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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name SPARTA MASONIC TEMPLE
other names/site number Masonic Temple

2. Location

street & number 200 West Main Street n/a got for publication
city, town Sparta n/a vicinity
state Wisconsin code WI county Monroe code 081 zip code 54656

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>-</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> objects
			<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Signature] 8/17/87
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. Entered in the National Register 9.25.87
 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

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social / meeting hall

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Social / meeting hall

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Classical Revival

Prairie School

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick

walls brick

roof tile

other concrete

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Sparta Masonic Temple is a two-story, Classically-proportioned building of yellow brick with a low hipped roof of red tile. The building sits upon a large 120 ft. x 150 ft. lot at the corner of Main and Court Streets near the downtown area of Sparta, Wisconsin.

A brick base rising to window-sill height on the first floor surrounds the entire building and is topped by a slender, stone string course. Brick pilaster strips surmount this base and are regularly spaced around the building. Each pilaster is topped with an inset stone panel and a stone coping beneath the deep overhanging eaves. A shallow, single-story entry pavilion surmounted by two urns projects from the south side of the building. The corners of the pavilion feature the same abstracted pilasters as the main structure. The sidelit entrance doorway is topped by a segmental-arched transom beneath a stone, segmented-arched cornice with returns resting on stone pilasters at either side. A carved "Masonic Temple" panel is set atop the door surround.

In the upper halves of the second floor windows, the muntins form an overlapping cross and x pattern. The east and west side elevations feature regularly-spaced double-hung windows on the first and second floors, divided by engaged pilasters and detailed with flat brick lintels and stone sills. Secondary access is provided by entries at the rear of the west elevation and to the rear of the building. The rear elevation also features a large projecting masonry chimney.

The present, 1923 Sparta Masonic Temple has distinguished neighbors: The 1902 Sparta Free Library (listed in the National Register of Historic Places-1981) across the intersection east; the 1895 Monroe County Courthouse (National Register of Historic Places-1982) across the intersection south; and the Federal Post Office across the intersection, diagonally from the Masonic Temple.

A beautifully kept lawn surrounds the building. The east and south sides are bordered by city walks. The west side has a row of spruce trees along with red cedar and one white pine bordering it. There are two maple trees in front located on the southeast and southwest corners. On the northeast corner there is a sugar hard maple.

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SPARTA MASONIC TEMPLE, Sparta, Monroe County, WI

Along the whole east side of the building there are Upright Spreading Juniper shrubs. On the southeast and northeast corners of the building are Pyramidal Aborvitae shrubs, while on both sides of the entrance there are Upright Arborvitae shrubs. There is no parking lot area.

A tour through the interior of the building is most interesting. [see plans]

"Entering the marble wainscoted vestibule you come to the main hallway at the end of which a pair of French doors open into the dining room. On the right, as you enter, is the ladies reception room; next is what the lodge boys call their living room, all richly and substantially furnished in big comfortable leather davenports and easy chairs with a generous fire place at one end, and French doors opening into the dining room at the other; the woodwork is all oak, stained dark.On the left of the entrance hall is a large cloak room for men; next, a door opens into a well-lighted, pleasant card and reception room with tables and chairs done in Indian gray, where members can smoke, play cards, and visit.

The big dining room with its polished maple floor is designed for serving refreshments and banquets and for dancing parties and socials. A stage on one side is provided for musicians. The kitchen has ample cupboards, a pantry, and plenty of shelves and drawers to hold all dishes and supplies. It has a hotel range and an electric range, together with an electric percolator for coffee. The room is well lighted and pleasant.

Next, we go up the wide, well-lit stairway (at the entry) to the lodge rooms. Passing through the ante room and the Tilers room, we enter the large and beautifully finished lodge room with its curved ceiling with beams of ornamental plaster. Opposite the entrance at the farther entrance is what is known as "East," being where the Worshipful Master presides. Here is a small stage with a rich velour curtain that works on a roller bearing, divided in the middle. The stage has several scenes which are used in the work of the various bodies; beautiful and massive solid walnut furniture adds richness to this fine lodge room, together with the large roomy opera chairs with which it is seated. This makes a scene of dignity and solemnity that impresses the beholder. All floors are carpeted over the original Battleship linoleum and walls are plaster finished and painted.

On this second floor, also, is a locker room. There are 100 steel lockers here for the uniforms of the Knights Templars, ample closets for costumes and paraphernalia of the various lodges. A corridor which circles the lodge rooms, shuts it off from any noise of the street.

The building is classed as a strictly fire-proof building of concrete, tile and steel and is modern in every respect."*

The interior detailing and materials of the lodge as noted in the above historic description remain for the most part intact, with only minor changes.

* "THE SPARTA HERALD" Sept. 11, 1923 issue

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

1923¹

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Dockendorff, Bernard J. and ¹
Parkinson, Albert E.
(Parkinson & Dockendorff)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Statement of Significance

The Sparta Masonic Temple Building is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C for its architectural significance as a fine example of a period and style of design produced by a noted regional firm. An outstanding local example of early 20th century eclectic design, the building features imposing classically-proportioned elevations in yellow brick and red tile and incorporates several abstracted prairie style elements. The building is a fine representation of the diverse commissions undertaken by the La Crosse firm of Parkinson and Dockendorff and exhibits their wide-ranging influence on regional design during the early 20th century.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Masonic Order was organized in Sparta on August 17, 1854, when a dispensation was issued by the grand lodge of Wisconsin, and the first meeting was held the next week. Meetings were held in homes and various buildings until a building could be obtained. The official charter was granted June 15, 1855. Valley Lodge No. 60 Free and Accepted Masons was instituted August, 1854; Sparta Chapter No. 19 Royal Arch Masons instituted Jan. 8, 1859; Sparta Commandery No. 16 Knights Templar instituted 1882; Sparta Chapter No. 18 Order of the Eastern Star instituted May 5, 1891; and, Sparta Chapter DeMolay for boys instituted Dec. 21, 1922. In 1891, lots 9 & 10 in Tyler's Addition, on the northwest corner of Main and Water Streets were obtained. A corporation was formed which erected a Masonic Temple on that location. Stock in the corporation was held jointly by members of the different masonic bodies. In 1910 Valley Lodge No. 60, had accumulated sufficient funds to take over the building and then owned it absolutely, free from indebtedness. In October, 1919, when the old building was deemed too small, the Masonic Order purchased the present location (lots 4 & 5 in Block 5 of the original plat of the Village of Sparta) from the widow of Dr. Fred Stiles, a former dedicated

See continuation sheet

¹ SPARTA HERALD 9/11/23, Sparta, WI

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

NRHP site files (Historic Preservation)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

A

1	5
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6	7	5	5	4	0
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4	8	6	7	8	4	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 4 and 5 in Block 5 of the Original plat of the Village, now city of Sparta

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire property historically associated with the Masonic Temple in its W. Main Street location.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Miss Julia E. Middleman
 organization Monroe County Historical Society date April 24, 1987
 street & number 511 South L Street telephone 608/ 269-3034
 city or town Sparta state WI zip code 54656

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member, and the present building was constructed. It took several years as World War I had caused a shortage of steel and other materials, but it was finally completed in 1923 and was dedicated on Sept. 13, 1923. The erection of the lodge was seen as a fitting completion to Sparta's civic center and was celebrated with an enthusiastic parade. It has been maintained in excellent condition.

The former Masonic Temple building on the corner of Water and Main Streets still stands there. The Lodge rooms were upstairs and the Knights of Pythias Lodge is now located there. The lower floor is occupied by two stores--the Korner Bakery and the S & S Liquidators. The fronts of these stores have been modernized over the years with large front windows. The Masonic Lodge is a fraternal organization and is a private recreational club. It's members are businessmen, professionals, and people from all walks of life. There are approximately 120 members at the present time, which is about a third as many as in early years. While many of the members were known to have been prominent individuals influential in local affairs, historical documentation did not show the local masonic lodge as particularly significant or outstanding in any one aspect of local development in the post WWI era represented by this building.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The lodge building is a fine example of Classical Revival design, whose broad roof and abstract geometric detailing also appear to reflect the influence of Prairie School stylistic traditions. The Sparta Masonic Temple is a unique blending of forms into a handsome and imposing local landmark which shares a prominent central location with an historic collection of public buildings, two of which are already on the National Register of Historic Places. They are the Neoclassical, 1902 Sparta Free Library (across the intersection East), and the 1895 Romanesque-styled Monroe County Courthouse (across the intersection South). The other corner of the intersection is the location of the Federal Post Office Building. That was built in 1915. The Masonic Lodge stands as a fine local example of civic/fraternal architecture.

The architectural firm of Parkinson & Dockendorff specialized in designing and erecting both public and private buildings--over 800 of them--in the six-state area of Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. The firm also served as a training center for numerous apprentice architects. While commissioned to prepare plans for numerous private residences, the firm was most well known for their public buildings, including many area schools, churches and hospitals. In Sparta the firm was responsible for the design of the State Bank building, the St. Mary's Hospital addition and the Sparta High School in addition to the Masonic Temple.

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SPARTA MASONIC TEMPLE, Sparta, Monroe Co. WI

Bernard J. Dockendorff, Sr., was born in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, in 1878. He received his early education in LaCrosse and later studied architecture at the Polytechnical Institute in Darmstadt, Hesse, Germany. He worked in Germany for two years before returning to LaCrosse in 1902. Here he formed a partnership with Albert E. Parkinson. Parkinson was born in Spaulding, England. When he immigrated to the United States, he settled in Sparta, Wisconsin, where he worked as an engineer and contractor. He moved to LaCrosse when he and Dockendorff established their firm. The two men died within four days of one another in September, 1952. The firm was dissolved following their deaths.

The work of the partners was complementary. They were both well-educated and practical men with reputations for honesty. They employed workmen of exceptional ability and used the best materials available. Brick with concrete detail and trim were usually used in their structures and featured especially impressive and ornate entrances. Parkinson was a member of the local Sparta masonic lodge which probably assured the full attention of his firm on the project. The contractors on the \$57,000 project, the Naset Brothers of Sparta, were also members of the lodge.

The eclectic nature of the Sparta Masonic Temple is a facet of design found in a large number of Parkinson & Dockendorff commissions and marked the firm as one of the most distinctive and prolific working in the West-Central area of the state in the 1900s.

The Wisconsin Cultural Resource Management Plan has identified Parkinson and Dockendorff among those firms working in Wisconsin that can be readily considered "masters" for purposes of National Register evaluation. These determinations were based on historical documentation, the quality and quantity of work, and the extent of influence.

Architecturally, the Sparta Masonic Temple is unique within the local community and the larger Monroe County region. The 1923 building is a fine example of Classical and Prairie style forms representing the diversity of early 20th century design traditions and the varied talents of architects Parkinson and Dockendorff.

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OWNER: (1987)

Valley Lodge No. 60 Free and Accepted Masons.
200 West Main Street
Sparta, Wisconsin 54656

9. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:

Sparta Herald, 9/11/1923, "Masonic Hosts Gather Here for Dedication of Temple" Sparta, WI
Richards, R.A., History of Monroe County, Wisconsin, 1912, C.F. Cooper & Co., Chicago.
Wyatt, B. (ed.), Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: Vol. 2, Vol. 3, 1986,
State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison. (Architecture, Fraternal
Organizations)

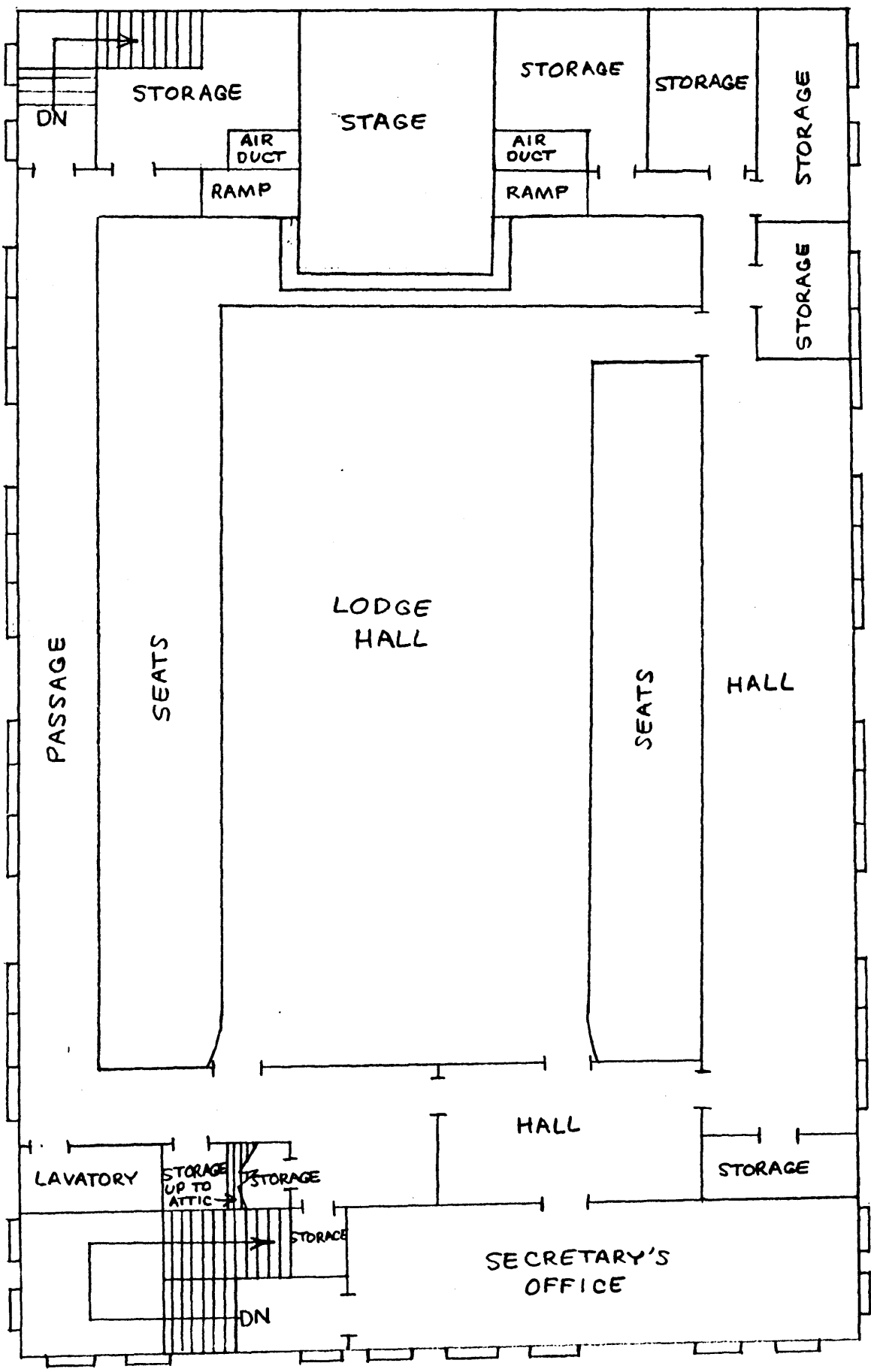
Resource files:

Records of the Sparta Masonic Temple, 200 West Main Street, Sparta, WI.
Architect files of the Historic Preservation Division, SHSW, Madison, WI.

11. Additional assistance:

Architectural Description - Robert Leverich, Architect, Eau Claire, WI
Landscaping Description - Forester Halbrader, DNR, Sparta, WI 54656.

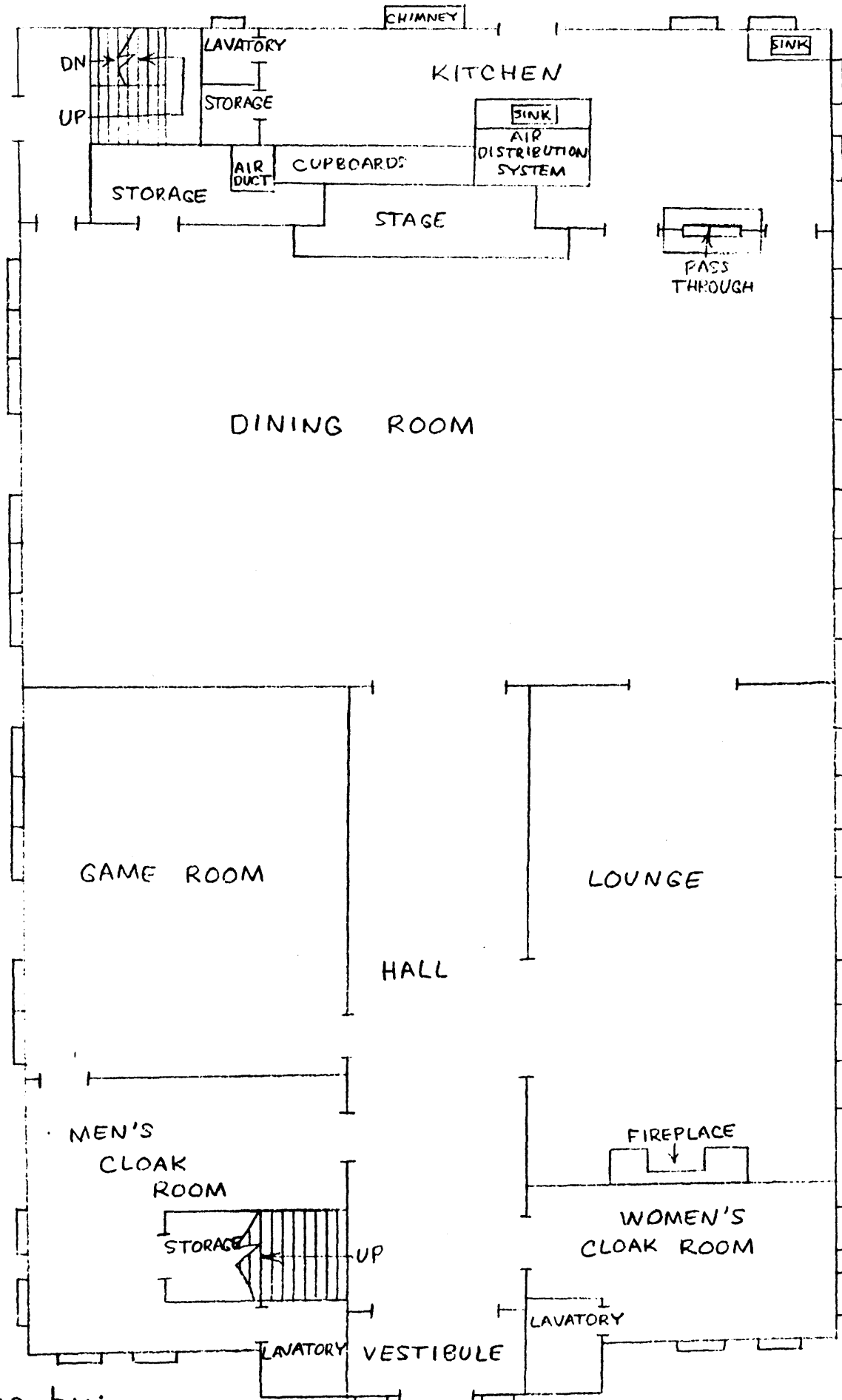
2ND FLOOR



drawings by: John A. McCoy August 1986

OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS: 55' X 95'

1ST FLOOR



drawings by:

John A. McCoy

August 1926



OUTSIDE DIMENSIONS: 55' X 95'