

"Ridgeway"  
St. Matthews  
Jefferson County, Kentucky

HABS No. KY-68

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KY

56-SAMA

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Kentucky

Historic American Buildings Survey  
E.T. Hutchings, District Officer  
1703 Heyburn Building, Louisville, Ky.

## RIDGEWAY

Ridgeway & Massie Avenues, St. Matthews, Jefferson County, Ky.  
(About 8 miles east by south of Louisville)

Physical Data

Present Owner: Judge & Mrs. Churchill Humphrey.

Present Occupant and Use: Residence of owners.

Description (Present Condition)

Wall Construction: 13" brick, flemish bond at front and rear.

Size and form: Central unit with two pavilion appendages (about 47' x 102½'); outbuilding (18' x 40'), connected by passage.

Number Stories: 1 story, basement and attic.

Front Porch: Small, 1-story, 4 wood columns, pediment, cement tile floor, stone steps and border.

Rear Porch: Across rear, one story, screened, wood floor.

Exterior Openings: Windows: Twelve-light, double hung.

Exterior Openings: Front Door: A pair of six-panel entrance doors with side lights and fan transom. Two doors to rear porch are made to simulate the windows.

Cornice: Wood, moulded.

Roofing: Tin, standing seam.

Chimneys: Six brick at mainhouse, one at outbuilding.

Interior (Interior woodwork design is of early character. Whether or not some of it has been replaced by former owners under architectural direction was not ascertained.)

Floors: Ash, about 6" wide.

Doors: 6 panel.

Trim: Moulded trim with corner block; some doors have a block at center of opening also; some doors have pilaster treatment with glazed fan light transom.

Mantels: Wood, Adam character.

Stairways: Wood, enclosed between partitions.

Plasterwork: Walls and ceiling plastered, but no special work.

Additions and Alterations: Roof replaced, monitor skylight added in recent years, secondary entrance doors removed and replaced by windows for new bathrooms, porch walls plastered and revised.

Outbuildings: Outbuilding connected to house was said to be originally the kitchen, now used for a study. Stone springhouse about 100 yards east. Wood barns and stables of more recent date.

#### Historical Data

Year of erection: About 1804-05.\*

Built for (first owner): Major Henry Massie.

Architect or Designer: Not ascertained.

Built by: Not ascertained.

Original Intended Use: Residence.

Notable events and occupants:\*\*

Major Massie's estate included about 400 acres. Mrs. Massie married three times, finally she was Mrs. Key. There were many owners of this place. About 40 to 50 years ago, a dairyman with his family moved into the two-room outbuilding on the east and used the main house for storage of his crops. After this abuse the house was restored by Maud and Aubrey Cossar (deceased). A. W. Cowell, Landscape Architect, planned the present planting, which has grown so thick that the entire front cannot be photographed. Nevin, Morgan & Kolbrook, Architects, finished a studio in the attic space and replaced an older cupola with a monitor skylight. Book shelves in living room and other minor revisions have been made from time to time. Present owner has put the house in excellent state of repair, inside and out.

References: \*From Old Kentucky Architecture by Rexford Newcomb.  
\*\*From Mrs. Churchill Humphrey

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Prepared by F. Ray Leimkuehler December 6, 1940

F. Ray Leimkuehler  
Architect in Charge, Central Unit,  
Historic American Buildings Survey.

Approved: *C. F. Hutchings* Date: 1 Dec 1941  
District Officer.

Addendum to:

Ridgeway  
4095 Massie Avenue  
St. Matthews (Louisville area)  
Jefferson County  
Kentucky  
(as recorded 9n 1940)

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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ADDENDUM TO

RIDGEWAY

HABS No. KY-68

Location: 4095 Massie Avenue, St. Matthews, Jefferson County, Kentucky.

USGS Jeffersonville, Indiana - Kentucky Quadrangle,  
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 16/618280/4235740

Present Owner: Martha L. Humphrey.

Present Occupant: Humphrey Family.

Present Use: Dwelling.

Significance: An excellent example of Federal architecture in Kentucky, Ridgeway has been meticulously restored to its former elegance and purpose as a residence.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

- 1. Date of erection: Circa 1817-1819. From deeds it is known that Henry Massie, the builder, acquired the property in 1811 under a mortgage which was released in 1816. It is unlikely, therefore, that he built the house before 1816. Tax records for Jefferson County reveal the following information:

Year	Acreage	Blacks Over 16	Total Blacks	Horses	Total Value
1812	400	6	11	9	--
1813	400	15	33	13	--
1814	400	18	37	13	\$19,270
1815	tax book missing				
1816	tax book missing				
1817	434	24	41	14	\$27,800
1818	434	23	42	17	\$32,100
1819	434	23	39	16	\$30,910
1820	tax book missing				
1821	434	16	33	13	\$24,260
1822	434	12	26	7	\$18,000

From the above information, it can be concluded that the house was probably constructed within the years of the growth of the value of the property.

- 2. Architect: Not known.

3. Original and subsequent owners: The house is located on tract 113 of plat 19 in Jefferson County. The following references to the title of the house and its immediate surrounding tract of land are found in the Clerk's Office in the Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville, Kentucky.

1811 Deed, December 25, 1811, recorded in Deed Book K, page 514. Henry Massie and Helen Massie mortgaged 400 acres of land for \$8,000 to Benjamin Sebastian, which mortgage was released December 3, 1816 by deed, recorded in Deed Book K, page 516.

Deed, December 25, 1811, recorded in Deed Book 9, page 246. Benjamin Sebastian and Amelia Sebastian sold to Henry Massie a 400 acre tract of land for \$4,000.

1872 Deed, April 6, 1872, recorded in Deed Book 163, page 134. Deed of partition of farm under the will of Helen Massie Martin Key, recorded in Will Book 7, page 451. The land, under this deed of partition, was divided among William C. Bullitt, Henry M. Bullitt, William B. Howard, Anne C. Courtney, Henry M. Love, Florence T. Love, Robert H. Love, Amanthus B. Love, Elizabeth H. Thompson and R. H. Thompson, Annette L. Carson and I. Charles Carlson, John Thompson, William L. Price, Helen M. Fulton, Priscilla L. Gordon and A.A. Gordon, Helen M. Chenowith and Henry Chenowith, Helen Lowry and James Lowry, Willitt Bullitt, Cuthbert Bullitt, William G. Bullitt, Eliza Fitzhugh and H. Fitzhugh, Harriet Fitzhugh and John Fitzhugh, Virginia Cook and John Cook, Helen Bate, and Virginia Thompson, all represented by I.W. Henning, special commissioner. William C. Bullitt received a tract of land containing the house.

Deed, April 24, 1872, recorded in Deed Book 162, page 332. William C. Bullitt conveyed to Joshua F. Bullitt his tract of land under the previous deed.

1874 Deed, June 25, 1874, recorded in Deed Book 214, page 568. Joshua F. Bullitt and Elizabeth R. Bullitt conveyed 10.38 acres to John C. Bullitt and Theresa L. Bullitt in exchange for 8.39 acres from the second party to the first.

1883 Deed, February 3, 1883, recorded in Deed Book 274, page 105. John C. Bullitt conveyed to Joshua F. Bullitt his rights, title, and interest to the land inherited from Helen Massie Martin Key.

- 1904 Deed, April 1, 1904, recorded in Deed Book 616, page 539. James B. Bullitt, executor of the will of Joshua F. Bullitt, Joshua F. Bullitt and Maggie T. Bullitt, James B. Bullitt and Clare Ralston Bullitt, and Fidelity Trust and Safety Vault Company sold to Charles Kaelin, Jr. and Edward L. Kaelin a tract of land (hereinafter known as tract no. 1 for the sake of clarity).
- 1910 Deed, March 21, 1910, recorded in Deed Book 714, page 423. Mary Kaelin and Edward L. Kaelin sold to Theresa Bisig tract no. 1.
- 1911 Deed, April 4, 1911, recorded in Deed Book 738, page 565. James B. Bullitt and Clare Ralston Bullitt, Joshua F. Bullitt and Maggie T. Bullitt, James B. Bullitt, executor of the will of Elisabeth R. Bullitt, and Fidelity Trust Company, trustee, sold to Louis Bauer the second tract of land composing present-day Ridgeway. (For clarity, this tract will be called no. 2).
- 1915 Deed, February 9, 1915, recorded in Deed Book 822, page 285. Theresa Bisig sold tract no. 1 to Mary Kaelin.
- 1922 Deed, December 23, 1922, recorded in Deed Book 1032, page 174. Edward L. Kaelin and Mary Kaelin sold tract no. 1 to Maud Woodson Cossar.
- 1922 Deed, December 28, 1922, recorded in Deed Book 1028, page 500. Louis Bauer and Eva Bauer sold tract no. 2 to Maud Woodson Cossar.
- 1931 Deed, October 23, 1931, recorded in Deed Book 1489, page 428. Maud Woodson Cossar and Aubrey Cossar, Fidelity and Columbia Trust Company, Farmers Bank and Trust Company of St. Matthews, and Ridgeway Farms sold both tracts of land to Martha L. Humphrey and Churchill Humphrey.
- 1970 Will, dated June 1, 1926 with codicil dated January 22, 1943, recorded in Will Book 163, page 511. Churchill Humphrey devised Ridgeway to his wife, Martha L. Humphrey.
4. Alterations and additions: Under the ownership of the Cossars restoration was undertaken by Frederic L. Morgan of the firm of Nevin, Morgan and Kolbrook. Included in the restoration were installation of electricity and lighting, plumbing, bathrooms, kitchen equipment, heating (central), skylights in the roof of the central pavilion for a new room constructed in the attic, hexagonal concrete flagging in the front porch floor and front walk, windows in the place of former doors at the front sides of

the hyphens, and a plan for relandscaping, partially executed. Previously it had found use as a combination residence and barn for a truck farm. Churchill Humphrey installed a trap door with ladder leading to the basement in the closet of the northwest corner bedroom. The bookshelves and book ladder of this bedroom date from the earlier restoration.

- B. Historical Context: Helen Massie, wife of Henry Massie, is best known for her three marriages. Following the death of Henry Massie in 1830 she married again in 1834 to John L. Martin. Following his death she was married once again to Marshall Key, brother of Francis Scott Key, in 1857. Following his death, she remained a widow until her death at the age of 80 in 1872. Special contracts, recorded in Deed Book NN, page 146 and in Deed Book 98, page 482, were drawn up for her second and third marriages in which both parties disavowed inheritance rights in the other's property. Legend has it that her first two marriages were to men of wealth, but her last was to her true love who, on their wedding day, drove to Ridgeway with a coach and swept his blushing bride over the threshold. Doubt is cast on this story by the fact that Helen Massie was 65 years old at the time. Childless, she left the farm to nieces and nephews, several of them belonging to the Bullitt family, another prominent Louisville family.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### General description:

The brick Federal style house is flanked by a wing on either side. A projecting pedimented porch is in the center of the main house, providing shelter for the front entrance. Simple long, narrow columns support the gable roof of the porch. A small elliptical window decorates the tympanum of the gable. The front doorway has an exquisite elliptical fanlight with 4-paned sidelights and long narrow pilasters flanking the paneled double doors. Two narrow, towering brick chimneys occupy either side wall of the main house. Between either wing and the main house, in the front facade, is an elliptical window with similar Federal features of the front doorway, with the exception of sidelights. It was originally a door, which was reached by a stoop. Both the main house and the end wings have hipped roofs. Interior features include elliptical doorways, some with fanlight-like transoms, molded chair railings and simple paneled doors.

## PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### A. Bibliography:

#### 1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Deed Books located in the Clerk's Office of the Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville, Kentucky.

Will Books located in the Probate Office of the Jefferson County Courthouse, Louisville, Kentucky.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Leopold, Helen, "Portrait Poems Offer Insight Into Ridgeway's First Mistress," Louisville Times, April 13, 1965.

Leopold, Helen, "Romantic Ridgeway," Louisville Times, March 27, 1965.

Prepared by: David Arbogast,  
Project Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
Summer 1974  
and  
Susan McCown,  
Staff Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
Spring 1981

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Preservation Alliance of Louisville and Jefferson County, Inc. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1974 at the HABS Field Office in Louisville by Prof. John Haggard, (Syracuse University), Project Supervisor; David Arbogast (Columbia University), Project Historian; Mary Oehrlein, Project Foreman; Bayer Lee (City College of New York), Architect; and Mary M. Herd (University of Tennessee) and Charles Raith (University of Cincinnati), student assistant architects. Susan McCown, a HABS staff historian in the Washington, D.C. office, edited the written descriptive data in the spring of 1981, for transmittal to the Library of Congress. HABS staff photographer Jack E. Boucher took the photographs of the structures in 1979.

ADDENDUM TO:  
RIDGEWAY  
(Judge Churchill Humphrey House)  
4095 Massey Avenue  
Saint Matthews  
Jefferson County  
Kentucky

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U.S. Department of the Interior  
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