1. NAME AND LOCATION OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: Patsy Cline House

Other Name/Site Number: Patsy Cline Historic House

Street and Number (if applicable)**:** 608 South Kent Street

City/Town: Winchester **County:** Winchester **State:** Virginia

2. SIGNIFICANCE DATA

NHL Criteria: 1 and 2

NHL Criteria Exceptions: n/a

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values
2. Visual and Performing Arts

Period(s) of Significance: 1948–1957

Significant Person(s) (only Criterion 2)**:** Patsy Cline (Virginia Patterson Hensley)

Cultural Affiliation (only Criterion 6)**:** n/a

Designer/Creator/Architect/Builder: unknown

Historic Contexts: Women's History Initiative
XXII. Music
D. Popular
K. Performers (Soloists and Ensembles)
O. Recording

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement. We are collecting this information under the authority of the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (16 U.S.C. 461-467) and 36 CFR part 65. Your response is required to obtain or retain a benefit. We will use the information you provide to evaluate properties nominated as National Historic Landmarks. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has approved this collection of information and assigned Control No. 1024-0276.

Estimated Burden Statement. Public reporting burden is 2 hours for an initial inquiry letter and 344 hours for NPS Form 10-934 (per response), including the time it takes to read, gather and maintain data, review instructions and complete the letter/form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate, or any aspects of this form, to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Mail Stop 242, Reston, VA 20192. Please do not send your form to this address.

3. WITHHOLDING SENSITIVE INFORMATION

Does this nomination contain sensitive information that should be withheld under Section 304 of the National Historic Preservation Act?

__ Yes

X No

4. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

1. Acreage of Property: 0.17 acres

2. Use either Latitude/Longitude Coordinates or the UTM system:

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)**:**
Datum if other than WGS84:

	Latitude:	**Longitude:**
A.	39.178015	-78.164674
B.	39.177878	-78.164076
C.	39.177775	-78.164114
D.	39.177909	-78.164715

OR

UTM References:

Zone	**Easting**	**Northing**

3. Verbal Boundary Description:

The nominated property is Tax Parcel #213-01-M-17, located on the east side of South Kent Street in the City of Winchester, Virginia.

4. Boundary Justification:

The boundary of the nominated property includes the house and property that was occupied by Patsy Cline during the period of significance and which maintains historic integrity.

5. SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT AND DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Patsy Cline House is nominated under NHL Criteria 1 and 2 for its association with nationally recognized country music singer Patsy Cline (1932–1963, born Virginia Patterson Hensley). Cline played a significant role in the evolution and popularization of country music as a co-creator of the Nashville Sound, which mingled traditional country music with the instrumentation and style of popular music and set the tone of country music for decades to come. Cline began her career in the late 1940s performing in the urban honky-tonks that proliferated after World War II and had her first hit single in 1957 following a performance on national television. In her music and in her public image, she negotiated the shifting musical and cultural boundaries between country and popular music, culminating in a string of hit records on both the country and popular music charts in the early 1960s, including "I Fall to Pieces" (1961) and "Crazy" (1961). Cline's success not only demonstrated the commercial viability of the Nashville Sound but also showed the country music industry that female performers could achieve the same level of success as male performers. Her musical talent and down-to-earth, assertive, and independent personality inspired and influenced other female performers, paving the way for country music stars such as Loretta Lynn, Dolly Parton, Barbara Mandrell, and Tammy Wynette.

Located in a historically working-class neighborhood in Winchester, Virginia, the Patsy Cline House at 608 South Kent Street is the property most strongly associated with Patsy Cline. She lived there longer than in any other place, and it was her home when she started singing professionally, signed her first recording contract, and made a name for herself in regional country music circles. The period of significance begins in 1948, when she and her family moved into the house. Although she moved to nearby Maryland after marrying Gerald Cline in 1953, she returned to 608 South Kent Street during the couple's frequent and extended separations. The period of significance ends in 1957, the last year Patsy Cline lived there and the year that her mother, Hilda Hensley, moved out of the house. In 1959, Cline settled in Nashville, Tennessee, where she lived in three different houses before her death in an airplane crash in 1963.

PROVIDE RELEVANT PROPERTY-SPECIFIC HISTORY, HISTORICAL CONTEXT, AND THEMES. JUSTIFY CRITERIA, EXCEPTIONS, AND PERIODS OF SIGNIFICANCE LISTED IN SECTION 2.

Biographical Information

On September 8, 1932, Virginia Patterson Hensley, later known as Patsy Cline, was born in Winchester, a city of about 11,000 in northwest Virginia. Her parents, who married less than a month before her birth, were part of the Southern working class. Her father, Sam Hensley (1889–1956), came from a landed family, but his father lost or sold most of the family land during the 1920s and 1930s, forcing him to seek wage jobs. Virginia Hensley's mother, Hilda Patterson (1916–1998), married Sam Hensley when she was sixteen years old and living on a small farm with her mother, siblings, and stepfather, who took day jobs to supplement the farm's meager income.[1]

[1] Margaret Jones, *Patsy: The Life and Times of Patsy Cline* (New York: HarperCollins, 1994), 1–6; Ellis Nassour, *Honky Tonk Angel: The Intimate Story of Patsy Cline* (New York: St. Martin's, 1993), 7; Douglas Gomery, *Patsy Cline: The Making of an Icon* ([Bloomington, Ind.]: Trafford, 2011), 39–40.

Like many working-class Southerners during the Great Depression of the 1930s and during World War II (1941–1945), the Hensley family moved frequently in search of employment. During Virginia's childhood, her father held jobs in factories, quarries, a shipyard, and on farms, sometimes leaving the family for extended periods of time to work. The family moved nineteen times before settling in Winchester in 1948. They rented the house at 608 South Kent Street, which stood in a white working-class neighborhood on the east side of town, near the railroad tracks. Not long after the move to Winchester, Sam and Hilda Hensley separated; Virginia, as well as her younger sister and brother, remained at 608 South Kent Street with their mother. To make ends meet, Hilda Hensley took in work as a seamstress and the family began sharing the house with two other families to reduce housing expenses. Within a year of moving to Winchester, Virginia dropped out of high school at age sixteen to help support her mother and younger siblings. After brief stints at a poultry factory and the Greyhound bus station, she took a job as a waitress at Gaunt's drug store in downtown Winchester (Figure 1).[2]

While working at Gaunt's in the late 1940s, Virginia Hensley pursued her dream of becoming a singer. She competed in talent shows, sang country and popular (pop) music with local bands in dance halls, bars, nightclubs, and country clubs, and performed on the hillbilly music hour at radio station WINC in Winchester with singer and disc jockey and musician Joltin' Jim McCoy. In 1949, when she was sixteen years old, she persuaded nationally known gospel singer Wally Fowler to allow her to perform on stage with him and his Oak Ridge Quartet during their show at the Palace Theater in Winchester. Impressed by her performance, Fowler arranged for her to audition for radio station WSM's *Grand Ole Opry* in Nashville, Tennessee. Broadcast throughout the southeastern United States from Ryman Auditorium (NHL, 2001), the *Grand Ole Opry* was the preeminent country music radio show at the time. Virginia Hensley and her mother traveled to Nashville for the audition, only to find that the head of the Artists Service Bureau at the *Opry*, Jim Denny, was reluctant even to audition her, much less hire her, because she was under the age of eighteen. Though her audition failed to win over Denny, it impressed *Opry* star and music publisher Roy Acuff, who offered her the chance to sing on his radio show the next day. However, Virginia and Hilda Hensley had to return to Winchester that day, and they did not have enough money for a hotel and alternate transportation home.[3]

Although her first attempt to get on the *Grand Ole Opry* ended in disappointment, Virginia continued to perform in local and regional circles. In 1952, she secured a regular gig with Bill Peer and the Melody Playboys, a honky-tonk band that played small and mid-sized venues in northern Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. For performances, she donned Western-style cowgirl outfits sewn by her mother, emulating the cowgirl image of singers Patsy Montana and Rose Maddox. The work with Peer's band was steady and profitable enough that she was able to quit her job at Gaunt's Drug Store to focus on her musical career. Seeing potential in the young singer, Peer took on the role of her manager, and at his suggestion, she began using the name, "Patsy."[4]

In 1953, to the surprise of many, she married Gerald Cline, whom she met at the Moose Lodge in Brunswick, Maryland, a regular stop on Bill Peer's performance circuit. Following her marriage, she moved to Frederick,

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[2] Jones, *Patsy*, 18–20; Warren R. Hofstra and Mike Foreman, "Legacy and Legend: The Cultural World of Patsy Cline's Winchester," in Warren R. Hofstra, ed., *Sweet Dreams: The World of Patsy Cline* (Urbana: University of Illinois, 2013), 18–19; *Miller's Winchester, Va. City Directory* (Asheville, NC: Southern Directory Company), vol. 11 (1949–1950), vol. 12 (1951–1952). The 1949–1950 directory includes Samuel Hensley among the residents of 608 South Kent Street, but biographies of Patsy Cline state that Sam Hensley left the family within a few months of their move to Winchester in the fall of 1948; it seems likely that the information for the 1948–1949 city directory was collected early in 1948 before Sam Hensley's departure. Several of the city directories erroneously indicate that the Hensleys owned the building in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

[3] Jones, *Patsy*, 20–36; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 87.

[4] Jones, *Patsy*, 37–41; Joli Jensen, *The Nashville Sound: Authenticity, Commercialization, and Country Music* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1998), 95.

Maryland, where Gerald worked for his family's construction business. She continued to perform in and around Washington, DC, which was only about forty-five miles from Frederick, and began using Patsy Cline as her stage name.[5]

At a summer music festival in 1954, Patsy Cline caught the attention of Washington, D.C., country music mogul Connie B. Gay, who began booking her for live performances and appearances on his local radio station.[6] The publicity and connections she gained through her work for Gay helped Cline secure a recording contract with Four Star Records in September. Owned by Bill McCall, Four Star Records was one of many small, independent record companies signing country musicians in the mid-1950s. Like most recording contracts for aspiring singers, Cline's was designed to maximize the record company's profits. As a result, Cline received only about 2 percent of the royalties, and the contract limited her to songs in the Four Star Records catalog, ensuring that McCall would get publishing royalties on any song she recorded.[7] Although small companies such as Four Star licensed songs and scouted musicians, they leased recording, pressing, and distribution rights to larger record companies such as Decca, RCA, or Columbia Records. In June 1955, Cline traveled to Nashville for her first recording session with Owen Bradley, the Decca Records producer of successful records for country stars such as Ernest Tubbs and Kitty Wells. Decca released four Patsy Cline singles by the end of 1956, but none achieved commercial success. In between recording sessions, she continued to perform with Bill Peer and as a solo act in the Washington, DC, area.[8]

Less than a year after signing her record contract, Patsy Cline increased her regional fame as a country music singer through appearances on television shows produced by Connie B. Gay.[9] She began as a guest performer on Gay's *Town and Country Time* with Jimmy Dean and the Texas Wildcats, a country music variety show broadcast every weeknight on WMAL starting in January 1955. When Gay added a three-hour weekly show, *Town and Country Jamboree*, in the fall of 1955, Cline was one of three female cast members. Gay also booked Cline and his other stars for appearances on nationally broadcast radio and television shows in order to promote his *Town and Country* programs.[10]

Her experience in front of the television cameras paid off in January 1957, when Cline broke onto the national music scene following her performance on CBS television's *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Show*, which showcased up-and-coming performers from around the country. She sang "Walkin' After Midnight," a song that she recorded in November 1956. The studio audience loved the song and Cline won the show, gaining her national exposure and appearances on Godfrey's weekday television show. Decca released "Walkin' After Midnight" as a single in February, and it quickly reached #12 on *Billboard* magazine's popular music chart and #2 on the country and western chart. Cline received few royalties from the record sales, but its success led to more television appearances and live performances that generated income.[11] With the money she earned, Cline helped

[5] Jones, *Patsy*, 40, 43–45; Nassour, *Honky Tonk Angel*, 21–25.

[6] Jones, *Patsy*, 61–67; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 106.

[7] Jones, *Patsy*, 52–60; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 95; Kristine M. McCusker, "Cultural Scripts and Patsy Cline's Career in the 1950s," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 100; Paul Kingsbury, "Unvanquished: The Immortal Voice of Patsy Cline," in *Patsy Cline: Crazy for Loving You* (Nashville: Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, 2012), 40.

[8] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 77–78, 95; Jones, *Patsy*, 86–88, 93–94, 109–10, 118; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 116–27. Cline stopped performing with Peer in September 1955.

[9] Jones, *Patsy*, 95–98, 105–8; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 127–41.

[10] Jones, *Patsy*, 67–69, 95–98; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 127, 135–37; Douglas Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 114–16.

[11] Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," 116–21; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 131, 143, 151–56, 158–60; Jones, *Patsy*, 59, 118–20, 124–25, 128–35, 139–48.

her mother purchase the house at 608 South Kent Street as well as a larger house down the street. In the summer of 1957, Hilda Hensley moved into the new house and leased 608 South Kent Street to tenants.[12]

The year 1957 was an eventful one for Patsy Cline personally as well as professionally. In March, she and Gerald Cline divorced. Biographers generally agree that she likely married Gerald Cline for financial support and respectability more than for love. The couple had separated in 1956, and for at least part of the time after the separation, Patsy returned to 608 South Kent Street to live with her mother and brother.[13] In September, she married Charlie Dick, a working-class Winchester native whom she met in the spring of 1956.[14]

Between 1957 and 1960, Cline's career stalled. With the cancellation of *Town and Country Jamboree* in the spring of 1957, she lost an important source of steady income and publicity. In late 1957, she moved to Fayetteville, North Carolina, since her new husband was in the army and stationed at Fort Bragg. The move distanced her from her fan base and professional connections in and around Washington, DC. She continued performing and recording, but the popularity of "Walkin' After Midnight" waned in late 1957, and none of the singles released over the next three years became hits.[15] After Charlie Dick was discharged from the army in early 1959, they returned to Winchester. In September, they moved to Nashville, Tennessee, which had emerged as the undisputed center of the country music industry.[16]

The move to Nashville revived Cline's singing career. Almost immediately, she began appearing regularly on the *Grand Old Opry* as a guest artist. In January 1960, she achieved her goal of becoming a member of the *Opry*, which meant not only a steady paycheck but also regular performances arranged by *Opry* management. In addition, she did several films for the US Army.[17] In September, her recording contract with Four Star Records expired and she signed directly with Decca Records, a move that enabled her to continue working with Owen Bradley but gave her access to a much larger catalog of songs.[18] At her first Decca session in November 1960, she recorded "I Fall to Pieces," written by Hank Cochran and Harlan Howard. Released in January 1961, eight days after Cline had her second child, the song steadily gained in popularity. "I Fall to Pieces" entered the country charts in April and the pop charts in May, peaking at #1 on the country charts and #12 on the pop charts.[19]

In June, as "I Fall to Pieces" was climbing the charts, Patsy Cline was in a serious automobile accident that kept her in the hospital for weeks.[20] She returned to performing in the following month and was back in the recording studios in August, when she recorded "Crazy" by Willie Nelson. Released in October, "Crazy" was another country-pop crossover hit. With back-to-back hit records on both the pop and country charts and membership in the *Opry*, Cline was generally regarded as a well-established and commercially successful singer by the end of 1961.[21] Between August 1961 and Cline's death in March 1963, Decca released two Patsy Cline albums—*Patsy Cline Showcase* (1961) and *Sentimentally Yours* (1962)—and six singles, all of which appeared in *Billboard's* Top 100 on either the country or pop charts (or both). In both 1961 and 1962, country music disc

[12] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 162. The new house was located at 720 South Kent Street. In 1961, Hilda Hensley sold that house and purchased 605 South Kent Street (Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 187).

[13] Jones, *Patsy*, 98, 103, 113–14; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 104–05, 121; *Miller's Winchester, Va. City Directory* (Asheville, NC: Southern Directory Company), vol. 15 (1957–1958).

[14] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 164–66; Jones, *Patsy*, 111–14, 149–50, 157–58.

[15] Jones, *Patsy*, 149–50, 168–71; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 166–76; Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," 116.

[16] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 176–80; Jones, *Patsy*, 172, 177.

[17] Jones, *Patsy*, 177–84, 188; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 184–86.

[18] Jones, *Patsy*, 187–88, 192–93.

[19] Jones, *Patsy*, 200–09; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 186–87.

[20] Jones, *Patsy*, 213–18; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 190–92.

[21] Jones, *Patsy*, 218–22, 225–28; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 199, 202–3.

jockeys polled by *Billboard* magazine voted her "Favorite Female Vocalist," and she won awards from other trade magazines such as *Cash Box* and *Music Vendor*.[22] In addition to regular performances at the *Opry*, Cline performed at Carnegie Hall in New York, at the Hollywood Bowl, at the Mint Casino in Las Vegas, on the television show *American Bandstand* with Dick Clark, and in numerous other venues, both small and large.[23] As her income increased from royalties and performances, Cline purchased what she called her dream home, a brick ranch house just outside of Nashville, in the summer of 1962.[24]

On March 2, 1963, Cline's manager, Randy Hughes, flew her and fellow *Opry* members Lloyd "Cowboy" Copas and Harold "Hawkshaw" Hawkins to Kansas City to perform in a benefit concert for the family of country music disc jockey Jack Wesley "Cactus Jack" McCall, who had been killed in an automobile accident. In the afternoon of March 5, Cline, Copas, and Hawkins left Kansas City in a Piper Comanche piloted by Hughes. The weather worsened as they flew east, but nonetheless they took off after stopping for fuel in Dyersburg, Tennessee. Between six and seven in the evening, the plane crashed near Camden, Tennessee, killing everyone on board. The deaths of Cline, Hughes, Copas, and Hawkins provoked an outpouring of public grief, especially among country music fans. When Cline was buried in Shenandoah Memorial Park in Winchester on March 10, thousands of mourners came to pay their respects.[25]

Decca Records released the remaining Patsy Cline recordings in the five years after her death. The first two posthumous singles—"Sweet Dreams (of You)" and "Faded Love"—reached the top ten in the *Billboard* country charts and the top 100 in the pop music charts. Her posthumous album, *The Patsy Cline Story* (1963), peaked at number nine on the country charts. Thanks to the success of "Crazy" and the posthumous releases, country music disc jockeys voted her "Favorite Female Country Artist" for 1963.[26] Ten years later, she became the first solo female singer inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame.[27]

Patsy Cline[28] and the Development of Country Music, 1948–1963

Patsy Cline's singing career spanned a period of consolidation and transformation in country music as a musical genre and a business. Her career illustrates many of the musical, economic, and cultural trends that affected post-World War II country music, notably the development of a country music industry centered in Nashville, the shift in emphasis from radio to recording, the emergence of honky-tonk and the Nashville Sound as subgenres, and the tension between expanding the country music audience and preserving its traditions.[29]

Hillbilly Music, Singing Cowboys, and Barn Dance Radio: Country Music's Commercial Roots, 1920–1945

As a commercial musical genre, country music has roots in the 1920s in recordings and radio broadcasts of what was then called "hillbilly" or "old-time" music. These loosely defined categories encompassed traditional folk songs, gospel tunes, and newer compositions in similar styles. Fiddles and banjos figured prominently, with

[22] Jones, *Patsy*, 228–29, 269, 314–23, 325, 327; Nassour, *Hony Tonk Angel*, 170, 206.
[23] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 215–26, 228–29, 231–38; Jones, *Patsy*, 229–32, 262–64, 266–68, 270–74.
[24] Jones, *Patsy*, 260–61; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 226.
[25] Nassour, *Honky Tonk Angel*, 218–44; Jones, *Patsy*, 283–95; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 275–80.
[26] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 284, 286–93; Nassour, *Honky Tonk Angel*, 246; Jones, *Patsy*, 325–27.
[27] Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, "Patsy Cline," Country Music Hall of Fame Inductees, https://countrymusichalloffame.org/Inductees/InducteeDetail/patsy-cline, accessed October 19, 2018. Sara and Maybelle Carter were inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame three years before Cline as members of the Carter Family.
[28] For clarity and consistency, the remainder of the nomination will refer to the singer as Patsy Cline, even when discussing the era before she began using that name.
[29] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 89–117.

guitars, autoharps, and harmonicas present as well. Some singers performed with nasal twangs and yodels, while others had melodious voices.[30] In the early days of radio, stations in the South and Midwest broadcast local musicians performing old-time music, but the music received nearly nationwide exposure on vaudeville-style variety shows known as radio barn dances. By the 1930s, the *National Barn Dance* from WLS in Chicago and the *Grand Ole Opry* from WSM in Nashville could be heard throughout much of the United States, and smaller radio stations launched barn dances for local and regional audiences.[31] Cowboy songs and Western music were radio favorites in the 1930s as well, with artists such as Gene Autry, the Sons of the Pioneers, Patsy Montana and the Prairie Ramblers, and Tex Ritter performing on barn dances and in live broadcasts.[32] These radio broadcasts influenced the musical style and ambitions of young Patsy Cline, who listened to barn dances and "hillbilly" music on the radio growing up in the 1930s and early 1940s.[33]

Starting in the 1920s, some in the music recording industry saw hillbilly and Western music as a potential market that would help compensate for declining sales as a result of competition with radio. In the 1920s and early 1930s, a few labels, notably Okeh and Victor, recorded radio favorites such as Fiddlin' John Carson out of WSB in Atlanta and sent talent scouts to the southern states. Among the musicians that Ralph Peer of Victor recorded during field sessions in Bristol, Tennessee, in 1927, were the Carter Family and Jimmie Rodgers, both of whom not only sold thousands of records but also became influential figures in the history of country music.[34] In Western music, "singing cowboys" were popular throughout the nation but especially in the West and Southwest.[35] Even though the economic depression of the 1930s and rationing during World War II hindered sales, the popularity of Western and hillbilly records demonstrated a widespread demand for what would become known as country music.[36]

The appeal of country music before and during World War II rested in part on a sense of nostalgia during an era of rapid cultural and economic change. For many in rural areas in the 1920s, hillbilly music and cowboy songs represented antidotes to the jazz age and the growing influence of urban culture by evoking seemingly fading ideals of family, faith, and independence. During the Great Depression and World War II, thousands of farm families migrated from the southern countryside to towns and cities in search of work. Virginia Hensley's childhood, spent moving among farms, towns, and cities before ultimately settling in a working-class neighborhood in a small city, was typical of this period. The romanticized version of rural life expressed in hillbilly music, cowboy songs, and barn dance radio appealed to whites who felt dislocated as a result of these migrations.[37]

Rural and Western imagery permeated the performance and marketing of country music. The very names of radio barn dances, as well as the hay bales and wagons that adorned the sets, associated the programs and the music with rural life. In between musical acts, these shows included comedy sketches featuring characters based on rural stereotypes. For performances and publicity photos, musicians typically wore old-fashioned dresses,

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[30] Bill C. Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 2nd rev. ed (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 43–51.

[31] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 32–34, 95–98; Diane Pecknold, *The Selling Sound: The Rise of the Country Music Industry* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), 15–16.

[32] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 142–52; Mary A. Bufwack and Robert K. Oermann, *Finding Her Voice: Women in Country Music, 1800–2000* (Nashville: Country Music Foundation Press & Vanderbilt University Press, 2003), 71–78, 80–82.

[33] Jones, *Patsy*, 16–17; Bill C. Malone, "Patsy Cline and the Transformation of the Working-Class South," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 20.

[34] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 34–39, 64–68, 77–91; Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 43–50.

[35] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 139–52; Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 71–78, 80–82, 110–11, 126–27.

[36] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 94–95, 180–81.

[37] Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 20–23, 45; Malone, "Patsy Cline," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 17–20; Jeffrey J. Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly: Country Music's Struggle for Respectability, 1939–1954* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2004), 67–68, 156–57.

work clothes, or costumes with Western details and motifs. In addition, they adopted a casual performance style that encouraged listeners to view performers as ordinary people not so different from the fans themselves. The connections to traditional folk music, casual performance styles, and rural sentimentality that became associated with country music in the 1920s, 1930s, and early 1940s represented the foundations of country music's developing identity as a musical genre.[38]

Honky Tonks and Television: Patsy Cline and Post-World War II Country Music, 1945–1957

During World War II, internal migration, interactions between soldiers, and nationwide broadcasts of the *Grand Ole Opry* introduced country music to a national audience and produced a surge in popularity after war's end.[39] In the late 1940s and early 1950s, Patsy Cline rode the wave of country music's postwar popularity, leading to her first hit single, "Walkin' After Midnight," in 1957. Her path towards success took her through live radio, the vibrant country music scene of Washington, DC, the working-class honky-tonks that shaped the sound and image of the music, and the new medium of television.[40]

In the late 1940s, teenaged Virginia Hensley started her singing career in much the same manner as had the pre-war generation of aspiring "hillbilly" musicians: by performing live on the radio and auditioning for barn dance radio. In the years immediately following the war, small radio stations continued their pre-war practice of featuring live broadcasts from local performers such as Hensley, who sang on the hillbilly music hour of radio station WINC in her hometown of Winchester, Virginia. In 1949, she auditioned (unsuccessfully) for the *Grand Ole Opry*, which took hold as the preeminent country music radio show in the nation after NBC Radio began broadcasting it nationwide starting in 1939.[41] Although the *Opry* and regional radio barn dances remained popular in the 1950s, radio programming was on the brink of significant changes when Virginia Hensley began her career. After the war, radios were smaller and more portable, and they were becoming common in automobiles. In this context, people were more likely to listen alone, while engaged in another activity, or in the car. As a result, radio station owners increasingly replaced live music broadcasts and variety shows with recorded music, resulting in fewer opportunities for local musicians to perform on the radio.[42]

Like many aspiring country music singers in the 1950s, Patsy Cline depended on performances in urban venues to gain experience and attract fans. She frequently appeared with Bill Peer and the Melody Playboys in bars and fraternal lodges in and around the capital city of Washington, DC, which grew rapidly during and after World War II.[43] The popularity of country music in cities such as Washington resulted largely from an ongoing shift in population. The migration of rural southerners to cities began during the Great Depression and accelerated during and after World War II as agricultural mechanization pushed tenants and small farmers off the land. In postwar cities, southerners who had grown up on farms listening to barn dance radio proved a ready market for country music.[44]

Honky-tonk bars and fraternal lodges such as the ones where Cline performed in the early 1950s were the heart of the postwar, urban country music scene. Situated in white, working-class neighborhoods populated by displaced rural Southerners, honky-tonks played country music live and on the jukebox and often had a dance

[38] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 9–12; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 12.
[39] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 177–97; Peterson, *Creating Country Music*, 187–89; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 67–88.
[40] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 97.
[41] Jones, *Patsy*, 20–22; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 184–85, 199–200, 206–08.
[42] Jensen, *The Nashville Sound*, 41–42; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 208.
[43] Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 110–11; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 95–98, 115–17.
[44] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 181–82; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 67–68.

floor. Along with fraternal lodges, they were a refuge from urban life and culture for working-class whites who migrated from the country to the city after the war, and the music played an important role in connecting them to their rural roots and creating a community of shared culture. When country music moved to urban honky-tonks in the decade after the end of World War II, it developed a distinctive sound that both diverged from and recalled the music of pre-war barn dance radio. Musically, honky-tonk differed from the hillbilly and cowboy music of the 1920s and 1930s in its use of amplification, steel guitars, electric guitars, sock rhythm, and a louder, heavier beat that could be discerned even in the din of a bar. Lyrics focused less on rural themes and more on drinking, work, family, love, marriage, and the honky-tonks themselves.[45]

Despite these differences in setting, instrumentation, and lyrics, there were points of continuity between honky-tonk and the country music of the 1920s and 1930s. Singers, Cline included, yodeled in the style of 1920s hillbilly music star Jimmie Rodgers, and often wore casual or Western-themed costumes. Following in the footsteps of barn dance radio star Patsy Montana, Cline typically performed in the early 1950s wearing a cowboy hat and a homemade costume decorated with fringe and Western motifs such as wagon wheels and cacti. On stage, singers continued to cultivate what country music scholar Joli Jensen describes as the "communal, relaxed, folksy performance style that became, and remains, a defining aspect of the country music genre." For instance, Cline's opening number set a comfortable, neighborly tone for her show with the chorus, "Come on in and sit right down and make yourself at home." As Jensen argues, by the late 1950s, the honky-tonk sound, rural and Western imagery, and a casual performance style became defining characteristics of country music that anchored the evolving genre to its rural and working-class roots.[46]

The urban audience for country music created opportunities for Patsy Cline and other musicians to perform in venues besides honky-tonks and fraternal lodges. For Cline, these opportunities came primarily through her association with disc jockey and concert promoter Connie B. Gay. The host of a popular country music radio show in the Washington, DC, area in the late 1940s, Gay quickly realized that country music performers could fill large concert venues in the city. In addition to established musicians, he recruited up-and-comers such as Jimmy Dean, George Hamilton IV, Roy Clark, and Patsy Cline, whom he began booking for concert appearances in 1954.[47] Gay was also a pioneer in bringing country music to television, which was making its way into American homes in the late 1940s and 1950s. [48] Cline was fortunate to begin working with Gay around the time that he launched his weeknight television show, *Town & Country Time*, and she became a regular cast member in his longer weekend show, *Town & Country Jamboree*. [49] Although Gay's television programs were short-lived, they provided Cline and other singers with local and regional name recognition, steady income, and valuable experience in front of the cameras. Cline took that experience to her 1957 appearance on NBC's *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Show*, which brought her national fame and her first hit record.

From Recording Contract to Hit Record: Patsy Cline and the Country Music Industry, 1954–1957

Patsy Cline began her recording career at a time when country music was becoming more profitable and more centralized, thanks in part to changes in the structure of the American popular music industry. Prior to World War II, the American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP) effectively excluded country music from the popular music industry. Without membership in ASCAP, songwriters and composers were

[45] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 153–57, 181–82; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 48–51; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 23–35.
[46] Jensen, *Nashville Sound,* 10–13, 35–36, 71 (quotation)–72, 98–99.
[47] Jones, *Patsy*, 64–67; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 106; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 200; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 66–67; Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 110–11.
[48] Warren R. Hofstra and Mike Foreman, "Legacy and Legend: The Cultural World of Patsy Cline's Winchester," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 47.
[49] Gomery, "Patsy Cline: A Television Star," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 108–16; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 64–65.

unable to collect royalties when their songs were published, performed, or used in radio broadcasts or films. By refusing to accept country songwriters as members or to license country songs, ASCAP limited the profitability of country music. In 1939, however, country music gained access to an alternative licensing organization in Broadcast Musicians, Inc. (BMI). Formed by radio broadcasters who were frustrated by ASCAP's hostility to radio and the resulting high fees ASCAP charged for radio broadcast, BMI licensed songs in a variety of genres and paid royalties when songs were played live, on jukeboxes, or on the radio. By the time Patsy Cline began recording in 1954, BMI had a diverse catalog of country songs. These structural changes in the music industry, combined with the growing popularity of country music after the war, spurred the development of a country music publishing industry centered in Nashville, Tennessee.[50]

With a system in place to gain royalties and burgeoning demand for country music, the country music recording industry expanded, creating more opportunities for aspiring musicians such as Cline to make records. The major country music record labels such as Decca, RCA Victor, and Columbia set up offices and studios in Nashville, and entrepreneurs throughout the country opened small recording studios that served as talent scouts for the major record companies.[51] Studios such as Bill McCall's Four Star Records identified musicians who were popular on local and regional performing circuits, signed them to recording contracts that offered little direct financial benefit to the performer, then sent them to the major studios in Nashville for recording.[52] For instance, McCall signed Patsy Cline in 1954 based on her popularity in the Washington, DC, area, but she recorded with Owen Bradley at Decca Records in Nashville.

The expansion of the country music recording industry reflected the growing importance of recorded music and popularity charts in the music industry more broadly. In the mid- to late 1950s, many radio stations shifted from playlists selected by disc jockeys to repetitive playlists of nationally popular songs, a type of programming known as format radio. In this context, radio air play generated record sales, while record sales helped secure radio play. At the center of this circular relationship were the music charts in *Billboard* magazine, which ranked the most popular records in the country in various genres, including pop and country.[53] The terms of most recording contracts (including Patsy Cline's) meant that performers saw little direct income from a hit record. Nevertheless, by the mid-1950s a hit record was crucial to singers' professional and financial success. A hit enabled musicians to increase their performance fees and helped them gain access to high-profile shows such as the *Grand Ole Opry* and the *Louisiana Hayride* (Shreveport Municipal Memorial Auditorium, NHL, 2008), which continued to be marks of prestige in the country music world.[54]

Patsy Cline and the Nashville Sound, 1957–1963

"Walkin' After Midnight" and Cline's hits of the early 1960s exemplify the Nashville Sound, which was the most commercially successful style of country music from the late 1950s through much of the 1960s. The Nashville Sound combined elements of "hillbilly" music, honky-tonk, and pop in an effort to broaden the appeal

[50] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 178–80; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 43–45; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 26–28, 53–58; Peterson, *Creating Country Music*, 185–86.

[51] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 209–10. The proliferation of small recording studios was made possible by the shift in the late 1940s from creating master recordings on wax cylinders to using electromagnetic tape. In addition to producing higher-quality recordings and providing more flexibility in sound editing, recording equipment for electromagnetic tape was smaller and less expensive.

[52] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 45.

[53] Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 63–65, 82–83; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 42–43, 45–46, 56–58; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 210–11.

[54] Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 64; Peterson, *Creating Country Music*, 190; Patricia Duncan, "Shreveport Municipal Memorial Auditorium," National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2008), 8, 12–21.

of country music without alienating the fan base of rural and working-class whites. Patsy Cline was one of the pioneers and co-creators of the Nashville Sound, and one of its most successful performers. In addition, her short career illustrates the longstanding and continuing tensions within country music between cultivating mass-market appeal and retaining its authenticity.

Country music scholar Jocelyn Neal describes the Nashville Sound as "characterized by musical accompaniments with smooth strings; background vocal quartets adding velvety 'oohs' and 'aahs'; subtle drums; slip-note piano; and catchy, lilting rhythmic grooves." The lead vocals "were resonant, shimmering with vibrato, and devoid of the nasal harshness that had characterized honky-tonk singers just a few years earlier."[55] The sound had musical roots in the decade after World War II, when country pop singers such as Eddy Arnold and Red Foley had chart-topping hits that featured smooth vocals, background singers, pianos, and sentimental lyrics devoid of rural themes. However, the Nashville Sound took shape as both a musical style and business strategy in the Nashville recording studios of Owen Bradley of Decca Records, Chet Atkins of RCA Victor, and Don Law of Columbia Records.[56]

Bradley, Atkins, and Law selected musicians and songs that fit their vision, but once in the studio, creating the Nashville Sound was a collaborative process that included songwriters, studio musicians, back-up singers, arrangers such as Anita Kerr, and lead singers. In 1957 and 1958, Don Gibson, Ferlin Husky, Faron Young, Marty Robbins, Jim Reeves, and Patsy Cline all had Nashville Sound records that made it not only to *Billboard*'s country charts, but to its pop charts as well. In the early 1960s, with access to a wider array of songs by both country and pop songwriters, Cline, Bradley, and the Decca session musicians crafted quintessential Nashville Sound hits that included backup vocals by the Anita Kerr Singers and the Jordannaires, string instruments, and lead vocals from Cline that combined the smooth sounds of pop with the emotionalism of country.[57]

As a business strategy, the Nashville Sound developed in response to changes in the music and radio industries. In the late 1950s, country music struggled to get radio airplay as more and more stations turned to the top 40 format and the number of stations playing country declined. In order to entice advertisers and station managers to play country music, the Country Music Association (CMA) and record producers endeavored to redefine and broaden the genre's audience, and the Nashville Sound was a key component of that effort. By smoothing out the honky-tonk and hillbilly sounds and jettisoning rural imagery, the architects of the Nashville Sound hoped to appeal to the urban middle class and to an increasingly affluent working class that wanted the cultural traditions of honky-tonk and barn dances without the class-based stigma associated with these musical styles. In the early 1960s, the buying power of working-class and middle-class audiences gradually attracted advertisers willing to support stations playing an all-country format that included the Nashville Sound, honky-tonk, traditional country, and religious songs.[58] At the same time, the fluid boundaries of pop music in the 1950s and early 1960s made it possible for smoother country songs to generate record sales among fans of pop music.[59]

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[55] Jocelyn R. Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song': Patsy Cline's Music Style and the Evolution of Genre in the 1950s," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 129 (quotation); Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 3.

[56] Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 199–220; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 77–79.

[57] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 80, 100–07; Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 5; Don Roy, "Discography," in Jones, *Patsy*, 307–23; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 247–74; Kingsbury, "Unvanquished," in *Patsy Cline*, 17–21.

[58] Jones, *Patsy*, 166, 193–95; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, especially ch. 3–5; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 254–67. Until the 1990s, the standard narrative of the development of the Nashville Sound was that it was a necessary adaptation in order for country to survive the onslaught of rock and roll. Scholars have since questioned whether country music was on death's door in the mid-1950s and noted that rock and roll's future was no more certain than country's. See Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 38–61, 64–67; Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 146–47.

[59] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 46–48; Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 129–35.

The trajectory of Patsy Cline's career in the late 1950s and early 1960s mirrors the fortunes of country music radio and the rise of the Nashville Sound. When "Walkin' After Midnight" became a hit in 1957, the shift to format radio was underway but not fully accomplished, leaving room in radio playlists and music charts for crossover hits from country artists such as Cline. Her lack of hits between 1957 and "I Fall to Pieces" in 1961 coincided with a decline in the number of radio stations playing country music, while her steady stream of hits on the country and pop charts in the early 1960s occurred at the same time that radio stations were beginning to adopt an all-country music format.[60]

In the late 1950 and early 1960s, the producers and promoters of the Nashville Sound and of the broader country music industry carefully negotiated the boundaries between pop and country, endeavoring to adapt country's sound and image to post-World War II culture without alienating its loyal fans. Joli Jensen argues that even as Nashville Sound recordings muted or eliminated the country sounds of fiddles, steel guitars, and twang, the producers and performers consciously cultivated other aspects of the culture of country music. Singers such as Cline, for instance, maintained the emotional and casual performance style that affirmed a connection between fans and musicians. They also recorded and performed more traditional country tunes in addition to their Nashville Sound recordings. The *Grand Ole Opry* retained its rural, folksy atmosphere and took its place as the symbolic heart of country music, even the sounds that emanated from its stage changed. At the same time, the Nashville Sound recording studios promoted an image of a relaxed, improvisational studio recording environment that echoed the informal, spontaneous performance styles of barn dance radio and honky-tonks.[61]

As a performer and celebrity, Cline struck a similar balance between pop and country in her music and in her public persona. Reportedly, she resisted some of the pop influences that Owen Bradley brought to her recordings, famously dismissing "Walkin' After Midnight" as "nothing but a little ole pop song" and only reluctantly agreeing to sing it on the *Arthur Godfrey* show. In the studio and in performances, she did not completely let go of the yodels, growls, and octave-higher endings from her honky-tonk roots, even though Bradley urged her to abandon them and they were absent from her most successful records. For television appearances, album covers, and appearances in Las Vegas and urban venues, she exchanged her cowgirl outfits for cocktail dresses. However, country music concerts in small cities and state fairs and appearances on the *Grand Ole Opry* remained staples of her performance schedule until her death, which occurred on the way home from a benefit concert for a country music disc jockey.[62]

Women in Country Music

As a solo female country music singer who achieved unprecedented success on both the country and pop music charts, Patsy Cline ushered in what country music historian Bill C. Malone calls "the modern era of women country singers."[63] With multiple hit records in the early 1960s, she proved to the country music industry that women could match their male counterparts in popular appeal and record sales and could do so without being associated with male performers. In her wake came a wave of female country singers in the 1960s and 1970s. Strong-willed, ambitious, and confident in her sexuality and her talent, Cline also inspired subsequent generations of female performers to break out of traditional images of women in country music.

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[60] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 104–05; Pecknold, *Selling Sound*, 134–52, 165.

[61] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 62–64, 68, 75–76, 84–88, 97–117, 121–34.

[62] Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 144; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 97–101, 106, 111–13; Mary A. Bufwack, "Girls with Guitars—and Fringe and Sequins and Rhinestones, Silk, Lace, and Leather," in Cecelia Tichi, ed., *Reading Country Music: Steel Guitars, Opry Stars, and Honky Tonk Bars* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 168–70. Cline's description of "Walkin' After Midnight" as a "little ole pop song" comes from a remembrance by songwriter Donn Hecht that was published in 1973 in *Country Music Magazine*, cited in Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 189, n. 17.

[63] Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 263.

Women in Early Country Music

In the early days of commercialized country music, women were stars of barn dance radio, and they played key roles in defining and popularizing the genre. Although the pre-World War II country music recording industry focused on male singers and instrumental tunes, records featuring Sara and Maybelle Carter, singing cowgirl Patsy Montana, Texas Ruby, and Lule Belle were among the most successful of the 1930s and 1940s. In the midst of the Great Depression when record sales plummeted nationwide, Montana's 1935 song, "I Want to Be a Cowboy's Sweetheart" nevertheless sold over one million copies. In the late 1940s, as recorded music became increasingly prevalent on the radio, securing a foothold in the country music recording industry became critical for female singers, yet they struggled against a male-dominated recording industry and the prewar tradition of presenting women as part of a group or duo.[64]

Patsy Cline and the Rise of Solo Female Country Music Singers, 1952-1963

Patsy Cline was one of several solo female singers who began recording in Nashville following Kitty Wells's 1952 hit, "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky-Tonk Angels." The first hit for a solo female country singer in the postwar era, the song climbed to #1 on the country music charts and reached #27 on the popular music charts. Over the next decade, nearly every Kitty Wells single reached the top twenty-five on the country music charts. Hoping to replicate her success, country music record companies brought more women into the studio, including Jean Shepard, Goldie Hill, Jan Howard, and Patsy Cline. Shepard and Hill each had several songs in the top twenty-five on the country charts in the 1950s, including a #1 hit for Goldie Hill in 1952, and Cline topped the charts with "Walkin' After Midnight" in 1957. In addition to opening doors to the recording industry, their success contributed to a significant increase in the number of female members of the *Grand Ole Opry* in the 1960s and 1970s.[65]

Cline stands out among the female country singers who debuted in the 1950s for achieving and sustaining a successful career without singing an answer song to a hit by a male performer or recording a duet with a male singer. Wells's 1952 hit, "It Wasn't God Who Made Honky-Tonk Angels," told the woman's perspective on Hank Thompson's "The Wild Side of Life" (1952). In his song, Thompson laments that his wife has become a "honky-tonk angel" whose attraction to liquor and night life leads her to throw away the steadfast love of her husband. In her answer song, Wells counters that the wife strayed only after her husband betrayed her. Wells recorded other successful answer songs, too, as did Jean Shepard, Goldie Hill, and Betty Cody.[66] In addition, many female country music stars of the 1950s and 1960s, including Wells, Shepard, Hill, and Wanda Jackson, had hits as part of a duet with a well-known male singer. For example, all but one of Hill's 1950s hits were as part of a duet with a male singer, and Shepard teamed with Ferlin Husky on "Dear John," which rose to the top of the country charts. The commercial success of these duets helped the women gain national name recognition, and in some instances, their singing partners advocated for them within the music industry. Cline, on the other hand, recorded no duets or answer songs.[67]

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[64] Kristine M. McCusker, *Lonesome Cowgirls and Honky-Tonk Angels: The Women of Barn Dance Radio* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 3, 44; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 31–34, 141–42; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 64–68; Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 66–68, 72, 145–46.

[65] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 150–56, 158–59, 214–15, 227–28; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 175–77; Georgia Christgau, "Kitty Wells, Queen of Denial," in Diane Pecknold and Kristine M. McCusker, eds., *Country Boys and Redneck Women: New Essays in Gender and Country Music* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2016), 212–13; Pamela Fox, *Natural Acts: Gender, Race, and Rusticity in Country Music* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 91.

[66] Fox, *Natural Acts*, 91–106; Bufack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 152–56; Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 136.

[67] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 159–60, 201–02; Lange, *Smile When You Call Me a Hillbilly*, 175–77; Fox,

The hits by solo female country music singers in the early and mid-1950s proved that fans would buy their records, but women still represented a small proportion of country recording artists and did not always receive equal treatment from the country music industry. They rarely headlined live performances, and men still comprised the majority of *Opry* members. Women appeared regularly on the pages of trade publications such as *Country Song Roundup*, but these magazines did not launch major publicity campaigns for female singers. In 1954, Goldie Hill became the first solo female to appear alone on the cover of *Country Song Roundup*, but only a handful of 1950s covers featured women.[68]

Until Patsy Cline in the early 1960s, no woman matched the chart success of Kitty Wells. At the height of Cline's popularity, she equaled Wells in proportion of singles on the *Billboard* charts, with eight of her nine singles between 1961 and 1963 entering the top 10 country songs. Moreover, Cline's crossover success far exceeded that of Wells and was remarkable among all country music singers regardless of gender. All nine of Cline's singles between "I Fall to Pieces" in 1961 and the posthumous release of "Faded Love" in August 1963 made *Billboard*'s Top 100 popular songs, and three reached the top 25. By 1962, she was headlining shows in major venues, including shows in Las Vegas, and commanded high performance fees.[69]

Cline's popularity and crossover success represented a milestone in the history of women in country music and laid the foundation for a marked increase in the number of nationally known female country music performers over the next ten years. Country singer Dottie West wrote that Cline's "massive appeal proved women, without men by their side, could consistently sell records and draw audiences."[70] After 1963, record companies signed more women and devoted resources towards promoting their careers. In addition to helping open the doors of recording studios, concert tours, and the *Grand Ole Opry* for women, Cline befriended and mentored up-and-coming singers such as West, Brenda Lee, Loretta Lynn, Barbara Mandrell, and Jan Howard.[71]

In reminiscences and tributes from female country singers and in the popular imagination, Cline is remembered and admired not only for her musical talents, but also for her assertive, ambitious, and self-confident personality. To the singers who came after her, Cline proved that with talent and charisma, they could attract fans and sell records without cloaking their ambition or deferring to men. In their encyclopedic book, *Finding Her Voice: Women in Country Music, 1800–2000*, Mary A. Bufwack and Robert K. Oermann write that Cline "transformed what it meant to be a female country star," citing her commitment to becoming a star and her willingness to stand up for herself.[72] When Cline came on the national stage in 1957, promoters initially presented her as a "sweet, simple country girl." However, neither Cline's personality nor her performance style fits this mold. On stage and in the studio, her sultry voice, her casual banter with male band-mates, and what historian Warren Hofstra calls her "blunt directness and coarse earthiness" quickly dispelled images of her as a

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Natural Acts, 102–105; Christgau, "Kitty Wells," in Pecknold and McCusker, *Country Boys*, 217–18; Jones, *Patsy Cline*, 246–47, 324–25. Wells's career also benefited from her marriage to country music singer Johnnie Wright, who achieved national fame and Opry membership as part of the duo Johnnie and Jack before Wells and helped launch his wife's career.

[68] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 154–55, 267; Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 136–37; McCusker, "Cultural Scripts," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 97. Jean Shepard appeared on the cover with duet partner Ferlin Husky a few months before Hill's solo appearance.

[69] Jones, *Patsy*, 255, 262, 270–74.

[70] Dottie West, "Foreward," in Nassour, *Honky Tonk Angel*, x (quotation).

[71] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 207–08, 222–37; Jones, *Patsy*, 200–02, 244–45, 257–60; Kingsbury, "Unvanquished," in *Patsy Cline*, 28–29; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 98.

[72] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 215 (quotation); Roseanne Cash, "The Cline," in *Patsy Cline*, 11; Kingsbury, "Unvanquished," in *Patsy Cline*, 13–21. On traditional images of women in country music leading to Patsy Cline, see Mary A. Bufwack, "Girls With Guitars," in Tichi, *Reading Country Music*, 153–70; Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 63–91; McCusker, "Cultural Scripts," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 90–92; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A*, 116–20.

shy, innocent girl-next-door.[73] Cline also did not adhere to the model of country music femininity cultivated by Kitty Wells, who publicly downplayed her professional ambition and highlighted her commitment to her husband and family. Album liner notes and fan magazines, for instance, noted that Wells would be just as happy making a home as making a record, affirming both the longstanding association between women and domesticity in country music and the housewife image that pervaded American popular culture in the mid-twentieth century. In contrast, Patsy Cline had two young children in the early 1960s yet remained openly ambitious and committed to her career.[74] Although she was neither the first nor the only singer to break with the clean-cut, domestic imagery associated with women in country music, she was arguably the most successful to date in the early 1960s. Since her death, her reputation for assertiveness, ambition, and independence from traditional roles has grown to almost mythic status.[75]

Becoming a Country Music Icon: The Patsy Cline Revival of the 1980s and 1990s

Cline's popularity waned in the late 1960s and 1970s as new artists and musical styles captured the nation's attention. Still, artists who knew Cline personally or grew up with her music continued to honor her memory and recognized her contributions to country music. In 1973, she became the first solo female singer to be inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame. New stars such as Tammy Wynette, Emmylou Harris, Linda Rondstadt, Loretta Lynn, and Reba McEntire recorded covers of Patsy Cline songs in the late 1960s and early 1970s, including several that reached the top 20 on the country charts and two that appeared on Grammy-winning albums.[76]

In the mid-1970s, country singer Loretta Lynn brought Cline back into the spotlight, despite a backlash against the Nashville Sound as a betrayal of country's rural and working-class roots. Lynn became friends with Patsy Cline during their time together on the *Grand Ole Opry* in the early 1960s. In her best-selling 1976 autobiography, *Loretta Lynn: Coal Miner's Daughter*, she devotes an entire chapter to Cline, praising the singer for her talent, her generosity, and down-to-earth personality. Lynn's 1977 Patsy Cline tribute album was a top 10 country album and produced a #1 country single, "I Got You," bringing further attention to Cline's music.[77]

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[73] Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 111 (quotation)–113; Warren R. Hofstra, "Afterword: The Historical Significance of Patsy Cline," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 176 (quotation). In *Natural Acts*, Pamela Fox observes that the record companies projected a similar girl-next-door image on Jean Shepard (102–05). In their biographies of Cline, both Ellis Nassour and Margaret Jones draw extensively on interviews with people who knew Cline and provide numerous examples of Cline's assertiveness and ambition, as well as descriptions of her demeanor on stage and in the recording studio.

[74] Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 150–55; Fox, *Natural Acts*, 94–98; Georgia Christgau, "Kitty Wells," in Pecknold and McCusker, *Country Boys*, 211–25; McCusker, "Cultural Scripts," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 95–97; Peter La Chapelle, "'Spade Doesn't Look Exactly Starved': Country Music and the Negotiation of Women's Domesticity in Cold War Los Angeles," in Kristine M. McCusker and Diane Pecknold, eds., *A Boy Named Sue: Gender and Country Music* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004), 24–35.

[75] Earlier performers who challenged the image of women in country music as domestic and demure include Rose Maddox, Texas Ruby, and Charline Arthur. See Bufwack and Oermann, *Finding Her Voice*, 144–46, 148; Emily C. Neely, "Charline Arthur: The (Un)Making of a Honky-Tonk Star," in McCusker and Pecknold, *Boy Named Sue*, 44–58; Peter La Chapelle, "'Spade Doesn't Look Exactly Starved,'" in McCusker and Pecknold, *Boy Named Sue*, 36–43. On Cline's posthumous image, see Jensen, "'Becoming a Postage Stamp': Patsy Cline, Visual Image, and the Celebrity Process," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 162–66; McCusker, "Cultural Scripts," in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 86–101; Jensen, "Patsy Cline's Crossovers: Celebrity, Reputation, and Feminine Identity," in McCusker and Pecknold, *Boy Named Sue*, 107–31.

[76] Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 148–49; Joli Jensen, "Patsy Cline's Crossovers: Celebrity, Reputation, and Feminine Identity," in McCusker and Pecknold, *Boy Named Sue*, 110–12; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 298–303.

[77] Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 146–49; Loretta Lynn with George Vecsey, *Loretta Lynn: Coal Miner's Daughter* (New York: Vintage, 2010; originally published 1976), 99–103; Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 300–01.

Interest in Cline's life and music continued to grow in the early 1980s, spurred largely by the award-winning film *Coal Miner's Daughter* (1980), based on Lynn's autobiography. In the film, actress Beverly D'Angelo portrayed Cline as a strong and independent woman who mentored Lynn, and the soundtrack featured several Patsy Cline songs. In 1981, Ellis Nassour published the first full-length biography of Cline, and in 1985, the producer of *Coal Miner's Daughter*, Bernard Schwartz, released *Sweet Dreams*, a biopic of Cline starring Jessica Lange. Although the movie fared poorly among critics and at the box office, the soundtrack, which featured Cline's songs with new instrumentation by her producer, Owen Bradley, sold well.[78] The growing interest in Cline in the 1980s dovetailed with a broader wave of nostalgia for the 1950s and early 1960s. The Patsy Cline revival also coincided with a resurgence in the popularity of country music, which took on associations with patriotism and conservatism during the Ronald Reagan era. At the same time, country music stars such as Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers had crossover hits that did well on both the country and pop charts, reviving long-standing debates about whether country music could retain its authenticity and identity in the midst of broader popular success. Paradoxically, Patsy Cline, whose crossover success in the late 1950s and early 1960s caused some to question her authenticity as a country singer, became emblematic of traditional country in the 1980s.[79]

Patsy Cline and her music gathered numerous tributes and accolades in the 1990s and early 2000s. Ted Swindley's tribute musical *Always… Patsy Cline*, which began in regional theaters in the late 1980s, became one of most widely produced plays in the mid-1990s. The United States Postal Service issued a Patsy Cline stamp in 1993, and Margaret Jones published a new biography in 1994. In 1995, the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences awarded her a Lifetime Achievement Grammy. Record companies issued numerous compilations, tribute albums, and remastered versions of Patsy Cline's music in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.[80] In 2004, the Library of Congress included Patsy Cline's version of "Crazy" in the second class of recordings named to the National Recording Registry, which recognizes American recordings that are "culturally, historically or aesthetically important…"[81] The resurgence of interest in Cline also sparked efforts to preserve her home at 608 South Kent Street in Winchester, which opened to the public as a museum operated by the nonprofit Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc. in 2011.

Fifty years after her death, Cline's place in the pantheon of country music greats is well-established. In 2017, the Patsy Cline Museum opened in Nashville, Tennessee, becoming one of only a handful of museums in the capital of country music devoted to a single performer. Historians and scholars of mass media and communication not only analyze and debate Cline's importance in American music and popular culture but have also explored the context and significance of the Patsy Cline revival of the late twentieth century. Her musical legacy continues in the work of the many musicians whom she influenced and inspired, including Emmylou Harris, k.d. lang, Tammy Wynette, Linda Rondstadt, Roseanne Cash, Trisha Yearwood, Norah Jones, Reba McEntire, LeAnn Rimes, Cyndi Lauper, and Trisha Yearwood.[82]

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[78] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 1–11.

[79] Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 1; Neal, "'Nothing but a Little Ole Pop Song,'" in Hofstra, *Sweet Dreams*, 128–29, 149–51; Jensen, *Nashville Sound*, 92, 113–16; Malone, *Country Music, U.S.A.*, 371–86.

[80] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 11–25, 328–32.

[81] "Nominate," Library of Congress, National Recording Preservation Board, Recording Registry, https://www.loc.gov/programs/national-recording-preservation-board/recording-registry/nominate/ (quotation); Douglas Gomery, "'Crazy'–Patsy Cline (1961)", Library of Congress, https://www.loc.gov/static/programs/national-recording-preservation-board/documents/CRAZY%20-revised.pdf.

[82] Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 299; Kingsbury, "Unvanquished," in *Patsy Cline*, 67.

Comparable Properties

The house at 608 South Kent Street in Winchester is the surviving property most closely associated with Patsy Cline during the period when she sought and achieved national significance as a country music singer (1948–1963). She lived in the house with her mother and siblings from 1948 until 1953, and episodically between 1953 and 1957, during separations from her husband, Gerald Cline.[83] During this time, she began singing professionally, auditioned for the *Grand Ole Opry*, became a well-known country music performer in Washington, DC, and surrounding areas, cut her first records with Owen Bradley and Decca Records, appeared on regional television variety shows, won over a national audience on *Arthur Godfrey's Talent Show*, and had her first hit song. A modest dwelling set within a neighborhood that retains integrity to the period of significance (1948–1957), the house at 608 South Kent Street illustrates Cline's roots in the southern white working class, the core fan base for mid-twentieth-century country music.

Between 1957 and her death in 1963, Patsy Cline moved roughly every two years. Between 1957 and 1959, Cline lived in Fayetteville, North Carolina, while her husband, Charlie Dick, was stationed at Fort Bragg, but neither she nor her husband intended to stay there permanently. Moreover, her singing career was at an ebb during this period; none of her records became hits and she performed less frequently than she had when she lived near Washington, DC, in the mid-1950s. Between 1959 and 1963, she lived in three houses in the suburbs of Nashville, Tennessee: a rental property at 213 Marthona Road in Madison (1959–1961), 3024 Hillhurst Drive in Nashville (1961–1962), and 815 Nella Drive in Goodlettsville (May 1962–March 1963). All three houses appear much as they did during the period of significance, though the setting of the house on Hillhurst Drive has been adversely affected by the construction of Interstate 65. Although these houses have documented associations with Cline during the period in which she was a nationally significant performer, each is associated with her for only a short period of time.

The house in Goodlettsville is notable among the Tennessee properties as her home at the height of her career and as a tangible expression of her financial and professional success. In 2016, the Tennessee Historical Commission determined it eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places on this basis.[84] Although the Goodlettsville property well illustrates the last months of Cline's productive career, the house in Winchester conveys multiple aspects of the singer's life and career because of its substantially longer period of association.

The Patsy Cline House complements the existing National Register properties and National Historic Landmarks that illustrate the development and popularization of the Nashville Sound and of country music more broadly in the twenty years after the end of World War II. The Ryman Auditorium, which hosted the *Grand Ole Opry* from 1943 to 1974, was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2001 for its "pivotal role in the evolution, dissemination and commercialization of country music."[85] Also designated a National Historic Landmark is the Shreveport Municipal Memorial Auditorium in Louisiana, the home of the *Louisiana Hayride*, a country music radio show that ran from 1948 to 1958. The performers on the *Louisiana Hayride* illustrate musical innovation and experimentation in country music in the postwar era and launched the careers of nationally significant

[83] According to biographer Douglas Gomery, the Clines moved several times within the Frederick, Maryland, area during their brief marriage, residing in the city's Linden Hills neighborhood at 824 East Patrick Street, with Gerald Cline's parents, and in a trailer park near town. Gomery, *Patsy Cline*, 104–05.

[84] Information about the National Register eligibility of 815 Nella Drive in Goodlettsville was obtained from the property's file at the Tennessee Historical Commission. The Commission has also evaluated the National Register eligibility of the site of the plane crash that killed Cline and determined the site ineligible for designation.

[85] Frank J. J. Miele, "Ryman Auditorium," National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 1978), Section 8, p. 7.

country and rockabilly performers such as Hank Williams, Kitty Wells, Johnny Cash, and Elvis Presley.[86] RCA Studio B in Nashville is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its national significance in the development of the Nashville Sound and of the country music recording industry. RCA's Chet Atkins, in cooperation with arranger and back-up singer Anita Kerr, produced Nashville Sound records in Studio B for Jim Reeves, Don Gibson, Skeeter Davis, Dottie West, and others. In addition, the establishment and expansion of RCA's presence in Nashville illustrates the consolidation of the music industry in the city and the growing importance of recording.[87]

[86] Patricia Duncan, "Shreveport Municipal Memorial Auditorium," National Historic Landmark Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2008).

[87] Julie Robison, Tara Mitchell Mielnik, and John Rumble, "RCA Studio B," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, 2012).

6. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION AND STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

Ownership of Property		**Category of Property**	
Private:	X	Building(s):	X
Public-Local:		District:	
Public-State:		Site:	
Public-Federal:		Structure:	
		Object:	

Number of Resources within Boundary of Property:

Contributing		**Noncontributing**	
Buildings:	1	Buildings:	
Sites:		Sites:	
Structures:		Structures:	
Objects:		Objects:	
Total:	1	Total:	0

PROVIDE PRESENT AND PAST PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS OF PROPERTY
(Please see specific guidance for type of resource[s] being nominated)

Summary Description

Built in several phases beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, the Patsy Cline House in Winchester, Virginia is a two-story, log, vernacular dwelling with frame additions extending from its rear elevation. Facing west towards South Kent Street, the house stands on a narrow lot in a neighborhood that was populated primarily by working-class whites during the period of significance (1948–1957). The two-story, three-bay, log section is the oldest part of the house and features a full-width front porch and Greek Revival details. A one- or one-and-a-half story frame ell was added in the late 1800s, and a former porch adjacent to the ell served as the kitchen when Sam and Hilda Hensley, Patsy Cline's parents, moved into the house in 1948. As Cline's home for most of the period between 1948 and 1957, the Patsy Cline House is the property most strongly associated with the nationally significant musician. Relative to other properties associated with Patsy Cline, 608 South Kent Street retains a high level of integrity in the aspects that are most important to conveying its significance: association, location, setting, and feeling. The building is a contributing resource in the Winchester Historic District (NRHP, 1980) and was individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2005.

Location and Setting

The Patsy Cline House (608 South Kent Street) stands on the east side of South Kent Street between East Monmouth Street and East Germain Street in Winchester, an independent city in northwest Virginia. The historically working-class neighborhood surrounding the house lies at the eastern edge of downtown and comprises one- and two-story dwellings sited close to the street on narrow lots. Most of the houses were constructed in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries, though there are a few mid-nineteenth-century houses such as the Patsy Cline House. The house's 0.17-acre lot abuts a steep embankment that slopes down to Town Run, a tributary of Abrams Creek. Railroad tracks and a paved walking trail are located along Town Run.

Site

The house stands at the western edge of the lot, its front porch adjacent to the sidewalk along South Kent Street. Due to a steep downward slope in the front third of the lot, the first floor is at grade at the front of the house, while the basement level is at grade at the rear of the house. The topography levels off to a gentler downward slope to the west.

The brick sidewalk along South Kent Street marks the western edge of the property. A freestanding historical marker that was installed in 2005 stands on the sidewalk near the house's northwest corner. To the south of the house, a wood picket fence separates the sidewalk from a terraced garden with stone retaining walls. The larger, upper portion of the garden contains a centered, square, brick-edged flower bed surrounded by gravel; a bird bath stands in the middle of the flower bed. Steps constructed of roughly laid stone are located between the foundation of the house and the lower portion of the terraced garden, which also includes a brick-edged flower bed. To the east of the garden and adjacent to the house is a wood lattice screen for the HVAC equipment.

A gravel driveway to the north of the house leads from the sidewalk to the backyard. A stone retaining wall with angled slate coping abuts the foundation and defines the southern edge of the driveway; the wall was added after 2010. The volume of gravel and the width of the driveway steadily diminish before ending near the rear elevation of the house.

The perimeter of the grassy backyard is marked by a post-and-wire fence on the north and east and by a stone retaining wall that extends the full length of the southern property boundary. A wood, picket fence stands atop the northern third of the retaining wall. The rest of the retaining wall has square holes for fence posts, but only two of the wood posts remain. Flower beds line most of the southern edge of the yard, with additional flower beds in the southeast corner and near the middle of the yard. The few trees in the backyard are located along its perimeter. There is a clothesline near the southeast corner of the house.

Exterior

The house comprises a two-story main block with a full-width front porch and a two-story rear addition. Constructed in the mid-nineteenth century of hewn logs, the 23' x 17' main block rests on a random-rubble, stone foundation. The two-story rear section was constructed in several stages between the late 1800s and the 1940s. The first addition was a one-story, wood-frame ell with a random-rubble, stone foundation. Constructed in the late 1800s, the ell extended from the north end of the main block's rear wall, creating an L-shaped building with a porch in the southeast corner. In the 1920s, the rear ell was raised to two stories. Before or during the period of significance (1948–1957), the porch in the southeast corner was enclosed, creating a one-story addition that housed the kitchen. The southeast addition was later raised to two stories and the foundation infilled with concrete block.[88]

The west (front) elevation of the three-bay main block is clad in wood weatherboard siding that is original to the building. Nonhistoric, vinyl siding covers the wood weatherboards on the north and south elevations of the main block; vinyl siding also covers the original board-and-batten siding on the rear ell.[89] The stone foundation of the main block is exposed on the south elevation but covered by a nonhistoric, stone retaining wall on the north

[88] The house at 608 S. Kent Street is depicted as a two-story house with a one-story ell on all of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps published between 1903 and 1921. On the 1927 Sanborn map, the entire house, including the ell, is depicted as a one-and-one-half story dwelling with no division between the main block and rear ell.

[89] A former exterior wall in the basement shows evidence of board-and-batten siding, and the 2005 National Register nomination documented board-and-batten siding beneath the vinyl siding on the ell's north elevation.

elevation. The retaining wall also hides the stone foundation of the rear ell; on the east (rear) elevation, the ell's foundation wall is clad in vinyl siding. The concrete block foundation of the southeast addition appears to have been added after 1957 to replace an earlier, less sturdy support system and was stuccoed circa 2010.[90]

Standing-seam metal covers the side-gable roof of the main block, the hipped roof of the front porch, and the low-pitched, cross-gable roof of the rear additions. The house has two interior brick chimneys. One rises through the peak of the roof at the north end of the main block, and the other is located on the east elevation to the north of the roof peak.

A one-story porch extends the full width of the house's front (west) elevation. The porch's low-pitched, hipped roof is supported by four square, chamfered, wood posts set atop brick piers; similar posts without brick piers are adjacent to the wall of the house. Photographs of Cline in front of the house show the porch posts both with and without piers, indicating that the brick piers were added during the period of significance. Nonhistoric, scroll-sawn balustrades are present at the sides of the porch. The porch's roofline displays elements of the Greek Revival style, including a wide fascia band and molded wood capitals. The floor is poured concrete and the ceiling is slatted wood.

The three-bay west elevation of the main block features two-over-two, double-hung, wood sash windows which were present during the period of significance. Historic, louvered, wood shutters are affixed to the exterior wall, but the original pintles remain in place. The second-story windows completely fill the space between the porch roof and the flat fascia board at the roofline. The door opening is located in the south bay and holds a nonhistoric, wood screen door and a half-light, wood door with nine panes in its upper half and three horizontal panels in its lower half. The windows have narrow, wood trim with an inner bead, while the doorway has nonhistoric, flat, square-edged, wood trim. The south elevation of the main block has two openings: a one-light, wood, casement window on the first story near the rear of the main block and a centered vent in the gable. Both openings have vinyl trim. There are no openings in the north elevation of the main block.

The north elevation of the ell has two first-story windows and one second-story window, while the rear elevation has a basement-level door, a first-story door, and a second-story window. All of the windows on the ell are nonhistoric, two-over-two, wood windows that were fabricated to match the historic windows on the front elevation; historic photographs indicate that the original windows were six-over-six, wood windows. The first-story door is roughly centered in the rear elevation of the house and opens onto a nonhistoric, one-bay, wood deck with steps leading to the backyard. The first-story door opening holds a wood screen door as well as a wood door with two panels set below two panes of glass that are separated by a wide, vertical muntin. The door to the basement is located directly beneath the first-story door and is a nine-light over three-panel wood door that is similar to the one on the front elevation.

The southeast addition has three fixed, six-light, wood windows on the first story: one on the rear elevation and two on the south elevation. The second story incorporates one reproduction, two-over-two, wood sash window on each of the exposed elevations, as well as a six-light, wood, casement window at the west end of the south elevation. A single window with a brick sill is roughly centered in the addition's stuccoed basement wall.

[90] The basement under the ell was a rental apartment in the 1950s, when there were two other families in addition to the Hensleys living in the house. The existing concrete foundation wall encloses the window and one door leading to this apartment, suggesting that the area underneath the southeast addition was originally open. The concrete foundation may have been added to provide additional structural support when the southeast addition was raised to two stories.

Interior

First Floor

The first-floor plan consists of four rooms: a living room at the west end of the house, an under-stairs bathroom off the living room, a dining room in the northeast corner, and a kitchen in the southeast corner. The living room and dining room both have wood, tongue-and-groove floors, while linoleum covers the floor in the kitchen. The six-inch baseboards and the window and door trim are composed of flat, square-edged, wood boards. The window trim is generally 4”-wide, while the door trim is typically 5½”-wide. The plaster walls in the living room, dining room, and under-stairs bathroom are painted, but a few areas are left unpainted and covered with plexiglass set in a wood frame in order to expose the historic wallpaper or structural system. The kitchen walls are also painted; the rear wall is constructed of wood boards, while the side walls are drywall or plaster. All of the first-floor rooms have textured plaster ceilings.

The living room is currently undivided, but during the period of significance, a partition wall enclosed the stairs that run along the south wall, creating a side-passage floor plan. Currently, a raised platform with wood flooring occupies the space between the front door and the base of the stairs. The sill of the door and the lowest stair tread are level with the platform, and a wood ramp slopes down from the platform to the main floor, running parallel and adjacent to the stairs. The ramp and the metal railings around the platform and ramp were added in 2011–2012 to provide wheelchair access to the first floor of the building.

The straight-run, open-string stairs to the second floor feature a rounded handrail, turned balusters, and a turned newel post. The flat door to the bathroom underneath the stairs was cut in half during the 2011–2012 renovation in order to allow visitors to see inside the room, which is where Patsy Cline prepared her hair and make-up for performances. The only plumbing fixture in the bathroom is a toilet.

Centered in the north wall of the living room is an interior brick chimney with fireplace. The chimney is plastered and painted. Inside the fireplace is an early nineteenth-century, metal fireback with a depiction of an urn or cauldron and chains, above which are banners bearing the name of the manufacturer, George North.[91] The Greek Revival-style wood mantelpiece incorporates a fireplace surround with bulls-eye corner blocks connected by beaded molding. A raised panel is set between the fireplace surround and the mantel shelf, which has rounded corners.

There are two openings in the east wall of the living room; neither opening has a door. The south doorway leads to the kitchen, while the wide opening at the north end of the wall opens into the dining room. Between these two openings is a set of recessed bookshelves that were present during the period of significance and occupy a former window opening.

Because the dining room floor is lower than the living room floor, there is a wood ramp within the doorway between these two rooms. The ceiling in the dining room is lower as well, leaving little or no space between the ceiling and the wood trim on the doors and windows. During the period of significance, stairs to the second floor and to the basement were located in the southwest corner of the dining room; although the stairs were removed in 2011–2012, their former location is evident in the patterns in the floorboards used to patch the floor. A metal, freestanding, mid-twentieth-century heater is roughly centered in the east (rear) wall of the dining

[91] North operated a foundry near Harper’s Ferry, Virginia (now West Virginia) in the late 1700s and early 1800s. Cultural Communications/Virginia Department of Historic Resources, “Patsy Cline House,” National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2005), Section 7, p. 2.

room. The heater vents through a former stovepipe hole in an interior chimney that is encased in wood panels; above the stovepipe hole is a wood shelf supported by metal brackets. To the south of the chimney is the door leading to the exterior, and a door opening in the south wall leads to the kitchen.

The kitchen is a narrow room that occupies the southeast corner of the first floor, a space that was a porch until the early or mid-twentieth century. As in the dining room, the floor and ceiling heights are lower than they are in the living room; as a result, there is a small step down from the living room to the kitchen. A broom closet with a vertical board door occupies the southwest corner of the kitchen. Mid-twentieth century appliances and kitchen cabinets with Formica counters line most of the south wall; additional cabinets are attached to the north wall between the living room and the door leading to the dining room. The cabinets were installed in 2011–2012. At the east end of the kitchen, beneath the centered window, are a small table and two chairs; the chairs are the only pieces in the house known to have been present during the time when Patsy Cline lived here.

Second Floor

The interior finishes on the second floor are similar to those on the first floor: wood floors, plaster walls, textured ceilings, and flat, square-edged trim. The stairs from the living room lead to a landing with two wood doors. The door in the north wall is a four-panel, mortise-and-tenon door that likely dates to the mid- or late nineteenth century, while the west door has five horizontal panels, a design that was popular starting in the second quarter of the twentieth century.

Both doors from the stair landing open into a large room that reportedly served as the bedroom for the Hensley family during the period of significance.[92] It is the only room in the house with crown molding. A curtain stretches from the chimney on the north wall to the wall that encloses the stair landing. Curtains also cover the openings to the closets on either side of the chimney, which does not have a fireplace. In the southwest corner of the room is a closet with plaster walls; the five-panel, wood door to the closet is a nonhistoric replacement. Within the closet are stairs leading up to the attic, which is floored but otherwise unfinished.

A five-panel, wood door in the east wall of the front room opens into a corridor that provides access to the two rooms and one bathroom in the rear section of the dwelling. There are two steps down from the front room to the rear section and a sloped ceiling above the steps. A door in the north wall of the corridor leads to the largest room in the rear section. Non-historic closets extend along the west wall of this room, where the stairs from the dining room were formerly located. A chimney is located along its east wall.

A door at the east end of the corridor opens into the southeast room, which is connected to the northeast room and features a kitchenette along its west wall. A bathroom occupies the southwest corner of the rear section. The log, exterior wall of the 1850s main block is currently exposed in the bathroom and within the closets in the northeast room. The floors in the rear section are carpeted except in the bathroom and in front of the kitchenette, where the floors are linoleum.

[92] There is conflicting information about the location of the bedrooms used by the Hensleys. An undated photograph that likely dates to 1955–1957 shows Cline and her mother in a bedroom in the house that has a dormer window, but architectural evidence indicates that the west room never had dormer windows. This suggests the possibility that the ell had dormers during the period of significance, and that the Hensleys used the second floor of the ell for bedrooms.

Basement

The basement is divided into three sections: the 1850s stone basement at the west end of the building, the stone basement beneath the rear ell, and the concrete block basement beneath the southeast addition. The 1850s basement is constructed of random-rubble stone; portions of the foundation walls are built around large rocks within the basement. The interior has a dirt floor and the walls show evidence of whitewash. A six-light, wood window to the east of the chimney is covered on the exterior but visible on the interior. The door opening leading into the 1850s basement has a wood frame and pintles, but the door and hinges are missing.

During the period of significance, the basement beneath the late nineteenth-century ell was finished and rented to tenants but is currently used for storage. The west, north, and east walls of the ell basement are random-rubble stone. The interior features a poured concrete floor and whitewashed ceiling joists; a few fragments of drywall remain on the ceiling joists but most of the drywall was removed to insert insulation during later renovations. Some of the ceiling joists have been replaced, particularly near the east and south walls.

The stone walls of the ell basement are mostly plastered and painted and retain evidence of multiple layers of wallpaper beneath the paint. A door in the east wall leads to the exterior. Along the north wall is a poured concrete ledge that was added in 2011–2012 to stabilize the foundation. There are two windows in the north wall that are infilled with a wood frame that rests atop concrete infill; the retaining wall covers both of these window openings on the exterior. Marks in the plaster on the west wall indicate the former location of the stairs leading to the first floor.

The wood-frame, south wall of the ell basement was originally an exterior wall. After the space beneath the southeast addition was enclosed with a concrete block wall, the eastern portion of the original south wall of the ell was removed and replaced with wood studs. The remaining portion of the original south wall retains the boards from the original board-and-batten siding and incorporates a window opening and a door opening; both the door and window are missing. The interior side of this wall is clad in drywall laid over wood lath, and the window has flat, square-edged, wood trim.

The interior of the basement under the southeast addition has unpainted concrete walls, a concrete floor, and unpainted joists at the ceiling.

Evaluation of Integrity

The Patsy Cline House in Winchester, Virginia, possesses a high level of overall integrity in the aspects most critical to conveying its significance: association, location, setting, and feeling. The house at 608 South Kent Street was associated with Cline for the first nine years (1948–1957) of her career. During this period, she made her first appearances on local radio, began singing professionally, made her first recordings, performed in honky-tonks and on television, and had her first hit record. The house stands out from comparable properties for the length of its association with Cline. Each of the other four houses where she lived after 1957 was associated with her for fewer than three years. As a result, these properties convey only a brief snapshot of her musical career, while the house at 608 South Kent Street is associated with multiple milestones along her path to national fame.[93] Also contributing to the strength of the Patsy Cline House's integrity of association relative to comparable properties is its ability to convey her working-class background, which is important to understanding her career and her association with country music. Situated in the same location within an area

[93] For additional detail on comparable properties, see above, pp. 19–21.

that retains its mid-twentieth-century character as a working-class neighborhood, the house possesses a high level of integrity of location and setting, which in turn contribute to a high degree of integrity of feeling.

In design and materials, the property retains a high level of integrity in the physical features and spaces most closely associated with Patsy Cline. On the exterior, the building's front elevation appears much as it did when Patsy Cline lived there as a young woman with her mother, Hilda Hensley, and two younger siblings. The front porch, the front elevation, and the roof materials and configuration are virtually unchanged. Vinyl siding was installed on the side and rear elevations between 2000 and 2005, but it is similar to the historic wood weatherboards on the front elevation and is not visually intrusive. Moreover, the original siding on the main block and rear ell remains in place beneath the vinyl siding.

For much of the period of significance, Patsy Cline and her family lived in only part of the house, which they shared with as many as two other families in order to reduce housing costs. As a result, the interior spaces known to have been occupied by Cline and her family are the most critical to the building's integrity of design, materials, and feeling. Anecdotal evidence and photographs connect the living room (Figure 3), powder room, and second-floor front room to the family.

These spaces, as well as the first floor of the rear additions, retain nearly all of the materials that were present during the period of significance. Most of the interior finishes date to the period before 1948, reflecting the family's limited economic means and their status as renters; unlike middle- and upper-class homeowners, Hilda Hensley did not have the resources to update their home with the latest styles. The floor plan in these spaces remains mostly intact, with the only alterations being the demolition of the wall between the stairs and the living room and the removal of the stairs in the dining room that occupies the first floor of the ell. The separation between the stairs and living room is not essential to the building's ability to convey its association with Patsy Cline and her working-class background. Although the stairs are associated with the building's use as a multi-family residence during the period of significance, physical evidence remains to indicate the stairs' former location. Overall, the preservation of the mid-twentieth century materials and design in these spaces contributes to the high degree of integrity of feeling.

The most extensive exterior alterations to the house's materials and design affect the rear additions. However, because this part of the house is not highly visible due to the close spacing of the buildings in the neighborhood and was likely not occupied by Patsy Cline and her family for most of the period of significance, it does not substantially impact the house's high level of historic integrity. Likewise, integrity of workmanship is not critical to the Patsy Cline House's ability to convey its historical significance since the house is not being considered for its architecture.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X_ Previously listed in the National Register (fill in 1 through 6 below)
__ Not previously listed in the National Register (fill in **only** 4, 5, and 6 below)

1. NR #: 05001230
2. Date of listing: 11/18/2005
3. Level of significance: National
4. Applicable National Register Criteria: A__ B_x_ C__ D__
5. Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A__ B__ C__ D__ E__ F__ G_X_
6. Areas of Significance:

__ Previously Determined Eligible for the National Register: Date of determination:
__ Designated a National Historic Landmark: Date of designation:
__ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: HABS No.
__ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: HAER No.
__ Recorded by Historic American Landscapes Survey: HALS No.

Location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office: X
Other State Agency:
Federal Agency:
Local Government:
University:
Other (Specify Repository):

8. FORM PREPARED BY

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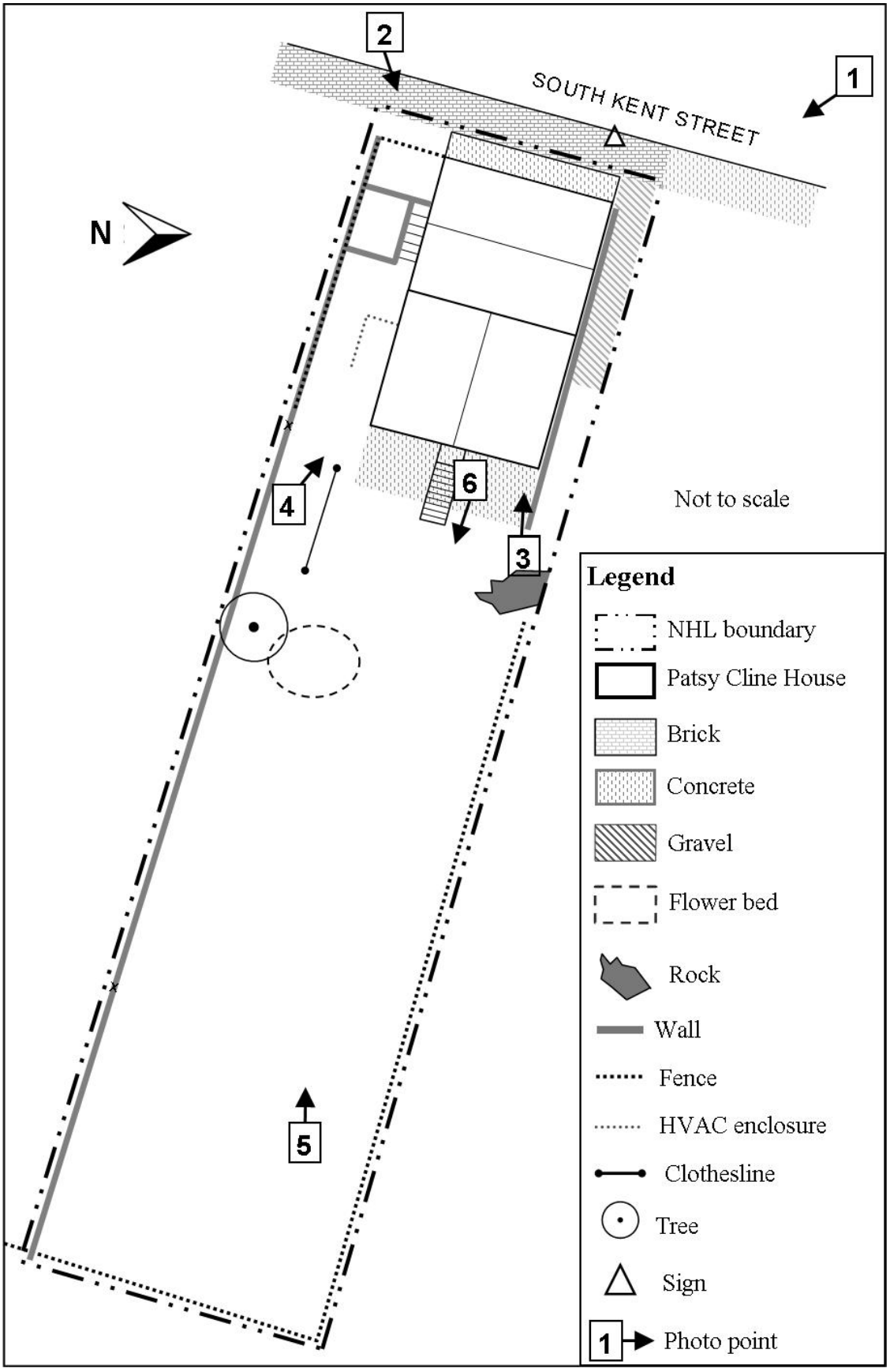
Map 1. Location Map, Patsy Cline House, 608 South Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia.

Latitude/Longitude:

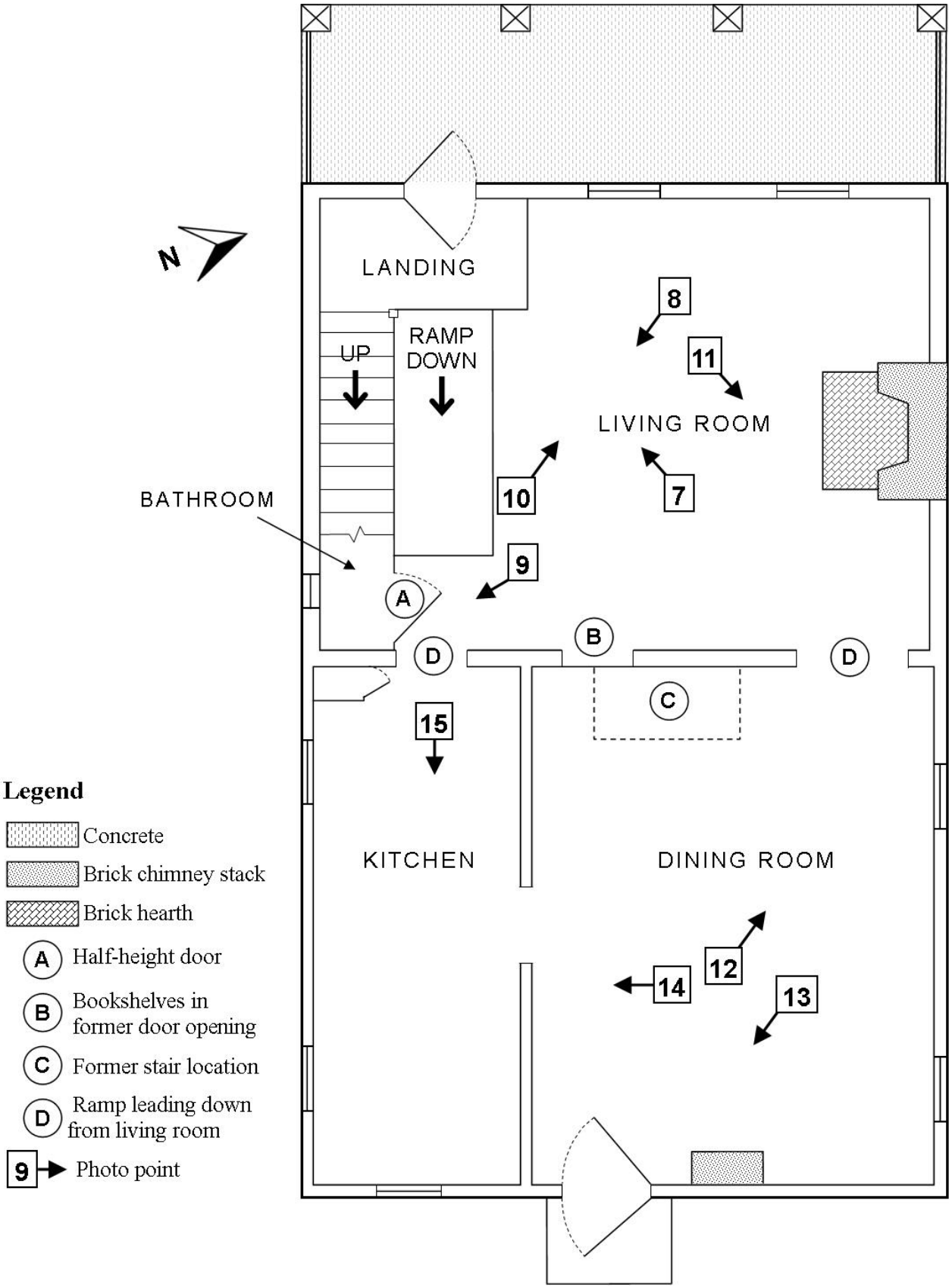
- **A.** 39.178015, -78.164674
- **B.** 39.177878, -78.164076
- **C.** 39.177775, -78.164114
- **D.** 39.177909, -78.164715

The datum is WGS 1984, and the imagery date is 5/5/2017.

Map 2. Site Plan and Photo Key, Patsy Cline House, 608 South Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia. Not to scale.



Map 3. Floor Plan (First Floor) and Photo Key, Patsy Cline House, 608 South Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia.



Map 4. Floor Plan (Second Floor) and Photo Key, Patsy Cline House, 608 South Kent Street, Winchester, Virginia.

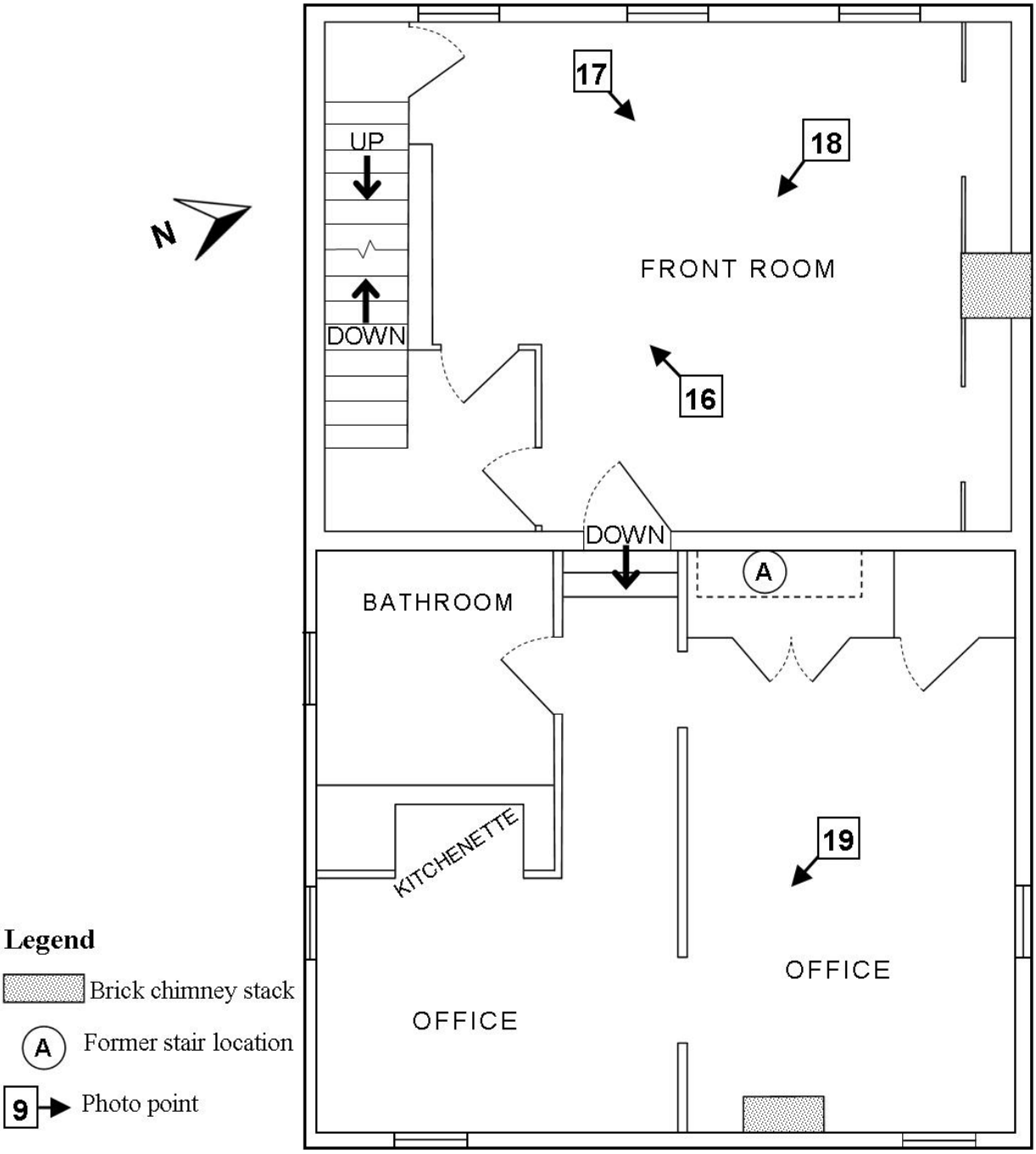


Figure 1. Patsy Cline (Virginia Hensley) in front of 608 South Kent Street in her Gaunt's Drug Store waitress uniform, late 1940s or early 1950s. Photographer unknown. (Image reproduced with permission from Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc.)

Figure 2. Patsy Cline on front porch of 608 South Kent Street, April 1956. Photographer unknown. (Image reproduced with permission from Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc.)

PHOTOS

Name of Property:	Patsy Cline House
City or Vicinity:	Winchester
County:	City of Winchester
State:	VA
Photographer:	Evelyn D. Causey
Date Photographed:	April 24–25, 2018

Photo 1. Exterior, looking southeast from South Kent Street, showing setting and north and west elevations. April 2018.

Photo 2. Exterior, looking northeast from South Kent Street, showing setting and south and west elevations. April 2018.

Photo 3. Exterior, looking west from backyard, showing driveway and north and east elevations. April 2018.

Photo 4. Exterior, looking northwest from backyard, showing side garden and south and east elevations. April 2018.

Photo 5. Exterior, looking west, showing backyard and east elevation. April 2018.

Photo 6. Backyard, looking east from stairs on rear elevation of house, showing flower bed, clothesline, and wall along southern property boundary. April 2018.

Photo 7. Living room on first floor, looking southwest towards front door and stairs to second floor. April 2018.

Photo 8. Living room on first floor, looking southeast towards bathroom and door to kitchen. April 2018.

Photo 9. Bathroom on first floor, looking southeast; door to kitchen is on left. April 2018.

Photo 10. Living room on first floor, looking northwest, showing fireplace on right and windows along front elevation on left. April 2018.

Photo 11. Living room on first floor, looking northeast, showing fireplace on left and doorway to dining room on right. April 2018.

Photo 12. Dining room on first floor, looking northwest, showing doorway to living room. April 2018.

Photo 13. Dining room on first floor, looking southeast, showing back door and chimney stack. April 2018.

Photo 14. Dining room on first floor, looking south, showing doorway to kitchen on right and back door on left. April 2018.

Photo 15. Kitchen on first floor, looking east. April 2018.

Photo 16. Front room on second floor, looking southwest, showing door leading to closet and to set of stairs to attic. April 2018.

Photo 17. Front room on second floor, looking northeast, showing closets on either side. April 2018.

Photo 18. Front room on second floor, looking southeast, showing doors to stair landing (on right) and door to rear addition (on left). April 2018.

Photo 19. Northeast room on second floor of rear addition, looking southeast. April 2018.

Figure 3. Patsy Cline in front of fireplace in living room of 608 South Kent Street, mid-1950s. Photographer unknown. (Image reproduced with permission from Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc.)