

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

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

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic H. B. Northcutt House

and/or common

2. Location

street & number State Route 56 _____ not for publication

city, town Altamont _____ vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Tennessee code 047 county Grundy code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u>_____</u> district	<u>_____</u> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<u>_____</u> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<u>_____</u> unoccupied	<u>_____</u> commercial
<u>_____</u> structure	<u>_____</u> both	<u>_____</u> work in progress	<u>_____</u> educational
<u>_____</u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u>_____</u> entertainment
<u>_____</u> object	<u>_____</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<u>_____</u> government
	<u>_____</u> being considered	<u>_____</u> yes: unrestricted	<u>_____</u> industrial
		<u>_____</u> no	<u>_____</u> military
			<u>_____</u> museum
			<u>_____</u> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<u>_____</u> religious
			<u>_____</u> scientific
			<u>_____</u> transportation
			<u>_____</u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name S. Hallis Northcutt, D. V. Northcutt and Lyte W. Northcutt

street & number State Route 56

city, town Altamont _____ vicinity of state Tennessee 37301

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Grundy County Courthouse

street & number State Route 56

city, town Altamont state Tennessee 37301

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Architectural Survey has this property been determined eligible? _____ yes _____ no

date March 1973 _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 4721 Trousdale Drive

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Harris B. Northcutt House, located in a very remote section of the state, is the largest and most prominent brick house in Grundy County. Situated near the center of Altamont, Tennessee, the Northcutt House dominates the streetscape of the small town.

The 2-story brick house, which is L shaped and laid in common bond, rests on a foundation of random sized native limestone. Built in 1885, the Northcutt house has a medium pitched gable roof with interlocking stamped metal shingles and a plain boxed cornice with return. Five single stack chimneys, one on each gable end, and three spaced evenly along the ell, accommodate ten fireplaces.

The five-bay facade (east elevation) is highlighted by a two-story pedimented portico with square plain columns and pilasters. The 4 over 4 windows on the main section have a segmental head with a radiating brick arch and stone lug sills. The windows on the facade are flanked by shaped louvered shutters. The windows on the ell are similar in shape, but are 6 over 6 in configuration. The main entrance has a semi-circular fanlight with a radiating brick arch over two double panelled wooden doors. A small vestibule to the front door was added ca. 1920. A segmentally arched door opening is located in the second story of the central bay behind the turned balustrade of the second story porch of the portico. This portico was added ca. 1920.

The gable ends of the main section are similar with a single window on each story located at the rear. The two-story gallery on the south elevation of the ell was originally open, but enclosed with weatherboards ca. 1920. During the 1940's and 50's, the owner rented out the rooms in the enclosed ell and the ramped entrance/fire escape was added.

The log outbuilding behind the Northcutt House predates the brick house by at least 40 years, and is very significant in the political history of Grundy County. This one story single pen structure served as the original Northcutt residence and later served as the Grundy County Courthouse in 1848. The half dovetail notched structure has a single exterior end stone chimney (present brick stack represents a later repair) and metal roof. A later log addition greatly enlarged the size of the cabin.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1885 **Builder/Architect** Harris Bradford Northcutt

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harris Bradford Northcutt House was built in 1885. This large two story brick dwelling reflects the position and prominence the Northcutt family held in the county. The Northcutt House is significant because the Italianate influence on this basic Tennessee vernacular type house is unique in Grundy County. Located in a rather remote area of the state, the building's scale and size makes it an anomaly to the county. Coupled with the fact the Northcutts were very important in the political and economic development of the county, the Harris B. Northcutt House is perhaps the most important and unusual private residence within Grundy County.

Harris B. Northcutt came from a large and influential family. One of fifteen children, Northcutt was born on December 11, 1829, and grew up in Northcutt's Cove. His parents, General Adrian Northcutt and Sarah Cope, came from families who were pioneer settlers in Warren and Grundy counties. Harris B. Northcutt attended school at the Altamont Academy. At age 24, he began driving stock to southern markets having acquired several years' experience by working for his father, General Adrian Northcutt.

General Northcutt was a very important person in both the political and commercial development of Grundy County. In 1846 Adrian Northcutt raised a company of soldiers, was appointed captain and served in the Mexican War. He later advanced to the rank of Brigadier General in the Tennessee Militia. He served for 5 terms in the State Legislature, 6 years in the House (1845-49; 1855-57) and 4 years in the Senate (1849-51; 1853-55). Through General Northcutt's efforts, the town of Altamont was selected as the county seat. Northcutt established the first general merchandising store in Altamont.

In March 1858, Harris B. Northcutt took over his father's business, and continued its operation until his death in 1910. The firm, known as H. B. Northcutt and Sons, had a long and honored reputation in Grundy County. Because of the small size of Altamont (population 546) and the relative remote location atop the Cumberland Plateau, the Northcutt business became the focus of activities for the community, and the Northcutt family became one of the most powerful and influential in the county.

A large quantity of the firm's account books, day ledgers, and business receipts are incorporated into the Northcutt family papers at the Tennessee State Library and Archives. Of particular interest is a list showing the cost for construction of the house in 1885. Not only does the list provide exact cost of materials and names of the workmen who performed each task, but the list also gives one insight into the economics of that time period. Construction costs ranged from \$6 paid to Jim and Lade Fultz for digging the foundation, \$450 for 90,000 bricks, \$190 for laying of the bricks and \$35.54 for lime. Other costs included \$147 for windows and doors, \$80 for plastering, \$9 for guttering, \$9 for 3 kegs of nails, and \$100 for 25,000 shingles, for a total cost of \$1862.55.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Memorial and Biographical Record of Middle Tennessee. Chicago Press, 1898, p. 351-352.
 Northcutt Family Papers, Ac.# 185, Box 8, Folder 17, Manuscripts Section, State Library
 and Archives, Nashville.
 Northcutt, Dolly. Northcutt and Other Allied Families, 1928.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3/4 acres

Quadrangle name Altamont, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

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

B

Zone		Easting						Northing						

C

Zone		Easting						Northing						

D

Zone		Easting						Northing						

E

Zone		Easting						Northing						

F

Zone		Easting						Northing						

G

Zone		Easting						Northing						

H

Zone		Easting						Northing						

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property includes 3/4 acres of a 7.9 acre tract, as outlined in red on the accompanying map. The original map, drawn on a scale 1"=100', is located at the State of Tennessee Board of Equalization, Nashville, Tennessee

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Stephen T. Rogers, Cultural Resource Surveyor

organization Tennessee Historical Commission date August, 1980

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

city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

Deputy
 State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Arge

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 2-5-82

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>Lynn A. Boebe</u>	date <u>March 23, 1982</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>Carol Dubois</u>	date <u>3/23/82</u>
Chief of Registration	

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For HCRS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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H. B. Northcutt married Fannie McGraw in 1862. Their sons, Thomas B. and James H, joined their father in the mercantile business, while their daughter Tinnie married James Moffit, a clerk in her father's store. After Northcutt's death in 1910, ownership of the house passed to Northcutt's daughter, Tinnie Moffit. Tinnie's daughter, Fanny Moffit, inherited the house after her mother's death ca. 1921, and lived there until her death in 1955. During Fanny's ownership, the Northcutt house also served as one of the few boarding houses in Altamont.

Fanny Moffit never married and died intestate. After a lengthy legal battle, ownership of the house passed to V. L. Northcutt and his sons, and today the Northcutt house stands as a constant reminder of an influential family in Grundy County.