

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>
COUNTY: <b>Shelby</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE <b>MAR 19 1975</b>

### 1. NAME

COMMON: <b>Davies Manor</b>
AND/OR HISTORIC:

### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: <b>9336 Davies Plantation Road (Brunswick)</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Memphis</b>		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: <b>Seventh</b>	
STATE <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE <b>47</b>	COUNTY: <b>Shelby</b>	CODE <b>157</b>

### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY <small>(Check One)</small>	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		

### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

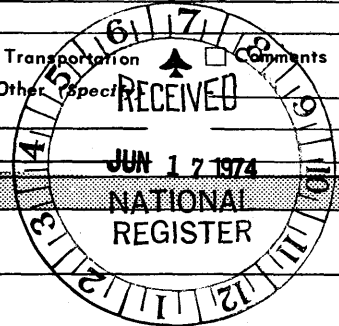
OWNER'S NAME: <b>Ellen Davies (Mrs. Hillman P.) Rodgers</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>9140 Davies Plantation Road (Brunswick)</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Memphis</b>		STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE <b>47</b>

### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: <b>Shelby County Register's Office</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>Courthouse</b>			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Memphis</b>		STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>	CODE <b>47</b>

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: <b>Historic American Buildings Survey</b>			
DATE OF SURVEY: <b>1972</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <b>Library of Congress</b>			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>		STATE: <b>D. C.</b>	CODE <b>11</b>



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: <b>Tennessee</b>
COUNTY: <b>Shelby</b>
ENTRY NUMBER: <b>MAR 19 1975</b>
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY.

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Davies Manor is a two-story house, built of hand hewn white oak logs on a foundation of sandstone. Tradition states that the west portion of the house, consisting of the present parlor with a bedroom above, with 20-foot square dimensions, was built about 1807 by an Indian chief. Nearby is a mound which revealed a collection of Indian artifacts when excavated by Dr. Julius Augustus Davies about 1890. An Indian trail led through the grove of trees in front of the house, much of which remains visible. This trail became an artery of travel for horse-drawn vehicles traveling to and from the Old Stage Road to Sulphur Wells (Brunswick) and to other communities. Parts of the trail later became the present Davies Plantation Road.

Before 1846 Joel W. Royster had acquired the log house and surrounding acreage. He added an identical east wing with a connecting dogtrot, an ell porch, dining room, and kitchen. The winding stairways in the east and west sections of the house are unique features. In 1931 the dogtrot was enclosed as a hallway under the existing upstairs hall. Subsequently, a pediment with two square posts was added. In recent years an addition has been made to the rear of the house.

In the 1850's Logan Early Davies bought the property from Mr. Royster. He and a younger brother, James Baxter Davies, became joint owners and accumulated a total of 1,200 acres, the original Davies Plantation. The property continues to be owned and occupied by their descendants.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE <b>Tennessee</b>	
COUNTY <b>Shelby</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	<b>MAR 10 1975</b>

(Number all entries)

7.

At the time of the enclosing of the dogtrot in 1931, wood siding was applied over the logs of the house, with the exception of the front elevation. At that time also the windows were reworked and the sidelights added. The original chimneys were destroyed by a storm in the 1930's, at which time the existing chimneys were built.

The area was at one time Indian hunting grounds, and a Chickasaw trail crossed the grounds.



**SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **ca. 1807**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal   | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric  | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic     | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Science   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Davies Manor, named for Zachariah Davies, a Revolutionary War soldier from Lunenburg County, Virginia, is considered to be the oldest house in Shelby County. It is significant as a good architectural example of the type of homes built by early settlers in West Tennessee, and is one of very few of that early period to remain.

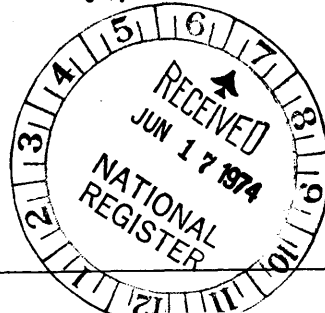
The house has long been a center for various types of public meetings. The first art exhibit ever held in a home in Shelby County outside Memphis was held at Davies Manor in 1944, and featured the paintings of Laura Yates Burnett. It has been featured on many pilgrimages, and is the regular meeting place of the Zachariah Davies Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution and Old Stage Road Society of the Children of the American Revolution.

The owner of Davies Manor is active in literary circles, having written numerous books and articles. She is also active politically, having served as the first woman delegate from Shelby County to the Tennessee State Constitutional Convention.

Davies Manor was the birthplace of two doctors of medicine, Dr. Julius Augustus Davies and Dr. William Little Davies. During the saddlebag days, Dr. W. L. Davies made his home at Davies Manor. There he dispensed medicine and performed minor emergency operations. The house was for a long period of time a veritable hospital to the sick of an area twenty miles from Memphis' medical facilities.

Davies Manor is also important as an aboriginal site, since an Indian Mound nearby yielded numerous artifacts when it was excavated in the 1890's, and since an Indian trail led through the grounds.

Importance in many areas of significance is possessed by Davies Manor, a landmark of the area that has been carefully preserved for over a century and a half.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Folmsbee, Stanley J., Robert E. Corlew, and Enoch L. Mitchell,  
History of Tennessee (New York, 1960).  
 Memphis Commercial Appeal Magazine, July 25, 1965.  
 Memphis Press-Scimitar, October 23, 1953.  
The Volunteer Gardner, official Publication, 1950.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

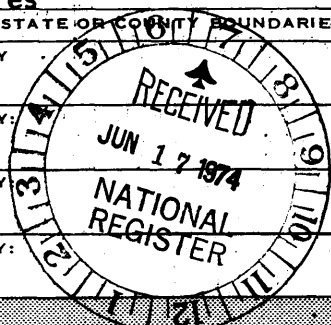
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		35° 13' 14"	89° 45' 05"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

16/249600  
 3900760  
 CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **7 acres**

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Ellen Davies Rodgers**

ORGANIZATION: **Shelby County Historian**      DATE: **3/29/74**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**9140 Davies Plantation Road**

CITY OR TOWN: **Memphis**      STATE: **Tennessee**      CODE: **47**

**12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION      NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name: Lawrence C. Henry  
 Lawrence C. Henry  
 Executive Director  
 Title: Tennessee Historical Commission

Date: 6/6/74

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

A. R. Winters  
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 3/19/75

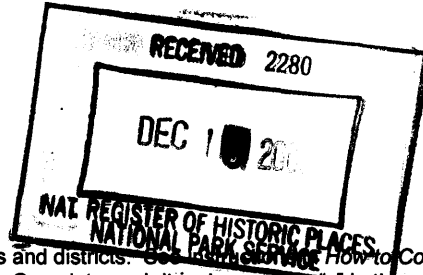
ATTEST:

Charles Henry  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3-18-75

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 *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 Davies Manor

other names/site number Henderson-Royster-Davies Homestead

2. Location

street & number 9336 Davies Plantation Road

NA  not for publication

city or town Memphis

NA  vicinity

state Tennessee

code TN

county Shelby

code 157

zip code 38134

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.)

*Herbert E. Hays*

12/7/05

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Deputy 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:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**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	
--------------	-----------------	--

3	1	buildings
		sites
1		structures
		objects
4	1	Total

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

N/A

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

1

**6. Function or Use**

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

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

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

RECREATION AND CULTURE: museum

**7. Description**

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

OTHER: log

Colonial Revival details

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls Log, weatherboard

roof ASPHALT

other Wood, brick

**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** moved from its original location.
- 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)

Architecture

**Period of Significance**

Circa 1821-1938

**Significant Dates**

NA

**Significant Person**

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

NA

**Cultural Affiliation**

NA

**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 # TN-183
- 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:

Davies Manor Association



Davies Manor  
Name of Property

Shelby County, Tennessee  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 7 acres Ellendale

#### UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>249600</u>	<u>3900760</u>	3	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	4	<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	<u>          </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 Judith Johnson  
organization Judith Johnson and Associates date March 2005  
street & number 176 Windover Cove #1 telephone 910/324-461838111  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code           

#### 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 Davies Manor Association  
street & number 9336 Davies Plantation Road telephone 901/386-0715  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38134

**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

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

## Description

Davies Manor is a local example of an uncommon two-story log house. Constructed in phases beginning in the early nineteenth century, the house has been a single pen log building, dog trot plan residence, and finally, the current log and frame configuration, dating from the 1930s. It is located in a rapidly developing area of the city that was originally known as Brunswick, Shelby County, Tennessee. It is surrounded by outbuildings of various ages.

The National Register boundary is approximately seven acres, although the current legal boundary is thirty-two acres. A pair of brick piers and a long gravel alley leading up to the house marks the entrance to the property. The house site rises to the east. The landscape is notable for its native hardwoods.

The two-story, rectangular, log, center-hall plan house with rear frame ell and shed additions has an asphalt shingle gable roof and masonry chimneys on the gable ends. The plain projecting eave roof has a box cornice and weatherboard gables. The log house foundation is non-native sandstone and the remainder of the house is set on brick piers. Constructed beginning circa 1821, the log building is yellow poplar pine. It began as a one and one-half-story, single-pen (room) with sleeping loft currently located on the west side of the house. The outer dimensions of both pens are 19 x 19 feet and the interiors measure 18 x 18 feet. To keep out the weather, the square hewn logs were originally chinked with clay and later with soft mix concrete. The structural support is provided by the square notched corners.

The more precisely squared, 6 ½" hewn east section of the log building was added circa 1831-7. The five-foot half-story on the west side was expanded to a full second story in height. The addition changed the configuration to an uncommon two-story dogtrot plan. Probably the exterior end masonry chimneys were constructed at that time and the second story center hall was enclosed. A paneled wood door with hand made wood pegs opened onto a full second story porch.

The three-bay facade fenestration contains two, three-part, double-hung, nine-over-nine light, rectangular windows between single-light sashes on both the first and second stories. These slightly larger windows were installed during the 1938 renovation, replacing similar ones that dated to the 1830s. A nine-light double hung window on the east side of the interior hall (former dog trot) is the only original circa 1830 window that remains. Augered round holes are found by the doorways and the windows of the west side, which were used to install the original doors and windows in the solid log wall.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

Rear additions include a one-story, frame construction, weatherboard ell on the west side that served as a dining room and was added between circa, 1854 and circa 1860. The walls are random width weatherboard with a stained wainscoting.

The dogtrot was enclosed as a frame center-hall circa 1931. The original center, two-story portico with gable roof and box columns was retained. The porch stoop was lowered and the bottom of the box columns was extended with brick piers and a brick walk was laid. The original second story porch was removed and replaced with a tiny balcony with a block balustrade. The circa 1931 entrance is a six panel wood entry with partial sidelights.

The gable ends of the structure were covered with weatherboard circa 1938 as was the former exterior walls of the dogtrot. In addition, circa 1938 a window similar to the facade was added to the west side of the dining room ell as was an interior multi-light door with sidelights leading from the parlor to the dining room. The sidelights are constructed of parts of the original handblown glass windows.

A gable addition was added to the north elevation of the dining room after 1950. A rear open, L-shaped back porch was enclosed and a rest room wing was added in the 1960s.

The log interior consists of exposed log walls and random wood floors with square nails. The parlor mantle is wood. The stairwells are wood. On the second floor, the stairs were enclosed for privacy and to conserve heat. The west side room has a door on the north side leading to crawl space above the ell.

There are a few twentieth century outbuildings remaining on the property. There is a board and batten store, board and batten tenant house, brick well house, and weatherboard tool shed. The buildings are all believed to have been constructed in the early part of the twentieth century and are considered contributing. A multi-purpose non-contributing building is located on the east side of the property which serves as a meeting rooms and offices.

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

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 3

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

## Statement of Significance

Davies Manor was listed in the National Register on March 19, 1975. There were numerous areas of significance, including architecture, and the period of significance was the eighteenth century. The additional documentation clarifies the architectural importance of the property and includes information on important twentieth century changes. There is also additional information on the families living on the property.

The Davies Manor house is a fine example of an early log building that evolved over the years, from the 1820s to the 1930s. The Colonial Revival detailing added in the 1930s represent what was considered appropriate historic preservation. Interest in historic buildings expanded in the early twentieth century especially after the restored landscapes of Colonial Williamsburg. Restoration or rehabilitation maintained the basic structure but often added "colonial" elements and details that were considered historically appropriate in general, but may not have been found on the particular building. Davies Manor, a circa 1821 single pen log building was expanded in the 1830s into a dogtrot. Frame additions were added to the house in the 1850s and 1860s. During the 1930s, the dogtrot was enclosed, some weatherboard siding put on, and new windows added. Then, as it does today, the house reflected the early settlement period architecture and the early twentieth century Colonial Revival movement. The house retains its architectural integrity.

Present day Shelby County was the ancestral home of the Chickasaw Indians. The area of land now known as the state of Tennessee was also a western claim of North Carolina until statehood was achieved in 1796. A profit oriented real estate speculator named John Rice, conceived a land promotion scheme in the early 1790s on a 5,000-acre grant of land on the Third Chickasaw Bluff. Rice met his untimely demise at the hands of unidentified Indians in 1791 before ever setting foot on his holdings and his brother sold it to Judge John Overton of Nashville for \$500 in 1794. Self-made millionaire judge John Overton was a close friend and business partner with General Andrew Jackson, whom he teamed up with in land speculations throughout the South. Judge Overton sold General Andrew Jackson half of the Rice Tract in 1796.

The final event leading to the formal founding of Memphis was the negotiation by Jackson and General Isaac Shelby of a sale of the so-called Chickasaw Purchase which sold over six million acres of land west of the Tennessee River to the United States for the outrageously low 4 ½ cents an acre. The Chickasaw Cession of 1819, which finally allowed European settlers legitimately into the area, displaced the aboriginal inhabitants.

Shelby County was also created in 1819 by the Tennessee legislature, at the urging of judge John Overton and General Andrew Jackson and named in honor of the General Shelby. On September

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

5,1821, Revolutionary War veteran Thomas Henderson received a 640-acre land grant from the University of North Carolina (Military Warrant #767). He settled in Shelby County in the area later known as Brunswick. Henderson constructed a 1-½ story, single pen log house that over time would evolve into a two-story enclosed dogtrot known as Davies Manor.

Davies Manor is the oldest intact local example of the period of American vernacular architecture built by European colonists known as Pre-Railroad folk houses.<sup>1</sup> As settlement expanded to the West, a distinctive tradition of wooden folk building evolved from the blending of the one-room deep houses of the Tidewater South with techniques of construction using horizontal log walls brought to the middle colonies by immigrants from the heavily timbered areas of central and northern Europe. The so-called Midland log house, a tradition that was carried across the Appalachians by frontiersmen, became the dominant Pre-Railroad Folk housing form over much of the heavily wooded eastern half of the country.

In 1830, Henderson sold the eastern 320 acres of his property to a land speculator, Emanuel Young, who also operated a riverfront store in Memphis. However, Young failed to pay his taxes and the local tax collector, Joel W. Royster, bought the property for back taxes in 1831.

Mr. Royster, a wealthy landowner, moved his family onto the property between 1831-1837. To accommodate them, he added a substantial log addition onto the original cabin including enlarging the sleeping loft into a full room, and adding two full stories to the east, which were connected by an open breezeway locally named a dogtrot. One concession to modernity was the insertion of Greek Revival style double-hung windows into the log walls. Greek Revival was the dominant style of American domestic architecture during the interval 1830 to 1850 and even later in some areas of the Gulf Coast. It occurs in all areas settled by 1860 and especially flourished in those regions that were being rapidly settled in the decades of the 1830s, 40s and 50s as it moved with the settlers as they crossed into Tennessee.

The first mention of the Davies family in the Shelby County area is an 1838 locator's deed showing the purchase of land by William E. Davies, a Methodist minister and gristmill operator. His father, Zachariah Davies, was a Virginia militiaman who had fought in the Revolutionary War.

The 1850 census lists William E. Davies as living with his family in Fayette County. Born in Maury County, Tennessee, his sons, Logan Early and James Baxter Davies, probably traveled back and forth on the Stage Road to oversee the Davies farm in Shelby County but lived with their father in Fayette County.

<sup>1</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984), 74.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

In 1851, Logan and James bought the Royster acreage with the log house and moved into bachelor's quarters there. Adjoining acreage was purchased in the following years and the Davies' plantation eventually totaled approximately 2,000 acres.

Now that he could provide for a family, James Davies married Penelope Almeda Little and moved her into the homestead in 1854. Sometime between 1854 and 1860, the first frame addition was added to the west side of the house to accommodate the growing family. In 1855, the couple had their first child, a son named Julius Augustus Davies. A second son, William Little Davies was born in 1857. Then tragedy struck in 1859 when Penelope Davies died at age twenty-seven.

A year later, older brother Logan Davies married Anna Frances Vaughn on November 28, 1860. In December 1861, a son, Gillie Mertis was born to Logan and Anna Frances. The 1860 Shelby County Census shows that the Davies family owned twenty-two slaves – thirteen males and nine females.

Eventually the Civil War touched the family as James Davies left his young children in his brother's care and enlisted as a private in the 38<sup>th</sup> Tennessee Infantry at Morning Sun in Shelby County. He served honorably in the medical corps and participated in several Civil War battles including Perryville, the Second Battle of Atlanta, Lookout Mountain, New Hope Church, Nashville, Peach Tree Creek, and Jonesboro. During this time, a daughter, Linnie Lee, was born to Logan and Anne Frances Davies.

James Davies returned from active duty in May 1865 and soon married his first wife's sister, Pauline Leake. The joy of that occasion was mitigated by the death of Anna Frances Davies at the age of twenty-four. James Davies second wife filed for divorce in 1866. The two brothers and their families continued to live in Davies Manor.

By June 1891, James' son, Gillie Mertis Davies married Miss Frances Ina Stewart in Brunswick, Tennessee. For the first four years of their marriage, they lived at Davies Manor. Then in 1895 the circa 1855 plantation commissary building was moved to another location on the property and expanded as a home for the newlyweds, named Hillcrest.

On June 17, 1904, James Baxter Davies died, leaving 596 acres including the log house to his bachelor sons, Dr. Julius Augustus Davies of Walls, Mississippi and Dr. William Little Davies who practiced in Brunswick.

Then in November 1903, a daughter (Frances) Ellen Davies was born to Gillie and Frances. In 1924, the same year that Frances Ellen earned a Bachelor of Science degree, her uncle Julius died, leaving one-half undivided interest in Davies Manor to his brother, William. Dr. William

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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 6

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

Davies died in 1931 and left his estate including Davies Manor to Ellen Davies. At this time, Miss Davies began a series of renovations to the more than a century old log home, including enclosing the dog-trot and reconfiguring the original appearance with replacement windows, reconfiguring the second story porch, and covering the gable ends of the building and some of the interior walls with weatherboard.

Ellen Davies married Hillman Rodgers in 1932. The next year, her father, Gillie Davies passed away in 1933 and left Hillcrest to his wife, Frances. Mrs. Frances Davies lived until 1958, leaving her entire estate to her daughter, Mrs. Ellen Davies Rodgers. Mrs. Rodgers began selling the surrounding acreage until her death in 1994. Today Davies Manor is still surrounded by thirty-two of the original acres.

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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   7  

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

## Bibliography

Davies Manor Association. *History of the Davies Plantation*. Memphis, TN, 2000.



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

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 8

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

## Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

When originally nominated the property had seven undefined acres included. This is not being changed.

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 9

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

**Davies Manor  
Memphis, Shelby County, TN**

Photographs by: Judith Johnson  
Date: March 2004  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission

View of facade, looking north.  
Photo 1 of 30

View of facade and east elevation, looking northwest  
Photo 2 of 30

View of east elevation, looking southwest  
Photo 3 of 30

View of rear elevation, looking south.  
Photo 4 of 30

View of west elevation, looking northeast.  
Photo 5 of 30

Detail of the west chimney.  
Photo 6 of 30

Detail of typical exterior window.  
Photo 7 of 30

Detail of foundation.  
Photo 8 of 30

View of the well house, looking southeast.  
Photo 9 of 30

View of the store, looking northwest.  
Photo 10 of 30

View of the tool shed, looking west.  
Photo 11 of 30

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 10

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

View of the tenant house, looking northwest.  
Photo 12 of 30

Interior center hall.  
Photo 13 of 30

Interior west parlor.  
Photo 14 of 30

Detail parlor fireplace  
Photo 15 of 30

Detail parlor stairs.  
Photo 16 of 30

Interior east ground floor room  
Photo 17 of 30

Detail interior window.  
Photo 18 of 30

Interior dining room.  
Photo 19 of 30

Interior dining room with door.  
Photo 20 of 30

Interior kitchen addition.  
Photo 21 of 30

Interior rear room.  
Photo 22\_of 30

Interior enclosed rear porch.  
Photo 23 of 30

Interior east rear addition.  
Photo 24 of 30

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

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 11

Davies Manor (additional documentation)  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

Interior west side second floor bedroom.  
Photo 25 of 30

Detail door  
Photo 26 of 30

Interior second floor center hall.  
Photo 27 of 30

Detail second floor fireplace.  
Photo 28 of 30

Detail of interior cement daubing  
Photo 29 of 30

Detail of east side stairs.  
Photo 30 of 30