

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received B 19 86  
date entered MAR 20 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic HELMWOOD HALL (Helm-Hagan House)

and/or common

2. Location

street & number Route #1, Box 243 (east side of KY Rt.55 at Moody Pike) not for publication

city, town Shelbyville X vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Shelby code

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mark E. Dennen and Kelly Scott Reed

street & number Route #1, Box 243

city, town Shelbyville vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Shelby County Courthouse (Office of County Clerk)

street & number Main Street

city, town Shelbyville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date Summer, 1979 federal X state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

**Helmwood Hall** is a two-story, five-bay, frame house situated in the gently rolling terrain of the Outer Bluegrass Region in north-central Shelby County, Kentucky. It is located about seven miles north of Shelbyville on the east side of Highway 55, directly opposite Moody Lane. The house sits on a knoll amidst a mature grove of trees and faces the property's western boundary, which is marked by a dry-laid wall of limestone blocks and four white pines (see site plan and photos 1 & 2).

In a county notable for its Greek Revival dwellings, **Helmwood Hall** is outstanding as a remarkably intact example constructed of frame. Three of the county's Greek Revival buildings are already listed in the National Register (the Sturgeon-Gregg House, Undulata, and Shelby Academy), and six others are in the process of being nominated. All of these are brick. Of the county's eighteen other potential National Register houses of the same style, thirteen are brick, while only five are frame.

**Helmwood Hall's** two-story, five-bay, main block has an original two-story, three-bay ell of the south side of its rear (east) wall. Behind the ell is a one-story brick unit. The breezeway that originally joined this brick "summer kitchen" with the east wall of the ell is now an enclosed porch (photos 3 & 4). The main block and the ell bear a hipped roof, while that covering the brick unit and the porch is gable. Three interior gable end chimneys with exposed faces are present at the north and south ends of the main block and along the south wall of the ell; the east walls of the ell and brick unit each bear an exterior brick chimney.

The primary entrance, located in the central bay of the western facade, has narrow, three-pane sidelights and a six-pane transom. Two narrow panels separate the door and sidelights, while fluted pilasters define the entire entrance bay. A dentilled cornice tops the door (photos 5 & 6). Also centered on this entrance is a two-story pedimented tetrastyle portico, supported by fluted columns with Ionic capitals (photo 7). The simple frieze of this portico extends across the building's west and south facades and around the corners, ending at the north chimney of the main block and the east chimney of the ell (see photos 3, 4, & 8). A secondary entrance is located at the central bay of the ell's south wall. Originally open, and still having a four-light transom above the door, this entrance was apparently enclosed during the late nineteenth century. The windows throughout are six-over-six sash. An L-shaped, single-story, shed-roofed porch, supported by six simple tapered columns, is present along the east wall of the main block and the north wall of the ell (photos 8 & 9). The balustrade defining this porch is no longer in place.

The plan of **Helmwood Hall's** main block is single-pile, center-passage, while the ell contains two rooms, the larger in front (west) and the smaller behind (east). A narrow enclosed stair separates the two rooms of the ell. The mantle in the north room of the main block is dentilled in a manner similar to the entrance as are the door and window surrounds in both this room and the passage (photos 10 & 11). The stairway located in the central passage is a half-turn stair with a full landing. The handrail is cherry and a scroll design decorates the stringers. The area of the stair under the stringer is panelled (photo 12). The door and window surrounds of both the south room of the main block and the west (larger) room of the ell are reeded and bear bull's eye corner blocks, while the mantels in these rooms are simply molded (photos 13 & 14). Many of the doors bear their original hardware (photo 15), and the floors throughout are random-width white ash.

## 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/
<input 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 type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** ca. 1835

**Builder/Architect** Attributed to John F. Hagan

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

**Helmwood Hall** is significant as a remarkably intact example of an early Greek Revival architecture in a setting that has not been greatly altered. Because it has experienced very little change, it is an especially clear illustration of the early Greek Revival design of the Outer Bluegrass Region. It contains the original woodwork and much of the original hardware and exists in a setting that retains many original elements including the stone wall, outbuildings, farm ponds, and trees at the property boundary and surrounding the house. Further, located in a county noted for its Greek Revival survivals, **Helmwood Hall** is outstanding as an example of frame construction whereas most similar dwellings are brick.

Although the builder of the house if not definitely known, local tradition attributes it to the builder/architect John F. Hagan, who reputedly built several other contemporary houses in the vicinity. **Helmwood Hall** was named, and apparently built, for William S. Helm on the occasion of his marriage to Rebecca Henton in 1830. Helm deeded the property (including 218 acres) to John F. Hagan, the supposed builder of the house, in 1874. The property remained the Hagan estate until 1914.

Locally, **Helmwood Hall** is important as the refuge of Confederate General John Hunt Morgan. General Morgan is said to have hidden in the house during December of 1863 after his escape from Union imprisonment at the Ohio State Penitentiary.

In summary, **Helmwood Hall** is a fine example of Greek Revival architecture of which there are many examples surviving in Shelby County. **Helmwood Hall** is particularly notable, however, because it is of frame construction and due to the great degree of its intactness and the integrity of the immediate surrounding landscape.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 20.22

Quadrangle name Eminence, KY

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A	1 6	6 5 7 8 4 0	4 2 4 0 6 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	1 6	6 5 7 9 4 0	4 2 4 0 5 4 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	1 6	6 5 7 9 5 0	4 2 4 0 4 2 0
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D	1 6	6 5 7 7 6 0	4 2 4 0 3 2 0
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E	1 6	6 5 7 4 6 0	4 2 4 0 3 6 0
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F	1 6	6 5 7 5 2 0	4 2 4 0 6 6 0
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G			
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H			
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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Julie Riesenweber, Senior Historian, Kentucky Heritage Council  
Mark E. Dennen (Architect) & Kelly Scott Reed (Museum Administrator)

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 1985

street & number Route #1, Box 243 telephone 502/633-2963

city or town Shelbyville state Kentucky 40065

# 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 David L. Morgan

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER date 2-12-86

### For NPS use only

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

Joyce M. McPherson date 3/20/86  
 for Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Helmwod Hall

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Few alterations have been made to **Helmwod Hall** since it was originally constructed. Changes include the building of a small (5' X 6') projecting entry at the south entrance during the late nineteenth century and the conversion of the breezeway connecting the brick summer kitchen with the ell to an enclosed porch. The enclosure of the breezeway does not significantly affect the integrity of the house since the area still functions as a pathway between the ell and the summer kitchen. The addition of the entry at the south facade is somewhat more problematic; however, the original details of this entry remain intact and the vestibule could be dismantled without harm to the building. The only significant change to the interior was outfitting the west room of the ell as a modern kitchen. None of the original interior woodwork was removed when this was done.

The nomination includes 20.22 acres which incorporate three outbuildings and several features of the nineteenth century landscape which contribute greatly to the integrity of the site. Marking the property's western boundary is a mortarless wall of rectangular limestone blocks (see photo 1 and site plan). A brick floored and ceiled root cellar of mortared limestone construction is located 30 feet from the northeast corner of the summer kitchen (photo 16). East of (behind) the house is a nineteenth century transverse crib barn with shed-roofed wings on each side (photo 17), which is constructed of hewn beams joined with pegged mortice and tenon. Also present within the acreage are three nineteenth century farm ponds, two of which have limestone retaining walls, as well as another large pond that was represented as a quarry in an Atlas of 1882. Three elements of this landscape are non-contributing. These are a vertical board outhouse located some distance behind the house (not the original privy location), a turn-of-the-century vertical board tobacco barn, and a recent barn intended for hogs but which presently holds farm equipment. The nomination includes three contributing buildings, one contributing structure and four contributing sites.

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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

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**Title:** Historic American Buildings Survey  
**Date:** 1970 (SH-185) **Federal**  
**Depository:** Library of Congress  
**City/State:** Washington, D. C.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Helwood Hall

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Duke, Basil. Morgan's Cavalry, (1909).

Lancaster, Clay. Ante-Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass, (Lexington: University of KY Press, 1961).

Montell, William Lynwood and Michael Lynn Morse. Kentucky Fold Architecture. (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976).

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**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

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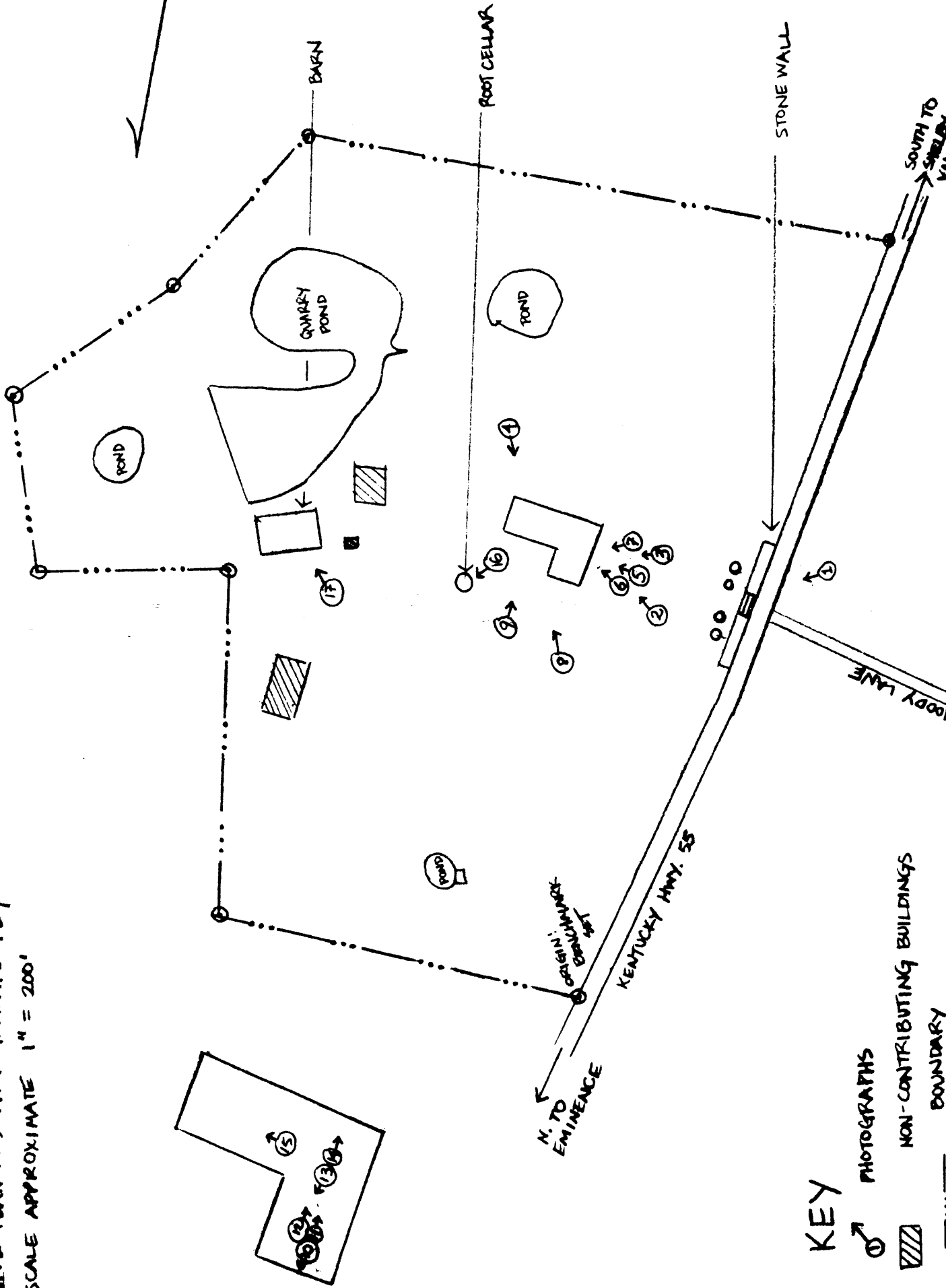
**Verbal Boundary Description and Justification:**

The boundaries follow present property lines in order to incorporate the dwelling, its dependencies, and features of the landscape historically associated with the site. Beginning at a benchmark set at Kentucky 55 north of the dwelling the boundary continues 1300 feet along the roadway to another benchmark set; then due eastward 907.25 feet to a post; northeastward 601.61 feet to a post; north northeastward 300.47 feet to a post; north northward 265.26 feet to a post; westward 280.87 feet to a post; northward 533.60 feet to a post; and westward 604.52 feet to the benchmark set of origin.

# HELMWOOD HALL (SH-185)

## SITE PLAN AND PHOTOGRAPHIC KEY

SCALE APPROXIMATE 1" = 200'



### KEY

○➔ PHOTOGRAPHS

▨ NON-CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS

⋯ BOUNDARY