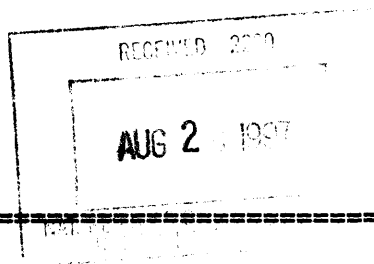


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name **Forks of Cypress**

other names/site number **Jackson, James, House**

2. Location

street & number on Jackson Rd. approx. 1.5 miles NW of Cox Creek Pkwy., above the forks of Cypress Creek
city or town Florence vicinity x Not for publication N/A
state Alabama code AL county Lauderdale code 077 zip code 35630

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 8/21/97
Signature of certifying official Date

Alabama Historical Commission (State Historic Preservation Office)
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that this property is:
- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register
 - removed from the National Register
 - other (explain): _____

[Signature] Date of Action 10/10/97
Signature of the Keeper

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check only one box.)	Category of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)	Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site	<u> 1 </u>	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> 1 </u>	_____ objects
			_____ Total

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

 N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

 N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: domestic Sub: single dwelling

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: vacant/not in use Sub: ruin

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Early Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, limestone

roof N/A

walls N/A

other brick

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition on continuation sheet/s.)

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

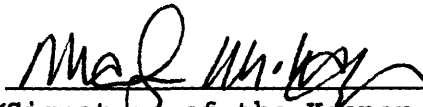
SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 97001166 **Date Listed:** 10/10/97

Forks of Cypress **Lauderdale** **ALABAMA**
Property Name **County** **State**

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for 
Signature of the Keeper

12/18/97
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 8

This nomination is amended to show Social History as the appropriate area of significance, as indicated in the text. Architecture is deleted.

These changes have been confirmed with the Alabama SHPO.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

=====

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.) N/A

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

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____

Period of Significance c. 1825-30 _____

Significant Dates c. 1825-30 _____

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A _____

Cultural Affiliation N/A _____

Architect/Builder Nichols, William _____

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

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(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 # AL-375
- 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 _____

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property approximately 33 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
1	16	433500	3856080	3	16	433880	3855690
2	16	433720	3856150	4	16	433500	3855690

____ 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 Johnathan A. Farris/Survey Coordinator & Trina Binkley/NR Coordinator

organization Alabama Historical Commission date May 2, 1997

street & number 468 South Perry Street telephone (334) 242-3184

city or town Montgomery state Alabama zip code 36130-0900

=====

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Dr. & Mrs. Ricky Irons and Dr. & Mrs. Gilbert R. Melson

street & number c/o 409 North Cedar Street and c/o 2129 Helton Drive telephone (205) 766-3062 and 718-3200

city or town Florence state Alabama zip code 35630

United States Department of the Interior
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

VII. DESCRIPTION

The Forks of Cypress ruins, the remains of an exceptional Alabama plantation house dating from c. 1825-1830, consists today of a series of twenty-three brick columns, arranged as a peristyle, resting on a limestone stylobate. A brick foundation with brick and limestone lined light wells and a brick lined cellar with a later poured concrete floor mark the former location of the house within the peristyle. Brick paving occupies the area between the colonnade and the foundations. The ruins crown the level top of a gentle slope at the confluence of the Big Cypress and Little Cypress creeks. The surrounding countryside consists largely of tree-lined open fields with a few trees scattered in the immediate vicinity of the site. The rolling agricultural land to the south of the house probably closely resembles the historic pastoral setting of the ruins within the horse farm of James Jackson, the man who commissioned the house. A short distance to the west of the ruins stands a mid-twentieth century frame barn. The setting to the northwest of the house has been slightly compromised by the recent construction of a large house in the Post-modern Eclectic vein about one hundred and fifty yards from the site. The new house does, however, rest on a somewhat lower site than the ruins and backs up to a tree line, so that its presence does not greatly influence the predominant sense of open space characterizing the historical pastoral landscape. A large stone chimney stand from what was once a log saddlebag dependency of the house remains some distance to the northeast of the house. At the end of a ridge almost directly to the east of the site, but not visible from the ruins because of its location in woods, is the Jackson family cemetery.

The ruins of the Forks of Cypress consist of all the non-wooden elements of the house, the rest being consumed in a great conflagration in June of 1966, with the exception of the chimneys which had collapsed following the fire. The ruins have three basic components: the twenty-three brick columns and twenty-four column bases, the stone stylobate and brick porch floor, and the stone-lined cellar and window wells. The columns of the Forks of Cypress consist of multiple curved bricks molded to varying sizes in order to achieve their pronounced entasis. On several of the columns, most notably the one on the extreme northeastern corner, the plaster which originally covered the shafts still remains. One column is "missing" in the middle of the eastern elevation because one of the chimneys collapsed on it as a consequence of the 1966 fire. The capitals of the columns were wood and therefore did not survive. The columns rest on bases with torus moldings that are accurate for the Ionic order.

Three limestone steps still allow access to the porch on the south facade. The bottom step originally terminated in ornamental scrolled returns, and the more eastern end of the step remains intact. The stone stylobate is composed of a fieldstone retaining wall capped by a slightly protruding stone course. The stylobate is faced with dressed stone on the south and west elevations. On the east and north elevations, the fieldstone has always been exposed. Inside the physical parameters of the stylobate stonework, the porch consists of brick paving laid directly in earth. The brick-lined cellar extends beneath what was originally the south half of the frame portion of the house. The brick lining is still visible, as are some elements of stonework, including the fieldstone lining of what was once a window well and cut stone slabs that mark locations of chimney bases and cellar entrances on east and west elevations. Not now visible but confirmed through archaeological investigations, the floor of the cellar is covered with a twentieth-century layer of concrete. Concrete or plaster remains in sections on the cellar walls. Archaeological investigations have shown the existence of the foundation of the kitchen building immediately to the east of the house proper, but these are not currently visible.

Detailed information about the portions of the house that were burned in 1966 are available in the form of HABS drawings. These show that the house was basically a double-pile frame form with the unusual plan element of a widened stair hall in the north half of the central passage. High style architectural detail typical of Alabama during the 1820s and early 1830s was scattered throughout the house in the form of mantles, fanlights, sidelights, and moldings. For more detailed information on how the Forks of Cypress looked before the fire, refer to the accompanying HABS documentation.

Some archaeological exploration has been performed around the house foundations and on the site of the kitchen. This work has been limited in its nature, primarily with the purpose of confirming that the colonnade, the house core, and the kitchen were all of contemporary construction. Great archaeological potential remains further out from the house, where there is a high probability of sites relating to slave life, the early horse industry, and plantation landscape in general. Though these

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County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

areas have yet to be investigated, it should be kept in mind that archaeological information of regional and statewide significance may be harbored by the pasture land around the ruins of the Forks of Cypress.

Currently plans are underway for the acquisition of the ruins of the Forks of Cypress by the Alabama Historical Commission in order that local historical groups may take charge of care and maintenance of the remaining structure. The ruins are to be stabilized at the soonest possible opportunity.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

VIII. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE—CRITERION A: SOCIAL HISTORY

The ruins of the Forks of Cypress are significant under criterion A for social history as the extant symbols of the ambition and aristocratic aspirations of their builder, James Jackson. The Forks of Cypress was the only documented peristyle (or peripteral) house to have been constructed in antebellum Alabama. In fact, the Forks of Cypress was a very early example of the peristyle house with respect to the entire nation and was perhaps the first of the type outside of the lower Mississippi Valley. Attributed to William Nichols, the Forks was an elite and high profile architectural statement formulated no doubt in collaboration with its patron, James Jackson, a wealthy and socially prominent planter and horse breeder. The ruins of the house remain important monuments connected with the trends of early 19th century neoclassicism and "high style" domestic architecture in Alabama. Even in a ruinous state, the Forks of Cypress can still convey its significance as an architectural statement of prestige, since the peristyle remains and it was this architectural feature that set the building apart from its Alabama contemporaries, rather than the somewhat standardized double pile form of the building's core.

HISTORIC SUMMARY

The character of James Jackson provided a *raison d'être* for the Forks of Cypress. Jackson, an ambitious Irish-born venturer of capital, probably moved to Lauderdale County, Alabama, shortly after his 1818 purchase of the land on which the Forks would be built.¹ Jackson had initially immigrated to Philadelphia about 1799, where he went into business with his brothers.² In 1801, Jackson relocated to Nashville, Tennessee, where he continued to act as a merchant and also pursued surveying.³ Heavy investment in lands in Lauderdale County as a prominent part of the Cypress Creek Land Company no doubt precipitated his removal to Alabama in the late 1810s.⁴ He is considered a founder of the town of Florence. James Jackson was a friend and close associate of many of the Tennessee elite including Colonel John Coffee and Andrew Jackson.⁵ James Jackson's quest for success led him to run for (and in fact win) a seat in the Alabama House of Representatives in 1822 and 1823, and a state Senate seat in 1825 and 1830. The desire to obtain a definitive expression of social status to accompany his successful business projects and civic career drove Jackson to commission a house for his Lauderdale County property that few people in early nineteenth century America could have seen without taking an interest. The historical and architectural significance of the Forks of Cypress is therefore based on what the building is but also on what the building says.

Anonymous Architecture?: the Problem of the Columns

The question of *who* designed the mansion at the Forks of Cypress is a somewhat complex issue, and to some degree is subservient to the larger question of *why* the house came to be. The former is a question that must be addressed, however. The Forks was a truly exceptional building compared to most of its Tennessee River Valley contemporaries. In the 1820s and 1830s large numbers of people in the area were clearly living in buildings that could be considered largely temporary in their nature. Even most of the wealthier individuals in the area were living in traditional vernacular building forms, particularly the "

¹Meyer, Mike. (Derry, Linda., ed.). "Forks of Cypress Archaeological Excavation Report: Main House and Kitchen Dependency". (unpublished, report #1-Lu-520). p. 2.

²*ibid.* and Owen, Thomas M. History of Alabama and Dictionary of Alabama Biography. (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1921). Vol. III, pp. 891-892.

³*ibid.*

⁴*ibid.*

⁵*ibid.*

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Section 8 Page 4 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
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l-house" and the "tidewater cottage". Jackson's long-time political rival for the seat in the state legislature from Lauderdale County, Democrat Hugh McVay, in fact lived in nothing more than a log dogtrot, even though he was a wealthy planter in his own right.⁶ The Forks of Cypress is of course itself at the core a variant on a vernacular building type, the "double pile", but the exterior impression it makes is altogether different from its eighteenth century ancestors on the East Coast. This contrast with past elite precedents and contemporary planter's houses has one major source: the monumental peristyle colonnade. Any patron of a house of this magnitude and level of stylistic innovation (who, like James Jackson never seems to have been involved in the building industry himself) probably had the advantage of advice from a professional source, either a master builder or a member of the then recently congealed profession of architect.

English-born architect William Nichols is the strongest candidate for having accomplished the formal design of the Forks of Cypress. The term "design" should be used here with caution, however. It is certain that in early Alabama, the patron would almost always set the basic program for any structure. The patron of the Forks could be considered James Jackson on a narrow level. On a broader level it could include Jackson's wife and even other members of his family and circle of friends. The actual fabric of the building itself could be enhanced or limited by the skills and dispositions of the craftsmen at hand. The early 19th-century American architect or master builder can almost always be found associated with any innovative stylistic event. The Forks of Cypress was a culmination of one such design occurrence.

Only two known men working in northern Alabama during the construction of the Forks of Cypress could possibly have had the exposure, inclination, or education to produce such a monumental building. These were William Nichols and George Steele. There is also, of course, the possibility that the designer of the Forks could have also been an unknown architect. George Steele can largely be ruled out as the architect of the Forks of Cypress as he was still throughout the 1820s more an artisan than an architectural designer given the works that have been documented as his from this period. Steele also was basically a "court architect" for the Huntsville elite and Florence was apparently not his "turf". Only one Alabama house contemporary to the Forks may have any great relation at all to the design, Belle Mina in Limestone County—the house of Thomas Bibb. This double pile structure shares the honor with the Forks of Cypress of introducing the monumental classical portico into Alabama domestic architecture. The two-story hexastyle Tuscan portico of Belle Mina seems, however, to have a different stylistic root than the peripteral portico of the Forks. In its essence, Belle Mina seems nothing else so much as an overblown version of the pavilions on the Lawn at the University of Virginia. Belle Mina is a stylistic descendent of Jeffersonian piedmont Virginian building, quite unlike the Forks which has an altogether more complex stylistic pedigree.

For several reasons, William Nichols appears the most probable candidate for the design. First, Nichols was working as State Architect of Alabama (particularly as the architect of the old Alabama State Capitol in Tuscaloosa) at about the same time the Forks was under construction and at the same time Jackson was at his most politically active.⁷ Given the circles that both men moved in the late 1820s, their meeting was highly probable. Nichols, in fact, is thought to have come to the vicinity of Colbert and Lauderdale Counties in order to work on the Muscle Shoals Canal, which would have placed him in close proximity to the house site itself.⁸ Nichols is documented to have worked with monumental classical orders as early as the mid-1810s at

⁶Tennessee Valley Historical Society. Historic Muscle Shoals: Buildings and Sites. (Sheffield, AL: Tennessee Valley Historical Society, 1983). pp. 104-105.

⁷See also Gamble, Robert. The Alabama Catalog: Historic American Buildings Survey: A Guide to the Early Architecture of the State. (University, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1987). pp. 46-52. and Peatross, C. Ford. and Mellow, Robert O. William Nichols, Architect. (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Art Gallery, 1979). pp. 11, 17-18.

⁸Gamble, Robert. Personal communication. Mr. Gamble received this information from Nicholas Winn of Florence, who has studied the subject of the Muscle Shoals Canal.

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Hayes (the James Johnston House) in Edenton, North Carolina.⁹ Besides the use of monumental orders, Hayes also shares with the Forks of Cypress the feature of a stair hall. The stair hall in these structures is formed by the subdivision of a central passage into a front and a back half, one of which possesses broader dimensions and contains the main stair of the house. Stair halls were a very unusual feature in America, but were more common elements of plan in Nichols' native England. Notably the stair hall of the Forks is very rectilinear and more Georgian in its form while the stair hall at Hayes is much more sophisticated and Adamesque, but this perhaps can be explained for the paucity of talented craftsmen in Alabama rather than any larger design issues. Another notable link between the design of the Forks and Nichols' architectural predilections is illustrated by the use of a type of segmentally arched fanlight on the south facade of the house which matches very closely Nichols' fanlight at Hayes. The fanlight is only one of two of its type in Alabama architecture of the period, the other one being part of a known Nichols design, the old Alabama State Capitol in Tuscaloosa. Finally, the use of the Ionic order corresponds to the architectural predilections of Nichols. The architect used an order nearly identical to the Forks of Cypress Ionic in the Alabama Capitol in Tuscaloosa. Both of these orders share the idiosyncrasy of "turning the corner", i.e. projecting the volute of corner columns at a forty-five degree angle in the Roman manner. This element has some precedence in the Georgian architecture of Nichols native Bath. The use of the colossal order in a domestic design, the use of the stair hall, the use of a particular version of the Ionic order, and historic circumstances all point towards Nichols as the "lead" designer for the Forks of Cypress. Nichols' involvement cannot by itself, however, explain the innovative use of a peristyle at the Forks of Cypress.

The only peristyle houses that could possibly predate the Forks of Cypress are in the Lower Mississippi Valley Region. The Forest (Dianah Dunbar House), a no longer extant plantation house in the Natchez vicinity built in 1816, was perhaps the first truly peristyle house in America.¹⁰ The Forest, known mainly from accounts and a sketch by a governess who once lived there, had a monumental Tuscan or Roman Doric peristyle wrapped around a house otherwise heavily influenced by French Colonial architecture. The peristyle type itself appears to emerge from the eighteenth century French plantation houses of the lower Mississippi. These houses were frequently two stories tall, had high hipped roofs, and were surrounded by galleries that reached all the way around the structure. The main circulation in these houses was exterior rather than interior, and therefore the galleries made up an important spatial component of the house. The designer of the Forest simply formalized the French design by using monumental piers to support the second story galleries and the eaves of the roof that formed the extensive recessed porch. The Forks of Cypress actually takes the peristyle dwelling in a different direction.

The frame core of the Forks, unlike the cores of the peripteral lower Mississippi houses, was basically an inward looking central passage house of the broad Anglo-American tradition. The Forks neither possessed a gallery or utilizes its peristyle porch as a space for circulation. The shade that the recessed porch of the Forks of Cypress offered was a quality always appreciated in warmer climates. The necessity for a porch on all sides of the house, however, is an impulse no one else in the Tennessee River Valley ever seems to have had. The detached treatment of the porch as a formal element apart from the "cella" of the main house is more formal and classical than the Mississippi River Valley houses on the whole. Further enhancing the Forks' classicism is the fact that it possesses a discreet, low hipped roof in contrast to the baroque, massive, high hipped roofs of the Mississippi examples.

⁹see Lane, Mills. Architecture of the Old South: North Carolina. (Savannah, GA: Beehive Press, 1985). pp. 146-150.

¹⁰see Miller, Mary Carrol. Lost Mansions of Mississippi. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 1996). pp. 8-10.

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The design of the Forks of Cypress abandons several of the climatic and cultural characteristics of the Lower Mississippi peristyle house type and in doing so lifts the peristyle house out of the realm of folk building and into the architectural *avant-garde* of the southern frontier. James Jackson no doubt knew of the French architectural traditions of the Lower Mississippi Valley. He had familial connections in Louisiana and traditionally had extensive business connections there as well. In addition, the Natchez Trace itself goes through Lauderdale County and certainly would have been an information pipe line between regions. Likely, James Jackson's contributions to the design of the Forks of Cypress were the requirements that the building have a porch on all sides and that the house make a statement by its grandeur. Nichols (assuming that he was the architect) then took the program and decided that the porch would take a monumental colonnade form, either following the model of a classical temple or perhaps simply wrapping a colonnade around the structure in a way reminiscent of the crescents of Bath.¹¹ Whatever the exact design precedents for the Forks of Cypress were, James Jackson's intent with the Forks of Cypress was to create a monument in which to live, an Alabama Acropolis so to speak, which would impress any and all who viewed it with the aristocratic tastes and means of its owner.

Monumental Magnificence: Designing for Display

The monumental architecture of the Forks of Cypress was an extension of James Jackson's successful quest for social prominence. In early-19th century America, display of wealth and hospitality were explicitly linked. Jackson used his material wealth to acquire possessions, of which his plantation house was one, that would advertise his elite qualities, which allowed him to obtain a positive reputation for himself and acquire wealthy "dynastic" marriages for his offspring. That, approximately thirty years after his death, Jackson was still being described as "possessed of great energy, tact, and judgement, which, added to an open and manly deportment, wealth, and liberality, gave him extensive popularity and influence" and also as having "dispensed a princely hospitality till his death" attests to his success in acquiring a truly aristocratic status among his contemporaries.¹² Among Jackson's possessions were the sources of his wealth, including three plantations and 201 slaves, as well as the displays of his wealth, including horses, furnishings, and the house. The ruins of the Forks of Cypress are the last remains of a world of aristocratic conspicuous consumption Jackson created that allowed him to generate a reputation of status and prominence upon his peers in the Tennessee Valley.

Jackson used horses, hospitality, and the house at the Forks of Cypress to cultivate his genteel status. The planter owned more than \$30,000 dollars worth of horse flesh at his death in 1840.¹³ Thirty-three race or riding horses (as opposed to work horses) were listed in Jackson's inventory.¹⁴ Jackson in fact owned a half share of a prize English stud, Glencoe (ancestor of Man O' War and Citation among others), worth \$10,000.¹⁵ Jackson's horses represent a substantial risky investment—an adult thoroughbred in Jackson's inventory was frequently worth more than an adult slave (and in the case of Glencoe, more than twenty slaves). Yet a horse does not produce goods for sale and its ability to produce capital is dependent on its own success at the races as well as the shrewdness of its owner and the abilities of its jockey and trainer. A horse's worth would depreciate rapidly if injured, and the animal could be easily destroyed by a fall. A barn fire could have truly

¹¹Robert Gamble must be credited with the latter idea.

¹²Brewer, Willis. Alabama: Her History, Resources, War Record, and Public Men. (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Company, 1975—orig. pub. 1872). p. 298.

¹³McDonald, William L. and Russel, Darrell A. "James Jackson of the Forks of Cypress: Will and Inventory". in Natchez Trace Traveler. Vol. 13, No. 1, Feb. 1993. pp. 62, 69-72.

¹⁴ibid.

¹⁵ibid. and Meyer, Mike. "Forks of Cypress Archaeological Excavation Report". p. 3.

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disastrous economic consequences, so it is no wonder that Jackson had lodgings at his stable and that he apparently kept on guard there at least one slave, named Jim Thornton, armed with a shotgun to ward off intruders.¹⁶ Although clearly an undertaking which had to be closely watched, raising race horses undoubtedly paid back Jackson with personal satisfaction at having raised quick and beautiful animals as well as lending him the aura of aristocracy, both since horse racing was of course the "sport of kings" and also since the equine investments had a high economic risk. Jackson also apparently had his own race track at the Forks of Cypress, which certainly brought him many visitors who would be suitably impressed by Jackson's equine stock as well as his extravagant hospitality.

Jackson had his house equipped with furnishings and other objects for use in entertaining large numbers of guests. The material possessions associated with Jackson's hospitality include plentiful seating (notably forty mahogany chairs and three sofas) and extensive dining accoutrements (several tables, \$150 worth of table cloths, towels, and napkins, sets of cut glass and china, and finally \$1500 worth of silverware).¹⁷ These objects functioned in the spatial context of a house designed specifically for entertaining. The house at the Forks of Cypress contained on its first floor substantial rooms with the main function of accommodating guests, providing them with food and amusement. These were the parlor, dining room, and stair hall. The "piazza" of the house itself could additionally be used as a place in which to receive visitors in fair weather. The cellar of the Forks of Cypress was a room for the support services associated with entertaining, convenient storage for food and beverages. The handily disposed kitchen also must have been an asset when many guests arrived.

Beyond its role as an accommodator of functions, the house at the Forks of Cypress had another message to give its visitors. More than any other house in Alabama at the time, the Forks of Cypress was a display in itself. Sited on the edge of a plateau in a position to dominate the landscape, the house turned its formal colonnade to the world on all sides. Twenty-four brick columns in themselves represented a conspicuous display of wealth and power. The design of the house was conscious of the gaze of the public down to very small details as well. Notably, the stylobate still shows which sides of the house would have addressed visitors arriving at the Forks of Cypress. The base is faced with ashlar masonry on the south side (the main entrance) and the west side, while the north and the east sides (the latter adjacent the kitchen) are faced with field stone.¹⁸ The very fact that the Forks possessed an Ionic peristyle and took such a progressive form marked it as a symbol of status. The ruins of the residence at the Forks of Cypress remain significant today not only as a work of pure design, but as the one extant symbol of the world of privilege, display, and status that James Jackson created for himself and his family that would place them firmly in the most elite circles of the old Southwest.

¹⁶McDonald, William L. and Russel, Darrell A. "James Jackson of the Forks of Cypress". pp. 69-

¹⁷ibid.

¹⁸Meyer, Mike. "Forks of Cypress Archaeological Report". p. 34.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 8 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 10 Page 9 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

X. Verbal Boundary Description

The National Register boundaries of the Forks of Cypress shall be as follows:

The Forks of Cypress boundaries begin at a point on the south side of the access road to the Forks of Cypress property where it joins Lauderdale County Road 41; thence the boundaries proceed west along the south side of said access road to a point on the north-south section line between Sections 29 and 30, Township 2 South, Range 11 West; thence the boundaries proceed due south along said section line to its junction with the Jackson Road (also known as the Jackson Ford Bridge Road); thence the boundaries proceed east along the north side of the said Jackson Road or Jackson Ford Bridge Road to its junction with Lauderdale County Road 41; thence the boundaries are completed north along the west side of said Lauderdale County Road 41 to the Point of Beginning.

Boundary Justification

The above boundaries have been drawn to incorporate lands historically associated with the Forks of Cypress, to include areas that contribute to the integrity of the ruins' setting, and finally to encompass the area subject to combined donation/easement actions taken in anticipation of the preservation and stabilization of the ruins of the Forks of Cypress.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photo Page 10 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

Photographs

Forks of Cypress

Florence vicin., Lauderdale Co., AL

Photos by: **Trina Binkley**
National Register Coordinator
Alabama Historical Commission
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, AL 36130-0900

Negatives: **Alabama Historical Commission**
468 South Perry Street
Montgomery, AL 36130-0900

Date: **March 1997**

SE corner, facing NW
1 of 37

interior cellar wall, facing S (closeup)
13 of 37

E elevation, facing NW
2 of 37

chimney base on west end, facing E
14 of 37

base of column on SE corner, facing SW
3 of 37

interior of cellar, facing SE
15 of 37

interior view of colonnade, looking NW
4 of 37

SW corner of cellar, facing S
16 of 37

N colonnade, looking W
5 of 37

NE corner of colonnade from interior
17 of 37

N colonnade, looking W
6 of 37

brick paving on porch floor
18 of 37

N colonnade, looking W
7 of 37

cellar entrance or chimney base, facing E
19 of 37

NW corner of house foundation
8 of 37

S interior wall on SE end: stone window well lining
20 of 37

brick porch paving
9 of 37

interior of colonnade looking SW
21 of 37

interior of SW corner facing SW
10 of 37

interior of colonnade looking W
22 of 37

top of fourth column from W on N colonnade
11 of 37

SE corner column base looking SE
23 of 37

interior cellar wall facing S
12 of 37

plaster on fifth column from W in S colonnade, facing SW
24 of 37

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section Photo Page 11 Name of property: **Forks of Cypress**
County and state: **Lauderdale County, Alabama**

Photographs (cont.)

return on bottom riser of front stairs
25 of 37

front stairs, facing NE
26 of 37

S facade, facing N
27 of 37

view from front, facing southeast
28 of 37

view from ruins, facing NW
29 of 37

S facade, facing N
30 of 37

S facade, facing N
31 of 37

SW corner, facing NE
32 of 37

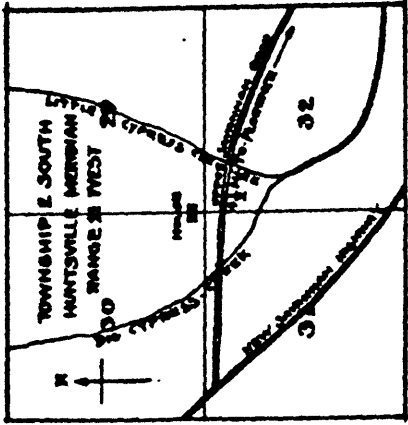
W elevation, facing E
33 of 37

view from ruins looking towards quarters chimney stand to NE
34 of 37

SW corner, facing SE
35 of 37

stylobate on S facade, facing N
36 of 37

W end of front stairs, facing NE
37 of 37



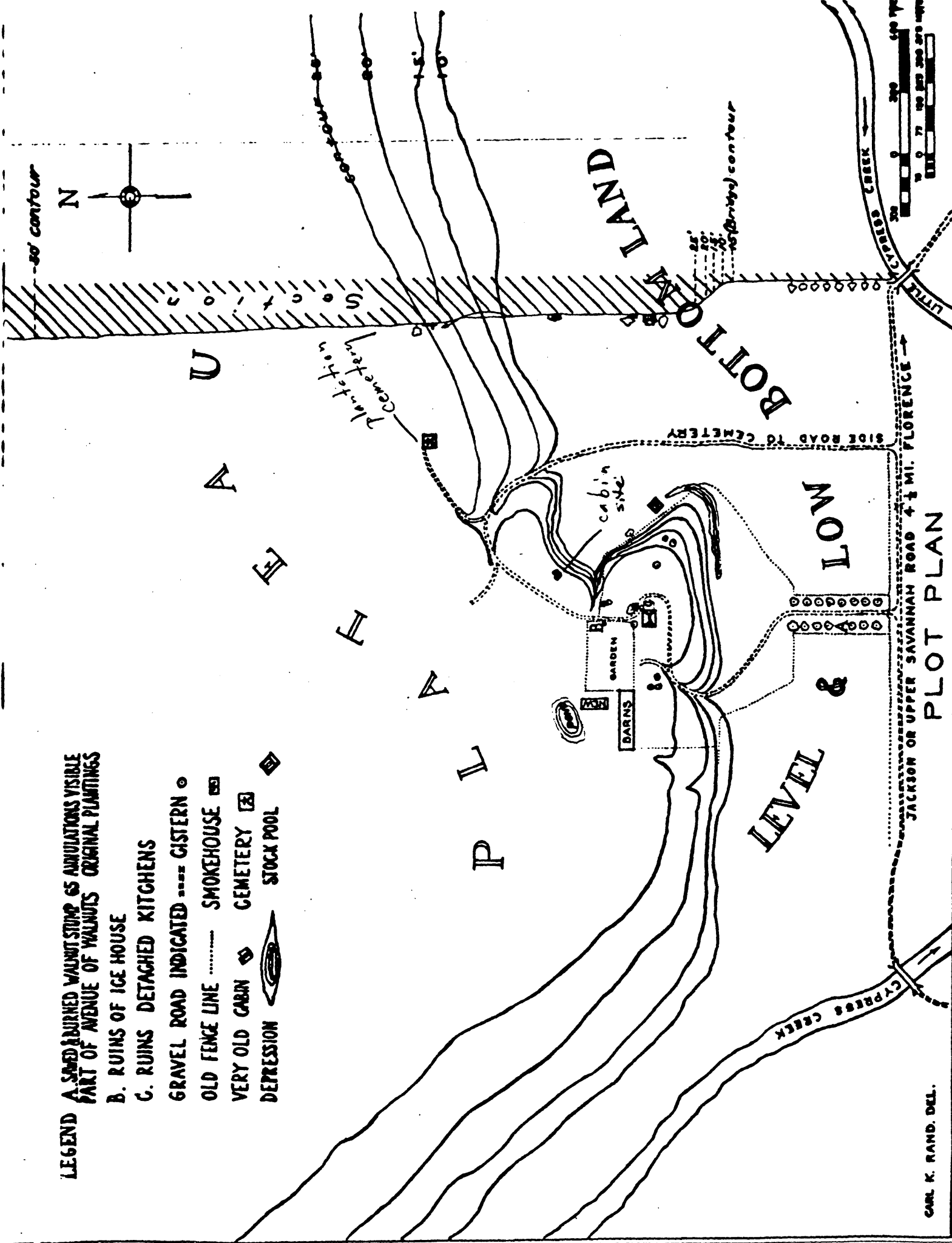
**SKETCH MAP
SHOWING LOCATION**
The Forks of Cypress

THE JACKSON HOME

NEAR FLORENCE-LAUDERDALE COUNTY-ALABAMA

ERECTED IN 1820

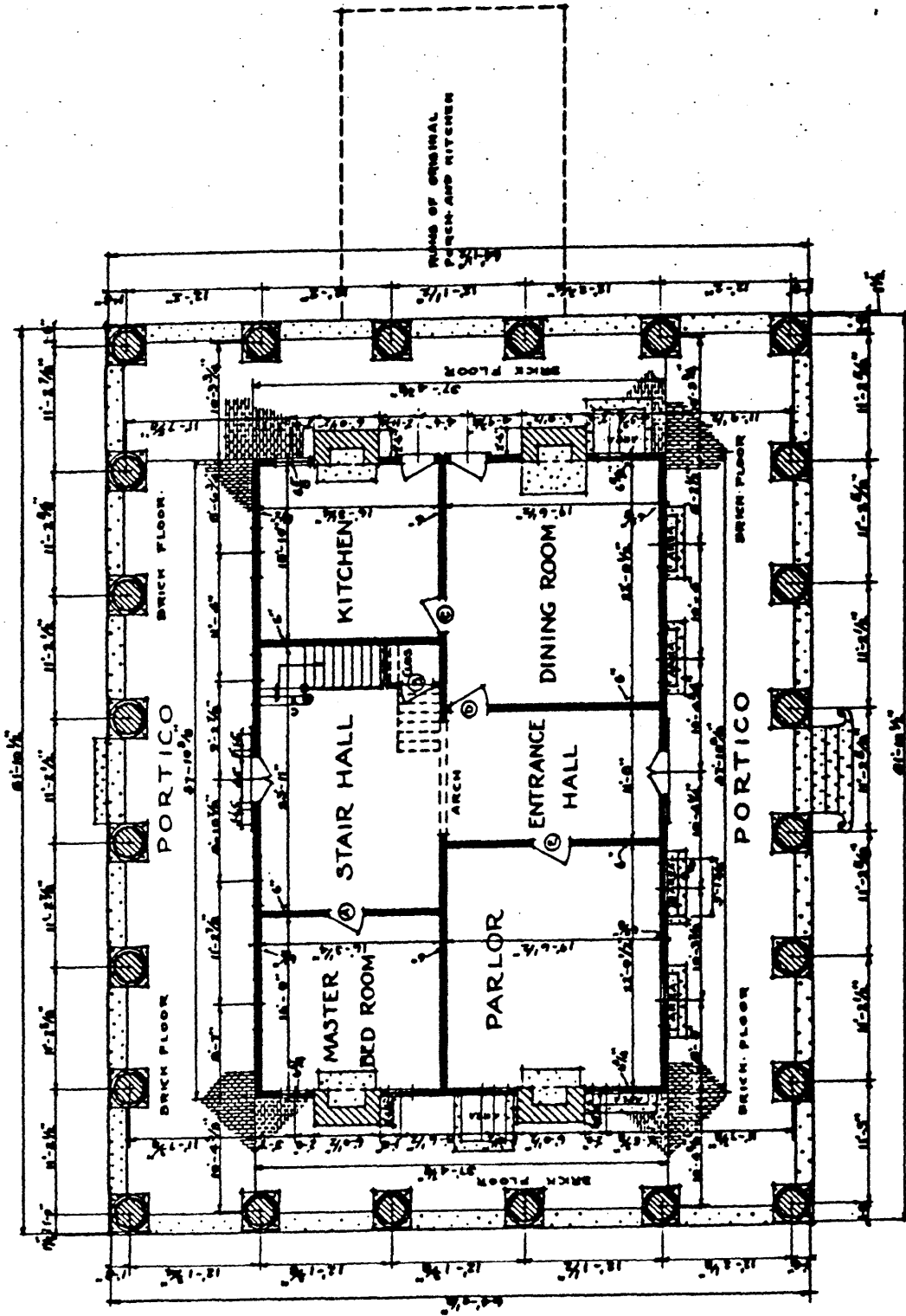
- LEGEND**
- A. SNED & BURNED WALNUT STUMP & IMITATIONS VISIBLE PART OF AVENUE OF WALNUTS ORIGINAL PLANTINGS
 - B. RUINS OF ICE HOUSE
 - C. RUINS DETACHED KITCHENS
 - GRAVEL ROAD INDICATED - - - - - CISTERN
 - OLD FENCE LINE - - - - - SMOKEHOUSE
 - VERY OLD CABIN
 - DEPRESSION
 - CEMETERY
 - STOCK POOL



CARL K. RAND. DEL.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

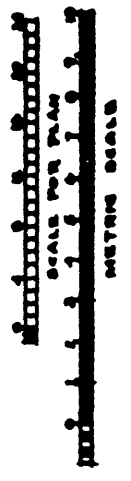
PLANTATION PLOT PLAN



LEGEND
 BRICK
 CUT STONE
 WOOD

HARRY J. FRAMM-DEL.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS AND RESTORATION
 HARRY J. FRAMM-DEL.

THE JACKSON HOME

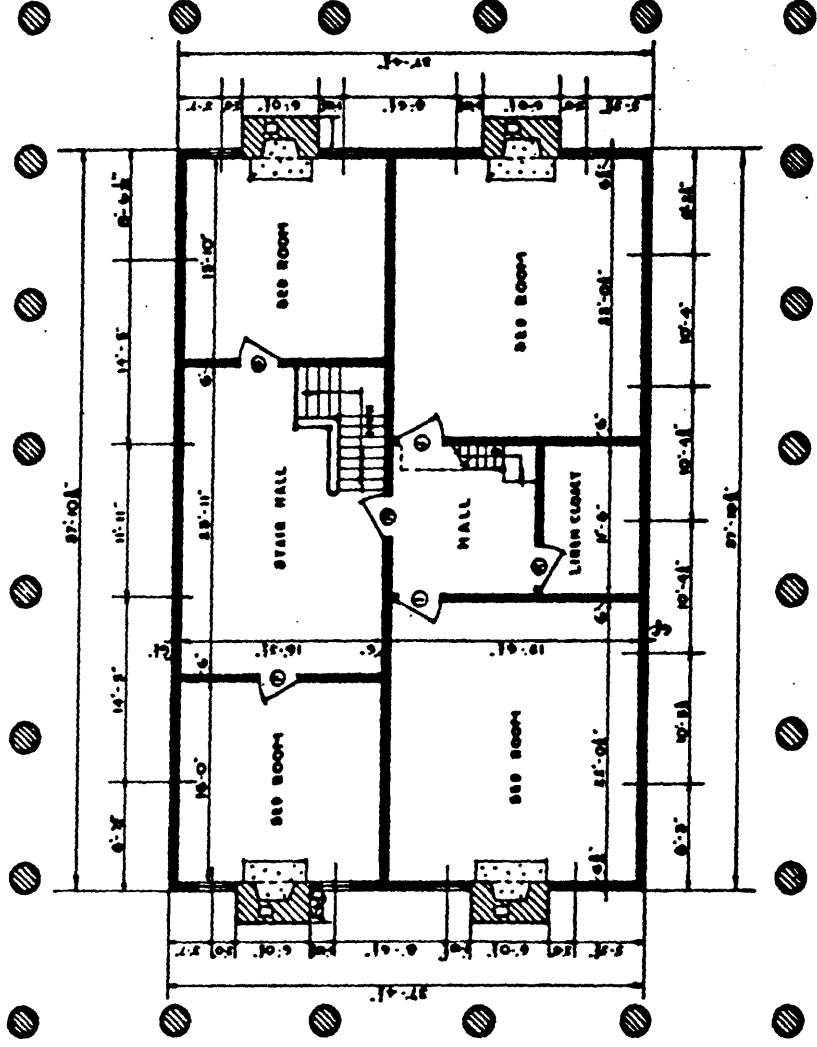
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS AND RESTORATION
 HARRY J. FRAMM-DEL.

DOOR SCHEDULE

1	3'-0" x 7'-0" x 1 1/2"
2	2'-8" x 6'-6" x 1 1/2"
3	5'-4" x 7'-5" x 1 1/2"
4	3'-0" x 7'-4" x 1 1/2"
5	5'-6" x 7'-4" x 1 1/2"
6	5'-0" x 6'-1" x 1 1/2"
7	2'-8" x 6'-2" x 1 1/2"
8	2'-0" x 6'-11" x 1 1/2"
9	5'-3" x 6'-0" x 1 1/2"
10	5'-0" x 6'-0" x 1 1/2"
11	5'-0" x 6'-0" x 1 1/2"
12	5'-0" x 6'-0" x 1 1/2"

FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR

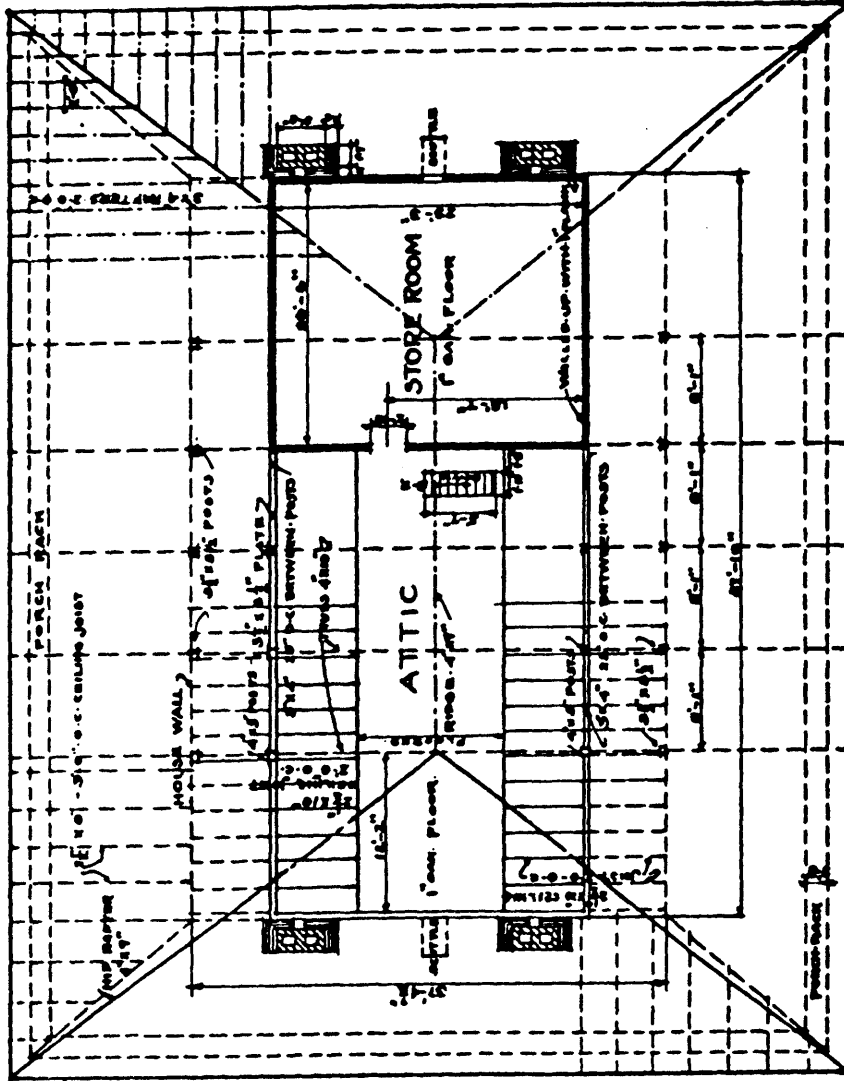
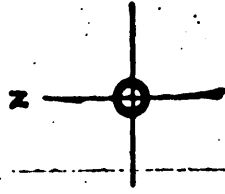


- LEGEND
- BRICK
 - CUT STONE
 - WOOD

SAMUEL C. WARE - DEL.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN





ATTIC AND ROOF PLAN

LEGEND

BRICK

WOOD

HARRY J. FRANK-DEL.

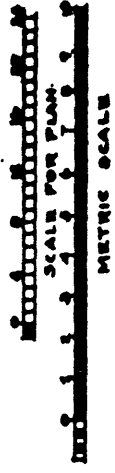
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF MINERAL, FOREST, AND RECREATION
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

NAME OF STRUCTURE
THE JACKSON HOME
FLORENCE - LAUDERDALE COUNTY-ALABAMA

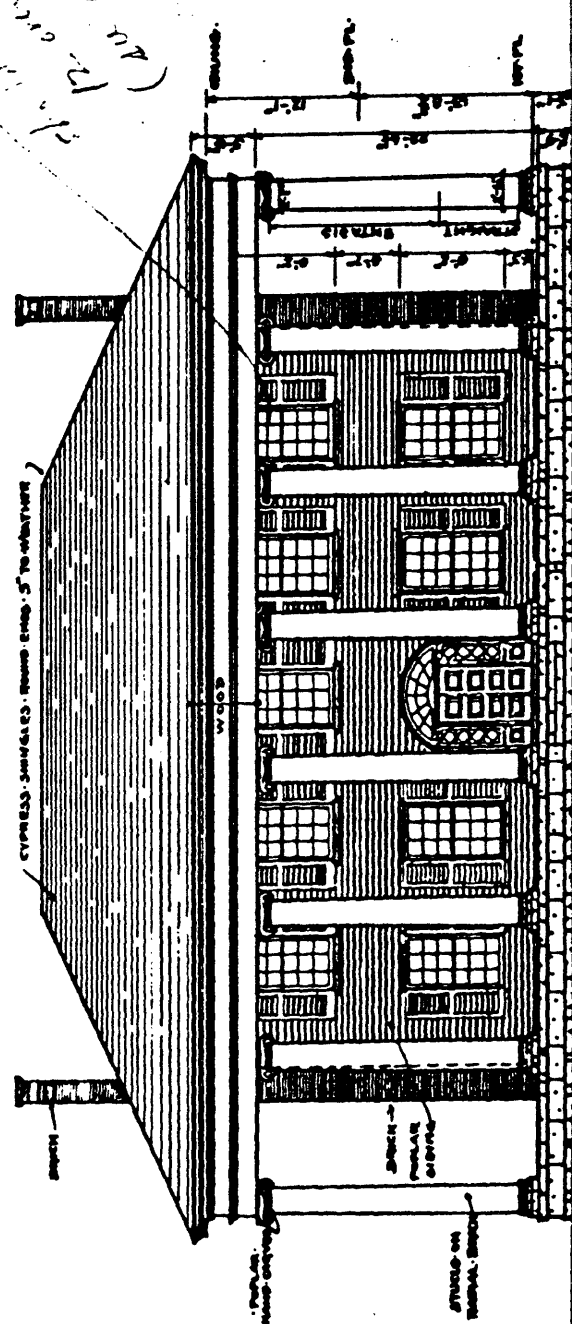


SHEET NO.
ALA
378

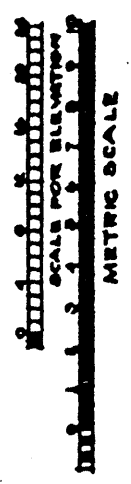
HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
MAY 8, 1938



*(See plan sheet 10)
 (See plan sheet 11)
 (See plan sheet 12)*



SOUTH ELEVATION



LEGEND

-  METAL
-  CUT STONE

HARRY J. FRANK DEL.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND RESTORATIONS
 BRANCH OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

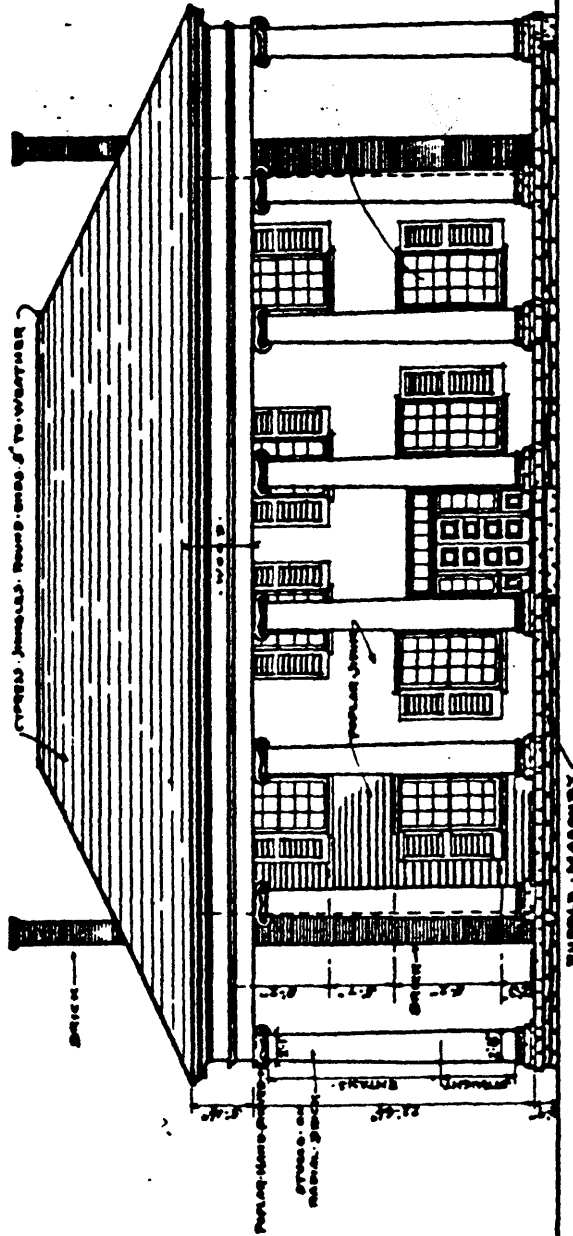
PROPERTY NO.

ALA
 878

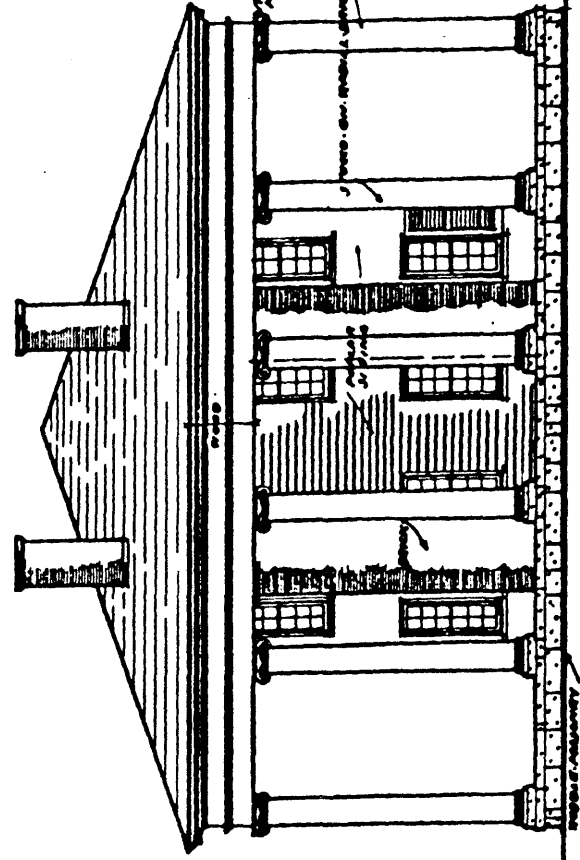


HISTORIC AMERICAN
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 UNIT 5 OF 20

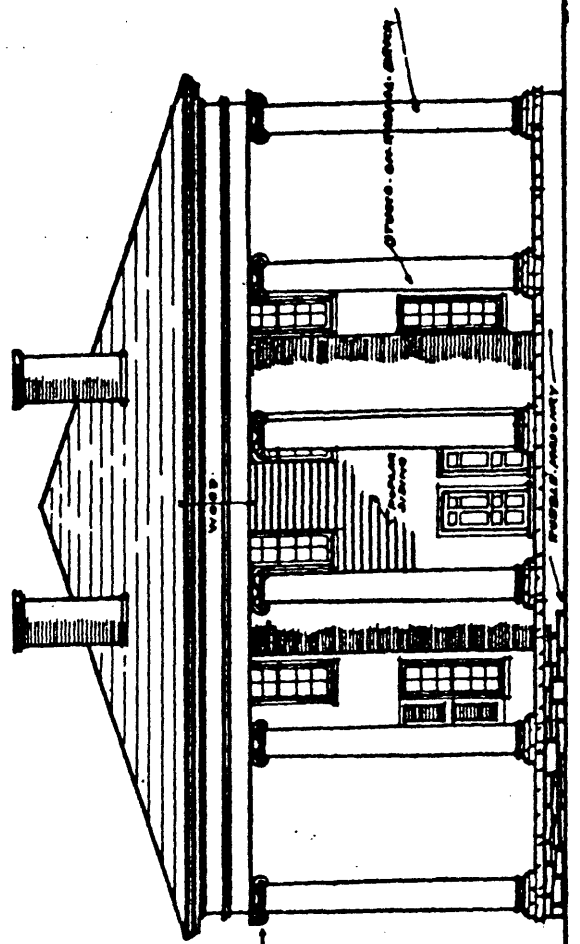
THE JACKSON HOME
 FLORENCE - LAUDERDALE COUNTY - ALABAMA



NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

LEGEND

METAL

CUT STONE

HARRY J. FRANK, DEL.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF MATERIALS, CIVIL ENGINEERING AND SURVEYING

NAME OF STRUCTURE
THE JACKSON HOME.

PROPERTY NO.
A.T.A.

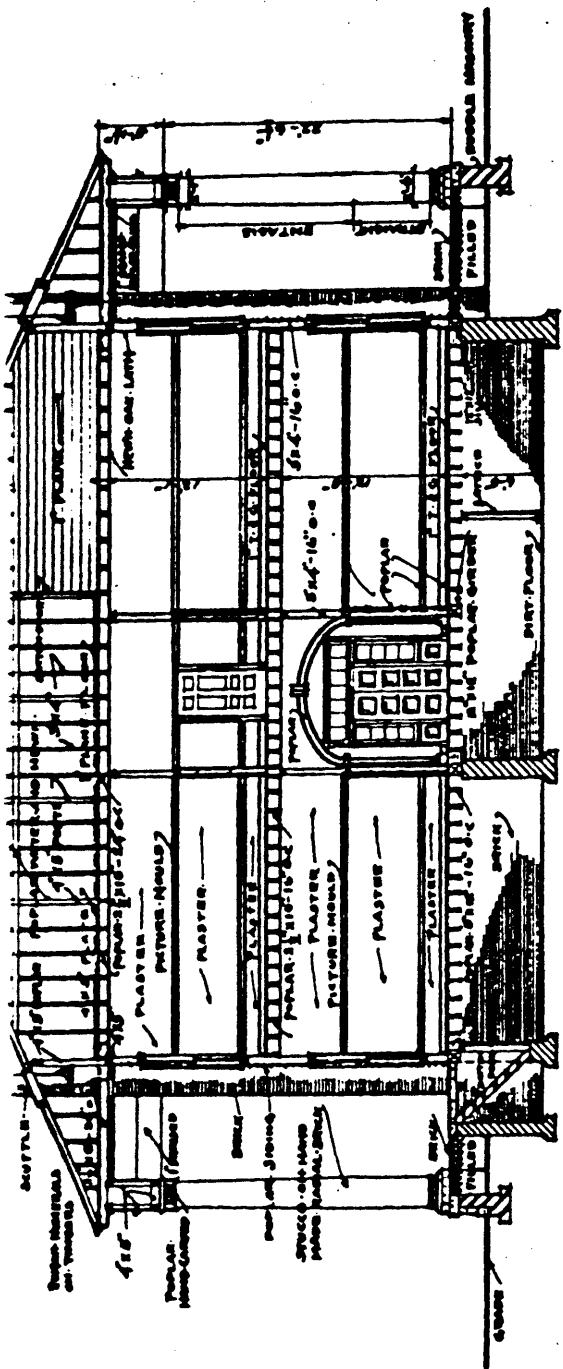
HISTORIC AMERICAN
ARCHITECTURE SURVEY

PLATE 12

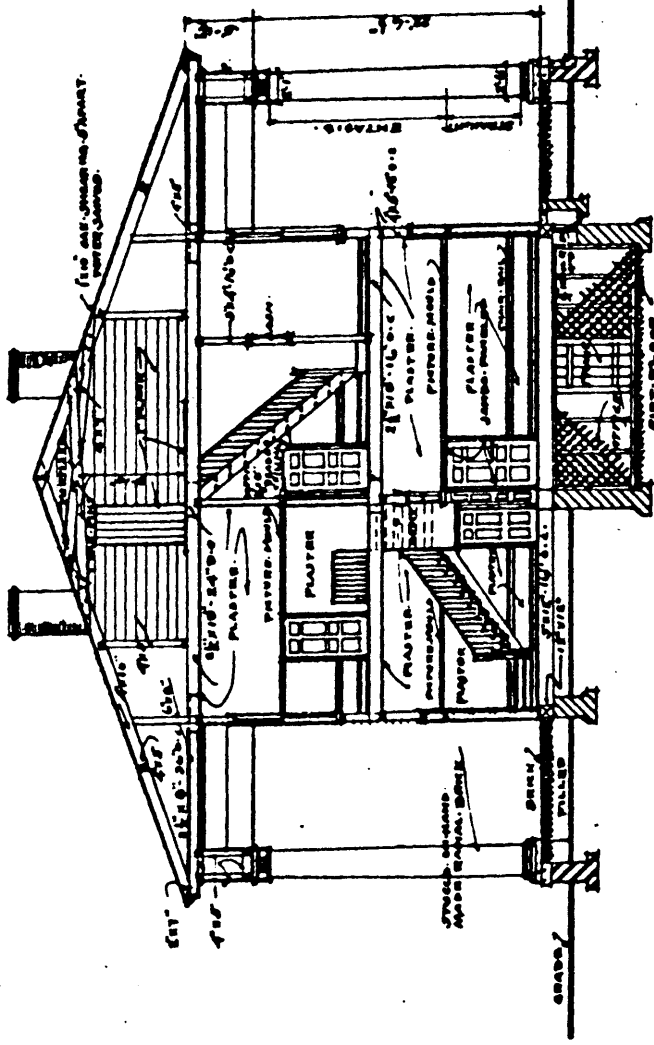
SCALE FOR ELEVATIONS



METRIC SCALE.

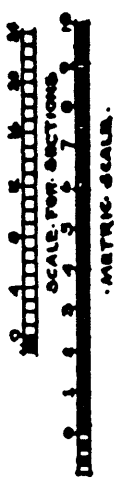


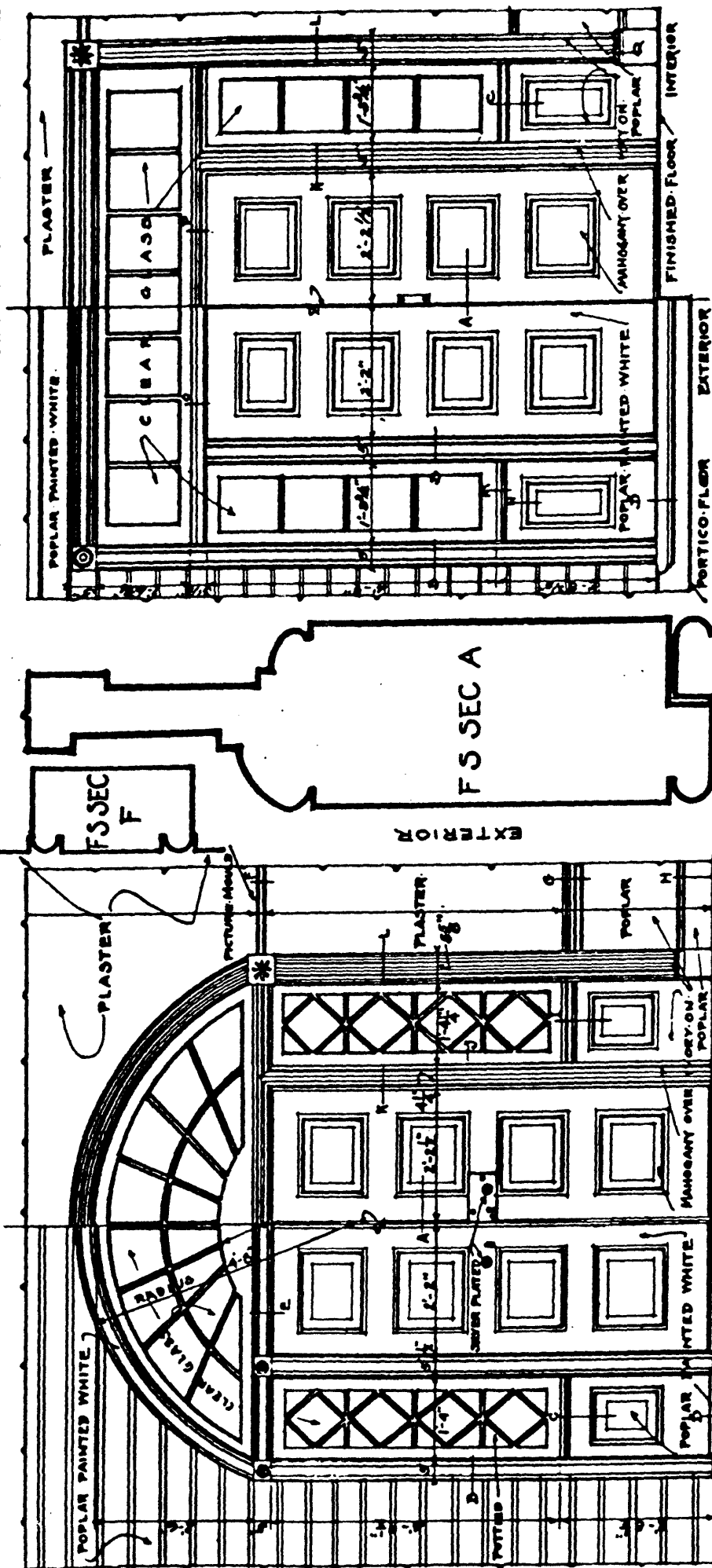
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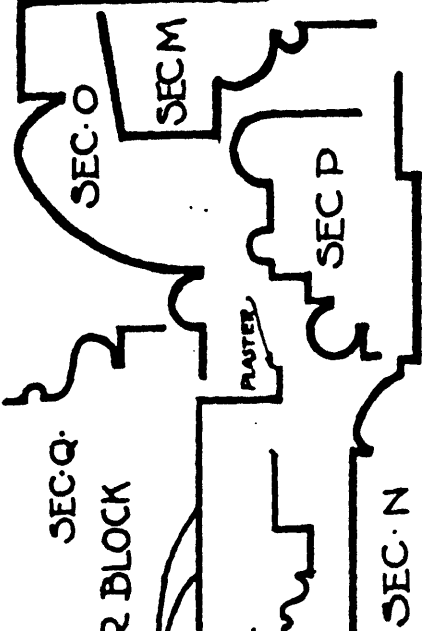
CROSS SECTION

LEGEND
 BRICK
 CUT-STONE
 STONE MASONRY
 HARRY J. FRAMM, DEL.





REAR ENTRANCE



SEC. Q

F S SEC CORNER BLOCK



F S SEC L

SEC. P

SEC. N

F S SEC K

F S SEC C

F S SEC G

F S SEC B & E

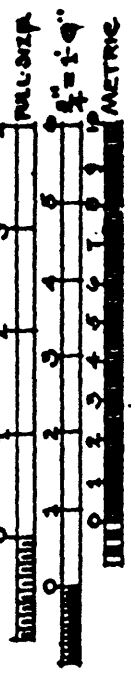
F S SEC D

F S SEC J

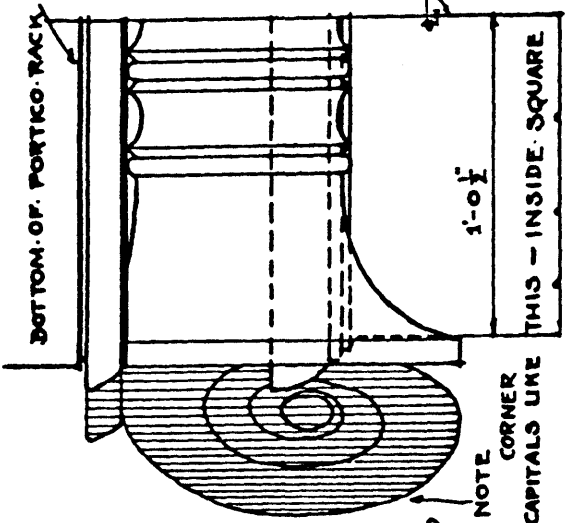
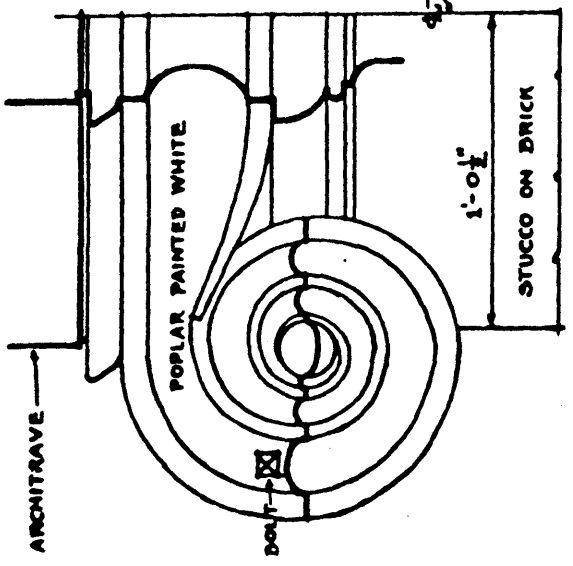
F S SEC H

F S SEC I

SECTION



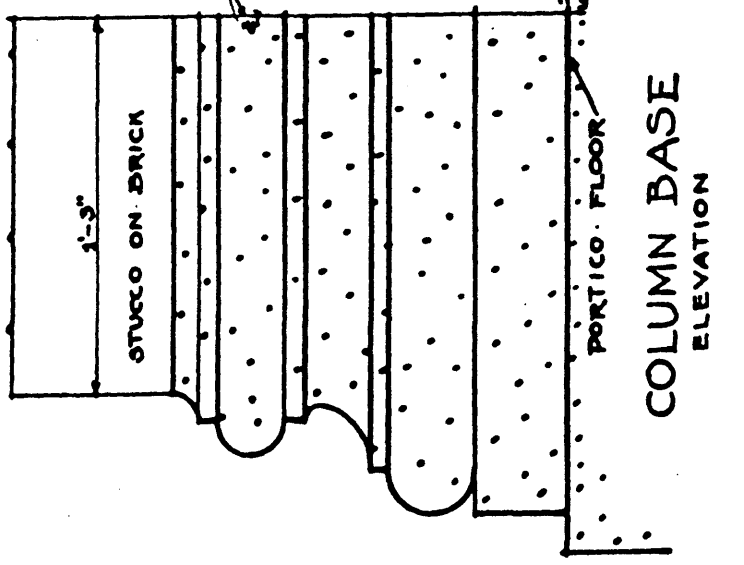
HARRY J. FRAHN - DEL.
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 65-1715
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



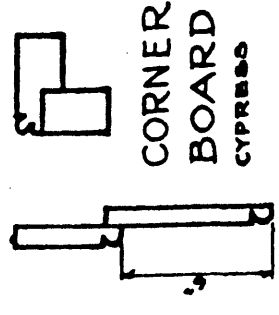
NOTE
CORNER
CAPITALS USE

COLUMN CAPITAL

**KITCHEN & DINING R'M
DOOR CASING**

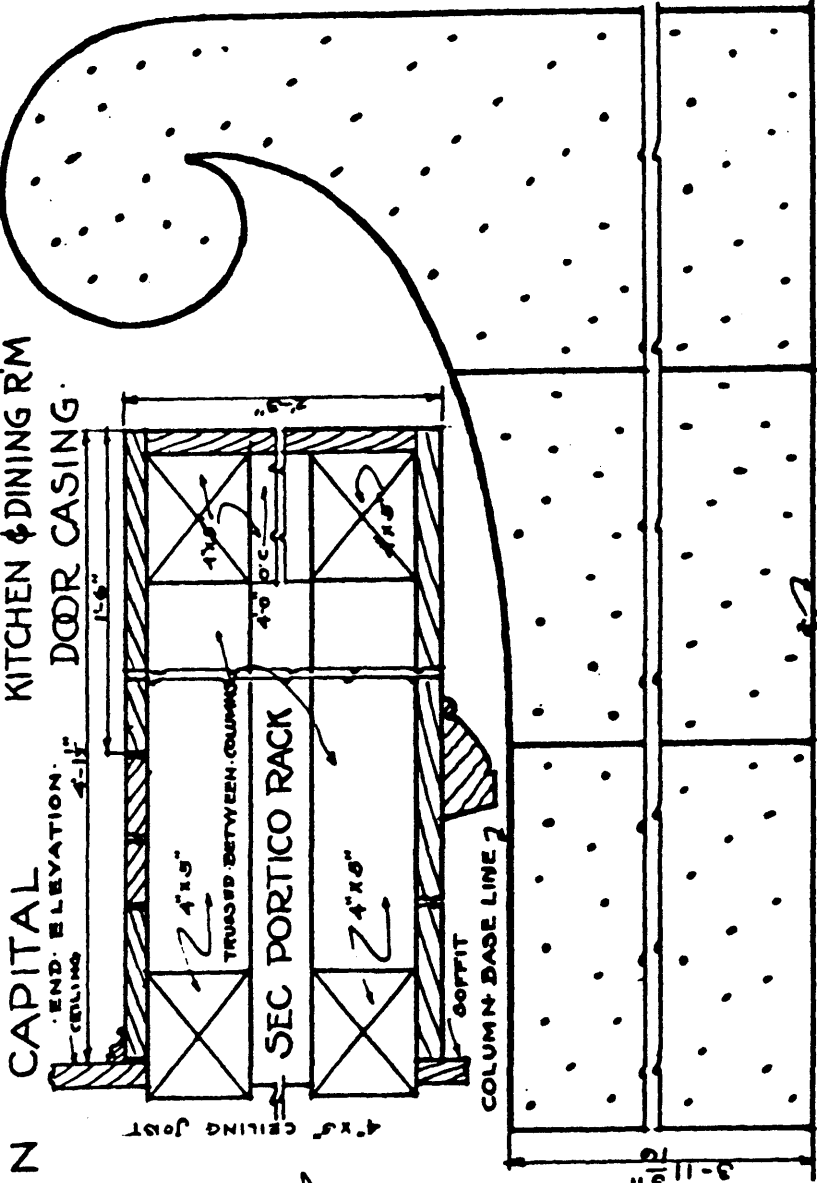
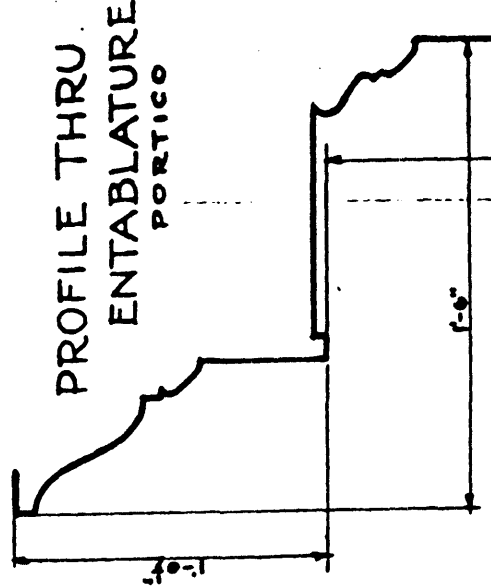


**COLUMN BASE
ELEVATION**



**SIDING
POPLAR**

EXTERIOR
MITRED AT TOP SIDING



**FRONT STEPS
PLAN**



3 INCHES = 1 FOOT
METRIC SCALE

LEGEND

[Symbol] CUT STONE

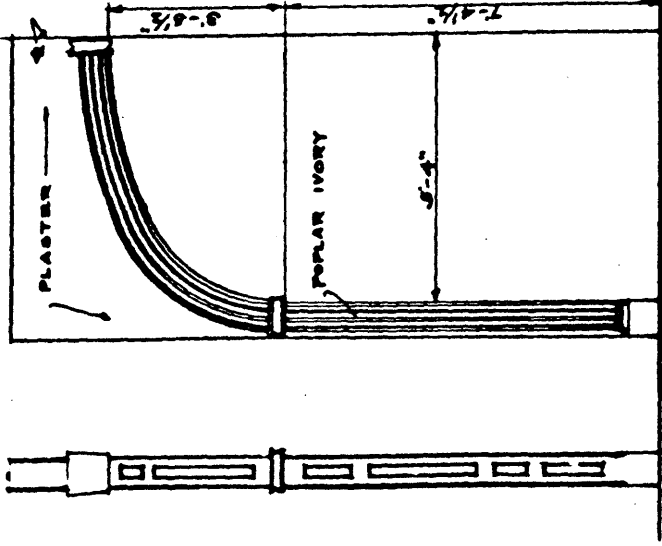
MARRY J. FRAMM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 68-1719

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

TYPE T A 272 2 1/2 V. 1000

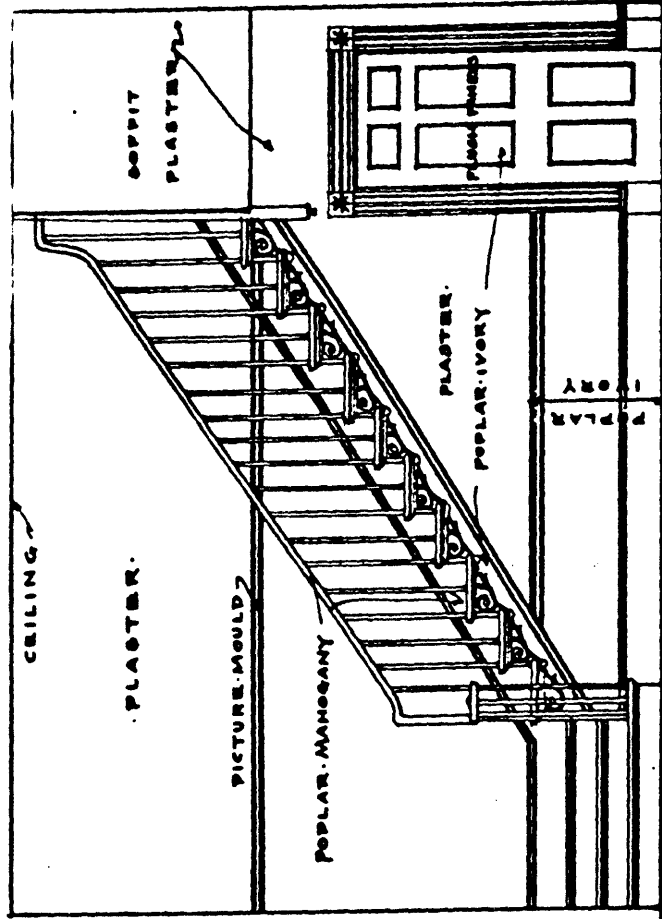
WORKING DRAWING NO.

SHEET NO.



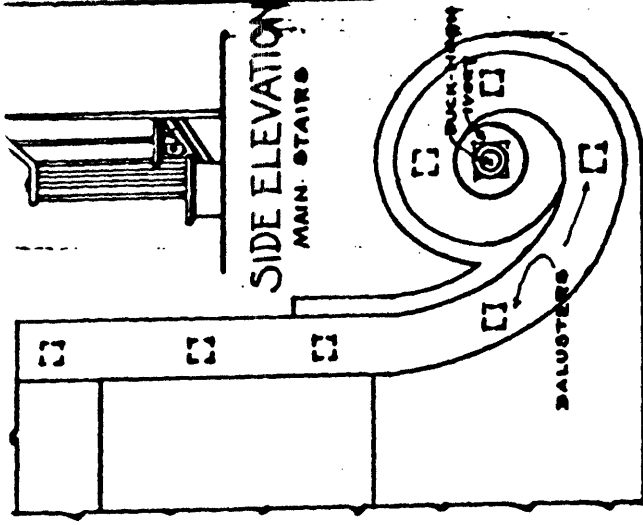
JAMB · ELEVATION ·

· ARCH · ENTRANCE · HALL ·

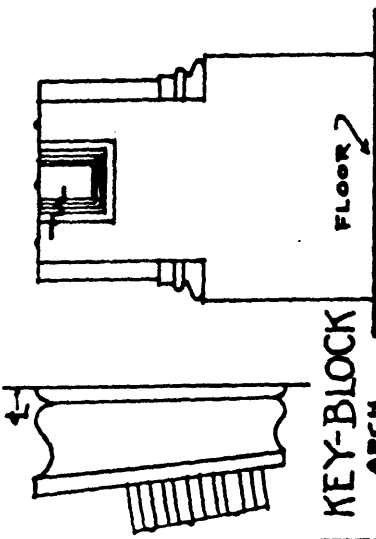


ELEVATION

DETAIL & MAIN STAIRS



· SIDE ELEVATION · MAIN STAIRS ·
· BALUSTERS ·
· -DETAIL · PLAN & FIRST TREAD · MAIN STAIRS ·

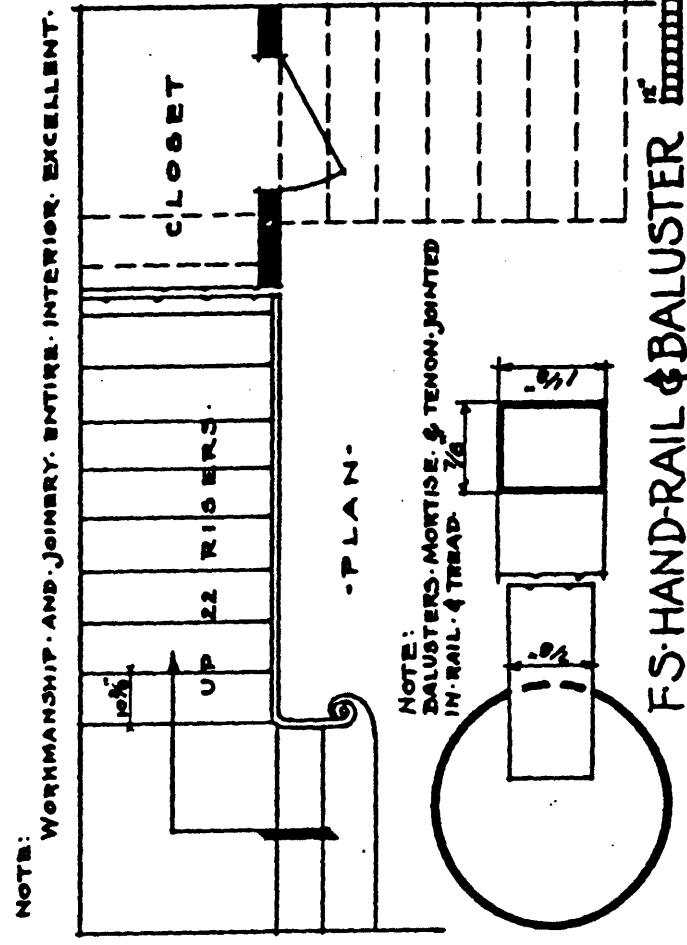


KEY · BLOCK · ARCH

JAMB AT BASE



FRONT · SPRING · BLOCK · JAMB



NOTE: WORKMANSHIP · AND · JOINERY · ENTIRE · INTERIOR · EXCELLENT ·

· PLAN ·

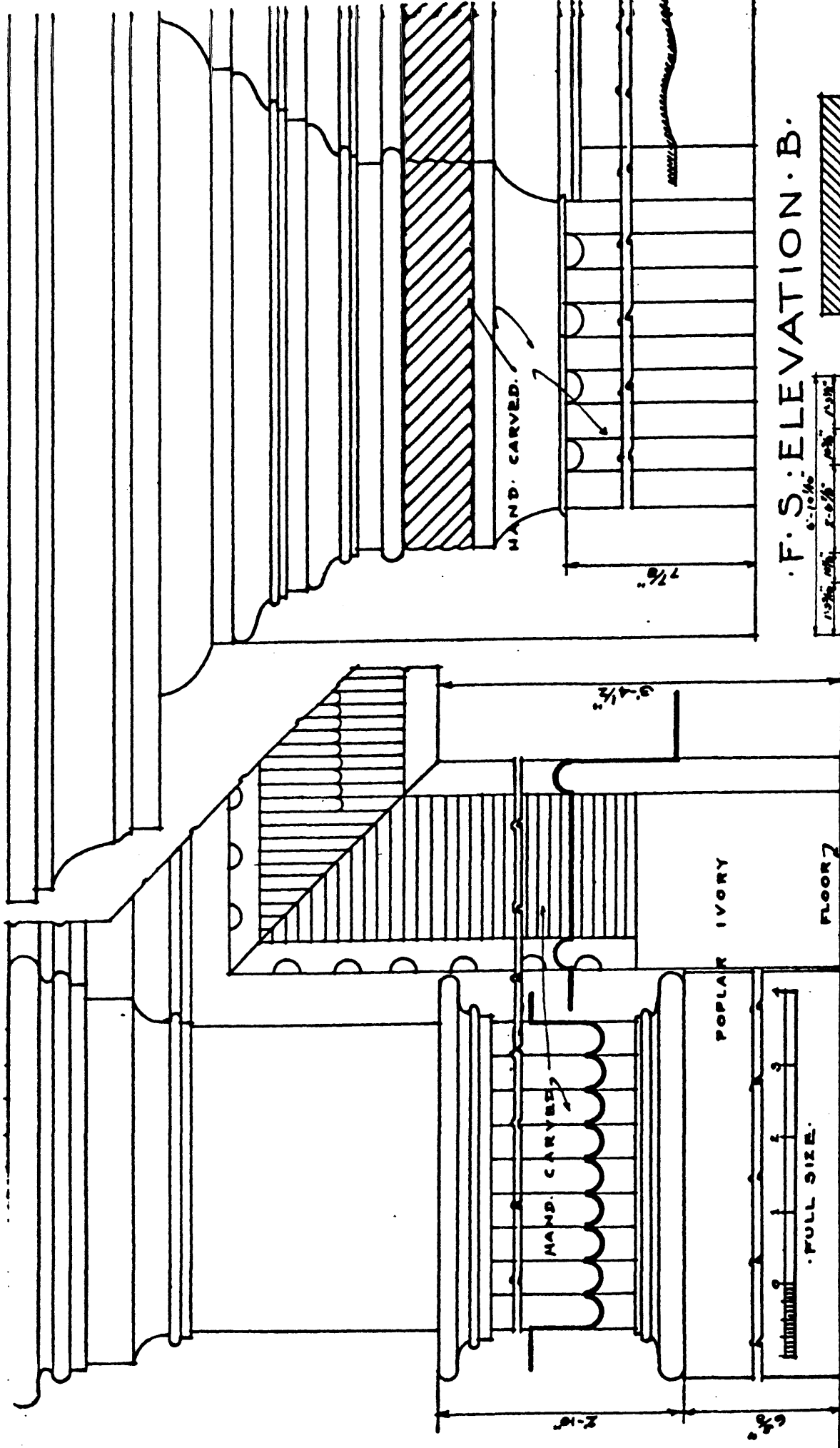
NOTE: BALUSTERS · MORTISE · & · TENON · JOINTED · IN · RAIL · & · TREAD ·

FS · HAND · RAIL · & · BALUSTER

WORLD · PROGRESS · ADMINISTRATION · OFFICIAL · PROJECT · NO. · 66 · - · 1718 · MARY · L · FRANK · U.S. · DEPARTMENT · OF · THE · INTERIOR · OFFICE · OF · NATIONAL · PARKS · BUILDINGS · AND · RESTORATIONS ·

NAME · OF · STRUCTURE · THE · JACKSON · HOME · FLORENCE · - · LAUDERDALE · COUNTY · - · ALABAMA ·

DESIGNED · BY · ALA · 376 · HISTORIC · AMERICAN · BUILDINGS · SURVEY · UNIT · 18 · OF · 19 ·



F.S. ELEVATION - A.

F.S. ELEVATION - B.

HARRY J. FRAHN
 ARCHT.
 1110 N. 10TH ST.
 DENVER, CO.

HARRY J. FRAHN
 ARCHT.
 1110 N. 10TH ST.
 DENVER, CO.

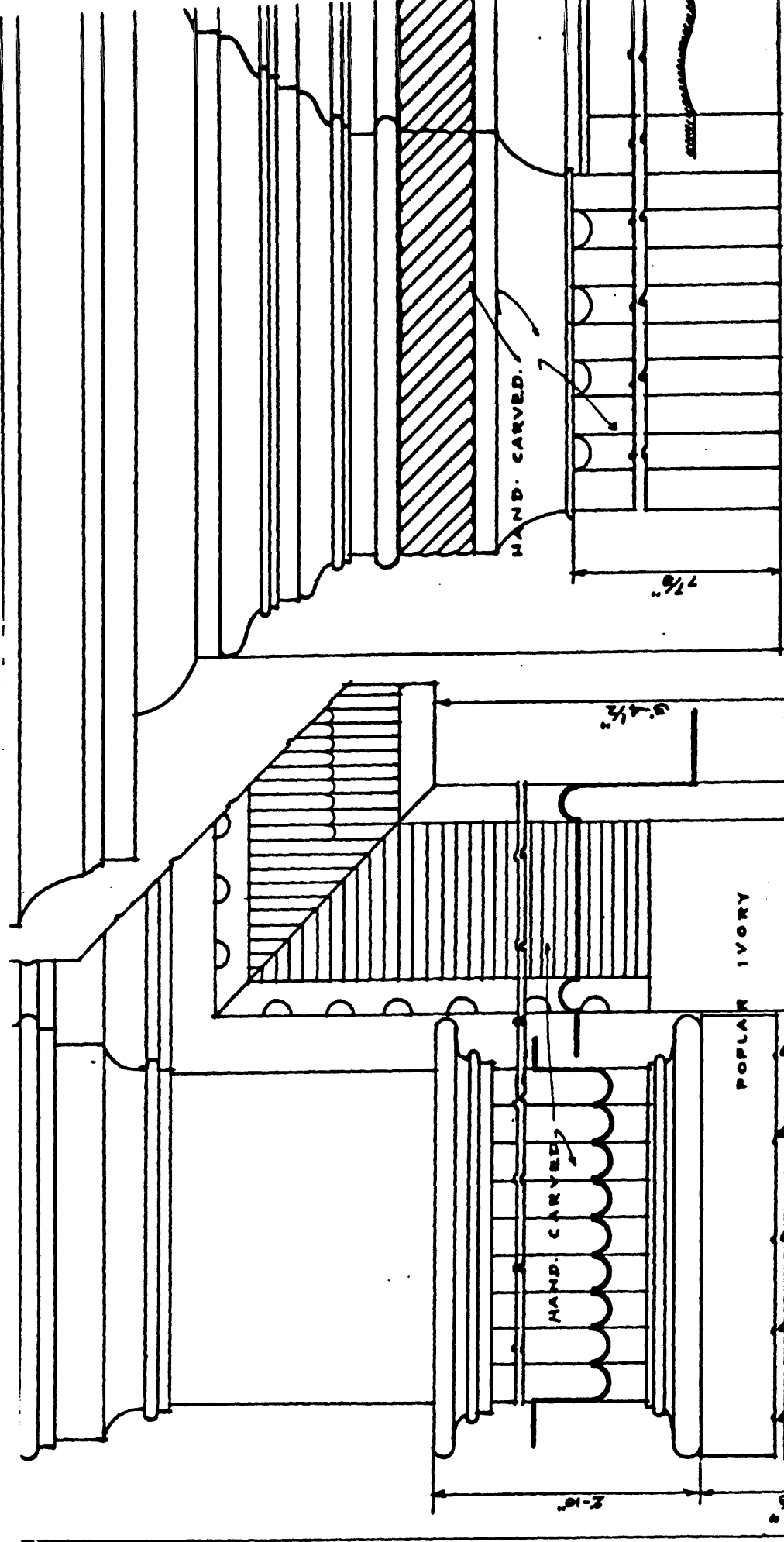
HARRY J. FRAHN
 ARCHT.
 1110 N. 10TH ST.
 DENVER, CO.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS, BUILDINGS, AND MONUMENTS
 WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 65-1718

HARRY J. FRAHN
 ARCHT.
 1110 N. 10TH ST.
 DENVER, CO.

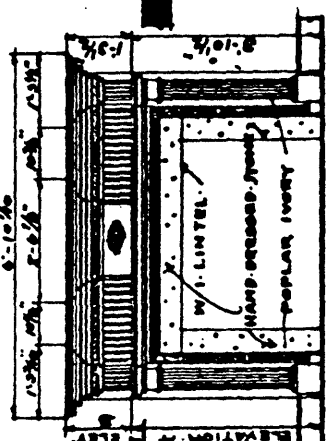
THE JACKSON HOME
 PARLOR-MANTEL

METRIC
 3" = 1'-0"
 HISTORIC AMERICAN
 BUILDINGS SURVEY



F.S. ELEVATION - B.

F.S. ELEVATION - A.

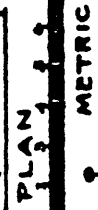


HARRY J. FRAHN
 ARCHITECT
 1000 BROADWAY
 NEW YORK, N. Y.

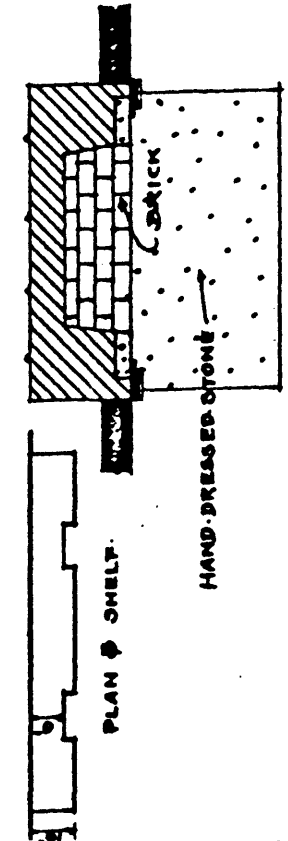
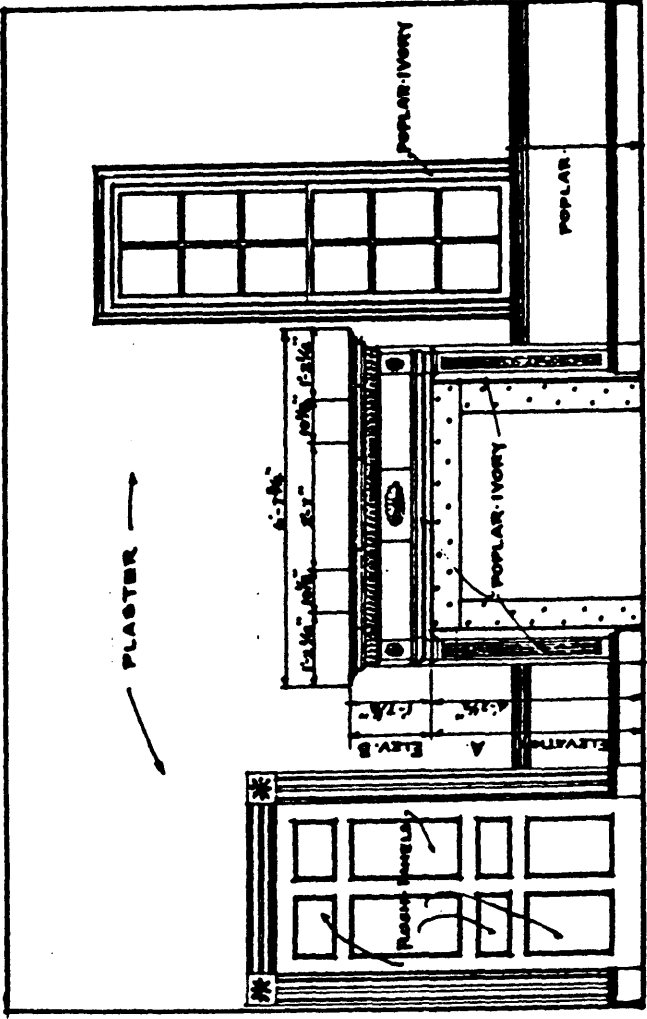
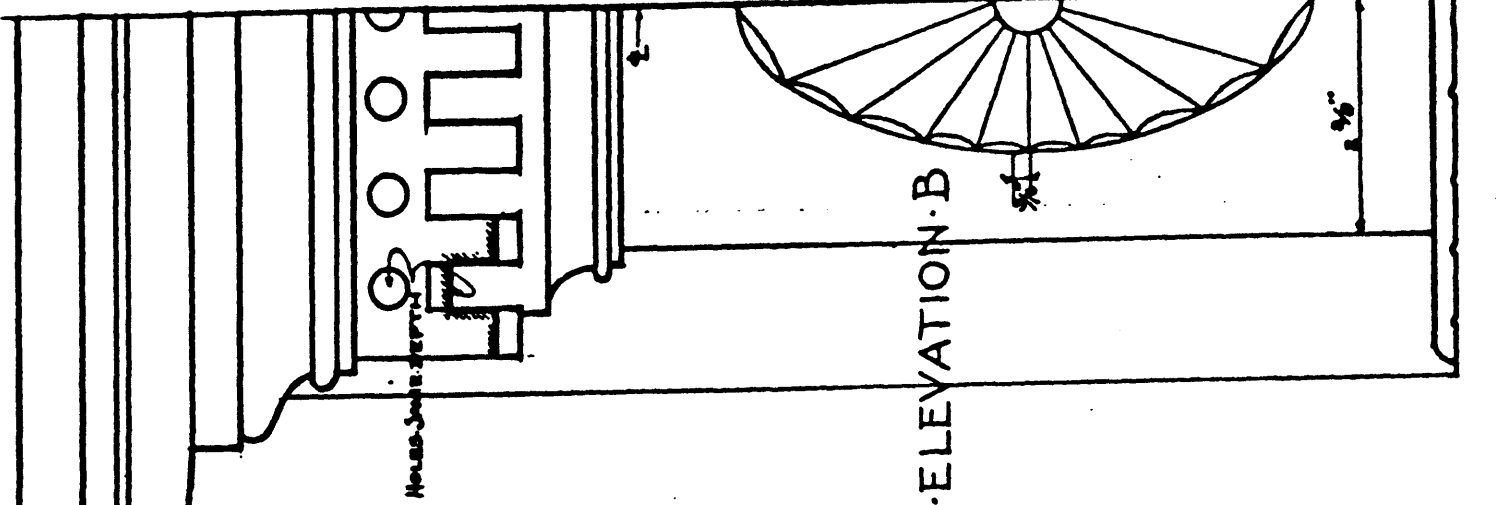
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 U. S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
 WASHINGTON, D. C.

F. S. P. A. S. E.

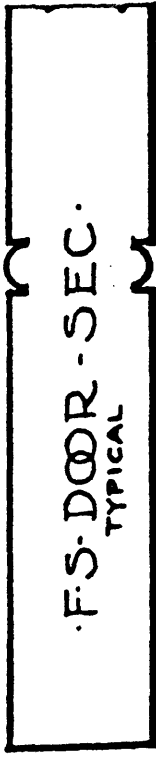
PARIOR MANTLE



METRIC
 1 1/2 1 3/4 2 2 1/4 3 3 1/4 4 4 1/4 5 5 1/4 6 6 1/4 7 7 1/4 8 8 1/4 9 9 1/4 10 10 1/4 11 11 1/4 12 12 1/4 13 13 1/4 14 14 1/4 15 15 1/4 16 16 1/4 17 17 1/4 18 18 1/4 19 19 1/4 20 20 1/4 21 21 1/4 22 22 1/4 23 23 1/4 24 24 1/4 25 25 1/4 26 26 1/4 27 27 1/4 28 28 1/4 29 29 1/4 30 30 1/4 31 31 1/4 32 32 1/4 33 33 1/4 34 34 1/4 35 35 1/4 36 36 1/4 37 37 1/4 38 38 1/4 39 39 1/4 40 40 1/4 41 41 1/4 42 42 1/4 43 43 1/4 44 44 1/4 45 45 1/4 46 46 1/4 47 47 1/4 48 48 1/4 49 49 1/4 50 50 1/4 51 51 1/4 52 52 1/4 53 53 1/4 54 54 1/4 55 55 1/4 56 56 1/4 57 57 1/4 58 58 1/4 59 59 1/4 60 60 1/4 61 61 1/4 62 62 1/4 63 63 1/4 64 64 1/4 65 65 1/4 66 66 1/4 67 67 1/4 68 68 1/4 69 69 1/4 70 70 1/4 71 71 1/4 72 72 1/4 73 73 1/4 74 74 1/4 75 75 1/4 76 76 1/4 77 77 1/4 78 78 1/4 79 79 1/4 80 80 1/4 81 81 1/4 82 82 1/4 83 83 1/4 84 84 1/4 85 85 1/4 86 86 1/4 87 87 1/4 88 88 1/4 89 89 1/4 90 90 1/4 91 91 1/4 92 92 1/4 93 93 1/4 94 94 1/4 95 95 1/4 96 96 1/4 97 97 1/4 98 98 1/4 99 99 1/4 100 100 1/4



EAST ELEVATION & DINING ROOM

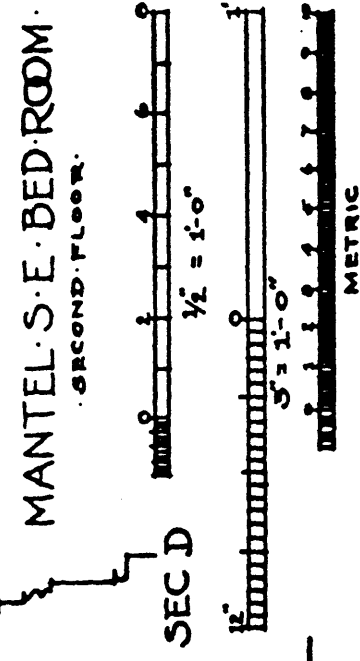
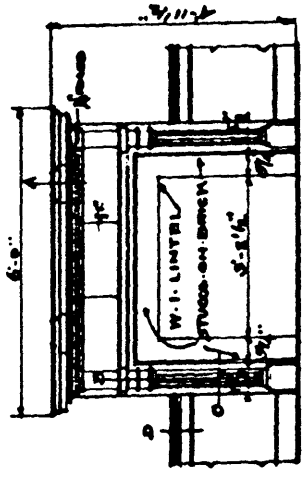
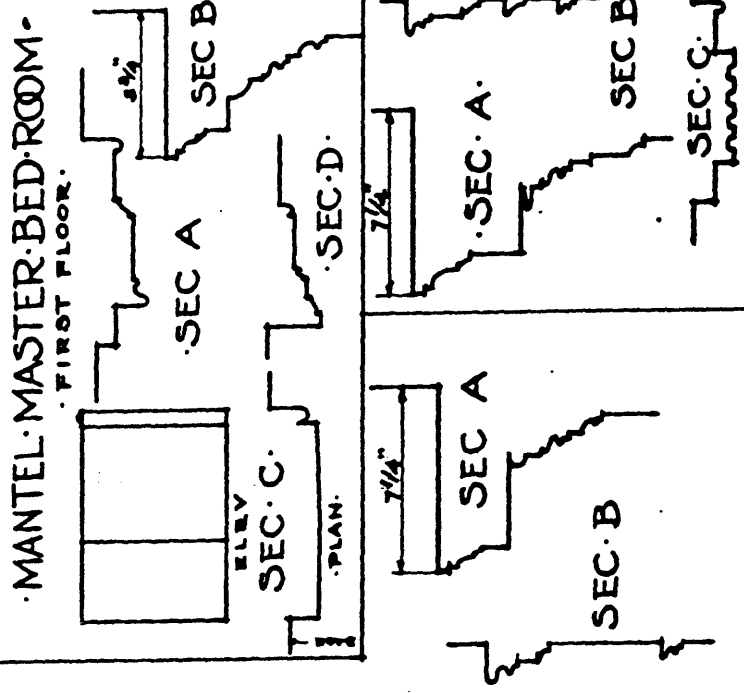
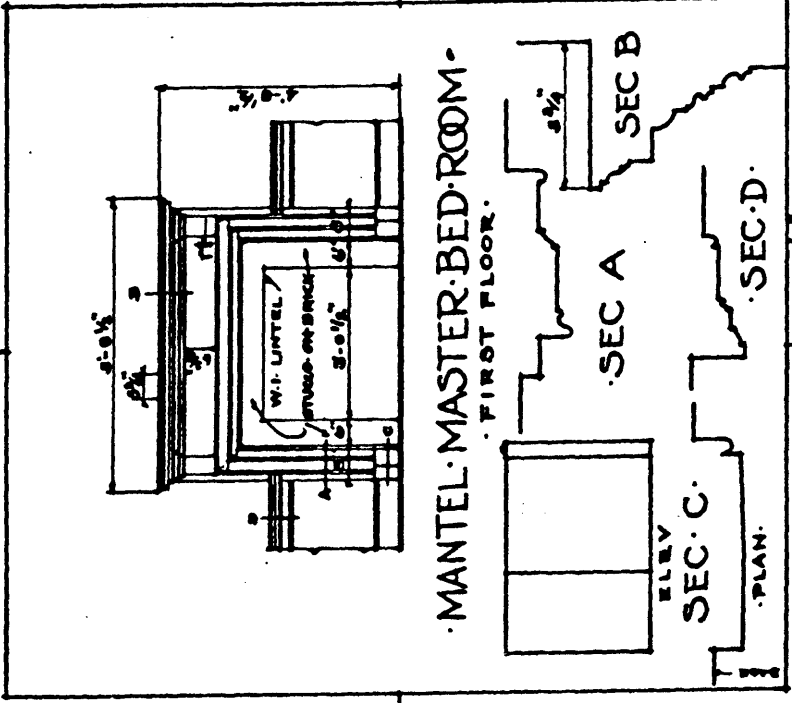
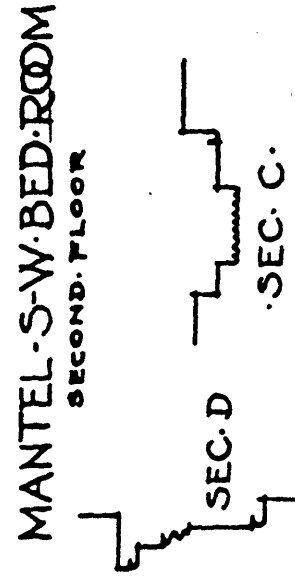
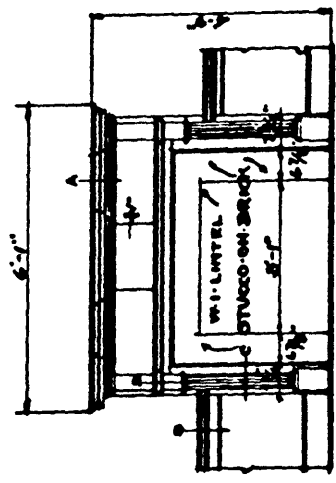
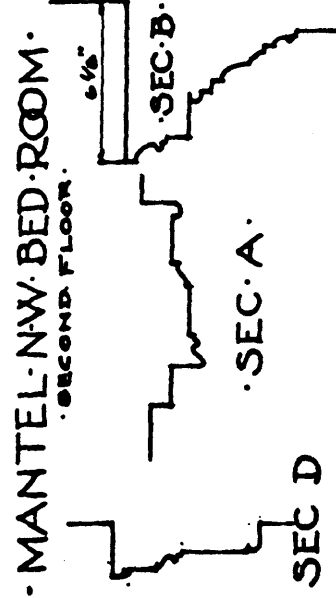
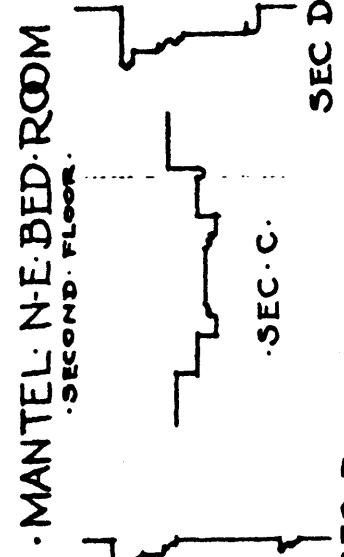
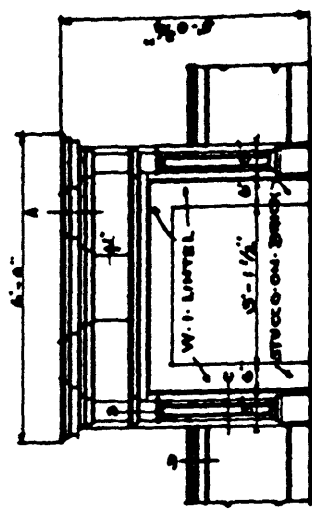
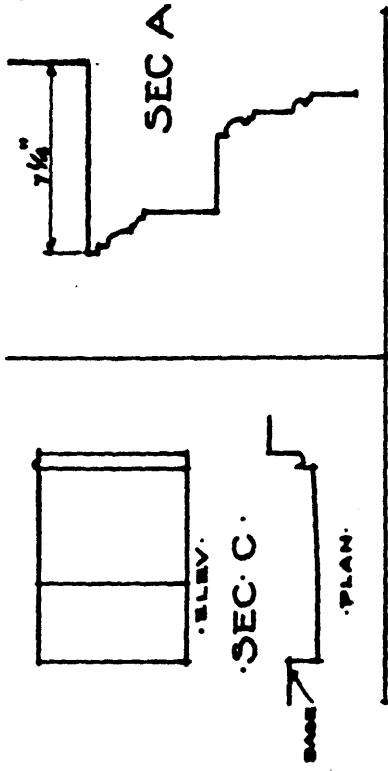


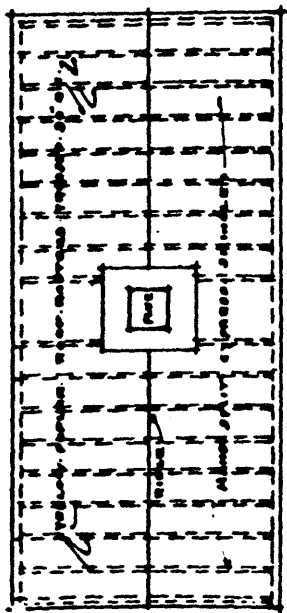
F.S. ELEVATION - A

- LEGEND
- BRICK
 - WOOD
 - CUT STONE

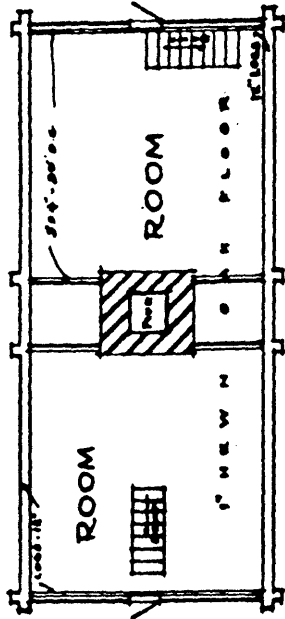
HARRY J. FRAHN

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
 OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 02-1718
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

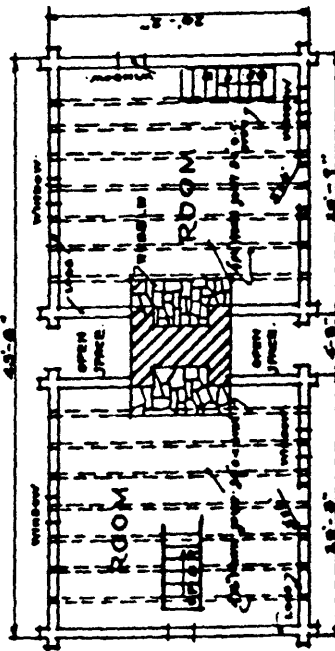




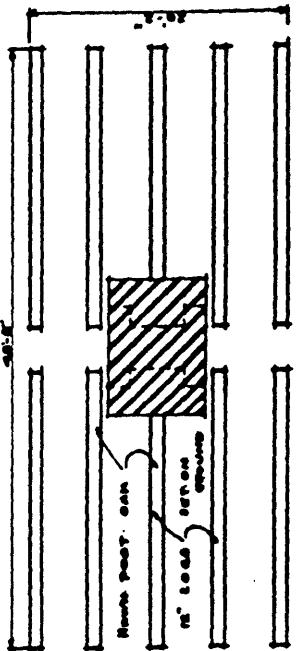
ROOF PLAN



ATTIC FLOOR



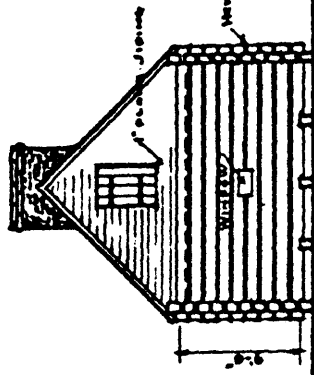
FLOOR PLAN



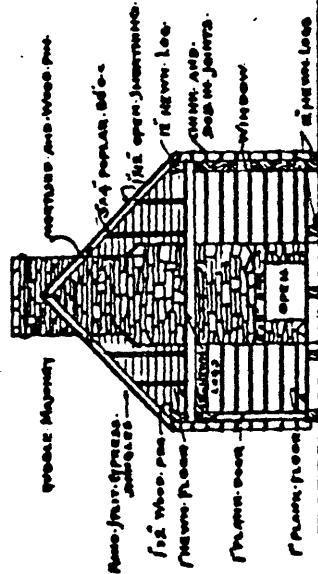
FOUNDATION PLAN

LEGEND
 RUBBLE MASONRY
 WORKED BRICK
 OFFICIAL PROJECT NO. 68-175

HARRY J. FRAHN

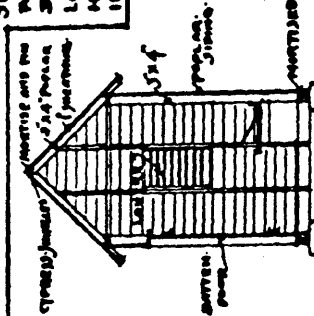


NORTH-WEST ELEVATION
 - SOUTH-EAST ELEVATION, SIMILAR.



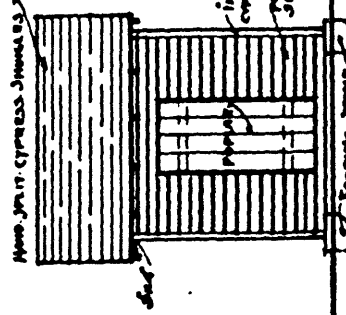
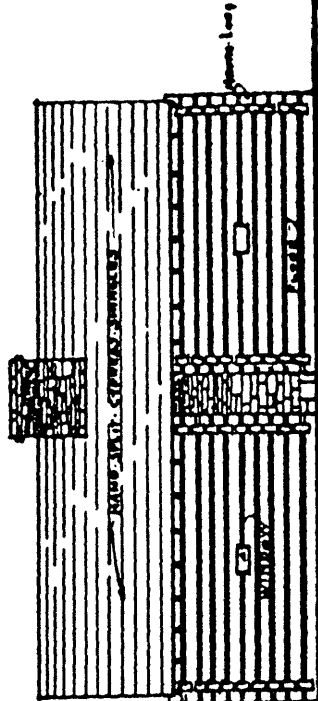
NOTE 1

CROSS SECTION: ORIGINAL CHINA AND DOB - CHINE AND MUD. SPLIT RAILS AND SAMP PARTS HAND-BURN'T BRICK - DISCERNABLE. LOBB - MAIN BODY OF HOUSE 8" x 16" HEAVY IRREGULAR AND CRUDE.

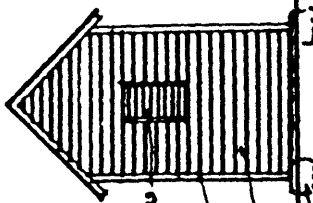


CROSS SECTION

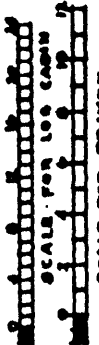
NORTH-EAST ELEVATION



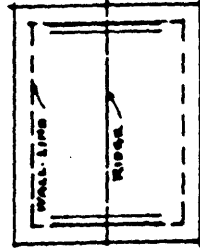
FRONT



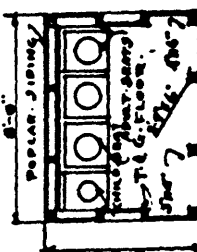
SIDE



METRIC SCALE



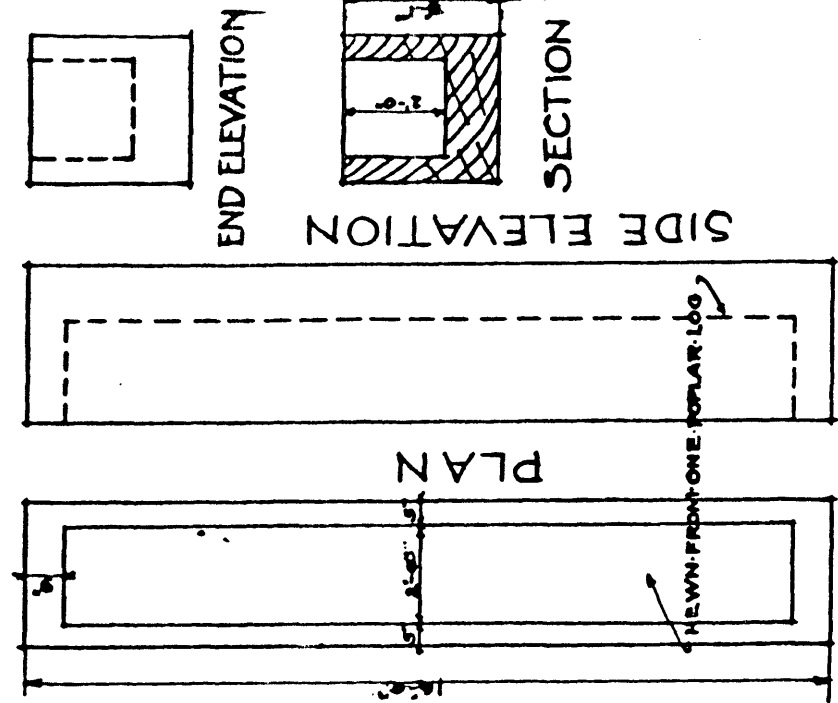
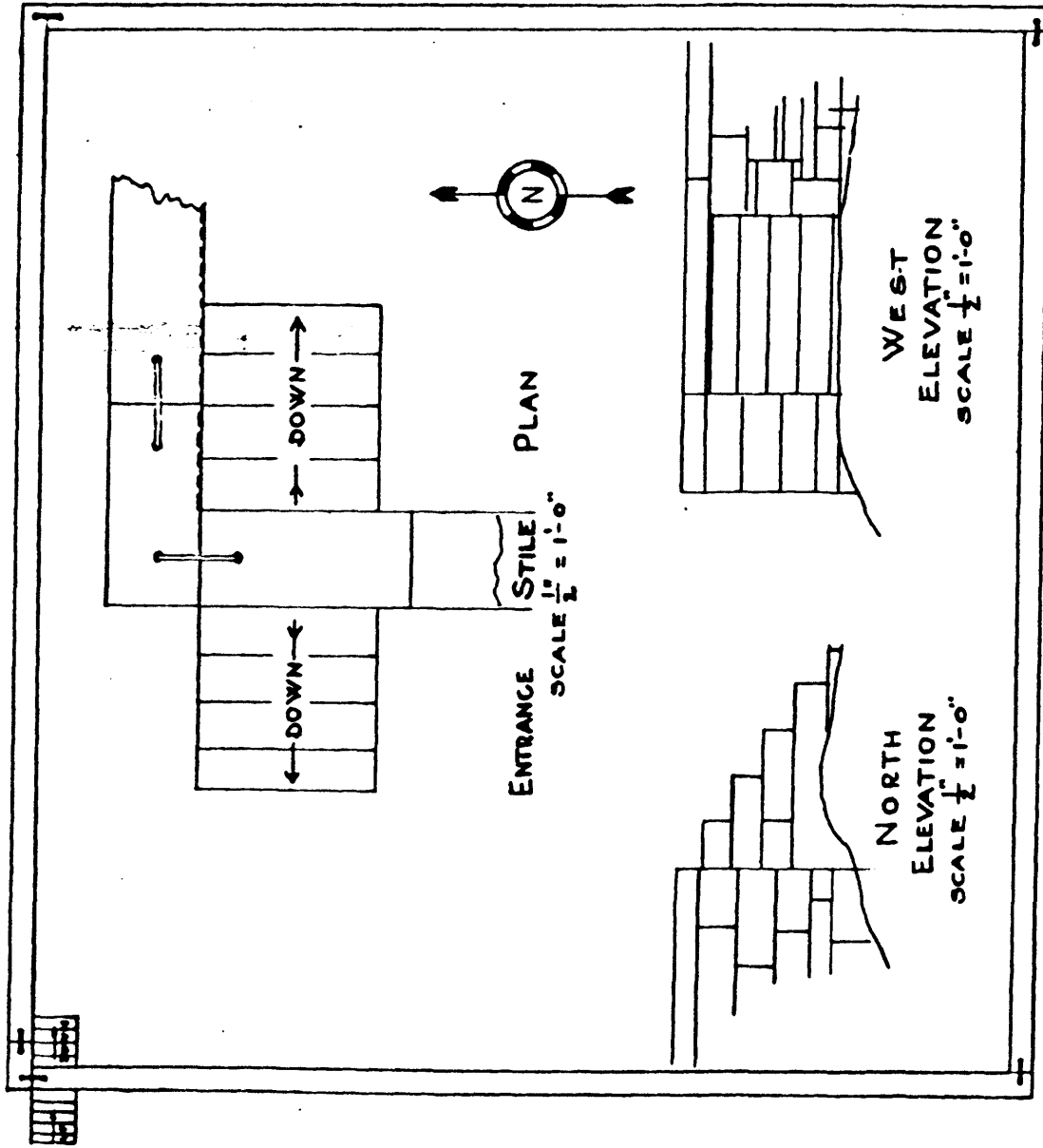
ROOF PLAN



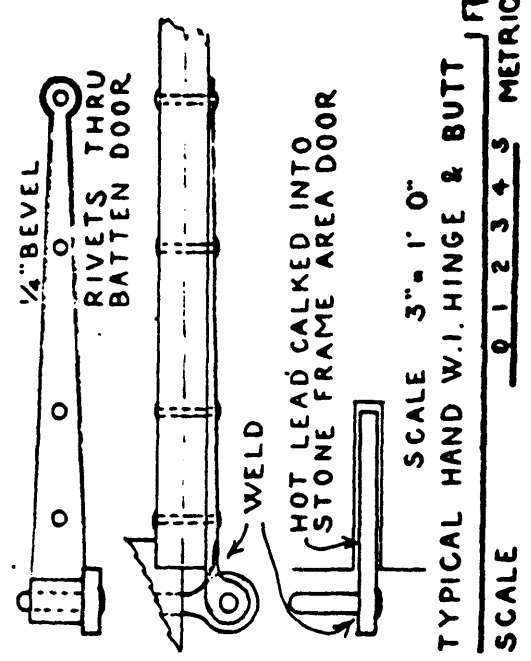
FLOOR PLAN



FOUNDATION PLAN



SORGHUM TROUGH
SCALE $\frac{1}{2}'' = 1'-0''$



CEMETERY SCALE $\frac{1}{8}'' = 1'-0''$

ABOUT EIGHTY GRAVES, MARKERS DATING TO 1819. CAREFULLY CUT NATIVE LIMESTONE COPING ON RUBBLE WALL SURROUNDING ALL CORNERS SECURED WITH W.I. ANCHORS $\frac{1}{2}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ SET FLUSH AND LEADED. STONE SET IN CEMENT MADE ON PREMISES INDICATED BY CHARCOAL STILL FOUND IN MORTAR.