

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JAN 30 1989

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 Walker, James Buchanan, House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number West End Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Centerville N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Hickman code 081 zip code 37033

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 2, Noncontributing 1 buildings, 1 sites, 1 structures, 1 objects, Total 2
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
Date: 1/23/89

In my opinion, the property meets (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official:
Date:

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, (explain:)
Signature of the Keeper:
Date of Action: 3/2/89

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Limestone
walls BRICKroof Slate
other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Situated on West End Avenue in Centerville (pop. 2,824), Hickman County, Tennessee, the James Buchanan Walker House is an excellent example of early twentieth century Classical Revival architecture. The style, popularized by the Chicago Exposition of 1893, was based on Roman or Renaissance rather than Greek precedents. Decoration was bolder in effect than that of the earlier Greek Revival style, with larger windows, more pronounced porches, and more emphatic individual building elements. The Walker House is the best example of this style in the county. The house was designed in 1903 by Nashville architect Clarence K. Colley.

The foundation is constructed of limestone bedded with burned lime mortar. The bottom course is large flat stones that extend the full thickness of the foundation. Visible areas of the front and sides of the foundation are faced with pitched faced ashlar stone, while work not visible from the exterior is of random rubble work that is bonded with through stones every six feet. Exposed joints are pointed with a raised bead of cement. Foundation ventilators are comprised of decorative cast iron grates.

Walls are of hard-burned brick laid in lime mortar, faced with sleeper bond pressed brick of a uniform dark red color, and laid in red mortar penciled white. Some brick from the Centerville Training School building which once stood on the site of the house was used in the construction. Ornamental brick, with molded dentils and with egg-and-dart work, is used in the cornices and all chimneys. The cut stone is Bowling Green white limestone and it is used for a water table, door and window sills, and front steps. Lintels over doors and windows are constructed of steel and cast iron. Framing lumber is yellow pine. Floor joists are two inches by ten inches set sixteen inch on center with one inch by three inch cross-bridging. Ceiling joists are two inch by six inch bridged the same way as the floor joists. Joists are doubled at partitions and around fireplaces and stair wells. The floors and roof are covered with diagonal pine and yellow poplar sheathing as a base. Floors in the parlor, dining room, library and reception hall are plain oak. Other floors are pine which is secretly nailed. Ceilings are poplar and are plainly faced with no crown molding. The front door and frame are quartered white oak and the doors in the aforementioned principal rooms are chestnut. The other doors and frames are poplar. Windows have boxed frames with hardwood pulley styles, steel-axle pulleys, and cedar and cypress sills.

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The hip roof is covered with Virginia slate and nailed with wire nails. Hip and box valleys are flashed with tin. It has a deck surrounded by a balustrade (widow's walk). Approximately eighteen feet square, it is reached by a ladder and hatch from the unfinished attic. The cornice, downpipes, and finials are made of galvanized iron.

The main facade looks north towards West End Avenue. The five bay facade is centered around a central pedimented portico with balcony supported by four large fluted poplar columns with Scamozzi order capitals. A denticulated wooden raking cornice and entablature defines the porch section only. The second story balcony is enclosed by a plain paling balustrade. Behind this portico, a one story porch extends across the entire facade and wraps around part of the east elevation. The porch roof is supported by smaller columns matching those of the main portico and is constructed of random length narrow boards. The main entry has a single-leaf door with a large beveled glass window. It is flanked by sidelights and topped by a three light transom. The windows to either side are double-hung sashes with 1/1 lights, topped with radiating brick voussoirs. Upstairs, paired 1/1 sashes are situated to either side of the porch. Just below the line of the eaves, a stringcourse of molded brick in an egg-and-dart pattern forms a cornice.

The east elevation is divided into three irregular bays. Part of the wall terminates in a canted bay end surmounted by a pedimented gable. The tympanum is brick with an elaborate traceried fanlight in the center. The same formed brick stringcourse found on the facade continues along this elevation. The one story porch wraps around the side to a single-leaf door into the projecting bay; in the 1930s this section of the porch was screened. Windows are 1/1 sashes. A tall corbeled interior brick chimney breaks the roof line near the front.

The west elevation is similar to the east elevation, however, the porch does not extend around to this elevation. There is a wood and glass panel door with a single light transom to the rear of the bay end. It is reached by stone steps. A tall corbeled chimney occupies the center of the projecting canted bay end and is flanked by quarter-round windows in the pedimented gable through which it passes .

At the southwest corner of the residence, projecting from the rear elevation, is a one story ell. Topped by a steep pitched hip roof, it has a 4/4 light sash on the east elevation. On the east elevation of the ell there is a wood and glass panel door that opens to a small latticework frame porch with a hip roof. The remaining part of the residence's south or rear

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elevation has centered 1/1 light sashes in each of its three bays and a smaller window to the east of center opening from a bath. A brick shed addition which housed an acetylene gas plant and later a twelve-volt Delco electrical system is also found here. A tall narrow concrete block flue rises from this end.

The well-appointed interior is laid out on the central passage plan. A small hallway extends across the rear on the first floor, and the kitchen occupies the rear ell. Stairs are located in the central and the rear halls. The upper level is divided into five bedrooms. The interior is completely unaltered, except for some gas pipes recently routed through the house. The plaster ceilings are eleven feet five inches on the first story and ten feet upstairs.

The central stair hall runs three-quarters of the way back to a junction with the rear hall. Wide seven panel chestnut pocket doors on Richards Improved Overhead Hangers open east and west to the main parlors. Behind the staircase, smaller five panel single-leaf doors open east and west to a bedroom and the dining room and south to the rear hall. The broad paneled box chestnut staircase wraps around the south and west walls. Its molded rail rises from a wooden newel post embellished with a domed cap and acanthus leaf trim. An integral wooden seat runs along the base of the stairs. On the opposite wall is a small oak mantelpiece with an overmantel framing a bowed glass mirror. Its molded shelf with ovolo trim is supported by small colonettes with Scamozzi capitals and a cantilevered lower mantel shelf. The iron coal firebox is surrounded by small pale green tiles. Crossing the center of the hall is a shallow arch supported by intricate molded and incised posts with tapered sides and small capitals supporting a cross-beam which is decorated with dentils and applied garland trim.

Behind the pocket doors to the west is a large parlor, called the library or music room. In addition to the main doors from the hall, a second set of narrower pocket doors in the south wall provide access to the dining room. A 1/1 light sash on the north overlooks the front lawn and a smaller matching window is centered on the west wall. Also on the west wall is another fireplace with mantel and overmantel supported by square posts with a bracketed shelf and egg-and-dart trim around the mirror on top. Light green tiles again surround the coal firebox. The dining room behind (to the south) also features smaller single-leaf doors south to the rear hall and kitchen wing and east to the central hall. The west wall is a gable bay end with the fireplace in the center. Its mantel and overmantel rests on two tiers of square posts with Ionic capitals. It also features a

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beveled glass mirror with egg-and-dart trim and light green tiles surrounding the hearth. Windows with l/l lights are located in the bays to either side.

Across the hall, the east parlor is laid out similarly, except that the second set of pocket doors to the south is replaced by a five panel single-leaf door connecting with the bedroom. The mantel in this room is supported by tall round columns with carved Ionic capitals. The molded shelf is convex and the mirror above is of beveled glass. Windows again are l/l light on the front and side walls. Behind (to the south) this room is the family room or downstairs bedroom. It is distinguished by its bay end to the east, with a door to the outside in the bay. Single-leaf doors open north to the front parlor and west to the central hall. Also on the south side is a fireplace with a plain boxed mantel and overmantel supported by round columns with molded capitals. Its shelf held up by carved acanthus leaf brackets and the beveled glass mirror is framed by ovolo trim.

Running across the entire rear of the first floor is a service hall. It has doors at the west to the outside, north to the dining room and central hall, and east to a original bath. A narrow straight service stair runs along the north wall. It has a plain rail supported by turned spindles rising from a square boxed newel post with simple molded trim. A door below the staircase provides access to the basement. Off the rear hall at the west end is the rear ell that contains the kitchen. It features 4/4 light sashes on the west and south walls, a boxed interior flue for a former stove, and a high chair rail running around all walls. On the north wall is a spacious walk-in pantry with single-leaf door. A wood and glass panel door opens east to the latticework side porch.

The upstairs floor plan generally follows that of the main floor. The broad central hall has a doorway, matching the main entry, opening north to the upstairs balcony. Five panel wooden doors with operable center-pivot glass transoms provide access to the bedrooms, two on the west and three on the east; a sixth matching doors at the south end leads to the rear hall. The staircase is located at the rear of the main hall and its turned posts continue all the way around the stairwell opening.

The northeast bedroom over the main parlor has two l/l light sashes on the north side and one on the east. A mantel and overmantel with acanthus leaf trim on the east wall matches that in the family room below. A narrow closet with a five panel single-leaf wooden door is on the north side of the room. Next door, the east center bedroom is distinguished by its bay

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end, with a fireplace with simple mantel and overmantel featuring a rectangular mirror. The cast iron coal firebox is surrounded by delft blue tiles. In the bay are 1/1 light sashes. A closet is located in the north corner. In the southeast corner of this floor is a large bath, with doors opening north to the center bedroom and west to the hall. A closet is located on the north wall and 1/1 light sashes open south and east.

Across the hall, the northwest bedroom is similar to the northeast. The only difference is a somewhat more elaborate coal burning fireplace with a mantelpiece decorated with carved, incised, and applied trim. The firebox surround and hearth are faced with pink and cream tiles. The west bedroom has a bay end with 1/1 light sashes. On the west wall is a coal-burning fireplace with tall mantel and overmantel supported by plain round columns and with green tiles on the hearth and surround. A small closet is located on the north wall, and single-leaf doors open east to the center hall and south to the rear hall.

The house was originally heated by the eleven coal burning fireplaces. In 1942 central oil heat was installed and in 1969 a gas furnace and central air conditioning were installed. Gas lighting was originally specified for the house, but the house was also wired for electricity (and an electrical service bell system), even though electricity was not yet available in Centerville. The original gas pipes are still present. At some later time, a household Delco electrical power plant, located in the shed addition to the rear ell, was used until public electricity became available. Original plumbing was one bath downstairs plus a sink in the kitchen and a five foot diameter, two foot deep tank off the upstairs rear hall connected to the cistern by a hand pump. This gravity-flow system was removed about 1942 when city water was provided.

Two outbuildings are located on the property. The larger building is a rectangular plan frame carriage barn dating from circa 1910. It is covered with horizontal wood siding and topped by a tin gable roof. The carriage barn is a contributing resource. The second building is a circa 1910 servant's house that has been altered with synthetic siding and a carport addition. This building is non-contributing because of its loss of integrity.

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 N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
COMMERCE
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1903-1939

Significant Dates

1903

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Walker, James Buchanan

Architect/Builder

Colley, Clarence K.

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

The James Buchanan Walker House in Centerville is nominated under National Register criteria B and C for its associations with Walker, an important figure in Centerville commerce and local government, and for its significance to Centerville and Hickman County in architecture. The house is one of relatively few homes in the county of brick construction and is the only good surviving local example of early twentieth century Classical Revival architecture. Most homes in Centerville and the surrounding country are simple buildings of frame construction, and no building in the county features such elaborate interior trim and decoration.

The house was built for James Buchanan Walker, who was born June 26, 1857 in the Whitfield-Coble-Beaverdam area in western Hickman County. As a young man, Walker clerked in the store of his elder brother, John T. Walker. He later operated his own store in the Shady Grove area in the eastern part of the county for nearly ten years. He then sold his business and came to Centerville, where he purchased his brother's interest in a mercantile business and also worked for the First National Bank in Centerville. Walker was the bank's assistant cashier and director after January 15, 1903, cashier after March 4th of the same year, and after January 14, 1913, President of the First National Bank, remaining in this capacity until his death in 1940.

Walker was a pivotal figure in the development of Centerville from a little country village to a prosperous small town. He was elected the first mayor of Centerville in 1905 and was said to have welcomed every stranger to town. He was remembered as cordially receptive to every new business, actively interested in the community, and capable and well-informed as a public official. He was a member of the Centerville School Board, president of the Centerville Training School (once located on the site of his house), and a member of the Board of Directors of Fairview Academy in Centerville. In business, he was recognized as the dean of Tennessee bankers. He was a member of the Methodist Church for sixty years, serving for thirty years as Superintendent of the Sunday School and for forty years

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Colley, Clarence K. Specifications for the James B. Walker House, Nashville 1902. In possession of Mr. Henry McBride, Centerville, TN.
- Lynn, O.J. I Remember When: Transcript of Taped Interviews With The Elderly Citizens of Hickman County. Centerville: Hickman County Library, 1983.
- McPherson, James. "Historic Homes of Hickman County". Masters Thesis, Vanderbilt University, 1975.
- Walker, John T. Family Record. Unpublished MS, in possession of Mr. Henry McBride, Centerville, TN.

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

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 1.3 acres

UTM References

A

1	6	4	5	7	5	0	0	3	9	5	9	3	3	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Centerville 49 SW

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is a rectangular parcel (#29) bounded by West End Avenue on the north, South Barnwell Avenue on the east, Centerville Park on the south and adjacent property lines on the west. See tax map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all property currently associated with the house. It is sufficient to provide a historical setting for the James Buchanan Walker House.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard Quin / Historic Preservation Planner

organization SCTDD date January 1987

street & number P.O. Box 1346 telephone 615-381-2040

city or town Columbia state TN zip code 38402-1346

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as Chairman of the Board of Stewards. He was a member of the Fifty Years in Business Club of Tennessee and was appointed by Governor Ben W. Hooper as a member of a three person commission to locate the Memphis-Bristol Highway. In 1916, he was chosen as a delegate to the 1916 Democratic National Convention.

In 1886, Walker married Henrietta Russell Walker, the youngest of nine children of Madison Monroe Russell and Rachel Alston Jones Russell from the Williamsport area on Duck River in western Maury County. They had six children, five daughters and one son. (The son, James B. Walker, Jr., took over as President of the bank on his father's death, and later was appointed as State Treasurer of Tennessee by Governor Frank Clement. His son, James B. Walker, III, became bank president when his father died. His aunt, Mattie Lou Walker, daughter of James B. Walker, also worked in the bank for seventy years, retiring in 1978.)

The land on which the house was built was purchased on October 13, 1902 by Walker from the Centerville Training School for \$1,500. The conveyance shows an existing brick building on the lot. The architect's specifications also refer to an existing building as a source for some of the brick to be used in the construction of the new Walker house.

The house was built in 1903 by Clarence K. Colley (1869-1956) of Nashville. Colley, a Wilson County native, opened his architectural practice in Nashville in 1899. He designed the North Branch of the Nashville Public Library on Monroe Street at Tenth Avenue North. In 1909 he was partnered with J.H. Colley and from 1922 until 1928 the firm was known as Colley and Company. Colley was known primarily for his numerous apartment buildings. The Walker House is an excellent local example of the early twentieth century Classical Revival. Its most prominent feature is a portico with tall round reeded columns topped by Scamozzi capitals. In addition to the central portico, one-story porches extend across the west or front and north sides, and a small latticework frame porch is placed at the interior side of the rear ell.

The relatively plain exterior gives little hint of the house's outstanding interior. The house illustrates the turn-of-the-century proclivity for the use of rich wooden detail work, featuring four sets of internal pocket doors, and an outstanding stairway in the central hall which is embellished with turned spindles and a molded rail, with a paneled closed area below. The same entry hall features a wooden arched opening separating it into two sections. In the rear hall, a smaller service stair also provides access

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to the second floor. Four of the rooms are of irregular shape, with bowed sides created by the gable bay ends of the house.

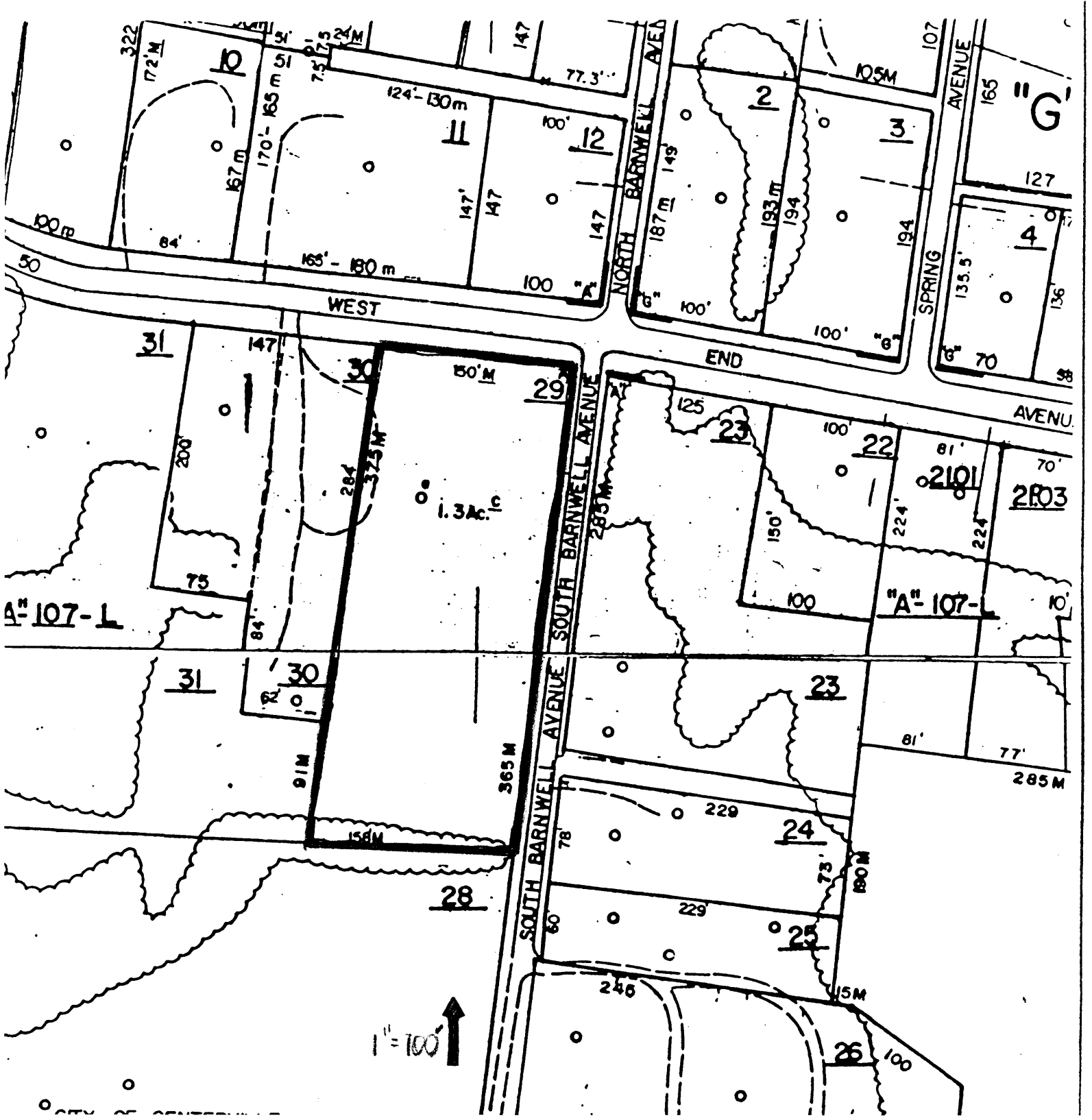
The house is the largest of the few brick houses in the small county seat. Most homes in Centerville are of frame construction and usually quite smaller. No house in the county is known to features such a detailed and complex interior. The interior is completely unaltered except for the installation of new gas lines, and retains all original doors, baseboards, and other millwork. No other house in the city is built in the early twentieth century Classical Revival style. The only other example of this style is the 1922 Methodist Church. The Walker house has remained in the family since its construction in 1903 and is presently being carefully restored.

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graphs Page 1

PHOTOGRAPHS

Walker, James Buchanan, House
West End Avenue
Centerville, Hickman County, Tennessee
Photo by: Richard Quin
Date: December 1987 and February 1988
Negs: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

North facade, facing south
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East elevation, facing west
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West elevation, facing east
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South elevation, facing north
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Interior detail of central hall
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Interior detail of central hall and west parlor
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Interior detail of dining room
7 of 10

Interior detail of east parlor
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Barn/carriage house, facing southwest
9 of 10

Servant's house
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