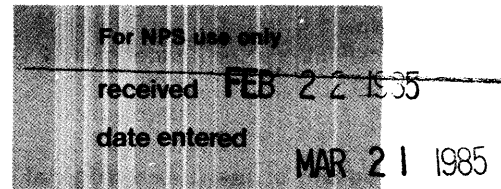


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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 Zenus Baird House
and/or common Baird-Welch House (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Water Street N/A not for publication
city, town Cornersville N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~
state Tennessee code 047 county Marshall code 117

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	N/A <input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Allen Carleton Bless
street & number P. O. Box 163
city, town Cornersville N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37047

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marshall County Courthouse
street & number Public Square
city, town Lewisburg state Tennessee 37047

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

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

Situated on the east side of Water Street in the market town of Cornersville, the Baird-Welch House is one of the best examples of early vernacular residential architecture in southern Marshall County, Tennessee. The two-story frame house was apparently erected in the 1820s or early 1830s and is one of few surviving structures of such distinction from this early period in this part of the south central Tennessee county. The house has two interesting appendages to the main section of the house; a one-story wing containing a dining room on the south side of the house, and a shed section at the rear containing a small bedroom and service area. The house has an outstanding interior, the numerous small rooms trimmed with wooden-panel wainscoting and featuring the original doors, mantels, and other millwork.

The house, constructed by Zenus Baird in the early years of the nineteenth century, is a two-story weatherboarded frame structure, the main block containing two rooms over two, with a rear shed section and an original one-story service section at the south end. The house rests on a limestone foundation and is topped with a side-gable roof of standing-seam tin. Brick chimneys with corbeled tops, set back at the roof line, are located at the gable ends and at the south end of the service wing.

The main facade faces west towards Water Street. This front is three bays wide, arranged around a central entry. The front door is a heavy, vertical-paneled wooden door, and windows on this front are double-hung sash, with 9/9 lights on the lower floor and 6/6 lights on the upper. The original porch deteriorated and was removed long ago. It was replaced by a concrete porch in the early part of the twentieth century, and this in turn was replaced by a shed porch supported by four square wooden posts during the house's rehabilitation.

The north and south sides are plain gable ends, with the tall brick exterior chimneys centered on the walls. Four-over-four sash windows flank the chimneys, on both stories on the south end, and on the lower floor only on the north,

The rear of the main section features an original one-story shed section containing a bedroom and service area. A shed porch extends from the rear of this section, accessed by a glass-panel door at the south end, and featuring three small 6/6 windows identical to those found on the front of the house and on the upper floor of the rear of the main block.

The one-story south wing, joined to the south end of the main block's rear shed section, consists primarily of one large room. This section has its own rear shed section, also original as evidenced by continuous weatherboarding. This area was originally an open porch, but has in part been enclosed as a screened porch and to provide for a small modern kitchen. The alterations are at the rear of the structure and not readily visible from the street.

The house features a particularly fine interior considering its locally early period of construction. Rooms are small, but nicely finished, with paneled wainscoting, poplar and ash floors, and original doors and mantels. Even the original hardware, including Carpenter locks and wishbone latches, has been retained. Although some alterations have

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been made to the rear sections to provide for modern baths and closet space, the basic plan of the house remains unchanged and the important interior elements have been preserved.

The central entry opens into a small front parlor or living room. The room features ash floors, laid in a north-south direction; wainscoting of solid wooden panels to three feet high, topped by a molded chair rail, and a massive fireplace on the north wall, framed by a fine wooden mantel supported by paired pilasters and decorated with carved floral designs, scarabs, and a delicate dentil course.

The adjacent room on the south side serves as a small bedroom. This room also features the wooden-panel wainscoting topped by a heavy chair rail, ash floors, and plastered walls. The mantel in this room is somewhat smaller, a molded cornice and shelf supported by paneled columns. A 6/6 sash window is located on the west wall, and a 4/4 window at the south end.

A small hall separates these two rooms from the rear shed section. This part of the house contains a small bedroom with ash floors, a small 4/4 sash window on the north wall, and a 6/6 window on the east or rear wall. Two small baths have been added to a part of the hall area, but do not substantially affect the interior plan.

Two small bedrooms are located upstairs. The north bedroom features a chair rail at the three foot mark, a six-paneled door, and four small 6/6 sash windows. The south bedroom displays wainscoting on the lower walls, blue poplar floors laid north-south, and a small fireplace with simple molded mantel. Two narrow 4/4 sash windows are located on the south wall, and 6/6 windows are centered on the east and west walls.

The south wing, constructed in 1859, consists primarily of a large sitting room and dining area. Floors in this part are of native cedar. The ornate Federal period mantelpiece at the south end is not original to the house, but came from an old home in the Milltown community on Duck River. The back of this section was originally an open shed porch; in 1972 it was enclosed to provide for a screened porch and a modern kitchen. The kitchen features a 12-light casement window on the south wall and a paired 9-light sliding window on the east.

Some twenty yards behind the house is a small frame carriage house. The small building features a front-gable tin roof, double-leaf doors of vertical battens, and a dovecote in the front gable.

The house and carriage house occupy a large lot on the east side of Water Street, between Cornersville's main thoroughfare and the Seaboard Railroad. The lot is at the top of a small rise above a good spring, shaded in the front by mature deciduous trees and facing a small meadow to the rear.

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 type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1830 **Builder/Architect** Zenus Baird

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Baird-Welch House, an early frame residence in the small Marshall County, Tennessee, market town of Cornersville, is being nominated under National Register criterion C for its local significance to Cornersville and southern Marshall County in architecture. The two-story weatherboarded frame house is one of the best surviving buildings from the 1820s or early 1830s period in the area. Considering its size and scale, the house has a particularly fine interior, featuring wooden-panel wainscoting in the principal rooms, rabbeted-panel wooden doors, original poplar and ash floors, and even the original household hardware. Although minor changes have been made to a rear section to provide for a modern bath and kitchen, the house retains its original plan and most of its original decorative elements. Few buildings in this section of the county retain such interesting features and are so well maintained.

The house is thought to have been built in the 1820s or early 1830s by Zenus Baird (1804-1874). Baird was a local merchant with a business located across from what today is the town's small park, and owned a considerable amount of property at the north end of Cornersville. About 1859 he added a one-story section to the south side of the house. He died in 1874 and is buried in Beechwood Cemetery on the town's northern edge. In 1873, shortly before his death, he transferred title of the house and property to his son, William E. Baird. Baird held the property for some time before selling it to James H. McGrew, who in turn sold the property to David Luna.

In the mid-1900s Luna sold the property to the Reverend S. H. Polk, minister of the local Cumberland Presbyterian Church. Polk, a distant cousin of President James K. Polk, sold off most of the farmland behind the house. Polk later sold the property to Mrs. N. P. Nyles. Around the turn of the century, the property came into the possession of C. L. Welch and his wife. Today the house is known in Cornersville as the Baird-Welch House.

In 1912 or 1913 the Welches sold the property to Mrs. Otis Endsley, a resident of the village of Belfast nine miles to the northeast. A springhouse and carriage house which stood on the property until this time were razed by Mrs. Endsley about 1920. After this time the building was occupied by tenants and no longer maintained. After a long period of neglect, the house and property were purchased in 1972 by Mr. and Mrs. Frank Boyd of Marshall County, who rehabilitated the old place, which is now the home of their daughter's family. No substantial structural changes were made to the house, and it has been treated with especial care and respect.

The house is a small two-story weatherboarded frame vernacular style house laid out in a modified hall and parlor plan. The house is constructed with a braced frame of heavy wooden timbers, connected by mortise-and-tenon joints and strengthened by struts and wind braces. Roof rafters are lapped and pegged together. The three-bay front is arranged symmetrically and is nicely balanced. Tall exterior gable end brick chimneys

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bless, Mr. and Mrs. Carleton. Person Interview. October 1984
Boyd, Mr. and Mrs. Frank. Person Interview. October 1984,
Whitesell, Mr. Ralph. "Baird-Welch House." Marshall County Historical Quarterly, 1983.
Whitesell, Mr. Ralph. Personal Interview. October 1984.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property One acre

Quadrangle name Cornersville, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	5	1	4	6	8	0	3	9	1	3	0	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 is a one acre lot, bounded on the west by Water Street, on the south and west by an alley, and on the north by property lines. This is all the property historically associated with the Baird-Welch House

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Quin
Regional Historic Preservation Planner

organization South Central TN Development District date October 31, 1984

street & number P.O. Box 1346 telephone 615/381-2040

city or town Columbia state Tennessee 38402-1346

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 National Park Service.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Haysen

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 2/11/85

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 3-21-85

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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with corbeled tops are located at the two gable ends.

The interior is particularly interesting, with small rooms accented by fine wooden details, including solid wooden-panel wainscoting in the principal rooms, original doors and mantels, and ash and poplar floors. A small boxed staircase clad in diagonal sheathing provides access to the second floor. The house even retains its original hardware, including old latches and box locks.

The Baird-Welch House is one of the oldest and best maintained houses in the Cornersville area of southern Marshall County, Tennessee. Although frame construction is the most common type in the area, few other examples of a similar vernacular style can be found in the region. The well-sited and attractive home is an interesting anomaly for the area, and well-deserving of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.