

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 12 1986

date entered

MAR 8

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

1. Name

historic Nolan, James N., House

and/or common Nolan Heights

2. Location

street & number Highway 13 North

N/A not for publication

city, town Waverly

N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee

code 047

county Humphreys

code 085

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. Gordon I. Turner

street & number Post Office Box 174

city, town New Johnsonville

N/A vicinity of

state Tennessee 37134

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Humphreys County Courthouse

street & number Main Street

city, town Waverly

state Tennessee 37185

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Humphreys County Survey

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1983

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town Nashville

state Tennessee

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located six blocks north of the Humphreys County Courthouse in Waverly, Tennessee (pop. 4,405), the James N. Nolan House is a one story frame and brick residence of vernacular design with Italianate and Queen Anne detailing. Begun in around 1870, the original weatherboard section is embellished with dentil moldings and brackets, ornamental porch spandrels and balustrade, and segmental arch door and window openings. Additions to the residence were constructed in 1875, 1880, and 1885. The interior contains many original mantels and moldings. No outbuildings are located on the property.

The circa 1870 L-shaped original house is sheathed with weatherboard, rests on a brick foundation, and is surmounted by a metal shingle gable roof with cornice returns. Two floor-to-ceiling segmental arch windows are located on the south facade of this section. The principal entry is comprised of a glass and panel door capped by a segmental arch transom window. Dentil moldings and brackets embellish a canted bay, which is located to the west of the entry. Three segmental arch, 1/1 double hung sash windows are the dominant features on the bay. A shed roof front porch is enhanced by scroll shaped spandrels and turned balusters. Set back approximately forty feet from the original house facade is the circa 1880 brick addition. The south facade of this section is pierced by two narrow segmental arch 1/1 double hung sash windows and a single leaf entry surmounted by a segmental arch transom window. The porch on this section has simple columns, a sawn wood balustrade, and a shed roof. Adjacent to the circa 1880 addition is the circa 1885 brick addition. Two small segmental arch 1/1 double hung sash windows flanked by louvered shutters are found on this section.

The west elevation of the original house contains two 6/6 double hung sash windows while the brick section is pierced by a segmental arch 1/1 double hung sash window and a single leaf entry. The west elevation of the circa 1875 gable roof frame addition displays three multipane double hung sash windows. This section of the house is separated from the rest of the house by a breezeway.

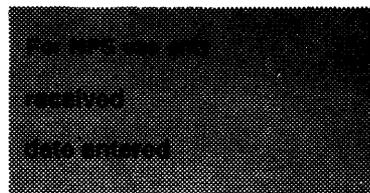
A shed roof porch with simple columns and a sawn balustrade, identical to the balustrade on the circa 1880 addition, delineates the east elevation of the original house. Four single leaf entries and two 6/6 double hung sash windows flanked by louvered shutters are located on this section.

The north (rear) elevation of the circa 1885 brick addition has a single segmental arch 1/1 double hung sash window and a segmental arch entry. A screened porch and three 6/6 double hung sash windows flanked by louvered shutters are the main elements of the north elevation of the circa 1875 addition. Two brick cellars are found underneath this section.

The interior of the James N. Nolan House contains five fireplaces with the original mantels, original window and door hardware, molded baseboards and paneled doors with architrave trim. The interior woodwork is simple in design. One especially interesting fireplace is comprised of a round arch opening and paneled spandrels with a central cartouche. Two bedroom fireplaces have openings framed by pilasters and simple friezes.

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The James N. Nolan House is situated on a bluff overlooking the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Surrounded by timberland, the property contains a nineteenth century fish pond and a circa 1930 fountain. The house is in good condition and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1870 - 1896 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The James N. Nolan House is being nominated under National Register criteria B and C for its architectural and historical significance in Waverly, Humphreys County, Tennessee. Architecturally, the house is an excellent example of a late nineteenth century vernacular cottage residence that evinces Italianate and Queen Anne detailing in the segmental arch door and window openings, bracketed cornice and ornamental balustrade. Historically, the house is significant for its association with James N. Nolan, a prominent businessman and politician in Waverly. Nolan owned a general merchandise store, warehouse, marble yard, and a major hotel. In addition, he was the railroad agent, mayor and member of the Board of Aldermen in Waverly, and State Comptroller. The house has undergone few modern alterations and retains its architectural and historical integrity.

James Nicholas Nolan (1840-1896) was born in Carlow, Cork County, Ireland to Mathew and Alicia Maher Nolan. The family emigrated to western Pennsylvania in 1849 and in 1857 James Nolan moved to St. Louis, Missouri where he worked as a clerk in a mercantile store for several years.

On March 3, 1862, Nolan joined the First Independent Battery Kansas Volunteers. He received a Second Lieutenant's commission from Kansas Governor Thomas Taylor in August 1863. In December 1863, Nolan and the Kansas Volunteers were stationed at Fort Hill in Waverly, Tennessee, to protect the St. Louis branch of the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railroad that was being laid from Kingston Springs to New Johnsonville on the Tennessee River.

After Nolan's discharge from the U. S. Army on March 4, 1865, he returned to Waverly and became involved in a mercantile business and served as a railroad and express agent.

James Nolan married Theodocia Ann Wyly in around 1865. Ann Wyly (d. 1871) came from a prominent Humphreys County family with vast land holdings. Nolan's house was constructed in around 1870. The original weatherboard residence had a front porch and was comprised of five rooms and an entry hall. Around 1875 Nolan added the north wing and connected it to the main house by a covered porch.

Nolan's rise as a successful businessman was due to his real estate investments in the Waverly railroad business district. In 1866, Nolan and B. B. Spicer built the Nolan House hotel near the railroad depot. The partnership continued until 1873 when Nolan became sole owner and rebuilt the hotel into the "substantial and commodious" Nolan House. From 1870 to 1880, Nolan and D. H. Goodrich ran Nolan and Goodrich, a mercantile store. In 1877 Nolan erected a large brick warehouse near the railroad for housing produce, peanuts, etc. Nolan and Goodrich also operated a marble yard in the basement of the warehouse.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 3 acres

Quadrangle name Waverly, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A 

1	6	4	2	8	5	5	0	3	9	9	3	8	1	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property is approximately three acres in size and irregular in shape. It is bounded on the north by a service road, on the east by Church Street, on the south by the railroad tracks and on the west by a service road and cemetery(see tax map). It includes enough land to protect the historical setting and architectural integrity of the James N. Nolan House.

**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 Cathryn C. Holland

organization N/A date October, 1985

street & number 23 Camelot Cove telephone (901) 668-8006home  
(901) 422-4041office

city or town Jackson state Tennessee 38305

# 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. Hayer

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 1/31/86

**For NPS use only**

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

Entered in the National Register

for Albert J. Byers  
Keeper of the National Register

date 3-13-86

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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In 1879, during the Memphis yellow fever epidemic, many Memphis families came to Waverly to escape the disease. Not realizing that mosquitos were the cause, tradition said to "cross water," so many crossed the Tennessee River. During this time, Michael J. Blessing brought his family to Waverly and stayed at the Nolan House hotel. Nolan met Blessing's daughter, Mollie, and she became his second wife on November 8, 1880. Nolan then enlarged Nolan Heights by building a brick ballroom and, later, a brick bathroom.

Waverly was first incorporated in 1838, but the charter was abandoned soon after. After numerous attempts to re-incorporate, on January 3, 1885, the present corporation was established and Nolan was elected to the Board of Aldermen. In 1886, Nolan was elected as the Mayor of Waverly. In 1881, Nolan was elected to the office of State Comptroller of Tennessee, the first state officer elected on the Republican ticket since Governor Brownlow's administration. He served as Comptroller from 1882 to 1886. Nolan died in 1896 and is buried in the Nolan Cemetery.

After Nolan's death, Mollie Nolan and her only surviving child, William Blessing Nolan, lived at Nolan Heights. William Nolan served as the Vice-President of the Citizen's Bank of Waverly, was a member of the Board of Aldermen from 1920 to 1946, and was a charter member of the Waverly Exchange Club. William Nolan died in 1949. William Blessing Nolan, Jr. later inherited Nolan Heights after his mother died in 1976. Nolan's aunt, Ann Whitfield Bowman, former editor for D.C. Health Publishing Company of Boston, lived in the house until 1979. At this time the house was left unoccupied for several years.

In 1983, the present owners purchased Nolan Heights. The house is being restored for use as a gift shop, Bed and Breakfast Inn, and a place to have local social events for Waverly and Humphreys County residents.

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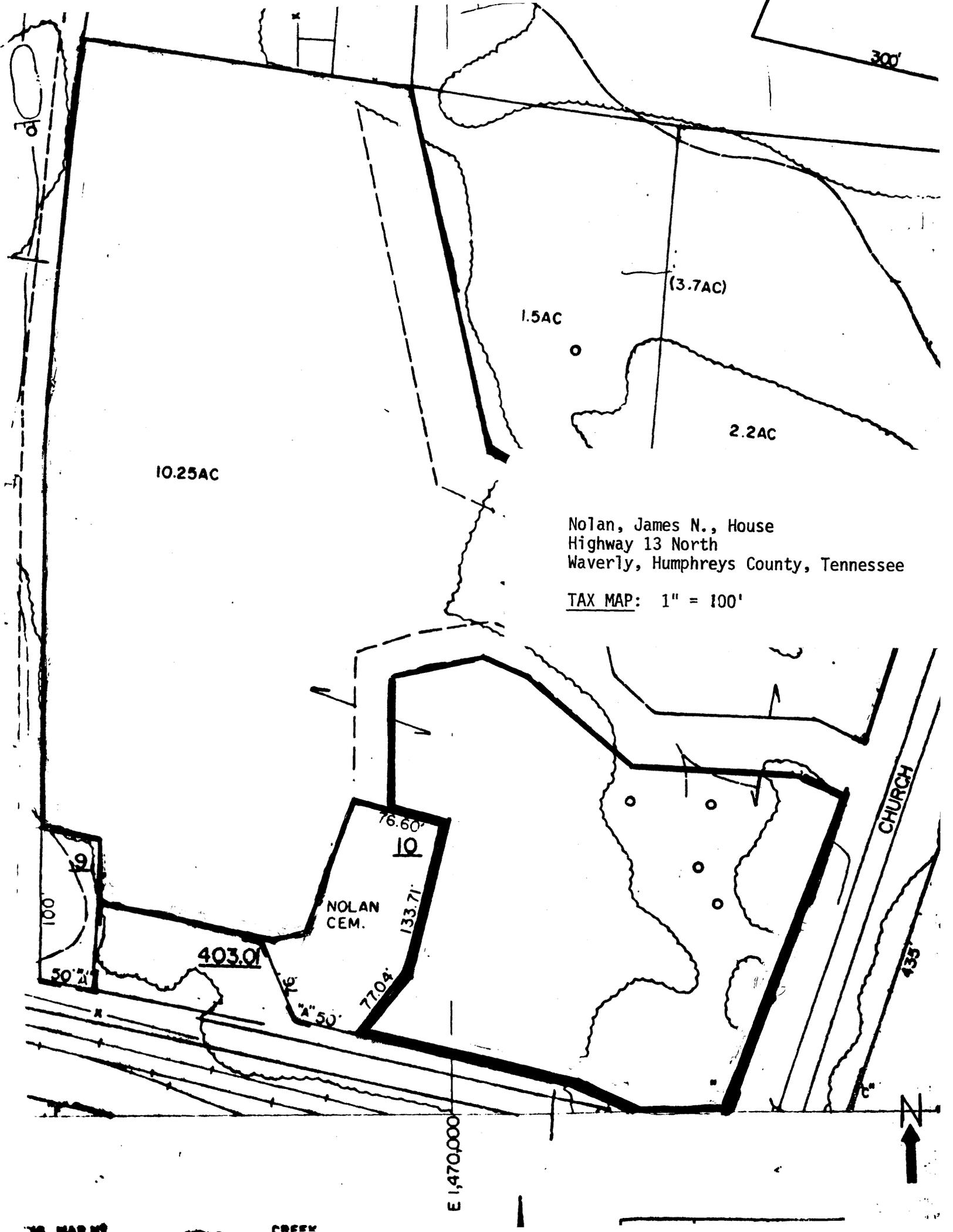
MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Goodspeed's County Histories and Biographies. Nashville: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1887; reprint ed., Nashville, Tennessee: Charles and Randy Elder Booksellers, 1973.

Humphreys County. Deed Books, 1872-1886. Humphreys County Courthouse. Waverly, Tennessee.

Humphreys County. Minute Book, Volume 31. Humphreys County Courthouse. Waverly, Tennessee.

News Democrat, 11 April 1979; 22 June 1984.



300'

10.25AC

1.5AC

(3.7AC)

2.2AC

Nolan, James N., House  
Highway 13 North  
Waverly, Humphreys County, Tennessee

TAX MAP: 1" = 100'

NOLAN  
CEM.

10

403.01

CHURCH

E 1,470,000

