

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 29 1987

date entered JUN 25 1987

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

1. Name

historic Parker-Bryson Historic District

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Greenfield Lane N/A not for publication

city, town Castalian Springs X vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Sumner code 165

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: not in use

4. Owner of Property

name William F. and Ruth Hagerty

street & number 720 East Main Street

city, town Gallatin NA vicinity of state Tennessee 37066

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sumner County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Gallatin state Tennessee

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Sumner County Survey has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes no

date 1983 ___ federal state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville state Tennessee

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input 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
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Parker-Bryson Historic District is located nine miles east of Gallatin off the Hartsville Pike (Highway 25) and on Greenfield Lane in the rural community of Castalian Springs. The main house (#1) was built circa 1794 for Nathaniel Parker. Facing north, the unadorned Federal style residence sits on a hillside above a stream that empties into nearby Bledsoe Creek. Included in the district are three additional buildings that contribute to the significance of the property. These are a blacksmith shop (#2), a school (#3), and a smokehouse (#4). The district is in fair condition and has undergone only a few alterations. Overall, it retains its integrity.

Constructed on a cut limestone foundation over a full basement, the one and one-half story Nathaniel Parker House is a solid brick residence laid in Flemish bond. Originally covered with wood shingles, the gable roof is now sheathed with standing seam tin. Brick inside end chimneys are found at each gable end. The bricks for the house were reputedly fired on the property by slaves while the limestone used for the foundation and basement fireplace resembles outcropping still seen on the farm. A one story frame ell is attached to the west gable end of the house. Probably built later than the house itself, photographic documentation indicates that it was constructed at least one hundred years ago. Approximately twenty-five years ago this ell was bricked over. The ell rests on a limestone foundation and contains a limestone chimney at the western gable end.

The north facade of the house is defined by a two story central pedimented portico added when the ell was built. Currently supported by timbers, the portico originally had square wood columns and a second story wood balustrade. These are being stored by the present owners for future use. A double leaf wood panel door with paneled casings and a five-light transom provides the principal entrance to the house. A single leaf entrance is located on the frame portion of the second story level. Two 12/12 double-hung sash windows with louvered wood shutters flank each side of the portico. The ell contains one double-hung sash window and one single leaf door.

Five double-hung sash windows are seen on the west elevation of the ell while two 8/8 double-hung sash windows are located at the upper level of the original portion of the house. Similar to the west elevation, the east elevation has only two shuttered windows in the upper level.

A centrally located double-leaf wood panel door capped by a five-light transom and flanked by four 12/12 double-hung sash windows is located on the south (rear) elevation. Originally the south elevation of the ell had a full length porch but this was enclosed when the ell was bricked over. This portion of the house now reveals seven 6/6 double-hung sash windows and a single leaf wood panel door.

The original house contains five rooms and two central halls. Paneled wood doors and windows are embellished with wide wood trim. Five inch and six and one-half inch wide poplar floors, door hardware, chair rails, baseboards, and paneled wainscoting are extant. The original wall plaster is made of lime, animal hair, and sand. Although the windows were replaced in 1969, the originals are being stored.

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A simple wood balustrade graces the principal stairway located in the central hall. One parlor is located east of the hall and two smaller parlors are found west of the hall. Each west parlor contains corner fireplaces and wainscoting. Fluted pilasters, bed moldings, and a paneled frieze surround the corner fireplace openings. The front parlor also contains a narrow stairway leading to the room above. This room may have been used as a bedroom, as such an arrangement was typical of early houses where the children's room would be located above, connected by an inner stair. This room also contains a small closet space below the stair. The use of the room at the rear is unknown but it could have been used as a dining room if the kitchen was located in the basement or some adjoining building no longer extant. A bed molding, plain frieze, and capitals ornament the fireplace in the east parlor. Two rooms in the upper level both contain fireplaces and small closets.

When first constructed, the ell contained two rooms along with a small room and porch on the north elevation (which later housed a cistern) and was enclosed with lattice work. This portion became a bathroom and a partition wall was removed when the ell was bricked. A massive stone fireplace is situated at the west end of this ell. The present owners added central heating and air conditioning to the house in 1969 but otherwise the original building has not been altered in recent years.

At the east side of the house are two weatherboarded buildings. The frame smokehouse sits on stone piers and is surmounted by a gable roof that projects out over the facade. A one story frame schoolhouse sits nearby. Rectangular in plan, the school has a gable roof and a single entrance. The exact date of the construction of these buildings is unknown, however, Bryson family records indicate that they were extant during the Civil War. West of the house is a circa 1820 log building constructed for use as a blacksmith and tool shop. Partially covered with boards, the one story building has a gable roof. All three of these buildings are contributing resources in the district.

The original rock spring house is situated at the bottom of the hill near the road. A 1970 tornado has damaged the structure and it is not included in the nomination. Also, the log building used by Nathaniel Parker is extant. Because it is on an adjacent property tract, approximately eight hundred feet north of the house, it is not included in the nomination.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1794-1865 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Parker-Bryson Historic District is being nominated under National Register criterion A for its local historical significance. Included in the district are a circa 1794 brick house, a school, a blacksmith shop, and a smokehouse. Together these buildings are a good representation of settlement patterns in rural Sumner County during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The buildings help illustrate a type of residential complex in existence prior to the emergence of good transportation routes and commercial centers. Although some alterations have occurred to the house, overall, the district retains its historic integrity.

Created by an act of the North Carolina General Assembly on November 17, 1786, Sumner County was the fifth county organized in Tennessee. It was formed from parts of Davidson County and is the second oldest county in Middle Tennessee. Originally the county's boundaries extended to include parts of present day Wilson, Macon, Smith, and Trousdale counties. Numerous streams and caves are located throughout the county and the principal minerals in the county are limestone and phosphate. In the eighteenth century, when the area began to be settled, much of the county was heavily wooded, although grasslands were found in the extreme northern section.

During the late 1770s, a push to settle beyond the Appalachians into the mid-Cumberland region was starting. Except for the Illinois area, this was the most western entry into the country yet made by eastern colonial pioneers. Expectation of good land was one reason for the move west. The nearest settlements to Sumner County were then at present day Harrodsburg (est. 1776) and Louisville (est. 1778), both in Kentucky.

Around 1778 the first European settlement in Sumner County occurred at Bledsoe's Lick; Kasper Mansker arrived in the county in 1779. The first permanent settlement is considered to have been Isaac Bledsoe's fort in 1784. At this same time Anthony Bledsoe began a settlement two and one-half miles north of Bledsoe's Lick. Known as Greenfield, it included a fort and 6,280 acres of land. It was on this property that Nathaniel Parker would build his house.

Nathaniel Parker was born in 1724 in Isle of Wright County, Virginia. He served under Washington in his expedition against the French at Fort Duquense. Cisco states that "he was fond of adventure and wandered through the wilderness of Pennsylvania and Northern Virginia, fearless of Indian foes." Parker was classed with the long hunters, as he spent much of his time hunting and exploring, being out often by himself for long periods of time. He made several journeys from Virginia to the Cumberland country and back. While in Sumner County he spent most of his time at Greenfield. Before the Indian troubles ceased he moved his young children (his wife had died) to Sumner County. Five years after the death of Colonel Anthony Bledsoe, Nathaniel Parker married his widow, Mary Ramsey Bledsoe. Although few references are made of Parker in historical accounts of the area, it is recorded that

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Approximately 2.75 acres

Quadrangle name Bethpage, TN 313 NE

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 16 559970 40308410
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet

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 William F. and Ruth Hagerty

organization N/A

date January 25, 1987

street & number 720 East Main

telephone (615) 452-1781

city or town Gallatin

state Tennessee

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. Hayden

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 5/26/87

For NPS use only

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

for Helene Byers
Keeper of the National Register

entered in the National Register

date 6/25/87

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Parker-Bryson Historic District

he held Greenfield Fort on April 28, 1793, against a party of 260 Indians, believed to have been one of the largest ever mustered in Middle Tennessee. In the late 1700s Nathaniel Parker teamed with Joseph Bishop and served as a spy for General Blount in Sumner County and part of what is now Wilson County.

Parker constructed a log house and lived there while his substantial brick residence was being completed. This reflects a typical settlement pattern in Sumner County. Early colonists would first live in forts, then build log houses, and, finally, many large landowners would erect a large house. Forts rarely had more than two or three families residing in them at one time. Most homesteads were fairly self-sufficient, since houses were scattered and transportation routes were poor. It was not until 1800 and 1802 when Cairo and Gallatin were established that a pattern of clustered dwellings and commercial buildings began to be established.

Nathaniel Parker farmed the land he owned. In an account book of General James Winchester's cotton gin at Cragfont (NR 2/26/70), three miles northeast of the Parker residence, it is noted that in 1806 Parker had 1,726 pounds of cotton ginned here. While little additional information on Parker is known, he appears to have taken an active role in the establishment of the local methodist church. Bishop Asbury of the Methodist congregation, recorded in the fall of 1800 en route from Bethel, Kentucky, to Nashville by the Kentucky Road, that he stopped at Parker's near the Bethpage community for preaching. It is thought that this reference is to Nathaniel Parker. How often preaching took place at the Parkers is unknown but by the year 1787 regular preaching was being held up and down the Cumberland country by itinerant Methodist preachers who moved from station to station and neighborhood to neighborhood, even where people had settled away from the forts. Tradition is that the congregation at Parkers later became Bethpage Methodist Church in 1818. Nathaniel Parker is listed as one of the original trustees on the original deed of conveyance of the church site.

The exact date of Parker's death is questionable. He wrote and signed his will on the 25th day of February, 1811. (Recorded on pp. 156 to 158 of the book of transcript of wills of Sumner County from 1788 to 1822). However, by 1819 the property was in the possession of the Bryson family. By this time Sumner County had grown to 19,211 inhabitants. In an account book which has been preserved headed "Peter Bryson's Book, In the Year of Our Lord Eighteen Hundred Nineteen," James Gillespie set up a record of business accounts from the blacksmithy and tool shop of Peter Bryson and his son, James. Peter left the shop about 1830, a change noted in the account book, and James took over the business. James left the shop to serve as a volunteer soldier in the Seminole War of 1836 but slave labor operated the shop during his absence. He returned to resume the business in 1837. The Bryson shop served the hardware and mechanical needs of the surrounding country. Housed in a one story log building, the shop did everything from making nails and tools to shoeing horses and repairing mill and farm equipment. Although he was usually paid in cash, occasionally payment was in produce or labor. Members of the Bryson family continued to reside in the house in the early 1900s.

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By 1860 there was still little manufacturing in Sumner County and small shops like Bryson's were important to farmers residing nearby. Most manufacturing in the county involved processing farm produce, such as milling or ginning. Tobacco, corn, grains, and beef production still provided most of the income in the county. Sumner county now had a population of 22,030, most of whom lived in the southern part. Gallatin, the county seat, had a population of 2,000 while Hartsville, the second largest town, had only 550 residents. Around 1858 a north-south railroad route had been completed, providing more potential for growth until the onset of the Civil War stopped this.

Schools in Sumner County were often small establishments operated by a single teacher or professor who charged students a fee and met in houses rather than in a school building. A few private schools operated with boards of trustees, but there was no state funding or involvement in education. A one-room frame school was built on the Bryson property sometime before 1860. It was used as a school for neighboring children during the Civil War. The property itself suffered little damage during the war, although it was reported that Union troops took all of the food, cattle, and horses on the farm. The frame smokehouse, an important building on most farms, is mentioned as being extant at this time.

The Parker-Bryson Historic District helps illustrate how a farm complex might develop in Sumner County during the late 1700s until the 1860s. The brick house is one of the earlier brick residences in the county. The Bowen-Campbell House (NR 7/25/77), built circa 1787, is believed to be the oldest brick home in the county. Of the seven houses built before 1800 already listed in the National Register in Sumner County, three are log (Talley-Beals House, NR 2/8/77; one house in the Shackle Island Historic District, NR 1/30/78; King Homestead, NR 1/30/78), three are stone (Cragfont, NR 2/26/70; Rock Castle, NR 7/8/70; Walnut Grove, NR 12/29/78), and one, the Bowen-Campbell House, is brick. The Parker-Bryson Historic District is interesting because it retains several support buildings.

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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alexander, Robert B. (decendant of Peter Bryson) Interview. January 1987.
Conducted by Ruth Hagerty at Rogana in Sumner County at the home of
Robert B. and Corrine Alexander.

Carr, John. Early Times in Middle Tennessee. Nashville. The Parthenon Press, 1857.

Cisco, Jay Guy. Historic Sumner County Tennessee. Nashville, 1909.

Durham, Walter T., The Great Leap Westward: A History of Sumner County Tennessee From Its
Beginnings to 1805. Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1969.

Old Sumner: A History of Sumner County Tennessee From 1805 to 1861.
Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1972.

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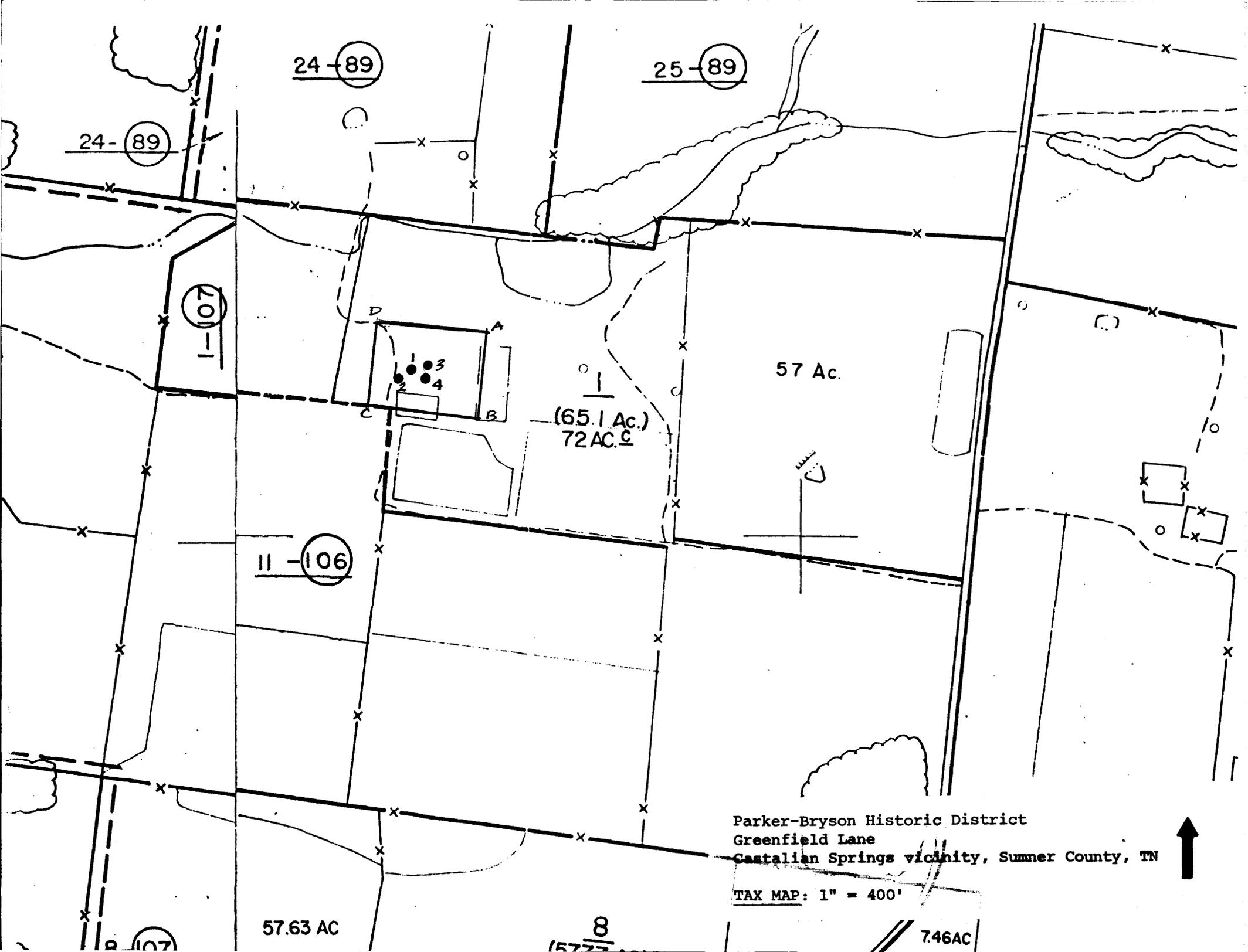
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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

The property being nominated consists of a rectangular shaped lot described as follows: beginning at point A the northeast corner located approximately 1800 feet from Greenfield Lane, extending 300 feet south, parallel with Greenfield Lane, to point B southeast to 400 feet west to point C, then 300 feet north to point D, then 400 feet east to point A the beginning. This includes enough land to protect the historic setting and architectural integrity of the Parker-Bryson Historic District.



24-89

25-89

24-89

101-1

11-106

57 Ac.

(65.1 Ac.)
72 AC.C

57.63 AC

15777/8

7.46 AC

Parker-Bryson Historic District
Greenfield Lane
Castalian Springs vicinity, Sumner County, TN

TAX MAP: 1" = 400'

