

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 5 1979
DATE ENTERED JUL 16 1979

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 Ben Johnson House
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 1003 North Third Street
CITY, TOWN Bardstown VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 02
STATE Kentucky CODE 021 COUNTY Nelson CODE 179

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input 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	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mrs. James Broaddus
STREET & NUMBER 1325 Taransay Drive
CITY, TOWN Henderson VICINITY OF STATE Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Nelson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER Court Square
CITY, TOWN Bardstown STATE Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky
DATE 1978 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Kentucky Heritage Commission
CITY, TOWN Frankfort STATE Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

Located just off Highway 105 on the north edge of Bardstown, the seat of Nelson County, the Ben Johnson House sits approximately 150 feet from the road. The structure, which faces west, is visible from the main thoroughfare, but is somewhat obscured at times by heavy tree cover.

Although Greek Revival in style, the addition of the oversized dormers, around the turn of the century, tends to alter the overall Classic sense. Besides the usual details which appear on many classic structures--the advanced piers, jack arches, and common bond brick--the other features are more uncommon. The wood cornice was given special treatment by the application of double dentils which give it a corbeled effect. Corbeled caps on the end chimneys tend to lend a Victorian look to the house. (See photo 1 .)

The main portico echoes the facade with denticulated cornice and double piers. Both the front and side entrances have transoms and sidelights but they differ in that a gabled Victorian porch was added to the side. (See photos 2&3 .) This addition lightens the heaviness of the Greek style.

The one-story ell, which appears to be original, has a corbeled cornice and five-course common bond brick. The only addition to the structure is a one-story frame shed porch located in the angle of the ell.

The interior of the Johnson House is relatively unchanged with a denticulated cornice strip over the main doors and original mantels.(See photo 4) The floor plan utilizes a central hall, cross-axis plan. The mantels in the double parlor and library are all similar, with wide double fluted pilasters and a fluted frieze.

The nominated area is approximately 3.8 acres and is bounded by the property lines. Included is the main house and six outbuildings. (See Diagram 1.) Four of the outbuildings are contemporary to the main house; the other two are not.

Located to the east of the house is a one-story, brick cottage with an end chimney and a corbeled cornice. (See figure C in Diagram 1.) Two other structures situated to the rear of the house include a Victorian style gazebo and a cylindrical-shaped smokehouse. (See D and E and photos 6-8 .) These three buildings were probably constructed not long after the main house. A one-story frame shed situated to the north of the main house appears to have been built around the turn of the century. (See figure G.) The other two structures, a two-car garage and another frame shed both of 20th century construction dates, are included in the nomination. (See figures B and F.)

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1851

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE The house attains significance by its association with one of Nelson County's most prominent political families.

It was constructed in 1851 for William Johnson (1817-1888), who served as Kentucky's Lieutenant Governor from 1867 to 1869. The structure was also occupied by his son, Ben Johnson (1858-1950) State Senator, and a member of the Kentucky General Assembly for 20 years.

William Johnson, born in Bardstown, Kentucky in 1817, held several important offices during his political career. He was admitted to the bar in 1849 and began his practice two years later. After that Johnson held the office of Nelson County Attorney from 1865 to 1873 and was elected State Senator from the 14th district in 1867. He became Speaker of the Senate that same year and thus was appointed Lieutenant Governor after the death of Governor John L. Helm in December 1867.

William Johnson died in 1888 at his home in Bardstown. His son Ben Johnson was politically active most of his adult life. He received a law degree from the University of Louisville in 1878 and returned to Bardstown to open his own practice. About one year later he sought his first public office, that of City Attorney. Johnson was a member of the State House of Representatives in 1885 and 1887, serving as Speaker in the later year. President Cleveland appointed him collector of internal revenue for the fifth Kentucky district in 1893 and he was a member of the State Senate from 1905-06.

After having been elected to Congress in 1907, Johnson was then reelected to then nine succeeding Congresses. Altogether he served for 20 years. He was a delegate at large to the Democratic National Conventions in 1912 and 1920. Lastly he served as a member of the Kentucky Highway Commission from 1922 to 1936.

Even after he retired from politics, Ben Johnson remained politically active and was an unofficial advisor to several governors' assistants.

In addition to Johnson, Nelson County contributed several other prominent political figures. Two of the best-known included Congressman Ben Hardin (1784-1852) and Governor Charles Anderson Wickliffe (1788-1869).

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Ben Johnson House

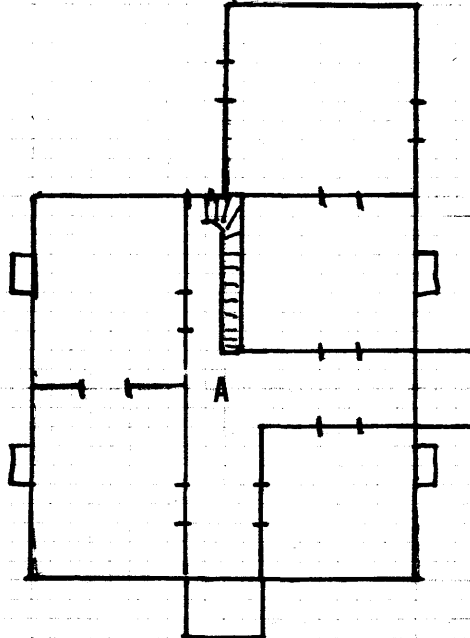
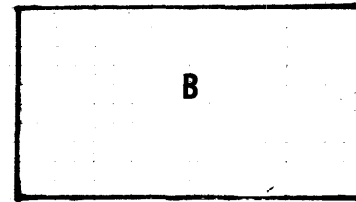
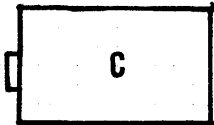
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

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_____. Historic Nelson County. Louisville: Gateway Press, Inc., 1971.

U. S. Congress, House Bill No. 447, Biographical Directory of the American Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1961.



Ben Johnson House
Nelson County
Bardstown JUN 5 1879
Kentucky

Jayne C. Henderson
Kentucky Heritage Commission
Frankfort, Kentucky
March 1979

JUL 1 6 1979

Diagram 1
Not to scale