

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

303

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Maple Shade  
other names/site number Robb House; Weymss House; SU.1078

2. Location

street & number 1755 Highway 31E N/A  not for publication  
city or town Gallatin  vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Sumner code 165 zip code 37066

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  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays 3/7/03  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:  
 entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other,  
(explain:)

Edson H. Beall for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
4-22-03

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Maple Shade  
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 4            | 1               | buildings  |
|              | 1               | sites      |
| 1            |                 | structures |
|              |                 | objects    |
| 5            | 2               | Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

FEDERAL influence

COLONIAL REVIVAL influence

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK, WOOD

roof METAL

other WOOD, GLASS, CONCRETE, METAL

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See 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.
- 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 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
SETTLEMENT

**Period of Significance**

Circa 1803-1950

**Significant Dates**

Circa 1803, 1870, 1920

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**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:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Department of History, Middle Tennessee State University

Maple Shade  
Name of Property

Sumner County, Tennessee  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approx. 7 acres

Gallatin, TN 313 NW

**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 16 554111 4030883  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**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 Jennifer Allen, Taffey Hall, D. Lorne McWatters  
organization Middle Tennessee State University, Dept. of History date August 5, 2002  
street & number MTSU Box 23 telephone 616/898-5805  
city or town Murfreesboro 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**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Robert and Mary Glen Lassiter  
street & number 1755 Highway 31E telephone 615/452-8282  
city or town Gallatin state TN zip code 37066

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee**Architectural Description**

Maple Shade is located at 1755 Highway 31E in Gallatin, Sumner County, Tennessee. Originally part of a 357-acre tract, the Maple Shade property consists of a one and one-half story house (Maple Shade) and four outbuildings that are now located on seven acres. The property was reduced to 156 acres in the late nineteenth-century. The house and the physical landscape have remained constant, and for almost two hundred years only owned by two families, the Joseph Robb family and the Captain James Alexander Wemyss' family. The current owners, Robert and Mary Glen Lassiter bought seven of the 156 acres from Mrs. Peggy Wemyss Conner, granddaughter of Captain James Alexander Wemyss, in 1997.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Conner still owns the remaining 149 acres. The seven-acre property, Maple Shade, includes the one and one-half story house currently used as a Bed and Breakfast and four outbuildings, including a garage, garden shed, tool shed, and a double-pen, central hall log cabin. The main house and three of the outbuildings (the garage, garden shed, and tool-shed) are the contributing buildings; the log cabin is non-contributing. Maple Shade is an excellent example of a circa 1803 Federal influence house with circa 1870 Colonial Revival modifications.

The 1803 Federal style Maple Shade house was built for the Robb family and modified or modernized by the Wemyss family around 1870. Although the architect of the house is unknown, construction of the house dates to around 1803, the year in which Joseph Robb purchased 245 acres of land from his father, William Robb, for \$470.<sup>2</sup> The name "Maple Shade" has been in use as a name for the property as early as 1878 when it first appeared on the Sumner County tax map.<sup>3</sup> Though 1878 marks the earliest recorded date for the name "Maple Shade," it is possible that the Wemyss family named the property Maple Shade after their 1870 purchase of the property. Set in Flemish bond brickwork on the façade and American common bond on the remainder of the house, the one and one-half story residence was constructed originally without the two gabled dormers and without the front porch across the south elevation (photograph 1). The porch and dormers, characteristics of the Colonial Revival architectural style, were added after Captain James Alexander Wemyss bought the property from Julius Y. Robb in 1870.<sup>4</sup> The roof, once wood shingled, is currently sheathed in standing seam metal, circa 1996.<sup>5</sup> The foundation of the house is limestone. The brick

<sup>1</sup> Sumner County Deed book, 361.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Lassiter, interview January 26, 2002. Sumner County, Tennessee, *Deed Book* 3, October 1, 1804, 464. The house is believed to be on the property at the time of purchase from the statement "all of the premises there on" written on the deed of sale.

<sup>3</sup> Sumner County Tax Map of the 10<sup>th</sup> district, 1878.

<sup>4</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee *Deed Book*, 27, February 26, 1870, 316-318.

<sup>5</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 2000), 46-47.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

walkway north from the driveway to the front porch of the house is bordered on both sides by huge boxwoods planted in the 1920s by Hattie Wemyss (photograph 2).<sup>6</sup>

The three-bay south facade of the house is a symmetrical, with a central door and two 6/6/6, wood sash windows, all with molded wood casings. The windows were originally 6/6, double-hung, wood sash. Captain Wemyss added the extra section of these windows after building the front porch to allow more light into the front two rooms of the house (photograph 3).<sup>7</sup> The door, protected by a decorative wood screen door painted white, has four panels and is inset into the wall with a plain decorative, white trim, four-light transom above (photograph 4). Brick jack arching caps the windows and doors. The dormers at the façade contain one, 6/6, double-hung wood sash window and are currently sided with aluminum. Dormer windows are one characteristic of Colonial Revival style architecture.<sup>8</sup> The date for the addition of the windows and dormers is circa 1870.

The 1803 portion of east elevation of the house contains tall brick end chimneys, the more northern one being smaller. Two 6/6 double hung windows are found on both the first story and on the upper story. A small circa 1930 bathroom is situated at the corner of the northernmost chimney (photograph 5). It has a low pitch gable roof and a single 6/6 double hung window. North of the original house and set back from the east elevation of the original house is a circa 1870 frame sleeping porch. The room was enclosed circa 1870 shortly after Captain James A. Wemyss acquired the property. The exterior of the sleeping porch is covered in white aluminum siding and has seven 6/6, double hung, wood-sash windows (photograph 6).

A brick kitchen (photograph 7) was added to the north side of the house in the 1920s. A glass-paneled door leads into a hallway at the south end of the kitchen, and a pair of 1/1, wood-sash, double-hung windows provides light from the east side. The north elevation is unembellished, with no openings, but the west elevation of the kitchen has another pair of 1/1, wood-sash, double-hung windows. The hallway on the south side of the kitchen was extended to provide extra storage space and a half bathroom at an unknown date. This extension (photograph 8) is shingled with cedar shakes and has a single-pane, wood-frame window on its north elevation.

The west elevation of the 1803 house is similar to the east, having two tall chimneys and 6/6 double hung windows on the upper story (photograph 9). However, a glass paneled door provides access to the 1803

<sup>6</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview April 4, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview April 2, 2002. The information regarding the windows and porch are a part of the oral history of Maple Shade, as told by Mrs. Peggy Conner. Captain Wemyss was her grandfather.

<sup>8</sup> John Blumenson, *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600-1945*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1977), 25.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

house from a circa 1920 porch that extends along the west elevation of the original house and part of the circa-1870 extension to the north elevation.

The original Federal style house consisted of four rooms, a large attic, and four chimneys easily seen on the east and west elevations (photographs 1, 5 and 9). The four rooms and attic are still in their original locations with little remodeling to alter their appearance. The chimneys are connected by metal tie rods that run the length of the original section of the house as a type of brace. The metal rods can be seen on the floor of the upstairs attic (photographs 5, 20, and 21).

Later additions to the Federal style house created an overall "L"-shaped appearance. The exact dates of the additions cannot be determined, but oral history dates the additions to the years before the Wemyss family bought the property in 1870.<sup>9</sup> From 1803-1870, Joseph Robb and his family owned Maple Shade. Since Joseph Robb and his wife Ann had a large family of ten children, additions were essential to house the family adequately.<sup>10</sup> The first expansion that the Robbs added to the house was a dining room attached to the north elevation of the original house (figure 2, photograph 6). The second expansion was attached north of the first, sharing one chimney (photograph 6). A hallway and kitchen was built onto the second addition circa 1920 (photograph 7). The original kitchen was detached and stood near the house to the north. It was still standing and in use as a storage shed until the 1960s, when a fire destroyed the building.<sup>11</sup>

The four original rooms of the Federal style house are on the first floor and consist of a living room, ladies' parlor, and two bedrooms (rooms 1, 2, 3, and 4).<sup>12</sup> Two additional rooms are located in the attic. The rooms in the attic are used by the current owners as a bedroom and as a bonus room. It is not known how the Robb family or Wemyss family may have used the two rooms in the attic. It is possible that neither family used the rooms for bedrooms due to the lack of adequate heating during the winter months.

The interior of the living room (room 1) is the first room of the original Federal style house that guests encounter upon entering the house from the front door on the south elevation. This room has experienced

---

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *1830 Slave Census*; Sumner County, Tennessee, *1860 Slave Census*. The *1830 Slave Census* record also shows that the Robb family owned thirteen slaves. The *1860 Slave Census* shows the Robb family owning eighteen slaves and three slave structures. However, there is not any evidence as to where these structures were located.

<sup>11</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview April 4, 2002.

<sup>12</sup> The interior of the house will be described beginning with the description of the rooms comprising the Federal style house, then moving to the additions in chronological order from what is believed to be the oldest addition to the most recent addition. To facilitate the description of the interior of the house, the floor plan sketch (Figure 2) assigns a number to each room. Numbers 1 through 5 denote the original four rooms and hallway with a staircase leading to the attic/second level. Numbers 12 and 13 are assigned to the two rooms in the attic/second level, and numbers 6 through 11 are rooms of the additions.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

minimal changes over the past two centuries. It has two 6/6, double-hung wood sash windows that are divided by the fireplace (facing east) and one 6/6/6 wood-sash window on the wall facing the porch on the south elevation. Crown molding along the ceiling and a plain wood chair rail painted white extend around the entire circumference of the room (photographs 10 and 11). The mantle, painted white as well, is embellished with dentils, wide pilasters with capitals and an extended mantle shelf. The chair rail and mantle are believed to be original to the 1803 construction since all four original rooms display chair rails around their circumferences. Rooms added after 1803 do not have a chair rail. The floor in the living room, as well as all of the floors in the house, is chestnut, and is original to the house.<sup>13</sup>

The room west (room 2) of the living room is currently used as a bedroom. The Wemyss family called this room the ladies' parlor. On the north wall of room 2 is a floor-to-ceiling built-in bookcase with wood paneled doors at the base of the shelves (photograph 12). The mantle in room 2 is similar in design to the mantle in room 1 (photograph 13). It is embellished with dentils, pilasters with bases and capitals and an extended mantle shelf. A glass-paneled door leads to the exterior porch, which runs along the west elevation (photographs 9 and 13). The casings of the original four rooms of the house all display inset wood panels. A doorway on the north side of room 2 leads to a small bedroom (room 3), currently used as a bathroom. Room 3 has one 6/6 double-hung wood-sash window facing west and a fireplace with a mantle displaying a molded mantle shelf, pilasters with capitals and a plain frieze (photograph 14).

The last of the original four rooms of the Federal style house (room 4) is a bedroom (photograph 15). This bedroom is small in size and has a fireplace with a mantle similar in style to the other fireplaces, but it is smaller than those found in the other three original rooms. It also has a plain wood chair rail similar to those found in the other three original rooms. Room 4 also has the bathroom addition, room 4a (photograph 16) added during the decades of the 1930s and 1940s by Hattie and Kate Wemyss, daughters of Captain James and Annie Hatch Wemyss, who were the owners as well as residents of the home.

Facing west across from room 4 is a hall (room 5) with a narrow staircase leading to the attic/second floor (photograph 17). This staircase is not original to the house it was possibly added circa 1870 when Captain Wemyss added the dormer windows to the south elevation of the residence.<sup>14</sup> At the top of the staircase is a 6/6, double-hung wood-sash window (facing south) that looks into one of the two rooms located in the attic, room 13 (photograph 18). Though the purpose of the window is lost to history, its direct alignment with the window of one of the two dormers that Captain Wemyss added suggests that its function may have been to filter sunlight onto the stairway. This architectural method of allowing light to shine down the stairway could have been made possible through an earlier partition built to support the doorway into room 13 (photograph 19). The two upstairs rooms, 12 and 13 (photographs 20, 21, and 22), in the attic have two 6/6,

<sup>13</sup> Mary Lassiter, interview January 26, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Mary Lassiter, interview January 26, 2002.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

double-hung, wood-sash windows, facing east and west respectively that are original to the Federal style portion of the house. The rooms also have 6/6, double-hung wood-sash windows in the dormers.

The first addition to the Federal style house, attached to the north side of room 3, was a dining room (room 6). This room is currently used as a bedroom. It has its own fire place located on the north wall, the fifth added to the house, two 12/12, double-hung, wood-sash windows that look east to the enclosed porch (room 7), and a third 12/12, double-hung, wood-sash window on the west wall (photographs 23 and 24). The room also has an eight-paneled door leading to the porch on the west elevation of the house (photograph 24). The doorknobs and lock are original to the door, whereas the latch above the lock is not.

The second room added to the house was built originally as a larger dining room and is currently used as a dining room (room 8). The new dining room shares a fireplace, located on the south wall, with room 6. Next to the fireplace on the south wall is a divided cabinet with two five-paneled doors above two single-paneled doors (photograph 25). All walls of the room have wood paneled wainscoting positioned below a chair rail that circles the room. The chair rail in room 8 is different from the rail found in the four original rooms. The chair rail in room 8 is wider, is positioned to protect the wainscoting and is several inches higher than the chair rail in the original rooms. There are two 9/6, double-hung, wood-sash windows on the west wall (photograph 26). A doorway facing north away from room 8 leads to a hallway (room 9) connecting the dining room to the kitchen (room 10) and extends west to a laundry room/half-bath (room 11). The hallway is narrow (photograph 27) and has an original built-in cabinet similar in style to the one in the dining room (room 8). The walls are wood-paneled and painted white, as are the walls in the kitchen, room 10. The kitchen, built circa 1920, is small, with modern wood cabinets (photograph 28). The walls and ceilings are narrow, tongue-and-groove wood, similar to those in the hallway, room 9.

A door facing east leading from the hallway to the enclosed porch (room 7) is currently referred to as a sleeping porch. The interior of the sleeping porch still retains an original wood peg chair rail near the ceiling (photograph 29). The porch extends along the east elevation of the house and has a door leading into the first addition (room 6) and a door leading to room 5 of the original Federal style house (photograph 30). The porch has seven, 6/6, double-hung, wood-sash windows facing east overlooking the garden and two, 12/12, double-hung, wood-sash windows on the west wall facing the interior of room 6. The enclosed porch retains the interior windows, originally exterior windows on the east elevation of the house. The floors are wide, heart-pine wood, and the ceiling is narrow, tongue-and-groove wood.

On the north side of the main house are four outbuildings, three contributing and one non-contributing and a historic stone wall that is contributing and a garden that is non-contributing. The contributing buildings are a garden shed, tool shed (former chicken coop), and a garage.

The garden shed is a small, rectangular, board-and-batten frame building (photographs 31, 32, 33) with three large, fixed 12-light windows and a single-door entry, all original to the construction of the building. The

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

foundation is limestone. The roof consists of hewn wood shingles and displays exposed rafter ends. The date of the garden shed is late-1870s, but possibly earlier as suggested by saw marks. Annie Hatch Wemyss, Captain James A. Wemyss's wife, built the two-foot stone wall after 1870, and this wall is a contributing (C) feature (photographs 31, 34).<sup>15</sup> The wrought iron fixtures in and around the garden (photograph 35) are circa 1980.<sup>16</sup>

The tool shed (photographs 34, 36) was once a chicken coop, evidenced by the tiny door located at the foundation of the building. It has a narrow row of four, 1/1 fixed glass windows. The building is of a long, narrow board-and-batten frame construction with a date of construction close to that of the garden shed. The roof of the tool shed is different from the roof of the garden shed in that it is covered in tin instead of wood shingles. The foundation (not visible) of the tool shed is limestone (photograph 36).

The log garage (photograph 37) is built with half-dovetail notching, while the garden shed and the tool shed are of board-and-batten frame construction. The roof of the garage is covered with standing seam metal and the foundation is limestone (photograph 38). According to Mrs. Conner, the garage was originally used as a smoke house until her Aunt Kate Wemyss began using it as a garage in the mid twentieth century.<sup>17</sup>

The log cabin west of the garage (photograph 39) is a non-contributing building on the property because of alterations it has undergone over the last seventy years. Kate Wemyss and her sister, Hattie, had the logs and chimney of the building moved onto the property in the 1930s, but the cabin was not assembled as a structure until the 1980s, when Mrs. Conner had someone fashion the logs and chimney into a livable house.<sup>18</sup>

The log cabin contains a central hall and one exterior limestone chimney, located on the west elevation (photographs 40, 41). The central hallway leads to a frame section added on the north elevation by the current owners (photograph 40). When the current owners added the board-and-batten frame addition to the north elevation of the house, the exterior north log wall became an interior wall (photograph 41). The new addition has a living room, dining room, bathroom, mudroom, and two closets (figure 3).

The west room, or pen, of the cabin has the exterior fireplace. The room is currently used as a bedroom (photograph 42).<sup>19</sup> The bedroom has one, 6/6, double-hung, wood-sash window and exposed log walls. The

<sup>15</sup> Mary Lassiter, interview January 26, 2002.

<sup>16</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview April 2, 2002.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Floor plan of the cabin.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

exposed log walls are evident in both pens and in the hallway. The west pen has the stone fireplace with a wood mantle shelf on the west wall. The east pen has a kitchen, bathroom, utility closet, and a study (figure 3).

In addition to the log cabin, three outbuildings, and main house, Maple Shade exhibits a picturesque rural setting. Maple Shade has a garden that includes the signature "Peony Grove" with over one hundred peony bushes that bloom every year in time for Mother's Day (photograph 43). These flowers were planted originally in the 1920s, by Mrs. Hattie Wemyss, daughter of Captain James and Mrs. Annie Wemyss.<sup>20</sup> Mrs. Peggy Conner placed the trellises in the garden and wrought iron fixtures in the garden during the 1980s (photograph 44, 45). The garden is used now for weddings and outdoor gatherings. In the layout of the garden there is not any evidence that this is a historic garden and is a non-contributing feature of the property.

The history of Maple Shade is embedded in agricultural production. Although Maple Shade has been reduced to seven acres the property retains characteristics of a historical agricultural identity. The property still retains buildings once used in agricultural production such as the chicken coop. There are pastures and open farmland surrounding the property on all sides. Joseph Robb and Captain James Alexander Wemyss both managed successful farms during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Located one and one-half miles from the town of Gallatin in Sumner County, Tennessee, the landscape still retains some of its original rural characteristics and is not located in an overcrowded neighborhood (photographs 46, 47, and 48). Robert and Mary Lassiter also own several horses and they are visible on the property. Maple Shade has plenty of plants and trees around the house and grounds contributing to the picturesque rural landscape. The driveway from Highway 31 East winds around large trees and over rolling hills leading up to the house (photographs 49 and 50).

Maple Shade is a fine example of a Federal style house with Colonial Revival updating. The original floor plan of the Federal style house is still visible. The Colonial Revival additions to the house do not take away from Maple Shade's historical integrity but instead reflect the necessity of architectural additions to accommodate growing families. Maple Shade is a property that has remained in its current condition for nearly two centuries. It is an example of a small house in the upper Middle Tennessee city of Gallatin that grew along with its owners during the early years of Tennessee's statehood and development.

---

<sup>20</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview April 2, 2002. The brochure for Maple Shade shows a color picture of the "Peony Grove" in full bloom. Photograph 42 is a photograph of the Peony Grove in winter.

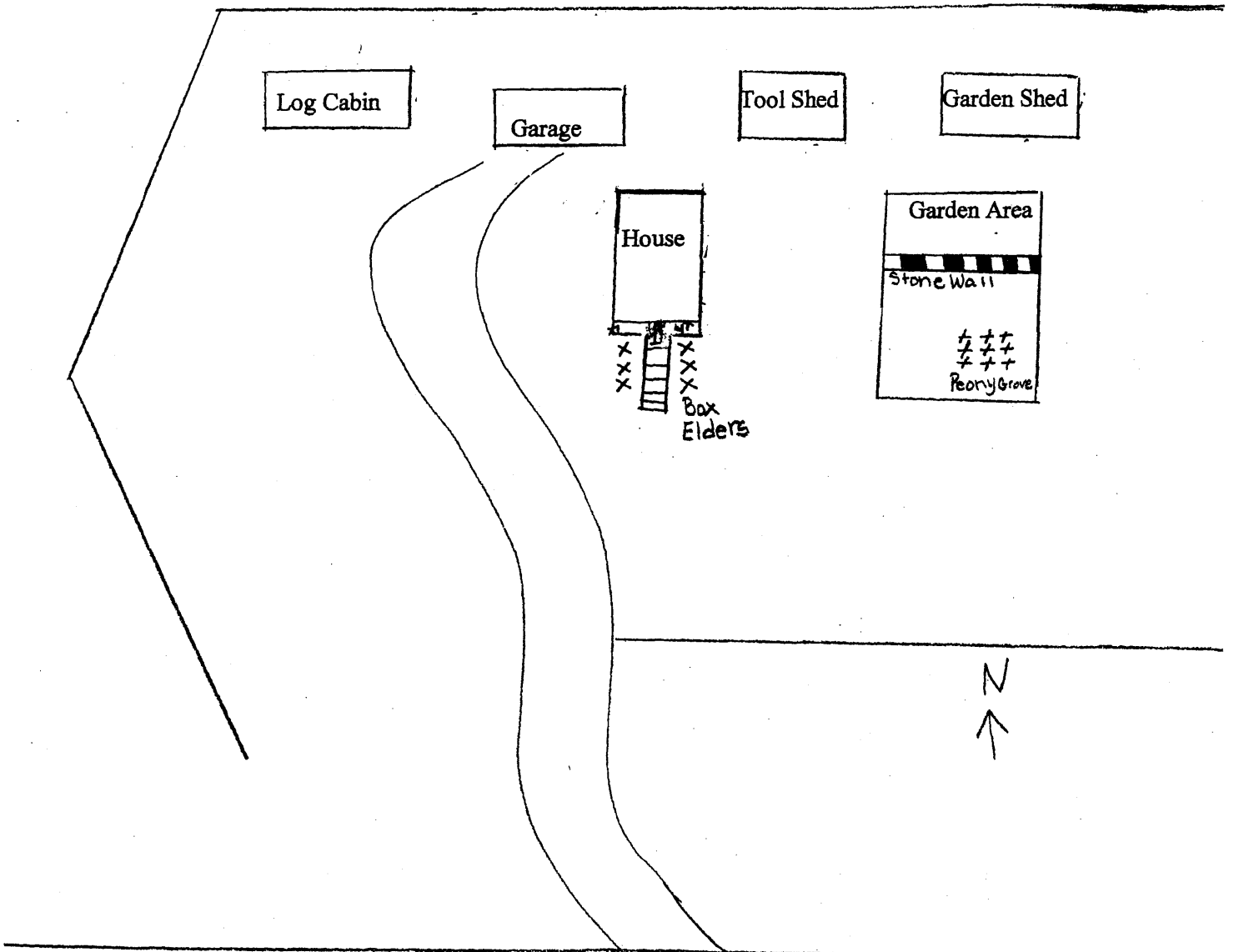
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

Figure 1: Maple Shade  
Gallatin, Sumner County, TN  
Sketch Map  
*Map Not To Scale*



HWY. 31

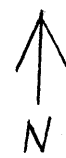
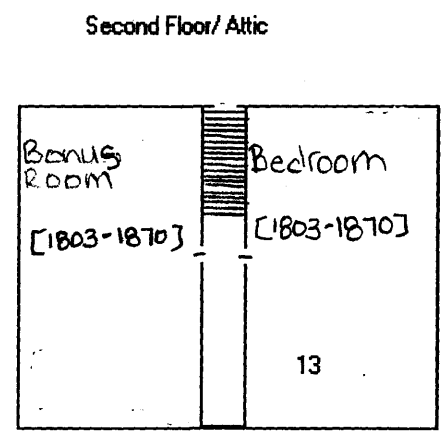
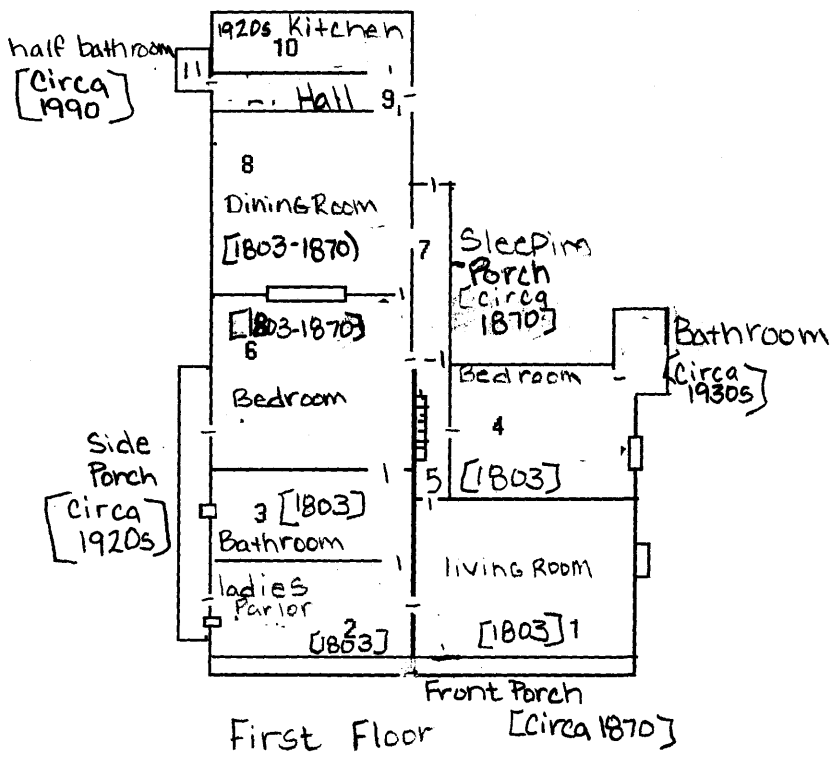
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

Figure 2: Maple Shade  
Gallatin, Sumner County, TN  
Photo Key Map of Main House,  
First and Second Floor/Attic



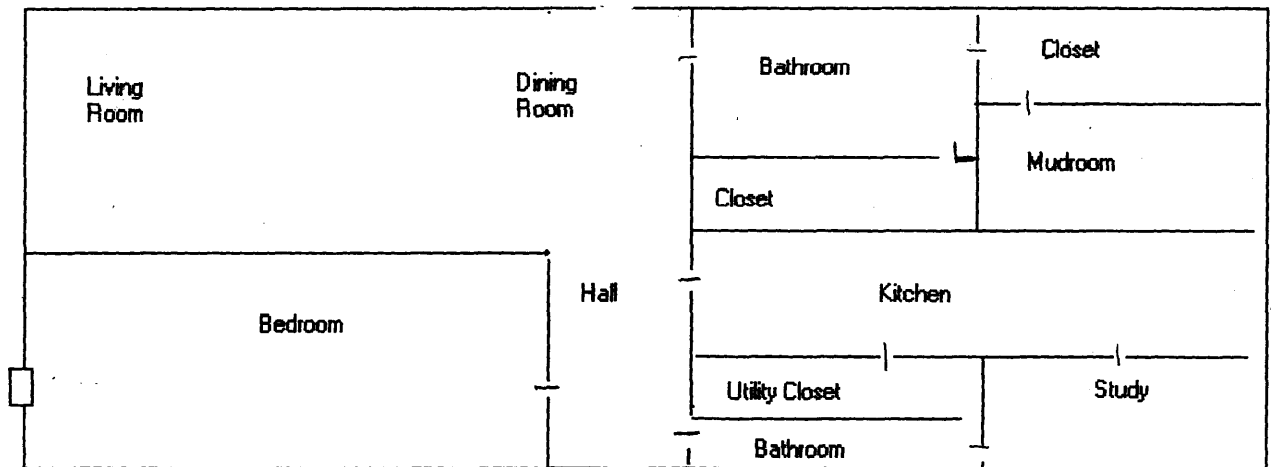
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

Figure 3: Maple Shade  
Gallatin, Sumner County, TN  
Photo Key Map of Log Cabin  
Map Not To Scale



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

## Statement of Significance

Maple Shade in Gallatin, Tennessee is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for early settlement patterns in Middle Tennessee and its association with the Robb and Wemyss families, both locally significant contributors to Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee's past. Members of both families were successful farmers with large land holdings, slave owners, and active participants in the civic and business enterprises of Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee. Under Criterion C, the house represents a locally significant example of early nineteenth-century Federal style architecture with Colonial Revival modifications. The defining features of these styles can be seen in the porch, roof, and dormers of the house on the exterior. Inside, historic fireplaces, wainscoting, wood floors and chair rails help define the architecture of the house. Maple Shade retains its historic and architectural integrity.

Located at 1755 Highway 31 East, three and one-half miles outside the city of Gallatin, population approximately 22,000, Maple Shade dates to circa 1803. As the average date of establishment for farms in Sumner County, Tennessee is 1831, Maple Shade is one of the earliest formed farms in upper Middle Tennessee.<sup>21</sup> The property is best described as a nineteenth-century working farm, where agricultural activity was more pronounced and evident, and a twentieth-century hobby farm, when agricultural activity on the property declined. Though the original architect of the home is unknown, early owners of the property can be traced. Maple Shade clearly represents a Federal style residence built during the infancy of the statehood and development of Tennessee.

The name "Maple Shade" first appears on Sumner County maps in 1878 and has been used as the name of the property ever since. Robert and Mary Lassiter are the current owners of the home, which today stands in an "L"-shape, with the original Federal architectural style evident on the south elevation with subsequent room additions extending north. The original Federal style portion of the home consists of four rooms: a living room, a ladies' parlor, and two bedrooms, one of which has been converted into a small bathroom. The chestnut floors and chair rails are original to this portion of the house. The family of Joseph Robb (who owned the house from 1803 to 1870) consisted of twelve members. As the Robb family expanded, additional rooms were added to the back of the house, forming an "L"-shape structure.

During the latter decades of the nineteenth century and for most of the twentieth century, the Wemyss family of Sumner County owned Maple Shade. When Captain James Alexander Wemyss purchased the Maple Shade property in 1870, the appearance of the house was in its current "L"-shaped form. The kitchen portion of the house, however, was attached to the home sometime during the 1920s. The original kitchen, which burned in the early 1960s, had been an outside building located away from the house. Contributing resources on the property today include the house itself, a tool shed that was once used as a chicken coop, a garage, a garden shed and a stone wall. Robert and Mary Lassiter, who purchased the Maple Shade property in 1997,

<sup>21</sup> *Tennessee Century Farm Files*, Sumner County, Tennessee. Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

currently use one non-contributing building on the property as their private residence. This building is a log house with rear additions and one chimney on the west elevation of the structure. Though the logs for the building were brought to the property in the 1930s, the house was not constructed until the 1980s, when Mrs. Peggy (Margaret Wemyss) Conner decided to build a small house on the Maple Shade grounds.<sup>22</sup> The Lassiters use the original Maple Shade home on the property as a Bed and Breakfast establishment.

The land upon which the Robb and Wemyss families lived, worked, and raised their children has important social and agricultural ties to Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee. Created by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly in 1786, Sumner County is one of the oldest counties in the state of Tennessee. In 1783, the General Assembly of North Carolina formed Davidson County out of territory (sometimes referred to as the Miro District), which consisted of much of the land area of present day Middle Tennessee. Three years later in 1786, the North Carolina General Assembly carved Tennessee County and Sumner County out of Davidson County, naming the latter after General Jethro Sumner, a Revolutionary War hero from North Carolina. Sumner County became an officially recognized county on November 17, 1786. Areas of Sumner County were later divided off to form the counties of Wilson, Smith, Macon, and Trousdale.<sup>23</sup>

The area of Tennessee west of the Cumberland Plateau was of particular interest to early land developers in the latter years of the eighteenth century. In *Tennessee Frontiers: Three Regions in Transition*, John R. Finger says that the infancy of Tennessee's statehood and development was a period characterized by "aspiring elites, covetous men of vast ambition who saw the acquisition of land as the means of economic and social advancement." Many men viewed their services in the Revolutionary War as tickets to land grants from the government, a reward which they believed would ultimately translate into their own personal and economic prosperity. As the Revolutionary War came to a conclusion, ambitious ex-servicemen-turned-land-speculators "circled Tennessee's landscape like vultures" in hopes of receiving land and reaping financial gain.<sup>24</sup> John Donelson, James Robertson, and John Sevier were three well-known recipients of Tennessee's land grant awards, but it was to Captain John Ingalls of North Carolina that the area comprising the Maple Shade property in Sumner County was granted by the government on September 15, 1787.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview by Taffey Hall, April 4, 2002.

<sup>23</sup> *The Goodspeed Histories of Sumner, Smith, Macon, Trousdale, Counties of Tennessee* Reprinted from *Goodspeed's History of Tennessee, 1887*, (Columbia, TN: Woodward & Stinson Printing Co., 1972), 802.

<sup>24</sup> John R. Finger, *Tennessee Frontiers: Three Regions in Transition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 99.

<sup>25</sup> Irene M. Griffey, *Earliest Tennessee Land Records and Earliest Tennessee History* (Baltimore, MD: Clearfield Press, 2000), 43.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

Sumner County was less than one year old when Captain Ingalls received 3,840 acres of land for his service to the state of North Carolina during the Revolutionary War. To profit from his new landholdings, Captain Ingalls soon began dividing up and selling his land to other interested parties. On the same day of the awarding of his land grant, Ingalls sold a portion of his holdings to William Stolcop. It was then sometime between 1787 and 1803 that Stolcop sold 357 acres to a Mr. William Robb, Sr., a native of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.<sup>26</sup>

The Robb family owned the Maple Shade property for most of the nineteenth century. William Robb, Sr., the first generation Robb to own the property, was born in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina in 1761 and died in Sumner County, Tennessee, in 1830. On October 1, 1803, Joseph Robb, one of William Robb, Sr.'s sons, paid his father \$470 for a 245-acre tract of land that also included "all of the premises thereon."<sup>27</sup>

Joseph Robb was born in 1781 in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, and came to Sumner County, Tennessee, in 1803. He was of Scotch-Irish decent and married Anne Motheral in 1809. The Robbs were the parents of ten children, the oldest of whom was Joseph M. Robb (born in 1822) and the youngest of whom was Julius Y. Robb (born in 1832). Other Robb children included William Henry, Elmer Edward, Eliza, Sarah, Alfred, George, James H., and Martha.<sup>28</sup>

Their 245 acres of property made for a substantial farming operation during the nineteenth century. As the average Sumner County farm in the nineteenth century registered at 121 acres, Maple Shade at the height of its production was nearly double the size of most of the surrounding area's farms.<sup>29</sup> The Robb family operated a self-sufficient farm, or one in which nearly all members of a family assisted in the production of food and clothing necessary for the family's survival on this establishment during the better part of the nineteenth century. Such farming operations were self-sufficient out of necessity, says Donald L. Winters in *Tennessee Farming, Tennessee Farmers: Antebellum Agriculture in the Upper South*. Among the most common crops on self-sufficient farms in Tennessee in the nineteenth century were corn and small grains. Corn was particularly important to a farming family's household diet because it yielded the greatest amount of nourishment per acre when compared with other staple crops. Small grains were important because they were necessary for breads and other baked goods. Typical antebellum Tennessee vegetable gardens included

<sup>26</sup> Ibid; Sumner County, Tennessee, *Deed Book*, 3, October 1, 1803, 473.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid. From the statement "all of the premises there on," it is likely that the existing Maple Shade home was constructed circa 1803. The statement is also ambiguous, however, and the authors of this report can not know for certain if it refers to the current house or not.

<sup>28</sup> *The Goodspeed Histories of Sumner, Smith, Macon, Trousdale, Counties of Tennessee*, 18.

<sup>29</sup> *Tennessee Century Farm Files*, Sumner County, Tennessee, Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

several varieties of beans, Irish or sweet potatoes (and sometimes both), peas, carrots, onions, beets, cabbage, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, celery, turnips, parsnips, cucumbers, asparagus, melons, peppers, and radishes.<sup>30</sup>

In the 1790s, farmers in Middle Tennessee began raising and exporting hogs, horses, and beef cattle. In the early to middle decades of the nineteenth century, pork rose to prominence as the most common meat raised and consumed on Tennessee farms. Sheep were also introduced to the area during this period. Wild animals such as deer, rabbits, squirrels, ducks, turkeys, and boars were hunted for additional meat as well.<sup>31</sup>

After purchasing 245 acres of land from his father in 1803, Joseph Robb added another eleven acres to his holdings during the early decades of the nineteenth century. By 1850 his 256-acre farm was valued at \$6,425. Robb owned \$100 worth of farm machinery and tools and sold \$200 worth of homemade manufactured goods in the middle part of the nineteenth century. The Robbs kept twelve horses in 1850, fourteen mules and donkeys, twenty-three head of cattle, two head of oxen, fifty sheep, and eighty head of swine. The total value of their livestock registered at \$1,780. Corn and small grains also played an especially significant role in the Robb family diet. In 1850, the Robbs harvested forty bushels of wheat, 300 bushels of oats, and 2,000 bushels of Indian corn. Additionally, thirty bushels of Irish potatoes and sixty bushels of sweet potatoes came from the Robb's garden. Other noteworthy manufactured goods from Joseph Robb's farm in the middle of the nineteenth century included 100 pounds of wool, 130 pounds of butter, and 100 tons of hay.<sup>32</sup>

Given the amount of agricultural activity on their farm and their ten children to feed, Joseph and Ann Robb's life at Maple Shade during the early years of the nineteenth century required the help of nearly all of the family's members, as well as the family's slaves. Typically, only the very old and the very young were exempted from constant, tedious, and exhausting work of farm operations. The girls, for example, assisted their mother in household chores such as cooking, cleaning, and washing. Additionally, Robb children and slaves assisted in the planting, maintenance, and harvesting of crops, cleaning the chicken coop and other outbuildings, gathering eggs, and helping in the garden. According to United States census records, Joseph and Ann Robb owned thirteen slaves in 1830 and eighteen slaves and three slave structures in 1860.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Donald L. Winters. *Tennessee Farming, Tennessee Farmers: Antebellum Agriculture in the Upper South*. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 30-32.

<sup>31</sup> John R. Finger, *Tennessee Frontiers*, 32-34.

<sup>32</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *1850 Agricultural Census*.

<sup>33</sup> John R. Finger, *Tennessee Frontiers*, 117 - 127; Sumner County, Tennessee, *1830 U.S. Census*; Sumner County, Tennessee, *1860 Slave Census*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

What time Joseph Robb was not attending to his farm operation, he devoted to civic and business endeavors in Gallatin. He was a schoolteacher, operated a local general store, and served as a ruling elder in the Shiloh Presbyterian Church, the oldest Presbyterian Church congregation in Middle Tennessee. Joseph Robb's father-in-law, Joseph Motheral donated the land to the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. upon which the Shiloh Presbyterian Church was built in 1793. Joseph Robb was elected and ordained as a session clerk in the church in 1812 and served as a ruling elder at Shiloh Church from 1812 to 1861. Robb also compiled the majority of the church's early records. The Shiloh Presbyterian Church was located on a hill three miles northwest of the Cairo community in Sumner County from its founding in 1793 until 1828. The church then moved to the east side of Desha's Creek and constructed a large brick structure in 1868.<sup>34</sup>

Through their membership and involvement in the Shiloh Presbyterian Church, the other civic contributions of Joseph Robb previously discussed, and the family's farming operation, Joseph and Anne Robb were well-respected members of the city of Gallatin and of Sumner County, Tennessee. As their family grew during the nineteenth century, the Robbs constructed additional rooms on to the back of their house, thereby creating the current "L"-shaped design of the Maple Shade home today. The room additions to Maple Shade were necessary to accommodate the large Robb family; slaves owned by the Robbs were necessary for help with the Robb's children and as extra hands on the Robb's farm.

In 1850, Joseph Robb owned nineteen slaves, and in 1860, he owned eighteen. He maintained three slave dwellings on his property and allowed his slaves to live together in family units. In 1849, twelve years before the onset of the Civil War, Joseph Robb completed his last will and testament wherein he insisted that the slaves his family owned be kept in family units when the time came for them to pass into the hands of Joseph Robb's children. "It is my will that should it become necessary in the division of the Negroes for any sale or sale to be made. . . [that] I hereby authorize my executor to make sales that prohibit him from separating man from wife, mother from small child," he said.

With the onset of the Civil War in 1861, Sumner Countians were initially reluctant to leave the Union. They sided with the Union and voted against secession in Tennessee's first referendum, but then in a vote of 6,465 in favor of secession and 69 opposed to separating from the Union, Sumner Countians overwhelmingly supported the Confederacy after the fall of Forts Henry and Donelson in the early months of 1862.<sup>35</sup> Though no Civil War battles or skirmishes were fought on the Maple Shade property, two of Joseph Robb's sons

<sup>34</sup> Alice B. Guthrie, *Shiloh Presbyterian Church, 1793 – 1847*. (Typed manuscript located in the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville: TN, Historic Records Project copied under the WPA on April 27, 1938); Walter T. Durham and James W. Thomas, *A Pictorial History of Sumner County, Tennessee, 1786 to 1986* (Gallatin, TN: Sumner County Historical Society, 1986), 115 – 117.

<sup>35</sup> Walter T. Durham and James W. Thomas, *A Pictorial History of Sumner County, Tennessee, 1786 to 1986*, 98-99; DeeGee Lester, "Sumner County," in *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press and Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 898-899.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 16

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

served in the Confederate Army. James H. Robb was a private in General Bibb's artillery company, and William H. Robb served as a private in the B Company of General McLemore's Calvary unit.<sup>36</sup>

The years of Reconstruction following the Civil War were a period of rebuilding for the entire South. Though Joseph Robb and his family at Maple Shade were not affected directly by the war in terms of battles or skirmishes, the Robb family was nonetheless faced with the task of regaining control of their pre-Civil War lives. Through hard work and astute farm management, however, the Robbs harvested 600 bushels of oats, 100 bushels of Irish potatoes, fifty bushels of sweet potatoes, and twenty tons of hay in 1870. They also produced 300 pounds of butter, twenty pounds of wax, fifty pounds of honey and used farm machinery and tools that were collectively valued at \$300. The Robbs kept fifteen horses, six mules, twenty-one heads of cattle, thirty-three sheep, and sixty swine in 1870.<sup>37</sup>

The Maple Shade property remained within the hands of Joseph Robb until his death, circa 1870.<sup>38</sup> Joseph Robb's eldest son, Joseph M., was the executor of his father's estate, which awarded 256 acres of land to Joseph's youngest son, Julius Y. Robb.<sup>39</sup> In Joseph Robb's will, he had intended for Julius Y. to pay Joseph M. \$1,400 for the land. On February 8, 1870, however, Joseph M. charged Julius Y. \$7,500 for the land and buildings thereupon. Additionally, Joseph Robb had inherited five acres of land from his neighbor, Arthur Tyree, and six and a half acres of land from his neighbor Eli Odum. These portions of his property he willed to his son William Henry. On February 26, 1870, Julius Y. sold the 256 acres of his land to Captain James Alexander Wemyss, a native of Alabama, for \$7,500, the same price for which he had purchased the property from his brother two and one half weeks earlier.<sup>40</sup>

Like his father, Joseph Robb, Julius Y. Robb was also actively involved in the civic atmosphere of Gallatin, Tennessee. He was educated at the Transmont Academy in Gallatin and married Clara Lauderdale of Gallatin in 1856. Julius Y. and Clara were the parents of four children. In 1882, Julius Y. Robb was appointed as a clerk and master of the chancery court of Sumner County.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Tennesseans in the Civil War: A Military History of Confederate and Union Units*, (Nashville: The Civil War Centennial Commission, 1965), 343.

<sup>37</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *1870 Agricultural Census*.

<sup>38</sup> Due to discrepancies in records at the Sumner County Archives, the exact death date of Joseph Robb is unknown.

<sup>39</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *Will Book*, 425, June 13, 1849, 633-635.

<sup>40</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *Deed Book 44*, February 26, 1870, 29-30.

<sup>41</sup> *The Goodspeed Histories of Sumner, Smith, Macon, Trousdale, Counties of Tennessee*, 914.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

When Julius Y. Robb sold the Maple Shade property to Captain James Alexander Wemyss in February 1870, Wemyss, too, was an active civic and business participant in Sumner County through his employment as a cashier at the Sumner Deposit Bank in Gallatin. According to Clara Hieronymus in "Oldies are Goodies," which appeared in *Living* magazine on April 11, 1976, Wemyss' oral tradition holds that Captain James Alexander Wemyss moved from northern Alabama to Sumner County, Tennessee after the Civil War to escape carpetbaggers in Alabama. Reportedly, Wemyss wanted to relocate his family "as far north as he could and still be below the Mason-Dixon line."<sup>42</sup>

Captain James Alexander Wemyss (1824 – 1900) was married to the former Annie Hatch (1848 – 1936) when the couple relocated to Gallatin, Tennessee, in the late 1860s. The couple raised eleven children at Maple Shade, which was already in its current L-shaped design when they purchased the home in February 1870. Maple Shade remained within the hands of James A. and Annie H. Wemyss until 1895 when the couple sold 150 acres of their property to Walter and Katie Witherspoon for \$7,500. (Earlier in the 1880s, James and Annie Wemyss had sold 100 acres of their original 256-acre establishment to neighboring farmers.) On September 2, 1896, slightly over one year after the selling of their home and property to the Witherspoons, Annie H. Wemyss purchased the property back from Walter and Katie Witherspoon for \$7,500, the same amount of money as the original sale of property. Maple Shade remained within the hands of the Wemyss family until 1997, when Robert and Mary Lassiter of Gallatin purchased seven acres of the property. The Lassiters now own and operate Maple Shade as a Bed and Breakfast establishment.<sup>43</sup>

Like Joseph Robb, Captain James Alexander Wemyss also operated a farming operation on the 256 acres of land he purchased from Julius Y. Robb in 1870. The *1880 U. S. Agricultural Census* reported that Wemyss tilled sixty-five acres of land and used nineteen acres of land for pasture. He kept nine horses, sixteen mules, thirty-eight head of cattle, eighty-six sheep, twenty-five swine, and twenty-five barnyard chickens. Wemyss planted twelve acres of corn and ten acres of wheat from which he reaped 350 and 108 bushels, respectively.

The most significant change James Wemyss made to the Maple Shade property, however, involved the planting of 120 apple and fourteen peach trees.<sup>44</sup> The only other two farms in Sumner County to plant orchards in the latter decades of the nineteenth century were the Greenwood Farm (located near Portland) and the Ashcrest Farm (NR 4/14/92) near Hendersonville. It is most likely that fruit from Maple Shade during this time was sold to markets in Gallatin and Nashville, Tennessee. By 1910, Sumner County's 145,000 apple trees were enough to earn the county the state's number one ranking for apple orchards. Though the county fell to a twelfth ranking a decade later, the county remained among the top twenty-five percent of apple producing counties in Tennessee. The fact that James Wemyss planted apple trees prior to Sumner

<sup>42</sup> Clara Hieronymus, "Oldies Are Goodies," *Living*. (Sunday, April 11, 1976), E-1.

<sup>43</sup> Sumner County Tennessee, *Deed Book* 44, 29-30; 58, 166-7.

<sup>44</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *1880 Agricultural Census*.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

---

County's apple boom at the turn of the century suggests that he was an initiator in this Middle Tennessee agricultural trend.<sup>45</sup>

Mrs. Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, who was born around 1920 and is the granddaughter of James A. and Annie H. Wemyss, owned and operated Maple Shade from the deaths of her last surviving aunts in the early 1970s until 1997 when she sold the house and seven acres of the then 156-acre property to Robert and Mary Lassiter. Mrs. Conner still owns 149 acres of the property. Of the Wemyss family's farming, Mrs. Conner has fond memories about the sheep that the family raised. Sumner County ranked in the top ten sheep producing counties in Middle Tennessee throughout the early decades of the twentieth century. According to Charles E. Allred, S. W. Watkins, and G. H. Hatfield in *Tennessee Economic and Social, Part 2: The Counties*, Sumner County ranked sixth in numbers of Tennessee sheep in 1900, 1910, and 1920. Essentially, sheep farming in Tennessee witnessed a steady increase from 1900 to 1920, and then began a sharp decline. In 1900, for example, Sumner County registered 12,533 sheep. A decade later that number had more than tripled to 40,084, but by 1920, had seen a sharp decline back down to only 13,303. The sheep operations of the Wemyss family reflected these trends of decline. The Wemysses had moderate numbers of sheep on the farm from the 1920s until 1940 and contributed to the economy of Sumner County during this period through the wool production from their sheep. (In 1920, Sumner County ranked fourth in the state in the value of wool sales.) Around 1940, however, the Wemysses decided to sell the sheep because they were too hard on the family's pastures. The sheep ate the grass too closely to the ground and when droughts came, all of the Wemyss family's grass would be killed off. All of the grandchildren of James A. and Annie H. Wemyss enjoyed the company of the sheep. When a mother sheep would have twin baby lambs, for example, the family would bottle-feed one of the twins because the mother sheep would only allow one of her lambs to nurse. The grandchildren always took great pleasure in caring for the neglected lamb, said Mrs. Conner.<sup>46</sup>

A granddaughter of Captain James Alexander and Annie Hatch Wemyss, Mrs. Peggy (Wemyss) Conner is the daughter of William H. Wemyss, the son of James and Annie Wemyss. William H. Wemyss's first wife died in 1937 and in 1939, the same year of his marriage to Ellen Stokes, William H. Wemyss, Sr. bought the Fairvue Plantation (6/10/75) in Sumner County. Built circa 1832 by Isaac Franklin, Fairvue was a textbook example of a Tennessee slave plantation. The 2,000 acres that comprised the slave plantation lie on the northeast side of the Cumberland River on Old Hickory Lake. In 1939, William and Ellen Wemyss restored Fairvue, which had fallen into ruin at the time of their purchase. Descendants of Ellen Wemyss have recently

---

<sup>45</sup> *Tennessee Century Farm Files*. Sumner County, Tennessee. Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University; Charles E. Allred, S. W. Watkins, and G. H. Hatfield, *Tennessee Economic and Social, Part 2: The Counties*. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1929), 64.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, Peggy (Wemyss) Conner, telephone interview by Taffey Hall, April 4, 2002; Charles E. Allred, *Tennessee Economic and Social*, 64, 77, 96.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

converted the historic site into a housing development.<sup>47</sup> A noted preservationist in Middle Tennessee, Ellen Stokes Wemyss also helped preserve the Rosemont (NR 4/26/78) plantation (built near Gallatin in 1835) and the Tulip Grove (NR 2/26/70) mansion on Lebanon Road across from the Hermitage (NHL 2/19/60) and built for President Andrew Jackson's nephew, Andrew Jackson Donelson between 1832 and 1836. She served as the regent of the Ladies' Hermitage Association in Nashville during the 1950s. Ellen Wemyss died in 2001.

Despite her family's ties to several prominent historic sites in Middle Tennessee, Mrs. Peggy (Wemyss) Conner says that she has always maintained closer personal ties to the family's Maple Shade property in Gallatin. Annie Hatch Wemyss had written her last will and testament in 1934 wherein she stated that the 156-acre Maple Shade estate and house should belong to two of her daughters who, at the time, were still living at the Maple Shade home. These daughters were Kate and Harriet (also known as "Hattie"). Kate Wemyss died in 1959 and Hattie in 1972. Upon the deaths of Kate and Hattie, stated Mrs. Annie H. Wemyss in her will, the land and house would then become the property of the two children of Annie's son William: William H. Wemyss, Jr. and Margaret (Peggy Wemyss) Conner, the wife of Mr. Thomas K. Conner. In 1977, William H. Wemyss, Jr. sold his portion of the Maple Shade property to his sister, Peggy Conner, for \$1.00. Mrs. Conner operated the 156-acre farm until 1997, when she sold approximately seven acres to Robert and Mary Lassiter.<sup>48</sup>

From 1803 to 1952, the Maple Shade property in Gallatin was a farming operation where Joseph Robb and Captain James Alexander Wemyss raised large families in one-and-a-half story Federal style home with Colonial Revival modifications. Members of the Robb family were successful farmers with large land holdings, slave owners, and active participants in the civic and business enterprises of Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee. Captain James Alexander Wemyss and his family, who moved to the property in 1870, also assumed active roles in the farming and business life of Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee. Maple

---

<sup>47</sup> Walter T. Durham and James W. Thomas, *A Pictorial History of Sumner County, Tennessee, 1786 to 1986*, 41; Walter T. Durham, *Old Sumner County: A History of Sumner County, Tennessee From 1805 to 1861*, (Gallatin, TN: Sumner County Historical Society, 1972), 296-297.

<sup>48</sup> Sumner County, Tennessee, *Will Book 9*, August 28, 1934, 184-185; Peggy (Wemyss) Connor, telephone interview by Taffey Hall, February 26, 2002.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 20

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

---

Shade tells the story of how two large, middle class families lived on the farm while gradually establishing their names as prominent citizens in Gallatin and Sumner County, Tennessee in the areas of agriculture, civic stewardship, and economic development. The property can best be described as a nineteenth-century working farm, where agricultural activity was more pronounced and evident, and a twentieth-century hobby farm, when agricultural activity on the property began to decline. The home itself is also an excellent example of a small house that grew along with its owners during the early years of Tennessee's statehood and development. Essentially, Maple Shade is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C because it was the location in which the ordinary lives of two Sumner County families made significant contributions to the city of Gallatin, the county of Sumner, and the state of Tennessee.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>49</sup> Although no testing has occurred at this site, there is a potential for archaeological remains, particularly around the site of outbuildings.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 21

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

---

## Bibliography

Allred, Charles E., S. W. Watkins, and G. H. Hatfield. *Tennessee Economic and Social, Part 2: The Counties*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1929.

Blumenson, John J. *Identifying American Architecture: A Pictorial Guide to Styles and Terms, 1600 – 1945*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1981.

*Business Listings From the 1878 Sumner Co. Land Ownership Map*. Available on-line at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~tnsumner/sum1878>. August 24, 2002.

Cisco, Jay Guy. *Historic Sumner County, Tennessee With Genealogies of the Bledsoe, Cage, and Douglass Families and Genealogical Notes of Other Sumner County Families*. Nashville: Charles Elder Bookseller, 1971.

Conner, Peggy (Wemyss). Telephone interviews by Jennifer Allen and Taffey Hall. January – August, 2002.

Durham, Walter T. Telephone interview by Taffey Hall. August 29, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Before Tennessee: The Southwest Territory, 1790 – 1796: A Narrative History of the Territory of the United States South of the River Ohio. Piney Flats: Rocky Mount Historical Association, 1990.*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Old Sumner: A History of Sumner County, Tennessee From 1805 to 1861*. Gallatin: Sumner County Historical Society, 1972.

\_\_\_\_\_, and James W. Thomas. *A Pictorial History of Sumner County, Tennessee 1786 – 1986*. Gallatin: Sumner County Historical Society, 1986.

Ferguson, Edwin L. *Sumner County, Tennessee in the Civil War*. Privately printed by the author, 1972.

*Fifty-First Annual Pilgrimage: Sumner County Tour of Homes*. Gallatin: Publisher unknown, 2001.

Finger, John R. *Tennessee Frontiers: Three Regions in Transition*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.

*The Goodspeed Histories of Sumner, Smith, Macon, Trousdale Counties of Tennessee*. Reprinted from *Goodspeed's History of Tennessee*. Baltimore: Clearfield Press, 2000.

Griffey, Irene M. *Earliest Tennessee Land Records and Earliest Tennessee History*. Baltimore: Clearfield Press, 2000).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 22

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

- 
- Guthrie, Alice B. *Shiloh Presbyterian Church, 1793 – 1847*. Typed manuscript located at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville: Historic Records project copied under the WPA on April 27, 1938.
- Harris, Cyril M. ed., *Illustrated Dictionary of Historic Architecture*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1977.
- Hieronymus, Clara, "Oldies Are Goodies," *Living*. (Sunday April 11, 1976), E-1.
- Lassiter, Mary. Personal interview by Jennifer Allen and Taffey Hall. January 26, 2002.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.
- Phillips, Steven. *Old Houses Dictionary: An Illustrated Guide to American Domestic Architecture, 1600 – 1940*. Lakewood: American Source Books, 1989.
- Stewart, Mary, ed. *A Brief History of the Black People of Sumner County*. Gallatin, TN: Sumner County Minority Bicentennial Committee, 1986.
- Sumner County, Tennessee. *Agricultural Census*. 1850 – 1880.
- Sumner County, Tennessee. *Slave Census*. 1850 – 1860.
- Sumner County, Tennessee. *Deed Books*. 3: 473-474; 12: 245-246; 13: 242-246; 19: 323; 27: 316-318; 44: 29-30; 58: 166-167; 361: 602-603; 685: 412-417.
- Sumner County, Tennessee. *United States Census*. 1830 – 1900.
- Sumner County, Tennessee. *Will Books*. 9: 184-185; 425: 633-635.
- Tennessee Century Farm Files*. Sumner County, Tennessee. Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University.
- Tennessee Extension Review*. 1918 – 1940.
- Tennesseans in the Civil War: A Military History of Confederate Union Units*. Nashville: The Civil War Centennial Commission, 1965.
- United States Historical Census Records*. Available on-line at <<http://www.fisher.virginia.edu/library>>.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number   9   Page   23  

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

---

Whitley, Edyth Rucker. *Marriage Records of Sumner County, Tennessee, 1787 – 1938*. Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, Co., Inc. 1981.

Winters, Donald L. *Tennessee Farming, Tennessee Farmers: Antebellum Agriculture in the Upper South*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 24

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

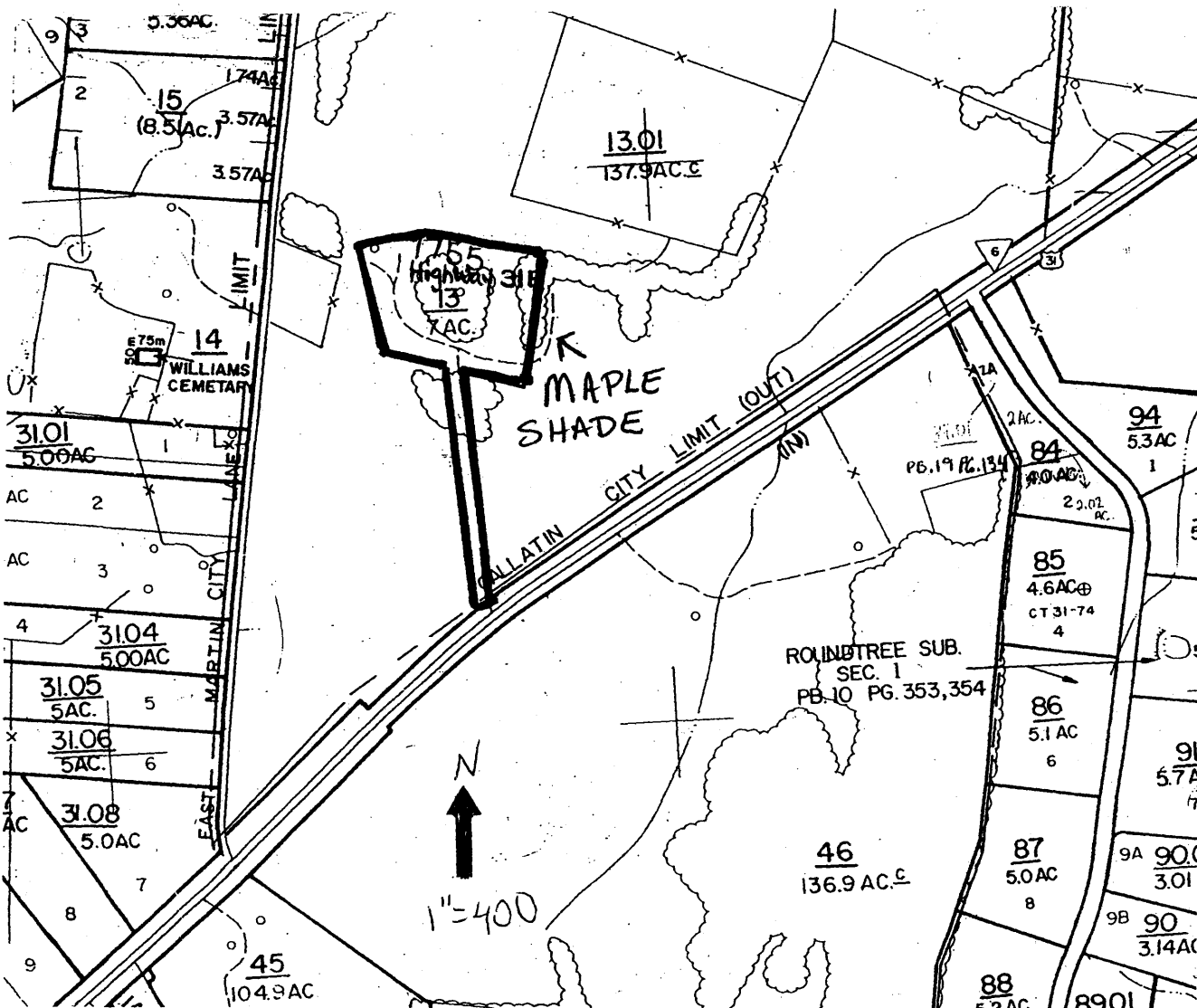
## Geographical Description

### Verbal Boundary Description

Maple Shade, located at 1755 Highway 31 East in Gallatin, Tennessee, is three and one half miles outside the city limits of Gallatin. The property sits on approximately seven acres.

### Boundary Justification

The boundaries for the nominated property include seven acres associated historically with Maple Shade.



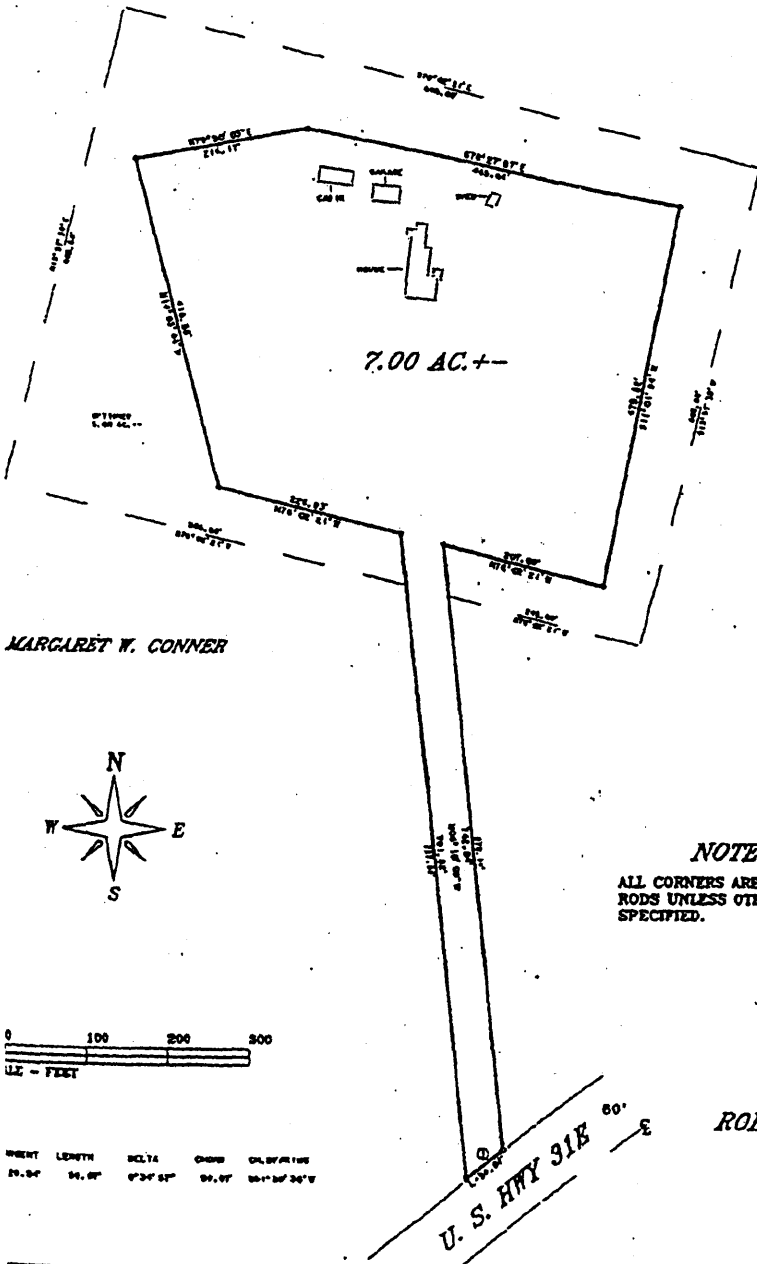
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 25

Maple Shade  
Sumner County, Tennessee

Sumner County, TN  
Deed Book



LOCATION SKETCH n. t. s.



MARGARET W. CONNER

SURVEY FOR  
**MARGARET W. CONNER**  
LOCATED IN THE 10TH CIVIL DISTRICT OF SUMNER COUNTY, TENNESSEE

SCALE : 1" = 100'  
 DATE : MARCH 23, 1997  
 SIZE : 7.00 ACRES +/-  
 DEED : D. B. 361, PG. 602, R. O. S. C.  
 MAP : MAP 105, PAR. 13 P/O,  
 T. A. O. S. C. T.

**NOTE:**

ALL CORNERS ARE NEW IRON  
RODS UNLESS OTHERWISE  
SPECIFIED.

**SURVEYOR'S CERTIFICATE:**

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS IS A CORRECTLY SURVEYED AND THAT THE  
RATIO OF PRECISION OF THE UNADJUSTED SURVEY IS AT LEAST  
1 : 10,000 AS SHOWN HEREIN.



SIGNED: *Carroll O'Brien*

BUYER:  
**ROBERT AND MARY GLEN  
LASSITER**

CARROLL O'BRIEN, SURVEYING  
600 DOUBLE FINE ROAD  
HUNTSVILLE, TENNESSEE 37894  
PHONE: (615) 370-3000

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Photos          Page     26    

Maple Shade, Sumner County, TN

---

## Photographs

Photos by: D. Lorne McWatters  
            MTSU Department of History  
Date: August 2002  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

South façade, facing north  
1 of 50

Brick walkway and boxwoods, facing south  
2 of 50

South façade window, facing north  
3 of 50

South façade, front door, facing north  
4 of 50

East elevation, facing west  
5 of 50

East elevation of enclosed porch and other additions, facing west  
6 of 50

North elevation, facing south  
7 of 50

North elevation, facing south, showing shingled addition, metal rod visible on floor, facing east  
8 of 50

West elevation, facing east  
9 of 50

Interior of Room 1, facing east  
10 of 50

Interior of room 1, facing south  
11 of 50

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number    Photos    Page    27

Maple Shade, Sumner County, TN

---

Interior of room 2, ladies parlor, with bookcase, doorway, facing north  
12 of 50

Interior of room 2, with original fireplace and door on west wall, facing west  
13 of 50

Interior of room 3, fireplace, window, west wall, facing west  
14 of 50

Interior of room 4, original fireplace, chair rail east wall, facing east  
15 of 50

Interior of room 4a, c. 1930 bathroom addition  
16 of 50

Staircase leading down from Rooms 12 and 13  
17 of 50

Interior window at top of staircase, part of Room 13, facing south through dormer  
18 of 50

Room 12, looking northeast through doorway and window at top of staircase  
19 of 50

Room 12, facing west through windows  
20 of 50

Room 13, facing east through windows  
21 of 50

Room 13, facing south through dormer  
22 of 50

Room 6, original dining room, fireplace, window on east wall, facing north door leading to Room 8  
23 of 50

Room 6, west wall, door and window facing west  
24 of 50

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number    Photos    Page    28

Maple Shade, Sumner County, TN

---

Room 8, second dining room, fireplace, wood cabinet, window on west wall, doorway facing south  
25 of 50

Room 8, west wall with chair rail and wainscoting, facing west through windows  
26 of 50

Room 9, hall way leading to Room 11, facing west  
27 of 50

Room 10, kitchen, facing north through door way  
28 of 50

Room 7, enclosed sleeping porch, wood peg chair rail, windows on east and west wall, facing south through doorway into 1803 section  
29 of 50

Room 7, enclosed sleeping porch, facing north  
30 of 50

Garden shed and stone wall, south elevation, facing north  
31 of 50

Garden shed, doorway, west elevation, facing east  
32 of 50

Garden shed and stone wall, east elevation, facing west toward house  
33 of 50

Garden shed, tool shed, and stone wall, facing north  
34 of 50

Wrought-iron trellis, facing south  
35 of 50

Tool shed exterior, facing northeast  
36 of 50

Log Garage, south elevation, facing north  
37 of 50



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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number      Photos      Page      29

Maple Shade, Sumner County, TN

---

Log Garage, north elevation, facing south  
38 of 50

Log Cabin, south elevation, facing northwest  
39 of 50

Log Cabin, west elevation, showing stone chimney and modern addition, facing northeast  
40 of 50

Log Cabin, exterior of original north wall, now south wall of modern addition, facing south  
41 of 50

Log Cabin, interior of bedroom in original log section, facing southwest  
42 of 50

Garden with bed of peonies (not in bloom), facing south  
43 of 50

Garden, trellis, and iron gate, facing east  
44 of 50

Garden, wrought-iron gate, facing east  
45 of 50

View of landscape with horse, facing north from Log Cabin  
46 of 50

View of landscape with horse, neighboring houses, facing northwest from Log Cabin  
47 of 50

View of landscape with well, neighboring buildings, facing southwest  
48 of 50

Stone pillars at driveway entrance, facing north from the highway  
49 of 50

Driveway with bridge, low stone wall, facing north toward house (white fence)  
50 of 50