

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

For NPS use only

received OCT 11 1984

date entered NOV 8 1984

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Vardy School Community Historic District

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Blackwater Road N/A not for publication

city, town Vardy vicinity of Sneedville Mo.

state Tennessee code 047 county Hancock code 067

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple Ownership

street & number N/A

city, town N/A N/A vicinity of N/A state N/A

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Hancock County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Sneedville state Tennessee 37869

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date N/A N/A federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Vardy School Community Historic District is composed of eight historically and architecturally significant buildings and their outbuildings which together form the small, rural Hancock County community. The Vardy School Community (population 8) is located 2.3 miles south of the Tennessee-Virginia state line between Powell Mountain and Newman Ridge along the north side of Blackwater Road. The buildings which make up the original community are clustered on seven acres of rolling land and were built between 1899 and 1937. These include the Vardy Presbyterian Church (1899), the second Mission School (1902), a residence (1920), the Manse (1921), the Vardy Community School (1929), the library (1929), another residence (1934), and the general store (1937). The first log schoolhouse (1892) was demolished in 1942. With the exception of a residence which was built in 1975, the Vardy School Community appears much as it did in the 1930s.

The oldest extant building in the community is the Vardy Presbyterian Church (1899). It sits on a bank above Blackwater Road, surrounded by most of the houses in the community as well as the library and general store. Several hundred yards above the church stands the Vardy Community School (1929) with its four ancillary buildings behind it. With the exception of the Vardy Presbyterian Church, most of the buildings in the community were stylistically derived from bungalow design concepts. The church employs some Gothic detailing in the fenestration and bell tower entry. All of the buildings were constructed of wood frame and rest on locally quarried limestone foundations except for the bath and storage houses associated with the Vardy Community School which were built completely of limestone.

The largest and most significant buildings within the Vardy School Community Historic District are the Vardy Presbyterian Church and the Vardy Community School which are both presently vacant. The church building is well secured and does not suffer from serious structural problems. The school has been subject to vandalism and damage from natural elements. The remaining buildings in the community are occupied or used for storage and are well cared for.

Properties have been listed in the inventory based on current ownership, and by architectural and historical interrelationships. Buildings within the district exemplify the historic development of vernacular architecture in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in rural Hancock County.

The majority of buildings in the district are listed in the inventory as contributing structures for their historic or architectural merit which contributes to the significance of the district. One brick residence (1973) is listed as non-contributing. Inventory numbers correspond to those on the accompanying tax map.

1. Residence. 1934. Vernacular with Bungalow influence. One story, three bay, gable roofed, frame building with exposed rafter ends, projecting gable roofed bay, and shed roofed front porch. Garage is a small limestone structure with a shed roof, built into the side of the hill. Small frame shed (1929) also on property. (C).

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2. Residence. 1920. Vernacular with Bungalow influence. One-and-one-half story, three bay, white frame building with side-gabled roof structure, frame shed roofed porch across central bay. (C).
3. Vardy Presbyterian Church, 1899, Vernacular with Gothic influences. Built by Morgan Osborne and Miles Watson of Blackwater, Virginia, One story, steeply pitched raised tin gable roof, three by four bay, white frame building with two-story, side-gabled roof bell tower. Double-leaf door entry with pentagonal surround and transom in base of bell tower, Tripartite, pointed arch, tracery window in center of south (front) elevation. Pointed arch four-over-four windows occur on east and west elevations, Major interior feature is the heavy swinging double doors with ovolo moldings which divide the vestibule from the sanctuary. (C).
4. Manse. 1921. Vernacular with Bungalow influence. Prefabricated building ordered from Iowa firm. One-story, three bay, frame, weatherboarded, side-gable roofed structure with in antis front porch. Central entry is of dark wood and has transom and sidelights. (C).
5. Library. 1929. Vernacular. One story, two bay, side-gabled roofed structure with corrugated metal siding to imitate clapboard. Located behind the Manse. (C).
6. Vardy Community School. 1929. Vernacular with Bungalow influence. Designed by William H. Leonard. Three story, gambrel cross-gabled roof, frame building with corrugated metal siding which imitates clapboard. Roof material is raised tin. One story, one bay, gable roofed porch covers entry on south (front) elevation. Interior has wide open room arrangements on all three floors. Outbuildings include a small frame garage, a limestone bath house, a deteriorated limestone water storage tank house, a storage house of limestone and a frame summer cottage. (C).
7. Residence. 1973. Modern Ranch style. Brick, one story, hipped roof building with a one story frame, gambrel roofed garage. (N).
8. General Store. 1937. Vernacular. One story, three bay, frame structure with a gable roof. (C).
9. Second Mission School Building. 1902. Vernacular with Bungalow detailing. One-and-one-half story, twenty six by twenty foot frame building with clapboard siding, a steeply pitched gable roof and a hip roofed porch with exposed rafter ends. This building was converted into a residence in the 1930s. (C).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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 1892 **Builder/Architect** William H. Leonard, Morgan Osborne, Miles Watson, and others.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Vardy School Community Historic District is being nominated under National Register criteria A and C for its historical and architectural importance to Hancock County and upper East Tennessee. The Vardy School Community was established in 1892 by the Holston Presbytery, Synod of Tennessee, Presbyterian Church of the United States of America and was the first school in Vardy to offer a first through eighth grade education in the required state courses as well as religion and recreation. The extant buildings of the Vardy School Community exemplify the development of vernacular architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in rural Hancock County.

In the 1890s Vardy was an extremely rural and isolated place. Settled by Vardiman Collins in 1780, the area became one of a small number of places in East Tennessee and Southwest Virginia inhabited by people known as Melungeons. It is believed that the Melungeons were of Portuguese and American Indian descent. Because of their dark skin and unfamiliar traditions, the Melungeons were classified as free people of color by the Tennessee Constitutional Convention in 1834. This meant, among other things, that Melungeons did not have the right to vote or bring legal suit against a white person. The social oppression and stigma attached to being a Melungeon encouraged the development of closed and clannish communities such as Vardy.

The Presbyterian mission school movement began in the 1890s. Schools were founded nationwide in areas not targeted by county public school systems. In 1898 there were five mission schools operating in the Holston Presbytery: Grassy Cove (near Crossville), Jeroldstown (near Kingsport), Kismet (undetermined location), Rock Creek (Erwin), and Vardy (near Sneedville). Often these schools received supplemental funding from the county but relied primarily on the financial support given by the Presbyterian Women's Board of Missions. The mission school movement peaked in the 1920s and had generally dissipated by the 1950s.

The Vardy Mission School served children within the eight mile stretch of the Blackwater Valley in Tennessee. In 1902, when the new school was built, there were sixty-five students enrolled in the curriculum and two teachers (also referred to as Bible readers). The nine month School year, the free tuition, and the free lunches were a boon to a community which prior to 1892 had not had the opportunity of formal education. Upon completion of the eighth grade Vardy students were often sent on to the ecumenical schools at Walnut Grove and Hot Springs, North Carolina and to the Warren Wilson Seminary at Swannanoa, North Carolina.

The Presbyterian Church required that the teachers in the mission schools be college graduates. In 1910, a woman named Mary Rankin arrived as a missionary to teach in the Vardy Mission School. She had studied at Columbia University in New York and remained at Vardy until 1946.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 7 acres

Quadrangle name Sneedville, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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

See Continuation Sheet

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 Martha Gray Hagedorn, Historic Preservation Planner

organization First Tennessee Development District date June 18, 1984

street & number 207 North Boone Street, Suite 800 telephone 615/928-0224

city or town Johnson City state Tennessee 37601

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. Hager

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 10/3/84

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

for Melores Byer
Keeper of the National Register

date 11-8-84

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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The mission church at Vardy was established in 1899. In 1920, Vardy received its first permanent minister, the Reverend Chester F. Leonard. He received an undergraduate degree from Northwestern University in Chicago, a Ph.D. from McCormick Seminary in Chicago, and two years of medical training from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore. Under Leonard's tenure, the mission school and church flourished. He left the community in 1952. Drew Williams, a Berea College graduate, taught at Vardy from 1931 until 1942, when he became the Superintendent of Schools for Hancock County.

The school produced many teachers, notably Helen Mullins, who graduated from the Vardy Mission School in 1926 and continued on to Maryville College, becoming Vardy's first college graduate. She returned to Hancock County to teach in the public high school.

With the construction of the large school building in 1929, the Vardy Mission School became known as the Vardy Community School. Teaching salaries for Mary Rankin and Drew Williams were funded through the Hancock County School System. Reverend Leonard drew his teaching and ministerial salary from the Presbyterian Church. In 1944, the curriculum of the Vardy Mission School became public. The Presbyterian Church sold the school to Hancock County for \$3,500 in 1955. Classes continued to be held there until 1973.

The Vardy Presbyterian Church held its last service in 1980. The building was sold by the Presbyterian Church to a Vardy resident in 1982.

The Vardy School Community buildings are not fine examples of the Bungaloid or Gothic styles, they are utilitarian and vernacular in their interpretations. It is the grouping of the buildings and their rural location that make them architecturally significant.

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Major Bibliographical References:

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Grohse, William Paul. Personal Interviews. March, May, and June 1984.

Herd, Reverend William Baker. Personal Interviews. May and June 1984

Ninety-Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church
in the USA. New York: Presbyterian Building, 1898.

Rage, Dr. Thomas. Personal Interviews. May and June 1984.

See, Dr. Ruth D. Personal Interview. June 1984.

Williams, Drew. Personal Interview. June 1984.

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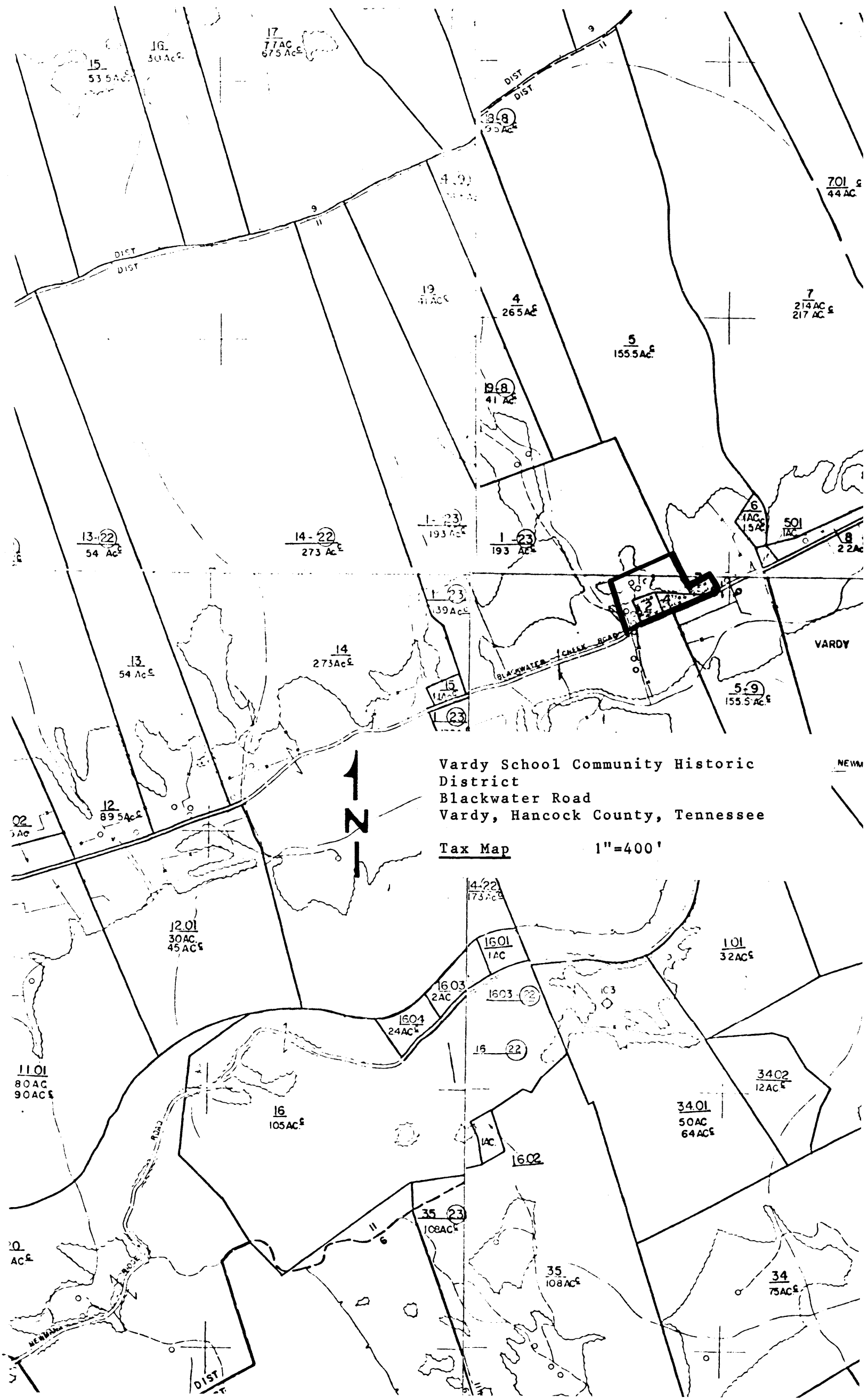
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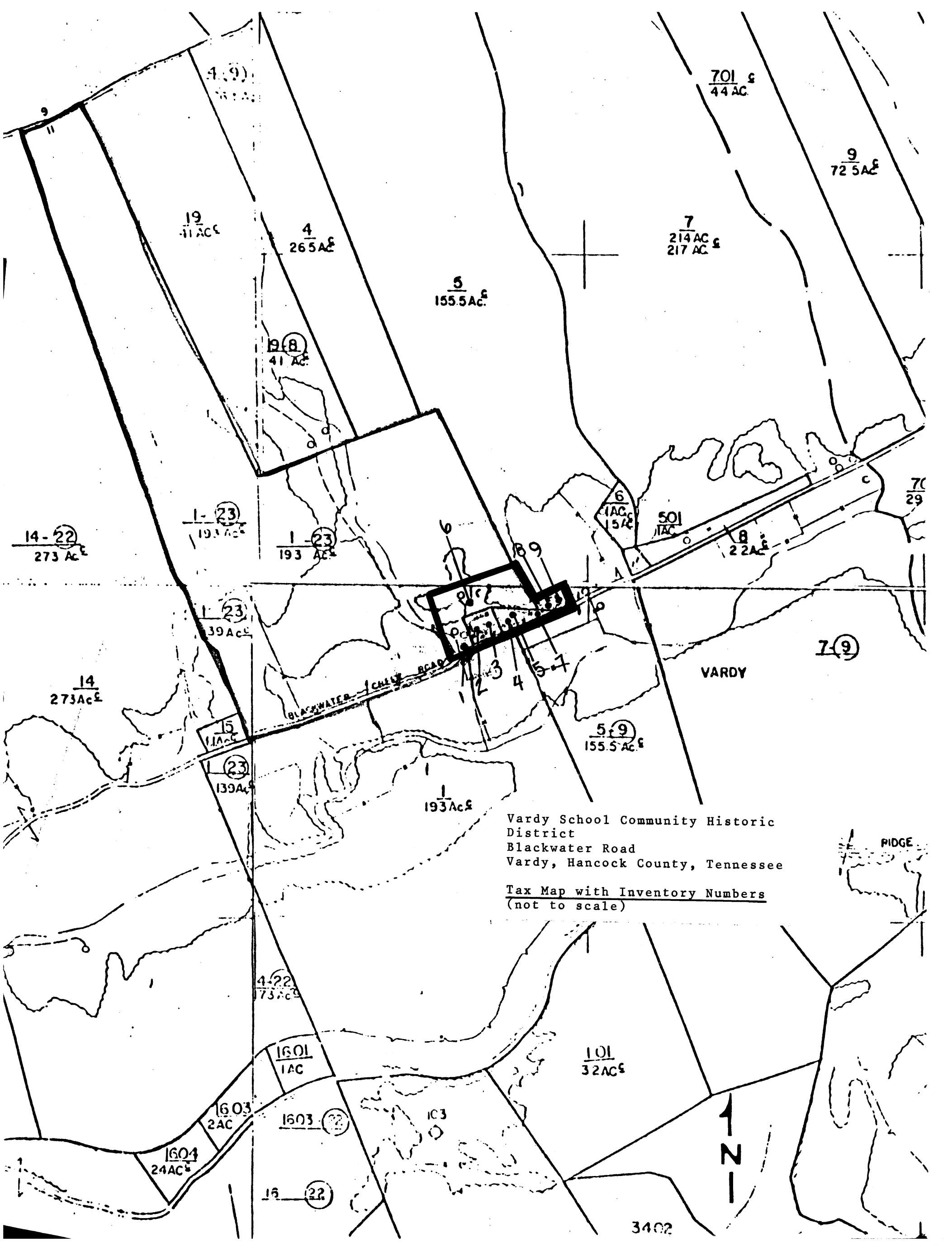
date entered

The Vardy School Community Historic District includes seven acres of land in an irregular configuration bounded on the south by Blackwater Road, on the east by adjoining property lines, on the north by an imaginary line which runs parallel to Blackwater Road for approximately 300 feet, and on the west by an imaginary line which follows a small creek bed for approximately 100 feet and then runs directly north for approximately 300 feet to intersect with the northern boundary. This area includes the small collection of buildings and enough acreage to preserve the historic setting and architectural integrity of the Vardy School Community Historic District.



Vardy School Community Historic District
Blackwater Road
Vardy, Hancock County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1"=400'



14-22
273 AC

19
41 AC

4
265 AC

5
155.5 AC

7
214 AC
217 AC

701
44 AC

9
72.5 AC

19-8
41 AC

1-23
193 AC

1-23
193 AC

6
11 AC
15 AC

501
11 AC

8
22 AC

70
29

1-23
139 AC



7-9

14
273 AC

15
11 AC

1-23
139 AC

1
193 AC

5-9
155.5 AC

Vardy School Community Historic District
Blackwater Road
Vardy, Hancock County, Tennessee

Tax Map with Inventory Numbers
(not to scale)

4-22
273 AC

1601
1 AC

101
32 AC

1603
2 AC

1603 (22)

103

1604
24 AC

15 (22)

