

PH0691071

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
NOV 23 1976
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED JUL 13 1977

**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**

Nathan Bedford Forrest / Boyhood Home

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

W of Chapel Hill

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Chapel Hill

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Fourth

STATE

Tennessee

CODE
47

COUNTY
Marshall

CODE
117

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" 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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: Vacant

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Willie E. Ragsdale

STREET & NUMBER

Route 1

CITY, TOWN

Chapel Hill

VICINITY OF

STATE
Tennessee

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Marshall County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Lewisburg

STATE
Tennessee

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Tennessee Historical and Architectural Survey

DATE

October 1976

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 DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Nathan Bedford Forrest Boyhood Home as it presently stands consists of two separate log structures joined by a frame addition. A second frame ell is attached to the rear of the one-story log portion.

The log portions of the dwelling are of cedar logs, hand-hewn or split with half dove-tail notching. The spaces between the logs are filled with small pieces of limestone and daubed with a lime-clay mixture. The rafters, visible in the attic or sleeping loft, are cedar poles, joined at the apex with pegs; there is no ridge-pole. The purlins are vertically sawn slabs of un-barked cedar. The present roof is of galvanized or tinned sheet iron, but nail holes in the purlins and a number of hand-split and dressed shingles indicate an earlier wood roof. The dry laid foundation, chimneys, and massive stone steps are of a very hard, cherty limestone.

The interior of the house is well finished with paneling, wainscoting and decorative mantels. The ground floor ceiling joists in the two-story wing are beaded along their lower margins.

From the historical evidence and on examination of the structure, it is possible to tentatively outline the sequence of construction. The log portions of the building probably date from the 1820s, with the two-story section, which appears to be of slightly rougher construction, possibly being constructed first. These two log sections were in all probability the only structures extant when the Forrests acquired the house. The economic status of the Forrest family was in those years not very high and it is unlikely that they made any alterations to the house during the three years of their ownership.

In 1833 William Forrest sold the property to Stephen W. Rainey. Oral accounts state that the Rainey's made extensive alterations to the house. The present appearance of the house for the most part probably results from these alterations. The changes include the construction of the frame connector between the two log structures and the division into two rooms of the downstairs of the two-story log portion. Other changes probably include the addition of paneling, wainscoting and decorative mantels. The door to the right of the fireplace in the two-story section was closed from the inside at this time by the paneling and wainscoting, though it remains visible on the exterior. The alterations done at this time were apparently an attempt to change the simple frontier cabins into something larger, more comfortable, and more pretentious.

No historical evidence is available concerning the framed addition to the rear; however the use of wire nails, balloon framing, and built-up framing members suggests that it dates from the late nineteenth or early twentieth century.

At the present time the structure is deteriorating rapidly. Most of the clay daubing has been washed out of the spaces between the logs, the windows are gone, and water is entering the building at numerous places. Recently the house has been used for tobacco storage. The two log portions of the building with the connecting addition appear to be structurally sound and restorable.

There are also a number of outbuildings--a log barn, a smokehouse, and a log shed. These are probably not contemporaneous with the Forrest occupancy but are good examples of nineteenth-century farm outbuildings.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1820 BUILDER/ARCHITECT W. S. Mayfield

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The most talented military leader that Tennessee, and perhaps the United States, ever produced was General Nathan Bedford Forrest of the Confederate Army. Born in Bedford (now Marshall) County, Tennessee, in 1821, Forrest's only military experience prior to 1861 was an abortive attempt to join the army of the Republic of Texas when he was twenty years old. During the period from 1841 to 1861 Forrest settled in the Memphis area and became a prominent and wealthy citizen, businessman, and planter, amassing a substantial fortune dealing in slaves, livestock and cotton.

In 1861 Forrest, at forty years of age, joined Captain Josiah White's Tennessee Mounted Rifles as a private. However, his prominence in civilian life dictated that he be given a command of his own. In a few short weeks he received a commission as a lieutenant colonel and was authorized to raise his own company. Over the next four years Forrest acquired a reputation of invincibility among both his own men and the enemy. Though often misused and mistrusted by the professional soldiers of the Confederate high command for the strong streak of insubordination that Forrest often evinced, he always enjoyed the respect and begrudging admiration of his opponents. This was perhaps best illustrated by the sobriquet "that Devil Forrest" frequently applied to him by General Sherman. Sherman elaborated:

He had never read a military book in his life, knew nothing about tactics, could not even drill a company, but he had a genius for strategy which was original and to me incomprehensible. There was no theory or art of war by which I could calculate with any degree of certainty what Forrest was up to. He always seemed to know what I was doing or intended to do.¹

Of Forrest's younger years, only the barest outlines and several anecdotes are known. His grandfather, Nathan Forrest, settled in what became Marshall County in 1808 when William Forrest was ten years old. William Forrest married in 1820 and Nathan Bedford Forrest, named for his grandfather, was his first born child. The house in which General Forrest was born, according to a source interviewed in the nineteenth century by one of Forrest's first biographers, was torn down. In 1830 William Forrest acquired a tract of land from a Mr. W. S. Mayfield. The log and frame structure which still stands on this property is the only home still existing associated with Forrest. It was young Forrest's home for three years. In 1833 William Forrest sold the property and moved his family to Mississippi.

²General W. T. Sherman, The Memoirs of General William T. Sherman, Vol. 1, (New York, 1943), p. 164.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sherman, General W. T. The Memoirs of General William T. Sherman, Vol. 1, New York, 1893.
 Wyeth, John Allan. That Devil Forrest, Life of General Nathan Bedford Forrest, Harper & Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1959.
 Marshall County, Tennessee, Deeds, Book A, pp. 272-273.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	6	5	2	2	5	8	0	3	9	4	3	8	7	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

Richard G. Tune, Historical Projects Officer

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

October 1976

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

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. Hyman

DATE

11/15/76

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

7/13/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

DATE

6-16-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET

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The house also possesses architectural significance. According to tradition the earliest portions of it were built by W. S. Mayfield in the early 1820s. It is a substantial log and frame structure typical of many such structures of the late pioneer period in Tennessee. While most houses in the more settled sections of the state in the 1820s were brick or frame, the farmer or craftsman of the rural areas was still likely to build with logs. Often when prosperity increased, rather than build a new and more imposing house, improvements and additions were made to the log structure. This was done to the Forrest home probably in the 1830s by the Rainey family, who acquired the property in 1833. The Nathan Bedford Forrest Boyhood Home is thus highly representative of the folk architecture of a particular time and place in Tennessee history.