

SHPO EVALUATION

**SHPO EVALUATION:
INDIVIDUALLY ELIGIBLE**

COUNTY: Lawrence
RESOURCE NUMBER: LA-129
EVALUATION: D / Eligible Individually
CONDITION: G / Good - In good state of repair

1. **NAME OF RESOURCE:**
Hay & Sparks Cemetery "Little" Grave Houses
How Determined: 9 / Other Traditional Name
2. **ADDRESS/LOCATION:**
26072 KY- 32 Martha, KY 81159
OWNER CONTACT (if known):
Emmett & Carol Barker
3. **GEOGRAPHIC DATA:**
Quad: Mazie, KY **Date:** 1978
Lat: 38.0274128 **Long:** 82.9627210
4. **FIELD RECORDER/AFFILIATION:**
Gary Hay/private citizen
5. **DATE RECORDED:**
6. **SPONSOR/INITIATION:** 6 / Personal project
(homeowner, etc.)
Sponsor Name:
7. **PREVIOUSLY RECORDED:** 0 / Not Previously
Recorded
8. **REPORT/NR REFERENCE:**
9. **ORIGINAL PRIMARY FUNCTION:**
07C: Funerary Other
10. **CURRENT PRIMARY FUNCTION:**
07C: Funerary Other
11. **ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION DATE:**
Estimated: 4 / 1900-1924
Documented:
12. **MAJOR ADDITIONS/MODIFICATION (specify)::**
0 / Undetermined E / Other active cemetery
expanded to rear of gravehouses into at least 2015
13. **MODIFICATION ASSESSMENT:**
2 / Moderate alteration
14. **CONSTRUCTION METHOD AND MATERIAL:**
Original/Primary (if known): W2 / Balloon frame
Subsequent/Secondary (if known):
Other:
15. **EXTERIOR WALL CLADDING:**
Original (if known): 1 / Wood weatherboard
Current:

16. **DIMENSIONS:**
Height: A / 1 story **Acreage:** ½ acre
17. **ARCHITECTURAL FORM/SHAPE:** A / Square or
rectangular
18. **ARCHITECTURAL TYPE (choose from applicable list(s)):**
Type: AA / Single room, square (frame, brick, or
stone)
Other:
19. **ARCHITECTURAL STYLE (choose from applicable
list(s)):**
Style: 00 / No discernable style
Other:
20. **FOUNDATION WALLS:**
Type: 1 / Piers
Material: S / Stone
21. **ROOFING**
Configuration: A / Gable, side
Roof Covering: 10 / Corrugated panels (iron,
aluminum, etc.)
22. **ARCHITECT/BUILDER (if known):**
23. **WINDOWS:** Original Replacement
Current Material: W / Wood
Sash Operation: F / Fixed
Glazing Pattern: M / Multi-Light
24. **NUMBER OF SUPPORT RESOURCES:** _____
(If yes, complete #27 and #28 below)
25. **COMMENTS/HISTORICAL INFORMATION** (Complete on
Continuation Sheet)
26. **PHOTO** (Place Additional Photos below under 26
cont'd)



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27. SUPPORT RESOURCES:

SITE PLAN KEY	NAME OF RESOURCE	FUNCTION	CONSTRUCTION DATE	METHOD/MATERIAL
1	Little Hay Grave House	07C: Funerary Other	5: 1875-1899	W3 / Frame, type unknown
2	Little Sparks Grave House	07C: Funerary Other	4: 1900-1924	W3 / Frame, type unknown

28. SITE PLAN (Complete if #24 was answered or if you are using sub-numbers):

29. MAP (Scan or attach copy of map showing exact location of resources):



25. (continued) COMMENTS/HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

The Hay & Sparks Cemetery (listed in Find-a-Grave) is located at 26070 KY-32 Martha, Kentucky on a small hill. The first recorded mention of the cemetery is in the Lawrence County deed book 29 page 264 dated 1894 when John Hay transferred the land to his son Leander M. Hay. The farm and cemetery land have been in the Hay family since 1837 (Lawrence County DI-420) and is now owned by Emmett and Carol Hay Barker. The first burial is likely to be that of the still born son of John and Rebecca Hay in April 25, 1857, whose birth is mentioned in the Lawrence County birth records (1847-1911). There is no head stone other than a badly worn short stone by the grave of John & Rebecca Hay. Within the Hay & Sparks Cemetery are thirty-six total graves with head stones and eight graves with a rock as a marker. There are two grave houses which, based on the folkways and oral history laid out below, were likely constructed shortly after the death date of the first person buried beneath their roofs (for the Little Hay House, c.1897 and for the Little Sparks House, c.1909). Gary Hay remembers his Aunt Angeline Hay Ross Fields telling him that her father John was buried in that little house. Gary Hay's first cousin Rebecca Hay Phillips also referred to her Gran Pap John being buried in the "little house." Gary Hay's immediate family always referred to his grandfather's grave as the "little house." The Little Hay and Sparks Grave Houses are oriented with their entrance doors facing East (reflecting the traditional East-West orientation of the Headstones) and each Little Grave House has a South-Facing Window. Each Grave Houses has been built over two graves. Roofs have exposed rafter tails beneath their eave overhang.

Gary Hay refers to the two grave houses as the Little Hay House and the Little Sparks House. The Little Hay House was built over the graves of John Hay 1832-1918 and his first wife Rebecca Skaggs Hay 1832-1897. This Little Hay House is a frame, weatherboard-sided building measuring 11.8' x 12 ½' x 8' tall with a 7" x 7" hewn beam base plate and a tin gabled roof. The sides are 4 ½' tall with an inward-opening weatherboard door measuring 35" wide x 44" tall. The Little Sparks house was built over the grave of Solomon Sparks Jr. 1866-1909 and Nancy A. Hay Sparks 1869-1947. This Little Sparks House is a frame, weatherboard-sided building measuring 12 ½' x 10 ½' x 8' tall with a 5" x 5" hewn beam base plate and a gabled tin roof. The sides are 4 ½' tall with an inward-opening weatherboard door measuring 35" wide x 44' tall. To the best of Gary Hay's knowledge there are no other grave houses in Lawrence County Kentucky although there are examples, some similar and some different, across the Appalachian region and in other parts of the country. Although the windows in the Grave Houses appear to have been replaced, this is a relatively minor impact to their historic integrity as a whole. Additionally, window replacement is a type of alteration NPS has previously accepted for Grave Houses listed on the National Register in other states. Grave Houses were generally built during a "golden age" from 1880-1930. Open style grave houses called grave shelters were also built during this time, and usually had four corner posts on stone piers, a gable roof, a wall or fence halfway up, and a gate for entry. Closed grave houses like the Little Hay & Sparks Houses usually had four corner posts on stone piers with a gabled roof, four walls which went all the way up, one or two windows, and a door for entry. The tradition of constructing Grave Houses and Grave Shelters over family members' graves declined when concrete and steel burial vaults were introduced. Both little houses at the Hay Sparks cemetery fill the description of a closed grave house with a door, one window, a gabled tin roof, and four walls to the top. Little Hay and Sparks Grave Houses are unique in that they appear to have had continuous dry laid fieldstone foundations historically (portions of which remain) but, due to missing/fallen stones, now rest on only large stone piers in many places. At 8' tall, Little Hay and Sparks Grave Houses are also larger and their base construction is of heavier materials than other examples.

The purpose of Grave Shelters and Houses may have been to afford a degree of status in the community or to protect the grave from the elements and free-range animals. There were also folk tales of protection from grave robbers, (a wild animal that would burrow in the soft soil.) Gary Hay's Aunt Angeline Hay Ross Fields and first cousin once removed Ada Sparks told him that the Little Hay & Sparks Grave Houses were associated with a curse that the grave had to be covered before the first rain or the next oldest family member would die. Gary Hay's first cousin once removed Ada Sparks, who was the cemetery caretaker for nearly fifty years, provided the following information about the Little Sparks House. The Little Sparks House has two unmarked graves outside - one on each side of the door. These are an infant born to Alfred & Mary Skaggs and stillborn infant born to George Regina Sparks. There are two unmarked graves on the backside of that of a mother and son whose last name was Jones. The mother and son were taken in by Nancy Hay Sparks. No information is known about the mother's death, but the boy had an epileptic seizure and fell into a creek and drowned. Ada's father John Mart Sparks was a diabetic and his leg had to be amputated. His leg was buried and then he was buried at the cemetery beside his leg a few years later. There are stillborn boys, Rufus and Russel Sparks 17 May 1935 buried in the same grave. Message from Gary Sparks who completed the text of this form and included his family memories: I feel this cemetery with the Little Grave Houses should be preserved. They are not only important to our family heritage and culture, but they are also important to Lawrence County and the State of Kentucky as an educational tool about those who preceded us and their way of life and beliefs. The "Little" Hay and Sparks Grave Houses appear to be Eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria Consideration D/Criteria A and C. Under Criteria Consideration D/Criterion A, the Grave Houses are significant at the state level in the area of social history as relatively rare survivors of an Appalachian regional folkway, the construction of miniature houses to protect the graves of their loved ones. Under Criteria Consideration D/Criterion C, the Grave Houses may be significant at the national level as they appear to be better preserved and larger examples of the physical expression of this Appalachian folkway than others found in the region.

27. (continued) ADDITIONAL IMAGES:



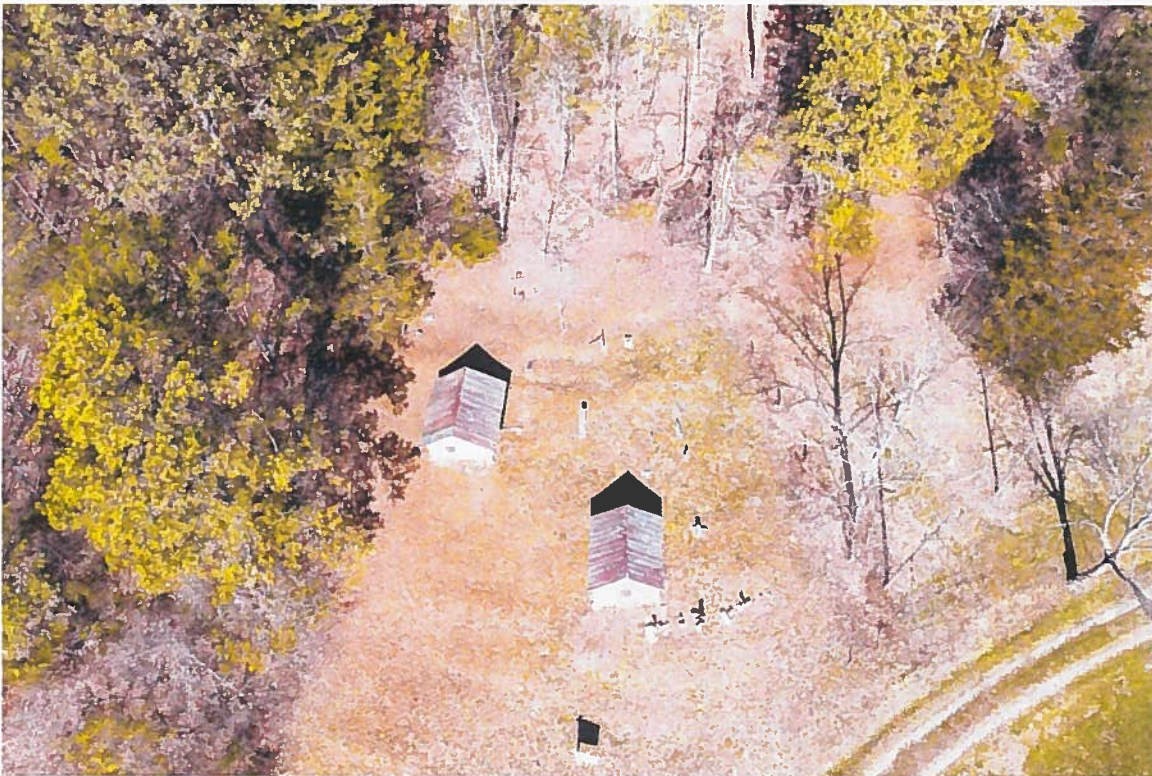
Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South Elevations, Camera Looking North)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South, East Elevations, Camera Looking Northwest)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South, East Elevations, Camera Looking Northwest)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South Elevation and Aerial View)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (Aerial View, South-North)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (Aerial View, E-W)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South Elevation and Aerial View)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo (South Elevation)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Perspective Photo of Other Graves in Cemetery (Looking Southwest)



Caption: Perspective Photo of "Little" Hay House and Other Graves in Cemetery (Looking North)



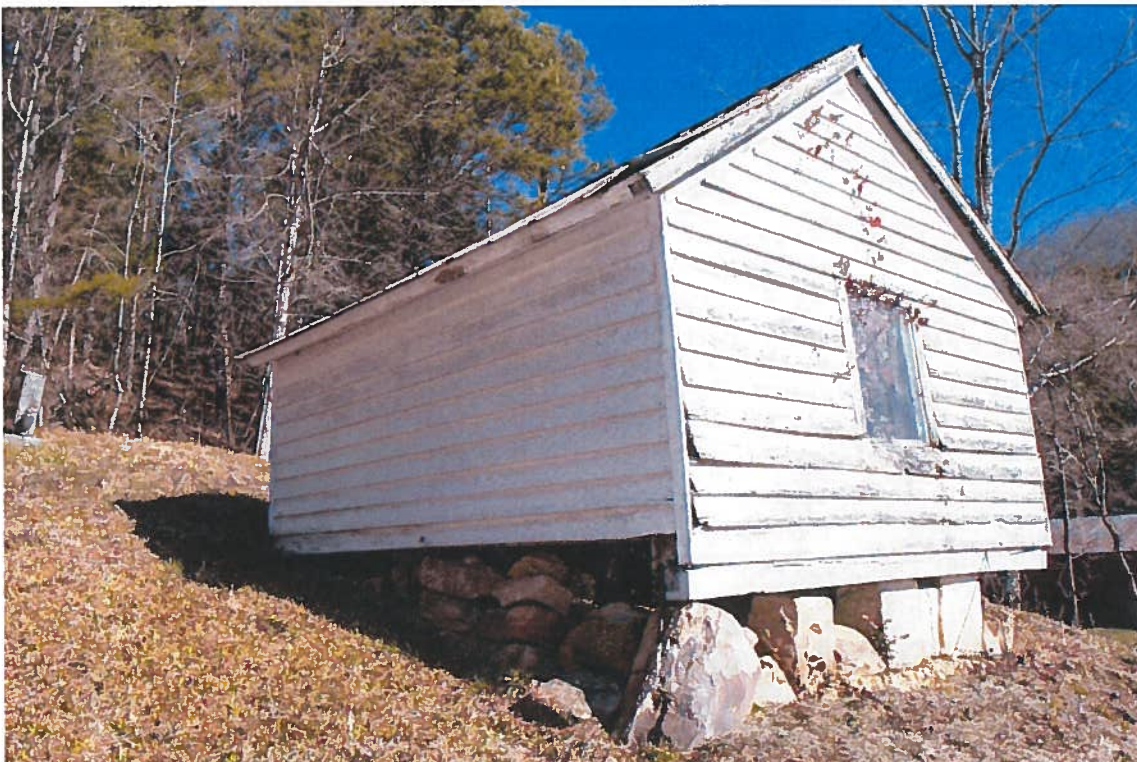
Caption: Perspective Photo of "Little" Sparks House and Other Graves in Cemetery (Looking North)



Caption: Perspective Photo of Hay & Sparks Cemetery Showing Other Graves in Cemetery (Looking East)



Caption: Hay & Sparks Cemetery Sign



Caption: "Little" Hay Grave House (West, South Elevations)



Caption: "Little" Hay Grave House (West Elevation)



Caption: "Little" Hay Grave House (North Elevation)



Caption: "Little" Hay House (East Elevation Showing Entrance Door)



Caption: "Little" Hay Grave House Interior Showing Framing of Building and Headstone Inside



Caption: Detail of "Little" Hay Grave House Headstone, John and Rebecca Hay (Interior to Grave House)



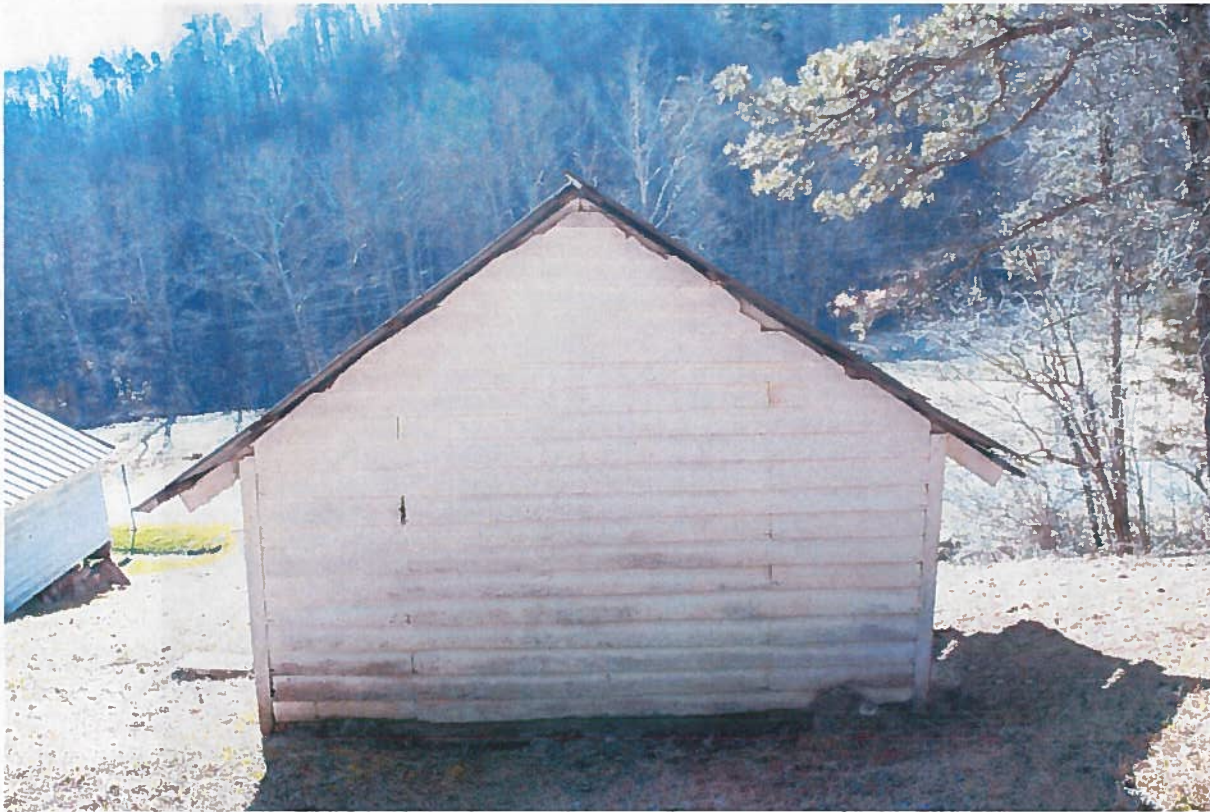
Caption: "Little" Sparks Grave House (East Elevation Showing Entrance Door)



Caption: "Little" Sparks Grave House (South Elevation)



Caption: "Little" Sparks Grave House (West Elevation)



Caption: "Little" Sparks Grave House (North Elevation)



Caption: "Little" Sparks Grave House Interior Showing Framing of Building and Headstone Inside



Caption: Detail of "Little" Sparks Grave House Headstone, Solomon and Nancy Ann Sparks (Interior to Grave House)



Caption: Detail of Sarah Skaggs Headstone (fallen) Located in Hay & Sparks Cemetery



Caption: Detail of Ballard Hay Headstone (fallen) in Hay & Sparks Cemetery



Caption: Detail of Lillie Hay Headstone (fallen) in Hay & Sparks Cemetery



Caption: Homemade Concrete Headstone for Phyllis Sue Sparks (parents William and Treva Sparks)