

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 23 1980

JUL 24 1980

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area

(Partial Inventory)

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Munfordville

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Hart

CODE

099

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC  
☐ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☐ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☐ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

See Continuation Sheet

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hart County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Town Square

CITY, TOWN

Munfordville

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1977

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

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

The survey of Hart County, which incorporated the survey of Munfordville, the county seat, began on April 19, 1977 and was concluded on June 17, 1977. The survey personnel were Philip Cochran, historian; Anthony James, architectural historian; and William Broberg, historian and survey coordinator. During these two months in the field, sites over 50 years of age were selected for documentation because of their architectural and/or historical significance as it pertains to listing on the state survey. Information on each property was gathered and recorded; buildings were photographed and sketched; interviews were conducted with local people; and historical research was carried out at the local library, Western Kentucky University, and in private collections. Once this information was collected, the material was evaluated and combined with material gathered at the University of Kentucky, the University of Louisville, the Filson Club, and the Kentucky Historical Society. The criteria for listing on the survey and the National Register were applied to each site and recommendations made.

The scope of this nomination are the corporate limits of Munfordville (see maps 1 & 2). With the exception of the L & N Railroad Bridge, presently owned by the L & N Railroad, all buildings or structures felt to be eligible for the Register are included. Two Civil War fort sites were deemed historic archaeological resources and would be nominated at a later date.

The number of buildings surveyed total 33. They include the following:

	<u>Brick</u>	<u>Frame</u>	<u>Log</u>
Houses	6	10	5
Smokehouses			1
Commercial Bldgs.	4	2	
Churches	2		
Public Bldgs.	3		

Hart County, Kentucky lies in the west-central section of the Commonwealth. The county seat is Munfordville, a rural community with a population of approximately 2,000 located near the center of the county on the Green River. To the south of Munfordville by 10 miles in the county's largest town, Horse Cave, with a population of approximately 2,500.

The Green River divides Hart County in half, running in an east to west direction. The northwestern boundary is marked by the county's only other major water course, Nolin River and Nolin River Lake. The topography is marked by knobs

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 23 1980
DATE ENTERED	JUL 24 1980

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
Hart County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

and sinkholes with a noticeable lack of streams and creeks. This is attributable to the existence of numerous caves that are in the area. (The western section of the county is encompassed by the Mammoth Cave National Park.) The southeast quadrant of the county presents the most level land for farming purposes.

The county has a predominantly agricultural-based economy, with tobacco being the primary cash crop. However, it is slowly being surpassed by the expansion of the cattle industry.

The city of Munfordville has one street, Main Street, which supports the commercial district. The spacious courthouse square is located on the northeast side of Main. Other than the Barret House and the Wood House which front to the rear of the court square, the majority of the older houses lie to the south of town nearer the Green River and the street which, at one time, served as the Louisville to Nashville Turnpike.

Munfordville's historic architecture is reflective of the expansive age of Munfordville's development. The earliest period of the community's history is exemplified in the three remaining log structures--the Munford Inn (Ht-19), the Elijah Creel House (Ht-22) (sadly deteriorated), and the Thomas Bolin Munford House (now clapboard). All are equally important in illustrating the town and county's historical development. The Munford Inn was a well-known meeting place at mid-point on the Louisville and Nashville Turnpike and the Creel House served as the first county courthouse until a permanent structure could be erected. Thomas Bolin Munford was one of the first settlers of Munfordville and operator of the first tavern.

Of the remaining historic resources in Munfordville, the most substantial and noteworthy architectural examples are of that period just after the initial settlement of the town, from the 1820's through the 1840's. Seven buildings date to this era--which include six houses and one church. All are of brick and all can be said to be either Federal in style or transitional Federal/Greek Revival. Without exception these sites are also the most outstanding structures in the county. (There are four other brick buildings of this period in the county.) One is in ruins, the other three are unoccupied and in deteriorated condition.

Of the Classic Greek Revival so popular in Kentucky, no examples remain.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
Hart County, Kentucky

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 23 1980
DATE ENTERED	JUL 24 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The next era of major building in Munfordville appears to have been within the commercial district. Most of the better brick Victorian commercial structures are now gone, with only two surviving--the Chapline Building and the Hart County Deposit Bank. The remaining three commercial buildings surveyed have either been drastically altered or of insufficient architectural quality to merit nomination.

The twentieth century has seen a decline in the over-all quality of architectural design of Munfordville's buildings. By the First World War, the town had reached an economic peak and retained its turn-of-the-century look until the 1960's and 1970's. During this time small subdivisions developed in outlying areas.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW (See individual survey forms)				
<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"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY			
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Included within the nomination of the Munfordville Multiple Resource Area are 13 sites--7 residences, 2 churches, 1 public building, 2 commercial structures, and 1 log tavern. With the exception of the County Courthouse, the 2 Victorian commercial buildings, and 1 Gothic Revival/Romanesque Church all remaining sites date to the pre-Civil War period. Of these early properties, each is interwoven with the settlement (Munford Houses); or development of Munfordville (Munford Inn, Alvey Cox, Dr. Lewis Barret, General George Wood House); or to events surrounding the Civil War (Presbyterian Church, Munfordville School). Later economic development is represented with the only two remaining Victorian commercial buildings with <sup>their</sup> original exterior detailing fairly intact.

The architectural variety extends from the log buildings characteristic of early construction in Kentucky, to Federal to transitional to late Victorian commercial to Colonial Revival. These sites reflect events in Munfordville vital to an understanding of its history and to the varying tastes in architectural design endemic to rural Kentucky communities.

The city of Munfordville was founded in 1816 on land donated by Richard Jones Munford. The location was favorable, by the banks of the Green River at a spot known as the Big Buffalo Crossing. It was also near the mid-point on the market route between Louisville and Nashville, which was later to become the Louisville-Nashville Turnpike, and on the route from Bowling Green to Harrodsburg, Lexington and Maysville. (Of great convenience for the many travelers that passed through the area was the Munford Inn, owned and operated by Richard Munford's brother Thomas.)

In 1819, Munfordville became the county seat of Hart County and boasted a population of approximately 200 people (with a county population of better than 5,000). By 1840, the population had reached 274, a number which remained relatively stable for the rest of the century.

Of special significance to Hart County and particularly to Munfordville was the construction of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad initiated in the 1840's. It followed the most direct route north and south with the exception of veering westward south of the Green River to serve the city of Bowling Green. By 1857 the railroad reached Munfordville and the Green River. The problem posed by the river, rimmed by hills on the north and smaller knobs to the south, was solved by Albert Fink, nationally renown bridge designer for the L & N who later became the company's vice-president and general supervisor (Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. III, p.387).

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
Hart County, Kentucky

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 23 1980
DATE ENTERED	JUL 24 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Construction of the Green River Bridge was completed by 1859, at a cost of \$165,000. At the time it was the largest iron bridge in the United States with a total length, including approaches, of 1,800 feet (Klein, p.10).

With the outbreak of the Civil War, both the North and the South recognized the importance of the L & N and its Green River Bridge. The North moved first to secure the area and built two earthen forts--Fort Craig on the southern bank and Fort Willich on the northern bank. Southern troops under General Braxton Bragg, in a prelude to the Battle of Perryville, captured Munfordville in September 1862. The Union forces surrendered to General Simon Bolivar Buckner, Bragg's assistant and Munfordville's most prominent citizen. Buckner would later become Governor of Kentucky from 1887 to 1891.

With General Don Carlos Buell's victory over the combined Confederate forces of Bragg and E. Kirby Smith at Perryville, the Southern Army retreated from Kentucky. Union troops recaptured Munfordville, and rebuilt the destroyed Green River Bridge. Munfordville remained in Northern hands for the remainder of the war.

With the conclusion of the war, commercial use of the L & N resumed. Munfordville's military significance in its location on the main line ceased, and the town again became but a single stop along the route between the two terminals of Louisville and Nashville on the larger city of Bowling Green. As such, the town has remained since that time, representative of one of Kentucky's many rural communities.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JAN 23 1980
DATE ENTERED	JUL 24 1980

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
Hart County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Books

Axton, W.F. Tobacco and Kentucky. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1975.

Collins, Richard H. History of Kentucky. Covington, Kentucky, by the author, 1874.

Crocher, Helen Bartter. The Green River of Kentucky. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976.

Gardiner, Florence Edwards, ed. Cyrus Edwards' Stories of Early Days. Louisville: The Standard Printing Company, Inc., 1940.

Kentucky State Gazetteers 1865, 1879-80, 1883-84, 1895-96.

McKee, Harley H. Introduction to Early American Masonry: Stone, Brick, Mortar and Plaster. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1973.

Montell, William Lynwood and Morse, Michael Lynn. Kentucky Folk Architecture. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1976.

Rogers, Edith, ed. Kentucky Deskbook of Economic Statistics. Frankfort: Kentucky Department of Commerce, 1975.

Articles

"Early Industries." The Hart County News, The Hart County Herald, The Cave City Progress Bicentennial Edition. March, 1974, Section 2, pg. 2.

Engerud, Colonel Hal. "Munfordville, The Home of Two Civil War Generals." The Hart County News, The Hart County Herald, The Cave City Progress Bicentennial Edition. March, 1974. Section 1, pg. 4.

"A History of Hardyville from Early 1800." The Hart County Herald. Horse Cave, Kentucky. Thursday, September 18, 1976. pp. 10-11.

Matera, Ann (Mrs. Gerald). "The Formation of Hart County--January 28, 1819." The Hart County News, The Hart County Herald, The Cave City Progress Bicentennial Edition. March, 1974. Section 1, pg. 3.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 23 1980

DATE ENTERED

JUL 24 1980

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area,  
Hart County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

Matera, Ann (Mrs. Gerald). "Frenchman's Knob--A Hart County Tragedy." The Hart County News, The Hart County Herald, The Cave City Progress Bicentennial Edition. March, 1974. Section 1, pg. 4.

"Munfordville--Its Founding and Settling." The Hart County News, The Hart County Herald, The Cave City Progress Bicentennial Edition. March, 1974. Section 1, pg. 3.

"The Old Inns of the Mammoth Cave Area Were Important in Their Time." Call of Kentucky. Shelbyville: Newspapers, Inc., Spring and Summer, 1973.

Roberts, Mary E. Brent. "Memories of Life on a Farm in Hart County, Kentucky in the Early Sixties." The Filson Club History Quarterly. Vol. 14, No. 3. Louisville: John P. Morton and Company, Inc., July, 1940.

Sides, Stanley D. "Early Hart County Travel by Mammoth Cave Visitors." Hart County Historical Quarterly. Vol. IV, No. 2. Munfordville, Kentucky: Hart County Historical Society.

South, R.R. "Horse Cave--Nation's Future Capital?" L & N Magazine. Vol. 23, No. 7. Louisville: Louisville and Nashville Railroad July, 1949.

Wilson, H.H. "Early History of Hart County." Call of Kentucky: Mammoth Cave--Barren River--Lake Area. Shelbyville: Newspapers, Inc., Spring and Summer, 1973.

Unpublished Manuscripts

Cann, Roy A. A History of Hart County. Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society Library, 1954.

England, Hal. The Louisville and Nashville Railroad's Green River Bridge at Munfordville. Frankfort: Kentucky Heritage Commission

Interviews

Cann, Roy A. Private Interview. Munfordville, Kentucky. May, 1977.

Chaney, B.T. Private Interview. Horse Cave, Kentucky. April, 1977.

Jones, Walter. Telephone Interview. Munfordville, Kentucky. June, Sept., 1977/

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 23 1980

DATE ENTERED

JUL 24 1980

Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
Hart County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 4

Lobb, B.H. Interview, July, 1977, Jonesville area, Hart County, Kentucky.

Matera, Ann. Private Interview. Horse Cave, Kentucky. April, May, 1977.

Richardson, Judge Charles. Private Interview. Munfordville, Kentucky. May, 1977.

Wilson, Harry H. Private Interview. Munfordville, Kentucky. April, May, 1977.

Newspapers

Harper's Weekly, January 11, 1862; January 25, 1862.

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly, January 18, 1862.

Unpublished Collections

Ford Album. Collection of historic photographs, University of Kentucky  
Photographic Archives, Louisville, Kentucky.

Matera, Ann (Mrs. Gerald). Collection of historic photographs, Horse  
Cave, Kentucky.

Poore, Mrs. E.R. Collection of historic photographs, Munfordville, Kentucky.

Maps

Atlas to Accompany the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies,  
1861-65.

Military Map of the States of Kentucky and Tennessee. Cincinnati, Ohio:  
Office of Chief Engineer, Department of the Ohio, November, 1863.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area  
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Munfordville Multiple Resource Area  
State Hart County, KENTUCKY

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Munford, Thomas Bolin, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

RETURN DUBIE 3/19/84

2. Munford, Richard, House

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

REJECT DUBIE 3/19/84

3. Munford Inn

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Carol Dubie 3/19/84

4. Munfordville School

Substantive Review

Keeper

Attest

Carol Dubie 3/19/84

5.

Keeper

Attest

6.

Keeper

Attest

7.

Keeper

Attest

8.

Keeper

Attest

9.

Keeper

Attest

10.

Keeper

Attest