

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received **MAR 6 1984**
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic White, Dr. Aaron C. House

and/or common White Hall (preferred)

2. Location

street & number Duplex Road N/A — not for publication

city, town Spring Hill N/A — vicinity of

state Tennessee code 047 county Maury code 119

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mrs. Hazel G. Morton

street & number P.O. Box 104

city, town Spring Hill — vicinity of state Tennessee 37174

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Maury County Courthouse

street & number Public Square

city, town Columbia state Tennessee 38401

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Maury County Comprehensive Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August, 1983 federal state county local

depository for survey records South Central Tennessee Development District

city, town Columbia state Tennessee 38401

7. Description

Condition

excellent

good

fair

deteriorated

ruins

unexposed

Check one

unaltered

altered

Check one

original site

moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Situated on the south side of Duplex Road on the eastern edge of the town of Spring Hill, White Hall is a two-story frame central-passage plan house with a one-story rear service ell composed of former dependencies. Built in 1844, the Greek Revival house rests on a limestone foundation and has a shallow hipped roof. The building retains its architectural integrity.

The main facade faces north to the lane. A monumental pedimented portico is centered on the five-bay front; it is supported by four square paneled pillars with tin Tower-of-the-Winds capitals. The pediment has a raking cornice end and a plain weatherboard tympanum. A heavy molded entablature with a dentil course encircles the entire house. Center doorways on the ground and upper floor are identical; double-leaf paneled doors are separated from two-light sidelights by plain tapered pilasters, and each entry is topped by a four-light transom and a shouldered architrave hood. The upper doorway opens onto a cantilevered balcony with a decorative rail. The eight large windows on this front have 9/6 lights and louvered shutters.

On the east elevation, an inset brick chimney is situated about twelve feet from the corner of the front of the house. Double-leaf doors at the center open onto a new brick stoop. A building seam about two-thirds of the way down the side indicates the enclosure of the rear porch. There are two shuttered 4/4 windows on the rear part and a fixed 8-light window over the center door. The west facade is plain, with an inset corbeled brick chimney.

The original rear porch and gallery were enclosed in the late 1800's. There are two 6/6 light sash windows on the rear; one on the upper story is very large and has shutters, and may have been moved from the main block of the house. A small center-pivot window opens into a bath.

A narrow shed section is joined to the rear porch at this point. There is one large 6/6 shuttered window, again probably moved from the main block, and roof extends another three feet, supported by square posts connected at the top by a latticework frieze.

Two original dependencies were long ago joined to the west facade to form an ell addition. The original two-story frame kitchen is connected directly to the house. The kitchen portion serves as today's dining room and the upstairs room is used for storage. The exterior has a large 6/6 window moved from the main house, a glass-paneled door opening onto a rear porch, and smaller 6/6 windows in the upper left. An original quarter is joined to the rear of the old kitchen structure, and serves as the modern kitchen. Its exterior appearance is basically unchanged from the time it served as a residence. Its front side faces east and has a batten door and 6/6 window opening onto a shed porch. There is a small lookout and another 6/6 window is on the south end and two on the west, rear side. The porch floor is raised on stone piers, connected by latticework. The structure has a steep tin roof; the loft is now used for additional storage.

The interior of the house is a modification of the common central-passage plan house. The staircase is not located in the entrance hall but rather on the enclosed rear porch. The house retains its original significant interior features, including doors and mantels with shouldered architraves and original ash floors.

No original or later outbuildings are located on the property. The house is approached from Duplex Road on a wide herringbone brick sidewalk and is set in a park of mature trees.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1844 **Builder/Architect** Henry White

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

White Hall, on Duplex Road in the northern Maury County town of Spring Hill, is nominated under National Register Criteria A, B and C for its local significance in architecture and for its associations with its first owner, Dr. Aaron White, and for its local role in Civil War history. The large frame house was built for Dr. White in 1844 by his younger brother Henry. White was a large landowner and early surgeon and doctor of medicine in the Spring Hill community. His residence on the eastern edge of the village is one of the best vernacular adaptations of the prevailing Greek Revival in this part of the county. The 2-story L-shaped central-passage house has an imposing pedimented portico supported by pillars with Tower-of-the-Winds capitals, detailed doors and entries, and other intricate examples of excellent local carpentry. The house retains its original interior elements and has not been significantly altered. White Hall is the largest surviving frame structure within the corporate limits of the town and the best frame example of classical architecture.

About 1844 Dr. Aaron C. White, son of General William White III who had moved to Nashville, Tennessee from Virginia, moved from his plantation at Elkton, Giles County, Tennessee, to Spring Hill with his wife, Eliza Fain, daughter of Samuel Fain and Susan Wharton, early settlers in the western Maury County village of Williamsport. White had previously purchased a 300 acre tract east of the village of Spring Hill, and had a large frame structure constructed there by his younger brother, Henry. The house faced Mt. Carmel Road (now Duplex Lane) and the rear of the farm extended to beyond the Kedron Pike. The whitewashed frame house was christened "White Hall".

Although a medical graduate of the University of New York and a doctor of medicine, Dr. White farmed in Spring Hill for a number of years before selling off 266 acres at the eastern edge of his farm to Seth Sparkman. He sold two one-acre lots on the Kedron Pike, and donated another 2 acres to the town of Spring Hill for the erection of a boys school. This was the site for many years of the Spring Hill Male Academy, and in compliance with Dr. White's expressed desire that it should always remain for educational purposes, it is now the site of the Spring Hill Public School.

This left Dr. White exactly 30 acres surrounding White Hall. He resumed his medical practice attending to the sick for many miles surrounding Spring Hill. His wife assisted him and ministered to as many of his patients as she could reach. In doing so, she contracted yellow fever in an epidemic which struck Spring Hill and died in 1853.

A year later Dr. White met Margaret Fain, a cousin of his late wife Eliza, daughter of John Fain, merchant and owner of Forest Hill, a large plantation on the French Broad River. After a brief but ardent courtship, he married her and brought her to White Hall. They had six children, all christened in the old Presbyterian Church; Rose, Ellen Amelia, John Fain, Lucy Gillespie, Mary, and Caroline Wharton White. Dr. White died in 1874, and left his wife to cope with the six young children. He is buried in the Spring Hill cemetery.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Cheairs, Irene M. and Rose W. Cheairs, "History of White Hall: A Story of Prewar Dixieland" typed MSS, September, 1961.
- Garrett, Jill Knight. "The Ghost Rider at White Hall". (Columbia) Daily Herald, 9 June 1973, Supplement.
- ~~Interviews with Martha Cheairs, 1983.~~

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 4 1/2 acres

Quadrangle name Spring Hill, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is bounded on the west by Walnut Street, the north by Duplex Road, and on the east and south by adjoining property lines. The nomination includes only the land currently conveyed with the house. It is the minimum property needed to protect the integrity of the house.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Quin, Historic Preservation Planner
Bo Childress, Cultural Resources Surveyor

organization South Central Tennessee Development District date October 1983

street & number P.O. Box 1346 telephone (615) 381-2040

city or town Columbia state Tennessee 38402

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

Deputy

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Herbert L. Hays

title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

date 2/27/84

For NPS use only

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

date 4/5/84

J. William Byers
Keeper of the National Register

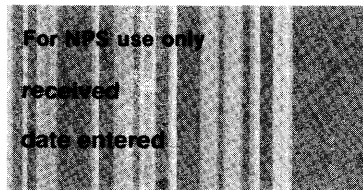
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
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Continuation sheet White Hall Item number 8 Page 2

In 1877, Rose, the oldest child married John Wesley Cheairs, grandson of pioneer Nathaniel Francis Cheairs, III, and the couple took up residence at White Hall with her mother. She died in December of the same year, and Rose and her husband decided to stay at White Hall. When the estate was offered for sale by court order, to give the other heirs their proportionate part, the couple bid it in; John Cheairs generously deeded his interest to his wife in fee simple, and thus the house remained in the family.

Following the death of Mrs. Cheairs in 1927, the house was for many years the residence of her children, Irene, Rose, and Wharton Cheairs. Upon their deaths the house was willed to Scarritt College in Nashville, which in turn sold the property in 1969 to Mrs. Hazel G. Morton, the current resident of the house.

Several Civil War incidents are associated with White Hall. In March, 1863, the dashing Confederate Cavalry General Earl Van Dorn established his headquarters at Dr. White's home in Spring Hill. The general, his staff, and aides-de-camp took over the entire house leaving only the kitchen wing to Dr. White, his wife Margaret, and several small children.

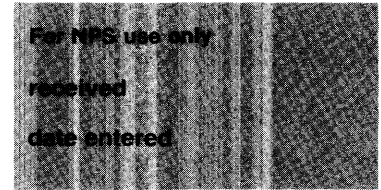
Van Dorn literally held court in Spring Hill. He held several military reviews which he attended dressed in a resplendently tailored uniform. Brass band concerts entertained the villagers, and "the mansions were lighted until midnight." Van Dorn supposedly was visited at White Hall by Jessie McKissack Peters, wife of neighboring doctor and former State Senator Dr. George B. Peters. Such aspects of Van Dorn's social life did not suit his hostess, Mrs. White, and she asked her husband to get the general out of the house. Before Dr. White could face up to the uncomfortable task of asking the general to leave, Van Dorn summoned him and told White that he was transferring his headquarters to the Martin Cheairs house (now Ferguson Hall at the Tennessee Orphans Home).

Van Dorn was in his new headquarters less than a week before he was assassinated by Dr. George Peters in the county's most famous murder, a major sensation of the day and still a matter of dispute.

On November 29, 1864, the advancing Confederate Army of Tennessee under General John Bell Hood encircled a large federal force under General John Schofield at Spring Hill. As a Confederate detachment under General Nathan B. Forrest entered Spring Hill on the Duplex Road from the Rally Hill turnpike, they were greeted by the White family in their front yard, who served the soldiers fried chicken from black tin trays. Neighbors across the road provided buttermilk and buttered biscuits. (Most of General Schofield's troops escaped that night.)

After the terrible Battle of Franklin the next afternoon, wounded soldiers were laid out in the front and back halls of White Hall for treatment by Dr. White. In later years, one of his children recalled being frightened and disturbed by the moans and cries of the wounded.

Dr. Aaron White could not join the Confederate Army due to deafness, but still served the South throughout the war as a physician and surgeon.

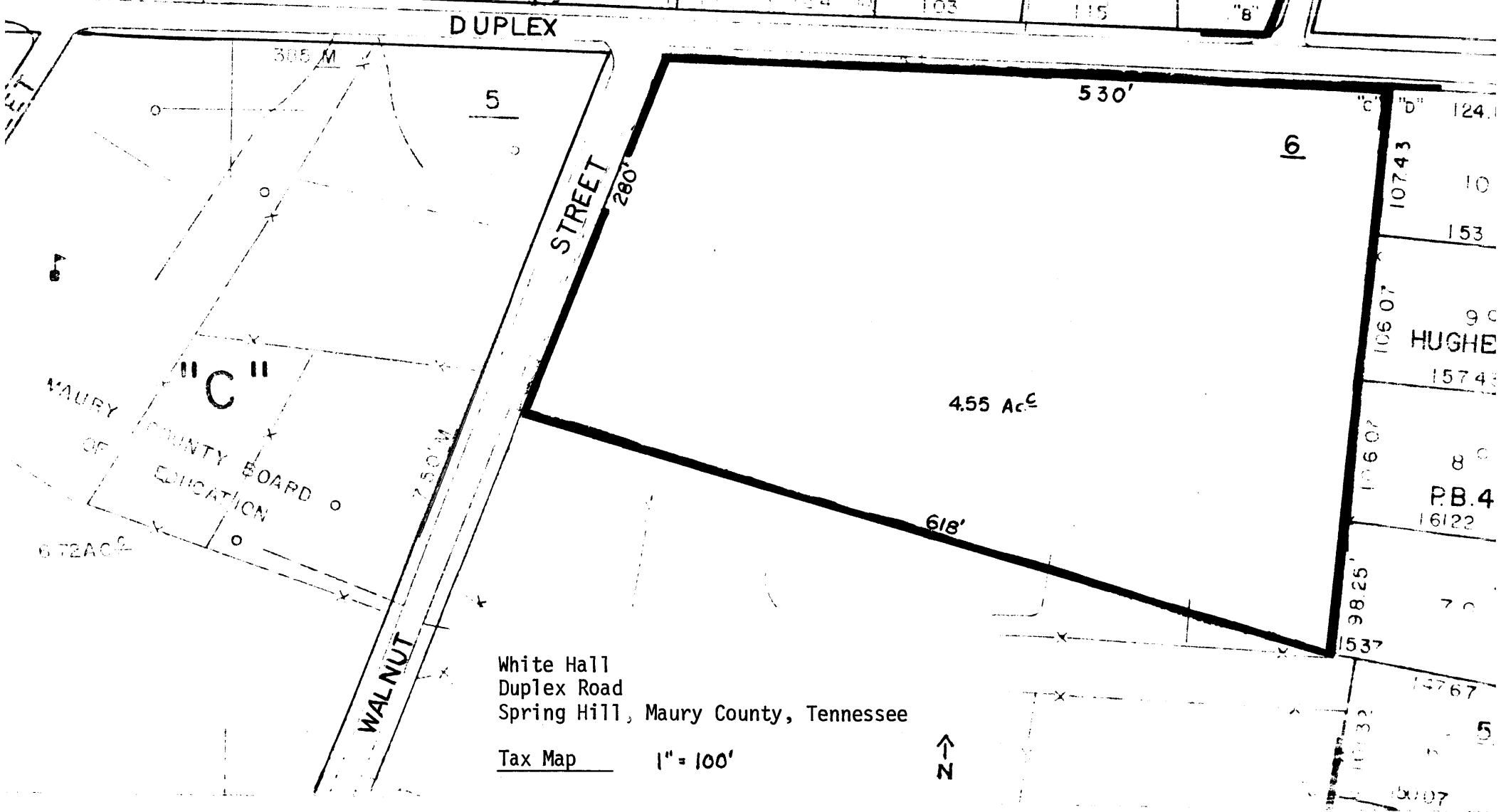
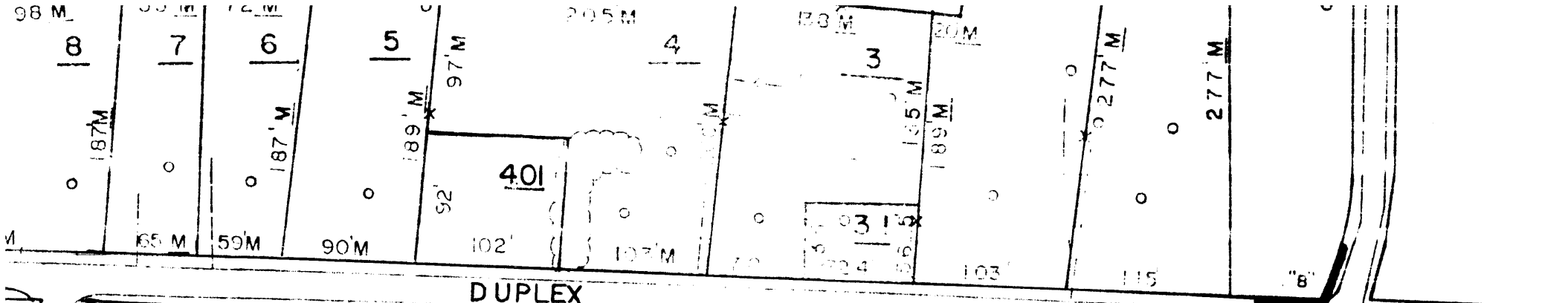
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Continuation sheet White Hall

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Architecturally, the large frame house White Hall is interesting for its modified central-passage plan; its monumental portico supported by pillars with Tower-of-the-Winds capitals; ornate door surrounds, balcony rails, and the heavy cornice on the exterior; and original mantels stairways, and other interior millwork and details. The original detached kitchen was long ago joined to the main part of the house by a dining room wing, but this rear addition adds to the overall character of this fine residence at the edge of the quite little town of Spring Hill.



White Hall
 Duplex Road
 Spring Hill, Maury County, Tennessee

Tax Map 1" = 100'

