

# ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SURVEY TIPTON COUNTY, TENNESSEE



Written for:

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## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

SECTION I - INTRODUCTION & PROJECT LOCATION...	3
SECTION II - METHODOLOGY.....	5
SECTION III - HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	8
SECTION IV - EVALUATION OF SURVEYED SITES.....	22
SECTION V - SUMMARY AND NATIONAL REGISTER RECOMMENDATIONS.....	48
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	53

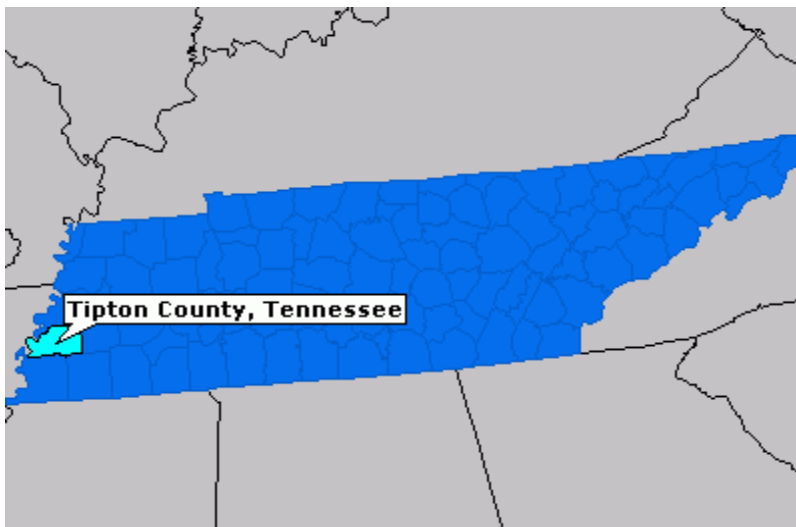
## **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION & PROJECT LOCATION**

The Tennessee Historical Commission (THC) is the state's historic preservation agency and one of its important programs is the architectural and historical inventory of the state's cultural resources. This inventory is a significant part of historic preservation and community planning since it provides basic data on the location, condition and architectural character of buildings and structures. While most counties in West Tennessee had been inventoried in recent decades, Tipton County remained as a notable exception. With matching funds provided by the Tipton County Government, the THC funded the completion of an architectural and historical survey in 2009 and an inventory was conducted between March and September of 2010. This survey was completed by Thomason and Associates of Nashville, Tennessee (Contractor).

Tipton County is located in southwest Tennessee with the Mississippi River serving as its western border and the Hatchie River forming its northern boundary. The county is largely rural in character and agriculture has historically played an important role in the local economy. Covington is the largest town in the county and serves as the county seat. Munford, Atoka, Mason, Gilt Edge, Burlison, Garland and Brighton are the incorporated areas of the county while Drummonds, Egypt, Mt. Carmel, and Idaville are representative of the many small communities in the county. The county has a variety of topographical features including the rich alluvial soils along the Mississippi River, hilly terrain in its western section and rolling farmland to the north, south and east of Covington.

With a land area of 459 square miles, Tipton County is historically a rural, agriculturally-oriented county. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was noted for its cotton production but by the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century it had diversified with soybeans, wheat and corn as other major cash crops. The county retained its predominantly rural character until after World War II when the suburban areas of Memphis began expanding to the north. This expansion has resulted in extensive residential development in the southern section of the county. Since 1980, the county's population has doubled from approximately 33,000 residents to 60,000. In addition to its rural character, Tipton County has a number of small communities which were developed along the county's railroad lines such as Mason in the southeast corner of the county and Brighton and Atoka south of Covington. The coming of the railroads in the 19<sup>th</sup> century played a major role in the development of the county as did the construction of US Highway 51 in the 1920s. US Highway 51 runs through the county in a north/south direction and is the major federal highway in this section of the state. The highway connects the county seat of Covington with Memphis, approximately 34 miles to the south, and along this highway are many commercial businesses.

Prior to 2010, survey efforts had included a study of the central section of the county for the proposed Interstate 69 project. Conducted 2000-2002, this survey examined properties within the proposed right-of-way of several alternatives both east and west of the county seat of Covington. This project resulted in the survey of fifty-one properties. Other survey and registration efforts have included the listing of two residential historic districts in Covington on the National Register of Historic Places as well as over a dozen individual properties scattered throughout the county. The architectural survey completed in 2010 resulted in the inventory of 756 properties and provides additional recommendations for National Register listing and other preservation efforts.



Location of Tipton County, Tennessee.



Map of Tipton County showing US 51 and other major roads.

## **SECTION II: METHODOLOGY**

Prior to initiating fieldwork, the Contractor obtained USGS quad maps and historic maps of Tipton County from the Tennessee State Library and Archives. The Contractor also reviewed previously published histories, National Register-listed resources, and historic photos of Tipton County, its county seat of Covington, and the larger towns such as Atoka, Munford, Mason, Brighton, etc. The Contractor agreed to complete field surveys of 700 properties built prior to 1960 within the county and to note the location of representative buildings constructed between 1950 and 1960. The field survey included the completion of inventory forms from the Tennessee Historical Commission and includes both digital and black and white photography.

Approximately one-fourth of the county was inventoried by the Contractor in 2000-2002 for the proposed Interstate 69 project. Properties within the proposed Interstate 69 corridors were not inventoried again since the existing survey data is less than ten years old. Properties within the South Main Street and South College Street Historic Districts in Covington were not surveyed since they are listed on the National Register. However, there was an examination of the district boundaries and current integrity and recommendations for future actions.

The alternative routes of proposed Interstate 69 travel north to south through the middle of Tipton County. This area has been primarily an agricultural area since its settlement in the early 19th century. The Consultant inventoried fifty-one primary buildings in Tipton County for this project. The majority of these were one-story dwellings constructed from ca. 1880 to ca. 1940. In addition to the dwellings, five commercial buildings, two churches, one cemetery, and one school were documented within the project area. A total of 58 properties were noted and photographed but not inventoried due to their degree of alteration or lack of integrity. One property in the I-69 project area, Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Retaining its predominantly rural character, Tipton County experienced steady growth in employment opportunities and population, especially since World War II due to the close proximity to Memphis and the Millington Naval Station. This settlement pattern in Tipton County influenced the survey methodology and the architecture available for survey. Guided by U.S. Geological Quad maps, the survey covered every accessible road within Tipton County. The earliest editions of relevant quad maps for Tipton County date from 1952-1972; photo-revised editions occurred from 1973-1983, indicating new buildings.

Field survey commenced mid-April, 2010 and was completed in October, 2010. Project Manager Peggy Nickell completed survey forms and interviewed available residents, while assisted by Phil Thomason and Andra Martens, in the rural areas each of whom completed digital and black and white photography and the corresponding photo logs. At each property interviews with occupants or property owners was attempted. Where no one was available, a questionnaire was left to be completed by the owner or occupant and mailed back to the Contractor. Seventy-one (71) questionnaires were returned providing more information on the surveyed properties.

The survey began within the legal boundaries of the incorporated communities of Garland, Burlison and Gilt Edge in the northwest and west sections of the county. It then progressed into the communities of Munford and Atoka in the central section of the county. Surveying continued into the north and central section of the county into the legal city limits of Covington and included the downtown courthouse square. The survey then shifted to include sections of the rural communities and area of Tipton County located to the east and northeast (Gift, Antioch, etc) then into the northern sections (Rialto & Leigh's Chapel), then northwest (Mt. Lebanon, Detroit and Walnut Grove). The incorporated community of

Brighton was then surveyed and the rural areas of Gainesville, Tabernacle, Ebenezer, Cannan Grove in the eastern half of the county were surveyed. Focus shifted to the far western portion of the county in the communities of Randolph, Richardsons Landing, St. Paul, Quito, Dixonville, Wilkinsville, Peckerwood Point and Drummonds. With the assistance of Shawn Anderson at the Tipton County GIS Planning Department, Mason in the southeast corner of the county was surveyed along with the properties in the Clopton and Mt. Carmel communities. The Charleston community and its surrounding were then surveyed. The rural areas were completed with a survey of the communities of Beaver, Double Bridges, Hopewell, Egypt, Holly Grove and Akins Corner on the west side of Highway 51. Trends in vernacular architectural form, property size, construction material and date of construction were evident within local areas, reinforcing the historic record of settlement patterns, population stability or movement of small communities and the historic use of the landscape.

Buildings were candidates for survey that appeared to date from pre-1960 and that retained substantial historic architectural fabric. This could and did include buildings in some state of disrepair. If a building possessed a combination of replacement features (i.e., replacement siding, doors, windows, and roof) it was deemed altered beyond useful survey. In general, buildings that possessed any two replacement elements usually were completely altered. Many buildings displayed non-historic roofing materials while still retaining all other original elements, such as doors and windows. In addition to replacement elements, alterations and additions were noted. Some buildings were too deteriorated to warrant survey and the incidence of razed dwellings, evidenced by small stands of large trees and/or house-less outbuildings, has resulted in significant attrition of historic architecture from the landscape.

Dates for construction of buildings were determined in the field, consulting USGS maps and their revised editions. Determination was also guided by familiarity with architectural trends regarding styles, forms, and building materials and their periods of popularity.<sup>1</sup> Every building surveyed was assigned a survey number, beginning with "TP-70" through "TP-826," for 756 individual primary buildings. Each of these resources is represented in an individual file folder containing the associated media (survey form with sketch, black and white photos, any miscellaneous literature provided by property owner). Additionally, each primary resource was photographed digitally and this electronic data accompanies this report.

Outbuildings such as barns, sheds, garages, chicken coops, and smokehouses were also photographed as above and noted within the survey form of its primary structure. Buildings that appeared to date between 1950 and 1960 were not fully surveyed unless considered a good representative example, rather merely noted on the USGS Quadrangle for future survey. Bridges were not surveyed, since a statewide bridge survey has been conducted. Several surveyed properties were surveyed as a complex with each individual building receiving a form labeled with the TP # and designated by a letter. Both individual cemeteries and those cemeteries associated with churches were surveyed if deemed historically significant. Each cemetery was photographed, and historical information was recorded (e.g., approximate number of headstones, general period, oldest headstone date, family names).

An important goal of the survey project was the evaluation of buildings for eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This evaluation was conducted on an individual basis at each dwelling site in rural areas. Within Covington, two historic districts are already listed and several surrounding properties were deemed eligible for inclusion in an expansion of these district boundaries.

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<sup>1</sup> A common reference for such information is *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Lee and Virginia McAlester. This study also referenced "Historic Family Farms in Middle Tennessee: A Multiple Property Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1995" by Carroll Van West.)

Properties in three additional areas on North Maple, East Liberty and West Liberty have retained sufficient historical integrity for inclusion in a possible historic district designation. These buildings were evaluated on an individual basis, though with consideration for possible inclusion in the above or separate district(s). The downtown area of Covington also appears to possess some blocks that meet National Register criteria.

## SECTION III: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Tipton County was formed in 1823 from a portion of Shelby County. Prior to white settlement the area that is now West Tennessee was largely occupied by the Chickasaws. In 1818 Andrew Jackson and Isaac Shelby negotiated with the Chickasaws to acquire the land in what became known as the Jackson Purchase. The land was subsequently divided into five districts and the area became open to settlement in 1819. Much of the land was owned by North Carolina citizens who had received Revolutionary War land grants. Among those who received grants in Tipton County were James Robertson, John Rice, Thomas Polk, and John Estes. Grants were given in tracts of 1,500 to 5,000 acres, but few of the owners settled the land.<sup>2</sup> Typically the land changed hands several times and was broken down into smaller parcels before individuals came to establish homes on the property.

The bulk of early settlers in what is now Tipton County came from Middle and East Tennessee with a few pioneers from Virginia, Kentucky, and the Carolinas. Jacob Tipton, Nathan Hartsfield, Marquis Calmes, J.F. Brown, F. Marshall, and Thomas Ralph initiated the first settlement in the county in 1821-1822 near the present site of Covington. By 1823, Jesse Benton and M. Phillips started a settlement along the Mississippi River, and a settlement on Indian Creek was begun by the Holshouser, Jarbro, Kutbeth and Matthews families. In 1824, R. H. Rose, Henry Turnage and S. Persons made a settlement along Big Creek.<sup>3</sup>

On October 29, 1823, the General Assembly officially established Tipton County, which was named for Captain Jacob Tipton. In 1824, commissioners selected a site for the county seat on land donated by Tyree Rhodes, John McLemore and James Vault. The site was near the center of the county and was given the name Covington after Leonard Wales Covington, a native of Maryland who was killed in the battle of Chrysler's Field.<sup>4</sup> In 1836, a large portion of Tipton County was taken to form the new county of Lauderdale to the north. This action reduced the area of Tipton County approximately 440 square miles. Covington, the county seat, no longer held a central location in the county, but was situated close to its new northern border, the Hatchie River.<sup>5</sup>

The town of Covington was platted into 106 lots, which were sold at public auction April 12, 1825. By July a small frame courthouse was erected. This building was replaced by a two-story brick structure in 1830. During this same year the first jail was also constructed.<sup>6</sup> James K. Hamilton opened Covington's first store in 1824, and Harry Williams soon followed with the town's first tavern. Other early merchants include Clark & Harper, W.H. Small, Samuel Gilliland, Holmes & Adams, Booker & Clarkson, Cornelius O'Conner, Vincent & Smith, James N. Smith, Brown & Smither, and W.C. Hazen. The financial panic of 1837 hit Covington's merchants hard and greatly diminished the town's emerging business district. Commercial development in Covington remained stagnate with little improvement until the 1870s. Between 1837 and

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<sup>2</sup>*History of Tennessee From the Earliest Times to the Present, Together with a Biographical Sketch of Lauderdale, Tipton, Haywood, and Crockett Counties* (Nashville, TN: The Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887), 808.

<sup>3</sup>Goodspeed, 808.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid*; *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, Carroll Van West, ed. (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 979.

<sup>5</sup>Goodspeed, 810.

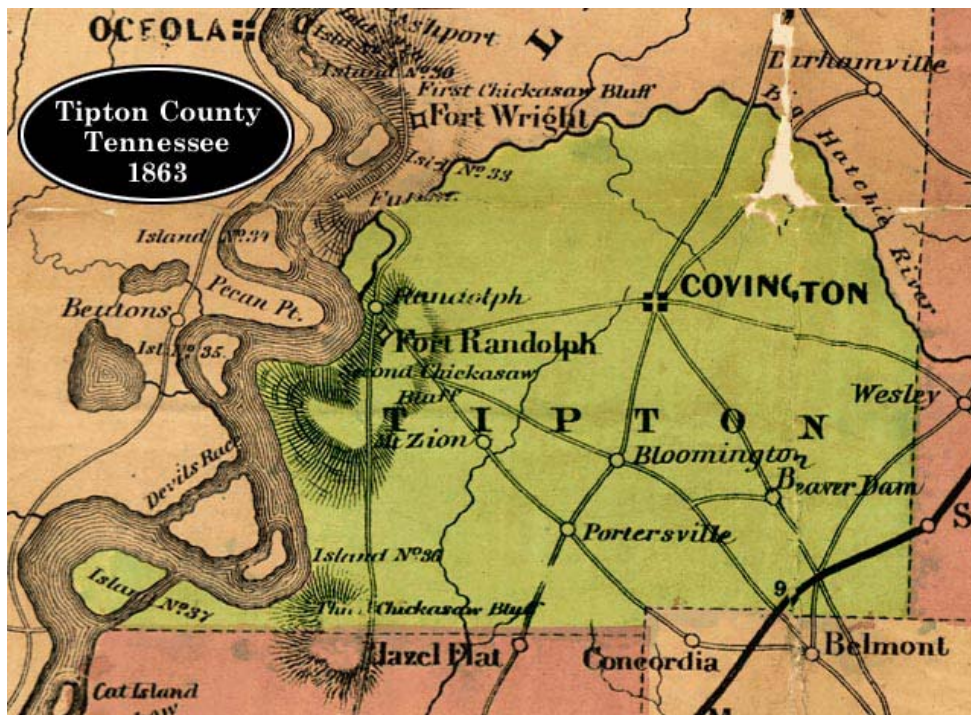
<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, 810; 813.



1850, only six merchants operated in the town. Advancements made in the 1850s were soon suppressed by the circumstances of the Civil War.<sup>7</sup>

Although Covington was the county seat, the earliest and most prosperous town in Tipton County was that of Randolph along the Mississippi River below its junction with the Hatchie River. Randolph was founded around 1822 and due to its location near the mouth of the Hatchie River, it served as the primary shipping and receiving port for Tipton, Haywood, Fayette, Madison, and Hardeman Counties. Goods from these areas were shipped up the Hatchie River, which was navigable as far as Bolivar in Hardeman County. As a result, business in Randolph flourished. Several extensive general stores operated in the town, and all purchased cotton. Early merchants included Nathaniel Potter, Milton Hunt, Montcrief & Postlewaith, Rose & Brothers, and Smither & Bowles. In 1839, Professor J. Mariner and his sister established the Randolph Institute to provide education to the town's youth.<sup>8</sup>

By the early 1860s, Randolph was home to around 300 people and was West Tennessee's chief business point along the Mississippi north of Memphis. However, with the Civil War came destruction as Federal troops burned the entire town. Following the war Randolph was slow to recover. From 1865 to 1870 only two merchants, Angus & Chatman and James Dickey, were in operation. The total number of merchants rose only to four in the following decade, and in 1885 the town again was devastated by fire. By the late 1880s, Randolph had less than 150 residents and just two general stores.<sup>9</sup>



Map of Tipton County showing the location of Randolph. Source: Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA).

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 813.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 814-815.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 815.

In 1832, some residents of Randolph and Covington formed the Big Hatchie Turnpike and Bridge Company. The organization intended to construct a road from Haywood County to the Hatchie River and build a bridge across the river near Indian Bluff. The road would provide towns in the county's interior to have access to the Mississippi River and the markets it reached. The board of directors included John T. Brown, Edmund Booker, Daniel A. Dunham, and Dan Vaught. Construction of the turnpike soon began. Slaves did most of the labor, and their \$10 monthly wage went to their owners.<sup>10</sup>

The bridge and part of the turnpike were completed in October of 1833, and a toll collector was appointed. Problems, however, plagued the company, as tolls proved difficult to collect and honest toll collectors difficult to secure. Work on the turnpike slowed and in December of 1835, it was still not completed. The following year the bridge became impassible due to faulty construction. The Randolph faction of the board of directors took charge of the company and new stock was sold. Despite this renewed effort, the company continued to suffer financially and work on the road ceased. A final effort to save the company came in 1839, when the state purchased half of its stock with the stipulation that state funds were to be used only in equal amounts to those collected from delinquent stockholders. This too proved futile as leadership in the organization failed. By the 1840s, high waters had destroyed the bridge, and a ferry took its place. The lack of funds also led to the deterioration of the turnpike itself, which few people used. The company finally dissolved in 1849.<sup>11</sup>

As time passed, the turnpike faded from disuse, and the area around it gradually was consumed by woods and farmland. A rebirth of the turnpike occurred in the late 1920s as a group of property owners along a section of the old roadbed organized a program to reestablish the road. The road would link Covington, Tipton's county seat, to Brownsville, the seat of county government in Haywood County. The service of a ferry was also to be renewed. In 1928, the state offered to maintain the road once the counties built it. The state eventually paved the road, which it designated State Route 54.<sup>12</sup>

A number of settlers arrived in Tipton County in the 1830s. By 1840 the county's population reached 6,800. A decade later 8,887 individuals lived in the county.<sup>13</sup> Early roads were established from Covington. One led to McKean's Landing on the Hatchie River, and another, known as the Benton Trace, extended from the county seat to the bluffs on the Mississippi. Eventually a road was constructed from Covington to Randolph and from Brownsville in Haywood County to Randolph. In 1833, a mail coach line was established in the county. The route initially traveled between Jackson and Randolph and later extended to Covington. The route was not in service for long before it was discontinued due to its length and expense.<sup>14</sup>

Churches and schools were important institutions established early in the county's history. The first church was organized and erected in Tipton County around 1823. It was led by the Primitive Baptists and met in a log meeting house on Gogins' Creek about fifteen miles southwest of Covington. In 1825, the Primitive Baptists also erected Indian Creek Church seven miles from the county seat.<sup>15</sup> Other denominations soon

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<sup>10</sup>Gaylon Neil Beasley, *True Tales of Tipton* (Covington, TN: Tipton County Historical Society, 1981), 3.

<sup>11</sup>Beasley, 4.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 5.

<sup>13</sup>Goodspeed, 811.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 809.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., 816.

followed and churches gradually appeared throughout the county. The Old School Presbyterians organized in Covington around 1829. They held services in the courthouse for a period of ten years before erecting a frame church. The denomination also formed churches in Mason and Atoka in 1881. The Missionary Baptists erected Charleston Church in 1835 and Smyrna Church in 1845. In 1836, the Methodists erected their first church in Tipton County in Covington, and formed the Clopton Campground and Church just south of Covington in 1837. The Cumberland Presbyterians erected Bethel Church in 1835, and Ebenezer in 1836. The Episcopalians first built churches in Randolph and Ravenscroft in 1839 and 1840. The first church of the Christians or Church of Christ was built in Covington in 1876, and a Roman Catholic Church was organized there that same year.<sup>16</sup>

One of Tipton County's earliest schools was established in the Robinson settlement northwest of Covington around 1822. The county male academy was established in Covington in 1827. James Holmes established the Mountain Academy in 1834. Holmes had been a missionary to the Chickasaws and brought several of the tribe's members to the Mountain Academy, which was initially housed in a log cabin and served both male and female students. It was conducted by James Byars until 1858, when the school was abandoned. Byars then established Tipton Male High School. The Tipton Female Seminary was organized in Covington in 1854, and the Randolph Institute was established in that town in 1839. A school was erected in the town of Mason in 1885, and many other schools continued to be built throughout the county as its population steadily increased.<sup>17</sup> In 1885, Tipton County contained forty-five schools for white children, and thirty-five schools for African-American children. Student enrollment came to 1,250 white males, 1,220 white females, 850 black males, and 1,090 black females. Twenty-three white male teachers, thirty white female teachers, nineteen black male teachers, and 12 black female teachers taught the students.<sup>18</sup>

Agriculture was the primary livelihood of most settlers, and grain and saw mills along with cotton gins were common industries throughout the 19th century. Thomas Ralph built the first horse-powered grist mill in the county around 1823 near Covington. In this same vicinity, Henry Yarbrow built the first water-powered mill the following year. Joseph White and Aquilla Davis operated a water-powered mill on Indian Creek eight miles from Covington in 1825, and William Starnes had a similar mill on a stream near the village of Atoka in 1826. John Mickleberry operated a horsepowered mill on Pea Ridge south of Covington in 1830. Both Ralph and Mickleberry also operated cotton gins. Other gins in the county were located in Covington and operated by John Hightower and William Simonton.<sup>19</sup>

Tipton County, along with other counties bordering the Mississippi River, contained the region's richest soil; however, settlers were hesitant to move into these areas due to their reputation of having unhealthful air. The lands were subject to overflow and air near the river was considered to be debilitating.<sup>20</sup> But the area's fertile soil and its growing reputation for profitable cotton production gradually drew settlers west.

Corn was one of the primary crops of early settlers. Its many uses and easy growth made it a staple on practically every farm. During the first few years of settlement, residents focused on clearing land and

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 816.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., 815.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 815-816.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 809.

<sup>20</sup>Bette Baird Tilly, "Aspects of Social and Economic Life in West Tennessee Before the Civil War," (Ph.D. diss., Memphis State University, 1974), 101.

raising a sustenance crop of corn. As they became more familiar with the soil, they began to plant cash crops for profit. Commercial agriculture developed rapidly as settlers realized the profit in cotton production. Between 1820 and 1826, cotton production in Tennessee rose from 20,000,000 pounds to 45,000,000. A large percentage of that amount is attributed to West Tennessee. In 1829, the region produced 50,000 bales.<sup>21</sup>

Cotton production proved lucrative to many West Tennessee farmers, as the cost of land was low and the crop yield was high. The crop yielded an average of one thousand pounds of seed cotton per acre, and land typically cost between two to five dollars per acre. The yield typically passed that of older states where cotton production was well established and had weakened the soil. West Tennessee also produced a high quality grade of cotton, which received international awards. At the 1850 London Exposition, West Tennessee cotton was acknowledged as "second only to the Sea Island cotton of Georgia."<sup>22</sup> In addition, cotton prices rose substantially. From 1827 to the mid-1830s, prime cotton rose from eight cents to fifteen and occasionally twenty cents a pound. In 1840, Tipton County planters produced 1,015,892 pounds of cotton, which brought a wholesale price of approximately \$91,430.<sup>23</sup>

Land quickly became consumed with cotton as planters concentrated on bringing in a quick and viable profit. Consequences of the focus on cotton resulted in a growing dependency on other areas for products and a depletion of the soil's fertility. The land's fertility was often exhausted as planters heeded little attention to crop rotation or replenishment of the soil. Continuous planting of cotton then required large amounts of unimproved land, which was in limited supply. Over time as usable land became less available, some planters moved to Texas or Arkansas, others reduced their cotton production and made less profit.<sup>24</sup> In growing more and more cotton, planters also moved away from self-sufficiency. In 1840, West Tennessee planters largely grew their own foodstuffs, including wheat, corn, fruits and vegetables, and livestock, in addition to cotton. In 1860, cotton growers tied up most of their land in cotton and purchased more provisions. By 1860, the impact of the concentration of cotton began to show. Nearby counties with more diversified agriculture were growing and their economies increasing compared to those that focused on cotton.<sup>25</sup>

Cotton was, however, king during the antebellum period in West Tennessee and Tipton County. With an increase in cotton production also came an increase of slaves, as cotton was a labor intensive crop. Large cotton plantations developed in the region, and the number of slaves in West Tennessee was far greater than in the rest of the state. The approximate ratio of slaves to whites in East Tennessee was one to twelve; in Middle Tennessee, one to three; and in West Tennessee the slave to white ratio was three to five. Due to its cotton production West Tennessee was also home to a greater number of large slaveholders. Over 85 individuals in West Tennessee owned over 100 slaves in 1856. At this same time, only one individual in East Tennessee is recorded as owning that amount. In 1830, Tipton County contained 1,732 slaves. In the same year, only 17 free blacks lived in the county.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Samuel Cole Williams, *The Beginnings of West Tennessee: In the Land of the Chickasaws, 1541-1841* (Johnson City, TN: The Watauga Press, 1930), 203; Tilly, 88-89.

<sup>22</sup>Tilly, 102-103.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 88-89, 92.

<sup>24</sup>Williams, 99, 203.

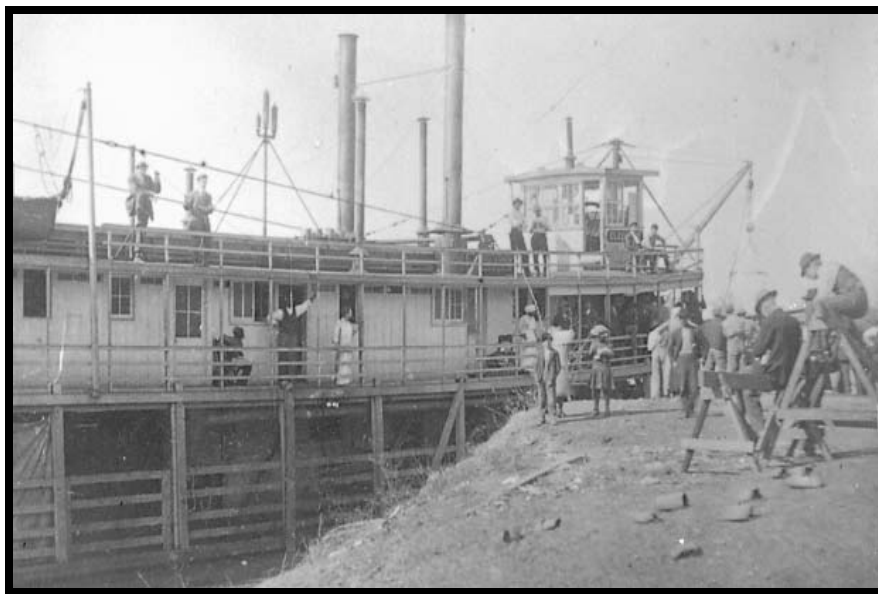
<sup>25</sup>Tilly, 99, 102-103.

<sup>26</sup>Williams, 207-208.

Despite the number of large plantations and the extensive cotton production in the region, there existed a large percentage of small farmers who owned few or no slaves. These farmers primarily relied on their own and their families' labor to produce crops. Reflecting the growing importance of agriculture to the economy, an agricultural society was organized in the county in 1840. The society held exhibitions near Covington until 1844.<sup>27</sup>

Memphis in neighboring Shelby County was the primary market for cotton in the region, but the town of Randolph along the Mississippi River in Tipton County also served as a significant port and market. Prior to 1840, Randolph exceeded Memphis in its amount of cotton shipped with between 35,000 and 40,000 bales transported annually. As a primary shipping point, the town served as one of the largest and most prosperous communities in the county. In 1834, Randolph had 1,000 residents and contained four hotels, close to fifty businesses, and several saloons.<sup>28</sup>

A rail line first appeared in Tipton County in 1859, when the Louisville & Memphis line was completed. This railroad passed through the southern corner of the county.<sup>29</sup> Along its route, the town of Mason's Depot



Steamboat Elenora at a Mississippi River landing in Tipton County ca. 1900. Steamboats were important components of commerce at the turn of the century (Source: TSLA).

was established in 1858. James Mason founded the town when he donated four acres to the railroad for its track and a depot. The town's first merchants, R.T. Broadnax, Joseph A. Green, and M. Stevens, were in operation soon after the railroad was completed. The first hotel opened in 1858 and was kept by James Smith. Business was brisk until the Civil War, when business was largely curtailed. Business resumed in the

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<sup>27</sup>Goodspeed, 811.

<sup>28</sup>Carroll Van West, ed., *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 979-980.

<sup>29</sup>Goodspeed, 810.

post war years, and Mason was incorporated in 1871. Disaster struck the town in January, 1879, as fire destroyed most of its buildings. Fire raged through the town again in the spring of 1883.<sup>30</sup>

During the Civil War, Tipton County suffered from occasional raids by troops, as did most areas in West Tennessee. The county furnished five companies of infantry and cavalry in the conflict. Business came to a stand still, and stock, grain, and firearm supplies were diminished; however, no battles occurred in the county and its residents emerged relatively unscathed. The town of Randolph along the banks of the Mississippi suffered the most damage during the war. It was occupied at various times by both armies, and on September 23, 1862, Confederates fired into the *Eugene*, a Federal packet vessel carrying supplies down the Mississippi. General W.T. Sherman was enraged by the act and retaliated by having the town destroyed by fire. Colonel Charles C. Walcutt and the 46th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regiment carried out the act on September 25, 1862. Residents were given some time to remove their belongings before the fire was started. Only one building, the house of J. H. Barton, was spared. This reportedly was due to the fact that Barton and Walcutt were members of the same lodge. The remainder of the town burned to the ground leaving about twenty families homeless.<sup>31</sup>

Following the Civil War, agriculture remained at the center of the county's economy. Among the top crops were wheat, rye, corn, oats, potatoes, tobacco, and cotton. Swine remained the primary livestock, followed by cattle and sheep. The Tipton County Industrial and Mechanical Association was established in 1871 and was active until 1876. The group had enclosed grounds and buildings where annual fairs were held. In 1870, the population of Tipton County reached 21,033, and by 1886, 25,000 individuals lived in the county.<sup>32</sup> In the post Civil War years, sharecropping or tenant farming came to dominate the agricultural system in the county. In this labor system, landowners provided laborers with land, farming equipment, and other provisions in return for a share of crop sales. The majority of newly freed African Americans became sharecroppers; however, the system greatly favored the landowner, who controlled prices and kept all the records, and landowners commonly took advantage of laborers. Most became captured in a never ending cycle of debt and oppression.

Around 1870, Covington, the county seat, had a population of approximately 900 people. Small villages with about twenty-five to fifty inhabitants were scattered throughout the county. Among them were Rialto, Brighton, Atoka, Mt. Zion, Tabernacle, Garland, Centre, and Charleston. These hamlets typically contained a post office and one to three small stores.<sup>33</sup> In 1870, the county established an asylum for the poor on a 100-acre farm in the Fourth District. In Covington, a new brick jail was erected in 1883 for a cost of \$15,000.<sup>34</sup>

One of the county's more unique developments in the post-Civil War years was Glenn Springs, a resort known for its medicinal waters. A farmer named Ballard near Randolph discovered the springs in the 1860s as he was digging a well on his property. Samuel P. Glenn of Fayette County came to own the property after Ballard's death, and recognizing the potential for profit turned the property into a resort. Glenn developed the land surrounding the springs by building a large hotel and a five-acre lake. Glenn Springs was a thriving

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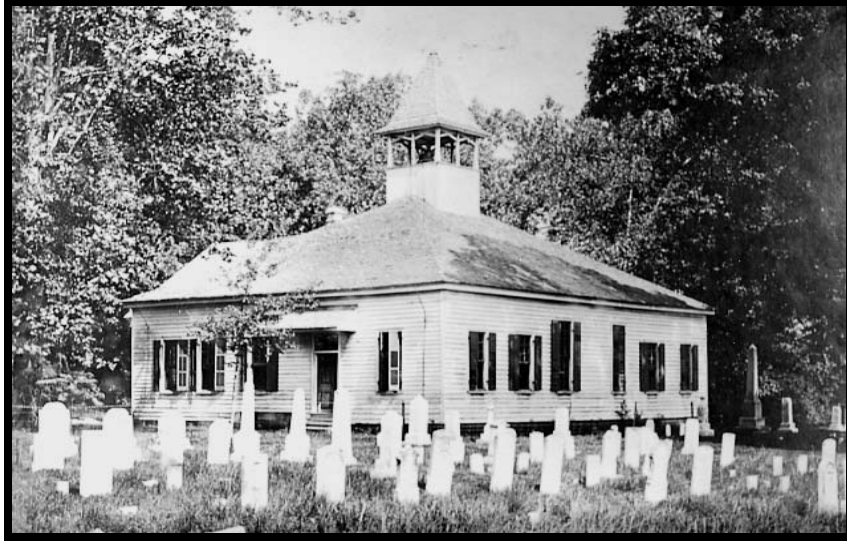
<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 814.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., 818; Beasley, 23-25.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 811.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 814-815.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 810.



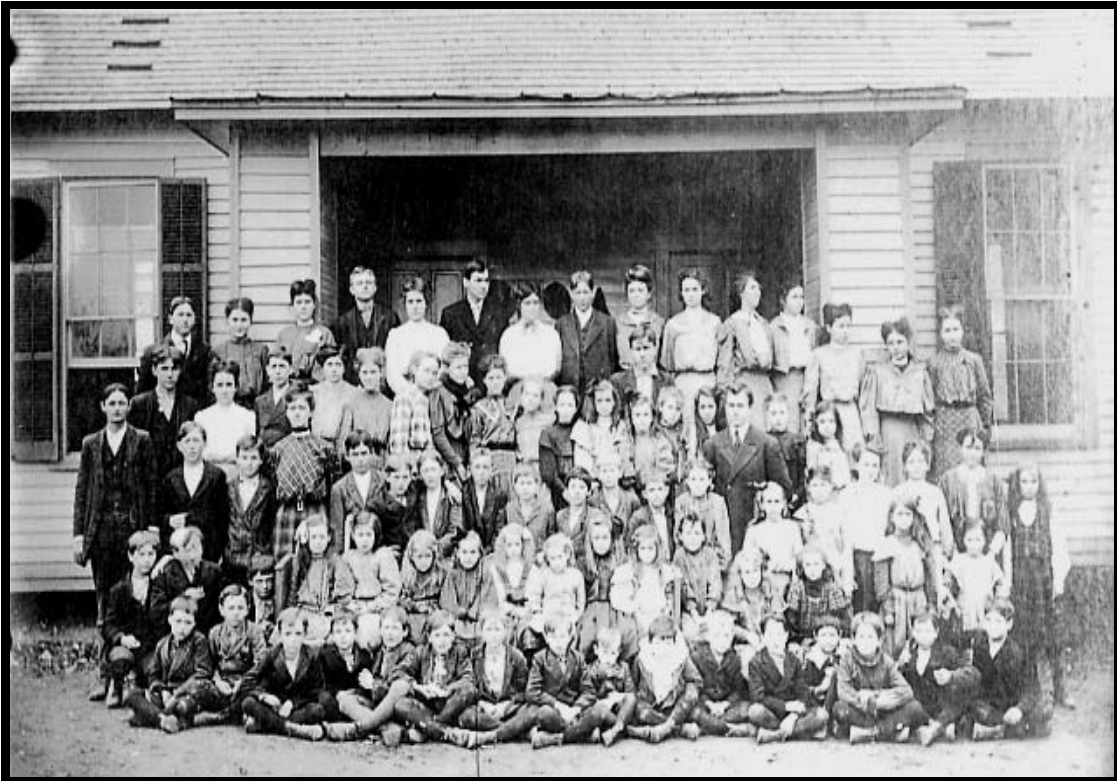
Salem Presbyterian Church, ca. 1900. Located northwest of Idaville, this church is typical of those built at the turn of the century in Tipton County. This church was replaced with a new building at mid-20th century (Source: TSLA).



Cotton in the Covington square ca. 1910 (Source: TSLA).



resort by 1880 and continued to flourish into the 1890s. Glenn's untimely death caused the resort to languish until the property was purchased by Dr. J.E. Blaydes. In 1914, Blaydes sold the resort to his son, Dr. A.B. Blaydes, a physician from Atoka. Blaydes made several improvements to the property and reopened the resort August 5, 1914. He continued to upgrade the property over the years by adding a skating rink, movie theater, dance pavilion, cabins and camping areas, and a bath house with dressing rooms. Glenn Springs soon became known as "The Carlsbad of America," and was one of the leading summer resorts in West Tennessee. Its success continued until shortly after World War I when the popularity of such resorts began to wane.<sup>35</sup> Today, nothing remains of the once prosperous resort.



Phelan School southeast of Covington ca. 1910. This school building was typical of two-room schools of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This building is no longer extant (Source: TSLA).

A second railroad line came to Tipton County after the Civil War and proved to be a boon to Covington, the county seat. The Newport News & Mississippi Valley line was completed from Memphis to Covington in 1872 and on through the county in 1882.<sup>36</sup> During the early part of the nineteenth century, Covington had been isolated from the lucrative steamboat trade and had not developed a significant business or commercial center. The arrival of the railroad opened new economic doors for the town by linking it to greater market potential. As a result, business and industry boomed and the town's population grew substantially. Between 1873 and 1880, the town gained over 6,000 new residents.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Beasley, 67-69.

<sup>36</sup>Goodspeed, 810.

<sup>37</sup>Carroll Van West, ed., *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 979.



Among the new residents were many African Americans, who prior to the days of Jim Crow, took an active part in local government. J.W. Boyd, a member of Covington's black community, was selected to serve on the county court in 1878-1879. In 1880 he was chosen as a state representative. In 1882, the town experienced a setback as fire swept through the streets destroying much of the public square. The town rebounded and by 1888 had added its first two banks. The following year a new three-story courthouse was erected which remains in use today.<sup>38</sup>

In the 1890s, the Newport News and Mississippi Valley line was taken over by the Illinois Central. With the purchase of this line, the Illinois Central system contained over 4,000 miles of track making it the "Main Line of Mid-America." It was a leading carrier of cotton, lumber, coal and corn.<sup>39</sup> Approximately half of the system's length was located in the South. The change substantially increased Covington's connections both north and south, and Covington's economy expanded further. Local businesses offered a wider variety of goods and services, and more professionals moved into the town. During the 1890s the town gained its first telephone service and electric street lights. The three-story Hotel Lindo (NR 12/27/82) was built downtown in 1901, and in 1904, the Covington Milling Company opened a four-story cotton gin factory near the railroad.<sup>40</sup> The Illinois Central takeover also resulted in significant physical changes to Covington's landscape. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries a prosperous residential neighborhood evolved south of the business district. Residents constructed homes reflecting a variety of architectural styles including Queen Anne, Classical Revival, and Bungalow designs, many of which are located in Covington's Currently, two National Register Historic Districts, South Main Street (NR 5/29/92) and South College Street (NR 2/7/97).

Another major physical change to the town was the movement of the rail line itself. After acquiring the line, the Illinois Central relocated the tracks several blocks from west of the business district to east of the square. In 1924-1925, the new U.S. Highway 51 was constructed on the alignment of the old railroad line west of the town square. The new highway ushered in the age of the automobile and a number of businesses cropped up along this corridor. Several Art Deco and International style buildings were constructed along the highway reflecting popular designs of the period. The local Coca-Cola Bottling Company (NR 2-7-97) chose an Art Deco style, as did the Coulston Electrical and Plumbing Supplies business at nearby 204 West Liberty. The Baxter Building located at the corner of U.S. 51 and West Liberty, was constructed in the International style.<sup>41</sup>

In 1920, Tipton County had a population of 30,258, and Covington had reached a population of 3,400. Chief industries at that time included a cotton mill, a cottonseed oil mill, and various manufacturing houses.<sup>42</sup> Another growing industry in Tipton County in the early 20th century centered around entertainment. During the 1920s, movie theaters began to appear in the county. The first appeared in Covington in 1925 when Arkansas native L.L. Lewis established the 500-seat Palace Theatre and

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<sup>38</sup>Carroll Van West, *Tennessee's Historic Landscapes: A Traveler's Guide* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995), 471.

<sup>39</sup>John F. Stover, *The Railroads of the South, 1865-1900: A Study in Finance and Control* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 19??), 185.

<sup>40</sup>West, 471-472.

<sup>41</sup>West, 473-474.

<sup>42</sup>Carroll Van West, ed., *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 979.

converted the 1890 Paine Opera House into a movie theater. But it was William F. Ruffin who's name became synonymous with theaters throughout Tipton County. In 1927, Ruffin started the Ruffin Amusement Company and purchased the Covington theaters from Lewis. He soon extended his chain to include theaters in Newbern, in Dyer County, and in Martin, in Weakley County. In 1929, Ruffin's Palace Theater in Covington, one of few towns its size in the country to have a theater equipped with the modern sound technology of Vitaphone, was the first in the county to show "talkies."<sup>43</sup>

In 1934, Ruffin further modernized the Palace with a new stage, orchestra pit, larger screen, and other features. He also lengthened the theater and added 200 more seats. Unfortunately, the Palace was destroyed by fire in January of 1936. Within days Ruffin had a temporary theater set up in an alternate location and began construction of a new theater on the site. The Ruffin Theatre opened on July 24, 1936, and was one of the most luxurious theaters in the region.<sup>44</sup>

During the 1930s and 1940s, Ruffin continued to expand his chain of theaters throughout West Tennessee and into southern Kentucky. He increased his holdings further when he purchased the Chickasaw Amusement Company in 1937. In Tipton County, Ruffin opened the Ritz Theatre in Covington in May of 1942. The Ritz became the headquarters for Ruffin's business, which continued to flourish on into the 1950s.<sup>45</sup> The Ritz remains a prominent landmark on the Covington square.

In the mid-1920s, U.S. 51 (State Route 3) was constructed through the county. It route paralleled that of the Illinois Central and provided Tipton County residents with improved and direct access to Memphis. By 1938, the majority of U.S. 51 was paved. Most other roads throughout the county, however, were mainly gravel or dirt roads. A few, such as State Route 59, had a bituminous surface.<sup>46</sup> As use of the automobile rapidly increased over the following decades, more roads became paved. U.S. 51 remained the primary corridor throughout the county and commercial businesses such as gas stations, restaurants, and motor inns appeared along the route.

Tipton County's population peaked in 1920 at 30,258 and then dropped to 27,498 by 1930. The county's population rose slightly the following two decades to reach 29,782 in 1950. After that, the number of people living in the county declined and totaled just over 28,000 in 1970.<sup>47</sup> Part of this decline can be attributed to the out-migration of African Americans in the county. Throughout these decades thousands of African Americans migrated from the South to northern cities in search of work. Racism and oppression in the rural South left them with little opportunity for advancement and many blacks found employment in a variety of industries in cities such as Chicago and Detroit.

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<sup>43</sup>Beasley, 70-71.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 72-73.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 73-76.

<sup>46</sup>Tennessee State Highway Department, "General Highway and Transportation Map, Tipton County, Tennessee," 1938; Copy on file at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, TN.

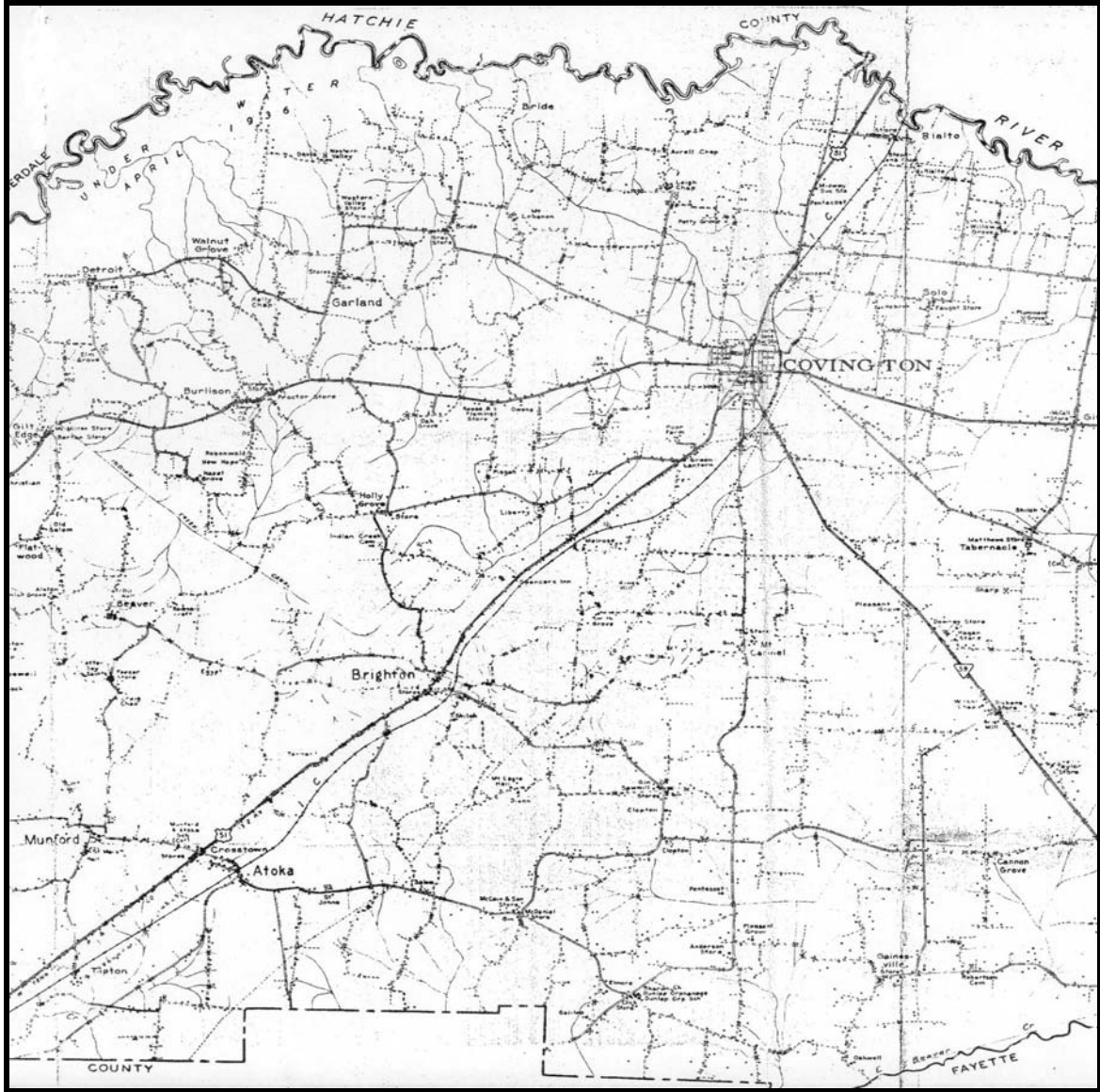
<sup>47</sup>Richard L. Forstall, comp., "Population of the United States, Tennessee and Tennessee Counties by Decennial Census: 1790-1990," (Washington, DC: US Bureau of the Census, 1997).



Brighton Depot built in 1903 and shown here ca. 1905. Passenger and freight depots were the centers of railroad communities such as Brighton. The building is currently still extant (Source: TSLA).



Robinson Service Station ca. 1920. The exact location is unknown but thought to be on U.S. 51 south of Covington. These businesses catered to the rise of automobile traffic in the county (Source: TSLA).



Tipton County in 1936 showing the major communities, churches, schools and road network  
(Source: TVA map of Tipton County, 1936).

During the 1970s, Tipton County's population began to grow again and reached 32,930 by 1980 and 37,568 by 1990.<sup>48</sup> Some African Americans returned to the region following the civil rights movement of the 1960s and 1970s. However, the majority of the increase in population came from the rising urban development of Memphis in neighboring Shelby County. As Memphis' population swelled, suburbs and urban sprawl spread northward into Tipton County. A tremendous amount of development occurred along U.S. 51, which remained the primary transportation corridor in the county.

By the late 1990s, the population of Tipton County reached approximately 40,000. Agriculture continues to play a major role in the economy, and many residents find employment at the county's various industrial facilities. These include World Color, a producer of magazines and catalogs that has 900 employees, and Charms Company, a candy manufacturer that employs about 340 workers. Other significant industries are the Delfield Company, a food service equipment manufacturer with 250 employees, and Mueller Fittings, which produces copper fittings and has 240 workers.<sup>49</sup>

In 2009, Tipton County had a population of 59,495 residents, an increase of 16% since 2000. This dramatic increase has had a major impact on the project area in southern Tipton County. Dozens of dwellings shown on the USGS quad maps in the south and central sections of the county have been replaced by large subdivisions or other housing developments. This has transformed the appearance of southern Tipton County from one of rural farmland to suburban development. Of the county's residents, 78.5% are white and 19.4% are African American.

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Carroll Van West, ed. *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture* (Nashville, TN: Rutledge Hill Press, 1998), 980.

## SECTION IV: EVALUATION OF SURVEYED SITES

### ARCHITECTURAL OVERVIEW:

There are currently ten properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Tennessee. These are as follows:

#### National Register Properties-Listed

- Mt. Carmel Church-Mt. Carmel
- St. Matthews Church-Covington
- Cannan Baptist Church-Covington
- Coca-Cola Bottling Plant-Covington
- Hotel Lindo-Covington
- Ruffin Theatre-Covington
- Trinity Church – Mason
- Trinity-in-the-Fields Church-Mason
- Charleston UMC Church & Cemetery-Charleston
- Rhodes House/Lara Wright House-Brighton



Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church  
Mt. Carmel, TN



Trinity Episcopal Church Mason, TN



Trinity-in-the-Fields Church  
Mason, TN



Cannan Missionary Baptist Church  
Covington, TN





St. Matthews Episcopal Church  
Covington, TN



Hotel Lindo  
Covington, TN



Charleston Methodist Church and Cemetery  
Charleston, TN



Rhodes House / Lara Wright House  
Brighton, TN



Ruffin Theater  
Covington, TN



Coca-Cola Bottling Plant  
Covington, TN

## Historic Districts

Within Covington there are also two residential historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### South College Historic District, Covington

The boundary of the South College Historic District is located in the 600, 700 and 800-blocks of South College Street. The district consists of seventeen contributing resources and one non-contributing outbuilding.



Representative dwellings within the South College Historic District.

### South Main Street Historic District, Covington

The boundary of the South Main Street Historic District is bounded on the south by Sherrod Avenue, on the north by East Church Avenue, on the east by South Maple Street and centers on South Main Street. The seventy-five contributing resources of the South Main Street Historic District include one commercial building, forty-seven residences, twenty-six outbuildings and one religious structure. Only four percent of the structures within the district boundary are non-contributing or a total of twenty-two properties.



Representative dwellings located within the South Main Street Historic District.



## DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

During the antebellum period, Tipton County was one of the state's chief producers of cotton and a number of small to mid-sized farms in addition to plantations were established in the county. The area had a large slave population, which constituted a large percentage of the county's total residents. In the post-Civil War years, cotton remained the chief product of the county, as the labor system of sharecropping became prevalent throughout the region. This agricultural labor system continued to dominate the area through the 1930s. In the post-World War II era, the practice of sharecropping quickly faded as agriculture became more mechanized. Soybeans replaced cotton as the chief crop, and in the late 20th century, large commercial farms emerged as the latest agricultural trend.

A number of small villages and towns emerged in the county during the late 19th century as railroad lines were built. The most dominant line was the Illinois Central, which ran north-south through the county. Communities formed around depots and small industries such as sawmills and cotton gins also appeared. Residents established stores, schools and churches and many of the county's communities grew to several hundred residents. As the automobile became prevalent in the early 20th century, general stores and gas stations were commonly found at the crossroads of major thoroughfares.

The architecture of Tipton County reflects its history as an agricultural area interspersed with a number of small towns and crossroads communities. The properties inventoried within the county include a number of Folk Victorian or pattern book plan dwellings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries that were the primary dwellings on local farms. These dwellings often have several associated outbuildings such as smokehouses, well houses, corn cribs and barns that reflect the property's agricultural use. A number of rural commercial buildings were also documented and reflect the development of small communities across the county.

Initial settlers in Tipton County in the early 19th century primarily constructed log dwellings. These were often one- or two-room structures with mud or wood chinking. Most of these dwellings were intended to provide temporary shelter while families established a farm and got settled. Once they could afford to, most individuals built a larger frame home. Others expanded their original dwellings and added details such as weatherboard siding.



Wiseman-Overall House (TP-273) located at 6422 Highway 59 in Burlison.

Very few log dwellings remain extant in Tipton County. An example documented during this survey is the Wiseman-Overall House in Burlison (TP-273). This dwelling began as a one- and one-half story dogtrot plan ca. 1830 and was moved to its present location within the last 10 years. Sometime in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the dogtrot was enclosed and a weatherboard exterior was added. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, dormers and a porch were added. This dwelling has been abandoned for several years and it has deteriorated significantly. Due to the move, the windows have been removed but are in storage and chimneys and fireplaces removed along with the porch posts. The dwelling was used as a stagecoach stop along the Randolph to Covington Road. The current owners would like to renovate the house, if possible.



One property documented in this survey originated as a log dwelling and was later expanded with a frame addition. The original rear portion of this abandoned dwelling (TP-94) on Elm Grove Lane in the Elm Grove community near Garland was constructed of log in the 1840s. Around 1860s to the 1870s, the owner built a one-story frame central hall plan dwelling with a full-width, main-facade porch, and the log section now serves as the dwelling's rear wing. Weatherboard siding covers the exterior of both the log and frame sections. The dwelling has been abandoned for a considerable amount of time and is currently used for hay storage and as a barn for animals.

Common house forms constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Tipton County include central hall, I-House, double-pen, and hall-and-parlor plans. The double-pen and hall-and-parlor plans are basic two-room, side-gable house forms that were commonly constructed throughout West Tennessee and Tipton County from the late 19th century on through the 1930s. Many farm tenant houses were



constructed in these designs. A representative example of a double-pen plan dwelling is the abandoned house (TP-99) located on Rocky Branch Road in the Garland area. This ca. 1880 one- and one-half story frame dwelling has two main entrances, original two-over-two wood sash windows, and an original rear shed roof wing. The porch roof and floor has collapsed.

The term Folk Victorian refers to a variety of house forms constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. One of these is the gabled ell design which was widely constructed throughout West Tennessee.

Gabled Ell dwellings were popular throughout rural and urban areas of the south at the turn of the century. This one- and two-story plan features a gabled bay, or ell, projecting at a right angle from the rest of the house on the main façade. A rear shed wing or ell is also common to this house form. Gabled Ell dwellings are generally modest in terms of size but often display ornate millwork on porches and eaves. Porches often feature decorative milled columns, balusters and vergeboard. Gabled Ell dwellings in Tipton County generally display decorative vent windows or attached vergeboard in the projecting gables on the main façade.

This popular house form features a side-gable section with a projecting gabled bay on the main facade. These dwellings vary in their amount of decorative detail, but most intact examples found in rural areas typically have milled or Tuscan porch columns, eave vergeboard, and wood shingles in the gables. An example found during this survey is the dwelling at 528 Long Road (TP-86) in the Bride community, which was built in the gabled ell plan ca. 1890. The house has a brick pier foundation, a weatherboard

exterior, and a shed roof porch with original milled wood posts. The main entry still retains its original Victorian style door. Located to the rear (northeast) of the dwelling is a vertical board clad barn concurrent to the date of the dwelling. Another example of the gabled ell design is located on Garland Drive in the community of Garland. The dwelling was constructed ca. 1915 with a standing seam metal roof and a concrete block foundation. This dwelling has been altered with an exterior of asbestos shingle siding and the porch has been altered with the replacement of the porch posts and floor. The gabled ell design is one of the most common house forms found in West Tennessee and Tipton County contains numerous examples.



Left, Long House (TP-86); Right, Gabled ell design on Garland Drive (TP-250).

## GREEK REVIVAL

The Greek Revival style emerged in the early nineteenth century as interest in Greece and its classical architecture increased. The Greek Revival style flourished in settled regions of the United States and followed settlers as they moved westward. A frieze at the cornice line of the main roof and porch roofs reflects the classical entablature of Greek architecture. Other identifying features of the style include a full-width or entry porch with prominent square posts or round columns, often with Doric capitals, and narrow sidelights and transom lights at the main entrance. Full-height porches and portico's are also common. Two representative examples of the Greek Revival style documented for this survey include the Charles Archer House on Garland Drive in Garland (TP-89) and the dwelling located at 514 South College Street in Covington (TP-647).



The Charles Archer House (TP-89) is a Greek Revival style, two-story, frame, I-house plan constructed ca. 1856. The dwelling rests on a brick foundation and is clad in poplar weatherboard siding. The dwelling has a two-story, portico with square wood columns on the main façade. On the rear façade is an original wing with numerous ca. 1900 additions including a wraparound porch and a cut-out, second floor rear balcony.





The Greek Revival style dwelling located at 514 South College Street in Covington (TP-647) is a two-story, frame dwelling constructed ca. 1850. On the main façade is a two-story portico supported by square columns with double brackets in the gable field. A two-story shed roof porch on the north façade is supported by round columns and a cross-hatch baluster railing. The dwelling is has an exterior of weatherboard siding, a continuous stucco-clad foundation and several small wings on the rear façade. The dwelling retains its original interior mantles and fireplaces along with its original wood floor and wood baluster staircase.

## GOTHIC REVIVAL



John Murray House (TP-190)

The Gothic Revival style became a common architectural style for country homes during the mid- to late nineteenth century. The style was promoted through pattern books by Andrew Jackson Downing and emphasizes steeply pitched roofs with multiple gables and wide porches. Common details include decorative vergeboard trim along the gables and Gothic pointed-arched windows. Other details often include quatrefoil and trefoil vergeboard and decorative trim. The only representative example of this style documented during this survey is the John Murray House (TP-190) on Woodlawn Road in Brighton, Tennessee. This two- and one-half story house has weatherboard siding, three gables on the main façade, original decorative

vergeboard and pointed-arched windows. The dwelling has a rear gable wing with an added large rear addition and a breezeway that attaches to a ca. 1930 two-car garage.

## QUEEN ANNE/VICTORIAN

The Queen Anne/Victorian style was popularized in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and featured an asymmetrical floor plan and extensive exterior detailing. This style is generally one- to two –stories in height and often features corner towers, turrets or projecting bays. Exterior wall surfaces are often varied with mixtures of brick, wood, stone and wood shingles. Large wraparound porches with milled columns and balusters are usually present on the main façade. Windows are one-over-one sash or of small multi-light design. Roofs may have asphalt shingle, slate or metal standing seam surfaces on hipped, gable designs or a combination of both. Brackets or decorative vergeboard are often found in the gables.

Numerous representative examples of the Victorian/Queen Anne style were documented in Tipton County in both the rural communities, in the small towns and the county seat of Covington. The Hamlett House located at 11963 Main Street in Mason (TP-176) exhibits many of the elements the style and was constructed ca. 1912. The dwelling has a hip and gable roof of asphalt shingles with gable roof dormers and a wraparound, rounded porch with Tuscan columns on rusticated concrete block piers and a wood floor. The main entrance retains its original, leaded glass and wood Victorian style door with leaded glass transom and sidelights. Some Victorian style windows remain in the projecting gable bays that also contain Palladian windows in the gable fields.

Hamlett House (TP-176) at 11963 Main Street in Mason.



Located in the small town of Atoka, the ca. 1900, Gragg House (TP-206) located at 374 Atoka-Munford Avenue has a hip roof with projecting gable bays with fanlight windows in the gable fields. A large aluminum awning shades the three-quarter-length porch supported by Tuscan columns. Sited on a ca. 1925 rear wing of the dwelling is a large hip roof dormer with three-over-one vertical light windows. Attached to the rear wing is a ca. 1985, large, multi-bay garage. The asymmetrical dwelling located at 623 West Liberty Avenue (TP-791) in Covington contains many of the elements of a Queen Anne style dwelling and was constructed ca. 1895. The dwelling has a multi-gable roof of asphalt shingles and a wraparound porch on the main façade supported by Tuscan columns. A chamfered projecting bay on main façade has diagonal board and wood shingles in the gable field. The two main entries retain their original heavy ornate Victorian doors with original single-light transoms.



Left, Gragg House located at 374 Atoka-Munford Avenue (TP-206); Right, Victorian dwelling located at 623 West Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-791).

## COLONIAL REVIVAL

The Colonial Revival style was one of the most popular architectural styles of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. During the 1890s, there was a renewed interest in the architectural forms of Colonial America. These dwellings were built with symmetrical floor plans and with classically detailed formal porches. Common characteristics are columns and pilasters in Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and Tuscan orders, eave dentils, gabled dormers, pedimented windows and doors. Dwellings in this style were constructed both of brick and frame and are generally one- and one-half to two-stories in height.



TP-621



TP-485



TP-364

A representative example of the Colonial Revival style in Tipton County is the dwelling at 114 Church Street in Covington (TP-621). This frame, one-story dwelling was constructed ca. 1885 and features a partial-width gable roof porch with tapered wood columns on brick piers. Windows are original two-over-two wood sash with wood surrounds. On the rear façade is a gable roof wing with an inset rear porch. At 328 East Liberty Avenue (TP-485) is a Colonial Revival style dwelling reminiscent of Colonial architecture on the East Coast. This one- and one-half story, frame dwelling has a high-pitch gable roof with three gable roof dormers on the main façade and no porch over the main entry. A partial-width side porch was enclosed ca. 1950 with various sizes of windows. This enclosure encapsulated the once-exterior large brick chimney. The rear façade has a high-pitch rear wing with several additions including a projecting bay on the east façade. Synthetic siding was added to the house ca. 1980. A later and more modest example of the Colonial Revival style constructed ca. 1920 is located at 935 Atoka-Munford Avenue in Munford (TP-364). This one- and one-half story, frame dwelling has a side gable roof of new standing metal seam with two gable roof dormers on the main facade, an exterior of synthetic siding and sits on a continuous brick foundation. On the main façade is a partial-width shed roof porch supported by square wood posts. An original side gable roof wing is located on the west façade.

## TUDOR REVIVAL

Although less popular than Bungalows, the Tudor Revival style was also built in Tipton County. These dwellings are based upon medieval house forms of England and were popular in America from 1915-1940. These house forms have high-pitched gable roofs, multiple gables on the main façade, and are generally of brick and/or stucco construction. Doors are often set within rounded or Tudor arches while windows often have multiple lights in the upper and lower sashes. In gable fields, stucco and wood are often combined to create the appearance of half-timbering.



TP-203

In Tipton County, the Tudor Revival style was very common both in the rural and urban communities and numerous examples were documented for this survey. Located in the small community of Atoka, this ca. 1940 dwelling has an exterior of wired & skintled brick, a large hip roof with projecting gables and a side porch and porte-cochere on the east façade and is located at 594 Atoka-Munford Avenue (TP-203). The main entry has a rounded door set within a closed projecting gable roof vestibule. Windows are six-over-six wood sash with concrete sills. Dormers are also common elements of the style and this example has a gable roof dormer on its main façade.

The Tudor Revival style is rather asymmetrical in plan due, many times, to the multiple projecting gables. One representative example of the Tudor style with multiple gables is located at 215 East Washington Avenue in Covington. This ca. 1935 dwelling is one-and one-half stories in height with a large brick



chimney on the main façade and a side gable roof. Multiple gables project off the main façade within one of these projecting gables being an open vestibule which contains the main entry. An side porch on the northeast corner has arched openings that have a central concrete keystone and connect to the open vestibule. Windows are three-over-one vertical light glass and wood windows with concrete sills. A highly ornamented example of the Tudor Revival style is located at 302 S. Main Street in Covington (TP-624) and was constructed ca. 1935. This one-and-one half story dwelling has an exterior of brick veneer and an asymmetrical plan with several attached wings and additions off the rear façade. The dwelling showcases several elements of the high style Tudor Revival style such as diamond casement windows, a closed projecting gable entry vestibule with a rounded wood louvered door, a large main façade chimney with double pots and a projecting sloped gable roof bay on the main façade. The arched opening side porch has been enclosed with jalousie windows but an original eyebrow dormer vent remains on the roofline. Also on the main façade is an original arched glass and wood eighteen-light casement window.



Left, Tudor Revival style dwelling on West Washington Avenue in Covington (TP-510); Right, Tudor Revival style dwelling on South Main Street in Covington (TP-624);

## **BUNGALOW/CRAFTSMAN**

The Bungalow or Craftsman style was the most common architectural style in America during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Bungalow style is characterized by square plans with low-pitch gable or hipped roofs, often with shed dormers. Windows are double hung-sash with three- or more vertical lights in the top sash and a single-light bottom sash. Bungalow/Craftsman dwellings have large broad porches which unusually extend across the front façade and are supported by tapered columns resting on stone, frame or brick piers. In contrast to the vertical emphasis in Victorian styles, Bungalow/Craftsman style dwellings emphasized the horizontal, with wide windows and wide roof eaves. In many examples, rafter ends and knee braces are visible below the eaves. The popularity of the Bungalow style corresponded with the continued growth and development of Tipton County and many dwellings reflect this style.

Two representative examples of the Bungalow style are the Dr. T.H. Price House located at 620 N. Main Street (TP-466) and the dwelling located at 3849 Flat Iron Road (TP-79), both located in the Covington area and constructed ca. 1920. One example, this frame one- and one-half story dwelling, was constructed ca. 1923 by Dr. T.H. Price, a local African-American physician in the Covington community. The dwelling has only had two owners with Dr. Price and his wife and then her nephew, who is the current owner. The property is now zoned commercial and is used as office space. The dwelling has a clipped gable roof with knee brace brackets in the eaves, a full-width porch with round wood posts and a brick floor. The original porch wood floor was altered ca. 1960, however, the dwelling retains its original Craftsman style, multi-light wood sash windows, doors and clip roof dormer on the main façade. Multiple clipped gables project from the main roofline and the exterior is clad with original weatherboard siding.



Clipped gable roof examples of the Bungalow style; Left, Bungalow at 620 N. Main Street (TP-466) and; Right, Bungalow at 3849 Flat Iron Road (TP-79).

Another clipped gable roof Bungalow example is the dwelling located at 3849 Flat Iron Road (TP-79). Similar in style to the Price House, this bungalow has an exterior of clapboard siding, a clipped gable roof asphalt shingles with exposed roof rafters, an exterior brick chimney, a full-width porch with a closed weatherboard railing. Knee brace brackets adorn the eaves. On the north and south elevations are small projecting shed roof bays with original six-over-six double hung wood sash windows. The main entry retains its original Craftsman style door and a clipped gable roof dormer with four windows is located on the main façade.



TP-817

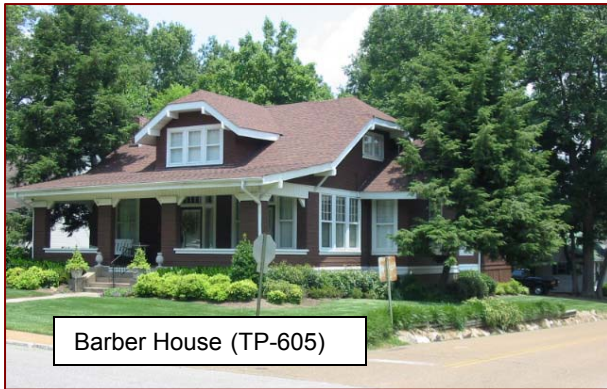
An example of a monitor roof Bungalow, also known as an Airplane Bungalow is the dwelling at 904 West Liberty Avenue. This dwelling was built ca. 1915 and has a raised hipped monitor roof on the rear façade. In recent decades this dwelling was altered through the addition synthetic siding but still retains its original Craftsman style windows and front porch.

Numerous other examples of the Bungalow style were surveyed for this project in Tipton County. Most are modest interpretations of this popular design and many have been altered from their original appearance through the addition of synthetic siding, rear or lateral wings, and/or replacement doors and windows. An example of a modest interpretation would be the dwelling located 850 W. Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-826) and was constructed ca. 1920. This dwelling has an exterior of clapboard siding, a front gable roof of asphalt shingles with exposed roof rafters and knee brackets in the eaves and sits on a brick pier foundation supplemented with brick infill. The inset, partial-width porch is located on the southwest corner of the main façade with a closed railing next to which is a large brick chimney. Windows are original four-over-one vertical light double hung wood sash windows and the main entry retains its original Bungalow glass and wood door. An original wing projects off the east façade and the rear porch has been enclosed with asbestos shingles siding. Another front gable Bungalow example would be the Ray House located at 407 E. Ripley Avenue in Covington (TP-492) constructed ca. 1925. The dwelling has a front gable roof of asphalt shingle with knee brace brackets in the eaves, a large stuccoed chimney on the main façade and a porte cochere extending off the northeast corner porch. Porch columns have been covered with stucco. Windows are original, four-over-one double hung wood sash and the exterior has been clad with synthetic siding.





Representative examples of the modest, front gable roof Bungalow design. Left, TP-826; and Right, TP-492.



Two higher style examples of the Bungalow/Craftsman style is the Barber House located at 314 S. Maple Street (TP-605) and the dwelling located at 214 N. Maple Street (TP-447), both located in Covington and constructed ca. 1925. The Barber House is a one- and one-half story, frame dwelling with an exterior of clapboard siding, an interior end brick chimney and a clipped gable roof with exposed purlins and knee brace brackets in the eaves. On the main façade is a full-width shed roof porch with a closed brick railing and square brick columns.

Located over the main entry on the main façade is a clipped gable roof dormer with exposed purlins and three original wood sash windows. Windows are original nine-over-one double hung wood Craftsman style with wood surrounds. The main entry retains its original Craftsman style glass and wood door with an original two-five-two light transom and original eight-light sidelights. On the south façade is an original clipped gable roof bay with original windows. The two-story, frame dwelling at 214 N. Maple Street (TP-447) has a front facing gambrel roof with knee brace brackets in the eaves and a dentiled cornice beneath them. On the main façade is a hip and clipped gable roof, wraparound porch with double and triple square wood columns on brick piers. The main entrance retains its original Craftsman style glass and wood door and some windows retain original Craftsman style while some are replacement one-over-one double hung wood sash. Several wings and additions project off the side and rear facades. The exterior is clad with weatherboard.



### MINIMAL TRADITIONAL

Minimal Traditional houses were built from ca. 1935 to the mid-1950s. These are houses which reflect the Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles in their overall forms and designs but have limited decorative detailing. The exteriors are general of weatherboard, brick veneer, or asbestos shingles. Windows are often sash unites similar to those in Colonial Revival style dwellings. These dwellings are distinguished by their simplicity and lack of ornamentation. Tipton County contains numerous examples of these styles and several dwellings documented in the project reflect these popular mid-20th century designs. The Swaim House located at 272 Alexander Drive in Brighton (TP-188) was constructed in the Minimal

Traditional style ca. 1945. The dwelling has a side gable plan with a small shed roof entry porch and a lateral offset wing. The house retains its original eight-over-eight sash windows and is clad with asbestos shingle siding. Another example of the Minimal Traditional style is located at 11143 Highway 59 in Gilt Edge (TP-281) and was also constructed ca. 1945. This dwelling has a side gable roof of asphalt shingles, an exterior of aluminum siding and original eight-over-eight sash windows. Over the centrally located main entry stoop is a small gable roof supported by wrought iron posts.



Left, Minimal Traditional style located on Alexander Drive in Brighton (TP-188); Right, Minimal Traditional style located in the Gilt Edge Community,

## RANCH

Following World War II, construction occurred on vacant lots throughout the neighborhood. Most dwellings built in Tipton County in the late 1940s and 1950s were versions of the Ranch style which was popular throughout the country. The Ranch style reflects some elements of the Bungalow/Craftsman style in its low, horizontal appearance and slightly pitched gable roof forms. Projecting gabled bays on the front of the house are common. Detailing is usually minimal with plain eaves, rectangular windows and metal or wood porch columns. Ranch style dwellings are more often than not, one-story in height. Garages are often attached to the house. Porches and decks are more common the rear than at the front of the house.

A modest representative example of the Ranch design is the ca. 1945 dwelling located at 308 E. Pleasant Avenue in Covington (TP-528). This dwelling has an exterior of brick veneer, a gable on hip roof with extending eaves and two-over-two horizontal-light wood sash windows. On the main façade is a four-horizontal light picture window with flanking two-over-two horizontal double hung wood sash windows.



Left, Ranch style house located on E. Pleasant Avenue in Covington (TP-528); Right, Ranch style dwelling located in the Burlison Community (TP-262).

While the former example is rather utilitarian in style, the dwelling located at 6740 Highway 59 W (TP-262) in the Burlison community has an exterior of blonde brick veneer, a large main façade stone chimney and four-light casement windows located on the corners of the projecting gables. Large, open gable returns are in the gable fields and the garage is attached with an open breezeway. The Ranch style became commonly used in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century for commercial enterprises such as physicians and dental offices similar to the Z & R Building located at 209 W. Pleasant Avenue (TP-637) in Covington. This ca. 1955 dwelling has a hip roof with extending eaves and a hipped roof wing on the rear facade. The building has several large banks of windows including 16-lite fixed metal industrial style picture windows with flanking four-light metal casements over which is are multi-light casements. The dwelling retains its original ca. 1955, five-horizontal light and wood door with flanking five-light sidelights at the main entry which is slight recessed beneath the eaves.



Z&R Building in downtown Covington (TP-637).



## URBAN COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

Commercial buildings were constructed throughout Tipton County's communities to house businesses and offices. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century a distinctive building form evolved around the Court Square in Covington and in the center of communities such as Munford and Atoka. Most commercial buildings began to be designed in rectangular plans with large storefronts for the display of merchandise. One-story buildings, known as One-Part commercial, had storefronts consisting of large display windows and transoms supported by either brick piers or cast iron pilasters or columns. These buildings generally displayed cornices of sheet metal or corbelled brick at the roofline. Two- and three-story buildings also evolved during these years with similar storefronts and with arched or rectangular windows on the upper façade. Known as Two-Part commercial, some buildings, particularly those on the courthouse square in Covington were designed with architectural features such as inlaid brick and terra cotta.

With the dominance of the automobile in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the courthouse square gradually lost its dominance as the center for commerce as businesses opened along US 51 and other improved highways. The 1930s and 1940s in particular witnessed the construction of numerous businesses along US 51 west of the square and several of these such as the Baxter Building (TP-404) were designed with the influence of the Art Deco and Art Moderne styles of the period. By the 1950s most commercial buildings constructed along the main highways in the county were designed in utilitarian forms with limited detailing, and with large parking lots in front of the buildings.

Many communities have lost their original commercial buildings to demolition or they have been altered in recent decades. The most intact concentration of historic commercial buildings remains the courthouse square in Covington. While a number of the buildings on the square have been inappropriately altered, it appears that there are sufficient numbers and integrity to meet National Register criteria. Not all sides of the square may qualify but a cohesive district does appear intact on the north side extending to include the Art Deco and Art Moderne buildings facing US 51.



Gulf Gas Station on corner of N. Maple Street and East Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-378); Right, Bill McGowan Building on corner of Tipton Street and Munford Avenue in Munford (TP-314).



Bozo's Hot Pit Barbeque Restaurant on Highway 70 in Mason (TP-164); Ritz Theatre on West Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-400).



Left, Art Deco influenced Building on East Liberty Avenue (TP-385); Right, Solmon Baddour Building on corner of North Main Street and W. Liberty Avenue (TP-10). Both located on the square in downtown Covington.



Left, Baxter Building on West Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-404); Right, Baxter Hotel Building on West Liberty Avenue in Covington (TP-405).

## RURAL COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE

In addition to residential architecture, several commercial buildings constructed in the rural crossroads and railroad communities of the county in the early 20th century were surveyed. These businesses were essential to everyday life of farmers and other rural dwellers. The stores not only supplied a wide variety of goods and produce but also served as centers for socialization and information. These stores often contained the post offices for the communities prior to rural delivery. The growth of the county seat of Covington, increased reliance on the automobile, the commercial expansion along U.S. 51, and changes in retail marketing have closed most of these businesses in recent decades. These buildings are one-story frame or brick structures built between ca. 1900 and ca. 1950 as general stores along major thoroughfares. These stores served the surrounding communities prior to the development of large chain grocery stores, and some offered gasoline as automobile traffic increased. With the exception of the William Pouncey and James Pouncey Stores in the Quito community, all of the commercial buildings documented in Tipton County were constructed in a gable front plan with several of the buildings having an additional false parapeted front wall.

In the report for I-69, five rural commercial buildings were inventoried in Tipton County. These included the Farmer Store in Rialto (TP-67); the Cecil Hill Store in the Solo community (TP-64); the Warren Owen Store (TP-50); the McCain Store (TP-20) at 4704 Idaville-Clopton Road; the Alfred Click Store (TP-22) at the intersection of Beaver Creek and Austin Peay Road.



Current condition of the Farmer Store (TP-67), the McCain Store (TP-20) and the Click Store (TP-22).

In addition to the rural stores surveyed for the I-69 project, sixteen rural commercial buildings were inventoried for the current survey. These include the Gainesville Supply Store in Gainesville (TP-113) and the Anderson Store in Detroit (TP-92). Almost all of these buildings are vacant or used for storage. A multiple property documentation form to the National Register should be prepared for eligible rural stores. These buildings are significant as centers of rural community life and they represent an important property type in the county. Listing on the National Register would provide tax credits and other incentives for their reuse and rehabilitation.





Left, Gilt Edge Grocery in Gilt Edge Community (TP-278); Right, Wilbur Pouncey Store in Quito Community (TP-136).



Left, Anderson Store in community of Detroit (TP-92); Right, Store at 9117 Gilt Edge Gin Road (TP-276).



Gainesville Supply Store in Gainesville Community (TP-113); Right, Miller Store in the Jamestown Community (TP-127).

## CHURCHES

Thirty-one churches were inventoried for this project in Tipton County. The Munford Presbyterian Church on Main Street in Munford (TP-315) was constructed ca. 1915 in a side steeple asymmetrical plan with many Gothic Revival style elements. The church has an exterior of brick, a high-pitched gable roof with many projecting gables and a steeple/bell tower with a flaring eave pyramid roof with a pointed finial. Windows are mostly stained glass with a large trefoil arched window on the east façade. Several wings accompany the main building along with a ca. 1960 Fellowship Hall. A building in the Tudor Revival style is the Mason Presbyterian Church located on Highway 59 in Mason (TP-175). This ca. 1925 cross-plan church has an exterior of multi-colored stone, buttresses and a gable roof with central copper steeple. Doors are square wood Tudor style and windows are casement diamond-lite design topped by a transom on the main section of the church. An interior end stone chimney is on the south façade and a circular stained glass window is positioned above the projecting vestibule entry. On the rear façade is a trefoil stained glass window. The Ravenscroft Episcopal Church in the Beaver community is a modest example of a Gothic Revival style church (TP-159). The original church was destroyed by fire but the congregation decided to use the fellowship hall for their sanctuary. The building is a simple gable front plan with a high-pitched roof and a glass enclosed entry vestibule added in the 1960s. The building has an exterior of asbestos shingle siding over the original weatherboard and sits on a common bond brick basement. Windows on the main level are all fixed stained glass and the remains of a brick chimney is on the rear façade. The original metal bell tower is sited to the east of the building on a concrete slab.



Left, Munford Presbyterian Church in the Munford Community (TP-315); Right, Ravenscroft Episcopal Church in the Beaver Community (TP-159); Below, Mason Presbyterian Church on Highway 59 in Mason (TP-175).

Two additional examples of the surveyed churches include the Bright Hill Missionary Baptist Church in the Jamestown Community (TP-126) and the Brighton Baptist Church located at 132 E. Woodlawn Avenue in Brighton (TP-183). Constructed in 1947, the Brighton Baptist Church is a central steeple plan building with Neo-classical style elements. The two-story building has an exterior of blonde brick veneer, arched and segmented stained glass one-over-one double hung wood sash windows with brick lintels in



the sanctuary. The main entry has a two-story portico with a fanlight window in the gable field and fluted Tuscan columns. The wings of the church retain their original six-over-six double hung wood windows. The two-story education building was constructed in the 1950s and showcase four- and three-light metal casement windows with transoms. The large metal building was constructed in January of 2008 and is used as the Family Life Center. The Bright Hill Missionary Baptist Church in the rural community of Jamestown was constructed ca. 1952 in a central steeple, front gable, T-plan design. The building is also constructed of blonde brick veneer and retains its original two-over-two horizontal light wood sash windows with concrete sills. The main entry has a double door and is deeply inset. A ca. 1970 gable and shed roof addition was constructed on the rear façade.



Left, Brighton Baptist Church in Brighton Community (TP-183); Bright Hill Missionary Baptist Church in the Jamestown Community (TP-126).



## CEMETERIES

Historic cemeteries across Tipton County range from small, private family plots to church-associated cemeteries to public cemeteries. If a church was associated with the cemetery, the church was considered the primary resource. In this survey, twenty-seven cemeteries were documented. Of these twenty-seven, sixteen “free-standing” cemeteries were documented and eleven were associated with a church either next to the cemetery boundary or located not too far distant.

All the cemeteries within the survey contained common examples of gravestone types such as obelisks, gabled obelisks, tablets, based tablets and flat forms. Representative examples of common symbols used on gravestones included weeping willow trees, lambs (for children), pointing fingers, clasped hands, doves, Bibles, angels, poppy flowers and unlinked chains. Numerous social organizations such as the Mason, Woodmen of the World, Eastern Star and Oddfellows were represented as well as Veterans from wars beginning with the Civil War and continuing through World War I and II, Korea and Vietnam. Those cemeteries with current burials included Veterans of the Gulf Wars.

Two representative examples of the cemeteries surveyed were the Robinson Cemetery (TP-108) in the Gainesville community and the Poplar Grove Cemetery (TP-104) in Drummonds. Located on Gainesville Road in the Gainesville community, the Robinson Cemetery is divided into two sections: the older section located to the north and surrounded by a chain-link fence and the newer section located to the south and closer to Gainesville Road. The large, older section has a good example of intact obelisk, gabled obelisk, urned obelisks, tablets and a double arched monument. The gravestones are in excellent shape with little to no vandalism. The earliest death date noted is Mary Robinson who died in 1834. The newer section has sustained a lot of vandalism to the gravestones and is in current use. Located in both sections is approximately 600+ graves. Civil War Veterans along with World War I & II Veterans are interred in

both sections. Yucca, elm, oak and maple trees border and are sprinkled amongst the graves. Gravestone symbols include clasped hands, missing links in chains and pointing fingers to name a few.



Robinson Cemetery (TP-108) in the Gainesville Community.

The second representative cemetery example is the Poplar Grove Cemetery which is located across the street from the Poplar Grove Church in Drummonds on Quito-Drummonds Road. The road leading to the cemetery loop has a large metal arched entry with the cemetery name across the top and supported by round concrete columns. The earliest death date noted here is 1850. The best feature of the cemetery is the William Clements gravestone. The gravestone is a square marble with carved drapery. On the north façade is a raised image of a bearded man leaning on a tree stump and on the south façade is a raised image of the same man pulling on the bridle of a donkey. Mr. Clements died in 1906 and his epitaph denotes that he was a farmer and loved his farm.



Poplar Grove Cemetery (TP-154) in the Drummonds Community.

## SCHOOLS

In 1927, the County Health Department Map of Tipton County shows all of the existing white and African American schools in the county.<sup>50</sup> According to the 1927 map, 26 African American schools were noted and 42 white schools. In many of the African American school locations such as Owen, Antioch, St. Paul's and Plummer's Grove, ca. 1955 brick veneer schools replaced the 1920s structures. Many of the remaining ca. 1955 school buildings have been adapted for residences or are being used as community centers.

Three of the remaining ca. 1955 black schools were surveyed. Several others were too altered to qualify. The Antioch School at 2261 Glenn Antioch School (TP-70) was constructed ca. 1955. This one-story building has a brick veneer exterior, a hip roof, an interior brick chimney and a bank of metal industrial 10-light metal hopper section windows, currently obscured, on its rear, west elevation. The original inset entry still retains its glass and wood panel doors. The school building is now being used as a residence. Not too far away from the Antioch School, the Plummer's Grove School has the same plan with the hipped roof and bank of windows. The chimney is on the inside of the rear façade and divides the bank of windows. The Plummer's Grove School also retains its original inset entry doors but have transoms which have been boarded over. This property is also being used as a residence. The third example of this ca. 1955 school building plan is the St. Paul School located on Richardson Landing Road in the St. Paul community. The school is located adjacent to the St. Paul Church and is being used as a community building. The large bank of windows on the rear elevation have been downsized and enclosed and the windows on the main façade have been downsized and now contain HVAC units. The main entry has been given a Colonial Revival style gable roof entry porch with vinyl fluted columns and its doors have been replaced.



Left, Rural African American schools located in the Plummer's Grove community (TP-77); Right, Antioch community (TP-70); Below, St. Paul's community (Below, TP-134).

<sup>50</sup>Tipton County, Tennessee, Map for the use of the County Health Department, 1927. Map on file with the Tennessee State Library and Archives.



Also included in the survey is the Brighton School District Complex (TP-185). Located on School Street in Brighton, the complex is composed of eight interrelated educational buildings constructed between 1920 and 1960 and is one of the two consolidated public schools in Tipton County. Educational buildings in the complex include the two-story brick high school building constructed ca. 1924 with a ca. 1966 library addition (TP-185-A); the ca. 1915, seven course common bond bathroom building with a hipped roof, original doors and a shed roof addition (TP-185-B); a ca. 1950, seven course common bond cafeteria building with a gable on hip roof, metal hopper windows and original double glass and wood doors with an original transom (TP-185-C); a ca. 1938, seven course common bond grade school building with a hipped roof with exposed roof rafters and original glass and wood panel double doors (TP-185-D); a ca. 1960, one- and one-half story, brick veneer, front gable plan gymnasium with flanking wings, metal awning windows and colored glass patterned sections over the original two sets of four-light double doors with a single light transom in the flat roof main entry wing (TP-185-E); a ca. 1950, brick veneer, home economics building with a hip roof, gable roof entry and double set four light hopper windows (TP-185-F); a ca. 1925 one-story, nine course common bond gymnasium with a monitor roof section and replacement vinyl windows (TP-185-G); and a ca. 1950, seven course common bond agriculture building with a gable roof and downsized window openings. This building is currently being used as the Brighton Fire Department (TP-185-H).



Brighton High School Complex located on School Street in the Brighton Community (TP-185).

## **AGRICULTURAL COMMERCIAL ARCHITECTURE**

### **Cotton Gins and Processing Plant**

The surveyed area in Tipton County extends through rural sections of the county. Tipton County was mapped by the Tennessee Valley Authority in 1936 and the map depicts stores, schools, industries, and other properties.<sup>51</sup> Industries identified on this map include cotton gins in most of the small communities throughout the county. The cotton gin at Idaville, previously surveyed for the I-69 project was operated by the McCain family and only one building, the ca. 1925 cotton seed house remains of this complex (TP-21) at 4699 Idaville-Clopton Road. The building was built in a gable front plan and has a concrete block pier foundation and an exterior of corrugated metal panels. This is a representative, but not notable, example of this type of industrial building found at the crossroads communities of Tipton County.

In addition to the McCain Cotton Seed House, seven cotton gin complexes and one compress/warehouse company were documented throughout the small communities of Tipton County. The typical cotton gin complex contained a scale house which most times also served as the office, a seed house, the gin building, a conveyor system, a loading house, a store or commissary and anywhere from one to several open shed rows that housed the trailers full of cotton that arrived from the fields.

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<sup>51</sup>Tipton County, Map prepared by the Tennessee Valley Authority, 1936. Map on file at the Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee.

Cotton Gin Scale Houses were commonly frame structures with a slant or half-gable style roof with a drive-thru section beneath which the scale apparatus was placed for weighing the cotton arriving from the fields. These drive-thru sections were sometimes covered by an overhang and also sometimes had a slight projecting bay with windows on all sides as with the T.R. Gray Cotton Gin Complex (TP-148) located at 4488 Brighton-Clopton Road in the Clopton community and constructed ca. 1920. The T.R. Gray Cotton Gin Scale House (TP-148) is a frame, one-story building with a slanted, half gable roof with an flat roof overhang supported by round metal columns beneath which is the scale and a chamfered projecting bay with original four-light fixed windows and an original glass and wood door. The T.R. Gray Cotton Gin building still retains its original metal gin building and conveyor system along with one original shed row and two ca. 1985 shed rows. The complex is currently being used for a cabinet making business and the T.R. Gray Store is located adjacent to the property. The scale house located at the Charleston Cotton Gin Complex (TP-142) is also a frame building with a slanting or half-gable style roof. However, this building does not have the projecting bay adjacent to the scale and the overhang has been removed or has fallen in. The original four-over-four double hung wood sash windows remain along with a glass and wood door. This ca. 1920 complex retains its original metal gin building with newer additions, conveyor system, loading house, seed house and open shed rows.



Left, Scale House/Office Building of the T.R. Gray Cotton Gin Complex (TP-148)in the Clopton Community; Right, Charleston Cotton Gin Complex (TP-142) in Charleston Community.

Cotton Gin Buildings are usually large, two-story, rectangular, metal frame structures with a concrete floor, an exterior of corrugated, vertical or horizontal metal panels. The building can become rather asymmetrical with several projecting bays and overhangs added as needed for expansion. Sometimes these structures will have shed or gable roof dormers or an additional monitor section on the roofline. Windows are commonly metal industrial fixed or awning/hopper style with multiple lights. Entries are more often than not bay entries with or without sliding track metal doors with a pedestrian door located adjacent. The gin building is connected to the conveyors and piping systems that support the gin process. The ca. 1910, Gainesville Gin Complex (TP-114) located on Gainesville Road in the Gainesville community has a small concrete block office building with a metal roof, a frame seedhouse, a shed row and gin building with the conveyor system still attached. The Gainesville Gin Complex was last in use in 1990. The Gainesville Supply Store stands in front of the gin building. On a larger scale is the Joe Christmas Cotton Gin located on Gin Street in the town of Mason. This ca. 1910 complex retains its scale house, loading house, and one enclosed shed row along with a very large gin building. The Christmas Gin Building is a metal frame structure with a concrete foundation and an exterior of corrugated metal. On the south elevation roofline are two gable roof dormers encased in corrugated metal. The easterly dormer full-width across the roofline while the western dormer only extends partial-width of the roofline and has a large round hole in one that most likely contained conveyor piping. On the west elevation roofline is a monitor roof section that extends halfway down the length of the building while on the north elevation is a large gable roof overhang supported by round metal posts. Windows in this structure are nine-lite metal industrial with awning/hopper sections.





Left, Gin Building of the Gainesville Gin Complex in the Gainesville Community (TP-114); Right, Gin Building of Joe Christmas Cotton Gin Complex in Mason (TP-166).

One interesting feature of the cotton gin complexes are the seed houses. Many of the complexes surveyed for this project have lost the seed house but a few examples still remain. The seed, once ginned from the cotton, is saved for the next year's planting. Each farmer in the community has a section, area or bin in the seed house that stores it until planting season. These structures are usually frame or metal with some form of cladding ranging from horizontal wood to corrugated metal. Most seed houses are rectangular and elevated on piers or concrete floors to keep the seed away from rodents and moisture. The Gilt Edge Gin Complex (TP-279) features an octagonal seed house with a pyramidal roof with a projecting gable overhang supported by round metal posts. Two vertical wood doors are located on the south elevations. Along with the octagonal seed house, the Gilt Edge Cotton Gin Complex (TP-149) still retains its gin building, loading house and silo and scale house/ office building with overhang which is now used as a residence. In contrast to the octagonal seed house, the seed house at the Gainesville Cotton Gin Complex is a frame rectangular structure set on piers with an exterior of rough hewn horizontal wood, a gable roof with a slight overhang on the west elevation below which there are three small horizontal wood doors for access. The building is adjacent to the gin building.



Left, Octagonal Seed house of the Gilt Edge Cotton Gin Complex in community of Gilt Edge (TP-279); Right, Frame Seed house of the Gainesville Cotton Gin Complex in the Gainesville community (TP-149).

Also associated with the Cotton Gin Industry is the Federal Compress and Warehouse Company (TP-825) constructed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century next to the railroad line which runs to the east of downtown Covington. Located at the corner of East Liberty Avenue and Union Street in Covington, this complex is comprised of a ca. 1940 office building, a metal water tower and a long frame structure with a metal roof with numerous brick firewalls dividing the building into sections. The exterior is clad with metal panels and/or horizontal and vertical board or left open to the elements. The frame office is quite small in proportion to the frame

structure and has a side gable roof of asphalt shingles, an exterior of shiplap siding and two-over-two horizontal wood sash windows. The building is currently vacant and in a severe state of disrepair.



Federal Compress & Warehouse Company on East Liberty Avenue in Covington, TN (TP-825).

## **SECTION IV: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDED NATIONAL REGISTER PROPERTIES**

The survey of Tipton County resulted in the inventory of 756 buildings, the majority of which were dwellings built in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In most cases these dwellings are vernacular forms or modestly reflect popular styles of their period. The number of surviving 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings is comparatively few, especially in the rural areas. Changes in agricultural practices and the residential development in the county have resulted in the loss of hundreds of farmsteads and tenant houses. With the increase in mechanization and decline in tenant farming, there has been wholesale removal of the small, frame tenant houses which were once part of many of the large farms. The suburbanization of the southern end of the county due to the growth of Memphis has also transformed the landscape and resulted in the demolition of many properties.

In the rural areas of the county are several properties which appear to meet National Register criteria for their architectural significance. These include Oak Hill (TP-104) near Mason, Hawthorne House (TP-107, also near Mason, and the John Murray House (TP-190) near Brighton. Oak Hill is a notable example of a 19<sup>th</sup> century, two-story I-House and few of these dwellings remain extant in the county. This property is also a Century Farm and has been in the possession of the same family for over one hundred years. Hawthorne House was built in 1910 and is a fine example of a two-story Colonial Revival style dwelling. Near Brighton is the John Murray House which was built ca. 1872 and is the county's most notable example of a Gothic Revival style residence.

### **Individual Nominations**



**Oak Hill – Keeling Road, Mason (TP-104)**



**Hawthorne House/Point-No-Point – Highway 70, Mason (TP-117)**



**John Murray House – Woodlawn Road, Brighton (TP-190)**

In addition to these three properties, there are also industrial and commercial buildings eligible for the National Register as part of a multiple property or thematic nomination. The remaining cotton gins and associated buildings are significant for the role they played in the county's agricultural development. Cotton was the primary cash crop for many decades and gins were essential to the cleaning and baling process. Several of these gins are no longer in use but the remaining buildings are an important legacy of the county. Over a dozen rural country store buildings are also extant and deserve recognition. These are typically one-story frame or brick buildings and within them the businesses sold groceries, hardware, livestock feed and other goods. They were the centers of the nearby area and served important functions for socialization. Post offices were also often housed in these buildings. The majority of these buildings are now vacant and National Register listing may improve their chances for rehabilitation.



Left, Gin Building of the Gainesville Gin Complex in the Gainesville Community (TP-114); Right, Gin Building of Joe Christmas Cotton Gin Complex in Mason (TP-166).





Left, Gainesville Supply Store in Gainesville (TP-113); Right, Wilbur Pouncey Store in Quito Community (TP-136).

## Historic District Nominations

The historic architectural legacy of the county is also evident in the communities such as Covington, Brighton and Munford. Covington contains two existing historic districts and it appears that there is justification for the expansion of the districts as well as the listing of two more. A section of the downtown area meets National Register criteria as does the residential area along West Liberty Avenue. The downtown district would include many of the buildings on the north and west side of the square and possibly other sides depending on the contributing and non-contributing building count. The district would extend to include the cluster of notable Art Deco and Art Moderne buildings constructed in the 1930s and 1940s along US 51 just west of the square. The proposed West Liberty Historic District would include thirty Properties within the 400-900 blocks of West Liberty Avenue and the 100-300 blocks of Elm, Simonton and Shelton Streets.



The Covington Downtown Historic District would include buildings such as the Baxter Building on West Liberty Avenue (TP-404) at left and the Soloman Baddour Building at Main and Liberty (TP-10).





Gabled Ell dwelling at 714 W. Liberty Street within the proposed W. Liberty Historic District (TP-788).



At 628 W. Liberty Street is this similar Gabled Ell dwelling in the proposed W. Liberty Historic District (TP-791).

### **Expansion of existing National Register-listed districts**

Expansion of the two existing historic districts to include additional properties is recommended. Both of these areas were listed on the National Register decades ago and expansion is justified based on buildings that should now be considered contributing because of their age and to include additional significant properties on the boundary edges.

The South College Street Historic District should be expanded to include additional properties along Holmes Avenue and the 500 block of S. College Street.

The South Main Street Historic District should be expanded to include additional properties on S. Maple Street, E. Church Street and the 700 Block of S. Main Street.

## **Next Steps**

Following the completion of a countywide survey, the next steps in recognizing and promoting historic properties may include the following:

- Completion of National Register nominations for individual buildings and districts. This would recognize the significance of the properties as well as provide federal tax credits for rehabilitation of income-producing buildings.
- Creation of driving tours and walking tours. Tipton County has a number of sites worthy of recognition through a county wide driving tour. There are also opportunities to develop walking tours for properties within Covington's residential historic districts.
- Publication of a countywide survey book. This would require additional research and photography but would result in a publication that would highlight particular buildings and areas. The survey book published in Sevier County in 1997 would serve as a good model for this type of publication.
- Discussions with property owners concerning protective measures for the existing and proposed historic districts such as historic district and conservation zoning.

Tipton County has a rich architectural and historical legacy. This survey provides the basis for additional recognition and preservation of its historic resources and will also be a valuable planning tool in the years to come.

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