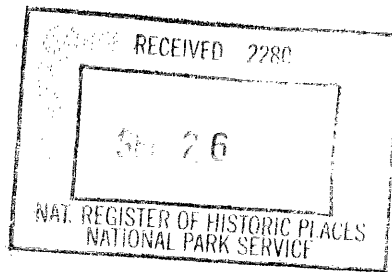


(Oct. 1990)

1215



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 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 LeMoyné College Historic District

other names/site number LeMoyné-Owen College

2. Location

street & number roughly bounded by Walker, Hollis Price, Crown, and alley to rear of Sweeney Hall N/A not for publication

city or town Memphis NA vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Shelby code 157 zip code 38126

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Date 9/26/05

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.
determined eligible for the National Register.
determined not eligible for the National Register.
removed from the National Register.
other, (explain):

Signature of the Keeper Edson H. Beall
Date of Action 11-9-05

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

3	buildings
1	sites
	structures
	objects
4	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

NA

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

1

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: college

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: college

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Colonial Revival

Modernist

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**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, concrete

walls brick, stone

roof asphalt

other wood

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**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** 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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE  
 EDUCATION  
 ETHNIC HERITAGE/BLACK  
 SOCIAL HISTORY (Civil Rights Movement)

**Period of Significance**

1914-1963

**Significant Dates**

1914, 1936, 1963

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Architects: Awsumb, George; Gassner, Francis of Gassner-Nathan-Browne; Tandy & Foster

Contractors: Forcum-James Co.; F.T. Thayer, Jr.; Alexander, James

**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 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:

Tennessee Historical Commission

LeMoyne College Historic District

Name of Property

Shelby County, TN

County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Approximately 4 acres Quad name: SW Memphis 404 SE

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 15 770235 3890288  
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 Michael Sicuro, Preservation Analyst; Chandra Dennis, LeMoyne-Owen College  
organization City of Memphis, Division of Housing and Community Dev. date April 8, 2005  
street & number 701 North Main Street telephone 901-576-7415  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38107

### 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 Dr. James Wingate, President of LeMoyne-Owen College  
street & number 807 Walker Avenue telephone 901/942-7301  
city or town Memphis state TN zip code 38126

**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.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The LeMoyne College Historic District is composed of four buildings and the 1936 campus quadrangle fronting Walker Avenue in the heart of south Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee. Buildings in the district date from 1914 to 1963 and are all brick, multi-story with either Colonial Revival or Modernist designs. One building, Steele Hall, was listed in the National Register for its significance in education in 1979. The campus is 2.5 miles from downtown and its immediate neighborhood is residential in character due to its development as a streetcar suburb ca. 1890-1935. To the immediate northwest is Second Congregational Church at 764 Walker (NR 8/26/82) and to the immediate northeast is Elmwood Cemetery at Walker and Neptune Streets (NR 3/20/02). The former LeMoyne-Gardens Public Housing Project site (NR 7/25/96), now demolished, is directly across the street from the college. It has been redeveloped as a New Urbanism community for mixed-income levels.

The architecture of this historically African American liberal arts college includes Colonial Revival and Modernist styles. The four buildings that comprise the district form a "U" shape with the landscaped quadrangle remaining as a raised terrace above Walker Avenue. The historic district consists of one site, the quadrangle lawn, and four buildings. The focal point is Brownlee Hall, located at the center on the south side of the quadrangle. It is flanked by Sweeney Hall, originally the President's home, on the east and Steele Hall and the Hollis F. Price Library on the west. Steele Hall, built in 1914 and designed by architects Tandy and Foster, remains as the oldest building on campus. Northeast of Brownlee Hall is a school bell mounted on a pedestal with a plaque reading "Original LeMoyne Bell 1870. Presented to the College by Mr. and Mrs. John R. Love. Erected by the class of 1943." This bell was made in Troy, New York in 1877 by Meneeley & Kimberly and recovered from the site of the old LeMoyne Normal & Commercial Institute on Orleans Street.

The two Colonial Revival buildings, Brownlee and Sweeney halls, were designed by George Awsumb in 1936. The Hollis F. Price Library was built in 1963 by the firm of Gassner-Nathan-Browne Architects. The firm of Gassner-Nathan-Browne would later design other buildings on the campus including the Alma C. Hanson Memorial Student Center and the Gibson-Orgill Science-Mathematics Learning Center. These two buildings, however, are outside the period of significance and not included in this nomination.

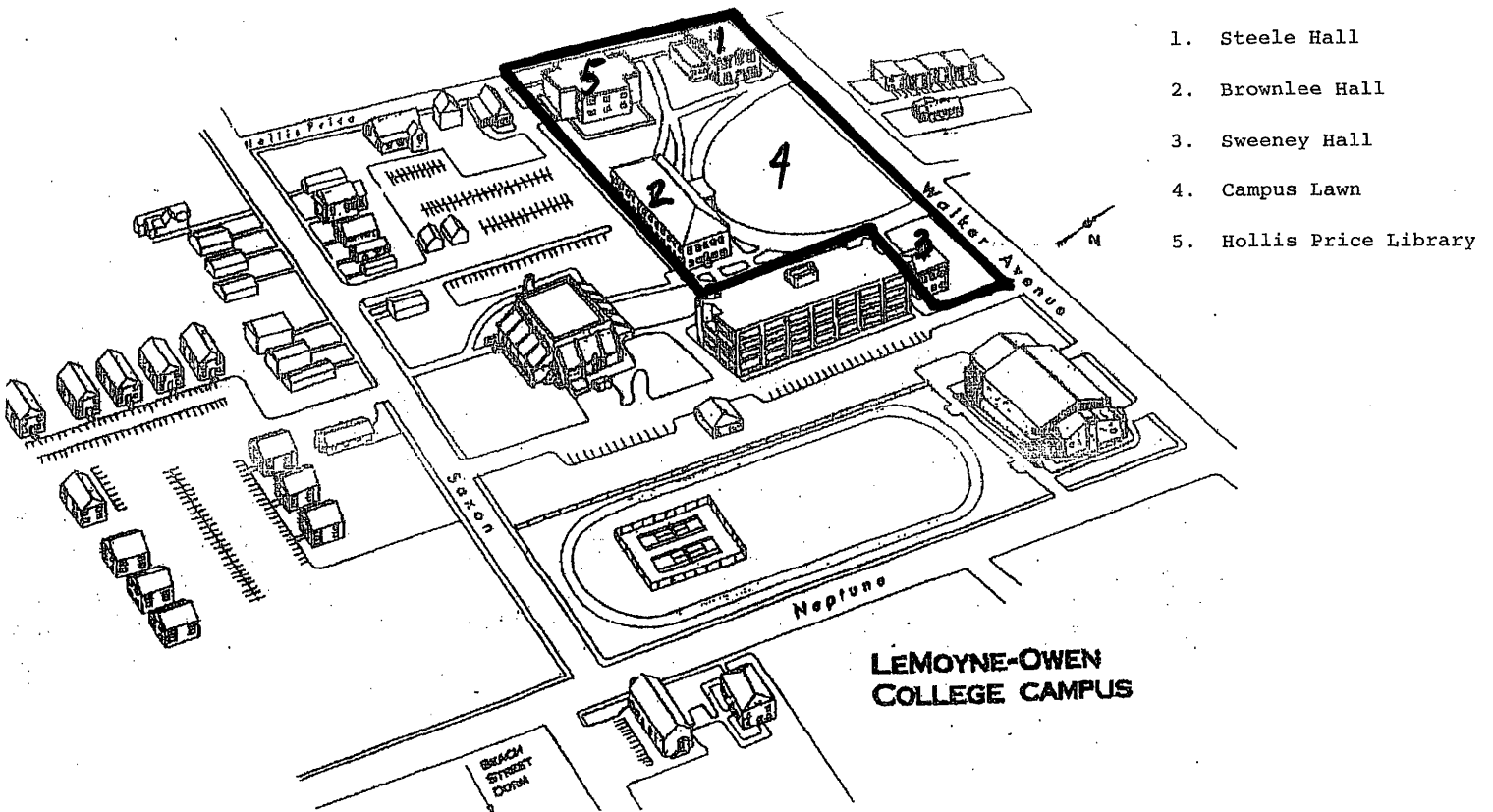
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

LeMoyne-Owen College Campus with district boundaries outlined



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

**INVENTORY**

A survey of resources in LeMoyne College Historic District was prepared by Memphis Heritage, Inc. as part of the *Memphis Cultural Resources Survey*. The survey was completed in 1989 and rechecked for this nomination.

1. Steele Hall C. Built in 1914 and previously listed in the National Register 3/23/79.  
Architect: Tandy and Foster  
Contractor: James Alexander  
Named for Andrew J. Steele, third principal of Lemoyne Normal School, 1870-1908.

This is a two-story brick building with an "L" plan, due to an addition circa 1930 but originally square, featuring Colonial Revival styling, that has a raised basement, brick foundation, concrete water table, and flat tar and gravel roof. The Walker Avenue elevation (originally the façade facing north) is 7 bays and originally incorporated two principal entrances flanked by brick pillars topped by small concrete spheres that have been removed. This elevation has a stepped parapet wall over the central bay with two gable-front parapet wall ornaments over two side bays. On this elevation is a sign band of concrete displaying the name "LeMoyne College." It retains its brick pilasters, 12/1 double-hung wood sash windows, and bands of three 9/1 double-hung wood sash windows with 3-light fixed transoms. The basement level features 8/1 double-hung wood sash windows. All windows have concrete lintels.

The current main entrance is located on the east elevation through 2-light, 4-panel Colonial Revival double doors topped by a prominent jack arch and keystone. The entrance is accessed by concrete steps with wrought iron railings. This elevation's fenestration continues the building's horizontal emphasis and consists of 3 bays featuring 8/1 double-hung wood sash windows grouped in pairs with pilasters separating the bays. The horizontal emphasis is also drawn from the wide water table, flat concrete window sills and lintels, concrete coping on top of the stepped roof parapet, and 9/1 double-hung wood sash windows in bands of threes with 3-light fixed transoms like the north elevation. Detailing is found in the form of concrete squares at the parapet wall and concrete diamonds located over the 1<sup>st</sup> story windows. This elevation also is ornamented with 4 brick niches, one remains possible as an original window, and has jack arches and concrete lintels. The central bay features windows grouped in threes on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stories. They are a variation of the classical Palladian window and are composed of 9/1 double-hung wood sash flanked by 3/1 double-hung wood sash windows; all topped by brick jack arches.

The building has a historic addition to its rear addition from ca. 1930 that was used as library space. In recent years, the interior of the building has been reconstructed due to deterioration and the need to create handicapped accessibility such as the installation of a sunken wheelchair ramp at the southeast corner and an elevator. The remaining interior building fabric includes the original wood and iron staircases.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

2. Brownlee Hall C. Built in 1936

Architect: George Awsumb

Named for Fred L. Brownlee, college president 1942-1943.

This is a two-story brick Colonial Revival style building with 15 bays, rectangular plan, and full basement. It has a hip roof with asphalt shingles and boxed dentillated cornice. The college bought 300,000 bricks from the former Lyceum Theatre in Memphis for its construction. The main façade (north) features brick quoins at the ends of the building, belt courses, jack arches with keystones, 12/12 double-hung wood sash windows, and one interior central brick chimney near the east elevation. The façade is dominated by a central 2-story gable-front roof portico supported by Doric columns and plain Ionic pilasters and has a bracketed cornice and multi-light wagon wheel window surrounded by decorative garland and swags in the pediment. The entry features 4-panel Colonial Revival double doors topped by a multi-light fanlight, a full gable-front pediment, and is framed by thin pilasters. The entrance itself is flanked by 8/8 double-hung sash windows on the 1<sup>st</sup> story that rest atop paneled wood bases and are topped by segmental arch wood lintels.

The east and west elevations both feature 8/8 double-hung wood sash windows with jack arches and 6-light Colonial Revival double door entrances topped with multi-light fanlights, round arch concrete lintel with keystone, and fluted Doric pilasters. All elevations on the basement level have wood vents capped by segmental arches. The rear elevation (south) overlooks a rear parking lot and features 15 bays of 12/12 double-hung wood sash windows with matching jack arches and keystone and two entrances to the basement level with 6-light Colonial Revival doors topped by hip roof sheet metal awnings that are accessed by descending concrete steps. The building serves as the Administration Building and retains its original interior configuration. A large entrance room is accessed from the front entrance and is transversed by a continuous double-loaded hallway of rooms with original moldings and doors. At both ends of the long hall are the original staircases that access the basement and second floor. The second floor plan of offices mimic the first and retains its integrity as well.

3. Sweeney Hall C. Built in 1936.

Architect: George Awsumb

Contractor: Forcum-James Co.

Named for Frank J. Sweeney, college president 1929-1942.

Originally built as the President's Home, this building is a two-story, 5-bay, brick structure with Colonial Revival styling that was built to complement Brownlee Hall. It has a rectangular plan with a raised basement level and is situated on the east side of the quadrangle facing west near Walker Avenue. It forms the east leg of the "U" shape that consists of the first and second building phases of the college from 1914 and 1936. It features a hip roof of asphalt shingles, molded cornice, 2 prominent central brick chimneys, and brick quoins. The façade (west) has 5-bays of 12/12 double-hung wood sash windows with jack arches and a brick keystone that flank a central entrance featuring an 8-panel Colonial Revival door topped by 5-light fanlight, pediment and keystone and flanked by thin fluted pilasters. The north and south elevations feature 3 bays of



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

12/12 double-hung wood sash windows. The entrance itself is accessed by a set of concrete steps with original wrought iron railings with decorative finials.

The rear elevation (east) has 5-bays with a central double-height multi-light Palladian window. The second story portion of the window has the traditional arched central window flanked by narrow multi-light windows but the first story portion resembles a door flanked by sidelights. The heavy wood molding of this two story arrangement makes the rear elevation more prominent than what is found on most residences. The rear elevation also features first story 12/12 double-hung wood sash windows that are approximately 12' in height and span ceiling to floor. These windows open to a poured concrete veranda enclosed by a wrought iron balustrade supported by decorative wrought iron brackets. The basement level contains five service bays on the rear elevation, some of which retain their original 6/6 double-hung windows and multi-light Colonial Revival doors that are framed by a brick arcade. The interior of the building retains its basic original floor layout with a small entry foyer flanked by offices and transversed by a hallway with offices along the rear.

4. Campus Lawn C. Designed and laid out in 1936 by George Awsumb.

The lawn is rectilinear and is bordered by a wrought iron and brick fence along most of Walker Avenue and the historic campus buildings on the other three sides. At the east and west end of the lawn, the area is accessed from Walker Avenue up two sets of concrete steps with wrought iron gates. Once inside the gates at either end, a crescent shape concrete walkway makes a wide curve from one entrance to the other while providing an approach to Steele Hall, the Hollis Library, Brownlee Hall, and Sweeney Hall. The remainder of the space features mature hardwood trees and scattered groupings of concrete benches. The original LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School Bell, from the old campus at 294 Orleans, is located in the southwest corner of the quadrangle after it was discovered and relocated in 1937.

5. Hollis F. Price Library C. Built in 1963.

Architect: Gassner-Nathan-Browne

Contractor: F.T. Thayer, Jr.

Named for Dr. Hollis F. Price, college president 1943-1970.

This is a three-story Modern brick building with half of the first story below grade, a flat roof, and a square plan with three equal structural bays in each direction built in the tradition of the Barcelona Pavilion. It is a cube of cantilevered masonry and glass strip stationary windows set in a concrete frame. On the inside, this effect defines the area for study carrels, but creates the outside effect of a floating quality. The exterior materials include hammered concrete, sand faced red brick, cast stone window frames, and grey plate glass in aluminum sections. The cantilevered construction is emphasized by the lack of vertical mullions in the exterior walls. The entrance is on the south façade through a set of single-light double-doors flanked with full-length stationary glass panels. The interior is lit by a central skylight, thin vertical window units, and horizontal ribbon windows that course the four elevations. The main level includes the reference section, circulation desk, periodical section, listening room, office and workspace, and ten individual study carrels. The entry retains is original terrazzo floors and metal hand rails that lead down to the basement level and up

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places

## Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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to the first and second floors. The basement level is actually a half-story below ground and features a circular hallway with meeting and storage spaces around the perimeter and the center. The rear area of the level has a small space for access to the rear exit and freight elevator that serves all levels. The first floor of the library is accessed by a wide set of stairs from the main entrance that lead to the circulation desk. The open space has a "T" plan to serve students and is dominated by a large mosaic by New Jersey artist Ben Shahn. The mosaic features a reclining figure that holds a symbol of the atom against a starry sky. The text in the mosaic is Psalm 133, a celebration of brotherhood.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

**NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The LeMoyne College Historic District in Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its significance in the education of African Americans in the Mid-South as well as the role its students played in the Civil Rights Movement in Memphis. The college was the only African American institution of higher education in the city when the burgeoning Civil Rights movement was impacting Memphis and the rest of the South. Students at the college were actively involved in the movement. Under Criterion C the buildings in the district are locally significant examples of Colonial Revival and Modernist campus architecture associated with the work of Tandy and Foster, George Awsumb, and Gassner-Nathan-Browne. The buildings form a “U” shape layout around a terraced quadrangle and represent three different phases of construction spanning the years 1914-1963. While the last building from 1963 is not yet fifty years old, it does represent one of Memphis’ most significant Modernist designs. It was one of 16 library buildings in the United States chosen for awards in 1963 given by the American Institute of Architects and the American Library Association and the National Book Committee Award of Merit in 1964. In addition, the 1963 building contains a superb mural by nationally renowned artist Ben Shahn. It also is one of the best works of the local architectural firm of Gassner-Nathan-Browne. Although the district’s period of significance is less than fifty years old, the property meets criterion consideration g because of the student involvement in the local Civil Rights movement and the locally outstanding design of the library. The district retains a high degree of architectural and historic integrity.

Background

The American Missionary Association (AMA) was formed in 1846 through the unification of the Union Missionary Society, the Committee for West Indians Missions and the Western Evangelical Missionary Society as a protest against the silence of other missionary agencies regarding slavery. Their primary focus was establishing schools in the south and providing assistance to the newly freed slaves. Its most notable permanent contribution was the establishment of several black colleges throughout the US, including: Berea College (1859), Fisk University (1866, NR 2/9/78) Talladega College (1867), Hampton Normal & Agriculture Institute (1868), Straight College (Dillard) (1869), Tougaloo College (1869), and Houston-Tillotson (1875).

During the 1860s, the black population of Memphis quintupled from 3,000 to 15,000, as newly freed slaves poured into the city in search of job opportunities and education. After the Civil War, teachers from the AMA were sent to the South to assist with the education of the freedmen. The beginnings of LeMoyne College can be traced back to 1862 when the AMA opened an elementary school for escaped slaves and freedmen during the Civil War at Camp Shiloh, 20 miles southeast of Memphis by AMA teacher Ms. Lucinda Humphrey. Ms. Humphrey, along with Rev. S.G. Wright and Rev. John A. Eaton, Jr., who became the head of the Bureau of the Refugee Freedmen and Abandoned Lands of West Tennessee known as the Freedmen's Bureau, worked together to establish permanent schools for newly freed slaves.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) 10 February 1991.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 8 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

In 1863 the school moved into Memphis at Lincoln Chapel on Orleans Street near the Freedmen's School in the Beale Street Baptist Church. However on May 1, 1866 in response to the Federal withdrawal of troops, race rioters destroyed that building, along with every school for blacks in Memphis. According to the reports from the local newspaper, the damage to the black community was severe: 91 houses, 4 churches, and 12 schools were burned. In 1867, the AMA rebuilt and reopened Lincoln School as a two-story brick building at 294 Orleans Street with 150 students and six teachers at a cost of \$10,000. That number soon swelled to 2,644 pupils with 19 teachers by January 1868. That same year, the Reconstruction government of Tennessee compelled the city to take over the schools and J.H. Barnum, an AMA missionary from Ohio became the superintendent for black education in Memphis, Tennessee.<sup>2</sup>

Because of financial burdens within the organization, the AMA approached several wealthy members to help invest in their education project in the south. One of their members, Dr. Francis Julius LeMoyne was one of the first members asked to give his bequest to help establish a school in Memphis. In 1870, Dr. LeMoyne, a Pennsylvania doctor, abolitionist, and philanthropist whose house had been a stop along the Underground Railroad, donated \$20,000 to the AMA to be used in the erection and support of a black normal school, in which black people might be prepared to be the instructors of their race. A portion of this sum was devoted to building and the remainder to the endowment of the institution. He instructed, "the institution should be so conducted as to give a good practical and scientific education" to anyone without regard to race, creed, or gender as an elementary and secondary school for prospective teachers. At this point the school was referred to as normal school for freedmen with one stipulation from LeMoyne, which was that the "dead language" should not be taught. As a result of the bequest, the LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School opened on October 1, 1871 at 294 Orleans Street. The school was so successful that Dr. LeMoyne gave another \$5,000 for equipment. Principal J. H. Barnum with Rev. W.W. Mallory and his wife as teachers marked the beginning of LeMoyne Normal and Commercial School with 110 pupils, 75 of these enrolled in Sabbath School.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the yellow fever epidemic of 1873, LeMoyne lost its second principal, D.E. Cottle, his wife, and one other teacher. After Cottle's death, Andrew Steele became the principal and took care of the school in 1874. When classes resumed in 1874, LeMoyne had 70 students in the Normal department (teacher training), 40 students in the Intermediate department (post-elementary), and 15 students in the Primary department (elementary school). The first two diplomas were granted in 1876 to Annie Sue Wright and J.T. Turner who went on to become teachers in the Memphis City School system. In 1898, LeMoyne had a graduating class of 13 and the enrollment was 750. By 1900, over 200 young people had received diplomas from the school. The hallmark of Steele's tenure as principal (1870-1908) was improving the physical plant of the school. To meet the needs of the growing student population, the existing buildings were enlarged repeatedly and a separate building for manual training, woodworking, and printing was erected. By 1910, LeMoyne's faculty became interracial.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Qualls, J. Winfield, "The Beginning and Early History of the LeMoyne School at Memphis 1871-1874."

<sup>4</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) 21 December 1952.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9 LeMoyné College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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## 1914-1963

In 1901, a high school was added to prepare students for the normal school course. The new head of the school was Ludwig Larsen who took the title of president and served from 1908 to 1915. To accommodate the growth of the school, in late 1912 or early 1913 LeMoyné decided to abandon its Orleans Street campus and purchase a two and one-half acre property on the southeast corner of Walker and McDowell for a new campus. The first building erected on the campus was Steele Hall. Completed in 1914, it was surrounded by residential structures. Eventually, the college began to acquire parcels to the east in order to gradually expand the size of its campus. The existing structures were used as housing for teachers and classrooms. In time, the college began to remove these houses to create space for new construction.

Designed by Tandy and Foster, Steele Hall was an impressive first building for the new campus. Tandy and Foster was an African American architectural firm based in New York. Little is known about the firm, but it is known that they designed Berea Hall for Berea College in 1911. Between 1901 and 1917, graduates from LeMoyné College numbered 343 with 193 obtaining post-graduate study at other institutions. Many went on to become teachers, social workers, ministers, and entered the medical field to become dentists, physicians, and pharmacists.<sup>5</sup> In 1915, LeMoyné's entire student enrollment was almost 600.<sup>6</sup>

In the late 1910s and 1920s, two presidents served the college including Earl Clippenger (1915-1924) and E.J. Ortman (1924-1929). During 1924-1930, LeMoyné existed as a junior college with a 2 year introductory program of study for regular college students and a 2 year program for teachers and pre-med students.<sup>7</sup> During the tenure of President Frank Sweeney (1929-1942), the college embarked on academic and physical transformations. Beginning in the 1930-31 term, Lemoyne decided to raise its academic standards from a junior college program to a full-fledged college offering the B.A. and B.S. degrees the following year. This brought change to Steele Hall in the form of additional one and two-story wings of fireproof construction to serve as a library, laboratories, and classrooms. Designed by architect George Awsumb and built by E.G. Hodges, contractor, the expansion was estimated to cost \$25,000.<sup>8</sup>

In May 1933, LeMoyné spent \$60,000 for the seven and one-half acres of land at McDowell and Walker for building expansion, giving the school a total of 10 acres. Enrollment was at 260 students in 1933 and it was the college's hope that an expansion of the campus would push that number to 1,000.<sup>9</sup> In 1934, LeMoyné became chartered as a college by the State of Tennessee to grant degrees, diplomas, and certificates. By the close of 1935, LeMoyné received a gift of \$75,000 from the Rockefeller General Education Board, which

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Beverly Bond and Janaan Sherman, *Memphis In Black & White* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 94.

<sup>7</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) 21 December 1952.

<sup>8</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 15 June 1930.

<sup>9</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 11 May 1933.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10 LeMoyn College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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was met in turn by a \$70,000 gift from the AMA. The alumni and a group of black supporters raised an additional \$5,000 to bring the total monetary gifts to the college to \$150,000 for the expansion in 1935-1936. Under the direction of architect George Awsumb, the original plan called for the erection of five new buildings including: faculty building to house staff, administration building, science building, fine arts hall, and gymnasium with an oval stadium.<sup>10</sup> (see architectural rendering). During this building period, only the administration building (Brownlee Hall) was built as planned, but a President's house (Sweeney Hall) was built on the east side of the quadrangle where the science and faculty buildings were envisioned.

George Awsumb was born in Norway in 1880, reared in Wisconsin, started working in barn construction in 1898, and graduated with an architecture degree from the University of Illinois in 1906. After working for J.C. Llewellyn of Chicago for two years, he received a traveling scholarship to study the architecture of France and England. After his return to Chicago, he taught design at the Art Institute. Awsumb moved to Memphis from Chicago in 1919 after he partnered with local architect Charles O. Pfeil to win the design competition for the Municipal Auditorium and Market House at Main and Poplar Avenue (built 1920-24 and now demolished).<sup>11</sup> Awsumb was convinced that his early training in barn building led to his career in church and public building design due to his belief that there was a great similarity in the basic principle the structures.<sup>12</sup> Awsumb had a prolific design career in Memphis including work on the following projects: the 1923-24 Humes Junior High School at 659 Manassas (NR 7/12/04) and its near twin South Side High School at Richmond and Orleans Streets in south Memphis (now demolished); the 1925 Dermon Building at 46 N. Third Street downtown (NR 3/15/84); the 1926-27 Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Midtown; a member of the design team for the 1935-38 Lauderdale Courts Public Housing Project downtown (NR 7/25/96); the 1947 Baron Hirsh Synagogue at 1740 Vollintine; the 1941 Samuel Abraham Chapel at Baron Hirsh Cemetery at 1536 South Rozelle; and the 1948-49 Walker Wellford, Jr. House at 135 St. Albans in the Hedgemoor Subdivision of East Memphis.<sup>13</sup>

In 1936, Brownlee and Sweeney halls were designed by Awsumb, completed, and opened. Brownlee Hall, first called the Administration Building and later named after Fred L. Brownlee who became the College President in 1942, was designed and built as the focal point of the newly expanded campus. President Brownlee had been the General Secretary of the AMA for 20 years and was a graduate of Ohio State University and Union Theological Seminary in New York City.<sup>14</sup> As the centerpiece of the college's growth, it was constructed as a two-story brick building with a raised basement and consisted of the following: 9 classrooms, 5 seminar rooms, lounging rooms for students and faculty, section offices, and a lecture room with capacity for 230 people. The building was built at a length of 160' and 90% of its construction workers were African American laborers and mechanics.<sup>15</sup> Sweeney Hall, built as the home for then college president

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<sup>10</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 11 May 1933.

<sup>11</sup> Judith Johnson, "The Art of Architecture: Modernism in Memphis 1890-1965," Memphis, TN, pg. 20

<sup>12</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis), 29 January 1934.

<sup>13</sup> Eugene J. Johnson and Robert D. Russell, Jr., *Memphis: An Architectural Guide* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1990), 11, 56, 94, 185, 251-52, 279, 307.

<sup>14</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis), 6 December 1940.

<sup>15</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 20 September 1936.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11 LeMoyné College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

and Harvard graduate Frank J. Sweeney (president 1929-1942), was also designed by George Awsumb in the Colonial Revival style and envisioned as a complement to Brownlee Hall. It was sited on the east side of the 1936-designed quadrangle. The \$20,000 residence was built as a two-story brick house with 13 rooms consisting of 5 bedrooms, study, library, office, and living rooms.<sup>16</sup>

In 1937, the old College Bell, which was a part of the College's original structure in 1880, was rededicated at the campus. It was at this time that the campus' front lawn was finished to include planting of trees, a network of walkways connecting the buildings to each other and Walker Avenue. New fencing was erected on all sides of the 1936 campus and included a new wrought iron gate at the entrance to the grounds at what was McDowell Street (now Hollis Price Street). It was topped with signage displaying a '37 to note that it was a gift of the class of 1937. The new athletic field was finally installed although without the planned grandstand or gymnasium.<sup>17</sup>

Sweeney's tenure brought change to LeMoyné College by introducing intercollegiate sports, taking the first African American debate teams out of the country, and encouraging the hiring of more African American faculty members and administrators. The late 1930s and 1940s were a time of increasing community involvement for the college. In 1937, LeMoyné's Department of Sociology, working with the local Y.W.C.A., embarked on a community survey out of which grew the Vance Avenue Y.W.C.A. Center. In later years, the college would also help to create the Orange Mound Day Nursery and the Emmanuel Episcopal Church Community Center in Claiborne Homes Public Housing Project. In 1942, LeMoyné was responsible for a tenant selection survey for the neighboring LeMoyné Gardens Public Housing Project that resulted in the placement of 580 families. Faculty members served on the boards of many of Memphis' social service and welfare agencies that were often staffed by LeMoyné graduates.<sup>18</sup> Also in 1942, LeMoyné College was designated by the State Defense Council as a regional school for the training of black civilian defense instructors. This program was modeled after a similar white initiative at Memphis State College.<sup>19</sup>

Beginning in 1942, Fred L. Brownlee, served as president for one year. In 1943, changes in the administration exemplified the changing thoughts on racial leadership for the college. Until this point, the President had always been white, while the Dean of Students had been African American. This policy was reversed with the promotion of Hollis Price as an African American president (1943-1970) to succeed Fred L. Brownlee and the Rev. Jay Wright as the white Dean of Students. Price, a native of Virginia, attended the mission school at Capahosic, Virginia, where his father served as principal for forty years. He then went on to attend Williston Academy at East Hampton, Massachusetts and then Amherst College and Columbia University where he received his Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees respectively. He taught economics at Tuskegee Institute for seven years, was Dean of Students at LeMoyné for two years, and was working on his Doctorate when he was appointed president.<sup>20</sup> Also at the start of President Price's tenure in 1943, LeMoyné

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<sup>16</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis) 11 February 1936.

<sup>17</sup> "LeMoyné Campus is Now City Showplace," *Memphis World*, 7 September, 1937.

<sup>18</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) 21 December 1952.

<sup>19</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis) 10 April 1942.

<sup>20</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis), 23 April, 1943.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

College gave its support to the creation of the United Negro College Fund by becoming one of its charter members. An additional change for the college came in 1947 with the disassociation from the AMA, as the organization disbanded nationally due to funding problems.

In 1946, the Tennessee Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention, under the presidential leadership of Dr. S.A. Owen, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church of Memphis, purchased the three-quarter million dollar physical plant of Siena College and St. Agnes Academy on Vance Avenue at Orleans (former Vance-Pontotoc Historic District) to establish a junior college. It was formally launched in 1954 as S.A. Owen Junior College (1954-1968). The campus consisted of approximately eleven acres of beautiful grounds on which there were five buildings including: the administration building, Roger Williams Hall, the Roger Williams Annex, Howe Hall, and Ribbins Hall. In July 1957, the name was changed to Owen College, in 1958 the College received accreditation, and in 1961 was admitted to the membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Owen College graduated its first class in 1956. Since then, there were 169 graduates from Owen College. However in 1968, Owen College merged with LeMoyne College after fire damaged Roger Williams Hall, a major building of Owen College's campus. Thus, a new chapter in higher education for African Americans in the Mid-South began as LeMoyne-Owen College and continues today.

In 1952, the college served a student population of 400 and had an estimated 400 graduates serving in the Memphis and Shelby County Public School systems. The college was now 1 of 32 privately managed institutions affiliated with the United Negro College Fund and remained committed as a community-minded institution serving a tri-state area in which more than 250,000 African Americans lived.<sup>21</sup>

By 1954, LeMoyne finished construction on its Bruce Hall Gymnasium as the final part of its expansion project originally envisioned in 1936. The 21,617 square foot brick building was built along Walker Avenue with a minimal setback and is on a lower grade than the original campus quadrangle. It was built to house the college's athletic programs and is sited to the east of Sweeney Hall.<sup>22</sup>

In the late 1950s, the double standard for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools (S.A.C.S.) was abolished and LeMoyne embarked on plans for a new library in 1960. At that time, LeMoyne was granted full membership in S.A.C.S. with an "A" rating.<sup>23</sup> In 1963, the College built the Hollis F. Price Library named after its first African American president who served from 1943-1970. The 22,400 square foot building was one of the few libraries for African Americans in Memphis. It is three stories high with the first story half below grade and is designed to house 65,000 books and publications. The building's exterior is signified by its dominant Modernist box design of two-stories cantilevering over a basement level that is topped by a stationary glass ribbon window. Thus, the design creates an appearance of

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<sup>21</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) 21 December 1952.

<sup>22</sup> Although potentially eligible, this building has been left out of the historic district nomination as the College plans a possible replacement with a modern facility.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 13 LeMoyné College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

masonry floating on glass. To date there have been no alterations to this building. In the early 1960s, soon after the building opened, the Library also served as a meeting place for local Civil Rights activists and the annual Race Relations Conference.

At the completion of the Hollis Price Library, the architectural community gave it notice with First Honor awards sponsored by the American Institute of Architects, the American Library Association, and the National Book Committee. The judging panel stated, "This library fits in the campus scene both functionally and aesthetically and the design is an excellent example of the dignified results which can be accomplished with restricted funds."<sup>24</sup>

A primary reason for the Library's interior design significance is drawn from the large mosaic tiled mural by renowned New Jersey artist Ben Shahn (1898-1969). After the urging of the College, to incorporate art works as an integral part of the building, architect Francis Gassner planned for the Library's mural space to occupy a visually important location from atop the circulation desk area on the main floor. The mural, measuring 10' high and 21' long, commands a presence as viewed from the building's entrance and throughout the library's interior space as its location is central to a two-story light well topped by a skylight. Francis Gassner personally invited Ben Shahn to design the estimated \$10,000 mural. Shahn was born in Lithuania and designed murals for the Federal Security Building in Washington, a number of schools in the New York area, and a synagogue in Nashville. Noted as one of America's leading contemporary artists at the time, Shahn was known as a "social painter of the urban scene" or a social realism artist. Shahn stated that he "liked stories and people." His design for the new library was to espouse the theme of brotherhood as a sprawled man gropes for the infinite. Over the figure's head looms a face that might be the God of judgment or the oppressive forces of life on Earth. In the black distance stars gleam in the open universe. At the right, the man's hand reaches toward symbols of science; suggesting perhaps that the artist believes this is a field where race and creed are nothing and knowledge is everything. Over the left side descends most of the text of the 133<sup>rd</sup> Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head...As the dew of Hermon and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: For there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."<sup>25</sup>

Shahn supervised the laying of the mural's polymer tempera mosaic glass tiles from Murano, Italy by a New York City tile setting firm in reverse on paper. The sheets were later brought to Memphis and the mosaics then fitted directly onto the wall.<sup>26</sup> Shahn was not unfamiliar with Memphis or the South in general as the artist worked as a commercial photographer for the Farm Security Administration in 1935 in which he photographed scenes in Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, and North and South Carolina.<sup>27</sup> At the library's dedication in 1963, Shahn and Gershon Beresford Onesimus Collier, the Ambassador from Sierra Leone in West Africa, were in attendance.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>24</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 5 April 1964.

<sup>25</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 30 September 1962.

<sup>26</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 3 December 1961.

<sup>27</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis) 16 November 1963.

<sup>28</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis), 14 November 1963.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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Francis Gassner (1927-1977), the lead architect on the library, was born in New York City, received his Bachelor of Arts in Architecture from Carnegie Institute of Technology in Pittsburg, and began his architectural business in Memphis in 1955. Gassner was a member of a team of architects that planned and designed Memphis' Civic Center Plaza along Main Street. He later founded his architectural practice with Thomas Nathan in 1958 to become Gassner-Nathan Partners Architects Planners, Inc.<sup>29</sup> The genesis of the redesign Memphis' Main Street between Adams and Poplar avenues was the 1955 Bartholomew Plan for Public Buildings commissioned by the city government. The plan called for a Civic Center with five new buildings and an underground parking garage in a four block area. By 1959, the plan was revised to consist of a pedestrian mall and new buildings to house City Hall, Federal and State Buildings, etc. Gassner, along with his architectural firm partners of Thomas Nathan and, by then, Robert Browne collaborated with the firm of Haglund and Venable to design the 1964-65 Donnelley J. Hill State Office Building. Gassner used large exposed structural members on the Hill State Office Building to divide the building into multi-storied sections. It rises 192 feet above ground level with about 10,000 square feet in each of its eleven column-free floors. The architects designed the building with two structural systems to gain the desired monumental impact for such buildings. The building has an exterior bearing wall and super frame that relieves the bearing wall at every fourth floor and transfers the load to eight massive exterior columns. The exterior wall cladding is a salt and pepper granite aggregate. The design of the exterior columns, as a pilotis carrying the building, is influenced by the work of architect LeCorbusier.<sup>30</sup> It earned a national design citation in the *Progressive Architecture* Design Awards Program for 1965.<sup>31</sup>

Gassner-Nathan-Browne also designed the following: the 1969 Shelby County Administration Building in Civic Center Plaza; the wedge-shaped 1974 Commercial and Industrial Bank building downtown; the 1969 Wassell-Randolph Student Alumni Center at the University of Tennessee Memphis; the 1976 third Temple Israel; and the 1970 administrative headquarters of Schering-Plough, Inc. Francis Gassner was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and president of the Memphis Chapter in 1969. He also served on the advisory panel of the Tennessee Arts Commission and as an instructor at the Memphis College of Art.<sup>32</sup>

Modernism as an architectural form in Memphis began to gain acceptance on public and institutional buildings in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Designed by architects Estes Mann and Roy Harrover, the Memphis Academy of Arts was completed in 1956 in Overton Park in Midtown. The design competition was juried by architect Philip Johnson. The building represents the modernist style of New Formalism that would become used on other Memphis buildings in the early 1960s such as Mann and Harrover's Memphis International Airport of 1963 and Alfred Aydelott and Associate's Memphis City Hall of 1966. In 1957, east Memphians saw the completion of Mann and Harrover's Richland Elementary School at 5440 Rich Road. It has been argued as the first truly modern school in the city and is dominated by its composition of Miesian

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<sup>29</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar* (Memphis), 17 August 1977.

<sup>30</sup> The term pilotis represents a series of columns or piles that are used to raise the base of a building above ground-level

<sup>31</sup> Judith Johnson, 38-40.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

---

rectangular boxes that show its concrete structural frame.<sup>33</sup> In addition to the Price Library at LeMoyne College and Richland Elementary School, the stylistic influence of architect Mies van de Rohe is also seen in the 1962 WHBQ radio and television station headquarters on South Highland Street near the University of Memphis. Designed by the Princeton, NJ architectural firm of Fulmer and Bowers, it is a two-story Miesian rectangle that departs from the International style to include dark-panels that decorate the top half of the white concrete structure and features a beautifully defined offset entrance.<sup>34</sup>

In the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s, LeMoyne College was a center of activity during the Civil Rights Movement and the campus served as host to some of the nation's most recognizable Civil Rights leaders including: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Rev. Benjamin Hooks (Class of 1945), and Rev. Billy Kyles. In addition, one of the last photos taken of Dr. Martin Luther King before his assassination on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis was at the College Bell with President Hollis Price in 1968.

LeMoyne's initial involvement was limited due to the college's traditional values and its emphasis as an institution of higher learning. Many of the activities that took place were student led. Among those student activists was Marion Barry who later moved to Washington D.C., joined the Civil Rights Movement there and eventually became Mayor. Barry created controversy when in 1958, as president of the campus chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), he wrote a letter in the college's student newspaper *The Magician* urging that former Memphis Mayor Walter Chandler resign from LeMoyne's Board of Trustees due to allegations that he insulted African Americans in testimony given during a federal court trial over segregated seating on Memphis Street Railway Company buses. Former Mayor Chandler was retained by the City of Memphis to help fight a suit brought to force integration of the bus line. Chandler charged that the suit was "not instituted in good faith" and that his legal position was that "the NAACP had caused the incident in order to sue." The Board of Trustees for the college stated that Barry's letter was "impertinent, ill advised, and did not provide facts on which the conclusions it reached were based."<sup>35</sup> Barry stated that he was not sorry that he and two others wrote the letter, but that he was sorry that the letter was published and created a sensation in the local papers. Barry claimed that his intentions were to educate other students on the legal matter and position taken by the former mayor and college trustee.<sup>36</sup>

On March 18, 1960, seven LeMoyne students and others from Owen College walked into McLellan's on South Main downtown and sat at the segregated lunch counter and demanded service. The white customers at the counter left and the store closed. Gwen Glover, one of the participants from Owen College, described the event as "We had been reading about the recent sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina and wondering what we could do."<sup>37</sup> The next day, forty LeMoyne students were arrested at sit-ins at the whites only Main Public Library on Peabody Avenue in Midtown and the Cossit Library on Front Street downtown. Those arrested included Marion Barry, Evander Ford, and Carol Hooks whose uncle Benjamin Hooks defended the

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<sup>33</sup> Johnson and Russell, 15, 205, 321, 353.

<sup>34</sup> Johnson, Judith, *The Art of Architecture*, 35.

<sup>35</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 20 March 1958.

<sup>36</sup> *Memphis Press Scimitar*, (Memphis), 18 March 1958.

<sup>37</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 29 March 2004.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number

8

Page

16LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

students in court. Benjamin Hooks, himself an alumnus of LeMoyne College, became the Executive Director of the NAACP. Evander Ford also participated in a student sit-in at the Overton Park Shell amphitheatre in the Overton Park Historic District (NR 10/25/79)<sup>38</sup>

These efforts by students at LeMoyne played a part in the overall Civil Rights Movement within Memphis. Like African Americans elsewhere, those in Memphis returned home from World War II determined to find equality in American society. Black leadership recognized that political organizing was the key to achieving some measure of equality. Several groups, including the Ministers and Citizens League, an inter-denominational group of black ministers, began a series of efforts to increase voter registration and education. In 1951, Dr. J.E. Walker, who founded and served as head of the Universal Life Insurance Company, offered himself as a candidate for the Memphis Board of Education. Although he lost, 20,000 black Memphians were registered to vote that year. Following Walker's defeat and the elimination of the poll tax in 1954, drives in the black community pushed registration to 60% of the eligible voters. The black voting bloc provided political leverage that enabled the black leadership to negotiate concessions from the white leadership that needed their support. A handful of blacks achieved political office in the 1960s and ultimately succeeded in altering the city charter to ensure more equitable representation.<sup>39</sup>

In 1955, 5 black students, including Maxine Carr (later Smith) who held a Master's degree from Middlebury College in Vermont and Miriam DeCosta Sugarmon who was a Phi Beta Kappa from Wellesley, were refused admittance to Memphis State College (now University of Memphis) as unqualified for graduate school. A federal injunction was filed against the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education responded with a 5 year plan to desegregate higher education institutions beginning with graduate students and descending to a lower grade each year. This satisfied the court and the injunction was denied. On an appeal to the United States Supreme Court in 1957, the plan was found unacceptable with a ruling that Tennessee colleges must admit qualified black students in accordance with equal protection clauses of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. In 1959, integration at then Memphis State College began with 8 black students.<sup>40</sup>

Beginning in 1960, the Memphis Chapter of the NAACP began to attack segregation with lawsuits targeting tax supported public institutions in Memphis including libraries, parks and golf courses, playgrounds, auditoriums, the fairgrounds, and swimming pools. After the Public Library was desegregated under court order, the NAACP sued to have the "colored" and "white" restroom and drinking fountain signs removed. During the early 1960s, 3 years of legal action, boycotts, weekly marches, sit-ins, and hundreds of arrests resulted in city buses, downtown lunch counters, the Memphis Pink Palace Museum (NR 7/9/80), Overton Park (NR 10/25/79) and Zoo, the Brooks Art Gallery, movie theaters, and restaurants being opened to African Americans. Memphis' integration did manage to avoid much of the animosity and violence found in other parts of the South. This is largely attributed to the Memphis Committee on Community Relations (MCCR) that served as an unofficial interracial group of business, civic, and religious leaders who worked

<sup>38</sup> *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis), 10 February 1991.

<sup>39</sup> Bond, Beverly and Janaan Sherman, *Memphis in Black and White* (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2003), 133.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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behind the scenes with a plan for moderate, gradual, and calm desegregation.<sup>41</sup> These efforts, however, would be tested during the violence that ensued during the Sanitation Workers' Strike in 1968 and the ultimate assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. who came to Memphis to lead the effort with peaceful intentions.

LeMoyne College has a historical significance as the only higher education available to African Americans in Memphis during the years of segregation and since the 1960s has continued to serve the Memphis community as a historically African American college. By the mid-1960s its enrollment reached nearly 700 students. During its long history, it has served as a training ground for African American leaders. Countless teachers were trained in the LeMoyne's Normal Institute. Among the college's prominent graduates are Jesse H. Turner, Sr., former National Treasurer of the NAACP; linguist Dr. Juanita Williamson; and A. Maceo Walker, Sr., former President of Universal Life Insurance Company and Tri-State Bank in Memphis. Other graduates have gone on to serve the Memphis community as college and school administrators, judges, state legislators, and city and county officials. Throughout the late 1950s and 1960s, the College served as a point of connection for students who supported Civil Rights in Memphis.

The historic building stock consisting of Steele Hall, Brownlee Hall, Sweeney Hall, the campus lawn, and the Dr. Hollis Price Library exemplify the campus' three building phases of 1914, 1936, and 1963. It shows the campus' development from restrained Colonial Revival styling in the 1914 Steele Hall to the 1936 expansion under architect George Awsumb in a full Colonial Revival mode consisting of the landscaped campus lawn framed by Brownlee and Sweeney Halls to the Modernist styling of the 1963 Dr. Hollis Price Library by architects Gassner-Nathan-Browne. All buildings, including the campus lawn, retain a high degree of integrity with Steele Hall being the only building that has had any interior or exterior alterations.

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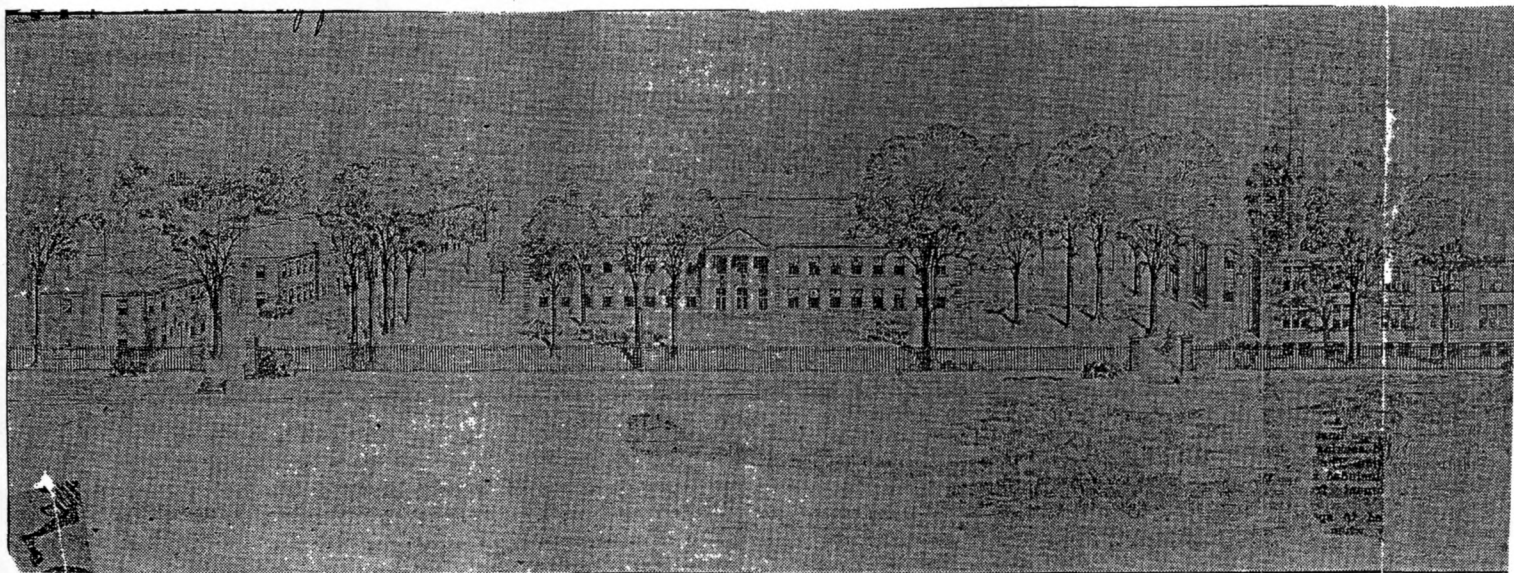
<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee



Design from 1933 for the 1936 campus expansion by architect George Awsumb. At far right is the existing Steele Hall. In the center is the Administration Building (later named Brownlee Hall). At left is the Science and Faculty Halls. A gymnasium and stadium were envisioned to be located to the left of the Science and Faculty Halls. Only Brownlee Hall was built as planned. Sweeney Hall (the President's Home) would be built in 1936 in the area where the Science and Faculty Halls would have been.

Image from *Commercial Appeal* 11 May 1933.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 19 LeMoyné College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 20 LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 21

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The LeMoyne College Historic District boundary begins at the southeast corner of Walker Avenue and McDowell Street (now Dr. Hollis Price, Jr.) 10' from the rear elevation of Steele Hall (building 1), continues south to the northeast corner of McDowell Street and Hicks Alley (now Crown Place), continues east past the rear of the Dr. Hollis Price Library (building 2) and Brownlee Hall (building 3- the boundary is 5' south of the rear of this building) to 50' east of Brownlee Hall, continues north 175', continues east 100' along an imaginary line that is 10' from the south elevation of Sweeney Hall (building 4) to the rear alley, continues north 80' to Walker Avenue, continues west along Walker Avenue back to the original point.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundary includes the largest intact area of historical resources on the campus for the period of 1914-1963 with the exception of the Bruce Hall Gymnasium.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 22

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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### **PHOTOGRAPHS**

Photos by: Michael Sicuro  
Housing & Community Development  
City of Memphis

Date: March 29, 2005  
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission  
2941 Lebanon Road  
Nashville, TN 37243

- 1 of 29  
Quad view to southwest toward Brownlee Hall
- 2 of 29  
Quad view northwest toward Steele Hall
- 3 of 29  
Quad view to west toward Steele Hall (right) & Hollis Price Library (left)
- 4 of 29  
Quad view to east to Sweeney Hall
- 5 of 29  
Quad view to northwest toward Steele Hall
- 6 of 29  
Quad view to south to Brownlee Hall
- 7 of 29  
Steele Hall, façade, view to west
- 8 of 29  
Steele Hall, façade & north elevation, view to southwest
- 9 of 29  
Steele Hall façade & south elevation, view to northwest
- 10 of 29  
Steele Hall, rear south elevation, view to north

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 23

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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11 of 29

Brownlee Hall, portico, view to southwest

12 of 29

Brownlee Hall, entrance detail at façade, view to south

13 of 29

Brownlee Hall, window detail at façade, view to south

14 of 29

Brownlee Hall, jack arch detail

15 of 29

Brownlee Hall, quoin detail

16 of 29

Brownlee Hall, rear south elevation, view to northwest

17 of 29

Brownlee Hall, east elevation, view to west

18 of 29

LeMoyne Bell, detail

19 of 29

Sweeney Hall, façade & south elevation, view to northeast

20 of 29

Sweeney Hall, façade, view to east

21 of 29

Sweeney Hall, entrance detail, view to east

22 of 29

Sweeney Hall, south & rear elevation, view to northwest

23 of 29

Sweeney Hall, rear elevation, view to west

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places**

## **Continuation Sheet**

Section number photos Page 24

LeMoyne College Historic District  
Shelby County, Tennessee

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24 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, façade & east elevation, view to southwest

25 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, east elevation, view to west

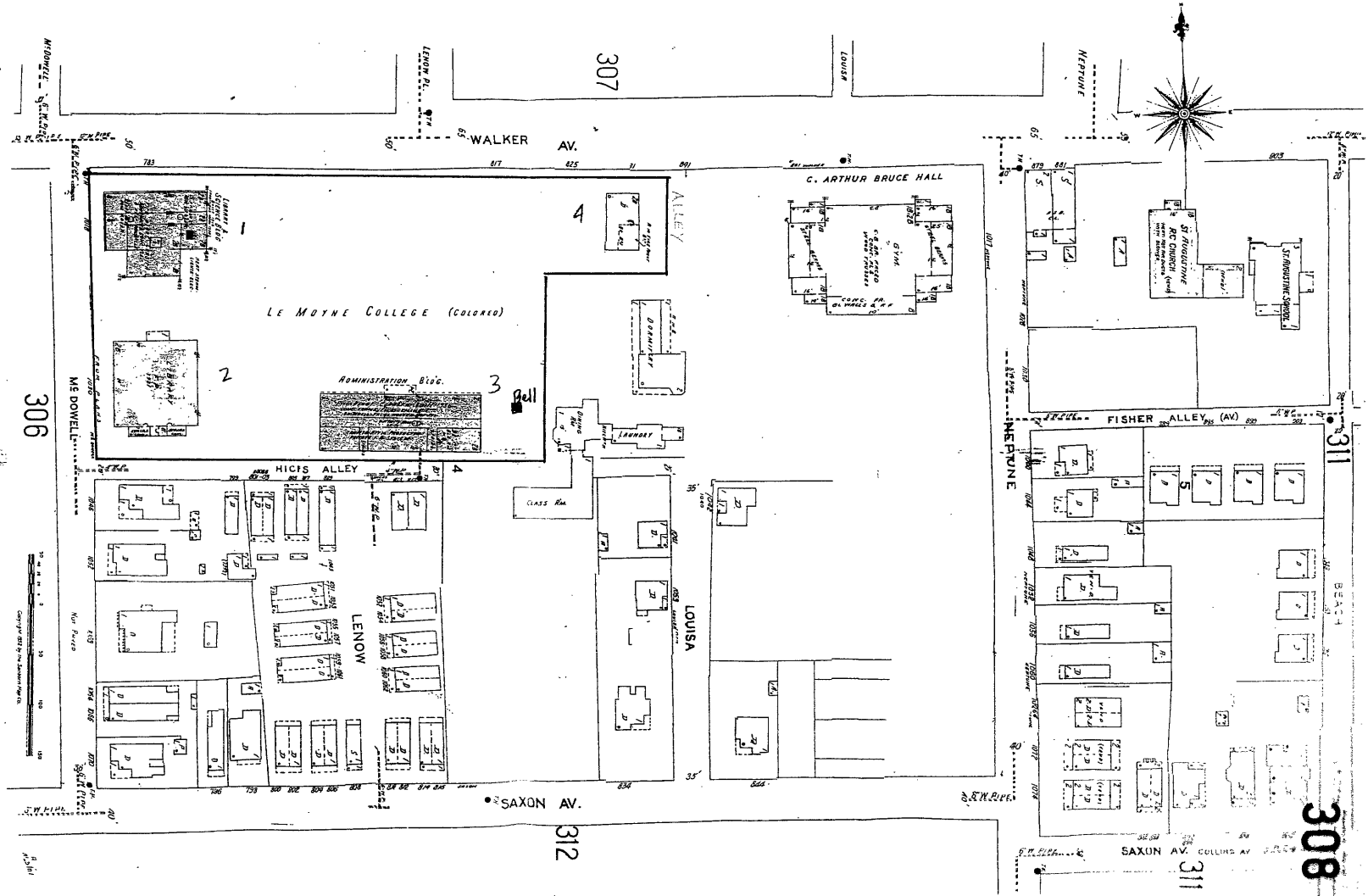
26 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, northeast corner detail

27 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, entrance detail, view to southwest.

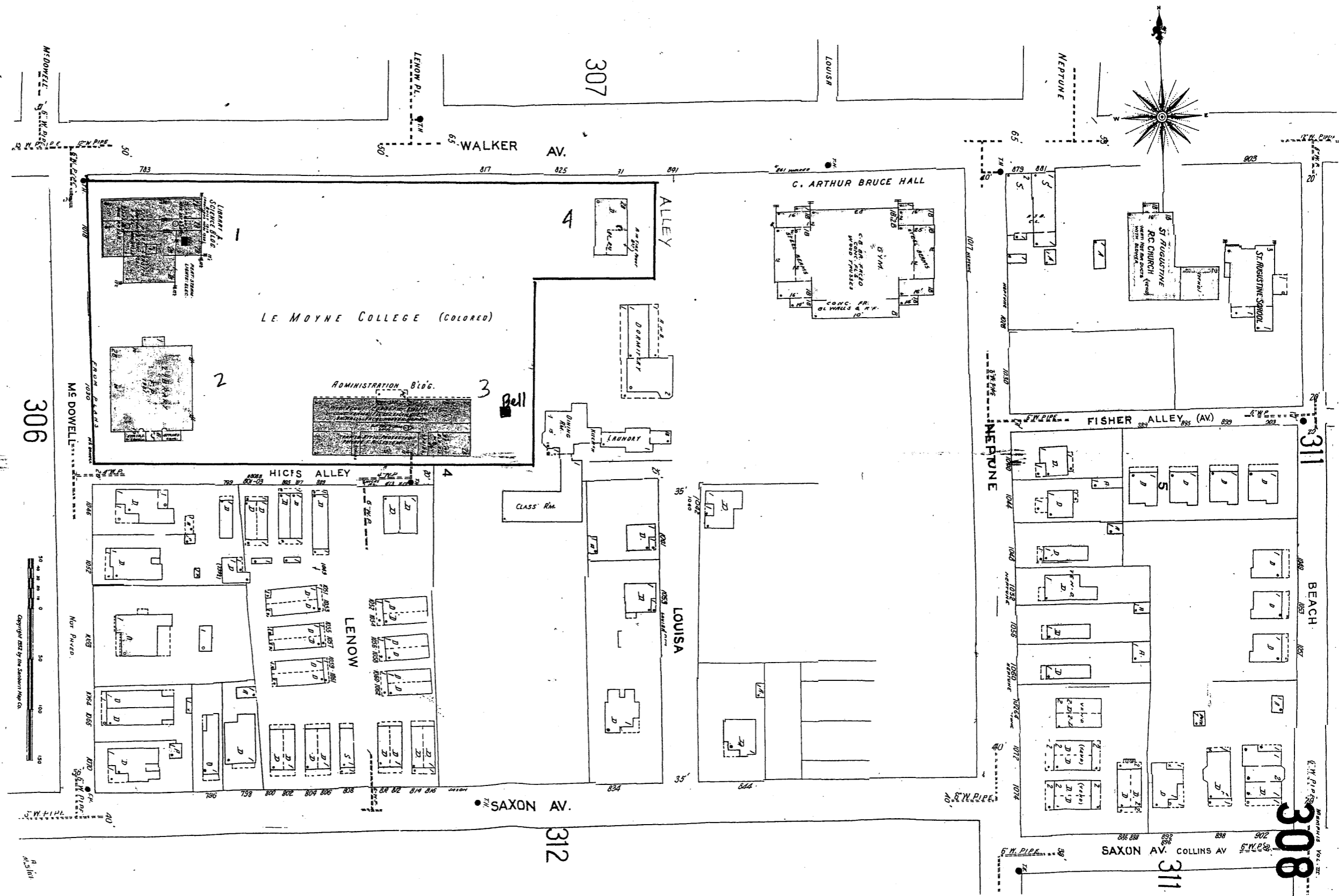
28 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, entrance interior staircase detail

29 of 29  
Hollis Price Library, interior view with Shahn mural

LeMoyné College Historic District Boundary begins at the SE corner of Walker Avenue and McDowell Street (now Dr. Hollis Price, Jr.) 10' from the rear elevation of Steele Hall (building 1), continues south to the NE corner of McDowell Street and Hicks Alley (now Crown Place), continues east 5' from the rear of the Dr. Hollis Price Library (building 2) and Brownlee Hall (building 3) to 50' east of Brownlee Hall, continues north 125', continues east 100' along the south elevation of Sweeney Hall (building 4) to the rear alley, continues north 80' to Walker Avenue, continues west along Walker Avenue back to original point.



LeMoyné College Historic District Boundary begins at the SE corner of Walker Avenue and McDowell Street (now Dr. Hollis Price, Jr.) 10' from the rear elevation of Steele Hall (building 1), continues south to the NE corner of McDowell Street and Hicks Alley (now Crown Place), continues east 5' from the rear of the Dr. Hollis Price Library (building 2) and Brownlee Hall (building 3) to 50' east of Brownlee Hall, continues north 125', continues east 100' along the south elevation of Sweeney Hall (building 4) to the rear alley, continues north 80' to Walker Avenue, continues west along Walker Avenue back to original point.



533

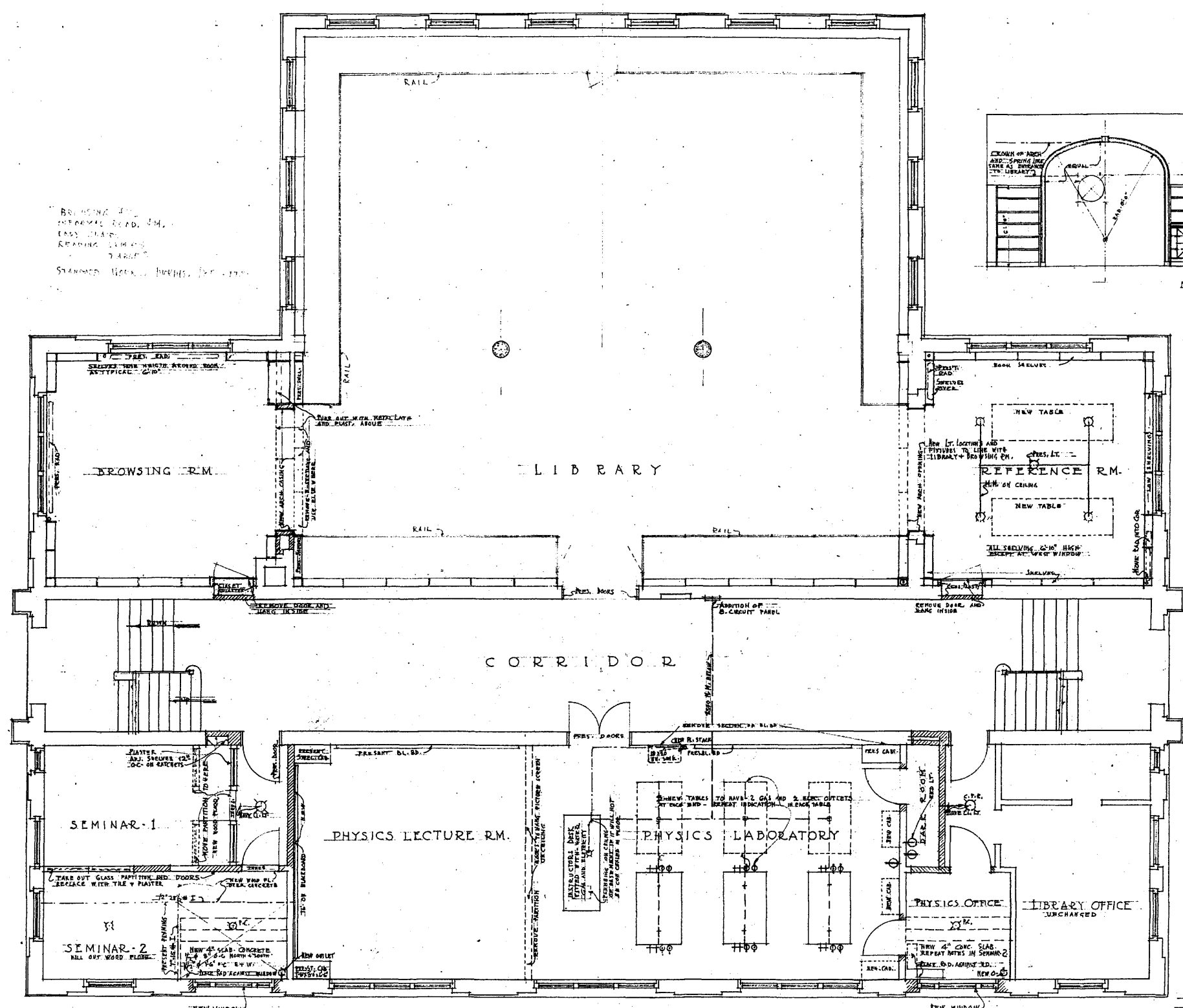
308

306

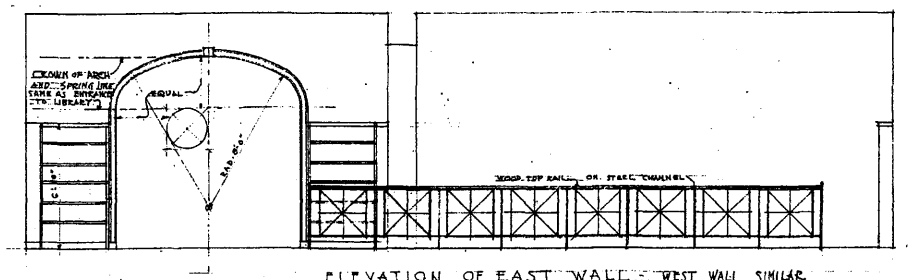
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311

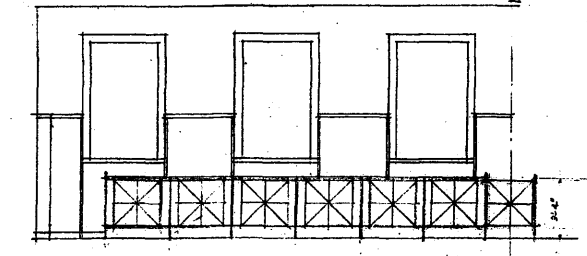
Copyright 1925 by the Standard Map Co.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



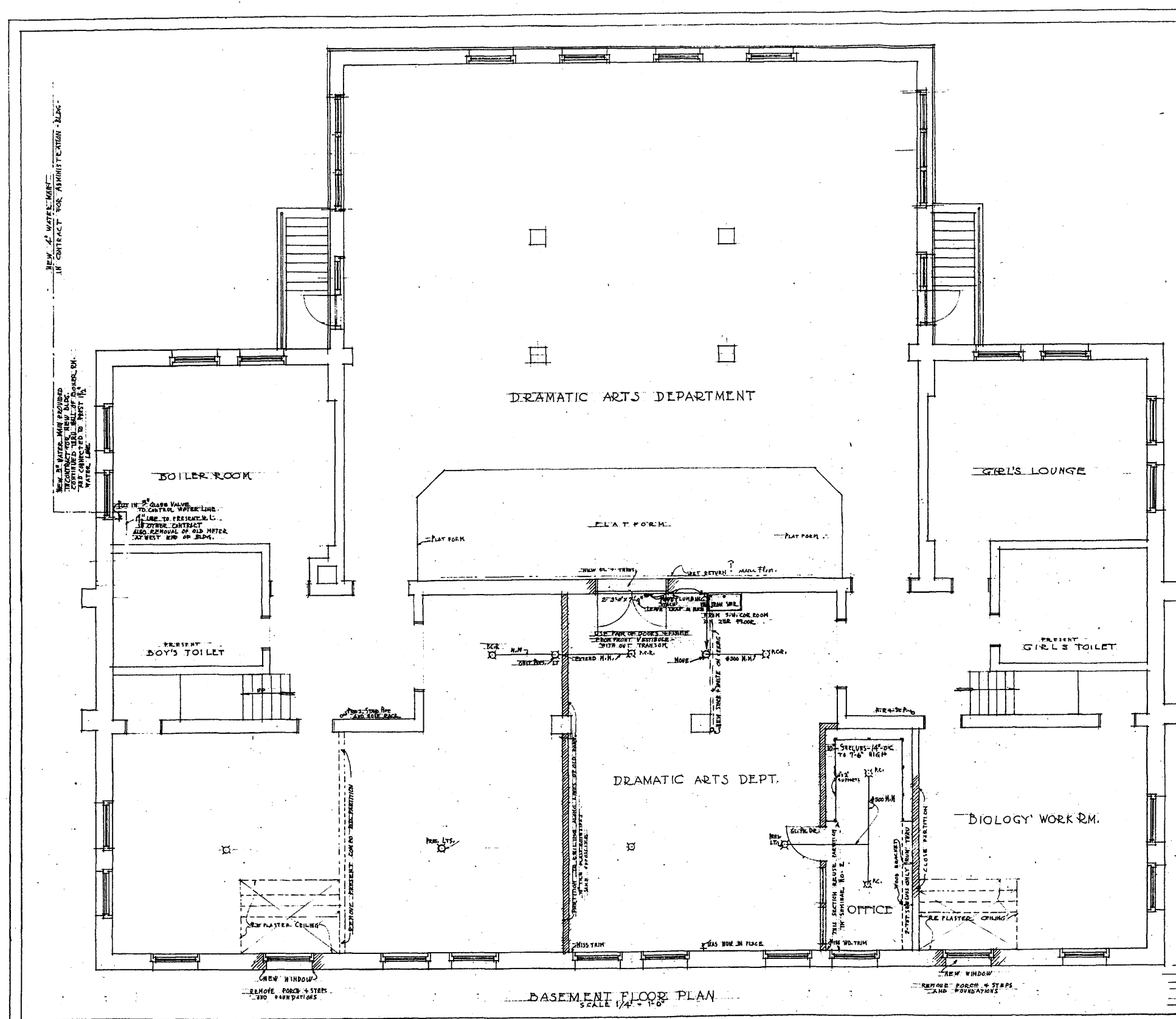
ELEVATION OF EAST WALL WEST WALL SIMILAR  
LIBRARY  
STEEL RAILING COMPLETE IS NOT IN CONTRACT



ELEVATION OF SOUTH WALL TO LIBRARY

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS  
STEEL HALL - EMORY COLLEGE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE FOR THE  
AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION N.Y.

GEORGE AWSUMB-ARCHITECT SHEET NO. 2  
1192 FOREST - AVE. COMMISSION 402  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE DATE 8/12/36



DRAMATIC ARTS DEPARTMENT

DRAMATIC ARTS DEPT.

GIRL'S LOUNGE

PRESENT GIRL'S TOILET

BIOLOGY WORK RM.

OFFICE

BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"



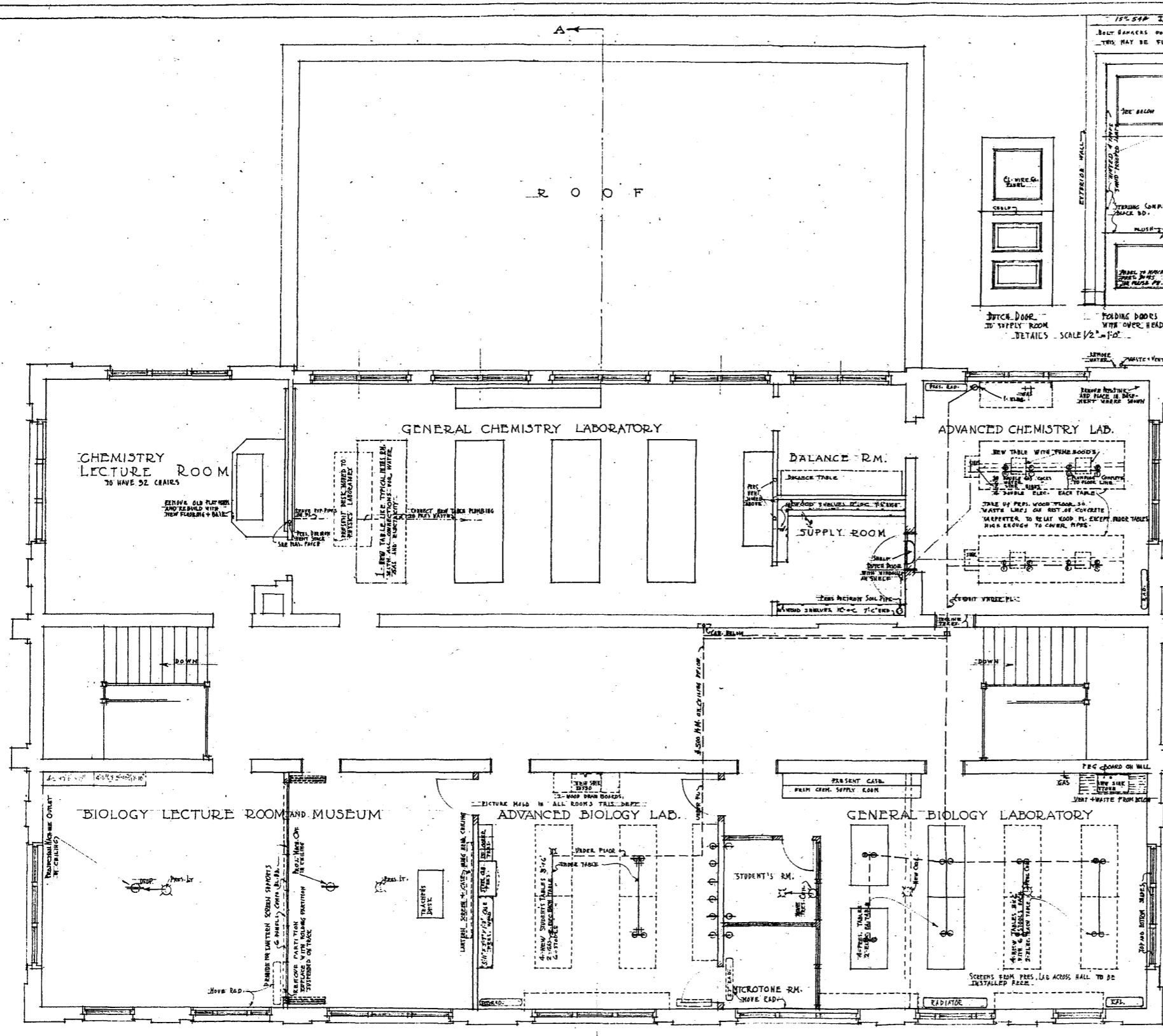
REVISED ELEVATION WITH ENTRANCE REMOVED  
AND WITH 2nd FL. AND BASEMENT WINDOWS SHOWN  
PATCH ALL FINISHED WALL WHERE ORIGINAL WORK SHOWS DAMAGE  
REPEAT THIS ELEVATION OPPOSITE END.

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS  
STEELE HALL - LEMOYNE COLLEGE  
MEMPHIS - TENNESSEE  
AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

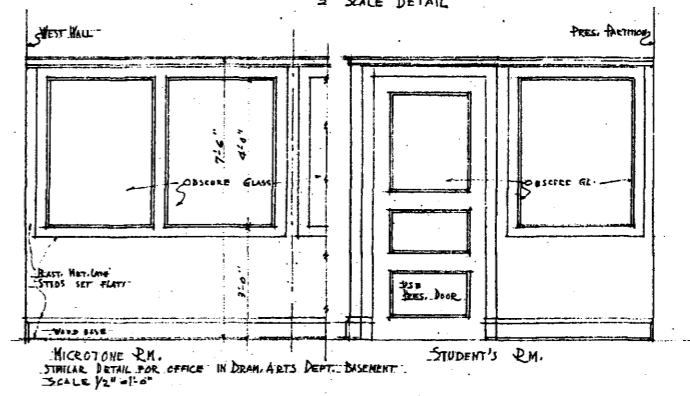
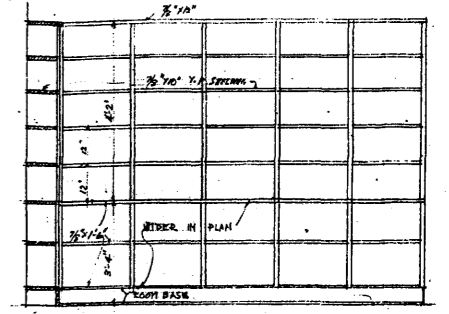
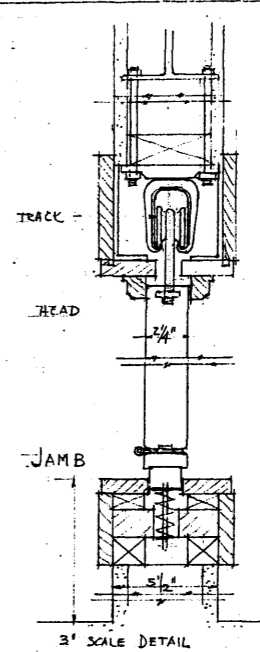
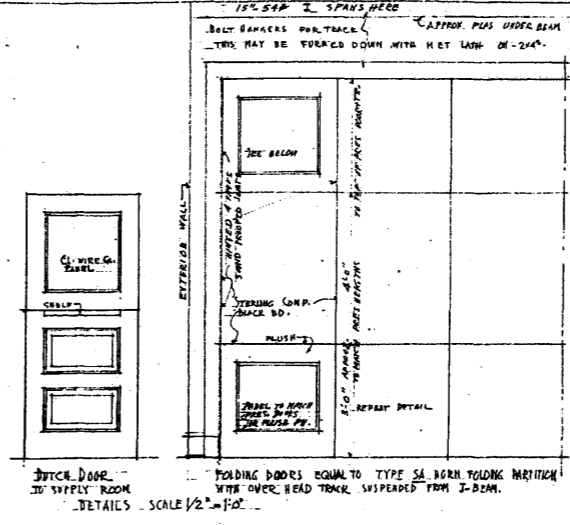
GEORGE AWSUMB - ARCHITECT  
1792 - FORREST - AVE  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

SHEET NO. 1  
COMMISSION 402  
DATE 5/18/36





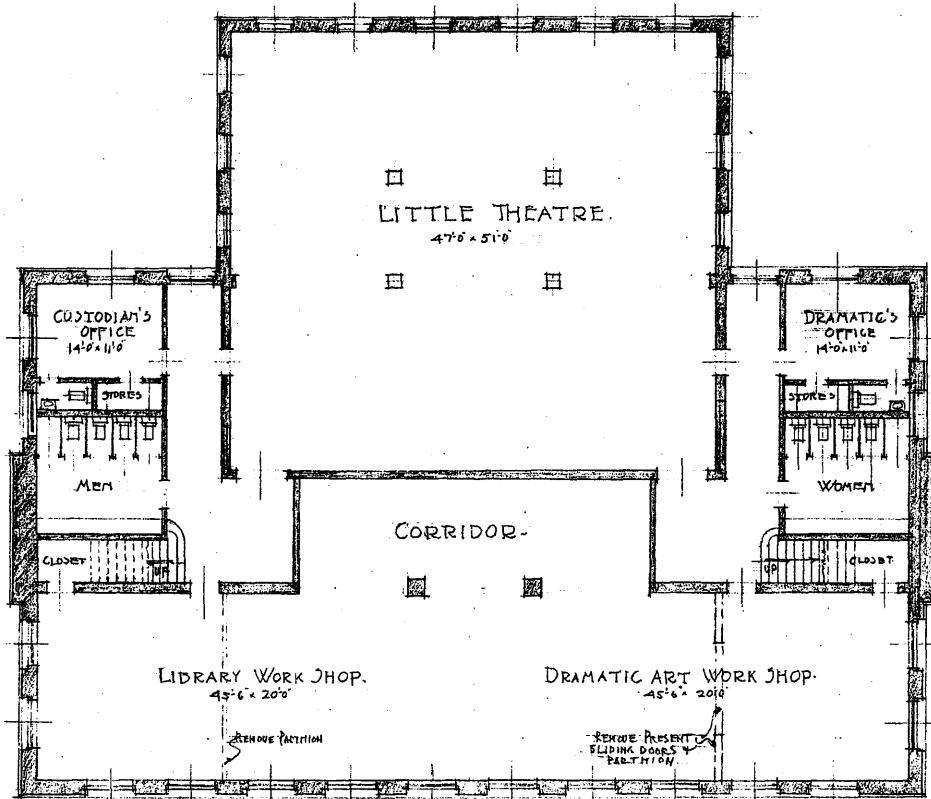
SECOND FLOOR PLAN  
Scale 1/4" = 1'-0"



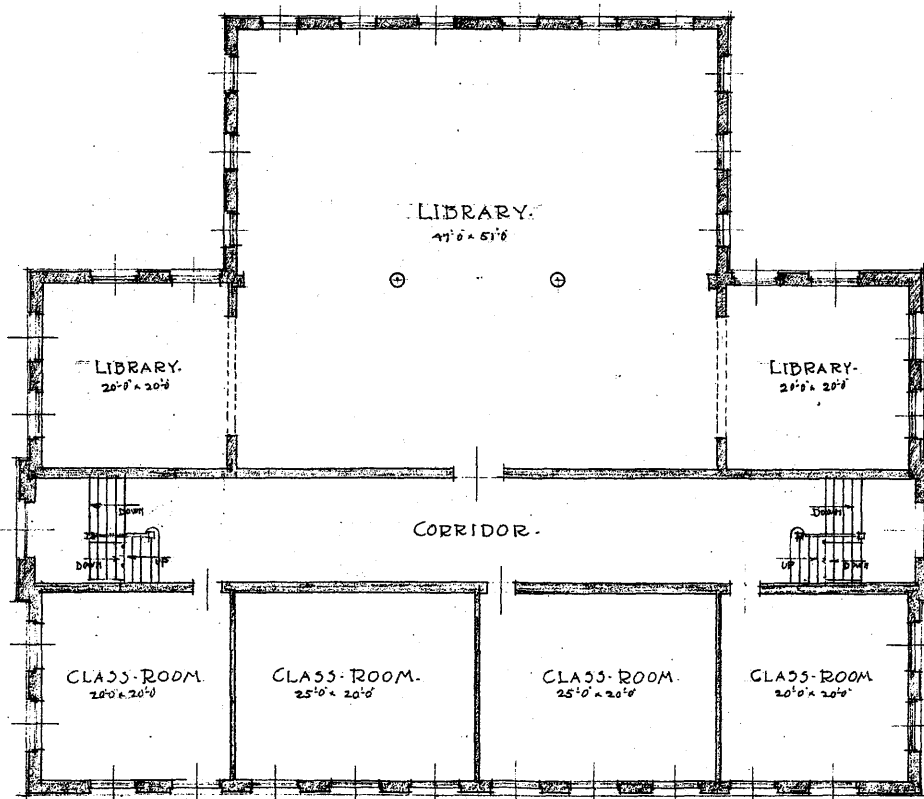
ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS  
 STEPLE HALL - LEMOYNE COLLEGE  
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE  
 AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION, INC.

GEORGE AWSUMB ARCHITECT  
 1792 - FOREST - AVE.  
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

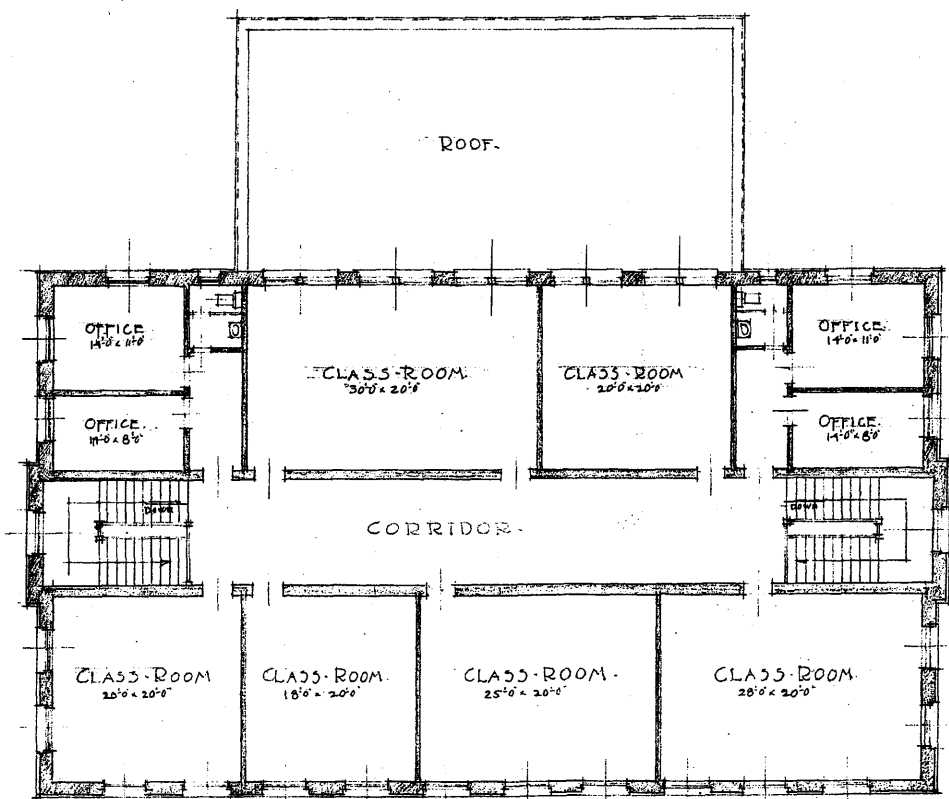
SHEET NO. 3  
 COMMISSION 402  
 DATE 5/12/36



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

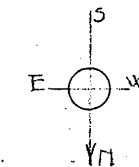
STEELE HALL

SCALE 1" = 5'

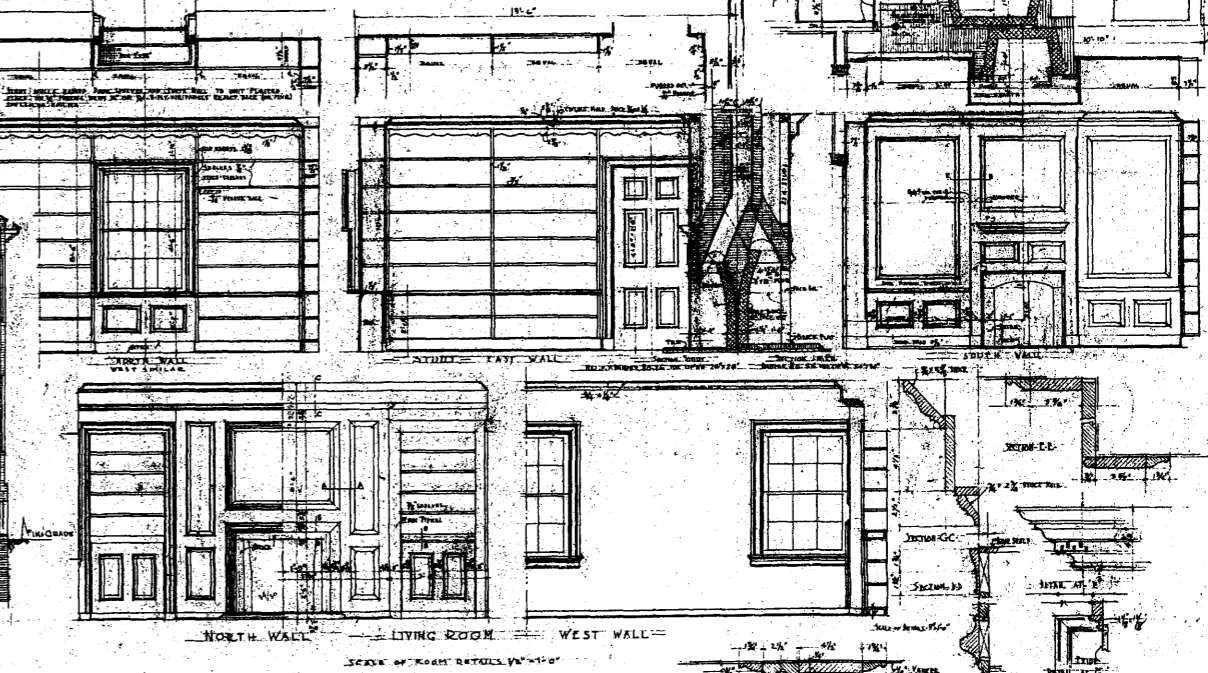
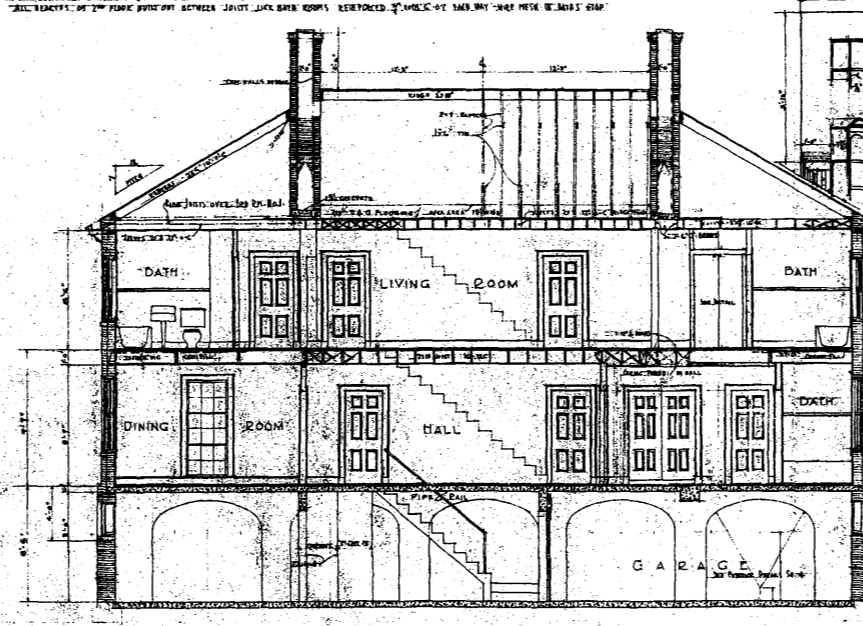
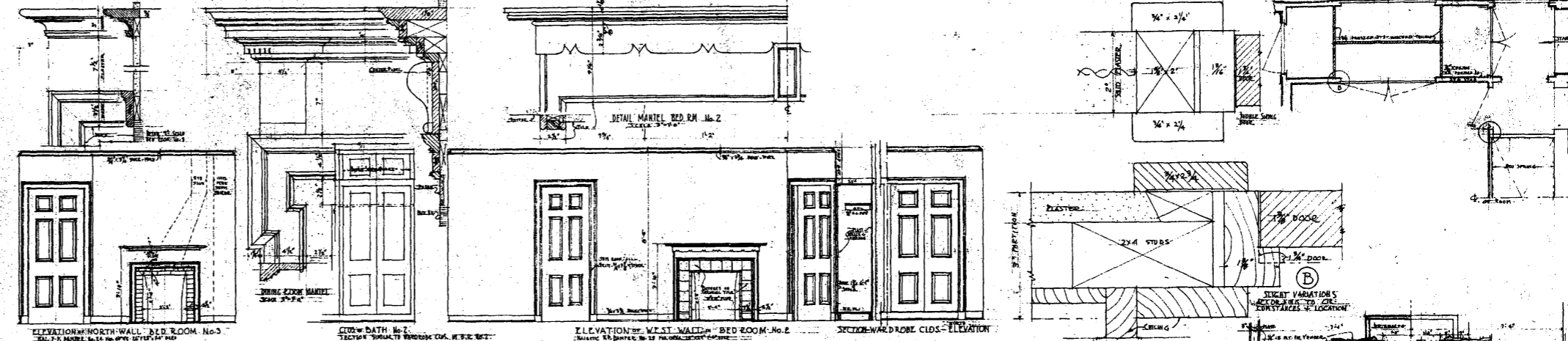
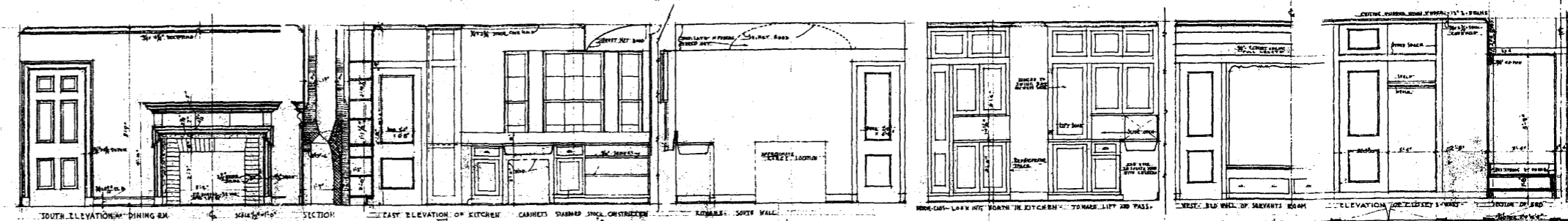
PRELIMINARY STUDY

LE MOYNE COLLEGE BUILDINGS

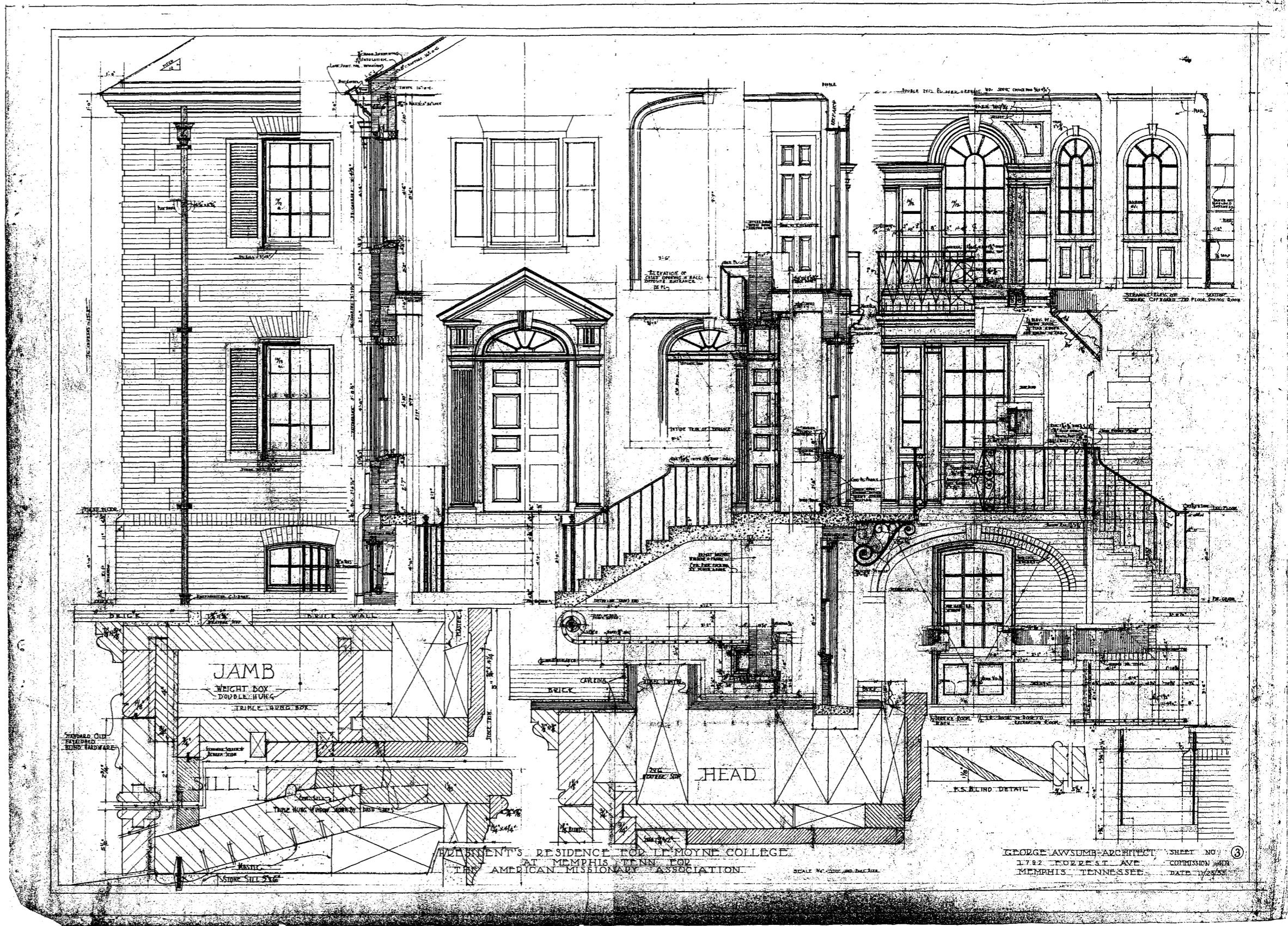
GEORGE AWSUMB ARCHITECT



5/28/34



SECTION C-C.  
 PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE FOR LE MOYNE COLLEGE  
 AT MEMPHIS, TENN. FOR  
 THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION.  
 GEORGE A. W. SUMBRIDGE ARCHT. SHEET NO. 4  
 1752 FOREST AVE. COMMISSIONED BY  
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE. DATE MAY 1911



JAMB

WEIGHT BOX  
DOUBLE HUNG  
TRIPLE HUNG BOX

STANDARD CUT  
FRYBURNED  
BRONZE HARDWARE

SILL

TRIPLE HUNG WINDOW HARDWARE DETAIL

STONE SILL 5x6

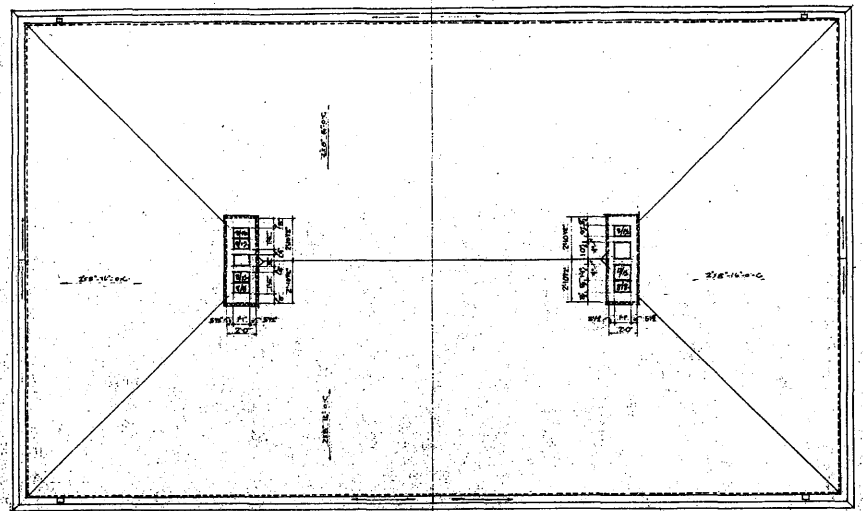
HEAD

P.S. BLIND DETAIL

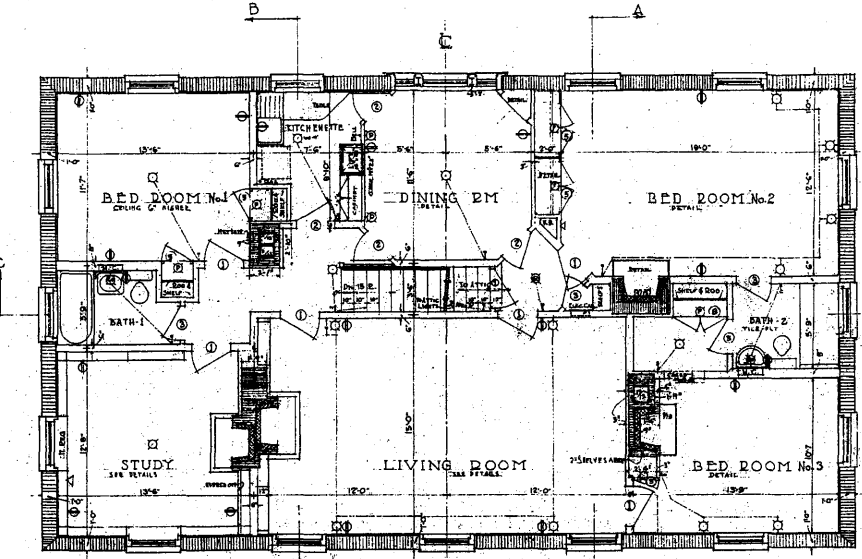
ELIZABETH'S RESIDENCE FOR LEMOYNE COLLEGE  
AT MEMPHIS TENN FOR  
THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

GEORGE LAWSON ARCHT SHEET NO. 3  
1782 FOREST AVE. COMMISSION MEN  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE. DATE 1905



ROOF PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

**DOOR SCHEDULE**

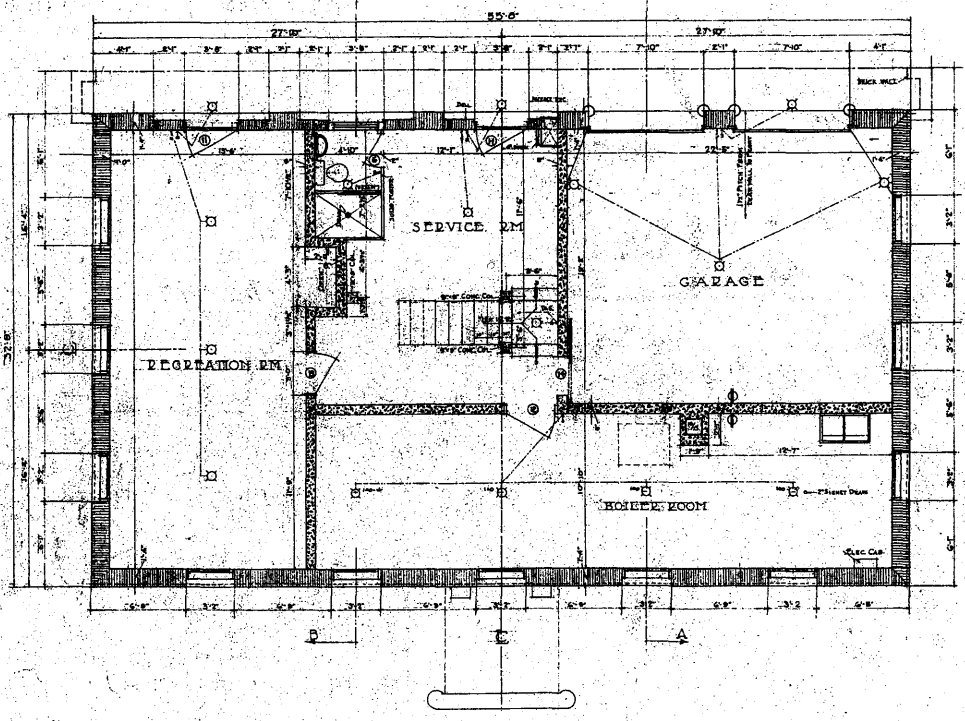
1	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 1
2	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 2
3	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 3
4	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 4
5	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 5
6	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 6
7	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 7
8	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 8
9	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 9
10	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 10
11	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 11
12	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 12
13	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 13
14	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 14
15	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 15
16	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 16
17	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 17
18	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 18
19	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 19
20	6'0" x 8'0" CASED	WOOD	BRASS	NO. 20

**GENERAL NOTES**

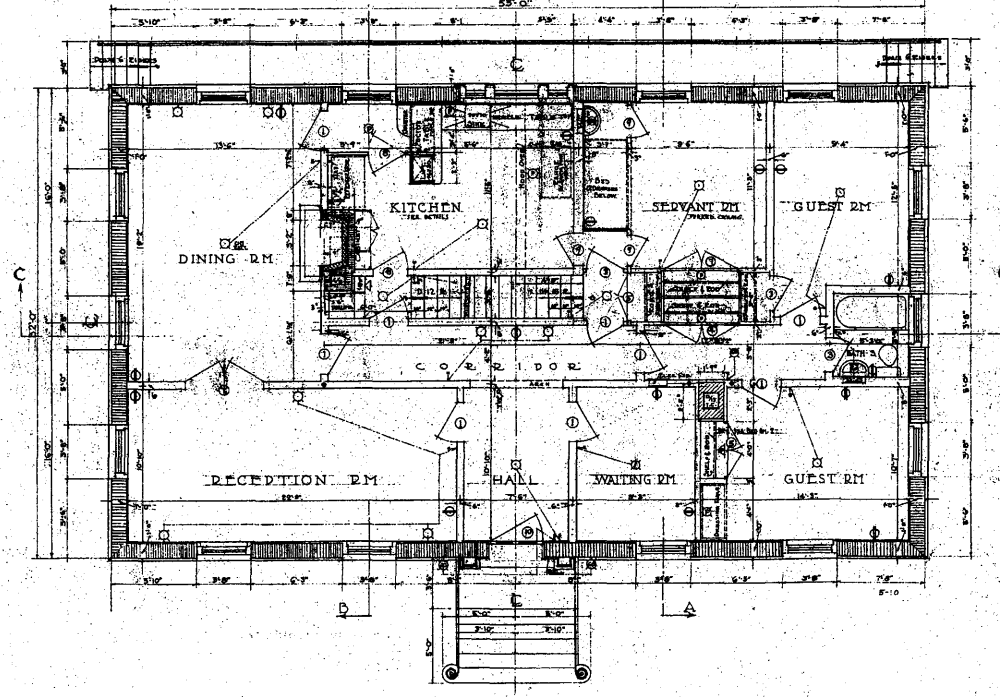
1. ALL MATERIALS TO BE AS SHOWN UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED.
2. ALL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE BUILDING CODES AND SPECIFICATIONS.
3. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
4. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
5. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
6. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
7. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
8. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
9. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.
10. ALL ROOFS TO HAVE VENTILATION THROUGH ROOF.

**ELECTRICAL NOTES**

1. ALL ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.
2. ALL ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.
3. ALL ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.
4. ALL ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.
5. ALL ELECTRICAL WORK TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LATEST EDITIONS OF THE NATIONAL ELECTRICAL CODE.



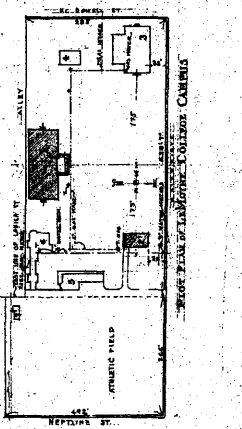
GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

**LEGEND**

1	ADMINISTRATIVE - ACADEMIC - BLDG.
2	RESEARCH - BLDG.
3	WORK - BLDG.
4	WORK - BLDG.
5	WORK - BLDG.
6	WORK - BLDG.
7	WORK - BLDG.
8	WORK - BLDG.
9	WORK - BLDG.
10	WORK - BLDG.
11	WORK - BLDG.
12	WORK - BLDG.
13	WORK - BLDG.
14	WORK - BLDG.
15	WORK - BLDG.
16	WORK - BLDG.
17	WORK - BLDG.
18	WORK - BLDG.
19	WORK - BLDG.
20	WORK - BLDG.

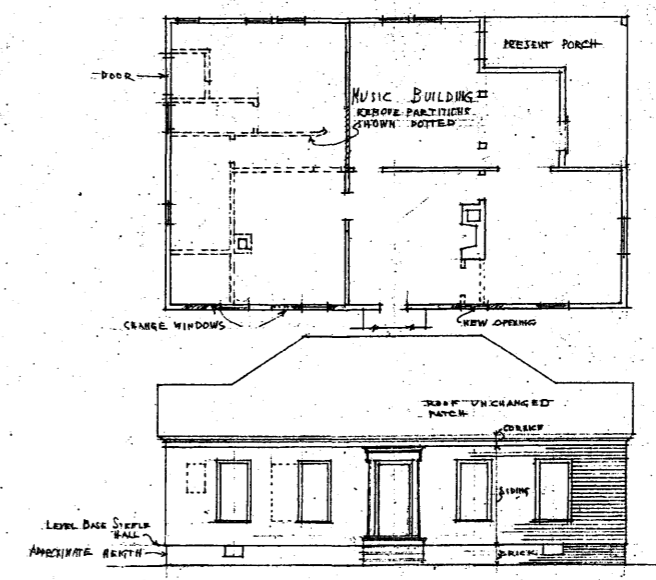
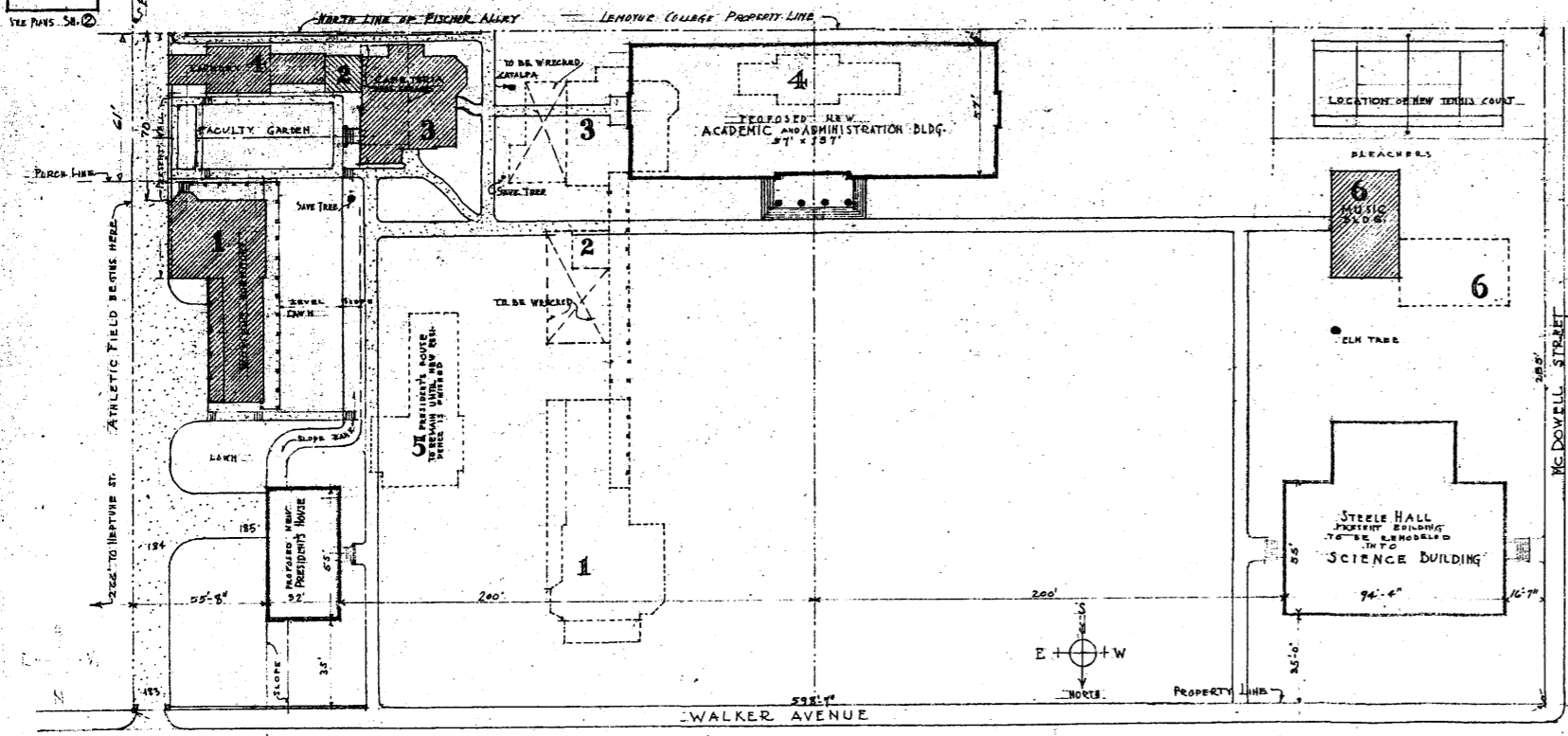
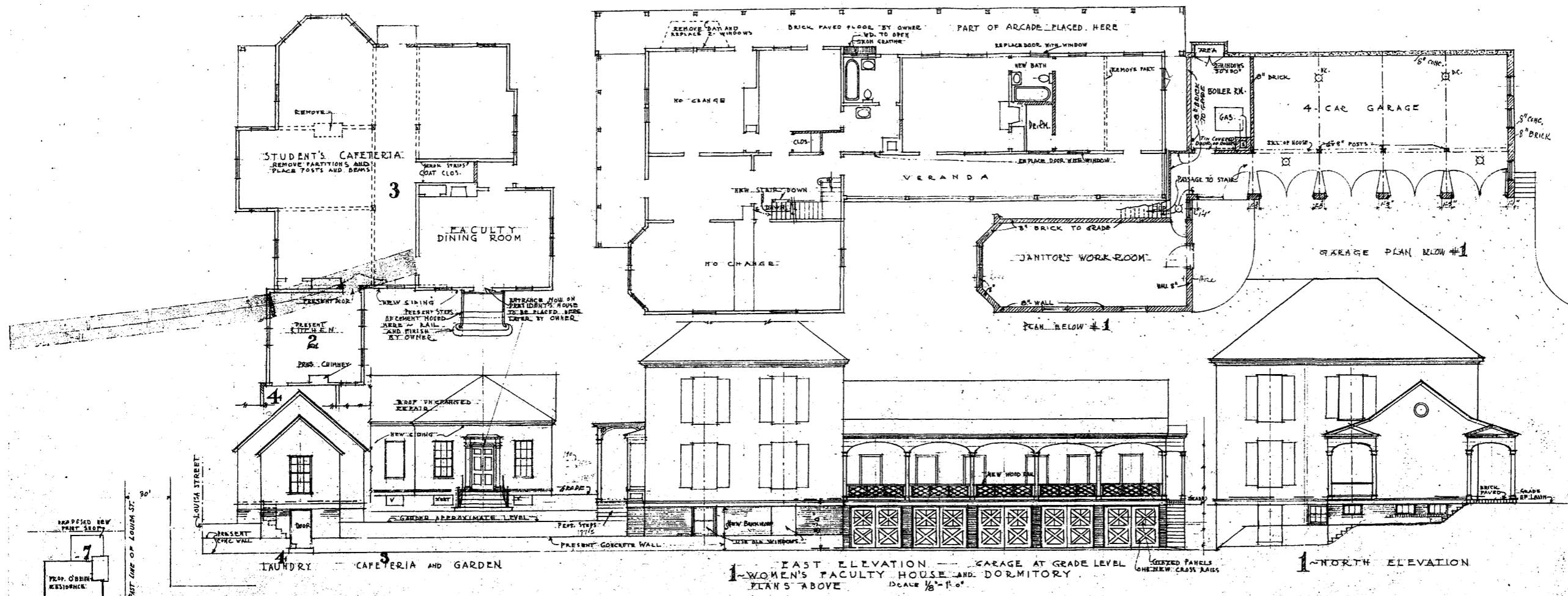


PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE FOR LE MOYNE COLLEGE  
AT MEMPHIS TENN FOR  
THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

GEORGE AWSUMB ARCHITECT  
1732 FOREST AVE  
MEMPHIS TENNESSEE

SHEET NO. 1  
COMMISSION # 901  
DATE 11/13/35



NOTE: ALL WALKS AND FINAL GRADING BY OWNER.

INDICATION:

- BLDGS. TO BE MOVED
- NEW AND PRESENT PERMANENT BLDGS.
- WRECKED
- NEW FRAME WORK
- NEW BRICK
- NEW CONCRETE

REVISED CAMPUS PLAN FOR LE MOYNE COLLEGE  
 BUILDINGS TO BE MOVED AND REMODELLED FOR  
 THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

GEORGE AWSUMB ARCHITECT  
 1792 FORREST AVE  
 MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

SHEET NO. 1  
 JOB 394  
 DATE 6/6/35