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EXP. 12/31/84

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

For NPS use only
received FEB 22 1985
date entered MAR 21 1985

1. Name

historic Crain Hill School and Church

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Crain Hill Road N/A not for publication

city, town Crain Hill N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Tennessee code 047 county Van Buren code 175

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 type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Crain Hill Cemetery Association
Milton Russell, Secretary - Treasurer

street & number Route 1

city, town Bone Cave N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 38518

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Van Buren County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Spencer state Tennessee 38585

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Van Buren County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission, 701 Broadway

city, town Nashville state Tennessee 37203

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 checked="" 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

Located less than one quarter of a mile from the Warren County line, the Crain Hill School and Church building still serves as a community meeting place for the residents of the small rural Van Buren County community of Crain Hill. This small, one room, vernacular building has suffered some alteration through the last few years; however, it retains its historical associations.

The Crain Hill School and Church building is a small, frame, weatherboarded, gable roofed, rectangular shaped vernacular building. The structure sits on a wooden pier foundation covered with pressed metal. The major elevation faces east with the gable end facing Crain Hill Road. Decoration on this elevation is limited to gable returns and simple molding surrounding the main entry which is placed in the center of this elevation. A shed roofed porch with a concrete block deck and four simple square porch posts occurs across the east elevation. The north and south elevations are identically detailed with three one/one sash windows defining the three bays. The rear (west) elevation has no openings or detailing.

The interior of the Crain Hill School and Church building is also very simple. Flush boards of varied widths cover the ceiling and the walls. The simple benches date from around the turn of the century. A blackboard remains on the west wall. The windows have simple surrounds. The west end of the building is a dais with a wooden lectern and low railing with turned balusters. This was installed after the school moved out of the building in 1927.

Alterations to this building include the rearrangement of the main entry from two single leaf doors to one central double leaf door which occurred circa 1930, the new porch posts and deck, the tongue and groove flooring (applied over the earlier red cedar flooring), and the windows which were replaced in 1982. Despite these changes the Crain Hill School and Church building retains its historical associations.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1870 - 1934 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Crain Hill School and Church is being nominated under National Register criterion A for its historical importance as the earliest remaining school and church building in the rural Van Buren County community of Crain Hill, Tennessee. This small, frame, one-room schoolhouse was built circa 1870 to serve the Rocky River Valley inhabitants as a school and place of worship. The structure was used as a schoolhouse until 1927 when a new larger building was constructed farther up the Rocky River Road but its function as a church continued until the mid-twentieth century. Today, the structure is maintained by the community and is used only for special occasions. The structure has undergone a few changes over the last few years; however, the Crain Hill School and Church building retains its historical integrity.

The Crain Hill School and Church building is the second structure for that purpose built on this site. The site, donated by Oliver Crain, sits at the top of a rise and overlooks the Rocky River and the Crain Hill Cemetery. Oliver Crain stipulated, in addition to providing facilities for a school, the structure would also be used as a church building for the community. This was fairly common in rural areas at this time for school buildings to serve both functions; however, it was further stipulated that the building was available to all religious groups with no preference indicated. The local people got together and built a small, one-room, frame structure which served the community until after the Civil War.

In the summer and fall of 1870 the new building was erected on the same site. The small, one room, gable roofed, two by three bay wide structure served the community as its only available school until 1927 when the Rosewell School was erected by the county farther south along Rocky Creek Road. The Crain Hill building continued to be used as a church building until the mid-twentieth century.

Two local clergymen were instrumental in having the building constructed, the Baptist preacher, Reverend Lawson Safely (1848-1931) and the Church of Christ minister, William R. Payne (1837-1921). Both of these men were buried across the street from the school and church building in the Crain Hill Cemetery. Other groups who also used the building for services included the Church of God, the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints, as well as itinerant fundamentalist preachers.

Today the building is still cared for and maintained by residents and former residents of the Crain Hill community. The structure is used for funerals, weddings, and the annual community picnic. Alterations to the structure include the rearrangement of the entry, enclosure of the foundation in pressed metal, the replacement of the porch deck, and the windows. Despite these changes, the Crain Hill School and Church retains its historical associations.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Dillon, James A. "Valley of Uriah" Dates to 1807." (McMinville, Tennessee) Southern Standard 23 November 1984, p. 1-A, 5-A.
- Guilford, Andrew. America's Country Schools. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press, 1985.
- Hillis, John. Personal interview. April 1984.
- Safely, Clarence "Red". Personal interview. April 1984.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than 1 acre

Quadrangle name Welchland, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	6	2	7	6	8	0	3	9	5	3	3	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 less than one acre, triangular in shape and bounded on the south and east by Crain Hill Road and on the north and west by adjoining property lines. This is all the property historically associated with the Crain Hill School and Church.

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 Robin L. Krawitz, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization Tennessee Historical Commission date January 13, 1985

street & number 701 Broadway telephone (615) 742-6722

city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37203

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. Stuger

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 2/11/85

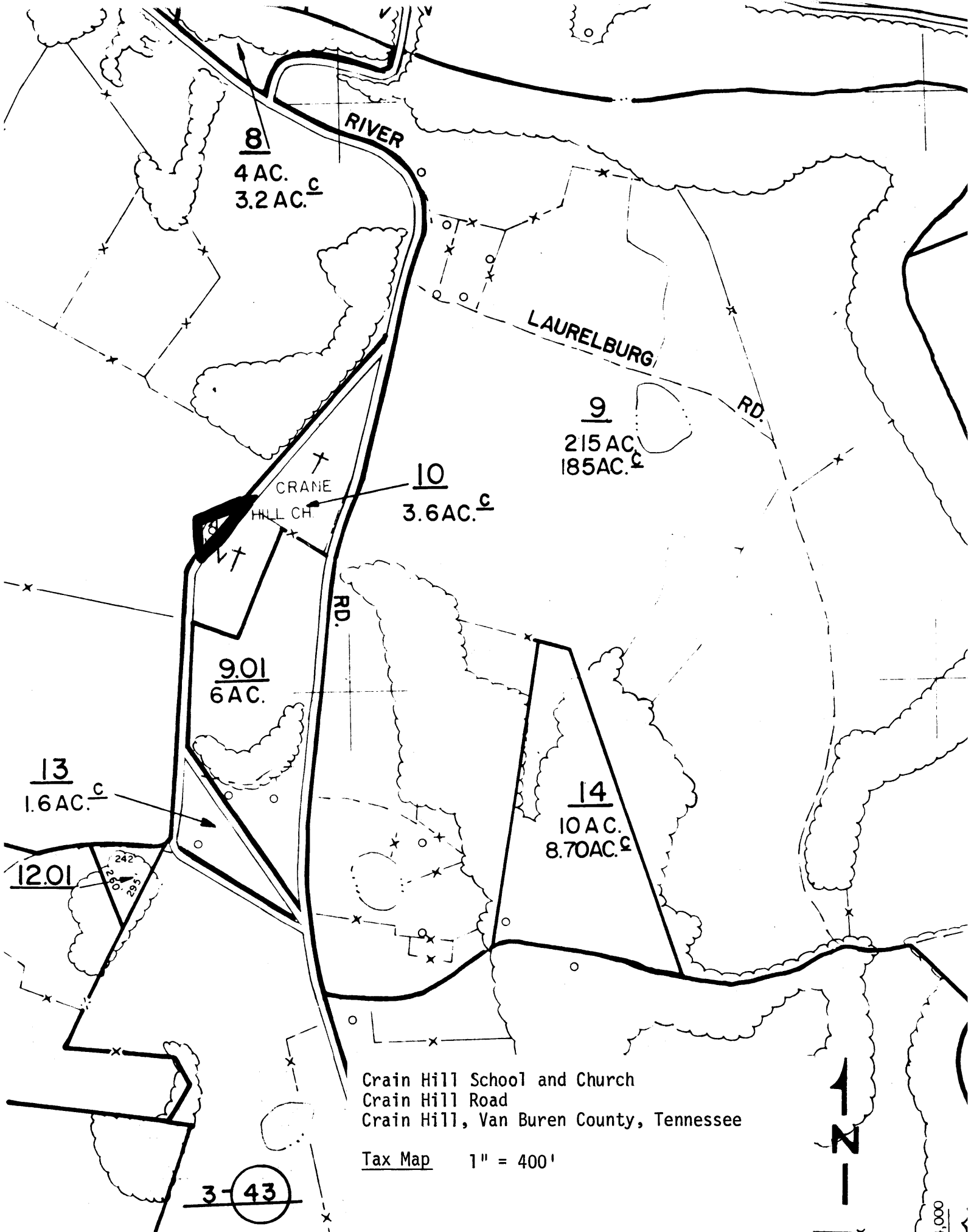
For NPS use only

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

for Melissa Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 3-21-85

Attest: _____ date _____
Chief of Registration



8
4 AC.
3.2 AC. c

LAURELBURG
RD.

9
215 AC.
185 AC. c

10
3.6 AC. c

CRANE
HILL CH.

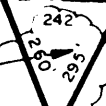
RD.

9.01
6 AC.

14
10 AC.
8.70 AC. c

13
1.6 AC. c

12.01



Crain Hill School and Church
Crain Hill Road
Crain Hill, Van Buren County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 400'



3-43