

Brown-Henry House
Name of Property

Franklin County, Kentucky
County and State

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	private
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Stone

walls: Brick

roof: Asphalt shingle

other: _____

Narrative Description

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Summary Paragraph

The Brown-Henry House (FR-F-3), is located at 818 Fields Avenue in Frankfort, seat of Franklin County, and capital of Kentucky. It is named for Orlando Brown, Jr., its owner when built, and after the Henry family, who were the next longest-term owners/occupants. The house is situated on a hill overlooking Holmes Street, which was originally a portion of the turnpike connecting Frankfort to Owenton, seat of Owen County, Kentucky. The dwelling is less than two miles from West Main Street in downtown Frankfort, but was outside of the city limits until 1950. The Brown-Henry House has been referred to locally as the “Orlando Brown Summer Home” and until the last decade of the nineteenth century, was a rural property on the fringes of downtown Frankfort. The house now sits in a neighborhood of late-nineteenth and twentieth century development, but retains the associated parcel from the subdivision of the land in 1936. The house is being interpreted for this nomination as having been built as a summer home for wealthy owners. Some of its association with the Brown family is inferred by its similarity to other Brown family residences, and so, those are presented immediately below.

The Mason Brown House in Owen County

Around 1856, Mason Brown, uncle of Orlando Jr., hired architect Nathaniel Center Cook to design a home on some of the Brown land on the Kentucky River in Owen County. The resulting house, located on Brown’s Bottom Road in Gratz, Kentucky, is almost a mirror image of the Brown-Henry House, except that the Franklin County house is rendered in brick and the Owen County Brown House is wood frame. Both houses are one-and-one-half story Gothic Revival dwellings with central cross gables. Though the Mason Brown House (ON-21) is three bays wide, with paired windows flanking the central entry on the façade, the massing and form of the two houses is almost identical. The same Greek Revival-influenced doorway is present on both, which may explain why the Brown/Henry House incorporated details of that style at a much later date than other dwellings in Frankfort – or it could have been a nod to the family’s main home at the corner of Wilkinson and Wapping (FR-FC-25).

Construction and Occupation of the Orlando Brown Summer House

Upon the death of Orlando Brown, Sr., in 1867, his holdings included the house and lot on Wilkinson Street valued at \$12,000, 66 feet of ground fronting on St. Clair Street, and 328 acres of land on the Franklin and Owen County turnpike road, about one mile from Frankfort, valued at \$17,400.00. It is this farmland where the Brown-Henry House would eventually be constructed. The land had been in the Brown family since at least 1839 and was actively farmed – the agricultural census lists “O. Brown” as the farmer, not a tenant.

In the January 4, 1873 issue of *The Triweekly Yeoman*, an article entitled “Improvements During 1872” noted that in that year, “Colonel Orlando Brown’s fine brick mansion, in the northeastern suburbs on the Owenton turnpike, was built at a cost of over \$6,000.” The date of 1872 seems consistent with the physical documentation of the house. The 1882 atlas of Franklin County shows two houses, both marked as “O. Brown” in the general area of the farm (see supplemental image one). The northeastern most house is no longer extant, and no details about it were discovered. It is possible that this house predated the Brown-Henry House and itself was utilized as a summer home by the Brown family. There is more discussion of the farm and the other house in Section 8.

Character of the Brown-Henry House’s setting and property changes over time

A rural property, once the center point of an over-300-acre farm, the Brown-Henry House is located northeast of downtown Frankfort. The acreage of the property dwindled from 300 acres to 165 acres by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, as demands on the Brown family estate necessitated the sale of the land. By the turn of the twentieth century, the parcel stood at approximately 55 acres. This land was developed by the Henry family

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in 1936. The house faces roughly southeast, but for simplicity's sake, this nomination will refer to the primary façade as facing east.

Description of the Exterior

The Brown-Henry House is a 1½-story brick dwelling built in the Gothic Revival style. The five-bay wide façade has a window/window/door/window/window fenestration pattern, with one-over-one double-hung sash windows. All of the windows feature segmental arches and stone sills. The doorway, which has a replacement door, has a slight Greek Revival influence, with a large transom and sidelights that are flanked by pilasters. Originally the entryway had three light sidelights with an inset panel at the bottom; the lowest light has been boarded over so that the sidelights now appear only as a two light division.

The front porch, which extends across the three central bays, is not original. The original Gothic Revival porch, which included elaborate fretwork and chamfered supports, was removed when the current owner bought the property in the late 1980s. The existing porch has a nearly flat metal roof, with only the slightest pitch, plain wooden supports, and an open rail balustrade.

Laid in six-row common bond brick, the house has been painted, most recently a pale blue color. The continuous mortared stone foundation has a strong raised joint that appears to have been modified in the twentieth century, perhaps when the Henry family purchased the property. A slight water table is located on the façade.

The most distinctive element of the façade is the steeply pitched central cross gable, which retains its original bargeboard. The bargeboard is repeated at the cornice of the façade and on the gable ends of the main block of the house. The opening in the gable has been replaced with a modern multi-light door. The side gable roof, clad in asphalt shingles, was originally pierced by two interior gable end brick chimneys, but wind damage resulted in the complete removal of the southern chimney and the removal of the northern chimney to the ridgeline.

The north gable end of the house has experienced some fenestration modification, with the boarding over of one window and another opening, also likely a window, has been bricked-in. There are two windows in the gable of the north and south elevations; none of the windows are arched, though all have stone sills.

A one-story, two-bay wide ell, which is two rooms wide rather than the typical one room as seen on ells of this period, extends to the west of the main block of the house. The ell originally had a chimney on the north elevation that has been removed.

A one-story hipped roof addition extends from the rear of the ell. According to the current owner, it was present upon her purchase of the property. The only outbuilding on the property is a stone and brick domed roof root cellar in the domestic yard behind the house.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance

1872-1936

Significant Dates

Ca. 1872

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

NA

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance:

The Period of Significance encompasses the period in which the house and its property changed to reflect the suburbanization of the area.

Criteria Considerations: **NA**

Statement of Significance

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Summary Paragraph

The Brown-Henry House meets National Register Criteria A and is locally significant in the Area of Community Planning and Development. The house illustrates patterns of residential development on the fringes of Frankfort's city limits. The house is important for its association with two significant trends in Frankfort's development. First, it follows the pattern where people of means would acquire a property on the fringe of town as a summer home, using it as a farm and a source of income. Second, and later in time, the property became associated with the town's first suburb, which developed in the late-nineteenth century. The house's two-phases of development are related, and revealed within the context "Residential Development within Frankfort and Franklin County, Kentucky, 1870-1936."

The first trend, of course, is defined by its exclusive nature—only a handful of wealthy Frankfort residents could support both an urban dwelling as well as rural summer get-away. Though secondary sources documenting this theme in Franklin County are scant, the phenomenon has been well documented in existing sources, including the context "Suburban Development in Louisville and Jefferson County, 1868-1940" and the National Register-listed "County Estates of River Road" (1999, NRIS 99000495). It is not the intent of this nomination to show that the country estate property type as seen in Jefferson County existed in Frankfort; rather, these well-researched sources lay a foundation for the tradition of wealthy families leaving their urban quarters for rural retreats during Kentucky's hot summer months.

The Brown-Henry House illustrates the success of Frankfort's industrial developers, particularly distillers, as well as transportation improvements, such as the streetcar system. The original farm of 300+ acres experienced numerous subdivisions from the post-Civil War period to the Great Depression. The Gothic Revival dwelling, now situated on an approximately four-acre lot, remains on its hillside location, and the change in its setting is testament to the forces of suburbanization on the fringes of town.

In this case, the house is associated with a prominent family in Frankfort and Kentucky politics. Later, that rural property is subdivided, participating in the process of suburbanization over a 40-year period. This house illustrates an important theme that has its expression in many Kentucky county seat towns. First, a house with ample acreage is purchased by a prominent family. Years later, that historic property transfers to new owners, who subdivide the land, converting the property from agricultural to residential use. While this was a common trend, the Brown-Henry House is important today in the local area because it has survived as a dwelling because its owners have adapted it during the successive waves of suburbanization that went on around it.

Background on the Brown Family

John Brown, a native of Staunton, Virginia, moved to Danville, Kentucky in 1783. A member of the Continental Congress and U.S. Senator from Kentucky (1792-1805), Brown's impact on the new state was immense. He moved to Frankfort in 1801, and with his wife, Margaretta Mason Brown, made their home in a brick Federal house on the bank of the Kentucky River in downtown Frankfort, known as Liberty Hall (National Historic Landmark, 1971). Construction of this dwelling began in 1796, and the family took up residence in 1801.

John and Margaretta had five children, and in 1835, the Liberty Hall parcel was divided to create an equal inheritance for their two sons, Mason and Orlando.¹ Architect Gideon Shryock, designer of the Kentucky State

¹ Differentiated here as "Orlando Brown Sr." to distinguish him from his son, Orlando Brown Jr., the builder of the Brown-Henry House.

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Capital, was commissioned to design a house for Orlando Brown Sr. on the resulting parcel, which also fronted on Wilkinson Street. The resulting two-story brick Greek Revival dwelling cost \$5,000.00 to build. John Brown died in 1837; Mason Brown inherited Liberty Hall. Orlando Brown, Sr., “editor and confidant of Kentucky’s Whig politicians” practiced law and served as editor of the *Frankfort Commonwealth*. Orlando Brown, Sr., died in 1867, dividing his estate between his two sons, Mason and Orlando, Jr., and their sister, Euphemia. Following the death of Orlando, Sr., in 1867, his widow (and second wife) Mary Cordelia Brodhead Brown, lived in the Wilkinson Street house until her death in 1874.

Historic Context: Residential Development in Frankfort and Franklin County, Kentucky, 1794-1860

Franklin County, formed in late 1794 from portions of Mercer, Shelby and Woodford Counties, was the 18th county created in the new state. Located in central Kentucky, the county’s terrain is mostly rolling to hilly, with the most fertile land located in the southern part of the county. Frankfort sits within a double curve of the Kentucky River, and is the capital of Kentucky, as well as the seat of Franklin County. Frankfort, established as a town by the Virginia legislature in 1786, straddling both sides of the Kentucky River “on a broad alluvial plain near the geographic center of the county.”² The town became the new state’s capital in December 1792, and eight years later Frankfort had become Kentucky’s second largest town, with 628 residents.³

Residential development took place on both sides of the Kentucky River, though the area on the north side of the river was the preferred place of residence for many early residents, including the Brown family. Much of this side of Frankfort is within the Central Frankfort Historic District, which “consists of the historic core of one of Kentucky’s oldest cities.”⁴ The presence of the capitol building and the central business district on the north side of the River also encouraged residential growth on that side of the town before the Civil War.

Initially South Frankfort was a part of the capital city with a much lower population. Platted in 1796 by surveyor William Steele, South Frankfort contained “340 lots separated by a grid of eight north-south of streets, intersected by six east-west streets.”⁵ South Frankfort did not grow as quickly as that portion of the capital city north of the River. In 1812, South Frankfort separated itself from the rest of the town legally, and incorporated. Many of the district’s streets were in place by this time, named after politicians and wealthy landowners, including Governor Isaac Shelby, General Benjamin Logan and Colonel Baker Ewing.⁶ Through the first-half of the 19th century, South Frankfort developed slowly, doing so as a self-contained town, with its own commerce and activity patterns.

South Frankfort’s development was influenced by the fortunes of the capital city across the River, as well as by the geographic constraints of its river valley topography. Erection of the first bridge connecting South Frankfort with Frankfort, in 1816, aided South Frankfort’s development, and began a process of uniting the communities back into a single political unit in 1850. Through most of the 19th century, South Frankfort

² Carl E. Kramer. “Frankfort,” in *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, ed John Kleber. (Lexington, Kentucky: The University Press of Kentucky, 1992), 352.

³ Ibid.

⁴ David Taylor. “Central Frankfort Historic District.” *Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places*. On file at the Kentucky Heritage Council. Listed 2009. (NRIS 09000570)

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Graham, Section 8, page 3.

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continued to transform into an urban area, with larger parcels containing estate homes being subdivided to make way for a denser collection of single-family homes.

The introduction of rail travel in the 1830s significantly improved transportation in Frankfort. The railroad, part of a line linking Lexington and Louisville, reached Frankfort in 1833. The line depended on horse-drawn power initially, but a steam locomotive took over that task in 1835. The line eventually became part of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, which in time was joined by lines operated by the Chesapeake and Ohio and the Frankfort & Cincinnati.

The Tradition of Summer Homes

The best well-known summer home in Kentucky would likely be Ward Hall (SC-137; NRIS 73000848), the large Greek Revival dwelling in Scott County built for Mississippi planter Junius Ward. This example, however, is an anomaly, and has very little in common with the Kentucky tradition of summer homes. Though very little research has been conducted on this type, it appears that most dwellings were decidedly smaller, simpler and less pretentious than the everyday homes of their owners.

Although there are several accounts of Frankfort families with summer homes, very little can be substantiated and it appears that most of the recounted houses are no longer extant. Establishing summer homes is an activity pattern common in many Kentucky counties, most notably Jefferson County, with its “Country Estates of River Road.” While the wealthy businessmen of Louisville utilized the transportation improvements to escape the stifling city heat along the hills of River Road, Frankfort county elites, including lawyers and distillers, took advantage of a growing road network to access rural properties on the hills around Frankfort.

The intentional shaping of their environment, through architect-designed homes and highly landscaped grounds, does not seem to have been the formula of Frankfort summer home owners. Rather, these houses were pre-existing dwellings and re-purposed as temporary habitation during the summer months, or were built in a straightforward and functional manner, to take advantage of hillside breezes.

It is clear is that a handful of wealthy families in Frankfort maintained a primary residence in town, while also owning a home on a farm or large parcel of land on the hills around Frankfort. This was not limited to just Franklin County residents, as Fayette County attorney Robert Todd owned as summer home known as “Buena Vista” (FR-109, NRIS 83002776).⁷ Located on the south side of Leestown Pike (US 421), the home was the “summer residence of Robert S. Todd, banker, businessman, sheriff and state senator from Fayette County.” Father of Mary Ann Todd, who would marry Abraham Lincoln, the house was easily accessed from the turnpike and later from the Lexington and Ohio Railroad, which ran directly in front of the house. The dwelling, a two-story frame house with a “log meathouse and stone kitchen in the ell” purportedly dated to the 1830s-1840s. All that remained in 1982 was the stone kitchen portion of the home, which was stone to the top of the windows, and brick to the roof.

The Mason Brown House (ON-21; NRIS 98000325) in Owen County, situated at a landing known as “Blue Wing Landing” was “principally used as a country estate by the Brown Family in the 1850s and 1860s. The trip by Kentucky River steamboat was an easy one, especially after a series of locks and dams were completed in 1842. Kentucky politicians and guests were entertained and friends and relatives from Louisiana and the Deep

⁷ FR-109.

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South came to this area in the summer.”⁸ The small, central passage house stands in stark contrast to the stateliness and large scale of Mason Brown’s home in downtown Frankfort, Liberty Hall, though its design was in keeping with the time. Gothic Revival dwellings were being constructed or existing homes were remodeled in the style all over Frankfort in the 1850s and 1860s.

The “Cliffs” (demolished) was the summer home of the Robert Perry Pepper family, located east of the Brown-Henry House, near the current day Cove Spring Park in Franklin County. Located on a bluff overlooking the city of Frankfort, the house took advantage of the cave situated “up [the] hill that would have poured its cool air down on the grounds.”⁹ The home site is located “under the fill of the Wilkinson Boulevard Connector.”¹⁰ The home was single story frame building with an “Adirondack” air, with “wide porches and rails made of branches.”

The main residence of the Pepper family (no longer extant) was a large Greek Revival house on West Main Street in downtown Frankfort, alongside Petticoat Lane.¹¹ This imposing double pile brick dwelling bore no resemblance to the casual air of the Cliffs. Robert Pepper, who was a few years older than Orlando Brown, Jr., worked in the family distilling business, but also farmed. The 1860 Census lists Pepper, then 28 years old, as a farmer, with real estate valued at \$19,000 and a personal estate of \$12,000. It is likely that what became the Pepper summer home was also a working farm, much like the Orlando Brown Sr. farm.

The Blair family, early settlers along Benson Creek, purchased a tract of land near the mouth of that creek, and dubbed it “Bellepoint” as the “land came to a point where the Kentucky River and Benson creek joined.” Francis P. Blair, who served in Andrew Jackson’s Administration, built on this site a “substantial log house which became his summer home.” It is not known where the main house of the Blair family was located.¹²

The Brown farm on the Owenton Turnpike provided an accessible respite from downtown Frankfort via an overland route rather than the river to the Gratz location of the Mason Brown House. During the 1850s and 1860s, the farm generated a great deal of income for the Brown family, and it is likely there was some river access from the location. In the 1860 census, Orlando Brown, Sr., had real estate valued at \$60,000 and a personal estate of \$40,000. He also is listed as owning 17 workers, a high number for the period, but not the highest in Franklin County. His brother Mason Brown is recorded as owning 31 people in the 1860 Slave census.¹³

In the 1860 Agricultural Census, Orlando Brown, Sr., is listed as the occupant on the land, rather than a tenant, suggesting he directly oversaw the farming operation (which does not mean he was actually working the land, but implies that he did not lease the land out). The illustration of the Brown farm provided by the 1860 Census is typical in many ways – eight milk cows, around 20 swine, and crops including corn, wheat and Irish potatoes. The milk cows provided milk and over 300 pounds of butter, while Brown’s seven horses were no doubt used for transport, and his mules used to work the farm. But Brown, a lawyer by trade, not only used his farm to provide for and feed his family, but he participated in the agrarian commercial enterprise of the day: hemp.

⁸ William H. Chatfield. “Mason Brown House.” *Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places*. On file at the Kentucky Heritage Council. Listed 1998.

⁹ Personal Conversation with Patrick Kennedy, Pepper family descendent.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ The site now has the address of 415 West Main Street, and is occupied by a non-historic office building.

¹² Kramer, 76.

¹³ United States Census Returns, 1860 Population Census, Agricultural Census and Slave Schedules.

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Hemp was the chief cash crop of antebellum Kentucky, and the crop that relied upon a system of enslaved labor in the state. There were main areas of production – in 1859, Fayette, Woodford, Garrard and Montgomery Counties led the state in hemp production. But the number of farmers that grew large quantities of hemp remained low, as it was a labor-intensive crop, and substantial yields required large acreage. For example, General yield estimates have one acre producing some 650 pounds of hemp. A farmer growing four tons of dew-rotted hemp (the preferred method in Kentucky) would need to dedicate 12 improved acres to the crop, as well as having the means to work the hemp, which was long, hard and tedious work requiring many laborers.¹⁴

Brown only had 350 acres of improved land, valued at \$12,000, but in 1859, he produced 15 tons of hemp. For comparison, Franklin County farmer Henry Giltner in Peaks Mill owned 750 acres of all improved land, valued at \$21,000 in 1860, while his personal estate was valued at \$10,000. Giltner's workers also raised eight tons of hemp in 1859. Among gentleman farmers in the Bluegrass Region (of which group Orlando Brown Sr. certainly belonged), Brutus Clay of Bourbon County produced 10 tons of hemp in 1859, while Robert Wilmot Scott of Franklin County, a contemporary of Brown's, raised 13 tons.¹⁵

Though it is not documented how and when the Brown family used their land on the Owenton Turnpike for pleasure, one can imagine it an easy jaunt to travel the two miles from Wilkinson Street to Thorn Hill. In addition to providing a respite for the family, it was an economic necessity for the family. The Civil War, emancipation, and the collapse of the Southern markets would have a detrimental effect on the fortunes of Orlando Brown, Jr.

A Reversal in Fortune

Following the Civil War and the death of his father, Orlando, Sr., in 1867, it appears that the financial situation of the Brown family began to decline. Orlando, Jr., was charged with providing for his sister Euphemia, who had been deemed insane and "wholly incompetent for the transaction of ordinary business."¹⁶ In addition to providing for his sister, Orlando, Jr., was still sorting through the intricacies of his father's estate, as well as that of his brother Mason, who had left all of his estate to Orlando, Jr.'s, young son, Mason P. Brown. Additionally, Orlando's stepmother, Mary C. Brodhead Brown, died in 1874.

During this time, Orlando, Jr., sold the lot located between the house that bears his father's name, and Liberty Hall, in which his cousins resided. The parcel was purchased by William Chinn, who built an imposing two-and-one-half story brick Italianate dwelling. The Chinn-Sutterlin House was demolished in the 1960s to unify the Orland Brown House and Liberty Hall. Toward the end of his life, Orlando, Jr., sold three lots behind the house at the corner of Wilkinson and Wapping.

In the 1870 Census, Orlando, Jr., was not listed as living in the Wilkinson Street house, as his stepmother was in residence. It appears that he took this opportunity to construct a home for his small family (wife and three children) on the farm on the Owenton Turnpike. Much smaller in scale and much less grand than the home in which he grew up, it may have been Orlando's vision to recreate the summer home of his uncle Mason Brown,

¹⁴ Janie-Rice Brother. *The Agricultural and Architectural Landscapes of Two Antebellum Montgomery County Farms*. Thesis, University of Kentucky Historic Preservation Program. (Lexington, Kentucky: 2003), 146-148.

¹⁵ Ibid, 148.

¹⁶ Appointment of Guardian for Euphemia H. Brown, July 3, 1868, Hamilton County, Ohio. Item number 6 in a transcription of a typed will prepared by Beth Carter from papers provided by Russ Hatter in May 2010. Said document in possession of the Liberty Hall Historic Site.

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and inhabit the smaller (and more affordable) Gothic Revival dwelling until he inherited the main house on Wilkinson Street. This lifestyle could not, however, be supported by the changing agricultural economy of the post-Civil War period, nor could it withstand the realities of accumulated family debt.

In 1875, following the death of both his stepmother and his brother (Mason), Orlando, Jr., borrowed \$1,620.00 from Laura Crittenden. A portion of the farm on the Owenton turnpike was used as surety for the loan.¹⁷ It appears that the next decade, from 1875-1885, was one of financial uncertainty for Orlando, Jr., and he was unable (or simply failed) to make all of the payments on the note. In addition to falling behind on his loan, from 1882-1886 Orlando Jr. leased his main house at the corner of Wilkinson and Wapping Streets to the Dudley Institute, an Episcopal school for both boys and girls established in 1876.¹⁸

The issue with the note quickly turned sour for Orlando Jr. Crittenden filed suit against him, and in order to satisfy the claims, the farm of approximately 165 acres was ordered sold at a Master Commissioners Sale in 1885. Orlando, Jr.'s, father-in-law, Judge Lysander Hord, bought the property, which adjoined some of his land. It is unclear as to whether the property actually went to the Master Commissioner's Sale, or whether Judge Hord stepped in and bought it, forestalling potential embarrassment for the family. In 1886, a notice in the April 10, 1886 edition of the Frankfort Roundabout stated that "L.B. Marshall purchased on Monday of Judge L. Hoard [sic], the farm of Col. Orlando Brown, lying on the Owenton Pike about one mile from the city, containing 160 acres, for \$51 an acre."

Marshall operated L.B. Marshall and Company, Real Estate and Insurance Agents, with an office located at 236 Main Street. He farmed the land in addition to acting as a real estate agent; the Thorn Hill Poultry farm was heavily advertised in the Frankfort papers. Marshall also raised tobacco at the farm.

New Growth and Development: Suburbanization at Frankfort's Fringe

The area along Owenton Pike (Holmes Street) was well-known to the earliest residents of Frankfort. "As early as 1774, travelers in the Frankfort area discovered Cedar Cove Spring, an excellent source of clear, clear water in the vicinity of Thorn Hill."¹⁹ A water line was laid in 1804 by Richard Throckmorton, following a line "from Cedar Cove Spring, along Brown's Bottom into Frankfort, a distance of about three miles." The Brown's Bottom makes reference to the lands owned by the Brown family at that time; in 1805, Senator John Brown was one of the incorporators on the Frankfort Water Company.²⁰

A new waterworks and sewer system in the late-19th century prompted continued development within the city limits and on the fringes. A streetcar system began operating in 1894, another boon to residential growth within the city. The Thorn Hill route began on Ann Street, and "followed Mero, Holmes, Wright and Wallace into Owenton Pike and up the hills into Thorn Hill."²¹ By the early-twentieth century, the streetcar system boasted of four primary routes and nine miles of track.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Kramer, 205.

¹⁹ Kramer, 51.

²⁰ Kramer, 50.

²¹ Kramer, Capital on the Kentucky, 221.

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Growth during the first two decades of the twentieth century was sporadic, as the population of the entire county dwindled and then fell stagnant. Frankfort fared a little better than rural parts of Franklin County: In 1900, there were 9,487 residents on the capital city. A brief uptick occurred in 1910, with 10,465 residents enumerated, a number that subsequently fell to 9,806 in 1920. South Frankfort was one of the few areas in the capital city that could boast of a rise in population; between 1910 and 1920 the population of South Frankfort grew by 2.5 percent, from 2,966 to 3,041.²²

In the late-nineteenth century, the state legislature annexed outlying areas into the city for the first time since 1805. The city's land area doubled with the annexation of "Fort Hill, the Holmes Street-Owenton Pike corridor out beyond Meagher Street, and a large expanse east of the city."²³ These additions to the city provided an increased tax base, and spurred public improvements that attracted "a substantial number of downtown merchants, industrial executives, and prominent politicians and government officials, but also large numbers of working class residents" to the district.²⁴ This annexation did not include the Brown land or the Brown-Henry House.

By 1890, more than "a dozen houses had been constructed along stretches of Owenton Pike and Georgetown Pike immediately east of the city limits. The city was beginning to reach beyond its established legal boundaries."²⁵ An entry in the February 27, 1892 edition of the *Frankfort Roundabout*, titled "Houses Wanted," reads:

There is great demand just now for houses from persons wishing to rent, and it seems to us that some of our capitalists might obtain a better return for their money by putting it into buildings than leaving it invested in stocks. By turning your money into houses you will improve the city and give employment to worthy mechanics who are thinking of going elsewhere to earn a living.

The first suburban development in the Thorn Hill area took root in 1889. L.B. Marshall, who then owned the Brown-Henry House, platted "Thorn Hill Park," the very first platted subdivision in Franklin County (see Supplemental Image 4). Thorn Hill Park encompassed around 48 acres, bounded by the Owenton Turnpike Road (Holmes Street) to the east, Dailey to the north, what would become Fifth Avenue on the west, and College and Swigert on the south. Marshall carved the land up into 181 lots which measured 50 feet wide with varying lengths, depending on where they fell within the overall plat. The streets were 50 feet wide and the alleys were 16 feet wide.

On January 24, 1888, part of the lien Marshall obtained to buy the land was released for the "48 3.10 acres of the land laid off in the lots by Marshall and including the land occupied lately by John P. Dailey."²⁶ In the northeast corner of the Thorn Hill Park plat is a large parcel, numbered 130, with a meandering drive leading from the Owenton Turnpike. The drive, labeled as "pass way" went by a brickyard and the overall plat bears the name "Dailey". This location appears to match the location of the second "O.Brown" house on the 1882 atlas. It

²² Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky*, 258.

²³ Carl Kramer. *Capital on the Kentucky: A Two Hundred Year History of Frankfort and Franklin County*. (Frankfort, Kentucky: Historic Frankfort, 1986), 215.

²⁴ Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky*, 215.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 179.

²⁶ Franklin County Deed Book DB 24, 217.

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is not known whether this parcel was offered for re-development and the existing house removed, or whether it was just included in the plat for sale.

The development does not seem to have grown quite as quickly as planned. In the first decade of the twentieth century, there are numerous ads in the *Frankfort Roundabout* for “garden farms” in Thorn Hill, usually around four to five acres. But it seems that Thorn Hill Park opened the floodgate for residential development on that side of Frankfort. In 1890, Thorn Hill Heights, located on the west side of the Brown-Henry House, was platted, also by Marshall (see Supplemental Image 5). The situation of the two plats suggests that either Marshall was living in the Brown-Henry House, or he desired maintaining it on its own large (50 + acres) parcel. Since Thorn Hill wasn’t included in the city limits until 1950, the city directories for Frankfort have names of Thornhill residents, but no addresses for them.

Thorn Hill Heights, only taking up about 20 acres of land, had fewer lots than its predecessor – only 75. These lots were arranged along the hillside perpendicular to the Owenton Turnpike, but were roughly the same dimensions as those in Thorn Hill Park.

The Holmes Street/Owenton Pike corridor, along with Bellepoint, “attracted substantial working class populations.” By 1900, the dirt roads in both communities were “lined with small vernacular cottages perched on narrow lots carved out of the hillsides.”²⁷ It was around this time of growth that L.B. Marshall also experienced some financial hardship, and sold some of his remaining land. The deed lists the sale as coming from Farmer’s Bank, which suggests a Master Commissioners Sale or a bankruptcy. The buyer was Mrs. A. C. Henry, whose husband began operating a meat store on Broadway in 1886. Mrs. Henry purchased the 55.68 acres in 1902.

Little is known about the Henry family’s use of the Brown-Henry House during this time, but what is clear is that the Holmes Street corridor continued to grow, supporting both industrial and residential development. More industry began to locate on that side of the city, drawn by the interface of roads, railroads and proximity to a labor force. The Frankfort Modes Glass Works was established on the Owenton Pike in Thorn Hill in 1907. The company “specialized in the production of flint and amber bottles.”²⁸ Two years later, the Glass Works was one of Frankfort’s largest firms, with over 300 employees.²⁹ The Hoge-Montgomery Company, located at the corner of Mero and High Streets in Frankfort, also employed a number of the Thorn Hill residents. The company, reorganized in 1905, employed many prisoners from the nearby State Penitentiary, but also approximately “300 free workers, including a large number of women and girls.”³⁰ The industrial and residential development co-existed in a symbiotic relationship: as factories grew, more people were hired, and living close to their places of employment was desirable.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry appear to have been living in the Brown-Henry House in 1910; Mr. Henry was listed as a farmer in the city directory. The couple’s two sons had left Frankfort in the 1890s to “seek their fortunes in the west” and lived for a time in Kansas and Nebraska. One of these sons, Bowen Henry, had returned to Frankfort by 1910. The census records from that year list him as 40 years old, and working as a real estate agent. In the

²⁷ Kramer, 214.

²⁸ Kramer, 272.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Kramer, 273.

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1910 Frankfort City Directory, though no street numbers are provided, a Bowen Henry is also listed as living in Thornhill.

A few years later though, Bowen Henry is listed as a farmer and living at 409 West Second Street in South Frankfort. In 1921, his mother, by then a widow, transferred the Brown-Henry House and its land to Bowen and a presumed sister, Corrine Henry of Louisville.³¹ Bowen Henry's place of residence continued to change over the next few years. It would appear that the Brown-Henry House was being rented out after 1921; an article in the March 24, 1968 edition of the *State Journal* by Nellie Glenn included this reminiscence about the Brown family:

The Glens moved into the Old Bowen Henry House in 1928 following a fire that destroyed their home on Grand Avenue... (Grand Avenue is in the original Thorn Hill Park plat) Bowen Henry was older than 85 and the property had belonged to his parents, Alexander and Sarah Carter Henry. The house sat at the top of the hill, surrounded by old outbuildings...³²

The Thorn Hill developments, located on either side of the Brown-Henry House, continued to grow during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Small dwellings, mostly frame T-plans, shotguns (some duplex shotguns) and bungalows defined the housing stock. In 1913, the city of Frankfort adopted a set of housing and building regulations for all construction within the city limits. Building permits were required for the "construction, alteration, repair or enlargement of any building which costs in excess of \$1,000."³³ In addition to implementing a permitting process, the new codes included sanitary regulations and fines for violations of any of the regulations. Building in Thorn Hill combined the ease of a short commute to downtown Frankfort, cheap lots and, until 1950, freedom from any city regulations regarding construction and sanitary systems.

Frankfort's economy slowed down, as most of the nation did, during the Great Depression. The local economy had already been shaken by Prohibition, which saw the all-important distilleries shuttered in 1919. The repeal of Prohibition in 1933 fueled the economic engines of the capital city, with a renewed need for affordable housing close to the distilleries. At this point, hemmed in on either side by residential development, faced with the financial realities of the Great Depression, and hoping to capitalize on the slowly revitalizing local economy, the Henry family subdivided the final 55 acres of the Orlando Brown Jr. farm. In 1936, Henry Park was platted (see Supplemental Image 6).³⁴

Rather than following the strictures of the previous Thorn Hill plats, Henry Park was divided into 9 blocks, and consisted of a staggering 385 parcels, including the a large parcel containing the Brown-Henry House (comprising lots 7-9 of Block "C"). While Henry Park involves double the number of parcels contained in L.B. Marshall's first foray into subdivision development, the developer of Thorn Hill Park started it with around nine acres more area than its 1889 predecessor (see Supplemental Image 7). Because lots were more numerous, they were tiny – 25 feet wide, and in some blocks, only 93 feet deep. Other blocks, able to take advantage of a less steep terrain, contained lots that stretched from 150 to over 200 feet deep. That same year, the Henry family sold lots 7-9 to Ora Thompson for \$3,645.50. The deed stipulated that "no building shall be erected thereon

³¹ Franklin County Deed Book 69, 330.

³² Nettie Glenn. "Revisiting Henry Park Via Memories." *State Journal*, Frankfort, Kentucky. March 24, 1968. Typed copy of article on file in the Thorn Hill Folder at the Capital City Museum.

³³ Kramer, 283.

³⁴ Franklin County Deed Book 84, page 272.

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nearer than 20 feet to the street lines as appears on said plat and nor shall any residence be erected thereon to cost less than \$1,500.”³⁵

The 1930s was a busy time for subdivision development in Franklin County. Thirty-two subdivisions were recorded between 1930 and 1939, the busiest decade for suburb expansion in the pre-World War II era. There are several reasons for this surge in residential development. A demand for housing had been growing since the first decade of the twentieth century and the move of the Capitol to South Frankfort. This prompted speculation on a level previously unknown in Frankfort.

A group of prominent businessmen and politicians joined forces in 1907 to subdivide a large estate on the southwest side of South Frankfort. “Capitol Heights,” heralded as Frankfort’s “new and only modern suburb” sought to capitalize on the new capitol building it overlooked. A portion of this development includes the west side of Shelby Street, south of Lafayette Drive. A 1911 ad for the development touted the suburb’s location “up where the pleasant breezes blow” and the quality of the “magnificent lots, immediately adjoining Kentucky’s new two million dollar capitol.”³⁶ Despite a strenuous and well-polished campaign, the development did not materialize for over another decade. See the nomination of Point Breeze (FR-F-5; 2013) for more discussion of this subdivision.

Lots began to sell and houses arose in Capitol Heights in the 1920s, as much of South Frankfort benefitted from an expansion of state government. As “the demands on government expanded during the twenties, so did the number of personnel required to implement these new functions.”³⁷ Many of the state workers moving into Frankfort chose to settle in South Frankfort, within walking distance to their job at the Capitol.³⁸

These subdivisions, carved out of steep hillsides in South Frankfort, were aimed at a different type of occupant than those in Henry Park. Additionally, in the 1930s, a 55-acre undeveloped parcel in South Frankfort, long a desirable residential location, would not have existed. The new occupants of Henry Park worked at Hoge-Montgomery, or the Glass Works, or the Stag Distillery (National Historic Landmark, 2013). After 1941, with the completion of the Thorn Hill and Leestown Road route (Thorn Hill connector), there was a “direct route to the Stag distillery for many Thorn Hill residents who previously had to drive some five miles to reach their jobs.”³⁹ The road provided a “direct connection between neighborhoods less than a mile apart but which had been separated historically by a lack of a road.”⁴⁰

Evaluation of the Significance of the Brown-Henry House within its Context

The Brown-Henry House helps us understand a pivotal period in Franklin County’s history, as well as a little-known phenomenon. The Brown-Henry House is a vestige of the nineteenth century practice of rural summer homes maintained by wealthy families in Franklin County. Additionally, the Brown-Henry House provides a

³⁵ Franklin County Deed Book 84, page 332.

³⁶ Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky*, Plate XIII.

³⁷ Kramer, *Capital on the Kentucky*, 297.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Kramer, 345.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

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glimpse into the dual identity of these wealthy families – an urban career (in law, in the case of Orlando Brown) supported by the production of a farm.

Could Orlando Brown, Jr., have been seeking relief in nostalgia? Modeled after the antebellum Mason Brown House (ON-21) in Owen County, the Brown-Henry House not only sought to emulate a lifestyle past its heyday, but an architectural style as well. All of the Gothic Revival dwellings with which Orlando, Jr., would have been familiar in Frankfort dated from the 1850s and 1860s. Brown consciously did not select a house with a fashionable style, as downtown Frankfort was already beginning to embrace the influences of the Victorian period in its domestic architecture in 1872.

The three decades after the Civil War were tumultuous. Frankfort grew in all directions. The idyll of the summer home, with a team of enslaved workers and a cash crop, could no longer be realized. Orlando Jr.'s financial woes were by no means unique – many Kentucky families of similar socio-economic status found themselves in similar straits in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Across Franklin County, the summer homes of the nineteenth century have been lost to development, either road construction or residential. The Brown-Henry House, no matter what meanings it held for Orlando, Jr., is the one-known surviving example of the summer home property type in Franklin County. Its second lifetime, following the loss of the farm by Orlando, Jr., is as witness to the suburban growth spreading along the Owenton Turnpike.

Development along the Owenton Turnpike, and in Thorn Hill overlooking the road, signaled a building campaign in Frankfort not previously experienced. The hillside was diced into lots, many of them less than generous in size and following the terrain's contours, soon sprouted small, affordable homes – the perfect investment for a landlord and a convenient home for many a renter and worker in the nearby factories and distilleries. As the area continued to grow in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Henry family – hemmed in on either side by Thorn Hill Park and Thorn Hill Heights – finally ceded to development pressures. Much like Thorn Hill Park, which was the first subdivision in the county, and also the first division of the Brown farm, this last division of the Brown land took place in the busiest decade for suburban development seen in Frankfort before the 1930s.

Evaluation of the Integrity of the of the Brown-Henry House

All seven integrity factors of the Brown-Henry House are discussed here.

The Brown-Henry House retains a medium level of integrity of *location* and *setting*. The hillside location, which made the site so desirable during the nineteenth century, has experienced many changes since it was used as a farm by the Brown family. These changes, however, are part of the reason the Brown-Henry House is locally significant, as they illustrate the patterns of residential development at work in Frankfort between 1872-1936. The setting of the Brown-Henry House is little changed from the 1936 plat of Henry Park, as the majority of the surrounding residential development dates to that time period.

The house retains its integrity of *design*, in that the massing, shape and form remain intact. The house is recognizable as a nineteenth century domestic building, built with a vernacular interpretation of the Gothic Revival style. The Brown-Henry House has a medium level of integrity of *workmanship* and *materials*. The house changed hands many times in the second half of the twentieth century, including a space of time where it

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was used as a boarding house. The loss of the front porch, changes to the fenestration and the entry door have lessened the material integrity of the house, but not to the point that it is unable to convey its *association* with the time of construction and the stylistic period in which it was built.

The *feeling* of the Brown-Henry House, in that it was a property set apart, originally, from its neighbors (literally and figuratively – given the hilltop location and the Brown’s socio-economic status) remains, as it is the oldest house in Thorn Hill and is recognized as such by residents and visitors alike. The house is still inherently separate from its surrounding, with its four-acre parcel providing a buffer from the enthusiastic development of the 1930s suburban sprawl – the same suburban sprawl which provided the means by which the house was not torn down and survived to the present day.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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The University of Virginia, Geospatial and Statistical Data Center Historical Census Browser. Electronic document, <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/collections/stats/histcensus/index.html/>, accessed 2011.

Upton, Dell. "The Origins of Chesapeake Architecture," in *Three Centuries of Maryland Architecture: A Selection of Presentations Made at the 11th Annual Conference of the Maryland Historic Trust* (1982)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): FRF-3

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4 acres

UTM References

Frankfort East Quad

Coordinates calculated according to GIS (ArcGIS Explorer)

Coordinates according to NAD 27: Zone 16; Easting 687 658.59; Northing 4231 277.67

Coordinates according to NAD 83, below:

1	<u>687 653.87</u>	<u>4231 483.80</u>	3	<u>16</u>		
	<u>16</u>			<u>16</u>		
	Zone	Easting	Zone	Easting	Zone	Northing
2	<u>16</u>		4	<u>16</u>		
	Zone	Easting	Zone	Easting	Zone	Northing

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary includes the legally described plat, which is “all of Lots 7, 8, 9, and 10 in Block C of Henry Park Subdivision, a subdivision now located in Frankfort, Franklin County, Kentucky as shown in Deed Book 83, page 272.”

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property proposed for inclusion on the National Register by the current nomination includes the approximate four-acre acre parcel associated with the Brown-Henry House. The proposed boundaries provide an appropriate setting for understanding the significance of the design and construction of this house within its historic context in Franklin County. The boundary includes the domestic yard and maintains the historic setting in which the contributing features were constructed.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janie-Rice Brother, Senior Architectural Historian
organization Kentucky Archaeological Survey date May 2013
street & number 1020A Export Street telephone _____
city or town Lexington state KY zip code 40506
e-mail _____

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

PHOTOGRAPHY LOG

All photos:
Brown-Henry House,
Franklin County, KY
Janie-Rice Brother, Photographer
2013
CD at Kentucky Heritage Council (SHPO)

1. Brown-Henry House, south and east elevations, facing northwest.
2. Brown-Henry House façade (east elevation) facing west.
3. Brown-Henry House south elevation, facing southeast.
4. Brown-Henry House south and east elevations, facing northwest.
5. Brown-Henry House, rear (west) elevation, showing ell and later frame addition.

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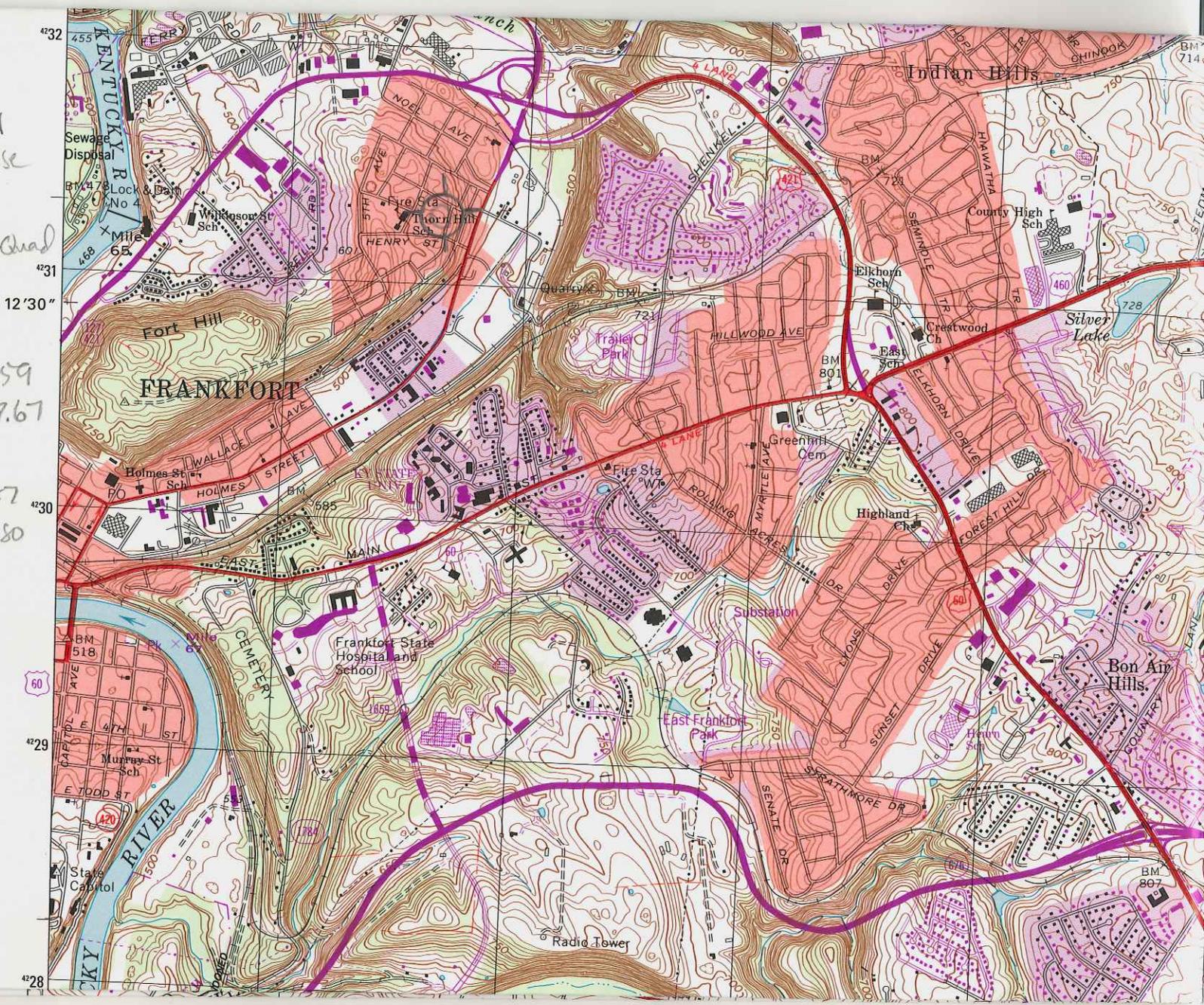
6. Brown-Henry House, detail of bargeboard on façade.

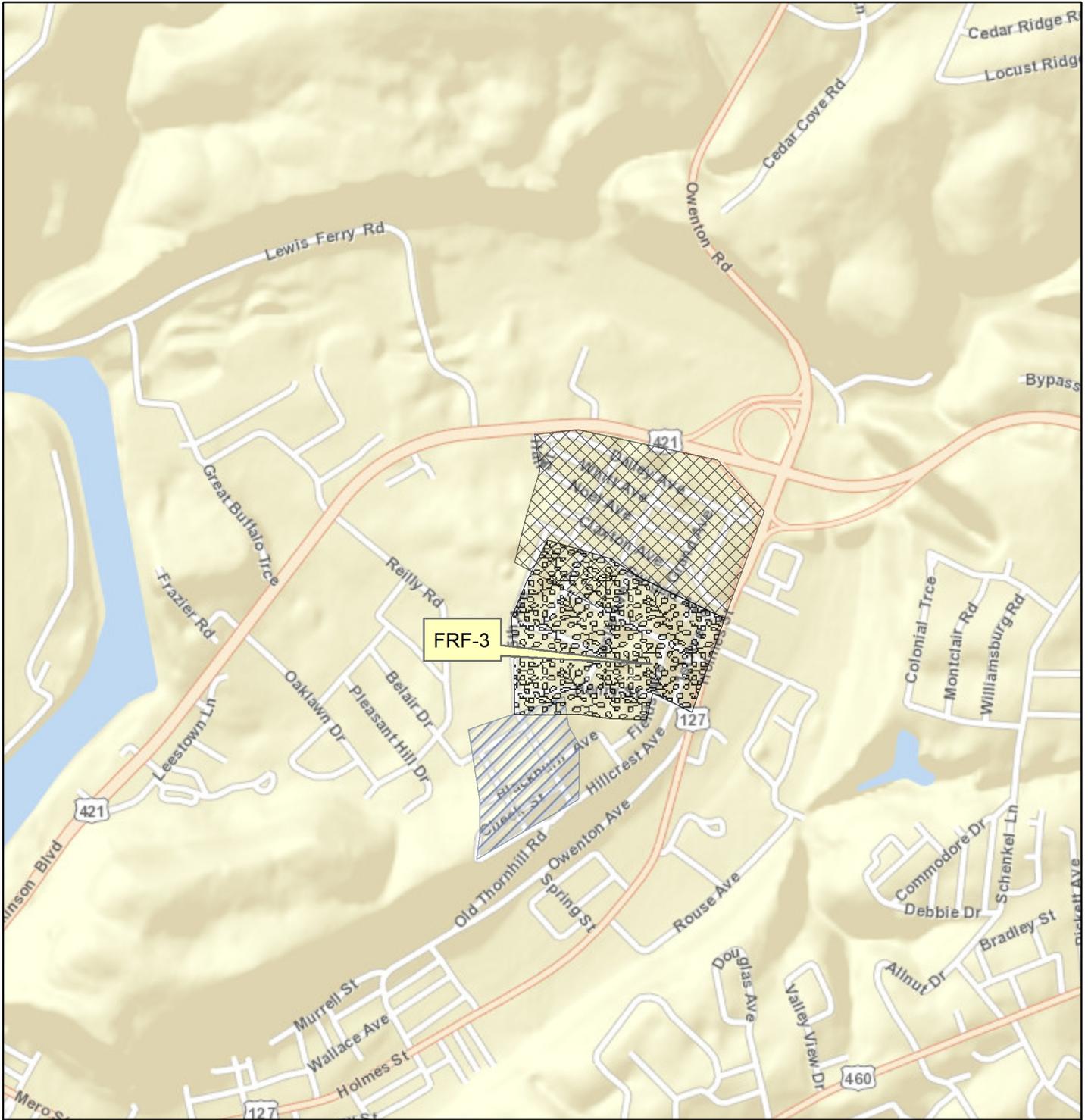
Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Mary Byers
street & number 818 Fields Avenue telephone _____
city or town Frankfort state KY zip code 40601

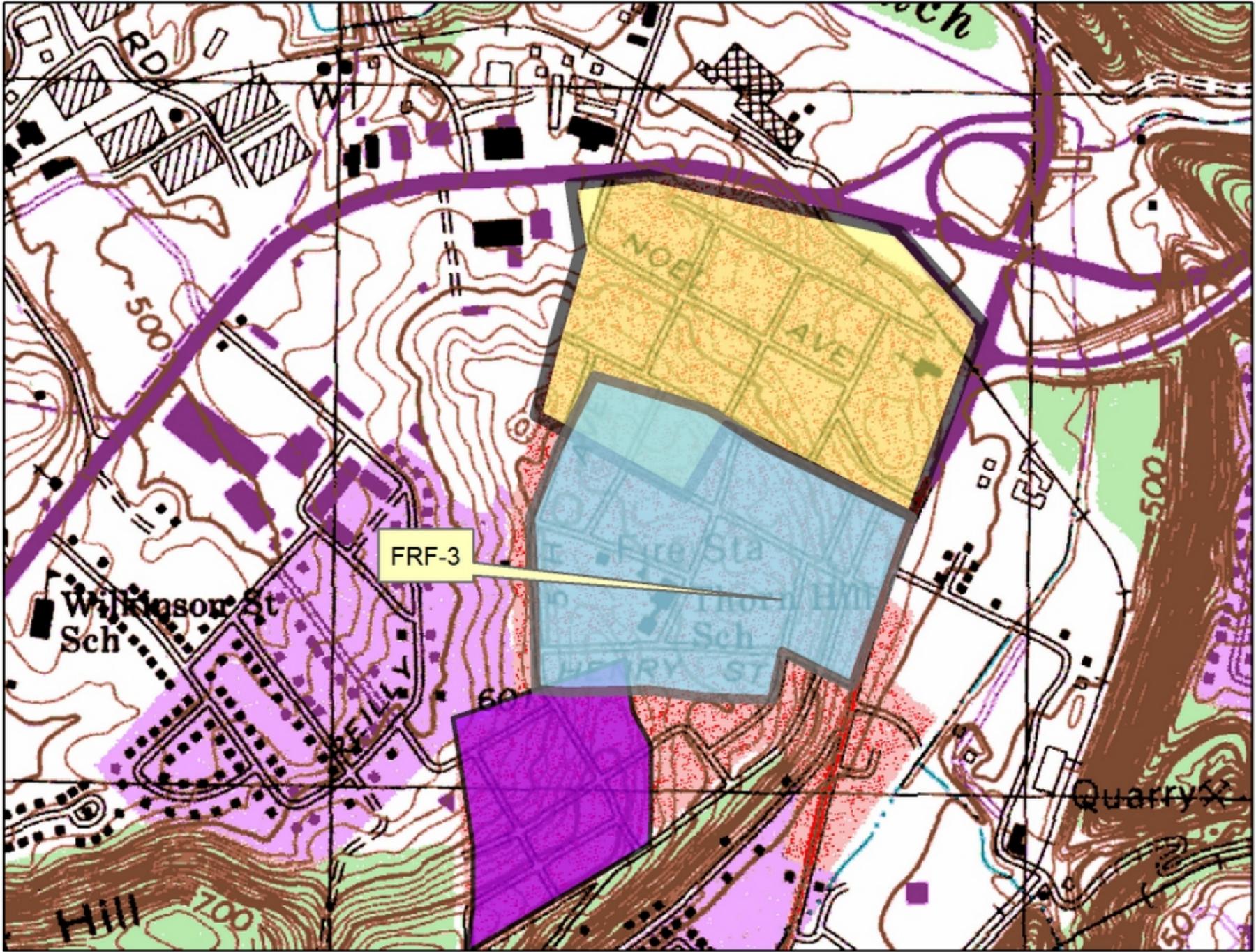
Brown-Henry
Summer House
Franklin Co., Ky
Frankfort East Quad
Zone 16
NAD 27
Easting 687 658.59
Northing 4231 277.67
NAD 83
Easting 687 653.87
Northing 4231 483.80





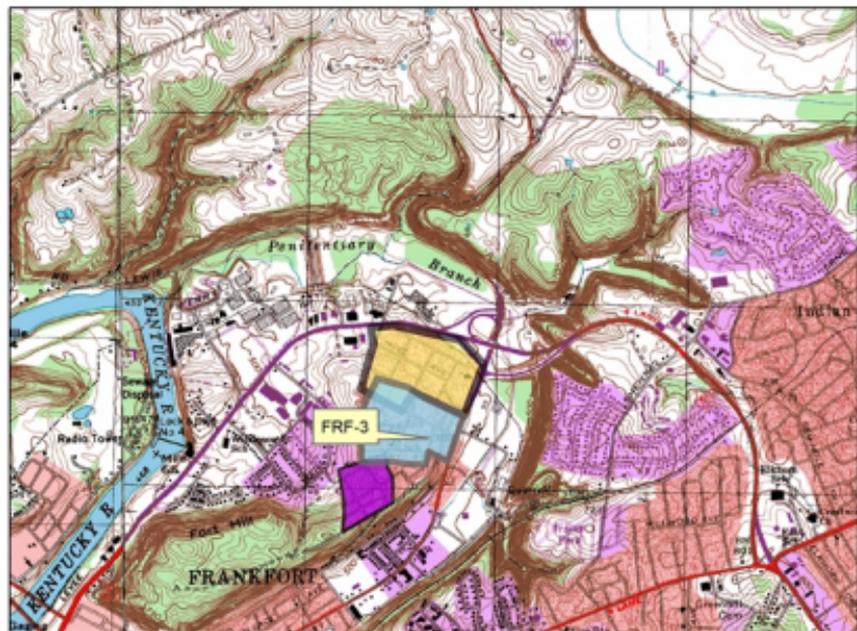
Legend

-  Henry_Park_1936
-  Thornhill_Hts_1890
-  Thorn_Hill_Park_1889



Legend

-  Henry_Park_1936
-  Thornhill_Hts1890
-  Thorn Hill Park_1889

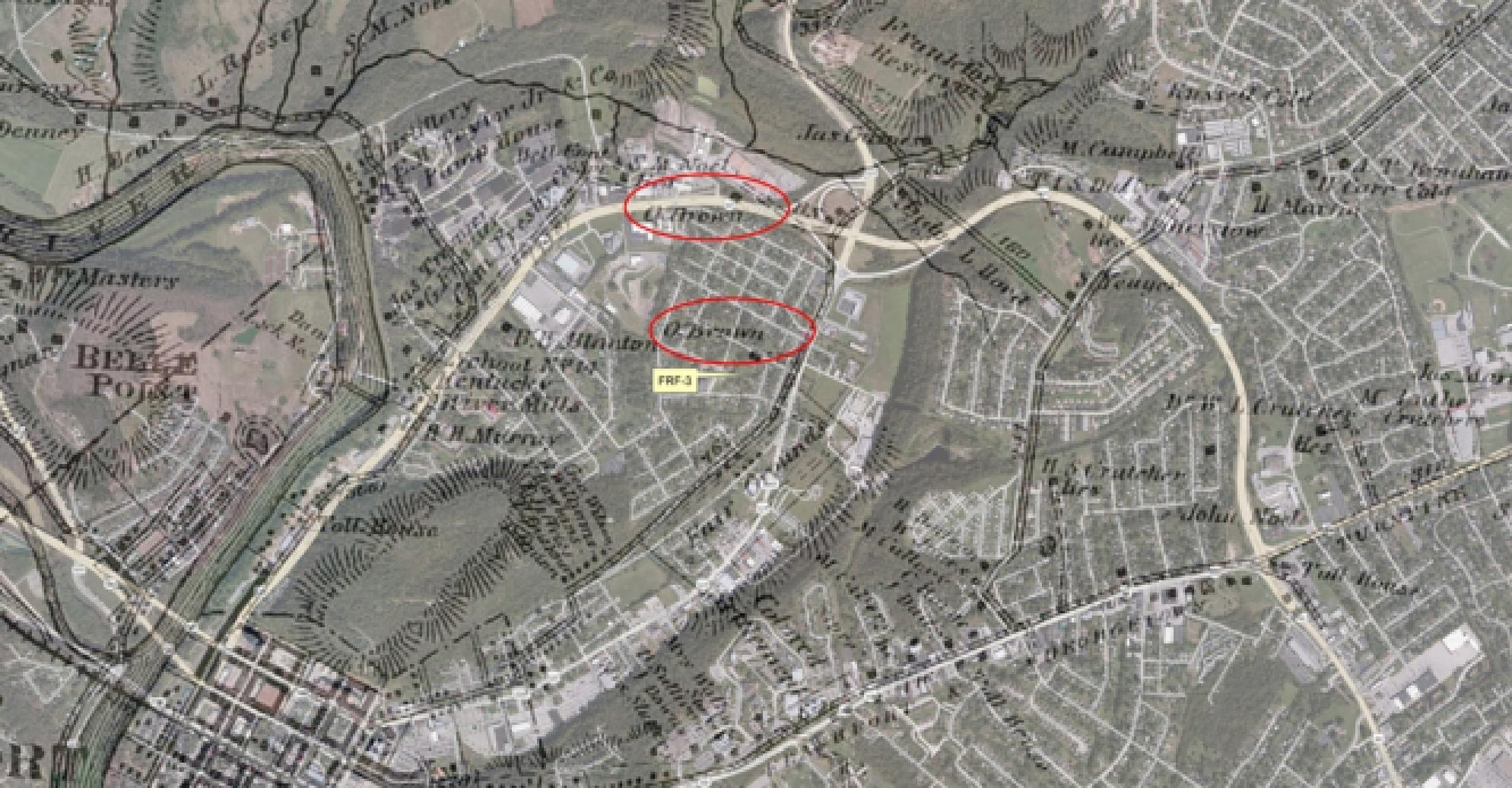


Legend

-  Henry_Park_1936
-  Thornhill_Hts1890
-  Thorn Hill Park_1889



Orlando Brown Houses



L. Horn

O. Brown

PRF-3

Belle Point

Fair Grounds

BRIDGE

















