

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

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

For NPS use only

received JUN 12 1984  
date entered JUL 12 1984

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

**1. Name**

historic Swaim House

and/or common same

**2. Location**

street & number Main Street (Tn Hwy. 11, U.S. 31A) N/A not for publication

city, town Chapel Hill N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Marshall code 117

**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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input 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 Joy and Larry Lewter

street & number P.O. Box 56

city, town Chapel Hill N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37034

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of Marshall County Registrar

street & number Marshall County Courthouse

city, town Lewisburg state Tennessee 37034

**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

### 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

Situated on the east side of Main Street just north of the small business district of the northern Marshall County town of Chapel Hill (pop. 752), the Swaim House is the oldest brick structure in Chapel Hill and one of the few such structures in the area. The one-story brick structure sits on a level lot of slightly more than two acres, some distance back from the street. This locally early house of the 1840's displays major characteristics of the Greek Revival style in its classically porticoed front entrance, corner pilasters and interior shouldered doorways.

The one-story house follows the central-passage plan quite common in this part of the Duck River valley. It is built of a light reddish-brown brick, roughly glazed, laid in stretcher bond; the soft mortar is pencilled for greater detail. The foundation is of ashlar-cut stone, rising to about three feet above ground level, and the building is topped with a composition roof. Corbeled brick interior chimneys are located at the two gable ends. A rear shed section was added in the 1940's, and a screen porch and garage were attached as an ell in 1982.

The front of the house faces west to Main Street; this elevation is three bays wide, with a parlor and dining room to the sides of a central hall. From the center extends a one-story pedimented portico supported by two square paneled antae columns with molded capitals. The heavy entablature of the porch, supported by small scroll brackets, is carried across the entire front of the house. At the center, recessed-panel double-leaf doors with oblong moldings are set in an elegant frame, with two operating sidelights over dado panels set off by pilasters and topped with corner lights, a transom, and a heavy molded architrave. At either side of the front, 1/1 sash windows are located in the original window frames, topped with a flat wooden beam lintel with corner blocks. The two front corners are framed by heavy molded corner pilasters.

The south side of the original 1840s section has two 1/1 sash windows in the original frames. The roof line is defined by a raking cornice and gable return. Repairs have been made to the brickwork at the loft level around the chimney, and the problems appear to have been stabilized. The north wall is quite plain but for the ghost of an original window.

A rear shed section was added to the house about 1945. It is constructed of a red brick similar in color to the original part of the house and is not obtrusive, nor is it visible from the front of the house. A triple 6/6 sash window opens on the south side, a double 1/1 window and a door are located on the rear, and a center-pivot window and a double 6/6 sash window face north. The same thin cornice that traces the eaves of the sides of the original 1840's section is continued around this shed addition.

To the rear of this shed section, a latticework porch connects with a modern barn-style weatherboarded garage added in 1982.

Although altered by two additions at the rear, the original front facade remains relatively unchanged. Most of the original interior features also survive; these include vertical-paneled doors set in shouldered architraves, matching interior window surrounds, and original mantels, the one in the south parlor being supported by scroll brackets matching those on the exterior 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 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		

<b>Specific dates</b>	1840's	<b>Builder/Architect</b>	Unknown
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**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Swaim House is nominated under National Register criterion C for its local architectural significance to Chapel Hill and Marshall County. According to local tradition the house was built in the 1840's for a doctor and served as his residence and office. In the late nineteenth century, the building was purchased by J.M. Swaim, a prominent Chapel Hill citizen and blacksmith. The house is the oldest brick residence in the town and a rare example in Marshall County and the surrounding area of a brick Greek Revival cottage. The quality of its design and craftsmanship can be seen in its well proportioned and detailed entrance portico and corner pilasters as well as its interior shouldered window and door surrounds.

The original owner of the Swaim House has traditionally been thought to have been a doctor whose name has long been forgotten. Existing deeds show that early owners were James Fulton, E.G. Forrest, William Turner, and J.F. Brittain, all men who contributed to the history of Chapel Hill. In 1893 J.M. Swaim acquired the property, and it has remained in his family down to the present owner, Joy Lewter, his great-granddaughter. Swaim was a successful blacksmith in addition to owning a pork processing business.

The Swaim House is an important example in south central Tennessee of the Greek Revival style expressed in a small brick building. While frame Greek Revival cottages are not uncommon in the region, small brick residences in this style are rare. Exceptional architectural features of the Swaim House are its pedimented Doric portico with square pillars, its Doric corner pilasters, and interior woodwork.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 1.7 acres

Quadrangle name Chapel Hill, TN

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	6	5	2	7	8	1	1	0	3	9	4	2	4	3	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** The nominated property is bounded on the west by Main Street (Tn. Hwy. 11, U.S. 31A) and on the north, east and south by adjoining property lines. The nomination includes the remaining land conveyed with the house and historically associated with it.

### 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 Joy Lewter  
Lloyd Ostby, Coordinator of Field Services  
N/A  
organization Tennessee Historical Commission date May 1984  
street & number P.O. Box 56 telephone 615-364-7226  
701 Broadway telephone 615-742-6716  
city or town Chapel Hill state Tennessee 37034  
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. Harper

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 6/4/84

### For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

Melrose Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

date 7/12/84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation sheet Swaim House

Item number 9

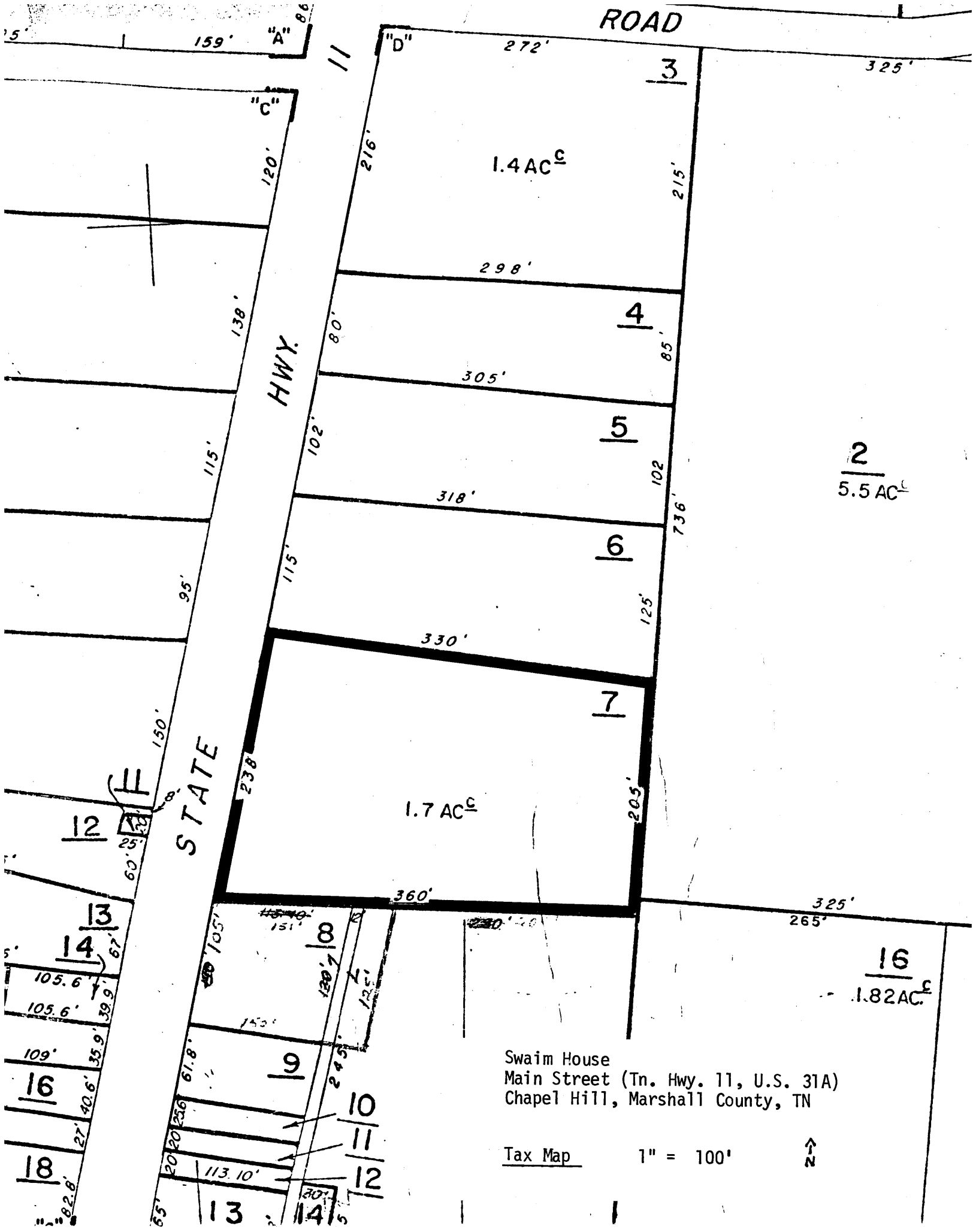
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Major Bibliographical References

Goodspeed, Weston A., et al. (eds.) History of Tennessee. Goodspeed Publishing Co.,  
1887 .

Interviews with citizens of Chapel Hill and Marshall County, winter 1983/84: Ralph  
Whitsell (county historian), David Jeter, Jane Kerr, Doug Rogers, and Grace Hurt.

Marshall County Deed Books



Swaim House  
 Main Street (Tn. Hwy. 11, U.S. 31A)  
 Chapel Hill, Marshall County, TN

Tax Map      1" = 100'      ↑ N