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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting 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 any 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 WESTCOTT, WILLIAM HOUSE

other names/site number R.R. Byers House

2. Location

street & number 443 Stiles Avenun N/A  not for publication

city or town Orange Park N/A  vicinity

state FLORIDA code FL county Clay code 019 zip code 32073

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 forth 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.)

[Signature] DSHPO Date 6-11-98

Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources  
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  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 7-15-98

Westcott, William House  
Name of Property

Clay Co., FL  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include any previously listed resources in the count)

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

**Name of related multiple property listings**

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Historic Architectural Resources of Orange Park, Florida

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: garage apartment

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: garage apartment

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Frame Vernacular

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls WOOD

roof ASPHALT

other

**Narrative Description**

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

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

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

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major 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):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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

# \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EARLY SETTLEMENT

**Period of Significance**

1883-1944

**Significant Dates**

1883

1944

**Significant Person**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

unknown

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of Repository \_\_\_\_\_

Westcott, William House  
Name of Property

Clay Co., FL  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 1 acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	3	1	0	0	0	3	3	3	7	2	4	0
	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 Sidney Johnston/Robert O. Jones, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date May 1998

street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (850) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

**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 Sarah B. Boyle

street & number 1152 Oak Ridge Road telephone unlisted

city or town Petersburg state VA zip code 23905

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 amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 1

**WILLIAM WESTCOTT HOUSE, ORANGE  
PARK, CLAY COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**SUMMARY**

The William Westcott House is located at 443 Stiles Avenue, Orange Park, Clay County, Florida. The two and one half story, frame vernacular house is built on brick piers, has an "L" footprint, and the exterior has horizontal siding. The side gable roof has a shed and gable extension. Windows are 2/2, double hung wooden sashes with wooden shutters, and a one story verandah with hip roof spans the main facade. A contributing garage with apartment is behind the main house.

**SETTING**

The Town of Orange Park is located fifteen miles southwest of downtown Jacksonville on the west bank of the St. Johns River. The house is located five blocks from the river on Stiles Avenue between north/south Plainfield and U.S. Highway 17, known locally as Park Avenue. The house stands immediately northeast of the Orange Park Elementary School. Non-historic residences lie to the north and east with the school campus extending to the west and south. Kingsley Avenue and U.S. Highway 17 serve as primary corridors through Orange Park. Vegetation consists of live oak trees, ferns, and ligustrum plants. Citrus trees originally occupied the landscape, but were lost in the freezes of the 1890s. The garage apartment outbuilding stands fifty feet northwest of the dwelling.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

**Exterior**

The main (south) facade fronts onto Stiles Avenue (Photo #1). The facade displays a symmetrical appearance with a steeply-pitched, side-facing gable roof surfaced with asphalt shingles. A one story verandah with hip roof has four battered columns resting on brick piers. Three broad steps access the porch and a central main door is flanked by windows. The second story has three windows. A corbled brick chimney pierces the main roof ridge to the east of center.

The east elevation has a gable end on the main block (Photo #2). A two story extension has a northern shed roof, and is stepped back from the main block. A one story extension with gable roof connects to the two story extension. Two windows are on each story of the main block, and a rectangular louvered vent is within the peak of the gable. The two story extension has two windows on the first story, and one on the second story.

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The one story extension has one small window. The verandah is visible to the south of the main block.

The north (rear) elevation has shed and gable extensions (Photos #3&4). The one-story gable extension protrudes at the northeast corner. A single, small, 4/4, double-hung sash window is within each of the three walls of the extension. A brick external chimney is to the west-of-center on the extension's gable end. The horizontal wooden exterior differs slightly from the siding on the main block. A one story open porch with hip roof supported by square posts on brick piers occupies the remainder of the elevation to the west. The porch is accessed by four wooden steps. The second story is spanned by a shed roofed extension with two groups of three pairs of wooden casements toward either corner, and a pair of casement windows within the center. A corbled brick chimney pierces the shed roof toward to west side.

The west elevation is similar to the east in that the main block has the same window and vent arrangement, and the north shed extension has one window on the second story (Photos #1&4). The first story incised porch has square posts.

**Interior**

The interior of the first story consists of a dining room, kitchen, and living room. Wooden floors are mostly carpeted. Plaster walls are wallpapered except in the kitchen. The plaster ceilings are exposed. The room arrangements conform to conventional I-house forms, which have two roughly equal sized rooms flanking a central hall with staircase.

The entrance opens into the living room, where a dog-leg staircase is located on the east wall of the room (Photo #5). The central landing of the staircase opens to both the living room and dining room (Photo #6). Square wooden newel posts are finished with molded caps, and anchor the handrails and balusters. A fireplace with textured brick and a wood mantel opens along the north elevation of the living room (Photo #7). The dining room lies to the east of the living room. North of the dining room is the kitchen (Photo #8), and the rear porch is to the west of the kitchen. The ceiling is ten feet and walls are finished with crown and floor moldings.

The second story is divided into four bedrooms, a restroom, and storage room. A central hall, dominated by a large turned newel post that anchors the head of the staircase, separates the master bedroom on the east from two smaller bedrooms on the west (Photos #9-11). Floors are wooden, and walls and ten foot ceilings are plaster. A bedroom, restroom, and storage room

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are contained within the shed extension to the north (Photos #10&13). Paneled wood doors with original hardware separate most rooms. Doors with four panels have nineteenth century decorative hardware in the older two-story section, and early twentieth century two-paneled wood doors hung with simple brass hardware are in the shed extension. Doors and windows are trimmed with plain boards.

**Alterations**

In 1925 the one-story extension on the north was added to accommodate a kitchen which had been in the first floor east room. A fireplace and chimney was built in the north wall of the living room. In the late 1920's turned posts on the front verandah were replaced with the brick piers and battered columns. The west wall of the central hall was removed, creating a larger living room. The stairwell landing was reconfigured on the first floor giving access to the dining and living room. In the 1930's the second story shed addition was created on the north elevation for a bathroom and living areas. In 1944 the garage with apartment was built northwest of the house.

**CONTRIBUTING OUTBUILDING**

A contributing garage apartment lies fifty feet northwest of the dwelling (Photo #12). Built in 1944, it has a shallow-pitched hip roof, pairs of 2/2, double-hung sash windows, and a pair of vehicle doors. Concrete block walls are supported by a poured concrete foundation, and a straight stair protected by a shed overhang extends along the east wall providing access to the second story. The second floor has a living room, kitchen combination, two bedrooms and a bathroom (Photo #13).

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**SUMMARY**

The William Westcott House is nominated to the National Register under Criteria A and C at the local level in the areas of Exploration/Settlement and Architecture. Completed about 1883, the building was one of the early houses built as a permanent residence. It is one of the oldest buildings from the early settlement, and is one of the few remaining historic buildings in Orange Park. The house is a good example of frame vernacular construction built in the I-house form, and altered in the 1920's and 1930's. The design of the building is consistent with national and statewide trends in architecture. The building contributes to the "Historic Architectural Resources of Orange Park, Florida" Multiple Property cover under the Historic Contexts of Founding and Early Settlement, Progressive Era, Florida Land Boom and Bust, and the Great Depression, World War II, and Aftermath and the F.1 property type.

**HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE**

William Westcott first visited Orange Park in early 1882, when he met local developer Washington Benedict who persuaded him to invest in local real estate and move to the settlement. Westcott, then forty-two years old, acquired a six acre tract on Stiles Avenue just east of Plainfield Avenue in March 1882. He then returned to his native West Eaton, New York, where he and his wife, Mary, collected their belongings and moved permanently to Orange Park in December 1882. They completed the house in 1883.

By 1885, Westcott had planted 150 citrus trees on his property, which was located one-half mile from the St. Johns River. Wanton Webb in his guide book Historical, Industrial, and Biographical Florida (1885) portrayed settlements throughout the state. He characterized Orange Park as "a thriving and select community with great natural beauty of location, [and] an extensive waterfront." The publication described twenty-seven Orange Park residents and their holdings. Webb commented that Westcott's house was "an attractive dwelling house painted white with green blinds," a color scheme that persists to the present. None of the other Orange Park buildings in Wanton's volume remains.

Soon after settling in Orange Park, Westcott opened a skating rink, which the *Jacksonville Florida Times Union* reported enjoyed a brisk business during the mid 1890s freezes. Unfortunately, Westcott, like his neighbors and farmers throughout north and central Florida, lost his citrus holdings to the devastating freezes. Westcott's wife, Mary, died in 1909



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after some fifty years of marriage, and several years later Westcott met and married Pattie Stevens of South Carolina. In 1919, Westcott died leaving an estate of some \$550, consisting primarily of livestock and a small amount of cash. Pattie retained ownership of the house into the early 1920s, but returned to South Carolina.

In 1923, R.R. Byers of Illinois, acquired the property as a seasonal residence. About 1925, Byers constructed a one-story gable extension at the northeast corner for a kitchen, and built a fireplace in the living room with a brick chimney rising along the north elevation. During the 1920s, he also replaced the original turned columns on the porch with tapered square wood posts and brick piers. Byers also reconfigured the staircase to its present appearance. About ten years later he added a two-story shed extension along the north elevation for an upstairs bathroom and additional living space. In 1944, Byers built a garage apartment northwest of the dwelling at 511 Stiles Avenue (Photo #14). The property is currently owned by Sarah Boyle of Petersburg, Virginia, who maintains the house as a seasonal residence.

**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Westcott House embodies a modified form of frame vernacular construction commonly referred to as the "I-house." The I-house, a narrow two-story building with its long side parallel to the road, typically consists of a side-facing gable roof, symmetrical facade, and plan with two interior rooms on the first and second stories separated by a central hallway and staircase. Kitchens are often contained within offset one-story cross gable extensions protruding at the rear, and fireplaces and chimneys placed at the gable ends. One-story porches extend across the facade.

The Westcott House is a good example of a house built in the I-house form, and modified within the historic period to reflect the taste and expanded living space needs of the second owner. The house concisely illustrates both the living arrangement typical of 1880s I-house, and the more open arrangement typical of 1920s domestic architecture. The additions were complimentary in style to the original form. The level of craftsmanship is high.

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**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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Jacksonville Florida Times Union, January 8, 1895.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Part of lot 11 block 7 section 1 Orange Park, as recorded in OR 651 p. 82,  
678 p. 275 & 1577 p. 1144 R/S.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary encloses property historically associated with the Westcott House.

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**PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST**

1. William Westcott House, 443 Stiles Ave., Orange Park
2. Clay County, Florida
3. Sidney Johnston
4. 1996
5. Historic Property Associates, Inc., St. Augustine, FL
6. Main (south) facade, looking northeast
7. Photo #1 of 13

Items 1-5 are the same for the following photographs.

6. East and south elevations, looking northwest
7. Photo #2 of 13
  
6. North elevation, looking southwest
7. Photo #3 of 13
  
6. North elevation, looking southeast
7. Photo #4 of 13
  
6. First floor stairway, looking east
7. Photo #5 of 13
  
6. First floor dining room, looking northwest
7. Photo #6 of 13
  
6. First floor living room, looking northwest
7. Photo #7 of 13
  
6. Kitchen, looking north
7. Photo #8 of 13
  
6. Second floor stairwell newel and railing, looking south
7. Photo #9 of 13
  
6. Second floor, southwest bedroom, looking east
7. Photo #10 of 13

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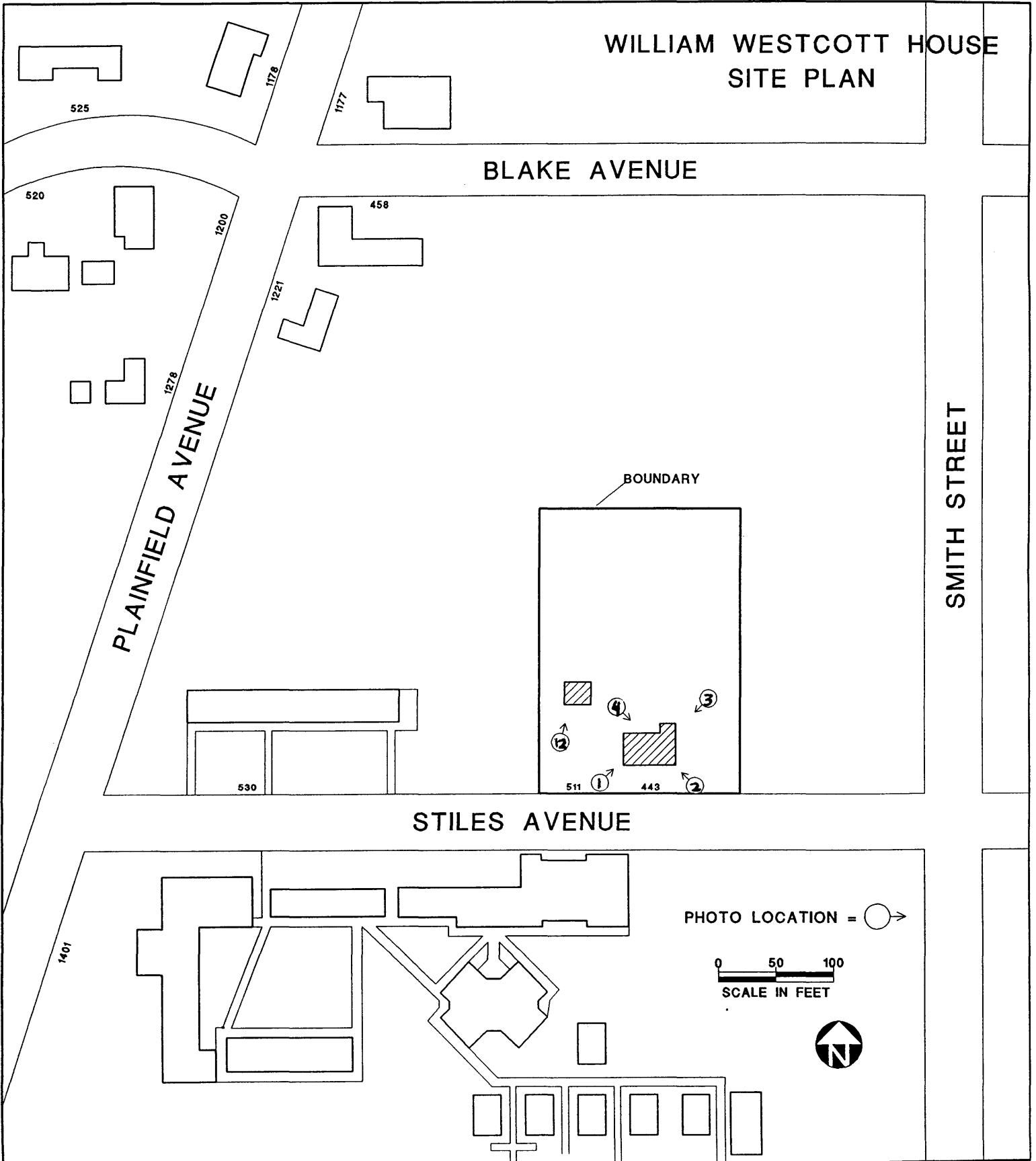
6. Second floor, northeast bedroom, looking northwest  
7. Photo #11 of 13

6. Garage apartment, looking northwest  
7. Photo #12 of 13

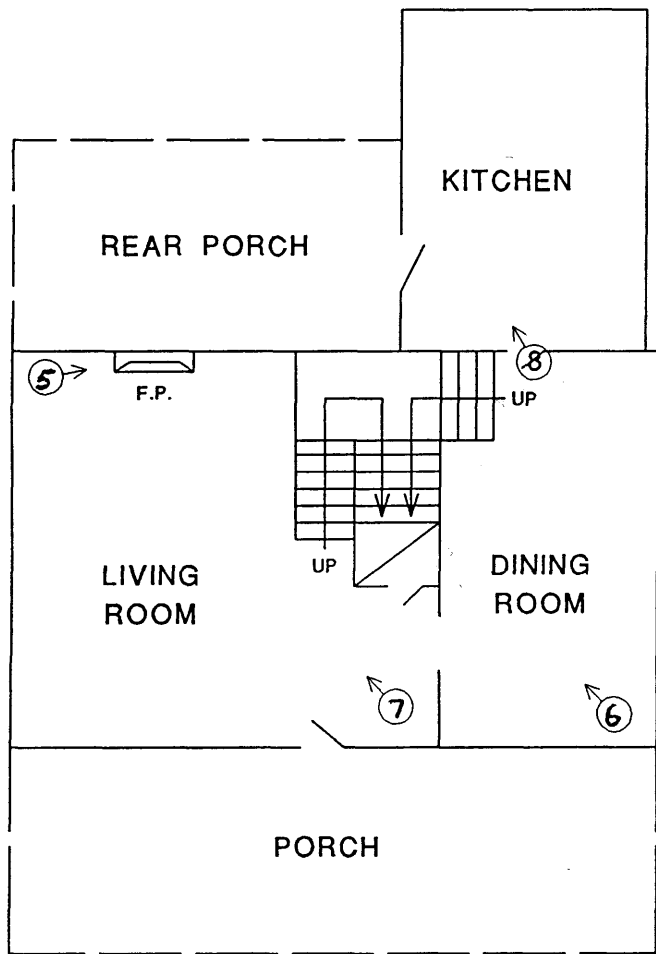
6. Garage second floor, looking northwest  
7. Photo #13 of 13

ORANGE PARK, CLAY CO., FL

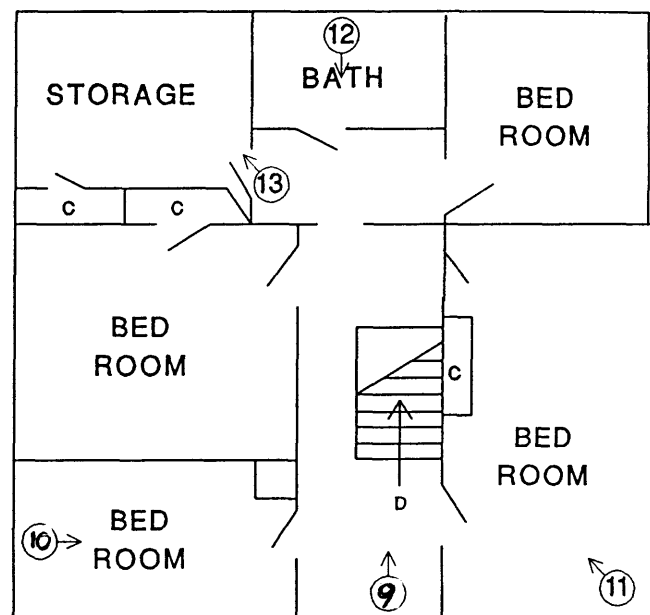
WILLIAM WESTCOTT HOUSE  
SITE PLAN



WILLIAM WESTCOTT HOUSE  
FLOOR PLANS



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



ORANGE PARK, CLAY CO., FL