

11661

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

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

1. Name of Property

historic name Mitchill-Tibbetts House other names/site number Miner House/ 80r2862

2. Location

street & number 21 East Orange Street n/a not for publication city, town Apopka n/a vicinity state Florida code FL county Orange code 095 zip code 32703

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing (1), Noncontributing (1 buildings, 1 sites, 1 structures, 1 objects), Total (2). Name of related multiple property listing: n/a. Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0.

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination (checked) 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 (checked) meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: [Signature] Date: 10/1/91. Florida State Historic Preservation Officer.

In my opinion, the property () meets () does not meet the National Register criteria. () See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: _____ Date: _____ State or Federal agency and bureau: _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register (checked), determined eligible for the National Register (), determined not eligible for the National Register (), removed from the National Register (), other (). Entered in the National Register (checked). Signature of the Keeper: [Signature] Date of Action: 11/7/91.

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
Domestic: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Frame Vernacular

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood: Weatherboard

roof Asbestos

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

8. Statement of Significance

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

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1887-1922

Significant Dates

1887

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Unknown/Unknown

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

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

A

1	7
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4	5	0	0	6	0
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3	1	7	2	2	3	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 44 of Block "B" of Davis & Mitchill's Addition to Apopka; as per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book "A" at page 89; Public Records of Orange County, Florida, in Section 9, Township 21, Range 28.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries include the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David T. Harden/ Barbara E. Mattick, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date September 1991

street & number R.A. Gray Blq., 500 S. Bronough Street telephone (904) 487-2333

city or town Tallahassee state Florida zip code 32399-0250

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1 Mitchill-Tibbetts House, Apopka, Orange Co., FL**SUMMARY**

The Mitchill-Tibbetts House, at 21 East Orange Street in Apopka, Orange County, Florida, is a two story, frame vernacular I-house with a rear ell and a central hall plan, constructed in 1887. A one-story extension was added to the rear of the main block c1915. At the same time, the original porch supports were replaced with Craftsman style battered columns (Photo 1). The house was occupied by several early developers and promoters of Apopka until 1922. The period of significance is, therefore, 1887-1922.

SETTING

The Mitchill-Tibbetts House is located in an old part of Apopka, known as the Davis & Mitchill Addition, platted in 1885. Orange Street, a brick street paved in 1914-15, runs along the south side of the property. About one hundred feet west of the property is Central Street, paved with brick by the City of Apopka in 1921. The surrounding area is a single family neighborhood with homes of varying ages on large lots. The Waite-Davis House (1886, NR 1990) is across Orange Street from the Mitchill-Tibbetts House. Several lots are still vacant.

The area is relatively flat with deep, well drained sandy soils. When the neighborhood around the Mitchill-Tibbetts House was originally developed, the area was pine lands. Today, most of the pine trees are gone, replaced primarily by oak and camphor trees. What was once pine forest is now an urban area undergoing another phase of rapid development. Three blocks away to the south and west is the main business district of Apopka, along U.S. 441. About one-half block to the east, the frontage along Rock Springs Road (Park Avenue) is being developed for office use. To the north is an extensive, developed, single family area.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The house has balloon frame construction and rests on brick piers which are infilled with lattice work. The exterior is heart pine horizontal siding with cornerboards. The cross gabled roof is covered with asbestos shingles, and a single, corbelled brick chimney pierces the ridge of the ell. Two of the gables have variegated shingles in the pediment (Photos 2 & 3). An

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attached, one-story, hip roofed, screened porch stretches across the main facade and wraps around the side elevations.

A barn or storage building is located northwest of the house. This building, reported to have been constructed c1925, has been substantially altered, and is a noncontributing building (Photo 4). A swimming pool, built c1980, is a noncontributing structure (Photo 11).

Exterior

The main (south) elevation is distinguished by a large central cross gable with variegated shingles at the second story. Single 2/2, double hung sash windows with shutters and triangular architraves are in each bay at the second story. A one-story, five-bay, screened porch stretches across the main facade and wraps around the east and west elevations. The hipped roof of the porch is supported by battered columns. Exposed rafter tails are visible in the eaves of the porch. The main entrance is centrally located (Photo 5).

The fenestration of the Mitchill-Tibbetts House is primarily 2/2 double hung sash, but there are also 6/1 and 1/1 sash, and aluminum framed awning windows. There are architraves on the window surrounds on all sash windows (Photo 6), except for those on the second floor on the north and east sides of the rear ell.

Interior

The interior of the main block of the Mitchill-Tibbetts House reflects its original I-house form and central hall plan (See Floor Plan.) The centrally located front door leads directly into an entry hall. A stairway to the second floor is on the west side of the hall. A door at the foot of the stairs leads to the living room, where a fireplace on the north wall is the central feature. The mantelpiece is distinguished by fluted pilasters with bulls eyes, a decorative motif which is applied to the interior doors throughout the house (Photos 7 & 8). A door in the west wall of the living room leads to the den, an enclosed portion of the original wraparound porch. A door in the east wall of the entry hall leads to the master bedroom, and a door in the east wall of the bedroom opens into the study which is also an enclosed part of the original porch. The first floor bathroom is entered through a door in the north wall of the bedroom.

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The first floor of the rear ell contains the dining room which is entered through a door just east of the fireplace in the north wall of the living room. To the east of the dining room is the kitchen which is on axis with the central hallway.

The second floor reflects the original configuration of the house, and includes two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a study (see Floor Plan).

Alterations

Since the original construction of the Mitchill-Tibbetts House in 1887, there have been several alterations, some within the period of significance. Most notable of the historic changes was the remodelling of the wraparound porch, in which original chamfered porch supports and fan brackets (Photo 9) were replaced with Craftsman style battered columns and screening (Photo 10); and the enclosure of the rear porch to provide a first floor bathroom and kitchen. The use of the Craftsman style, typical of the early 20th century, and the fact that running water first became generally available in Apopka in 1915-16, indicate that these alterations were made between 1915 and the early 1920s. Original wood shingles on the roof were replaced with asbestos shingles, also probably by the early 1920s.

Since the early 1950s, several other minor exterior alterations have been made; however, they do not distort the basic character and feeling of the house. These changes include the following: removal of original gable ornamentation in the 1950s, enclosure of the rear porch to expand the kitchen in 1963, and extension of the roof line of the former rear porch to create a carport in 1965 (Photo 11). The porches on the east and west elevations have also been glassed in to create a study and a den.

On the second floor, closets were added to all the bedrooms in 1988. In addition, the room in the ell was converted back into a bedroom; it had been converted into a bathroom when indoor plumbing was originally installed in the house (c1915). At the top of the stairs, the west room, which had been a bedroom, was divided to make a new bathroom and a study. Prior to this change, the second floor bathroom, which was in the ell, could only be entered by going through the west bedroom. The bedroom to the east of the stairs remained unchanged except for the addition of a closet.

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The Mitchill-Tibbetts House is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Development & Planning as one of the original houses built in the Davis & Mitchill Addition, which is one of the earliest residential neighborhoods in Apopka, dating from the 1880s. It was associated with citizens who were prominent in the development of Apopka in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, most notably Robert M. and Joseph D. Mitchill, pioneer developers of Apopka, and General George W. Tibbetts, who in his seven years in Apopka, contributed significantly to the promotion of the community.

The Mitchill-Tibbetts House is one of fourteen houses that remain from Apopka's early development, and is typical of the houses built in the town between 1880 and 1900. Although more modest, it incorporates several features also found in its contemporary across the street, the Waite-Davis House, built in 1886, and listed in the National Register on August 2, 1990.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

For Central Florida, the 1880s were a time of optimism and self-confidence, of town building, railroad construction and land development. An intense advertising campaign touted the attractions of the area to prospective visitors and settlers. These promotional efforts had a dramatic effect on the establishment and growth of the city of Apopka. In 1871 there had been only one house at what would become Apopka. Just three years later the settlement still had only nine houses, but new residents began to arrive in the community in a steady, if somewhat slow, pace. On September 2, 1882, Apopka residents voted to incorporate the Town of Apopka, elected a mayor, and established the town limits.

Citrus farming and lumber production formed the basis of the early economy of Apopka. Four saw mills were operated in the area by 1885. These produced dressed lumber, boxes, and crates for packing citrus. With the seemingly daily establishment of new groves, a prosperous lumber business, and a boom in real estate sales, the general outlook for the continued growth of Apopka was bright. The crowning success was the arrival of the railroad, the construction of which had been anticipated since the 1870s. The completion of the Tavares, Orlando and Atlantic

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Railroad in 1885, and the Midland Railroad a short time later, precipitated rapid expansion of the business district along Central Avenue.

By 1886 Apopka boasted twelve stores, four churches, a school, two hotels and a variety of shops and suppliers. The expansion of the town had been accompanied by a remarkable improvement in its appearance. The scattering of unimpressive buildings described by a visitor in 1880 had been replaced by handsome two-story business buildings and distinguished residences. Additions to the original town plat were made as the community grew, increasing in number and size as the decade of the 1880s waned.

The real estate boom, however, had reached its zenith shortly after the arrival of the railroad, and an unmistakable economic decline set in in the late 1880s, spurred by a hard freeze of January 1886. In 1888, more bad weather followed, and a yellow fever epidemic caused many settlers to flee until the danger had past, and discouraged new settlers from locating in the area. Some grove owners and businessmen were forced to liquidate their assets to satisfy outstanding debts. Further economic reverses were brought on by the national depression that followed the Panic of 1893. Even greater disasters were to follow in the winter freezes that devastated the citrus industry in 1894 and 1895. Orange production in Central Florida was reduced by 85 percent between 1895 and 1896. The freezes, coming at a time when Apopka's economy was already in decline, were a crushing blow. From a population of nearly 1500 in the mid-1880s, the town dropped to just 350 permanent residents by 1905.

The economy began to improve, however, as outside investors once again began to show an interest in real estate and business ventures in Apopka. The formation of the Apopka Board of Trade in 1912 signaled the beginning of a new era of economic growth. The Board of Trade actively sought to have new businesses locate in Apopka, offering a free building site with railroad facilities and a five-year tax exemption to anyone who would establish a job-producing enterprise. It encouraged private firms to construct hotels, citrus packing houses, or other suitable concerns. In 1914 the city's voters approved bond issues to build a city hall and to construct an electric power plant. During the same period, a municipal water tower was constructed to provide drinking water and fire protection. By 1914 Apopka had generally recovered from its long economic depression. The

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expansion of Apopka's economy continued through most of the remainder of the decade, fueled in part by the war in Europe, which increased the demand for lumber, naval stores, and other raw materials found in the area.

The accumulation of surplus capital during World War I, and campaigns to advertise Florida as a winter resort in the early 1920s precipitated a land rush known as the Florida Boom. Apopkans, wishing to make their town attractive to new settlers and investors, upgraded and expanded municipal services and laid new brick streets. The city experienced an increase in tourism and real estate activity in the 1920s until the Florida Land Boom came to a crashing end in 1926. By 1930 new development ceased, forcing Apopka to join the rest of the nation in the Great Depression.

Historic Significance

In 1876, Frank H. Davis, a native of Manchester, New Hampshire, moved to the Apopka area where he set out an orange grove. In 1885 he opened his own real estate office while continuing with his groves. On December 4, 1885, Davis together with Robert M. Mitchill of New Rochelle, New York, filed a plat for Davis and Mitchill's Addition to Apopka. Davis and Mitchill were able to entice a significant number of New Englanders to move to Apopka and settle in their subdivision which came to be called "Yankee Town" to distinguish it from "Old Town", which was the area around the Masonic Lodge.

On August 2, 1887, John F. Fitzsimmons purchased Lot 44 in Block B of Davis and Mitchill's Addition. Fitzsimmons had planted groves in the area in the mid 1880s, and operated a sawmill in Apopka for several years prior to 1891. Fitzsimmons may have been the builder of the Mitchill-Tibbetts House, since he appears to have been engaged in developing homes in the area. Between 1885 and 1888 he bought and sold six other properties in the Apopka area, in addition to the Mitchill-Tibbetts House.

Just six days after purchasing Lot 44, Fitzsimmons mortgaged it to Edward B. Waite for \$675. Apparently the purpose of the mortgage was to finance construction of a residence on the lot, since the mortgage required Fitzsimmons to "keep the buildings erected on the above mentioned lot insured in favor of the mortgagee." Five months later, on March 8, 1888, the residence on Lot 44 apparently having been completed, Frank Davis, with his

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associate Robert M. Mitchill, bought back Lot 44, along with three others, for \$4,026.52. Davis and Mitchill owned the lot jointly until May 22, 1891, when Mitchill bought out Davis' interest in the property.

Robert M. Mitchill had been born in New York City in 1825. He was graduated from the Harvard law school, but never practiced that profession. Most of his interest lay in traveling and scientific research, and he first visited Florida c1869. He settled in Apopka in 1882, and established a successful real estate agency, and soon became an active promoter of the community in association with Davis. Despite his business activities, he continued to pursue his particular scientific interest in birds, and his ornithological collection was presented to the Smithsonian Institution. Old Kodak bottles, probably from Mitchill's photography of birds, have been unearthed in the back yard of the house at 21 East Orange Street. He died in Apopka in October 1899, and his son J.D. Mitchill became the owner and occupant of the house.

Joseph D. Mitchill was born in New York City on April 26, 1856. He was graduated from Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1878. He entered the banking profession and spent fifteen years on Wall Street. The major part of his life, however, was spent as an accountant, and he practiced in many cities across the country. After he moved to Apopka in 1899, Mitchill entered the real estate business and became a leader in the community. He led many of the initiatives undertaken to overcome the stagnation of the community brought on by the freezes of December 1894 and February 1896. In 1905, he was elected mayor of Apopka, and was one of the incorporators of the Apopka Water, Light and Ice Company. He served several terms as mayor and continued to be active in local politics until defeated by the incumbent in a final race for mayor in 1928. He died c1930.

In 1911, J.D. Mitchill had sold the house to W.T. Wilson, another prominent member of the Apopka community. Wilson was the local station agent, first for the Florida Midland Railroad and then for its successor, the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, from 1889 until 1932. He also served as postmaster for a time, and as a result of his active involvement in the civic and social affairs of the community, was a member of the city council from 1909 to 1919.

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In 1914, Wilson sold the house to General George W. Tibbetts, an entrepreneur and state legislator from Seattle, Washington, who had recently arrived in Apopka. In Washington, Tibbetts had pursued a number of agricultural and general development enterprises. Tibbetts was elected to the Washington territorial legislature in 1876, and later served as a member of the constitutional convention that framed the Washington state constitution. He also served as a Brigadier General in the Washington State National Guard, hence his title.

Tibbetts lost all his possessions in the Panic of 1893, but began to restore his fortunes after the turn of the century. In 1902, he was elected to Washington's eighth legislature. Later, among other investments, he purchased citrus groves in Central Florida, which brought him to Apopka in 1914. While living in Apopka, from 1914 to 1922, Tibbetts remained an entrepreneur, building a two story brick business block near Fourth Street and Central Avenue. He was one of the leaders of the Apopka Board of Trade. Tibbetts sold his house in January 1922, and returned to Washington, where he died in March 1924. Although he lived in Apopka for only seven years, his influence on the city during one of its periods of expansion was considerable.

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Pierce, Louise Mitchill, Winston-Salem, NC. Telephone interview with Barbara Mattick, Tallahassee, FL, 17 September 1991.

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Photographs 1 Mitchill-Tibbetts House, Apopka, Orange Co, FL

Section number _____ Page _____

-
- 1 1) Mitchill-Tibbetts House, 21 East Orange Street
2) Apopka, Orange Co., FL
3) David T. Harden
4) August 26, 1990
5) 950 Egret Circle, Apt. 5208, Delray Beach, FL
6) S & E elevations; camera facing NW
7) 1 of 11

Items 1-5 are the same unless otherwise noted.

- 2 6) Variegated shingles in central gable of main (S)
elevation; camera facing N
7) 2 of 11
- 3 6) Variegated shingles in west gable; camera facing E
7) 3 of 11
- 4 6) Barn (NC); camera facing N
7) 4 of 11
- 5 6) Main elevation (S); camera facing N
7) 5 of 11
- 6 6) Typical fenestration; camera facing N
7) 6 of 11
- 7 6) Fireplace in Living Room; camera facing N
7) 7 of 11
- 8 6) Typical four-panel interior door; camera facing E
7) 8 of 11
- 9 1) Mitchill-Tibbetts, 21 East Orange Street
2) Apopka, Orange County, Florida
3) Unknown
4) 1903
5) 21 East Orange Street, Apopka, FL
6) S & W elevations; camera facing NE
7) 9 of 11

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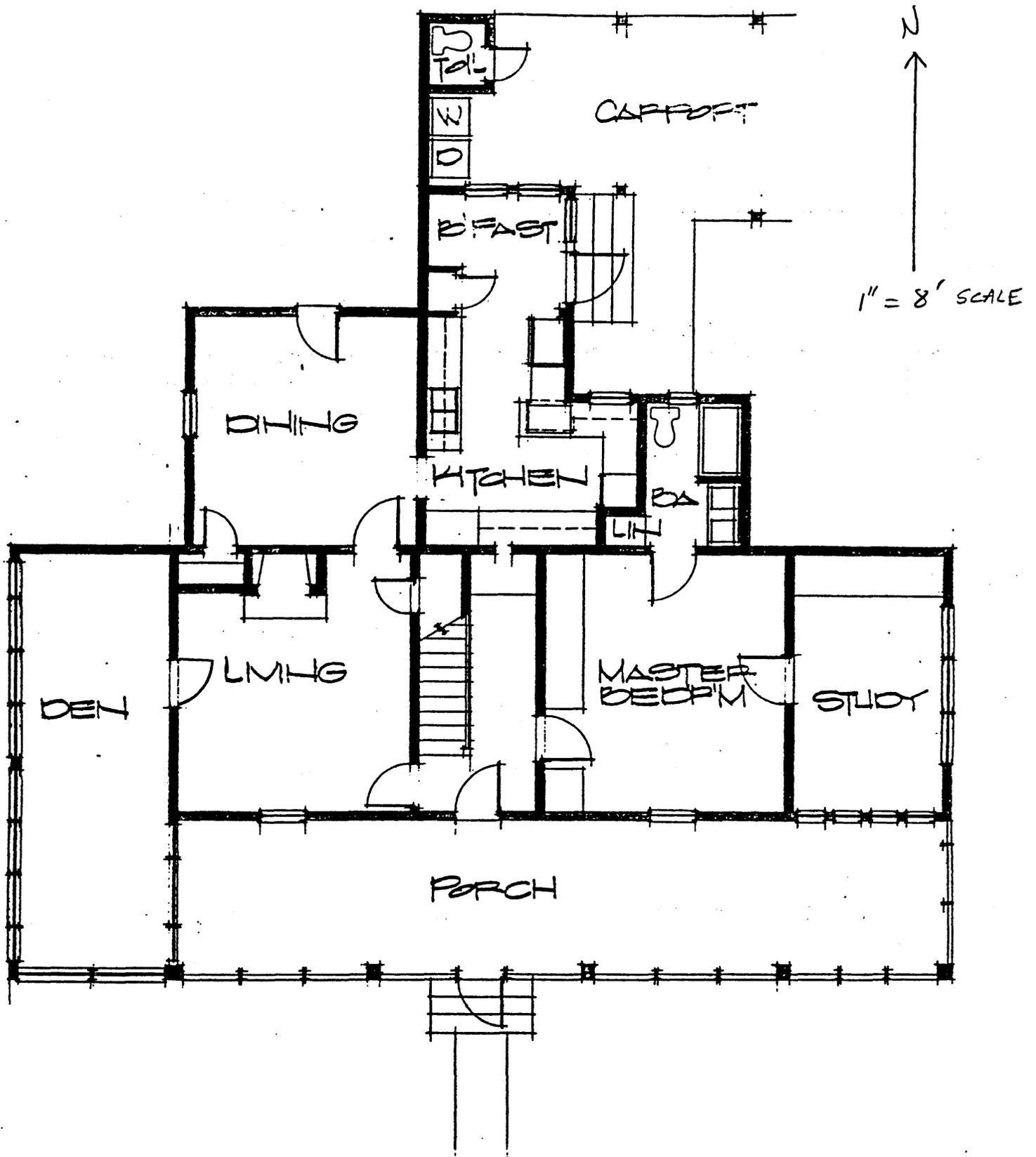
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Photographs 2 Mitchill-Tibbetts House, Apopka, Orange Co., FL

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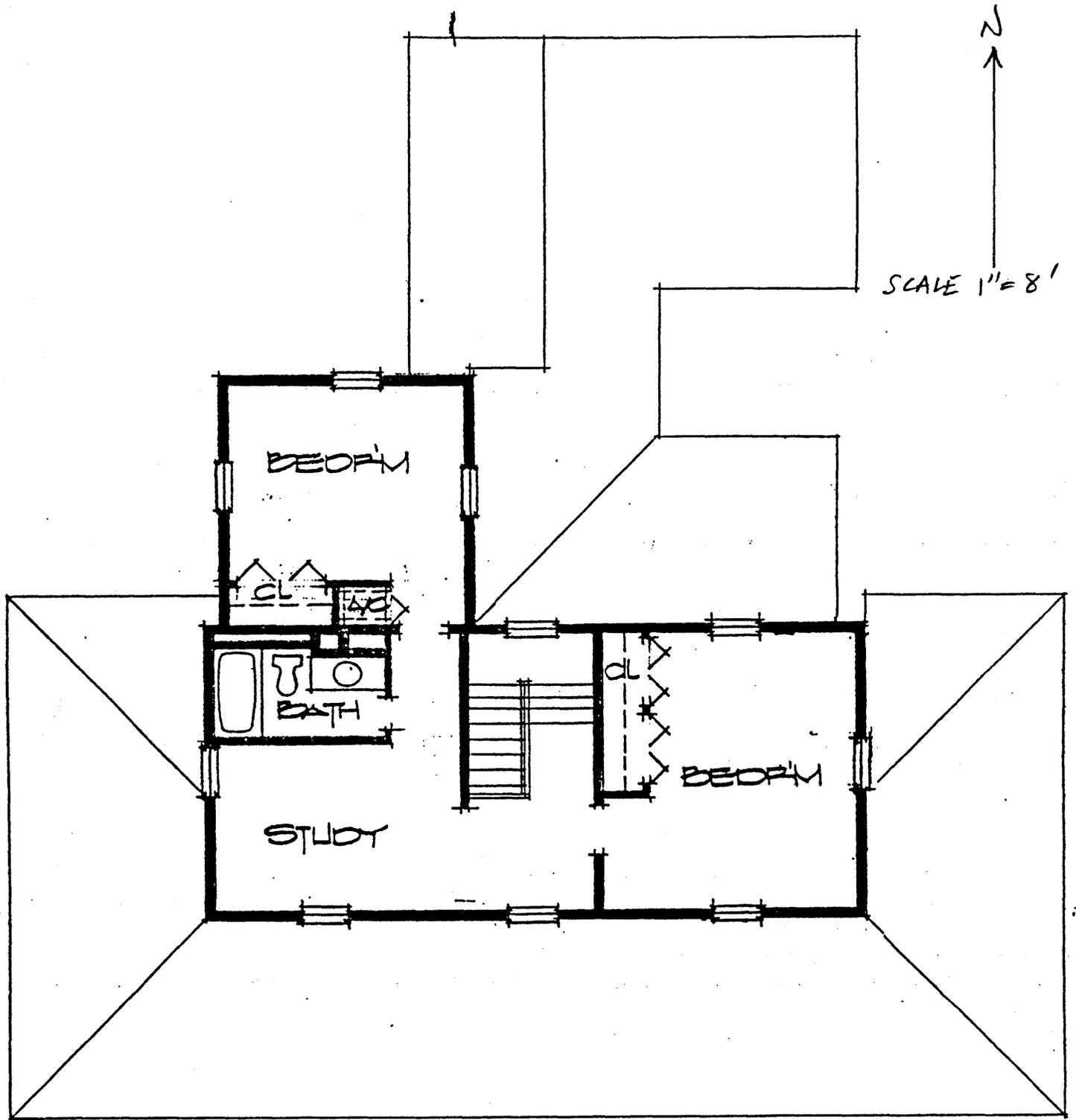
- 10
 - 1) Mitchill-Tibbetts, 21 East Orange Street
 - 2) Apopka, Orange County, Florida
 - 3) Norris Miner
 - 4) February 15, 1954
 - 5) 21 East Orange Street, Apopka, FL
 - 6) Main (S) elevation; camera facing N
 - 7) 10 of 11

- 11
 - 6) Rear (N) elevation and swimming pool (NC); camera facing S
 - 7) 11 of 11



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Mitchill-Tibbetts House
 Apopka, Orange Co., FL



EXISTING SECOND FLOOR PLAN

Mitchill-Tibbetts House
Apopka, Orange Co., FL

21 East Orange Street, Apopka, Florida

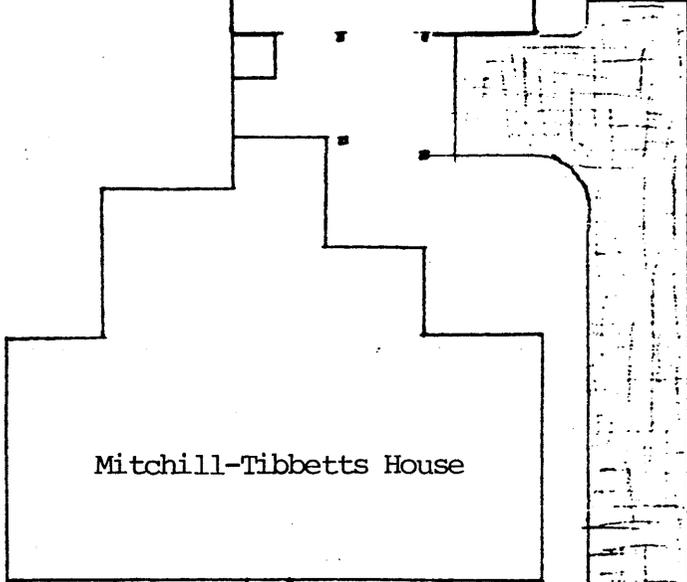
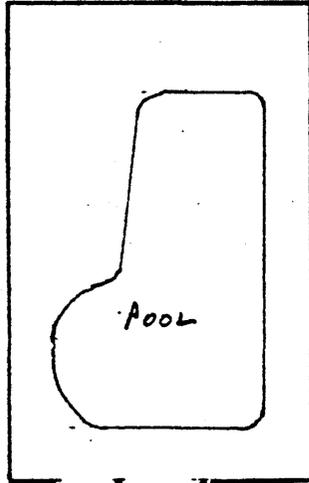


SCALE 1"=20'



SHED

LOT 44



Mitchill-Tibbetts House

0 0 PALMS

PROPERTY LINE

8" OAK

8" OAK

ORANGE STREET

