

**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 John Geist and Sons, Blacksmith Shop and ^{House} Residence
and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 309, 311, 313 Jefferson Street not for publication
city, town Nashville vicinity of congressional district 5th
state Tennessee code 47 county Davidson code 037

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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 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 George, Joe, Johnny and Rosemary Geist %George Geist
street & number 311 Jefferson Street
city, town Nashville vicinity of state Tennessee

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registrar's Office
street & number Davidson County Courthouse
city, town Nashville state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local
depository for survey records _____
city, town _____ state _____

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 Geist property consists of three buildings on Jefferson Street, three blocks southeast of the boundary of the Germantown National Register District. John Geist, Sr., began business as a blacksmith on this site in a now demolished frame building at 311 Jefferson. The Geist family lived in the rear of the shop. Increasing prosperity allowed the construction of a separate residence at 313 Jefferson into which the family moved in 1891. This house still stands. It is a solid brick, tin-roofed, shotgun house one room wide and three deep with a kitchen in the basement below. All three upstairs rooms open onto a wooden porch running the length of the west side of the house. Now used as storage space for the Geist business, the house has lost its residential character on the interior with the removal of woodwork and sections of wall. The house is basically in sound shape, but the porch is showing signs of deterioration.

About 1900 (no exact records exist, and family oral history is undecided on the point) the original frame shop at 311 Jefferson was replaced with the present brick structure. The newer shop, which shares a wall with the residence at 313, is a rectangular, flat-roofed building with two full stories, one on the Jefferson Street level and one below. Each floor is a single large room lit by simple rectangular windows and, upstairs, a skylight in the center of the ceiling. Two forges are located on the east wall of the building upstairs, and one downstairs. Their unusually tall chimneys, designed to carry smoke and sparks up and over the buildings to the east, are supported by triangular brick buttresses. The lower level, completely above grade at the rear of the building, was used for wagon repair and the upper floor for shoeing horses. The animals were led into the building through an arched doorway on Jefferson Street. In recent years the terrain which sloped away from Jefferson was filled in, altering the view of the buildings from the rear but not altering the buildings themselves, as a well around the entire rear preserves the original wall and window configuration. An open porch added across the rear of both buildings after the shop's construction has now been enclosed and serves as the business office.

The shop and original residence reflect the simple but adequate existence afforded by the prospering small enterprise. Their no-nonsense facades are unadorned except for some decorative corbeling at cornice level on the shop and modest gingerbread along the porch rail eaves of the house. But continuing prosperity enabled the family to move in 1908 into a much larger house at 309 Jefferson, a lot John Geist had purchased in 1905. The structure's square facade and pyramid roof are typical of the large, comfortable middle-class houses of the era locally referred to as four-squares and is considerably more impressive than the residence at 313. It is family history that the house was designed by locally prominent architect Christian Asmus, another member of the North Nashville community.

The new house is a red brick veneer structure on a stone foundation. The focal point of its Jefferson Street facade is the pedimented entry porch supported by paired Tuscan columns on plinths. Beside the entry porch the rest of the exterior is almost severe in its simplicity but impressive in scale when compared to the smaller buildings to the west. The first floor of the house is occupied mainly by four more or less square rooms. The front door opens into an entry hall out of which the stair rises. To the left of the hall is the living room, behind the living room are the dining room and pantry, and behind the entry hall, the kitchen. Upstairs four bedrooms and a bathroom open off of a central hall.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 29 1980
DATE ENTERED	APR 29 1980

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The kitchen and upstairs hall open onto a two-story back porch. The interior, largely original, is typical of houses of the period with attractive, fairly simple oak woodwork. The pocket doors which separate hall from living room and living room from dining room still operate as do the combination gas and electric light fixtures in each room. Though unoccupied for several years, the house remains in good physical condition.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

While the Geist buildings are architecturally pleasant and largely unaltered, their chief significance derives from association with the Geist family business and the German-American community of North Nashville. After immigrating from Germany in 1874, John Geist, Sr., began his business in 1884 and purchased the nominated property in 1886. As the business and family grew, the group of buildings now standing developed. Buildings and business were passed to his sons, John, Jr., and George in 1911 and are now owned by John, Jr.'s son, George and his siblings. Though no longer primarily a blacksmith, George Geist still uses the forge when called on to do so; and his father, John, Jr., used it every business day until his death three years ago. This is the last remaining active 19th century blacksmith shop in Nashville. The American experience of John Geist, Sr., and his descendants--immigration, modest beginnings, hard work and increasing prosperity, and eventual Americanization--is shared by many German families who came to Nashville in the nineteenth century and settled in the area known as Germantown. This family history is vividly reflected in the group of three business and residential buildings on Jefferson Street.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Nashville City Directory.
 Oral interview with Mr. and Mrs. George Geist (8/17/79).
 Geist family records and deeds.

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acreage of nominated property 1/2 acre
 Quadrangle name Nashville, West, Tennessee Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>519340</u>	<u>4003130</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated is a single tract of land outlined in red on the accompanying map. The original map is located at the Mapping Division of the Davidson County Metropolitan Planning Office, Nashville, Tennessee.

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

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David H. Paine/
 organization Metropolitan Historical Commission date _____
 street & number Second Ave. N. at Broadway telephone 615-259-5027
 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

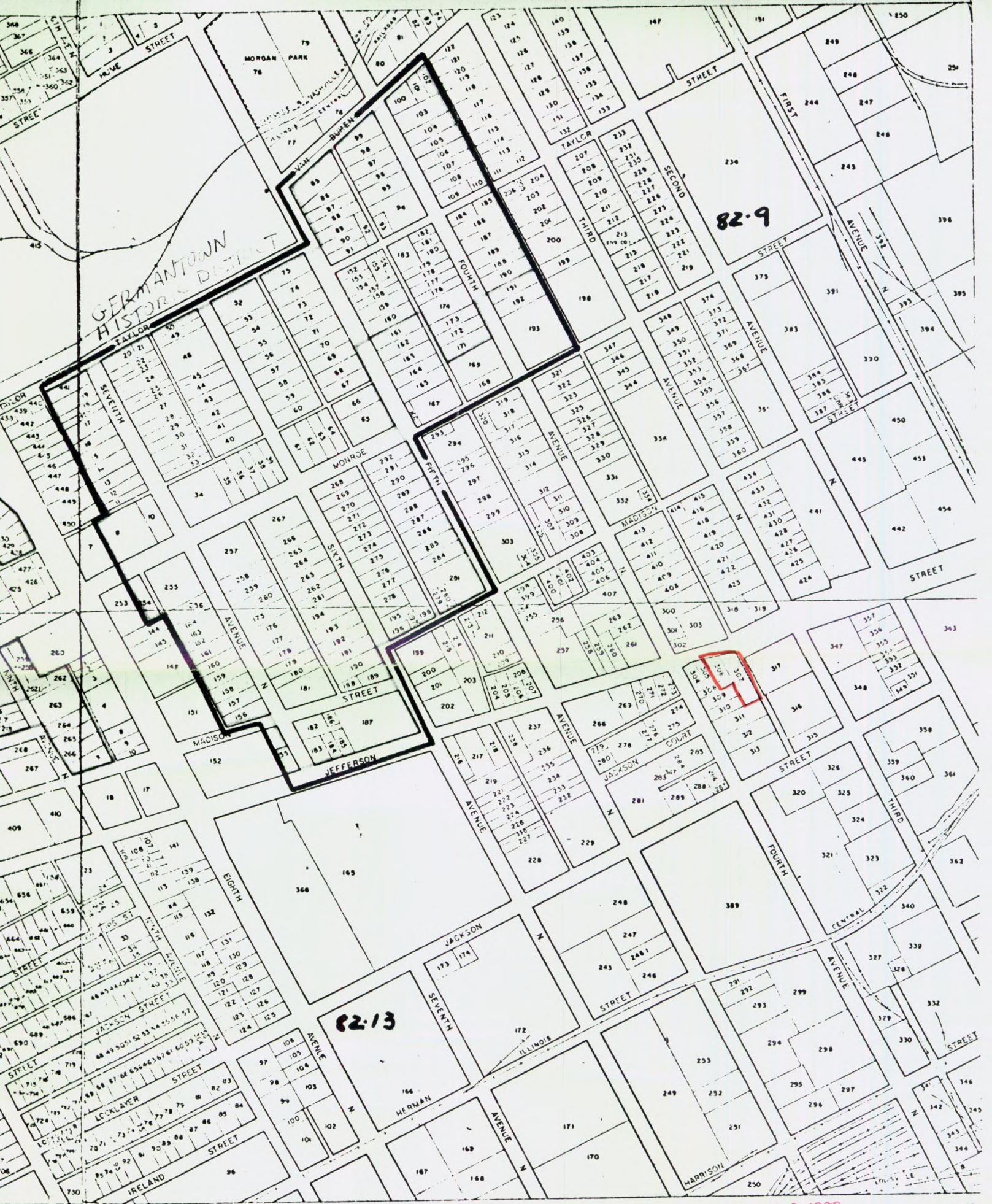
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert E. Inge

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 2/27/80

For HCERS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

For W. Ray Luce date 4/29/80
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Kristin J. O'Connell date 4/22/80
 Chief of Registration



FEB 29 1980

SHEET

SHEET P

DIVISION OF THE METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT
DAVIDSON COUNTY, TENNESSEE
ATLAS 200 SERIES MAPS BY AMERICAN AIR SURVEYS, INC.

THIS SHEET DERIVED FROM THE FOLLOWING PROPERTY MAP SHEETS PRODUCED BY AERIAL SURVEY METHODS:

SCALE	SHEET NO.	SCALE	SHEET NO.
1" = 100'	82-9	1" = 100'	82-10
1" = 100'	82-15	1" = 100'	82-14
1" = 400' SHEET NO. 82			

ORIGINAL MAP SHEETS COMPILED BY PHOTOGRAMMETRIC METHOD, DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY APRIL 1950; PROPERTY DATA FROM DEED RESEARCH, FIELD RECONNAISSANCE AND SURVEY VISITOR PLATS.

ATLAS SE
(BASE MAP ONLY - NOT TO BE USED)
DAVIDSON COUNTY
SCALE 1" = 100'