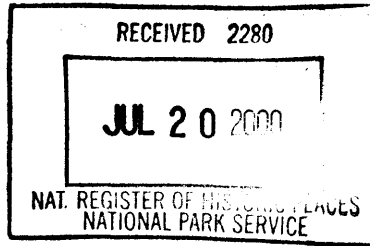


(Oct. 1990)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



993

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions 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 Cheekwood
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1200 Forrest Park Drive N/A not for publication
city or town Nashville N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Davidson code 037 zip code 37205

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Kasper 7/13/00
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
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:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Alvin M. Way 8/23/00

Cheekwood
Name of Property

Davidson County, TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
3	buildings
3	sites
7	structures
3	objects
16	Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling; secondary structure

LANDSCAPE: garden; street furniture/object

RECREATION/CULTURE: work of art

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE: garden; street furniture/object

RECREATION/CULTURE: museum; work of art

EDUCATION: education-related building

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Georgian Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone; BRICK

walls STONE: Limestone; BRICK

roof Fiberglass shingles; Asphalt shingles

other METAL; GLASS

Narrative Description

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

See continuation sheets.

Cheekwood

Name of Property

Davidson County, TN

County and 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: N/A

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C moved from its original location.
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.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Landscape Architecture
Art

Period of Significance

1929-1932

Significant Dates

1929-1932

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Fleming, Bryant; Kerrigan, Philip - iron work
see continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical 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): N/A

- 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 #

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
Other State Agency
Federal Agency
Local Government
University
Other

Name of repository:
Cheekwood Museum of Art

Cheekwood
Name of Property

Davidson County, TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Approximately 7 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

Belleview 308 SW

1 16 511130 3893660
Zone Easting Northing
2 _____

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing
4 _____

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 Carroll Van West
organization MTSU Center for Historic Preservation date February 22, 2000
street & number PO Box 80, MTSU telephone 615-898-2947
city or town Murfreesboro state TN zip code 37132

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 Tennessee Botanical Gardens and Museum of Art (Bob Brackman, contact)
street & number 1200 Forrest Park Drive telephone 615-356-8000
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37205

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 listing. 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 20303.

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Architect/Builder

Hopton, Harold V. - plaster work
Barthle, Leo - wood work

1980-1981
Street, Ed - Stalworth Gallery

1998-1999:
Graham Gund Associates - architect
Hadley, Arthur - interior
Page, Ben - landscape

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Description

Constructed between 1929 and 1932, Cheekwood is located at 1200 Forrest Park Drive in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee. The estate originally contained approximately 100 acres. In 1959, 55 acres of the estate were given for the creation of the Tennessee Botanical Gardens and Fine Arts Museum. The nominated property contains approximately seven acres of the original estate, a section that contains the core of the original landscape architecture and domestic architecture of Cheekwood. The extant historic buildings, structures, and sites comprise a significant historic district of landscape architecture, designed by master landscape architect Bryant Fleming. The mansion sets within an imaginatively landscaped garden, as if the house and the surrounding limestone walls, limestone terraces, limestone stairs, ornamental metal railings, boxwood-lined paths, staircases, and various period classical statuary and urns were extensions of each other. A wisteria arbor, for instance, connects the south entrance of the house to the south gardens and water features. A broad two-story loggia overlooks an expansive terrace, boxwood-lined walks, and various classical statues. The house itself has its basement floor anchored into the hillside, allowing what is actually a three-story house to blend into the designed environment and interact with the gardens on an intimate scale. The overall effect within the nominated seven acres is that of an English Country House, set in the hills of west Nashville, that through intact vistas, carefully maintained gardens, and sensitively restored buildings, still maintains a strong sense of time and place.

1. Cheekwood Mansion (1929-1932, 1980-1981, 1999)

Cheekwood Mansion is a Georgian Revival styled dwelling, with a limestone foundation, limestone and terra-cotta walls, and an asphalt-shingle hipped roof with four stone chimneys. The house rests on a raised basement, and has two primary floors with a spacious attic. Set on a north-south axis at the crest of a hill, the house has a transverse hall floor plan. Its east facade is a symmetrical nine-bay main block. Four two-story Ionic pilasters define the central three bays of the projecting entrance. The pilasters support a classical entablature and pediment, which has a terra cotta cartouche in its center. Three eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows with limestone lintels are on the second story while the first floor has three eight-over-twelve double-hung sash windows with limestone lintels. The central window has a pedimented lintel. The limestone basement entry has a centered double door, flanked by fluted limestone Doric pilasters, which support a lunette. On either side of the entrance are niches for statuary. Five limestone steps lead to the front door and there are metal handrails, installed circa 1970. Flanking the steps are ornamental metal electric light posts, executed by Philip Kerrigan circa 1932. Flanking the main block's projecting entrance are three bays, which are composed of symmetrically arranged twelve-over-sixteen double-hung sash windows on the first floor and eight-over-eight, double-hung sash windows on the second floor.

On either side of the main block are limestone wings. The projecting gabled south wing with stone quoins has a Palladian-styled window on the main floor, which was copied from one at the Boodle Club in London. Outside of the window is a limestone balcony, with an exquisite decorative ornamental metal balustrade by Philip Kerrigan, supported by four stone consoles. Above the Palladian window are two symmetrical eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows. The recessed north wing of the facade has four symmetrical bays of twelve-over-sixteen double-hung sash windows on the first story and eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows on the second story. A five bay arched arcade, which is largely obscured by boxwoods, extends forward from the first story. Within the arcade are two niches for statuary and a handicapped access ramp added circa 1981. Attached to the north wing is an arched stone gate that allows access to the service courtyard.

The south elevation sets on a raised basement and is symmetrically arranged, with four twelve-over-sixteen double-hung sash windows flanking a central first story entrance, while there are six eight-over-eight, double-hung sash windows on the second story. A neoclassical styled wisteria arbor, executed by Philip Kerrigan, is connected to the house at the central entrance and is supported by five square metal posts topped with a modernist interpretation of a

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Corinthian capital. The arbor rests on a stone balcony and extends south, effectively connecting the house to the various terraces and water features of the south gardens. It further provides the primary south vista into the adjacent Harpeth Hills.

The west elevation is dominated by a two-story, four bay loggia which has three, symmetrically arranged two-story Corinthian columns and two two-story Corinthian pilasters. Built into the hillside so that only the first and second floors of the dwelling are accessible, the loggia was designed to provide views of and immediate access to the terrace and gardens, especially the Swan Fountain. In 1998-1999, museum officials enclosed the loggia with new glass, metal, and wooden doors that were similar to the doors from the long gallery into the loggia. This remodeling replaced large louvered doors originally designed by Leslie Cheek, Jr., and installed after 1932. The decision to replace the louvered doors was made in order to provide proper museum-standard environmental control to the dwelling. On either the north or south side of the loggia are slightly projecting gabled wings. Both the north and south gable wings have two symmetrical bays on both the first and second floors, with the upper floor windows being eight-over-eight double-hung sash windows while the first floor has twelve-over-sixteen double-hung sash windows topped by stylized shell-like lintels. The north and south gables also have a centered terra cotta cartouche. Immediately north of the north gable is the one-story, hipped roof projecting three-sided room. This is breakfast room, which has a central three-part window flanked by two four-over-four double-hung sash windows. Connected to the breakfast room is the Stalworth Gallery, a two-story limestone and concrete addition with basement, constructed in 1980-1981.

The irregularly arranged, three-story north elevation was the original service wing of the house. On the first story, a wood paneled door is flanked by two four-over-four double-hung sash windows to the east and a garage door, which was installed circa 1980 to allow museum staff to bring larger works into the house, to the west. A winding stone and concrete staircase, which features a metal railing executed by Philip Kerrigan, connects the exterior of the first story to the exterior of the second story, where a recessed entrance allowed access to the main floors of the mansion. Above the staircase is a recessed eight-over-eight double-hung sash window. Flanking the staircase are triple pairs of casement windows, which date to an unknown period. The third story has three symmetrical bays, each with an ornamental metal balustrade executed by Philip Kerrigan. These bays have large single pane windows, which were installed in 1980-1981, when the Stalworth Gallery was added to this elevation. The Stalworth Gallery was located at the northwest corner of the mansion. This irregular shaped limestone, concrete, and steel gallery with large single-pane windows is the only significant alteration to the exterior of the mansion since its original construction between 1929 and 1932. As architect Ed Street stated in the *Nashville Banner* of May 17, 1981: "the concept of the renovation had been to do as little as possible to the house itself...the exterior appearance of the added area wouldn't pretend to mimic the style of the house, but would blend congenially with it and maintain its scale, tone, and texture."

Since 1960, the interior of the mansion has been used for exhibit space, offices, storage, and other museum-related functions. Consequently, portions of the house no longer exhibit their original function. But in 1998-1999, under the direction of designer Albert Hadley and architect Graham Gund Associates, the primary public rooms of the mansion - the entrance foyer, the long hall, and gallery - were restored to their circa 1932 appearance. These restored rooms retain many elements of Fleming's original design that incorporated new construction and historical objects and elements. The graceful curved staircase, with balusters and handrail from the palace of Queen Charlotte at Kew, England, is one good extant example of Fleming's work. Other important elements are three sets of mahogany and gilt doors from Grosvenor House, London; a white marble and blue lapis lazuli 18th century mantelpiece attributed to Robert Adam; breakfast room doors from the Jesuit College at Hiles Place, Canterbury, England; pine paneling in the library that features mahogany doors and fruitwood door frames from Sedbury Park, England; an Italian Renaissance terra cotta fountain in the loggia; an 18th century Italian marble mantelpiece; two chandeliers from the residence of the Countess of Scarborough; a dozen 19th century English panels painted in the Italian style along the long hall; and a clock surrounded by a swag held by eagles. Much of the original plaster work, executed by the firm of Harold V. Hopton, was also restored, while the interior carpentry and woodwork is of high quality and artistic merit. (C)

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

2. Frist Learning Center (1931-1932, 1998-99)

In 1998-1999, a new two-story glass, metal, and concrete building - what architectural critic Christine Kreyling aptly described as a "transparent membrane" in the *Nashville Scene*, October 28, 1998 - was constructed, enclosing the original garage and stable buildings (1931-32). The designer was Graham Gund Architects. Although the interior of the stables and garages were renovated into new uses, the exteriors remain intact, reflecting the original red-brick Colonial Revival style of the buildings, complete with colonial cupolas. Also, the original courtyard between the two buildings was retained in the renovation. Intact interior features are the original patterns of stall, carriage, and garage doors as well as the wood-paneled tack room. New restrooms and elevators are in the new construction so as not to intrude on the original material of the two buildings. Although changed in function, the Frist Learning Center received a respectful renovation and contributes the setting and integrity of the property. As Kreyling observed, "what is admirable about Cheekwood's Frist Center is the creative respect shown for the original architecture." (2 C)

3. Swan Terrace and Pool (1931-1932)

This contributing stone fountain structure, with a swan statue cast from lead, was the centerpiece of Fleming's primary land alteration, the creation of the terrace. After accepting the commission, Fleming discovered that the hillside location of Cheekwood was almost solid limestone. The original design called for the leveling of the hillside to create a terrace, and Fleming then took the quarried limestone to use as the primary building material of the mansion. The pool represents the highest elevation of the water features of the estate, and from this height, the water flows through various designed features to the three pools south of the house. (C)

4. Southwest Garden (1931-1932)

A low limestone retaining wall, with ornamental metal railings executed by Philip Kerrigan, separates this small recessed garden from the terrace. It has a small water feature, with a stone swan sculpture (1931-1932) and at its southwest corner there is a classically-inspired stone statue of a woman carrying a basket on her head. This eighteenth century English sculpture, which rests on a concrete and limestone pedestal, was acquired from an unknown source during Cheek family trips to England. The sculptor is unknown. (C)

5. Wisteria Arbor (1931-1932)

Executed by Philip Kerrigan, the wisteria arbor is an impressive ornamental metal structure, with a modernist interpretation of neoclassical style in its thin metal Corinthian posts. It rests on a limestone foundation. Underneath the arbor is a classically-styled stone bench, probably acquired from England in the late 1920s, and a sculpture of a human torso, which rests on a stone pedestal and is dedicated to Walter Sharp. The arbor is a contributing structure. (C)

6. Great Basin Pool (1931-1932)

A stone staircase, with ornamental railing executed by Philip Kerrigan, leads down to the Great Basin Pool, which is framed by a stone arch wall. At the northwest corner of the pool is the Lady of the Lake stone statue, which is believed to be English, 18th century. (C)

7. Reflection Pool (1931-1932)

A terrace, with a low stone wall and Kerrigan decorative ironwork railing at the south end, overlooks the Reflection Pool, which had its original depth restored in work completed in 1998-1999. At the west end of the pool is a stone classical statue of Urnea, the Greek Muse of Drama. At the east end is a stone classical statue of Thalia, the Greek Muse of

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Comedy. Both works date to 18th century England and were acquired during the Cheeks' trips there during the 1920s. The statues rest on stone and concrete pedestals and were cleaned and restored in 1998-1999. To the immediate south of the Reflection Pool is another stone wall and double staircase that leads into the boxwoods surrounding the south gardens.(C)

8. Southeast Gardens (1931-1932)

Near the southeast corner of the mansion is a limestone wall and overlook that features an iron sundial on an urn-shaped stone pedestal and one of five terra-cotta urns, attributed to J. M. Blashfield of London, that are located on the property. Underneath the overlook runs water from the south garden fountains, and this water feature meanders down the hill through various plants and trees until it reaches the three pools at the bottom of the hill. A stone staircase, with decorative metal railings executed by Philip Kerrigan, winds from the overlook down to the stream of water. (C)

9. Classical male statue (1931-1932)

Located at the northwest corner of the house, near where the Stalworth Gallery abuts the Breakfast Room, is a classically-inspired stone statue of a male, believed to be 18th century English in origins. It is a contributing object. (C)

10. Small statue of cherubs playing with goats (1931-1932)

This contributing object rests on a stone pedestal and is near the loggia entrance. Its origins are believed to be 18th century England. (C)

11. Northwest Garden (1931-1932)

This interrelated structure contains stone walls, stone steps, stone pedestals, and ornamental metal balustrades executed by Philip Kerrigan. Various pieces of sculpture are displayed, including two lead roosters, two iron urns, and a large marble urn with cherubic Bacchus. The origins of the sculptures are unknown, but the marble urn is believed to be English, 18th century. The garden is a contributing structure (C)

12. Oxford Urn (1931-1932)

This large neoclassical piece, located at the west end of the terrace, is a copy of a similar urn at Oxford, England. Resting on a stone pedestal, the urn is a contributing object. (C)

13. Pet Cemetery (1937-1959)

Located below the west terrace, this small plot allowed the Cheek children to bury favorite pets on the mansion grounds. The first marked burial took place in 1937. The date of the last burial is not known. This is a contributing site. (C)

14. Robinson Family Water Garden (1931-1932)

These three ponds, with hand-laid rock walls in a casual Rustic-style manner, provided the water for the estate's various water features. After decades of infill, the original depth of the ponds was restored in 1999, but the new work was done so to harmonize with the original construction and the ponds retain integrity of setting, feeling, and association. (C)

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

15. Overall site: walks, driveway, boxwoods, scattered urns

Throughout the nominated property there are five scattered stone benches, stone walls, landscaped walks framed by boxwoods, a service court that contains relocated historic cobblestones from downtown Nashville, and various stone urns and clay pots. All of these landscape features date to 1931-1932 and retain their integrity to that period. They help to connect the different elements of the landscape into a coherent whole and together these elements comprise a contributing site. (C)

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Significance

Cheekwood, at 1200 Forrest Park Drive in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C in the areas of architecture, landscape architecture and art. Cheekwood is a significant historic district of related buildings, structures, objects, and sites designed by leading American architect and landscape architect Bryant Fleming between 1929 and 1932. Although the estate was converted to new uses as a botanical garden and art museum beginning circa 1959, much of the original residential design is intact. The nominated property boundaries contain the most significant elements of Fleming's original design, including the mansion and surrounding landscape features. In addition to the work of Bryant Fleming, Cheekwood contains superb examples of the artistic ironwork of Philip Kerrigan and the Kerrigan Iron Works. The various buildings, sites, objects, and structures included in the district reflect well the original historical and architectural integrity of the property.

The estate lies at the northwest end of Belle Meade Boulevard (1909-1910), which is one of Nashville's best-known streets. In 1909, architect Ossian Cole Simonds, one of the leading landscape architects in the country, was commissioned to design a new subdivision, then called Belle Meade Park. To open the old plantation fields for new house lots, Simonds produced a curving street plan that adapted to the natural contours of the landscape. Simonds' plan was never fully realized, however, because the land company encountered financial difficulties. By December 1910, Luke Lea and a group of local investors controlled the land company. Lea approached the Nashville Street Railway and Light Company to build a four-mile-long streetcar track from the end of its line at Wilson Boulevard to what is now Percy Warner Park. Lea even promised to underwrite the cost of the line extension and to provide a macadam boulevard twenty feet wide on both sides of the streetcar line. This streetcar line later became the route of today's Belle Meade Boulevard. As fine homes, apartments, churches, and parks were built along the elegant drive over the next two decades, the boulevard became the centerpiece of the Belle Meade neighborhood.

In 1927, Luke Lea of the Belle Meade Land Company donated 868 acres for the creation of a city park, named for his brother-in-law Percy Warner, at the west end of Belle Meade Boulevard. This was the beginning of the Warner Parks (NR 1/20/1984). Cheek purchased sixty acres from the Hillsboro Land Company in 1928. (Deed Book 723-604). The purchase of land, recorded on April 17, 1928 cost Cheek \$40,000. Situated north of the park boundary, the his new country estate was to be named Cheekwood, It would become one of the largest, and most grand, estates in Belle Meade.

Cheek had made his fortune from his extended family's wholesale grocery and coffee-making businesses. This type of commercial activity was very important to Nashville's economic growth in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The wholesale grocers dominated a large regional market, which stretched from southern Kentucky to northern Alabama and extended as far east as the Cumberland Plateau and as far west as the Tennessee River. Joel O. Cheek and Christopher T. Creek, two cousins, established the family's business empire when they started their wholesale grocery firm in 1890. Within two years, the Cheeks were concentrating on the coffee market. They soon established the firm of Nashville Coffee and Manufacturing, which marketed a prepared, roasted and blended coffee at a time when most companies merely sold green beans. In 1904 the Cheeks entered into a partnership with James W. Neal and over the next few years, they expanded production throughout the country as Cheek-Neal Coffee. They built a new roasting plant at Cummins Station (NR 11/17/1983) in Nashville as well as factories in Houston, Jacksonville, Richmond, Brooklyn, Los Angeles, and Chicago. The Cheeks and Neal strived to establish their coffee as a prestige product. They convinced Nashville's Maxwell House hotel to use the coffee exclusively in its restaurants and then they acquired the use of the hotel's name for the coffee's marketing. Sold as Maxwell House Coffee, with the slogan "Good to the Last Drop" (allegedly, praise lavished by President Theodore Roosevelt when he visited the Maxwell House in 1907), the coffee became popular and eventually gained a staggering one-third of the American coffee market. In 1928, Joel Cheek sold the coffee business to Postum Company, later General Foods, for a reported sum of \$42 million, enriching family members who had invested in the company. In 1929, Leslie Cheek, the son of Christopher T. Cheek,

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

took a portion of this windfall, approximately \$1.25 million, and used it over the next three years for the construction of his lavish country house estate. The family moved into the mansion at Thanksgiving in 1932.

As the architect of Cheekwood (the name combines Leslie Cheek's last name with that of his wife Mabel's maiden name, Mabel Wood), the family chose the nationally prominent architect and landscape architect Bryant Fleming, of Ithaca, New York, and Cornell University. Born in Buffalo, New York, in 1877, Fleming graduated from Buffalo High School in 1896. Interested in the field of landscape design, he sought the advice of Frederick Law Olmstead, Sr., who encouraged Fleming to attend Cornell University and study with Liberty Hyde Bailey in the agriculture department. Cornell lacked a formal degree in landscape architecture, but under Bailey's guidance, Fleming took courses in horticulture, architecture, architectural history, and art that prepared him well for his future career. Fleming graduated from Cornell University in 1901, with a B.S. degree in agriculture, and joined the firm of landscape architect Warren H. Fleming, who had been a favorite student of Olmstead, Sr. Three years later, in 1904, Cornell administrators took the first steps toward creating a landscape architecture program at the university. They hired Bailey to organize the new Outdoor Art Group, a two-year program within the College of Agriculture, and Bailey, in turn, hired Fleming as one of the faculty for the program. In 1906 the Outdoor Art Group became the Rural Art program, then in 1912 it was renamed Landscape Art, with a master's degree offered. The College of Architecture took over the program in 1920 and named it Landscape Architecture. By that time, the Cornell program was recognized as one of the nation's most preeminent training grounds for landscape architects.

Throughout these years of program development at Cornell, Fleming continued on the faculty as he also began his own private career as a landscape architect. In 1904 Fleming and Frederic D. Townsend organized the Buffalo firm of Townsend and Fleming, which took on a wide range of subdivision and residential commissions, including several in the vicinity of Glenview, Kentucky, a small railroad town at the northern end of the Central Basin of Kentucky and Tennessee. These Kentucky commissions introduced Fleming to the mid-south, but the bulk of the firm's work was in New York, with the most significant commissions being designs for Letchworth State Park, the restoration of Watkins Glen, and a new landscaped green space at Cornell known as Cascadilla Glen, as well as a new comprehensive campus plan for his alma mater.

Only in his mid-thirties, Fleming soon was recognized as one of the country's promising landscape designers and in 1911 he was elected as a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, an organization that he had joined in 1905. The next significant change in Fleming's career came during World War I, when in 1915, he and Townsend dissolved their partnership and Fleming moved to Wyoming, New York. There he established his own independent practice. Also in that year, the American Academy in Rome recognized landscape architecture as one of the allied arts, and Fleming served as one of the initial jury members for the landscape architecture competition. Moreover, his new home and office in Wyoming, New York, placed Fleming in regular contact with one of his major patrons, Lydia Avery Coonley Ward (1845-1924), a writer and social activist who lived in the town. Fleming designed much of the grounds and house renovations at Ward's estate named "Hillside."

Fleming's firm was small in numbers, but active in a number of wide-ranging projects across the country, especially after the end of World War I when America entered the boom of the Jazz age. Fleming carried out commissions in Chicago, Toronto, Detroit, Cleveland, Kansas City, and Louisville as well as his typical number of commissions in New York State and the surrounding environs. As landscape bibliographers observe, "Fleming's knowledge of art, architectural history, and antiques equaled his command of horticulture and the technical aspects of landscaping, leading to a depth of involvement with his residential projects that defined the Fleming style." (1) In 1924, the year that Lydia Avery Coonley Ward died, Fleming moved his office from Wyoming to Ithaca, New York, home of Cornell University. In 1925, Fleming was appointed as the University Landscape Advisor at Cornell and for the remainder of his professional career, Fleming worked out of Ithaca.

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The Fleming style was in full bloom when the architect completed his first major Tennessee commission, the design of a grand suburban residence for Robert M. Carrier (NR 5/27/80) at 642 South Willett Street in Memphis, in 1926. The Carrier dwelling "is composed of elements of Jacobean, Elizabethan, and Tudor buildings collected by Fleming in England and then reassembled as the centerpiece of the handsome gardens he laid out for the Carriers," according to architectural historians Eugene J. Johnson and Robert D. Russell, Jr. They concluded that "because so many of the interior details are authentic, the house has a remarkable presence." (2) This blending of disparate architectural details, some historic, some manufactured, was an important trait of Fleming's work at this time. "Fleming's work was extremely individual and unorthodox, at times challenging all rationality, often guilty of the most whimsical exaggeration," concluded historian Norman T. Newton, "yet somehow [it was] invariably delightful." (3) His projects often combined interior design, antique furnishings, landscaping, and domestic architecture, all with the purpose of creating a unified statement of time and place. Already he was at work on such a commission at Belle Meade as he gathered furniture, objects, statuary, and prepared the site for the eventual construction of Cheekwood.

An important question to raise about Cheekwood's architectural legacy is why the Cheeks chose Fleming as their architect. Family records are silent on this key decision. Certainly there were prominent southern architects already with experience in executing the plans for large suburban estates. Philip Shultze in Atlanta had already made his mark with the Swan House in the hills north of the Georgia capitol. In Nashville, the firm of Marr and Holman, in association with Thompson, Holmes, and Converse of New York City, had completed the massive Hermitage-like Brentwood Hall estate for financier Rogers Caldwell in the early 1920s. More recently, in 1928, another Nashville firm, Dougherty and Gardner, had designed for insurance executive Guilford Dudley, Sr., and his suffragist wife Anne Dallas Dudley the country house estate known as Hunter's Hill, a lavish Jacobean Revival mansion complete with windows of Venetian glass executed by Owen Boniwit. The Cheeks perhaps wanted New York sophistication—certainly Fleming was more prominent nationally than his southern competitors, and his prior work in central Kentucky and Memphis indicate that he knew how to please southern clients. Another possibility is that Fleming was much more proficient in landscape design than the other designers. The Cheeks wanted to set new, higher standards for gracious living among their social counterparts in Belle Meade. A country estate on the scale of Cheekwood would immediately elevate the Cheeks to a place of prominence in Nashville's social and cultural circles. Fleming's biographers also note that the architect was very persuasive and eager to please potential new clients. Finally, Fleming was not the sort of architect to avoid input from his clients; in fact he and the Cheeks traveled to England together to decide on what sort of house, type of garden, and the range of antiques that they use for the Nashville estate. This trip would prove crucial for the eventual aesthetic sensibility of Cheekwood.

It may never be known why the Cheeks chose Fleming, but it is clearer why they and Fleming chose to build the estate in Georgian Revival style. In the first two decades of the twentieth century, new country houses in England often embraced different variants of Arts and Crafts architecture, such as Tudor Revival and Jacobean Revival. These styles were popularized in Great Britain, and in the United States, through the pages of *Country Life* magazine. For upper-class Americans, this influential magazine created a lasting image of proper estate architecture, social customs, and the gracious, relaxed lifestyle associated with the English country gentleman, an image many Americans sought during their visits overseas and then sought to recreate upon their return to the states. Often architects would travel with their clients on these overseas house tours. In Richmond, Virginia, elite families moved Tudor-era homes from England to build the modern suburban estates of Virginia House and Ashcroft Hall during the mid-1920s. The Dudleys chose a similar style for their Hunter's Hill home, while the Carriers in Memphis commissioned Fleming himself to design a Jacobean Revival mansion as their suburban estate. The most popular style in the South at that time was the Classical Revival mansion - like the Swan House in Atlanta - that reflected the persistent popularity of the style since it was introduced by such prominent architects as Richard Morris Hunt and McKim, Mead, and White in the late nineteenth century.

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The Cheeks, undoubtedly with Fleming in full agreement, wanted something more in line with current trends in England, something more sophisticated than the country house designs popular in the south for the last twenty years. They opted for the current rage in England during the 1920s - the Neo-Georgian, or Georgian Revival, style popularized by the preeminent country house architect, Edwin Lutyens. The pages of *Country Life* had praised Lutyens' work ever since he had designed an Arts and Crafts/Tudor Revival style house for the magazine's managing editor in 1899. Lutyens' designs, however, evolved beyond the Arts and Crafts tradition, especially after World War I when his commissions consistently evoked the classicism of the Georgian era, what some critics have described as a "Wrennaissance." Gledstone Hall, in Yorkshire, England, built between 1925 and 1927, is representative of Lutyens' work during the 1920s. It was full of modern conveniences but housed in a Georgian Revival design similar to that of Cheekwood in its subtle use of classical motifs, both in the house and gardens. Lutyens also was admired for his integration of gardens and manor houses in the eighteenth century manner. As historian Roderick Gradidge remarks, this style of Lutyens, "when used on houses of reasonable size, could produce a building that anyone who was, or wished to be, a gentleman would be happy to live in." (4) The selection of Georgian Revival style for Cheekwood reflects the influence of the late 1920s trips to England by the family and architect as well as their appreciation and understanding of the best in country house design then being built in Great Britain.

Fleming and the Cheeks also embraced another characteristic of Lutyens' designs - the incorporation of historical architectural elements in both the exterior and interior of the house and in the gardens. Lutyens claimed to have learned this truth from the great nineteenth century British architect Richard Norman Shaw, who once told a young Lutyens: "if you had my experience you would find that the newly-rich, who are after all the patrons of today, demand replicas of something they have seen in other countries they have visited." (5) Anne Massey, in her history *Interior Design of the 20th Century*, remarks that "wealthy Americans" of the early twentieth century "lacked confidence in their own cultural heritage, and generally looked to European models." (6) One popular way of expressing taste and sophistication in interior design was to incorporate European architectural elements into the home. Leslie Cheek, Jr., did record where they obtained several of the primary interior architectural elements:

- Iron panel by Samuel Yellin of Philadelphia set in courtyard archway (ground floor)
- 12th century Gothic brick set in plaster above a stone fireplace (ground floor)
- Gilted mahogany doors from Grosvenor House, London (first floor)
- Balusters from Queen Charlotte's palace at Kew (first floor)
- 18th century mantelpiece attributed to Robert Adam (first floor)
- Dining to Breakfast Rooms doors from a Jesuit college at Hiles Place, Canterbury (first floor)
- Pine paneling with mahogany doors and fruitwood door frames from Sedbury Park, England (first floor)
- Chandeliers from residence of Countess of Scarborough (first floor)
- Palladian window copied from Boodle's Club, London (first floor)

Garden statuary also came from various English locations, although it is difficult to discern where in Great Britain the family or architect actually obtained the objects. The combination of new and old in the domestic architecture, interior design, and landscape architecture of American country estates was not uncommon during the 1920s. In *The American Country House* (1990), historian Clive Aslet points out several American architects and builders "acquire[d] parts of genuine old buildings in Europe and ship[ped] them across the Atlantic." Indeed, Aslet found that "certain decorating firms specialized in acquiring complete paneled rooms from France, Italy, and England, either chopping them down or extending them to make them fit their new locations." (7)

Leslie Cheek, Jr. noted that the "firm of Crowther was one of those [antique dealers] most frequently visited, from which many boxes of architectural fragments eventually came to the Cheekwood site." According to counts kept by Nashville newspapers, doors, door frames, handrails, iron work, mantels, wall panels, molding, chandeliers, tapestry statuary,

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and furniture used at the estate filled four railroad freight cars. (8) Cheekwood records also indicate that the family made several purchases through the prominent London dealer Edward Duveen. A few years earlier in New York City, Duveen was the primary dealer supplying paintings and antiques for Elsie De Wolfe's extremely influential interior design of the Henry Frick Mansion.

When the various English and European antiques were combined with the outstanding craftsmanship of local masters such as Philip Kerrigan, Jr., who executed the ornamental metal work throughout the estate; Harold V. Hopton, whose Nashville firm executed the plaster work; and Leo Barthle of Memphis, who led the carpenters who carved the mansion's exquisite woodwork, Cheekwood holds a significant place in the history of the decorative arts and interior design in Nashville. Kerrigan's work is particularly impressive. "The man who taught Middle Tennessee to love fine art metalsmithing was Philip Kerrigan, Jr.," asserts historian Jack Hurley. (9) Kerrigan was a Nashville native who founded his own company at the age of twenty-five in 1929. Cheekwood was his first major commission and there he made a lasting friendship with Bryant Fleming, who expanded the young craftsman's understanding and appreciation of nature and historical European traditions in ornamental metal. They worked together on many other commissions after Cheekwood. Hurley describes Cheekwood as "a virtual catalogue of Kerrigan's ideas concerning design in iron. The undulating lines and natural motifs of acanthus leaves, vines, and flowers can be seen in the great gates that lead to the inner gardens. Beautiful use of the scrolls and geometrical forms are featured in the exterior light fixtures. The banister to the great stairway in the entrance hall uses a combination of wrought iron and cast brass to dramatic effect." (10) Contemporaries also praised Kerrigan's Cheekwood designs for their revival of the ornamental metal arts in the city in particular and in the South in general.

Kerrigan's work, in fact, provides an important visual link between the gardens and house, with the single most important feature being the Wisteria Arbor that links the house's primary public rooms to the south gardens and the most imposing landscaped vista of the Harpeth Hills. Kerrigan's ability to conceptualize his commission in this manner was a major reason why Fleming so respected the young craftsman and would use him in future estate designs. To Fleming, the house should not only extend into the gardens, but the gardens should extend into the house, that the two components should actually be one and the same coherent design. In Fleming's conception of Cheekwood, the landscape and not the mansion was the focal point of the design, a reality admitted early in written accounts about Cheekwood. In the *Nashville Tennessean* of April 20, 1952, writer Louise Davis observed that "it is easy to believe that the house was made to grace the gardens." (11) Later commentators have made the same observation of Fleming's designs. Johnson and Russell conclude about his Memphis houses that "Fleming actually was a landscape architect who had expanded his work to include designing the houses that went with his gardens." (12) In a feature article about Cheekwood titled "A Touch of English Countryside in Tennessee," writers for *Southern Living* comment that

The house and gardens function as a unit. Even though the house provides the central focus of the gardens, it doesn't dominate the landscape. If anything, its placement makes it less conspicuous. Instead of sitting on a hilltop, the house is actually built into the slope to minimize its impact on the site. The layout of the gardens also helps reinforce the link between the house and its environment. Thanks to the hillside setting, much of the garden has a sweeping view that seems to pull the countryside right up to the house. Other areas, like the fountain garden, have the feeling of a room that's been extended out into the landscape." (13)

In his description of Cheekwood, Leslie Cheek, Jr., who took a degree in architecture from Yale University, emphasizes this relationship between the gardens and the mansion:

The location consisted of a wooded, rounded, steep hill, the top of which Mr. Fleming decided to level slightly, in order to create an area for a lawn immediately behind the house, in the center of which he decided to place the now-famous Swan Fountain." (The Long Gallery of the first floor) also opened up

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on a capacious 'Loggia,' which had its west side supported by a series of limestone columns, giving a view out onto the Main Lawn and its central Swan Pool, described above - which became the actual center of the whole upper level complex of the garden system. The Main Floor Gallery also led through the living room to its south side, where doors opened onto an elaborate metal-supported Wisteria Arbor, with related series of fountains. These fountains served as a focus for the small stream which meandered outside the library windows. This water was collected in a pool below the Wisteria Arbor, from which it flowed into a series of cascades to the chief reflection pool of the main garden, which was ornamented by two sculptures. The various pools were connected on the site by a series of natural steps and walking paths of varying levels to form a fascinating and diverting pattern of landscape design. The sources of the little streams eventually terminated in the three lakes located on the property at a lower level, serving as informal swimming pools. (14)

The Cheekwood commission provided Fleming with an unrivaled country landscape setting due to its original number of acres and its location next to the Percy Warner Park. It was an ideal place to create the modern country house estate, where owners had adequate land at their disposal for the "hunt" and other riding diversions while they still were close to their offices and investments in the adjoining urban center. In his *American Estates and Gardens* (1904), Barr Ferree asserted:

Country houses we have always had, and large ones too; but the great country house as it is now understood is a new type of dwelling, a sumptuous house, built at large expense, often palatial in its dimensions, furnished in the richest manner and placed on an estate, perhaps large enough to admit of independent farming operations, and in most cases with a garden which in an integral part of the architectural scheme. (15)

The Cheeks wished to express an urbane, sophisticated life, with many of the trappings of the ideal life of an English country gentleman, as so well documented in the magazine *Country Life* during the 1920s and 1930s. The horses kept at the brick stable were part of this lifestyle. The boxwoods that tied the entire garden design together were another while the integration of the house into the gardens meant that the two worked together to produce a setting for parties and gatherings on a scale far grander than before in Nashville.

Of course, the whole setting at Cheekwood reflects Fleming's love for the eighteenth century English country house. He successfully translated to a southern suburban setting the eighteenth century tradition of an irregular garden design, where every element seems to be rooted in nature, be it the various water features, the statues, the rock-lined walks and pools, or the attractive shape of ornamental metal. H. F. Clark, in his study *The English Landscape Garden* (1942), concluded that the irregular informal garden of eighteenth century estates was "a new environment which was sensible, not only of visual values, but also of the reactions of such an environment of all states of the human mind in general. The irregular informal landscape tolerated and encouraged incongruity, the grotesque, surprise and variety, not from mere whimsy but because that was the way of nature and of liberty." (16) Perhaps Cheekwood's best example of this is at the northwest gardens, where ornamental metal balustrades by Philip Kerrigan combine with stone walls, stone steps, stone pedestals, two lead roosters, two iron urns, and a marble cherubic Bacchus urn to create a place of incongruity, surprise, and variety.

When the estate was completed in 1932, the city, state, and country were mired in the worst period of the Great Depression. Yet, with their investments secured, the Cheeks carried out a lavish lifestyle despite the economic doldrums of the decade. To work the estate, they employed five servants for the mansion in addition to a foreman and twelve to fourteen workers for the gardens. Some of the employees lived in rooms on the third floor of the mansion. This section of the dwelling was later converted into museum galleries, circa 1970, and renovated again in 1998-1999.

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When compared to his other work in Tennessee, Fleming's Cheekwood is a very important design in the career of an important American landscape architect. The recent National Park Service survey of the pioneers of American landscape architecture asserted that Fleming's "career as a designer of country estates reached its zenith in the late 1920s and early 1930s in Belle Meade" (17), where he designed or remodeled the extant estates of Cheekwood, Longleaf (NR 2/16/84), and other homes and began the landscaping of Percy Warner Park (NR 1/20/84). Of the various Nashville projects, Cheekwood was envisioned as the most comprehensive, a blending of man-made and natural landscape features with a large mansion sheathed in flamboyant Georgian Revival style as the central viewpoint for the resulting landscape design. The estate reflected three significant elements of the "Fleming style": 1) the dwelling complemented and enhanced the overall landscape design and effect, and not vice versa; 2) the mixing of historic and new artifacts and materials; and 3) a nod toward regionalism in the use of locally available materials (limestone) but embracing the current trend of Georgian Revival style for country house design.

In addition to his work at Cheekwood during the depression years, Fleming left Tennessee with other important architectural legacies. From 1930-1932, he carried out a major remodeling and expansion of the Thomas J. Tyne estate, Longleaf, on Hillsboro Road. To Longleaf's facade, Fleming added three dormers on the roof, matching the three bays of the main block; a projecting two-part portico; and flanking one-story wings. His new interior design incorporated many opulent features. A marble Adamesque mantel, with Wedgewood medallions, was placed in the drawing room, while the new dining room had its own Adamesque mantel, along with a carved wood and plaster ceiling, with gold leaf detail, from a Sicilian archbishop's palace. As at Cheekwood, Fleming employed Philip Kerrigan and the Kerrigan Iron Works to design decorative ironwork for the front entrance as well as iron balusters for the main stairway. Fleming also redesigned the estate's landscaping, constructing a grassy front terrace with stone retaining walls and steps, flanked by lion statues and metal lamp posts. For Percy Warner Park, Fleming designed the multi-tiered allee that climbs up 875 feet to the park's first major hill. Other house commissions in Belle Meade included the landscaping for Raajel, 116 Jackson Boulevard, a Colonial Revival house designed by A. Herbert Rogers; and the architecture and landscaping of Brook Hill, 104 Lynwood Avenue, an eclectic French Regency design executed by Fleming in the early 1930s. In Memphis, between 1931-1933, Fleming designed the Leroy King House (now the Administrative Building of the Harding College Graduate School of Religion) at 1000 Cherry Road, which Johnson and Russell have called "the finest Georgian Revival house in the city." (18) Fleming retired from active practice in 1938. He died in Warsaw, New York, in 1946.

That very same year, the estate passed into the hands of Walter Sharp and Huldah Cheek Sharp, who had married four years earlier. Leslie Cheek, Sr., had died in 1935; Mabel Wood Cheek died in 1946. The Cheekwood estate soon thereafter gained a significant association with the beginnings of regularly scheduled classical musical performances in Nashville through the establishment of the Nashville Symphony Orchestra. In a recent history of the Nashville Symphony, arts advocate and patron Mary Ragland emphasized that "Walter Sharp was the Nashville Symphony. It was his idea and his work, and he promoted it tirelessly. There would have been no Nashville Symphony without Walter Sharp." (19) While the symphony performances took place at the downtown War Memorial Building, planning and fundraising sessions took place at Cheekwood, and the estate hosted a grand reception after the first performance of the symphony on December 10, 1946. (20) This began a tradition of Cheekwood receptions after symphony performances. The Sharps also provided living quarters at Cheekwood for symphony conductor William Strickland, who lived there until 1951. Walter Sharp is a significant figure in the modern history of the arts in Nashville. He chaired Vanderbilt's Department of Fine Arts and Music, was a trustee at Fisk University, was the first president of the Nashville Arts Council, and was a founder of the Tennessee Commission on the Performing Arts, a predecessor organization to the Tennessee Arts Commission.

In 1959, Walter and Huldah Cheek Sharp deeded fifty-five acres of the estate for the creation of the Tennessee Botanical Gardens and Fine Arts Center, which converted the mansion into an art museum, while Fleming's original ornamental gardens became the foundation for a large public outdoor museum devoted to gardens, plants, and

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landscape architecture. (21) The Exchange Club of Nashville, of which Walter Sharp was a member, made an initial contribution of \$25,000 to Cheekwood and spearheaded a successful \$217,000 fundraising drive, culminating in the opening to the public of Cheekwood as a museum and garden in 1960. It soon established itself as the city's primary fine arts institution. Significant support of Cheekwood by the Exchange Club of Nashville has continued for forty years. Presently, a substantial annual fundraising event, The Antiques and Garden Show of Nashville, is co-sponsored by the two organizations, with two-thirds of the proceeds going to Cheekwood and one-third going to the Exchange Club Charities. (22)

Over the next forty years, various new buildings, structures, and gardens were built, but never did the new use of the estate obscure the original monumentality of Fleming's house and gardens. For example, although contemporary in design, the Botanic Hall (1971) by Neil Bass relates well to the overall Cheekwood landscape. Its style reflects the spirit of New Formalism while its concrete exterior mimics the masonry of the manor house. The hall's interior curvilinear plan was an attempt to relate to similar architectural motifs in the mansion. There was another effort at incorporating vistas of the mansion and the landscape gardens. Albert W. Hutchinson, an engineer partner of another architectural firm, Brush, Hutchinson and Gwinn, was always interested in Cheekwood and its development by Bryant Fleming. When he was named to a committee to prepare a catalog for an exhibit entitled "Cheekwood—the First Fifty Years" his interest became more focused. Hutchinson amassed a sizable collection of information about the estate and its architect, which his family donated to the Tennessee State Library and Archives after Hutchinson's death in 1986. Hutchinson's scholarly concerns translated into a tradition of respect and preservation given to the main elements of Fleming's designs at Cheekwood. In 1981, the Stalworth Gallery, designed by Ed Street of Nashville, was added by incorporating the first floor kitchen and part of the second floor servants' quarters into a new addition of complimentary design and materials.

As part of this tradition of respect shown the original design of Cheekwood, the Cheekwood Botanical Gardens and Museum of Art undertook a large capital campaign in the 1990s to raise funds for mansion and garden restoration in addition to the creation of new gardens and expanded public programming at the institution. Architect Graham Gund and interior designer Albert Hadley prepared the plans to restore many of the original interiors of the mansion, particularly on the ground and first floors. The restoration updated the interiors to professional museum standards and improved visitor access. Another team of designers and conservators, led by Nashville landscape architect Ben Page, repaired and restored the original gardens and water features of the estate. This team concentrated on restoring the Boxwood gardens and paths, as well as the garden elements immediately surrounding the house, to their general appearance at the time of Fleming's work in the early 1930s. Perennial plantings, and a dominant green color, was the initial landscaping effect at the mansion and the restored gardens convey this historical tradition well. Several of the original view sheds from the mansion designed by Fleming were also restored. The institution held a grand re-opening of the Museum of Art at the mansion on August 29, 1999.

In the important 1936 study, *History of Homes and Gardens of Tennessee*, the blending of landscape and architecture at Cheekwood - merely a few years old then - was lauded as perhaps the finest achievement in landscape design in Tennessee. Over sixty years later, this achievement accomplished by the Cheeks and their architect, Bryant Fleming, continues to impress with its dignity, its unity, and its beauty. As *Nashville Tennessean* critic Clara Hieronymus declared in 1979: "Deeply interwoven in the fabric of Nashville first as private home and now as public facility, Cheekwood is important for both." (23)

Endnotes

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2. Eugene J. Johnson and Robert D. Russell, Jr., *Memphis: An Architectural Guide* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 239.
3. Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 441.
4. Roderick Gradidge, "Edwin Lutyens: the last High Victorian," in Jane Fawcett, ed., *Seven Victorian Architects* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 130.
5. Shaw is quoted in Peter Davey, *Arts and Crafts Architecture* (London: Phaidon, 1995), 171.
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7. Clive Aslet, *The American Country House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 81.
8. Leslie Cheek, Jr., "Cheekwood" typescript, and various newspaper clippings, Albert W. Hutchinson, Jr., Papers, Tennessee State Library and Archives.
9. F. Jack Hurley, "Iron in a Golden Age: Ornamental Blacksmithy in Tennessee," in Carroll Van West and Margaret Duncan Binnicker, eds., *Creating Traditions, Expanding Horizons: 200 Years of the Arts in Tennessee* (Tennessee Arts Commission and Tennessee Historical Society, forthcoming, 2002).
10. Ibid.
11. This column is reprinted in Louise L. Davis, *From Chicken House To The Moon and Other Tales* (Nashville: Friends of Metro Archives, 1998), 60-65. Also see, Louise Davis and Ginger Burress, *Cheekwood—the First Fifty Years* (Nashville: Tennessee Botanical Garden and Fine Arts Center, 1979), 3.
12. Johnson and Russell, *Memphis*, 345.
13. "A Touch of English Countryside in Tennessee," *Southern Living*, May 1980, 124.
14. Leslie Cheek, Jr., Cheekwood, unpublished typescript, Hutchinson Papers, TSLA.
15. Barr Ferree, *American Estates and Gardens* (New York, 1904), 1.
16. H. F. Clark, *The English Landscape Garden* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1980 [1942]), 48.
17. Knight and McCarthy, "Fleming, Bryant," 60. Knight elaborates on this theme in her "Bryant Fleming, Landscape Architect: Residential Designs, 1905-1935," Master's thesis, Cornell University, 1987. In the thesis, she describes Cheekwood as the "jewel" of Fleming's work in Tennessee.
18. Johnson and Russell, *Memphis*, 345.
19. Larry Adams, "The First Nighters: Walter Sharp and the Birth of the Nashville Symphony," *Nashville Scene*, March 7, 1996, p. 19.
20. *Nashville Banner*, December 11, 1946, p. 24.

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21. "Arts, Garden Center Lure: Cheekwood Goal Topped." *Nashville Banner*, April 14, 1959.
22. The data on the Exchange Club of Nashville was prepared by Tom Woodard, State Review Board Chair, from information in his possession.
23. Clara Hieronymus, "Cheekwood's 50 Years: Growing Again," *Nashville Tennessean*, June 3, 1979.

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated boundaries contain approximately seven acres, stretching east to west from the original circular drive that leads from, but does not include, the property's south visitor parking lot to, and including, the boxwood gardens that ring the west terrace of the gardens. The north boundary contains the northwest portion of the boxwood gardens and the adjacent elements of the pet cemetery and the Frist Learning Center, which is the northern most element in the nominated property. The south boundary includes the various south gardens and extends along the Connell Gardens to the Robinson Water Gardens at the southeast corner of the nominated property. These boundaries include the extant original landscaped areas and the primary contributing buildings, structures, objects, and sites of the historic Cheekwood estate. These elements retain architectural and historical integrity. New gardens or modern buildings are situated outside of the nominated property.

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Section number photos Page 20

Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Photographs

Cheekwood, Davidson Co., TN

Photos by: Carroll Van West
MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
2941 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37243

Date: January and March 2000

East facade, looking west
1 of 50

East facade, looking west
2 of 50

Kerrigan light post, driveway retaining wall, and east facade, looking northwest
3 of 50

Driveway retaining wall, facing northwest
4 of 50

Driveway retaining wall, east facade, and Kerrigan railing staircase, facing northwest
5 of 50

East facade, facing northwest
6 of 50

Detail, Kerrigan balustrade, south wing, east facade, facing northwest
7 of 50

Arched arcade, east facade, facing west
8 of 50

South elevation, facing north
9 of 50

Staircase and Kerrigan wisteria arbor, south elevation, facing northwest
10 of 50

Kerrigan wisteria arbor and south elevation, facing northwest
11 of 50

Kerrigan wisteria arbor, facing west
12 of 50

Kerrigan wisteria arbor and staircases, facing west
13 of 50

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Continuation Sheet**

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Kerrigan wisteria arbor, detail, facing east
14 of 50

Kerrigan wisteria arbor and lower garden balustrade, facing north
15 of 50

West elevation and southwest garden, facing northeast
16 of 50

West elevation, facing east
17 of 50

West elevation, southwest garden, and Stalworth gallery, facing northeast
18 of 50

West elevation and Stalworth gallery, facing northeast
19 of 50

Stalworth gallery and west elevation, facing southeast
20 of 50

North elevation, facing south
21 of 50

Kerrigan garden gate and Stalworth gallery, facing southeast
22 of 50

Courtyard of north elevation, facing east
23 of 50

Classical male statue, facing northwest
24 of 50

Northwest garden, facing south
25 of 50

Reflection pool, facing southeast
26 of 50

Reflection pool statuary, facing south
27 of 50

Reflection pool and Kerrigan balustrades, facing south
28 of 50

Boxwood walk entrance at northwest garden, facing southeast
29 of 50

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

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Boxwood walk, facing east
30 of 50

Rooster statuary at northwest garden, facing northwest
31 of 50

Northwest garden, facing northwest
32 of 50

Reflection pool, facing east
33 of 50

Reflection pool statuary, facing east
34 of 50

Great Basin Pool, facing northwest
35 of 50

Lady of Lake statue at Great Basin Pool, facing north
36 of 50

Kerrigan balustrade and south vista, facing south
37 of 50

Stream for Robinson Family Water Garden, facing east
38 of 50

Stream for Robinson Family Water Garden, facing southeast
39 of 50

Robinson Family Water Garden, facing southeast
40 of 50

South lawn and Robinson Family Water Garden, facing southeast
41 of 50

Rock terraces for walkways, facing northwest
42 of 50

Boxwood walk, facing northwest
43 of 50

Boxwood walk, facing east
44 of 50

Boxwood walk and stone steps, facing east
45 of 50

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Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 23

Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Pet cemetery, facing north
46 of 50

Frist Learning Center, facing east
47 of 50

Frist Learning Center, facing north
48 of 50

Frist Learning Center, facing northeast
49 of 50

Courtyard, Frist Learning Center, facing northwest
50 of 50

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Section number photos Page 24

Supplemental Photographs

These photographs were taken in July 1997 and show details of the house and gardens of Cheekwood. They are keyed to three of four plans included with the nomination.

Photos by: Sue and Billy Sumner
Neg.: Tennessee Historical Commission

Plan 1 - ground floor of house

Site 1 on plan
#1 of 33

Site 3 on plan
#2 of

Site 4 on plan
#3 of 33

Site 5 on plan
#4 of 33

Site 13 on plan
#5 of 33

Plan 2 - second floor of house

Site 1 on plan
#6 of 33

Site 2 on plan
#7 of 33

Site 5 on plan
#8 of 33

Site 7 on plan
#9 of 33

Site 9 on plan
#10 of 33

Site 10 on plan
#11 of 33

Site 12 on plan
#12 of 33

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Site 12 on plan
#13 of 33

Site 16 on plan
#14 of 33

Plan 4 - site plan

Site 2 on plan
#15 of 33

Site 3 on plan
#16 of 33

Site 5 on plan
#17 of 33

Site 6 on plan
#18 of 33

Site 8 on plan
#19 of 33

Site 10 on plan
#20 of 33

Site 11 on plan
#21 of 33

Site 12 on plan
#22 of 33

Site 14 on plan
#23 of 33

Site 15 on plan
#24 of 33

Site 16 on plan
#25 of 33

Site 17 on plan
#26 of 33

Site 18 on plan
#27 of 33

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Cheekwood
Davidson County, Tennessee

Site 19 on plan
#28 of 33

Site 22 on plan
#29 of 33

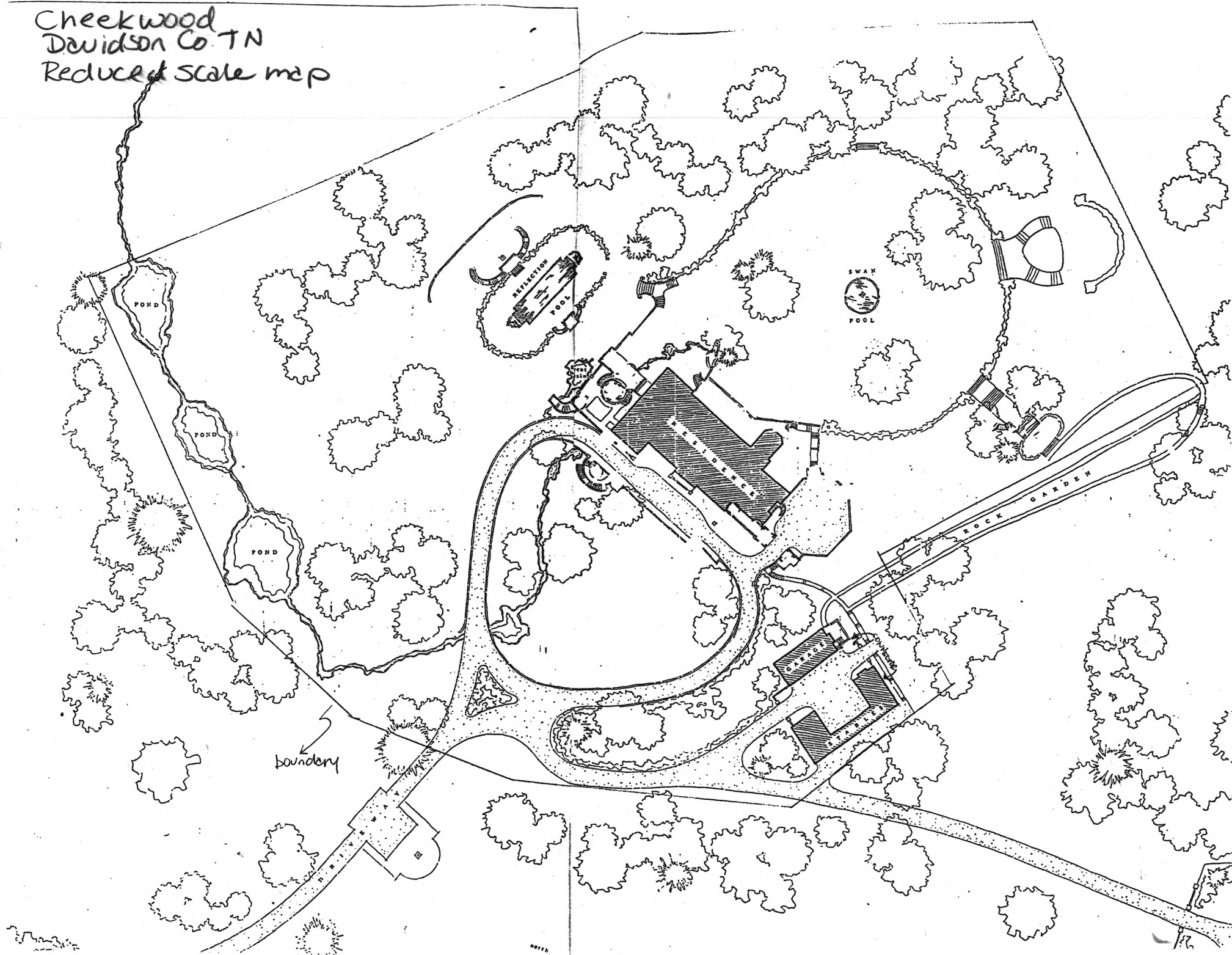
Site 23 on plan
#30 of 33

Site 24 on plan
#31 of 33

Site 26 on plan
#32 of 33

Site 27 on plan
#33 of 33

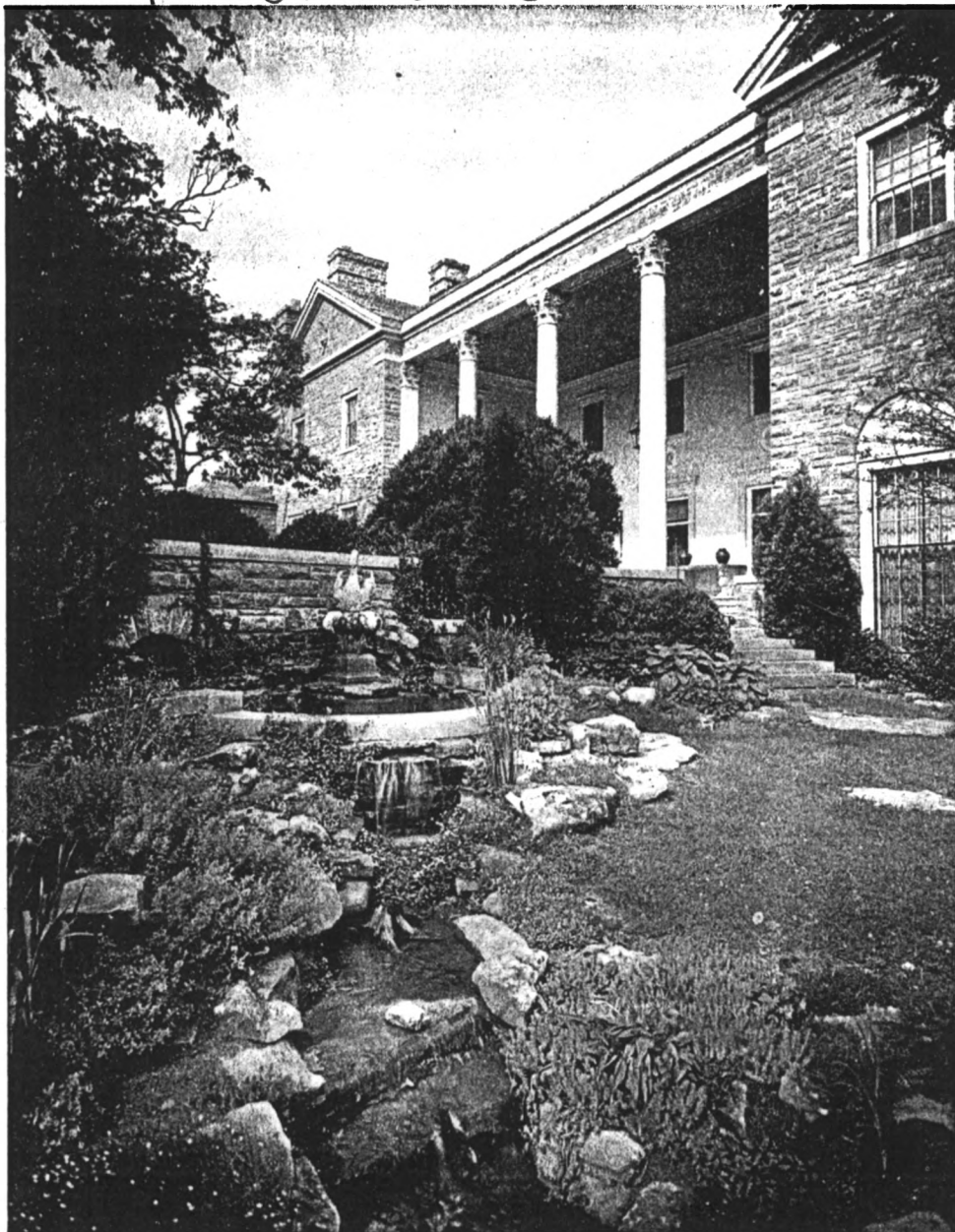
Cheekwood
Davidson Co TN
Reduced scale map



ROFFA

1/26

See photos #16 & 18 of 50



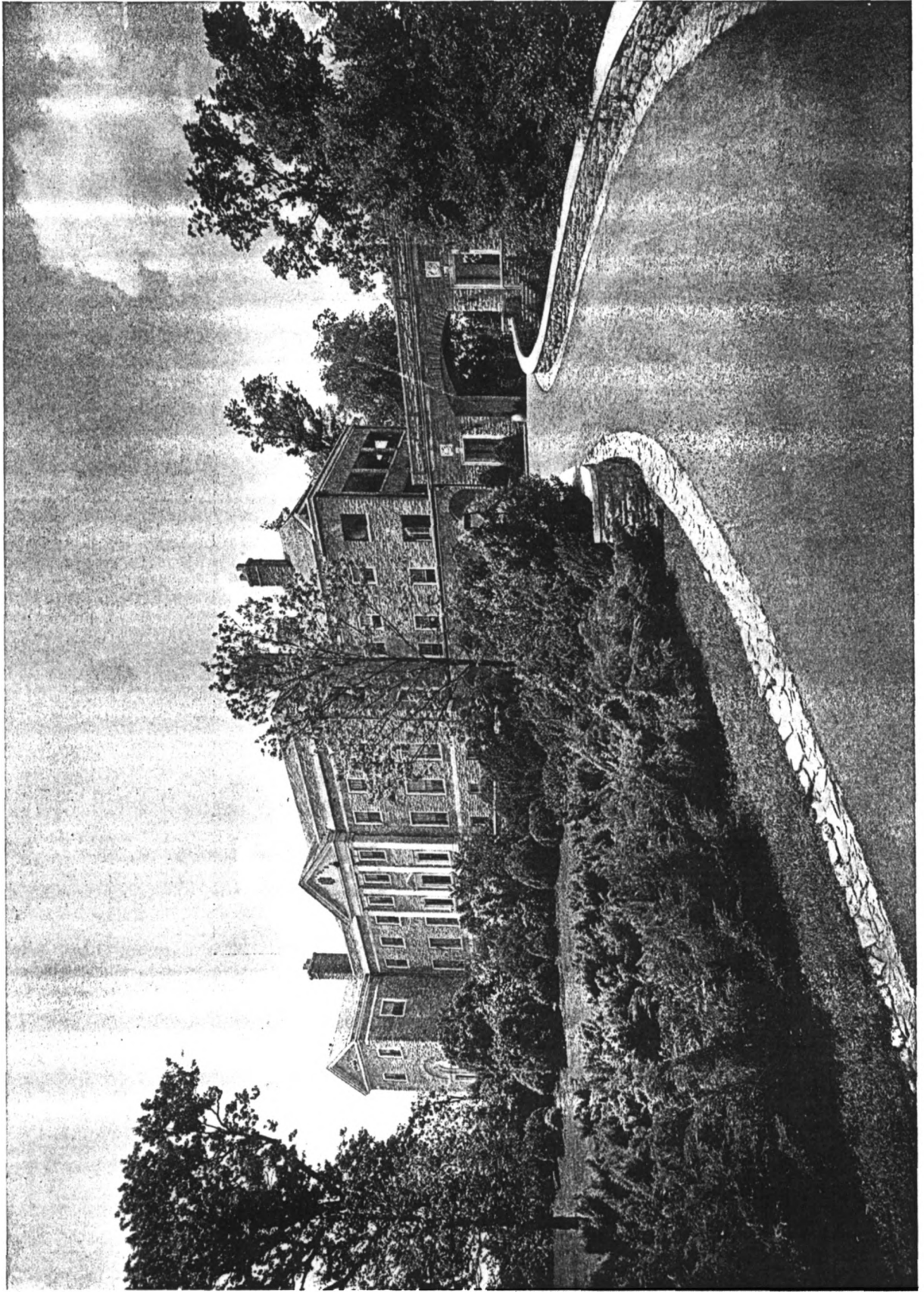
West facade. The loggia overlooks a broad box-bordered lawn. A brook, flower-edged, flows down into the rock garden pool, and on into the first of the three lakes below.

PHOTO BY HAROLD HALIDAY COSTAIN.

CHEEKWOOD
The Estate of Mrs. Leslie Cheek
Nashville

see photos # 1, 2, 6 & 8 of 50

DAVIDSON COUNTY

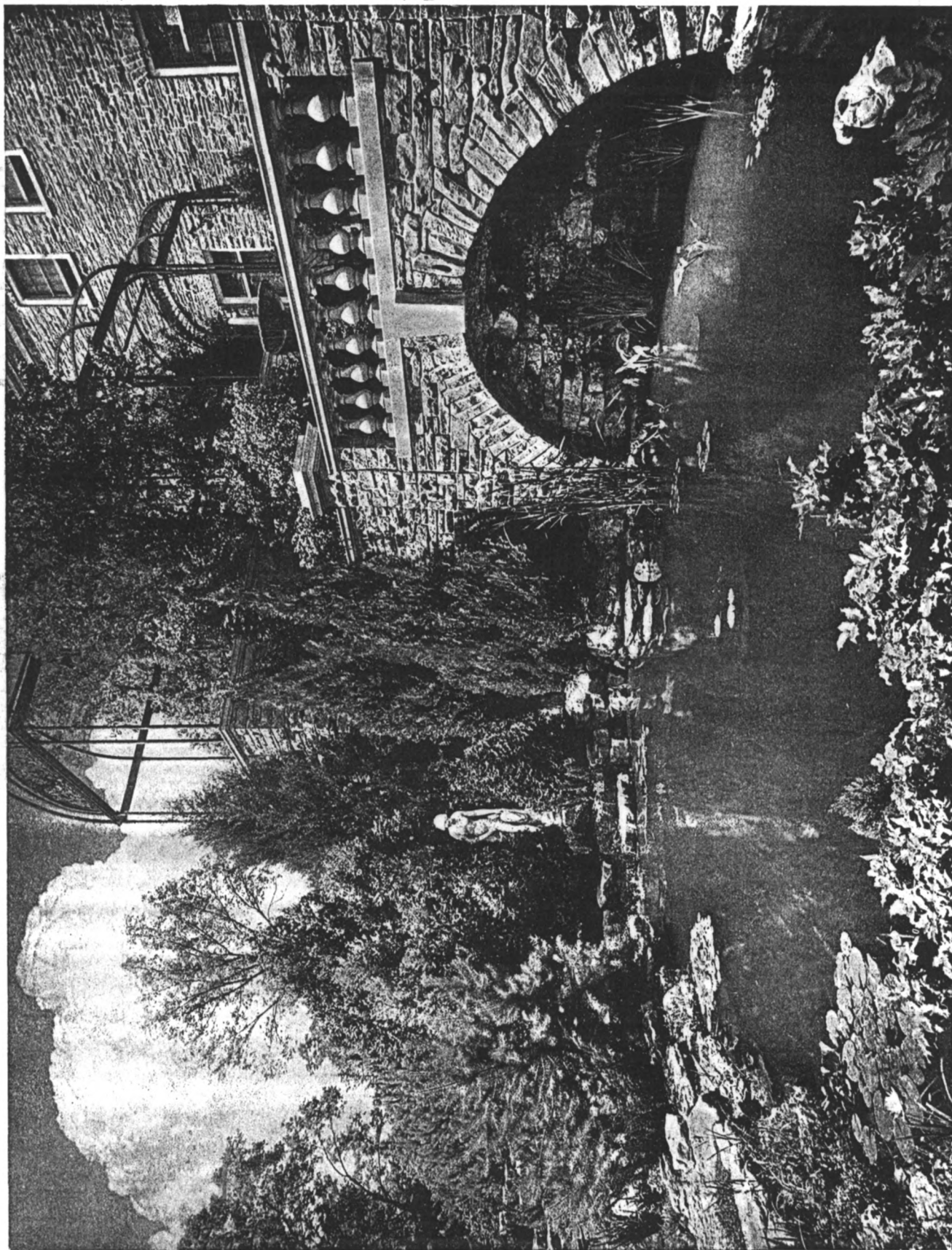


CHEEKWOOD.

East facade showing main entrance. The house is Georgian architecture, built of native stone. The tile roof is laid in solid concrete in the English fashion. The boxwoods in the foreground are specimens of many hundred which Mrs. Cheek has collected.

PHOTO BY HAROLD HALIDAY COSTAIN.

see photos # 9-15 of 50



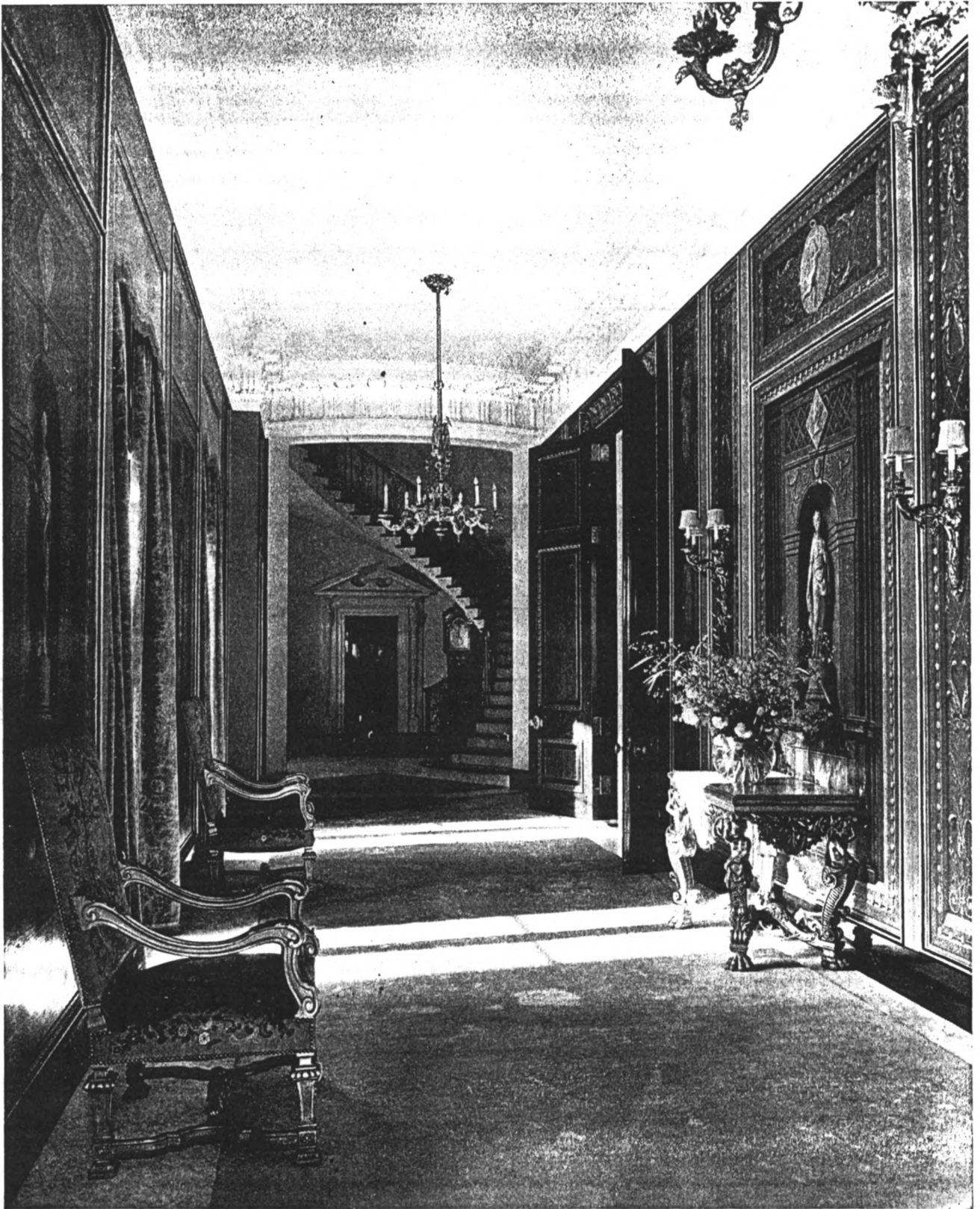
CHEEKWOOD.

Wisteria-covered iron trellis with grotto below. An antique statue of the "Lady of the Lake" guards the lily pool.

PHOTO BY HAROLD HALIDAY COSTAIN.

see photos 7, 8 & 13 of 33

DAVIDSON COUNTY



CHEEKWOOD.

Hallway on second floor. The stairway of wrought iron was once the property of George III. The doors are from Grosvenor House, the hardware bearing the ducal crest. The walls are paneled with "Picture Sculptures" in tones of green and gray.

PHOTO BY HAROLD HALIDAY COSTAIN.



CHEEKWOOD.

Documentary urn—an original Georgian piece used in all architectural books.

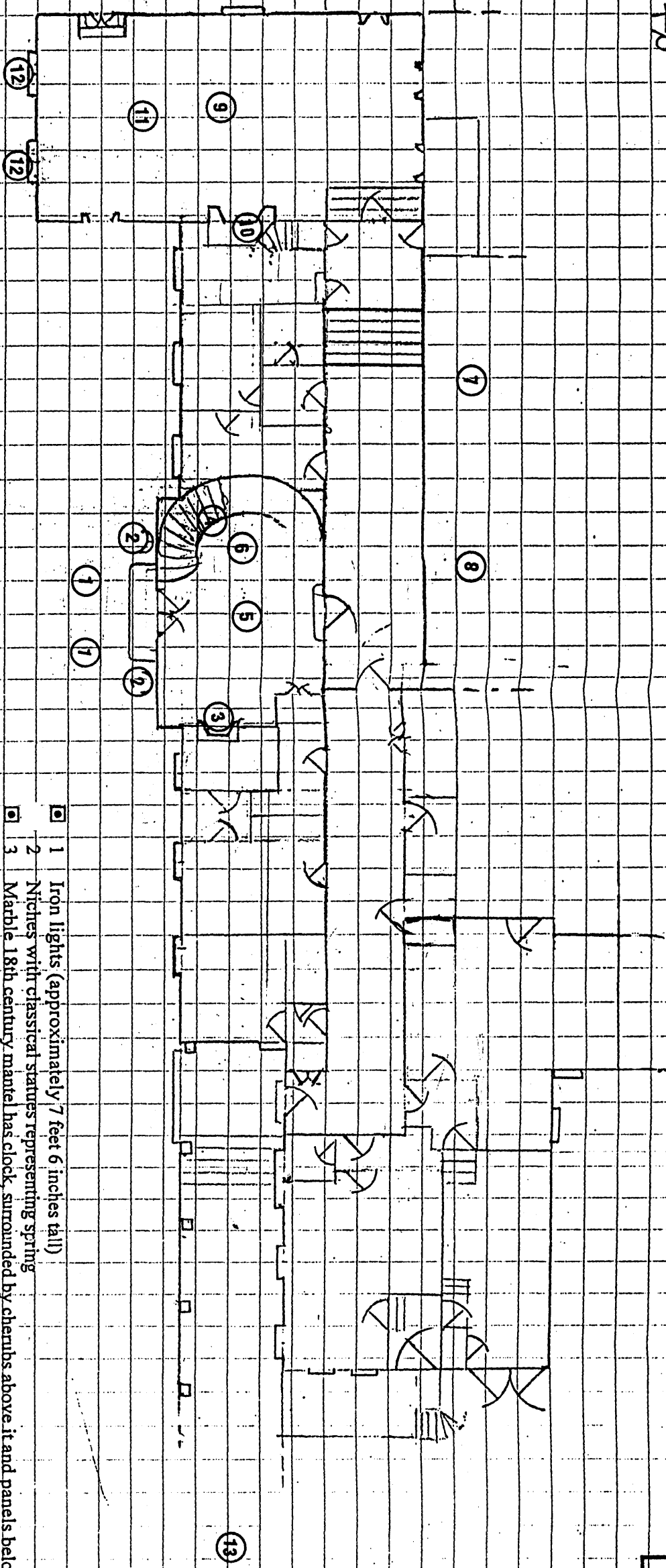
South facade showing terraced garden, the two Italian figures representing Astronomy and the Arts. The mirror pool, reflecting the house, is bordered with English boxwood.

see photos # 9-15, 28 & 33 of 50



CHEEKWOOD
DAVIDSON COUNTY TN

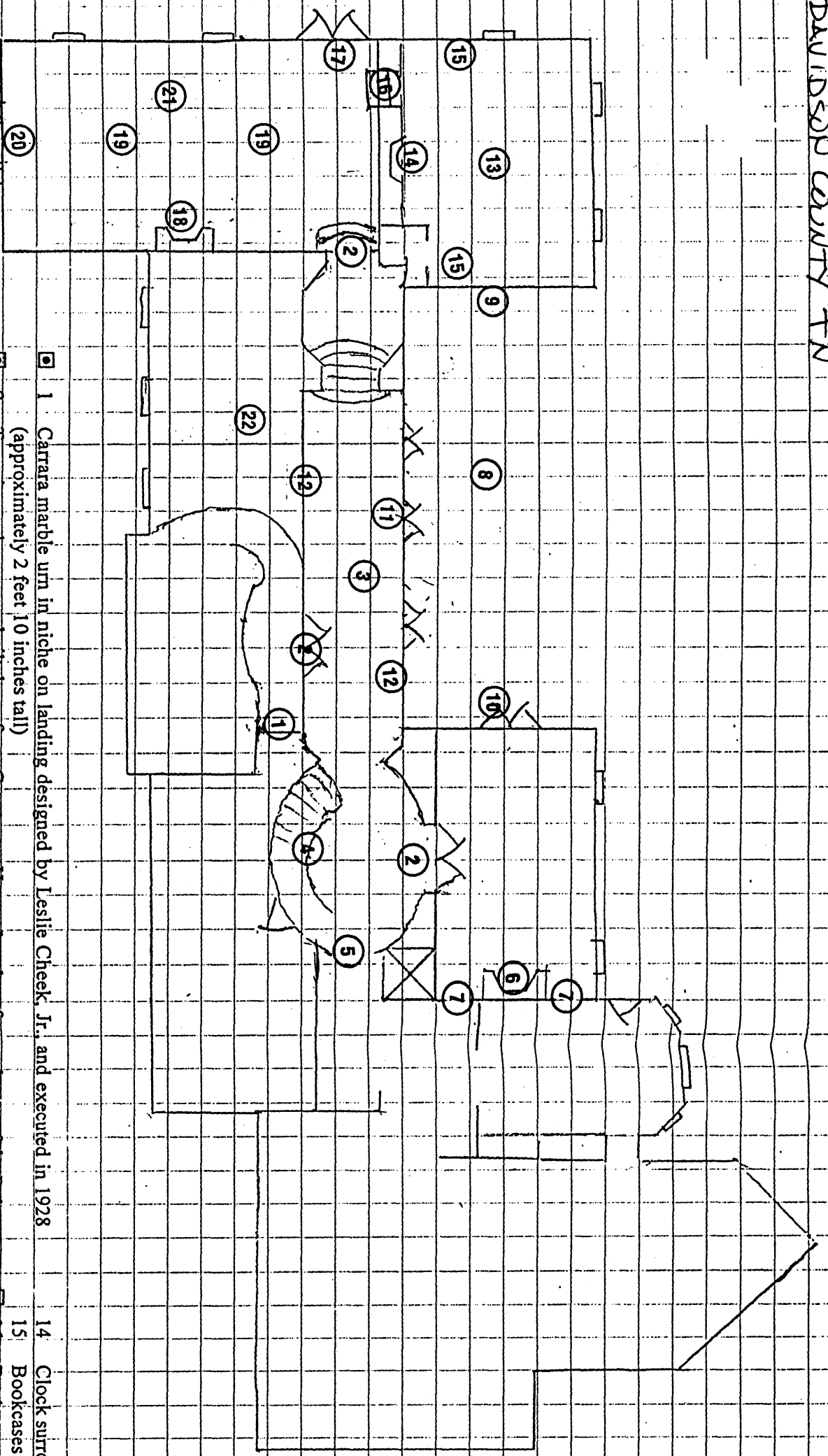
PLAN 1



- 1 Iron lights (approximately 7 feet 6 inches tall)
- 2 Niches with classical statues representing spring
- 3 Marble 18th century mantel has clock, surrounded by cherubs above it and panels below carved with Scottish thistle, English rose, and Irish shamrock
- 4 The ornate balusters in the staircase were designed with Cheekwood symbols: the pineapple for hospitality; the byre for the arts; and the eagle for patriotism; possibly designed and executed by Phillip Kerrigan, Jr.
- 5 Deep carved crown moulding edged in the egg-and-dart design
- 6 Mansion stair and floor of marble
- 7 Polished brick floor
- 8 Pine paneling with cabinets, niches, and shelving
- 9 Oak paneling with carved frames around niches and windows
- 10 Stone fireplace with 12th century Gothic brick set in plaster above it
- 11 Hardwood flooring (now covered with carpet)
- 12 Ironwork grills on outside of windows
- 13 Iron panel by Samuel Yellin of Philadelphia in archway leading to courtyard

PHOTO

GROUND FLOOR

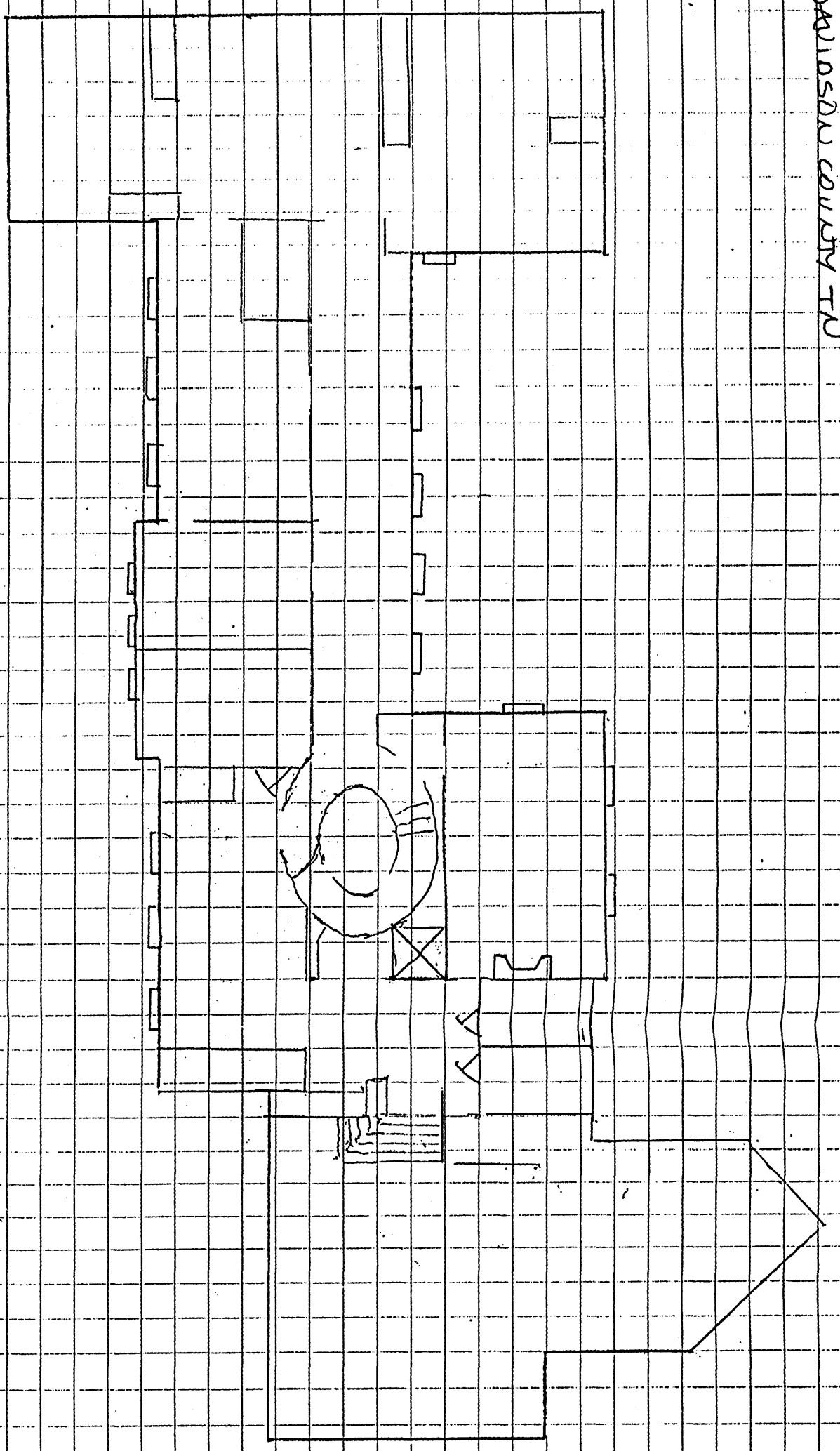


- 1 Carrara marble urn in niche on landing designed by Leslie Cheek, Jr. and executed in 1928 (approximately 2 feet 10 inches tall)
- 2 Lowering mahogany and gilt doors from Grosvenor House, London, former home of the Dukes of Westminster
- 3 Marble floor
- 4 Balusters from Queen Charlotte's palace at Kew that King George III presented to her as part of an anniversary gift (It is thought that these were expanded by Phillip Kerrigan, Jr.)
- 5 Serene carved caryatids stand on either side of a door with a classical, broken pediment
- 6 White marble and blue lapis lazuli 18th century mantelpiece attributed to Adam
- 7 Doors from dining room to breakfast room carved for a Jesuit college at Hiles Place, Canterbury, England; and dated back to 1740 exhibit the following motifs: egg and dart, ribbon and flower, olive-and-leaf, scrolled acanthus and the applied carving of laurel leaf fan and drapery
- 8 Extensive two-story loggia
- 9 Large Italian renaissance terra cotta fountain scaled to the proportions of the loggia
- 10 Door from loggia to dining room; marable statues; young fisherman and young huntress
- 11 French doors opening on loggia
- 12 A dozen 19th century English panels painted in the Italian style
- 13 Pine paneling with mahogany doors and fruitwood door frames from Sedbury Park, England
- 14 Clock surrounded by a carved swag held by eagles
- 15 Bookcases with columns leading to a broken pediment
- 16 Bookcases on either side of short hall to drawing room carved in shell design at top
- 17 French door-opening in wisteria arbor
- 18 Lavish 18th century mantelpiece of Italian marble of two types and colors and elaborately carved white marble pilasters and center plaque. The over-mantelpiece is of two carved columns joined by a broken pediment with a gilded eagle in the middle
- 19 Chandeliers from the residence of the Countess of Scarborough dating from the 1780s
- 20 Palladian window copied from the Boodle's Club in London, with small balcony with ornate iron balustrade
- 21 Plaster work on ceiling in circular design
- 22 Italian oil on canvas in ceiling of an allegorical scene

P.N.C.T.S.

FIRST FLOOR

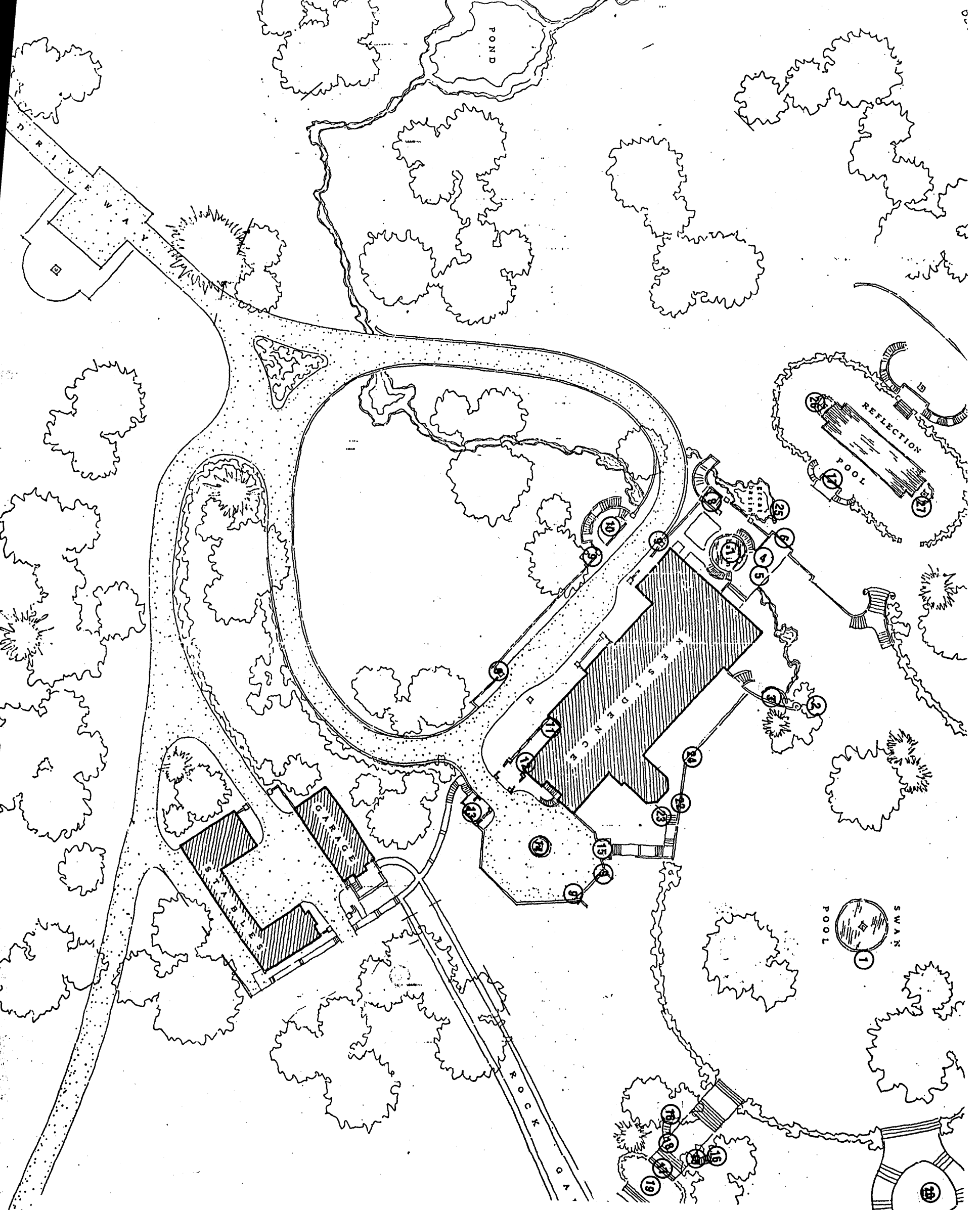
CHEEKWOOD
DAVISONDA COUNTY TX



PLAN 3

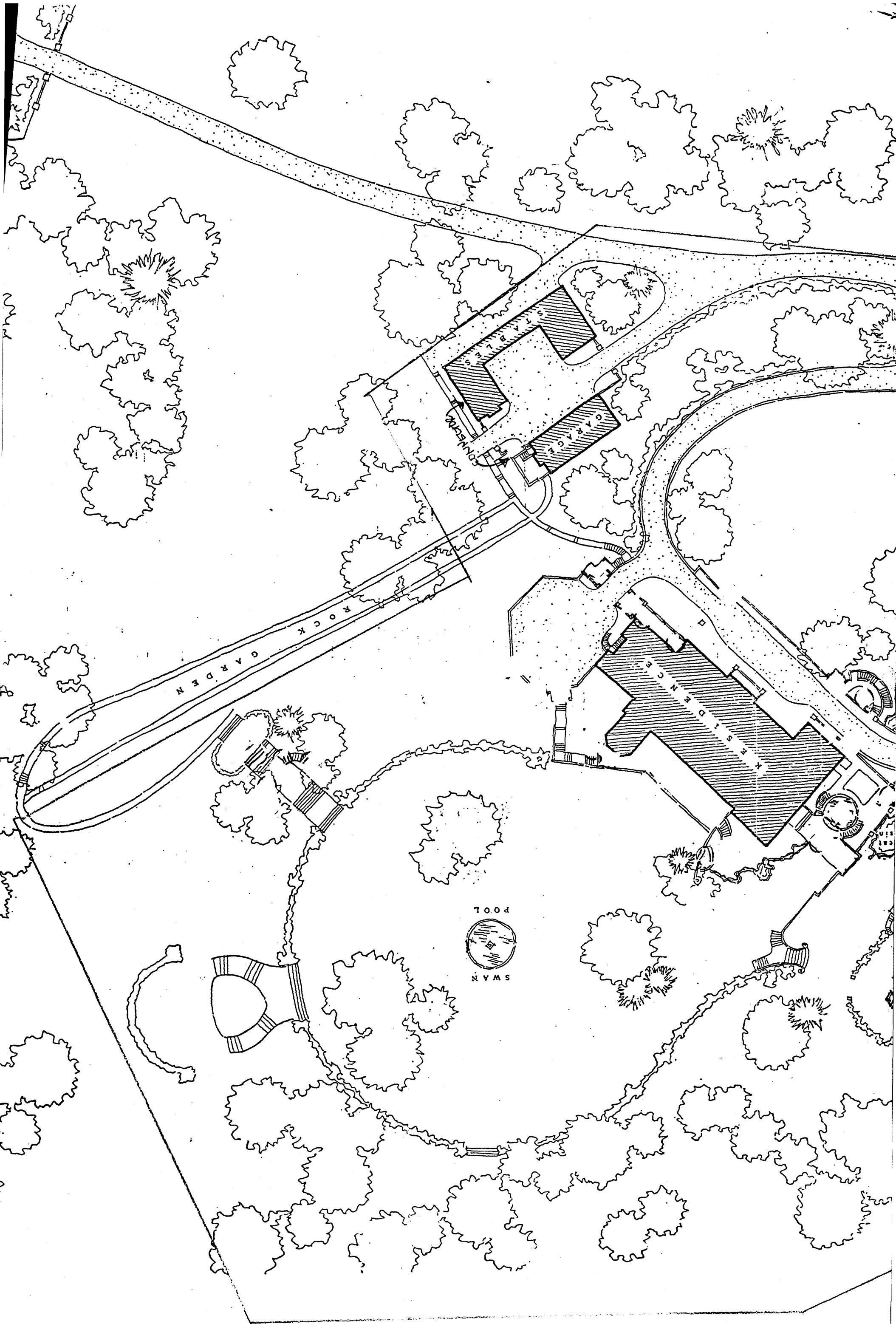
The second floor has been adapted for art galleries. Bathrooms were removed. The beautiful painted ceiling that was in the study is covered over. This is not an antique, but was painted after the house was built. The second floor is as shown above. It still has the Cheekwood feeling with its beautiful plaster cornice on the wall of the stairwell and the woodwork on door frames and crown moulding.

SECOND FLOOR

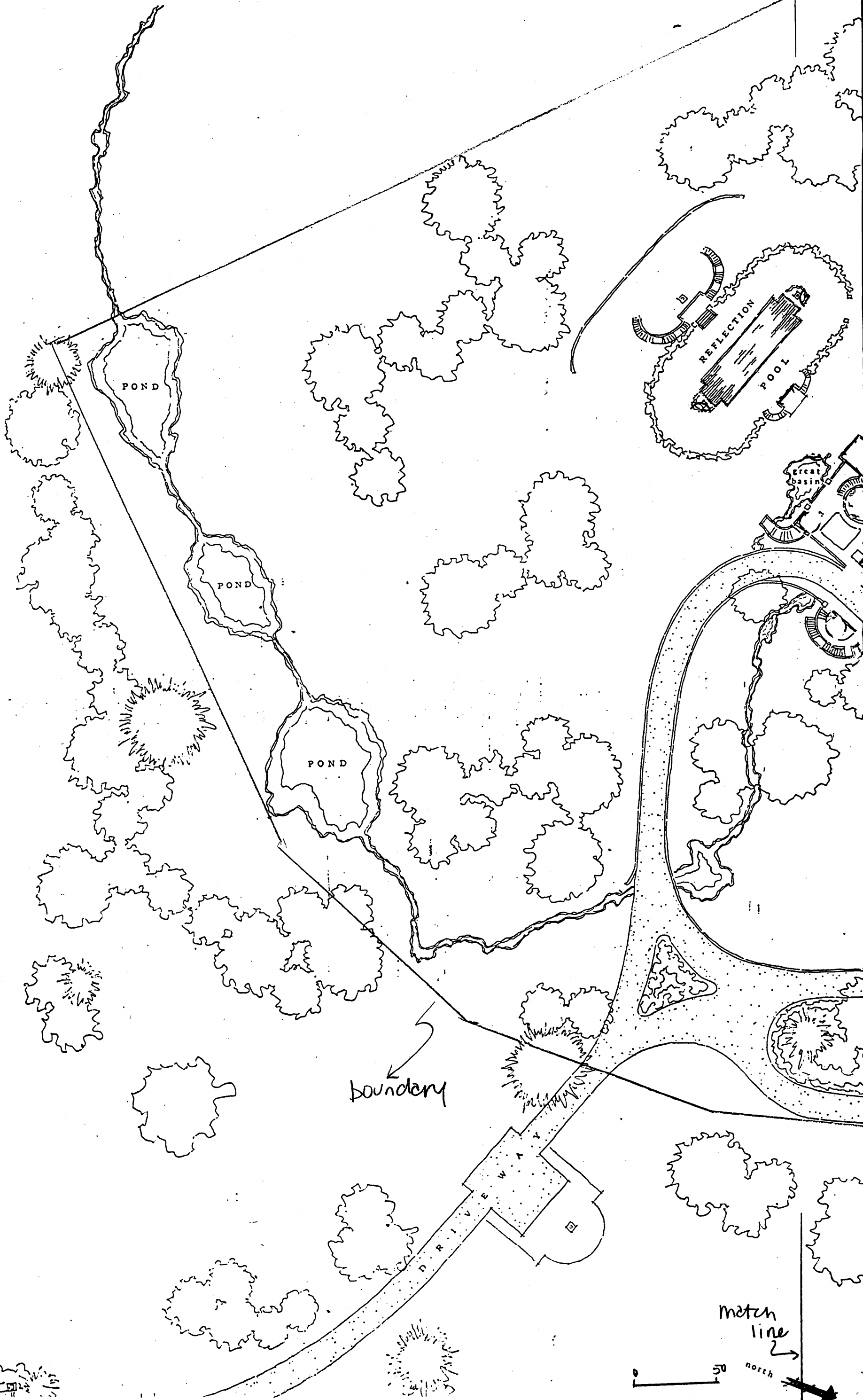


PLAN 4 PHOTO

- 1 Lead Swan Spouting Water into Round Pool (the beginning of the complicated water system originally fed by a spring)
- 2 Life-Size, Stone Classical Statue of Lady with Basket on Her Head
- 3 Stone Swan with Water Running from Under It into Pool
- 4 Wisteria Arbor
- 5 Beautifully Carved Stone Bench
- 6 Exquisite Ironwork as Part of Arbor
- 7 Large Fountain and Pool
- 8 Decorated Clay Pots (Copies by the Garden Club of Nashville are for sale--four locations)
- 9 Majestic Urn of Light Tan Terra Cotta (There are five of these urns at Cheekwood, one bearing in neat indentation, "I. M. Blasfield, Mill Wall and Paddington, London, No. 439.")
- 10 Iron Sundial on Urn-Shaped Stone Support
- 11 Niche with Stone Statue of St. George and the Dragon
- 12 Niche with Ornate Ceramic Urn (approximately 3 feet 2 inches tall)
- 13 Plain Stone Bench (four locations)
- 14 Service Court Paved with Cobblestones that Once Paved Streets of Nashville
- 15 View from Service Court to Steps Leading to Loggia Terrace
- 16 Lead Rooster (two locations)
- 17 Ornamental Ironwork Balustrade (ten locations)
- 18 Iron Urns (Approximately 1 foot 6 inches tall; 2 locations)
- 19 Marble Urn with Cherubic Bacchus, Roman God of Wine and Revelry (approximately 3 feet 8 inches tall)
- 20 "Oxford" Urn with Lotus Carving at Its Base and the Curving Horns of Finely Detailed Rams' Heads for Handles (It boasts a lavish garland of grapes, leaves, and tendrils, to which are affixed reed pipes and a horn.)
- 21 Dog Cemetery Where Cheek Family Pets Were Buried, Including Aristotle, Whose Tombstone Reads "Aristotle, 1928-1937"
- 22 Life-Size Stone, Classical Male Statue
- 23 View from Loggia Terrace to Service Court
- 24 Small Statue of Cherubs Playing with Goats on Pedestal
- 25 Life-Size Stone Classical Statue Called "Lady of The Lake"
- 26 Life-Size Statue of Thalia, The Greek Muse of Comedy
- 27 Life-Size Statue of Urnea, The Greek Muse of Drama



Cheekwood Davidson Co TN lot 2



boundary

REFLECTION POOL

great basin

DRIVE WAY

match line →

50 north