

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED OCT 13 1976  
DATE ENTERED NOV 7 1976

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

Smith-Little-Mars House

AND/OR COMMON

Elm Bluff

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

State Highway 63 W of Speedwell on TN

CITY, TOWN

Speedwell

X VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Second

STATE

Tennessee

CODE

47

COUNTY

Campbell

CODE

13

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

X OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

X BUILDING(S)

X PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

X PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

X NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Mrs. Sam Mars

STREET & NUMBER

4241 Whitlow Avenue, S.W.

CITY, TOWN

Knoxville

VICINITY OF

STATE

Tennessee

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Campbell County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Jacksboro

STATE

Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Tennessee Historical and Architectural Survey

DATE

August 1975

FEDERAL X STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Tennessee Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Smith-Little-Mars House is located at the crest of a tree-shaded bluff, approximately 100 yards above State Highway 63. The hillside location affords a panoramic view of the 320 acre farm which extends out in every direction, across the verdant valley floor. The perimeter of the landscaped garden is defined by a three-foot-tall, limestone retaining wall which fronts the lot. The wall was built by Silas Little who changed the style of the house to suit his Victorian tastes. Representing two distinct periods of construction, the earlier construction was the two-story brick section, designed in the symmetrical, one-by-three bay center hall plan, typical of the Tennessee vernacular form of the classic styles popular during the period. Characteristically, there is a two-story service wing extending to the back from one side. This wing is somewhat reduced in scale from the front section and the second-floor bedrooms in the wing are lower than the rooms across the front section. Silas Little added the columned portico and cantilevered balcony to the main facade. To enlarge the house, he built a frame addition within the former ell at the back. He enclosed the earlier rear porch and extended the center halls through the house. The grand center hall was thrown open to the left side parlor, and he designed columns for the hall to match those in the portico. The end wall fireplaces were changed by the addition of the tall, pilastered mantles and glazed tiles around the fireplace openings. The front bedrooms are the same size as the parlor rooms, and to these he added a large master bedroom in the frame addition. The keeping room and kitchen are located in the brick wing, behind the right side parlor and a new dining room and butler's pantry were built in the frame addition, with the main entry through the parlor suite. Features for the 1840 design include the brick wall fenestration, Flemish bond brick work and carved brick eaves. The original shutters are attached to the windows. In 1944, the present owner added modern plumbing and conveniences to the house, and has maintained this house as a summertime residence.

Little added the unusual stone barn, which is located 250 yards northeast of the house in 1919. Other frame structures on the property are a springhouse, smokehouse and storage buildings in the yard. The stone and frame cottage was built by a former slave who died before he had finished it. When the cottage was completed, it was used for the groundskeeper.

# 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 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 1840; 1890

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank Smith/Silas Little

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Smith-Little-Mars House was built by slave labor in 1840 for Frank Smith. Joshua Little, a circuit preacher in Powell Valley, purchased the property after the Civil War and sold the house and farm to his son, Silas, in the late 1890s. Silas, who operated a clothing business in Knoxville and became wealthy, built additions and added the Victorian refinements to the antebellum house. He died in 1927 and bequeathed the house and farm to his only daughter Gladys. She lived in the house for several years, but the property remained vacant while she lived in Knoxville. Thirteen years later it was restored to its 1890s appearance by the present owner.

This is one of the few remaining antebellum houses in the county. The farm has retained much of its original character through continued use. All of the original architecturally important outbuildings have been maintained, and vestiges of the fine Victorian gardens have been preserved.

The topography of the picturesque Powell Valley is characteristic of East Tennessee, its rolling hills, forested ridges, and productive valleys attracted pioneers who settled there and became wealthy before the Civil War. The Smith-Little-Mars House is located in a sparsely populated, rural area at the edge of Campbell County, and the surrounding countryside has remained essentially unchanged for over a century.

It is interesting to note that the integrity of the original antebellum design for the Frank Smith house was not radically effected by the late Victorian additions of the 1890s. The house has been compared to others in Campbell and Claiborne counties which were built by slaves belonging to John Kincaid II. Kincaid was a prominent early settler in this region and his only daughter was the wife of Silas Little. Legend assumes that slaves belonging to Kincaid did much of the construction work, manufactured the brick, and cut the limestone blocks. This would account for the similarity of the proportions and overall design of the brickwork to other antebellum houses which were built by Kincaid. The original deeds and contracts for this property were destroyed when the courthouse in Jacksboro burned. The 1840 construction date is confirmed because slaves who built the house carved their names and this date into one of the beams under the original section of the house.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The LaFollette Press, June 10, 1971.

The Knoxville News Sentinel, December 30, 1966.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 9.5

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	7	2	3	7	4	4	0	4	0	3	7	0	8	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Gail Hammerquist, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

October 1976

STREET & NUMBER

170 Second Avenue North

TELEPHONE

(615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

# 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Herbert L. Hayden*

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

10/6/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

11/9/76

DATE

11/1/76