Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Ashland; Henry Clay Home

AND/OR COMMON: Ashland; Henry Clay Home

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: corner East Main Street and Sycamore Road

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Lexington __ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 6th

STATE: Kentucky CODE: 021

COUNTY: Fayette CODE: 067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	XX MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: Henry Clay Memorial Foundation

STREET & NUMBER: East Main Street and Sycamore Road

CITY, TOWN: Lexington __ VICINITY OF

STATE: Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER: Fayette County Court House

CITY, TOWN: Lexington

STATE: Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: Inventory of Historic Assets

DATE: in progress __FEDERAL XX STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN: Frankfort

STATE: Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
X EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
__GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Ashland, home of Henry Clay, stands near the center of 20 acres of parklike land at the southeast corner of East Main Street and Sycamore Road in Lexington, Kentucky. The grounds--rolling lawn dotted by groves of trees, including some of the ash from which the house derives its name--are all that remain of the 600 acre estate assembled by Clay; the majority of that land, where he farmed and raised thoroughbred horses and purebred sheep and cattle, is now covered by substantial residential developments. The main approach to the mansion, which faces northwest, is a curving drive with carriage circle entered from Sycamore Road (west). A secondary drive leads from the mansion, past outbuildings and visitor parking (effectively screened) to Fincastle Road (south). A formal garden is located at the southeast corner of the property.

According to tradition the 20-room, gable-roofed brick mansion was designed by Benjamin Latrobe and the grounds planned by Pierre Charles L'Enfant. The 2-story main block with pedimented central pavilion and projecting 1-story entrance bay was constructed in 1811 and the flanking 1-story wings with end pavilions were added shortly thereafter. Square-headed, multi-pane windows were flanked by exterior shutters. Interior features included ash paneling from trees cut on the property, a circular stairway, and three octagonal rooms--entrance hall, library, and dining room.

The mansion had shown evidence of structural weakness even during Clay's lifetime; following his death and probably about 1857 his son, James B. Clay, had the building razed and reconstructed on the original foundation under the supervision of Lexington architect Thomas Lewinski. In general the second building followed the lines of the first and materials were reused where possible; ash trees were again cut on the property to replace the original paneling. Some alterations were made, reflecting the Italianate style then popular: the circular stairway was replaced by a half-turn with carved balusters and rail; windows were enlarged, fitted with 2/2 sash, and topped with cast-iron hoods decorated with moldings, keystones, and pendants; and iron balconies were added above the projecting entrance bay and at the front (northwest) windows of the end pavilions. The greenhouse, at the rear of the main block (southeast, adjacent to dining room) was constructed in 1863. The Henry Clay Memorial Foundation, owner of Ashland since 1926, has carried on a program for gradual restoration of the mansion but no significant alterations have been made since the reconstruction. Furnishings are largely pieces owned by Clay or by members of his family.

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Only four of the original Ashland outbuildings survive, all located just south of the mansion (see accompanying sketch map). The brick carriage house consists of a high center section with hipped roof flanked on the east and west by lower flat-roofed sections; Clay's coach remains in place. The caretaker's house, located to the rear of the carriage house, is a 2-story gable-roofed building with 1-story rear ell. To the west of the secondary drive are the dairy cellar and ice houses, brick structures sunk in the ground, the latter covered by conical shingled roofs.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAI
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT.	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	XX POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1811-1852 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Benjamin H. Latrobe; Thomas Lewinski

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Ashland, located at East Main Street and Sycamore Road in Lexington, Kentucky, was the home of Henry Clay, distinguished American political leader of the pre-Civil War period and one of Kentucky's greatest statesmen. Clay acquired the first portion of his 600-acre Ashland estate in 1806. The 2-story central block of the brick mansion was constructed in 1811 and the flanking 1-story wings with pavilions shortly thereafter. According to tradition, the house was designed by Benjamin Latrobe and the estate grounds were planned by Pierre Charles L'Enfant. From 1812, when he first gained national attention as a leader of the "War Hawks" in Congress, until his death in 1852, Clay retured to Ashland as often as his busy public career would permit.

The Ashland mansion had developed structural weaknesses even during Henry Clay's lifetime. Following Clay's death and probably about 1857, his son, James B. Clay, razed the mansion and reconstructed it on the original foundations with an exterior updated by elements of the Italianate style then popular. No significant alterations have been made in the house since that time. Most of Clay's 600-acre estate is now covered by substantial residential developments. The mansion (furnished largely with family pieces) and several original supporting buildings with 20 acres are owned and maintained as a museum complex by the Henry Clay Memorial Foundation.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Henry Clay was born in Hanover County, Virginia, on April 12, 1777. Though his formal schooling was limited, he read law under George Wythe and Robert Brooke and in 1797 was licensed to practice. The same year Clay moved to Lexington, Kentucky, where he quickly gained a wide reputation as a lawyer and orator. He served in the Kentucky legislature from 1803 to 1806 and was professor of law at Transylvania University in Lexington from 1805 to 1807. After one session in the United States Senate (1806-07), Clay returned to the state legislature, was elected its speaker in 1808, and served there until chosen to fill an unexpired term in the Senate (1810-11). He was elected to the House of Representatives in 1810 and served as its speaker from 1811 to 1814.

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Clay first gained national recognition as the spokesman of Western expansionist interests and leader of the "War Hawks" in Congress, who stirred enthusiasm for war with England and helped to bring on the War of 1812. He resigned from the House in 1814 to take part in the peace negotiations leading to the Treaty of Ghent. Clay returned to the House in 1815-21, where he was again chosen as speaker (1815-20), and began to develop his idea of an "American system," a national program which eventually included Federal aid for internal improvements and tariff protection for American industries. In order to pacify sectional interests, Clay pushed the Missouri Compromise through the House in 1821. During his final term in the House (1823-25), he once again became the speaker and did much to extend the authority of that office. In the same session Clay secured the western extension of the National Road and, despite heavy opposition, carried the Tariff of 1824.

As a candidate in the Presidential election of 1824, Clay stood fourth in electoral votes. Since no candidate had a majority, the election went to the House, where Clay would vote for one of his rivals. Though instructed by Kentucky to support Andrew Jackson, his dislike of that military hero was so great that Clay voted instead for John Quincy Adams. When President Adams appointed Clay Secretary of State, Jackson's friends accused the two of political collusion. While the charge appears to have been groundless, it did premanent damage to Clay's political career. In 1828 Clay again supported Adams for President and was bitterly disappointed by Jackson's election.

Although he had intended to retire from politics, Clay was returned to the Senate in 1831, where he became the acknowledged leader of the Whig party (formerly the National Republicans). He hoped to embarrass the President politically by mounting constant opposition to his policies, but Jackson was overwhelmingly reelected in 1832. Clay's anger was eclipsed by the crisis over South Carolina's nullification of the Tariffs of 1828 and 1832 followed by Jackson's threats of armed invasion of the state. Working with the faction led by John C. Calhoun--and at the expense of his own protectionist views--Clay helped to promote the Compromise Tariff of 1833. That same year, when Jackson removed Federal deposits from the Bank of the United States to his "pet banks," Clay secured passage of a Senate resolution (removed from the record in 1837) censuring the President. Refusing to be a Presidential candidate in 1836, Clay continued his opposition tactics in the Senate against Martin Van Buren's administration.

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After an unsuccessful attempt to gain the Whig nomination in 1840, Clay was offered the position of Secretary of State by President Harrison, but chose to remain in the Senate, where he hoped to secure reestablishment of the Bank of the United States. However, the unexpected accession of John Tyler to the Presidency and his vetoes of Clay's bills caused Clay to resign his Senate seat. He became the Whig candidate in the Presidential campaign of 1844, during which he issued the "Alabama Letters," modifying his previous opposition to annexation of Texas and agreeing to annexation if it could be achieved with the common consent of the Union and without war. Clay's defeat by James K. Polk, an avowed expansionist, was a heavy blow both for him and for the Whig party, which refused him its Presidential nomination in 1848.

Returning to the Senate in 1849, when the country faced the issue of slavery in the territory newly acquired in the Mexican War, Clay denounced the extremists in both North and South and asserted the superior claims of the Union above the interests of either section. A slaveholder himself, Clay outlined a plan for gradual emancipation in his Pindell Letter of 1849. He was chiefly responsible for shaping the Compromise of 1850, which he hoped would definitely end the sectional struggle, and with forty-four other members of Congress signed a pledge to oppose for public office anyone who did not accept that settlement. In the summer of 1851 Clay returned to Kentucky by way of Cuba in an unsuccessful attempt to improve his failing health in the southern climate. Although obviously ill, he returned to Washington in the fall and died there on June 29, 1852. His body was returned to Lexington for burial.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 20 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	16	721400	4211820	B	16	721120	4211560
C	16	721010	4211810	D	16	721240	4211980

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Polly M. Rettig, Historian, Landmark Review Project; original form prepared by Frank B. Sarles, Jr., Historian, 8/14/59

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service	11/26/75
STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
1100 L Street NW.	202-523-5464
CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Washington	D.C. 20240

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 9/8/83

~~DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION~~

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)