1. Name of Property

historic name River Side Farmhouse
other names/site number Shofner, Jacob Martin, House

2. Location

street & number 497 Shofner Road
city or town Shelbyville
county Bedford
code 003
state Tennessee
code TN
zip code 37160

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature]
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[ ] entered in the National Register.
[ ] determined eligible for the National Register.
[ ] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[ ] removed from the National Register.
[ ] other, (explain): [signature] [Date]
## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
[ ] private  
[ ] public-local  
[ ] public-State  
[ ] public-Federal  

**Category of Property**  
[ ] building(s)  
[ ] district  
[ ] site  
[ ] structure  
[ ] object  

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

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**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Foundation</th>
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<th>Roof</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>Limestone; CONCRETE</td>
<td>WOOD</td>
<td>METAL</td>
<td>BRICK</td>
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</table>

**Narrative Description**  
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- [ ] A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(N/A)

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- [ ] A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- [ ] B removed from its original location.
- [ ] C moved from its original location.
- [ ] D a cemetery.
- [ ] E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- [ ] F a commemorative property
- [ ] G less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

**ARCHITECTURE**

#### Period of Significance

1890

#### Significant Dates

1890

#### Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

#### Cultural Affiliation

NA

#### Architect/Builder

Shofner, Jacob Morton (builder/designer)

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):** N/A

- [ ] preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- [ ] previously listed in the National Register
- [ ] Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- [ ] designated a National Historic Landmark
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
- [ ] recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

**Primary location of additional data:**

- [x] State Historic Preservation Office
- [ ] Other State Agency
- [ ] Federal Agency
- [ ] Local Government
- [ ] University
- [ ] Other

**Name of repository:**
## River Side Farmhouse

**Name of Property**

**Bedford County, Tennessee**

**County and State**

### 10. Geographical Data

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<th><strong>Acreage of Property</strong></th>
<th>approximately 4 acres</th>
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**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

### 11. Form Prepared By

**name/title** Rebecca L. Smith  
**organization** MTSU Center for Historic Preservation  
**street & number** Box 80  
**city or town** Murfreesboro  
**date** August 1997  
**telephone** 615/898-2947  
**state** TN  
**zip code** 37132

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Maps**
  - A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
  - A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- **Photographs**
  - Representative black and white photographs of the property.
- **Additional items**
  (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(name) Mrs. Prentice Cooper (contact), William Cooper III, James H.S. Cooper, and John N.P. Cooper  
**street & number** 413 East Lane Street  
**city or town** Shelbyville  
**state** TN  
**telephone** 615/684-3621  
**zip code** 37160

---

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.
VII. DESCRIPTION

River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

River Side Farmhouse is located on Shofner Bridge Road in the horseshoe bend of Duck River in Bedford County, Tennessee. The construction of this building dates to 1890 when Jacob Morton Shofner built on the land his grandfather, John Shofner, had settled on in 1815. It is a vernacular adaptation of a Queen Anne style farmhouse and it retains its original form and is still owned by descendants of John Shofner.

River Side Farmhouse is a two-story, frame, Queen Anne-influenced house with a fifteen room roughly rectangular plan, a hipped roof, and decorated front, side and rear porches. The roof is metal with ornamental pinnacles, the foundation is limestone and concrete, the sides beaded weatherboard, and the three, original chimneys are brick. The interior of the house reflects a craftsman's vernacular interpretation of the Queen Anne style and has such interesting characteristics as a hidden spiral stairway leading from an upper children's bedroom down into the closet adjoining the parent's bedroom on the first floor, and sawn decorative details consisting of oak, walnut, and cherry wood cut from the trees on the property. The interior doors have significant details such as graining, original hardware, and a twisted molding located in the four corners of their five-panels; most retain original hardware. The house has received very little alteration since its construction. The kitchen and bathrooms were updated with modern appliances and conveniences in 1990.

The facade, north elevation, is flat with a projecting, three-sided, six window corner bay which connects to a decorated, one-story porch on the first floor. Over the entrance to this porch is a tympanum supported by turned or milled wood posts, which also support the rest of the porch. The balustrade connects these columns to one another. Fish scale shingles can be seen on a slight roof projection visible on either side of the tympanum, as well as, on the interior of it. Wooden lattice extends from the wooden floor of the porch to cover the limestone foundation. The first floor of the facade contains four, one-over-one, double-hung windows, with original glass, surrounded by an applied cap trim. The original walnut front door has an inset of original frosted glass and original, one light, glass transom above. The second floor contains five, one-over-one, double-hung windows, with original glass, and the same cap trim. Under the roof-line is a cornice molding with dentil trim which puts a finishing touch on the facade.
River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

On the west elevation the decorated front porch continues and connects to another three-sided, six window, corner bay. This view of the porch also has the turned or milled wood balusters serving as connectors. The same open, white lattice extends from the wooden floor of the porch to cover the foundations. The first floor of this elevation contains four, one-over-one, double-hung windows and one, six-over-six, double-hung window. The same beaded weatherboard, as seen on the facade, can be seen here, as well as the same cap trim surrounding the windows. The side entrance is a six-paneled and painted door. This elevation contains the one-story brick kitchen which predates the 1890 house but was incorporated into its design. The kitchen has a painted, paneled door set in a segmental arch opening with screen door in front of it allowing for outside access. A four-over-four, double-hung window, also set in a segmental arch opening, is to the right of the door and an iron railing is connected to the concrete steps leading to the outside kitchen entrance. The second story of the house contains four, one-over-one, double-hung windows and the same cap trim and cornice moldings as the other elevations. The limestone foundation is evident in the center of this elevation and where it is not visible is the open, white lattice.

The south, rear, elevation is irregular with the three quarters of the elevation being a two-story decorated porch with ten simple, square posts topped by small brackets. The same type of turned or milled wood balustrade as on the other house elevations, are located on the upper and lower porches and an opening can be seen on the first floor of the porch where the entrance stairs are located. Where this porch is located, the main body of the house is recessed approximately five feet and limestone piers can be seen supporting the porch. The same beaded weatherboard is continued onto this elevation. Here on the first floor are a one, one-over-one, double-hung window and one five-paneled door, both surrounded by the same cap trim as the rest of the house. On each side of this door is an original exterior light fixture called a metal carriage light. On the second floor are two, one-over-one, double-hung windows and one six-over-six, double-hung window with the same cap trim. On the second floor of the third portion of the elevation, not covered by the porch, is another twelve-paned window with the same cap trim. The beaded weatherboard extension to the brick kitchen is located on the first floor of this section of the elevation. This simple, brick kitchen is square with three original windows, metal roof, chimney, root cellar, and limestone foundation. There is an original, small, wooden door on the south elevation which leads into the cellar. The only changes to the exterior of this brick building are the concrete stairs and metal hand-railing added, circa 1950.
River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

The east elevation has a small, decorated, one-story porch located on the first floor of the northeast area of the elevation. This porch has the same turned or milled posts connected by the balustrade and open, white lattice which extends from the wooden floor of the porch to the ground. Located within this porch, on the face of the house is another one-over-one, double-hung window surrounded by the same cap trim, a five-paneled door with original two-light, glass transom, and exterior, metal, carriage light. South of the porch, one bay of the house projects out. This projection has one-over-one, double-hung windows on each floor directly above one another. The limestone foundation can be seen on this part of the elevation. The same cornice molding with dentil trim as seen on the facade and west elevation is found under the roof-line.

The primary entrance, north facade, opens into the central hall (3A) of the interior of the house. All of the first floor rooms can easily be accessed from this hallway and the five-paneled door at the rear of the central hall leads out to the exterior porch. To the southeast of this space is the grand, free-standing staircase leading to the second floor. The staircase is probably the best feature of the house's interior design, being out of solid cherry and having intricate, curvilinear carvings on the carriage. The square newel post is carved in panels and the balusters are milled or turned to look spindlelike. The exposed wood floor in this area is walnut and it continues throughout the first floor. Also the large, original, wrought-iron, heating grate is located in the southwest area of the floor in this central hall. To the east of the central hall are two, original, five-paneled, wooden doors, which lead into the original parlor and living room. These doors were originally grained but have darkened with age. They still contain their original, Victorian era hardware sets that are embellished with a decorative motif within a rectangle. The parlor (1A) has its original wooden fireplace mantle which is made-up of a cornice with dentil molding, side columns, overmantle, mirror, shelf supported by three brackets, milled cherry wood, brick surround, and modern heater. Original, wooden shutters can be seen where they cover the windows in this room. The original living room (2A) is the only room missing its original mantle. To the west of the central hall is the original master bedroom (4A) and the original dining room (5A). These rooms are entered through the same type of five-paneled and grained doors with original hardware sets as the previous two rooms. The original master bedroom contains the hidden, spiral, cherry staircase leading to an upstairs bedroom, in what looks to be a closet entered through a five-paneled, painted door. This room contains an original, milled wood fireplace mantle.
River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

which has an opening framed by pilasters, plain frieze, simple mantle shelf, and modern heater. Original shutters are also on the windows in this room. Another five-paneled and painted door connects this room to the original dining room (5A) beside it, which contains an original fireplace mantle with mantle shelf, brackets, milled or turned side posts and shelves, and a brick opening with modern heater. Original oak wainscoting is seen on the walls below a chairrail.

From the original dining room is a walkway to the kitchen. This area, along with the kitchen (6A), was recently remodeled in 1990, where a closet and bathroom were added in the walkway and modern cabinets and linoleum were installed in the kitchen.

Four bedrooms and three bathrooms are located on the second floor of the house. The central hall (3B) continues on this floor and allows access into the ample rooms. All four bedrooms and the bathroom located in the central hall contain the same five-paneled and grained doors except there are original, two-light, glass transoms above each. The original walnut flooring continues throughout this floor also. Original shutters can be seen on the window at the end of the hall and on the windows located in the bedrooms (1B, 4B, & 5B). The hidden, cherry, spiral staircase runs into the front, west children's' bedroom. A third bathroom was added to the east of the central hall when the remodeling of the first floor took place in 1990 by dividing an existing bathroom in two. All four bedrooms retain their original mantles which are almost identical. All four mantles are made-up of cherry milled wood, shelf supported by two brackets, side pilasters, and decorated with a oval rosette. The mantle in bedroom (4B) has been inset with a grate and round-headed opening and has original ceramic tile located on the hearth. The mantle in bedroom (5B) has an original white and grey marble surround with an added modern heater. The mantle in bedroom (2B) has been stripped of its surround and hearth materials.

The interior design and intact features of the house correspond with stylistic elements of the exterior, and give a picturesque example of a Queen Anne farm house, as interpreted in a rural setting. The house exhibits a high degree of architectural integrity and is an excellent example of late nineteenth century design.
VIII. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

River Side Farmhouse is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C as a significant example of vernacular craftsmanship and the interpretation of Queen Anne style in a rural setting, representing the impact of the Queen Anne style on rural progressive farms in Bedford County.

River Side Farm was established in 1815, when John Shofner brought his family by way of horseback from North Carolina. He built a log cabin on the spot where the farmhouse stands today. After his death, his son Michael tore down the cabin and built another house. Then in 1890, Jacob Morton Shofner, tore down his father's house to build the Queen Anne farmhouse still lived in today. He named it River Side and six generations have lived in the house, the last being Morton Brandon King and family. The house has the distinction of being the birthplace of Prentice Cooper, three-term governor of Tennessee from 1939 to 1945, and grandson of Jacob Morton Shofner. The house is now owned by the Prentice Cooper heirs.

The late Victorian era building style known as Queen Anne has been considered a more urban style seen in city row houses, small commercial buildings, and elite summer cottages. This style was popular among the newly rich and the rising suburban middle class of the nineteenth-century industrial era. It was the characteristic style of the "gilded age". Because of this style's association with wealth and prosperity, rural farmers also began adopting it as a way to show their agricultural wealth and status in their communities. These free-standing residences employed some of the most picturesque effects of the Queen Anne style, at least in a rural setting, like Bedford County, where the traditional symmetrical form of the I-house still predominated. In fact, a historic I-house is the closest surviving historic dwelling on Shofner Bridge Road to River Side Farm.

River Side is an excellent example of how a Bedford County family adapted the architectural style of Queen Anne in building a new rural dwelling so to associate their own prosperity and property with late nineteenth-century architectural trends. The Shofner family was one of the first families to settle in the Shelbyville area and from 1815 to 1890 the Shofner family was prospering agriculturally and in other ways. The family farm, of several hundred acres, expanded. The house's builder, Jacob Morton Shofner, probably saw the Queen Anne style as a way to make a statement of the family's
River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

acquired status and wealth. By adapting the Queen Anne style for his new dwelling, he associated his prosperity with the expanding prosperity of the Victorian era. The varied details and craftsmanship of the dwelling had another purpose as well. Shofner also operated a lumber business and the use of different woods, and the intricate carving of interior details, served Jacob Morton Shofner as a demonstration of what his business could produce. The architect and craftsmen of the dwelling are not clearly identified with any one person, but the house was built under the direction of Jacob Morton Shofner, who is considered the builder and designer of the house by oral family tradition.

The Queen Anne style reflected not only the industrial innovations of the country but also the changes in ideas of house design. The style allowed for a versatile use of materials and forms provided by power tools. Interiors were a departure from the predictable square rooms of earlier houses. Spaces opened and flowed, nooks and crannies appeared, porches opened the house up to the outdoors, and wooden details were often stained in dark colors. The River Side Farmhouse exhibits many of these characteristics, such as the grained doors, flowing staircase, and doors leading on the porches. Indeed, River Side has effectively maintained all of its significant Queen Anne exterior and interior details. It epitomizes a vernacular interpretation of this style, especially in its porches, extensive use of dark woods, grand central staircase and hall, mantels, grained paneled doors, spindlework, jigsaw ornament, fish scale shingles, and projecting bays. These details reflect how local craftsmen interpreted Victorian style in the late nineteenth century.

Bedford County has few documented extant examples of Queen Anne-influenced farmhouses and among those, River Side Farmhouse is a significant surviving architectural example. Of the eighty-three historic houses included in the 1969 publication, _Doors to the Past_, by the Bedford County Historical Society, River Side Farmhouse was the only Queen Anne residence in the county, outside of the county seat of Shelbyville. Two other examples have been listed in the National Register during the 1980s. The Henry A. Clark House (NR 8/30/85) is a large brick home on the outskirts of Wartrace. The John Gheeem Sims House (NR 11/5/87), also in the Wartrace vicinity, is a large frame house of both Queen Anne and Eastlake influences.

Today, River Side Farmhouse continues to be used as a domestic residence and remains a symbol of progressive agricultural farmers in the late nineteenth-century.
River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

IX. BIBLIOGRAPHY


River Side Farmhouse, Shelbyville, Bedford Co., TN

X. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Tax Map for this nomination has the scale 1" = 400'. This scale tax map is prepared by the Tennessee State Review Board of Equalization for rural areas. In the past, the Tennessee Historical Commission has used this scale map for nominations and has found that the 1" = 400' adequately meets our office needs. The Tennessee Historical Commission does not have the facilities to prepare maps to the scale preferred by the National Park Service.

The nominated property includes approximately four acres, defined as the property designated by the marked rectangle on parcel 12, Bedford County tax map 98.

Boundary Justification

The nominated parcel is the site of the present and past domestic complex of the River Side Farmhouse and includes the original driveway to the house.
River Side Farmhouse, Bedford Co., TN

PHOTOGRAPHS
By: Carroll Van West
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation
PO Box 80, MTSU
Murfreesboro, TN 37243
Date: June 1996 and July 1997
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37243

North facade, facing south
1 of 35

North facade, entrance porch, detail, facing south
2 of 35

North facade, porch roof detail, facing west
3 of 35

North facade, entrance door panel detail, facing south
4 of 35

Porch, west elevation, facing southeast
5 of 35

West elevation, facing east
6 of 35

West elevation, main dwelling, facing east
7 of 35

West elevation, kitchen addition, facing east
8 of 35
River Side Farmhouse, Bedford Co., TN

South elevation, facing north
9 of 35

South elevation, facing northwest
10 of 35

East elevation, facing southwest
11 of 35

Central hall and staircase, first floor, facing south
12 of 35

Central hall, first floor, facing northwest
13 of 35

Staircase, first floor, facing southeast
14 of 35

Three window bay, parlor (room 1A), facing north
15 of 35

Mantel, parlor (room 1A), facing south
16 of 35

Exterior door detail, parlor (room 1A), graining remnants
17 of 35

Detail, bay window graining, parlor (room 1A), facing north
18 of 35

Mantel, baseboards, and doors, bedroom (room 4A), facing south
19 of 35

Detail, mantel and original doors, bedroom (room 4A), facing southwest
20 of 35
River Side Farmhouse, Bedford Co., TN

Hidden spiral staircase, bedroom (room 4A)
21 of 35

Mantel and original door, bedroom (room 5A), facing north
22 of 35

Hallway of hyphen between dwelling and kitchen, facing south
23 of 35

Modern kitchen appliances and cabinets, room 6A, facing east
24 of 35

Detail, staircase, second floor landing, facing west
25 of 35

Detail, staircase bannister, second floor, facing northeast
26 of 35

Central hall, second floor, facing northeast
27 of 35

Mantel, bedroom (room 4B)
28 of 35

Detail, spiral staircase, second floor bedroom (room 4B)
29 of 35

Mantel, second floor bedroom (room 5B)
30 of 35

Mantel, second floor bedroom (room 2B)
31 of 35
River Side Farmhouse, Bedford Co., TN

Mantel, second floor bedroom (room 1B)
32 of 35

Detail, transom, second floor bedroom (room 2B)
33 of 35

Bathroom, second floor, facing southeast
34 of 35

Central hall, second floor, facing northeast
35 of 35