

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received JUL 22 1983

date entered

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

1. Name

historic V. R. Harris House

and/or common Mitchum House

2. Location

street & number Main Street (State Highway 49) N/A not for publication

city, town Erin N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Houston code 083

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. and Mrs. Albert J. Mitchum

street & number P.O. Box 469, Main Street

city, town Erin N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37061

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Houston County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Erin state Tennessee 37061

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None 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

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 V. R. Harris House, built in 1891, is a grand 1½ story Queen Anne style house of frame construction located in Erin, the county seat of rural Houston County. The house crowns a hillside lot overlooking Main Street. A low cement retaining wall and sidewalk are located at the lot's base. Neighboring the Harris House are much more modest Victorian and early twentieth century frame houses scattered along Main Street. The exterior of the Harris House remains practically unaltered. Although the interior has been altered with minor renovations, the significant interior features such as the grand staircase, mantels, woodwork, and doors remain intact.

The long irregularly-shaped clapboard house exhibits extremely fine craftsmanship and as typical of the Queen Anne style it employs a variety of exterior treatments. Its asphalt shingle roof is basically hipped with numerous gabled projections of varying sizes and is dotted with brick chimney pots. The most prominent features of the house are its imposing size, the long encircling raised verandah with decorative turned posts, brackets, spool frieze, turned balustrade and lattice foundation infill, and the corner tower with its tall conical roof. Dozens of leaded glass windows, paired more often than not and set close together, are rectangular double-hung sash with pronounced decorative wood surrounds. The facade entrance, a single-leaf door with stained glass transom, is located in the central bay and reached by wide concrete steps.

The 20-room interior of the V. R. Harris House retains most of its original mantels, staircases, door and window trim, baseboards, doors, stained glass windows and elaborate woodwork. The floor plan has been somewhat rearranged and some partitions have been added or removed, with bathrooms and other contemporary conveniences added. Even with the alterations, the interior still retains a large degree of architectural integrity.

A small rectangular log outbuilding with a metal-covered gable roof and single-leaf entrance is located immediately behind the house. The exact construction date of the log building is unknown; it appears to have been built at least at the time of the house.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> invention				
Specific dates	1891	Builder/Architect	Unknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The V. R. Harris House is nominated under National Register criteria B and C. The house derives significance from association with Volney Rowe Harris, an important businessman in Erin and Houston County. The house is particularly significant as the most imposing, high style house in Houston County and as an outstanding example of Queen Anne style architecture in the rural northwestern counties of Middle Tennessee.

Volney Rowe Harris (1850-1911) was one of the most influential and successful businessmen in Houston County. He was born in Kentucky and moved to Robertson County, Tennessee at the age of 14 where he worked for several years as a store clerk. From there he moved to Nashville, working at a wholesale dry goods jobbing house for six years. In 1871, Harris married Lizzie Garner, daughter of Judge John E. and Elizabeth (Thomas) Garner of Springfield. In 1875 Harris and his wife moved to Erin where he opened a general merchandising trade. Harris was elected Erin's second mayor in 1881. Serving only one term, he continued and gradually extended his business affairs, entering into a partnership with Henry Buquo. Their firm, named Harris & Buquo, engaged extensively in manufacturing lime and cooperage material. The firm later extended to a lumber and stave business. Also, they formed the Erin Lime Works, one of two lime companies in Arlington, and they operated a kiln in Stewart, Tennessee and a cement plant in Clifton, Tennessee. In the 1880s the firm was transacting \$125,000 a year in business.

In the 1890s the Harris & Buquo partnership dissolved. Harris became the sole owner of the prosperous lime works, cement plant, stave and heading factory, a saw and grist mill, two general stores, and 15,000 acres of land in Houston County. He built his grand twenty-room Queen Anne style house in 1891 for \$25,000. By 1911 when Harris died, his estate was valued at \$500,000 and included 30,000 acres of land.

After the death of Harris' wife in 1913, the house was occupied by three of their 12 children. These three, Annie Warren Harris Rollow, Ewing Garner Harris, and Edgar Rowe Harris, occupied the house until 1924 when it was sold out of the family to George Daniel Boone, M.D. and his wife, Nell Rountree Boone. The Boones owned the house for 20 years. In 1944 Carlisle Webb Mitchum, R. Ph. and his wife, Ruth Uffelmann Mitchum, purchased the house. Their son, who is the present owner, acquired the house in 1970.

The house reflects the position and prominence in Erin of its builder, V. R. Harris, and its subsequent owners. Harris was one of Houston County's most wealthy citizens during the late 1800s and early twentieth century. Demonstrating his wealth and prominence, Harris built his fashionable Queen Anne style house on an unusually grand scale for a small town and rural county. The house was, and remains, the largest, most elaborate house in Erin and Houston County. Furthermore, the house is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style with its variety of exterior treatments and stylistic features such as the irregular shape and roof forms, long encircling verandah with turned posts, brackets, spool frieze and turned balustrade, and its conical-roofed corner tower.

9. Major Bibliographical References

McClain, I. N. The History of Houston County, Tennessee. Columbia ? , Tn.: n.p., 1966.
Goodspeed, Weston. History of Tennessee.... Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1886.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property approx. 2 acres

Quadrangle name Erin, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6	4	3	7	0	7	0	4	0	1	9	1	2	0
Zone		Easting					Northing							

B

Zone		Easting					Northing							

C

Zone		Easting					Northing							

D

Zone		Easting					Northing							

E

Zone		Easting					Northing							

F

Zone		Easting					Northing							

G

Zone		Easting					Northing							

H

Zone		Easting					Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shain Dennison, Architectural Historian

organization Tennessee Historical Commission date January 1983

street & number 701 Broadway telephone 615/742-6716

city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37203

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. Hoyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 7/15/83

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 8/18/83

for Deloris Byers
Keeper of the National Register

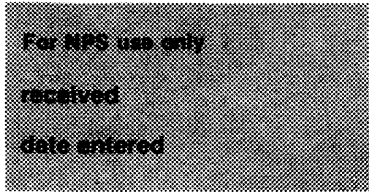
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

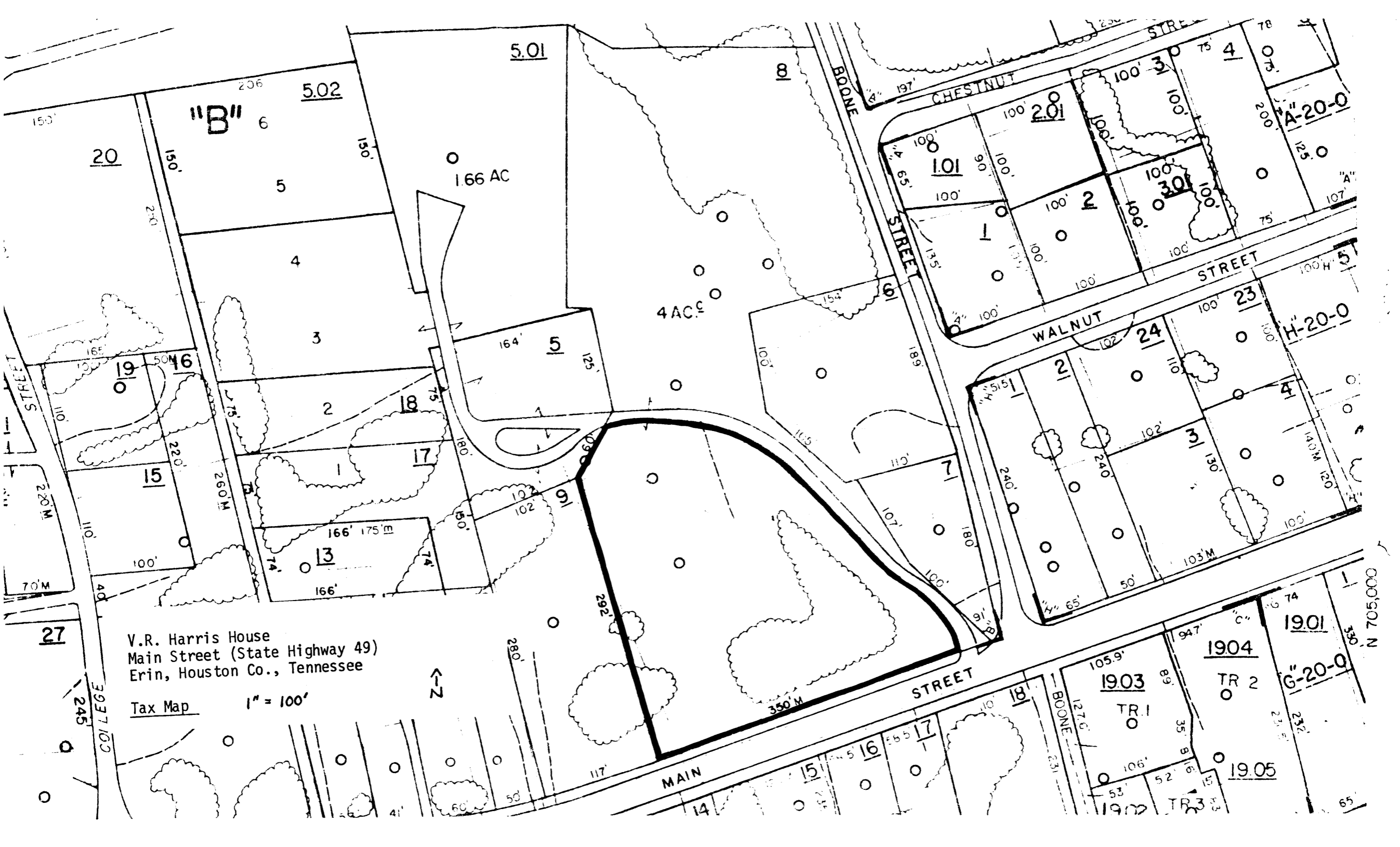
**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet V.R. Harris House Item number 10 Page 2

Verbal boundary description

The nominated lot is roughly triangular in shape and is bounded on the south by Main Street, the west by an adjoining property line, and the north/east by a private, paved drive. Included in the nomination is the minimal land needed to protect the architectural/historical integrity of the house.



"B" 6

5.01

5.02

20

1.66 AC

4 AC

1.01

2.01

A-20-0

STREET

WALNUT STREET

H-20-0

V.R. Harris House
Main Street (State Highway 49)
Erin, Houston Co., Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 100'



STREET

MAIN

BOONE

N 705,000

19.01

19.03

19.04

G-20-0

TR 1

TR 2

19.05

19.02

TR 3