

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Mitchell House

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Castle Heights Military Academy
West Main Street ___ not for publication

city, town Lebanon ___ vicinity of congressional district Fourth

state Tennessee code 047 county Wilson code 189

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Castle Heights Foundation, Inc.

street & number West Main Street

city, town Lebanon ___ vicinity of state Tennessee 37087

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wilson County Courthouse

street & number East Main Street

city, town Lebanon state Tennessee 37087

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historical & Architectural Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date May 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records Tennessee Historical Commission

city, town 4721 Trousdale Drive, Nashville state Tennessee 37220

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<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

The Mitchell House, a large two story, rock-faced masonry building of the Neo-Classical Revival style, is located on the campus of the Castle Heights Military Academy in Lebanon. It faces south and is fronted by a large open lawn with huge scattered trees. Situated at the base of a gently sloping hill on which rests the castellated school for which the academy derived its name, the Mitchell House remains visible from West Main Street as the impressive focal point of the campus entrance.

Built as a residence in 1906 by David E. Mitchell, who with I.W.P. Buchanan established the Castle Heights School in 1902, the Mitchell House was used as such until the mid to late 1920's when the academy acquired the estate and used the building to locate the Junior School. During its service as the Junior School, the mansion has been somewhat altered. The interior changes have resulted in the conversion of the upstairs bedrooms into classrooms, the addition of several restroom facilities, the conversion of main floor rear parlors into offices and a kitchen, and the enclosure of the rear porch as a hallway. In addition, an apartment for the headmaster was added to the rear ell. Other than these alterations, which do not compromise the building's architectural integrity and involve no structural changes, the building appears very much the same as originally designed by the architects, Thompson, Gibel and Asmus.

The Mitchell House is basically rectangular shaped with an offset rear ell and is constructed of rockfaced stone covering two layers of bricks on a foundation of rough cut stone. Its facade is eight bays wide and features a central two-story classical portico. Five pedimented dormers on the low hipped roof provide further accent. At each end of the building are one story porticos. The one facing west extends outward forming a porte cochere. The cut stone foundation, over which is a layer of concrete cut in large blocks, extends from the facade and side elevations to form the base of the three porticos, thus surrounding the building on three sides with a continuous porch. Five offset interior chimneys top the roof which is covered with red clay tile.

The facade is visually balanced by window groupings and the central portico. The central bay grouping of the door and a window on each side is flanked by a set of two windows on the left hand side and by a like set on the right. Also, farther on the right where the facade wall recesses is a window. Directly above each first floor structural opening is a double hung sash window. Each window of the first floor has three lights consisting of two, long and narrow vertical panes of glass topped by a short horizontal pane of glass. All windows have plain wood surrounds, plain smooth stone sills, and rusticated stone lintels. The front door is double-leafed and has a single light, leaded and beveled glass transom which is topped by a flat hood. Its surrounds are of cut stone and feature quoins. The four wooden, fluted columns of the portico are of the Composite order and rest on large, square smooth dressed stone blocks. Two stone pilasters, which give the appearance of helping support the portico, also rest on stone blocks. The modillions and dentil course of the Corinthian entablature continue around the entire roof as a metal frieze separating the roof from the walls.

The side elevation facing west is accented by a projecting polygonal bay extending two full stories in height. Each of its sides have a long, narrow one-over-one light window on both stores. The second bay from the left is a single-leaf glazed door which is surrounded by leaded and beveled glass sidelights and a transom. Its surrounds are wood and it is topped by a flat keystone head of smooth dressed stone. Above the doorway on

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	OCT 2 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

the second floor is a wide, four-over-four light window. The third bay is a window like those of the first floor on the facade. Over it, on the second story is a one-over-two light window. Another window like those of the first floor facade comprises the fourth bay on the far right, above which is a one-over-one light window like those of the second story facade. The window surrounds, lintels, and sills are all like those of the facade. Two pedimented dormers are located on the hipped roof of this end section above the second and third bays. The portico and porte cochere which provide further accent are of the Ionic order and are supported by five groupings of two and three smooth wooden columns.

In the rear, the Mitchell House is irregularly shaped. The ell is offset to the left and has a hipped roof which extends from the main rectangular portion of the building. On the right side of the main portion, the end section's hipped roof is adjacent to the main portion of the building. Therefore, its rear elevation protrudes from that of the main building. This protrusion has only one double hung sash window with a transom light located on the first floor to the left. The central section of the rear elevation is that of the main rectangular portion of the building. Its original one story porch has been enclosed and only the entablature and foundation of the original porch remain. Above the porch is a large decorative window of leaded glass on the second story. The glass of the window, its sidelights, and transom is beveled as well. To this window's right is a narrow one-over-one light window. Two plain hipped dormers are found centered on the roof of this section.

The ell has been altered somewhat with several additions. On the side facing west only the two plain hipped dormers of the roof and three windows of the original construction can be seen. The wide window of the first floor is centered on this elevation and has two-over-four lights. Above it is a one-over-one light window. To the right on the second floor is another like window. Each window is trimmed like those of the facade. The rear elevation of the ell has three windows which have wood surrounds and smooth stone sills. One very small light window is situated to the left of a narrow one-over-one light window on the first floor. On the second floor and also on the left side of this elevation is a large one-over-one light window. A single plain hipped dormer is centered on the roof above. The side elevation of the ell facing east is four bays wide and has two dormers on the roof above the first and second bays from the left. The first bay consists of a set on both stories of separate narrow one-over-one light windows which share the same stone lintel. The second bay from the left consists of two windows, one over the other, which are like those of the second story facade. The third bay has two like windows situated the same. A more narrow, one-over-one light window on the first floor comprises the fourth bay on the far right.

The additions to the ell consist of a partly brick and weatherboarded frame room which is attached on the first floor to the right-hand corner of the ell. The frame side facing west has a group of three six-over-six light windows to the left and a modern single leaf door to the right. One like window is located on the frame side facing

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DATE ENTERED	DEC 7 6 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

north. Moving around this addition to the brick side which faces east, is a one-over-one light window with wood surrounds and a stone sill. An entablature like that of the rear porch remains as evidence that this may have been a portico originally. On the second story above the addition, the corner has been weatherboarded with each of its two sides having a one-over-one light window with plain surrounds of wood.

The side elevation of the main portion of the building which faces east is symmetrically formed by projections. It has two projections, one to the left of the central bay and one to the right. Each projection has four one-over-one light windows which are situated one above the other on the north and south sides of the projections. The projection on the right-hand also has a double window, each side having one-over-one lights located on the first story. The window has decorative wood surrounds and a leaded and beveled glass transom. Directly above on the second story is another double window minus the transom.

The central bay of the east side elevation consists of a single-leaf glazed door with leaded and beveled glass sidelights and a transom. The doorway is surmounted by a flat keystone head of smooth dressed stone. Located on the second floor above is a large casement window. All windows described above have surrounds, sills, and lintels like those of the facade. This elevation is further accented by a plain hipped dormer centered on the roof above and by the portico which extends the length of the elevation. It too, is of the Ionic order and its smooth round columns are grouped in twos. A wood balustrade connects the columns except between those in the center where concrete steps lead to the porch and east side entrance of the building and on the facade side.

Particularly fine interior details and woodwork reflect the Neo-Classical Revival influence and have survived completely unchanged in the three front rooms of the first floor. The library features Phillipine mahogany paneling on the upper walls and beamed ceiling, which is ornately carved, and a floor-to-ceiling Italian marble mantel. Bookcases of leaded glass doors reach half way to the ceiling and surround the room. Settles are built in on each side of the fireplace and the windows have built in seats. The entrance hall reflects the same grandeur in its oak paneling, fluted Ionic columns and pilasters, and grand double curve with landing staircase. An unusual feature of the staircase is the paneling and formal doorway underneath. The door is a solid piece of curved wood. The parlor is decorated with onate carved woodwork which is painted white and with cloth covered plaster panels. The fireplace serves as the focal point of the room and features a high arched mirror that is highlighted with a wooden swag and gold-leafed wooden ribbons over the mantel. All the original hanging and wall light fixtures remain, as well as several rugs and some furnishings in each room. The moulding and other decoration such as seen in the mantles, paneling, beamed ceilings, columns, and huge sliding doors remain intact throughout the building on both floors.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 2 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

A small original springhouse, which is round and surrounded by Doric columns, is located behind the Mitchell House and is presently used as a gun house for the school. It too, reflects the high style of the Neo-Classical Revival.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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 _____ **Builder/Architect** Thompson, Gibel, and Asmus

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mitchell House, built in 1906 by David E. Mitchell, is an outstanding example of residential buildings of the Neo-Classical Revival style. It stands today as one of the most architecturally important buildings of this century in the city of Lebanon and in the county. The unaltered elaborate ornamentation of the interior woodwork and grandeur of the classical fenestration and monumental proportions of the building's exterior are unparalleled by any other twentieth century public or residential building in this predominantly rural area of Tennessee.

David E. Mitchell was born in Pennsylvania in 1876. By the age of seventeen he graduated from the Normal School at California, Pennsylvania and by nineteen he had become an editor of a newspaper and an extensive dealer in coal and iron properties. At twenty-six, just after he received the B.A. degree from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Mitchell became the youngest president the university had ever had. In 1902, he, along with I.W.P. Buchanan, established the Castle Heights School.

Then, in 1906 construction of Mitchell's home was begun. It was designed by the architects, George W. Thompson, Henry Gibel, and Christian A. Asmus. Thompson, Gibel and Asmus were the architects of many other important buildings in Nashville, such as the Arcade, and were the supervising architects of the Carnegie library in 1904. The stone mason for this large rock-faced mansion was Robert Wolfenden.

The Mitchell family occupied the building until 1923 when the children moved to Florida. However, Mr. Mitchell, saddened by the death of his wife in 1919 had mysteriously left Tennessee shortly thereafter. The home remained unoccupied for several years until the school, which had become a military academy in 1914, purchased the estate in the mid to late 1920's to locate the Junior School.

It has been during the mansion's service as the Junior School that it has undergone minor alterations. The upstairs bedrooms were used as a dormitory, then as classrooms and continue to be used as such. A modern kitchen was built into the rear first story room and the offices which the administrative staff now use were moved into the other rear rooms. Also, an apartment was added to and in the rear ell for the headmaster. Despite these alterations, the Mitchell House retains its architectural integrity and quality craftsmanship and construction.

Mr. Mitchell's ambition and prosperity are still reflected in the lavish stone mansion. The architectural details of the exterior and the interior, particularly in the three front rooms of the first floor, remain as originally constructed. Not only is the exterior of the Mitchell House truly reflective of the high Neo-Classical Revival style which can be seen in the typical Greek porticos, frieze, and stone embellishments, but the elaborate interior reflects the architectural tastes of the period as well.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Burns, G. Frank. "Man of Genius and Energy." The Lebanon Democrat, 1978.
 Herndon, Joseph L. "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930. A Dictionary." Thesis presented to the Graduate School of Architecture at Columbia University, May 1975.
 Interview with Virginia Lawlor in Lebanon on May 11, 1979

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 4.42
 Quadrangle name Lebanon, Tennessee

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>562190</u>	<u>4007380</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The property nominated is a quadrilateral tract which contains acres and is shown on the accompanying Tennessee State Equalization Board map No 68G of Lebanon, Wilson County. The tract includes the Mitchell House and its associated springhouse as well as the lawn which

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shain Terrell, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization Mid-Cumberland Council of Governments date September 18, 1979

street & number Suite 600, 501 Union Building telephone (901) 244-1212

city or town Nashville state Tennessee 37219

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Herbert L. Hays

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 9/25/79

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

Sally G. Oldham date 12/16/79
 Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Beth Groves date 12/1/79
 Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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RECEIVED	OCT 2 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Adam Revival influence is seen in the parlor which boasts of ornate carved woodwork painted white and cloth brocade panels. The Adam motif is highlighted in the fireplace which features a high arched mirror crowned by a wooden swag and gold-leafed wooden ribbons over the mantel. An unusual feature of the interior, which is not commonly found in the United States that also speaks of the Adam Revival is the solid wood curved door beneath the grand staircase in the entrance hall. However, primarily the Renaissance Revival style is illustrated in the entrance hall through the use of golden oak paneling and coffered ceiling and classical columns and pilasters. The library portrays another period influence, the "Old English" look, in its Phillipine mahogany paneling and beamed ceiling which features acanthus leaf medallions in its soffits and ornately carved moulding, built in settles on either side of the floor-to-ceiling Italian marble mantle and window seats, and bookcases of leaded glass doors reaching halfway to the ceiling which surround the room. Original William and Mary wall sconces and Gothic-reminiscent chandeliers further suggest the "Old English" look. Original light fixtures, rugs, and a few furnishings remain in all three of the downstairs front rooms as well as the intact ornate woodwork and paneling.

The Mitchell House impressively stands practically unaltered as an excellent example of the high Neo-Classical Revival style as represented in a residential structure and among the city and county's most architecturally significant buildings of the twentieth century.

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FOR HCRS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 2 1979
DATE ENTERED	DEC 6 1979

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE 2

faces West Main Street.