

PH0670821

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 2 1977
DATE ENTERED AUG 22 1977

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 ****
Connor Toll House
AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER *W of Signal Mtn.*
4212 Anderson Pike
CITY, TOWN Signal Mountain VICINITY OF Third
STATE Tennessee CODE 47 COUNTY Hamilton CODE 65

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input 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:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Walden's Ridge Historical Association
STREET & NUMBER 2011 Altura Drive
CITY, TOWN Signal Mountain VICINITY OF Tennessee

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hamilton County Registrar's Office
STREET & NUMBER Hamilton County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN Chattanooga STATE Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Tennessee Architectural and Historical Survey
DATE June 1972 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Tennessee Historical Commission
CITY, TOWN Nashville STATE Tennessee

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

James C. Conner built his home of logs with two rooms up and two down. The two pens are joined by a double stone fireplace. Except for the upper north room, there is a window at the end of each room, upstairs and down. Stairs lead to a bedroom above the living room. There are no stairs to the loft above the kitchen. The logs are poplar and oak and joined with square notching. Much of the original chinking was replaced during the restoration of the toll house. The floors were originally poplar but have been replaced with pine. A two-room, one-story addition that was made in 1909 was not replaced.

Before the 1976 restoration was undertaken, the site was photographed and surveyed. The logs were numbered and the house was taken down. Logs from the 1909 addition were used to replace rotted logs in the original toll house. The cabin was raised on the exact location, after which the chimney was restored and the shingle roof replaced. Original techniques and materials were duplicated throughout.

In the yard near the house there was a 14' x 15' smokehouse, an apple house, an ash hopper, and a well. Elsie Adams describes the implements and furnishings in exact detail in her book Pioneers of Walden's Ridge. In the years after the Civil War, she writes, it became a beautiful place: "The broad fields were divided into orchards, gardens, farming land and a lovely meadow with a stream gently flowing. A flock of sheep grazed in the meadow. In the yard were old-fashioned flowers including roses. West of the house was a grove of 'cheese' apple trees, probably no longer heard of. The sheep kept the grass cropped making a lovely lawn. When the apple trees were in bloom their sweet fragrant perfume filling the air and the soothing hum of the busy bees made this a place of contentment. Many of the 'city folks' of Chattanooga, who came to Walden's Ridge in the springtime, found their way to Squire Conner's home to sit in the evening and enjoy the beauty of nature on the mountain top." Mrs. Adams describes an orchard beyond the cross fence. The trees were planted in rows 12 or 15 feet apart, leaving space to plant corn between the rows. In addition to the "cheese" apple, she names the Sheep nose, Russet, Limbertwig, Spice, Early Harvest and June apples, as well as the Ben Davis, Horse and Snow apple trees. There were also cherry trees and Indian peaches in the five acre orchard, and pear trees in the garden.

Although the toll house tract is now less than 1/2 acre, a few of the original trees remain nearby. Two adjacent tracts which front on Fairmont Road and Taft Highway combined with the toll house tract would make it possible to recreate an orchard and reconstruct some of the outbuildings.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" 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 1858

BUILDER/ARCHITECT James C. Conner

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Conner Toll House is significant in the settlement of Walden's Ridge, in the social development of its people, in the evolution of log cabin architecture, and in the history of regional transportation. It played a modest role in the Civil War. Its orchard and farming operation were illustrative of mountain agriculture.

James C. Conner came from North Carolina to settle in Hamilton County in 1842. In 1847, he and George Rogers were assigned a grant of 1,000 acres on Walden's Ridge by Elisha Rogers, J. C. Conner's father-in-law. Elisha Rogers was himself a prominent figure in the early history of the region, as he built the first home on the mountain at the top of the "W", where he operated the toll gate until the outbreak of the Civil War.

In July of 1858, James C. Conner and his wife Kizziah Rogers and their six children moved up the mountain in an ox-drawn covered wagon. They had built and moved into their new log home before January. The children attended school at the Old Academy, of which J. C. Conner was a founder and stockholder. Until after the Civil War this was the only school in Hamilton County. J. C. Conner and his family were one of only about 12 families living on Walden's Ridge before the outbreak of the War.

During the War the Conner house was a relay station for the Union Army. Messages were fire flashed from Cameron Hill to Signal Point, then carried by courier post to Bob White's place, then to the Conner place and on to Col. Joe Anderson's. From there messages were sent by fire flash to Jasper in the Sequatchie Valley.

After the War the toll gate was moved to the Conner place, where it remained until 1892. Anderson Pike was the only highway leading into Chattanooga from the Sequatchie Valley. Across it was the toll gate, fastened to a hickory tree on one side and chained to a heavy post on the other. The tree was cut down to widen the Pike.

In addition to operating the toll gate, J. C. Conner was elected to the legislature and served three terms as sheriff of Hamilton County. His youngest son, Thomas C. Conner, lived in the toll house until his death in July of 1938 at age 80. It was occupied until October 1975 by the late Mary Esther Conner, his daughter.

After the death of Miss Conner, a group of citizens formed the Walden's Ridge Historical Association to purchase and restore the toll house as a mountain museum. This was accomplished in 1976 with a grant of \$7,500 from the Tennessee American Revolution Bicentennial Commission and generous local support.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Adams, Elsie Conner. Mountain Melody or Pioneers of Walden's Ridge. Chattanooga, 1950.
 Patten, Cartter. Signal Mountain and Walden's Ridge. Chattanooga, 1962.
 White, Dorothy E. "Story of Anderson Pike." Chattanooga Times Magazine. June 11, 1933

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	6	6	5	1	4	9	0	3	8	9	3	9	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

Mrs. Joe V. W. (Kay) Gaston

ORGANIZATION

Walden's Ridge Historical Association

DATE

January 1977

STREET & NUMBER

2011 Altura Drive

TELEPHONE

(615) 886-3117

CITY OR TOWN

Signal Mountain

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. Hays

DATE

2/22/77

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

8/22/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

8.12.77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER