

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Somerville Historic District

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

street & number Court Square, and irregular pattern along N. Main, St, N/A not for publication

city, town Somerville N/A vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Tennessee code 047 county Fayette code 047

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<u>N/A</u> 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 Multiple Ownership

street & number N/A

city, town Somerville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number Court Square

city, town Somerville state Tennessee 38068

**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

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### **Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Somerville is the county seat of Fayette County, which is located near the southwestern corner of the state. The Somerville Historic District contains 101 buildings. The majority of these are located around the court square and along South Main Street. All of the commercial buildings around the court square were constructed after 1880 with the exception of three: Wilder and Associates Building (#75) built ca. 1850, Walter's Grocery (#103) built ca. 1870, and Minor's Market-Smith Dry Goods (#89) built ca. 1875. Dr. Josiah Higgason's house, "Frogmore," (#46) built ca. 1829 is the oldest building in town. Eleven other structures which remain in excellent condition were built between 1835 and 1865. Greek Revival Period influences are reflected in most of these buildings. The exceptions to this are found in the Cooper House (#26) which was influenced by both the Greek Revival, in shape and massing, and the Gothic Revival in exterior decoration; St. Thomas Episcopal Church (#92), which conforms stylistically to the Gothic Revival Period; and the W. H. Blake House (#43), which is characteristic of the regional style most often called Tennessee Vernacular.

The Fayette County Courthouse, located in the center of the town square, is the only governmental building located within the historic district. Built in 1925, this is the fourth courthouse to serve Fayette County.

Building materials used throughout the historic district were based on the structure's proposed use; residential (frame), commercial or religious (brick). The size of the lots and the setback in the residential area seemed to conform more to the architectural period during which the building was constructed, with the largest lots and deepest setbacks found during the Greek Revival Period. One unifying theme found throughout the district is the use of porches on the residential buildings as well as two of the earliest commercial buildings.

The majority of the contributing buildings, both commercial and residential, are from the Victorian Period and reflect the influence of the Victorian Gothic and Italianate styles. Twenty of the twenty-seven properties which do not contribute to the character of the district have been built since 1940, six were built between 1870 and 1920 but have been extensively altered, and one is a vacant lot.

### **Buildings and sites contributing to the character of the district**

1. Judge Thomas Richard Cocke House, "Alba Villa" (203 South Maple Street): 1846, Greek Revival, two-story, hip roof, frame, weatherboard, 1/1 light windows, two-story high pedimented porticos on both the north and east elevations. Each portico is supported by four fluted Ionic order columns, each has a lunette in the gable end, each of the double leaf doors has a rectangular transom, corner lights and side lights, entrances onto each of the balconys match those on the first floor.
2. Lightfoot House (613 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period with transitional influence, two-story, frame, weatherboarded, hip roof with cross gables, Palladian influenced windows in gable ends, 1/1 light windows, one-story encircling verandah supported by fluted columns and turned balusters.

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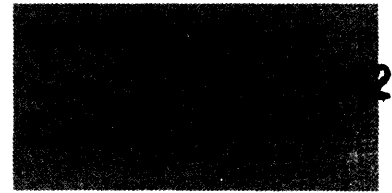
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3. Seventh-Day Adventist Church (611 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period cottage, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with cross gables, bargeboard, 1/1 light windows, turned posts on porch.
4. Downey House (607 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period cottage, 1½ story, frame, weatherboarded, hip roof with cross gables, 1/1 light windows, verandah across facade, central pediment supported by eight columns.
5. Wirt House (603 South Somerville Street): ca. 1870, Victorian Period cottage with Italianate influence, one-story, brick, gable roof, interior end chimneys, round headed windows with 6/6 lights, porch supported by brick piers added ca. 1945.
7. Langdon House (612 South Somerville Street): ca. 1915, one-story, frame, gable roof with wide eaves and brackets, exterior end chimneys, porch across facade and bricking of exterior ca. 1940.
9. Nix House (608 South Somerville Street): ca. 1890, Victorian Period cottage, one-story, frame, weatherboarded, shingled gable ends, bargeboard, turned porch posts, interior chimneys.
10. Harvey House (606 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with cross gables, interior chimneys, porch around two sides supported by turned posts.
11. Taylor House (604 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period cottage, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof, rectangular transoms over entrances, turned porch posts; second building, perhaps earlier, attached to the rear, gable roof, exterior end chimney.
12. Treadway House (602 South Somerville Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period cottage, one-story frame, weatherboard, gable roof, L-shaped porch with turned posts and brackets.
14. Armour House (503 South Somerville Street): ca. 1935, 1½ story cottage, frame, shingle, gable roof, round headed entrance.
15. Blake-Summers House (301 West Church Street): ca. 1870, Greek Revival influence, two-story, frame, weatherboard, double-leaf entrance with sidelights and rectangular transom, hip roof, exterior end chimneys, pilasters, one-story 3-bay porch added later.
16. Pulliam-Matthews House (503 Oak Street): ca. 1850, Greek Revival, two-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof, exterior end chimneys, two-story high pedimented portico supported by two fluted columns, second floor wrought iron balcony, doorways with rectangular transoms and sidelights, 6/6 light windows with exterior blinds.
17. Burtis House (417 Oak Street): ca. 1840, Greek Revival cottage, 1½ story on raised foundation, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, two interior chimneys, two dormers, 9/9 light windows with exterior blinds, pedimented portico with columns and pilasters, double leaf doors with rectangular transom and sidelights.

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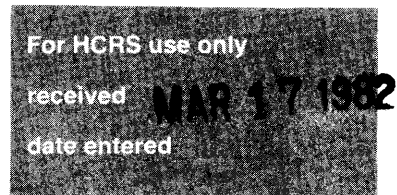
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18. Cooper-Washington House (418 Oak Street): ca. 1835, Greek Revival, 2-story, brick, hip roof, exterior end chimneys, two-story pedimented portico supported by two tapered square pillars, balcony with simple wood balusters, rectangular transom with sidelights, one-story frame addition, ca. 1940, on the rear.
19. Treadway House (302 West Church Street): ca. 1860, one-story, L-shaped brick, gable roof, frame addition ca. 1935.
22. First Baptist Church Activities Building (West Church Street): ca. 1900, one-story, frame, brick veneered ca. 1950; this building was the station and terminus of the Southern Accommodation, a branch line of the Southern Railway which connected Somerville to the main line at Moscow.
26. Cooper House (507 South Main Street): ca. 1860, First Revival Period, two-story, frame, weatherboard, three bay facade, hip roof, rear chimneys, bracketed cornice, one-story flat roofed porch with parapet supported by two pillars, rectangular transom and sidelights at main entrance, Gothic Revival influenced windows.
27. Sims House, "Seven Oaks" (504 South Main Street): 1873, Victorian Period, two-story, frame, weatherboarded, hip roof with front cross gable, bracketed cornice, interior chimneys, one-story rear ell with gable roof, one-story front porch with decorative posts and brackets. Small one-story frame, weatherboard outbuilding, one-bay wide, gable roof with boxed cornice and an exterior end chimney, possibly earlier than the house.
28. Somerville Elementary School (South Main Street): 1936, one-story, brick, Second Revival Period, three bay wide projecting central block with pedimented portico supported by four columns, cupola, six over six light windows. Site of the old Somerville Female Institute.
29. McElwee House (406 Charleston Street): ca. 1880, Victorian Period, one-story, brick, L-shaped, gable roof, boxed cornice, interior chimneys, circular brick vents, round headed windows with distinctive brick surrounds.

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32. Smith House (407 South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, aluminum siding, hip roof with cross gables, 1/1 light windows.
33. Lipsky House, "Magnolia Place" (South Main Street): ca. 1912, Classical Revival, two-story, frame, weatherboard, wraparound verandas with a two-story central pedimented portico supported by large paired Ionic columns, fanlight in pediment, central entrance way with rectangular transom and sidelights, hip roof, interior chimneys, denticulated cornice with decorative brackets. One-story outbuilding, ca. 1850, gable roof and central chimney, poor condition.
35. Hendon House (408 South East Street): ca. 1880, one-story, frame with weatherboard, hip roof, pedimented portico with shingled gable end, rectangular transom over central entrance way which is flanked by long narrow windows.
37. Littleton House (402 South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, cross-gable roof, single leaf entrance with two-light rectangular transom, turned porch posts.
38. Davis House (308 South Main Street): ca. 1930, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with cross gable, exposed eaves, paired windows, 6/1 lights, brick porch added ca. 1940.
39. Yancey House (306 South Somerville Street): ca. 1930, bungalow, 1½ story, frame, brick, gable roof, exposed eaves, bracketed cornice, brick porch supported by square brick pillars.
40. W. H. Blake House (309 South Main Street): ca. 1850, First Revival Period, two-story, frame, weatherboard, two-stage central pedimented portico, each supported by four square posts, double leaf doors with narrow five light rectangular transom, 6/6 light windows with movable louver blinds, gable roof with exterior end chimneys. One story, frame servants' house, gable roof, central chimney, porch across facade and a frame well house also on the property.
42. Morris House (301 South Main Street): ca. 1890, stick style, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, wraparound veranda with turned posts and sawn balustrade, fish scale shingles and half timbers in cross gables, 1/1 light windows, rectangular transom and sidelights at the entrance.
43. Dr. Josiah Higgason House, "Frogmore" (302 South Main Street): 1829, Greek Revival, two-story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, exterior end chimneys, two-story high veranda with a second story balcony which extends across the facade, polygonal columns, five bays wide, large central entrance framed by wide sidelights and multi-light rectangular transom, 6/6 light windows with movable louver blinds; 1½ story frame addition across the rear, ca. 1925, gambrel type roof with dormers and exterior end chimneys: one-story servants' quarters, brick, gable roof, central chimney. Frogmore is the oldest house in Somerville.

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44. Wetzler House (302 South East Street): ca. 1910, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, decorative circular vent, shed dormers, central entrance with sidelights and rectangular transom, cut stone porch with Ionic order masonry columns across the facade.
45. Havercamp House (210 East Marginal Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, pyramidal roof with front gable projection, shed dormer on side, entrance with rectangular transom and sidelights, porch around two sides supported by round columns.
46. Somerville Male Academy (301 East Marginal Street): ca. 1850, one-story, brick, hip roof, two front entrances with rectangular transoms, two separate porch additions on facade, each with turned posts and decorative brackets, 6/6 light windows with movable louvers.
47. Pulliam House (308 East Marginal Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, pyramidal roof with intersecting gables, columned porch on two sides, 1/1 light windows, single leaf door with rectangular transom.
48. Fowler House (306 East Marginal Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, steeply pitched hip roof, projecting front gable, columned porch on facade, entrance with rectangular transom.
49. Boggs House (302 East Marginal Street): ca. 1900, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with shed dormers and intersecting gabled projections, decorative porch with turned posts.
50. Parker House (208 East Marginal Street): ca. 1915, two-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with intersecting projecting gables, interior chimneys, 1/1 light windows, single leaf glass paned entrance with rectangular transom and sidelights, one-story veranda on three sides supported by Ionic order columns and a turned balustrade.
51. Montgomery House, "The Hill" (East South Street): ca. 1850, Greek Revival cottage, one-story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, exterior end chimneys, three bays wide, pedimented portico supported by two square pillars and pilasters, single leaf entrance with rectangular transom, 9/6 windows with exterior blinds.
52. Pulliam House (East South Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, pyramidal roof with intersecting gables, interior chimneys, 1/1 light windows, three single leaf doors with rectangular transoms, porch on two sides supported by square pillars.
53. Hodge House (212 South East Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof, interior chimneys, columned porch on front and one side.
54. Somerville Methodist Church (202 East Street): 1911, two-story, brick, five bay facade with the three central bowed bays; ca. 1950 wing, which resembles the original section was attached to the south side of the church.
56. Parsons House (212 South Main Street): ca. 1930 duplex, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, six bays, two central entrances, bracketed pediment, paired windows, gambrel roof, exposed eaves, gabled dormers, screened porch on each end.

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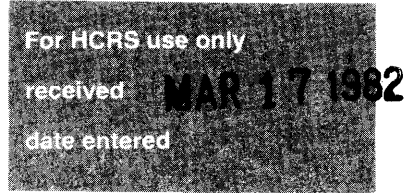
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57. Rhea House (204 South Main Street): 1918, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, porch on front and side supported by square posts.
58. Freeland House, "The Etowah" (113 East South Street): ca. 1860, Greek Revival cottage, 1½ story, frame, weatherboard, gable roof, exterior end chimneys, pedimented portico with a multi-light rectangular window with sidelights, central double leaf door with rectangular transom and sidelights.
59. Yancey House (South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with intersecting gables, porch on front and side with tapered brick porch posts.
60. Parsons House (207 South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with intersecting gables, interior chimneys, 1/1 light windows, wraparound porch supported by round tapered posts and turned balusters.
61. Ozier House (201 South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, frame, weatherboard, hip roof with intersecting gables, interior chimneys, 1/1 light windows, porch supported by brick pillars.
62. Newby House (South Main Street): ca. 1920, 1½ story, brick, gable roof, three bay gabled dormer, 6/1 lights, porch across facade supported by brick pillars.
63. First Presbyterian Church (124 South Main Street): ca. 1890, Victorian Gothic, brick, compound pointed arched portal set in a square buttressed tower on the southeast corner. Crenelated parapet, gable roof with stepped brick corbelling along parapet. Two-story brick addition with hip roof attached at the rear of church with a small one-story brick addition behind the second addition.
67. Service Station (South Main Street): ca. 1920, commercial building, one-story, brick, steeply pitched gable roof, vacant.
68. Price's Drug Store (East Fayette Street): ca. 1920, commercial building, two-story, brick, finial like decorations at either end of parapet, building name (Price) in parapet.
69. Somerville Bank and Trust Co. (East Fayette Street): 1895, Victorian Romanesque influence, commercial building, two-story, brick and cut stone, round arched entrance supported by short polished columns.
70. Wirt Building, (102-104 East Court Street): ca. 1900, Victorian commercial building, two-story, brick, two section; second floor, 4 bays, housed Lipsky's Opera House in the early 1900's.
71. Wilder and Associates Building (East Court Street): ca. 1850, two-story, brick, commercial building, possibly two buildings that were combined in a later remodeling; considered to be the oldest building on the court square. The building houses the law office of Tennessee Lieutenant Governor John S. Wilder.

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76. Martin's Department Store (116 East Market Street): ca. 1925, one-story, brick, commercial building, decorative tiles along cornice.
77. Fair Theatre (112 East Market Street): ca. 1920, Art Deco influence, two-story, brick, recessed entrance, first story covered with glass tiles, second floor overlaid with concrete panels, bowed neon sign atop facade.
78. Maxines's Dress Shop-Cohn's (East Market Street): ca. 1925, one-story, brick, commercial building, two sections.
79. Western Auto Store (East Market Street): ca. 1920, commercial building, one-story, brick, decorative tile cornice.
80. Western Auto Store (East Market Street): ca. 1925, one-story, brick commercial building.
81. Somerville Farm Supply (215 North Main Street): ca. 1900, commercial building, 1½ story, brick, gable roof, decorated stepped brick parapet, very few alterations.
83. Minor's Dry Goods (124 West Market Street): ca. 1925, commercial building, one-story, brick, flat roof.
84. Farmer's Hardware (130 West Market Street): ca. 1880, Victorian Period, commercial building, two-story, brick and stucco, decorative lintels on second floor windows.
85. Minor's Market-Smith Dry Goods (132 West Market Street): ca. 1875, Victorian Period commercial building, two-story, brick, two-stage gallery across facade supported by chamfered edge posts, parapet with brick denticulated cornice, attic grille vents, facade has had very minor alterations.
86. The Two Sisters (136 West Market Street): ca. 1900, commercial building, two-story, brick.
87. Burger House (West Market Street): 1910, commercial building, one-story, brick, corbelled brick cornice; recently rehabilitated.
88. St. Thomas Episcopal Church (201 West Market Street): 1858, Gothic Revival, brick, buttresses extending above cornice, gable roof, lancet arched stained glass windows, arched double leaf doors; interior is in original state with a lancet arch framing the apse.
89. Masonic Lodge (West Market Street): 1860, two-story, rectangular shape, brick, flat roof, somewhat remodeled.
90. Delta Development-Holland Cotton Company (135 West Market Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period commercial building, two-story, decorative block, remodeled recently.
93. Rhea's Rexall Drugs (West Court Street): ca. 1890, Victorian Period commercial building, two-story, brick, decorative brick cornice.



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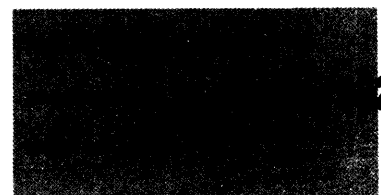
94. Rhea's Rexall Drugs (West Court Street): ca. 1900, Victorian Period commercial building, two-story, brick, simple brick cornice.
95. Lipsky's Store (West Court Street): ca. 1925, commercial building, one-story, brick.
96. Guthrie and Rosser Furniture and Appliance (West Fayette Street): ca. 1925, commercial building, 4 sections, one-story, brick.
97. Tucker's Antiques (West Fayette Street): ca. 1925, commercial building, 1 story, brick.
98. The Fayette Falcon (West Fayette Street): ca. 1925, commercial building, one-story, brick.
99. Walter's Grocery (West Fayette Street): ca. 1870, Italianate commercial building, two-story, brick, round arched windows with tracery and hood molds, attic vents, curved parapet. Originally used as a hotel.
101. Fayette County Courthouse (Court Square): 1925, Beaux-Arts influence, two-story on a raised foundation, brick, paired windows, bronze panels between first and second floor windows; the Beaux-Arts influence is evidenced in the dome, portico supported by four Ionic columns, parapet and overall massing; Architect, George Mahan, Memphis.

Nonconforming intrusions detracting from the integrity of the district

6. Wirt House (601 South Somerville Street): ca. 1960, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.
8. Langdon House (610 South Somerville Street): ca. 1970, modern, 1 story, frame with partial brick veneering.
13. Havercamp House (505 South Somerville Street): ca. 1950, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.
14. Armour House (503 South Somerville Street): ca. 1940, modern, 1½ stories, frame, weatherboarded.
20. Woody House (210 West Church Street): ca. 1960, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.
21. Boyd House (208 West Church Street): ca. 1960, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.
23. First Baptist Church of Somerville (415 South Main Street): ca. 1975, modern, 1 story, concrete block with brick veneering.
24. Armstrong House (503 South Main Street): ca. 1975, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.

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25. Armstrong Clinic (505 South Main Street): ca. 1880, remodeled ca. 1950, 1 story, frame and weatherboarding (early section) and brick veneered frame (ca. 1950 construction).
30. Hensley House (404 Charleston Street): ca. 1960, modern, 1 story, frame, aluminum siding.
31. Frist Baptist Church and Christian Activities Building (Charleston Street): 1981, large one story rectangular brick section with low gable roof, two story metal building section with low gable roof.
34. House (Churchill Street): ca. 1960, modern, one-story, brick.
36. Lawson House (404 South Main Street): ca. 1950, modern, 1 story, frame, weatherboarded.
41. Dobbins House (South Main Street): ca. 1950, modern, 1 story, frame, weatherboarded.
55. Freeland House (106 East Marginal Street): ca. 1955, modern, 1 story, brick veneered frame.
64. Somerville Bank and Trust Company (South Main Street): 1978, one story brick, rectangular, flat roof with parapet.
65. Store (South Main Street): ca. 1920, one-story, brick and stucco, greatly altered.
66. Staff Cafe (South Main Street): ca. 1910, one-story, brick, three-bay facade; only part of the exterior walls remain.
72. Four A's Restaurant (East Court Street): ca. 1940, commercial building, 2 sections, 2 stories, brick.
73. Barber Shop (114 East Court Street): ca. 1950, commercial building, 1 story, brick.
74. Margaret's Fabrics and Beauty Shop (112 East Court Street): ca. 1950, commercial building, 1 story, brick.
75. Cooksey's (East Court Street): ca. 1900, commercial building, 2 stories, brick covered with aluminum panels, drastically remodeled; small, 1 story, brick residence, considerably remodeled, attached to rear; known as Brown Hotel in early 1900's.
82. Parson's Grocery and Barber Shop (203-205 North Main Street): ca. 1970, commercial building, 2 sections, 1 story, brick.

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91. Ben Franklin (West Court Street): ca. 1870, commercial building, 1 story, brick, drastically remodeled.
92. Rike's True Value Hardware Store (West Court Street): ca. 1890, commercial building, 2 stories, brick, recently remodeled.
100. Creative Hair Styles (South Main Street): ca. 1970, commercial building, one story, brick.

## 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 checked="" 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 ca. 1830-1930      Builder/Architect      N/A

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) Criteria C

The buildings of the Somerville Historic District remain as an excellent collection of residential and commercial architecture in a rural southwest Tennessee community. Somerville's architectural development spans nearly three quarters of the nineteenth century and through the first quarter of the twentieth century, demonstrating the growth and development of the community and the influence of architectural styles and periods with relatively unchanged, outstanding examples from the Greek Revival period forward including a variety of early twentieth century styles such as the Neo Classical Revival, Beaux Arts and Art Deco.

Somerville, established on the Loosa Hatchie River, prospered as the most populated social, governmental, and business center in rural agrarian Fayette County. Incorporated in 1826, Somerville was developed on land donated by George Bowers and James Brown who each gave 25 acres. The town was established as the seat of Fayette County, which had been created by an act of the Tennessee General Assembly in 1824, and named in honor of Lieutenant Robert M. Somerville who was killed in 1814 at the Battle of the Horse Shoe during the Creek War.

During the early decades Somerville developed as the core of a cotton, slave labor farming community feeling the large scale, fast immigration into the county of "a respectable class, bringing no small portion of wealth" (as commented in the November 26, 1825, issue of the "Jackson Gazette"). In 1828, Somerville had "400 inhabitants, 100 houses, 20 mechanics, 7 professional men, 8 stores, 2 groceries, 3 taverns, a courthouse, and a jail." Money for building the first courthouse and jail came from the town lots that were sold at auction. Three separate courthouses, all at the same location, have since served Fayette County. The first, a one-story log building erected in 1825 as a temporary structure, was replaced in 1833 with a two-story brick building. The third courthouse, constructed in 1876 of bricks with a slate roof, burned on February 10, 1925 and was replaced by the present structure, designed by prominent Memphis architect George Mahan, Jr.

The town's business district was laid out in a court square plan, ensuring commercial development around the square with residential growth expanding for the most part to the south. The earliest building remaining in Somerville is an exceptional 1829 Greek Revival period house, the Dr. Josiah Higgason House (#46). It was built by Dr. Higgason who married Amy Cocke, daughter of one of the county's first settlers, and has remained in the family since. Several other substantial houses from the Greek Revival period remain in Somerville and were probably influenced by the Higgason House. The Judge Thomas Richard Cocke House (#1), the Blake-Summers House (#15), the Pulliam-Matthews House (#16), and the Burtis House (#17) match its massive proportion and all are of wood frame construction with imposing details and lots a block deep and in some instances a block wide.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Crane, Paul and Sophie. Tennessee Taproots, Old Hickory, Tennessee: Earle-Shields Publishers, 1976.  
 Foster, Austin P. Counties of Tennessee, State of Tennessee Department of Education, Division of History, 1923.

## 10. Geographical Data

**ACREAGE NO. VERIFIED**

Acreege of nominated property 52 <sup>±</sup>

Quadrangle name Somerville, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

A 

1	6	2	8	6	4	6	0	3	9	0	2	2	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

1	6	2	8	6	2	8	0	3	9	0	1	8	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

1	6	2	8	6	0	4	0	3	9	0	1	5	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

1	6	2	8	6	6	6	0	3	9	0	1	8	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

1	6	2	8	6	0	1	0	3	9	0	2	4	6	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

1	6	2	8	6	2	5	0	3	9	0	2	4	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundaries of the district follow the rear property lines of buildings primarily on the court square and those along sections of S. Main, Cemetery, S. Somerville, East, and West Streets running north-south and those along sections of Marginal, Church, W. High,

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cynthia Cole, Coordinator of Field Services  
Shain T. Dennison, Architectural Historian

organization Tennessee Historical Commission date August 31, 1981

street & number 4721 Trousdale Drive telephone (615) 741-2371

city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert E. Sawyer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 3/3/82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Shelburne Byers</u> Keeper of the National Register	Entered in the National Register date <u>4/15/82</u>
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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received

date entered

82

Continuation sheet Somerville Historic District Item number 8

Page 2

Growth and expansion in Somerville occurred primarily during the years following the Civil War, as evidenced by the large number of fine Victorian era residences and commercial buildings. Therefore, the influence of the Gothic Revival style was not felt as strongly as the Greek Revival or later Victorian period. A fine example and the best representation of the Gothic Revival mode of architecture in Somerville is the St. Thomas Episcopal Church (#92).

The largest collection of buildings in Somerville representing one architectural period are from the Victorian era. Porches had become and continued to be a predominant element of residential buildings. All of the smaller one-story Victorian houses, both brick and weatherboard, have porches across the facade and in some cases around at least one side. Commercial buildings on the court square constructed during this period also utilized porches. Minor's Market-Smith Dry Goods (#89) still has its two-stage porch with chamfered posts and decorative brackets. It is thought that at least three extant buildings on the square originally had porches. The First Presbyterian Church (#66) in the Victorian Gothic style, the Somerville Bank and Trust Company (#73) influenced by the Victorian Romanesque style, and the Victorian commercial Rhea's Rexall Drugs (#97) attest to a diversity in architecture sought during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

Somerville's commercial structures of the early twentieth century show a more restrained attitude toward building than those of the nineteenth century. The majority of these buildings were one-story in height with far less emphasis on decorative architectural elements. Exceptions to this are Price's Drug Store (#72) and the Fair Theatre (#81).

Residential architecture during the early decades of the twentieth century tended to follow the same restrained direction as the commercial buildings. The Lightfoot House (#2) and the Lipsky House (#36) are typical of the Classical Revival influence. One of the best examples of the Bungalow influence in Somerville is the Yancey House (#42). Monumental buildings from the early twentieth century include the Methodist Church (#57) and the Fayette County Courthouse (#105). The most recent building contributing to the character of the district is the Somerville Elementary School (#28), built in 1936 on the site of the earlier Somerville Female Institute.

Somerville remained a small, rural town (1979 population 2,264) after the turn of the century as Memphis and Shelby County to the west increased its role as the metropolitan center of southwest Tennessee. As a result Somerville survives as an outstanding collection of buildings representing a wide variety of architectural periods and styles from about 1830 to the 1930s. The Somerville Historic District illustrates the town's development and the types of residential and commercial architecture popular in a rural, agrarian West Tennessee county.

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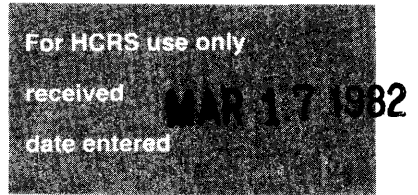
**Continuation sheet** Somerville Historic District **Item number** 2

**Page** 2

S. Main, Charleston, East, Hiawatha, West, S. Somerville, and Cemetery Streets running north-south and South, Marginal, Bonnie Burton, Churchill, Church, W. High, and Maple Streets running east-west (See attached map).

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet Somerville Historic District Item number 9

Page 2

Givens, David Sr. Our Church's Story-1829-1979: First Presbyterian Church Somerville, Tennessee, privately published, 1979.

Herndon, Joseph L. "Architects in Tennessee until 1930, A Dictionary," Thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1975.

The Tennessee Gazateer, 1834. Eastin Morris.

Williams, Samuel Cole. Beginnings of West Tennessee, Johnson City, Tennessee: The Watauga Press, 1930.



**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

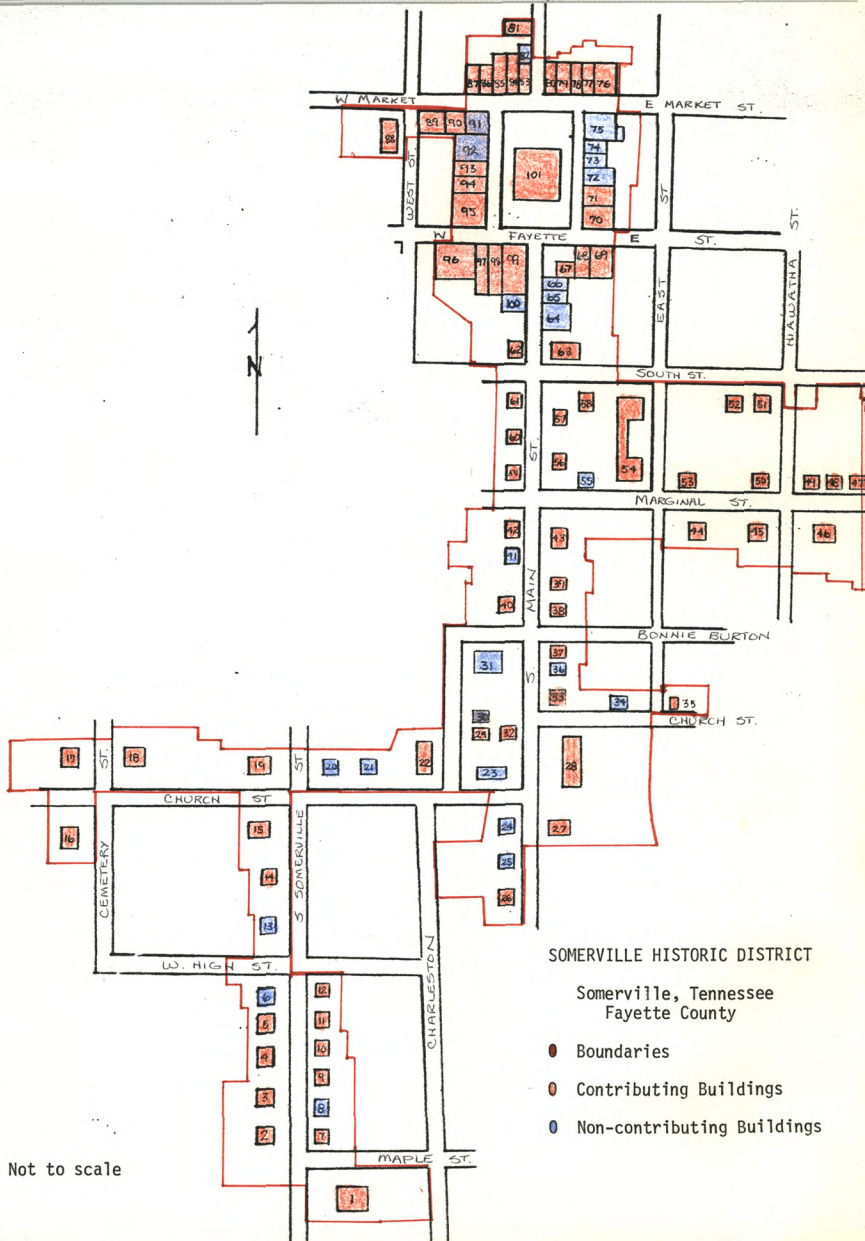
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Continuation sheet Somerville Historic District Item number 10

Page 2

and Maple Streets running east-west. The boundaries were selected to include as many contributing buildings as possible, with the fewest number of non-contributing buildings, to form a cohesive collection of architecturally and historically important commercial and residential buildings. To include several outstanding pivotal buildings, the boundaries in some instances jog across or part way down the streets; the buildings that are excluded as a result (on the south side of Church St. and the east side of S. Somerville) do not meet the National Register age criteria nor do they possess historic or architectural merit. They were omitted in order to maintain the architectural integrity and unity of the district. Where the boundaries jog to include one or a few properties (#1, #16, #17, #26), the buildings are of major architectural and historical importance to the town and district. These enhance the neighborhood feeling and the feeling of architectural development, and evolution of styles by representing the substantial Greek revival period town houses which occupy large lots that are a block deep and wide.



SOMERVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Somerville, Tennessee  
Fayette County

- Boundaries
- Contributing Buildings
- Non-contributing Buildings

Not to scale