

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination FormSee instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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received

JAN 30 1984

date entered

1. Name

historic AUGUSTA MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA (Partial Inventory: History/Architecture)

and/or common

2. Location

1 dist. + 6 ind. + 1 DOE

street & number The incorporated limits of Augusta not for publication

city, town Augusta vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Bracken code 023

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> government |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multiple Resource | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NA being considered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industrial |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| | | | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership: See KY Historic Inventory Forms

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bracken County Courthouse

street & number Madison and Locust Street

city, town Brooksville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

KY Historic Resources Inventory and
title National Register of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes ☒ nodate Various ☒ federal ☒ state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent

☐ deteriorated

☒ good
☐ fair

☐ ruins

☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered

☐ altered

Check one

☐ original site

☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Location and Physical Description

Augusta, a small, picturesque community of 1,450, is situated on the banks of the Ohio River in northeastern Kentucky, 45 miles southeast of Cincinnati and 15 miles west of Maysville, the largest city and commercial center of the Outer Bluegrass region. The town was founded on a broad, alluvial floodplain, bounded by Bracken Creek to the east, Little Turtle Creek to the west and a backdrop of steep hills to the south (photo #1). The relative breadth of the floodplain allowed the town to expand more readily than many of its densely settled river neighbors, notably Maysville and Ripley, Ohio. In general Augusta's historic development first occurred along the riverfront (Water Street) near the ferry and public landing. By the 1820s and thirties houses and public buildings of considerable pretensions had been built around the courthouse and college squares. Post-bellum expansion extended the town limits south and eastward, until by 1884 a substantial portion of the community as it now exists had been formally developed (Fig. #3). The present day municipal limits, which include large areas of undeveloped land, correspond almost exactly to the town boundaries of a century ago.

At the present time there are three listings in Augusta that have been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. The largest and most familiar nomination is the Water Street (Riverside) Historic District (National Register 9/24/75), a linear shaped assemblage which contains approximately 25 buildings, most of which face the Ohio River (Fig. #4). A second listing, the Augusta College Historic Buildings (National Register 2/20/80) consists of two early nineteenth century buildings associated with Augusta College. These two buildings are included within the boundaries of the proposed historic district. The third property listed in the National Register, Abraham Baker's Wine Cellar (National Reg. 12/30/74), is located near the edge of Augusta above Bracken Creek (not indicated on map). The Augusta Multiple Resource Area Nomination consists of the Augusta Historic District and seven individual sites situated in or near the pre-1825 village boundaries (Fig. #4).

Architectural Description: Augusta Historic District

The Augusta Historic District encompasses the greatest concentration of historic resources in the community. Of the 145 structures included within the district boundaries, approximately 100, or two-thirds, are residential dwellings and 20 contributing structures are commercial in nature. The remaining structures have or formerly had religious, educational or governmental associations. Eighteen of the buildings were built prior to 1850; thirty-eight from 1851 to 1877, and forty-six, or 32 percent, were built during the fertile period from 1877 to 1900. Approximately twenty-six structures date to the first quarter of the twentieth century. Six structures, including the municipal water tower (19) were erected between 1927 and 1930. Over two-thirds of the structures built before 1877 were constructed of brick, conversely, the vast majority of residential buildings erected after 1877 are of frame construction. One hundred and nine of the 145 structures in the district are over fifty years old and are considered to be contributing elements. Twenty-nine are designated contributing but altered and seven have been classified as intrusions. The historic district is very cohesive with few vacant lots. There are no fast food restaurants or modern gas stations in the district. In this respect Augusta contrasts sharply with many other small towns.

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Despite its comparatively small size, Augusta possesses a remarkably diverse, both temporally and architecturally, collection of historic resources. Buildings range from a c.1796 log and stone courthouse to a modern bank building of 1930. Distribution of particular styles or building types generally reflect the patterns of town expansion. Consequently, the Federal and early vernacular structures tend to be located near the river or around the institutional centers, while the later structures, especially the residential Italianate, are clustered at the southern or "Upper" end of town. Twentieth century development typically sprang up on vacant lots but more often toward the eastern end of town beyond Seminary Street. Commercial activity initially began on Water Street near the ferry landing, subsequently expanding south on Main Street all the way to Third. Toward the end of the nineteenth century a small commercial node developed around Moneyhon's Lumber Yard at Second and Seminary Streets. About the same time the railroad acted as a transmitter in attracting development along Third Street east of Frankfort Street.

The historic resources contained within the Augusta Historic District are an important collection of high styled, domestic and purely vernacular buildings. Several notable examples of the Federal, Gothic vernacular, Italianate, Queen Anne and revival styles are represented. Of the fourteen buildings that can be classified as Federal architecture, ten feature Flemish bond masonry. Many of these early antebellum survivors exhibit finely detailed entrances and interior woodwork and a degree of sophistication rarely seen in other portions of the county.¹ Examples of this are the arched entrances employed on three Federal dwellings (26, 70, 78) the hound's tooth cornice found on the rear ell of the McKibben House (26) and the reeded moldings and bulls-eye woodwork on the interior of the McKibben Hotel (13, photo #12). Similarly, the Bracken Academy Building is noteworthy for the execution of its interior fittings (photo #48) and original window light arrangement. Floor arrangements do not follow any consistent pattern; there are Federal houses with center passage, side passage and unusual local variations (85, 93). Certainly the most pretentious Federal house is "Whitehall," the grand two and one-half story double pile mansion built by Martin Marshall (70).

The Augusta Historic District is also characterized by an important grouping of domestic or regionally inspired Gothic architecture. Actually there are two forms of the Gothic style--residential and ecclesiastical. The ecclesiastical Gothic generally is a later revival, with freely articulated lancet windows, stained glass and an occasional buttress. St. Augustine (1859) is the earliest version followed by four Gothic inspired Protestant Churches, all built between 1879-1894 (50, 92, 135, 142). In contrast to the church architecture, Augusta's residential Gothic is almost exclusively of frame construction. The only exception to this is the brick Presbyterian Parsonage (59), built c.1875. The parsonage and the eleven other Gothic houses are typified by their steep cross gable roofs, lancet windows, and symmetrical fenestration (25, 52, 59, 64, 66, 69, 43, 104, 116, 118, 132, 145). Augusta's most pretentious version of the Gothic Revival is located on Elizabeth Street (66, photo #51).

¹This sophistication is evidenced on the carved wooden architraves of the Joshua T. Bradford House (Water Street National Register nomination).

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There are, for reasons suggested in Section 8, noticeably few examples of the Greek Revival style in Augusta. The two purest representations of the style, the Wells-Ryan House (20) and the Joseph Doniphan House (100) exhibit the more formal two story, center passage plans commonly associated with the period. The Laban Stroube House (81) and the Cleveland Law Office (14) are single story versions with later modifications. One dwelling, the R. W. Winter House (65) combines elements from both the Gothic and Greek Revival styles. Its unusual side entrance and porch fenestration are singularly unique in Bracken County. Another distinctive transitional form can be detected on the front wing of the McKibben House (26), whose front and side elevations exhibit a curious integration of pilasters and arched Italianate lintels (photo #22). Three of Augusta's antebellum churches (110, 111, and 129) still survive, although later alterations to their fabric make their original Greek appearances somewhat less convincing. Many of these structures have interior spaces embellished with Greek trim and shouldered architraves.

The immediate post-bellum and late Victorian periods encompass the greatest number of structures in the district. Herein lies the great era of commercial expansion on Main (Upper) Street and a concurrent phase of residential development on Fourth Street. Over one-fourth of the district's residential fabric can be classified as Italianate and Queen Anne in style. Two of the district's most unusual examples of the Italianate (51, 139) have distinctive lintel treatments and decorative gable bracing, while the prototypical Italianate dwelling is a two-story T-plan building of balloon frame or brick construction. Stylistic features often include the use of decorative shelf lintels, transomed doors and two-over-two window arrangements. By the late 1880s a number of transitional Italianate and Queen Anne buildings appeared on Fourth and Bracken Streets. These structures are embellished with an exciting array of wall treatments and decorative porches (53, 56, 83, 95, 99; Photos 41, 44, 71, 74). One of the most distinctive elements employed on these frame dwellings is the triangular panel decoration exhibited in the gable ends (photo #44 and # 74). This unusual feature has not been observed in other Kentucky towns and seems to be a salient feature of Augusta's late nineteenth century residential architecture.

Instances of the Second Empire and Romanesque Revival are practically non-existent in the district. The only true example of Second Empire architecture (88) has been considerably altered, but the Christian Church (55), a fine brick structure with robust spire remains totally intact. There are approximately six buildings in the district that exhibit the asymmetrical floor plans, variegated wall surfaces and window treatments commonly associated with the Queen Anne style. One example, the Clara Diltz House (136) is a particularly fine expression of the style. The Dunbar House (27), among the town's largest, was built by Oliver Tatman, a local carpenter-builder.

The turn-of-the-century residential styles are quite restrained, and several of the survivors have suffered from misguided modernization efforts. Four dwellings on South Main Street were constructed between 1900 and 1905 (39, 40, 41, 45) followed by a later group of American Four Square and vernacular styles (77, 90, 96, 99, 120). The Augusta School (138), designed in 1900 by Benjamin Crane DeCamp, easily stands out as the most

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sophisticated of the revival styles. It also is a major focal point, both visually and functionally, in the community. Completing the twentieth century fabric are four modified Bungalow dwellings located in the upper part of town (49, 79, 101, 112, photo #35). Built in the late teens, these structures are not individually outstanding but do respect the setback, massing and textures of neighboring buildings in the district.

Vernacular style buildings comprise an important and often unheralded part of Augusta's architectural history. The largest proportion of this group are single story frame residential buildings with two and three bay fenestration. Most are located on Bracken and Third Streets (31-34; 103-109; 115-119) with individual clusters situated along Park View and Second Streets (17; 72-74). This latter group was built with identical floor plans but reversed on the next closest building (see photo #18).

In contrast to many river towns, Augusta's commercial district lies perpendicular to the river, extending two blocks on Main Street (formerly Upper Street) from Water to just beyond Third (C. & O. Railroad).

Two of the buildings on the east side of Main Street, the Armstrong Tobacco Warehouse and Lotha Smith's Saloon, are already listed in the National Register as part of the Water Street Historic District; therefore, they are not included in this nomination. The remaining twenty commercial buildings in the Augusta Historic District are predominantly two and three story brick structures with common wall construction. The vista along the west side of Main Street shows a very intact streetscape (photo # 3) with the major gaps being on the east side near Second Street. A majority of the commercial buildings date to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, although several notable exceptions do occur. The Rankins Grocery, built in 1850, is the earliest commercial structure in Augusta and possibly Bracken County (15). It is embellished by a handsome cast iron storefront, one of two such fronts in Augusta manufactured by the George L. Mesker Company of Evansville, Indiana. Another storefront on Main Street was manufactured by the L. Schreiber and Sons Iron Works of Cincinnati (10) while two other buildings carry iron fronts but without the manufacturer's plate (8, 9).

Interspersed with the commercial buildings are a detached Federal house set back from the street (13) and a modern single story intrusion (11). Immediately north of the intrusion are two fine Italianate buildings (9, 10) and a commercial Queen Anne (8). Further north on the same side of the street are the Neo-classical Farmers State Bank (6) and the Mansard roofed Augusta Liberty Bank (3, photo # 6), a seriously neglected but important corner building. West on Second Street are a cottage style gas station (4) and frame hotel building (5) both of which were built circa 1929.

The east side of Main Street, although considerably less intact than the west side, does exhibit several important vestiges of Augusta's commercial development. Certainly the most interesting structure is the Augusta Motor Sales (23) a vintage post-World War I automobile dealership and showroom. North of the showroom are a two-bay, two-story brick commercial building (22) and the Augusta Municipal Building (21) a 1930 element with

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modest Art Deco pretensions. Toward the southern end of the commercial area beyond the railroad tracks are two additional commercial structures. The "Old Tin Shop Corner" (42) has suffered from numerous alterations but the Myers Stove Shop (44) is remarkably intact, including its original window arrangements and unusual store front (photo #20). Two of the district's most important commercial structures, the Winters and Bradley Buildings (67, 68) are located immediately outside the limits of the commercial core. The Winters Tobacco Warehouse (photo #53), Augusta's earliest surviving example, is distinguished by arched six-over-six window sashes and a parapet gable end. Immediately adjacent and facing Elizabeth Street is the Bradley Building, a three-story Italianate with iron storefront cast by Schreiber's Iron Works, Cincinnati, Ohio (photo #52).

Architectural Summary: Seven Individual Sites

In addition to the Augusta Historic District there are seven individual sites that complete the nomination. Five of these properties are residential buildings and two are commercial-industrial. The Plummer House (149) and Wells-Keith House (143) are the two earliest examples, exhibiting design influences characteristic to the late Federal and mid-nineteenth century vernacular styles. Within this Federal vernacular vein the Plummer House, distinguished by a five bay facade and six-over-six windows, stands intact (photo #109). The Wells-Keith House, constructed circa 1860, is the only single story row building documented in the town, although others probably existed. Another dwelling, the J. Weldon House (145) ranks among Augusta's most intact examples of the Gothic vernacular style (photo #103).

Two dwellings, the McKibben and Kelsch Houses (146, 148), are included in the nomination for their intactness and as examples of a distinguishable style. The Holt House is a handsomely articulated version of the Italianate style while the sweeping roof, mixed wall treatments, and massive front porch of the Kelsch House are collectively representative of the Bungalow design. Very few bungalow or mission houses were observed during the comprehensive survey.

The Griffith's Grocery (144) and the F. A. Neider Company (147) are important vestiges of Augusta's commercial-industrial heritage. Although architecturally unembellished, both properties convey a strong sense of their historical origins, and by virtue of its location form an important component of the historic townscape. They are also the most intact non-residential structures located outside the downtown core area.

Physical Relationships

The original plat of Augusta consisted of ten irregular blocks, a public square and several out lots (see Figure 1). There were a total of 113 rectangular lots, and instead of a network of alleys the developer reserved large lots at the middle of the blocks. In 1824 the village more than doubled in size when William Buckner platted his 54 lot addition. Buildings were generally located near the street side of these lots with the greatest density along the riverfront and Upper Street. Toward the end of the nineteenth century two additional tracts were subdivided east of Seminary Street,

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and the properties there generally reflect the smaller lot sizes and mixed land uses. The character of Augusta has, except for the damage from fires and floodings, remained essentially unspoiled. A few mobile homes, factories and warehouses have appeared, but more often than not this has occurred outside of the historic town core. There have also been a few misguided attempts at restoration but again these changes have not diminished the town's overall historic character. Augusta still remains a quiet river town far removed from the rapid changes and congestion of the large urban centers.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The historic sites survey of Augusta, Kentucky, was initiated and conducted during the early 1970s by Mrs. John Parker, a resident historian. Forty-five sites were documented on Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory forms. This inventory was considerably expanded by the form preparer, a historian, in 1982-83 when the community was comprehensively surveyed. The existing 45 sites on inventory were re-surveyed and approximately 100 additional historic sites were documented. National Register criteria were applied to all of the resources surveyed in Augusta. Those sites meeting the National Register criteria are included within this nomination while several sites not meeting the criteria were omitted and placed in the state survey file. Manuscript U.S. census, atlas maps and state directories were used to supplement secondary histories. All of the architectural and historical information was recorded on Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory forms (please see attached). Boundary descriptions for the individual properties are denoted on the inventory forms.

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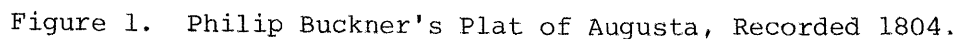
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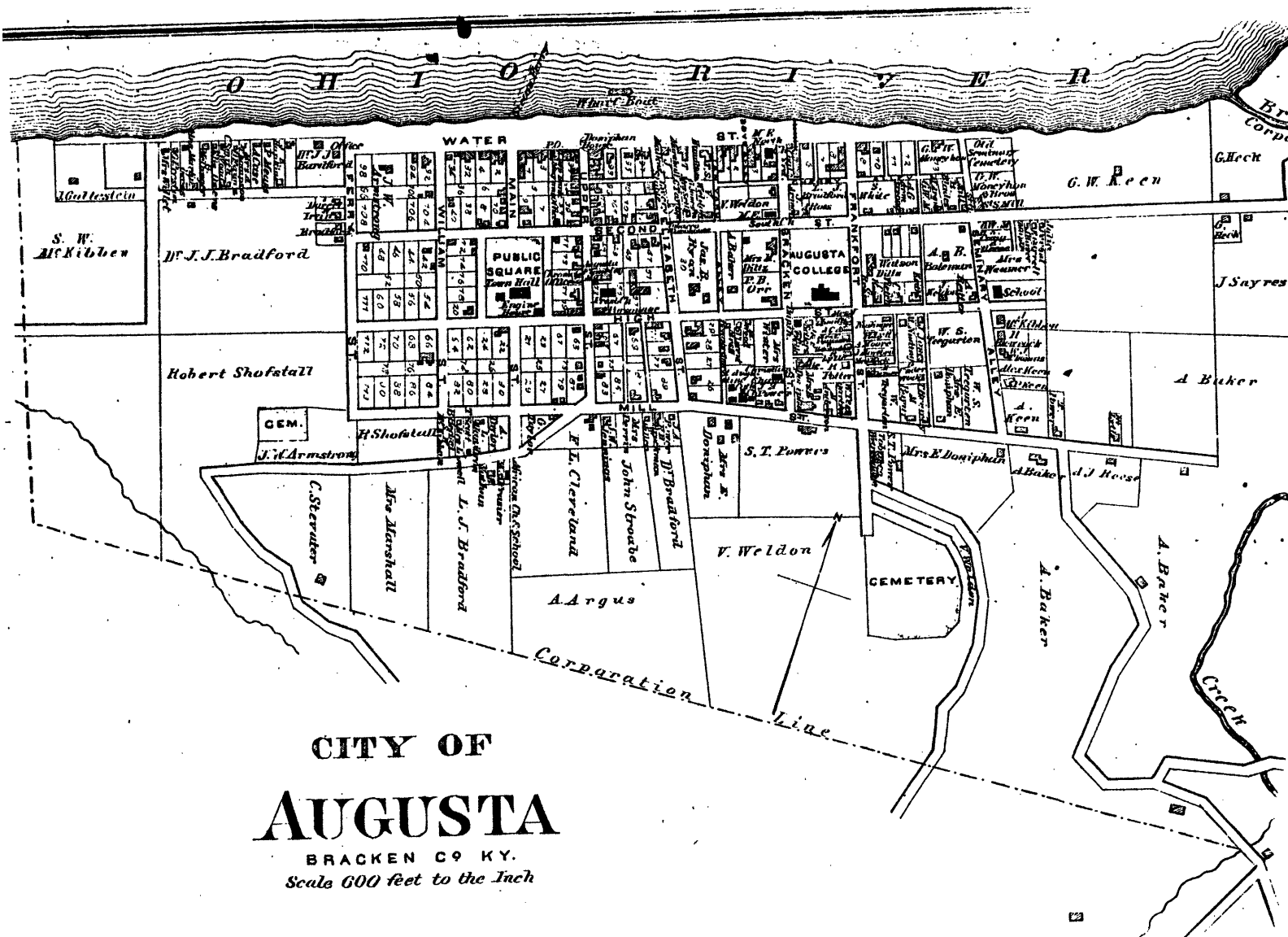


Figure 2. Augusta in 1877.

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CITY OF AUGUSTA

AUGUSTA PRECINCT BRACKEN COUNTY
Scale 300 feet to an inch

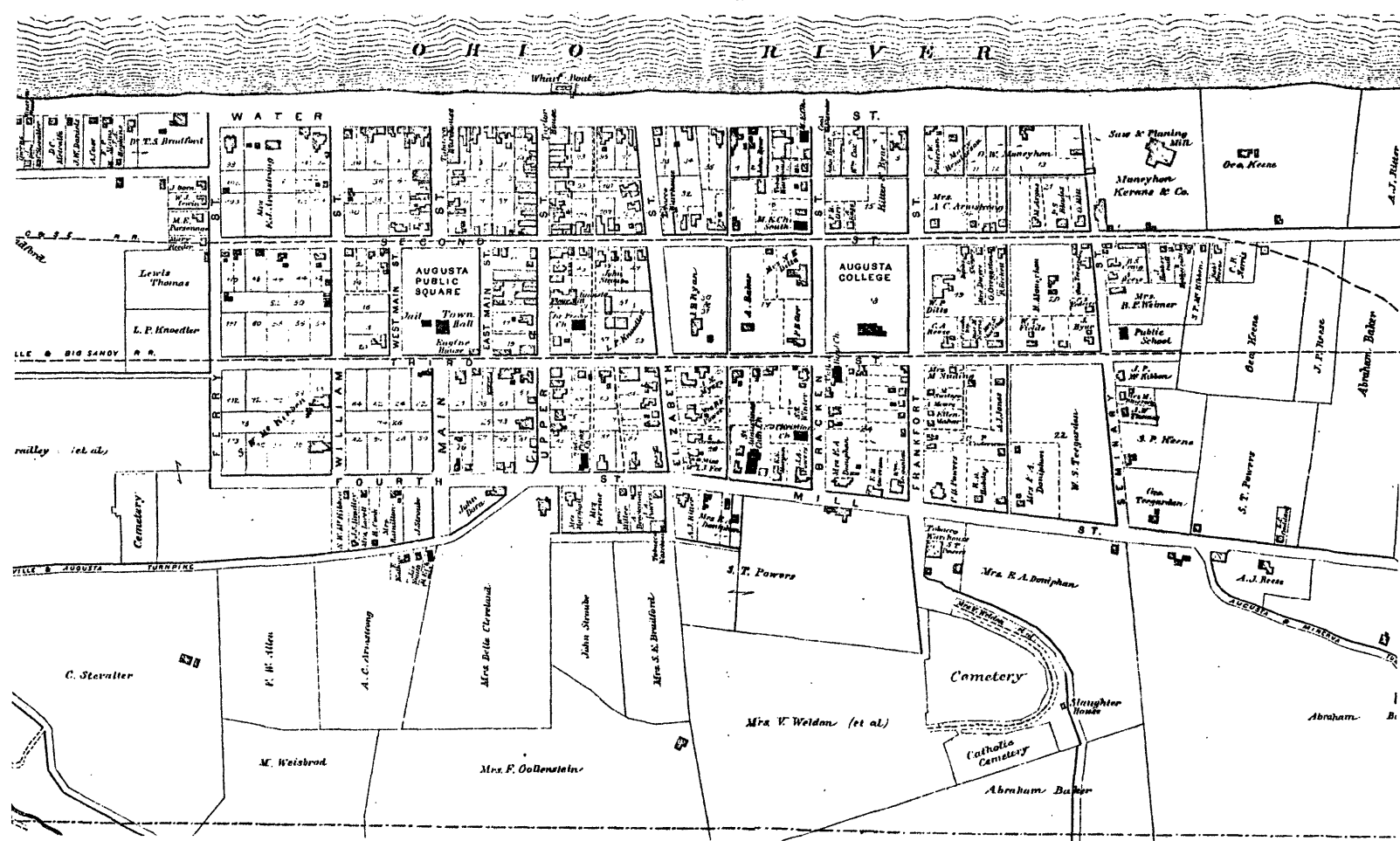


Figure 3. Augusta in 1884.

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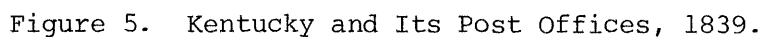


Figure 5. Kentucky and Its Post Offices, 1839.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Augusta Multiple Resource Area and Augusta Historic District*

Significance

The Augusta Multiple Resource Area constitutes a significant expression of material culture in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley, historically representing a important period in town formation and Augusta's rapid emergence as a commercial, educational and governmental center. Augusta's early platting and settlement (1797) resulted in its designation as a county seat and focal point for higher education, and its strategic location between the Ohio River and the rich Outer Bluegrass hinterland made it an important point of trade. The town's Virginia and immigrant heritage introduced several important elements into the community, in particular, a successful professional-mercantile class, a tradition of supporting higher education and the establishment of Protestant and Catholic Churches. During the nineteenth century Augusta produced a remarkable number of lawyers, doctors, and educators, while distinguishing itself as the site of the first Methodist College in the world. In agriculture, the rapid production of white burley tobacco, first developed in Bracken County and neighboring Brown County, Ohio, had a profound impact on Augusta's status as a local and regional market. By the twentieth century, however, the old political and educational traditions had largely vanished, yet Augusta never relinquished its dominant status as the county's principal commercial and industrial center. The unique and extensive collection of historic resources contained in this nomination are a significant embodiment of this rich material heritage.

Historical Summary

Augusta was founded by Captain Philip Buckner, a Revolutionary War veteran from Virginia who had received several western land warrants in Kentucky and the Ohio Territory. In 1797, one year after the creation of Bracken County, Kentucky, Buckner announced in the Kentucky Gazette that he would petition the county court to "establish the town of Augusta on the Ohio Below the mouth of Bracken Creek."¹ Later that year Buckner donated 600 acres of his patent to the new town of Augusta, and vested title in trustees. A portion of this land was platted and lots were sold at auction. Significantly, Buckner also made provision for a courthouse and college square, a far-sighted achievement in frontier town planning. Influenced by this gesture, the Kentucky Legislature designated Augusta as the county seat and in 1799 set aside 6,000 acres of land on the Tennessee border with proceeds from the land sales going to Augusta's newly chartered Bracken Academy.

By 1810 the settlement boasted 255 residents. River navigator Zadok Cramer described Augusta in 1817 as:

a handsome village very pleasantly situated on the left bank of the Ohio, with an extensive and rich bottom in its rear, as in its front, a fine view of the river, with a clean gravelly beach for its landing. It is the seat of justice for Bracken County, Kentucky, contains 40 houses, some handsomely built with brick, and courthouse, jail, two stores, two taverns, and a handsome brick school house.²

*Since the Augusta Historic District includes over 95% of the M.R.A. and includes material resources related to all areas of significance for the M.R.A., this summary statement applies to the District and the Multiple Resource Area.

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A number of historic resources in this nomination reflect Augusta's position as a principal educational center and county seat. The most obvious of these properties are the original public squares, one reserved for county government and the other for Bracken Academy. Standing structures include the original county courthouse (30), a log and stone structure built c.1796, the Bracken County jail (20), and the original Bracken Academy dormitory, built c.1800 (78). The courthouse is believed to be the oldest county building in the state and may be the earliest survivor in the trans-appalachian west.³ A somewhat later but architecturally compatible building frames the north end of the public square and complements the early historic fabric there (149, photos 109, 110).

Religious denominations and their early educational pursuits formed an inextricable part of Augusta's formative development. The Presbyterians had organized themselves by 1815 followed by the Methodists four years later. Other religions were active in the community as evidenced by the survival of the original Baptist and Christian Churches (110, 111), both built in 1840, and the Methodist Episcopal Church South (129). It was the zealotry of the Methodist presence, though, that had the most far-reaching impact on Augusta. Led by the efforts of Reverend James Armstrong, Augusta emerged as an important Methodist focal point. A church had been erected in 1819 (see Water Street nomination), and by 1821 the Ohio and Kentucky Conferences of the Methodist Church selected Augusta as the site for "a seminary of learning in the western country."⁴ Bouyed by such strong support the trustees of the Bracken Academy agreed to sell their holdings, and in 1823 the first building of the Augusta College was completed. This handsome Federal structure served as the town's centerpiece until 1854, when it was destroyed by fire. However, two of the original dormitories built in the 1820s still stand facing the old college square (128, 137), along with several herringbone brick sidewalks.

The importance of the college to Augusta cannot be overstated. By virtue of the fact that it was the nation's first established Methodist College, it brought considerable prestige and civic pride to this rather remote river town. By 1842 the college had conferred 37 honorary degrees and produced 121 graduates, many of them enjoying successful careers in the local, state and national arenas. John Gregg Fee (1816-1901), born on a nearby Bracken County farm, became a noted abolitionist and founder of Berea College, Randolph S. Foster (1820-1909) was appointed the first president of Northwestern University and Robert McFarland president and faculty member of Miami University.⁵ Augusta College's faculty included Reverend John Findley, Joseph Tomlinson and Francis L. Cleveland (51). Reverend Tomlinson, the uncle of Stephen Collins Foster, also served as president of the College and resided in a fine Federal house on Bracken Street (124).

Because Augusta was located astride a great river highway of commerce and migration, it enjoyed a remarkable period of prosperity during the early antebellum period. The advent of steamboats enhanced the vitality of the water front and linked Augusta with Cincinnati and other river markets. Concomitantly, an improved network of roads and turnpikes radiated outward into the hinterland (Fig.#5). Yet another factor which helped shape the town's early growth was the establishment of a ferry around 1800 between Augusta and the Ohio Territory. The ferry initially was operated by Colonel John Boude

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(1765-1841), but its commercial value to the local economy was of such importance that the Kentucky Legislature later granted the College exclusive rights over its operation. To this day Augustans take great pride in the continued operation of their ferry (see Photo 2).

While Augusta's population more than tripled during the three decades after 1810, a period of slight decline set in before the Civil War. Several factors may have all been responsible, particularly the removal of the county seat to Brooksville in 1839 and the demise of the College during the late 1840s. The unsettling impact of these changes can physically be discerned through the noticeable lack of late antebellum architecture which so often characterized Ohio River towns. Of the Greek Revival style, only three major examples (15, 76, 100) survive in the nominated area with an equally low number existing outside the district.

Around midcentury the dominant Virginia hierarchy was joined by a small but important group of German-Irish immigrants. Many of these immigrants found employment in the fledgling wine industry, while others sought opportunities in the lucrative mercantile trades. A demographic analysis of the 1870 census indicates that of the 197 households recorded in Augusta, 27, or 14% had foreign nativities. Of this group, 22 were German and 3 Irish.⁶ Charles Bremgardner, a German shoemaker by trade, lived in a now altered dwelling on Third Street (119), while John Buerger, a tin merchant from Cincinnati, operated a store on Upper (Main) Street (44). Several other German establishments, including John Cablish's Bakery and Wittmeier's Meat Shop have been demolished. Many other German owned houses remain undocumented or have been totally altered. Fortunately, the German tradition of building pretentious churches is still manifested through the somewhat altered design of St. Augustine's Church (87). Dedicated in 1860 by a mass spoken in German, St. Augustine is significant as one of the oldest Catholic Churches in northeastern Kentucky.

Augusta's black heritage has been largely undocumented, and for this reason few historic sites have proven black associations. Census figures indicate Augusta had a comparatively small antebellum black population, with most families residing near the periphery of the town. Several structures may have been occupied by blacks (see 106-109) but this has not been substantiated. Those structures that do have black associations have been severely compromised.⁷ There is, however, a black Methodist Church, now stuccoed, at Frankfort and Second Streets (135).

The Civil War did have an impact on Augusta as Union gunboats and a Home Guard attempted to defend the city from Confederate raiders. In April, 1861, the City Council, led by Joseph Doniphan, W. C. Marshall, J. B. Ryan and Francis Cleveland, appropriated \$1,500 for the formation of a Home Guard. It was during the summer months of 1862 that Colonel John Hunt Morgan's famous cavalry conducted raids throughout the Ohio and Licking Valleys. Mayor Doniphan declared martial law and about 100 Augustans entered the Home Guard. In September, 1862 Union forces and the Home Guard unit battled the Confederate raiders on the streets of Augusta, and when the raid was over, an estimated 40 lives were lost. While the destruction of property has probably been exaggerated, several major buildings on Water Street east of Main were indeed lost. It has also been documented that one casualty, Lt. William Prentice, died at the home of Lewis Wells (76).⁸

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Agriculture, particularly the production of white burley tobacco, had a profound impact on Augusta's late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial expansion. Earlier developments in the livestock trade (26) and local wine industry had certainly proven fruitful (see Abraham Baker's Wine Cellar National Register Nomination), but it was white burley tobacco that transformed the region's agricultural economy. This distinctive hybrid was reputedly developed in the mid-1860s by two nearby farmers, and because the new tobacco could be air cured and harvested more quickly than the traditional dark cut variety, production rapidly spread. By 1870 Bracken County produced more tobacco than all northern Kentucky counties combined and Augusta had emerged as a principal shipping point to the Cincinnati and Louisville markets. At the same time Kentucky accounted for nearly one-third of the nation's tobacco production.⁹ In Augusta eleven warehouses were in operation by 1900, but of this substantial number only two survive (68, the other warehouse is located in the Water Street Historic District). Several of Augusta's leading tobacco merchants also channeled surplus capital into residential real estate. Some of the documented manifestations of this include the R. W. Winter House (65), the B. F. Power House (80), the S. S. Winter House (114), and the J. A. Power Houses (58, 89).

After the Civil War Augusta was quite successful in maintaining its commercial hegemony, partially because it was the largest Kentucky town between Maysville and Newport. Economic growth can also be attributed to improvements in river navigation and the opening of the Maysville and Big Sandy Railroad (later C & O) which not only passed through Augusta, it by-passed Brooksville, the former's chief interior rival. The coming of the railroad during the 1880s gave Augusta yet another transportation link between itself and the Ohio Valley urban centers. As a result Augusta remained the largest town in the county, watching its population grow from 850 in 1865 to over 1,700 by 1900. Augustans boasted the country's first bank, Allen Harbeson and Company, founded 1868 (1), the only lumber company, established by George Moneyhon (139) and the largest law practice (100). This post-war prosperity is well represented in the town's historic resources, especially in the residential areas which developed south of Third Street and the commercial core on Main Street. Churches which had become too small or had been inundated by flooding could finally afford to relocate on Fourth Street (50, 55, 92, 142).

An important number of commercial properties included in this nomination are a microcosm of the gradual shift that occurred in Augusta's mercantile development. For example, the older firms such as Doniphan's Tannery (see 85), McKibben Hotel (13) and Rankins Implements (16) all represent a distinctive period, one that was heavily agrarian and traveler oriented. Beginning after the Civil War, however, a new breed of merchant had come to stake out a career in Augusta. "Slowly but surely," wrote one observer, "this old historic town is evolving itself into an active business city. Factories are creeping into its midst, and overtures have been made for the establishment of other industries."¹⁰ Initially this group was dominated by a band of German immigrants, but toward the end of the century the incoming businessman typically was from Cincinnati and other distant towns. Members representing this latter group included John Buerger (44), Louis P. Knoedler (9), Henry Bertram (8) and J. E. Dunbar (1). During the early twentieth century the in-migration from Ohio was led by J. M. Milner and Russell Richey (9, 23).

During the early twentieth century Brooksville valiantly challenged Augusta's supremacy by building a short-line railroad to the Chesapeake and Ohio's main line, but this strategy proved only marginally successful. Augusta continued to grow, reaching a peak of 1,820 in 1920. Residents had witnessed the construction of a new public school (138), a new bank (3), library (48) and even a municipal water tower (19). A small building

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boom occurred around 1930. This is reflected in the construction of a new Municipal Building, hotel and cottage style gas station (4, 5, 21). Toward the east end of town the railroad facilitated such industries as F. A. Neider (147), an auto part manufacturer that in 1925 claimed itself to be the largest employer in Bracken County.¹¹ Other industries that are no longer standing include L. V. Marks Shoe Company, Weimer and Son and the Huenefeld Stove Company.

Within Augusta's broad historical development there existed several important figures who are related to the Multiple Resource Area. Many of the earlier individuals were Virginians, who along with the influence of the college helped foster a highly successful professional class. No other town of its size in northeastern Kentucky boasted such a concentration of lawyers, doctors and educators. Several members of this group were graduates or students at Augusta College. Martin Marshall (1778-1858) patriarch of Augusta's self-made lawyers, resided in the town's grandest antebellum house (70), while his son Thornton Marshall (1819-1901) lawyer, politician and Augusta College graduate, held the distinction of casting the deciding vote that kept Kentucky in the Union. It was from this Augusta ancestry that George Catlett Marshall (1880-1959) emerged as one of the nation's great military leaders. Although born in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, Marshall's parents, George Marshall and Laura Bradford, were native Augustans (see 70).

Equally prominent were the Doniphans, who like the Marshalls, were Virginians or of Virginia ancestry. Joseph Doniphan (1823-1873), admitted to the bar in 1848, went on to serve two terms in the Kentucky legislature and as an enumerator during the 1850 federal census. Doniphan's achievements also included terms as Bracken County Judge and Chancellor of Kenton, Campbell, Pendleton and Bracken Counties, Kentucky. Both Joseph Doniphan and his son George a lawyer resided in one of Augusta's most pretentious Greek Revival mansions (100). The third family within this legal triumvirate were the Clevelands, who for a brief time occupied a c.1880 Italianate house on Fourth Street (51) and an office on Main Street (14). As first cousin of President Grover Cleveland, Francis L. Cleveland held a faculty chair at Augusta College and served terms in both the Kentucky House of Representatives and Senate (1859-1863; 1863-1867). His son James Harlan Cleveland (1865-1906) was a distinguished lawyer and head of the U.S. District Attorney's Office in Washington. He also was the nephew of Supreme Court Justice John Marshall Harlan. Collectively the lawyer's residences stand out as an important class statement in Augusta's material heritage.

Concurrent with attorneys, Augusta's physicians occupied important positions in the town and state, and again the father-son relationship dominated. The most renowned member of this group was Joshua T. Bradford (1818-1871) a graduate of Augusta College and son of Virginia parents. Bradford, called by Lewis Collins as the second most distinguished surgeon in Kentucky history, ranked among the leading ovarian surgeons of his time. He and his brother Jonathan Bradford practiced medicine in Augusta for over fifty years, while another brother, Colonel Laban J. Bradford, owned real estate valued over half a million dollars. Jonathan's son Thomas S. Bradford, yet another Augusta College graduate, also maintained a medical practice in Augusta. Other significant physicians include George W. Mackie (1786-1855), John M. Orr, John Tomlinson and Anderson D. Keith. Although most of the resources representing these individuals

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are located in the Water Street Historic District, two structures built by Anderson D. Keith are nominated herein (26, 143).

While this nomination does not include an archaeological component, a significant Fort Ancient village presently exists within the resource area. Portions of the site have been officially designated 15 BK 9 and 15 BK 200. Professional investigations at the site have been very limited. The principle reason for excluding the prehistoric component is the difficulty in delineating boundaries. Moreover, time and labor constraints prevent a professional testing at this time.

Preservation and restoration activities in Augusta generally have been confined to the existing historic district properties on Riverside Drive. Improvement efforts have been inspired by two local preservation groups, the Mary Ingles Heritage Foundation, founded in 1969 and the Save Historic Augusta Restoration Effort (S.H.A.R.E.) formed in 1974. The Mary Ingles Foundation has been responsible for promoting a local historical marker program and the survey of nearly 75 sites in Augusta and Bracken County. The group also has been instrumental in preserving the Augusta Row Building, a structure used in the filming of the television series "Centennial." At the same time S.H.A.R.E. has acquired a building within the row and plans to restore it as a museum. Their project has received a matching grant from the Kentucky Heritage Council and the Department of Interior. In 1976-77, S.H.A.R.E., in collaboration with the University of Cincinnati's Department of Design, Architecture and Art, published a revitalization and development plan for Augusta. This plan encouraged the preservation of Augusta's historic resources. Collectively these organizations, along with concerned citizens in Augusta, have played a leading role in preserving the town's rich cultural heritage.

The multiple resource approach was chosen in response to the findings of the comprehensive city survey. Prior to the survey many residents in the community had expressed an interest in having their properties listed in the National Register. The Multiple Resource approach was seen as an expeditious way of integrating the results of the comprehensive survey into one listing while at the same time expanding site recognition beyond the limits of Riverside Drive. The proposed Augusta Historic District was so drawn because it best represents the historic core of this Ohio River community. The individual sites are being nominated as examples of important architectural styles or as representations of significant historical and development themes. It is hoped that listing in the National Register will be used as a planning tool while enhancing a greater community-wide preservation awareness.

¹Edith Wood, Middletown's Days and Deeds (By the Author, 1946), p.52.

²Zadok Cramer, The Navigator (Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear and Eichbaum, 1817), p.101.

³The Green County Courthouse is Greensburg, Kentucky, built c.1800, claims to be the oldest.

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⁴An Exposition of the Affairs of Augusta College, September, 1842 (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1842), p.4.

⁵Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds. Dictionary of American Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930-1931) III:555.

⁶U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, Tenth Census of the United States, 1870.

⁷A frame black church located on the hill above Route 8 has been extensively modified while a small frame school, previously moved, stands on East Third Street outside of the nominated area.

⁸Walter Rankins, "Morgans Cavalry and the Home Guard at Augusta, Kentucky" Filson Club History Quarterly 27 (October 1953): 308-320.

⁹W. F. Axton, Tobacco and Kentucky (Lexington: the University Press of Kentucky, 1975, pp. 68-73.

¹⁰The Headlight: Centennial Celebration 1797-1897 (Cincinnati: C & O Railroad, 1897), p.5.

¹¹The Augusta Independent, 18 September 1925.

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10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 46 acres (district only)

Quadrangle name Felicity & Higginsport, Ohio

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification The boundaries for the entire Multiple Resource Area are the present incorporation limits of Augusta. Boundaries for the Augusta Historic District are delineated on an enclosed map (Figure 5). Boundary references for the individual properties refer to the Department of Revenue maps on file at the Bracken County Courthouse.

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 Stephen C. Gordon, Historian

organization Kentucky Heritage Council

date September 1983

street & number 9th Fl., Capital Plaza Tower

telephone 502/564-7005

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

May Susan Opper

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date January 24, 1984

For NPS use only

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

See Continuation Sheet for Listings

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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AUGUSTA HISTORIC DISTRICT: ACREAGE & BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The Augusta Historic District comprises approximately 46 acres. The boundaries were delineated in order to include the town's most cohesive assemblage of historic resources. The northern and western limits were drawn so as to exclude vacant lots, non-contributing elements and the already listed properties in the Water Street Historic District. The cluster of contributing but altered properties at Main and Third Streets were included because they maintained a consistent scale, fenestration and setback. In addition, these buildings served as important visual links within this part of the district (photos 29 and 30). Route 8, the principal thoroughfare defining the town's southern edge generally was followed as the district's southern boundary. All of the properties adjacent to but outside the district, especially to the northeast and east, have been altered or are non-contributing elements. The exceptions to this are, of course, the seven individual sites being nominated.

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Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Augusta Multiple Resource Area
State Kentucky

Conn accept 3/1/84

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Augusta Historic District

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 3/3/84

Attest

2. Brothers-O'Neil House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 5/22/84

Attest

3. Griffith's, Evan, Grocery

Substantive Review

Keeper

Ann Duhon 5/22/84

Attest

4. McKibben, Alfonso, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 5/22/84

Attest

5. Minor, J. R., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 5/22/84

Attest

6. Neider, F. A., Company

Substantive Review

Keeper

CO TO PAZ - CD

Attest

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

7. Weldon, James, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 5/22/84

Attest

8. Wells-Keith House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Helene Byers 5/22/84

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