

56-904



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name William M. McMurry House
Other names/site number N/A
Name of related multiple property listing N/A
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & Number: 313 N. Main Street
City or town: Springfield State: TN County: Robertson
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 37172

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 forth 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Claudette Spru 2/23/17
Signature of certifying official/Title: Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: Date

Title: State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register

other (explain): _____

[Handwritten Signature]
 Signature of the Keeper

4-17-2017
 Date of Action

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 the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: WOOD; STONE; GLASS

Narrative Description

William M. McMurry House, circa 1896, Contributing Building

Located in Springfield (2013 population 16,659), Robertson County, Tennessee, the William M. McMurry House is a circa 1896 residential building that was remodeled in the Classical Revival style in the early 20th century. The house is situated on the west side of North Main Street, just north of downtown Springfield in an area with many stately older homes. The main body of the house retains Victorian-era elements, including projecting bays and decorative scalloped shingles in the gable fields, while Classical Revival features are most evident in the full-width front porch. The two-story frame residence rests on a rusticated cut-stone foundation and the entire building is covered in weatherboard siding. There are three, large, brick interior chimneys, one on each side of the main block of the house (north and south ends) and a third in the middle of the rear wing (near the west end). The house displays a cross-gable roof clad in crimped metal. While some changes have occurred over time, the house retains sufficient integrity of location, setting, feeling and association as the place which best represents its prominent original owner and Springfield tobacconist, William M. McMurry.

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Exterior

The façade (east elevation) is dominated by a full-width, two-story portico supported by four fluted columns. The flooring and three wide front steps of the portico are concrete with rusticated stone foundation. Both the portico and the central front-gable roof wing directly above display modillion and dentil courses in their cornice lines. The two center columns of the portico have Scamozzi capitals, while the two end columns have square capitals with a decorative garland applied on the two exterior sides. The non-original bases of the columns are circular fluted, slightly larger than the columns themselves. The porch floor is of poured concrete on a rusticated cut stone foundation reached by a concrete walk that is the width of the two center columns. Three concrete steps lead from the walk to the porch. In the center of the façade are two single-leaf entrances, one on each floor. Fluted Scamozzi columns flank the first floor entrance and support a curved balcony above. A decorative turned balustrade completes the balcony. The door opening onto the balcony has simple trim with a projecting lintel. On either side of the doors are large two-over-two, double hung, wood sash windows, one on each side of the upper and lower entries. Applied louvered shutters are on the first floor windows of this elevation.

The north elevation has a two-story projecting bay topped by a gable end with decorative shingles. The center of the bay is parallel to the structure and has no openings. The sides are canted with a one-over-one double-hung sash window with a single-light transom on each floor. The section to the left of the bay is devoid of any openings. The section to the right has two double-hung windows, one on each floor. The second floor window is slightly smaller than the first floor window. Further west is a one-story weatherboard addition. One double-hung window with a single-light transom is located on this elevation.

The rear (west elevation) of the building has several additions. The first floor has two shed additions with the one on the north end being slightly taller than the one on the south end; the north addition has a low sloping roof and one, one-over-one, double-hung sash window while the south addition has two, one-over-one double-hung sash windows. Both of the south windows are shorter than the one to the north. The north portion of second floor of this elevation has a gable end. The gable is simple and has no decorative trim or shingles. To the south on the second floor there are two additions, one with a roof that is steeply pitched towards the south end of the house. This addition projects from a larger shed roof addition and contains the rear stairs. The second floor windows of this elevation are a one-over-one, double-hung sash with a single light transom and a four-over-four, double-hung sash in the stair addition.

The south elevation is similar to the north in that it is dominated by a two-story bay with a gable end that contains decorative sawn shingles. The ends of the cornice boards have sawn details. Like the north elevation, the center of the south bay is devoid of any openings, while the canted sides have one window on both floors on each side. These windows display bracketed lintels and are one-over-one, double-hung sash with single-light transoms on the first floor. To the east of the bay are two, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows, one on each floor. The first floor window has a bracketed lintel with bull's eye moldings in the two upper corners. The second floor window has simple board trim. The area to the east of the bay has one window, and it is located on the second floor. It is a one over one double hung sash with simple surround.

Interior

The entrance leads into a large open L-shaped hall. The most visible feature is the staircase leading to the second floor. The sides and underneath are covered in dark, stained wood paneling. The balusters are turned and stained dark as well. The rail and balusters are supported by square, paneled posts with matching stain.

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The treads and landing have a natural finish. The fireplace is located in the southeast corner. It has a large overmantel with Ionic columns that extend from the hearth to the top of the mantel. Between the top shelf and the mantel is a mirror. The mantel is supported by three simple brackets. This fireplace and all others in the structure (unless otherwise noted) have rectangular decorative tiles with a molted glaze. The front portion of the hall is separated from the back with a beaded frieze that is stained dark like the stairs. Opposite from the stairs are a pair of pocket doors that lead into the northeast room. Opposite the pocket doors is another fireplace, centered on the north wall. This fireplace has a white mantel and overmantel. The mantel appears to be of the Victorian era and is more delicate than that of the hall. The mantel is supported by turned posts and sawn brackets. Over the mantel is a mirror with a small shelf on either side. On the west wall, there is another pair of pocket doors that lead into the room to the west. On the south wall is a single door with single-light transom that leads to the back section of the main hall. The single doors off the back hall have simple molded surrounds with bull's eye corner blocks.

The room to the west is comprised of the bay on the north elevation. Centered on the west wall is a fireplace, and further south is a door that leads into a large rectangular room that has all modern finishes with a dropped ceiling. Opposite the back hall is another room that contains the bay of the south elevation. There is a fireplace and closet in the northeast corner of this room. The fireplace has a simple, bracketed mantel supported by turned posts. Near the center of this room is a wet bar that has been added in recent years.

To the south of the northwest room is a series of four smaller rooms and a hall. The westernmost room contains the back stairs and appears to have been an enclosed porch. There is an opening that leads into the northeast room with modern finishes. To the east of the back stairs is the pantry, a bathroom and a small hall that leads to the room in the southwest corner of the house.

The second floor hall is L-shaped like the one on the first floor. In the southeast corner is a fireplace that has a natural finish, the mantel is a simple shelf supported by round, turned columns on square bases. On the east wall is a large window that opens to the portico. Further north is the door that leads to the balcony.

To the north of the hall is the northeast room. There is a fireplace centered on the north wall flanked by a closet on each side. On the east elevation is a large window that opens to the portico. The room to the west is the upper portion of the bay on the northern elevation. A fireplace is centered on the western wall and has a closet to the south and a door to a bathroom on the north side. Across the hall to the south is the room that occupies the bay of the south elevation. The fireplace on the east wall in this room has no mantel, at this writing, and is exposed brick. In the southwest corner of this floor is a room that has a bathroom in the northeast corner and a closet in the northwest corner. This room is accessed by a hall which steps down from the second floor main hall. To the north are several small rooms, a bathroom, a storage room, and a laundry. To the west off the back hall are the back stairs, which are housed in the slanted addition of the east elevation.

As of March 2016, some recent alterations had occurred to the building, including the installation of several vinyl windows, new flooring on the main level, and elements like tin ceiling tiles and drywall in the renovated kitchen area at the back of the house.

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Storage Shed, c. 1940 (Non-Contributing Building)

There is a storage shed carport in the south east corner of the property. The garage/storage building is three bays wide with a corrugated metal shed roof. The northern bay has been infilled with a glass panel door and a simulated multi light window. There is also a corrugated metal roof along the façade, eastern elevation.

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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

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

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

AGRICULTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1896-1935

Significant Dates

1896; 1908

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

McMurry, William M.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Completed circa early 1896, the William M. McMurry House, located at 313 North Main Street, in Springfield, Robertson County, Tennessee is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion B for significance at the local level and its association with William M. McMurry, a prominent Springfield citizen, businessman and capitalist, as well as a leading tobacconist or dealer of tobacco within Springfield's early 20th century tobacco industry. Under Criterion B, the property is significant during the period from circa 1896 to 1935 when William M. McMurry lived there and was making significant contributions in the areas of Agriculture and Commerce. McMurry contributed to Springfield's early 20th century growth and development through his civic leadership as a Springfield Alderman (1894-1899), in addition to his notable career as a reputable business man and well-revered tobacconist during the turbulent Black Patch Tobacco War era (1904-1909). William M. McMurry began his career as tobacco dealer and an initial investor in Springfield's early tobacco market, and by 1903, he owned and operated various tobacco warehouses in Springfield. Considered a pioneer of Springfield's early 20th century tobacco industry, he represented the Italian Regie as a contracted tobacco agent, and was a founding member of the Springfield Tobacco Board of Trade in 1910. Born and raised in Robertson County's Tenth District near the Bethlehem community, he was considered among the best judges of dark-fired tobacco and knew the tobacco business from plant bed to market. McMurry played a substantial role in the emergence of Springfield's tobacco market within the larger area tobacco industry, specifically credited with establishing one of the first "loose leaf floor" auction houses in Springfield in 1916, thus beginning the auction sales system and principal method of marketing tobacco in Robertson County. The nominated property retains sufficient integrity from the time William McMurry built and began living in the house (c. 1896) until he died in 1935, the period which best represents McMurry's influence and financial success in the local tobacco industry as well as shaping of the early Springfield tobacco market with the institution of the auction sales system.

Narrative Statement of Significance

Early Life and Career of William M. McMurry

Born October 6, 1856 in the Bethlehem community of Robertson County, Tennessee (Tenth District), William M. McMurry (1856-1935) was the third of seven children born to Meredith McMurry (1827-1889) and Susan A. (True) McMurry (1826-1870).¹ At 14 years of age, William's mother died in 1870 leaving his father to care for six children that remained in the household and ranged in ages from 3 to 15 years.² In January 1872, his father remarried taking a second wife, Cynthia E. (True) Miles McMurry (1837-1891), the youngest sister of his first wife, Susan A. (True) McMurry. William's father, Meredith McMurry remained living on his farm in Robertson County's Tenth District his entire life until his death in late 1889.³

¹ Durrett, Jean M., Diane Williams and Yolanda G. Reid. *Robertson County, Tennessee Cemetery Records*. Springfield, TN: Y.G. Reid, 1987, 169.

² Ancestry.com. 1850, 1860, 1870 & 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2010, Images reproduced by FamilySearch, (accessed 9 October 2015).

³ Durrett and Reid, 169. Meredith McMurry and both of his wives are buried in the Bethlehem Cemetery at the Bethlehem Baptist Church, situated near the McMurry homeplace in Greenbrier, Tennessee.

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A descendant of Robertson County's early pioneer families, William M. McMurry was raised on his father's farm in the Tenth District of Robertson County, located north of Highway 76 and near Owens Chapel Road and Sulphur Fork Creek in the Bethlehem community. William's father, Meredith McMurry, was a known tobacco dealer and farmer who helped shape his son's understanding of farming, particularly raising tobacco in an area commonly known to have the best soils for growing tobacco and identified as the "Black Patch."⁴ This distinctive region is still largely defined by the deep green, heavy almost black or dark fire-cured tobacco, the primary cash crop grown in this area of northern Middle Tennessee and western Kentucky since early settlement; with Robertson County as one of the largest producers of dark fired tobacco.⁵ (*Figure 1*) From early childhood, William grew up working in the tobacco patch, raising tobacco from plant bed to market, in addition to fostering the skill of buying and prizing tobacco on his father's farm in the Bethlehem community. With a farming background and hands-on experience heavily imprinted upon him since childhood, William naturally developed an expertise in handling and sorting tobacco. As a result, he was able to easily engage in the local Springfield tobacco market, accumulate a sizable quantity of tobacco of his own, and become a prominent tobacconist as well as capitalist in his own right.⁶

In December 1878, William M. McMurry married Joyce "Effie" Green (1857-1890), the daughter of prominent Springfield citizen and businessman who was also the Robertson County Trustee (1874-1877), Milton Green (1823-1897) and Mariah T. (Davis) Green (1833-1916).⁷ Following their marriage, William (22 years) is found working as a grocer while residing in Springfield's Ninth District along with his wife Effie in 1880; together they had two sons, Paul G. McMurry (1880-c.1962)⁸ and Charles S. McMurry (1882-1942).⁹ While employed as a grocer, William gained valuable work experience beyond his general knowledge of farming and tobacco cultivation. Although William lived and worked in Springfield, he continued to engage in the area's tobacco industry, which included maintaining a hands-on connection to his father's farm. In February 1888, he advanced his career and reputation even further within the Springfield community, exhibiting his expertise and knowledge as a tobacco handler by taking first place in one of three Springfield Tobacco Fairs, held in association with the State's Commissioner of Agriculture at that time,

⁴ Goodspeed Publishing Company, *The Goodspeed History of Robertson County, Tennessee* Nashville, Tennessee: Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1886-1887), <http://www.tngenweb.org/goodspeed/robertson/robtco.html> (accessed 27 April 2015).

⁵ Suzanne Marshall, *Violence in the Black Patch of Kentucky and Tennessee*, Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1994, 3; Map of Black Patch region of Western Kentucky and Tennessee; Anna Youngman, "The Tobacco Pools of Kentucky and Tennessee," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (Jan. 1910), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1821805>, (accessed 11 February 2015), 36. This dark-fired (or black burley) tobacco variety is largely exported and used mainly in the manufacture of fine-cut plug, and other chewing tobacco, with limited extent for cigarettes.

⁶ "William M' Murry, Dean of Tobacco Dealers, Is Dead," Obituary, no author or date given (c. 1935); "William McMurry Dies Suddenly on Tuesday," *Robertson County Times*, 16 May 1935.

⁷ *The Goodspeed History of Robertson County, Tennessee*; Durrett and Reid, 102; "News from Old Robertson – Springfield, Tennessee," *Republican Banner*, 7 August 1874 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸ Sandra Helm Workman, email to author, 18 September 2016; Ancestry.com, United States Social Security Applications and Claims Index, 1936-2007 [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc., 2015.

⁹ Ancestry.com, 1880 United States Federal Census [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2010, Images reproduced by FamilySearch, (accessed 9 October 2015); Durrett and Reid, 106.

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Major B. H. Hord.¹⁰ William also served on the Board of Directors for the People's Bank of Springfield from February 1888 through August 1889, and remained a lifelong stockholder until its demise in 1924.¹¹ (*Figure 2*)

In November 1889, William's father, Meredith McMurry, died leaving him to settle and administer his estate and farmland situated in the Tenth District.¹² Just eight months later, in July of 1890, his wife Joyce "Effie" Green also died at the age of 33 years, leaving William to raise two young boys.¹³ Shortly after Effie's death, William remarried in April 1891 taking Lizzie Lee (Eckles) Jackson (1858-1944) as his second wife, and noted belle of the town.¹⁴ (*Figure 3*) Lizzie was the only daughter of six children born to I. A. Eckles, (1820-1876), a Springfield drug store owner, and her mother, Gabriella Peace (Hockersmith) Eckles Powell (1838-1901)¹⁵, originally of Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Initially, she was married to Lyman Turner Jackson (b. 1852) in August of 1881 until his death in 1888, Lizzie and Lyman had two children, Nell Louise (Jackson) Edwards (1882-1916) and Fred Ebenezer Jackson (1884-1957).¹⁶ Although a second marriage for both, William and Lizzie embraced their each of their young families, and together they would have one daughter, Helen McMurry Morrison (1894-1952).¹⁷ (*Figure 4*)

As a native son of Robertson County, William McMurry quickly became well-known as a reputable gentleman and businessman man throughout Springfield and the surrounding area, recognized particularly for his significant tobacco knowledge and connections within the tobacco industry that later helped him become a prominent tobacconist. The earliest Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, dated April 1893, lists the following firms in business dealing leaf tobacco in Springfield, Tennessee: C. C. Bell & Sons (South Main Street and the L&N Railroad), Durrett & McMurry (South Main Street), Charles Hallum (10th Ave East and L&N Railroad), R.Y. Johnson (Academy Street and L&N Railroad), and G. S. Taylor (Willow Street).¹⁸ Although initially a partner with D. L. Durrett (1839-1902) in the Durrett and McMurry Tobacco Warehouse

¹⁰ Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), Nashville, Tennessee, Miscellaneous Robertson County Papers, *Springfield Record*, Volume No. 1, 1862-1947; Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), Nashville, Tennessee, Miscellaneous Robertson County Papers, "Our Tobacco Fairs," *Springfield Record*, 9 February 1888.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2 February 1888 & 8 August 1889; "Springfield and Robertson County." *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 8 March 1896, 19 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers). TSLA, Nashville, Tennessee, Robertson County Trustee, Tax Books 1903, Roll 182. A general review of the *Springfield Record* from 1888 to 1889 finds William M. McMurry a recurring name listed on the People's Bank of Springfield Board of Directors, organized and opened on 21 February 1887 and closed July 1924, where he is listed as a bank stockholder on the 1903 Tax Books.

¹² TSLA, Nashville, Tennessee, Robertson County Administration of Executor Bonds, Roll 6008, no. 146, January 1886 to 1891, Pages 123, 371 & 372; William McMurry is declared administer of his father's estate December 1889 and by August 1890 he is settling the estate inventory and deed.

¹³ Durrett and Reid, 98. Joyce "Effie" Green, William M. McMurry's first wife, is buried beside him in the Elmwood Cemetery in Springfield, TN.

¹⁴ Chas H. Love, *The Springfield I Have Known*, Springfield, TN: Robertson County Times, 2003, 25.

¹⁵ Durrett and Reid, 102.

¹⁶ Ancestry.com. Indiana Deaths, 1882-1920 [database on-line], Indian. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Various Indiana Putnam County death records indexed by the Indiana Works Project Administration. Indiana: c.1938-1941; Michael Denning, *1914-1925 Robertson County, Tennessee Death Certificates*, publisher unknown, 2006, 38.

¹⁷ Denning, 5.

¹⁸ 1893 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee; Love, 4; Jerry Platz, "Daniel Latimer Durrett," Find a Grave, <http://www.findagrave.com/> (accessed 15 November 2015).

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located in Springfield on South Main Street in 1893, William contemplated establishing his own business venture one day. McMurry's budding reputation within the Springfield community and local tobacco industry further allowed him to aid his brother-in-law, Alfred "Fred" Hicks Eckles (1875-1940), Lizzie's youngest brother, in obtaining a job in Clarksville, Tennessee with Turnley and Gill, tobacco warehousemen in October 1893.¹⁹

Beyond his early investment and business successes, William McMurry also became a recognized civic leader and actively participated in the early growth and progress of the Springfield community and Robertson County during the late 19th century. Beginning in early April 1894, William was elected and sworn into his first two-year term as Alderman of Springfield's Third Ward, along with G. S. Taylor (1847-1898), serving under then Mayor, H.T. Stratton.²⁰ Re-elected Alderman of the Third Ward where he served in that capacity until May 1899, William participated in writing early town ordinances that introduced personal property tax, as well as established streets and street lighting. Under Mayor J. W. Bell, Springfield installed its first electric light system, effectively bringing "Springfield out of the ranks of 'dark' towns."²¹ William also endorsed a petition by city officials for the Knights of Pythias to purchase property constructing Springfield's first City Hall or Opera House, that included a lodge room above for the Knights of Pythias to meet.²² While on Springfield's City Council, William remained actively engaged in the tobacco trade growing his tobacco business and attended area tobacco sales in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, accompanied by other prominent area tobacco men, like C.E. Dorris of Springfield and W. H. Simmons of Greenbrier (1860-1941).²³

During that same time (c.1895), William McMurry also experienced noted personal prosperity which he exhibited in the construction of his new house located at 313 North Main Street in Springfield; a few years after the lot was formally deeded to him by Lizzie's family estate, in February thru June of 1891.²⁴ Originally the homestead and dower of Lizzie's mother, Gabriella Peace (Hockersmith) Eckles Powell, both the land and lot were passed to Lizzie from her deceased father's estate, I. A. Eckles who died at 43 years

¹⁹ Charles Mayfield Meacham, *A History of Christian County Kentucky, from Oxcart to Airplane*, Nashville, TN: Marshall & Bruce Co., 1930, <http://westernkyhistory.org/christian/meacham/bioe.html> (accessed 17 September 2015). Born in Springfield, Tennessee, Alfred "Fred" H. Eckles later also became a successful businessman and civic leader in Hopkinsville, Kentucky, working as a cashier and later rising to President of the Planters Bank & Trust Company in 1918.

²⁰ TSLA, Nashville, Tennessee, Robertson County, Springfield City Hall Minutes, Roll A 8817, Vol B, May 1886 –April 1896, p. 249-252; Vol. C, April 1896 – December 1904, p. 162; Yolanda Reid, email to author from Robertson County Historian, 2 November 2016. Another tobacco man, George Sydney Taylor (1847-1898) owned a tobacco business and served as a Springfield Alderman alongside McMurry in the Third Ward, dying while he was a sitting Alderman in 1898.

²¹ Love, 21. This book is a reproduction of articles published in the Robertson County Times, beginning with its issue of 4 February 1943.

²² TSLA, Tennessee, Robertson County Springfield City Hall Minutes, Roll A 8817, Vol C, April 1896-December 1904, pages 22 & 33, 34, 166; "Exciting Election – Citizens of Springfield Select Board of Mayor and Alderman," *Nashville American*; 3 April 1898.

²³ "Personal Gossip," *Hopkinsville Kentuckian*; 7 June 1895; "The Russell House –Springfield's Premier Event Venue," <http://www.therussellhouse.us/history> (accessed 28 July 2016). Col. William Henry Simmons was a prominent and successful tobacco merchant, a buyer of local tobacco and exported it internationally. He operated several tobacco houses in the area including plants in Springfield, Clarksville, Adams, Gallatin, and Greenbrier, Tennessee, including Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

²⁴ Robertson County, Tennessee, Deed Book 35, February – June 1891: 214-217.

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old. Centrally located on North Main Street, the residential lot is set in an affluent residential neighborhood of Springfield that included residences of some of the area's most prominent citizens and their families, in addition to being situated next door to his mother-in-law, Gabriella Eckles Powell's house.²⁵ (*Figures 5 & 6*) William and Lizzie McMurry began construction of their large, distinguished Victorian residence soon after the birth of their only daughter Helen McMurry in 1894, and completed in early 1896, to accommodate their large combined and growing family. By June 1896, the McMurry's were already entertaining guests at their new home and the couple was mentioned with frequency in the local society pages of both the Springfield and Nashville newspapers. Likewise, William enjoyed the company of Lizzie's family, particularly her oldest brother, Wat W. Eckles, then Clerk of the Circuit Court in Robertson County (1882-1898), traveling to take in a fishing trip to San Diego, California in July 1897.²⁶

Early in his career, William McMurry began formulating a business plan to venture out on his own, yet he needed to obtain the necessary capital as well as a substantial reputation within the tobacco industry to do so. In January 1898, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield (population 2,500) listed the following firms still in business dealing leaf tobacco in Springfield, Tennessee: C. C. Bell & Sons (South Main Street and the L&N Railroad), Durrett & Coutts (South Main Street), Charles Hallum (10th Ave East and L&N Railroad), R.Y. Johnson (Academy Street and L&N Railroad), G. S. Taylor (Willow Street), with the addition of Sam N. Morrow in 1895 (Cheatham Street and 12th Avenue West).²⁷ Although noticeably absent among the tobacco houses in Springfield for that year, McMurry like other tobacco dealers of his time branched out and bought and prized tobacco in surrounding communities located in Adams, Cedar Hill, Cross Plains, Greenbrier, Lamont, and Orlinda, with most tobacco dealers financed by Clarksville interests.²⁸ As such, in October 1902, William McMurry and Ben H. Sory, a former Robertson County Sheriff (1890-1896) and fellow Springfield Alderman, embarked upon a tobacco business partnership in Adams, Tennessee.²⁹ The *Nashville American* states that McMurry and Sory, working with local merchants and citizens of Adams, facilitated the organization of a stock company, with plans to construct a \$2,500 tobacco stemmery and factory in that town and an option for McMurry and Sory to lease it for five years.³⁰ It was also during this time, that McMurry kept a full agenda continuing to serve as Alderman until 1899 of Springfield's Third Ward while planning his next business venture.

²⁵ Love, 25; 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee.

²⁶ "Out of Town Folks – Springfield" *Nashville American*, 21 June 1896 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers); "Robertson Fishermen" *Nashville American*, 28 June 1897; "Fish Stories" *Nashville American*, 5 July 1897 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

²⁷ 1898 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

²⁸ Love, 27.

²⁹ James O. Nall, *The Tobacco Night Riders of Kentucky and Tennessee, 1905-1909*. Nashville, TN: McClanahan Publishing House, Incorporated, 1991, 89; Bill Cunningham. *On Bended Knees: The Night Rider Story*. Nashville, TN: McClanahan Publishing House, Incorporated, 1983, 55. "Exciting Election" *Nashville American*, 3 April 1898. Ben H. Sory served as Robertson County Sheriff from 1890-1896. Sory also served along with William McMurry as alderman over Springfield's First Ward, elected in early April 1898.

³⁰ "Tobacco Factory," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 22 October 1902 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers); Bill Cunningham, *On Bended Knees: The Night Rider Story*, Nashville, TN: McClanahan Publishing House, Incorporated, 1983, 92. Besides a tobacco buyer for the Duke combination of the American Tobacco Company, the Regie (Italian) and Imperial (British) Companies, Ben H. Sory was also in a business partnership with McMurry and Sory tobacco factory in Adams, TN, including his own business.

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With his tobacco industry dealings and area business connections, including tobacco handling and prizing expertise, by 1903 William is seen in business for himself as a tobacco dealer. The Springfield Sanborn Fire Insurance Map dated August 1903 reveals William as the sole business owner of William M. McMurry Tobacco Warehouse, located on the east side of South Main Street in Springfield.³¹ (*Figure 7*) In addition, according to the Robertson County's 1903 Tax Books for the Ninth District (Springfield) McMurry paid taxes on 13 town lots, while also denoted as a guardian for some of the Eckles' Family real estate holdings. Until 1912, McMurry paid taxes on no less than five town lots in Springfield's Ninth District; these significant real estate investments also contributed to his increasing accumulation of wealth. Still, both McMurry and Sory remained in a business partnership, actively engaged and buying tobacco in Adams, Tennessee as Italian government (or *Regie*, meaning "regal" or "royal") agents in December 1903, while also bidding against C. C. Bell & Sons, the Imperial (British) agents, also of Springfield.³² Throughout the late 19th and into the early 20th century, accompanying his stellar rise as a businessman and civic leader, William McMurry continued to realize increasing noted success as a tobacco dealer and would later significantly influence the area's tobacco industry.

Springfield's Tobacco Industry

By the end of the 19th century, Springfield's loose leaf tobacco market increasingly garnered a distinct reputation with each passing tobacco season, becoming well-known and eventually established a world-wide ranking as the best dark-fired tobacco market in the world.³³ This distinctive tobacco variety known as "dark tobacco," requires special care, including the delicate fine art of smoke curing. This involved process, exclusive to the "Black Patch" region of western Kentucky and western Tennessee, is an ingrained cultural characteristic passed down over successive generations, the product grown in the area since early settlement. Even prior to the Civil War, Robertson County was known as the greatest producer of "dark tobacco" in the Black Patch region, specifically this tobacco type was considered of a higher grade and chiefly grown for export to European and later other world markets as well as being used primarily for chewing or snuff tobacco products.³⁴ In Springfield, all types of dark-fired tobacco used by the domestic and export trade were sold in Springfield's tobacco market, usually made into fine-cut, plug, chewing tobacco or snuff, as well as plug wrapper, cigar wrapper and spinner, Austrian or light brown, French and Spanish fillers.³⁵ Yet Springfield's emergence as a separate tobacco market waited until after the Dark Tobacco District Planters Protective Association of Kentucky and Tennessee (PPA 1904-1915), organized in Guthrie, Kentucky in September 1904, and once the tobacco farmer uprising had run its course, known as the Black Patch Tobacco War (1904-1909).³⁶

Initially, Robertson County's geography or locale in the "Clarksville District," more formally known as the Eastern Dark Fired District, determined the medium of which Robertson County's tobacco, its main crop,

³¹ 1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

³² "Tobacco Buyers Active," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 6 December 1903 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

³³ Love, 26.

³⁴ Marshall, 4; Cunningham, 21.

³⁵ Love, 27; Rick Gregory. "Robertson County and the Black Patch War, 1904-1909." *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 39, No. 3, Fall 1980, 342.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

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was sold into the tobacco trade market.³⁷ As a result, a majority of the fine types of tobacco grown in Robertson County were for years prized, sold and credited to the epicenter of that market located in Clarksville, Montgomery County, Tennessee. However, during the 1890s, Robertson County emerged as a new tobacco market, largely buoyed by the Regie and Imperial tobacco contract interests, essentially facilitating Italian and British government monopolies who contracted agents using local dealers to buy tobacco, although tobacco prices were ultimately fixed by men higher up.³⁸ Of the European Regies who bought tobacco in Springfield, Tennessee, the Italian Regie was considered the most powerful primarily because of its standalone monopoly, and that it was not aligned with American (Duke) or Imperial (British) tobacco companies. Thus, with the organization of the PPA in 1904, Springfield's identity was further secured as a separate tobacco selling market as well as demarcated as an Association town; where the Association leased warehouse space in which to store its tobacco holdings.³⁹ Moreover, in 1900, Robertson County ranked second in tobacco production to Montgomery County, but by 1910, Robertson County had surpassed Montgomery County becoming "Tennessee's leading producer of the staple."⁴⁰

At the end of the 19th century, Robertson County, Tennessee had become well-known for its specific variety of high-grade, dark-fired tobacco, and it is this reputation that subsequently facilitated the emergence of Springfield's tobacco market within the Black Patch region during the early decades of the 20th century. Further reinforcing both Springfield and Robertson County's significant position within the tobacco industry was the centrality of the Association's organization and business interests, including the deep-abiding sympathy of the area's tobacco growers, whose impoverished circumstances only strengthened their loyalty to the Association. Moreover, William McMurry is considered a leader within Springfield's early tobacco industry, credited with ultimately helping to bring the early auction sales system into the reputable Springfield tobacco market beginning around 1909. (The auction sales system method of marketing tobacco, primarily how tobacco grown in the U.S. was sold, began in Danville, Virginia shortly before the Civil War, spreading throughout the flue-cured belt of Virginia and North Carolina, and later into places like Louisville and Cincinnati after the Civil War. Beginning in the 17th century, tobacco leaf was sold in hogshead containers due to the distance required for transport from farm to market; a system later abandoned because buyers could not determine the quality of the tobacco. By 1901, loose-leaf auction marketing was introduced into Kentucky and Tennessee areas around Clarksville, Tennessee, and became the established method to sell tobacco at market after the Tobacco Wars ended (1904-1909). The loose-leaf auction sales system was also encouraged with improvements in transportation, increased growth of domestic manufacturing, growing importance of flue-cured tobacco (cigarettes), and concern about tobacco grades during inspections.)⁴¹ Although his first tobacco warehouse was destroyed by a 1908 fire during the turbulent years of the Black

³⁷ Ibid., 27.

³⁸ Ibid.; Granville Babb Sprouse House NRHP 10/02/1998.

³⁹ Nall, 123 & 191. During the Black Patch War era, ten sales places (Association towns) were maintained by the Association, which included Clarksville and Springfield in Tennessee, and Paducah, Mayfield, Murray, Hopkinsville, Russellville, Princeton, Guthrie, and Cadiz in Kentucky. By 1910, with the tobacco market turmoil subsiding, the Association moved its headquarters to Clarksville, Tennessee, leaving only three sales places to continue at Springfield, Clarksville, and Paducah.

⁴⁰ Gregory, 343.

⁴¹ John Van Willigen, *Tobacco Culture: Farming Kentucky's Burley Belt*, Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1998, 161; Verner N. Grise and Karen F. Griffin, *The U. S. Tobacco Industry*, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 1988, <https://naldc.nal.usda.gov/download/CAT10407134/PDF> (accessed February 15, 2017), pp. 29.

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Patch Tobacco War, by 1916, McMurry had risen again to prominence in Springfield, establishing one of the initial tobacco auction houses (his second warehouse) to facilitate the sale of Robertson County tobacco directly to the world market rather than through the Clarksville Tobacco Exchange.⁴²

The Association and the Black Patch Tobacco War era

Beginning around the late 1890s, farmers of western Kentucky and northern Middle Tennessee tobacco belt faced a prolonged depression caused by falling tobacco prices, a symptom of the agricultural and economic changes of the era, and considered the worst economic downturn since the Civil War.⁴³ In 1904, the American Tobacco Company, formerly known as the Duke & Sons Company, reorganized and developed a tobacco trust known by farmers as the Duke Trust. As a consolidated monopoly led by James B. Duke, the Trust effectually put other tobacco buyers out of business and completely dominated world tobacco markets; therefore able to pay farmers increasingly less and less for their crop.⁴⁴ In response to the Duke Trust's actions along with falling tobacco prices, farmers of the Black Patch region organized together, forming their own association called the Dark Tobacco Planters Protective Association of Tennessee and Kentucky (PPA) in Guthrie, Kentucky on September 24, 1904. More commonly known as the Association, members agreed to cooperatively market the staple, pool their tobacco, and in addition withheld it from the market until purchasing companies agreed to pay higher prices.⁴⁵ On the day the PPA was formed, over 5,000 farmers convened in Guthrie, Kentucky, arriving by horseback, wagon and train to rally support for the Association's creation, endorse bylaws, and elect Charles H. Fort as the Association's President and Felix Grundy Ewing as the general manager.⁴⁶ As such, because both Association leaders originated from Adams, Tennessee, Robertson County was considered one the most loyal of all counties to the Association, and included prizing houses in every civil district of the county as well as tobacco prizers and warehouse men appointed by the Association. Springfield, the Robertson County seat designated as an Association town, would also later give birth to the Black Patch Journal in May 1907, a publication sponsored by the Association aimed at promoting its membership and organizational goals.⁴⁷

A year later in October 1905, just weeks following the Association's second annual rally in Guthrie, Kentucky, tobacco growers became increasingly frustrated with the failure of the Association's initial cooperative efforts to raise tobacco prices and turned to vigilantism. As a result, thirty-two members of the Robertson County Branch of the PPA, and likely friends of general manager, Felix Grundy Ewing, met at the Stainback school house in north western Robertson County (Seventeenth District), near Adams, Tennessee. At this meeting, they specifically assembled to address real or perceived grievances against the buyers' monopoly (the Trust) and non-poolers they referred to as "hillbillies."⁴⁸ These impatient, strong-willed, group of angry men, all small tobacco growers and considered religious men with reputable and upstanding,

⁴² William M'Murry, Dean of Tobacco Dealers, Is Dead"; "William McMurry Dies Suddenly on Tuesday"; Love, 33.

⁴³ Marshall, 107; Rick Gregory, "Black Patch War," Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture, 2009, <https://tennesseencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=95> (accessed November 2015).

⁴⁴ Cunningham, 37.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 41-43; Charles H. Fort who lived in Adams, TN was the former president of the Clarksville Tobacco Growers Association.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 53. Besides promoting its membership, this publication also sought to build a strong organization, but also took a strong, militant stand against those outside the Association.

⁴⁸ Cunningham, 53-54.

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untarnished positions within their community, then secretly adopted the “Resolutions of the committee of the Possum Hunters Organization.” Calling themselves “Possum Hunters,” the committee consisted of “not less than five members nor more than two thousand men” and made “civil visits” to farmers who remained outside the Association, counseling and instructing them as to the folly of their ways.”⁴⁹ Besides seeking to encourage them to join the Association, the Possum Hunters also made it a point of advising buyers of the American Tobacco Company not to purchase tobacco from the non-pooler hillbilly barns; those farmers who remained staunchly independent.⁵⁰

Throughout the Dark Tobacco District of Tennessee and Kentucky, Possum Hunter clubs similar to the one organized in Robertson County, initially formed as bands of unmasked men who openly congregated at night and visited independent “hillbillies” to sternly lecture or admonish them about joining the Association.⁵¹ Specifically, those who refused to cooperate and remained outside the Association as non-members were targeted, as they presented significant threats to the Association’s organizational plans to increase its membership. Tobacco growers and dealers who declined to collectively pool their tobacco with the Association, instead choosing to remain independent, were oftentimes shunned publicly at Association meetings and/or their names published in sympathetic newspapers. Moreover, the monopoly of buyers led by the American Tobacco Company (the Trust) and the Italian Regie, including business owners and professionals, were also ostracized and their establishments boycotted by Association members.⁵² By 1905, as economic distress continued and tobacco prices set by the Trust fell even lower, the once “peaceful” methods used to convince (coerce) buyers and non-poolers to join the Association progressed to include threats and intimidation. Despite Association leaders’ call for unity and warnings against violence, coercive actions later escalated into violent night attacks on property and people (terrorism), thus giving rise to the “Night Riders,” a term used as their business was conducted at night.⁵³

Soon after the Association organized, an incident occurring in late 1904 involved the large tobacco warehouse in Adams, Tennessee leased by William M. McMurry and his business partner, Ben H. Sory, the contract agent buying tobacco for the Italian Regie trade in that community.⁵⁴ In particular, local Association member J. H. Stroud attempted to visit Sory at the tobacco factory of McMurry and Sory during the day, and not to draw suspicion in securing Sory’s cooperation in joining the Association.⁵⁵ Anticipating trouble, and after an earlier contested Association delegation visit to his Red River camp, Sory barricaded the McMurry and Sory tobacco warehouse with armed men inside, again turning the Association away in opposition and refusing to join.⁵⁶ Known as a bold and fearless individual, Ben H. Sory was a tobacco buyer and business man in the Adams community who retained considerable prestige even though he vigorously fought and

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 55.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Marshall, 119.

⁵³ “Black Patch War”; Marshall, 116; Cunningham, 57-58.

⁵⁴ Nall, 89.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 89-90; Christopher Waldrep, *Night Riders: Defending Community in the Black Patch, 1980-1915*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993, 77. While camping with his wife at his Red River Camp on 1 November 1904, Sory refused the civil visit of a group of Possum Hunters men stating is opposition to joining the Association.

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opposed the Association from its beginning, alongside other influential business men of Robertson County.⁵⁷ After this incident, the Association made no further attempts to enlist Sory, as Night Rider lodges around north Tennessee both feared and respected him, as his opposition was a frequent topic for area lodges, notoriously known as the “King of the Hillbillies.”⁵⁸

Due to the Adams community’s staunch solidarity aligned with the Association, McMurry and Sory remained in business for only a short time, continuing to buy and receive tobacco for the Italian Regie in Adams through October 1906; the partnership between Sory and McMurry worked well, and like Sory, McMurry had comparable viewpoints regarding the Association as a tobacco dealer, of which he too remained independent throughout the Black Patch Tobacco War upheaval and refused to join the Association.⁵⁹ By early December 1905, as their business partnership in Adams concluded, William McMurry had also become a charter investor of the Peoples Union Warehouse in Springfield, situated off Tenth Avenue, East and Hill Street near the L&N Railroad line, together with John R. Long, D. A. Payne, E. B Long and H. T. Statton.⁶⁰ Like Sory, William McMurry had comparable viewpoints regarding the Association, as he too remained an independent throughout the Black Patch Tobacco War upheaval and refused to join the Association. Both McMurry and Sory maintained their business association in Adams, Tennessee, until Sory transferred to Clarksville as partner in the Hayes-Sory Company and because it was no longer profitable for the Regie syndicate to maintain an agent there.⁶¹ Such acts of intimidation similar to Ben H. Sory’s experience in Adams, although initially carried out in Robertson County and replicated throughout the tobacco belt of western Kentucky and Middle Tennessee early in the Black Patch Tobacco War, later became an epidemic followed by actions to that included vandalism, arson, and even murder.⁶² (Figure 8)

Despite the Association’s repeated denial of any relationship with the Night Riders and their violent activities, yet their coercion tactics which later escalated into violence also effectively assisted the Farmer’s Cooperative, and helped raise tobacco prices which kept the Association profitable from 1905 to 1914.⁶³ As a result, buyers for the Trust increasingly were forced to purchase greater amounts of tobacco from the Association, as demanded by their companies and tobacco buyers, yet also trying to purchase tobacco as cheaply as possible. Because the Association had to sell their pooled tobacco or risk failure as an organization, they effectively received better prices than prior to its organization; still the Association received less than average tobacco prices which it set on the crops. Throughout the Black Patch Tobacco War years, the Trust continued to pay consistently higher prices to the “hillbillies,” specifically those revered as independents and who outright refused to join the Association.

⁵⁷ Cunningham, 92.

⁵⁸ Nall, 90.

⁵⁹ TSLA, Tennessee, Robertson County Trustee: 1904 and 1905 Tax Records, Roll 183 & 184; Timothy R. Henson, *Adams—Adams Station and Red River Businesses, The Adams Enterprise*, 2006, 17. The Tax Records for 1904 and 1905 show McMurry and Sory paying taxes in Adams (Sixth District) on one lot valued at \$250 for each year.

⁶⁰ Love, 33-34.

⁶¹ Nall, 90.

⁶² Cunningham, 55. Relief Map of Black Patch region by Jim Asher also identifies where most of the Night Rider activity took place.

⁶³ “Black Patch War.”

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During the most violent phase of the Black Patch Tobacco War, “night riders scraped or salted tobacco plant beds, destroyed tobacco fields, killed livestock, burned barns and warehouses filled with tobacco, dynamited farm machinery, assaulted or discriminated against hillbillies and tobacco buyers.”⁶⁴ From 1905 through 1907, in an effort to bolster Association membership, Night Rider events significantly escalated from just punishment of individuals to a pattern of destruction of trust-operated tobacco warehouses.⁶⁵ During the height of the night riding activities, witnesses reported spectacular night raids encompassing hundreds of masked Night Riders who were not only well-organized, but descended upon towns with military-like precision. They captured entire towns like and Princeton (November 30, 1906), Hopkinsville (December 6, 1907), and Russellville (January 3, 1908), Kentucky, taking control of police officers and fire houses, seizing telephone stations, then proceeded to burn tobacco warehouses. Although night visitations and smaller scale raids characterized Night Rider activities, with most taking place in western Kentucky, as well as Montgomery and Robertson Counties in Tennessee, the Night Rider violence peaked between 1907 and 1909 and diminished over the next few years.⁶⁶ Even as an Association town, largely shaped by the turbulence of the Dark Fired Tobacco War era (1904-1909), Springfield’s formidable reputation evolved into as a standalone world-class tobacco market and became reality during the first decades of the 20th century. Given the early endeavors and steadfast efforts of many individuals, firms and corporations engaged in the Springfield tobacco market; one person who stood out during this era, considered a pioneer and dean of tobacco, was William M. McMurry.⁶⁷ William McMurry’s career as a tobacco dealer was defined by his reputable character and fair business dealings, significant tobacco knowledge, and area tobacco industry investments, including his entrepreneurial spirit and vast array of partnerships.

McMurry and the Italian Regie

In early September of 1905, William M. McMurry became the tobacco buying agent for the Italian government for all of Robertson County, when the Italian Regie contract was transferred from the S. N. Morrow & Company to William M. McMurry, both of Springfield.⁶⁸ Upon his contract acquisition, McMurry represented the Italian government tobacco monopoly in Springfield and functioned as a local tobacco buyer for many years when that country bought considerable dark-fired leaf tobacco.⁶⁹ Although still at the bottom of a vast hierarchical organization of the Italian Regie, as a contracted tobacco agent William McMurry became part of an emerging salaried tobacco professional class, recruited from the local community because of his well-regarded reputation and expertise, as well as his broad business connections within the tobacco industry.⁷⁰ As a contracted tobacco buyer, although his sole endeavor was to buy tobacco while taking orders and carrying out instructions from bosses higher up, still these men were also considered very powerful. For McMurry, his own success was largely defined by his ability to walk a fine line, balancing both his loyalty to the company who paid him, as well as his business dealings with the tobacco farmers in the community in which he grew up and now lived and worked. As a result, because William did not join the Association, Regie agents like McMurry were oftentimes considered allies of the Trust and

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Waldrep, 79.

⁶⁶ Marshall, 123; “Black Patch War.”

⁶⁷ Love, 26.

⁶⁸ “Regie Contracts Let,” *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 7 September 1905 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁶⁹ “William M’Murry, Dean of Tobacco Dealers, Is Dead”; “William McMurry Dies Suddenly on Tuesday.”

⁷⁰ Waldrep, 19, 30-32.

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represented the uncertain intrusion of changing market forces on the once stable agricultural rhythms of life. As impersonal market forces increasingly crept into the early 20th century, the success of a tobacco buyer chiefly depended upon his character, understanding of the local economy, including social and racial etiquette, as well as the evolving relationship between tobacco buyer and area tobacco farmers.⁷¹ Throughout his entire career, William M. McMurry maintained considerable professional ethics in his business dealings, ultimately representing an extension of his personal character that garnered a significant level of respect among both his peers and well as farmers, helping him to successfully navigate the turbulent Dark Fired Tobacco War years into the early 20th century.

In his new position, McMurry also became associated with Joseph Fergio, the head Italian government official for the Italian Regie stationed in the United States, along with Walter Grey Dunnington, the chief agent who controlled all of the western Kentucky and Tennessee export tobacco market. Thus, both his business and professional associations ultimately brought him into the crosshairs of the Black Patch Tobacco War era entanglements. In *The Tobacco Night Riders of Kentucky and Tennessee, 1905-1909*, James O. Nall specifically mentions one such incident that concentrated the attention of the Association growers on the Italian Regie Agency, causing the organization and its local agents to be more thoroughly hated than before.⁷² On September 7, 1905, upon receiving his contract as an agent, William M. McMurry was mentioned in the newspaper as part of an Italian Regie entourage, which included Fergio and Dunnington from New York, along with E. R. Tandy (Clarksville, Tennessee) and W. C. White (Cadiz, Kentucky). These top officials of the Italian Regie met at the Hotel Latham in Hopkinsville, Kentucky along with some of the highest Association representatives, Felix G. Ewing, salesmen of the Dark Tobacco Planters Protective Association of Tennessee and Kentucky (PPA).⁷³

By December of 1905, as a noted Springfield tobacconist, McMurry also became a charter investor in construction of the Peoples Union Warehouse, located at Tenth Avenue East and Hill Street and used for a number of years by the Association to store its tobacco.⁷⁴ According to the *Nashville American* dated October 6, 1906, William McMurry remained the only agent in Robertson County buying and prizing tobacco for the Italian Government.⁷⁵ Up to and including the 1907 season, William M. McMurry reportedly bought heavily in the Springfield tobacco market, purchasing Association tobacco to fulfill the Italian Regie contracts, despite continued escalation in Night Rider activities that increasingly wreaked havoc throughout the Black Patch region.⁷⁶ In Springfield, hillbilly opposition to the Association also became rather offensive at various times, further bolstered by the Italian Regie and other trust buyers operating there throughout the Night Rider years.⁷⁷ Subsequently, on August 18, 1907, William found himself situated at the center of the escalating controversy within the Black Patch, as a manufactured report circulates in the *Nashville Tennessean* stating that William M. McMurry, the sole Regie contractor in Robertson County, had seen his error and would join Association. In response, he emphatically stated that he has said nothing of the sort, but

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Nall, 33.

⁷³ "Looks Like a Hen is On." *Hopkinsville Kentuckian*, 7 September 1905.

⁷⁴ Love, 33-34. Charter members included John, R. Long, William McMurry, D. A. Payne, E. B. Long and H. T. Statton.

⁷⁵ "Outside Tobacco Is Scarce in Robertson," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 6 October 1906 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁷⁶ "Springfield Tobacco Market," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 13 & 19 April 1907 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁷⁷ Nall, 92.

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instead this a rumor and he continues to have a working relationship with both the Association and his employer, the Italian Regie, and ultimately he will make up his own mind about his position in the tobacco trade.⁷⁸ However, by the following Monday night edition of *The Banner*, another rumor circulated that William M. McMurry would leave the Regie service, and again William counters stating that there is no truth in the report.⁷⁹ Then suddenly, on August 30, 1907, William M. McMurry, considered one of the most extensive tobacco buyers in the Black Patch region, apparently quits the Italian Regie after a meeting in Louisville, Kentucky with prominent men of the tobacco world. William also further clarified his decision to leave stating that “he [will] not represent the Regies in the coming [1908] tobacco season or buy loose tobacco in any manner from the farmer.”⁸⁰

Between 1906 until 1909, Night Rider activity continued to escalate and eventually erupted into violence throughout the tobacco belt of western Kentucky and Middle Tennessee. In a response that condemned the lawlessness, the newly-elected Kentucky Governor A. E. Wilson (1907-1911) dispatched troops to trouble spots in March 1908, just as several victims brought civil suits against individual Night Riders. Although the Association continued to deny any relationship to the Night Riders and their associated county branches, and did not denounce or speak out against Night Rider violence, these actions seemed only to fuel the ongoing hatred of angry farmers and others sympathetic to the Association and the Night Riders cause. Nevertheless, William M. McMurry remained active in the tobacco trade, recognized as one of the best tobacco authorities within the tobacco belt, despite his recent resignation as the Italian Regie buying agent in Robertson County. In September 1907, William was placed in charge of the tobacco exhibit at the Tennessee State Fair, which included assistance from both of his sons, Charles and Paul McMurry; who placed third in the Bright Trash Burley Class.⁸¹ Yet, Robertson County, the local district in which Felix Grundy Ewing lived, including the county seat of Springfield, Tennessee, both remained loyal to the Association, although tensions ran high at times among hillbillies within the Springfield area. By late 1907, tensions intensified between the Association and the hillbillies that resulted in murder attempts as well as threatening letters sent to Association President, Charles Fort, from agitated area hillbilly factions.⁸² Consequently, on February 11-12, 1908, the commodious, three-story William M. McMurry Tobacco Warehouse located on Main Street in Springfield, Tennessee was mysteriously burned to the ground, leased recently by the Association as a prizing house and filled with tobacco just days prior.⁸³ Although Night Riders initially were thought to have caused the destruction, Nall explains in *The Tobacco Night Riders of Kentucky and Tennessee 1905-1909*, that the William M. McMurry Tobacco Warehouse in Springfield was instead burned by “hillbillies” in retaliation for McMurry’s lease of his warehouse to the Association.⁸⁴ The building, owned by William McMurry and formerly occupied by him as a Regie house, was considered a loss estimated at \$15,000,

⁷⁸ “McMurry Won’t Join Association,” *Nashville Tennessean (1907-1910)*, 18 August 1907 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁷⁹ “No Truth in Report,” *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 18 August 1907 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸⁰ “Regie Buyer Quits,” *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 30 August 1907 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸¹ “Great Wealth of Tobacco Exhibited,” *Nashville Tennessean (1907-1910)*, 27 September 1907 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸² Nall, 91-92.

⁸³ “Association House Burned,” *Hopkinsville Kentuckian*, 13 February 1908 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸⁴ Nall, 93.

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housing approximately 125,000 pounds tobacco and was thought to be partially insured.⁸⁵ Although he never joined the Association, William M. McMurry's fate was forever etched into the Black Patch Tobacco War era history, considered guilty by some, yet willing to work amicably with the farmer, including both the Association and the Italian Regie as his employer. Italian Regie contractors like McMurry were never combined with the American or Imperial Tobacco Companies, yet they continued to operate in the Black Patch towns along with the British and American tobacco monopoly representatives. Increasingly, over time it became evident that the Italian Regie was also allied with the Trust in their dominate control of the tobacco industry. Still, like many tobacco dealers of his time, William McMurry tried to class himself as an independent, to escape being branded as a "Trust buyer," and to ultimately evade the ill feelings held toward them by a majority of the tobacco growers.⁸⁶

McMurry's Later Career

William M. McMurry's rise as a prominent business man, successful civic leader, and reputable tobacconist, later employed by the Italian Regie as a tobacco agent, parallels the rise and evolution of Springfield's early tobacco market from the late 19th century into the early 20th century. Extending through the Black Patch Tobacco War era (1904-1909) and following the period of influence of the Dark Tobacco District Planters Protective Association of Kentucky and Tennessee (PPA 1904-1915), William McMurry continued to live and work in Springfield, Tennessee as a successful tobacco dealer. Despite destruction of his first tobacco warehouse by fire in early 1908, both William M. McMurry and his wife, Lizzie, remained active in Springfield's society, even as he continued to influence Springfield's emerging tobacco industry.⁸⁷ With the destruction of his tobacco warehouse, William had time to reassess the direction of his career and business interests, deciding instead to take a more behind-the-scenes approach, letting the volatile Black Patch Tobacco War era pass him by without deterring him. William McMurry instead invested his time helping both his sons with their careers, who both worked as tobacco sorters as children then later as tobacconists in the Springfield tobacco trade, further assisting them in getting their tobacco businesses and warehouses up and running.⁸⁸ A review of Robertson County tax books from 1903-1936 shows William McMurry as not only an investor, but also an early real estate developer who paid taxes on as many as thirteen town lots beginning in 1903, in addition to the lot he owned in Adams from 1904-1905. By early 1908, William McMurry's accumulated wealth afforded him the ability to make dramatic changes to his house, thus bringing the once elegant Victorian-era house into modern times, creating a prestigious Colonial Revival house with ionic columns fronting Main Street.⁸⁹ (*Figures 9 & 10*)

By November 1908, the *Nashville American* reports that Edwards, Boyd & McMurry have plans to construct a large prizing and tobacco factory, operating a tobacco warehouse and storage business, on the site of the

⁸⁵ "Records Broken in Tobacco Receipts," *Nashville Tennessean* (1907-1910), 24 February 1908 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁸⁶ Nall, 13.

⁸⁷ "Bridal Tour to Havana," *Hopkinsville Kentuckian*, 14 May 1908; "Endorsing the Candidacy of R. L. Peck for the Ninth Judicial Judgeship," *Springfield Herald*, 30 July 1908.

⁸⁸ Love, 31 & 33; TSLA, Tennessee, Robertson County Trustee: 1905 Tax Records, Roll 183. Paul McMurry is also seen in Adams, TN (6th District) owning property according to the 1905 Tax Records.

⁸⁹ 1903 & 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Springfield, Tennessee; Sandra Helm Workman personal collection, a 1911 Photo of the William McMurry House reveals the updated modern Classic Revival architectural style of the house.

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old McMurry warehouse site previously burned last winter.⁹⁰ Here, along with his business investors, William McMurry reconstructed a tobacco warehouse, only to later rent it out to J. J. Orand & Sons' Loose Floor, and then later sold it to E. R. Tandy and T. B. Farley in October 1911, doing business as Tandy & Farley Tobacco Rehandling firm (1913).⁹¹ It was also during this time when McMurry began to refine the tobacco sales and marketing approach and is credited with establishment of the first "loose leaf floor" in Springfield's tobacco auction houses in 1916, introducing the auction sales system as a principal method of marketing tobacco in Robertson County. Area farmers brought their tobacco into Springfield's reputable market and displayed it on the auction sales floors, knowing they were assured fair grades by inspectors, good handling of their tobacco, including honest treatment by those over the loose floors, as well as the best possible prices from buyers. In turn, buyers who patronized the Springfield market knew their purchases were handled right, and samples from the baskets or hogsheads of tobacco were true types of the contents therein.⁹² As early as 1903, the *Nashville American* observed increased construction of tobacco warehouses in Springfield, particularly to handle Association tobacco, thus bringing about the emergence of the Springfield Tobacco market, as tobacco was formerly shipped to warehouses in the Clarksville and Hopkinsville market and traded to the larger market.⁹³ Moreover, William M. McMurry was also noted as part of the initial membership forming the Springfield Tobacco Board of Trade in January 1910, of which this board functioned the same as Tobacco Boards in other places.⁹⁴ The Springfield tobacco market operated under strictly observed rules and regulations set by the governing committee of the Tobacco Board of Trade, primarily composed of all buyers and warehouse men of Springfield, of which dealers were required to operate under said recognized rules and regulations set forth.⁹⁵

Beyond the traditional tobacco markets of Clarksville and Hopkinsville, Springfield's emergence as a significant tobacco market in its own right, with tobacco first auctioned during the 1915 tobacco season beginning in January; there was only one loose floor that year, erected in the fall of 1914.⁹⁶ Springfield's first loose leaf tobacco floor was the Jones, Wallace & McMurry firm, with member investors of Doc. A. Jones, Robertson County Circuit Court Clerk; Arthur Wallace, of Hopkinsville, Kentucky; and William's son, Paul McMurry of Springfield. By the 1916 tobacco season, William M. McMurry along with his son, Paul, opened the second loose leaf tobacco auction floor in Springfield known as McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company, quickly followed by other tobacco houses coming into operation. Beginning in September 1916, William M. McMurry filed for a charter of incorporation for his company as McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company, encompassing a capital stock of \$15,000, to operate a loose leaf floor to buy and deal in tobacco,

⁹⁰ "Tobacco Warehouse," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 7 November 1908 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁹¹ Love, 36; 1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map.

⁹² Love, 26; TSLA, Nashville, Tennessee, Miscellaneous Robertson County Papers, Vol. 1, 1862-1947, "A Brief History of the Dark Fired Tobacco Industry in Springfield and Robertson," *Springfield Daily Herald*, 3 July 1944.

⁹³ "Tobacco Warehouse," *Nashville American (1894-1910)*, 7 November 1908 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁹⁴ "Tobacco Board of Trade Formed at Springfield," *Nashville American*, 27 January 1910 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers).

⁹⁵ Charles Mayfield Meacham, *A History of Christian County Kentucky, from Reconstruction Days*, Nashville, TN: Marshall & Bruce Co., 1930, <http://westernkyhistory.org/christian/meacham/Chap20.html> (accessed 15 November 2016).

⁹⁶ Love, 25 & 33.

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including tobacco sales, as well as a re-handling and packaging business.⁹⁷ Situated on the west side of South Main Street, between Ninth and Tenth Avenue West, William McMurry constructed his new two-story tobacco warehouse adjacent to the L&N Railroad freight depot and set for business in Springfield's emerging tobacco market.⁹⁸ (Figures 11 & 12) William McMurry owned and operated his second warehouse here along with his son Paul McMurry from 1916 to 1932, until Paul withdrew from the firm and was later succeeded by Louis Morrison, William McMurry's son-in-law.⁹⁹ Today, McMurry's Loose Leaf Tobacco warehouse still stands along Main Street, among the many aging tobacco warehouses in Springfield's warehouse district, located at 903 South Main Street, and reminiscent of a bygone era.

After the Black Patch Tobacco War era subsided and remnants of the Association struggled to even exist, William M. McMurry once again became a prominent and prosperous tobacconist, actively engaged in Springfield's tobacco industry as he had a well-known reputation as a man of fine judgement and integrity, beyond his successes in the tobacco industry and as a business man. Associated with Springfield's tobacco industry and its evolution into a world tobacco market with substantial foreign interests as well, William McMurry's most significant contribution include his efforts to organize the first tobacco cooperative in Springfield, from which the tobacco auction floor was introduced called "loose floor" – where the farmer came to sell his tobacco for the best price.¹⁰⁰ As such, William and McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company is mentioned with frequency in the newspapers regarding significant amounts of tobacco purchases and sales. Throughout the 1920s, just as Springfield saw increasing growth and prosperity emerging as a leading area tobacco market, McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company was also cited in the *Springfield Herald* as one of three Springfield loose leaf tobacco prizing floors in addition to sales among E. J. Gunn Tobacco, and T.W. Simmons & Company.¹⁰¹ McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company is also identified as among the chief buyers of Cigar Wrapper and Spinner tobacco grades, including cigar wrappers, binders, and filler for pipe smoking; highly in demand in European Countries, including a growing demand in Germany before and after World War I and later World War II. The 1927 and 1933 Springfield directories list William M. McMurry and both of his sons, Paul and Charles McMurry, as tobacconists, all living in Springfield, Tennessee with their families. (Figure 13) Even after the Stock Market crash in October 1929, a letter dated November 15, 1929 and signed by William McMurry clearly exhibits not only his understanding of the economic crisis at hand, but as a businessman he empathized with his customer, while accentuating the importance of maintaining the trust and confidence of the farmer.¹⁰² By the 1934-35 tobacco season, William M. McMurry became senior partner in the Growers Loose Leaf Floor and was considered among the best judges of dark fired tobacco in the country at that time.¹⁰³ (Figure 14)

⁹⁷ "Charters at Capitol," *Nashville American* (1910-1920), 7 September 1916 (ProQuest Historical Newspapers); "Box Users" *Barrel and Box*, Chicago, IL: March 1916, Vol. 21, Issue No. 1, 39, <https://books.google.com/books> (accessed 16 September 2016). William McMurry's business partner investors include A. S. McMurry, P. G. McMurry, and A. L. Dorsy.

⁹⁸ Love, 33; 1921 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee.

⁹⁹ Love, 33. Louis Morrison was married to William's only daughter with Lizzie, Helen McMurry Morrison; Louis Morrison had been the McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Company head office since its establishment in 1916.

¹⁰⁰ "A Brief History of the Dark Fired Tobacco Industry in Springfield and Robertson County," *Springfield Daily Herald*, 3 July 1944.

¹⁰¹ "Springfield Leads as Tobacco Market," *Springfield Herald*, 31 March 1927.

¹⁰² Kathy Meredith, email to author, 28 March 2015.

¹⁰³ "William M' Murry, Dean of Tobacco Dealers, Is Dead"; "William McMurry Dies Suddenly on Tuesday."

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William M. McMurry’s Comparative Significance

Similar to other noted tobacco men of his time, William M. McMurry was born and raised in Robertson County and knew the tobacco business intimately, yet further developed a considerable reputation as a business man and civic leader. His farming background and knowledge of the tobacco industry was acquired during early childhood, while working alongside his father in the tobacco patch and raising tobacco, during which time he fostered a skill of buying and prizing tobacco. With such hands-on experience heavily imprinted on him, McMurry naturally developed an expertise in handling and sorting tobacco that allowed him to easily engage in the Bethlehem community and later the Springfield tobacco market. He bought tobacco in Springfield for many years prior and was able to accumulate a sizable quantity of tobacco of his own, later became a prominent tobacconist, contract agent with the Italian Regie, as well as capitalist in his own right within Springfield’s tobacco industry.

McMurry’s career is best defined by his knowledge of the tobacco business from plant bed to market, his skill and expertise required in sorting, prizing and buying tobacco, including his invaluable relationship and revered reputation he had among area farmers, other tobacco men, and within the larger tobacco industry in general. His significance within Springfield’s tobacco market is evident in his long career association within the tobacco industry and noted establishment of one of the first “loose leaf floor” auction houses in Springfield in 1916, which facilitated the emergence of the auction sales system that assisted in tobacco marketing and sales during the early 20th century. William M. McMurry enjoyed a successful career throughout his lifetime, and he was frequently mentioned in area newspapers or society pages regarding his tobacco business affairs. His importance within Springfield and the area’s tobacco industry is further underscored by his obituary in the May 16, 1935 *Robertson County Times*, which lists several prominent citizens as Honorary Pallbearers, including members of the Springfield Tobacco Board of Trade, other notable tobacco men, Mayor John E. Garner, and several patriarchs of prominent Springfield families.

Two other significant tobacco men of Springfield, who also lived during McMurry’s life time included William H. Simmons (1860-1941) and Granville Babb Sprouse (1863-1947; Sprouse House NRHP 10/02/1998). Both of these men started their early tobacco businesses in Greenbrier, although they later extended their business involvement to Springfield’s market. W. H. Simmons entered the Springfield tobacco market in 1902, followed by G. B. Sprouse later in 1908, and like McMurry both Simmons and Sprouse were successful businessmen as well as civic leaders. As chief competitors in Greenbrier and later in Springfield’s tobacco market, both the G. B. Sprouse and W. H. Simmons tobacco factories rivaled each other in tobacco volume and payroll receipts, including their involvement in the development of the Springfield market, which later became known as the "World's Finest Dark-Fired Market."

Specifically, Granville Babb Sprouse maintained a significant longevity in the tobacco industry and economy of Robertson County, opening his first prizing house or tobacco factory in Greenbrier in 1895. He later entered into the Springfield tobacco market in 1908, where he operated the G. B. Sprouse & Company tobacco warehouse, continuing his business interests through his son-in-law, Joseph O. Kemper, and his grandson, Granville B. Kemper (known as G. B.) retired in 1985. The Granville Babb Sprouse family’s involvement in the Robertson County tobacco industry totaled ninety years, and is believed to be the longest

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running, family owned tobacco business in Robertson County's history. G. B. Sprouse also served as Mayor of Springfield from 1921-1924, a major stockholder in the failed Peoples Bank of Springfield (1889-1924), and later moved to organize the First National Bank (circa 1925), where he served as stockholder until his death in 1947.

Moreover, W. H. Simmons also was a prominent and successful tobacco merchant with one of the largest tobacco warehouses in Springfield, Tennessee, including a large landowner in the region. Simmons built his tobacco warehouse in Springfield, near the Mansfield Cheatham House in which he lived for many years, located off Richards Street and the Railroad. He walked across the yard to work each day from his house that has remained basically the same since 1905 (Russell House, NRHP 11/22/2011), while the tobacco warehouse was still operated by the family until c. 1977.¹⁰⁴ During his career, as a leading tobacco merchant he purchased local tobacco and exported internationally, he operated several tobacco houses in the area including plants in Springfield, Clarksville, Adams, Gallatin, and Greenbrier, Tennessee, and Hopkinsville in Kentucky. In addition, he also served as the director of the Springfield National Bank and served as Colonel under Tennessee Governor Hill McAllister (1933-1937).¹⁰⁵

William M. McMurry passed away on May 14, 1935 at the age of 78 after suffering from a stroke. His obituary provides considerable insight into the life and times of a man well revered as the "dean of tobacco dealers," a "pioneer tobacco man," and one of Springfield's most prominent citizens. For over fifty years, he was actively engaged in Springfield's tobacco industry, longer than any other man, born and raised in Robertson County's Tenth District, William M. McMurry was also considered among the best judges of dark-fired tobacco, knowing the business from plant bed to market. As a respected businessman and civic leader, he also had a wide circle of friends from among all walks of life, and William M. McMurry was highly esteemed among area farmers, who believed in "Bill" McMurry, knew him, liked him and quoted him, particularly appreciating that he went out of his way to pay them a fair price for their tobacco.¹⁰⁶ Then, nine years later, in 1944, Lizzie followed him in death at the age of 86 after a short illness. Both are buried in the Elmwood Cemetery in Springfield, Tennessee.¹⁰⁷

William M. McMurry House

A few months prior to and following William's marriage to his second wife, Lizzie, the town lot of 313 North Main Street in Springfield, Tennessee, where the McMurry House stands today, was formally deeded to William M. McMurry, between February and June of 1891. As part of the original homestead and dower of Lizzie's mother, Gabriella Peace (Hockersmith) Eckles Powell, the lot was passed to Lizzie from her deceased father's estate, I. A. Eckles who died at 43 years of age. The lot is centrally-located on North Main Street in an affluent residential neighborhood of Springfield that included residences of some of the area's most prominent citizens and their families, in addition to being situated next door to his mother-in-law,

¹⁰⁴ Brian Beadles, "Russell House," National Register nomination (NRHP 10/26/2011).

¹⁰⁵ "Last Rights Held on Saturday for Col. W. H. Simmons," *Robertson County Times*, 27 March 1941.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid; "William McMurry Dies Suddenly on Tuesday."

¹⁰⁷ TSLA, Nashville, Tennessee, *Robertson County Times*, Roll No. 10, 18 July 194 – 17 May 1945; "Funeral Services for Mrs. McMurry Held Yesterday," *Robertson County Times*, 7 September 1944.

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Gabriella Eckles Powell's house.¹⁰⁸ While the earliest homes in the neighborhood date to the mid-19th century, the majority were constructed throughout the late-19th and 20th centuries.

McMurry constructed a distinguished Victorian residence on Main Street soon after the 1894 birth of his daughter, Helen McMurry, finishing construction in early 1896 to accommodate the large combined and growing family he shared with Lizzie. Sometime around 1908 (according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance map), the house was substantially enlarged and updated with the addition of large, notable columns and elegant décor, bringing the Victorian-era house in line with modern times, a display of the McMurry family's increased prosperity. A 1911 photo reveals the substantial update to the McMurry residence into a large two-story Colonial Revival frame house with clapboard siding and Ionic columns. The elegant, eclectic residence constructed by McMurry parallels the large stylish homes characteristic of the prestigious area residents who were notable in Springfield's early prosperity and growth during the late-19th and early-20th century. The architectural styles and exceptional workmanship represented throughout the residence attest to the social stature and economic success of William McMurry by the time of the home's construction (c.1896), its Classical Revival update (c.1908), and its later remodel (1923). (*Figure 15*)

The William M. McMurry House retains remarkable architectural integrity of materials, design, workmanship, setting, location, feeling and association. Character-defining elements of the McMurry House, reminiscent of a period of prosperity in Springfield, are well-preserved and beautifully crafted. The McMurry House has continuously served as a residential house within the period of significance spanning from 1896 to 1935, when William M. McMurry died suddenly after a short illness. Lizzie McMurry remained living in the home until her death in 1944, whereas the family also ran it as a Tourist Home taking in boarders beginning around 1940 until 1952, and was listed as the McMurry Tourist Home in the 1951 and 1952 telephone directory for Springfield.¹⁰⁹ After Helen McMurry Morrison died in 1952, the only child of William and Lizzie, Christine Edwards Helm, was left as executor of the house and was later sold out of the family in 1958.¹¹⁰ Today, the William M. McMurry House remains an impressive example of a two-story Colonial Revival foursquare, frame house with clapboard siding. The McMurry House embodies prominent architectural elements that include a hipped roof with a full-width porch, a centered gable, massive 22-foot-tall Ionic columns and balcony fronting Main Street, is supported by a raised course stone foundation, and the eaves of the house are lined with wooden dentils and brackets.

¹⁰⁸ Love, 25.

¹⁰⁹ Southern Bell Telephone and Telegraph Company, Robertson County, Tennessee, *Telephone Directory for Springfield, Adams, Barren Plains, Cedar Hill, Cross Plains, Greenbrier, Orlinda, and White House, Tennessee*, 1951 and 1952.

¹¹⁰ Robertson County, Tennessee, Deed Book 121, October 1958: 486. The William M. McMurry house was sold in October 1858 after Fred (Alfred E.) Jackson died in 1957; Lizzie's only son from her first marriage to L. T. Jackson. Christine Edwards Helm (Nell's daughter, and Lizzie's granddaughter) administered the sale of the house.

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Letter dated July 17, 1940, between Lizzie McMurry and Christine Edwards Helm;

various family and house photos, including c. 1896 and Classic Revival updated house c.1911.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register	<input type="checkbox"/>	Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	<input type="checkbox"/>	University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): RB-252			

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.40 acres **USGS Quadrangle** Springfield North 306 SW

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Latitude: 36.512220

Longitude: -86.884829

Verbal Boundary Description

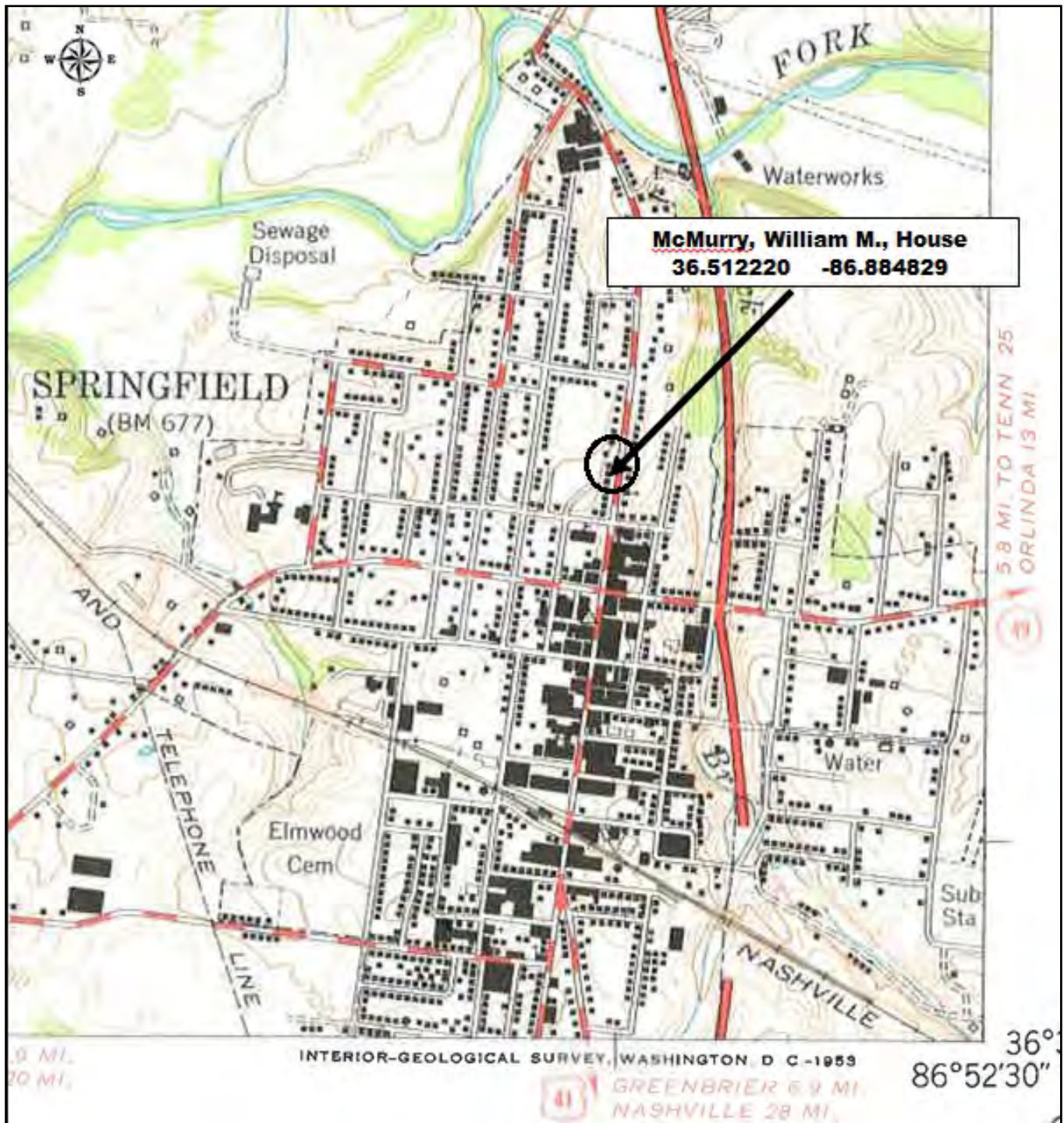
The property is defined as Parcel 014.00 as depicted on the Madison County Property Tax Map 080G, Group D. The property fronts on N. Main Street and has a 106.1' front (east) parcel line. 197' on the north and south boundary lines that flank parcels 013.00 and 015.00, respectively. The rear of the property (west) is bounded by small area of trees with Locust Street just beyond that.

Boundary Justification

The National Register boundary for the William M. McMurry House includes those buildings that are historically associated with William M. McMurry and retain adequate integrity.

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USGS Topographic Map Springfield North-306 SW, 1952.
Original map scale 1:24 000.

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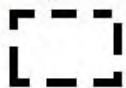
McMurry, William M., House
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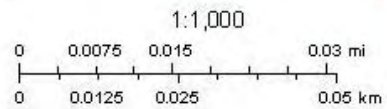
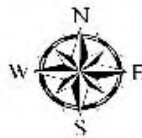
Robertson County - Parcel: 080G D 014.00



February 11, 2016



National Register boundary



TN Department of Transportation
OIRGIS Services

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11. Form Prepared By

Name Tonya Blades

Organization Greater Nashville Regional Council

Street & Number 501 Union Street - 6th Floor Date 11-01-2016

City or Town Nashville Telephone (615) 862-8857

E-mail tblades@gnrc.org State TN Zip Code 37201

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to map.
- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. should be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps)

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

McMurry, William M., House
Name of Property

Robertson County, Tennessee
County and State

Photo Log

Name of Property: William M. McMurry House
City or Vicinity: Springfield
County: Robertson State: Tennessee
Photographer: Caroline Eller, Tennessee Historical Commission
Date Photographed: March 18, 2016

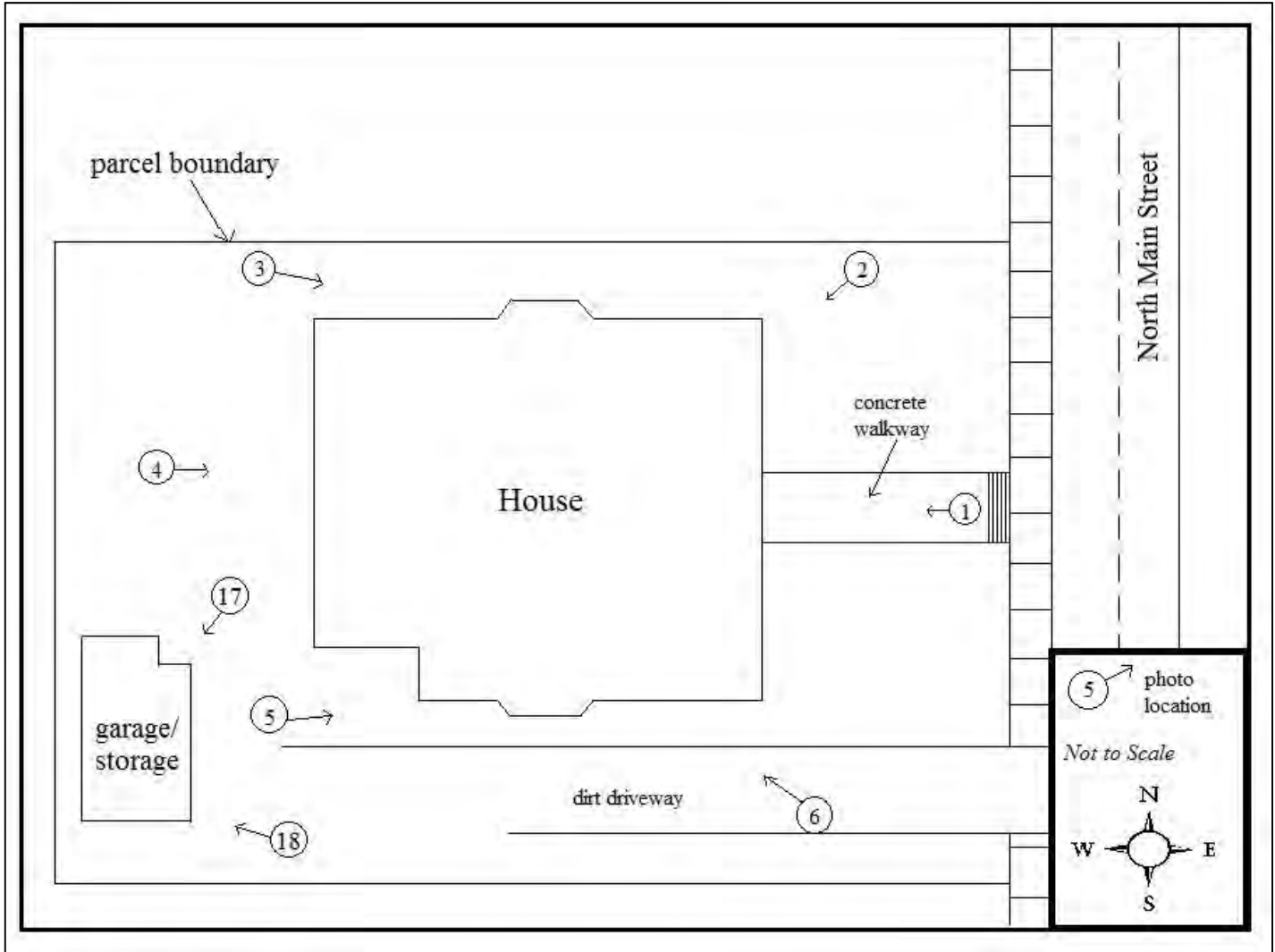
Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 18. East façade. Photographer facing west.
- 2 of 18. Northeast oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 3 of 18. North elevation. Photographer facing southeast.
- 4 of 18. West elevation. Photographer facing east.
- 5 of 18. Southwest oblique. Photographer facing northeast.
- 6 of 18. South elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 7 of 18. View of main staircase, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 8 of 18. View of entry hall, first floor. Photographer facing northwest.
- 9 of 18. View of current dining room, first floor. Photographer facing north.
- 10 of 18. View of center hall, first floor. Photographer facing west.
- 11 of 18. View of current kitchen area, first floor. Photographer facing northwest.
- 12 of 18. View of living space, first floor. Photographer facing south.
- 13 of 18. View of living space, second floor. Photographer facing southeast.
- 14 of 18. View of bedroom, second floor. Photographer facing north.
- 15 of 18. View of center hall, second floor. Photographer facing west.
- 16 of 18. View of bedroom, second floor. Photographer facing north.
- 17 of 18. Northeast oblique, garage/storage building. Photographer facing southwest.
- 18 of 18. Southeast oblique, garage/storage building. Photographer facing northwest.

McMurry, William M., House
Name of Property

Robertson County, Tennessee
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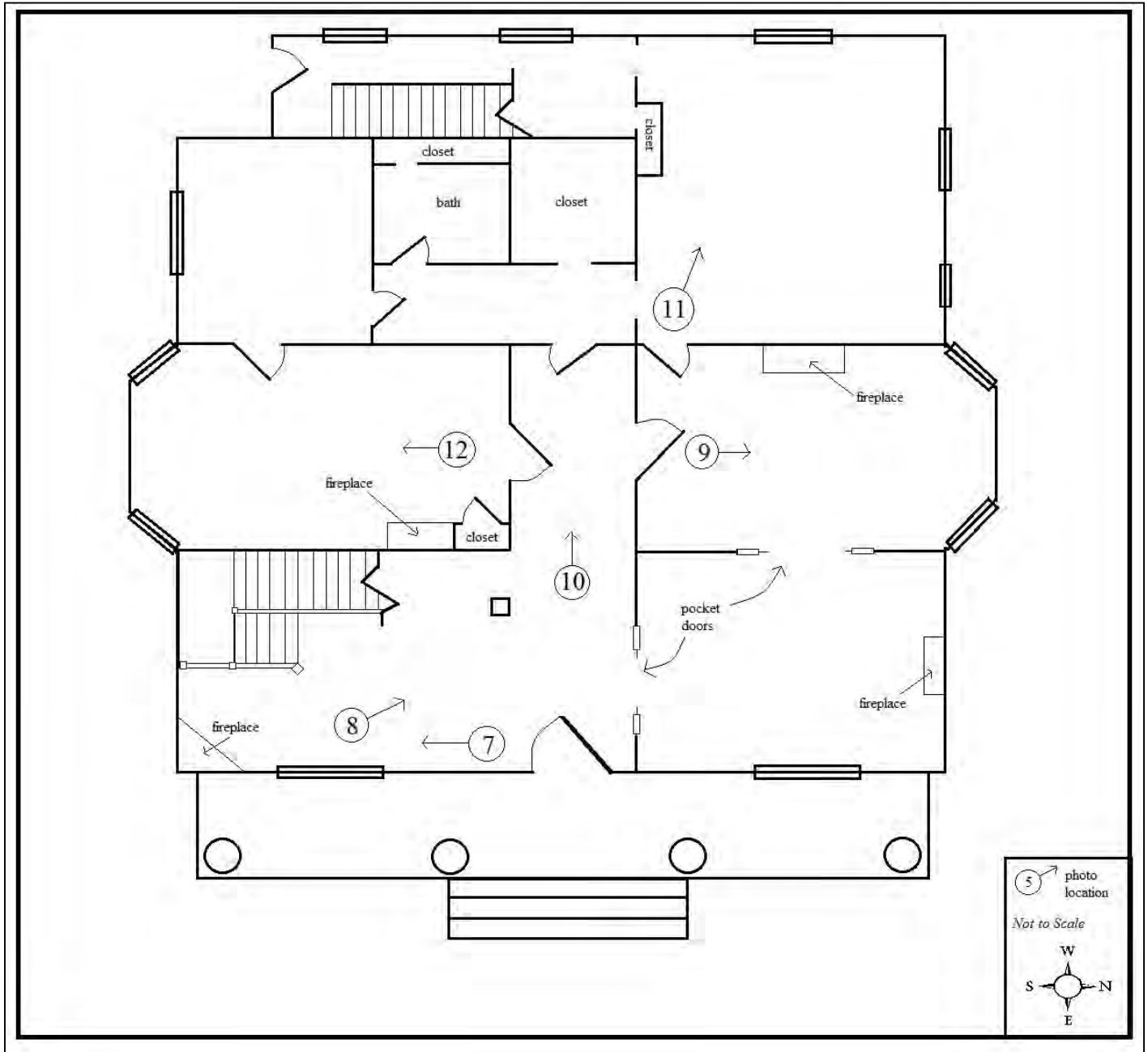
Site Plan with Photo Key



McMurry, William M., House
Name of Property

Robertson County, Tennessee
County and State

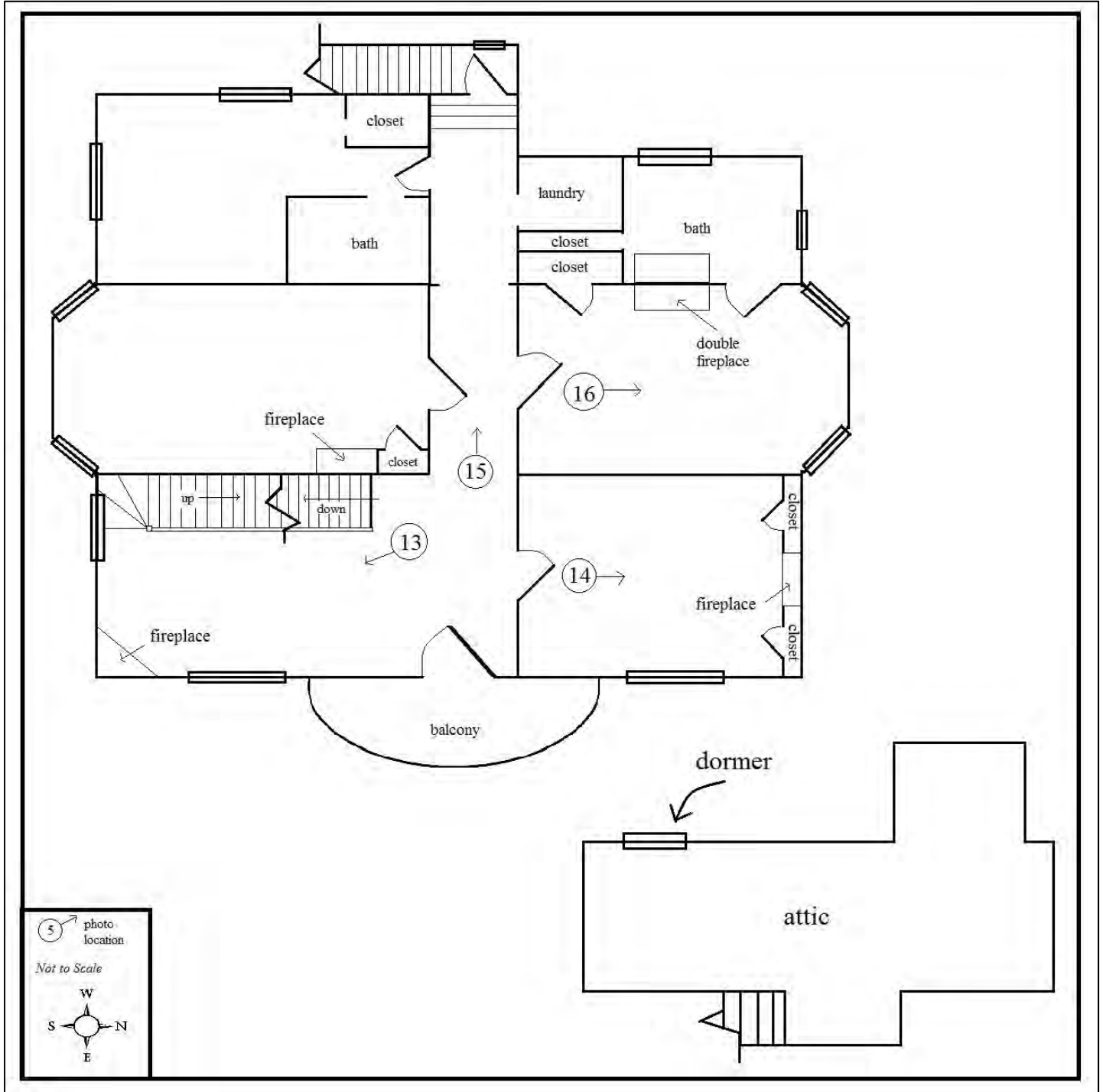
First Floor Plan with Photo Key



McMurry, William M., House
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Second Floor Plan with Photo Key



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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McMurry, William M., House
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N/A
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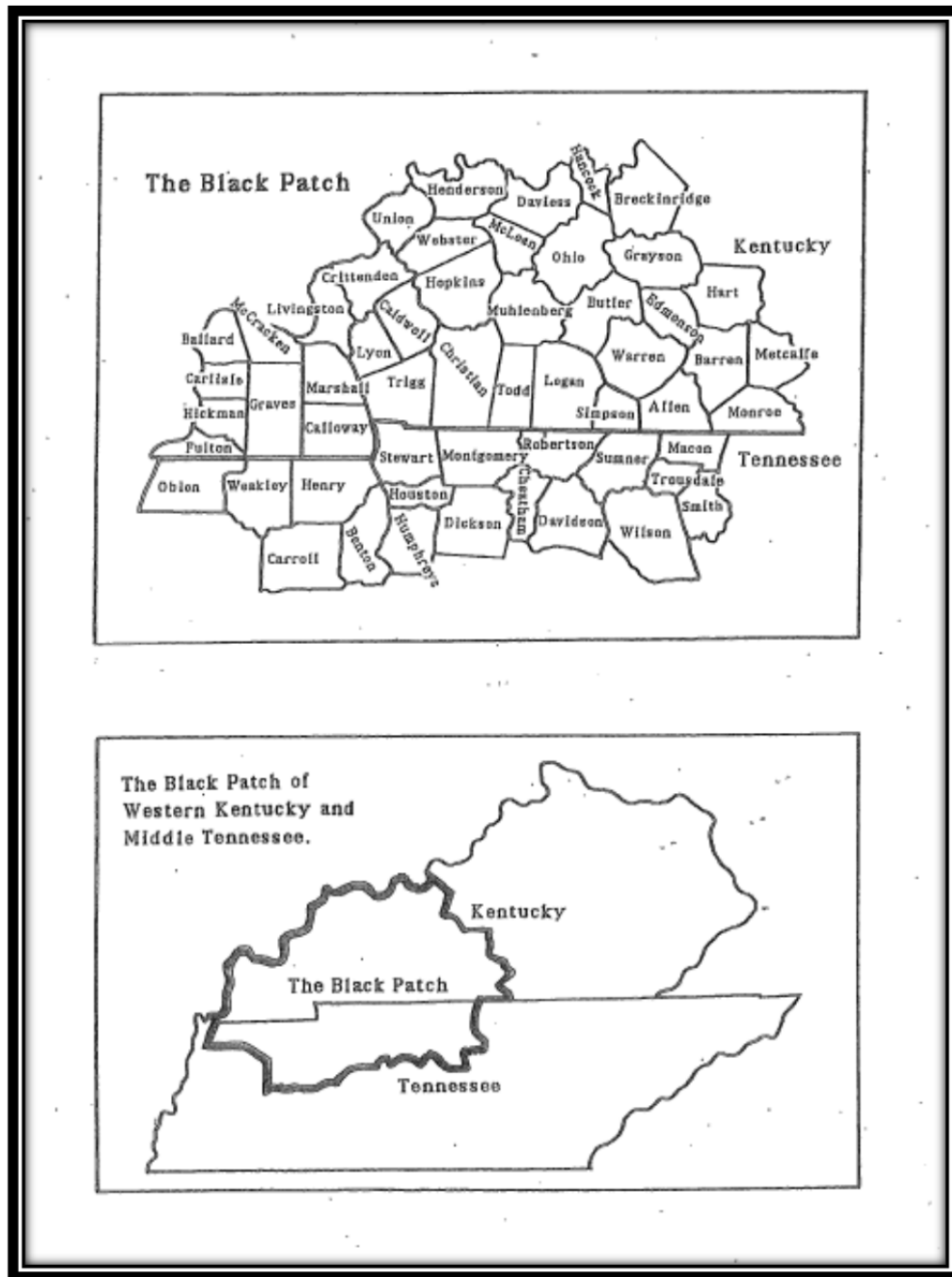


Figure 1: Black Patch Region Map, Western Kentucky and Tennessee.
Source: Violence in the Black Patch, Suzanne Marshall.

United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

McMurry, William M., House

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Figure 2: William M. McMurry, circa 1896.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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McMurry, William M., House

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Figure 3: Lizzie Eckles Jackson McMurry, circa 1896.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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Figure 4: William M. McMurry Family Photo, circa 1896.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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Figure 5: William M. McMurry House Photo, circa 1896.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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Section number Figures Page 46

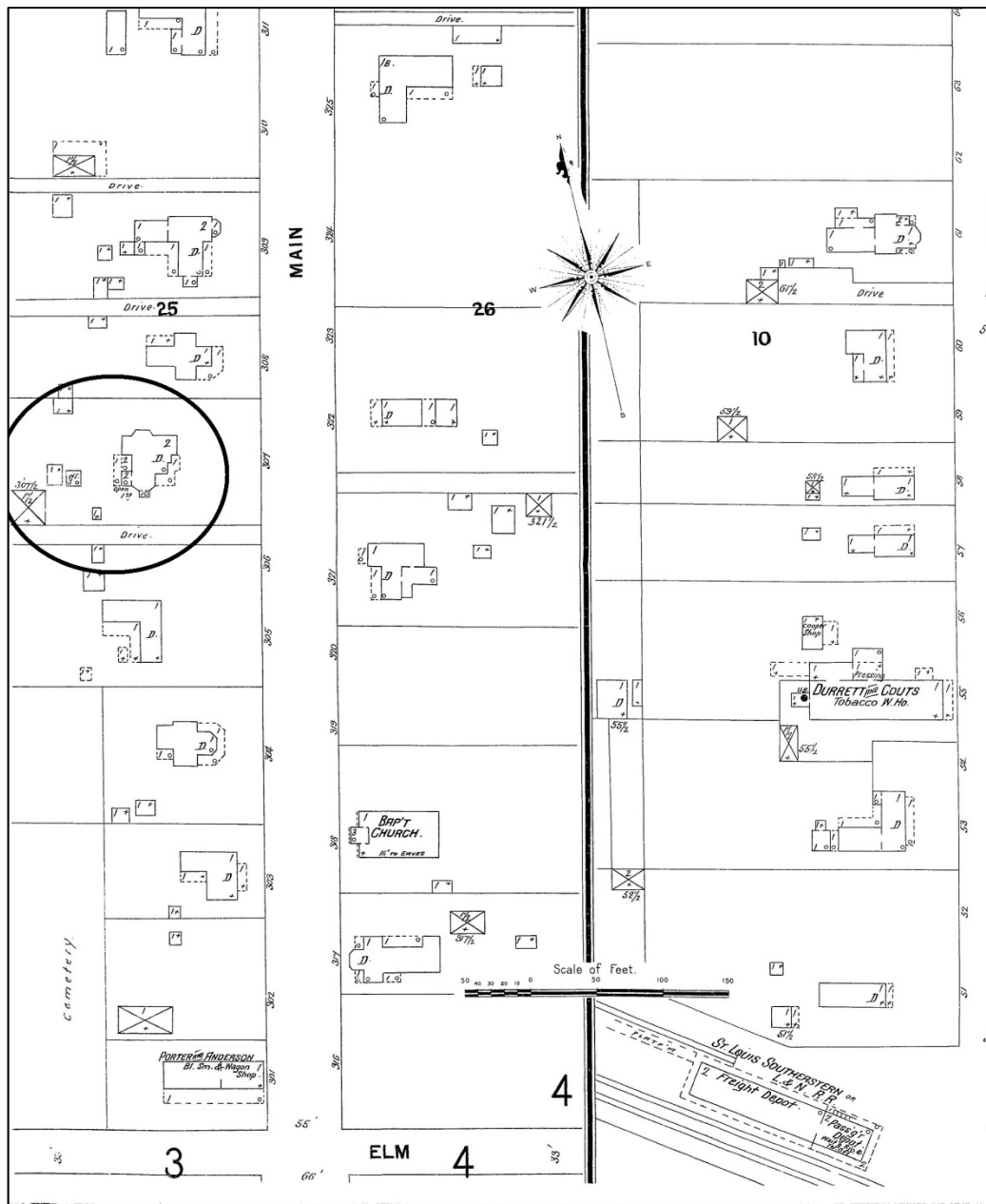


Figure 6: William M. McMurry House, Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee, January 1898.

Source: Sanborn Map Company.

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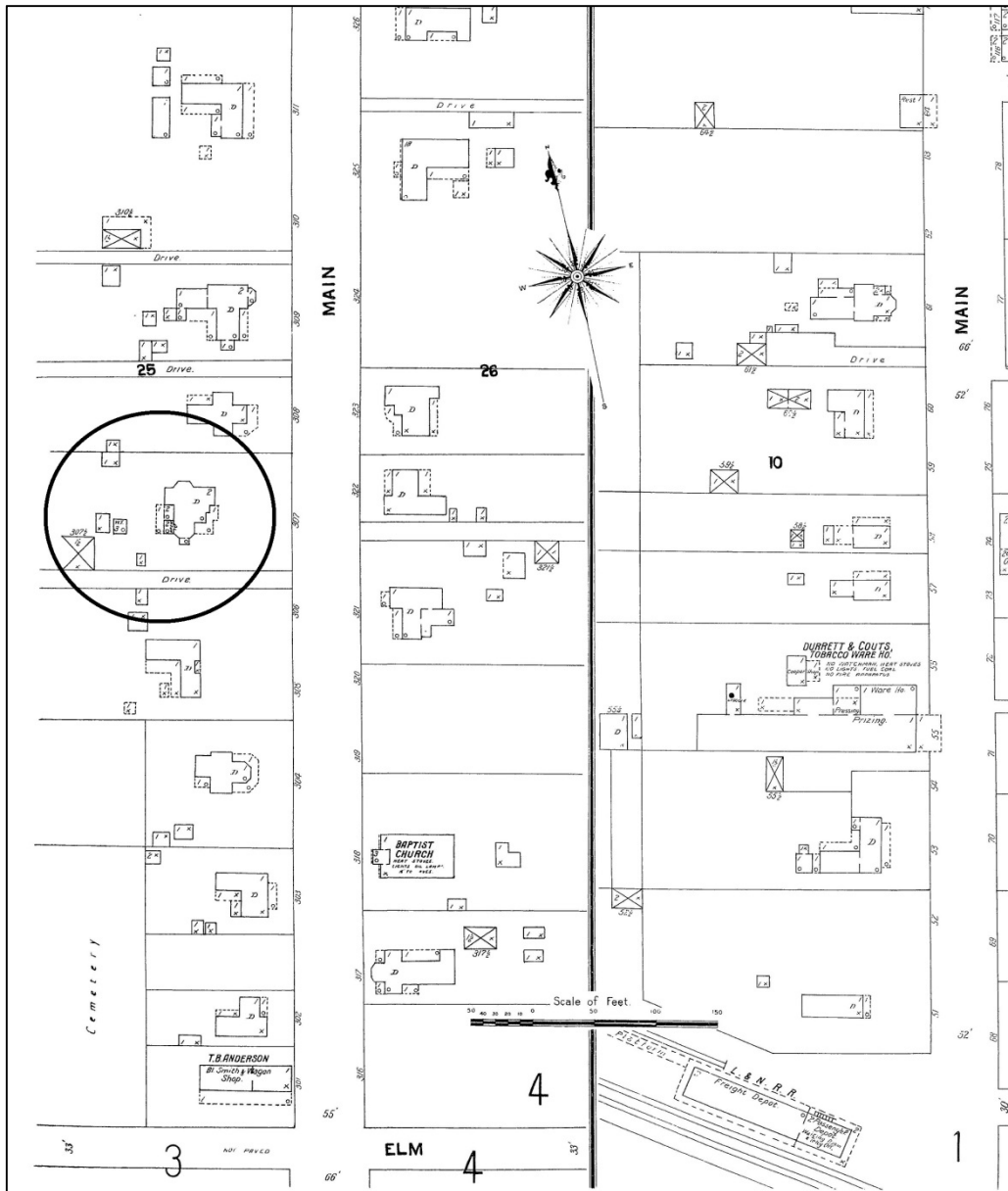


Figure 7: William M. McMurry Tobacco Warehouse,
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee, August 1903.
Source: Sanborn Map Company.

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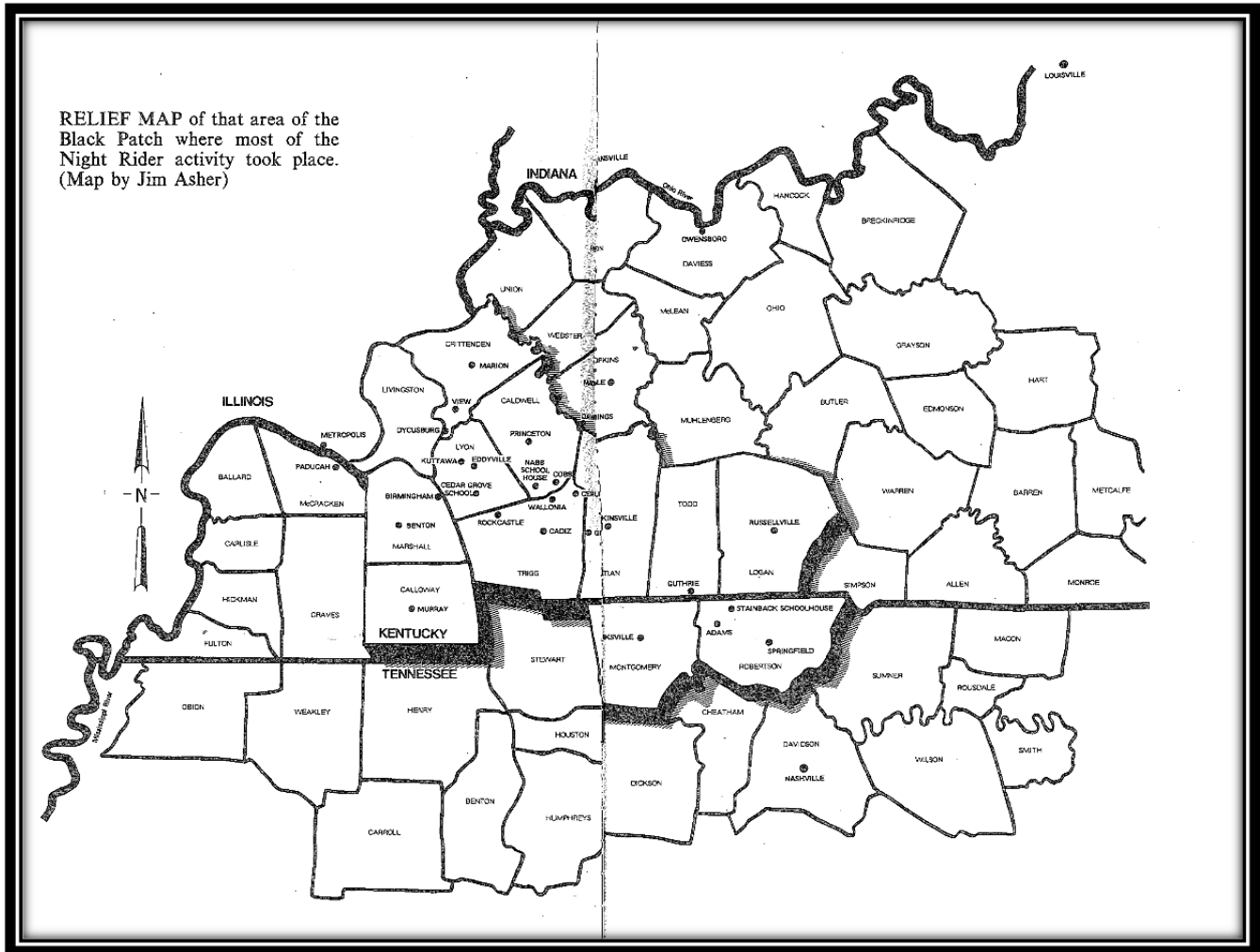


Figure 8: Black Patch Night Rider Activity.
Source: Bill Cunningham, *On Bended Knees*.

United States Department of the Interior
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Figure 9: William M. Murry House, circa 1911.
Source: Postcard of Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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McMurry, William M., House
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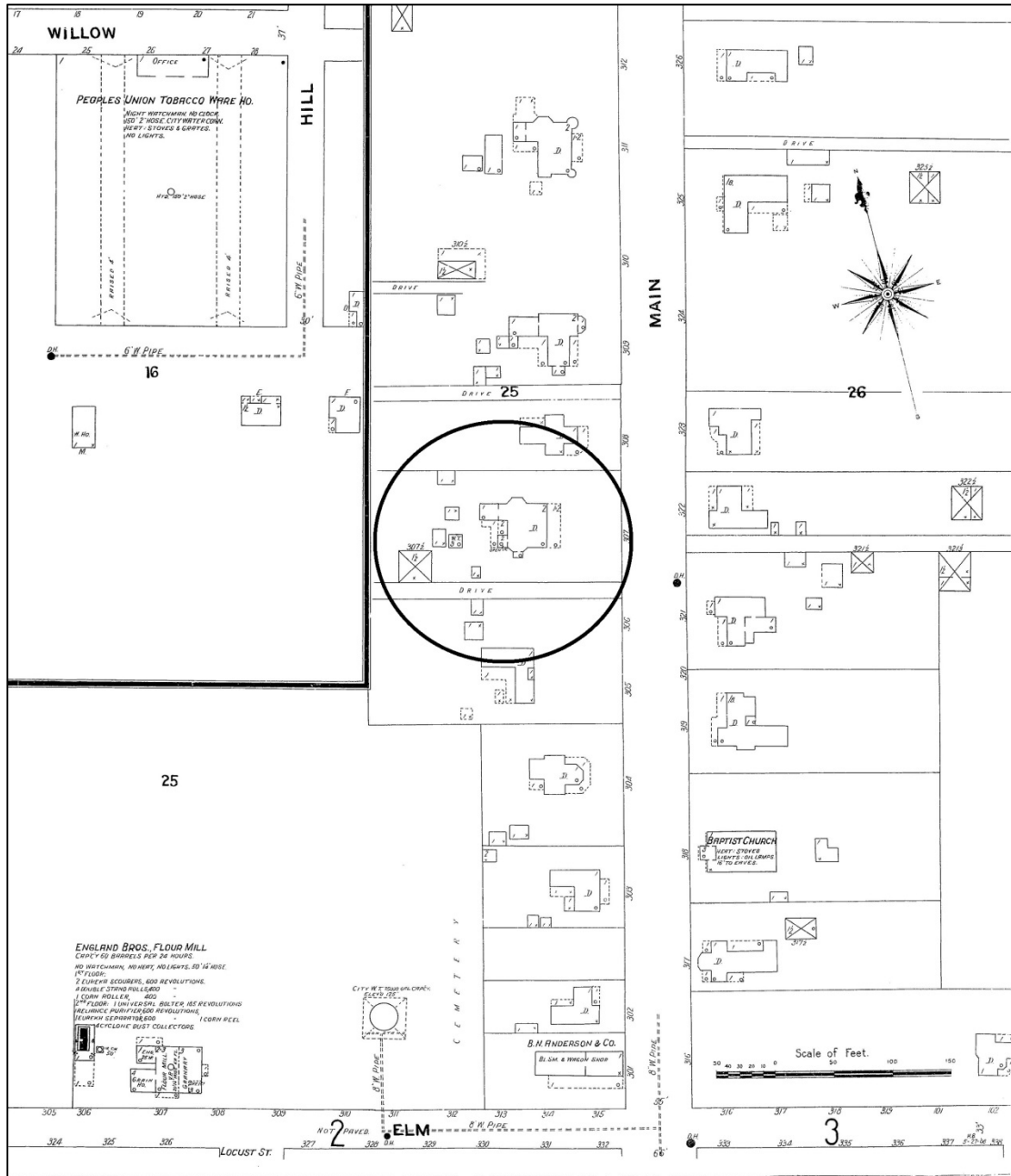


Figure 10: William M. Murry House.
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee, May 1908.
Source: Sanborn Map Company.

United States Department of the Interior
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Figure 11: William M. McMurry Loose Floor Tobacco warehouse, 2016.

Source: Tonya Blades.

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Figure 12: "Springfield Tobacco Sale," circa 1940.
Source: Yolanda G. Reid, Robertson County Archives, Springfield, TN.

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National Park Service

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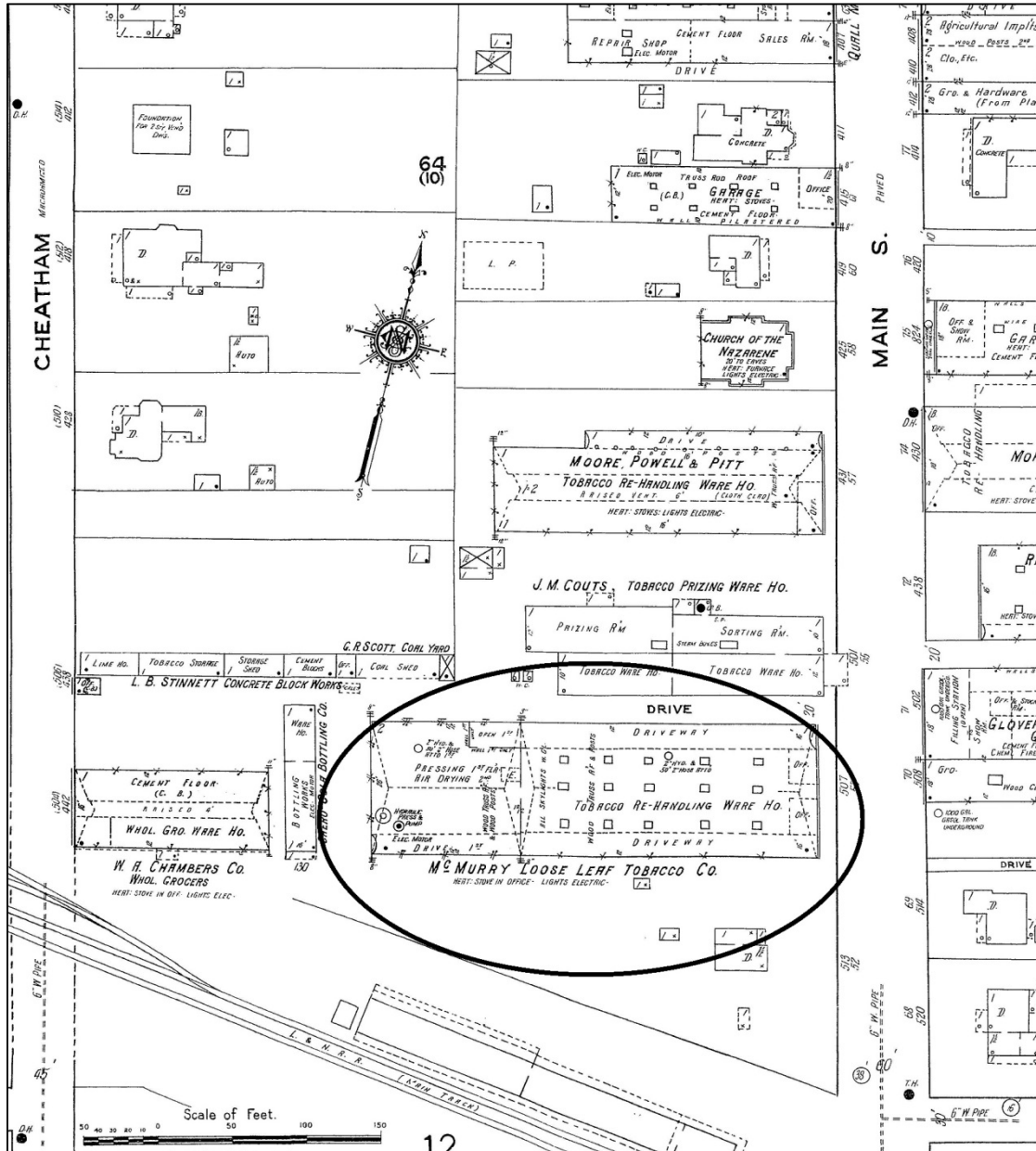


Figure 13: William M. McMurry Loose Leaf Tobacco Warehouse, circa 1916.
 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of Springfield, Tennessee, August 1921.
 Source: Sanborn Map Company.

United States Department of the Interior
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Figure 14: William and Lizzie McMurry Photo, circa 1920s.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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McMurry, William M., House

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Figure 15: William M. McMurry Photo, circa 1930s.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

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N/A

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Figure 16: William M. McMurry Photo, circa 1930s.
Source: Sandra Helm Workman, descendant of Lizzie McMurry.

Property Owner:

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name Kathy Meredith

Street &

Number 1844 Old Springfield Highway

Telephone 615-943-6003

City or Town Goodlettsville

State/Zip TN, 37072



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CITY OF
SPRINGFIELD

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716

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 3/3/2017 Date of Pending List: Date of 16th Day: Date of 45th Day: 4/17/2017 Date of Weekly List:

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver | <input type="checkbox"/> National | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG | |

Accept Return Reject 4/17/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria:

Reviewer Jim Gabbert Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275 Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR ; No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
2941 LEBANON PIKE
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0442
OFFICE: (615) 532-1550
E-mail: Claudette.Stager@tn.gov
(615) 770-1089



February 23, 2017

J. Paul Loether
Deputy Keeper and Chief,
National Register and National Historic Landmark Programs
National Register of Historic Places
1201 Eye Street NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the documentation to nominate the *William M. McMurry House* to the National Register of Historic Places. The enclosed disks contain the true and correct copy of the nomination for the listing of the *William M. McMurry House* to the National Register of Historic Places.

A Historic Preservation Certification Application Part 1 Evaluation of Significance (preliminary determination for individual listing in the National Register) has been requested for this property.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, contact Caroline Eller at (615) 770-1086 or Caroline.Eller@tn.gov.

Sincerely,

Claudette Stager
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

CS:cc

Enclosures(3)