NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Noblit-Lytle House

other names/site number Noblit, Thomas Hughes, House; Lytle, William Franklin, House; GI-2625-2626

2. Location

street & number 1311 Sugar Creek Road N/A☐ not for publication

city or town Minor Hill ☒ vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Giles code 055 zip code 38473

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

E. Patrick McIlhaney, Jr. 6-11-08

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See Continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- ☐ entered in the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register.
  - ☐ See continuation sheet
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Noblit-Lytle House
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 178 acres Appleton, Tenn. 59 SW

UTM References
(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	480387	3876600
2	16	481250	3876600
3	16	481253	3875328
4	16	480370	3875327

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robbie D. Jones
organization Consultant date June 8, 2008
street & number 1353 Greenland Avenue telephone (615) 400-3966
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37216

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 15 minute series) indicating the property's location

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name John Gregory & Holly Smith
street & number 1311 Sugar Creek Road telephone (256) 536-4557
city or town Minor Hill state TN zip code 38473

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

Noblit-Lytle House
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity who's components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations N/A
(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** moved from its original location.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property
- ☐ **G** less than 50 year of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance
ca.1848-1950

Significant Dates
N/A

Significant Person
(complete if Criterion B is marked)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown; Multiple
Williams, Wiley C., stonemason

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography
(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State Agency
- ☐ Federal Agency
- ☐ Local Government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Noblit-Lytle House
Name of Property

Giles County, Tennessee
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- [x] private
- [ ] public-local
- [ ] public-State
- [ ] public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- [x] building(s)
- [ ] district
- [ ] site
- [ ] structure
- [ ] object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3		buildings
1	1	sites
3		structures
		objects
7	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/Single Dwelling - House
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure - Smokehouse
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure - Springhouse
AGRICULTURE/Agricultural Outbuilding - Barn
FUNERARY/Cemetery

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

WORK IN PROGRESS
DOMESTIC/Secondary Structure - Springhouse
AGRICULTURE/Agricultural Outbuilding - Barn
FUNERARY/Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival
Queen Anne

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE; STONE
walls WOOD
CONCRETE; STONE
roof METAL
other BRICK

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See Continuation Sheet

VII. Narrative Description

The Noblit-Lytle House is a vernacular, 1½-story log dog-trot constructed in the 1840s, which was renovated and enlarged in the 1890s with elements of Queen Anne-style architecture added. During the major 1890s renovation, the breezeway was enclosed, the roof was raised slightly to create taller second floor bedrooms, weatherboarding covered the log walls, and a new rear kitchen/dining wing was added. During the 19th century, two brick chimneys were added on the log portion of the house and a new stone chimney to the frame wing, which was likely located atop a former detached log kitchen outbuilding that was removed.

The 178-acre property – the core of a farm that once contained 1,009 acres - retains several domestic and agricultural outbuildings, including a log smokehouse dating from the 19th century, a frame dairy barn built around 1943, a concrete springhouse built around 1950, a large family cemetery established by 1862, and stone cemetery gateposts built in 1938 at the entrance road. The yard surrounding the farmhouse also exhibits landscaping features, such as stone retaining walls and plantings, dating from the early 20th century. The Noblit-Lytle House and its support buildings have been well preserved and the property is an excellent example of a farm from the 19th and early 20th centuries in rural Giles County.

The Noblit-Lytle House is located in the extreme southwest corner of Giles County, Tennessee, on a hillside overlooking the south side of Sugar Creek Road. The farm is located approximately ½-mile west of State Route 11 (Minor Hill Hwy.) and the Sugar Creek Bridge located in the bottomland adjacent to the farm. The property is located about two miles south of the incorporated community of Minor Hill in Giles County, Tennessee, and about 1½ miles north of Limestone County and the Alabama state line.

The exterior and interior of the house retains a remarkable amount of original architectural integrity. Very few changes have been made since the 1890s renovation. Besides a small bathroom enclosure on the rear porch and concrete block foundation in-fill, both made around 1960, changes to the house have not significantly altered the dwelling's 19th-century appearance or integrity. While several original outbuildings have been razed, the property retains three outbuildings, a family cemetery and gateposts, and landscape features - all dating from the period of significance of ca.1848-1950. Only one landscape feature, a small rainwater pond installed in the summer of 2007, is considered a non-contributing resource to the property.

During the frontier period, nearly all families in Giles County lived in modest log houses before replacing them with larger, more refined dwellings. Initial frontier dwellings were hastily, and often poorly, constructed and were not meant to be permanent. Therefore, very few log dwellings from the early 19th century survive in the county. Most of the remaining log buildings were built of better quality construction methods employed in the second quarter of the 19th century.

This dwelling is a classic example of a log dog-trot type farmhouse, which was built around 1848 with two, equal-sized 18'x18' log pens separated by a 10'-wide open breezeway and supported by stone foundation piers. Originally, the house – measuring approximately 18'x48' - featured separate entrances into each pen from the breezeway. The second floor spaces stretch across the entire house, including the breezeway. The

northern pen featured an enclosed stair in the northeast corner (no longer extant) while the southern pen features an enclosed stair in the southwest corner. These led to small attic bedrooms, likely for the children. A detached, log kitchen outbuilding (no longer extant) was most likely located in the northwest corner of the house. The logs are hewn planks with exposed bark on the top and bottoms and would have featured mud daubing over wooden and/or stone chinking (chinking/daubing not visible now). The floor joists are large un-hewn logs retaining the outer bark layer. The exterior chimneys were most likely made of hewn stones. The interior has two-panel, beveled doors and the fireplaces feature simple, post-and-lintel type mantels.

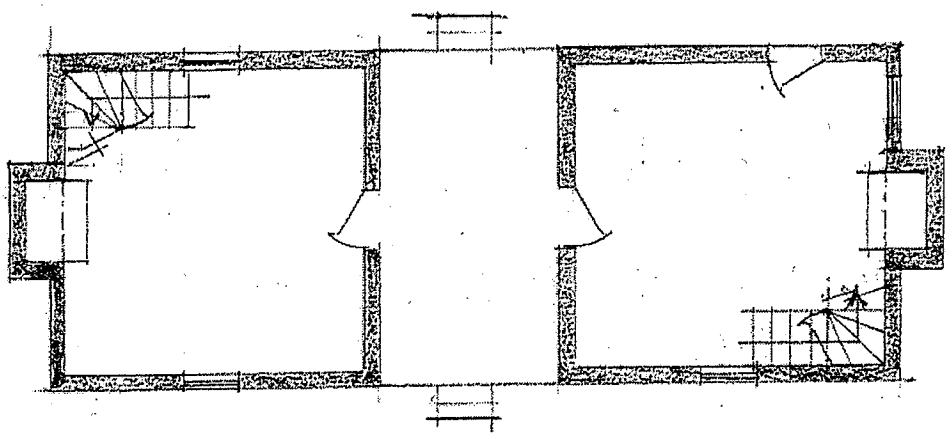
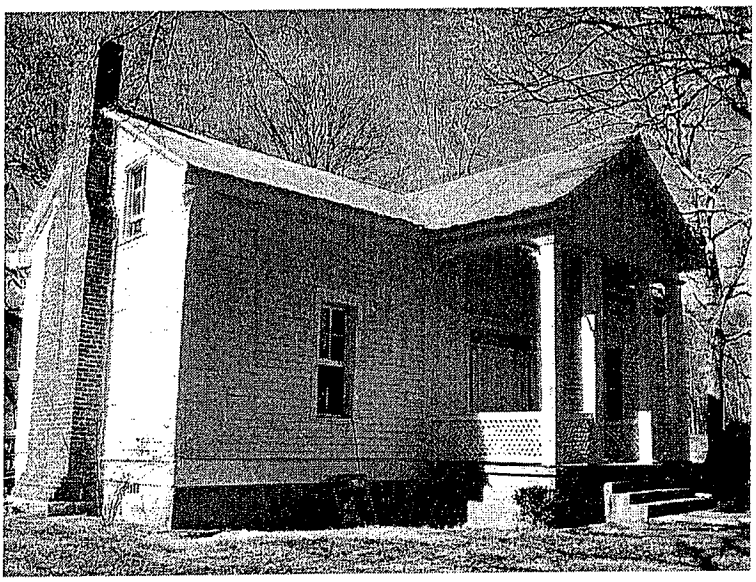


Figure 1. Conjectural first floor plan of the Noblit-Lytle House as built in the 1840s (R. Jones).

The farmhouse would retain this physical appearance until the 1890s when subsequent owner William Franklin Lytle undertook a major renovation of the home that resulted in an entirely different appearance. Lytle enlarged the home by enclosing the open central breezeway and replacing the detached kitchen outbuilding with a new frame kitchen/dining wing measuring approximately 18'x40' and featuring an unfinished attic. He added double entrance doors to the front and rear of the enclosed breezeway, creating a large, central entry hall.

Lytle removed the enclosed corner stair in the southern log pen and added a new enclosed stair in the central hall, which led to the southern pen's second floor bedroom. The second floor roof was apparently raised slightly so that the second floor bedrooms featured taller ceilings. At some point in the 19th century, the original chimneys were removed and replaced with new brick chimneys made with hand-kilned bricks; this may have occurred prior to the 1890s renovation. The chimney to the new kitchen was also rebuilt with hewn stones. The rear dining room featured an enclosed corner stair to the second floor unfinished attic, used for storage space and a bedroom. Originally, the gable roof featured wood shingles, but this was replaced with metal panels by the 1920s.



Noblit-Lytle House, looking northwest. (R. Jones, 02/2008).

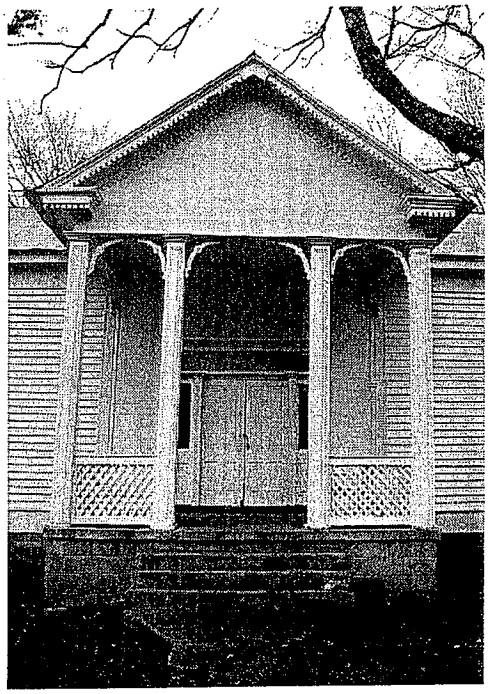
Lytle added weatherboarding to the entire exterior to disguise the log walls of the original dog-trot and added elements of Queen Anne-style trim and a large, center-bay front porch embellished with elaborate trim. An L-shaped porch was added to the rear of the house. The interior was completely renovated with beaded wallboards, molded trim, and tongue-and-groove floorboards. New windows were 4/4 sash with molded trim. The front and rear entrances feature transoms and sidelights, which provided light into the new central entrance hallway. This renovation created a stylish and modern 1½-story country farmhouse containing approximately 1,900 square feet of finished living space.

Perhaps the most architecturally distinctive feature of the dwelling's exterior is the one-story front porch, which covers the center of the main façade. Constructed with factory-milled woodwork, this ornate Queen Anne-style porch was added in the 1890s in an attempt to "update" the physical appearance of the antebellum dwelling. Supported by large, square molded columns, the porch exhibits lacy sawn brackets, saw tooth trim, and molded porch railing with wooden lattice in lieu of more common balusters.

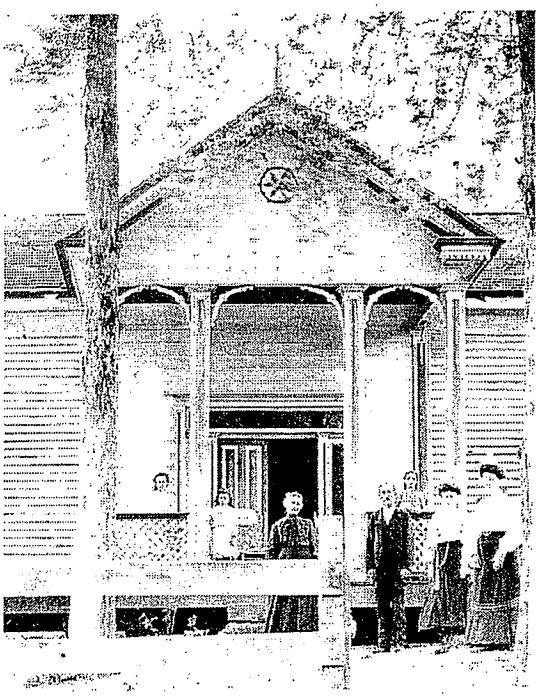
The east, or front, facade features three bays with two 4/4 sash windows at the center of each of the side bays. These windows exhibit molded trim across the top featuring flat drop pendants on the sides. The center bay features a double entrance door with a 6-pane transom across the top and 3-pane sidelights (the glass in the transom and sidelights is missing, but will be replaced in the future restoration). The doors are original 4-panel doors. The foundation along this façade is constructed with corner concrete piers added in the 1920s with concrete block in-fill added around 1960. (The original foundation was made with stacked stone piers.) The concrete pier in the southeast corner rests on a hewn circular millstone, likely salvaged from a nearby flourmill along Sugar Creek.

The weatherboarding in the front porch is flush, reflective of the front porch's use as an outdoor room. The center-bay front porch is supported by four, large square columns with molded trim and exhibits sawn trim, curved brackets, and gable returns. The pediment features flush weatherboarding and saw tooth trim. Two original decorative elements have been removed; this includes a sawn rooftop finial and a six-pointed star within a circle (the star will likely be replicated during the restoration). Around 1960, the porch's original wooden floorboards and limestone pier foundation were replaced with a concrete floor and a solid concrete block foundation. The porch is reached by a set of concrete steps, added in the 1920s and replacing the original hewn limestone steps.

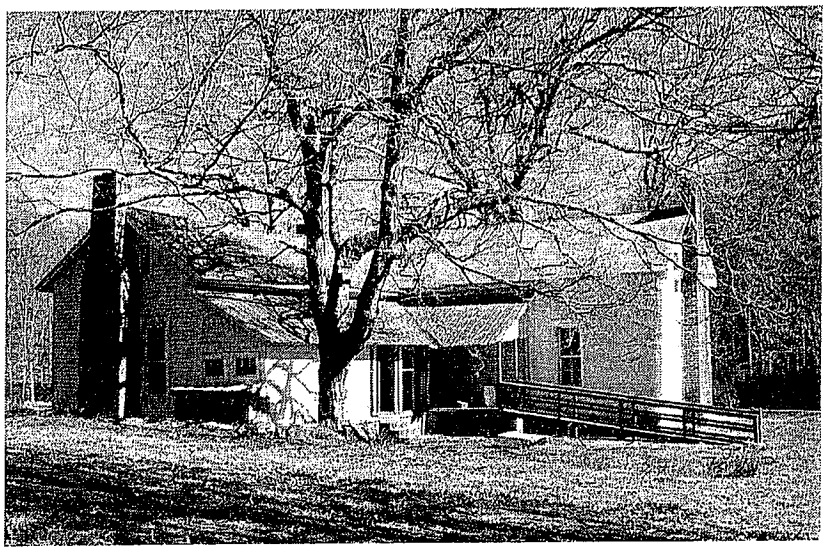
The south façade of the front part of the house (dog-trot) is dominated by a brick chimney supported by a limestone foundation. Two small 4/2 sash windows are located on the 2nd floor; these windows featured molded trim across the top. The gable returns are boxed. The south façade of the rear ell features a one-story side porch that was partially enclosed in the 1950s at the western end for use as a bathroom and utility closet. The remainder of the porch is unchanged, although the screening has been removed. A set of concrete steps serves the porch, which is supported by a concrete block foundation. This façade also features a 3-panel door with a glass window, which served the original dining room on the rear ell.



Front porch in November 2007 (R. Jones)



Front porch in December 1905



The Noblit-Lytle House, looking northeast (R. Jones, 2/2008).

The west façade, or rear elevation, is dominated by the hewn stone chimney located at the end of the rear kitchen/dining ell. This chimney apparently replaced an older stone chimney that probably served the original detached log kitchen building and was built on top of the original stone chimney foundation (physical evidence of the original chimney foundation is seen through a hole in the kitchen floor on the interior; the original stone firebox floor is 4" lower than the current room floor). There is a 4/4 sash window on the south side of the chimney, and two single-pane, fixed sash windows flank the chimney on the second floor. The enclosed side porch features fixed sash windows that serve the utility room and bathroom, added in the 1950s. A small metal shed was added to the enclosure in recent years to enclose exterior plumbing pipes serving the washer and water heater (this addition will be removed).

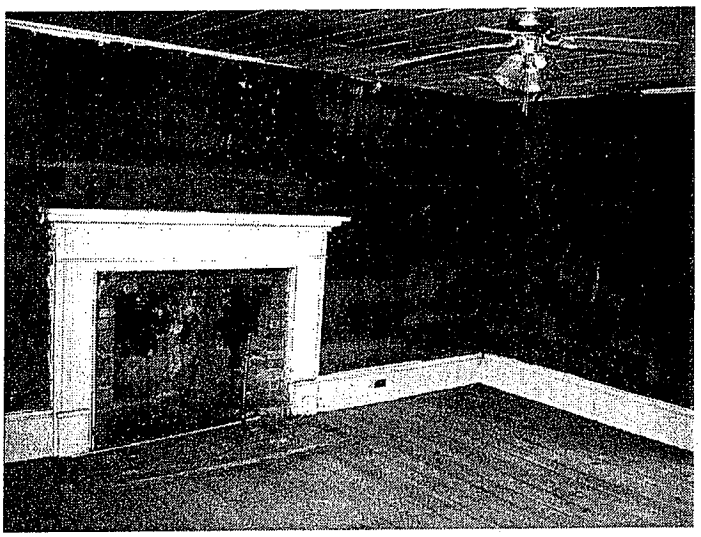
The west façade of the front part of the house (dog-trot) features a 4-panel double-entrance door in the center bay similar in appearance to the front entrance, but with no transom or sidelights. There is a 4/4 sash window on the south bay. The one-story, shed-roof rear porch extends across the center bay, although screening has been removed. The rear porch features a replacement concrete floor, likely added around 1960. A wooden wheelchair ramp was added in recent years (this will be removed in the restoration).

Noblit-Lytle House, looking southeast at the rear façade (R. Jones, 12/2007). Note the stone retaining wall.

The north façade features three bays, with the east bay being located at the end of the front part of the house (dog-trot) and the center and west bays serving the rear kitchen/dining ell. The south bay features a brick chimney supported by a stone foundation. A 4/4 sash window is west of the chimney. The center bay also features a 4/4 sash window and the west bay has a 3-panel door with a glass window. The door, leading to the kitchen, retains concrete steps. The windows and door exhibit molded trim across their tops. There are also two windows flanking the chimney on the second floor; a 6/2 sash on the east side and a 6/6 sash on the west side. This façade features a replacement concrete block foundation.

The house is based on a center-hall plan, incorporating the original log dog-trot plan, with a frame rear kitchen/dining wing added to the northwest corner. The house has undergone very few interior alterations since the major renovation and expansion in the 1890s and retains some original building fabric from the 1840s. All of the interior rooms retain beaded and flush wallboards and ceiling boards as well as hardwood floors; dating from the 1840s to 1890s. The house retains a mixture of 1840s 2-panel, hand-planed doors with beveled panels and manufactured 4-panel doors added in the 1890s. The interior rooms also retain molded trim, such as baseboards and fenestration molding. In 2007, the current owner removed wallpaper dating from the early to mid-20th century from all the interior rooms; exposing the original wallboards, which were unpainted. (The wallboards and ceiling boards will be restored.)

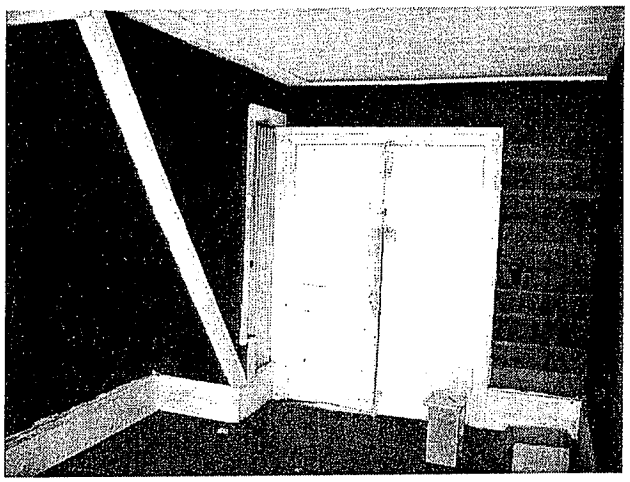
The south parlor features a 1890s 4-panel door to the center hall and a 1840s post-and-lintel fireplace mantel with molded trim. The enclosed corner stair, originally located in the southwest corner, was removed in the 1890s and exposed log walls were covered with new wallboards. The north parlor retains its original 1840s architectural fabric, including an enclosed corner stair in the northeast corner, which features a 2-panel door leading to the second floor bedroom. This parlor retains a 2-panel door to the center hall and the original post-and-lintel fireplace mantel with molded trim. The floor has a 2nd layer of wooden floorboards. There is also a small closet beneath the stair and it retains the original 2-panel door.



The south parlor retains the 1840s fireplace mantel and evidence of the 1840s corner stair, which was removed during the 1890s renovation and later covered with wallpaper (R. Jones, 12/2007).

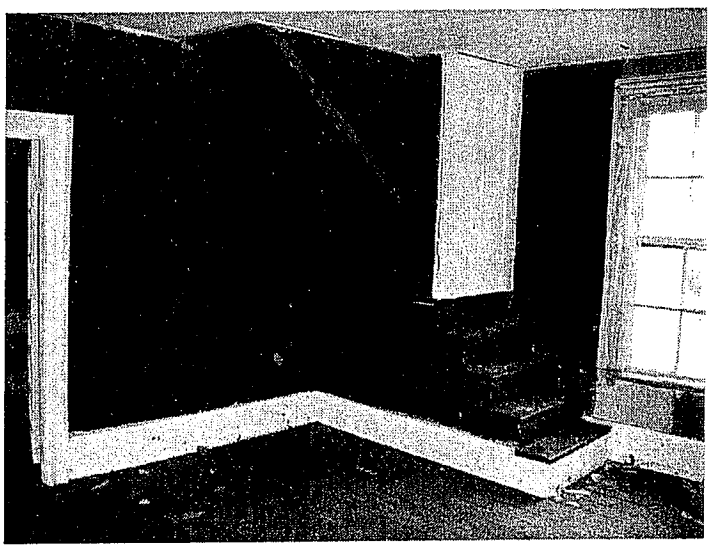
The north parlor retains the 1840s fireplace mantel and 1840s corner stair, including two 1840s 2-panel beveled doors, one leading to the 2nd floor bedroom and the other to a small closet (R. Jones, 12/2007).

The center hall, which was added during the 1890s renovation, features an enclosed corner stair in the southwest corner, which leads to the 2nd floor bedroom (replacing the south parlor stair that was removed). The hall retains two sets of 4-panel double entrance doors from the 1890s.



The center hall features a narrow corner stair and double doors (R. Jones, 12/2007).

The 1890s rear wing features the dining room and kitchen. The dining room retains an enclosed corner stair in the northwest corner; the stair features a 2-panel door leading to the attic storage/bedroom (this stair may have originally been located in the south parlor). This stair has inscribed initials "MWL" and "THN" in the trim (which may have been made by Mary Will Lytle and Thomas Hughes Noblit Jr.). The dining room features a 4-panel door leading to the north parlor and a 3-panel door with glass windows leading to the kitchen. A small closet was added to the north wall in the 1950s or '60s when the room was used as a bedroom by tenants (this has been partially removed already).

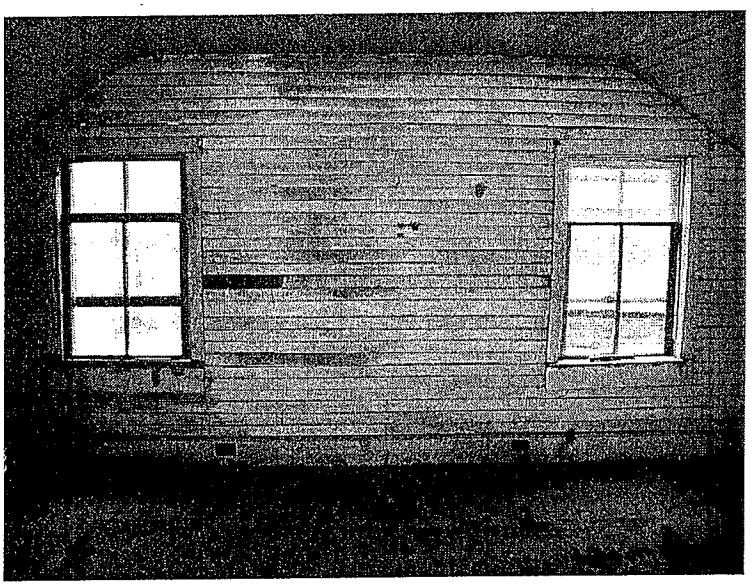


The dining room retains the enclosed corner stair that may have originally been located in the 1890s from the 1840s south parlor; its dimensions match the 1840s north parlor stair (R. Jones, 12/2007).

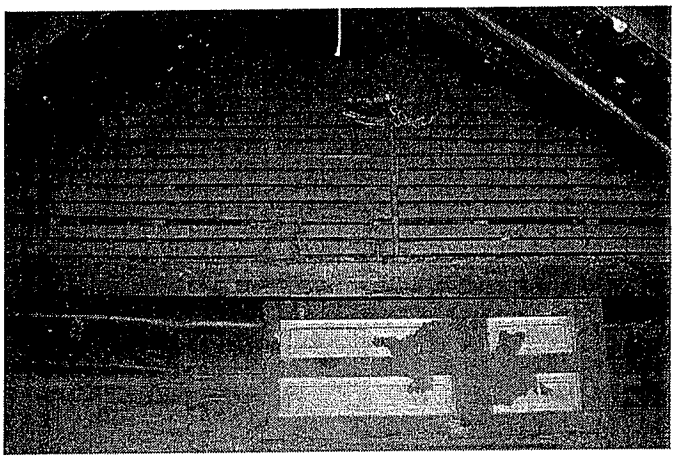
The kitchen features a small closet pantry that is located beneath the dining room stair and accessed from a 2-panel door in the northeast corner of the kitchen. The fireplace mantel has been removed. A modern door leads to the porch enclosure housing a bathroom and utility closet (added in the 1950s and enlarged in the 1960s or '70s). An electrical breaker box is located in the southeast corner.

The second floor consists of four rooms, accessed by three sets of enclosed stairs. The front part of the house (dog-trot) features a south bedroom over the south parlor and a center storage room over the center hall. Access to a small attic over the front porch is by a tiny opening from the center room. An 1840s 2-panel door separates the bedroom from the center room. In 2007, the current owner discovered decorative floor matting, made of jute or hemp and likely imported from China or Japan, beneath modern linoleum; the floor matting dates from the early 20th century. The north bedroom is over the north parlor and features a banister and railing, probably added during the 1890s renovation. Both of these bedrooms are finished with beaded wall and ceiling boards.

The large unfinished room above the rear kitchen/dining wing was likely used for storage and perhaps a bedroom. The original log walls of the dog-trot are visible along the east wall.



The south bedroom features beaded wallboards; the original 1840s corner stair was removed in the 1890s; the replacement floorboards are visible (right). This room was painted white. Note the "ghost" of the imported Asian floor matting dating from the early 20th century (R. Jones, 12/2007).



The attic over the rear wing in unfinished, exposing the roof over the front part of the house and hewn logs from the original 1840s dog-trot. Note the 1890s 4-panel door. (R. Jones, 12/2007).

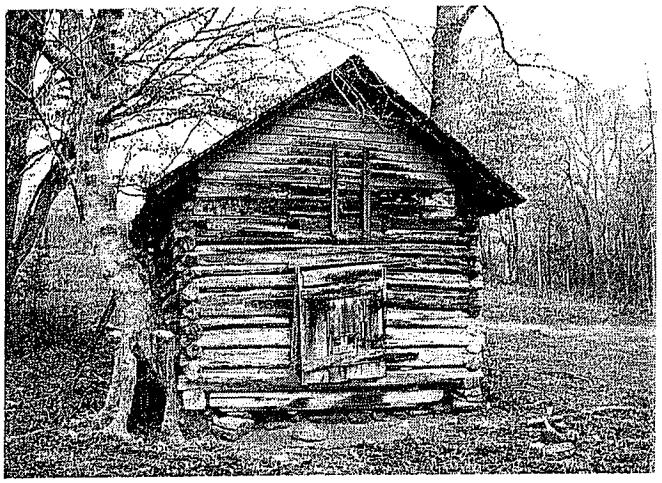
The property retains six outbuildings, structures, and sites – all besides a modern pond are contributing. This includes a smokehouse, a barn, a springhouse, a cemetery, a pair of cemetery gateposts, stone retaining walls, and a modern pond.

OUTBUILDINGS – Smokehouse (C), and Barn (C)

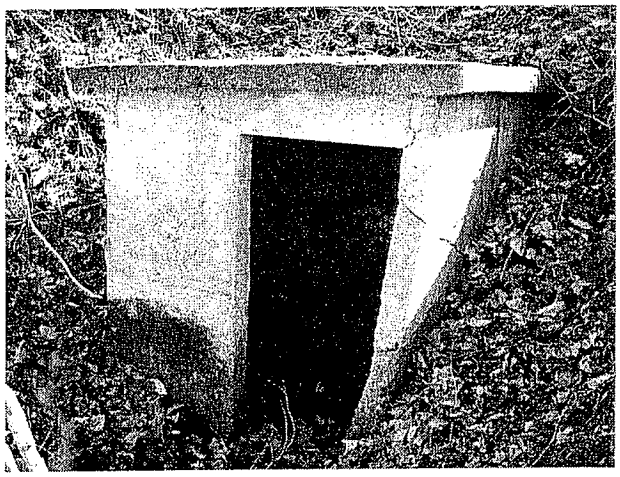
The support outbuildings include a log smokehouse located northwest of the farmhouse. The smokehouse exhibits V-notching and a board-and-batten door with strap hinges. The gables have circular-sawn weatherboards. The smokehouse dates from the 19th century, perhaps from the 1840s, and has a new roof structure added in the early 20th century.

The other outbuilding are a large 32'x50' gambrel-roof dairy barn constructed between 1942 and 1944. This frame barn has a solid concrete foundation and feature stalls for dairy cows and horses as well as a large hay loft.

The Noblit-Lytle House, looking northeast; the dairy barn was built ca.1943 (R. Jones, 2/2008).



The log smokehouse was constructed in the 19th century and retains stone chinking (R. Jones, 12/2007).



The small, concrete springhouse was built to protect a steep hillside spring around 1950; it continues to supply water to the house via a gravity-fed hose (R. Jones, 2/2008).

SITES – Cemetery (C) and Pond (NC)

The Noblit Cemetery is located atop a hill to the northwest of the farmhouse and enjoys a stunning view of the surrounding countryside, including the Sugar Creek bottoms where the Battle of Sugar Creek likely occurred during the Civil War. The oldest marked grave in the cemetery dates from 1862, but according to family tradition, there are several unmarked graves for children and slaves from the 1850s.

Today, the cemetery contains the graves and tombstones of dozens of family descendants and neighbors. The cemetery retains a 19th century announcement bell, which originally hung in a cedar tower; it was re-hung in a stone tower built in 1990 with stones brought from the farms of each family represented in the cemetery. The families would ring the bell to announce that someone in the community had died, with different signals

to call volunteer gravediggers and graveside funeral services. A decorative metal fence, which once surrounded a family plot, is now used as a gate into the cemetery, which is protected by a chain link fence. The metal fence and gate date from ca.1900.

The cemetery exhibits a variety of some 165 funerary tombstones and monuments constructed from 1862 to the current day. The tombstones are primarily of the upright headstone/footstone and more decorative obelisk types. These are outgrowths of the Victorian and Neoclassical eras of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The 19th century tombstones were hand-carved by local itinerant and part-time stonecutters, while the 20th century tombstones and family monuments were manufactured by professional stonecutters and purchased from commercial marble yards, using imported stone. The large marble "Noblit" monument was installed in the early 1930s.

The only non-contributing feature is a small, rain-water pond added southeast of the barn in the summer of 2007; the pond is located at the former site of a hog pasture.

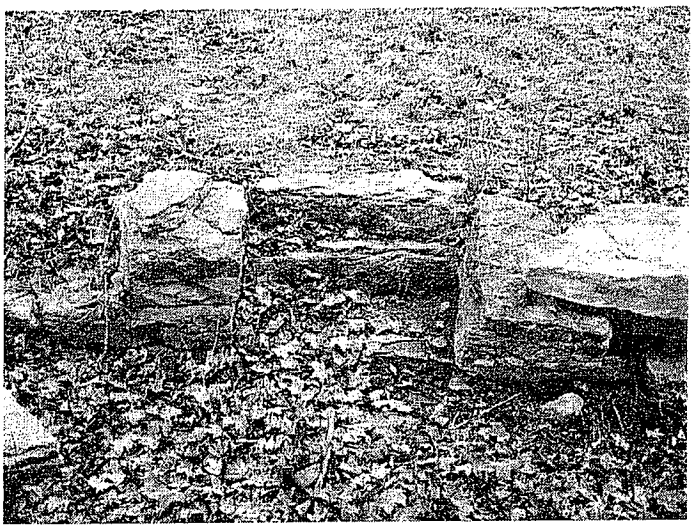
The Noblit Cemetery, looking southeast, with some 160+ burials was established by 1862 on a hilltop overlooking the farm; the announcement bell is in the background (R. Jones, 2/2008).

STRUCTURES – Cemetery Gateposts (C), Stone Walls (C), and Springhouse (C)

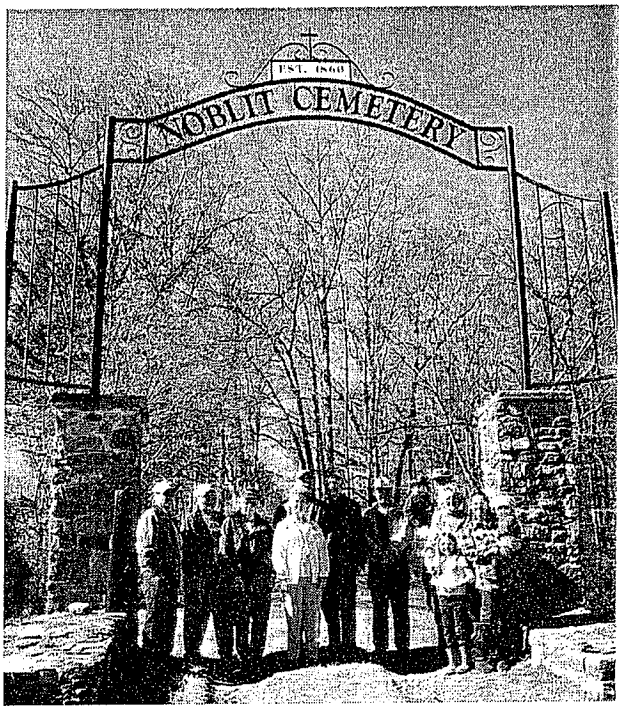
A vehicular access road leads to the cemetery from Sugar Creek Road and is marked by a pair of stone gateposts constructed in May 1938 by local stonemason Wiley C. Williams. The south post is original and retains the inscription "WCW" and "May 1938." The north post was damaged by a truck in the 1960s and repaired. Originally, the gateposts featured a metal arch with the name "Noblit Cemetery," however, that arch was removed in the 1940s or '50s in order for large trucks to pass. A replacement metal arch with the name and establishment date of 1860 was installed in 2005. The cemetery and gateposts are located on a separate 5-acre parcel and are maintained by a family trust established in 1979.

The farmhouse also retains many remnants of landscaping added in the early 20th century. This includes stone retaining walls surrounding the rear ell and across the front yard. A set of stone steps is located in the northwest corner near the rear kitchen door; the steps led to the smokehouse and vegetable garden. The yard also retains concrete sidewalks at the front entrance and rear kitchen entrance; both added in the 1920s.

The third structure is a small 4'x4' concrete springhouse, built ca. 1950 located on a steep hillside east of Sugar Creek Road; the spring provided water to the house via a gravity-fed metal pipe.



The Noblit-Lytle House retains stone retaining walls at the rear and a set of stone steps leading to the smokehouse and vegetable garden; the walls date from the early 20th century (R. Jones 12/2007).



The stone gateposts leading to the Noblit Cemetery, containing 160+ burials, were built in 1938; the original metal arch was replaced in 2005. Shown are the current owner and his family, the former owner, a former occupant, family members, and neighbors, including (l to 4) Jim Newton, Steve Newton, Fred Newton, Allan Hale, Sharon Townsend, Sam Hale, Robert Lee Townsend, Aidan Smith, John Smith, Lenora Word, Lily Rose Smith, Holly Smith, and Ruby Skye Smith (R. Jones, 2/2008).

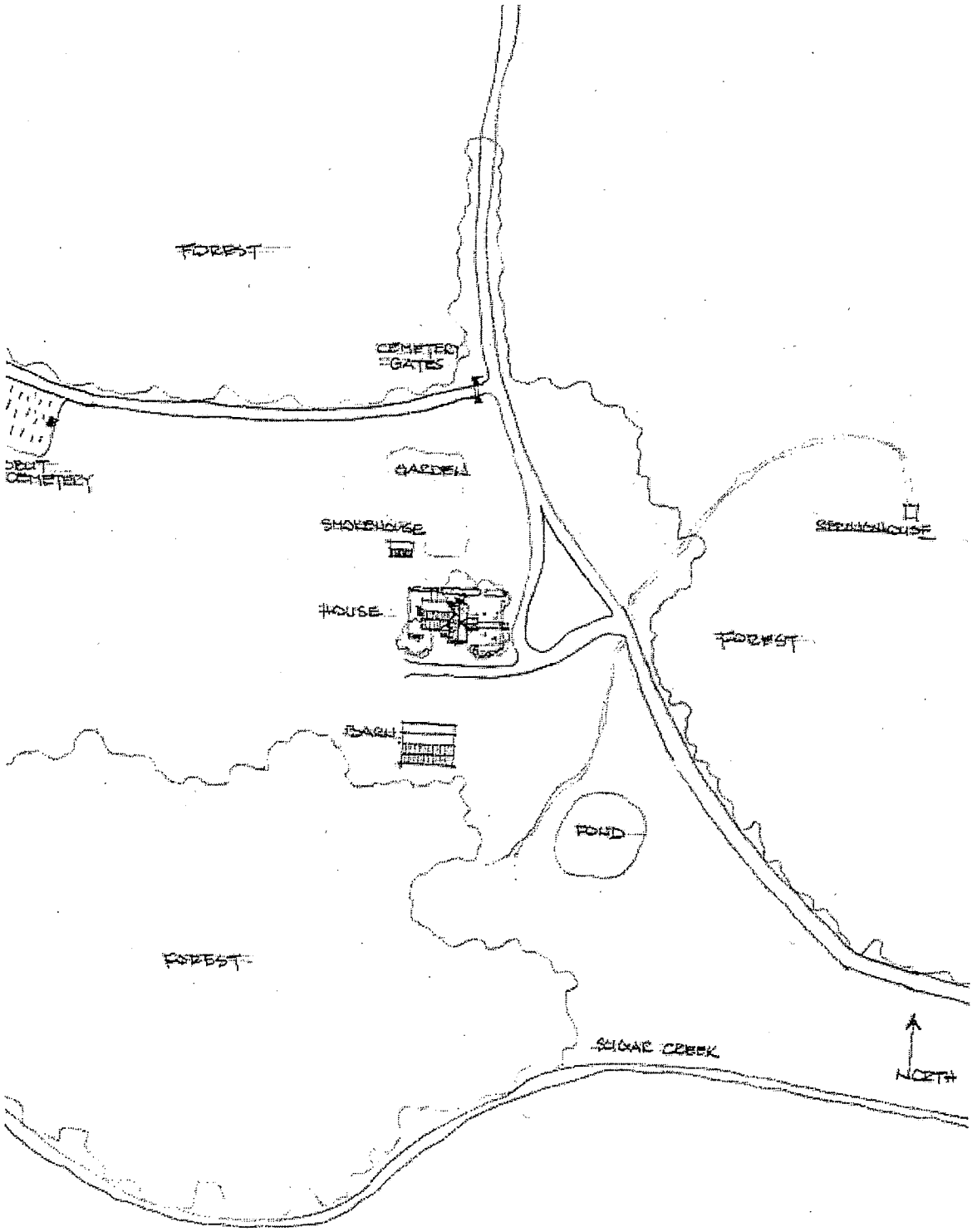


Figure 2. Site Plan for the Noblit-Lytle House (R. Jones).

VIII. Statement of Significance

The Noblit-Lytle House is eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A for local exploration/settlement patterns and Criteria C for its local architectural significance. Located in rural Giles County, Tennessee, near the Alabama state line, the property retains a dwelling originally constructed around 1848 and renovated and enlarged in the 1890s. The house is a good example of a 19th century rural farmhouse with elements of Queen Anne-style architecture. The property also features three outbuildings – a 19th century log smokehouse, a ca.1943 frame dairy barn, and a ca.1950 concrete springhouse – as well as domestic landscape elements from the early 20th century. The 178-acre property has been continuously used for agricultural farming since initially settled in the 1840s; the Noblit family settled the area in the 1810s.

This vernacular dwelling was originally built by Thomas Hughes Noblit as a one-story log dogtrot farmhouse. It underwent a major physical change in its appearance in the 1890s by Noblit's son-in-law William F. Lytle with an enclosed central hallway, weatherboarding, the addition of a rear ell, and the addition of an ornate Queen Anne-style front porch. The interior was also completely renovated in the 1890s. Since then, the house has undergone minimal renovations, such as the enclosure of a small section of the rear porch around 1960 for use as a bathroom. Overall, the property and the house retain a high degree of architectural integrity from their ca.1848-1950 period of significance.

The following brief summary of Minor Hill gives a local historical context for the Noblit-Lytle House.

MINOR HILL

The hilly area in the southwestern corner of Giles County was reserved for American Indian occupation after Tennessee was formed in 1796; it was part of a "Congressional Reservation" established in 1806. This land was not formally opened up for white settlement until after federal treaties were signed with American Indians from September 14-20, 1816. Treaties with delegates from the Cherokee and Chickasaw Nations were negotiated at the Chickasaw Council House at Col. George Colbert's Ferry on the Tennessee River and along the Natchez Trace near Tupelo in the Mississippi Territory (present-day northwest Alabama). The treaties were negotiated by General Andrew Jackson, General David Merriwether, and Jesse Franklin – delegates representing the United States on behalf of President James Madison. They opened up lands in northern Alabama and Middle Tennessee (see map on next page).

The initial white settlers in the southwestern corner of Giles County were Reuben Riggs and Henry Morgan. Other early white settlers included James McKinney, Kallit Nail, James Collins, James Appleton, and William Noblit. The hilltop area of the highland rim where Kallit Nail lived became known as "Nail's Hill" until he moved away in the 1840s; it was later renamed "Minor Hill" in honor of subsequent resident Joseph Minor, who moved away in 1857. However, the area has retained the name Minor Hill ever since.

A stage coach and wagon road connecting Pulaski to Lamb's Ferry on the Tennessee River near Rogersville, Alabama, was called the "Lamb's Ferry Road" (now State Route 11). It ran southwest through Minor Hill, crossing Sugar Creek near the Noblit-Lytle House, and is shown on an 1832 state map and an 1836 tax map.

Puncheon Camp Branch runs southwest draining into Sugar Creek southwest of Minor Hill. An ancient Indian trail led from Minor Hill to Huntsville, Alabama. Early settlers used to the Indian trail to drive hogs to Huntsville. The Florence Road ran southwest from Minor Hill through Appleton in Lawrence County to Florence, Alabama, which was established in 1818 as the seat of Lauderdale County.

INDUSTRY & COMMERCE: Before 1809, there were no mills in Giles County, requiring farmers to travel to adjacent Maury and Williamson counties to mill their corn into meal or wheat into flour. However, by 1820 there were around a dozen mills running throughout the county. In 1818, two water-powered mills were constructed near Minor Hill on Sugar Creek - one by James Cox later known as Malone's Mill and another by Elijah Ruthony. Two years later in 1820, James Paisley built a horse-powered mill near Minor Hill. In the 1870s, a distillery was constructed along Sugar Creek; it featured a bonded warehouse and was said to have been used by locals to make apple cider. In the late 19th century, a stave mill was built at Minor Hill.

During the antebellum era, Minor Hill was primarily used as a stage stop along the Lamb's Ferry Road. During the Civil War, a courier post was also established here. In 1868, a general merchandise store opened at Minor Hill. The 1878 Beer's Map of Giles County shows that the tiny village of Minor Hill then featured two general stores and a post office, which was established in 1870.

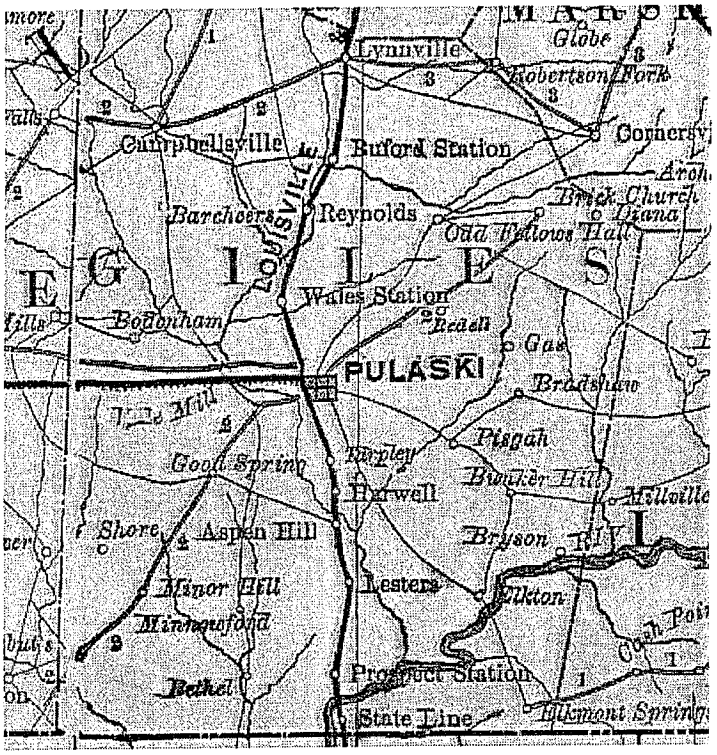
EDUCATION: In the late nineteenth century, the Minor Hill community built a small log school. A larger district schoolhouse was constructed in 1897. By 1882, the village featured an Odd Fellow Masonic Lodge, but no churches. In addition, the Oxford School was built along the Lamb's Ferry Road at Sugar Creek and the Puncheon School was constructed in the 1870s along Sugar Creek Road near the Noblit-Lytle House, on land donated by Thomas H. Noblit.

TRANSPORTATION: Initially, transportation in the county was limited to rough wagon roads and ancient Indian trails. Very few waterways besides the Elk River were large enough for navigation. In the 1830s, a turnpike was constructed between Columbia, Maury County Tennessee, and northern Alabama, running south through Pulaski and Elkton in Giles County Tennessee. In 1840, a second turnpike was built from Pulaski to Elkton. An 1834 map of Tennessee shows that turnpikes also existed from Pulaski to Lawrenceburg (Lawrence County), Cornersville (Marshall County), and Fayetteville (Lincoln County) as well as turnpikes from Elkton to Athens and Huntsville in northern Alabama.

The Nashville & Decatur Railroad was constructed through Giles County between 1856 and 1860. The county provided $275,000 towards its construction. Between 1866 and 1872, the N&D Railroad was extended south to Birmingham, Alabama, and leased to the Louisville & Nashville Railroad. As indicated on the 1878 Beer's Map of Giles County, the Lamb's Ferry Road had been improved into a pike connecting to Minor Hill and Pulaski to the north and Rogersville, Alabama, to the south. Additional turnpikes were constructed throughout the county in the 1880s.

After the 1910s, the Columbia Pike became known as the "Bee-Line Highway" and later U.S. Hwy. 31 (connecting Nashville with New Orleans via Birmingham). In 1916, Giles County native Alma Rittenberry,

of Birmingham, established the Bee-Line Highway. The Lamb's Ferry Road became State Route 11 South; a new concrete highway bridge over Sugar Creek was completed in 1938-1940.



This 1888 map of Giles County shows transportation routes along roads, turnpikes, the L&N Railroad, and the Elk River as well as growing rural communities. Minor Hill is located in the southwest corner on the improved Lamb's Ferry Road.

CIVIL WAR IN MINOR HILL

While no major battles were fought in Giles County, the Civil War had a significant impact on the area, including Minor Hill. Residents of Giles County were overwhelmingly pro-seccession and hundreds of young white men immediately volunteered to go fight for the Confederacy. On May 16, 1861, the 3rd Tennessee Infantry Regiment with ten full companies of some 885 men from throughout Middle Tennessee was organized at Lynnville in northern Giles County. A total of 23 Confederate companies, which generally included about 100 men, were formed in the county. Two regiments of black Federal troops formed at Pulaski in 1863-1864. Local historians estimate the county sent more than 3,000 men to serve in the Confederate army and dozens of African Americans, many former slaves, who served with the U.S. Colored Infantry of the Union army; one third of all these men died during the war.

Sporadically throughout the ward, both Federal and Confederate soldiers occupied Giles County, which was under control of the Union army between early 1862 - after the fall of Fort Donelson - and 1865. Pulaski and Lynnville in northern Giles County were both heavily fortified.

AGRICULTURE

The Noblit-Lytle House is located at the northern end of the broad Sugar Creek valley, which ranges from ¼ to 1-mile in width, creating one of the largest bottomland areas in the region. In the 1810s and 1820s, several water and horse-powered cotton gins were constructed in the county as cotton became one of the primary cash crops of the region. During the antebellum era, Giles County became one of the largest producers of cotton in Middle Tennessee. John McGrew was a census taker for this section of Giles County in 1850. He wrote the following description of the Minor Hill area in June 1850.

> "A large portion of this District is still unsettled. It is generally very poor and broken, except on the various streams, which is very productive and is composed of a black and gravely [sic] soil. It is an extremely healthy section of the county and on a good many of the different streams which flow through the District are to be found several very excellent sites for the erection of cotton mills and other kinds of machinery." (Giles County Census)

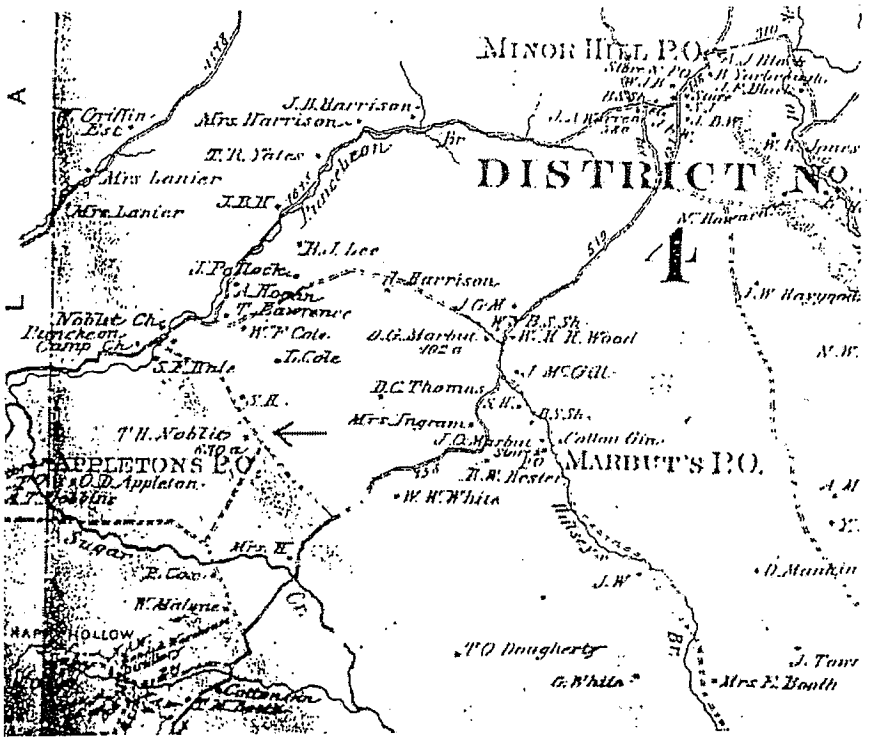
By 1878, two cotton gins and a distillery had been constructed near Sugar Creek. These agricultural facilities processed cotton, corn, and other crops grown by the area farmers.

Most of the county farmers were self-sufficient. Members of his household produced much of what they consumed. Corn was the mainstay of the household diet. Farmers typically grew wheat and possibly barley, rye, oats, and buckwheat. The garden and orchard were major sources of food. The typical garden contained a variety of beans, Irish and sweet potatoes, peas, carrots, onions, beets, cabbage, squash, pumpkins, tomatoes, celery, turnips, parsnips, cucumbers, asparagus, melons, peppers, and radishes. Orchards typically provided apples, peaches, cherries, and plums as well as grapes.

Local farmers raised domesticated livestock, which provided meat for the family's consumption, including hogs, cattle, chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese. They also raised sheep, primarily for their wool, and bees for honey. The forests and streams also provided local farmers with food, including wild game such as deer, rabbit, squirrels, ducks, turkeys, boars, and fish such as trout. Members of the household would also gather other wild foods such as fruits and nuts.

Farmers would have their wool, cotton, and flax converted into thread or cloth so that members of the household could perform clothes-making tasks such as spinning and weaving as well as quilting.

Still, even self-sufficient farmers were required to purchase some necessities and luxuries at the local general merchandise store. This included such food items such as coffee, refined sugar cane, tea, spices, hard candy, chocolates, and cheese as well as whiskey, rum, or wine.



1878 Beer's Map of Giles County, showing the T.H. Noblit farm, then 630 acres (marked). The nearby "S.H." indicates the location of the School House constructed in the 1870s on land donated by T.H. Noblit.

THE NOBLITS IN AMERICA

The Noblit surname is of French origins, originally spelled Noblette. Historians have traced the surname to Jacque de Noblette who lived in 1066 in the western part of France known as Normandy. The surname has been spelled various ways by descendants in America. Variations include Noblett, Noblitt, Noblet, and Noblit. Since the nineteenth century, the spelling in Giles County has consistently remained Noblit.

Several members of the Noblit family emigrated from Europe to American in the early eighteenth century. This included four brothers – John, Richard, Francis, and William – who landed at Cape May, Delaware, on Christmas Day in 1721. William Noblit (1704-1771) settled near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he operated a tavern called the "Ten Mile House" (it was located about ten miles from Philadelphia), which was later renamed the Black Horse Inn. He married in 1736 and had six children, including Samuel Noblit (1744-ca.1836), who served in the Revolutionary War for nearly two years – fighting in battles at Long Island and Fort Washington.

Around 1771, Samuel Noblit migrated to Rich Hill, South Carolina (near Spartanburg). Samuel Noblit had married Sarah McClellan, an immigrant from Ireland, and they had six children, including William Noblitt. Samuel Noblit was a farmer, but also established neighborhood schools where he taught between 1778 and 1815. He also spent time in Georgia in 1783-1784.

WILLIAM NOBLIT

William Noblitt was born July 18, 1785, in South Carolina and was christened by a Presbyterian minister when he was three months old. He attended his father's school. Later in 1803, at age 18, he was baptized at the Cedar Springs Baptist Church. He left that church in 1806 and migrated to Tennessee.

According to family tradition, William Noblit was one of the first white settlers in Giles County, illegally settling on land in the Chickasaw Indian territory of the southwestern part of the county around 1810. From 1809-1811, U.S. soldiers from Fort Hampton on the Elk River in Alabama were ordered to drive off these "intruders" on Indian lands by burning their crops, fences, and farmhouses. Most "intruders" were temporarily driven away, but eventually returned and rebuilt. This would have included William Noblit. Noblit is not listed on early county records such as the 1809 and 1810 petitions of intruders who had been removed or on the 1812 county tax list. However, the 1810 petition with over 400 signers proclaimed that an estimated 2,250 settlers were living on the Chickasaw reservation lands.

During a speech to the U.S. Senate in 1812, U.S. Senator Felix Grundy of Nashville "urged the early extinguishment of the Indian title to the lands West of Maury and Giles, embracing the Western and South-western part of Giles, and to the Mississippi River..." (McCallum, 1876; reprinted, 1997: n.p.)

The threat of attacks by Indians left most white squatters living in constant fear. In the fall of 1813, after the Fort Mims Indian massacre in the Alabama territory, squatters in the Chickasaw Indian territory temporarily left the area in fear of rumored additional attacks. Several local settlers served in the War of 1812 under General Andrew Jackson of Nashville and these "Tennessee Volunteers" helped win the war and the famous Battle of New Orleans on the Eighth of January in 1815. According to family descendants, William Noblit was a veteran of the War of 1812 and served under Gen. Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans.

The land where William Noblit had settled in Giles County was eventually opened up for legal settlement with an Indian treaty, negotiated by General Jackson and others, in September 1816. According to family tradition, U.S. soldiers attempted to burn William Noblit's cabin while he was away, but once his wife explained he was fighting against the British under Gen. Jackson, they relented. This incident would have occurred in 1814 or 1815. (The story was recounted in a 1902 newspaper article.)

William Noblit (1785-1862) married Ann Hughes McClure (1788-1870), a Georgia native, and they had three children: Sarah MC, born in 1810; "Baby Girl" who died at birth in 1815; and Thomas Hughes, born on May 8, 1812, in Tennessee. These children were apparently born in a log cabin that their father William had constructed as an "intruder" in the Chickasaw Indian territory of southern Giles County. Exactly when and where in southwestern Giles County William Noblit originally settled is unknown, although family history indicates he settled at the head of Jenkins Creek. A local history published in 1876 by James McCallum stated that Sugar Creek was not settled by whites until 1818, although McCallum did list "William Noblitt" as one of the "very early settlers" in the area surrounding Minor Hill. (McCallum, 1876; reprinted, 1997)

Giles County court records indicate that William Noblit and his wife were living in the county by at least 1814. That year, William Noblit was involved in a legal dispute with John Boyd. In March 1814, Boyd placed charges of assault and battery against Noblit, resulting in several court proceedings and appeals at both the local and state level. By September, Boyd had apparently dropped the charges. Some of the court proceedings also mentioned Noblit's wife.

By 1820, "William Noblett" was listed on the U.S. Census for Giles County where he was living with his wife and two children. William Noblit is also listed on the 1830 (misspelled as "Knoblette") and 1840 U.S. Censuses for Giles County, but his son Thomas H. Noblit is not listed on either census. County court records indicate that Noblit served on jury duty in August 1833; he was one of several "good and lawful" men and house holders that were not then serving as road overseers (who were exempt from jury duty).

The 1836 tax list for Giles County listed "William Noblet" in District No. 3 (central southwest) with 25 acres and owning no slaves. This land had been granted to him by his son Thomas Hughes Noblit. The 1836 tax list showed his son Thomas H. Noblet separately as owning no land or slaves. Only the younger Thomas Noblet, 24, was listed as a white poll. That father and son are listed separately for the first time could indicate that they had set up separate households although Thomas Noblit was unmarried at that time. Later in 1836, William Noblit purchased 80 acres of land from the heirs of Anna Reagan.

THOMAS HUGHES NOBLIT FARM, 1846-1889

Thomas H. Noblit was ambitious and purchased his first property in 1828 at age 16 when he bought 25 acres for $100 on the nearby Little Shoal Creek. His sister Sarah, age 18, and uncle, Samuel McClure Hughes, signed the deed as witnesses.

Between 1846 and 1858, Thomas accumulated several land grants in southwestern Giles County totaling about 330 acres from the State of Tennessee, beginning with 90 acres on Sugar Creek in October 1846. In 1848, he obtained 175 acres on Shoal Creek from Gov. Neill S. Brown. Gov. William Trousdale granted him five separate land grants between September 1850 and August 1851, totaling nearly 50 acres along Sugar and Shoal Creeks. In June 1858, Gov. Isham G. Harris granted him 16.75 acres on Sugar Creek.

In 1857, Thomas H. Noblit also purchased 73.75 acres for $1,000 from neighbor Mary A. Kennemer as well as land from his father William Noblit (via an "agreement"). In total, Thomas H. Noblit acquired at least 400 acres in the 1840s and 1850s.

On January 31, 1841, Thomas H. Noblit, 28, married Roanna Clear (1822-1889), 18. They would eventually have nine children, including Samuel (1842-1890); John C. (1843-1876); Orlena "first" (1845-1863); William (b.1848); Thomas H. Jr. "first" (1853-1856); Malvina (b.1856); Thomas H. Jr. "second" (1858-1942); Mary "Mollie" (1861-1936); Orlena "second" (1864-1933). Four of his children died young. According to a family descendant, Roanna was likely Thomas Noblit's second wife, but information for his first wife is unknown.

In the late 1840s, Noblit became the legal guardian for the children of his sister Sarah Noblit Hardy. Her husband Jesse Hardy died leaving four minor children: John L. (b.1837), Marian Lafayette (b.1839), Sarah Ann (b.1840), and Mary "Lucy" Jane (b.1845). In February 1849, the local court appointed the children's new stepfather John B. Davis as their guardian. Noblit had "failed to renew his Bond as such Guardian within the last two years" and settled with the county clerk in June 1849 for guardianship of his nephew and three nieces. Apparently, for two years (1847-1849), Noblit's household included at least three adults and seven children or ten people in total. Sarah and John Davis had two children: Margaret (b.1849) and Thomas H. (b.1853).

The 1850 U.S. Census listed Thomas H. Noblit, 37, as a farmer with real estate worth $1,000. He was living with his wife Roanna, 28, and children: Samuel, 8, John C., 7, Orleana, 5, William, 2, as well as Bobe Roads, 30, a schoolteacher boarding in their home. Samuel and John C. were in-school. William Noblet, 64, and his wife "Amie," 61, were living in a nearby district. His farm was also worth $1,000. The census indicates that three adults and four children – seven people total - were living here.

Beginning in the late 1840s, Noblit began to become more involved in the local community and by the 1850s he had risen to the level of a community leader and law officer. In March 1848, he was elected as a Justice of the Peace representing the 4th district. He was sworn in at the county courthouse in June 1848.

Justices of the Peace heard civil cases of common law involving less than $1,000 and equity involving less than $50. They also decided misdemeanor cases if the fine was less than $50. The bulk of a justice's responsibilities centered around issuing warrants and subpoenas for all courts including civil and criminal court warrants. As a JP, Noblit also executed estates, proved deeds and sales of slaves or other personal property, built and controlled roads and bridges, performed marriages, and administer oaths.

In Giles County, Noblit sat on a county quorum-court, which was a part-time body, elected from two-member districts that had overall responsibility for county affairs. Among their responsibilities are passing the budget, creating new ordinances (at the misdemeanor level), setting property tax levels, and working with other elected officials. The full-time elected county administrator, who presided over the quorum court, was the county judge.

Noblit was also appointed in August 1849 as a judge for local elections. Noblit continued to serve the role as a Justice of the Peace at least through 1867; he was elected in 1865 as the single representative of the 4th district. He was appointed a tax assessor for the 4th district in 1868.

Besides serving as a Justice of the Peace, Thomas Hughes Noblit was a farmer, country doctor, and merchant. His family retains many of his personal papers. These illuminate the financial operations of his general merchandise store in the 1860s and 1870s. The store was located near Puncheon Creek approximately one mile north of Sugar Creek. Thomas would travel over 150 miles to Memphis to obtain merchandise for his store. The round trip would typically take about six weeks. The family retains the receipts for county taxes paid by Thomas H. Noblit between 1859 and 1887.

Noblit also worked as a physician. Family papers indicate that he owned several medical books, medical advisors, a medical bag, a set of balances, a lance, tooth pullers, and a large quantity of Strychnine (*Nux vomica*), a bitter tonic made from an evergreen tree native to Southeast Asia. Strychnine was then used medicinally in small doses for the treatment of digestive problems, alcohol and tobacco poisoning, acute infectious diseases, heart problems, and other common ailments.

Thomas H. Noblit was also a Master Mason in the local Masonic Lodge and an elder in the Church of Christ, which was originally called "Noblit's Chapel" when first built around 1870 on land he donated near Puncheon Creek and the Puncheon Camp Baptist Church (established in 1844). The Puncheon Church of Christ at Noblit's Chapel was formally organized in November 1876 with 28 members, including his wife Roanna and son Samuel. The congregation continues to use the log church building today (GI-2645).

The church was also used as a community school. According to family history, Noblit housed schoolteachers and tutors at his home; one is listed in the 1850 census. In the 1870s, Noblit donated land for construction of a single-room, frame schoolhouse, which was located between his home and the church. It was call the Puncheon School House, and several members of the Noblit family attended; it is no longer extant. Thomas Noblit's son, John C. Noblit, was one of the first schoolteachers. The school operated until the late 19th century when a new school was built near the church; that school burned in the 1920s, but was replaced in the early 1930s with a new school used until the 1940s and now used as a private dwelling.

The 1860 U.S. Census, made on September 4, 1860, listed Thomas H. Noblet, 48, as a farmer with real estate worth $9,000 and personal possessions worth $2,863. He lived with his wife Roanna, 38 (listed as illiterate) and three children: Samuel, 18, John, 16, Orlena, 15, Thomas H., Jr., 1. Samuel and John were listed as farm laborers who are also attending school. The census also listed his elderly parents William, 74, and Ann, 72, as living with him. Thomas had given his parents 25 acres of his farm on July 8, 1858 (in addition to the original 25 acres he gave them in 1836). The value of William's personal possessions was $155. The 1860 census indicates that four adults, three teenagers, and one young child – eight people total - were living here.

William Noblit died in 1862 at age 77. He was buried in a family cemetery atop a hill overlooking the farm. His wife Ann died in 1870 at age 82 and was buried in the Noblit Cemetery too.

SLAVERY

It is unknown if William Noblit ever owned slaves. Thomas H. Noblit owned slaves, however, the exact number is unknown. Thomas Noblit purchased two slaves for $1,100 from Gordon Jackson at Pulaski on August 11, 1853. County records show that he purchased "Mary a black woman supposed to be 23 or 24 years old and her son Billy a yellow boy age about 2 years; which negroes are warrant sound and healthy, both in body and mind and slaves for life" (Noblit Family Papers). Slaves would have assisted with production of cash crops, primarily cotton. A Tennessee farm with one to three slaves would typically produce four or five 500 lb bales of cotton per year.

According to family descendants, the Noblit Cemetery contains several unmarked slave burials. And, after the Civil War an African-American named Shorty Appleton worked at the neighboring Newton farm; family descendants speculate that Appleton may have been a former slave at the Noblit farm.

THE BATTLE OF SUGAR CREEK

Gen. Hood and Gen. Forrest fought the pursuing Union army, led by Gen. George H. Thomas, as they retreated through Giles County between December 23 and December 27, 1864. The two armies engaged at Lynnville on December 23 and at Pulaski on Christmas Day along the road to Minor Hill, where around 150 Union troops were killed or captured at Anthony Hill; about 50 Confederates were captured.

By nightfall, the Confederates had retreated from Anthony Hill and camped at Sugar Creek. Here, they set up an ambush on December 26 along Lamb's Ferry Road at the crossing of Sugar Creek. Gen. Forrest ordered the construction of temporary breastworks made of logs, rails, and even "old out houses." Although the exact location is debated, this military action is thought to have taken place on the south side of Sugar Creek along the road and less than one mile from the Thomas H. Noblit farm.

Some historians claim the engagement took place north of the creek along a narrow pass with hills flanking the road – this position is inscribed on the "Last Stand in Tennessee - December 27, 1864" roadside marker erected at the bridge by the Tennessee Historical Commission - and other local historians claim it took place along Sugar Creek along the back side of this farm and in neighboring Lawrence County.

The ambush, known as the Battle of Sugar Creek and the "last stand" of the Confederate army in Tennessee, took place shortly after 8:30 am on a cold, foggy morning with light rain on December 26, 1864. The Federal troops could not see the Confederates due the heavy fog, but they initially held their ground. Concealed by the fog, the Confederates were able to capture and kill several Union troops as they attempted to cross the icy waters of Sugar Creek. By noon, the Federal army ceased their pursuit of the Confederates who were then able to continue their retreat and safely cross the Tennessee River at Lamb's Ferry at Bainbridge, Alabama, en route to Tupelo, Mississippi. The Federal troops camped for the winter after crossing the Elk River.

Local historian James Soloman claims that approximately 150 Union soldiers were killed or seriously wounded and 400 horses were killed during this engagement. (Local residents can locate isolated cemeteries around the neighborhood where Union soldiers are said to be buried; none are on this property.) Afterwards, a Union general described the carnage in southern Giles County: "The road from Pulaski to Bainbridge [Alabama], and indeed back to Nashville, was shrewn with abandoned wagons, limbers [cannon carriages], blankets, etc., showing most conclusively the disorder of the enemy's retreat." (Soloman)

During the Middle Tennessee campaign, Confederate officer Captain Calvin Gilbert of the 20th Tennessee Calvary Regiment arrested and detained Thomas H. Noblit, 52, for burning houses although after an investigation, the charges were dropped and he was released. The original arrest record dated December 3, 1864, was retained in Noblit's personal papers and is transcribed below:

> "This is to certify that I a Commissioned Officer in the Confederate Army have this day arrested Thomas H. Noblett with certain charges against him first charge being instrumental in burning houses. After a full investigation I find One Thomas H. Noblett innocent and clear of all the above charges. And have therefore released him and recommend to the Southern Authorities to not interrupt the above man. As I deem him all Rights." (Noblit Family Papers)

After the war ended, Thomas Noblet registered a claim with the Federal government that the "Federal army" burglarized his property during foraging in December 1864. A copy of the original claim, which was apparently never paid, is retained in the family papers and states that the following items were taken from his farm: 11 head of sheep ($22); 500 lbs. of fodder ($10); 12.5 bushel of corn ($12.50); 3 hogs ($37.50); 500 bushel of corn ($500); 150 lbs. of salted pork taken from his smokehouse ($18.75); 2 beef cattle ($16); and 14 head of [indecipherable] ($77). The total value of these stolen goods was $671.75 (about $10,600 today). Thomas Noblet added:

> "All of the above was taken by the command of Gen. Wilson and Gen. Hammond and Gen. Welch while fighting Rebble Hood back on his March to Nashville they commenced camped three day in half Mile of my Premises when the above was taken. (Noblit Family Papers)

There are several vivid Civil War stories involving the property as handed down through family history. One story is that several of Thomas's young children visited with Federal troops as they camped at the Noblit farm in 1864. Another story states that a renegade Federal soldier entered the home and commented that young Mary "Mollie" Noblit, born in 1861, would not survive due to her fragile health. However, Mollie proved the soldier wrong and lived to age 72. Perhaps one of the most intriguing stories is that shots were fired at the farmhouse during the war and that bullets are still lodged in the log walls, hidden beneath the weatherboards added in the 1890s.

POST CIVIL WAR ERA

The 1870 U.S. Census, taken on July 7, 1870, listed Thomas H. Noblit, 58, as a farmer. His property was valued at $5,000 and personal possessions valued at $1,745. He lived with his illiterate wife "Rozanna," 49, who was keeping house and children: Samuel, 27, John C., 26, Thomas H., 11, Mary, 9, and Orleana, 6. The boys were all listed as farmhands. In addition, Nancy Clure, 75, was listed; she was blind and a Pennsylvania native. The census indicated that five adults and three children – a total of eight people – lived here.

In 1876, Thomas H. Noblit expanded the farm by purchasing 150 acres for $450 from Mary Warren. The 1878 Beers Map of Giles County indicates that Thomas H. Noblit then owned 630 acres and was one of the county's prominent farmers.

The 1880 U.S. Census listed Thomas H. Noblit, 68, as a physician. He lived here with his wife Roanna, 58, and three unmarried children: Thomas H.J., 21, Mary, 19, and Orleana, 16. Thomas H.J. was crippled and had been unemployed for six months that year. The census also listed William A. Dobbs, 20, as a boarder; he was a laborer who had been unemployed for four months that year. According to the census, five adults and

one teenager – a total six people – were living here. Thomas's son Samuel Noblit, 39, was a single farmer boarding with Lewis H. Cole who lived nearby. (Note: Ages recorded on census records are not always accurate.)

Thomas H. Noblit died on November 29, 1887, at age 75. By the time of his death, he had enlarged the farm to nearly 1,009 acres. He left the farm to his family with his wife Roanna receiving 235 acres and the "homestead" and the rest going to his four living children: Mary "Mollie" Lytle who had married in 1882, Orlena Newton who had married in 1883, Samuel Noblit, and Thomas H. Noblit, Jr. The estate was settled in March 1888 by his two sons T. H. and Samuel and his two sons-in-law W. F. Newton and W. F. Lytle; in 1890, the four men all received $180 from Noblit's estate. The family papers indicate that William F. Lytle had assumed control of the farm by 1887 and was the official estate administrator.

Thomas H. Noblit's homestead was described by his estate papers, which listed the following belongings at the time of his death, all of which were inherited by his wife Roanna. This included: 30 barrels of corn; unspecified amount of wheat, fodder, and oats; 800 lbs. pork; 1 yoke oxen and wagon; 1 mare [female horse]; 1 yearling [horse]; 1 sow and 2 shoats [young pigs]; 14 head sheep; beehives; plow harnesses; 1 looking glass; dining tables and chairs; 1 cupboard; 1 clock; table and shelf ware; cooking stove and vessels; wash vessels; spinning wheel; plows and hoes; 1 mattock; 1 iron wedge; 2 shovels; bedsteads and clothing; 2 chopping axes; fowls; 1 sausage mill; 2 Bibles; 1 chest; 1 pair sheep shears; glass jars; and stone jars.

In addition, many items were sold at an estate sale held on December 27, 1887. This included: two head of horses; 10 barrels of corn; 3 bushels of rye; 200 lbs. of pork; 1 crop-cut saw; 2 augers; a tooth puller; sheep shears; a fly catcher and trap; 5 gallon keg; a log chain; a flour sprinkler; a mattock; a colt muzzle; a drawing knife; a currying knife; hand axe; a wheel barrow; a claw hammer; a musket gun; an army gun; a pair of candle molders; a handsaw; a pair of balancers; a tobacco knife; side saddle; man's saddle; 1 lot gimlets and door butts; a pair of merchant scales; 2 merchant twine boxes; 1 electric battery; 4 medical books; 3 history books; 8 volumes of Congress; an arithmetic book; 2 small medical cases; 1 pair of doctor saddle bags; a lance; a clock; a looking glass; and a "broke-down" wagon.

NOTE: The farm of Orlena Noblit Newton (1864-1933) and her husband William F. Newton (1851-1931), which Orlena inherited in 1888, is located north of her father's homestead on Sugar Creek Road and is still owned by Fred B. Newton and his family, including sons Jim and Steve. The farm retains the original 1883 farmhouse and several outbuildings (GI-2628-2630) and is a registered Tennessee Century Farm as administered by the MTSU Center for Historic Preservation. (The family maintains an online website located at http://newtonfarm.blogspot.com/.)

The farm of Samuel Noblit (1842-1890) and his wife Emma E. Appleton Noblit (1851-1927), which Samuel inherited in 1888, is located northwest of his father's homestead atop a hill overlooking the Sugar Creek valley. When he died in 1890, Samuel left his "homeplace on Sugar Creek" to his wife and "little daughter." He also left 260 acres on Shannon Creek to his wife. The early 1880s farmhouse had been abandoned for many years and the deteriorated building was recently razed, but two original outbuildings, including a well-house and milk-house, remain. That parcel of land is not included within this nomination.

Thomas H. Noblit, Jr. (1858-1942) and his second wife Josephine E. White (1869-1937) moved in 1909 to West Point in Lawrence County, Tennessee; his first wife Ellen Appleton died in 1889 at age 32.

WHEN WAS THE NOBLIT-LYTLE HOUSE BUILT?

According to family history, Thomas H. Noblit constructed the original log dogtrot between 1834 and 1836, probably due to a 1936 newspaper obituary for subsequent owner Mollie Noblit-Lytle that stated her family had lived in the homeplace for more than 100 years.

However, recent research of county records and family papers would indicate that Thomas H. Noblit constructed the log dogtrot around 1848 at age 36. Thomas H. Noblit married Roanna Clear in January 1841 and by 1845 they had started a family with three children. Around 1847, Noblit took in his sister Sarah Noblit Hardy, 37, and her four young children (ages 4-10). At that time, his household contained ten people.

County court records state that in December 1847, Thomas H. Noblit helped his neighbors maintain the Powell Road from the "18 mile post on old Florence Road to Double Springs" In March 1848, Noblit was elected a Justice of the Peace for the county's 4th district. In June 1848, John W. Kelly was appointed road overseer with help from neighbors, such as Jonathon Lock, Isaac Smith, Samuel Adams, and including "whoever lives where Thomas H. Nobett formerly lived." This specific language noting Noblit's former residence was repeated in county court records in August 1850.

In 1849, Noblit's sister remarried and she and her four children soon moved to a new home. The 1850 census stated that a 30-year old schoolteacher was boarding here. That year, at least eight people lived at Noblit's home. In 1853, he purchased two slaves (a mother and her son) who may have lived in the home, but more likely in a separate kitchen outbuilding.

The 1860 census and 1870 census also show that at least eight people lived here, including Noblit's elderly parents, boarders, and various farmhands (on separate occasions). The 1880 census showed a household of six people.

These records seem to indicate that Thomas H. Noblit constructed a new larger home around 1848 in order to house his rapidly growing family as well as his widowed sister and her children; Noblit served as the legal guardian for his nephew and three nieces from 1847-1849. The new home would also have reflected Noblit's rising stature as a community leader and elected member of the county court.

The home's architecture reflects this hypothesis. The log dogtrot originally featured two separate sets of corner enclosed stairs to the second floor. The second set of stairs would have provided separate access to an upstairs room and some level of privacy for his sister and her children, his parents, boarders, and farmhands.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN "WILL" LYTLE FARM, 1889-1939

After Thomas H. Noblit died in 1887, his son-in-law William Franklin "Will" Lytle (1858-1942) officially took over operations of the farm. Lytle had married Mary "Mollie" Noblit on December 12, 1882, and their first child Lura was born in 1883. James J. Shelton, a minister of the gospel, performed the marriage ceremony. Mollie and her new husband apparently moved away for a few years before returning to her childhood home around 1886 to care for her elderly parents. It is possible that they never left, but Mollie's 1936 obituary specifically stated that she had lived in her childhood home for the past fifty years.

On November 28, 1889, Roanna Noblit, 67, died, leaving the 235-acre farm and homestead to her daughter Mollie and her husband W.F. Lytle. Mollie's husband had obviously already taken over operations of the farm, paying the 1888 county taxes of $16 on May 8, 1889.

Little is known of Will Lytle's childhood. He was listed on the 1870 U.S. census for Giles County as living with his mother Mary Susan Lytle, 32, who was keeping house at Lynnville in the northern part of the county. The census indicated he lived with two siblings, but his father had died during the Civil War. His mother's personal estate was valued at $700. He was then 12 and attending school. He does not appear on the 1880 census, but many have been living in the Appleton community of Lawrence County as a boarder with merchant G.W. Hammonds. His mother remarried Reuben Wilford McCormick in 1871; they had a child, Adrian Wilford McCormick, in 1874, but he died a year later. Will's brother, George Lytle, moved to Nashville and is buried in the Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Will and Mollie began their own family in the former Thomas H. Noblit homestead. Their children were all girls and included Lura (1883-1943); Lillie (1886); Helen (1888-1959); Anna (1891-1920); Rada Irene (1894-1905); and Mary Will (1897-1990).

Other occupants of the home included Will Lytle's mother, Mary, and stepfather, Reuben McCormick, who operated a two-story blacksmith shop across the road from the farmhouse until his death sometime before 1910. In the early 20th century, a small, four-room tenant house was also located across the road from the farmhouse; family member Lillian Newton Bass lived here with her family from 1930-1934. (Both the blacksmith shop and the tenant house were abandoned in the 1940s and are no longer extant.) Will also took in a ward named Walter Claude Thomas (1883-1948), who's father died when he was a baby.

The 1910 U.S. census listed William Lytle, 52, as a farmer living here with his wife "Mollie," 44, and their daughters Helen, 27; Anna, 14; and Mary, 12. The 1920 U.S. census listed William F. Lytle, 61, as a farmer living here with his wife "Mary," 58, and their daughter Helen, 32, then single and working as a milliner (hat maker). Will's widowed mother, Mary McCormick, who was listed as 72 years old in 1910 and 80 years old in 1920, lived here until her death in the mid-1920s. (Note: ages recorded on census records are not always accurate.)

In the early twentieth century, Will and Mollie raised their girls here. Tragically, Lillie lived less than a year and Rada Irene died when she was nine. However, the other girls lived to adulthood. Anna married M. H. Merritt, but at age 29 in 1920, she apparently died during childbirth. The baby only lived six days.

Helen and Lura married a set of brothers; Helen to Admiral "Add" Farragut White (1882-1956) and Lura to Noah L. White (1897-1946).

Dr. Mary Will Lytle never married. After graduating from the neighborhood Puncheon School, she went to college at the Middle Tennessee Normal School, a training school for primary teachers, which opened in 1911 in Murfreesboro (now Middle Tennessee State University). Then, to be admitted, a student had to sign a pledge to teach in the public or private schools of the State of Tennessee within six years after leaving the school, at least as long as he or she had attended school, be over sixteen years of age, have a certificate of good moral character from one's pastor or someone else of good standing, and a certificate of good health from a doctor. After completing two years of study to earn her teaching degree, she returned to Minor Hill where she taught at the Puncheon School.

In the 1920s, Mary Will Lytle returned to school at Vanderbilt University in Nashville where she attended the Dental School. In 1926, she was among the first females to earn a Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) degree in the final graduating class from Vanderbilt University's School of Dentistry. Dr. Lytle took a job in Birmingham, Alabama. She decided to specialize in children's dentistry and orthodontics. In 1929, Dr. Lytle earned a Master of Science degree in Dentistry from Northwestern University in Chicago.

While studying at Northwestern, she suffered severe burns to her hands by overexposure to radiation while holding film tabs in the mouths of children during an experimental research assignment. Fortunately, she recovered and was able to open her own practice in the 1930s in Birmingham. In the 1940s, she opened a second office in Anniston, Alabama, for weekend appointments. Known as "Dockie," she was the first and for many years only female dentist in Birmingham. After retiring, she traveled for many years. She died at age 92 in 1990 and is buried in the Noblit Cemetery on her childhood farm.

PROGRESSIVE FARM

Between the 1890s and 1930s, William F. "Will" Lytle and his wife Mollie improved the farm and farmhouse with practical work common during the Progressive Era. Rural farmers were encouraged to improve their farms and farmhouses by making them attractive, comfortable, and convenient. Local, state, and federal agencies assisted through home economic departments at local high schools, farming magazines, and the home demonstration department of the Agricultural Extension Service of the University of Tennessee. Most of the work to improve farmhouses was carried out by farmwives while the farm improvement was carried out by the farmers. Together, this agricultural and domestic work was meant to create more modern and profitable farms as well as "Better Homes on Better Farms" in Tennessee.

Sometime in the 1890s, Will Lytle completely renovated and enlarged the original 1840s log dogtrot by enclosing the central breezeway and raising the roof on the second floor. He also added exterior weatherboarding, an ornate front porch, and a rear kitchen/dining ell. The original chimneys were replaced with new, taller brick chimneys and a new stone chimney was added to the kitchen. Physical evidence suggests that an original detached kitchen outbuilding was likely replaced during this renovation. Will Lytle

also completely renovated the interior by adding beaded wallboards, several new doors, removing one of the original enclosed corner stairs, and adding two new stairs.

This photograph taken December 19, 1905, shows the Lytle family in front of the farmhouse. Shown with William F. Lytle and his wife Mollie – center - are their five daughters (l to r): Anna, Mary Will, Rada Irene, Helen, and Lura. Photo courtesy Sam & Carolyn Hale.

Will Lytle added a decorative six-pointed star within a circle to the pediment above the front porch, undoubtedly due to his membership in the Masonic Order. Known as a "Blazing Star" and similar to the pentastar, or pentagram, this is a common Masonic and ancient religious symbol, used by the Greeks and medieval Christians, although after the mid-20th century, it became more commonly affiliated with the occult, Satanism, and the Wicca religion. This may explain why the symbol was removed sometime after the 1950s. Similar stars were once found on the front porch pediments of several farmhouses in the neighborhood. Both Thomas H. Noblit and Will Lytle were Masons. Lytle has the common Masonic square, compass, and letter "G" for God inscribed on his tombstone in the Noblit Cemetery.

Will and Mary Lytle also improved the lawn landscaping surrounding the farmhouse by constructing stone retaining walls and stone steps and by adding native shrubs, boxwoods, and trees. A vegetable garden and orchard were located north of the farmhouse with direct access to the kitchen. Flowers were located around the front lawn and on the front porch, both in hanging pots and in concrete flower pots.

Photograph taken around 1930 of Mollie Lytle resting on the dwelling's front porch.
Photo courtesy Jim Newton of Clarksville, Tennessee.

Photo taken around 1935 of Will and Mollie Lytle, sitting near the fireplace in the north parlor.
Photo courtesy Sam & Carolyn Hale of Atlanta, Georgia.

Will and Mary Lytle raised their five girls here. In 1898, Will Lytle served as a local delegate for the Gubernatorial Convention held in Pulaski; he represented the county's 4th District, which voted for former

U.S. Rep. Benton McMillin (1845-1933) of Carthage for governor (a Democrat, he served as governor from 1899-1903).

In 1936, Mary Lytle died and was buried in the family cemetery located on hill behind the farmhouse. Two years later, Will hired a local mason, Wiley C. Wiliams, to construct stone gateposts to the Noblit Cemetery. In 1938, Will Lytle moved to Birmingham where he rotated his time between the homes of his three daughters – Lura, Helen, and Mary. He died in 1942 and is buried in the Noblit Cemetery.

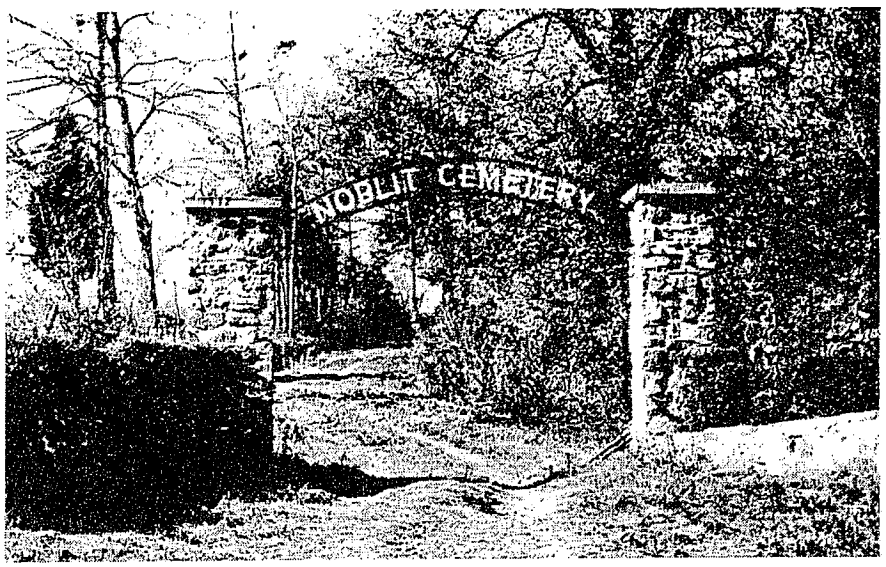


Photo taken in the 1940s of the Noblit Cemetery stone entrance gate, constructed in May 1938. Photo courtesy Sam & Carolyn Hale.

TENANT FARMING, 1939-2006

Upon Will Lytle's death, the three daughters living in Birmingham inherited an undivided interest in the farm. It was first managed by the oldest daughter, Lura, and later, by Helen Lytle White (1888-1959). Helen enjoyed a successful early career designing and creating hats sold at nearby general merchandise stores. She was recruited to work with some leading department stores in Nashville, St. Louis, and Chicago (also involved with several fashion shows). In 1918, she moved to Nashville and lived with her uncle George Lytle and "Aunt Jim." At one point she worked for L. Jonas, who operated a leading couture shop. She later settled near her sisters in Birmingham, Alabama.

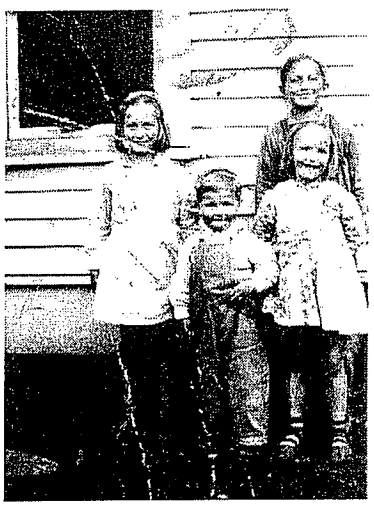
Helen Lytle leased the farm to a series of local families, who either served as sharecroppers or caretakers for the property. The first was James Albert Jones, who lived here with his wife Queenie and four children from 1939-1950, except for a 3-year period from 1942-1944 when the house was occupied by Helen's brother-in-law, Andrew White and his family, for a couple of years followed by John Robert Appleton and his family. In 1950, Cletus Thomas and his family lived here for about a year before Lamora and "Shorty" White (distant relatives) took over operation of the farm. Shorty White was caretaker of the farm for about 35 years,

between 1951 until 1986. Members of the neighboring Newton and Townsend families also assisted in sharecropping the farm during this period.

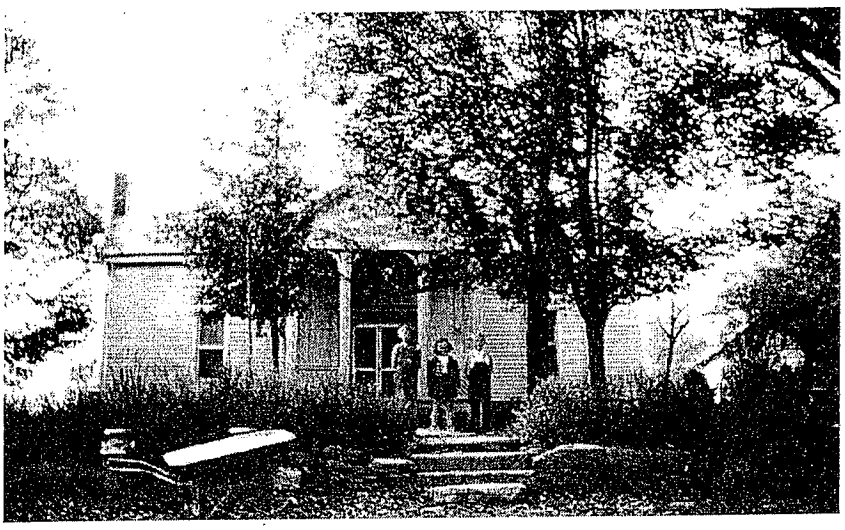
Between 1942 and 1944, the Lytle family paid to have a large 32'x50' gambrel-roof barn with a cast concrete foundation constructed; Andrew White was then the caretaker. The barn housed dairy cattle, horses, mules, farm equipment, and hay. Electricity was added to the home in 1948, allowing the family to purchase a refrigerator; before then, dairy products such as milk and cheese were kept cool in the natural springs across the road from the farmhouse. Sometime around 1950, a small 4'x4' cast concrete springhouse was also constructed at a hillside spring located on the north side of Sugar Creek Road; water was gravity-fed to the farmhouse via metal pipes; at different times, the pipes were beneath and above the road (this spring continues to supply the farmhouse with water since there is no city water).

The farm was share cropped during the 1940s and 1950s. Crops grown included cotton, corn, soybeans, sorghum cane (for molasses), and broom corn (for brooms). Other outbuildings constructed during the early 20th century - such as a car shed, a large chicken house, an icehouse, and an outhouse - are no longer extant.

According to Lenora Word who lived here as a child between 1939-1942 and 1945-1950, in the 1940s and 1950s, the Lytle's stored family furniture in the southern parlor and would spend weekends visiting from Birmingham in the southern upstairs bedroom. These rooms were locked and off-limits to the families that rented the farmhouse; the renters resided in the northern parlor and upstairs bedroom, the center hallway, and the rear ell. She recalls that the northern parlor or "front room" was her parent's bedroom; the dining room or "middle room," was the boy's bedroom; and upstairs bedroom was the girl's bedroom; the kitchen was the kitchen and dining room; and the center hallway was a makeshift living room.



Photograph taken around 1939 of the children of Albert and Queenie Jones at the farmhouse; pictured are (l to r) Myra, Ollie, Rabon, and Lenora. Photo courtesy Lenora Word of Minor Hill, Tennessee.



Photograph of the farmhouse from 1935-1939; the three children are unidentified. Note the 10-gallon metal milk can, which is now used as a mailbox post; the family still owns the wheelbarrow. Photo courtesy Jim Newton of Clarksville, Tennessee.

Lenora Word recalls that the children in the 1930s and 1940s would milk the farm's 8-10 dairy cattle as part of their chores. The milk would be left in a 10-gallon milk can along the roadside for weekly pick-up. The dairy milk supplemented the income for the farm tenants.

In the 1940s, family member Lytle White, a minister from Birmingham, would often fly his private airplane to Minor Hill in order to preside over services at the Puncheon Church of Christ. He would land in the bottom land on this and neighboring farms. He was also a photographer and took several aerial photographs of the farm during the 1940s. Lytle White died in 1956 and is buried in the Noblit Cemetery.

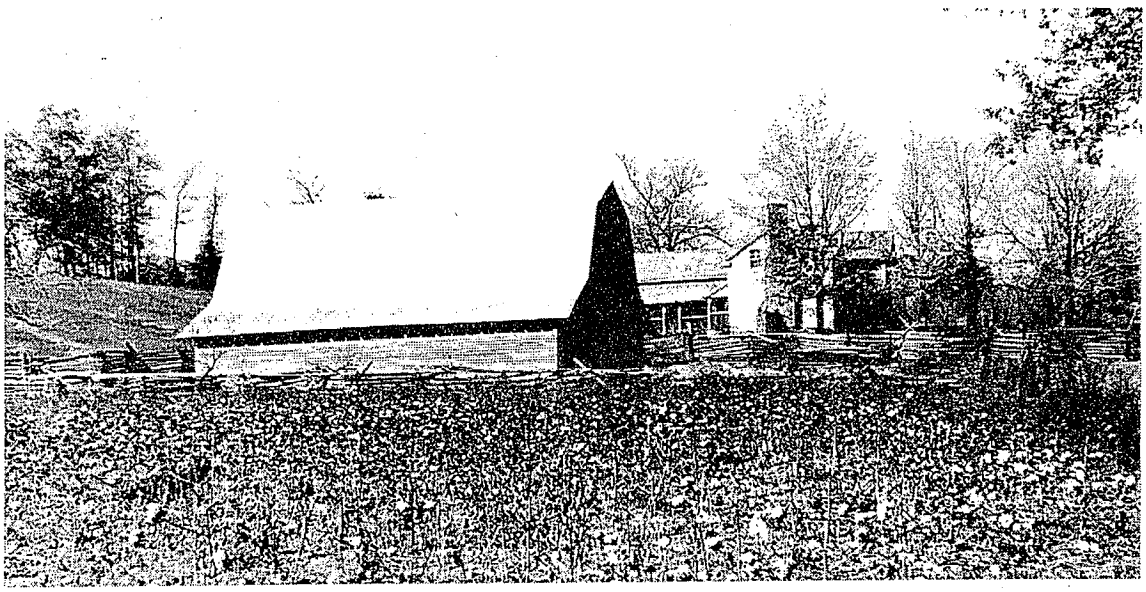
Helen and Add White's only daughter, Carolyn White, became a registered pharmacist and in 1961 married Sam H. "Sammy" Hale, whom she had met when he was living in Birmingham, Alabama. A native of Warren County, Tennessee, Hale's career as a rock-n-roll radio broadcaster or "DJ" from 1955-1966 and later a stock market analyst took him from McMinnville to Nashville, Birmingham, New York City, Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Atlanta, where he and Carolyn have lived since 1962. Hale sometimes worked under the on-air name of Charlie King. In 1957, Sam had the distinction of being the first person to present a live newscast on an U.S. Army television station, while he was stationed at Kagnew Station in Asmara, Ethiopia.

In 1955, Hale had been introduced to his career as a radio broadcaster by Gerald Edward "Ed" Phillips, a native of Pulaski, Tennessee, who became a legendary "rock jockey" radio broadcaster and nationally known radio personality between 1954 and the 1970s working in McMinnville, Pulaski, Nashville, Birmingham, San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and New York City. Phillips worked under the on-air names of Mel Kent, Johnny Mitchell, Johnny Holiday, and Sebastian Stone; he died in 1987. In 1959, Ed Phillips had recommended Hale as his replacement in Birmingham; Phillips and his father sang in a local

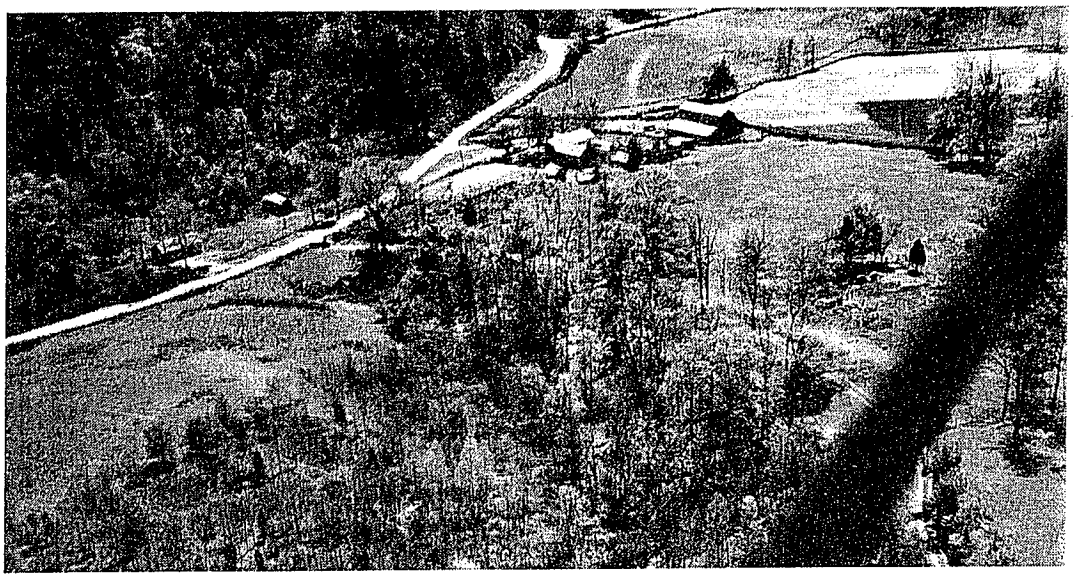
choral group at the Puncheon Church of Christ. Both Hale and Phillips assisted in shaping American Top 40 radio programming in the 1950s and 1960s.

When Carolyn's parents died in the late 1950s she and three family members inherited a one-third interest in the 235-acre farm; the other owners were Dr. Mary Lytle of Birmingham, Alabama, Noah Lytle White, and his sister Mary Lytle White. Dr. Lytle took over management of the farm from her home in Birmingham; working with Shorty White, she had the farmhouse improved in the later 1950s or early 1960s with a bathroom and concrete block foundation. Occupants after the 1950s included the Young and Comer families.

In the early 1960s, Dr. Lytle asked that Sam Hale take over management of the farm from his home in Atlanta, Georgia. Between 1980 and 1986, the other family members sold their property interests to Carolyn and Sam Hale who owned the property until 2006.



Photograph of the farm taken around 1950 and looking north, shows the cotton crop and new dairy barn as well as the screened rear porch and replacement metal roof. The wooden snake fences are no longer extant. Photo courtesy Sam & Carolyn Hale.



Aerial photo of the Noblit-Lytle farm taken ca.1948, looking southeast. Note the farmhouse (center), smokehouse (left), large barn (right), family cemetery (lower right), and cemetery gateposts (left). Also shown are the McCormick blacksmith shop and tenant house (far left) as well as other outbuildings that are no longer extant. Photo by Lytle White of Birmingham, Alabama.

After gaining clear title in 1986, Sam and Carolyn Hale sold 31 acres along the northern boundary to R.T. Smith, which would afford him access to his farm to the rear and remove the implied easement of his driving through the farm's bottomland to reach his place. At the same time, an inaccessible 17.2-acre tract across Sugar Creek joining the Cox property along the southern boundary was sold to James T. "Jimmy" Cox. This left about 178 acres, including the Noblit Cemetery and its entrance gate, which is located on a separate 5-acre tract maintained by the Noblit Cemetery Trust established in 1979 as well as community donations and volunteer labor.

Subsequent occupants of the home place included Bill and Nancy Hayes and their children. When preparing the home for rental to them, Mr. Hale and his sons uncovered a stash of family historical documents from the front porch attic, which have since been shared with other family members, as well as the Giles County Historical Society; the archaeology department at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and the author of this nomination. These family papers dated from the 1830s through the 1920s, and are especially important since the county court records do not exist between 1831-1836 and 1848-1852.

Although archaeological potential has not been evaluated within the boundaries of the farm, a site was found in close proximity. In the 1980s, the Tennessee Department of Transportation replaced the State Route 11 highway bridge over Sugar Creek, which is located near this property. The environmental survey discovered a prehistoric archaeological site near the bridge. Subsequent excavations discovered ten human burials and two dog skeletons as well as several structures and features from prehistoric occupational periods, including Late Archaic period (2500-3000 B.C.) and Woodland period (A.D. 400-500). The archaeologists also

discovered a historic period structure dating from the early 19th century. TDOT published a report on the "Bailey Site" at Sugar Creek in 1988.

In late 1989, the Hales rented the home to Jimmy and Cyndi Young and their children. Shortly thereafter, Cyndi's elderly mother, Augusta Comer, and two of her brothers also moved in. The Comer family remained as tenants until early winter of 2006 when the Hales sold the 178-acre farm to current owners John Gregory and Holly Smith of Minor Hill, Tennessee.

The Smiths began stabilizing the farmhouse and property, which had fallen into a state of minor disrepair and have retained Leatherwood, Inc. of Fairview, Tennessee, to undertake plans to restore the farmhouse.

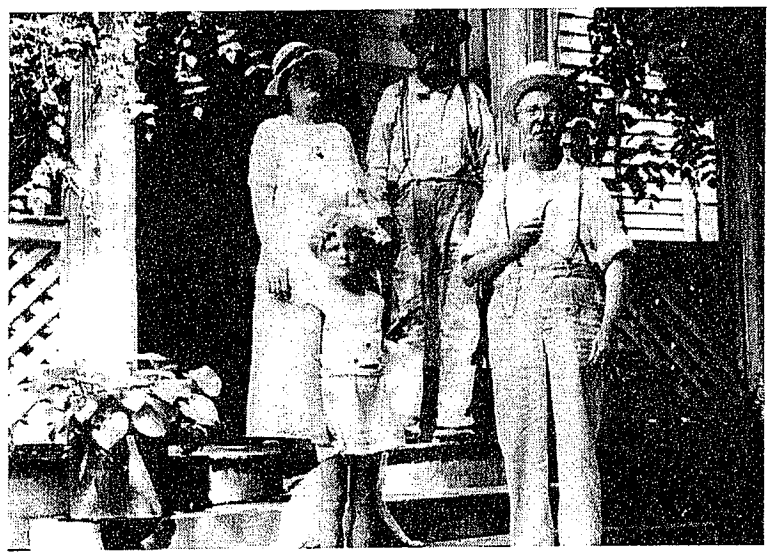


Photo taken in the 1920s, showing Carolyn Hale as a young child with her grandfather Will Lytle (center) and his brother and sister-in-law. Carolyn owned a part-interest in the farm from 1959-2006. Note the concrete steps. Photo courtesy Carolyn Hale.

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Multiple interviews with author, made between November 2007 and February 2008, via email, telephone, and in person:

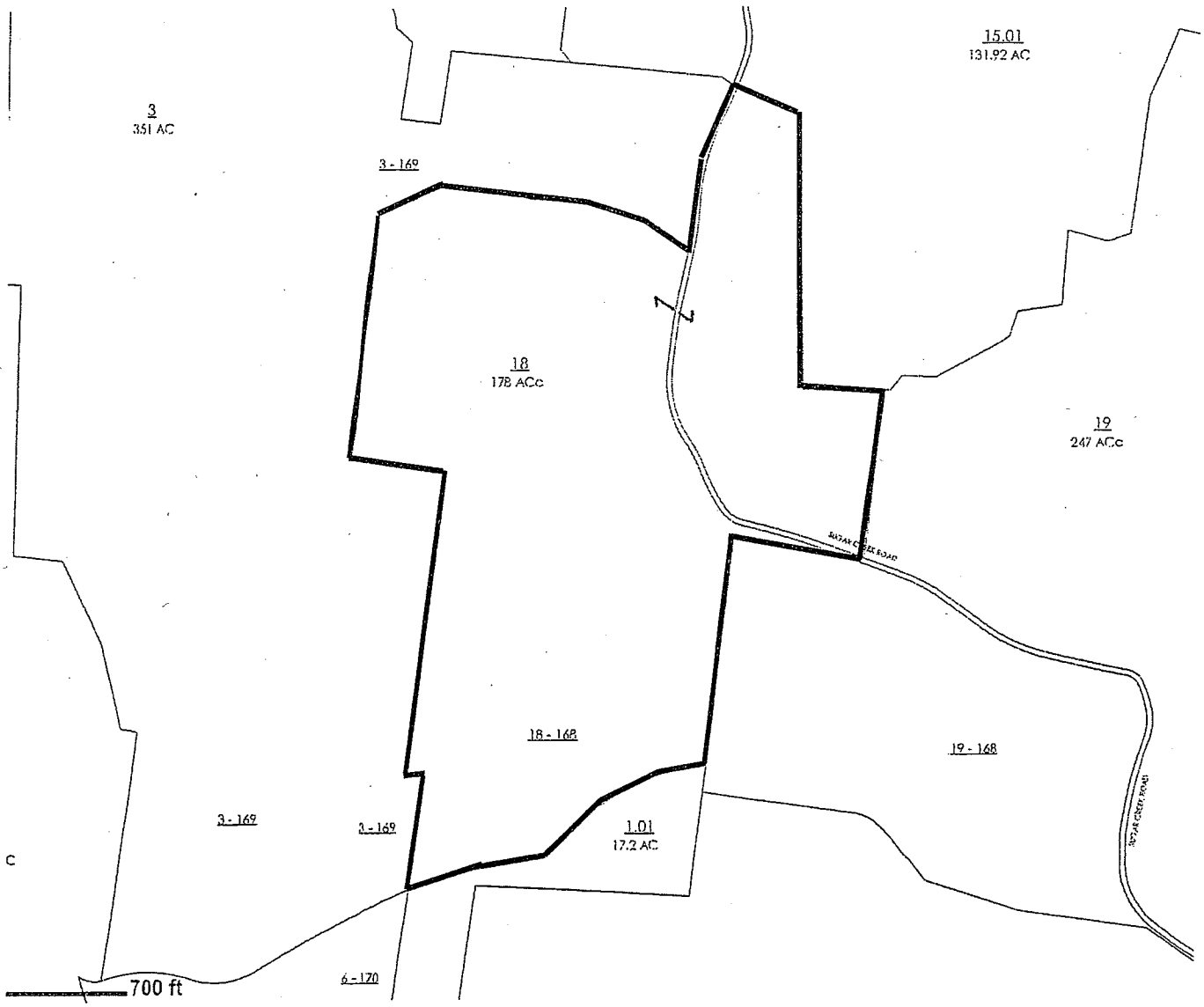
John G. Smith, Minor Hill, TN
Sam H. Hale, Atlanta, GA
Carolyn Hale, Atlanta, GA
Jim Newton, Clarksville, TN
Steve Newton, AIA, Nashville, TN
Fred Newton, Clarksville, TN
Robert Lee Townsend, Loretto, TN
Lenora Word, Minor Hill, TN

Private Family Papers & Photographs loaned to the author

Thomas Hughes Noblit
William Franklin Lytle
Sam H. Hale
Carolyn Hale
Lenora Word
Jim Newton
Lillian Newton Bass
John Gregory Smith

X. GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION

The boundaries for the nominated property includes all of the 178-acre lot. Refer to Giles County Tax Map 18, Parcel 168. This includes a 5-acre section containing the Noblit Cemetery and the cemetery entrance gateposts, which are owned and maintained by a family trust. The nominated boundaries contain the property historically and currently associated with the Noblit-Lytle House. The map scale is 1"=1000' and is the best available for this area.



PHOTOGRAPHS

Photos by: Robbie D. Jones, Consultant, Nashville, TN

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Clover Bottom Mansion
2941 Lebanon Pike
Nashville, TN 37243

#	Subject	Date	View
1 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Landscape	02/02/2008	SW
2 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Landscape	02/02/2008	SE
3 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Landscape	02/02/2008	NW
4 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior	12/02/2007	NW
5 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior	12/02/2007	W
6 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior	12/02/2007	SW
7 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior	12/02/2007	SE
8 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior	12/02/2007	NE
9 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior, Rear retaining wall	12/02/2007	S
10 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior, Rear retaining wall	12/02/2007	N
11 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior, Rear Ell window detail	12/02/2007	S
12 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Exterior, Front porch detail	12/02/2007	W
13 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Smokehouse	12/02/2007	NE
14 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Smokehouse	12/02/2007	W
15 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Dairy Barn, exterior	02/02/2008	SE
16 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Dairy Barn, interior	12/02/2007	E
17 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Springhouse	02/02/2008	SE
18 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Cemetery	02/02/2008	SE
19 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Cemetery, tombstones & bell & graves of Thomas H. Noblit and William F. Lytle	02/02/2008	E
20 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Cemetery, gate	02/02/2008	W
21 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Interior, South parlor	12/02/2007	SW
22 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Interior, North parlor	12/02/2007	NE
23 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Interior, Center Hall	12/02/2007	SW
24 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Interior, South Bedroom	12/02/2007	S
25 of 25	Noblit-Lytle House-Interior, Rear Attic	12/02/2007	E

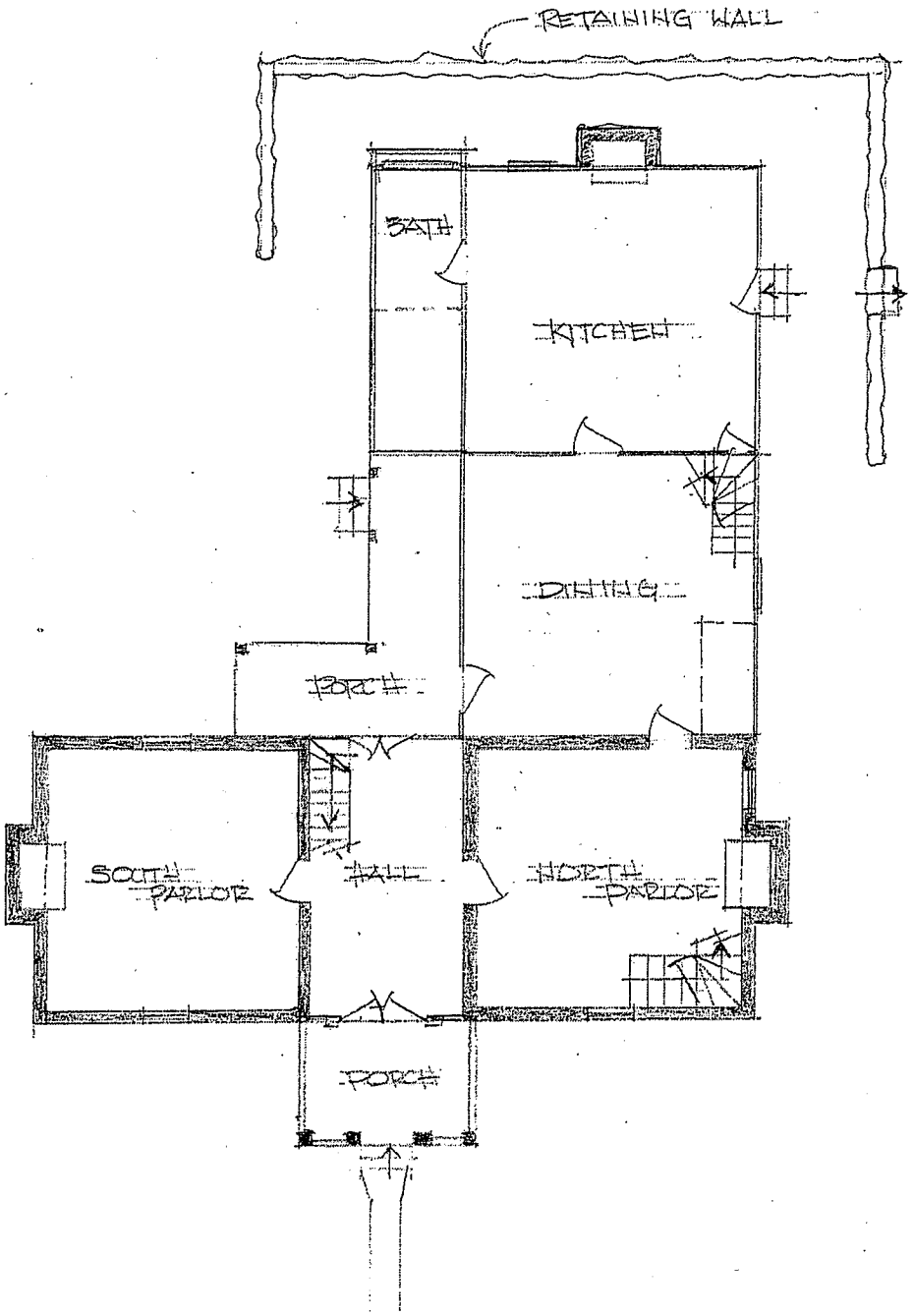


Figure 3. Noblit-Lytle House, first floor plan (R. Jones).

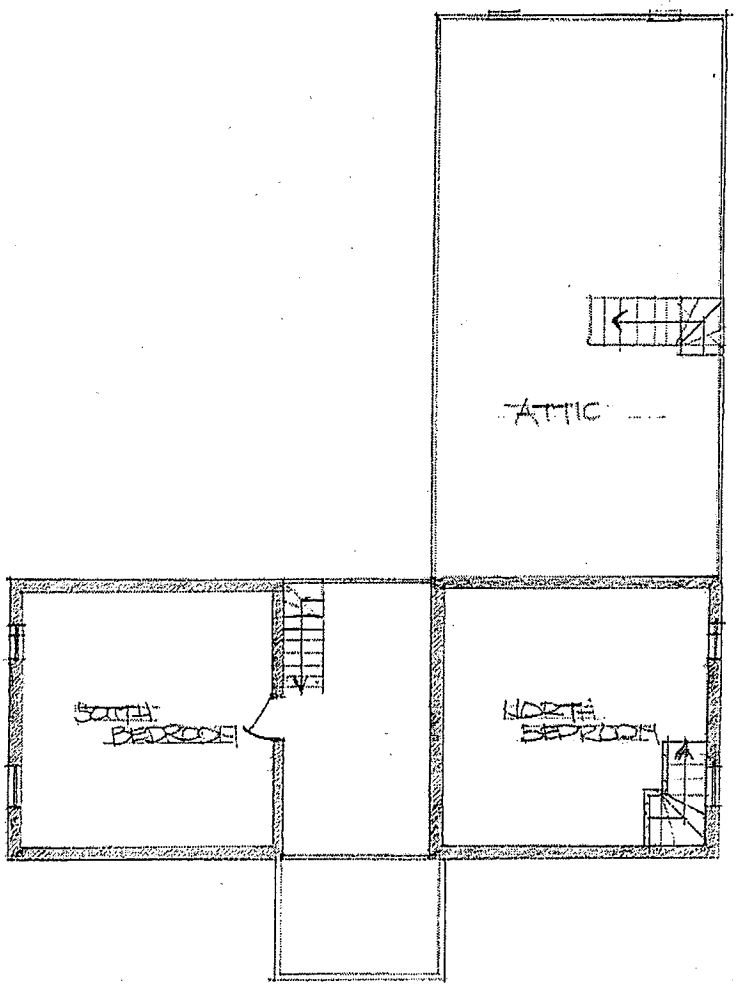


Figure 4. Noblit-Lytle House, second floor plan (R. Jones).

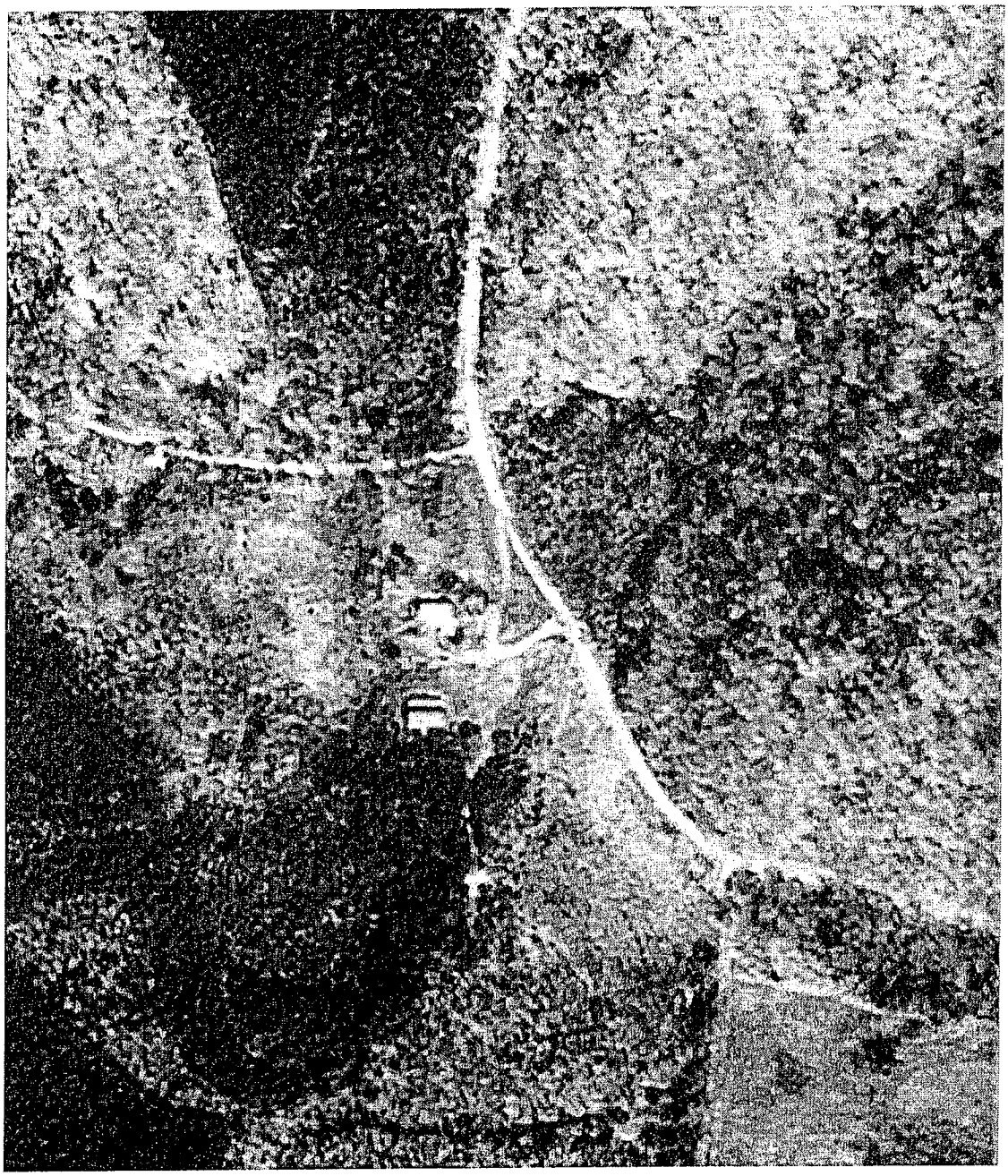


Figure 7. USGS Aerial Map (Appleton Quad, April 6, 1998), showing the farm.

The Noblit-Lytle House is located in the center and the barn to the south; the cemetery is to the left.