

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 30 1989

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Griffitts, William H., House  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Jackson Ferry-Greenback Rd. N/A not for publication  
city, town Greenback X vicinity  
state Tennessee code TN county Loudon code 105 zip code 37742

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u> structures
	<u>2</u> objects
	<u>2</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Richard L. Hays Deputy SHPO, Tennessee Historical Commission Date 1/20/89  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Alloret Byus Entered in the National Register 3/2/89

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / Single dwellingAGRICULTURE / agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC / Single dwellingDOMESTIC / Secondary structure

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: East Tennessee vernacular/Federal

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICKwalls Weatherboardroof Shingleother WOOD

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

Located on a rolling ten and one-half acre farmstead on the north edge of the recently-formed Tellico Lake (formerly the Little Tennessee River) the circa 1854 William H. Griffitts House is a frame two story farmhouse with a ell-shaped plan. Federal influence is evident in the composition of the three bay facade with a pedimented porch and in the fireplace mantles. Recent renovation efforts have retained most of the original materials and respected the integrity of the original design. Only partial enclosure of the rear porch, to provide plumbing, and the addition of an open deck off the kitchen, have altered the characteristic ell shape. Outbuildings on the property include three contributing and two non-contributing resources. The contributing resources are a circa 1855 tobacco barn, a circa 1905 frame corn crib/barn, and a circa 1905 log corn crib. The non-contributing outbuildings are a modern garage and a scale house that has lost structural integrity.

A gable roof with a boxed cornice and returns caps the two story house. Symmetrically designed, the three bay facade has a centrally located pedimented portico covering the entrance. Cornice returns, square tapered columns with capitals, and lattice work railing are the principal features of the portico. The single-leaf entrance has the original three light sidelights and seven light glass transom intact. Materials used in constructing the house were brick foundation, pine weatherboards, which have been painted (1975), and wood shakes for the roof, which deteriorated and were recently (1983) reintroduced in restoring the roof. Roof framing consists of pole rafters notched on the ridge ends for ease of assembly. The front porch railing may not have been part of the original structure, but was present in the 1880s (see historic photograph). The original window shutters are extant, are being restored, and will be re-installed. The original 6/6 double-hung sashes, which had deteriorated beyond repair, were replaced with 8/8 sashes in the 1970s. Brick chimneys at the gabled elevations of the main wing have been recently re-pointed and partially reconstructed.

Flanking the outside end chimney, the two bay south elevation of the main section has 8/8 sashes on both levels. An offset separates the mass of the two story main section from a one story kitchen ell. Two 8/8 double-hung sashes and the south kitchen entrance are located on this section. An open deck has been added to it in recent years.

 See continuation sheet

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The one story east elevation of the kitchen ell has one 8/8 double-hung sash centered below an offset gable, which is extended on one side to include the porch. The kitchen chimney is centered on the ridge of the gable roof. Supported by square columns and plain ballusters, the one story porch extends to the main section of the house.

The north elevation is composed of the symmetrical mass of the two story main section, with a centered outside end chimney flanked by 8/8 double-hung sashes on the lower level, and the ell-shaped shed-roofed porch. The eastern end of the porch was enclosed for a bathroom early in this century. The six doors opening onto the porch from the house remain intact, but two have been sealed.

The interior arrangement is a central passage plan in the main section and three rooms in the ell. Both of the downstairs rooms contain Federal mantles, stone hearths, simple wide-board (horizontal) panelled walls and ceilings of hand-planed pine. The mantles vary slightly in character, but generally have wide friezes and Doric pilasters. The natural-finished wood in the second floor rooms remains today essentially as when the house was built. However, the wood has been painted on the main floor although distinctive marks of hand-planing remain evident. Original pegged cabinets remain intact in the dining room. The upper cabinet doors are glazed and lower doors have perforated decorative metal panels. Other interior doors are also wood panelled. All of the door and window casings have a distinctive bevelled molding, except at the front entrance, which has a fluted casing with cornerblocks. The fluting also occurs on the sides of the stair handrail, which terminates in a tapered newel post.

The two front rooms, originally used as the parlor and bedroom, are now used as bedroom and living room. A smaller bedroom (now a den) at the juncture of the kitchen ell and the main house was not originally accessible from the dining room except by the porch. The kitchen and dining room retain their original functions. The second floor provides two additional bedrooms flanking the stair hall, where a small bath has been added by moving the cabinets out from the west wall. Insulation has been added, and a central heating and air conditioning system installed as part of the recent renovation effort.

Outbuildings include a gable-roofed twenty-seven feet by twenty-four feet tobacco barn with weatherboard siding, tin roof, and stone piers; a twenty-eight feet by twenty feet frame corn crib that is now used as a sheep barn; and log corn crib that is approximately twelve feet by twenty-five feet. A modern gable roof garage constructed with shake roofing and weatherboard siding has replaced a thirty feet by thirty feet barn which had

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Griffitts, William H., House

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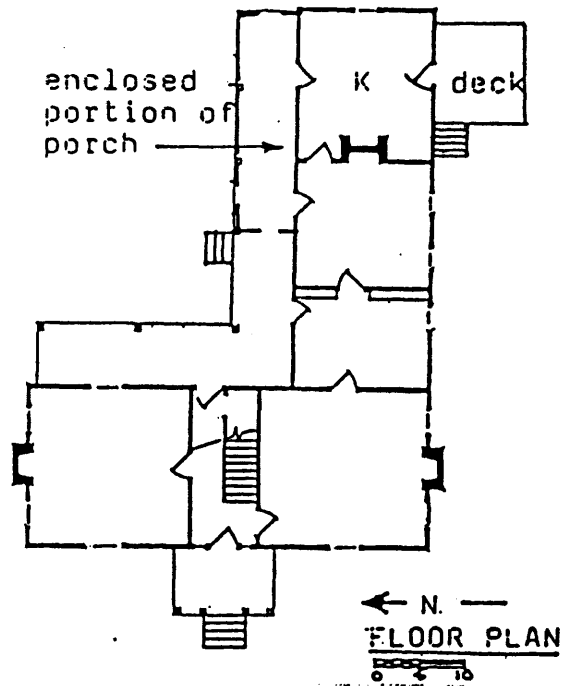
deteriorated. The scale house, an open shelter used to weigh livestock, is in poor condition. There were an early kitchen and barns on the property, however, nothing remains from them. Their location is known but the sites have not been evaluated for their historic archaeological potential.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G    N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

ARCHITECTURE  
SOCIAL HISTORY

circa 1854-circa 1934

circa 1854

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The William H. Griffiths House is being nominated under National Register criterion A for its association with the Griffiths family and the settlement of Friendsville (pop. 908). The Griffiths were a part of the Quaker community and its mission to promote education and social welfare in the area around Blount and Loudon counties. The house is also being nominated under criterion C for its architectural significance as an outstanding, well-preserved example of a mid-nineteenth century East Tennessee variant of the Federal style in an ell-shape plan with minor late nineteenth and early twentieth century alterations. Due to the inundation of Morganton and other areas as a result of the construction of the Tellico Dam in the 1970s, most of the houses representative of that period have not survived.

The Griffiths house, which was located on 335 acres of property near Jackson Ferry on the Little Tennessee River is approximately five hundred feet from the house of Charles Hughes (circa 1828) who is reported to be the brickmason for the Griffiths House and whose father, Robert Hughes, received the original land grant from William Blount in 1809.

The Griffiths house reflects the plain unadorned style characteristic of the meeting houses the Quakers constructed. The beauty arises not from any decoration at all, but from the fine proportions and the evident honesty of the building. Locally, the designs of the Quakers were evident in the first meeting house they constructed before 1870 and in the second meeting house built in 1878. Both were one and one-half story frame buildings with gable roofs. The first meeting house no longer exists and the second meeting house has been remodeled and bricked over. The central passage plan of the Griffiths house is a fine example of this traditional plan. The Hughes house is a smaller and earlier version of his design, but the Griffiths house is a good representation of the plan with a full ell.

The Quaker movement began in England with the preaching of the Quakers' founder, George Fox (1624-1694). The first settlement in this area by Quakers occurred circa 1791 and was located on the site of a former Indian

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:  
 State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 10.5 acres

UTM References

A 

1,6	7,5,0	8,7,0	3,9	5,1	3,0,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

  
C 

1,6	7,5,1	1,3,0	3,9	5,1	0,4,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

B 

1,6	7,5,1	0,2,0	3,9	5,1	2,4,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

  
D 

1,6	7,5,0	7,4,0	3,9	5,1	0,2,0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

Meadow 139 NW

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary is an irregular shape that follows the Tellico Reservoir Boundary and other adjacent property lines. It follows the legal description. See map of the William H. Griffiths House.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes sufficient land to protect the house and its outbuildings.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Eugene Burr & Linda Cole / AIA, AICP & Research Assistant  
organization Office of Eugene Burr date September, 1988  
street & number 220 Carrick Street, Suite 118 telephone (615) 522-5238  
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village in Loudon County. Originally called Unity, the name was later changed to Unitia. Quakers had also settled in Washington and Greene Counties during the 1790s. The Griffitts, formerly from Wythe County, Virginia, are credited with selecting the site of Friendsville in 1796, along with the Matthews, Allens, and Walker families. Friendsville became the site of the Newberry Monthly Meeting of the Quakers in 1808. The Newberry Monthly Meeting belonged to Lost Creek Quarterly Meeting until 1870 when Newberry and Hickory Valley were set up as the Friendsville Quarterly Meeting. William H. and Lucy Ann Griffitts were registered in the Hickory Valley meeting. Properly known as the Religious Society of Friends, the Quakers' membership in the area grew to approximately 1,400 in 1870.

In 1897, mainly due to improved transportation facilities between Tennessee and Ohio, the Friendsville Quarterly had its membership transferred from North Carolina to Wilmington, Ohio Yearly Meeting to which they are still attached. Today there are 150 members of the Friends Church, but attendance runs between seventy and eighty members.

Concerns of the first Quakers in the region were mainly the receipt and transfer of certificates of membership and a watchful regard for the morals of the Society. Gradually, as the church became more firmly established, new and broader interests occurred. Foreign missions, Sabbath schools, education of Freedmen, and education of children were some of the major concerns of the group.

It was generally believed that the Quakers of Friendsville were a part of the Underground Railroad, and that the settlement was a station to which runaway slaves from the south made their way in their efforts to reach Ohio and the other free states of the North. The Quakers continued the harboring of runaway slaves and helping them into free territory until the Civil War settled the question of slavery. Historical research reveals that the Quakers played a large part, not only in molding sentiment against slavery, but in being equally as active in their efforts to assist the newly emancipated race when freedom came.

John Griffitts, Sr. (1804-1890), father of William H., was one of the co-founders of the Great Union Camp Meeting in October of 1874. The Campground is located 1/2 mile east of Jackson's Ferry. The National Campground, as it is now named, was placed on the National Register in 1971. The camp meetings were interdenominational gatherings intended to unify people after the Civil War. Historical research shows that the slaves and freed blacks in Tennessee enjoyed few social opportunities and



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had very limited mobility. Therefore, services such as were offered by the Campground meetings provided some relief to social isolation.

William H. Griffitts (1825-1884), his wife, Lucy Ann (1829-1910), and his family were Quakers who had no sympathy for slavery or secession. Because of their religious convictions, the family never owned slaves. After the Civil War, several freed black families settled on property adjacent to the Griffitts farm. This area was and is known today as Negro Hollow. One of the seven black families known to have lived there was the Jackson family, who took their name from the landholding white family on whose farm they worked. William H. Jackson, the oldest son (b. 1907), recalls the visits of Lucy Ann Griffitts in Negro Hollow when she attended to sick children, as well as Nancy Griffitts, granddaughter of Lucy Ann Griffitts, who was the first white teacher in the Negro Hollow school.

The tolerance of the Griffitts family for minorities and others regarded routinely in the mid-1800s as adversaries is also seen in the feeding of enemy troops under General Sherman's command, who were crossing the river at Jackson's Ferry. Lucy Ann Griffitts, whose husband was in Kentucky at the time, was alone with her children when the Union soldiers came asking for food. Her unselfishness was only tempered by her children's needs, after they had gone without for three days, and the urging of a Union soldier.

The records of the Unitia/Friendsville settlements indicate that "Shortly after the settlement of the area, the Friends, following their custom of providing education for their children, began plans for schools." Frances Hackney, who along with the Griffitts, Matthews, Allen, and Jones families, helped establish Friendsville, donated land for the Friendsville Academy. The first academy belonged to the Newberry Monthly Meeting until 1881, when a new charter moved it to Friendsville Quarterly Meeting. Several members of the Griffitts family were enrolled at the Academy during the late nineteenth century. A family member, Effie Griffitts, left her property to Friendsville Academy, following her death in 1970.

Members of the Griffitts family lived in the house until 1934 and descendants owned the house until 1960 when it was sold to Phil Hamilton. It was subsequently sold to Stuart and Betsy Worden in 1974, who restored the exterior, and to the present owner in 1979.

During its history, the house has served as a court for the circuit judge (Judge Godwin of Lenoir City), and as the first telephone exchange in the area in the 1920s.

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The William H. Griffitts House has many characteristics of a form known as East Tennessee Vernacular. As described in the Knox County survey report, this residential building form was erected between 1840 and 1900. It is two stories tall and of brick or frame construction. One or two rooms deep, the building form has a side gable roof with gable end chimneys. Its facade is generally three bays wide and has a central entry and a wide front portico.

A recent survey of the areas of Friendsville and Unitia show that there appear to be few remaining intact and unaltered nineteenth century resources associated with the Quakers. Most of Unitia was inundated in the 1940s when the Tennessee Valley Authority constructed the Fort Loudon Dam. Friendsville does have two older residences extant. The Medlin House, a two story building with a hip roof, and the house where John Hackney dwelled, a one story frame house, are both presently unoccupied and deteriorating. Also extant is the circa 1795 Samuel Frazier House (near Friendsville). It has the three bay plan of the Griffitts house but it was constructed of limestone. Other historic buildings in the immediate area appear to have lost integrity. The William H. Griffitts House and its outbuildings provide a good example of a mid-nineteenth century farm associated with the Quaker church.

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- Cansler, Charles W., Three Generations. Kingsport Press, Inc. (private publication), 1939.
- Daughters of the American Revolution, Hiwassee Chapter, Beloved Landmarks of Loudon County, Tennessee. Loudon, Tennessee. 1962.
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- Dunlap Josephine, History of Friendsville Monthly Meeting of Friends, Friendsville, Tennessee, 1958. In possession of George Henry, Friendsville historian.

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Friendsville, Tennessee, 1899. In possession of George Henry,  
Friendsville historian.

**MICROFILM**

Hickory Valley Meeting, microfilm at Blount County Library. Book 16, roll  
523.

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Griffitts, William H., House  
Jackson Ferry - Greenback Road  
Greenback, Loudon County, Tennessee  
Photo By: Larry Benson  
Date: See Below  
Neg: Tennessee Historical Commission  
Nashville, Tennessee

Facing east, west facade  
Date: July 1984  
#1 of 15

Facing north, south facade  
Date: July 1984  
#2 of 15

Facing west, east facade  
Date: July 1984  
#3 of 15

Facing south, north facade  
Date: July 1984  
#4 of 15

Walnut Mantle, East Upstairs Bedroom  
Date: July 1984  
#5 of 15

Door Casing Detail  
Date: August 1988  
#6 of 15

Living Room Mantle  
Date: August 1988  
#7 of 15

Dining Room Cabinet  
Date: August 1988  
#8 of 15

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Stair Balustrade

Date: August 1988

#9 of 15

Log Corn Crib, facing south, north facade

Date: April 1985

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Barn, facing west, east facade (demolished recently, now site of NC garage)

Date: April 1985

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Scale House, facing east, west facade

Date: April 1985

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Corn Crib, facing south, north facade

Date: April 1985

13 of 15

Tobacco Barn, facing west, east facade

Date: April 1985

14 of 15

Garage, facing north -- west, south, and east facades

Date: April 1985

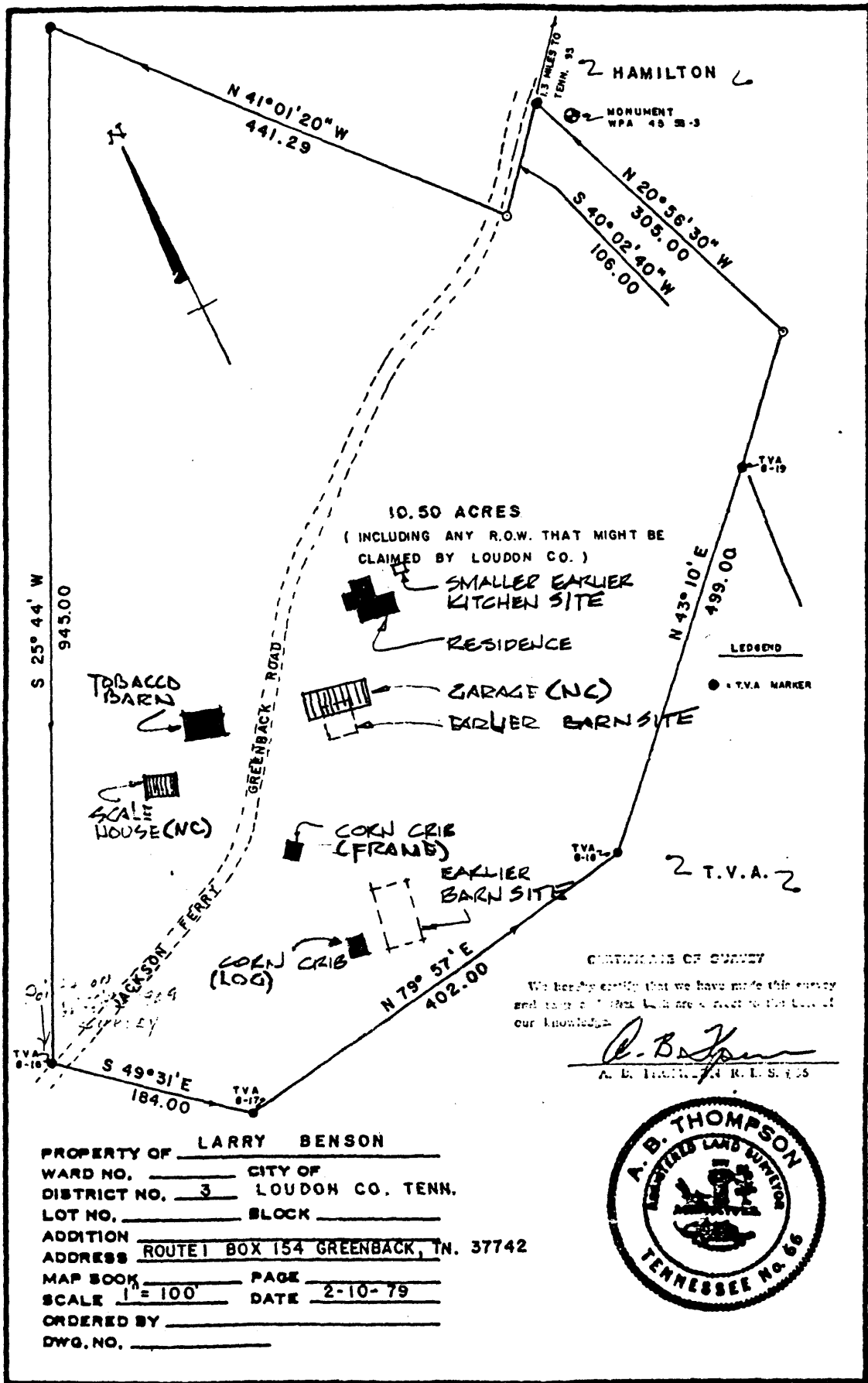
15 of 15

Historic Photograph (c. 1880s)

Facing east, west facade.

#1 of 1

Griffitts, William H. House  
 Jackson Ferry - Greenback Rd.  
 Greenback vicinity, Loudon County, TN



# GRIFFITTS HOUSE PROPERTY MAP

