Form 10-300 (July 1969)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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7.	DESCRIPTION								
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CONDITION	(Check One)			(Check One)					
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Carnton, a Greek Revival house with some Federal and Georgian influences, was built by Randal McGavock about 1825. McGavock, member of a prominent Virginia family, brought from Virginia an architect by the name of Swope to design the impressive mansion he was to build on his thousand acre tract of land just south of Franklin. The house contained more than twenty rooms, consisting of the main block of the house which had four rooms and a large hall on each two floors with a large ballroom on the third floor. In addition, a large ell was built on the east side, containing servants quarters, a smokehouse, workrooms, and a carriage house. This ell has since been removed.

The wing pavilion plan, the facades of gables with twin chimneys tied together with the parapet wall above the roof lines, as well as the porches with superimposed orders and pediment, were already apparent when Swope arrived in Middle Tennessee, However, he developed these features with some sophistication of the Atlantic seaboard traditions to make Carnton, so named by McGavock for his ancestral home in Ireland, one of the more impressive homes in Middle Tennessee.

The plan of the house is typical Middle Tennessee in arrangement, but is unusual in its use of entirely different verandas on opposite elevations. At the front is a small porch with superimposed columns; at the rear is a long veranda with square pillars extending through to the main cornice and supporting a second floor veranda. The entablature is characterized by the use of cornice brackets and omission of the architrave.

Carnton contains some excellent Georgian influenced woodwork and mantel pieces, but its chief glory in its prime must have been its gardens. Randal McGavock planned his home in the midst of elaborate grounds. The garden was designed by his wife, who consulted with her friend, Mrs. Andrew Jackson, exchanging bulbs, slips, and advice, with the result that the Carnton garden was almost identical with the one at the Hermitage. Unfortunately, the gardens are no longer kept up and only traces of the original splendor remain.

On the grounds of Carnton are the McGavock family cemetery and two-acre Confederate cemetery, the land for which was donated by Colonel John McGavock, son of the builder of Carnton, for burial of Confederate soldiers killed in the Battle of Franklin on November 30, 1864. The bodies of 1,481 Confederates are buried in the cemetery.

JUL 17 1972

IGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	18th Century	20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	🗓 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicab	le and Known)		
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Che	eck One or More as Appropr	iate)	
Abor igiņal	Education	🗓 Political	Urban Planning
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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of Carnton is great in many areas. Its architecture is a good example of the houses built by prominent citizens of Middle Tennessee during the prosperous antebellum years. Also, its outstanding gardens made it one of the show places of Middle Tennessee and for that reason it is important in the field of landscape architecture. Its political significance lies in the fact that its builder was once a mayor of Nashville, as was his nephew. Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, and Felix Grundy were frequent visitors to Carnton, as were neighbors John Bell and Matthew Fontaine Maury.

In addition to the realms of significance stated, Carnton played a unique part in the Civil War, perhaps never equalled by any other site. Since it was on the battlefield during the Battle of Franklin, many of the dead and dying were brought there. After dark on the day of the battle, wagons began unloading their cargoes of over three hundred wounded and dying soldiers. / Mrs. McGavock tore up every piece of white linen, damask, and cotton, as well as much of the family clothing, to bind up the wounds. On the rear veranda were placed the bodies of five Confederate generals -Pat Cleburne, John Adams, States Rights Gist, Hiram Granbury, and Otho Strahl - all killed during the battle. Here their bodies were prepared for burial. In no other battle of the war were so many generals killed. In 1866, when Colonel McGavock found that the wooden headstones of the soldiers buried on the battlefield were being destroyed, he donated two acres adjacent to his family cemetery to be used as a burying place for the dead. The bodies of 1,481 soldiers were moved to this plot.

Thus, Carnton possesses significance in many areas, and deserves to be preserved as one of the outstanding sites in Tennessee.

9.	MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES					
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	Herbert L. Harper, Director (of i	Field Services IDATE	\dashv		
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12	STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION		NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION			
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	As the designated State Liaison Officer for the Na-		I hereby certify that this property is included in the			
	tional Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law		National Register.			
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