

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

612

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280

JUL 29 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Other names/site number: Blanton House

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. Location

Street & number: 625 N. Washington Street

City or town: Danville State: Indiana County: Hendricks

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B X C ___ D

Frederic C. D... [Signature]

7.21.2016

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau
or Tribal Government

Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Hendricks County, Indiana

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 determined eligible for the National Register
 determined not eligible for the National Register
 removed from the National Register
 other (explain:)


Signature of the Keeper

9.12.16
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
Public – Local
Public – State
Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Hendricks County, Indiana

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL: civic

RECREATION AND CULTURE: outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Colonial Revival

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: BRICK

WOOD: weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other: _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Blanton House property is a semi-rural estate developed on the northern outskirts of Danville, Indiana, in the mid-1930s. The site, located on the east side of N. Washington Street, is enclosed by a wooded perimeter and contains many mature trees. The site contains two Colonial Revival style buildings designed by Indianapolis architects Burns & James set within a designed landscape planned by Indianapolis landscape architect Donald B. Johnston. The property was built and occupied by Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton, along with their children, and was acquired by the Town of Danville following the Blantons' deaths. Since its acquisition by the town, the property has undergone few alterations, retaining a high degree of integrity to its original 1930s design.

Narrative Description

Grounds (Contributing Site)

Indianapolis landscape architect Donald B. Johnston laid out the Blanton property as a small estate with a series of formal landscapes set within a wooded, naturalistic surrounding. The plan appears to have been implemented in 1936. A curving drive brought guests to the house's front

door, while an extension led around to the attached garage and service areas. To the south of the house was a formal, hedge-framed flower garden with rectangular planting areas arranged symmetrically around a central pool. The garden was laid out on axis with the south door and porch of the living room and concluded in a semicircular overlook. To the east of the house was a terrace lawn enclosed by shrubs and connected to the lower lawn by a flight of steps. North of the house a wall of low shrubs screened the chicken house and laundry yard from view. The brick-clad Playhouse is aligned with the front of the main house and gives the impression of a detached summer kitchen or similar outbuilding. North of these features was a large vegetable and cutting flower garden framed by flowers, lilacs, and small flowering trees. Beyond was the “ravine tangle” along a small stream followed by a geometrically-planned orchard. Aerial photographs taken between the 1930s and the 1960s show the fulfillment of Johnston’s plan as the plantings reached maturity.

While some elements of Johnston’s original design have been lost, the overall effect remains. The entrance drive follows its original course and is framed by mature trees, many planted in the 1930s. The flower garden has been replaced by a brick-paved patio following the same outline, still enclosed within hedges along the south and west sides of the space. The east terrace lawn was later modified by the addition of curving brick walls and slate pavement, possibly during the Blantons’ 1959 remodeling of the house. The slate pavement later deteriorated and was replaced by stamped concrete in imitation of slate. The garden, laundry yard, and adjacent plantings have been lost, but the footprint remains as a rectangular open lawn framed by trees. The orchard was replaced by new-growth forest during the late twentieth century. In spite of these changes, the main designed spaces of the grounds retain the spatial effects and character documented in Donald B. Johnston’s 1935 design.

Main House (Contributing Building)

The main house was built c.1935 – 1936. The house underwent a renovation in 1959, with the most substantial alterations occurring along the north and east elevations. It was owned and occupied by one generation of the Blanton family before becoming property of the Town of Danville. The house remains in very good condition and retains a high degree of integrity to the period of significance.

The main house was designed to give the appearance of a Georgian center-hall plan with attached wings. Much of the exterior is clad in red brick veneer laid in a common bond pattern. A water table is formed by a soldier course along the first floor line. The house’s windows are primarily six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows, although a few eight-over-eight and four-over-four double-hung windows are present along with some divided-lite casements. The basement windows are all steel sash divided-lite casements. The windows have rowlock sills but no header treatment. The 1959 additions utilize divided-lite, double-hung windows compatible with the design of the original house. All windows are fitted with operable wood shutters held in place by S-shaped iron shutter dogs. Most windows are fitted with aluminum-framed exterior storm sash.

The main wing is a side-gabled brick-clad two-story mass with its west façade divided into three bays. The central bay contains the main entrance, a six-panel entry door with a wood surround

featuring square Tuscan pilasters and a frieze trimmed by dentil molding. A set of pyramidal concrete steps with curved iron handrails leads up to the entrance. The flanking bays each contain a six-over-six double-hung wood sash window at the first floor level. The second floor contains a single six-over-six double-hung wood sash window in each bay. Copper gutters along the roof edge lead down to ornamental copper conductor heads just below the main frieze. An exterior brick chimney rises along the south side of the main house.

The north wing steps down in two stages, giving the effect of a house that has grown through gradual evolution. An open incised porch was originally set between the first floor of the garage and the main house, forming a side entrance. This porch was later infilled and the opening covered with wood clapboards. The pilasters at either side of the opening and the beam at the top remain exposed. The first floor of the garage's west facade is clad in brick veneer and features a single centered window. The second floor features a projecting wall clad in wood clapboards. This wall terminates into a side-gabled roof at the window sill height for the second floor of the main house. A six-lite divided-lite wood casement set in a dormer with a curved roof and is aligned with the first floor window below. The area above the side porch continues the second floor clapboard wall, but here it rises to the height of the main second floor. A single window is centered in this wall.

The north elevation features three paneled wood garage doors within the first-floor lean-to and a single window centered in the gable end above. The east elevation follows the cladding pattern of the west facade: brick at the main wing and the first floor of the north wing, wood clapboards at the second floor of the north wing. The north wing features a one-story lean-to extension built during the 1959 renovation. The east elevation of the main wing is divided into two bays. The south bay mirrors its appearance on the west facade. The north bay projects out to the east and is topped by a smaller gable. The first floor features a rectangular bay window with divided-lite sash. The east face of the window is a large fixed sash of 30 lites. The north and south ends of the bay are each a single full-height, five-lite casement. The base of the bay is clad in brick veneer matching the patterns of the adjacent walls. The original south porch was replaced by a one-story sunroom during the 1959 renovation. The kitchen and sunroom additions are clad in matching red brick that appears to have been salvaged from an earlier building. Some of these bricks retain traces of white paint. The sunroom features brick knee walls based on the design of those at the dining room bay window. The room is enclosed by large, single-lite sliding glass doors and jalousie windows.

The public rooms of the first floor all feature oak flooring running east-west. All interior doors are of the same six-panel raised-panel design. All doors feature mortise locks, dark brass knobs with circular escutcheons, and elliptical keyhole escutcheons. All doors and windows feature identical molded wood trim.

The house was designed to give the impression of a Georgian center-hall plan, with an entrance centered in the symmetrical facade. The front door is centered on the main space of the hall, with the staircase set back to the north. Immediately north of the front door, between the base of the staircase and the west wall, is a door into the den. The hall terminates into the door to the dining room. The south wall contains a cased opening into the living room, and the north wall contains

a door into the side hall. The hall is clad in varnished vertical wood paneling. The paneling forms a repeating pattern of two wide boards separated by a bead. The space between these repeating units contains an asymmetrical pair of moldings, a narrow quarter-round to the right intersecting with a wider chamfered molding on the left. The ceiling is trimmed by a crown molding that matches the profile used in the living room. The staircase features open stringers and two square balusters rising from each tread. A narrow turned newel post is set within a projecting radiused bottom step.

The living room extends along the entire south side of the house and measures approximately 15 by 25 feet. The cased opening from the hall is on axis with the fireplace centered in the south wall. The east and west walls each contain a centered window while the south wall contains a window west of the fireplace and a double door opening into the sunroom to the east. The pair of divided-lite wood doors that originally filled this opening have been removed, although the original exterior shutters remain in place within the sunroom. Floor-length windows terminate in sills integrated into the top molding of the baseboard. A wood crown molding matching that of the hall breaks out above the windows, forming a window cornice containing curtain hardware. An extra layer of molding at the base creates a different effect from the cornice of the hall. The projecting chimney breast of the fireplace is clad in wood paneling. Raised wood panels, a green marble surround, and a slate hearth accent the fireplace.

The den is located in the northwest corner of the first floor of the main wing and measures approximately 9 by 11 feet. A floor-length window is located in the west wall and a window with a raised sill is located in the north wall. The north and south walls are lined with floor-to-ceiling bookshelves. The bases of these bookcases project out to form cabinets with flat-panel doors and turned wooden knobs. The space between the bookcases at the north window contains a window seat. All four walls are clad in vertical board wood paneling matching the design and finish of that used in the hall. The bookshelves, indicated on the original floor plan, are built in front of this paneling. The room retains an original pendant light fixture. The fixture includes a semi-spherical white glass globe hanging from a conical brass base with cutout five-pointed stars. The cone terminates in a ring that is attached to a brass chain.

The dining room is located in the northeast part of the main wing and measures approximately 13 by 16 feet. The south wall contains a floor-length double-hung window while the east wall contains a projecting rectangular bay window. The face of the bay contains a 30-lite fixed sash picture window. The two narrow sides of the bay are comprised of full-height casements. A door in the west wall connects to the hall while a door in the north wall connects to the kitchen. The room features a wood crown molding matching that of the living room. A heavily-molded chair rail runs the perimeter of the room. The room retains a five-arm glass chandelier with nickel trim that is believed to be an original fixture.

The butler's pantry originally filled the northeast corner of the main wing. During the 1959 renovation, this space was opened up to become a part of the kitchen. The space between the dining room, butler's pantry, and den contains the side hall. This corridor connected the side porch, garage, hall, and butler's pantry. The west side of the hall is lined with four doors. From north to south, these lead to a water closet, two coat closets, and the basement stairs. The side

hall is clad in vertical board paneling matching that of the hall and den. The floor is clad in c.1965 vinyl sheet flooring. The side hall retains a flush-mount exposed-socket light fixture accented with a brass laurel wreath. The water closet retains its original two-faucet sink, towel bar, and tile. The floor is covered with a black, white, and gray pattern while the wainscoting is of square white tile.

The north wing contains the kitchen and garage. A butler's pantry originally separated the kitchen from the dining room. The 1959 remodeling included removal of the wall between the two spaces. The built-in cabinets along the south wall of the original pantry remain and one of the two cabinets from the north wall appears to have been relocated within the kitchen. An L-shaped addition to the kitchen created a new rear entrance and a breakfast room with a projecting bay window. All walls of the kitchen are clad in vertical board wood paneling matching that of the hall, den, and side hall. The kitchen appears to remain largely unchanged from its 1959 form. The 1959 wood cabinets and stainless-steel-trimmed laminate countertops remain in place along with the built-in ovens and range. The cabinet pulls and light fixtures appear to have been replaced c.1985. Vinyl plank flooring appears to be a recent addition.

The rear staircase forms a vestibule between the kitchen and the garage. The garage contains three car bays. The eastern bay was added in the 1959 remodeling and the two original bays were extended slightly to the north. The interior walls of the garage are clad in horizontal bead-board. The floor is of exposed concrete and the ceiling appears to be gypsum board.

The second floor contains four bedrooms and a room that may have served as a bedroom or playroom. Door and window trim matches that of the first floor and all rooms except the bathrooms feature hardwood floors. The master suite was located above the living room and included a private bathroom and walk-in closet with built-in drawers and cabinets. A small room above the entrance hall may have served as a bedroom, office, or sewing room. The east and west bedrooms and a bathroom occupy the remainder of the second floor of the main wing. The north wing contains a large room that may have served as a bedroom or playroom. This connects to the rear stair and the north bedroom, with private bath, that may have been intended as a servant's room. The second floor has undergone very few alterations. The bathrooms retain their original brown and orange tile floors and yellow tile wainscoting with tan base and cap trim. The original toilets are the "Monada" model by Crane.

The attic is one open, unfinished space. The basement contains a mix of service and living spaces. A staircase below the main stair leads down to a hall below the entrance hall. The stair features a handrail and balusters matching those of the main stair above. Basement doors are of a five-panel horizontal panel configuration and feature narrow molded casings. The hall opens on to a family room below the living room. This room is lit by steel sash casements at the south and east elevations and features a brick fireplace with wooden mantel centered on the south wall. The walls are of painted concrete block and the floor is clad in composition tile featuring a blue ground with black and white marbling. This flooring extends into the hall and is likely an early period finish. The furnace room is located below the den and side hall. A laundry room is located below the dining room and kitchen. The kitchen and one second-floor bathroom contain trash chutes for a Kernerator-brand incinerator that was originally located in the basement.

Playhouse (Contributing Building)

The playhouse is a one-story side-gabled outbuilding with Colonial Revival details matching those of the main house. The building's south facade features a symmetrical facade with a central six-panel entry door flanked by six-over-six double-hung wood sash windows. A single window is located on the west elevation. The interior of the building consists of a main room running the full width of the south half of the building. The north side of the room is dominated by a large brick chimney and fireplace with wood blocking for a mantel. The north half of the building was originally divided into two spaces. The western half appears to have served as a garden or tool shed while the eastern half appears to have been an open porch. The porch was later enclosed with wood clapboard siding. The interior is unfinished, with exposed wood framing and a bare concrete floor. The building retains a high degree of integrity and remains in good condition.

Chicken House (Contributing Building)

The chicken house appears to be the structure indicated on Donald Johnston's 1935 site plan. It was later relocated to the northwest corner of the garden area. It is a one-story side-gabled wood-frame structure. The south wall contains a bank of three six-lite divided-lite wood sash windows. The building has flush horizontal siding and exposed rafter tails. Although it appears to have been relocated within the site, the structure retains a high degree of integrity and remains in fair condition.

Gazebo (Non-Contributing Building)

A non-contributing modern gazebo forms an overlook on the hillside east of the house. The gazebo consists of a wood-shingle hipped roof supported by square wooden posts, with wood lattice forming a guardrail around the perimeter.

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.

Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Hendricks County, Indiana

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1935 – 1959

Significant Dates

1935 – 1936

1959

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Burns, Lee

James, Edward D.

Johnston, Donald B.

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance has been selected to cover the design and development of the site during 1935 and 1936 as well as the only major remodeling in 1959. By 1959, the intended landscape had reached a good degree of maturity as well. The property has undergone few changes since 1960 and retains a high degree of integrity to this period.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Blanton House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, achieving local significance under Criterion C for Architecture and Landscape Architecture. The property embodies the distinctive characteristics of Period Revival suburban estates designed between World War I and World War II. The property also represents the work of skilled design professionals influential in residential construction in central Indiana during this period. It is among the most high-style examples of the Colonial Revival style in Hendricks County and retains its original designed context. The period of significance encompasses both the initial design and construction of the property and subsequent significant modifications made by the owners after a period of occupation.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Architecture

The Blanton House is a significant Colonial Revival work by one of central Indiana's most prominent residential architecture firms of the 1930s. The main house and playhouse were designed by the Indianapolis architectural firm of Burns & James. The firm specialized in Period Revival residences in and around Indianapolis, particularly in the city's fast-growing suburbs north of 38th Street. While many of the firm's projects were located in suburban neighborhoods, the Blanton property forms a semi-rural country estate. This allowed for the creation of a suitable context for the house, including the Colonial Revival playhouse and a designed landscape mixing natural and formal elements. This designed context created the impression of a Colonial

homestead that had developed over time rather than a modern suburban home built in a former field. In this respect, the Blanton property allowed for a more complete fulfillment of the Colonial Revival ideal.

Lee Burns (1872 – 1957) was born at Bloomfield, Indiana. He served in the Spanish-American War before joining the Indianapolis publishing house of the Bowen-Merrill Company. Burns attended Butler University but left before completing a degree. In 1910, he founded the Burns Realty Company, focused on the design and construction of fine houses in and around Indianapolis.

Burns was interested in the early history of Indiana and its early architecture, particularly the Federal and Greek Revival buildings seen as highly desirable from an early twentieth century Colonial Revival perspective. He wrote several books on Indiana history, including *The National Road in Indiana* (1919), *Indianapolis—The Old Town and the New* (1923), *Life in Old Vincennes* (1929), and *Early Architects and Builders of Indiana* (1935). Burns served on the executive committee of the Indiana Historical Society, as a member of the commission that developed the neoclassical George Rogers Clark Memorial at Vincennes, and as a director of the John Herron Art Institute.¹ During the late-1940s, Burns oversaw Colonial Revival “restoration” work at William Henry Harrison’s “Grouseland” (1804) at Vincennes, Indiana.

In 1926, he partnered with Edward David James (1897 – 1969), a graduate of Butler and of the Cornell University School of Architecture, to form the firm of Burns & James. Burns had no formal training in architecture but passed the architectural and engineering licensing examinations around 1928. The firm occupied a suite in the Architects & Builders Building at 333 N. Pennsylvania Street in Indianapolis. The work of Burns & James focused primarily on single-family residential projects. The firm designed a few non-residential projects, including a 1932 fire station at 5555 N. Illinois Street in Indianapolis, but most of these projects were located in a residential context. In 1929, the firm was awarded the Society of Architects’ gold medal for best residential design for the William R. Teel House at 56th Street and Washington Boulevard in Indianapolis.

In 1949, Burns and James decided to dissolve their partnership. James opened a firm under his own name focused on buildings for Indiana University’s Bloomington campus and Burns opened the firm of Burns & Burns with his son David V. Burns. Burns & Burns’ later works included the English Foundation Building, the Broad Ripple branch of Flanner & Buchanan Mortuaries, and the Garfield Park Conservatory. Following Lee Burns’ death in 1957, David Burns joined August Bohlen to form the firm of Bohlen & Burns.²

Burns & James’ Colonial Revival design for the Blanton House reflects current Period Revival architectural fashions of the 1930s. The treatment of details and materials reflects Lee Burns’

¹ Connie J. Zeigler, “Burns, Lee,” *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994), 365-366.

² Connie J. Zeigler, “Burns, Lee” and “Burns and James,” *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994), 365-366.

interest in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century American architecture, while the house's functional internal arrangement is indicative of the firm's experience in creating comfortable environments for modern living. The Colonial Revival design of the house may also have been an acknowledgement of Jeannette Wales Blanton's New England heritage.

The Blanton House is among the most high-style Colonial Revival houses in Hendricks County. The house was not identified in the *Hendricks County Interim Report* (1989). This survey identified only one comparable Colonial Revival house in the county, the Fred R. Hobbs House (1925) at 643 E. Main Street in Plainfield, designed by Hubert Garriott. Both houses have a comparable massing, proportions, and fenestration on the main wing. Unlike the Blanton House, the Hobbs House is located on a lot in a suburban neighborhood along U.S. 40, the National Road. Other Colonial Revival houses identified in Hendricks County are dissimilar in design, massing, and materials. Most are clad in wood clapboards and feature minimal Colonial Revival ornament applied to more contemporary early twentieth century forms. In the context of Hendricks County, the Blanton House appears to be a unique example of a Colonial Revival house set within a designed, semi-rural estate landscape.³

The architect for the Blantons' 1959 remodeling is not known. The project included selective modifications to specific components of the house, reflecting the changes in American life after World War II. The original design of the house included a kitchen separated from the dining room by a butler's pantry, a common pattern for pre-World War II households employing a cook. The remodeling of this space created a much larger eat-in kitchen that could facilitate gathering and entertaining by owners who cooked for themselves. By the 1950s, rapid advances in household technology had produced modern appliances and gadgets had that mitigated much of the labor and drudgery associated with cooking and housekeeping in the pre-World War II period. Expansion of the original two-car garage to a three-car garage reflects the increasing importance of automobiles in an ever-more-suburban American landscape. Replacement of the original south porch with an enclosed sunroom featuring sliding glass doors and jalousie windows reflects the increasing trend toward indoor/outdoor living spaces during the postwar period. In these respects, the house evolved to embody changes to American life between the 1930s and the 1950s.

Landscape Architecture

The site surrounding the Blanton House was laid out as a small country estate or rural retreat. The grounds were designed by Indianapolis landscape architect Donald B. Johnston (1891 – 1950). The property is significant as a surviving designed landscape of the 1930s that has reached maturity and survives without major alterations to the overall effect intended by its designer.

Donald Bond Johnston was born in Richmond, Indiana, to Ella Bond and Dr. Melville F. Johnston. His mother was an active promoter of the arts and women's rights in the Richmond

³ Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, *Hendricks County Interim Report*, (Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1989) xxviii.

community.⁴ Johnston received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Earlham College in 1912 and a Master's degree from Harvard University's School of Landscape Architecture in 1915.⁵ During his college years, Johnston travelled to Europe to study planning projects, parks, gardens, and estates. He worked for the New York firm of Vitale, Brinckerhoff & Geiffert and the Minneapolis firm of Morell & Nichols between 1915 and 1924. Johnston opened a private practice of landscape architecture and city planning in Indianapolis in July 1924.⁶ Johnston occupied an office in the Hume-Mansur Building during the late-1920s before moving to the Architects & Builders Building at 333 N. Pennsylvania Street.

During the late-1920s, Johnston worked as a staff landscape architect for the Department of Conservation. One of his projects included the development of Frederick Law Olmsted's preliminary concepts for the Nancy Hanks Lincoln Memorial (1927) at the Abraham Lincoln Boyhood Home site in Lincoln City, Indiana.⁷ Johnston worked with Burns & James on other projects during this period, including the residence of Roy E. Adams at 4145 Washington Boulevard in Indianapolis.⁸ Johnston prepared landscape plans for much of the Georgian Revival campus of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, between 1940 and 1949.⁹

Johnston's design for the property created a suitable context for a semi-rural Colonial Revival estate. The wooded perimeter of the site would grow in to give the effect of a long-established homestead. This treatment may also reflect Jeannette Wales Blanton's interest in nature and the outdoors. The inclusion of a formal flower garden trimmed by hedges and a terrace lawn stepping down from the house reflect then-current ideas about Colonial-style gardens suitable for a Colonial Revival house. Johnston enclosed functional outdoor spaces for a garden, chicken coop, and laundry drying, with axial and scenic paths among flowers and flowering shrubs. Although some elements of Johnston's original landscape design have been lost, the overall spatial effects he envisioned have been maintained and define the character of the property today. Certainly, enough of the core, most important, areas of the designed landscape, closest to the house, remain intact enough to convey a locally significant example of 20th century estate design. Aerial photos clearly bear out this assertion (see maps).

⁴ John William Leonard, ed., *Woman's Who's Who of America* (New York: American Commonwealth Company, 1914) 437.

⁵ *Alumni Directory of Earlham College 1847 – 1947* (Richmond, Indiana: Earlham College, 1947) 157.

⁶ [untitled], *Indianapolis Star*, July 13, 1924, 43.

⁷ Jill York O'Bright, *There I Grew Up: A History of the Administration of Abraham Lincoln's Boyhood Home* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1987) 34-35.

⁸ American Society of Landscape Architects, *Illustrations of Work of Members* (New York: J. H. Twiss, 1932) 117.

⁹ Miami University Archives, "Miami University Campus: Maps, Plans, and Architectural Drawings, Box 53," last updated April 9, 2014, http://archives.lib.miamioh.edu/show_content.php?subCat2_id=3327&&subCat2_name=Miami%20University%20Campus:%20Maps,%20Plans,%20and%20Architectural%20Drawings,%20Box%2053&&subCat1_id=328&&subCat1_name=Maps&&cat_id=55&&cat_name=Pictures%20/%20Artifacts%20/%20Maps%20/%20Plans

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

The Blanton House was built for Forest and Jeannette (Wales) Blanton. Forest Williams Blanton (1899 – 1977) was born in Indianapolis on August 10, 1899, to Llewellyn Harvey (L. H.) Blanton (1853 – 1909) and Lucy Lodicea Williams (1871 – 1902). His parents were married at Rochester, New York, on June 1, 1897. L. H. Blanton founded the Blanton Milling Company at Indianapolis in the early 1880s. Forest attended Amherst College in Massachusetts, graduating in 1921. Forest and his brother, Alexander J. Blanton, operated the family’s mill until 1923. At that time, they sold the Indianapolis business and purchased a flour mill at Clayton in nearby Hendricks County. The Clayton mill was built in 1902 by Nordyke & Marmon and was originally operated by the firm of Vanarsdale & Lipps. After the Blantons purchased the Clayton mill in July 1923, Forest Blanton began commuting by interurban electric light rail from his home in Indianapolis.

On October 16, 1923, Forest Blanton married Jeannette Wales at All Souls Unitarian Church in Indianapolis. Jeannette Hale Wales (1902 – 2002) was born in Braintree, Massachusetts, on April 4, 1902. The Wales family had resided in Braintree since the seventeenth century and Jeannette was among the ninth generation to be born there. Her seventh-great-grandparents, Nathaniel Wales, Jr., (1623 – 1662) and Isabel Atherton (1630 – 1661) came from Yorkshire, England, to Massachusetts in 1635. Her father was Dr. Ernest deWolfe Wales (1873 – 1950), a graduate of Harvard University who maintained a private medical practice.¹⁰ Wales attended Harvard’s Lawrence Scientific School from 1892 to 1895, completing his M.D. at the Harvard Medical School in 1899.¹¹ He married Frances “Franc” Hale (1875 – 1961) in her native Minneapolis, Minnesota, on June 21, 1899. Franc graduated from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1897 with a Bachelor of Library Science.¹² The couple remained at Minneapolis until at least 1900, returning to Massachusetts around 1901. Jeannette and her sister Elizabeth Webster Wales were born in Braintree. Ernest and Frances Wales moved their family to Indianapolis in 1906.¹³ In 1916, the *Indianapolis Star* listed Jeannette among the “young daughters of prominent Indianapolis families [who] have caught the ‘Preparedness Camp’ fever and will spend the summer in the Michigan woods.”¹⁴ The article noted that the girls would sleep in tents in a manner similar to boys’ military preparedness camps, but, instead of military drills, the program would include domestic science classes, gymnastic dancing, baseball, basketball, tennis, hiking, and craft classes including basket weaving. Jeannette graduated from Indianapolis’ Shortridge High School in 1918 and attended Smith College, her mother’s alma mater, graduating in 1922.¹⁵ She seems to have been acquainted with Forest Blanton by

¹⁰ Harvard College Class of 1896: Secretary’s Fourth Report (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard College, 1911) 313.

¹¹ Harvard Alumni Association, *Harvard University Directory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, 1910) 697.

¹² *The Smith College Monthly*, Vol. IX, No. 8 (May 1902) 533.

¹³ “Misses Marmon to Entertain for Bride-to-Be,” *Indianapolis Star*, October 9, 1923, 4; “Parents Give Bridal Dinner for Daughter,” *Indianapolis Star*, October 16, 1923, 6.

¹⁴ “Many Girls Seek Open Air Life in Northern Woods,” *Indianapolis Star*, June 25, 1916, 45.

¹⁵ “Notes of Society,” *Topics* (Indianapolis, Indiana), Vol. I, No. 26 (December 11, 1920), 9.

December 1922, when he was among the party in her family's box at a charity ball for the Indianapolis Free Kindergarten and Children's Aid Society held at the Claypool Hotel.¹⁶

Forest and Jeannette Blanton resided in Indianapolis for several years after their marriage. In 1928, the Clayton mill ceased grinding flour and in 1929 Forest Blanton became the sole owner of the company. The renamed Blanton Mills operated as a grain buyer, feed mill, and farm supply store. The Blanton Mills operated a branch store at the southwest corner of the Courthouse Square in downtown Danville from 1929 through the early 1960s. Blanton also owned the grain elevator at Bridgeport, Marion County, Indiana, from 1942 to 1962. Blanton retained the business until January 1972, when it was sold to James A. Walker.

In 1929, the Blantons moved from Indianapolis to Danville. One day in the early-1930s, Jeannette Blanton and her eldest daughter were walking along Washington street north of Danville. Upon reaching the top of the hill, Jeannette felt that the adjacent property would be a desirable site for the family's new home. Forest Blanton soon made an offer to the property owner and purchased a 72 acre parcel.¹⁷ Around 1935, the Blantons selected the Indianapolis architectural firm of Burns & James to design a new house for this site. Landscape architect Donald B. Johnston was engaged to design the site.

Two sheets of the original construction documents survive: a first floor plan for the house and a site plan. The surviving first floor plan for the Blanton House is not dated. It was drawn by "DB," likely David V. Burns, who is listed as a draftsman in the office of Burns & James in the 1935 Indianapolis city directory. The site plan was drawn by Donald B. Johnston and is dated December 16, 1935. The floor plan appears to be an earlier version of the design, as some features shown on the site plan and in the construction photographs are not shown on the floor plan. These include the addition of a square bay window to the east elevation of the dining room and the addition of a porch to the south elevation. Undated construction photographs show both the bay window and the floor slab of the porch. These photographs also suggest that the fenestration pattern of the kitchen was modified slightly from that shown on the surviving floor plan.

The Blanton House, outbuildings, and surrounding landscape were built c.1935 – 1936. Construction photographs that remain in the house show grading work underway around the east elevation, with a pair of horses pulling a grading tool driven by a workman. A photograph of the front of the nearly-completed house shows ladders leaning against the north elevation and a bare, treeless lawn in front of the house.

The house underwent a renovation in 1959, with the most substantial alterations occurring along the north and east elevations. These included expansion of the garage and kitchen and reconstruction of the south porch as a sunroom. The brick for the house's exterior is said to have come from the Odd Fellows building on the courthouse square in Danville. A three-story brick building containing an Odd Fellows hall at 52-54 W. Main Street, on the north side of the square,

¹⁶ "Society Turns Out to Charity Ball for Children's' Aid," *Indianapolis Star*, December 2, 1922, 7.

¹⁷ "The Blanton House," *Hendricks County Monthly*, December 2001, 13.

was replaced by a new one-story building in 1953. It is possible that salvaged brick from a building demolished in the 1950s was utilized in the 1959 additions.¹⁸

By the 1940 census, Forest and Jeannette were living in the house with their daughters Jeannette, Lucy, and Elizabeth "Betsey". A fourth daughter, Mary Blanton, was born after the 1940 census. Forest Blanton died in 1977. In 1994, Jeannette Blanton donated much of the family's estate to the Town of Danville as the Blanton Woods Nature Park. In 2000, Jeannette Blanton sold the house to the Town of Danville and moved to a senior living facility. In October 2001, she moved from Danville to Hanover, New Hampshire, to be closer to her daughters. She died in 2002 at age 100. The Blantons are buried in Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis.

Since 2001, the Town of Danville has maintained the Blanton House as a venue for events. These include weddings, receptions, parties, corporate retreats, and seminars. The house has been well-maintained and its conversion to an events venue has required few alterations.

¹⁸ "The Blanton House," *Hendricks County Monthly*, December 2001, 13.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)
[see footnotes for page citations]

Alumni Directory of Earlham College 1847 – 1947. Richmond, Indiana: Earlham College, 1947.

American Society of Landscape Architects. *Illustrations of Work of Members.* New York: J. H. Twiss, 1932.

“The Blanton House.” *Hendricks County Monthly.* December 2001.

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[untitled], *Indianapolis Star,* July 13, 1924.

Leonard, John William, ed. *Woman’s Who’s Who of America.* New York: American Commonwealth Company, 1914.

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http://archives.lib.miamioh.edu/show_content.php?subCat2_id=3327&&subCat2_name=Miami%20University%20Campus:%20Maps,%20Plans,%20and%20Architectural%20Drawings,%20Box%2053&&subCat1_id=328&&subCat1_name=Maps&&cat_id=55&&cat_name=Pictures%20/%20Artifacts%20/%20Maps%20/%20Plans

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“Notes of Society.” *Topics* (Indianapolis, Indiana). Vol. I, No. 26 (December 11, 1920).

O’Bright, Jill York. *There I Grew Up: A History of the Administration of Abraham Lincoln’s Boyhood Home.* Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1987.

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Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Hendricks County, Indiana

“Society Turns Out to Charity Ball for Children’s’ Aid.” *Indianapolis Star*, December 2, 1922.

The Smith College Monthly. Vol. IX, No. 8 (May 1902).

Zeigler, Connie J. “Burns and James” and “Burns, Lee.” *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4.37

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 540771 | Northing: 4402333 |
| 2. Zone: 16 | Easting: 540771 | Northing: 4402500 |
| 3. Zone: 16 | Easting: 540937 | Northing: 4402549 |
| 4. Zone: 16 | Easting : 540937 | Northing: 4402333 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The west boundary is the east side of N. Washington Street, approximately 216 feet west of the west façade of the Blanton House. The south boundary intersects this line at a right angle, approximately 295 feet south of the south elevation of the Blanton House. From the meeting point of these two lines at the southeast corner of the boundary, the line runs east 312 feet, turns north at a right angle and continues 610 feet, then turns west at a right angle, running west 312 feet to the east line of N. Washington Street, then runs south 610 feet to the point of origin. The boundaries encompass approximately 4.37 acres and are set within the larger 72-acre Blanton Woods property owned by the Town of Danville.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These boundaries encompass the extent of the extant historic resources, including the buildings, structures, and designed landscape. Although the original landscape plan included an orchard and “ravine tangle” to the north, these features are no longer extant.

Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

Hendricks County, Indiana

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Benjamin L. Ross
organization: RATIO Architects, Inc.
street & number: 101 S. Pennsylvania Street
city or town: Indianapolis state: Indiana zip code: 46204
e-mail: BRoss@RATIOarchitects.com
telephone: 317-275-6965
date: October 2014

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

City or Vicinity: Danville

County: Hendricks

State: Indiana

Photographer: Benjamin L. Ross

Date Photographed: June 26, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 43. View of context on N. Washington Street, facing northwest
- 2 of 43. View of Playhouse, Main House, and drive from N. Washington Street, facing east
- 3 of 43. View of approach along drive, facing northeast
- 4 of 43. View of Playhouse and Main House, with flower garden hedge at right, facing northeast
- 5 of 43. View of Main House, facing northeast
- 6 of 43. View of Main House, facing southeast
- 7 of 43. View toward N. Washington Street from front door, facing west
- 8 of 43. View of north elevation of Main House, facing southeast
- 9 of 43. View of Playhouse and Main House, facing south
- 10 of 43. View of Playhouse and former vegetable garden clearing, facing northeast
- 11 of 43. View Playhouse and former vegetable garden clearing, facing north
- 12 of 43. View of Chicken House, facing northwest
- 13 of 43. View of back yard, facing south
- 14 of 43. View of east elevation of Main House, facing west
- 15 of 43. View of Main House in context, facing northwest
- 16 of 43. View of terrace, facing south
- 17 of 43. View of terrace, facing north
- 18 of 43. Detail of dining room bay window and kitchen addition, facing northwest
- 19 of 43. View south terrace on site of former flower garden, facing north

- 20 of 43. Detail of front door, facing east
- 21 of 43. Detail of conductor head and downspout, facing southeast
- 22 of 43. Detail of dormer, facing northeast
- 23 of 43. View of entrance hall, facing east
- 24 of 43. View of entrance hall, facing west
- 25 of 43. Detail of newel post, facing northeast
- 26 of 43. Detail of paneling and crown molding, facing south
- 27 of 43. View of Living Room, facing south
- 28 of 43. View of Living Room, facing west
- 29 of 43. Detail of Living Room crown molding and integral window cornice, facing southeast
- 30 of 43. View of Dining Room, facing southeast
- 31 of 43. View Den, facing north
- 32 of 43. Detail of Den pendant, facing northeast
- 33 of 43. View of Side Hall, facing north
- 34 of 43. View of Kitchen, facing northeast
- 35 of 43. View of Kitchen, facing south
- 36 of 43. View of Garage, facing west
- 37 of 43. View of Family Room, facing southeast
- 38 of 43. View of basement stair, facing north
- 39 of 43. View down main stair from second floor, facing west
- 40 of 43. View of bathroom, facing east
- 41 of 43. Detail of original plumbing fixtures, facing southeast
- 42 of 43. View of East Bedroom showing built-in and wainscoting, facing northeast
- 43 of 43. View along main second floor corridor, facing south

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton House, 625 N. Washington Street, Danville, Hendricks County, Indiana, 2016



Site Plan over 2013 aerial photo

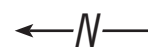
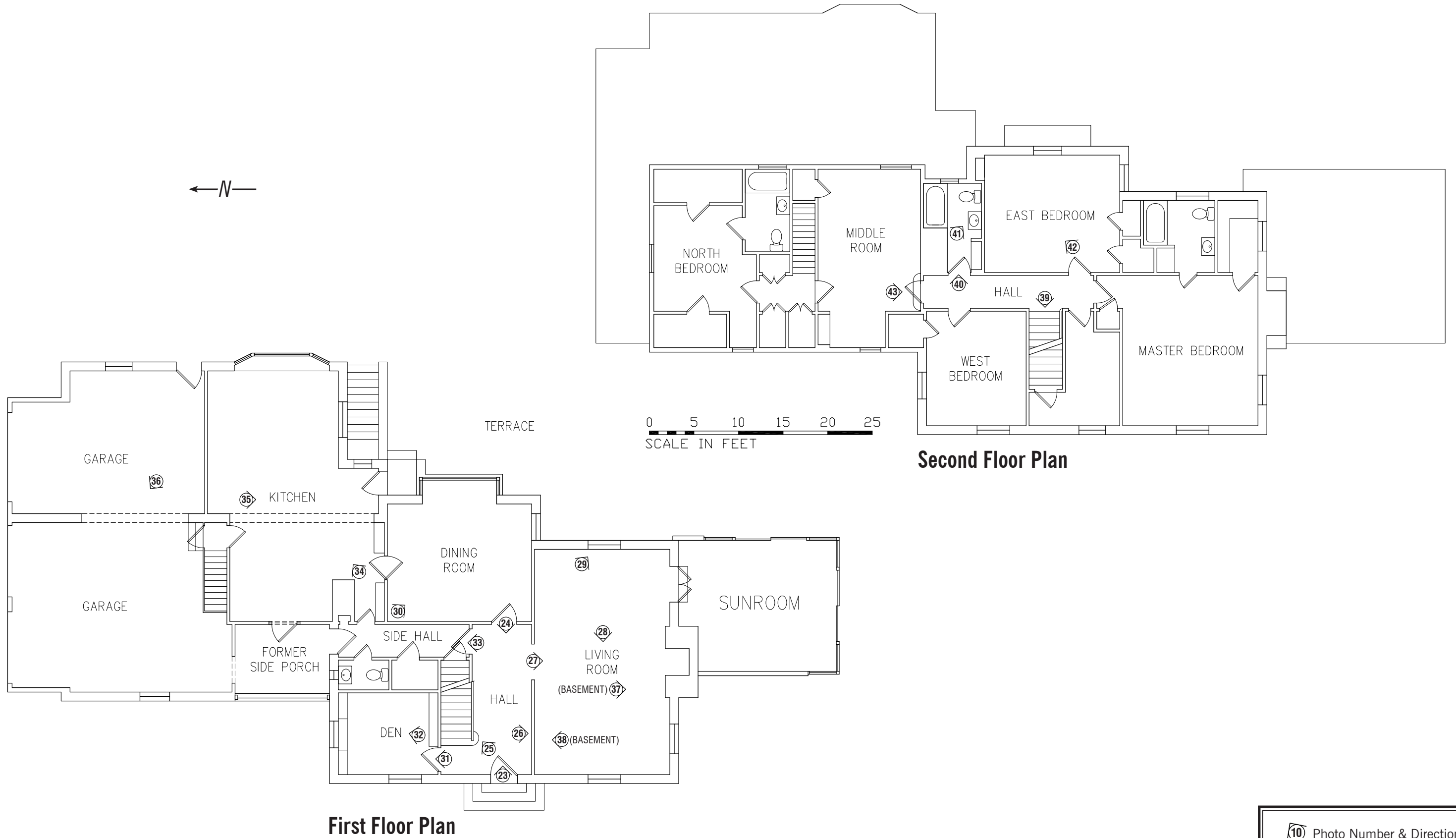
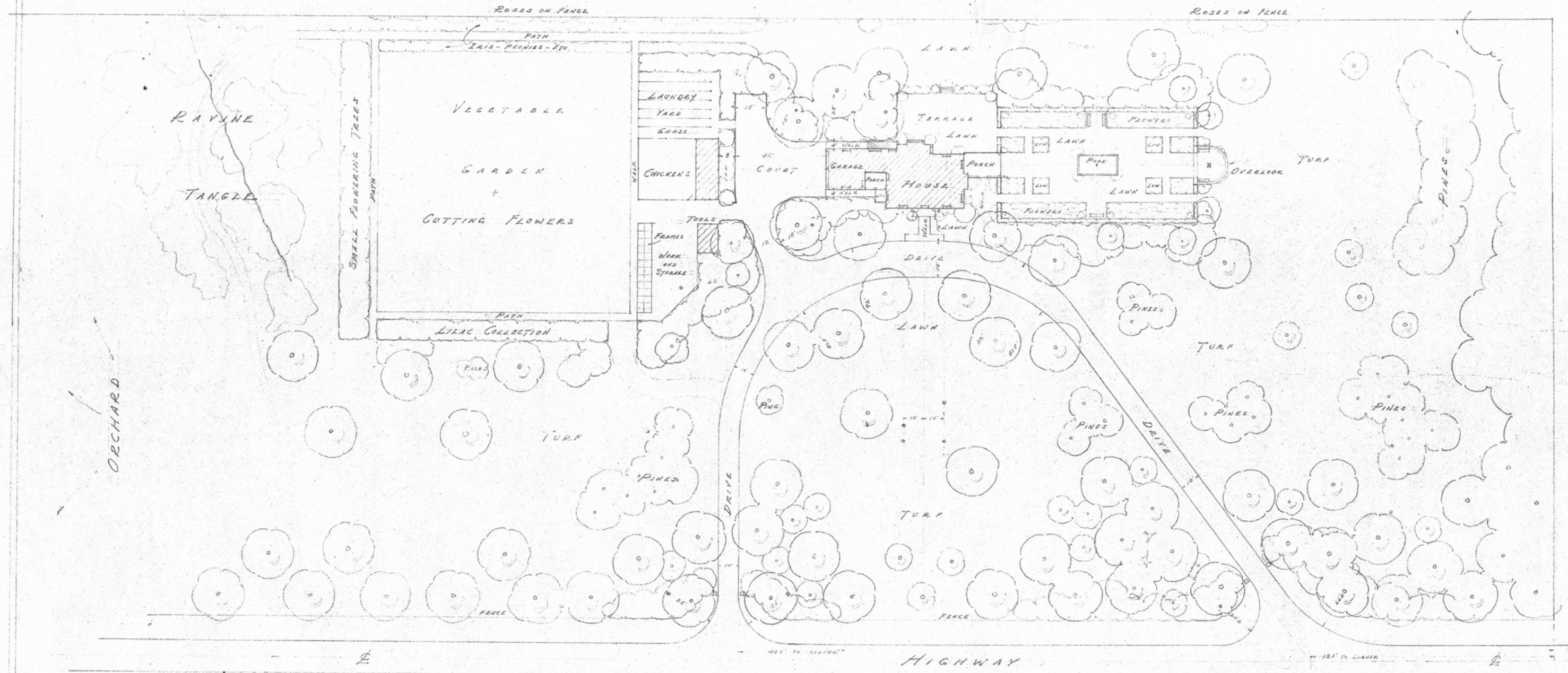


 Photo Number & Direction
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Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton House, 625 N. Washington Street, Danville, Hendricks County, Indiana, 2016



Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton House, 625 N. Washington Street, Danville, Hendricks County, Indiana, 2016



GENERAL PLAN FOR THE PROPERTY OF MR F.W. BLANTON
BURNS AND JAMES - ARCHITECTS
SCALE 1"=20'
DONALD B. JOHNSTON - LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Donald B. Johnston
12/16/35

1935 site plan

Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton House, 625 N. Washington Street, Danville, Hendricks County, Indiana, 2016



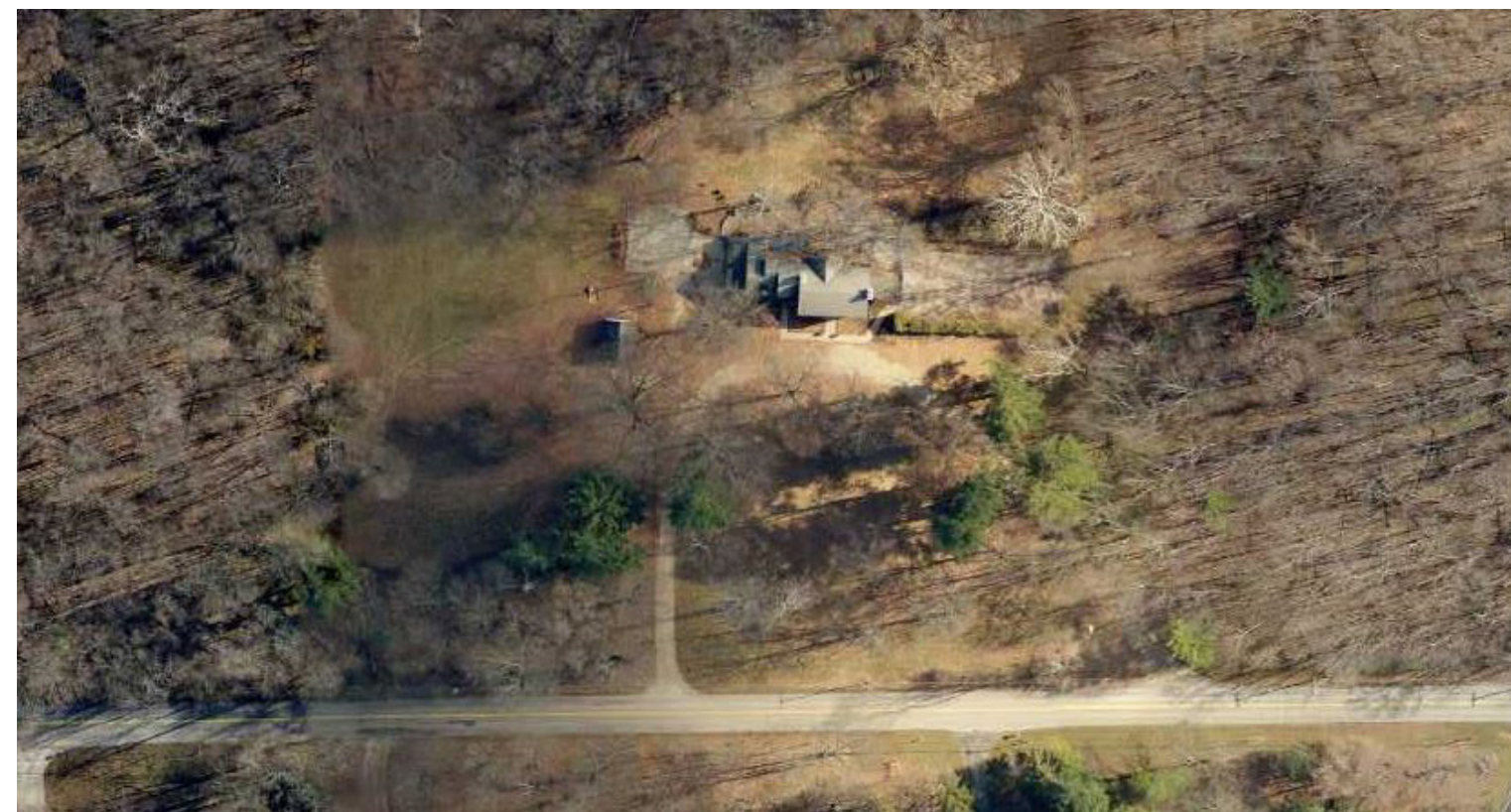
1939 aerial photograph



1949 aerial photograph



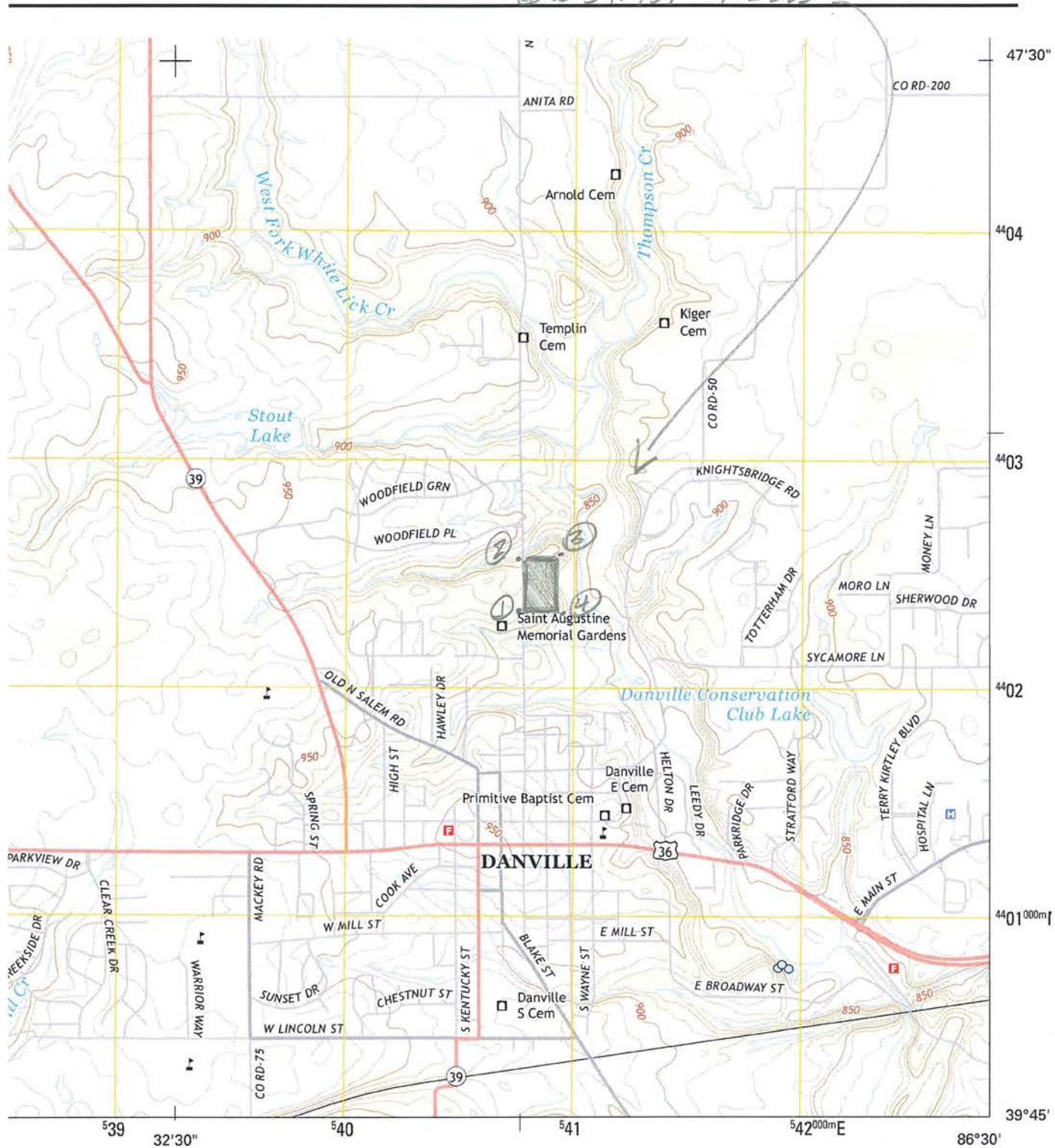
1958 aerial photograph



2013 aerial photograph

Forest W. and Jeannette Wales Blanton House, 625 N. Washington Street, Danville, Hendricks County, Indiana, 2014

NAD 83 UTM 5 16 540 771 4402 333
② 16 540 771 4402 500 ③ 16 540 937 4402 549
④ 16 540 937 4402 333



USGS Map: Danville Quadrangle, Indiana - Hendricks Co., 7.5-minute series























































































CAUTION
STEP DOWN

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Blanton, Forest W. and Jeannette Wales, House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: INDIANA, Hendricks

DATE RECEIVED: 7/29/16 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/18/16
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 9/02/16 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/13/16
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 16000612

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 9.12.16 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in
The National Register
of
Historic Places

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

DNR Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology • 402 W. Washington Street, W274 • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739
Phone 317-232-1646 • Fax 317-232-0693 • dhpa@dnr.IN.gov • www.IN.gov/dnr/historic

Michael R. Pence, Governor
Cameron F. Clark, Director



July 21, 2016

Dr. Stephanie Toothman
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service 2280
National Register of Historic Places
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, N.W.
Washington D.C. 20005

RECEIVED 2280

JUL 29 2016

Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

Re: Forest W. and Jeanette Wales Blanton House, Hendricks County, Indiana

Dear Dr. Toothman,

Enclosed is a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Forest W. and Jeanette Wales Blanton House, Hendricks County, Indiana. The Indiana Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the application and voted to recommend its approval to the National Register of Historic Places.

The enclosed disc contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the Forest W. and Jeanette Wales Blanton House (Hendricks County, Indiana) to the National Register of Historic Places.

Please address any questions you or your staff may have about this nomination to my National Register staff members, Paul Diebold or Holly Tate.

Sincerely,

Cameron F. Clark
State Historic Preservation Officer

CFC:PCD:pcd

enclosure: nomination package