

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUN 21 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

Johnson - Pence House
HISTORIC
Imogene Johnson and Daniel B. Pence House
AND/OR COMMON
Pence House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
W of Georgetown off U.S. 460
On farm road between Ky. 227 & U.S. 460, one mile west of Great Crossing
CITY, TOWN
Georgetown VICINITY OF 6
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
Kentucky 021 Scott 209

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Vacant

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Robinson
STREET & NUMBER
Gano Avenue
CITY, TOWN
Georgetown VICINITY OF
STATE
Kentucky 40324

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Scott County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
East Main Street
CITY, TOWN
Georgetown STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky
DATE
1971
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Kentucky Heritage Commission
CITY, TOWN
Frankfort STATE
Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Pence House is a ca. 1830 two-story brick residence that faces east towards the Elkhorn Creek in rural Scott County, Kentucky. The main facade is laid in Flemish bond and is three bays wide. The western bay is the main entrance which is composed of double doors flanked by colonnettes and sidelights and is surmounted by an elliptical fanlight. This fenestral arrangement speaks of the hall-and-double-parlor plan of the main block's first floor. The modest entrance porch was added ca. 1900, and the pyramidal roof covering the main block replaced a section destroyed by a storm in the early 20th century. From remaining evidence, it appears that the principal two-story mass was originally crowned by a classic, pediment-like gable (see conjectural reconstruction). This gable was perhaps pierced by a Palladian window or a lunette in the center.

At the southwest is a one-and-one-half-story ell whose two rooms house the kitchen and dining room. A shed-roofed porch spans the ell's eastern side, and a carport has been recently appended to the southern end. A large stone chimney that served the kitchen was dismantled many years ago, and a small bathroom has been installed off the dining room.

The substantial hall contains a well-executed staircase at the south, and there are double parlors off the hall. These rooms are connected by double doors that are crowned by a leaded elliptical transom. Throughout the Pence House there is an amazing amount of provincial woodwork extant. These include reeded window and door casings, variously-treated mantels, built-in cupboards paneled in differing fashions, baseboarding, and chair railing--several sections of which are gouged with the Greek fret motif.

The main block's second level is arranged in the same manner as the first. Interior fittings of the second floor observe a hierarchy and are simpler. The attic space above the ell was apparently servants' quarters and is reached by an enclosed staircase within the dining room. The brick walls rest on a stone foundation and there are two chimneys on the east side set one brick outside the wall.

The Pence House occupies the summit of a wide rise and is void of any original outbuildings. In proximity to the north is the Pence Family Cemetery. Few of the gravestones are upright and the area is unprotected. The original owners of the house are interred here, and although the stones are no longer upright, the inscriptions remain legible. The family cemetery is included within the nominated property.

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

SPECIFIC DATES **1829-30**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The social history of the South reveals that children born to slave women and fathered by slaveholders were seldom publicly recognized by their white fathers. The Imogene Johnson-Daniel Pence House stands as a physical reminder of one slaveowner who not only recognized his offspring by a slave, but who reared these children in his home, educated them, and, when they married, gave them large tracts of prime agricultural land. This particular case carries added significance because of the identity of the slavemaster--Colonel Richard M. Johnson, Vice President of the United States under Martin Van Buren (1836-1840)--and the political consequences resulting from Johnson's private life. The fact that Johnson made no effort to conceal the identity of his children by Julia Chinn, a slave, worked severely to the detriment of his political career (Nelson, p. 58; Meyer, p. 433). It was certainly a factor in 1836 with Johnson's failure to secure a majority of electoral votes necessary to secure the vice-presidency; whereupon he became the only vice-president ever elected by the United States Senate (Dictionary of American Biography p. 115). The house in Scott County on the North Elkhorn was built for Johnson's daughter Imogene and her husband on land given them by Johnson.

The period of the birth and childhood of Richard Johnson's daughters Imogene and Adaline by Julia Chinn, a slave inherited from Johnson's father's estate, was the era of his ecliptic rise to national fame. Imogene, according to her tombstone in the family plot near the house, was born February 17, 1812, when Johnson was actively crusading as a "War Hawk" in the Congress of the United States, declaring that, "I shall never die contented until I see England's expulsion from North America, and her territories incorporated with the United States (Meyer, p. 81). Between the date of the infant's birth and the conclusion of the war of 1812, Johnson had become a national hero. With his brother James, he organized a mounted regiment which defeated the federated Indians and British at the Battle of the Thames in October, 1813. During the conflict he was credited with the killing of Tecumseh, renown Indian leader of the federation (Meyer, pp. 139, 400-406; Bolt; pp. 196-197).

After the war, Johnson's political career continued to rise. He is said to be the first native Kentuckian to be elected to the state legislature, to be elected to the U. S. House of Representatives and Senate as well as the Vice-Presidency. Johnson's political fame is viewed as being tied both to his role as a war hero, and to his authorship of the bill which abolished imprisonment for debt (Meyer, p. 81).

During the period of Johnson's ascendancy on the political scene, his daughters were growing up on his Blue Spring farm in Great Crossing, near Georgetown where the girls' mother

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Basler, Roy P. The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953, pp. 402-3.

Bolt, Robert, "Vice President Richard M. Johnson of Kentucky: Hero of the Thames--or the Great Amalgamator?" The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society. Vol. 75, p. 191.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2
UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	7,0,7,8,9,0	4,2,3,3,0,4,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The southern and eastern boundaries are defined by the respective foundations of the house. The nominated property proceeds in a northwesterly direction for 300 feet to encompass the Pence Family Cemetery.

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
Mrs. Ann Bevins/Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian; Gloria Mills, Historian

ORGANIZATION
Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE
May 1978

STREET & NUMBER
104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE
(502)-564-3741

CITY OR TOWN
Frankfort

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 *Edward W. Yuster*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE 6/15/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION *Jan H. Gumore* DATE 11.20.78

ATTEST *Jan H. Gumore* KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER DATE 11/17/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Imogene Johnson and Daniel B. Pence House

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served as housekeeper (DeVol, p. 11). The farm was also the location of a Baptist mission project established by Johnson in 1825 to educate Choctaw Indian youths (Choctaw Indian Academy, Scott County, listed on the National Register March 7, 1973). It was there the two girls received their education. Both were later to marry white men and both couples were deeded a part of Johnson's estate. Johnson, who never married, gave to Adaline and her husband, the Blue Spring farm, and to Imogene and her husband, Daniel Pence, whom she married in 1830, certain land on North Elkhorn (Meyer, p. 321; Nelson, p. 54). "After the disposal of his home place, Johnson removed to the other side of the Elkhorn, the White Sulphur tract " (Meyer, p. 321).

Johnson's private life was to have a very definite effect on his political career. The attempt was often made by political antagonists to discredit Johnson, a staunch Jacksonian, by alluding to his personal relationships (Nelson, p. 53). Reference was often made by his political foes to his domestic life during his campaign in 1835 to secure the Vice Presidential nomination. Although strongly backed by Andrew Jackson, Johnson came up one vote short of a majority in the electoral college. Virginia Democrats directed their electors to vote for William Smith of Alabama. Although other issues were involved, "the most powerful reason for the opposition to Colonel Johnson in Virginia and the South," states one biographer, "was expressed in a letter of Alfred Balch to Jackson on April 4, 1835: 'I do not think from what I hear daily that the nomination of Johnson for the Vice Presidency will be popular in any of the slave holding states except Kentucky on account of his former domestic relations' " (Meyer, p. 413). With Virginia's vote for the obscure Alabamian, the election was thrown to the U. S. Senate, where Johnson's election was finally secured (DeVol, p. 11).

As Vice President, Johnson was somewhat inconspicuous. He did, however, campaign in 1840 for renomination as Vice-President, but this time without the endorsement of Jackson (Meyer, p. 433). On May 22, 1840, Jackson wrote from the Heritage to Francis P. Blair: "His late family connection which has gone abroad will prevent the whole religious portion of both states to vote against him [Kentucky and Tennessee]" (Nelson, p. 61). Because of such overwhelming opposition, Johnson failed in his efforts for re-nomination and for the remainder of his life, with the exception of two terms in the State Legislature, "was assiduously devoted to improving his private fortunes, somewhat impaired by a too liberal hospitality and constant attention to public affairs. He was a member of the Legislature at the time of his death in 1850" (Collins, p. 402).

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Julia Chinn, the mother of Imogene Pence, died during the cholera epidemic of 1833-36. She was described by Thomas Henderson, the former principal of the Choctaw Academy as "a regular member in a large and respectable Baptist Church for many years with myself, sustained a good character as a pious, humble christian, to the day of her death." Henderson also stated that the daughters had married respectable men and were "independently situated" (Bolt, p. 202).

Daniel and Imogene Pence continued to live on the tract of nearly 400 acres, and 1871 deeded the farm to D. Franklin Pence and E. H. Pence. The farm was bought by Homer Robinson in the early years of the 20th century.

The house, a comfortable and well-fitted rural residence of the early 19th century, is now vacant and in poor condition but is still capable of being restored. The rooms are commodious, and the interior fittings show a concern for embellishment despite their being executed by an obviously provincial craftsman.

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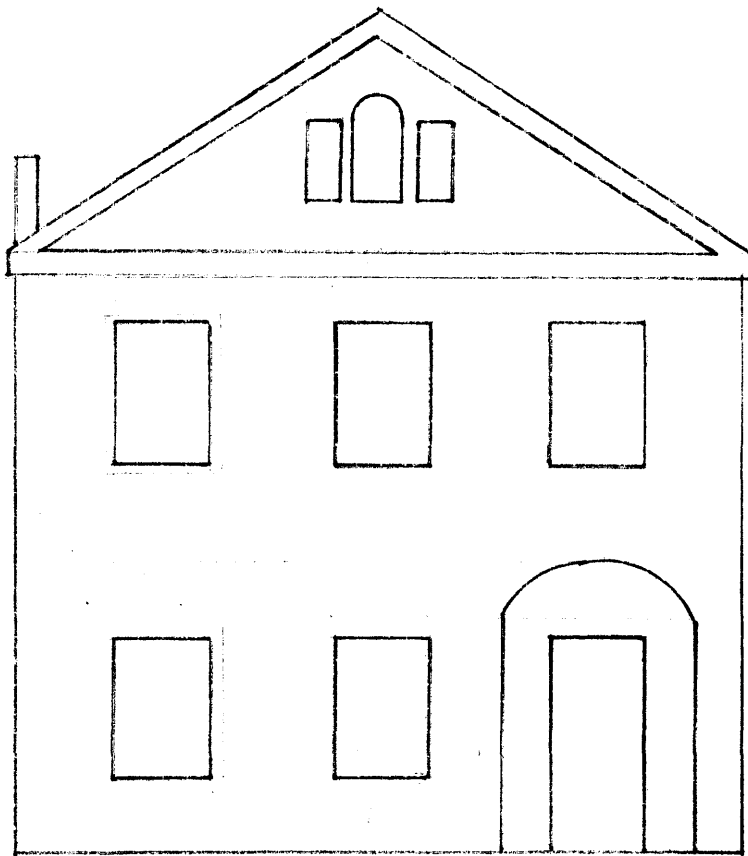
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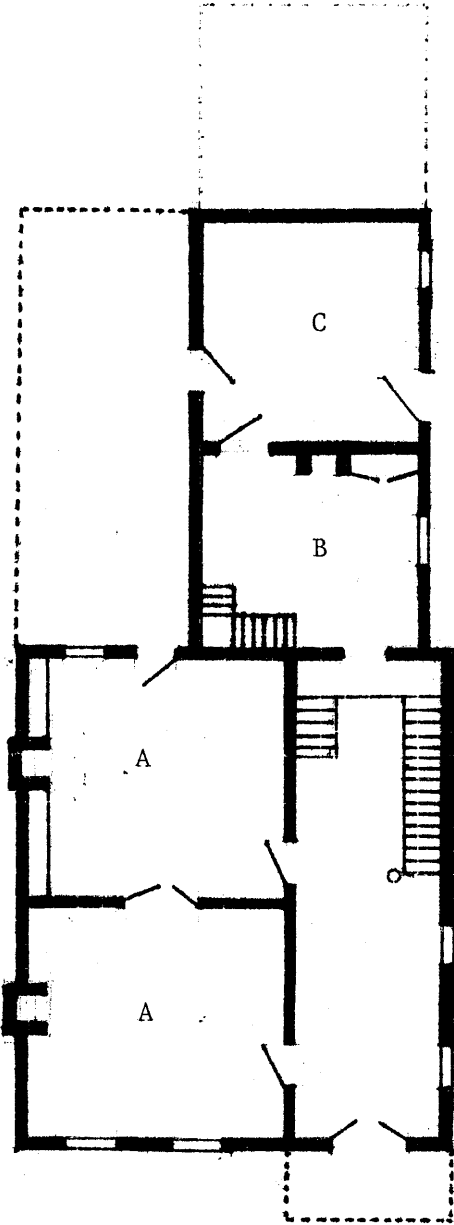
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THE PENCE HOUSE, CA. 1830
SCOTT COUNTY, KENTUCKY

CONJECTURAL RECONSTRUCTION
NO SCALE





- A . PARLORS
- B . DINING ROOM
- C . KITCHEN

PENCE HOUSE, SCOTT COUNTY, KENTUCKY
FIRST FLOOR
NO SCALE

