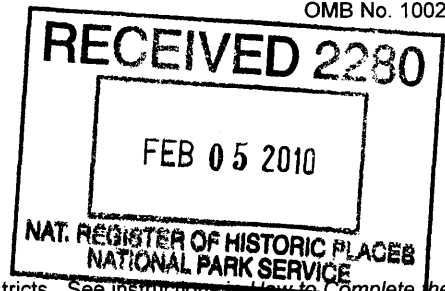


087



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hamilton-Tolliver Complex

other names/site number Hamilton-Tolliver Log House, Tomato Cannery Site, Tolliver Store; UN. 391 & 392

2. Location

street & number 158 Kettle Hollow Road NA  not for publication

city or town Maynardville  vicinity

state TN code TN county Union code 173 zip code 37807

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

E. Patrick McElroy, Jr.  
Signature of certifying official/Title

February 1, 2010  
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register.
- other,

(explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

[Signature]

3/12/10

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Name of Property

Union County, Tennessee  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal
- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	1	buildings
1		sites
1		structures
		objects
6	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

COMMERCE/TRADE: store

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Saddlebag, side gable, gable front forms

foundation STONE, CONCRETE block

walls Log, weatherboard, WOOD, ASPHALT shingle siding

roof Tin

other WOOD

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations N/A**

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture  
 Commerce  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

Ca. 1830-1959  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

NA  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Name of Property

Union County, Tennessee  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 30 acres Maynardville 125 Southeast

**UTM References**

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>17</u>	<u>252550</u>	<u>4019750</u>	3	<u>17</u>	<u>252689</u>	<u>4019212</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>17</u>	<u>252869</u>	<u>4019430</u>	4	<u>17</u>	<u>252142</u>	<u>4019785</u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tony N. VanWinkle  
organization NA date July 2, 2009  
street & number 543 Watauga Avenue telephone 865/357-3555  
city or town Knoxville state TN zip code 37917

**Additional Documentation**

submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Betty Bullen  
street & number 1982 Highway 61-E telephone 865/992-1005  
city or town Luttrell state TN zip code 37779

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

## DESCRIPTION

The Hamilton-Tolliver Complex is situated on thirty acres located north of the county seat of Maynardville (1,782, 2006 pop.), off Kettle Hollow Road in Union County, Tennessee. The property contains a number of contributing and noncontributing residential and commercial resources ranging from ca.1830 to the mid-twentieth century. The property is situated amid a mosaic landscape of irregular cleared fields and patch woodlands, a pattern characteristically adapted to the hill-country topography of the region. A portion of the cleared land is still in agricultural production. Straddling both sides of Kettle Hollow Road, the site includes the original nineteenth century domestic compound as well structures representative of the property's expanding commercial enterprises of the twentieth century. The ca.1830 log house forms the core of the property. Secondary resources such as the smokehouse, privy, store, and cannery site contribute to the history of the property.

### Inventory & Description

#### **South side of Kettle Hollow Road—Hamilton-Tolliver Domestic Complex**

##### 1. Hamilton-Tolliver Log House, ca. 1830, 1920s, 1933 (contributing building)

The Hamilton-Tolliver Log House is a one and one-half story and one story saddlebag log house built ca.1830 and still on its original site. Facing north, the house exhibits two discontinuous, slightly dimensionally asymmetrical pens located to the east and west of a central chimney, each covered with a separate gable roof. Whether these pens were built at the same time is not known with certainty, but they are likely to have been built within a few years of each other. The east pen measures 21' x 22', the west pen 24' x 22'. The logs, largely original yellow poplar (though with a few replacement members) exhibit half-dovetail corner joinery. The gable ends of the upper half-story are clad in unfinished wood siding. The primary roof, as well as those of the front and rear porches, is sheathed in standing seam tin. The current porches uniting the pens on the front and rear elevations were added in the 1920s. The foundation of the house displays a combination of early twentieth century form-poured concrete and more contemporary concrete block and sandstone veneer. The central chimney features a tripartite materials composition, including a poured-concrete foundation, a limestone base/hearth mid-section, and an upper flue section built of brick (partially replaced in 1988 with salvaged bricks from a neighboring structure).

Fenestration in the single story (with attic) west pen includes a centrally placed single, wood paneled door entry on the north (front) elevation; a single six-over-six double-hung window on the west elevation; a single six-over-six double-hung window and single door entry on the south (rear) elevation. Additionally, the west pen features a hand-dug root cellar accessible from the east side just south of the chimney foundation, added in 1933.

Fenestration in the one and one-half story east pen includes a single offset door in the north (front) elevation with two six-over-six double-hung windows flanking the door to the east. The upper half-story displays a

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

single, fixed, three light window on the north elevation. The east elevation of the east pen features a single, symmetrically placed, double-hung twelve light window on the ground level (possibly replacing an earlier door), and a door entry inaccessible from the exterior on the upper half-story (likely for lifting furniture into the upper story). The south (rear) elevation of the east pen features a single, symmetrically placed simple wood paneled door entry. The windows and doors of both pens of the log house date at least to the 1920s, according to oral testimony of Irene Tolliver Hamilton, who was born in the house in 1918.

The Hamilton-Tolliver log house retains a simple and unadorned interior. Both pens feature wood flooring (original in the west pen, with replacement tongue and groove added to the east pen in the 1920s), plain log interior walls (which have never been covered in paneling or plaster), exposed rafter ceilings, large limestone segmental arched fireplace/hearths emanating from the common central chimney, and continuous open single-room floor plans. The east pen includes a boxed stair with partial hand-hewn rail in the southeast corner providing access to the upper half-story room. The east pen's upper half-story features ceilings sloping sharply from the ridge. All surfaces in this upper room are covered in light colored wallpaper, a practice common in the early to mid-twentieth century to brighten interiors of otherwise dark, unfinished wood walls. The west pen appears to have functioned primarily as the kitchen pen, while the east pen was utilized as the primary living space. The cellar, hand dug beneath the west pen in 1933, served as a clandestine distillery as well as a general cold storage area.

While the Hamilton-Tolliver House exhibits some minor alterations to the historic fabric and design executed in 1988, these are all sympathetic to the original structure and necessary to the building's continued preservation. Exterior changes include the stabilization of the west elevation's (west pen) crumbling foundation with new stone veneer, concrete block foundation, and the replacement of the first-course log with an equivalent replacement number. Likewise, some deteriorated siding and window trim was replaced in the west gable. The east foundation was stabilized in a similar manner. Deteriorated siding and trim were also replaced on the east pen, but only as needed. The structural integrity of the east pen roof was rehabilitated with the installation of new support rafters. However, the original rafters were left in place. The top third of the chimney was reconstructed using salvaged bricks to its appearance in photographs from 1979 (before the chimney collapsed). (See Figure 5.) The rotting floor and upright posts of the front porch were also replaced and the roofing replaced with in kind material (tin). Much of the exterior chinking was replaced in 1928. Interior changes include spot repairs to the chinking, and the replacement of broken window panes. The deteriorated ceiling of the east pen was also replaced with wood approximating the original. Likewise, wallpaper was replaced with approximate replica material. All of these changes were necessary to stabilize the house. Their execution was done with attention to detail and care in replicating historic materials as closely as possible. As the founding building and domestic epicenter of the larger complex, the house adequately conveys the historical continuity of the site when considered collectively.

## 2. Smokehouse, ca. 1929 (contributing structure)

A primary domestic dependency of the Hamilton-Tolliver House, the smokehouse is located immediately west of the west pen. The wood frame smokehouse, built ca. 1929, is a simple gable front structure featuring

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

a cantilevered roof on the front north elevation. A single, wood plank entry door pierces the structure's front elevation and is otherwise absent additional entries or windows. The structure is clad in board and batten siding. The foundation and understructure are composed of both wood posts (intermittently placed to support floor joists) and dry-stacked stone (placed in each of the four corners). The smokehouse is unaltered from its original condition and retains integrity.

### 3. Privy, ca. 1930 (contributing building)

The simple wood frame privy structure is located south of the Hamilton-Tolliver House. The privy is a one story shed roof building with a single door entry and is clad in weatherboard. The privy is unaltered from its original condition and retains integrity.

### 4. Log Barn, ca. 1908 (noncontributing building—relocated)

Located southeast of the Hamilton-Tolliver House, the one story, single crib log barn features half dovetail corner joinery. Relocated to the current site in 1988, the structure was built ca.1908. Because of its status as a relocated structure, the log barn is a non-contributing element.

## North side of Kettle Hollow Road—Commercial Complex

### 5. General Store Building, ca. 1953 (contributing building)

Situated just across Kettle Hollow Road from the Hamilton-Tolliver House, the 1953 general store is a gable front wood frame structure with a shed roof porch on the front elevation. The front likewise displays two symmetrically placed windows flanking the primary public entry. The store displays two additional horizontally elongated windows abutting the roofline on the west and east (side) elevations. Otherwise, the side elevations are unadorned on the exterior. The rear (north) elevation features a shed roof extension covering the loading/shipping/receiving areas. Situated on an elevated concrete block foundation, the store has a full basement level as well, accessible via hinged door entries on the west elevation. The exterior of the structure is sheathed in bricked patterned, asphalt roll siding, a common exterior treatment in the mid-twentieth century.

The interior of the general store displays a floor plan reflective of the structure's elongated orientation (paralleling to the roof ridgeline) and intended to maximize shelf space and the flow of customers. Some original shelving remains along the side walls of the interior, as does some of the original counter space.

The current store building is the second such structure built on this location. The original structure likely dated to the 1910s or 1920s. The current structure, built in 1953, continued the general mercantile business originated in the earlier structure and was in operation until the late 1960s.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

---

Reflective of common rural general store structures of the mid twentieth century, the unaltered Hamilton-Tolliver General Store retains essential integrity.

6. Milk Storage Shed, ca. 1953 (contributing building)

Located just behind (to the northwest) of the general store building, and an appendage of George Tolliver's larger mercantile exchange business, the milk storage shed is a simple gable front frame structure covered in asphalt siding with a brick pattern. The structure features a simple offset wood paneled door under an aluminum awning on the front elevation, flanked by a single, fixed, two-light window. Both side elevations feature additional entries and/or windows which have since been boarded up. The foundation of the milk storage shed is concrete block.

7. Norris Dam Brand Cannery Site, 1929-1936 (contributing site)

Utilizing the spring located to the north and west of the general store structure, the tomato cannery site retains some above-ground features. Reflective of early-mid twentieth century family-size commercial canneries, an artist's rendering of the site based on oral histories collected from descendant Irene Tolliver Hamilton<sup>1</sup> reproduce a site composed of several interrelated structures and/or work areas. These included a springhouse (remnants of which are still extant), a cooking area adjacent to the spring, a peeling table, and large, open, shed roof canning shed. (See Figures 2 and 3.)

As an important value-added enterprise for on-farm surpluses, the cannery site expresses continuity with a greater regional tradition of family canneries, perhaps most famously represented by the Bush Brothers Company, which grew from a similar small tomato canning operation started by A.J. Bush in 1908.<sup>2</sup> The site has not been studied as an archaeological resource. If it ever is, it could yield valuable information on the methods, techniques, and material culture associated with this enterprise.

---

<sup>1</sup> Irene Tolliver Hamilton. Oral History collected and transcribed by Betty Hamilton Bullen. July 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Bush Brothers & Company, "1908-1929: Our Grandfather Canned Tomatoes," [online]: URL: <http://www.bushbeans.com/history/timeline.php>. Accessed July 20, 2009.



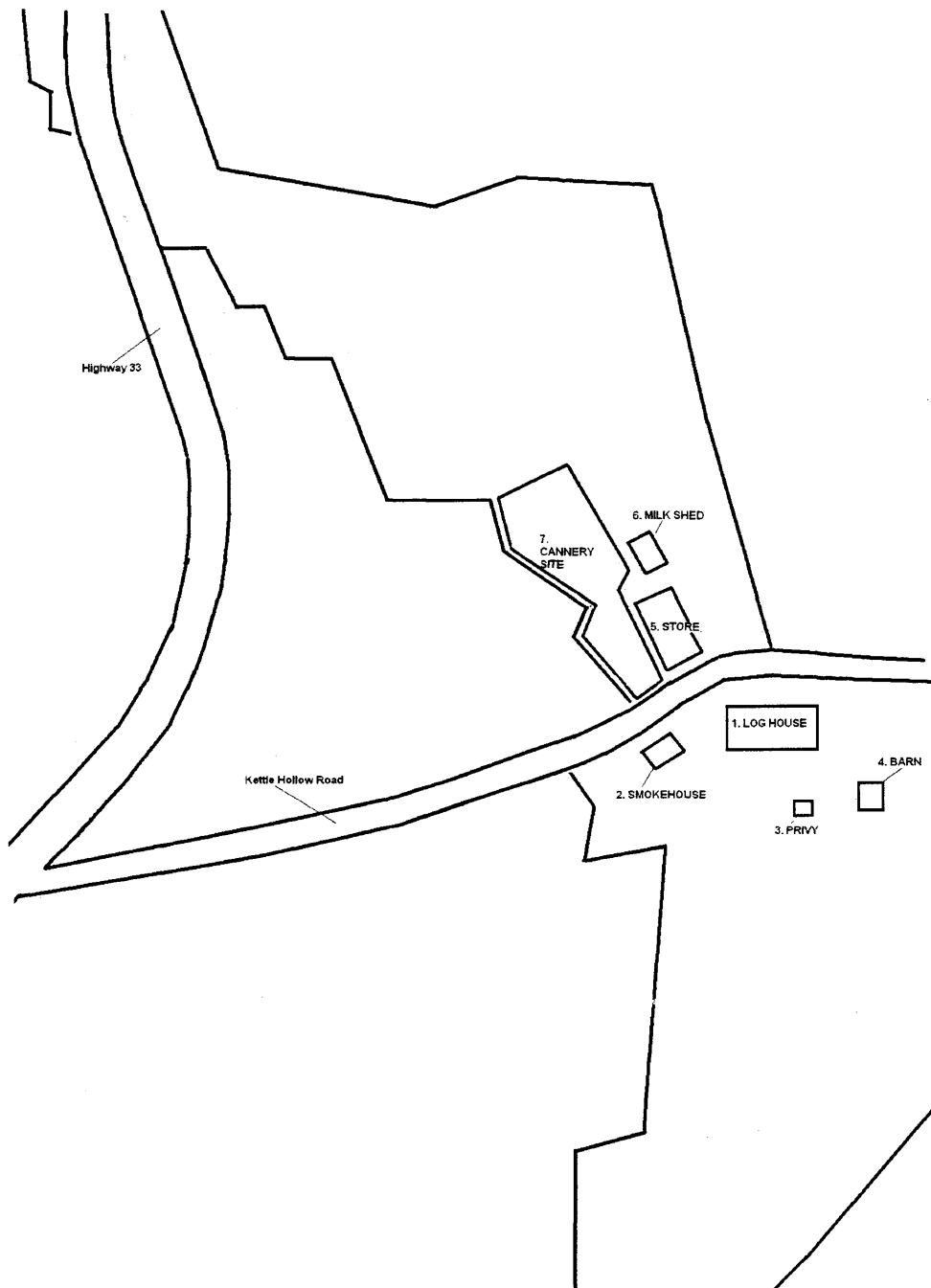
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Figure 1. Site Sketch Plan – not to scale



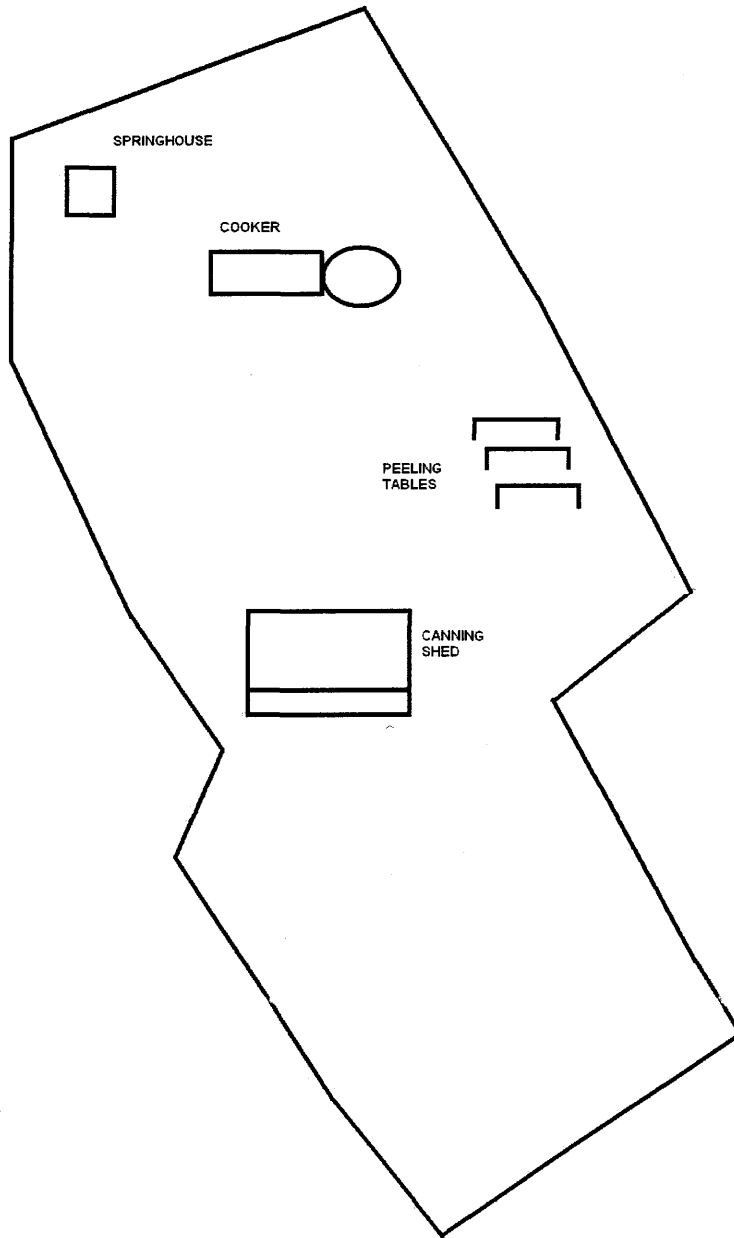
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Figure 2. Sketch Plan of Cannery Site (from oral history of Irene Tolliver Hamilton) – not to scale



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number 8 Page 7Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Hamilton-Tolliver Complex is being nominated to the National Register under Criterion A for its significance in local agricultural and commercial history. Including resources that range from the original early nineteenth century saddlebag log house and associated domestic dependencies, to the remains of the early twentieth century tomato cannery, to the mid-twentieth century general store, the property encapsulates the historical development and continuity of the agro-commercial enterprises characteristic of middle-class farming families in Union County and the Ridge and Valley sub-region of East Tennessee. As such, the Hamilton-Tolliver Complex is an exemplary representative of the evolution and integration of diversified livelihood strategies and localized entrepreneurialism that were essential to the economic survival of East Tennessee farm families spanning its period of significance (ca. 1830 – 1959).

**Settlement Period—The Hamilton Family**

Though settled much earlier, the nascent geo-political unit of Union County was formed from portions of the surrounding counties of Anderson, Campbell, Claiborne, Grainger, and Knox in 1850, but owing to legal disputes, was not officially recognized until 1856. Encompassing some of the more rugged terrain of East Tennessee's Ridge and Valley physiographic province – characterized by a series of elongated southwesterly/northeasterly oriented ridges of relatively narrow width rising from the floor of the Great Valley of the Tennessee River and its tributary systems - the history of Union County has been shaped to a large extent by this geographic reality. Indeed, in limiting the possibilities for commercial-scale agricultural operations, the geography of Union County has yielded a historical trajectory more akin to the counties of the Unaka Mountains and Cumberland Plateau than many of its immediate neighbors in the Ridge and Valley. Though the county contained a few prosperous farmers, the general pattern of agricultural development (the primary economic activity of the county well into the twentieth century) was overwhelmingly oriented toward small-holder, subsistence level production.<sup>3</sup> This is reflected in the county's cultural landscapes, comprised largely of a vernacular mosaic of relatively modest farmstead dwellings and dependencies, and the associated field and forest patterns of an integrated working landscape. There are only three properties listed in the National Register in Union County, but this fact belies the considerable richness of Union County's vernacular cultural landscape. The Hamilton-Tolliver Complex is an exemplary representative of this richness.

Though the current log house was built ca.1830, or possibly slightly later, the Hamilton-Tolliver property is closely linked to the settlement history of the greater region. Indeed, the property's original owner, William Hamilton (1755-1828), was awarded a land grant, likely for his service in the Revolutionary War, in 1786. By 1794, Hamilton settled in the community that would bear his name, Hamilton's Crossroads, at that time within the boundaries of Grainger County. Hamilton's property totaled some 1,629 acres and was among the largest landholdings in the area. Besides an active life in local political and civil affairs, the Hamilton family

<sup>3</sup> Bonnie Heiskell Peters, "Union County," in *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 1001.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

patriarch built a gristmill in the Hamilton's Crossroads community. Carrying on his legacy of civic engagement, William's eldest son, Alexander Hamilton Sr. (1779-1852), inherited most the (future) Union County land his father had amassed, serving as the local Justice of Peace as well as in the local militia. Passing to the third generation after Alexander Sr.'s death, it is during the tenure of Alexander Hamilton Jr. (1812-1863) that the current log house is believed to have been built. Subsequently willed to Alexander Jr.'s eldest son, William Lay Hamilton (1831-1904), the property passed out of Hamilton family ownership when in 1875, William Lay Hamilton sold the house and property to Crecy Hundley. Little is definitively known about the extent and nature of the farm operations undertaken on the property during the early tenure of the Hamilton family heirs. Nonetheless, this period of the property's history links it directly to the settlement history of the county.

## Commercial & Agricultural History—The Tolliver Family

Over several decades succeeding William Lay Hamilton's sale of the farm in 1875, the Hamilton-Tolliver property passed through a series of owners, each of relatively short tenure, until it was finally acquired by Emily Tolliver in 1909. Emily's brother George Tolliver began farming his sister's property shortly after she purchased it. Besides growing wheat, cotton, and other crops on the Hamilton-Tolliver Farm, George Tolliver was an active merchant in the county, leasing his first store in Hickory Valley (before the valley's inundation by TVA's first dam and reservoir, Norris) and a second on what is now Walker's Ford Road (in the general vicinity of Hamilton-Tolliver property, extant, on the corner of Walker Ford and Mill Pond roads). In 1913, George finally acquired the farm from his sister, where he would fully integrate his farming and mercantile enterprises, constantly expanding these to include a highly diversified livelihood strategy that would assist the family in surviving through the worst economic crisis in the country's history. Thus, it is during the period of history spanning George Tolliver's ownership of the property that it would evolve toward its current configuration and appearance.

Among the earliest of George Tolliver's on-farm enterprises was a modified continuation of his previous mercantile businesses. With the lease on his Walker's Ford Road store expiring in 1909, Tolliver, with the purchase of one of the first and only automobiles in the area, shifted his focus from stationary stores to a rolling store business, which he operated from 1909 to approximately 1919. The property's present General Store building first served as a garage for George Tolliver's mobile market. From this mobile market, Tolliver peddled general merchandise ranging from textiles and clothing items to tobacco products, to tools and imported commodities such as sugar and coffee. These he frequently exchanged for barter in locally produced/procured food and forest commodities including eggs, vegetables, and hides, which in turn he would resell to Gay Street merchants in Knoxville, in adjacent Knox County.

Rolling stores in the twentieth century south convey an important chapter in the social history of rural race and gender relations tied to changing patterns of trade, consumption, and mobility. As Lu Ann Jones asserts in her study of the lives and survival strategies of early twentieth southern farm women, "Bastions of male

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 9Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

customs and habits, country stores were not particularly hospitable places for women to shop. . .”<sup>4</sup> Itinerant peddlers and their successors, rolling stores, offered farm women empowering alternatives to the male dominated stationary store, where “. . . women incorporated commerce into a domestic economy where they operated from a position of strength and helped define the terms of trade.”<sup>5</sup> In many part of the deep South with large African American rural populations, the same dynamic of equity operative in the neutral marketplace embodied by rolling stores offered a similar environment of relative empowerment and opportunity.

Like the country store, early rolling stores like the one operated by George Tolliver provided crucially important nodes of informal exchange for cash-poor and largely immobile rural families. As an article by Steven Grauberger on rolling stores in rural Alabama illustrates, “It was common for people who ran rolling stores to swap out merchandise for common farm goods such as eggs, chickens, pecans and maybe shelled corn or vegetables.”<sup>6</sup> Interviews with George Tolliver’s daughter (and current property resident) Irene Tolliver Hamilton, confirm this pattern of exchange (mentioned above), with these and other items, including butter and hides, being regularly traded for such imported and/or bulk commodities as sugar, coffee, and lard. As a great many of the farm products thus traded by customers fell squarely within the productive domain of women, this is yet another way in which rolling stores offered additional income-via-exchange as well as domestic food security. This equaled a trading status not afforded women in other settings. Drawing from one of the many oral histories framing her study, Lu Ann Jones offers the following anecdote from Mioma Thompson of south Georgia: “Mama would always save her money and her eggs. Course, we had what we wanted to eat. But about the time for [the rolling store] to come, she’d go to saving them eggs up and put her a chicken in the coop, fatten it up. That’s the way she got what she needed.”<sup>7</sup>

George Tolliver’s rolling store, like others, followed regular routes that rural customers came to rely on for the acquisition of certain goods. In gathering farm goods in such exchanges, Tolliver in turn accumulated merchandise he would then transport some thirty miles to Knoxville to peddle out to merchants in that city’s central business districts. Yet another important cash-earning component to Tolliver’s participation in this web of exchange linking urban and rural markets was his role as a moonshine runner. Indeed, the illicit moonshine trade was a central element in the survival strategy of many rural Tennessee families and provided a significant source of untaxed revenue. As William Ellis states, “With corn the primary crop, particularly among semi-subsistence farmers in the Appalachian backcountry, it was only natural for the production of distilled liquor to become the occupation or avocation of many farmers.”<sup>8</sup> Thus the rolling store completed a circle of exchange that tied urban retailers to rural families in an era before widespread automobile ownership facilitated the direct retail shopping experience. While providing an important service

<sup>4</sup> Lu Ann Jones, *Mama Learned us to Work: Farm Women in the New South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 32.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 36.

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Grauberger, “Rolling Stores Once Common in Rural Alabama,” *Alabama Folklife*, June 1996 [online] URL: <http://www.arts.state.al.us/actc/articles/store.htm>. Accessed July 16, 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Lu Ann Jones, *Mama Learned Us to Work* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 37.

<sup>8</sup> William E. Ellis, “Moonshine,” in *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 642.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

to rural families in Union County in this regard, George Tolliver's rolling store business also provided financial security for his own family.

Building on his now considerable experience as a merchant, around 1919, Tolliver converted the garage used for his rolling store into a stationary general store. Tolliver continued to exchange bulk and import commodities for locally produced farm products in his new general store, focusing his now limited mobile operation more intently on the wholesale delivery of those products to Knoxville retailers rather than following commercial routes. In this period, Tolliver also continued to haul moonshine for local distillers as well. After hand digging the root cellar under the west pen of the Hamilton-Tolliver log house in 1933, George Tolliver even experimented with his own distillery, though according to daughter Irene Tolliver Hamilton it never amounted to an appreciable source of income.

Expanding his entrepreneurial activities yet again, around 1929 George Tolliver established a small commercial tomato cannery in the creek bottom immediately adjacent to the current store building. The Tolliver canning business, sold under the label Norris Dam Brand, was an extension of value-added farm operations initiated through governmental agricultural extension services beginning in the early twentieth century.<sup>9</sup> Central among these government efforts were the establishment of tomato clubs for girls and corn clubs for boys. As Diane Ross notes, "In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the government sought to improve agricultural practices and farm life, based on the newest scientific advances."<sup>10</sup> This included the introduction of "improved" growing technologies in the case of the boy's corn clubs, and the promotion of new home canning technologies in the case of girl's tomato clubs. Through such efforts, tomato canning quickly expanded into the arena of larger commercial productive activities available to rural farm families. (See Figure 4.)

The Tolliver cannery is likewise part of a larger regional family canning enterprise arising throughout the region in the early twentieth century. The most successful of these regional operations, the Bush Brothers Company, started as a family tomato cannery in 1904 by A.J. Bush, had beginnings similar to those of the Tolliver operation.<sup>11</sup> As interviews with Irene Tolliver Hamilton illuminate, the Norris Dam Brand operation was executed exclusively by family members on the farm. This included every step in the process, from growing the tomatoes, to the intricate canning process itself, to the distribution and sale of the final product (a natural extension of Tolliver's mercantile enterprises). Indeed, the tomato cannery was fully integrated into family farm life. As Mrs. Tolliver Hamilton notes, "We grew tomatoes on the ridge behind the house. The boys would plow the ground in the fall and work it down good in the spring. Everybody had to help plant the tomatoes. We'd usually get them laid by in July."<sup>12</sup> An extended interview excerpt from Mrs.

<sup>9</sup> He used this name by 1927-1930, as documented by receipts for labels from Knoxville printer S.B. Newman & Co. Labels in possession of property owner.

<sup>10</sup> Diane Ross, "Tomato Club Canning Equipment, Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century," [online] URL: [http://www.lib.usm.edu/spcol/exhibitions/item\\_of\\_the\\_month/iom\\_may\\_07.html](http://www.lib.usm.edu/spcol/exhibitions/item_of_the_month/iom_may_07.html). August 2, 2009.

<sup>11</sup> Bush Brothers & Company, "1908-1929: Our Grandfather Canned Tomatoes," [online]: URL: <http://www.bushbeans.com/history/timeline.php>. July 20, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Irene Tolliver Hamilton. Interview. Transcripts, July 2008, Betty Bullen, Maynardville, TN.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Tolliver Hamilton's oral history elucidates the intricacies of the canning operation that followed the initial planting sequence:

We canned tomatoes in the spring lot. My daddy built a shed there with a table all the way down one side. We'd line up down that table and put the tomatoes in the cans and push the can down the line to the next one to be crimped and to the next one to put it into the box and carry them to the cooker. The cooker was close to the spring because we didn't want to carry water any further than we had to. We'd build a big fire under that cooker—shove the wood under it at one end and the smoke would boil out at the other end. It was big and would hold lots of cans. There was an apple tree out there and the boys would bring baskets of tomatoes down off the ridge and set them in the shade of that apple tree. We had big table there and that's where we'd peel them, put them in the buckets and take them to the canning shed to be put into the cans. When the tomatoes come in we'd have to work hard from daylight to dark to get them all canned.<sup>13</sup>

Norris Dam Brand tomatoes thus became yet another node in the multifaceted livelihood strategy employed by the Tolliver family. The Tolliver cannery was relatively short-lived, however, spanning from approximately 1929 to 1937. Due to both failing health and children moving away from the home, Tolliver abandoned this operation at the latter date and refocused his efforts on the stationary store operation, supplementing this with the production of a few commodity crops. This latter effort included a brief experimentation with sorghum production on the site of the former cannery and the continued production of staple commodities.

In 1942, George Tolliver passed away. The patriarch's daughter, Irene Tolliver Hamilton and her husband, Sam Hamilton, assumed operation of the general store business thereafter, maintaining the family business through the late 1960s. The original stationary store, having been expanded from its initial role as a garage for George Tolliver's rolling store sometime around 1920, was rebuilt yet again in 1952-1953 to accommodate expansion. This latter iteration of the Tolliver Store is the structure inventoried above. Sam Hamilton continued to farm the property throughout this period as well. Farming operations in this period included diversified vegetable production as well as dairy (the latter complimented by the construction of the milk storage shed behind the store building around 1953). Some of these products, including vegetables, cream, and butter were marketed to larger regional grocers, such as the Cas Walker Super Market and White Stores, smaller community grocery stores, and sold direct at the Knoxville farmer's market. Milk from the Hamilton-Tolliver farm was sold to Avondale Dairy in Halls Crossroads (Knox County).

Like the dynamically shifting fortunes and economic strategies of the Tolliver family, the landscape expressing that reality was likewise dynamic. From the settlement period log house to the 1950s store complex, the Hamilton-Tolliver property is an important example of the continuity of rural life in a county through the historical trajectory it spans. In 2008, the property was been designated a Tennessee century Farm. Through the efforts of descendant and current property owner Betty Bullen, the Hamilton-Tolliver Complex currently serves as an important local educational and interpretive site. Ms. Bullen provides educational opportunities through offering upwards of fifteen farm and house tours per year for local and

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

---

regional business and professional groups as well as school children. Visiting groups have included representatives of the Nine Counties/One Vision group (now the East Tennessee Preservation Alliance), the Bell County (Kentucky) Historical Society, students from Horace Maynard Middle School, fifth graders from all Union County schools, home school groups, and members of 4-H. Ms. Bullen's vision for the future includes a continuing and expanding role of the property as a publicly-accessible educational and interpretive site. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places would lend considerable credibility and gravitas to this role, and indeed constitutes yet another distinct educational possibility in its own right as visitors learn about the functions of this singularly important preservation tool and its applicability in local contexts.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 13

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bush Brothers & Company. "1908 – 1929: Our Grandfather Canned Tomatoes." Centennial Celebration: [online] URL: <http://www.bushbeans.com/history/timeline.php>. Accessed July 20, 2009.
- Coddington, Jon. National Register Nomination for "Baite Ousley House." Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1974.
- Ellis, William E. "Moonshine," in *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, Carroll Van West, Ed. Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press/Tennessee Historical Commission, 1998.
- Grauberger, Steven. "Rolling Stores Were Once Common in Rural Alabama." Montgomery, AL: Alabama Folklife Website: [online] URL: <http://www.arts.state.al.us/actc/articles/store.htm>. Accessed July 16, 2009.
- Hamilton, Irene Tolliver. Interview and Transcription by Betty Hamilton Bullen, Maynardville, TN, July, 2008.
- Jones, Lu Ann. *Mama Learned Us to Work: Farm Women in the New South*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Nummer, Brian A. "Historical Origins of Food Preservation." Athens, GA: University of Georgia, National Center for Home Food Processing and Preservation: [online] URL: [http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/nchfp/factsheets/food\\_pres\\_hist.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/nchfp/factsheets/food_pres_hist.html). Accessed August 2, 2009.
- Peters, Bonnie Heiskell. "Union County," in *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, Carroll Van West, ed. Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press/Tennessee Historical Commission, 1998.
- Ross, Diane. "Tomato Club Canning Equipment, Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century." Hattiesburg, MS: University of Southern Mississippi Libraries, Special Collections/Digital Collections: [online] URL: [http://www.lib.usm.edu/spcol/exhibitions/item\\_of\\_the\\_month/iom\\_may\\_07.html](http://www.lib.usm.edu/spcol/exhibitions/item_of_the_month/iom_may_07.html). Accessed August 2, 2009.
- Winters, Donald L. "Agriculture," in *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, Carroll Van West, ed. Nashville: Rutledge Hill Press/Tennessee Historical Commission, 1998.
- Wood, Chris. National Register Nomination for "Nicholas Gibbs House." Nashville: Tennessee Historical Commission, 1988.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

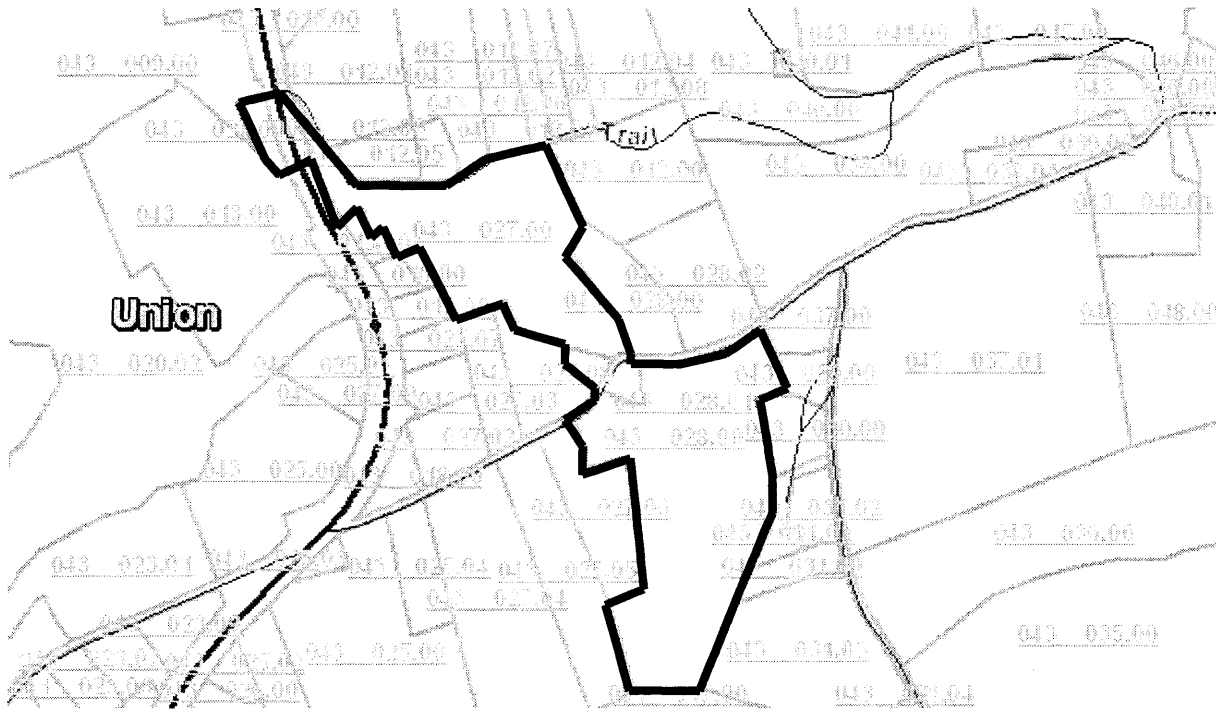
Section number 10 Page 14

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The proposed property boundary includes most of tax parcel 28, all of parcel 28.01, and all of parcel 27, as indicated on Union County tax parcel map. An approximately 4 acre portion of parcel 28, north of Kettle Hollow Road, is excluded because it includes a modern house and is visually separated from the remainder of the site by a fence row. The nominated property contains all the remaining historic land associated with the Hamilton-Tolliver Complex.

0  392 ft      north 



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 15

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

---

## PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos by: Bob Stevenson (Stevenson Photography, Clinton, TN)

Date: August, 2009

Neg/digital: Tennessee Historical Commission

#1 of 20

Overview, façade (north)

#2 of 20

East elevation, log house

#3 of 20

West elevation, log house

#4 of 20

Overview, domestic compound, south elevation of log house

#5 of 20

Detail, corner joinery, log house

#6 of 20

Detail, chimney & saddlebag pen configuration, log house

#7 of 20

Detail door/entry, log house

#8 of 20

Detail, representative 6/6 window, log house

#9 of 20

Detail, interior, hearth, west pen, log house

#10 of 20

Detail, interior, box stair, east pen, log house

#11 of 20

Interior, upper half-story room, log house

#12 of 20

Detail, interior, hearth, west pen, log house

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 16

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

---

#13 of 20

Privy

#14 of 20

Non-contributing log barn

#15 of 20

Façade, smokehouse

#16 of 20

Rear elevation, smokehouse

#17 of 20

Overview/façade, general store

#18 of 20

Overview, south side elevation, general store

#19 of 20

Overview, milk storage shed

#20 of 20

Springhouse (tomato cannery site)

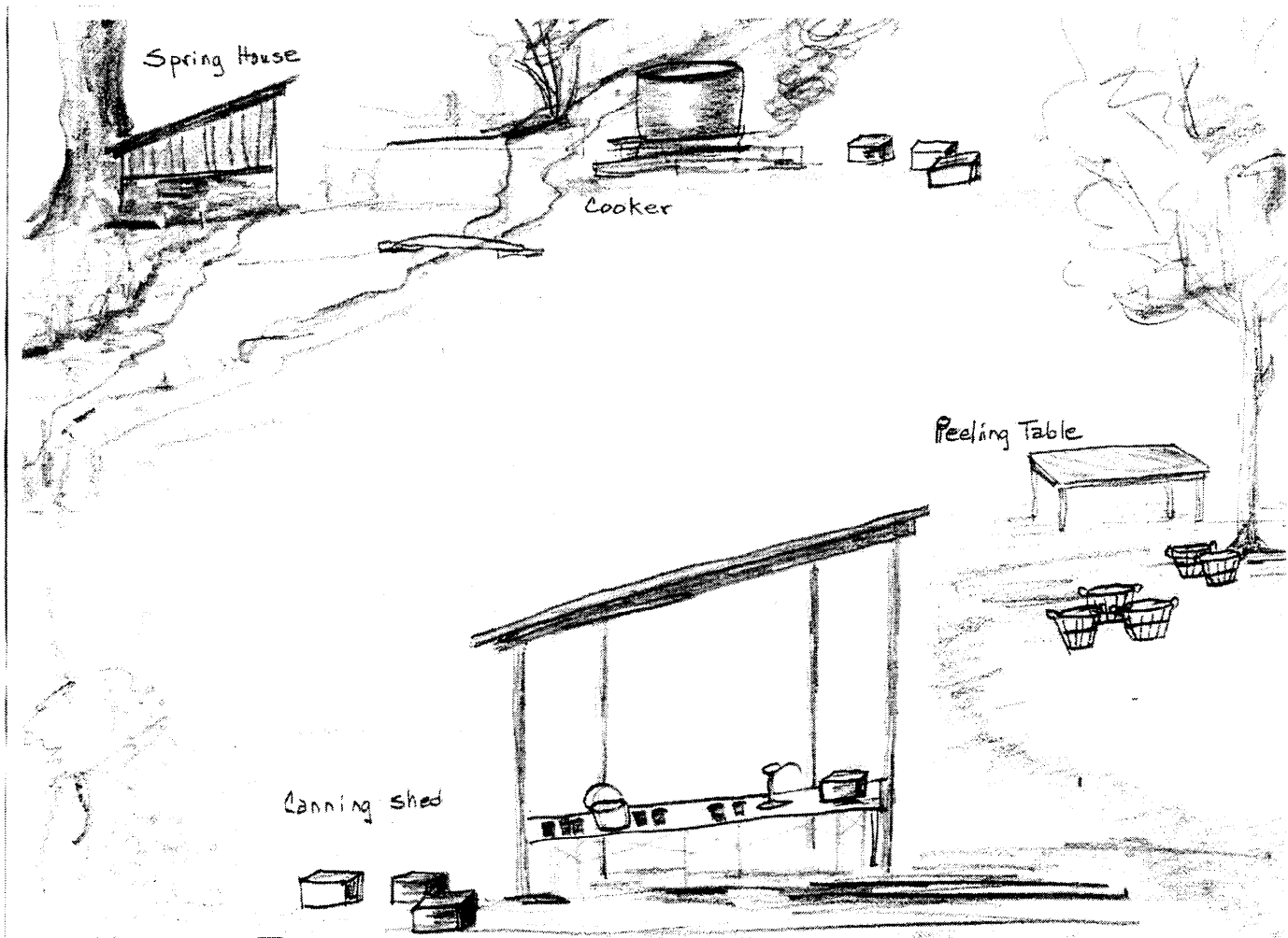
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number      Figures Page      17

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Figure 3. Sketch of Cannery. Norris Dam Brand Tomatoes 1929-1936. Drawn from the memory of Irene Tolliver Hamilton.



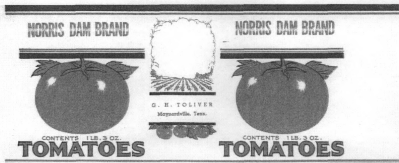
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number      Figures      Page      18

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Figure 4. Tomato Labels



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number          Figures          Page     19    

Hamilton-Tolliver Complex  
Union County, Tennessee

Figure 5. House and smokehouse from a 1979 survey of properties in Union County.

