

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 3 1978  
DATE ENTERED NOV 20 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Lemon Hill

AND/OR COMMON  
Lemon Hill

2 LOCATION

*E. of Lexington off U.S. 60*  
STREET & NUMBER 7 3/4 miles east on Winchester Road (U.S. Rt. 60)  
and north for 1 1/2 miles on Cleveland Rd.

CITY, TOWN Lexington CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 06  
STATE Kentucky VICINITY OF CODE 021 COUNTY Fayette CODE 067 ✓

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Haley Asbury

STREET & NUMBER  
4036 Cleveland Road

CITY, TOWN Lexington VICINITY OF STATE Kentucky

*MR. EDWARD C. O'NEAR, II  
ROUTE 3  
VERSAILLES, KY 40383*

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, Fayette County Courthouse  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER West Main Street

CITY, TOWN Lexington STATE Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Historic Survey and Plan, Historic Properties Atlas, Fayette Co.

DATE 1970  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Lexington-Fayette Urban Co. Planning Commission

CITY, TOWN Lexington STATE Ky.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

"Lemon Hill" is sited on a level terrain, the approach from Cleveland Road straight and slightly sloping down to the front of the house. Lands to the sides and rear slope down to a major fork of the North Elkhorn Creek. Originally the area in the front of the house was shorter before the straightening of Cleveland Road between 1861 and 1877. The rear in front of the house is a flat open green, with trees bordering both sides of the space commanded by the front of the building (Photo #1). The surrounding area has never been built up, and the house exists isolated from the road and neighbors, and quite unaffected by the construction of Interstate 75 immediately to the south of the adjoining lands.

There exists a dichotomy between the nature of the plan and the formal properties of the front elevation, front room and elegant finishes and details used in the public spaces. The front elevation "is reminiscent of the Redwood Library (1748-1750) in Newport, Rhode Island" and "also suggests an early Jefferson design for Monticello, adapted from one by Robert Morris"<sup>1</sup> (Photo #2). In addition, its elegant proportions appear to have been directly derived from Palladian domestic architecture. In contrast, "despite its superficial dressiness, Lemon Hill is a genuine country house. In some respects it is more satisfying from the rear view, where the formal elements are not in evidence. Here, one would hardly suspect the house of belonging to the Greek Revival era, and might place it two decades earlier."<sup>2</sup>

The house consists of a two-story main block of brick (Photo #2) on a stone foundation, nearly square in plan, with wings of brick on either side. The wings appear symmetrical from the front, but are dissimilar in plan when detectable from the sides or rear (Photos 5, 7, and 8). The plan may be described as L-shaped since the north wing extends beyond the rear wall of the main block and the right wing rear wall is flush with the rear wall of the main block. An outside one-story gallery once connected the hall and dining room to the left wing hall and kitchen. At present this gallery and porch have collapsed and little remains.

Special treatment of building materials on the elevations is limited to the smooth faced ashlar foundation of the front and left, north walls, in contrast to the rest of the rough cut stone foundation, and the use of common bonding for all brick walls. The front facade is articulated by pilasters on the corners of the

1 Lancaster, Clay, Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass, p. 105.  
2 Ibid., p. 106.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1840

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

"Lemon Hill" is an intriguing example of the new awareness by the general public of architectural styles which arose at the time of the Greek Revival period. "Things had to be done a la mode, and if neglectful, one ran the risk of being unfashionable."<sup>1</sup> What apparently had been suitable for the father of Abraham Lunsford Ferguson when he arrived in 1785 from Virginia with a relative, perhaps his brother, Bryant Ferguson, was not fashionable for his son and namesake, a wealthy and prosperous farmer. In 1848 Abraham Ferguson died, leaving his son five thousand dollars, six slaves and his lands on the David's Fork of the North Elkhorn Creek. The house that he built for himself and his family shortly after 1840 has all the proper details and design considerations of the Greek Revival period: the ceiling centerpieces, woodwork, blind windows, massing of the main block and wings, proportions, etc. Yet the house within, beyond the front formal reception room and from the sides and rear, has many of the asymmetrical aspects of the early houses in Kentucky--dwellings which evolved from functional concerns and many times achieved their overall form from the continual process of accretion as the family grew and the farm became prosperous.

This dichotomous state of affairs could partially be explained by the fact that this branch of the Ferguson family, from inspection of deeds, wills, histories and newspaper articles, never interested itself beyond the occupation of farming. Beyond the first and socially necessary fashionable view of the building, they were apparently more concerned with the comforts of a functional, if not formally appropriate, design. But that which was necessary was elaborate, proper and manifests fine craftsmanship.

With the changing economy and the dispersal of the Ferguson family, the farm was sold in 1905 to David Francis Frazee, "a banker, capitalist, educator, businessman, farmer and churchman," who raised tobacco, stock and "took interest in horses." He died childless in 1909 and left the farm to his three nieces. Together they sold the property to J. Wilmore, who then turned around and sold the property one of the nieces and her husband

<sup>1</sup> Lancaster, Clay, Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass, p. 81.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet.)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 8 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 6	7, 3, 3	0, 7, 0	4, 2, 1, 5	0, 0, 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C					

B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A rectangle measuring one thousand (1000) feet by five hundred (500) feet whose exact center is the mid-point of the front door; the one thousand (1000) foot sides are perpendicular to the front facade wall and the five hundred (500) foot sides are parallel to this same wall.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Nona E. Ellis

GM

ORGANIZATION

Lexington-Fayette County Historic Comm.

DATE

November, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

253 Market Street

TELEPHONE

255-8312

CITY OR TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Eileen W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

6/29/78

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ANTHROPOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*Charles Adams*

DATE

11-20-78

ATTEST *Jane H. Gilmore*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/17/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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main block and outside corners of the wings. The facade also displays an elegant attached, pedimented porch with rusticated tympanum, with four equally spaced slender wood columns on cast iron bases, supporting an entablature of architrave and blind frieze with denticulated cornice. The cornice is repeated on the front elevation of the two wings and returns for a short distance on the sides.

The porch is enclosed with the original cast iron railing of a stylized geometric design. The main block of three bays with central door is embellished by a door piece derived from Lafever's Young Builder's General Instructor (1829), Plate 50<sup>3</sup>; Tuscan Doric pilasters support an entablature with denticulated cornice, Ionic columns in antis between the door and five stacked pane side lights and three-pane transom above a vertical two-panel door (Photo #3). Centered in the portico ceiling is an elliptical centerpiece of plaster with a border of vines and stylized floral pattern in the central area (Photo #4). The windows in the main block and wings (on the lower story) are six over six, the central triple window over the front door being the only exception. Second story windows (three over three) of the wings are located only on the side and rear elevations, thereby creating the image of one-story wings when viewed from the front.

The plan of the main block consists of a front room the width of the facade, and approximately two-fifths of its depth. The room has been made to appear symmetrical with the location of a blind door on the rear wall, to the left of the double door to the dining room and matching the single door to the stairhall on the right. A fireplace on the north wall of the room is unmatched on the south wall, and provides the only asymmetrical feature of the space. The interior doorpiece matches the elaborate exterior treatment: fluted pilasters frame the side lights and transom, and support a deep entablature, with projecting cornice, panels infill below the sidelights. Woodwork of the windows matches the richness of the door, with fluted pilasters, same deep entablature with projecting cornice, and panel below. High baseboards of rounded built-up mouldings surround the room. A white marble mantel with floral patera matches the black marble mantel in the dining room.

3 Lancaster, Clay, Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass, p. 105.

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A large rectangular floral ceiling piece is centered in the space (Photo # 9). The dining room entrance is on axis with the front door, but the orientation of the space suggests the first instance of the breakdown in the symmetry presented by the design of the front facade. Woodwork of the dining room is simpler than that of the front room with the exception of the triple hung windows leading to the gallery which have hinged, panelled doors of the same height of the infill panels of the living room and allow the windows to be used as doors and provide extra ventilation during clement weather (Photo #10). Windows have fluted architrave trim with bull's eye patera. A circular ceiling centerpiece with floral decoration is a further embellishment of the formal room (Photo #11).

In the right hand, southeast corner of the main block is the stair-hall with dog leg stair. The baseboard design of the two front rooms is used here, but the stair, being in such a small and minor position, has received simple treatment--a heavy round Greek Revival newel post, square, tapering balusters, and step ends decorated with a floral moulding.

Three chambers and a square hall are above the public rooms in the main block. Two of these rooms have Greek Revival mantels similar to the mantels on the first floor; fluted architrave trim with bull's eye patera surrounding doors with double door presses (two vertical panel doors as below) to the side of the fireplaces.

The north wing is composed of the master bedroom with anteroom, the side entrance and stair, pantry and kitchen. The design of the north elevation (seven bay with central door) of the wing is balanced by the use of a blind window at the corner (Photo #7). A secondary public entrance to the rear stair has a highly decorated door piece to match the front entrance: Tuscan Doric pilasters, entablature and denticulated cornice. The Ionic columns in antis have been removed, but evidence remains of their former existence (Photo #6). Although the provision of side entrances is not uncommon, especially in country homes,

(continued)

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the elaborate decoration given such an entrance is not generally the rule. It may be hypothesized that the side entrance was so treated because of its use by the owner and master when returning from business at town late at night. Rather than enter the major door on the front, he could easily slip in the side near his bedroom, without disturbing the household, but still gain entrance to his mansion through a portal commensurate with the design of the house. The master's room has the same high baseboards but a slightly different design, a wood mantel; pilasters with brackets supporting the simple mantel shelf, architrave trim with square patera of a raised, diamond pattern, and a double door press to the right of the fireplace. The hall, with simple staircase of square balusters with a tapering section (newel missing), pantry and kitchen in rear have received simple treatment and are presently in poor condition. Four rooms above, at a slightly lower level than the second story rooms of the main block, have the same architrave trim and patera on doorways, and mantels are missing. Because of the need to preserve the height proportions of the wing respective to the main block, ceilings are low and slope to the north exterior wall. This design factor also explains the lower level of the second story wings.

The south wing consists of two chambers and hall on the first floor. Again the blind window has been employed on the front corner to preserve the proportions of the wall and window placement (Photo #7). Mantels match that of the master's room. Presses to the side of the mantels have vertical, two-panel doors, fluted architrave trim and a heavy, projecting cornice (Photo #12). Doorways have the same fluted trim with the addition of bull's eye patera. Above these spaces are two rooms, with sloping ceilings (like on the north wing and at the same lower level), the same simple architrave trim and raised diamond patera as in the master's room, and simple mantels of an earlier design. Here, as elsewhere in the house, random width flooring is employed.

The nominated area includes the elevated terrain to the front of the house and land to the side and rear that is visually important to the site's retention of its agricultural identity.

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Bettie F. and Charles A. Asbury. The property and home, referred to as one of the three finest farms in Fayette County when owned by D. F. Frazee, has continuously been occupied (until the late 1950's) by the owner and farmer of the surrounding lands. At present the farming interest is horse breeding, an example of the continuing change of the agricultural economy in Fayette County from the early days when the scion of the Ferguson family made his fortune--allowing his son to build a "farmer's Greek Revival mansion."



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Fayette County Deed Books: A, pp. 141, 143; O, p. 249; 142, p. 281; 185, p. 537-542.

Fayette County Will Books: F; O, p. 375; 10, p. 495.

Kentucky Reporter. Lexington, Kentucky. May 12, 1823.

Lancaster, Clay. Ante Bellum Houses in the Bluegrass. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1961.

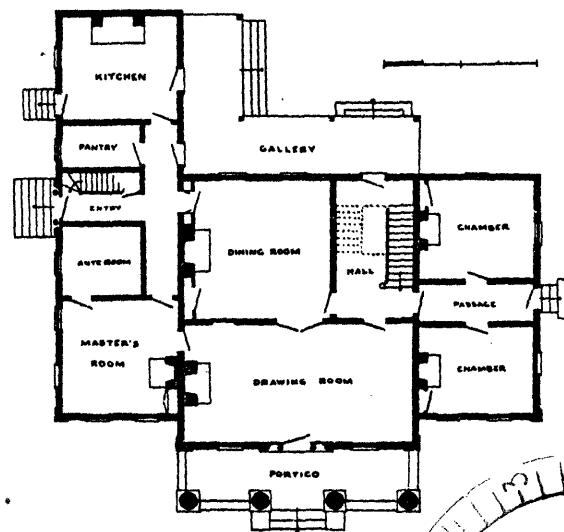
Lexington Morning Herald. Lexington, Kentucky, February 19, 1909.



146. *Lemon Hill.*

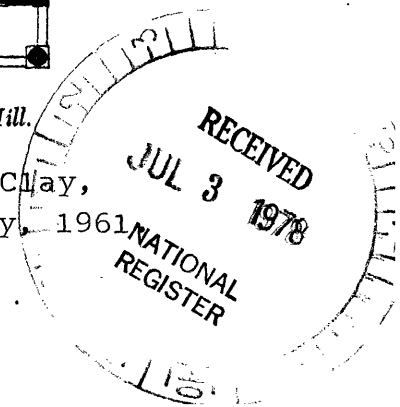
Redwood Library (1748-1750) in Newport, Rhode Island.<sup>44</sup> Lemon Hill also suggests an early Jefferson design for Monticello, adapted from one by Robert Morris.<sup>45</sup> A recessed doorway on the right flank has simplified Doric pillars and an entablature similar to that of the portico. For symmetry, a blind window is inserted on this end, and another on the far side of the house. An elliptical centerpiece in the ceiling of the portico is unusual, as is the rustication in the pediment. The front doorway of Lemon Hill, which is centered and has Ionic colonnettes *in antis*, seems to have been derived from Lafever's *Young Builder's General Instructor* (1829), Plate 50. Through it one enters the thirty-foot drawing room, behind which are the dining room and stairhall, with a gallery beyond (Fig. 147). A false door in the drawing room balances the real one to the hall. The rectangular centerpiece in this room has an inner motif identical to that in the hall of the Elley villa (Fig. 179), plus a whorled outer border containing chrysanthemums, or similar flowers, in molded frames. The south wing houses two chambers with passage between them. The longer wing to the north contains the master's room and anteroom, the side entry and stairway to the

upper floor, and pantry and kitchen. This part of the house alone has a basement. The L-shaped gallery functions as a means of circulation from the service quarters to the main hall. Over the drawing and dining rooms are chambers of full height, from which steps lead down to the upper rooms of the wings, which have sloping ceilings: Despite its superficial dressiness, Lemon Hill is a genuine country house. In some respects it is more satisfying from the rear view,



147. *First Floor Plan of Lemon Hill.*

From Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass, Lancaster, Clay,  
University of Kentucky Press, Lexington, Kentucky, 1961



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Lexington  
Fayette County  
Kentucky

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Clay Lancaster, Ante Bellum  
Houses of the Bluegrass,  
University of Kentucky Press,  
Lexington, Kentucky, 1961.

Map 2. First floor plan of  
Lemon Hill.

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