

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 3 1982

DATE ENTERED JUN 3 1982

# 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

McCann, Benjamin House (Castlelawn)

AND/OR COMMON

Castle Lawn

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Old Richmond Pike, 6 miles se of Lexington

NA NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Lexington

6th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Kentucky

021

Fayette

067

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

## OWNERSHIP

## STATUS

## PRESENT USE

 DISTRICT PUBLIC OCCUPIED AGRICULTURE MUSEUM BUILDING(S) PRIVATE UNOCCUPIED COMMERCIAL PARK STRUCTURE BOTH WORK IN PROGRESS EDUCATIONAL PRIVATE RESIDENCE SITE**PUBLIC ACQUISITION****ACCESSIBLE** ENTERTAINMENT RELIGIOUS OBJECT

NA IN PROCESS

 YES: RESTRICTED GOVERNMENT SCIENTIFIC BEING CONSIDERED YES: UNRESTRICTED INDUSTRIAL TRANSPORTATION NO MILITARY OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. Fred B. Wachs, Jr.

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Rt # 5, Old Richmond Pike

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

NA VICINITY OF Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

40511

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Fayette County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

West Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory

Has the site been determined eligible?

 yes  no

DATE

May, 1977

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY 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
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Benjamin McCann House is located on the east of Kentucky 25 and 421, approximately six miles southeast of Lexington in Fayette County, Kentucky. Fayette County is a central Kentucky county marking the center of the world-famous Bluegrass region. The Benjamin McCann House is situated on an approximately 375-acre farm which is principally used for the raising of thoroughbred horses and the growing of tobacco and corn.

Facing southwest, this three-bay, two-story, classic style brick house has all the boldness and high-style quality of the Greek Revival period. (Photos 1, 2, 3, 4). Built in 1847 for a reputed \$40,000 for Benjamin McCann, this house has been averred a McMurtry built house. John McMurtry was an architect/builder whose work is most representative of the nineteenth century architecture in central Kentucky. His use of the Minard Lafever pattern book was obvious not only on the McCann house but on others built during this period.

The facade is laid-up in Flemish bond pattern and the other three sides in common bond with every eighth row in the header, stretcher pattern. The massive portico is supported by paired Ionic columns and the main doorway is more than likely by way of Lafever's Modern Builders' Guide (Photo # 5). According to architectural historian Clay Lancaster, "The entablature with its frieze taken from the doorway on the north side of the Erechtheum on the Athenian Acropolis was duplicated twice in Fayette County doorways--at Waveland off the Nicholasville Pike, and at the McCann house on the Richmond Pike." The main block of the house has a low hipped roof with pairs of inside chimneys at each end. Common bond pairs of flat brick pilasters are at either end of the facade while the rest of the building is surrounded by evenly spaced pilasters supporting a heavy wooden entablature under the eaves with dentil molding. Fluted frames with corner blocks surround the center section of the triple windows on the facade which have nine-over-six sashes on the first floor and six-over-six on the second. The foundation and front porch steps are blocks of dressed limestone which are bushhammered with chiseled margins. The original kitchen wing behind the dogtrot has been added onto with a connecting room to the east and with a garage attached to its end wall.

On the interior, the main block of the house is two rooms deep with a one-story attached wing housing the service rooms and a gallery. Originally the front door opened into a reception hall with a narrower enclosed stairhall behind. In the 1941 remodeling the wall between the front hall and stair section was removed and a larger staircase installed (Photo # 6). The two pairs of rooms are connected by large double doors and the door moldings form Greek ears at the top. (Photo # 7). In the original dining room is a staircase which was the only means of getting to the chamber above this room. (Photo # 8). In more recent times this isolated second floor chamber was made to connect with other rooms on that floor. The front hall, drawing room and parlor have their original ceiling centerpieces, the one in the hall being a close copy to the centerpiece design in The Beauties of Modern Architecture by Minard Lafever. (Photos # 9, & # 10). The original Greek Revival pilastered style mantles (Photo # 11) are throughout the house except for the room addition off the kitchen and on one fireplace upstairs where a marble Victorian mantel has been added. The rooms have sixteen-foot ceilings and the floors are ash and the woodwork is walnut. (Photo # 12). The second story has four bed chambers and remains intact as built except for the addition of two bathrooms and chair railing.

(continued)

# 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 1847

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John McMurtry

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Benjamin McCann House, located in Fayette County six miles southeast of Lexington, is an outstanding example of the Greek Revival style. Constructed in 1847, it has undergone some minor changes over the years, but remains virtually intact. The design and building of the house has been credited to Lexington's first known architect/builder, John McMurtry. McMurtry began his career in 1833 at the age of twenty-one as an apprentice to Gideon Shryock, the architect who introduced the Greek Revival to Kentucky. McMurtry went on to design and build some of the most important residences in central Kentucky until his death in 1889. He was greatly influenced in his building by the design books of Minard Lafever and he used this high quality of design on the doorway of the Benjamin McCann House.

This two-story massive Greek temple-like structure was built for Benjamin McCann in 1847. Little is known of McCann although it is said that he came to Lexington from Tennessee to involve himself in the horse industry but by 1860 when he sold this farm, he was financially over-extended and left the area. McCann had assembled 300 acres from different purchases although the land was originally a land grant to Mr. Levi Todd, grandfather to Mary Todd Lincoln. This land was known as the Locust Barrens grant. The farm became known as Castlelawn (now Castle Lawn) under the over thirty-year ownership by the Alexander Bush family, who purchased the farm in 1860. Ownership passed to the Samuel Morgans, Hattie G. Wilson, George and Joseph Goodwin and in 1941 to Fred Wachs, Sr. Mr. Wachs was president of the Herald-Leader Company from 1959 until retirement in 1974. He was named most valuable member of the Kentucky Press Association in 1961 and was one of Lexington's major business and civic leaders. He received three honorary doctorate degrees and was named Lexington's Outstanding Citizen in 1969.

The house remains as an important example of the Greek Revival period. Except for two unobstructive additions, the house is virtually unchanged on the exterior and exhibits some of the highest quality decorative elements, especially the front doorway. Practically all of the interior features remain, such as floors, doors, baseboards and mantels.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

UTM NOT VERIFIED

See continuation sheet for # 9.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8.6 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	7,2,7,0,4,0	4,2,04,9,0,5	B	1,6	7,2,7,0,8,0	4,2,0,4,8,1,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,6	7,2,6,8,1,0	4,2,0,4,6,6,5	D	1,6	7,2,6,7,6,5	4,2,0,4,7,6,0

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION** The boundary begins at a point (number 1) 1000 feet northeast of the Old Richmond Pike and runs to the southeast for 375 feet to a point (number 2). The boundary turns in a southwesterly direction for 1000 feet to a point (number 3) and then turns northwest for 375 feet along the Old Richmond Pike to a point (number 4). It then turns northeast and runs 1000 feet back to the point of origin (number 1) thereby incorporating the main house and the important scenic setting from the Pike. (See Map 2 for delineation of boundary. See #7, p. 2 for boundary justification.)

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

STATE	NA	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Richard S. DeCamp, Executive Director

ORGANIZATION

Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

253 Market Street

TELEPHONE

606/255-8312

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

*Mary Emma Appel*

TITLE

*State Historic Preservation Officer*

DATE

*4/27/82*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Entered in the National Register

DATE

*6/3/82*

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

AGENT

for KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

The nominated acreage consists of approximately 8.6 acres on the east side of Kentucky 25 and 421 incorporating the house and the scenic approach along the drive which creates the setting viewed from the Old Richmond Pike. No outbuildings are within the nominated area.

1

Clay Lancaster Antebellum Houses of the Bluegrass, p. 89.

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Fayette County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Fayette County Deed Books 39, 99, 152, 262, 328. Fayette County Courthouse.

Greg, Sissy. Courier-Journal Magazine. Louisville, Kentucky, March 14, 1948,  
p. 13.

Lancaster, Clay. Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass. Lexington, KY., 1961,  
pp. 83-84, 91-92.

Newcomb, Rexford. Architecture In Old Kentucky. Urbana, Illinois, 1953,  
pp. 134-135.

Simpson, Elizabeth. Bluegrass Houses and Their Traditions. Lexington, Ky., 1932,  
pp. 349-351.



1000

X1032

X1032

X1041

X1051

X1062

X1058

X1049

1050

X1047

X1045

RICHMOND

ROAD

X1037

1000

1050

X1056

Benjamin McCann House  
Lexington  
Fayette  
Kentucky

Urban County Planning Commission Map  
Fayette County

Scale: 1" = 400'

Date: 1976, Update 1980

Map # 2  
The nominated area is shown in red.



ANDERSONVILLE

LEXINGTON

E

T

GEORGETOWN

CHILDSBURGH

ATHENS

Benjamin McCann House  
Lexington  
Fayette  
Kentucky

Hewitt Map of Fayette County  
Scale: Unknown

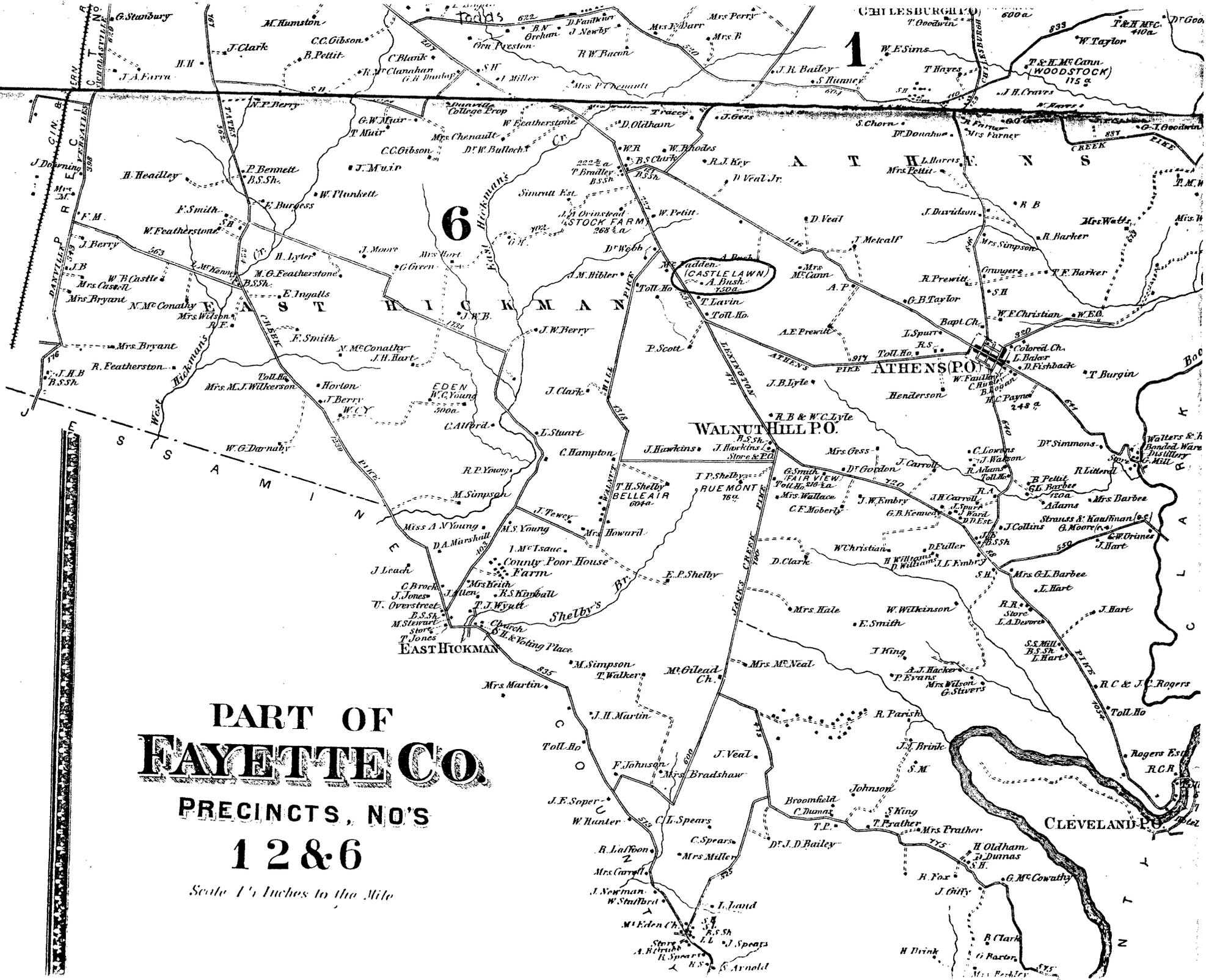
Date: 1861

Map # 3

# PART OF FAYETTE CO.

## PRECINCTS, NO'S 1 2 & 6

Scale 1 1/4 Inches to the Mile



Benjamin McCann House  
Lexington  
Fayette  
Kentucky

D.C. Beers Atlas of Bourbon, Clark,  
Fayette, Jessamine and Woodford Counties

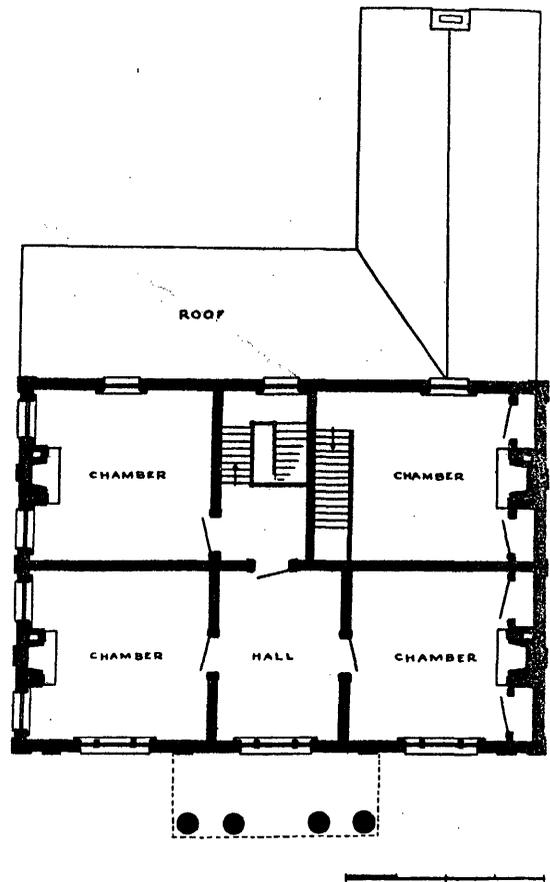
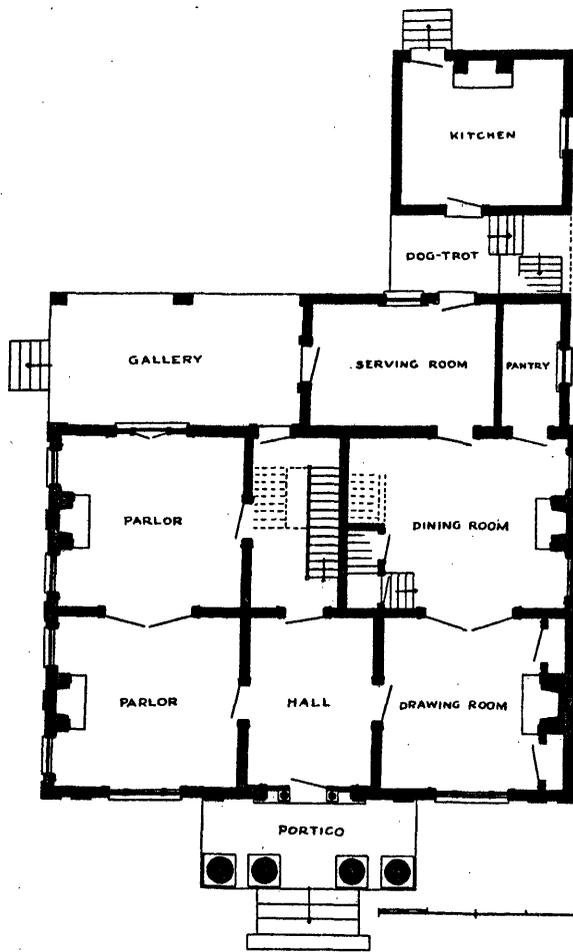
Scale:  $1\frac{1}{4}$ " = one mile

Date: 1877

Map # 4



123. Benjamin McCann House.



124. First and Second Floor Plans of McCann House.

Benjamin McCann House  
Fayette  
Lexington  
Kentucky

Drawings from Ante Bellum Houses of  
the Bluegrass, Clay Lancaster, 1961.

Map # 5