

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
 RECEIVED DEC 29 1975
 DATE ENTERED JAN 20 1976

**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
Robins' Roost
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
South Roane Street
CITY, TOWN Johnson City VICINITY OF COUNTY Washington CODE 47
STATE Tennessee CODE 179
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT First

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mr. and Mrs. John G. Love
STREET & NUMBER
South Roane Street

CITY, TOWN Johnson City VICINITY OF STATE Tennessee

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Washington County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Jonesboro STATE Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
_FEDERAL _STATE _COUNTY _LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Robins' Roost, the former residence of two famous governors of Tennessee, has been authentically restored and modernized by the present owners. Like many of the residences of the late nineteenth century era the Victorian architecture is characteristic of their gracious life style and enjoyment of picturesque vistas.

Located high above the street level the house and outbuildings spread across the side of the steep hillside lot. The parklike setting is landscaped with ornamental plants, flowering shrubbery and tall shade trees. The main driveway enters the oversized lot from Roane Street. It winds across the terraced hillside to the main entrance. Making a turn at the north elevation it continues past the lower garage and descends to the street level at the north west corner of the lot. A stairway constructed of rusticated stone crosses the property diagonally from the front sidewalk to the drive adjacent to the main entrance. Outbuildings located behind the main house and back terrace have been restored by the present owners. The major outbuildings include a two-story house located on the slope above the main house. Designed in the Tennessee vernacular style the structure features a gable roof and rectangular front porch. The architectural fabric is original and similar to that of the main house and the other outbuildings.

Built of frame construction on brick bearing walls, the residence features asymmetric articulation of the rectangular plan which defies central axis points with wings and additions projecting in each direction, topped by steep gable and modified hip style roof. The structure is clad in weatherboard and shingle, painted white. The main roof is clad in standing seam metal.

Distinguished by its prominent setting the most charming characteristic of the design is created by the prominent placement of the veranda style porch. Skirting three elevations of the first story, it curves in a semi-circular arc around the base of the two-story bay wing. An inviting feature of the porch is the panoramic view of the city and the countryside beyond. The porch structure is supported by a full story raised basement accented by diamond shape windows across the front. The spectacular quality of the veranda is accented by the robust carved wood brackets, turned and chamfered posts and gingerbread design of the ornamental balustrade.

A feature of the main facade is the perch-like quality of the second story balcony. The balcony porch is highlighted by the fanciful, bargeboard decorated, gable roof pediment, turned posts, carved banister and rail. The lower part of the wall is clad in fishtail shingles, painted white.

The sparkling quality of the restored exterior is continued on the interior. The former elegance of the interior design is accented by antique furnishings and restored original fixtures. Paint has been removed from the woodwork to expose the hand carved and hand rubbed wood carpentry of the paneling, door enframements, moldings and wainscoting. Doors are hand carved with bowed panels and fitted with brass hinges and knobs. Mantles and overmantles are designed with delicately carved and incised floral motifs accented by robust spool work and pierced wood panels. The main staircase, located in the foyer, combines the pierced wood panel and spool motif banister, linear carved closed stringer stair and oversized newel post featuring

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 29 1975

DATE ENTERED

JAN 20 1976

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

incised floral and spool motif. Door enframements feature a crown motif. The handsome wainscoting incorporates beaded panels and carved chair rails. The present owners have added modern conveniences for the kitchen and baths. The present plan of the floor space is the original. Additional modernizing is in keeping with the late nineteenth century period.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES	1890	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	William T. Graham
----------------	------	-------------------	-------------------

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Robins' Roost is a landmark in Johnson City, Tennessee. The beautifully restored house, located on South Roane Street, was formerly owned and lived in by two famous governors of Tennessee. The house was built in 1890 by William T. Graham. It was sold to Robert Love Taylor in 1892, who gave the house its present name.

Robert Love Taylor became governor for the first term of office in 1887 and returned to Johnson City in 1892. In 1900 he sold Robins' Roost to his brother, Alfred A. Taylor, who lived there until 1903. Alfred Taylor became governor of Tennessee in 1921-1923. Robert Love Taylor and Alfred A. Taylor are best remembered for their concurrent and opposing political campaigns for governor in the election of 1886. The election was so unusual that it won national interest, and it is still referred to by historians and humorists as the "War of the Roses."

Robins' Roost is distinguished by its prominent setting and parklike vista, characteristic of the gracious life style, prestige and affluence enjoyed by its former owners. The architectural style is picturesque. It is characterized by the full story raised basement which adds extra height to the sweeping veranda style porches. Equally nostalgic is the second story balcony, designed to take full advantage of the site and splendid panoramic view. The interior has been completely restored to its former elegance, furnished with period antiques. The most outstanding feature of the interior is the hand carved woodwork which has been hand rubbed to restore its original finish and luster. Thus, in addition to its association with famous Tennesseans, Robins' Roost is significant as an example of Victorian architecture in the area in the late nineteenth century.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Tennessee Historical Markers, 1972 ed., p. 65.
Folmsbee, Stanley, Robert Corlew, Enoch L. Mitchell, Tennessee, A Short History
 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1969).
Taylor, James P., Alf A. Taylor, Hugh L. Taylor, Senator Robert Love Taylor
 (Nashville: The Bob Taylor Publishing Company, 1913).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 8

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	7	3	7	9	2	7	0	4	0	1	9	0	4	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B

ZONE				EASTING						NORTHING					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Gail Hammerquist, Architectural Historian

November, 1975

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

170 Second Avenue North

TELEPHONE

(615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville

STATE

Tennessee

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Herbert L. Hayden

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

12/11/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER.

Acting

John R. Rogers

DATE

1/20/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Charles ...

DATE

1-20-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

acty