

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 94001258

Date Listed: 4/23/97

Riverdale Historic District  
Property Name

Knox            TENNESSEE  
County        State

Knoxville and Knox County MPS  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*Paul R. Lynn*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

4/23/97  
Date of Action

=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 1

This resubmission changes the name of the property from Riverdale-Hodges Historic District (shown on the original submission) to Riverdale Historic District.

Section No. 8

The period of significance for the district is also amended to show that it extends from circa 1785 through 1875.

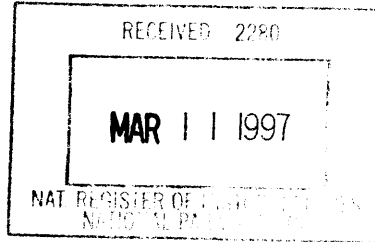
These changes have been confirmed with the Tennessee SHPO.

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DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Riverdale Historic District

other names/site number Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District

2. Location

street & number 6416 & 6603 Thomgrove Pike, 6802 Hodges Ferry Road  not for publication

city or town Knoxville  vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Knox code 093 zip code 37914

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Robert L. Bryan  
Signature of certifying official/Title

3/5/97  
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Bob L. Bryan Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

4/23/97

Riverdale Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox County, Tennessee  
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)  
Category of Property (Check only one box)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4		buildings
1		sites
1		structures
		objects
6	0	Total

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

Historic and Architectural Resources of  
Knox Co., TN

Number of Contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

2

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

PROCESSING: manufacturing

TRANSPORTATION: water related

TRANSPORTATION: road related

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

TRANSPORTATION: road related

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Gothic Revival, Greek Revival

OTHER: Folk Victorian

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls weatherboard

roof ASPHALT, METAL

other STONE, WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Riverdale Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox County, TN  
County and State

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 N/A

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

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C moved from its original location.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property
- G less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT  
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance  
circa 1785-1850

Significant Dates

circa 1785, circa 1796, circa 1836, 1850

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Knoxville/Knox Co. Metropolitan Planning Commission

Riverdale Historic District  
Name of Property

Knox County, TN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 29 acres

### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>249480</u>	<u>3982980</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>250120</u>	<u>3982560</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>250130</u>	<u>3982960</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>249480</u>	<u>3982560</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann K. Bennett, Senior Planner and Pamela Dishongh, Intern  
 organization Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission date May, 1994  
 street & number Suite 403, City-County Building telephone (423) 215-2500  
 city or town Knoxville state TN zip code 37902

### Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

### Property Owner

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

name see attached continuation pages  
 street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Riverdale Historic District extends from the intersection of Thomgrove Pike and Wayland Drive south across the French Broad River. It includes four buildings - three houses and one Mill (Riverdale Mill, NR 1/27/87) - a stone arched bridge, and one site - the Bowman-McBee-Hodges Ferry Crossing.

The district crosses Thomgrove Pike and the French Broad River as the original community did. The district includes the crossroads of a community that was present in Knox County from the earliest days of European settlement. Thomgrove Pike is a modern road which follows the path of the original North Carolina Road, a road prominent in settling Knox County in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The North Carolina Road followed the pathway carved by the French Broad River. During periods of low water, the French Broad was too shallow to provide a transportation corridor, but during wetter months it was also an early settlement route into Knox County. The French Broad River was later a transportation corridor for flatboats and, for a brief period, steamboats. Along the French Broad, several communities existed that spanned the French Broad River. Only in the second quarter of the twentieth century, when paved roads and bridges made automobile travel possible, were the ferries along the rivers abandoned. The shipment of goods on the French Broad had ended some thirty years earlier.

To the north of Thomgrove Pike, the land slopes downward toward Campbell Branch, the stream that flows into Mill Creek and provides water for Riverdale Mill, which is sited on its banks. On the south side of Thomgrove Pike, the land slopes downward to the French Broad River; the domestic buildings mentioned in this nomination were all built at a n elevation well out of the flood plains of Campbell Branch, Mill Creek and the French Broad River. They are the buildings that remain from the early settlement of Riverdale. The district boundaries are drawn to include the ferryman's house across the French Broad because the community originally included that house in its boundaries, and the ferry linked both banks of the French Broad River. Later development took place at the edges of these properties, separated from them by the surrounding agricultural land or topography; those later buildings do not infringe on the appearance of the town center and are not included in this nomination, which captures the nucleus of the original community.

The French Broad River's tree lined banks offer glimpses of the south bank of the river, and of the Bowman-McBee-Hodges House in the distance, on the first rise of the flood plain some two hundred feet from the river's south bank. From this house, the ferry operator provided the link that historically joined the Riverdale community which spanned the river. North of the Bowman-McBee-Hodges House and east of the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House, along the south side of Thomgrove Pike, is the ferry landing. The ferry landing was always an undeveloped opening along the banks of the river. Today as in the past, a graveled one lane ramp descends the river bank on each side of the French Broad, and recreational boaters have taken the place of the horses and wagons that historically used the ramps.

The construction of the buildings in the Riverdale Historic District is unique for Knox County. They are a mixture of nogging and later frame construction, all one or two stories tall. Each house has at least one section that has been established as nogging construction. In Knox County, most of the examples of this unusual construction have been found along the French Broad River. The architecture of the buildings primarily reflects the mid to late nineteenth century. Two of the houses, the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House (Knox County Historic Sites Survey Number - KN.2469) and the Bowman-McBee-Hodges House (KN.2803), show both Greek Revival and Gothic Revival stylistic influences. The Reverend James Kennedy-Edward Pickel House (KN.2470) is Folk Victorian in style.

Described below, by street address, are the principal resources in the district. Of the six resources in the district, all are contributing. There are four primary (contributing) buildings, one contributing site and one potential archaeological site.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## HODGES FERRY ROAD

### 1. 6802 Hodges Ferry Road. Bowman-McBee-Hodges House.

Gothic Revival with Greek Revival influence. Circa 1836; 1870; 1950. The Bowman-McBee-Hodges House is a two story, heavy timber frame construction with nogging infill, with an exterior wall covering of weatherboard. A cross gable roof covered in standing seam metal forms a "T" shape. From the front, or north facade (facing the French Broad River) the house appears to be a front gable plan. However, both east and west elevations also display projecting gables with side wings. Encircling portions of the west and east elevations and extending completely across the north elevation is a one story wrap around porch with chamfered wood columns, decorated with sawn wood trim between the porch columns. In the gables, sawn wood bargeboards match those appearing on the porch. A large sawn wood pierced attic vent in the shape of a rosette also decorates the north (front) gable. Six over six double hung wood windows are crowned with comices as are the three, six panel wood doors opening into the house from the north, east and west elevations. Each door is flanked by three light sidelights and topped with three light transoms. The north entrance sidelights and transom contain original ruby glass. A slight eaves overhang is decorated with a wide frieze and alternating large and small sawn wood brackets. Additional brackets are located along the wall, underneath the roof of the front and side porches. A pargeated brick foundation supports the main structure while pargeated concrete blocks support the front and side porches.

A one story gable-roofed rear addition circa 1870 contains the kitchen, which was added to the south facade of the house. A shed roof side porch with chamfered posts faces west. A similar porch originally facing east was partially enclosed circa 1950 to provide space for a bathroom. The addition is covered with weatherboarding and features double hung wood six over six windows topped with comices matching the window trim of the original section of the house.

The earliest part of the house contains a total of six rooms, three upstairs and three downstairs, with three hallways. Two of the hallways contain winding, suspended staircases with carved walnut balustrades and brackets along an open stair string course. Each room has plastered walls and ceilings, and carpet covering wide plank pine floors. All rooms feature baseboards and moldings around doors and windows. Each room is square and measures 16' x 16'; each room contains a fireplace with an original wood mantel and curved openings flanked by pilasters in the Doric order. Fireplace surrounds are brick.

Built-in cupboards are located next to the fireplaces, with built-in closets in each of the upstairs rooms. Both cupboards contain double upper doors with small glass panes, in addition to double single paneled lower doors. Three built-in closets are located upstairs. Two of the closets feature two bottom drawers located beneath upper double four-paneled doors. The third closet also had two bottom drawers. However, these drawers are located below five central drawers flanked by one-panel doors. All cupboards and closets feature porcelain knobs and are crowned with comices. An additional interior feature of the house is four paneled doors with three light transoms. (C)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

## THORNGROVE PIKE

## 2. 6416 Thorngrove Pike. McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House

Greek Revival with Gothic Revival influence. Circa 1796, 1865. The McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House consists of two sections, a rear one and one-half story section built circa 1796 and a front two story section built in 1865. The circa 1796 rear section of the house is heavy timber frame construction with nogging infill. This original section of the house has an interior, central brick chimney, an end-gable roof of metal standing seam and wall covering of clapboard and weatherboard. In 1973, to counteract the deterioration of the original soft brick in the foundation, the foundation was replaced with concrete blocks and the exterior section of the chimney was rebuilt. Windows are nine over six double hung sash with the exception of the two casement windows on the second story of the southeast elevation in the original structure. One of the casement windows contains four lights, the other, an original window, contains six lights. A wood porch covered with a shed roof and supported by replacement cedar log posts, is located along the southeast facade. The north end of the porch was enclosed in 1973 in order to accommodate a bathroom.

The front (northeast) section of the house was built in 1865. It is a two story frame three-bay central passage plan residence with Green Revival and Gothic Revival influences. The wall covering of the house is weatherboard. The home has two interior end chimneys and a gable roof covered with metal standing seam roofing. On the primary (northeast) facade is an original one story front porch encompassing the central bay of the facade. A metal hip roof, wood tongue and groove porch floor and Gothic sawn wood bargeboard, together with four wood posts bracketed by pierced sawn wood Gothic trim, rest on sawn wood piers, providing the design details of the porch. The front entrance has original two panel double doors flanked by three light sidelights above a base with an octagonal recessed panel. A three light transom appears over the door, flanked by corner lights. Windows are wood, double hung, six over six sashes flanked by louvered wood shutters and surrounded by a crowning triangular pediment and dog-ears. There are corner boards. The gable ends of the house display molded partial cornice returns. A wide frieze located directly beneath the eaves is decorated with paired sawn wood brackets.

The original, circa 1796, section of the house was built in a hall and parlor plan. A dining room, kitchen and grain room located to the rear (south) of the kitchen are on the first floor. Two bedrooms are located above. Boxed-in stairs provided original access to the upper story of the original house. However, the stairs were rerouted in 1865 to connect the new section with the original upstairs bedrooms. At this time, open straight run stairs leading to the second story were installed in the "grain room." The interior retains its original sheathing of wide, beaded horizontal boards and wide board floors which have been covered with carpeting. Only in the northern first floor room has the sheathing been covered with modern paneling. Ceilings on the first floor were lowered in 1973 and covered with beaver board tile. An open, central fireplace, with a firebox approximately five feet wide and five feet tall, was once used for cooking in both of the downstairs rooms. Both fireplace openings were sealed when stoves using the chimneys as flues were installed in the late 1800s. Built-in cabinets are located to the sides of both first floor fireplaces.

The 1865 section of the house is one room deep with a central hall plan. Interior features include original wood paneled doors and wainscoting, all of which still exhibit the original painted grained finish. Greek Revival styled wood mantels and built-in cabinets are located in each room. Plastered walls and ceilings are intact, and wide board pine floors remain exposed and in excellent condition. One of the most distinctive interior features of the 1865 portion of the house is a suspended open string staircase with a carved cherry balustrade and newel posts, risers, treads, and decorative stair brackets.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

Located in front of the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House is a circa 1785 archeological site. Hammer dressed stones, grown over by grass, mark a site that oral history records as the foundation of the first house James White constructed in Knox County, Tennessee. The oral history is confirmed by Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey in *his History of the Lebanon Church* written in 1875. In that history, he noted that a house was built by James White in 1785, and occupied for a period of about ten years by White, Alexander Campbell, and possibly others. Dr. Charles Faulkner, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Tennessee, recently conducted a Phase I survey and shovel testing of the site. In addition to prehistoric artifacts recovered there, the historic artifacts, which appear to have dated from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, indicate that there was a built on the site and that it was very early in Knox County European-related settlement. The artifacts found were consistent with that conclusion.

### 3. Ferry Landing

Located approximately 200 feet from the front elevation of the Bowman-McBee Hodges House on the French Broad River is a ferry landing site, which links with a landing across the French Broad River; the ferry is noted as being established circa 1796. The ferry land is an unpaved entry to the entry featuring a gradual slope rather than a vertical riverbank. (C)

### 4. 6603 Thomgrove Pike. The Reverend James Kennedy-Edward Pickel House.

Folk Victorian with Italianate influence. Circa 1805, circa 1875, circa 1900. The Reverend James Kennedy-Edward Pickel House consists of a one story rear section built circa 1805, which is probably of heavy timber frame with nogging infill construction; a portion of the building may also have been built using log construction. The rear section has weatherboard as an exterior wall covering. The rear section has a gable end roof with a standing seam metal roof covering, a brick foundation, and an interior central brick chimney. A full length porch along the north elevation is covered with a shed roof supported by sawn wood columns. Along the south facade is another wood porch covered with a shed roof. However, the end of this porch has been enclosed to provide space for a laundry room. This original section of the house has one window with a batten shutter and no glass, one over one double hung wood window and one six over six double hung wood window. Only one original door remains in this section, a four panel cross door.

The front section of the house was built circa 1875 with an additional room to the north added in the early 1900's. According to local oral history, this portion of the house original consisted of two pens separated by a dogtrot. The structure is a one story frame asymmetrical plan which was originally a central hall or dog-trot plan. The structure now has four, but originally had three bays. The house has a brick and concrete block foundation, one interior brick end chimney and one interior brick central chimney that was originally an end chimney, and a gable end roof with standing seam metal roof covering. On the primary, or west, elevation is a one story full length porch covered by a shed roof with a standing seam metal roof covering, sawn wood columns, turned wood balustrade and sawn wood Italianate style brackets. The primary entrance is a four panel cross door crowned by a three light transom.

The interior of the circa 1805 portion of the house features built-in cupboards with two upper doors of two panels and two lower doors of two panels, plaster walls and ceilings, wide horizontal plank wainscoting, chair rails, base boards and wide plank floors. Throughout the house, fireplaces have fireboxes that are approximately five feet wide and almost as tall; they display brick surrounds and mantels that are all similar. The circa 1900 addition of the north room has plaster walls and ceilings, carpeted floors and a four panel door. Three closets and two baths have been added to the house interior in recent years. (C)

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 5

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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**5. Thomgrove Pike over Campbell Branch. Thomgrove Pike Bridge.**

Circa 1870. Stone arch bridge. Located on Thomgrove Pike twenty-five feet east of its intersection with Wayland Drive. Single center arch, stone abutments, cut stone in random pattern. (C)

**WAYLAND DRIVE**

**6. Wayland Drive at Thomgrove Pike. Riverdale Mill. (NR 1/27/87)**

The Riverdale Mill is frame, of post and beam construction, with weatherboard wall covering. Two stories in height, it is topped by a gable roof with both six over six and two over two double hung sash windows and a one story flat roofed porch on the front elevation. The foundation, which is made up of piers and a partial solid wall, is of cut limestone. (C)

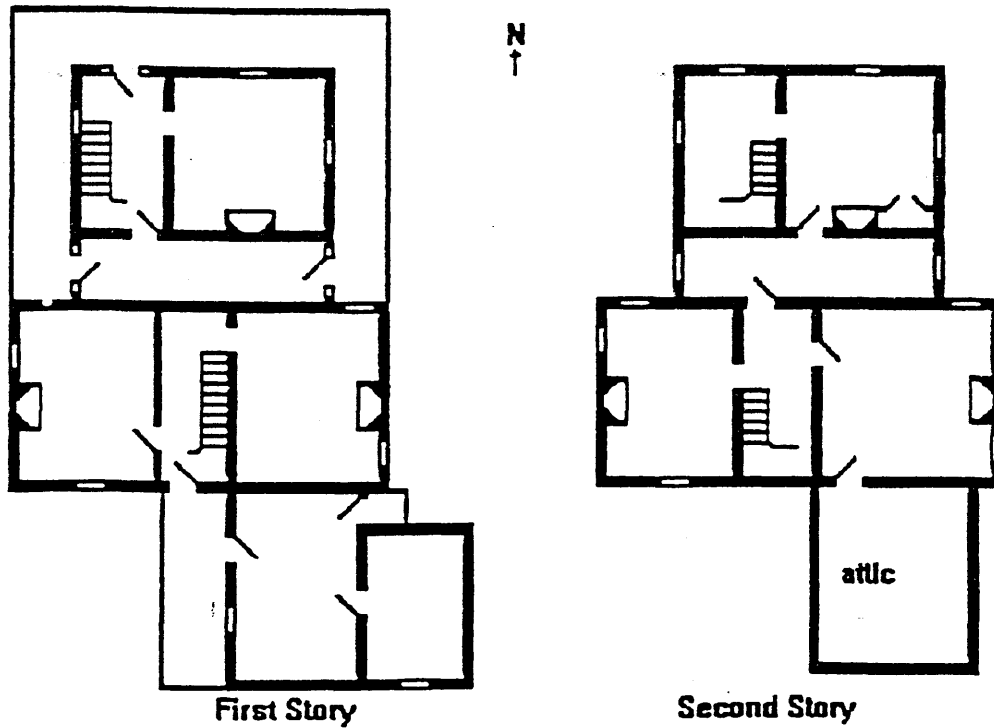
Also included within the boundaries of the Riverdale Mill is the mill dam located north of the mill on the Campbell Branch. (C)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee



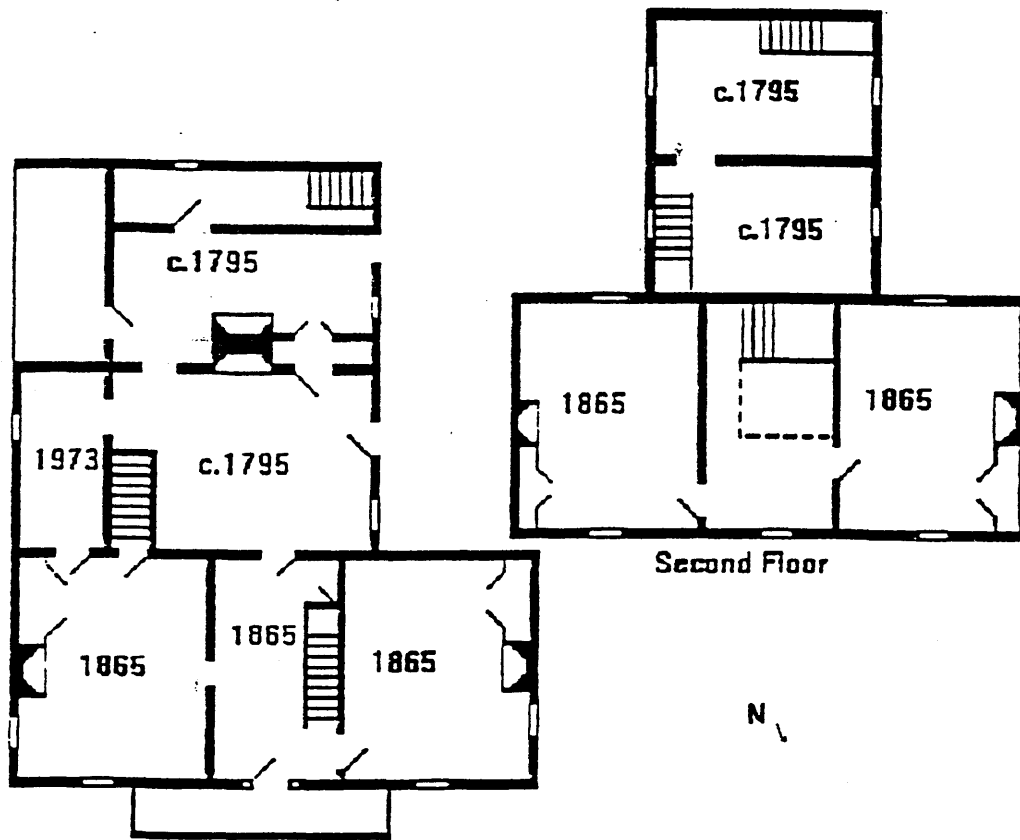
**Bowman-Hodges House  
Hodges Ferry Road**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee



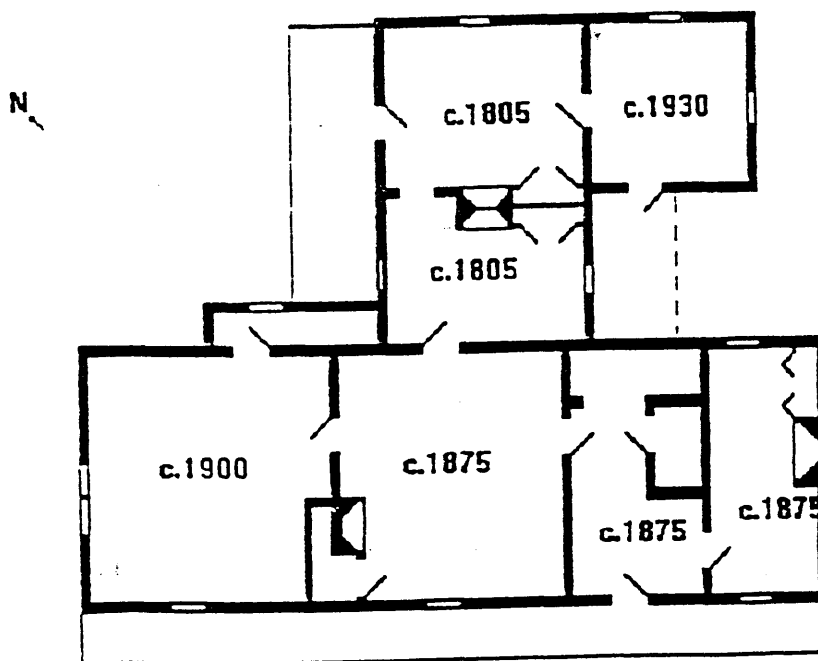
First Floor  
McNutt - Campbell-Kennedy House - 6416 Thorngrove Pike

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee



Rev. James Kennedy - Edward Pickel House  
6603 Thorngrove Pike

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

The McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House, located at 6416 Thorngrove Pike, faces east toward an old fork in the road that once led to the Bowman-McBee-Hodges Ferry located on the French broad River east of the house. Thorngrove Pike parallels the north, or side, elevation of the structure. The ferry and the road which accessed it no longer exist, although the ferry landing can be plainly seen. The McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House appears today much as it did in a photograph taken in the 1890's. Situated north of the French Broad River on a high, level lot, the house is in the heart of what was once the thriving village of Riverdale. Mill Creek flows in front of the house to the east of the lot. A graveled drive to the east offers access from Thorngrove Pike, but the formal walk to the front of the house, lined with boxwoods, still travels to the now abandoned ferry road.

The McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House was built in two sections. John McNutt probably built the rear section of the house after his purchase of the land in 1796. The plan, construction and details of the house are consistent with a circa 1790-circa 1800 construction date. In 1834 McNutt sold his land to John Campbell, youngest son of Alexander Campbell. Campbell sold the house to James Kennedy II in 1865. Kennedy then constructed the two story front section of the house. Kennedy was a miller and minister who operated the Kennedy (Riverdale) Mill and founded the New Salem, or Secured, Church (since demolished). Kennedy and Campbell jointly bought the equipment for the Riverdale Mill in 1854.

Across Wayland Drive from the mill is the Reverend James Kennedy-Edward Pickel House, at 6603 Thorngrove Pike. Like the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House, this house was built in two sections. The earliest section in the rear appears to have been built circa 1805, and is either nogging construction or log; the front, one story, frame section was built circa 1875 by Edward G. Pickel, who purchased the property from James Kennedy. Pickel served as postmaster and used the front of the house as a post office. The history of transfers of this property began with Charles McClung, who owned the property early and lost it for non-payment of back taxes in the late 1790's. Alexander McMillan purchased the property after McClung, and sold it to the Reverend James Kennedy in 1805. Either McClung or Kennedy could have built the rear section of the house, but McClung is not recorded as having lived in this area. Rev. James Kennedy built a two story brick house (since demolished) in 1817 in Knoxville and moved from Riverdale. However, this house continued to be owned by the Kennedy family until it was sold to Edward Pickel in 1875.

Opposite the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House on the south bank of the French Broad River stands the Bowman-McBee-Hodges House. According to local tradition, the house was built in 1836 by Dr. Albert Bowman. The house is a two story nogging structure. Dr. Bowman acquired the land where the house is located in 1813. Robert L. McBee acquired the house in 1854. Hodges, McBee's nephew, inherited the house from McBee in 1890. Each of the occupants of this house also operated the ferry that crossed the French Broad River at this point, and linked the community of Riverdale across the river. At one time, Bowman was the postmaster for the Riverdale community, further evidence of the connection between the north and south banks of the French Broad.

Early in the nineteenth century, the nucleus of the Riverdale community began to spread east, and another section of Riverdale exists along Thorngrove Pike about one-half mile east of the Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District. Other early communities along the French broad River were linked through commerce and social interaction; the history for each of them should be reviewed to understand the history of settlement along the French broad River. They include Frazier Bend and Seven Islands. Taken together, these districts embody not only the characteristics of early settlement and architecture in Knox County, and the gentle, evolutionary course of that settlement from the late eighteenth century until the mid-twentieth century. It was then, in the 1950's, that road improvements and bridge building displaced the ferries and made self-sustaining communities less important economically, centralizing those functions in Knoxville. It was also in the 1950's when the Tennessee Valley Authority dams were completed. This section of the Tennessee Valley, the impoundments created by those lakes meant that a ford could no longer cross the Tennessee River. A bridge would be necessary to cross the water, and if one was not built, as was the case at Riverdale, then the river began to separate, rather than link, the two sections of the community, changing its economic and social interaction.

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# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number   9   Page   11  

**Riverdale Historic District**  
**Knox County, Tennessee**

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### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Snyder, Gary. Personal interview on August 4, 1992, with Pamela Dishongh.

Spruill, Dorothy. Personal interview on August 7, 1992, with Pamela Dishongh.

Whitley, John. Personal interview on August 13, 1992 with Pamela Dishongh.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 12

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning 200 feet west/northwest from the intersection of Wayland Drive with Thomgrove Pike; thence north/northwest approximately 300 feet; thence south/southeast approximately 300 feet to the north bank of the French Broad River; thence north/northeast along the French Broad River approximately 1000 feet; thence east/southeast approximately twenty feet; thence south/southwest approximately 150 feet; thence west/northwest approximately sixty feet; thence south/southwest approximately 1000 feet; thence north/northwest approximately 500 feet to the point of beginning, including the property formerly nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as the Riverdale Mill.

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

These boundaries contain the original sites of settlement in Riverdale, and include the mill and the ferry site, which fueled commercial development in the community.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 12

Riverdale Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Riverdale Historic District meets the criteria as set forth in Early Settlement and the Frontier, 1785-1860, of the multiple property documentation form, "The Historic and Architectural Resources of Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee." the Riverdale community was settled in the 1780's. It is significant under Criterion A for early settlement, and Criterion C for architecture.

Riverdale was listed in the *Tennessee Gazetteer* as one of the ten communities that existed in 1792 when the Southwest Territory was formed. Businesses reported at the Riverdale location in 1792 included the mill and tannery, boot, shoe and harness maker associated with the mill, a general store, a blacksmith shop, a cooper's shop, and post offices. Buildings which once housed these commercial uses and still survive include the mill and the Kennedy-Pickel House and the Bowman-McBee-Hodges House, both of which once served as the post office for the community. In addition the ferry landing, symbolic of the link across the French Broad River which was the primary commercial spine of the community, is still visible.

One of the original settlers in the Riverdale community was James White, who built a log house on the north bank of the French Broad River in what is now the front yard of the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House. *In History of the Lebanon Presbyterian Church* written in 1875, Dr. J. G. M. Ramsey described the location of White's first house as "five miles up the French Broad River from its fork with the Hoiston, on property formerly owned by John Campbell, Esq., and now owned by James Kennedy." This location was part of a 350 acre tract purchased by White and is the location of hammer dressed stones which may have formed the piers and chimney base of an early house. Members of the community allude to the site as "James White's first house in Knox County." The current owner of the McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House, herself a granddaughter of James Kennedy, is explicit in describing the location of the foundation and the fact that James White constructed his first house there. Preliminary site investigation, through a Phase I survey and shovel testing by Dr. Charles Faulkner, Professor of Anthropology at the University of Tennessee, bear out this conclusion. Although the preliminary test was too limited to provide a full discussion of the activities that have taken place on the site, it did reveal (in addition to evidence of prehistoric settlement), artifacts that are consistent with the early settlement of Knox County. If this early building site is to be further documented, or established as James White's home site, further site work will need to be done. However, the initial inquiry established that the site shows good possibility of being an example of the type of temporary "land improvements" erected by early settlers, who replaced those temporary improvements with more substantial log or masonry dwellings as soon as they were settled and financially able. These "land improvements" have not been located or documented in East Tennessee. This site also has the possibility of determining the nature of contact between Native Americans and first generation European settlers.

By 1786, White had moved to the present site of downtown Knoxville and built White's Fort. White's first house was evidently occupied by Alexander Campbell in 1791-1792. However, Campbell does not appear to have owned the house. Campbell eventually moved about a half mile further east of Thomgrove Pike and built his home there. This occupation by Campbell is also documented by J. G. M. Ramsey. White deeded the land to John McNutt in 1796.

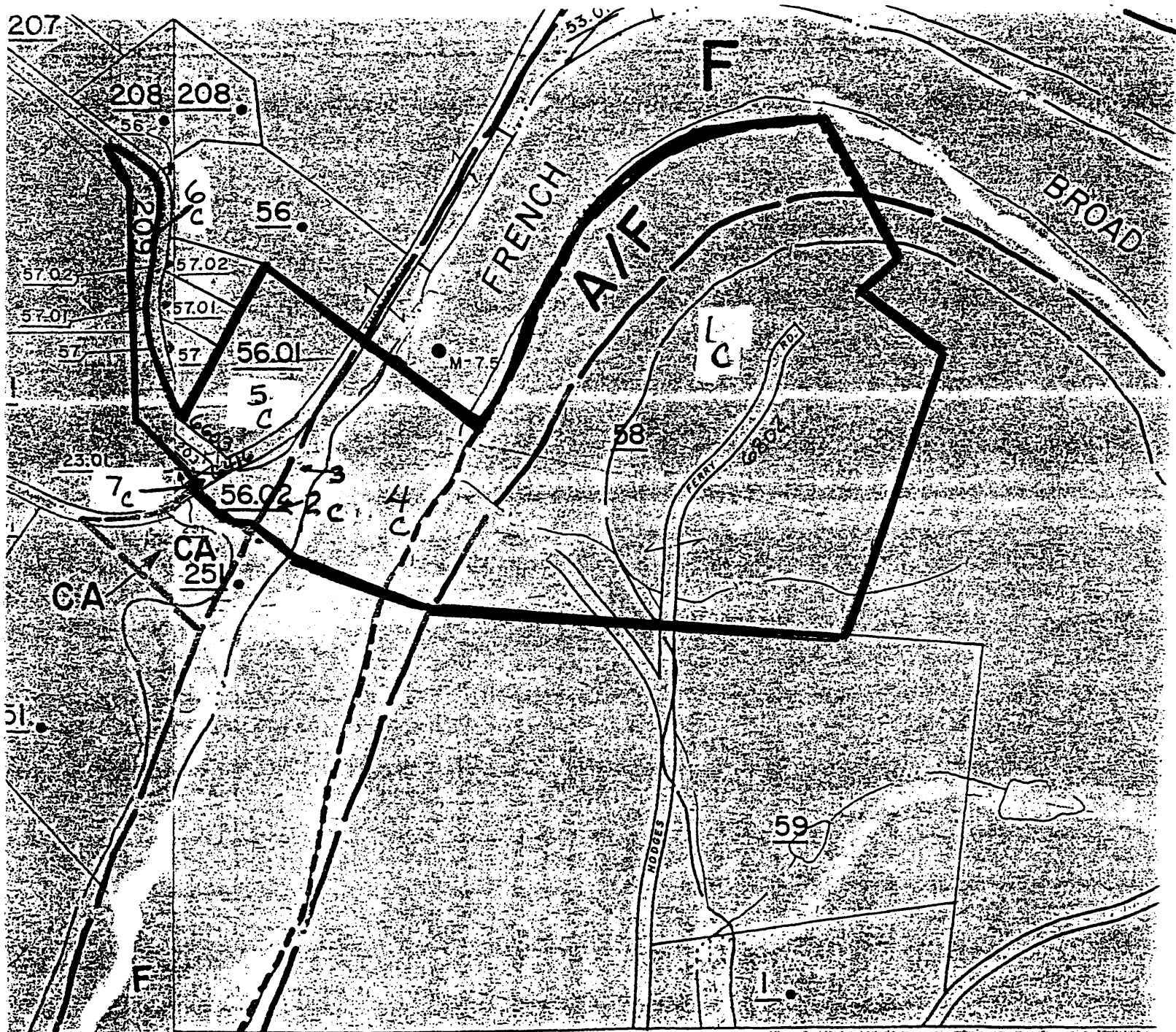
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13A

Riverdale Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox Co., TN

North  
Scale 1" = 400'



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number      Photos      Page   14  

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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## PHOTOGRAPHS

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee  
Photo by: Pamela Dishongh  
Date: August 1992  
Neg.: Tennessee Historical Commission

Kennedy-Pickel House  
6603 Thorngrove Pike  
West elevation facing east  
1 of

Kennedy-Pickel House  
6603 Thorngrove Pike  
Interior, bedroom door  
2 of

Kennedy-Pickel House  
6603 Thorngrove Pike  
Interior, bedroom mantel  
3 of

McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House  
6416 Thorngrove Pike  
East and southeast elevations, facing west/northwest  
4 of

McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House  
6416 Thorngrove Pike  
Interior stair, stair hall and front entry, 1865 section  
5 of

McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House  
6416 Thorngrove Pike  
Kitchen Fireplace and mantel, circa 1796 section  
6 of

McNutt-Campbell-Kennedy House  
6416 Thorngrove Pike  
South elevation facing north, showing circa 1796 exterior  
7 of

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number      Photos      Page   15  

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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Bowman-Hodges-McBee House  
6802 Hodges Ferry Road  
North elevation, facing south  
8 of

Bowman-Hodges-McBee House  
6802 Hodges Ferry Road  
West and south elevation, facing northeast  
9 of

Bridge  
Over Campbell Branch at Thorngrove Pike

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 16

Riverdale-Hodges Ferry Historic District  
Knox County, Tennessee

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### **PROPERTY OWNERS**

Mr. John Whitley  
6802 Hodges Ferry Road  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37914

Mrs. Dorothy Spruill  
6416 Thorngrove Pike  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37914

Mr. Gary Snider  
6603 Thorngrove Pike  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37914

Ms. Jean L. McCoy  
604 Ensley Drive, Route 29  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37920

Knox County  
Department of Public Works  
City County Building  
400 Main Avenue  
Knoxville, Tennessee 37902