

Mississippi River Corridor – Counties' Historical Information

DYER COUNTY

The Tennessee General Assembly established Dyer County in 1823 and named it in honor of Colonel Robert H. Dyer. John Mclver and Joel H. Dyer donated sixty acres for the new county seat, named Dyersburg, at a central location within the county known as Mclver's Bluff. In 1825 Joel Dyer surveyed the town site into eighty-six lots; the first courthouse was built on the square in 1827. The present Classical Revival-style courthouse, designed by Asa Biggs in 1911, centers a downtown historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The county's population in 2000 was 37,279.

Fertile soil and plentiful stands of timber made Dyer County rich farming country. The early profitable crops of corn and tobacco were replaced in the post-Civil War era by a reliance on cotton, and the timber industry expanded. Situated at the head of steamboat navigation on the Forked Deer River, Dyersburg grew as a river town, especially once the Grey Eagle made the first successful steamboat trip in 1836. The county was spared the worst of the Civil War, as no major battles or other activity occurred within its borders. Dyersburg resident Otho F. Strahl raised a local Confederate infantry company in 1861 and then steadily advanced to the rank of brigadier general in the Army of Tennessee. On November 30, 1864, Strahl was killed at the battle of Franklin.

The county's first industrial boom dates to 1879, when the steamboat Alf Stevens shipped timber from A. M. Stevens Lumber Company of Dyersburg to St. Louis markets. The Stevens company established a large sawmill in 1880 and opened a planing mill in 1885. The Bank of Dyersburg opened in 1880, while another timber industry, Nichols & Co. Wooden Bowl Factory, began operations in 1881. The arrival of the Newport News and Mississippi Valley Railroad in 1884 further expanded market possibilities; a branch line, the Dyersburg Northern, soon linked the county seat to Tiptonville. The new railroad links encouraged the creation of new industries and businesses. In 1884, for example, investors established the Dyersburg Oil Company, a cottonseed factory. This company remained locally important through the twentieth century.

In 1904 and 1907 Dyersburg hosted two huge revivals conducted by evangelist George C. Gates. The 1907 revival alone converted seven hundred people. The revivals preceded Dyersburg's greatest boom as it emerged as a regional railroad hub. Between 1909 and 1914 Dyersburg became the junction point for three different lines, led by the Illinois Central Railroad. The Illinois Central expanded its facilities throughout the county, building in 1920 a new combination depot at the town of Newbern, a major cotton and livestock shipping point. Listed in the National Register, this depot survives and is one of only two Amtrak passenger stops in Tennessee. Newbern is the county's second largest incorporated city. Smaller villages include Trimble, Fowkles, Finley, Bogota, and

Heloise, the county's sole Mississippi River village.

By the 1920s the rich timber resources of Dyer County were gone; cotton was the county's leading resource. African Americans participated actively in the Rosenwald school-building program, sponsoring and constructing four schools across the county, while white officials put up most of the money for a modern sixteen-room industrial training school for blacks. Known as Bruce High School, it remained a segregated facility until it closed in 1966. In 1929 Dyersburg Cotton Products built a modern plant complete with company housing on the outskirts of Dyersburg. The town's largest industrial concern, the plant consumed about six million pounds of cotton each year from local farmers. The great Mississippi River floods of 1927 and 1937 devastated western Dyer County, especially lands between the Obion and Mississippi Rivers.

During World War II the Halls Air Base, located at the border of Lauderdale County and Dyer County, created many civilian jobs as it trained hundreds of B-17 bomber pilots. An emergency landing strip was also built in Dyersburg. After the war agriculture in Dyer County began to shift from cotton into new crops. By the mid-1980s soybeans composed the largest crop by far, followed by wheat, milo, corn, and cotton. Industry continued to expand and the county became a regional medical, educational, retail and distribution center. The establishment of Dyersburg State Community College in 1969 enhanced educational and cultural opportunities in the county. In the last two decades, two major projects have modernized the county's transportation system: Interstate I-155 links Dyersburg with Missouri via the only highway bridge (1976) over the Mississippi River between Cairo, Illinois, and Memphis, and the four-lane expansion of U.S. 412 connects Dyersburg to I-40 at Jackson.

Carroll Van West, Middle Tennessee State University

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

Listings of National Register of Historic Places in Dyer County:

1	TN	Dyer	Bank of Dyersburg	100 N. Main St.	Dyersburg	1983-06-16	
2	TN	Dyer	Dyersburg Courthouse Square Historic District	Roughly bounded by Church, Main, Cedar and Court Sts.	Dyersburg	1991-02-28	
3	TN	Dyer	Gordon--Oak Streets Historic District	107--302 Gordon and 114--305 Oak Sts., and W side 711--731 Sampson Ave.	Dyersburg	1992-05-08	Dyersburg MPS

4	TN	Dyer	King, Edward Moody, House	512 Finley St.	Dyersburg	1990-10-25	
5	TN	Dyer	Latta House	917 Troy Ave.	Dyersburg	1978-11-14	
6	TN	Dyer	Newbern Illinois Central Depot	Jct. of Main and Jefferson Sts.	Newbern	1993-03-25	
7	TN	Dyer	Pleasant Hill Cemetery	Approx. .7 mi. W. of cattle gate at end of Cemetery Rd.	Finley	2003-11-13	
8	TN	Dyer	Troy Avenue Historic District	827--1445 Troy Ave., W side	Dyersburg	1992-05-08	Dyersburg MPS

National Register Properties in the riverbottom project area:

Pleasant Hill Cemetery, Finley

Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005:

Bogota Community Center (historic Bogota School), Hwy 103 at Hwy 78, Bogota. A 1950s-1960s school building that is well maintained and an excellent site for exhibtry and kiosks for the corridor.

Mississippi River Port, Heloise, near end of Hwy 104. Excellent view of river and still used as a river access point. One of the better places in the river bottom to see an old 19th century small town port

Heloise-Midway Road. This paved road hugs the river—and provides great vantage points to the river.

c. 1940 tenant house, approximately 900 Heloise-Midway Road, north of the intersection of Bradley Road. Very few homes remain west of the great levee road (Hwy 181) and this is a good example of worker housing from the early 20th century that was probably built after the 1927 or 1937 floods.

Free Church of God at Chic. This c. 1960 concrete block church building is one of the few west of the great levee. Located near the intersection of Chic Road and Moss Island Road. Several other homes are in the vicinity defining in physical terms the community of Chic. Chic is near the confluence of the Obion and Mississippi Rivers and this location might be the best place for interpretive markers or kiosk about the Obion Mounds, one of the most significant prehistoric properties in the project area.

C. 1960 crossroads store. Bradley Road at Tiger Tail Road. Now abandoned and in poor repair but an example of commercial activity in this very rural area.

Lenox. A railroad village that is situated on the bluffs with some compelling overviews of the riverbottom. The historic Murray Gin building is associated not only with the cotton industry but also with the impact of railroad development .

Finley. The largest town situated in the riverbottom in Dyer County. Also associated with railroad development. It has the county's one National Register-listed site, the Pleasant Valley Cemetery, which has poor access but contains views of the riverbottom from a bluffs vantage point. Access is from Finley Cemetery Road but road is gated about .7 mile from the actual cemetery.

LAKE COUNTY

Located in the northwest corner of Tennessee, Lake County is bounded by Kentucky on the north, Reelfoot Lake and Obion County on the east, the Mississippi River on the west, and Dyer County on the south. The smallest county in the state, Lake County covers 210 square miles. Its flat terrain contains some of the richest soil in the state. The county was named for Reelfoot Lake, which was formed by a series of earthquakes that jolted the region from December 1811 to mid-March 1812. Despite popular legends that attribute the name of the lake to "Chief Reelfoot and his Indian Bride," the lake was named for Bill Jones, whose clubfoot gained him the nickname "Reelfoot Jones." Jones died in March 1839, when he slipped from a foot log, fell into Spring Creek, and drowned. Thereafter the creek was known as "Reelfoot Creek," and since it fed the lake, the shallow body of water acquired the name Reelfoot also.

The Tennessee General Assembly organized Lake County in June 1870, and Tiptonville was designated as the county seat. The first session of court was held on September 5, 1870. Settlers established homesteads along the river and the lake as early as 1827. Until the organization of Lake County, area residents were part of Obion County and traveled to Troy to conduct county business. In recognition of the difficulty associated with crossing the "scatters of the Lake" (a swampy area extending south from the lake to the Obion River), a special Circuit Court was established in 1858 for the portion of Obion County lying west of Reelfoot Lake. The first term of this court was held in June 1858 in the Masonic Hall in Cronanville, the largest village. The men living in this area were exempted from militia duty in Troy. The scatters of the lake were brought under control by digging a dredge ditch from the lake to the Obion River along the boundary line between Lake and Obion Counties. Bridges crossing the ditch replaced the earlier ferry boats.

Lake County's economy is based on agriculture, with cotton and soybeans the chief crops. Farmland has remained in the same families for generations, and Lake County has several Tennessee Century Farms, including the Ed Sumara Farm, the Wynn Farm, and the Carter Farm. In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, cotton gins operated alongside the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad,

ginning as much as forty bales per day. Located on a spur of the railroad, the community of Ridgely was once the site of several cotton gins, whose abandoned operations are still visible. In 1997, however, only one gin still operated in the county, turning out a bale of cotton every five minutes. Continental Grain Company ships corn, wheat, and soybeans by river and has replaced several earlier soybean companies. Lake County Seed Company, which operated a cottonseed oil mill in Tiptonville from 1906 to 1971, now stands abandoned.

In 1861 the last major Confederate fort on the Mississippi River fell in the battle of Island #10, which lies in the great river bend near Tiptonville. The Confederate loss at Island #10 opened the Mississippi River to Union forces and assured the occupation of Memphis in June 1862.

Lake County and Reelfoot Lake returned to national prominence in 1907, when lake residents waged a violent battle against the West Tennessee Land Company for control of the lake. In a series of slick legal moves, the land company acquired title to the lake and developed plans for draining the lake for cotton production. Local commercial fishermen and lake residents fought back, and the conflict escalated into a series of night rider attacks in which armed and masked men terrorized the company and its supporters. The attacks resulted in the kidnapping and death of company attorney Quinton Rankin of Trenton and the arrest of three hundred men accused of being nightriders. The cases against the men were eventually dropped, and the state acquired the lake for public use in 1914.

Lake County has 7,954 residents in 2000. It contains twenty-two villages, including the communities of Ridgely, Tiptonville, and Wynnburg. In the great Mississippi River flood of 1927, Ridgely became the site of one of the 154 emergency relief camps established by the American Red Cross. Today the community operates two schools for students in the south end of the county; one school contains kindergarten through sixth grade, and the other is a junior high school.

Wynnburg was created by Samuel F. Wynn, when he divided his farm in 1907 to accommodate the construction of a branch line of the Illinois Central from Dyersburg to Tiptonville. Wynn donated land for a depot, schools, and churches, and the town acquired its name from the family.

Tiptonville, the county seat, dates from 1857 but was not incorporated until 1900. Located on a small rise known as the Tiptonville Dome, the town also served as an emergency relief camp during the flood of 1927 and again during the flood of 1937. Tiptonville serves the educational needs of the northern end of the county with kindergarten through sixth grade and the county high school. The Lake County High School football team won the state championship in 1980 and 1985, and has been runner-up in 1977, 1979, and 1994.

Today Lake County has several factories, including Georgia Gulf, which produces PVC, a vinyl compound. The Illinois Central Railroad still plays an important role in the county's economy. Formerly, the county was served by trains making two round trips daily for passengers and freight. Today, it makes one trip daily for freight.

General Clifton Bledsoe Cates, a four-star general and nineteenth commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps, was born at Cates Landing in 1898. He was raised in the county, attended elementary school here, and called the county "home." Cates died in 1970. Tiptonville also was the early home of Carl Perkins, whose combination hillbilly music and rhythm and blues influenced early rock-n-roll.

Abigail Hyde, Ridgely

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

National Register of Historic Places Properties in Lake County:

I	TN	Lake Caldwell--Hopson House	431 Wynn St.	Tiptonville	1993-03-11

National Register properties in riverbottom project area:

Caldwell-Hopson House, 431 Wynn Street, Tiptonville

Historic Sites and State Parks in Lake County:

BATTLE OF ISLAND #10

The opening of hostilities between the Confederate States and the United States in the spring of 1861 found both belligerents woefully unprepared for the struggle ahead. Confederate strategists realized that the Mississippi River offered a broad avenue of invasion into the South; the river had to be defended if Southern independence was to be realized. Confederate control of the Mississippi River was vital to the unification of the seceding states east and west of the Mississippi Valley and could effectively cripple the agricultural economy of the midwestern states of the Union.

Early in the war, the Confederate forces under the direction of General Leonidas Polk fortified Island #10, near the Kentucky-Tennessee state line. In 1861 Island #10 was part of a chain of islands in the Mississippi River lying below Cairo, Illinois, that led into the heart of the Confederacy. It was so named for its position as tenth in this chain from north to south.

A Confederate force of approximately 7,000 troops manned the island defenses. General W. W. Mackall was in command at the time of the Union attack in March 1862. Seven Union gunboats under the command of Flag Officer Andrew H. Foote bombarded the island for three weeks. Heavy bombardment, high water, and the successful movement of the Union gunboats past the Confederate guns forced the surrender of the island on April 7, 1862. Polk evacuated as many soldiers as possible on an assortment of river transports while under fire from two of Foote's gunboats. Union soldiers pursued the retreating Confederates into the swamps and captured over six thousand prisoners near Tiptonville, Tennessee.

With the collapse of Island #10's defenses, military activities moved farther south, effectively ending Confederate control of northwest Tennessee for the duration of the war.

Bill Threlkeld, Union City

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Birthplace of Carl Lee Perkins (1932-1998)

Carl Perkins, the son of Tiptonville sharecroppers, was Sun Record's first certified million-selling artist. Perkins began his musical career by forming the Perkins Brothers--Jackson's hottest honky-tonk group. The trio featured Carl as lead singer and songwriter, older brother Jay on rhythm guitar, and younger brother Clayton on guitar.

Through Clayton, Carl Perkins befriended Johnny Cash. Cash, who later hired Perkins to become part of his road show and eponymous ABC-TV series, inspired Perkins's signature song, "Blue Suede Shoes." Perkins and Elvis Presley were well acquainted long before Presley made "Blue Suede Shoes" a hit song.

Perkins lost the momentum of his early success when, en route to New York for his network television debut on The Perry Como Show, he was seriously injured in an automobile accident at Dover, Delaware. None of Perkins's subsequent hits, including "Honey Don't," "Boppin' the Blues," and "Matchbox," proved as popular as "Blue Suede Shoes." Nevertheless, Perkins's fans include a number of internationally known music stars who attribute their own musical style to his influence. The late Ricky Nelson, the Beatles, and the Stray Cats have been among his admiring peers.

Carl Perkins and his wife, Valda, were the parents of three sons and a daughter. The Perkinses lived in Jackson at the time of Carl's death in 1998. In 1991 the

city honored the singer with the establishment of the Exchange Club Carl Perkins Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse. The Carl Perkins Boyhood Home is a historic site in Tiptonville.

Stacy Harris, Nashville

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

REELFOOT LAKE STATE RESORT PARK

This three-hundred-acre state park on an eighteen-thousand-acre lake is located in the northwest corner of Tennessee. The New Madrid earthquakes of 1811-12 probably enlarged a series of oxbow lakes that had existed here long before. Permanent settlement was slow to come to the lake area due to the frequency of flooding and "unhealthy" reputation the lake had gained. An account from 1848, for instance, mentioned only a single family living along the lake. But the region was renowned for its hunting. Allegedly Davy Crockett killed 105 bears in the lake area between 1825 and 1826. In time, however, the people living around the lake fell into two groups. Those on the west side, between the lake and the Mississippi River, typically practiced plantation agriculture, while those on the east side were fishermen and subsistence farmers.

After the Civil War, the timber industry harvested much of the lumber in the region. One lumberman, James C. Harris of Tiptonville, announced in 1899 that he "owned" the lake and that he planned to drain it for further development. Harris's pronouncement eventually led to the violence of the infamous night riders of Reelfoot Lake affair in 1908. Legal battles over ownership continued until 1913, when the Tennessee Supreme Court declared the lake navigable and within the public domain.

The move toward creating a state park occurred in the 1920s due to lobbying from several citizens and local officials as well as the state government's desire to end the legal fight over the ownership of the lake. Donald V. Sabin and his wife Nonie Rhoads Sabin, who grew up in Union City, opened a photography studio there in 1919. They specialized in people and topics from the Obion and Lake Counties area but especially focused their attention on the natural beauty of Reelfoot Lake. In 1923 the Sabins offered a series of three hundred photographs of Reelfoot Lake to the State of Tennessee. State officials declined to purchase the collection, but realized that the Sabins' offer was an important example of local interest in the preservation of Reelfoot Lake. Two years later, the state purchased property surrounding the lake and established the Reelfoot Lake Park and Fish and Game Preserve.

In the 1960s to 1980s the state instituted a series of improvements, including a

visitor's center/museum, lodge and restaurant, and an airplane landing strip, that led to the park's designation as a State Resort Park. Today the park is popular with fishermen and nature lovers, who especially enjoy looking for the park's small resident population of American bald eagles. The Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency successfully introduced nesting eagles to the park in 1981.

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Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005:

Reelfoot Lake State Park, Blue Bank Section, Hwy 21. New Deal era improvements at the park by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Two extant CCC buildings: the Round House Shelter and the Check-In Shelter. Either would be great facilities for exhibitry or kiosks.

Lake Isom National Wildlife Refuge. Developed by CCC in 1938.

Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge. Developed by CCC in 1941.

Boyette's Resort and Restaurant, Hwy 21. A, traditional tourist business along the highway.

Calhoun's Shop, Hwy 21 across from Reelfoot Lake Visitor Center, Hwy 21. Traditional boat makers who have state, regional, and national recognition. See entry on the Calhoun family in the *A History of Tennessee Arts* (UT Press, 2004). Insert in arts book—made boats to go out on lake

Reelfoot Lake State Park Visitors Center (built 1961), Hwy 21. Contains interesting but dated exhibits about the park and the surrounding culture. Exhibits marker that designates the park's listing as a National Natural Landmark in 1966.

Ruckers Battery state historical marker. New Markham Road at Hwy 78 northeast of Tiptonville. Ruckers Battery was part of the outer defenses of Island No. 10. It is located on private property but is viewable from the Earl Trim Road

Gray's Camp. Gray's Camp Road off Hwy 78 North. A complex of historic and modern buildings that still serves sportsmen.

Reelfoot Lake State Park (c. 1980) Phillippy Road at Gray's Camp Road.—developed in the last 20 years—along lake—marker about earthquake—people

fly in, stay at inn—hunters coming in for business—photo

Island No. 10 Interpretive Site. Hwy 22 at Cates Landing Road. Stone and concrete markers and sign interpret Island No. 10 battle. Erected c. 1960.

Merijac Memorial River Park, Pea Ridge Road, Tiptonville vicinity. This small public park is right on river and has a picnic shelter, tables, benches. This is great place for interpretation of river or more interpretation of naval warfar during the Civil War.

Jones Chapel Church of Christ and Cemetery, Hwy 22, north of Tiptonville. National Register quality cemetery that is the resting place for the mass burial of 75 Confederates from the Island No. 10 battle but more importantly for the many markers that are associated with settlement history in the region. The oldest identified marker dates to 1838.

Tiptonville Public Library, 126 Tipton Street, Tiptonville. Original Colonial Revival building constructed by local National Youth Administration effort and the local Woman's Club.

Lake County Courthouse, 229 Church Street, Tiptonville. 1905 building that was renovated, bricked, and expanded through a grant from the Works Progress Administration in 1936.

Rock of Ages CME Church, Lake Street, Tiptonville. Concrete block building that dates to 1923 and associated with the Rev. A.J. Jackson. Appears to meet the criteria for National Register listing under the Rural African American Churches in Tennessee Multiple Property nomination.

St. John's #3 Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery, Lake Street, Tiptonville. Probably the oldest African American resource in Tiptonville.

Tiptonville Presbyterian Church, 719 Church Street, Tiptonville. Has state historical marker. This Folk Victorian-styled church served a congregation organized in 1880 by Rev. J E Carne and the building dates to 1892 constructed under guidance of Rev. William Thorne. National Register eligible.

Boyhood home of Carl Perkins, Highway 78, Tiptonville. Typical double entrance tenant house found in the county in the 1920s and 1930s. Open for tours during the tourist season.

Tiptonville also has compelling industrial remnants of cotton gins and the cotton seed oil industry from the mid-to late twentieth century.

Crockett Chapel United Methodist Church and Cemetery, Bluebank Road. Huge historic cemetery and historic church building. Associated with early settlement

history in the county.

Wynnburg School, Wynneburg-Keefe Road at Hwy 78. Interesting stone veneer school building from c. 1930, with a triple entrance. Now used as a church.

Ridgely Rosenwald School (c. 1925), Hampton Road near Mile Lane. Although brick veneered at an unknown date, this historic school building is one of only two surviving Rosenwald school buildings in the general project area. Important property for African American history interpretation.

Main Street Commercial Core and Residences, Ridgely. Ridgely boomed as a cotton industry town in the early twentieth century. 209 Main Street and 305 Main Street are good examples of a bungalow and Colonial Revival house of a stylistic consistency rarely seen in the county. The business area contains a building labeled as the Ridgely Historic Museum (not open) and an impressive Classical Revival bank building. The most compelling artifacts are the decaying hulks of cotton gins and various cotton processing structures located along the railroad line immediately west of the business district.

Shell Hiway Garage, Hwy 78, Ridgely. An extremely rare artifact of roadside architecture, probably built after the 1927 flood.

Highway 79, Hathaway Road. One of the longest stretches of road west of the Great Levee Road (Hwy 181). In poor condition at several places, but an excellent view of the agricultural landscape.

LAUDERDALE COUNTY

In November 1835 the Tennessee General Assembly established Lauderdale County from portions of Tipton, Dyer, and Haywood Counties. The county was named for Lieutenant Colonel James Lauderdale, who was killed in the battle of New Orleans. The county covers 477 square miles and is bounded by the Forked Deer River, the Mississippi River (although some areas, such as Forked Deer Island are now on the west side of the river), and the Hatchie River. The eastern part of the county lies on the Gulf Coastal Plain while the western portion is in the Mississippi Bottom.

Native Americans used the rich resources of Lauderdale's river bottoms and hardwood forests for thousands of years before European explorers arrived. Woodland and Mississippian Period sites, many with mounds, dot the landscape. By the late seventeenth century the Chickasaws claimed West Tennessee. Robert Cavelier de La Salle and his party observed their villages, and the Europeans constructed Fort Prudhomme near the mouth of the Hatchie. Despite the Chickasaw claims, North Carolina sent Henry Rutherford to the area in 1785 to survey for land warrants. Rutherford and his party established "Key Corner" as a landmark for marking off claims by carving his initials and a large key into a

huge sycamore on the first high ground east of the Mississippi and south of the Forked Deer. Following the Jackson Purchase in 1818, Rutherford, his brothers, Benjamin Porter, and a man named Crenshaw settled near Key Corner. Native Americans returned to Lauderdale County during the 1950s, when two Choctaw families migrated to the county to work in the cotton fields. Today two Choctaw communities are in Ripley and Henning.

The earliest settlements of whites and African American slaves were located at Key Corner and Porter's Gap. Griffith Rutherford built the first grist mill in the county at Key Corner in 1826, and Joseph Jordan and William Champers added a cotton gin the following year. Fulton, on the Mississippi River, was settled in 1819, and Judge James Trimble laid out Lauderdale's first town there in 1827. Fulton prospered as a steamboat landing, but today much of the town has been consumed by the Mississippi River. Durhamville was established in 1829; that same year, a church--Turner's Chapel--was built there. Edith Kenley opened the first school in her home at Double Bridges. General William Conner promoted Ashport, a speculative town on the Mississippi. Other early towns included Golddust, Nankipoo, and Hales Point. Nankipoo became the home of Roark Bradford, a popular writer of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. Bell Irvin Wiley also was raised near Nankipoo and later achieved fame as the author of more than twenty history books on the Civil War including *The Road to Appomattox*, *The Life of Billy Yank*, and *The Life of Johnny Reb*; the latter two remain authoritative studies of the common soldiers of the war.

Ripley was established as the county seat in February 1836 on 62 acres purchased from Thomas Brown and named for General E. W. Ripley, a veteran of the War of 1812. J. N. Smith opened the first mercantile store in a log cabin, and the town quickly became a center for trade between Dyersburg and Covington. In 1936 the Public Works Administration (PWA) built Lauderdale County's fourth courthouse. Designed by the Nashville firm of Marr and Holman, the building displays the PWA Modern style so popular in the New Deal era. Works Progress Administration funds were used in 1941 to construct the post office, designed by Louis A. Simon in a Colonial Revival style. A mural, *Autumn*, produced through the federal artists' program, still decorates the post office interior. Painted by Marguerite Zorach, the mural reflects hunting and nutting in the West Tennessee country.

During the antebellum period cotton dominated the county's agriculture. Steamboats carried cotton bales from landings on the Forked Deer, Mississippi, and Hatchie Rivers. In 1850 there were 304 slaveholders in Lauderdale County, 96 of whom owned ten or more slaves. The two largest planters were Hiram Partee, who had eighty-six slaves, and Thomas Fitzpatrick, with eighty-four.

The Civil War devastated the county's farms and plantations. After Fort Pillow's fall to Union forces in June 1862, occupation of the county seesawed between Confederate and Union troops, both of whom bivouacked in Ripley at different

times. Skirmishes occurred at Double Bridges and Woodville in October 1862, Knob Creek in January 1863, and Durhamville in September 1863. The most controversial engagement took place at Fort Pillow on April 12, 1864, when a Confederate force under General Nathan Bedford Forrest overran the Union outpost and killed almost half the garrison of 600 mostly African American troops.

The county recovered from the war slowly, returning to cotton as the primary crop, with some tobacco raised for the market at Memphis. Railroads reached the county in the 1870s. Henning became the first railroad town, established on the line that at various times was named the Newport News and Mississippi Valley line, then Paducah and Memphis (1872), Memphis and Louisville (1874), Memphis Paducah and Northern (1878), Chesapeake, Ohio and Southwestern (1881), and finally Illinois Central (1887). In 1873 Carrie White became the first African American teacher in Henning. In 1918-19 Will Palmer, an African American businessman, built his home in Henning. The town's most famous son, Alex Haley, spent his boyhood there with his Palmer grandparents. He later wrote the international bestseller *Roots* from the stories he heard from his grandmother and aunts. The railroad reached Ripley in 1874 and eventually reached the towns of Gates (1882), Halls (1883), and Curve (1884), which was touted as the strawberry capital of the world.

By the late 1890s Ripley had acquired an electric system, and telephone lines strung by the Cumberland Telephone and Telegraph Company reached Halls in 1900. The Bank of Halls organized in 1899, followed by the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Henning (1901), Ripley Savings Bank and Trust (1903), and Gates Banking and Trust Company (1904). Building on a school tradition that included Ripley Academy, Lauderdale Institute, and Ripley Female Institute in the 1800s, public high schools were built between 1900 and 1910 at Curve, Ripley, and Halls. Timber became an important industry in the county. Anderson-Tulley, a Memphis veneer company, purchased 17,000 acres of Lauderdale timberland, which now serves as the Anderson-Tully Wildlife Management Area.

During World War II the U.S. Army constructed an air base at Halls. Some 7,700 troops trained on the 2,450-acre site, many of them as B-17 bomber pilots. The base closed after the war, and the land was sold at auction in 1955. A portion of the land was developed as an industrial park, and Lauderdale County acquired its first plant when Tupperware opened one of three national plants in 1969, employing 750. Although Tupperware closed its manufacturing facility in 1991, Lauderdale has attracted a number of industrial employers. In 2001 four companies had more than 500 employees: SR of Tennessee, a motor vehicle parts company, had 750 workers; Marvin Windows had 720 employees; Tennessee Electroplating, another motor vehicle parts firm, had 640 workers; and A. O. Smith, a producer of motors and generators, had a labor force of 500. The two largest public sector employers were the Lauderdale County School System and the State of Tennessee's Cold Creek Correctional Facility, formerly Fort Pillow Prison Farm. In 2000 the population of Lauderdale County was

27,101.

Ann Toplovich, Tennessee Historical Society

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National Register of Historic Places in Lauderdale County:

1	TN	Lauderdale	Fort Pillow	TN 87	Fort Pillow	1973-04-11	
2	TN	Lauderdale	Lauderdale County Courthouse	Town Sq.	Ripley	1995-03-30	Historic County Courthouses of Tennessee MPS
3	TN	Lauderdale	Palmer, W. E., House	Off U.S. 51	Henning	1978-12-14	
4	TN	Lauderdale	US Post Office	17 E. Jackson Ave.	Ripley	1988-09-23	
5	TN	Lauderdale	Wardlaw-Steele House	128 Wardlaw Pl.	Ripley	1980-01-08	

National Register Properties in riverbottom project area:

Fort Pillow, Tennessee Hwy 87

Historic Sites and State Parks in Lauderdale County:

ALEX HALEY STATE HISTORIC SITE

The Alex Haley State Historic Site is located at 200 South Church Street in Henning, Lauderdale County. This one-and-one-half story weatherboard bungalow was the house of Alex Haley's grandfather, Will Palmer, who operated a respected and profitable lumber business and mill in Henning. In 1918-19 Palmer and his wife Cynthia built the ten-room house, complete with music room and library, that rated among the most modern and fashionable residences in this rural town. Two years later, in 1921, their daughter Bertha Palmer Haley brought her baby son Alex back home to Henning to stay with her parents while her husband, Simon Haley, pursued graduate studies at Cornell. Haley lived here from 1921 to 1929 and afterward visited the home during many summers. As he later recounted in his popular book *Roots: The Saga of an American Family* (1976) and in many interviews, his Grandmother Palmer was an immense influence on his telling of the family history, especially through her colorful and

compelling stories of past, but not forgotten, family members.

Haley heard those stories and began to develop his own sense of imagination and place while living at this bungalow dwelling. His writings and lectures inspired millions to search for their family history and to learn how their families have played a role in the drama of the American past. The Alex Haley Boyhood Home was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978 and was opened as the first state historic site devoted to African American history later that decade. After his death in 1992, Haley was buried in the front yard of the boyhood home he recalled so fondly.

Carroll Van West, Middle Tennessee State University

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

FORT PILLOW STATE PARK

This Civil War earthwork and battleground occupies a Mississippi River bluff in Lauderdale County. Late in the spring of 1861 Confederate troops from Arkansas built a battery at the site to control a bend in the river. Major General Gideon Pillow subsequently ordered the construction of a thirty-acre enclosure with numerous batteries below, in, and atop the bluff. It soon took on his name.

When upriver defenses crumbled in early 1862, Brigadier General John Villepigue arrived with reinforcements and a ram fleet to prepare the fort for action. On April 13 a Confederate gunboat fleet retreated to Fort Pillow. A superior Federal flotilla followed and anchored near Osceola, Arkansas, exchanging artillery fire with the fort. Neither side did much damage; both forces sent most infantrymen to participate in the Corinth, Mississippi, campaign.

On May 10 Captain James Montgomery's Confederate ram fleet surprised the ships under Captain Charles Davis in the nearly bloodless battle of Plum Bend. The rams fled after sinking two gunboats, which were soon raised and repaired. Federal Brigadier General Isaac Quimby then arrived with troops to storm the fort but quickly abandoned the effort. Next, Colonel Charles Ellet arrived with army rams and tried to attack the Confederate fleet, only to be driven back by the fort's artillery. As a result of the Confederate retreat from Corinth, Villepigue evacuated the fort by June 4.

The Federal army irregularly used the site until fall 1862, when a garrison of cavalry and mounted infantry began patrolling the area in search of guerrillas, conscription agents, and contraband trade. The navy kept a warship near the fort to support these operations. The fort became a trading center as well as a refuge for runaway slaves and Unionists, but the guerrilla war locked into a stalemate. In

early 1864 the fort turned into a recruiting post.

The garrison included some three hundred inexperienced white Unionists and approximately an equal number of African Americans, when some fifteen hundred Confederate veterans under Major General Nathan B. Forrest assaulted the fort on April 12. The gunboat evacuated most civilians and ineffectually shelled the enemy. During morning fighting, the Federals retreated to a small inner fort near the bluff. Calling a truce, Forrest offered to accept the entire garrison as prisoners of war, a significant gesture as the Confederacy did not officially recognize blacks as legitimate soldiers. The Federals refused, and the next Confederate charge broke into the fort. As a result of the intense hostility toward armed blacks and Southern Unionists, discipline among the victors broke down, and many granted no quarter. Deaths totaled 64 percent of the black troops and at least 31 percent of the whites. Forrest alleged that the Federals refused to surrender until most had died; Federal survivors claimed that a massacre took place.

Sharp Northern criticism included a congressional report written by Senator Benjamin F. Wade and Representative Daniel W. Gooch. Abandoned after the incident, the site slowly reverted into a wilderness. In 1971 the state acquired it to develop a state historical site known now as the Fort Pillow State Historic Area.

John Cimprich, Thomas More College

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

CHOCTAWS VILLAGE, HENNING

The Choctaws of West Tennessee are the only native-speaking American Indian community in Tennessee. In fact, they have retained their language to a greater extent than virtually any other Native American group. The importance of being Choctaw is best expressed when they say, Chata hapia hoke, "We are Choctaw," a statement which underscores the widely held native view that the loss of language is the loss of identity. While other native languages of Tennessee have been lost, the Choctaw language and culture remain a vibrant part of the state heritage.

In 1830 the Choctaws relinquished the last of their ancestral lands by signing the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. The majority of Choctaws, some 19,200, moved to Indian Territory, but about 8,000 remained. The smaller group became sharecroppers and tenant farmers on local cotton farms. A few held title to their own lands, but the majority were farm laborers during the growing season and lived off the land during the winter.

By 1960 some 3,200 Choctaws resided on or near the reservation near Philadelphia, Mississippi. With economic opportunities steadily declining in the Mississippi hill country, the Choctaws maintained a tenacious grip on their former territory.

In 1952 two families from Neshoba County, Mississippi, responded to the labor recruitment efforts of a farmer in Lauderdale County, Tennessee, and moved to the Golddust community. The area was appropriately named, for the Choctaws saw the rich Mississippi alluvial floodplain as the land of opportunity. The population steadily increased from the few families of the 1950s to some 200 individuals by 1960. After 1960 the bottomland sharecropper way of life gave way to more mechanized agriculture. Some Choctaws moved to more financially rewarding factory jobs in Ripley, the county seat, while others returned to the reservation. By the early 1990s, some twenty-six families, representing approximately 150 individuals, remained in the Golddust area.

A Choctaw community in Memphis also developed, and it too numbers about 150 members. The Memphis Choctaws, like their Lauderdale County neighbors, have maintained close contact with Mississippi relatives. Many Memphis Choctaws migrated to Tennessee in response to the 1953 Federal Termination Act, which advocated assimilation and rapid termination of aid and protection for Native Americans.

Today West Tennessee Choctaws maintain a common identity based on shared language, similar customs, and collective cultural heritage. Choctaw migration occurred through kinship networks with strong links to the parent communities in Mississippi. The Choctaws have accepted some cultural values from their non-Native American neighbors, but their traditional ways of life are reinforced by travel to the Mississippi reservation to receive health services from traditional doctors and herbalists. Weddings, funerals, and festivals such as the annual Choctaw Fair help to retain and reaffirm traditional values.

The first generation of Lauderdale County Choctaws worried about the loss of native culture, but crafts such as cane basket and mat weaving and bead weaving, as well as the traditional dances, songs, and stick ball games are taught to younger generations. In their early days at Golddust, the Choctaws built the First Indian Baptist Church, where services are often conducted in the Choctaw language. The church has since moved to Ripley, where it serves as a focal point for the community.

The annual Choctaw festival at Chucalissa Indian Village in Memphis, begun in 1964, helps foster group solidarity. The Chucalissa Choctaw Heritage Festival informs the public about Choctaw culture and serves as a homecoming for West Tennessee Choctaws. Beginning in 1987 Lauderdale County Choctaws initiated a similar festival at Fort Pillow and later moved it to Henning.

In 1991 a United States Department of Education grant, Project Smoke Signal, began to correct the steady erosion of self-esteem experienced by Choctaw children attending public school. Through after-school programs which emphasized traditional beliefs, crafts, and culture, along with a strenuous study program, the drop-out rate among Choctaw youths has decreased significantly.

The West Tennessee Choctaws continued to benefit from their association with the federally recognized tribal government in Mississippi. In 1992, through the efforts of Choctaw community leaders in Lauderdale County and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, the federal government purchased 172 acres near Henning for government housing. Seventeen families now live in this Choctaw community. The Lauderdale County community of Choctaws is also the only local Tennessee population governed by a body of elected leaders. The American Indian Affairs of Tennessee, organized in 1986, ensures the continuation of traditions and the Choctaw way of life. The ability to adapt to a changing world assures the Choctaws a place in Tennessee's future.

David H. Dye, University of Memphis

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005:

Key Corner, Highway 88 at Key Corner Road. Key Corner is significant in the settlement history of the Mississippi River Valley in Tennessee. A historical marker is at Daniel Meeks Road. Key Corner Road has excellent river bottomland views.

Hales Point. End of Hwy 88. Old 19th century river port at confluence of Obion River and Mississippi River. A granary business now operates at the river port. Another good location, however, to interpret Obion Mounds and the prehistoric Native American history of the area.

New Mitchell Grove Baptist Church, Barr Road. One of the most isolated churches in the region, on the riverfront west of Anderson-Tully wildlife preserve. Speaks strongly to the farming communities still located along the river bottomland.

Henning Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Edith-Nankipoo Road. This 1960 gable-front brick church building and adjoining cemetery appears to meet the criteria for National Register listing in the Rural African American Churches in Tennessee multiple property nomination.

Moore's Grocery, Edith. A c. 1920 brick crossroads store that is still a popular business in this area.

Bethlehem Golddust Baptist Church. Hwy 19. Small frame African-American church from c. 1930 with older cemetery across the road.

Fullen's Grocery and Cotton Gin (still operating), Jim Fullen Road at Hwy 19, Ashport. Important example of a commercial/industrial center located along the river in this cotton landscape.

Crutcher Lake Road and Spur Road. Highway 19 at Golddust to Keyes Point and return. This paved road circles a single huge cotton field, still under production.

Oak Grove Baptist Church, 629 Crutcher Lake Road, just south of Ft. Pillow State Park. This turn-of-the-century African-American church appears to be National Register eligible. The adjacent historic cemetery has graves dating to at least c. 1900.

Mt. Zion Baptist Church, Ray Road, Fulton. A new property owner appears to have closed this road and has acquired the church property. Nothing indicates that this historic African American church—with excellent views of the river—is still operating.

Mississippi River view, state park property, Ray Road at Fulton. Apparently in the 1970s, the state park provided a river overlook access. It still owns the property but has a locked gate that closes access to automobiles. Easy walk to the vantage point. Much better views of the river here than within Ft. Pillow State Park.

Fort Pillow State Historic Park. See listing above on the state park's history. It does provide an overview of the river area at one pull-over located on the river bluff.

Fort Pillow State Prison Farm, Highway 87. A good collection of historic farm buildings and residences from the early 20th century through the New Deal era. This portion of the prison farm may be eligible for the National Register. Certainly to balance the historic record, interpretation must be addressed to the original purpose, audience, and function of the prison farm.

Saint James CME Church and Cemetery. 6848 Highway 87. This molded concrete block, built 1939-1947, is potentially eligible for the National Register. The oldest marker in the cemetery dates to 1905.

Canaan Missionary Baptist Church, Highway 87. This Colonial Revival-styled

church, with a huge 19th century cemetery, appears to meet the registration requirements for listing in the National Register under the Rural African American Churches in Tennessee Multiple Property Nomination. The congregation dates to 1867 and the cemetery contains a marked U.S. C. T. burial for Civil War soldier, Wallace Nixon (Company D, 6th US Colored Heavy Artillery).

El Canaan Missionary Baptist Church. El Canaan Road at Hwy 371. Congregation dates to 1900 but current building dates to 1981. Earliest marked grave in the cemetery in 1918. A great setting within the agricultural landscape.

Alex Haley Museum and Boyhood Home, Henning. See above text on this state historic site. Northwest of the house is the New Hope CME Church which erected the first marker to honor Haley in 1977.

OBION COUNTY

Created on October 24, 1823, and organized on January 19, 1824, Obion County included what is now Lake County until 1870. The county took its name from the Obion River; the word Obion is thought to be an Indian word meaning "many forks." Situated in the rolling hills of northwest Tennessee, Obion County has earned the nickname "Land of Green Pastures."

Many early settlers were Scots-Irish from the Carolinas and Virginia. The first known white settler was Elisha Parker, who arrived in the area in 1819. In 1820 Colonel W. M. Wilson settled three miles southwest of the future town of Troy; organization of Obion County took place in his cabin. Davy Crockett was among those present on March 16, 1825, when the county seat of Troy was laid out. Crockett's association with the history of Obion County is well known; he served the area in the U.S. House of Representatives, and his claim of a record kill of 103 bears was made in Obion County.

The history of Union City, the present county seat, was tied to the railroads. Laid out in 1854 by General George Gibbs on land he received in 1829, the town derived its name from the intersection of the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad with the Mobile and Ohio Railroad.

Historically Obion County has been a region of small farms; in 1860 most farms ranged in size from twenty to fifty acres. Tobacco, corn, and wheat were the principal crops. The population of Obion County increased rapidly in the antebellum years; in 1830 the population numbered just over 2,000, increasing to 12,800 by 1860.

Obion County experienced its share of action during the Civil War. In the early months of 1861 Camp Brown, which housed up to ten thousand Confederate soldiers, was established one mile north of Union City in preparation for General

Leonidas Polk's invasion of Kentucky and occupation of Columbus in September 1861. The last important engagement in Obion County pitted the U.S. Seventh Tennessee Cavalry under the command of Colonel Isaac Hawkins against Nathan Bedford Forrest's Seventh Cavalry under the command of Colonel Duckworth. Unable to take the Federal stronghold at Union City by storm, the Confederates devised a "Quaker cannon" from a black painted log and wagon wheels and successfully demanded unconditional surrender in Forrest's name.

Rebuilding and recovery occupied the years following the war. Business and manufacturing had revived by the early 1880s, and the rail lines soon made Union City a commercial center, shipping the products of the county's furniture factories and sawmills to eastern markets.

Along with the commercial vitality of Union City came demands to move the county seat from Troy. Following a lengthy public debate and court battle, Union City won a hotly contested referendum, and the county records were moved to the new courthouse in July 1890. As the county seat, Union City grew rapidly, a period of expansion now marked by several National Register properties, including the Washington-Florida Avenues historic district; the East Main Historic District; and the Mt. Zion C.M.E. Church.

In the early 1900s trouble loomed at Reelfoot Lake. Fishermen felt they had a natural right to fish the lake. However, lands beneath the lake's shallow waters had been claimed under the 1783 grants made prior to the earthquakes of 1811-12 that created the lake. In the meantime, settlers profited from the lake's bounty of fish and migrant waterfowl unmindful of previous claims. In the 1870s John Burdick established a dock and wholesale fish business at the lake.

In the 1890s James Harris of Tiptonville became interested in exploiting the timber and agricultural possibilities of the lake. Buying up most of the old land grants, Harris announced in 1899 that he would drain the lake. Opposed by Burdick and the fishermen, Harris's son won the initial legal battle when the lake was declared not navigable and thus subject to private ownership.

In 1907 Harris joined forces with the West Tennessee Land Company, which had acquired the remaining grants. Under pressure from the land company, Burdick chose to lease his property and obtained sole rights to purchase all lake fish, a move that embittered some of the fishermen.

Emotions among some lake residents shifted toward a more violent solution to the dispute as they lost faith in legal remedies. Soon men wearing masks and gowns and calling themselves Night Riders, made vigilante raids around the lake, terrorizing those who opposed them and burning Burdick's dock.

On the night of October 19, 1908, Robert Z. Taylor and Quentin Rankin, attorneys for the land company, were taken from Ward's Hotel at Walnut Log by

the Night Riders. When they refused demands to reopen the lake to fishing, Rankin was killed, and Taylor escaped into the water of the lake, surviving to tell the story.

Captured by the state militia, eight men were tried in Union City, and six of them were sentenced to hang, but the Tennessee Supreme Court overturned the verdict on several technicalities. The lake was later ruled navigable and incapable of private ownership. Today it is a part of Tennessee's park system, and its fish, game, and the winter presence of American bald eagles attract many visitors.

Economic development in the twentieth century rested on manufacturing. In 1923 Brown Shoe Company joined the Canvas Duck Decoy Company and Child's Specialty House (children's clothing) as the major industries located in Union City. In 1934 Salant & Salant established shirt manufacturing in that city. In 1968 Goodyear Tire, employing 3,000 workers, came to Union City. The newest industry to locate in Obion County is Tyson Foods, which established a processing plant in 1996. In addition to rail service, Obion County is served by Everett-Stewart Airport, originally a World War II aviation training field.

Agriculture remains a key economic contributor. In 1986 the state designated twenty-seven Tennessee Century Farms in Obion County and these properties produced cotton, soybeans, livestock, honey, corn, and wheat.

Obion County's rich history has been carefully preserved. The first monument ever erected in memory of unknown Confederate dead was dedicated in Union City on October 21, 1869. Nearby is the Obion County Museum. On Highway 51 is Turner Kirkland's Dixie Gun Works, the world's largest supplier of antique guns and parts. The Obion County Courthouse, built by the Public Works Administration in 1939-40, and the Park's covered bridge near Trimble are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 1997 Main Street Union City sponsored a multiple property National Register nomination which listed over one hundred additional properties in Union City, including the Capitol Theater, Central School, and the Union City Armory.

The 2000 census lists the county's population at 32,450, representing a slight growth of 2.3 percent since 1990. Union City too experienced slow growth, reaching a population of 10,876. Despite its industrial growth, Obion County has retained its agricultural base and still ranks high in the production of corn, wheat, orchard products, soybeans, and swine.

Rebel C. Forrester, Union City

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

National Register of Historic Places Properties in Obion County:

1	Bransford, Thomas Leroy, House	815 N. Ury St.	Union City	1995-08-04	
2	Caldwell Lustron House	1020 E. Church St.	Union City	1999-06-25	Union City, Tennessee MPS
3	Capitol Theatre	118 S. First St.	Union City	1999-03-18	Union City, Tennessee MPS
4	Central Elementary School	512 East College St.	Union City	2001-02-16	Union City, Tennessee MPS
5	Confederate Monument	Summer and Edwards Sts.	Union City	1977-07-28	
6	Deering Building	106 1st St.	Union City	1983-11-25	
7	Dickey's Octagonal Barbershop	SW corner High and N. Church Sts.	Rives	1975-04-29	
8	East Main Street and Exchange Street Historic District	Roughly along Main, Exchange and Church Sts.	Union City	1999-11-22	Union City, Tennessee MPS
9	Houser House	2221 Old Troy Rd.	Union City	2002-07-17	
10	Morris, W. W., House	305 W. State Line Rd.	South Fulton	1983-01-27	
	Mt. Zion Colored Methodist Episcopal Church	105 N. Greenwood	Union City	2001-02-16	Union City, Tennessee MPS
12	Obion County Courthouse	Jct. of Third and Washington Sts.	Union City	1995-03-30	Historic County Courthouses of Tennessee MPS
	Railroad Park	100 Park St.	Union City	1999-05-05	Union City, Tennessee MPS
14	Union City Armory	415 W. Main St.	Union City	1999-03-18	Union City, Tennessee MPS
	Union City, Mobile and Ohio Railroad Depot	214 E. Church St.	Union City	1995-07-28	
16	US Post Office	114 W. Washington	Union City	1984-05-31	
	Washington Avenue and Florida Avenue Historic District	Located along Washington And Florida Aves., bet. 3rd and 5th Sts.	Union City	2001-09-01	

National Register Properties in riverbottom project area:

Dickey's Octagonal Barbershop, High and N. Church Streets, Rives

Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005:

Blakeley Chevrolet, 100 block Main Street, Hornbeak. Self-defined as Tennessee's oldest Chevrolet dealership

Cotton Gin, 200 block Main Street, Hornbeak. Defining element of historic cotton industry in this portion of the county.

Bill Nations Camp Motor Court, 200 block Reelfoot Ave, Samburg. A prototypical 1940-1950s motor court associated with the development of Reelfoot's tourist industry after the creation of the state park.

Bunch's Grocery/Samburg Motel, 100 block Reelfoot Ave., Samburg. One of the oldest commercial businesses in Samburg

SHELBY COUNTY

The Tennessee General Assembly established Shelby County on November 24, 1819, just a little over a year after the "Jackson Purchase" and Chickasaw treaty freed West Tennessee from Indian claims. The county is named after one of the successful treaty commissioners, Isaac Shelby, a Revolutionary War veteran and former governor of Kentucky. Although sparsely populated at the time, Shelby County began its existence as Tennessee's largest (784 square miles) in area and is now also the largest county in population (over 860,000 people).

From the beginning, Shelby County enjoyed a geographical advantage as a travel and trade center. The Chickasaws had already established trails from the fourth Chickasaw Bluff (future Memphis) to future northwest Alabama and northeast Mississippi (now U.S. Highways 72 and 78 respectively) in order to gain access to early Mississippi River trade. Originally these trails followed ridge lines between river basins in order to facilitate all-weather travel. Later they would become the basic routes for early railroads, which would make Shelby County and its principal city, Memphis, the economic center of the region.

The first meeting of the Shelby County Quarterly Court was held on May 1, 1820, and authorized \$125 for the construction of a log courthouse and jail along with a property tax of \$6.25 per 100 acres of land. It also authorized the conduct of a county survey which officially reported three years later that the county contained only 625 acres, because of a state boundary error by James Winchester which had sliced a strip four miles wide and approximately thirty miles long off the

bottom of Shelby County and recorded it as being in Mississippi. The error was not discovered until 1835, but is commemorated today by Winchester Road, which follows his state boundary survey line. Shelby County property in this strip is still neatly delineated by the Mississippi survey system of section and quarter sections while the northern 80% of the county uses the older Tennessee survey system of "metes and bounds."

In 1826 Memphis was incorporated as a town, but almost two years earlier, the county seat had been relocated to the village of Raleigh at Sanderlin's Bluff on the Wolf River, squarely in the center of the county. There it remained until after the Civil War, when in 1868 the clamor of lawyers and litigants brought it back to Memphis. Other early settlements include Big Creek (south of present Millington), which apparently was home to several families even before the Chickasaw treaty, and the log cabin which would expand into Davies Manor at Brunswick dates from 1807. Obviously, these early settlers had made their own arrangements with the Indians. Near Big Creek, further south towards Memphis, was the Egypt settlement, part of the exotic Egyptian-naming era which swept southern Illinois and West Tennessee from around 1818 to 1820.

Other areas of Shelby County were also receiving attention. In 1825 an idealistic young Scotswoman named Frances Wright acquired 2,000 acres of wilderness property about four miles upstream of Raleigh on the Wolf River. There in early 1826 she and her younger sister, Camilla, began a noble experiment. They established a plantation named Nashoba upon which black slaves could work and earn sufficient credit to purchase their freedom. The surplus funds would be used to buy more slaves and repeat the cycle. However, there were no profits, and in 1829 Wright ended the project but kept the property, eventually leaving it to a niece who only parted with the last remaining acreage in 1900. Today it comprises the southeast quadrant of the Shelby County Penal farm (Shelby Farms) and the western subdivision of Germantown located north of the Norfolk-Southern Railroad (earlier the Memphis and Charleston Railroad). Germantown now has a population of nearly 32,000.

During the nineteenth century, lasting towns were also established at Bartlett (currently Shelby County's second most populated, with more than 40,543 people); Collierville (31,877) grew 120 percent between 1990 and 2000; Millington (10,443); and Arlington (2,568), which had a rate of 66.7 percent growth over the last ten years. Several twentieth-century incorporations have been attempted, but only one, Lakeland, has survived. Census officials place Memphis's population at 650,100 in 2000.

Edward F. Williams III, Memphis

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

State Parks in Riverbottom project area:

MEEMAN-SHELBY FOREST STATE PARK

Containing 13,467 acres, Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park near Memphis is the most visited state park in Tennessee. Initially known as Shelby Forest State Park, it began as a New Deal recreation demonstration area of the National Park Service during the 1930s. Edward J. Meeman, avid conservationist and editor of the Memphis Press-Scimitar, had interviewed Adolph Hitler and was impressed with forest reclamation projects in Germany, finding similarities between the land there and eroded southern land. In a series of newspaper editorials and private conversations with public officials, Meeman insisted that forests in his region could be made to prosper once again. He worked with State Forester James O. Hazard to identify a potential park area in Shelby County, and in 1933 the National Park Service provided Shelby County money and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) labor for the park's initial development.

The National Park Service and the Resettlement Administration supervised the CCC crews and, later, Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers at the park. The Tennessee Game and Fish Commission supervised wildlife control projects. Land clearing came in 1935, and officials focused on establishing a wildlife reserve, replanting the forests, reclaiming eroded land, and building recreational facilities. The CCC planted trees, built trails and a group camp area, and dammed a lake. The WPA built cabins and various recreational structures; the largest was the Administration Building, which housed an auditorium, recreation hall, and cafeteria. By 1941 the park had picnic areas, playgrounds, a group camp, the Administration Building, cabins, trails, and a swimming area; officials announced that more facilities, including a lake, swimming pool, and horse barn, would soon be under construction. World War II intervened, however, and the new facilities were not built. In 1944 the National Park Service transferred the park to the state. Five years later, under state supervision, park development began again.

Over half of Meeman-Shelby Forest is a wildlife management area supervised by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency under an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation. Within the park, many species of birds, including the rare Mississippi Kite, may be seen; wild mammals include white-tailed deer, foxes, and raccoons. Reclamation efforts also have been very successful. As early as 1962, state conservation officials were bragging of the park's success in regenerating valuable stands of southern hardwoods. State Naturalist Mack Prichard observes that the park is "one of the prime examples of hardwood forest regeneration. Some of the trees there gain up to an inch in diameter a year. It's one of the fastest-growing forests we have."

(1)

Carroll Van West, Middle Tennessee State University

(1) James and Dorothy Richardson, "Meeman-Shelby: One of Our Most-Loved State Parks," *Tennessee Conservationist* (May/June 1994): 4.

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

T. O. FULLER STATE PARK

Located southwest of downtown Memphis off Tennessee Highway 61, T. O. Fuller State Park, established in 1933, is the nation's second oldest state park created for use by African Americans. The park currently contains 1,138 acres and includes Chucalissa Indian Village, a reconstructed Native American village and museum that interprets regional archaeology. Shelby County purchased the land from the Dover Barrett estate and called the original park the "Shelby City Negro State Park." In 1949 the county deeded the land to the state for one dollar.

The site's location was influenced more by the designation of the facility for African Americans than the aesthetic appeal of the landscape, and in April 1939 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Company 1464 arrived and began park development. The group, which had just finished a project at Chickamauga National Military Park near Chattanooga, had been reduced in size to 44 men, but rapidly expanded to as many as 175 members with the hiring of local workers. Allegedly, the park encompassed one of the state's most significant historical places--the legendary site where the Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto first viewed the Mississippi River. In addition, the CCC uncovered a Native American village and burial mound dating to the Mississippian period while conducting routine excavation for a swimming area.

Following discovery of the Native American site, construction ceased while archaeologists, under the supervision of the University of Tennessee, investigated the site. Once archaeologists stabilized the area, the CCC participated in the excavation of what became known as the "Fuller Mounds" project. This work continued until the advent of World War II; major excavation activities resumed in 1952. The state reclassified the Fuller Mounds area as an unsegregated park and renamed it Chucalissa Archaeological State Park. In 1962 the state transferred approximately 187 acres, including the excavated site, to the Tennessee State Board of Education for research purposes. The University of Memphis administers the archaeological property today.

By 1943 T. O. Fuller Park contained very few recreational facilities. Early development of the park instead centered around excavation of the Chucalissa site. Limited state and federal funding prevented the hiring of additional labor, and diminishing CCC participation crippled further development. During the

1950s the park acquired cabins, a lodge, bathhouse, swimming pool, athletic fields, a concession building, hiking trails, and picnic areas. In 1956 the City of Memphis funded construction of a segregated golf course for African Americans. Today this park retains a rich and fascinating history as one of Tennessee's most intriguing state parks, offering a wealth of information on Native American and African American history.

Ruth D. Nichols, Nashville

Taken from the Online Edition of the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture (Tennessee Historical Society and University of Tennessee Press, 2005, <http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net>)

Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005 (partial):

Note that this fieldwork concentrated in the northern bluffs area, from the county line to Meeman-Shelby and then down Benjestown Road to its end north of Memphis. Another day of fieldwork is scheduled for the winter where the rest of the riverbottom area to T.O. Fuller State Park will be surveyed.

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Rankin Ranch Road. This brick gable-front church built in 1956 appears to meet the criteria for listing in the National Register under the Rural African American Churches in Tennessee Multiple Property Nomination. Congregation was established in 1875.

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church. 1745 St. Paul Road. This historic church was founded in 1881. with the present building rebuilt in 1953 and a new portico added in 2002. The cemetery across the road is quite old, with the earliest stone visible dating to 1907.

Embury United Methodist Church. Locke-Cuba Road. Older white Methodist congregation, established 1854. Cemetery is quite old, with oldest visible marker dated 1881.

Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park. See description and history above.

Benjestown Road (south of Meeman-Shelby). Has an interesting collection of historic African American church congregations that mark along with river bluff road the large number of African Americans who resided in the region. These churches include:

New Birth Church of God in Christ (1960s), 6424 Benjestown Road

Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church (1924, 1995), 4813 Benjestown Road.

Christ Tabernacle AME at St. Paul Church (1983)

TIPTON COUNTY

The area forming West Tennessee was part of the Chickasaw Nation until 1818, when the territory was opened for settlement under the terms of the Jackson Purchase. An 1819 act by the general assembly divided the new territory into five districts. The first county in the Western District was Shelby, which was organized at the village of Chickasaw Bluff in 1819. Tipton County was formed from Shelby County in 1823 and named for Captain Jacob Tipton who was killed leading his men in a battle near Fort Wayne in 1791. Tipton's son, Armistead Blevins, who supervised the organization of Shelby County, was present when Tipton County was formed. Covington, situated near the center of the county, was established as the county seat in 1826. Its name honored Leonard Wales Covington, a Maryland native who was killed in the battle of Chrysler's Field in 1813.

In 1833 the Tennessee Gazetteer described Covington as a post town and seat of justice thirty-eight miles from Memphis. Covington was originally divided into 106 lots on seven streets. Most construction was of frame and log, with the exception of a brick jail. In addition to the courthouse and jail, Covington had seven stores, two taverns, a surveyor's office, three or four physicians' offices, a similar number of lawyers' offices, and thirty or forty houses. Located on a tributary of the Hatchie River, Covington remained isolated from the steamboat trade of the nineteenth century and did not achieve commercial significance until the arrival of the Newport News and Mississippi Valley Railroad in 1873. Between 1873 and 1880, over 6,000 new residents arrived in Covington to take advantage of the commercial and industrial opportunities created by the arrival of the railroad. Economic expansion rose even faster after the takeover of the railroad by the Illinois Central in the 1890s. The town received its first telephone service and electric street lights in 1894. By 1920 Covington had a population of over 3,400 and boasted a weekly newspaper; three banks; an electric light plant; a water works; and a cotton mill, a cottonseed oil mill, and other manufacturing enterprises. Today, the downtown historic district contains an array of architecturally significant commercial and residential buildings.

Mason, thirteen miles south of Covington, was founded in 1858 and named for James Mason. In 1855 Mason became the first town in Tipton County to acquire rail services when the Memphis and Ohio Railroad established Sharon Depot, later known as Mason Depot. By 1859 the town contained four businesses, and the following year Mason hosted a campaign speech by Stephen Douglas. The town received a visit from Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States, who attended services at the Trinity Episcopal Church. Mason was also the site

where a regiment of West Tennessee African American soldiers were mustered into the Union army. By 1887 Mason, with 400 inhabitants, was the second largest town in the county.

Randolph was founded in 1823 and named for John Randolph of Virginia. Randolph undoubtedly occupied the best potential site available for water-borne commerce and provided an excellent harbor for steam and flatboats at all stages of the river. Until 1840 Randolph shipped more cotton than Memphis, as many as thirty-five to forty thousand bales annually, and became the great steamboat depot of West Tennessee. By 1834 it had its first newspaper and a population of 1,000. It had four hotels, several schools, nearly fifty businesses, and a dozen saloons.

Many factors led to the demise of Randolph. Five years after its founding, the land title was discovered to be faulty. Mrs. Ann Grambelling of New York filed suit to claim the whole town on the grounds that she had acquired a military land grant warrant that included the tract. Her case stood up in court and is of unusual interest because the warrant belonged to an African American soldier who served in the Revolutionary War. Randolph's citizens negotiated a compromise settlement and bought their town for eight thousand dollars. More important problems that affected the town's future were Randolph's failure to secure a railroad; financial depression; an unfavorable mail route; the continuation of the county seat at Covington despite an 1852 effort to have it moved to Randolph; and the failure to secure a proposed canal connecting the Tennessee and Hatchie rivers. The final blows came in 1862 and 1865 when federal troops twice burned the town.

In 2000 the population of Tipton County stood at 51,271, an increase of more than a third in just a decade. The county supports a one-hundred-bed hospital and city and county school systems. The Covington Airport has five thousand feet of runway. Although agriculture continues to account for a significant portion of the Tipton County economy, many county residents work at one of several industrial enterprises. World Color, which prints catalogs and magazines, employs 875 workers; Charms Company has 300 employees, the same number of workers employed by Mueller Fittings; the 250 employees of Delfield Company make food service equipment; and the diet foods company Slim Fast employs 250 workers as well. In addition to these large employers, several smaller manufacturers produce everything from wiring harness to business forms.

Prepared by encyclopedia staff from material supplied by Angela Wallace Finley, Covington-Tipton County Tourism Bureau

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National Register of Historic Places properties in Tipton County:

1	Canaan Baptist Church	211 N. Main St.	Covington	1999-11-30	Rural African-American Churches in Tennessee MPS
2	Charleston United Methodist Church and Cemetery	Covington-Stanton Rd.	Charleston	2002-07-17	
3	Coca-Cola Bottling Plant	126 US 51, S	Covington	1997-02-07	
4	Hotel Lindo	116 W. Liberty St.	Covington	1982-12-27	
5	Mt. Carmel Presbyterian Church	Mt. Carmel Rd.	Covington	1984-07-12	
6	Rhodes House	SE of Brighton on Clopton-Gainsville Rd.	Brighton	1980-04-30	
7	Ruffin Theater	113 W. Pleasant Ave.	Covington	1992-03-26	
8	South College Street Historic District	600, 700, and 800 Blocks of S. College St.	Covington	1997-02-07	
9	South Main Street Historic District	Roughly bounded by S. Main St., Sherrod Ave., S. Maple St. and Sanford and Lauderdale Aves.	Covington	1992-05-29	
10	St. Matthew's Episcopal Church	Munford St.	Covington	1977-08-16	
	Trinity Church	Main St.	Mason	1984-03-15	
12	Trinity Episcopal Church, Old	Charleston Rd., 4 mi. NE of Mason	Mason	1997-05-21	

National Register Properties in the Riverbottom Project Area: None

Potential Heritage Sites Identified in the Riverbottom Area during Fieldwork of December 2005:

Jamestown community, northwest of Giltedge. This historic African American community dates itself to 1821. It is one of the oldest and most significant black rural enclaves along the river. Significant properties include: Dickens Community Cemetery; Carey Chapel AME Church (remodeled 1998), Bright Hill Missionary Baptist Church (1905, 1922, 1952); and United Baptist Church (c. 1920, might be a former school) on Jamestown Road. The cemetery, Bright Hill Missionary Baptist Church, and United Baptist Church are all probably eligible for

the National Register. A local group is now planning a museum to be housed in either one of two historic concrete block stores along Jamestown Road.

Randolph United Methodist Church (1953, 1975), Randolph. The church has a historical marker telling its story and a hillside cross provides a good view of the river. You can access the old river port by a dirt road access provided by a local tavern located on the river.

Fort Wright (1861-1862). The remnants of one of the most important Confederate river forts are located in Randolph. The property owner does not allow access to the fort site. There is no historical marker for the fort.

Needham Road between Randolph and Richardson's Landing has several excellent views of the river.

St. Paul Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, School, and Cemetery, Drummonds Road, St. Paul. Located south of Randolph, this historic African American community is centered around the church and cemetery. The school has been bricked over, probably in 1981, but it remains immediately adjacent to the church, documenting the powerful story of church sponsorship for public education in the early 20th century South. The oldest marker at the Cemetery appears to be 1911, but there are many depressions with no markers. Buried in the cemetery is USCT veteran Sampson Prayer of Co. M of the 7th US Colored Heavy Artillery.

Drummonds, Drummonds Road. This is a historic white cemetery that has experienced a significant degree of recent suburban growth. The town's old cotton gin is of note and is the large city cemetery, which contains burials dating to the 1850s, including those of several Confederate veterans. The cemetery is a good marker for 19th century settlement patterns.

Poplar Grove United Methodist Church. Quito-Drummonds Road and Dilliard Road, Drummonds. Established in 1840, this congregation is one of the historic white congregations of the era and they maintain a turn of the century frame Gothic style church.

Dixonville is a historic rural African-American enclave. It has two historic church buildings located adjacent to each other at the crossroads of Quito-Drummonds Road. Both are small gable-front frame buildings: Mt. Herman AME Church and Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church (1948).

Pouncey's Store. Quito. An excellent example of a mid-20th century brick country store. It now appears closed for business.