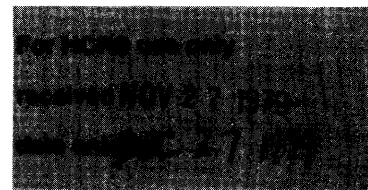


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



1. Name

historic Childress-Ray House

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 225 North Academy Street _____ not for publication

city, town Murfreesboro _____ vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Tennessee code 047 county Rutherford code 149

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mary Alice Newsom Ray

street & number 225 North Academy Street

city, town Murfreesboro _____ vicinity of state Tennessee 37130

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Rutherford County Court House

street & number Court Square

city, town Murfreesboro _____ vicinity of state Tennessee 37130

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historical and Architectural Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date June 1973 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 4721 Trousdale Drive

city, town Nashville _____ vicinity of state Tennessee 37219

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input 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 Childress-Ray House is located at the southwest corner of North Academy Street and Lytle Street in Murfreesboro, less than one half mile northeast of the Rutherford County Courthouse. When constructed in 1847, the house reflected the prevailing Greek Revival style.

The two story brick house was constructed on a cut and coursed limestone foundation; the bricks are laid in stretcher bond. The low gable roof is presently covered with composition shingles.

The facade, or east elevation, has three bays. A center pavilion projects from the facade; this pavilion was added by John Childress when he purchased the house in 1874 in order to make the building conform to the fashion of the 1870s. At that time the pavilion was flanked by two front porches which featured ornate gingerbread-type trim. These porches were destroyed by a tornado in 1913 and were replaced by the present porches which are supported by fluted pillars in the fashion of the style prevailing in the early twentieth century.

The original plan of the house had a center hallway flanked by one room on each side. The stairway ascends from this center hall and was designed using the turned balusters and large newell found in most Greek Revival houses in this area; these elements are primarily walnut with some mahogany. A two story, brick ell containing two rooms on each floor adjoins the rear of the house (west elevation). In 1950 this ell was remodeled to form two apartments, and kitchens for these apartments, a third apartment (on the second floor), and a den (on the first floor) were added in the corner formed by the ell. The ell also adjoins the old brick kitchen which is presently used as a workshop.

Southwest of the house stands a one story brick dependency; the precise use of this building remains uncertain, but it was probably used for storage of food since it contains a sunken, brick-lined cavity.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1847 **Builder/Architect** Jim Fletcher

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

A native of Sumner County, Tennessee, John Childress moved with his family to Murfreesboro in 1819. Later he attended and was graduated from the University of North Carolina and was admitted to the Tennessee bar.

In 1824 his sister Sarah married James K. Polk, who became the eleventh president of the United States. John Childress was elected attorney general pro tem in 1829. Twenty years later he moved to a farm on the Shelbyville Pike and lived and farmed there until the outbreak of the Civil War. Besides operating his farm and practicing law Childress served as director of the Nashville and Chattanooga Railroad, director of the Bank of Tennessee (1854–56), president of the Planter's Bank of Tennessee in Murfreesboro (1859–61), and president of the First National Bank of Murfreesboro (1872–80).

During the Civil War Childress and his family lived in Griffin, Georgia. While residing there his daughter Betty married General John Calvin Brown, who was later elected governor of Tennessee.

After the war Childress found his farm in shambles and moved to Nashville. He served as a circuit judge in the capitol city and formed a law partnership with Arthur and John Colyar. In 1874 he purchased the Childress House in Murfreesboro. His sister Sarah, then a widow living in Nashville, visited the house often. Childress died in 1884, and sixteen years later the family sold the house.

The Childress-Ray House was built in 1847 by Murfreesboro contractor Jim Fletcher. The center pavilion was built ca. 1875; the (ca. 1875) front porches were destroyed by a tornado in 1913, and they were replaced with the present porches; and ca. 1950 several rooms were converted into apartments.

The Childress-Ray House was the residence of Major John Whitsell Childress, a man who played an important role in nineteenth-century Tennessee business and government. He held important leadership positions in a railroad, three banks, operated a large farm, and was a successful attorney and jurist.

The house illustrates the changes that have so frequently taken place as architectural tastes changed through the years. Originally constructed in the Greek Revival style during its heyday, the facade was drastically altered in the 1870s to incorporate a projecting pavilion, segmentally arched windows, and ornate decorative trim—all features of the then-popular Italianate style as interpreted in Middle Tennessee. Finally, when the porches were destroyed in 1913, they were replaced with the present arrangement which uses the clean lines and fluted pillars favored at that time under the influence of the Colonial Revival movement.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Claixon, Jimmie Lou Sparkman. 88 Years with Sarah Polk. New York: Vantage Press, 1972.
- Hughes, Mary B. Hearthstones: The Story of Historic Rutherford County Homes. Murfreesboro: Mid-South Publishing Co., Inc., 1942.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property .4

Quadrangle name Murfreesboro, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the property nominated is shown as the red line on the accompanying tax assessment map No. 91-L entitled "Murfreesboro, Rutherford County." The nominated property is the entire tract owned by Mary Alice Newsome Ray.

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 Britt Casteel, Research Assistant

organization Tennessee Historical Commission

date October 1979

street & number 4721 Trousdale Drive

telephone (615) 741-2371

city or town Nashville

state Tennessee 37219

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Herbert L. Hoyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 11/21/79

For HCERS use only

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

Sally G. Oldham

date 12/27/79

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Kristin O'Connell

date 12/11/79

Chief of Registration

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED NOV 27 1979
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Means, Marianne. The Woman in the White House: The Lives, Times, and Influence of
Twelve Notable First Ladies. New York: Random House, 1963.