

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 20 1986  
date entered MAR 31 1986

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

## 1. Name

historic MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA OF DANVILLE, KENTUCKY

and/or common (Contains Five Districts & Eight Individual Properties)

## 2. Location

street & number City Limits of Danville, Kentucky not for publication

city, town vicinity of

state Kentucky code county Boyle code

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> park
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> na work in progress	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> na in process	<input type="checkbox"/> na yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> na being considered	<input checked="" 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 Multiple Owners (See Continuation Sheets)

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Boyle County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Danville state Kentucky

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic Resources Inventory of Kentucky has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ no

date 1976 ☐ federal ☒ 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**

### SURVEY METHODOLOGY

In the Spring of 1984, the Old House Club of Danville, Kentucky, received a matching grant from the Kentucky Heritage Council to nominate districts and individual structures to the National Register. Emily Clark coordinated the volunteer time and deed research while the Danville Public Library donated space for an office and meetings. Working from the survey of Danville completed in 1976 by Mary Cronan Oppel and David Morgan, the Multiple Resource Area Nomination includes the following five districts: Commercial District, Lexington Avenue-Broadway District, East Main District, Warehouse District, and the Maple Avenue District. Eight individual sites or structures outside the districts were also nominated and include the following: Bellevue Cemetery, First Presbyterian Church & McDowell Park, the Gore House, Carnegie Library, 420 East Lexington, 432 West Main, the Birney House and the Willis Russel House.

Prior to this nomination, there were nine individual structures listed in the National Register in Danville including: Old Centre (1972), Boyle County Courthouse (1973), McClure-Barbee House (1973), Jacobs Hall (1976), Dr. Ephraim McDowell House (1976), Mound Cottage (1977), Trinity Episcopal Church (1977), Crow-Barbee House (1983), and the Crutchfield House (1983). The Todd-Montgomery District on Third Street and the Constitution Square District on Main Street were placed in the National Register in 1976.

### OVERVIEW

Danville is the county seat of Boyle County, Kentucky. Formed from portions of Lincoln and Mercer Counties in 1842, Boyle County was named for Judge John Boyle (1774-1834), the Chief Justice of the Kentucky Court of Appeals. The county is bordered by Mercer, Washington, Marion, Casey, Lincoln, and Garrard Counties. Covering 182 square miles, the majority of its territory is classified as part of the Bluegrass Region except for the area southwest of Danville which is in the Knobs. Major waterways include the Dix River, Salt River, and the Chaplin River.

The town of Danville, established as Crow's Station by the Virginia Legislature in 1784, predates the county. A series of conventions held at Constitution Square in 1792 determined much of the form of Kentucky's government. Twelve conventions were held on the Square which formed the eastern boundary of the original town plat of Danville. Laid out in 1785, the original town plat contained 63 lots located within the three blocks west of the Square along what is now known as Main Street, Walnut Street, and Green Street (see Map #3). The Square served as the major commercial, civic, and religious center of town until the early 19th century when commercial activities abandoned the log structures on the Square for the brick and frame structures being built along Main Street. The topography of the town center was relatively flat and offered no resistance to development. The only waterbody near the town was the Town Spring Branch east of the Square. As additional areas were needed, the Danville Board of Trustees acquired farmland and subdivided into a grid pattern similar to the original plat.

Danville's prestige as a governmental, educational, and religious center attracted the Transylvania Academy, the Kentucky Asylum for the Deaf, and Centre College during the first decades of the 19th century.

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In the 1830s the townlands expanded again when property once owned by Daniel McIlvoy came up for sale. The street pattern was extended north of Main Street, but the land was sold in large tracts instead of the lot pattern favored by the trustees (see Map #4). During this time period, the major parks were the original town square, the Presbyterian burying ground (now known as McDowell Park), and the Centre College Campus.

Old Centre and many other important civic structures were designed and built by the Russels in the first half of the 19th century. Their work in brick is usually distinguished by massive columned porticos even in the residential designs.

Danville became the county seat of Boyle County in 1841 when the county was formed from parts of Lincoln and Mercer (see Map #1). A devastating fire in 1860 started during a George Washington's Birthday celebration and destroyed most of the business district. Danville was not occupied by either side during the Civil War, but its churches and courthouse were used as hospitals after the Battle of Perryville.

The Southern Railroad reached Danville in 1877 and provided a major stimulus for the growth of the downtown. Danville became an important link in a transportation network that linked the North and the South. The Italianate architecture of the central business district testifies to the prosperity of the times with ornately detailed two and three story brick buildings. The development pattern during this period can be seen in Map #5.

The area to the west of the original Public Square was not developed until the 1890s when Main Street was extended. Other areas of town had gained their density through the infill of later houses on the big lots of the earlier houses. The East Main section was built virtually totally during one time period and the houses are variations of similar styles and floor patterns.

During the late 19th century, Lexington Avenue and Maple Avenue were developed as major transportation corridors connecting Danville to other towns. Later development on these streets retained the setbacks and stylistic quality despite the heavy traffic.

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

**Specific dates** 1832–1936      **Builder/Architect** Various, See Individual & District Forms

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Danville, Kentucky, Multiple Resource Area Nomination contains properties significant under Criteria A, B, and C. Properties significant in the areas of architecture, commerce, education, exploration and settlement, industry, landscape architecture, and black history at the local level are included in the nomination. One property associated with the abolitionist leader, James Birney, has National significance in black history.

Nominated in relation to Criterion A are properties associated with the early settlement of Danville. Two properties, the Willis-Russel House and the James G. Birney House have important associations with the history of blacks in Danville. Danville's role as a significant regional educational center are reflected by the Carnegie Library at Centre College and various buildings in the Maple Street and Broadway/Lexington Avenue Districts which were associated with the development of Centre College and public educational facilities in Danville.

Also nominated under Criterion A are two districts, the Commercial and the Warehouse Districts which were linked to the evolution of Danville as a regional trade center and a center for the processing and shipment of agricultural products.

Nominated in relation to Criterion B is the James G. Birney House. Birney was one of the leaders of Midwestern abolitionism after being forced to leave Danville in the 1830s. His importance as the leader of the abolition movement including being a candidate for President of the United States makes his Danville house a significant property in spite of its later alterations.

Most of the properties in the Danville Multiple Resource Area are significant under Criterion C. Four historic districts constitute significant concentrations of historic buildings that qualify as significant and distinguishable entities. The Commercial District contains an excellent concentration of commercial, governmental and ecclesiastical architecture from 1860 to 1930.

The Broadway/Lexington Avenue Historic District contains many properties which would qualify for the National Register individually because of their architectural merit. It also contains numerous examples of the best work of regional architect/builders Robert Russel, Sr., Robert Russel, Jr., and E. B. Russel, whose 19th century work has achieved regional renown.

Two other districts, the Maple Avenue and East Main Residential Districts are important collections of late 19th and early 20th century building styles that are unified by lot size, setback, and landscaping features. Although these two districts have few outstanding individual buildings, they are clearly significant and distinguishable entities which meet National Register district criteria.

Properties within the districts and some of the individual properties are significant as the works of master builders such as the Russels. The Danville Cemetery is also significant under Criterion C both because of its high quality as landscape architecture and because of the high artistic values found in the sculptures located therein.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property See Individual & District Nomination Forms

Quadrangle name Danville

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheets for Districts & Historic Resources Forms for Individual Properties

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

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Helen Powell

organization H. Powell & Company, Inc.

date December, 1984

street & number Suite 201, 2230 Idle Hour Center

telephone 606/266-5351

city or town Lexington

state Kentucky 40502

## 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 February 13, 1986

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

See Continuation Sheet for Distances  
Keeper of the National Register

date

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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The nomination also contains buildings which are outstanding local examples of Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, Carpenter Gothic, Italianate, Queen Anne, Romanesque Revival, and Classical Revival styles. Some of these are individually nominated but most are located within the four historic districts nominated for their architecture.

This nomination contains relatively few buildings associated with early settlement, politics and government and education due to the coverage of these important themes in earlier nominations (see list in #7).

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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Beers Atlas of Boyle and Mercer Counties, 1876.

Boles, John B., Religion in Antebellum Kentucky.

Brown, Richerd, The Presbyterians, Two Hundred Years in Danville.

Fackler, Calvin, Chronicle of Old First.

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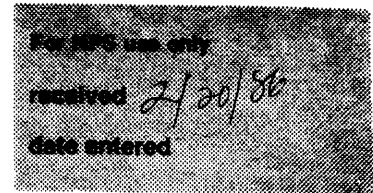
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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Danville Multiple Resource Area  
State KENTUCKY

Nomination/Type of Review

COVER ASchlagel 3/31/86  
Date/Signature

1. Birney, James, House

Keeper R

Attest

2. Carnegie Library

Keeper ASchlagel 3/28/86

Attest

3. Danville Cemetery Substantive Review

Keeper R

Attest

4. Danville Commercial District Substantive Review

Keeper ASchlagel 3/31/86

Attest

5. East Main Street Historic District

Keeper ASchlagel 3/31/86

Attest

6. First Presbyterian Church Substantive Review

Keeper ASchlagel 3/31/86

Attest

7. Gore House

Keeper R

Attest

8. Haskins, W. H., House Substantive Review

Keeper ASchlagel 3/31/86

Attest

9. Lexington Ave-Broadway Historic Dist.

Keeper ASchlagel 1/12/87

Attest

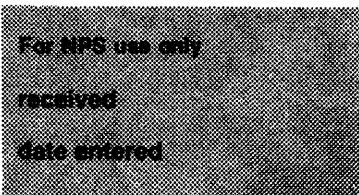
10. Maple <sup>AVE</sup> Street District Substantive Review

Keeper ASchlagel 4/16/87

Attest

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Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

Name Danville MRA

State \_\_\_\_\_

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

11. Warehouse District

Keeper

A. Schlager 3/31/86

Attest

12. Willis--Russel House

Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_ S

Attest

13. Russel, E. B., House

Keeper

A. Schlager 3/31/86

Attest

14.

Keeper

Attest

15.

Keeper

Attest

16.

Keeper

Attest

17.

Keeper

Attest

18.

Keeper

Attest

19.

Keeper

Attest

20.

Keeper

Attest

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION