

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

RECEIVED MAR 11 1992

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 Ross, L.W., House other names/site number SP-T-50

2. Location

street & number North side of Highway 44 just east of Taylorsville city, town Taylorsville state Kentucky code KY county Spencer code 215 zip code 40071

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 (0), Total (1). Name of related multiple property listing: NA. 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 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: David L. Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer, Kentucky Heritage Council. Date: 2-25-92.

In my opinion, the property meets (unchecked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official: 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 (unchecked), determined not eligible for the National Register (unchecked), removed from the National Register (unchecked), other (unchecked). Entered in the National Register: 4/2/92. Signature of the Keeper: Melorus Byers. Date of Action: 4/2/92.

**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)

LATE VICTORIAN/ Other:

Queen Anne-influenced

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE/ limestone

walls VINYL

WOOD/ decorative shingles

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**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)

ARCHITECTURE  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1896-1900  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

ca. 1896  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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**

Acreeage of property approximately one acre

UTM References

A 

1	6	6	4	5	8	6	0	4	2	1	0	5	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Talorsville, Ky. Quadrangle

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the property is indicated on the accompanying copy of Spencer County Property Identificatin Map T2. It includes all of Lot T2-29-34.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See Section 7, Continuation Sheet 3.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Carolyn Brooks, Historic Preservation Consultant  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date December 10, 1991  
street & number 1288 Bassett Avenue telephone 502 456-2397  
city or town Louisville state Ky. zip code 40204

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

## DESCRIPTION

The L.W. Ross House (SP-T-50) is a large two-story wood-framed house with Queen Anne-influenced styling. It dates from about 1896. The asymmetrically planned house has a hipped roof with gable-roofed extensions, a prominent octagonal corner tower, and a wrap-around front porch. In recent years the house has been clad with vinyl siding, but it still retains most of its original detailing including decorative shingles and bargeboards in the pediment areas of the gable ends. It is located on an acre lot bordering State Highway 44 just to the east of the Taylorsville city limits. The house is perched on a prominent knoll, half way up a ridge that rises at the eastern edge of town. Directly to the east of the house along Highway 44 is a one-story brick commercial building probably dating from the 1960s. A historic stone wall with historic concrete-block gate posts near its east and west ends fronts Highway 44. Both sets of gate posts have historic iron gates. This wall with its gates is counted as a contributing structure in the nomination. The only outbuilding remaining on the property is a small deteriorated wood-framed shed which neither contributes nor detracts from the property. It has not been included in the building count. The nominated property retains integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, associations and feeling. Although integrity of design and feeling have been somewhat compromised by the addition of vinyl siding, the major portion of the original exterior and interior detailing that serves to identify the building's style and date remains in place.

The house sits on a limestone block foundation which in most places has been covered with concrete stucco. The house has an asymmetrical plan with a projecting wing on the front west corner and an octagonal tower at the front south corner capped with a conical roof and a metal finial. Walls, originally clad with weatherboards, are presently covered with vinyl siding of close to the same width as the weatherboards.

Windows are one-over-one double hung sash with plain wood surrounds that have also been sheathed in vinyl. A small stained-glass window on the east side lights the stairs. An elliptical window on the second-floor front lights the second-floor stair hall. The front entrance has double doors which are glazed in the upper half.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

The house has a hipped roof with three projecting gable extensions. The front and southeast facing pedimented gable ends are detailed with decorative shingles and sawn-work bargeboards. Two corbelled brick chimneys rise from the center of the house.

A large high shed-roofed porch with a wood deck and Tuscan columns wraps around the front and a portion of the east side of the house. Prominent concrete steps lead to the front entrance.

Certain areas at the rear of the house may be additions, but this is not entirely clear from examining the house. The sun room and bathroom areas on the east rear corners of both the first and second floors are probably additions or alterations that date to before 1941. The second floor area above the kitchen may also be an early addition. The filled-in porch addition to the rear of the kitchen most certainly has been added and appears to be non-historic.

The first floor interior is laid out with a large stair hall and an adjoining parlor at the front of the house and a dining room, kitchen, small room, bathroom, and sun room to the rear. The second floor has a similar layout with a large front stair hall and four bedrooms, a sun room, and bath. First- and second-floor plans included with the nomination make the room arrangement clear.

On the interior the house is extremely intact with all original stairs, floors, doors, woodwork, and mantels still in place with close to their original finish. None of the wood in the house has ever been painted. The house is elaborately detailed compared to most Taylorsville residences of this period which tend to be extremely plain. Door and window surrounds have reeded moulding and bull's-eye corner blocks. Double pocket doors separate the parlor and dining room and a single pocket door is located between the stair hall and the small room directly behind it. Floors have approximately 3" pine boards. First-floor mantels, located in the parlor and dining room, have decorative appliques, glazed tile surrounds and hearths, and mirrored overmantels. Those in the two bedrooms above these rooms are similar but simpler with less elaborate appliques and no overmantels. The dining room has an historic china cupboard. The stair hall has a half-octagonal bay and a stained-glass window on the first stair landing. The three-quarter-turn open stair has decorative spandrels and newel posts with incised detailing and beaded edges. The kitchen is detailed with vertical board

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Ross, L. W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

wainscoting. A small enclosed quarter-turn stair leads from the kitchen to the rear second-floor room.

The house is prominently sited on a knoll located halfway up the ridge that rises at the eastern edge of Taylorsville. The house is oriented toward the town rather than to the highway that runs along the property's east side. Because it is a landmark building that provides visual closure at the east end of town, it was included in the recent survey of Taylorsville despite its location just outside the city limits. The house is surrounded by lawns that slope down to its front and sides. A few large shade trees are located near the south front corner of the house. A small concrete reflecting pool of undetermined date is located on the front lawn about forty feet from the house. To the rear of the house is one small board-and-batten shed in extremely deteriorated condition. The pool and the shed neither add to nor detract from the property and have not been included in the building count.

A finely laid stone wall runs along the edge of the property on its east side where it abuts State Highway 44. Square entrance gates constructed of historic rough-cut concrete block are located at the southwest corner of the property and at the east side of the house. Those near the house have historic metal gates. At one time the property no doubt had a carriage drive accessed by the two sets of gates that looped around the property in some manner. A third small entrance to the property located between the two large gates has been closed off and the stone wall filled in. This appears to have been a foot path that led to the front entrance. The wall and gates are an important landscaping feature that has been counted as one contributing structure.

## Boundary Justification

A small collection of historic residences dating from c. 1880 to 1939 is located to the southwest of the house along Main Street. Although historic, these houses were determined to be ineligible for district status because as a group they do not reflect a coherent theme.

The approximately one-acre site presently associated with the L.W. Ross House has been included in the nomination. The acreage is important to document the historic setting of the house which included a sweep of lawn down to the historic wall along the property's edge. An additional three-plus acre area to the

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

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

Section number 7 Page 4

Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

---

northeast of the house that was once associated with it has been sold off and now contains a non-historic brick commercial building and several non-historic houses.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The L.W. Ross House (SP-T-50) is significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture. It has been evaluated within the context **Domestic Architecture in Taylorsville, 1800 - 1941**, a context that was created as part of a comprehensive survey of Taylorsville prepared earlier this year. The Ross House is Taylorsville's most substantial and elaborate late 19th century house and is the only example of a house in the community strongly influenced by the nationally popular Queen Anne style. Only one other house of similar date, scale, and styling is known to exist in Spencer County (SP-T-89) just to the west of Taylorsville. A survey of Spencer County currently being prepared will determine its eligibility for the Register.

The house, with its hipped roof with gable extensions, corner tower, decorative shingle work, wrap-around porch, and large entrance hall with a prominent half-turn stair, is identified in the **Domestic Architecture** context as the only example of Queen Anne-influenced styling in Taylorsville. It stands apart from the more typical two-story T-plan houses which were the dominant house form for the more substantial houses built in the town from about 1870 to 1915. Both its exterior and interior detailing is more extensive than in any other Turn-of-the-Century house in Taylorsville. It is viewed as important as the best example in Taylorsville of a stylish Turn-of-the-Century house that acknowledged a nationally prominent residential building style.

The L.W. Ross House has been determined eligible for individual listing in the National Register despite the overlay of its vinyl replacement siding. It is felt that the siding does not seriously impact the integrity of location, setting, design, workmanship, and association that are so strong in what is otherwise an extremely intact and important house. Although the integrity of feeling is somewhat compromised by the use of vinyl, most of the important exterior details that give the house its identity including decorative shingles, bargeboards, its octagonal tower, and the metal finial which caps it are still in place. The siding is applied in a manner that carefully simulates the weatherboards that remain in place beneath it. The interior is almost completely intact. The house still projects a very strong sense of its original design and materials on both the exterior and the interior. Its period of significance dates to 1896 to 1900 the time during which the house is believed to have been constructed.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Ross, L.W.

Section number 8 Page 6

The property on which the Ross House now stands was farm land owned by prominent Taylorsville citizen, Joseph Cox in the late 1800s. The Cox residence, which was demolished about 1940, was located at the foot of the ridge to the west of the Ross House on property now associated with the house at 613 Main Street. Cox died in 1896, and shortly after his widow, Anne B. Cox, began selling off land near their residence.

L. (Lafayette) W. Ross purchased the 1.5 acre tract on which the house sits in May, 1896 for \$150. In March, 1898 he purchased an additional 2.79 acre parcel to the northeast of the original lot for \$100. This land has since been split off from the house. The style of the house would suggest that it was built at the time of these land purchases. The 1896 deed called for Ross to build a fence around his land. It also prevented Anne Cox from selling any of her remaining property in this vicinity to "colored parties."

L. W. Ross was a prominent lawyer in Taylorsville who served as County Attorney from 1914 through 1918. He also served on the Board of Trustees for Taylorsville for a number of years until his death in 1941. His wife, Matty Howard Ross, died in 1930 and possibly at this time he sold the property. By 1941 when he died his will indicates that he owned only a 100 acre farm in the vicinity of Elk Creek, some five miles from Taylorsville.

Domestic Architecture in Taylorsville: 1865-1941  
(excerpted from the survey report's historic context:  
Domestic Architecture: 1818-1941)

Taylorsville's slowly growing population (from 537 in 1880 to 615 in 1900) precluded the need for many new houses after the Civil War. Nonetheless, some notable changes in the housing stock did occur, beginning about 1875, as new neighborhoods were developed and old and out-of-date houses were replaced by more modern dwellings. By 1882, the Atlas of Nelson and Spencer County, Kentucky indicates approximately 80 dwellings in Taylorsville.

During this period the town expanded north along Washington Street and Main Cross Street beyond Back Alley which had been the original northern city limit. A number of the new houses are located along these streets. Others are located on lots on Main Street, some previously undeveloped and others the sites of earlier houses that were demolished to make way for new, more up-to-date housing.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

A few of the extant houses from the latter years of the 19th century indicate that ante-bellum house forms were not entirely forgotten when construction began again after the Civil War. The J.R. Mudd House (SP-T-57), built about 1875 is a two-story central passage house. One significant difference between this house and its forerunner is in the chimney locations. The end chimneys of the earlier houses have been replaced in the Mudd House with centrally located end windows, and the chimneys have been shifted to the rear at the juncture with the rear ell.

The Wyatt-Massie House (SP-T-26), probably built about 1870, is a small one-story three-bay house with a variation of a hall-and-parlor plan. A central front door accesses the larger of its two rooms, and a nearly central chimney rises between them. A bold, projecting boxed cornice runs along both the front and rear facades. This small house is very similar in plan and in its cornice detailing to 503 and 505 Garrard Street (SP-T-131 and 132), both believed to be ante-bellum houses.

There are only two remaining examples in Taylorsville of a simple two-room house form that appears frequently in rural Spencer County and other surrounding areas, beginning in the years after the Civil War. The James Ray Jewell House (SP-T-6) and the F.J. Snider House (SP-T-102), both probably built in the 1890s, were originally one-and-one half story hall-and-parlor plan houses. Both have historic side or front additions which somewhat alter their present appearance. Both also have an original small central cross gable, a popular feature that provided light for an upstairs room. The fact that there are so few examples in Taylorsville suggests that this was principally considered a rural house form.

The most frequently built houses in late 19th century Taylorsville were two-story T-plan houses, a variation of the central passage house in which the room on one side of the hall was pushed forward allowing for the addition of a second room behind it, creating a total of three rooms on each floor in the main block of the house. These houses generally also had a rear ell which, in many cases, was built at the same time as the main house. Some of the later examples became more complex and asymmetrical in plan with a central hipped or gabled roof and a number of projecting gable extensions. The T-plan house in Taylorsville begins to appear about 1870 and continues to be built into the 20th century, the last documented example dating from between 1910 and 1915.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

Eighteen such houses still stand in Taylorsville, and at least three others have been demolished.

As with the earlier central-passage houses these dwellings vary considerably in both exterior and interior styling and detailing. The most elaborate have various combinations of such decorative features as bay windows, window caps, bracketed cornices, and decorative shingle work in the gable ends. The George Kurtz House (SP-T-120), the Young-Gilbert-Huston House (SP-T-51), the Charles Hough House (SP-T-9), and the Thomas Collier House (SP-T-10) all exhibit at least some of these details.

On the interior, these houses all originally had an open stair, usually with a quarter turn, located in the central hall. Many of the earlier examples in Taylorsville have handsome turned cherry or walnut newels and railings. The finest houses are detailed with shouldered architrave trim and cast-iron mantels, sometimes still with a faux-marble finish. Other houses have simple, bold mantels that hark back to the Greek Revival. Bull's-eye corner blocks are common. The 20th century examples such as SP-T-99 and SP-T-110, none of which were available for examination, tend to be the least elaborately detailed on the exterior and, probably, also on the interior.

Aside from the T-plan residences and the late examples of the central-passage and hall-and-parlor houses discussed above, very few historic houses from the late 19th century remain today in Taylorsville. Three houses unlike any others in the town are worthy of note.

The John Eastburne Young House (SP-T-11), built about 1877 for, and probably by, John E. Young, an important local builder, is the only house in Taylorsville or in the county with a Mansard roof and some Second Empire influences. The finely detailed two-story double-pile house has a recessed central front entrance, a central passage extending half way back, and chimneys that rise between the front and rear rooms on each side. Gable-roofed dormers on all sides are handsomely detailed with lancet windows flanked by paired columns. The interior was not available for viewing. The house is very sophisticated for 19th century Taylorsville and no doubt reflects the builder's knowledge of national styles.

The Parsonage of the Methodist Episcopal Church (SP-T-17), built about 1883, is a two-story single-pile three-bay house with

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 9Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

a projecting central front bay flanked by identical shed-roofed porches. (Figure 16) Entrances from each porch access a front vestibule from which a centrally located enclosed stair leads to the second floor and from which doors open into the two principal rooms. Interior chimneys are located to either side of the stairs. The Sanborn maps suggest that there may have been one or two other houses in town with this plan.

Only one house in Taylorsville exhibits any real influences of the nationally popular Queen Anne style. The L.W. Ross House (SP-T-50) probably built between 1896 and 1900, is by far the grandest Turn-of-the-Century house in Taylorsville. It has many features associated with the Queen Anne style including a hipped roof with gable extensions; a corner turret; decorative shingles; a wrap-around porch; and an elliptical window. It is the only house in Taylorsville known to have a large corner entrance hall with an elaborate half-turn stair, a feature commonly associated with Queen Anne floor plans. Its pocket doors; period mantels with glazed brick surrounds, applied detailing and overmantels; prominent staircase; stained-glass window; and reeded window and door trim with bull's-eye corner blocks are not unique to Taylorsville or to the Queen Anne style. However their presence together in one house is unique in Taylorsville and suggestive of the complexity and profusion of detailing found in high-style Queen Anne dwellings. There is one other Queen Anne house (SP-89), just across Brashears Creek from Taylorsville that was not included in the Taylorsville survey, but the county has no other documented examples of the style.

The period from 1900 to 1941 saw the development of several small new neighborhoods in Taylorsville and the continued replacement and infilling of new houses in older neighborhoods. Electricity became readily available in Taylorsville about 1915, no doubt leading to some changes in housing construction. Balloon and box frame construction probably became much more common in Taylorsville during this period, as they did in towns throughout America, although this has not been documented.

As at other times, the lack of growth in population, from about 600 in 1900 to an all-time high of about 800 in 1920, resulted in a limited number of new houses. Reasor's Addition, laid out in 1899 by J.W. Reasor on the land directly south of Brashears Creek between Main Cross Street and Jefferson Street, developed into the 1940s with primarily small modest houses.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

---

Between about 1914 and 1940 the east end of Main Street developed into a small neighborhood of somewhat more substantial houses, many with Bungalow/Craftsman styling or influences. No houses with the large scale or the floor plan of the L.W. Ross House were built in Taylorsville after 1900. Only one Bungalow/Craftsman house, the Will Hough House (SP-T-122), comes anywhere close to the Ross House in terms of its elaborateness of design and attention to both exterior and interior detailing.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 11

Ross, L.W., House  
Spencer County, Ky.

---

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, Mary Frances. The History of Spencer County, Kentucky.  
Taylorsville, Kentucky, 1991.

Kentucky State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1895-1896.  
Chicago and St. Louis: R.L. Polk & Co., 1895.

Spencer County, Kentucky Deed Books: V-406<sup>4</sup>; X-109; Y-132.

Spencer County, Kentucky Settlement Book 5, pages 319 and 324.

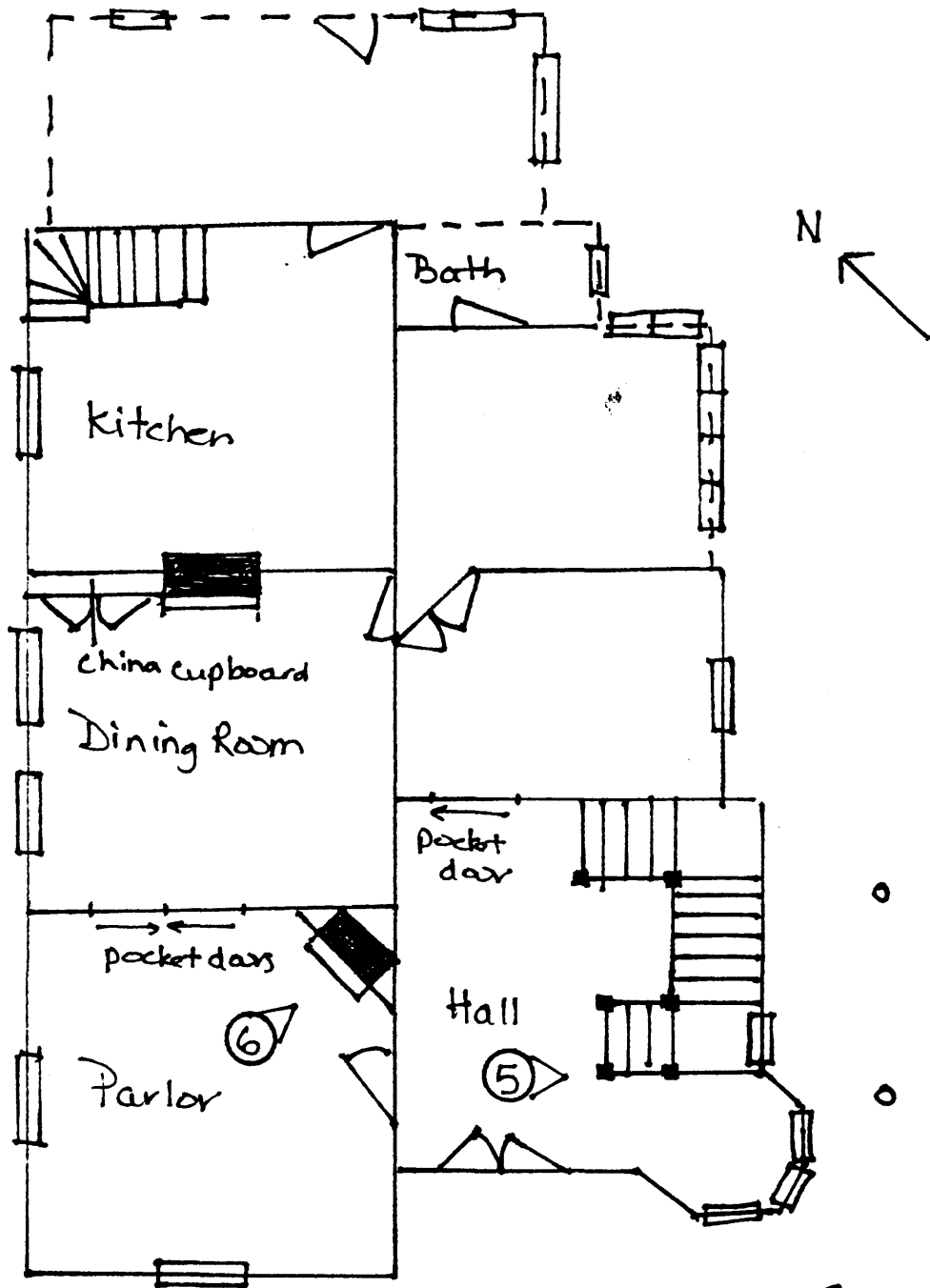
# Floor Plan

Not to Scale

Addition: - - - -

Photo No. 4

Direction of View: (1)



First Floor Plan

L.W. Ross House (SP-T-57)



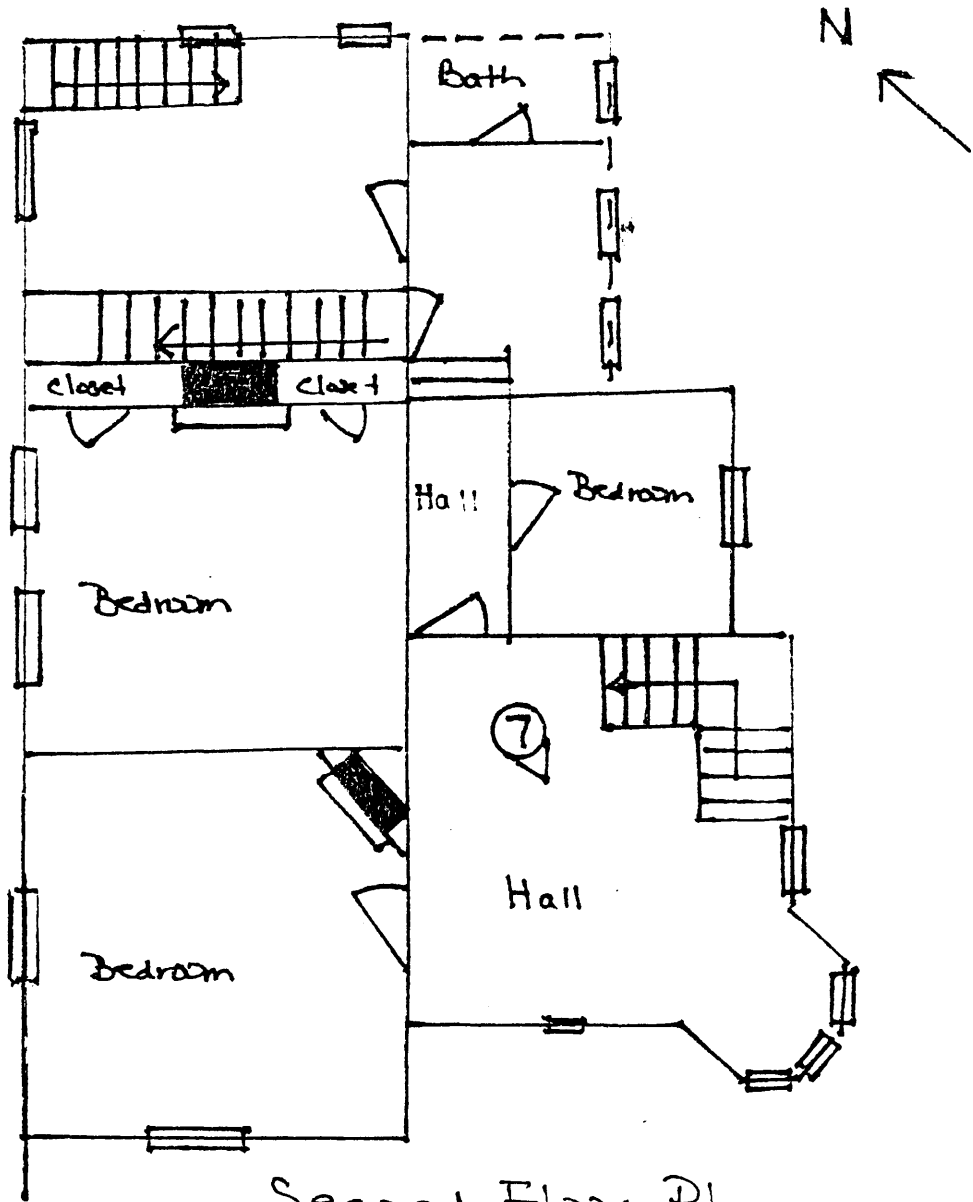
Floor Plan

Not to Scale

Addition: ---

Photo No. 4

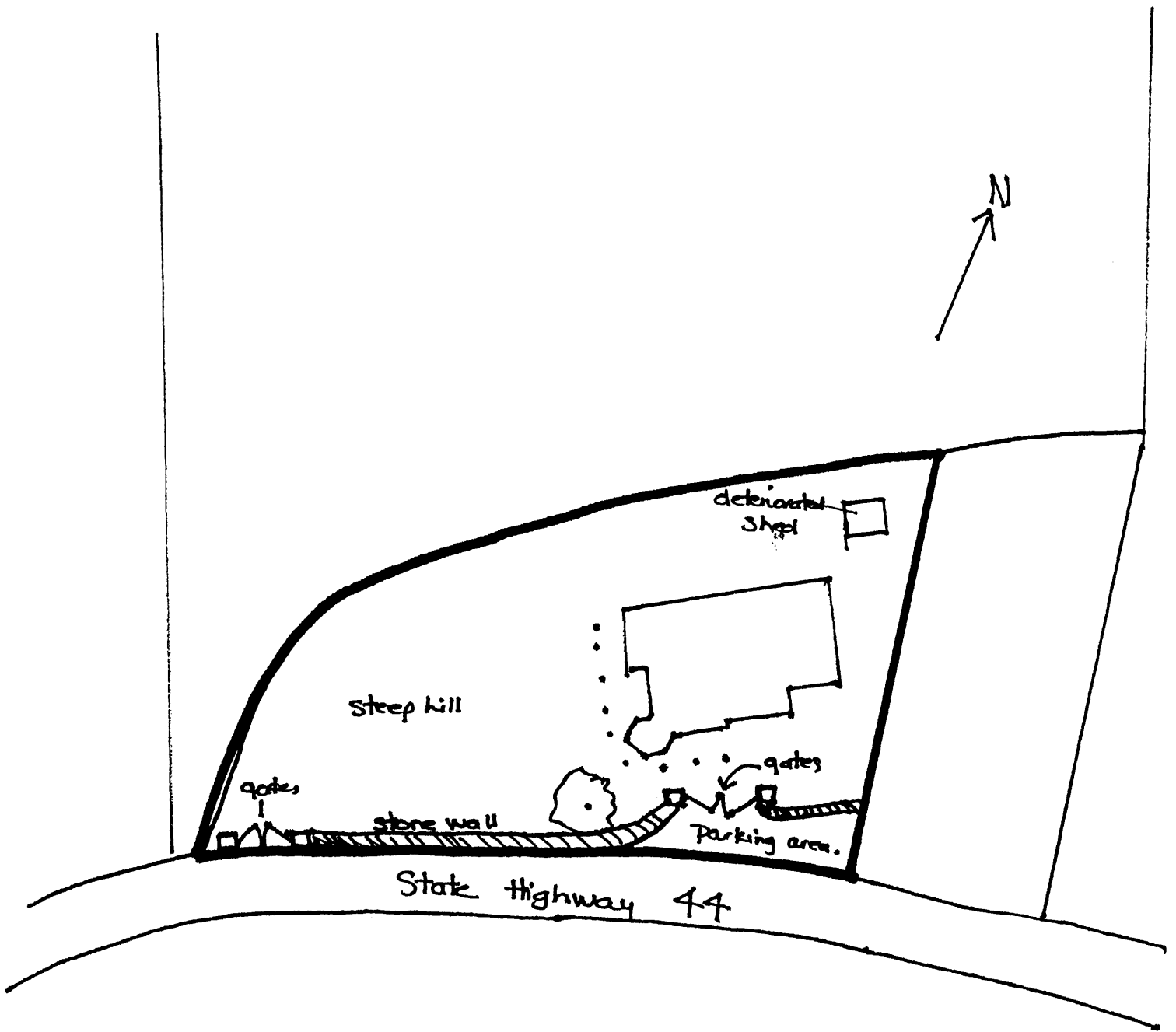
Direction of View: ⑦



Second Floor Plan

L. W. Ross House

(SP-T-50)



Ross, L. W. House

Spencer, Co., Ky.

SKETCH MAP

Not to scale

Property Boundary: —————



MAIN STREET

Ross, L. W., House  
Spencer Co, Ky.  
BOUNDARY MAP  
Source: Spencer Co. Property  
Identification Map T-2  
North: ↑

Scale: 1" = 210'

42 41 40 39 38

37

35

36

57

34-1

30

34

34-2

52 53 54 55 56

33

32

26 25 17 16

15

14

31

21 20

4

3

2

1

24 18

13

12

5

23 22 19

30

11

10

10A

9

8

7

37

55

56

57

58

38

54

Source: Spencer Co. Property  
Identification Map T-2

Scale: 1" = 210'

53

51

52

5

6

3

4

31

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

---

PHOTOGRAPHS

Ross, L.W., House  
Taylorsville, Spencer County, Ky.  
Photographer: Carolyn Brooks  
Date: June, 1991  
Negatives on file at Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Ky.

(The above information is the same for all 7 photographs submitted with the nomination. Below the photographs are listed in the order of their photograph numbers and each view is described.)

1. Front facade; photographer facing northeast.
2. East side; photographer facing northwest.
3. East side and rear; photographer facing west.
4. West side and rear; photographer facing south.
5. First-floor stair hall; photographer facing southwest.
6. Detail of mantel in first-floor parlor; photographer facing east.
7. Second-floor stair hall; photographer facing south.