

**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 Cox House

and/or common Harpeth Academy

2. Location

street & number 150 Franklin Road _____ not for publication

city, town Franklin _____ vicinity of congressional district Sixth

state Tennessee code 047 county Williamson code 187

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Harpeth Academy, Inc.

street & number 150 Franklin Road

city, town Franklin _____ vicinity of state Tennessee 37064

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Williamson County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Franklin _____ state Tennessee 37064

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historical and Architectural Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date July 1979 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 4721 Trousdale Drive

city, town Nashville _____ state Tennessee 37220

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 Cox House at Harpeth Academy was built in 1891 for Nicholas Nichol Cox. It is situated in Franklin on 5.8 acres of flat land, which are outlined by thick rows of trees on two sides, on the north bank of the Harpeth River. Woods & Crabb, architects of Nashville, Tennessee drew the plans and specifications for the Cox House and W. O. N. Vaughn contracted with Cox to do the woodwork on the building, although he later subcontracted with George Moore & Sons of Nashville to actually do the woodwork for both the interior and exterior of the Cox House.

The large, two story Victorian building which Woods and Crabb designed is irregularly shaped and of brick construction on a rough cut stone foundation with a hipped roof of composition shingles, topped by four interior chimneys. It features a one story veranda with ginerbread trim which begins at the north side elevation, rounds the front corner, and extends the length of the facade except where it is interrupted by an offset central two story projection.

The irregular shape of the building is formed by several sections. The main section, as seen from the front, is rectangular with an offset central projection. A one and a half story, gable-roofed ell extends from the center of this main section in the rear, forming a T. Crossing the stem of the T and abutting the main section of the building is a one and a half story hipped-roof section which extends farther from the ell on the north side, thus forming a projection on the north side elevation of the whole building.

The facade, which faces northwest, features seven bays of windows and doors, a denticulated wood frieze with brackets, a gable decorated boxed cornice of the projection, and the veranda. The seven bays are grouped into four sections. Beginning on the far left is a group of two one-over-one light windows on each story. The next section, which is situated to the left of the projection consists of a single-leaf glazed door with beveled glass and lighted transom and a window directly above on the second story. The group of two windows on each story of the projection serves as the third section. Also, on the side of the projection facing north is a first story single-leaf glazed door with lighted transom which leads to the porch. The fourth section, on the far right, consists of two windows on the second story over a single leaf door with lighted transom and a window on the first story. The windows, which all have one-over-one lights and wood sills, and doors, which all have single lighted transoms, of the Cox House have plain surrounds of wood and arched double radiating voussoirs. Accent of the veranda is provided by the ten decorative wood posts, dentils and spools of the trim, and a small decorative pediment situated on the composition shingle roof of the veranda just above the entrance. The floor of the veranda is concrete. All woodwork of the exterior, except the doors which have been stained, has been painted white.

The side elevation facing northeast is divided into three sections which are the side of the main section of the building, the projecting hipped roof section, and the side of the ell as described above. Four windows like those of the facade are located one above the other on the first and second stories of the main section's side. Two like windows are found on the projecting section and a hipped dormer with a double one-over-one light windows is centered on the roof. In addition, a single-leaf door leads from this one room projecting section to the front veranda. The third or ell section has two-four-over-four light shuttered

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

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windows, one to the left and the other in the center, and a single leaf door to the right. Two plain flat lintels of basement openings are found at the foundation. On the rear elevation of this ell section is a single-leaf glazed door on the first floor and a four-over-four light window on the attic floor above. A small, square one story entrance to the basement protrudes from this wall to the left of the door.

In the rear (southeast elevation) of the Cox House, brick and concrete block one story additions that were constructed in 1972 and in 1975 cover the original walls of the building which were highlighted by a veranda like that of the facade. Although the veranda was removed when the additions were built, no structural changes were made in the Cox House. The original building remains intact. The additions which house the gym, classrooms, and such of the school are irregularly shaped and extend from the rear of the Cox House, only partly visible from the street in front. All that remains visible of the original construction in the rear is the roof line of the building sections and the dormer with double windows like the dormer on the opposite or north side of the hipped roof section in the rear.

The side elevation facing southwest is that of the main section of the building and has two centered windows on each floor like those of the facade. The additions which extend from the rear run flush with the original side elevation facing south.

Interior finishes are typical of fine Victorian residences. The cherry, oak, and ash paneling, flooring, moulding, and door trim remain intact throughout the interior as well as the heavy ornate mantels and staircase. Although the interior is used for offices of the school's staff and as classrooms, the original woodwork hardware, and most of the windows and transom glass remain unaltered. The original wooden shutters for the exterior windows are stored in the spacious attic along with several original light fixtures.

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 1891

Builder/Architect

Woods and Crabb

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Congressman Nicholas Nichol Cox was born in Bedford County, Tennessee on January 6, 1837. While an infant, his widowed mother moved to Texas where Cox later became a member of Captain Callahan's command of Texas Rangers who followed Indian marauders through Texas into Mexico. Cox moved back to Tennessee to study law at Cumberland Law School from which he graduated in 1858. In the same year he was admitted to the bar and practiced law first in Linden (Perry County), Tennessee, and later in all the counties from Williamson County to the Tennessee River. During the Civil War, Cox was a colonel in the Tenth Tennessee Cavalry of the Confederate Army, serving principally with General Nathan B. Forrest. In 1866 Cox began to farm and to practice law in Franklin, Tennessee.

Cox's political career began when he was a presidential elector on the Democratic tickets of Breckinridge and Lane in 1860 and of Greeley and Brown in 1872. He was elected as a Democrat to the Fifty-second Congress and to the four succeeding Congresses (March 4, 1891-March 3, 1901). Declining to be a candidate for renomination in 1900, he resumed the practice of law and engaged in banking in Franklin.

It was in 1891, when Cox was elected to Congress, that he built his home which the Harpeth Academy now occupies. The Cox House, the subject of this nomination, is a fine example of Victorian residential buildings that reflects the tastes of a prominent and influential member of the community. It speaks of the prevailing fashion in residential architecture and of the builder's sophistication through its simplicity in plan and decoration and its refinement in interior finishes, which remain virtually intact today.

The Harpeth Academy, a private elementary school and itself an historic institution, purchased the Cox House in 1969. Recently, the Academy has made a successful effort to prevent the demolition of the Cox House that was planned so that a new school facility could be constructed in its place to provide additional space. It is the intent of the Harpeth Academy to continue to utilize the building for administrative offices and to restore the building as much as possible to its original appearance.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Tennesseans in the Civil War, Part 1, Nashville: Civil War Centennial Commission, 1964.

Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 5.8 **UTM NOT VERIFIED**
 Quadrangle name Franklin, Tennessee Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>512180</u>	<u>3975840</u>	B					
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C				D					
E				F					
G				H					

Verbal boundary description and justification

The boundary of the Cox Home nomination is shown as the red line on the accompanying Tennessee State Board of Equalization maps (Nox. 78C and 63N) of Williamson County, drawn at a scale of 100 feet to the inch. The nominated property is the entire tract owned by Harpeth Academy, Inc.

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

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shain Terrell, Historic Preservation Specialist
Mid-Cumberland Council of Governments

organization _____ date July 25, 1979

street & number Suite 600, 501 Union Building telephone (615) 244-1212

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 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hays

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 9/25/79

For HCRS use only
 I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

W. Ray Luce date 2/28/80
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Beth Groves date 2/25/80
 Chief of Registration