

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Tait, Netherland, House

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**RECEIVED**  
FEB 22 1990

DIVISION OF  
NATIONAL REGISTER PROGRAMS  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**CORRECTION:**

The correct spelling for the Netherland Tate (sic) House, Lewis County, Tennessee should be Netherland Tait House.

*Herbert L. Hays*

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

2/15/90  
Date

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

1200, 577  
2/22/90

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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

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Tait, Netherland, House

Lewis County, TENNESSEE

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVAL

for Keeper William Byers 3/7/90

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only
received JUL 11 1984
date entered AUG 9 1984

1. Name

historic Tate, Netherland House

and/or common Murfree House

2. Location

street & number Napier Road, N/A not for publication

city, town Napier Vic, X vicinity of ~~Congressional District~~

state Tennessee code 047 county Lewis code 101

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Burklow Family  
c/o Burklow Building Supply  
street & number Mill Street

city, town Hohenwald, N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 38462

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lewis County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Hohenwald state Tennessee 38462

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date N/A N/A  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Netherland Tate House is situated on Napier Road off the old Natchez Trace about eight miles southeast of the Lewis County seat of Hohenwald and three miles north of the Napier community. The house is set on a small rise overlooking fields bordering the Buffalo River, about three-quarters of a mile east of Metal Ford, where the Natchez Trace crosses the river. Light woods are overtaking the area around the house itself, but much of the rich river bottom land remains in agricultural production, mostly corn. The house is a one-and-one-half story log structure featuring two pens separated by a breezeway or dogtrot. Logs used in the construction of the house are white oak, from sixteen to twenty-one inches in width, assembled by half-dovetail notching and chinked with wooden blocks and mortar. Broad-axe marks on the logs can still be plainly seen. The original floor plan had a large parlor and dining room on the first level; the upstairs consisted of two bedrooms and a central hall. A plain weatherboarded frame shed section was added to the rear of the house in the 1940s; at the same time the log structure was covered with weatherboard siding. The house is set on stone piers with brick infill, and has a standing-seam tin roof. Exterior brick chimneys on stone bases are situated at the east and west gable ends.

The main front of the house faces north to the Buffalo River. The weatherboarded facade is divided into three bays centered on a central entry; a later simple pedimented portico extends from the front at this point. The plain pediment is supported by four square antae columns and two matching pilasters. The central doorway is framed by spaces for sidelights set over dado panels and separated from the doorway by plain pilasters; the door itself and the glass sidelights are presently missing. Double-hung sash windows were installed in the original window locations when the house was weatherboarded; however these replacement windows have all but rotted away.

The west and east sides of the house are rather plain, featuring single-light lookout windows at the loft level. Exterior brick chimneys with corbeled caps are set at the center of these gable ends; the chimney on the west end is damaged at the top. The east end also features a double-hung sash window in deteriorated condition to the front of the chimney.

A one-story frame shed addition extends across the rear of the building. The simple weatherboarded section has a low pitched monocline roof and a shed porch at the back. This wing, which was added in the 1940s with the other alterations to the house, originally featured 2/2 sash windows and a central door. The room on the east side was apparently used as a breakfast room or other dining area; it features two large light side-opening French windows. This rear addition is in a very advanced state of deterioration and may be removed in the upcoming rehabilitation.

The interior of the house retains the original floor plan of two log pens divided by a central passage or dogtrot, with a loft above laid out on a similar plan. The white oak logs are plainly visible inside the house. In places the walls were sheetrocked and wall-papered; however, these walls have succumbed to the elements. The house is in a deteriorated state overall, but the main structural elements remain in condition to allow the house to be rehabilitated for continued use.

Also on the property included in the nomination is a gabled shed, apparently used as a well-house; the small frame structure remains in fair condition.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** c. 1850 **Builder/Architect** Netherland Tate

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Netherland Tate House off the Natchez Trace in Lewis County, Tennessee, is nominated under National Register criteria B and C for its local significance to Lewis County in architecture and local history. The one-and-a-half-story weatherboarded house is one of the earliest log buildings in the county and is currently being restored. The property was part of the McLish Indian Reservation founded about 1810, and remnants of the Indian settlement are still in evidence in the area. The builder of the house, Netherland Tate, was a prominent early farmer in Lewis County.

The house was erected by Netherland Tate, who came to the county about 1840 and invested in land and slaves. Tate bought a 472 acre tract at a Chancery Court sale in Columbia. The land was located in "The Barrens" once in Maury and Lawrence Counties, later a part of Lewis County (1843). Tate chose a prime tract of Buffalo River bottom land about thirty miles west of Columbia and eight miles southeast of Hohenwald, the present county seat of Lewis County.

The land had been a part of the McLish Indian Reservation, which was established about 1810. The reservation was named for John McLish, a half-breed leader of a local band who operated a traveller's inn or stand on the western bank of the Buffalo River near Metal Ford. The remains of an Indian mound can still be traced on the property.

Tate erected a large one-and-a-half-story log house with an open dogtrot or breezeway about 1850. He located his house on a hillside some seven hundred yards from the river, near the point where the old Columbian Highway, the Natchez Trace, crosses Buffalo River at Metal Ford. The old Nashville-Natchez route was declining in use by 1850, having been replaced by Jackson's Military Road and steamship travel on the Mississippi. The house is located about three miles south of the site of the old Griner's Stand where Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame committed suicide or was murdered by the Griner family in 1809.

The house passed through two generations of the Tate family. A granddaughter, Nancy Browning was born in the house in 1878, and lived there until 1928, when the farm was sold to Mr. Jess Bates. She was the last member of the Netherland Tate family to occupy the house.

On June 26, 1939, David A. Clark, Acting Custodian of the Meriwether Lewis National Monument, wrote a memorandum recording details of a visit with the Brownings to Acting Superintendent Garner of the federal Natchez Trace Parkway Project. During his visit on June 23, Mr. and Mrs. Browning provided an account of their life on the old Tate place. Mrs. Browning related how, as a child, she went out with her uncle to trap beaver, otter, mink, and other animals along the Buffalo River below the house. Mr. Browning pointed out an old Indian trail, and a spot where the Indians used to make periwinkle soup; shells were so abundant here that a plow could not break the surface. Although the area has been much cultivated over the years, shells can still be found. According to Mr. Browning, the Indian mound stood about thirty inches high and about fifteen or twenty feet across. It was intact until at least 1928, when Mr. Jess Bates cultivated the area, greatly reducing the mound. The Browning's statements were corroborated by Abraham Lincoln Rye, who was born a slave in 1861, and who was living with the Brownings at the time of Clark's visit in 1939. Rye

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Interviews with Marjorie Graves, Lewis County Historian, 1983-84.  
Letter, Alma Lou Murfree to Mrs. Louis Sawyer, 4 January 1984.  
Memo, David A. Clark, Acting Custodian, Meriwether Lewis National Monument, to Acting Superintendent Gardner, Natchez Trace Parkway Project, 26 June 1939.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. two acres

Quadrangle name Henryville, TN

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>116</u> Zone	<u>45731010</u> Easting	<u>31921441710</u> Northing	B	<u>    </u> Zone	<u>    </u> Easting	<u>    </u> Northing
C	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	D	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
E	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	F	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
G	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	H	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property is somewhat elliptical in shape with the arched section being formed by a curve in the Napier Road and the straight boundary on the south being an imaginary line. The nomination includes the minimum land needed to protect the historical and architectural integrity of the house.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>
state	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>	county	<u>N/A</u>	code	<u>N/A</u>

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	<u>Richard Quin, Historic Preservation Planner</u>		
organization	<u>South Central Tennessee Development/</u>	date	<u>May 1984</u>
street & number	<u>P.O. Box 1346</u>	telephone	<u>(615) 381-2040</u>
city or town	<u>Columbia</u>	state	<u>Tennessee 38402</u>

## 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.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Harper

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 7/2/84

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register

date 8-9-84

Keeper of the National Register

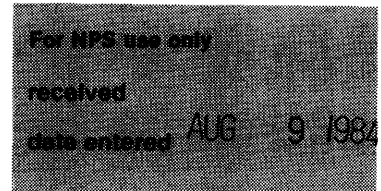
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



**Continuation sheet** Netherland Tate House      **Item number** 8      **Page** 2

remembered a row of stones, now vanished, around the old Indian mound. He also recalled as a boy climbing into a cave in the vicinity and discovering some bones.

In 1936 or 1937 the property was purchased by Mr. Roy Murfree. At this time the log house retained its original plan of two rooms to the side of the open breezeway; the upstairs contained two bedrooms and a central hall. The Murfree family moved into the house about January 1, 1939; weatherboard siding was added to the house in October, 1940. The Murfrees planned additional changes to the house, but were delayed by World War II building supply shortages. Then a new rear kitchen and dining wing was added, and electricity was provided to the house. The rear shed addition was very plain and incompatible with the original character of the house; it was still present in late 1983. The Murfrees also installed "Heatilator" fireplaces in the old chimneys, later replacing them with gas heaters. The family occupied the house until the mid-1950s, when it was abandoned.

Unoccupied, the old house deteriorated fairly quickly, the original log part of the house faring much better than the twentieth century additions. The large field between the house and the river has remained in production, but nature has reclaimed much of the area. The house and property were eventually purchased in the winter of 1984 by the Burklow family of Hohenwald, who intend to rehabilitate the old Lewis County landmark in a sympathetic manner.

