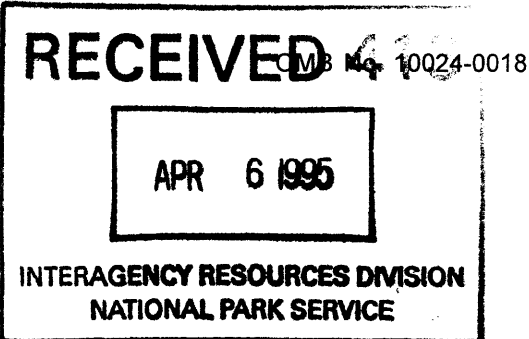


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Ochsner Hospital

other names/site number La Plata County Hospital; Gable House; 5LP1336

2. Location

street & number 805 Fifth Avenue [N/A] not for publication

city or town Durango [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county La Plata code 067 zip code 81301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

[Signature] State Historic Preservation Officer March 28, 1995 Date

Colorado State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet [].
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register
- other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date 5/4/95
Edson H. Beall
Entered in the National Register

Ochsner Hospital
Name of Property

La Plata County, CO
County/State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH CARE/hospital

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE

walls BRICK

roof WOOD/shake

other _____

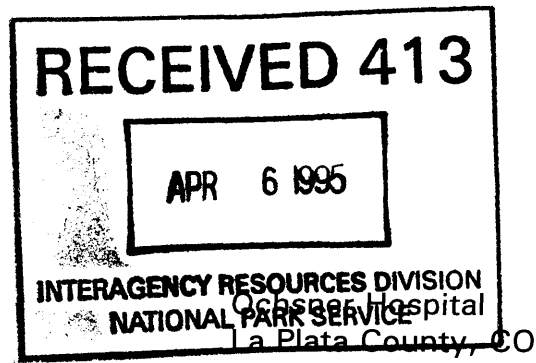
Narrative Description

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

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National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1



DESCRIPTION

The 1890 Ochsner Hospital is a classic example of the Queen Anne style as expressed in the western United States during the 1890s. The structure is a three-story brick building with a wood wrap-around porch punctuated by ornate banisters and columns. The house also features two second-story balconies, an imposing polygonal corner turret, and four intersecting gables. The gable ends contain fishscale shingles with ornate vergeboards.

The former hospital is located only two blocks from the East Third Avenue Historic District (National Register listed in 1984), "the community's oldest most intact historic residential neighborhood."¹ The building is five blocks from the center of old town Durango. It is situated on the rear quarter of four lots, leaving a large expanse of yard in the foreground. The entire compound is surrounded by a six foot high English privet hedge. The hedge is broken by three period replica wrought iron gates.

The three course thick, red brick walls spring from a sandstone block foundation. There is a full basement under three quarters of the first-story. A wrap-around porch surrounds the corner turret along the front (east) and south elevations. The majority of windows on the first and second story are wood frame, one-over-one double hung sash. The first-story windows have sandstone sills and radiating brick voussoirs. The second-story windows have sandstone sills and lintels. Three massive chimneys intersect the roof: one abuts the south elevation of the corner turret; another rises on the north elevation; and the third intersects the rear (west) roof elevation. In addition to the gables on each elevation, a small hipped roof dormer occupies the west end of the south elevation and a modern hipped roof dormer with skylight occupies the north elevation of the front (east) gable. The cedar shingle roof replicates the original and is sprayed with powdered graphite.

The structure is 8,000 square feet with 13 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, a massive 50' x 15' living room, library, dining room, and large kitchen. The white oak hardwood floors were laid in 1937 and covered in 1939 by order of the state hospital board. These floors have been restored to their original condition in most of the house. The house is dominated by a long sweeping entry on the east or Fifth Avenue elevation. The heavy ornate 48" wide door opens into the main entry with a fireplace on the left and the first of three flights of ornate pine stairs. On the right are two 36" x 90" pocket doors that open into the library. All the doors on the first-story are original, heart pine with cast brass hinges and mortise sets. The library is approximately 30' x 15'. It contains another set of large pine sliding doors that lead into the expansive living room. The centerpiece of this room is a large fireplace and three impressive brass chandeliers. Continuing to the left, or south, the living room opens into a 30' x 15' dining room. Adjacent to this room is a kitchen that was added in the late 1930s or early 1940s. Also on the first floor is the master bedroom and bath, as well as a guest bath.

¹ Karen Anesi, "The Boulevard/East Third Avenue Historic Residential District Application, P. 1.

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Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO

The second-story consists of a wide main hallway, five large bedrooms, and a bath. The third-story contains six bedrooms and a bath. The fourth-story, or converted attic, is a two room office and bedroom suite.

Some external alterations to the original design occurred, but these changes do not significantly diminish the integrity of the building. In ca.1940, a wood frame, shed roofed kitchen was added to the rear (west) elevation. In the same year a small, flat roofed, wood frame utility room was added to the north elevation of the house by the hospital administration. The north end of the wrap-around porch, including the original porch stairs, was also enclosed by a wood frame addition. A third-story metal fire escape provides egress via the north gable windows. An additional window was added to the turret's third-story and it and the other third-story turret windows are now single light casements instead of the original one-over-ones. The only other exterior alteration was the addition of the dormer on the north side to provide more incidental light to the operating room. This took place around 1915. The courthouse records show by way of a plumbing lien that indoor plumbing was added in 1910.

Carriage house/garage

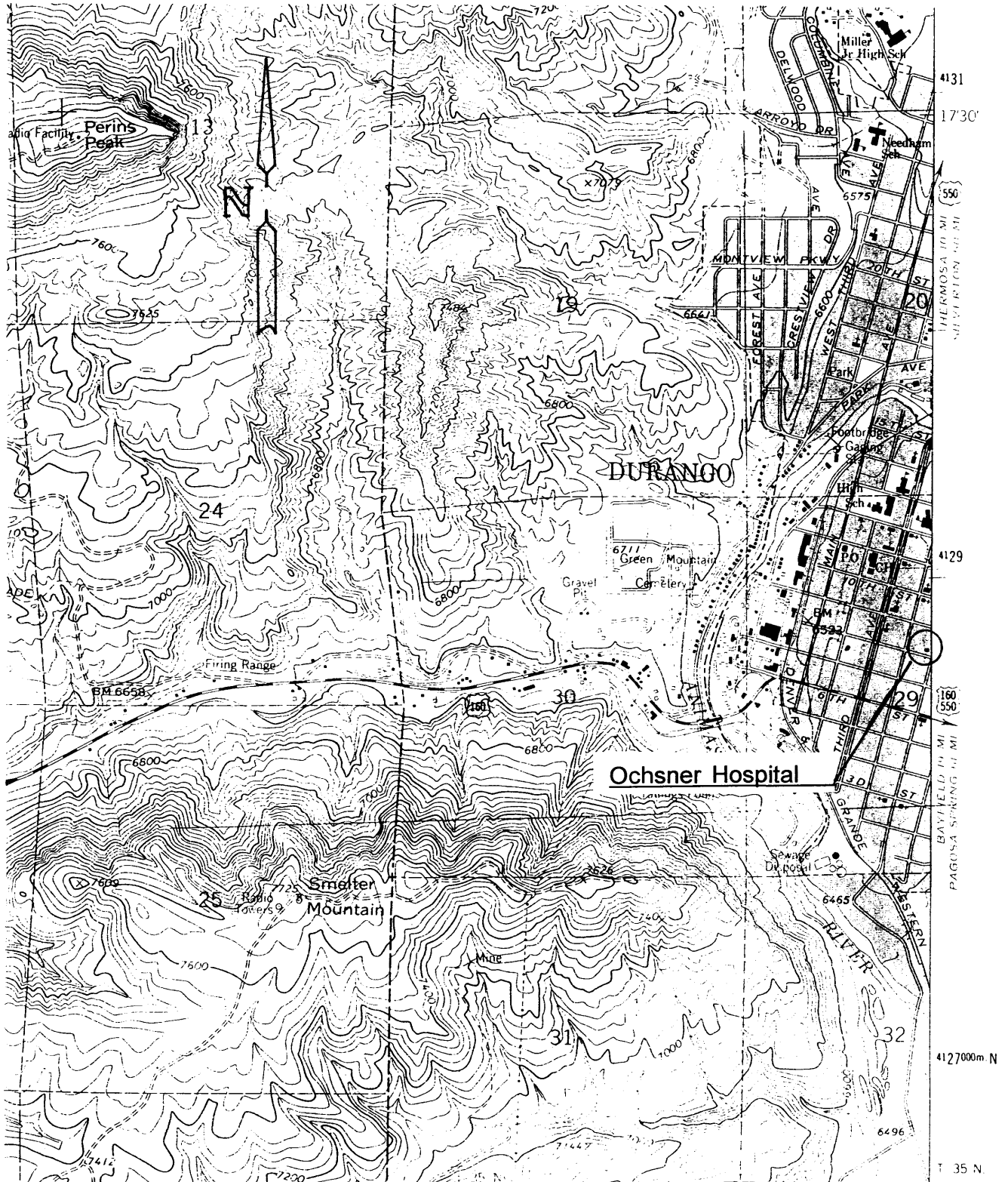
The property also includes a two-story, rectangular, wood frame carriage house/garage. The first-story is wood sided and the second-story is shingled. The building is topped with a metal hipped roof. The historic windows have been replaced with single light casements and a small shed roofed addition was added on the north elevation. The building is considered to be contributing.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO



Ochsner Hospital
Name of Property

La Plata County, CO
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

HEALTH/MEDICINE

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

1890

1913 - 1942

Significant Dates

1890

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above).

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

Durango Public Library

Animas Museum

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO

SIGNIFICANCE

The Ochsner Hospital is considered to be eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A. The building was one of Durango's earliest private hospitals from 1913 to 1942 and served as its first public hospital from 1942 to 1962. Many Durangoans were born or received care in this hospital from 1913 to 1962. The building is also considered to be eligible under Criterion C as one of Durango's best examples of Queen Anne architecture in terms of scale and detailing.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The town of Durango was founded in 1880 and laid out by men in the employ of General William Jackson Palmer's Denver and Rio Grande Railroad.² The railroad intended to extend their line through the valley and up the Animas Canyon to tap the rich Silverton mining district in the heart of the San Juan Mountains. With the advantage lent by the railroad, Durango soon developed a regional economy. Such industries as smelting, logging, coal mining, banking, and agriculture contributed to the growth of Durango in the 1880s and 1890s.³

James E. and Eliza Schutt, owners of the Schutt Flour Mill and Schutt Mercantile, acquired the property for the house between 1884 and 1890. Construction appears to have begun in 1890 and was apparently completed in 1892. Given the size of their real estate holdings, the Schutts were one of Durango's prominent couples. They fell prey to the 1893 silver crash and by 1898 were forced to sell the house to J.L. Rachofsky, another mercantile owner. His store, The Famous, caught fire in 1913. In that same year, Rachofsky sold the house to its most illustrious owner, Dr. Benjamin J. Ochsner, "One of the best known medical men in the Four Corners area."⁴ He studied in Europe for a year and in 1902 came to Telluride to practice. Best known as a surgeon, Dr. Ochsner performed the region's first goiter operations here. His hospital contained the most modern equipment of the period including Durango's first X-ray equipment.⁵

² Duane Smith, *Sagebrush Metropolis: Durango 1880-1881*, (Durango: Durango Herald, 1977) p. 3.

³ Duane Smith, *Rocky Mountain Boom Towns*, (Albuquerque: Univ. Of N.M. Press, 1980) pp. 9,30,34,35,38.

⁴ *Durango Herald*, Obituary of Dr. Benjamin Ochsner, 8/25/1953.

⁵ *Durango Herald*, Obituary of Dr. Benjamin Ochsner, 8/25/1953.

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Section number 8 Page 6

Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO

In addition to being an accomplished doctor and surgeon, Ochsner was also an internationally famous photographer and pistol shot. While in Austria he won that country's national pistol championship. He staged an exhibition of pistol shooting for the king and queen of Belgium. Later, he numbered the American National Pistol trophy among his many national and international awards for both rifle and hand gun shooting.⁶

Considered one of the world's most consistent contributors to national and international photography salons, the doctor became one of the few Americans honored with a fellowship to the Royal Photography Society of London. His photographs hang in the permanent collections at the Smithsonian Institute. Further interests in music led him to play nightly with a string ensemble in Durango's Sheridan Hotel.⁷

Dr. Ochsner sold his hospital to Dr. Leo Lloyd and Dr. Christopher Martin in 1936. Doctors Lloyd and Martin ran the hospital for six years and then sold it to La Plata County when they both left to serve in the armed forces during World War II. It became the county's first public hospital, operating until 1962 when the county moved to a new location north of town.⁸

In 1962 the county sold the building to JAME Corporation and in 1966 it was sold to one of the stockholders, Marvin Dale, the local postmaster. In 1970, Dale sold it to its present owners, Jeffrey and Heather Bryson, who now operate the former hospital as a bed and breakfast.

The period of significance includes only the years during which the building served as a private hospital, 1913-1942.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The most ornate style of the Victorian period in Colorado, the Queen Anne style was popular between 1880 and 1910. Characterized by its asymmetrical composition and vertical orientation expressed in a steeply pitched, multi-gabled roof, the Ochsner Hospital epitomizes this style. Other elements of the Queen Anne style aptly displayed on the building include a polygonal turret; prominent, decorative porches, including a wrap-around porch; decorative vergeboard; and wall surfaces comprised of a variety of textures and materials.

⁶ *Durango Herald*, Obituary of Dr. Benjamin Ochsner, 8/25/1953.

⁷ *Durango Herald*, Obituary of Dr. Benjamin Ochsner, 8/25/1953.

⁸ DiFerdinando, Charles, interviewed by Jeff Bryson on June 15, 1994 at the Animas Museum, Durango.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 & 10 Page 7

Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anesi, Karen, "The Boulevard/East Third Avenue Historic Residential District Application"

DiFerdinando, Charles, interviewed by Jeff Bryson on June 15, 1994 at the Animas Museum, Durango

Durango Herald, Obituary of Dr. Benjamin Ochsner, 8/25/1953

Smith, Duane, *Rocky Mountain Boom Towns*, (Albuquerque: Univ. Of N.M. Press, 1980)

_____, *Sagebrush Metropolis: Durango 1880-1881*, (Durango: Durango Herald, 1977)

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Block 54, Durango, La Plata County, Colorado.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the Ochsner Hospital.

Ochsner Hospital
Name of Property

La Plata County, CO
County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. Zone	13	245080	4128630	2. Zone		
		Easting	Northing		Easting	Northing
3. Zone		Easting	Northing	4. Zone		
					Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey C. Bryson

organization _____ date August 1, 1994

street & number 805 Fifth Avenue telephone 303-247-4982

city or town Durango state CO zip code 81301

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

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

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name Heather & Jeffrey Bryson

street & number 805 Fifth Avenue telephone _____

city or town Durango state CO zip code 81301

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

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photographs Page 9

Ochsner Hospital
La Plata County, CO

- 11 Carriage house/garage, south elevation, view to the north
- 12 Carriage house/garage, west elevation, view to the east
- 13 Carriage house/garage, north elevation, view to the southeast

