

PH0024384

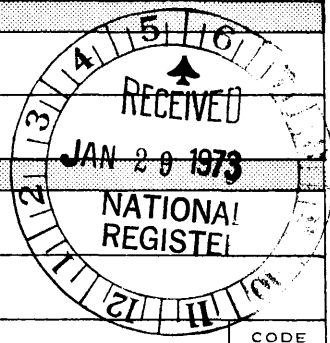
Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Kentucky	
COUNTY:	Lincoln	
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	APR 11 1973	



1. NAME

COMMON: William Whitley House State Shrine

AND/OR HISTORIC: Sportsman's Hill

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Off U.S. 150 - 2 miles west of Crab Orchard

CITY OR TOWN: Crab Orchard *me.*

STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21 COUNTY: Lincoln CODE: 137

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<u>Historic Home</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Kentucky Department of Parks

STREET AND NUMBER: Capital Plaza Office Building

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Lincoln County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Stanford STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Survey Of Historic Sites In Kentucky

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971: March  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: 401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE: FOR NPS USE ONLY

APR 11 1973

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built between 1787 and 1794, this house is one of the first brick houses west of the Allegheny Mountains. The brick is laid in Flemish bond. Header bricks in the gable ends are glazed so that a slightly darker pattern, in this case a series of diamonds, stands out clearly. The glazed brick initials of William and Ester Whitley above the entrances are a very distinctive feature of the house. William's initials, "W.W.", appear above the front entrance and Ester's, "E.W.," appear above the rear entrance.

Attacking Indians would have found it difficult to enter the house; the walls are thick and the windows are set high above the ground. The glass for these windows was reportedly brought over the Cumberland Gap on pack mules.

The house consists of three rooms and a large hall on the first floor; two rooms and a hall on the second floor; and a spacious attic. The dining room with Whitley's gun closet in one corner is to the right of the large entrance hall. A smaller room behind the dining room is believed to have been the original kitchen. Across the hall on the left side of the house is the high ceilinged family room, which has thirteen S-shaped wood carvings above the fireplace.

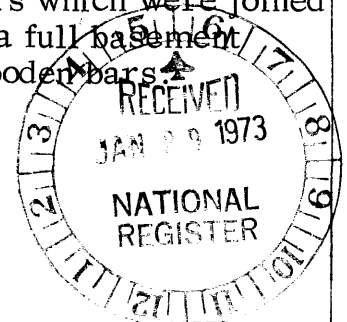
A beautifully carved stairway joins the upper hall with the lower hall. The end of each step is decorated with an eagle holding an olive branch. There is also a hidden stairway or ladder connecting the kitchen with the west bedroom on the second floor. This type of stairway afforded access to safety during an Indian attack.

Between the second floor and attic the main stairway becomes narrower to allow room for a semi-secret cubicle which shares the middle rear window with the stairwell. When this space was covered it would have hidden a man while allowing him to watch out or to fire a gun through the window.

The attic which runs the length of the house is lighted by two windows in each gable. It was probably used for spinning or weaving in addition to games and dancing. Large squared rafters which were joined by wooden pegs are visible here. There is also a full basement which has windows that are protected by stout wooden bars.

(see continuation sheet)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

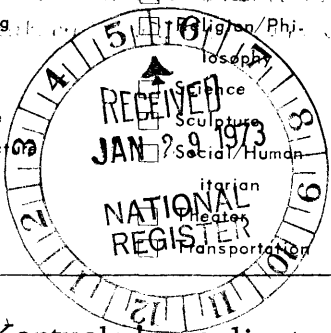
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1787-1794**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	History contains persons relevant to development of this State.
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanities	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Italian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

William Whitley, one of Kentucky's earliest pioneers was born in Virginia in 1749 and moved to Kentucky in 1775. Traveling by horseback he was accompanied by his wife and two small daughters. They made their journey twenty years before the Wilderness Road was open to wagon traffic. Whitley's wife, Ester, is believed to have been the third white woman to cross the Cumberland Mountains into Kentucky; and their third daughter, born at Harrodsburg, was the second white child born in Kentucky.

By 1780 Whitley received a colonel's commission in the militia and had been awarded a grant of 10,000 acres of land in recognition of his military services. Colonel Whitley organized and led a body of troops to protect settlers and travelers along the Wilderness Road. He believed in attacking the Indians on their own ground and was party to numerous expeditions against them.

Whitley's home has often been referred to as the "Guardian of the Wilderness Road" because of its use as a fort during Indian attacks and as a haven of safety and hospitality to travelers on the Wilderness Road. Colonel Henry Hamilton, former British Governor at Detroit, also known as the "Hairbuyer," stopped here as a prisoner, after being captured at Vincennes.

In 1788 Whitley laid out a racetrack on his property. This was the first racetrack in Kentucky and helped give his home the name of "Sportsman's Hill."

According to Charles G. Talbert in The William Whitley House, the Indians considered Whitley to be the white chief of the Kentucky frontier. Many of their leaders visited him, sometimes spending the night in the house while their braves slept outside. "At least one treaty was made there, the chiefs negotiating with Whitley and their women presenting gifts to his wife."

(see continuation sheet)

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The William Whitley House, Charles G. Talbert; Kentucky Dept. of Parks (no date)

Brochure "The William Whitley House," Ky. Department of Public Information, Frankfort, Ky. (no date)

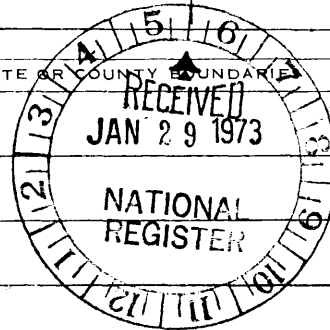
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37 ° 28 ' 05 "	84 ° 33 ' 0 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 6 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



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 SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Charles E. Parrish, Assistant Director

ORGANIZATION: Kentucky Heritage Commission DATE: 1-15-73

STREET AND NUMBER: 401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort STATE: Kentucky CODE: 21

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Mrs. Simeon Willis

Title State Liaison Officer

Date January 22, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert K. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/11/73

ATTEST:  
W. J. Smith  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 4.3.73

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

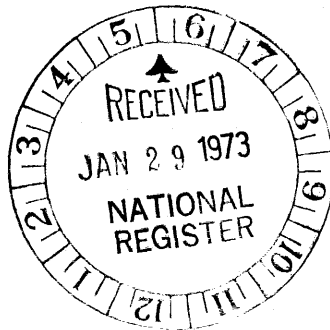
STATE Kentucky	
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# 7 DESCRIPTION

The house originally had other safety features that would have been advantageous during an Indian attack; these included rifle ports and heavy shutters for the windows. At the time when Whitley built his home, he could not build an ordinary house; out of necessity it had to also serve as a fort.

Furnished in the period 1770-1810, the William Whitley House is now a State shrine, part of the Kentucky State Park System.



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#8 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

During a target shooting contest with visiting Cherokees, Ester Whitley, who despite her husband's fame as a fighter, was better at target shooting than him, outshot the Indians. Amazed, they asked how she had learned to shoot so well. She replied that she had learned so that she could kill Indians and could still do so if she had to.

Colonel Whitley, who was 64 at the outbreak of the War of 1812, was unable to resist the call to battle, and enlisted as a private. Still spry for his years, before the Battle of Thames, he swam his horse across a river to collect the scalps of three Indians whom he had killed.

He had often stated that he wanted to die in defense of his country. According to Talbert, during the Battle of Thames in 1813, Whitley was one of the volunteers who were sent out to draw the fire of the Indians to avoid leading the main part of the regiment into an ambush. This group, which rode to an almost certain death, has been called "The Forlorn Hope." William Whitley rode at the head of this group. Nineteen of the twenty men were unhorsed in the first Indian volley; fifteen, including Whitley, were mortally wounded. Although at least three men have been credited with killing Tecumseh, Richard Spurr, one of the twenty members of the "Forlorn Hope" said in later years that he had seen an Indian and Whitley fire at each other, and that both were killed. He had carried the bodies of both into camp, where General Harrison identified the Indian as Tecumseh.

Although known primarily as a pioneer, scout and great Indian fighter, Colonel Whitley was an outstanding leader in the civic and social life of the community. In 1797 he was elected to the lower house of the State legislature and served one term. The Whitley House was a gathering place for such frontier leaders as George Rogers Clark, Daniel Boone, and Isaac Shelby, Kentucky's first Governor. Here they discussed plans that affected much of the future of Kentucky. In 1818 Whitley County was formed and named in his honor; the county seat, Williamsburg, was originally known as Whitley Courthouse.

