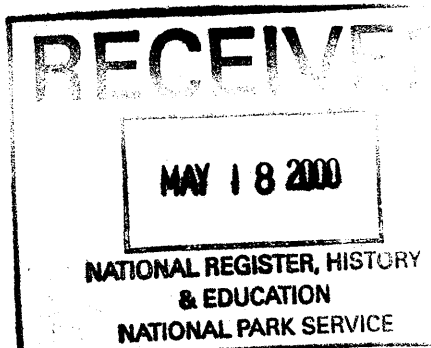


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



689

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell, House

other names/site number Eastcliff

2. Location

street & number 176 N. Mississippi River Blvd.

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota

code MN

county Ramsey

code 123

zip code 55104

not for publication

vicinity

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official Ian R. Stewart

Date 5/8/00

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

Minnesota Historical Society

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 of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Ball

6/15/00

Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell, House
Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota
County and State

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)

- buildings(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
2	3	structures
0	1	objects
5	4	Total

Name 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
the National Register**

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC, single family

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC, single family

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th and 20th CENTURY REVIVALS
Colonial Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE
walls WOOD, weatherboard
roof WOOD, shake, ASPHALT
other STONE

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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.)

Property is:

- 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1921, 1930

Significant Dates

1921, 1930

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Johnston Sr., C.H.
Johnston Jr., C.H.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

Primary Location of Additional Data

- 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 # _____

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Minnesota Historical Society

Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell, House
Name of Property

Ramsey County, Minnesota
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.62 acres

UTM References St. Paul West, Minn. 1967, revised 1993
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<u>15</u>	<u>484350</u>	<u>4976800</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Thomas R. Zahn, Steve Mueller
organization Thomas R. Zahn & Associates date August 26, 1999
street & number University Club, 420 Summit Avenue telephone 651-221-9765
city or town Saint Paul state Minnesota zip code 55102

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 University of Minnesota
street & number 335 Morrill Hall, 319 15th Avenue SE telephone 612-625-5000
city or town Minneapolis state Minnesota zip code 55455

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. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
Ramsey County, Saint Paul, Minnesota

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The Edward Sr. and Markell Brooks House, now known as "Eastcliff," is located on a 1.62-acre site above the eastern bluff of the Mississippi River. The property sits along North Mississippi River Boulevard, which is a meandering roadway following the river bluff that provides access to large, city estates. Developed primarily in the 1920s through the mid-century, the lots to the east of North Mississippi River Boulevard provide a spacious, park-like home to many fine examples of Saint Paul's eclectic and revival style architecture.

The Brooks estate which consists of the main house, a five-stall garage, a bath house, a swimming pool, a tennis court and a more recently added pergola (non-contributing structure), is located on a heavily wooded and richly planted site that occupies nearly 10 city lots. North Mississippi River Boulevard defines the property boundary to the west, Dayton Avenue to the north, Otis Avenue to the east, and a private residential site to the south. The property is primarily surrounded on all four sides by a decorative wood fence (non-contributing structure), and partially at the southeast corner by a tall, wire tennis court fence that is covered in vines.

The Main House (contributing building)

The exterior of the two-story Colonial Revival main house has gone through little change since its construction in 1921-22 and expansion in 1930. Sitting on a poured concrete foundation with a full basement, the house displays two major wings that form an L-footprint (81 ft. by 123 ft.). The building is clad in wide wooden clapboard siding and the roof is sheathed in wood shingles. The primary or west wing runs roughly north and south, parallel with the Boulevard. The secondary or north wing faces Dayton Avenue running east and west.

The architectural features that define the Brooks House as Colonial Revival are: the side-gabled massing framed by massive brick chimney stacks; wood shingles; Adamesque cornice with returns and brackets; the broad clapboard siding that mimics the proportions of shingle siding; the shuttered, multi-paned,

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
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double-hung windows with entablature; the use of Palladian windows; the projecting two-story bay defining the main entrance; the paneled front door framed by sidelights; the carved fan panel above the entrance; the entrance carriage lanterns; and the swags carved into the frieze above the main oriel window. Features that show creative interpretation of the style are: the lack of symmetry in the placement of the main façade entrance; the exaggerated size of the oriel window above the entrance; the sloping roof on the back of the house; the playful use of windows above, below and at the cornice line; and the elegant, unique Palladian oriel window sets found in the inner terrace area.

The primary public façade, on the west wing, displays an imposing main entrance, a porte cochère to the north, and sunrooms on both levels at the south end. Two tall brick chimneys frame the massing—one at the north gabled end, and the other at the south end of the former main living quarters. The first-story fenestration consists of large 8-over-8 double-hung windows that are framed by tall, louvered shutters with oval/parrot-shaped panel cutouts toward the top. Located above each of the first-story windows are 6-over-6 double-hung, second-story windows. The windows on the upper level are shorter than those below, and are framed by louvered shutters.

The main entrance is centered in a two-story bay with an end gable that projects westerly from the west wing's primary façade. The front door is flanked with sidelights and crowned with a bracketed, multi-paned, oriel window. Large carriage lanterns hang on either side of the entrance and stair window composition. The end gable displays bracketed returns at the lower roofline.

The single-story porte cochère, to the north, is supported by sets of paired posts, and displays a paneled and latticework balustrade above. The sunrooms to the south display tall multi-paned casement windows on the first-story level and shorter multi-paned casement windows above.

The secondary north-facing façade runs parallel to Dayton Avenue and displays a variety of architectural elements including a massive brick stack on the gable end of the west wing, the porte cochère, a variety

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
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of single and paired windows, side entrances, and a first-story bay window. The bay window was added in 1986-88 with the expansion of the formal dining rooms, and partially replaced a recessed, first-story porch that displayed arched, side openings. Symmetrically placed on the roof are two eyebrow windows. A third brick chimney stack projects through the roof toward the easterly end of the north wing.

The south facing elevations are composed of the gabled end of the west wing and the inner court façade of the north wing. The most southerly façade of the west wing displays an end gable with corner pilasters. Projecting off the sunrooms to the east is a small two-story extension, which was added to the house in 1926. The fenestration on this façade is similar to that of the main façade. The inner terrace façade displays a series of tall multi-paned double-hung windows and French doors on the first level and three Palladian oriel windows that project through the eaves above. At the easterly end of the inner façade is a southerly projecting wing that is defined by a stone clad first story and a massive brick chimney stack. The chimney is flanked on the second story by four narrow 8-paned casement windows to the west and a projecting, bracketed bay with four similar windows to the east. The roof of the easterly wing is hipped with the roofline sweeping down to a single-story height in the back.

The most easterly façade of the main house faces an asphalt parking pad and displays 6-over-6 double-hung windows with shutters on the first floor. A wide dormer on the second story displays five, short, and individually placed 6-over-6 double-hung windows. Until the construction of the detached garage in 1930, the first story housed a three-stall garage with access from the east.

Although the main floor interiors of the Brooks House have gone through considerably more change through time than the exterior, much remains of the original charm and warmth. The main floor entrance foyer retains its elegant circular Georgian staircase with iron grillwork and wooden balustrade. The living room is to the right of the stair hall entry. The south end of the living room is dominated by a fireplace flanked by French doors providing access to the sunroom at the most southerly end of the west wing.

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The bookcases on the north wall of the room, originally half-height, now extend up to the crown molding.

The sunrooms were originally designed as screened sun porches on both first and second floors. The original sun porch footprint was nearly doubled in size with an expansion to the east in 1930. At that time the original screened porches were enclosed with multi-paned casement windows. The sunroom on the first floor displays a glazed tile floor, a niche on the fireplace back, a wood ceiling, and an abundance of windows on three sides.

Looking east from the entrance foyer are French doors providing access to the inner court terrace. Directly north of the foyer are the "Peacock Bar" and the "Walnut Den." Originally a powder room, the "Peacock Bar" is clad in mirrors painted with peacock eyes by the modernist Frank Post.

The "Walnut Den" directly north of the bar remains largely unchanged. (The room originally served as Mr. Brooks' private library.) The room has a glazed tile floor, walnut paneled walls, a corner brick-faced fireplace, and a beamed ceiling.

On the north wall, adjacent to the "Walnut Den" is a vestibule providing access to the house from the side porte cochère. Originally, a door off the side vestibule provided access to a hallway. The interior hallway and porch walkway ran nearly the entire length of the north wing. At the east end of the porch was an access door leading to an attached three-stall garage. A subsequent need for adequate accessibility and larger reception and dining space, have caused considerable modification to the 1st floor plan of the north wing. The original plan accommodated a small "Peacock" dining room, a butler's pantry, a family kitchen, a maid's sitting room and the garage to the east.

Modern renovations in 1985 began with the removal of the inner hallway wall, and interior modifications produced a large open dining room, a breakfast room in place of the maid's sitting room, a domestic kitchen, and a large catering kitchen in the original garage area. A 1930 addition to the south of the

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easterly end of the wing now provides a bath and service room/office. An original side entrance and back stair separate the domestic kitchen from the catering kitchen. Three pairs of French doors provide access from the dining room and the breakfast room to the inner terrace.

In 1991 the University constructed a handicap accessible restroom facility off the entry hall at the porte cochère.

The second floor of the house basically retains its original configuration with a master bedroom suite, sun room and office in the west wing, and a long inner hallway providing access to a series of bedrooms with attached baths, and a back den in the north wing.

The basement has a large amusement room and boiler room in the main wing, and a sauna, laundry and half bath in the northern wing. The basement does not extend under the sunroom to the south or the original garage area to the east.

The Secondary Structures

The Garage (contributing building)

Anchoring the northeast corner of the property is a five-stall garage with a staff apartment above. The location of the garage on the site was carefully selected to form one side of a service court behind the house. Its location on the corner of Dayton and Otis Avenues was intended to complete the enclosure of the site and define the northeasterly corner of the estate. By the time the garage was built in 1930, the neighborhood to the east had become more fully developed. Gone was the heavily wooded area that had attracted the Brooks family to the site. The new garage was intended to buffer the estate from the encroaching neighborhood to the east.

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The garage is a one-and-a-half story wood frame structure (22 ft. by 60 ft.) with a full basement below and staff living quarters above on the second story. The exterior is in the Colonial Revival style with wide clapboard siding, end-gables, gable returns, and a brick chimney stack to the north, and an asphalt shingled roof (originally wood shingled). The stall doors face west and are crowned with an entablature and dentils. A flat-roofed wall dormer is centered above each stall door at the cornice line. The dormers hold 6-over-6 double-hung windows.

At the northwest corner of the garage is a recessed entry porch with a door into the garage to the south, and a door to the east leading to the second-story stair. The north-facing wall of the garage displays a large arched, multi-paned stair window crowned with a key block. The east-facing façade displays three, low double hung windows on the first floor, and mirrors the west-facing façade with five flat-roofed wall dormers at the cornice line. The south-facing façade displays an upper-story apartment entry door with an exposed exterior stair to grade.

The first floor of the garage contains five parking stalls and an entrance to the living quarters on the second floor. The second floor contains an entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, laundry room and two bedrooms. The basement contains a shop and the swimming pool heater and filtration equipment.

The Bath House (contributing building)

The bath house, constructed in 1923 and expanded to double its size in 1930, backs onto Otis Avenue at the east end of the property, and overlooks the north/south oriented pool. The one-story structure (13 ft. by 41 ft.) displays a tall gabled roof and lower, side hipped roofs all covered in asphalt shingles (originally wood shingles). The Colonial Revival style building is clad in wide clapboard siding with corner pilasters flanked by side pilasters. Its most striking feature is the westerly projecting gable that is supported on a series of posts forming a Palladian motif—openings in three parts, divided by posts,

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with a flat lintel over each side and an arch over the center. The center opening frames an exterior-facing fireplace.

The bath house contains separate dressing and toilet/shower rooms for men and women. The toilet/shower rooms have marble wainscots and partitions. The building has no basement.

The Swimming Pool (contributing structure)

The present pool, constructed in 1930, replaced a smaller pool, which was added to the property in 1923. The 1923 pool had an east/west orientation and was located close to the inner terrace area of the main house.

The existing pool, with a north-south orientation, was constructed to the easterly end of the property adjacent to the enlarged bath house. It is basically rectilinear and runs parallel with the main, west-facing façade of the bath house. A diving board is centered on the gently curving southerly end of the pool, and at the northerly corners of the pool are radiating steps down into the shallow end.

The Pergola (non-contributing structure)

Bordering the pool to the west is a wood pergola (non-contributing structure constructed in 1986-88) that runs north/south and covers a flagstone walkway. The walkway and pergola connect the parking and back of the main house to the north, the yard and terrace walkways to the west, the pool to the east, and the tennis court to the south. Looking from the terrace and back yard, the pergola displays two large wood arches that mirror the arch in the center bay of the bath house, and mark the access path from the pergola to the pool area immediately to the east.

The Tennis Court (contributing structure)

The asphalt tennis court, constructed prior to 1931, is located at the southeast corner of the property and has an east/west orientation. The court is surrounded on the north, south, and west sides by a wire

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
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fence approximately 12 feet in height that is covered in vines. The east end of the court displays a tall wood practice wall, approximately 10 feet tall, that backs onto Otis Avenue. The court fence and practice wall serves as a formidable buffer and visual barrier between the estate and the neighborhood to the east.

The Site

A tall spoke fence (non-contributing structure) defines the estate on most of its four sides. The original fence of similar design was replaced in 1986-88. The fence completely surrounds the estate except where it is interrupted by the south wire fence of the tennis court and the back/east-facing wall of the garage. The spoke fence ranges in height from 9 feet down to 5 feet as it traverses the back of the property, steps down to the west toward North Mississippi River Boulevard, and travels across the front of the property. Vehicular access is provided through three openings in the Dayton Avenue fence line—one serves as a service entrance to the garage and parking slab at the back of the property, and two gates serve the asphalt horse-shoe drive toward the northwest corner of the site. Primary vehicular access was originally provided through a gate off North Mississippi River Boulevard. Vehicles entered off the Boulevard, drove through the porte cochère, and exited at the back of the property along Dayton Avenue. Circa 1970, when the Boulevard was lowered to pass under Marshall Avenue to the north, the front entrance to the estate had to be closed. At this same time a stone retaining wall (non-contributing structure) was added to the northwest corner of the property to compensate for the required grade changes.

Two fence gates along Dayton Avenue provide pedestrian access—one to the front entry and the other to the garage/employee apartment entry. The entire fence along Otis Avenue and the easterly half along Dayton Avenue is backed with solid wood panels for privacy.

Large oak trees, that probably pre-date the development of the grounds for residential use, dominate the estate. The arboretum-type grounds are highly vegetated with flowerbeds along the many walkways and

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
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terrace of stone and brick pavers. Photographic documentation indicates that most of the planting beds have been added since the house came into University of Minnesota ownership in late 1950s.

The entrances and main features of the estate are linked by a system of walkways and terraces. Many of the 1921 and 1930 flagstone paths remain. However, with the 1995 removal of the vehicular drive connecting the front and the back of the site along Dayton Avenue, and the introduction of the horse-shoe drop-off drive in the front, pedestrian red brick paved walkways were developed along the Dayton Avenue side of the estate. Red brick terraces were also constructed adjacent to the main house in the inner court. The upper terrace is of mortared brick, and is separated by brick walls and circular stairs from the lower terrace of flagstone. Brick paved surfaces link the Dayton Avenue sidewalk with the north side entrances, the pedestrian drop-off at the northwest corner of the main house, and the main entrance to the west. Flagstone walkways provide access to the southern half of the site connecting the front entry, the inner terrace, the tennis court, the pergola, the pool and the service parking pad between the main house and the garage.

In 1996 five modern outdoor sculptures were installed on the grounds of the estate. They are on loan from the University of Minnesota's Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum collection. Also added to the site in 1999 were a flagpole and plaque (non-contributing object) honoring the University's students, alumni, faculty and staff who gave their lives for their country.

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Brooks, Edward, Sr. and Markell House
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The Edward Sr. and Markell Brooks House in Saint Paul, known as 'Eastcliff,' has drawn wide attention since its construction in 1921. A stately manor, the estate consists of a large two-level Colonial Revival main house, and two auxiliary buildings consisting of a five-stall garage with an apartment above, and a bathhouse. The consideration of its National Register historic significance falls under Criterion C – the embodiment of distinct characteristics of a type, period or method of construction. The estate was built during the period of the 1920s, and embodies many of the flamboyant cultural influences found in that decade. The original owner and occupant of the building was prominent Northwest lumberman Edward Brooks, who hired the celebrated architect Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. and his firm to design the home. The subsequent main house expansion, the garage construction, bath house expansion and pool relocation were also done by the Johnston firm in 1930. Although the estate has experienced more recent alterations to the grounds and the interior, Eastcliff remains one of Saint Paul's best examples of 1920s Colonial Revival style architecture, and a grand representation of the Johnston firm's domestic architecture.

According to Edward Brooks Jr. (the son of the original owner), the decision to build a house in the Colonial Revival style was determined in part by a fondness for a home of this architectural type in Up-State New York—the residence of the Coonleys, very close family friends.¹ It was also a very popular residential style in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s.² Colonial Revival architecture is a product of the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, when early American building styles received widespread attention.³ Advances in printing methods during the closing years of the nineteenth century allowed for the national circulation of books and periodicals featuring accurate illustrations of original colonial American homes. These home styles satisfied a contemporary popular craving for a truly 'American' architectural expression, as opposed to relying upon English, French or Spanish models for their buildings. The early decades of the Colonial Revival architectural movement were marked by a relatively free interpretation of the historic originals. The tenor matured somewhat at the turn of the century, leading to the re-creation of historically accurate details and proportions. Meanwhile, advances in technology allowed for the production of elaborate detailing in wood at a cost the majority of homebuilders could afford. The architecture itself is relatively flexible, following a variety of general

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forms. The homebuilder could choose from either a traditional symmetrical facade, with its great emphasis upon an accentuated front door, or follow an asymmetrical shape (such as at Eastcliff). This flexibility allowed for the incorporation of lifestyle changes, such as the need for attached garages to store the ever-increasing numbers of automobiles in American society. The result became an eclectic blend of ideas drawn from elements of other contemporary building styles, while still unmistakably within the rubric of an 'American' home style. By 1925, in the middle of the decade when Eastcliff was built, of 571 home designs surveyed in the *Architectural Record*, 40.5% were described as Colonial Revival, 16.5% as "English" inspired, 5.5% as "French," and 8.9% as "Spanish."⁴

The 1983 Saint Paul and Ramsey County Historic Sites Survey lists the architect of Eastcliff as Clarence H. Johnston, Sr. (the Minnesota State Architect), while an article published in 1923 in the *Architectural Record* lists the architect's son, C. Howard Johnston, Jr. as the main designer.⁵ The disagreement derives from the fact that, as head of the firm hired to design the building, Clarence H. Johnston, Sr.'s name appears on the building permit as the architect. However, by the 1920s, the drafting of domestic architecture was handled by the other family member of the Johnston firm – his son, Clarence H. Johnston, Jr. (who went by his middle name of Howard).⁶ Although he may not have been directly responsible for the actual design of Eastcliff, Clarence H. Johnston Sr. managed to "keep his hand into every job that the firm had," and doubtless looked over the mansion's design before the plan received final approval.⁷ Construction on the new building began in 1921, and was completed the following year at a cost of \$30,000.⁸

Eastcliff was constructed at 176 North Mississippi River Boulevard, Saint Paul on a site overlooking the Mississippi River. At the time the mansion was built, the neighborhood was heavily wooded and sparsely populated.⁹ The Northern boundary of the property was Dayton Avenue, then a narrow dirt road.¹⁰ The architecture at Eastcliff follows closely the preferences exhibited by other designs of Howard Johnston and his father's firm. His early home designs, beginning in 1911, were bungalows inspired by cottages found in England.¹¹ Eastcliff represents an intellectual development in the man's career. The

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composition of the main elevation is similar to a now razed home built in 1914-15 at 710 Linwood Place, in Saint Paul, and also to the still extant Herbert H. Bigelow summerhouse built in 1916-17 at 54 Peninsula Road, in Dellwood. The latter site's complex internal layout and picturesque character is also continued in Eastcliff, highlighted by the choice of boulders to face the building.¹² Another Johnston domestic design with similar features is the Dean B. Gregg house (built in 1916, at 11 Kenwood Parkway, Saint Paul). A similar fan design over the street entrance, along with the playful theme of cutout parrot silhouettes within the shutters are echoed at Eastcliff. Howard's domestic designs continued to follow this evolution after the interruption of the First World War (Howard, like Edward Brooks, also performed military service in the conflict).¹³ Architectural historian Paul Larson notes the greater freedom in the profile and arrangement of the walls and a wider selection of building materials evident in his later domestic designs.¹⁴ Eastcliff is generously sheathed in ten-inch wide wood lap siding. This is in keeping with the Colonial Revival style favored by the Brooks family, and should not necessarily be seen as a conscious decision to employ extensive woodwork as a reflection of the owner's association with the lumber business. The informal, multiple roofed, sprawling manner of Eastcliff, as it reaches back and encloses the yard behind the building, reveals Howard's earlier affiliation with picturesque English cottage styles from before the war. The house he designed for his brother Harrison soon after the construction of the mansion for Edward Brooks, (the H. R. Johnston house, built in 1923, at 12 Crocus Hill) although more modest in scale, displays many similar features to Eastcliff. Again the architectural style is Colonial Revival, employing similar building materials, similar fan design over the entrance, and neo-classical detailing on the porch. Howard shortly returned to the eclectic use of building materials, however. Limestone faced the Hayworth P. Beard house (built in 1924-25, at 34 Kenwood Parkway, Saint Paul), and a variegated brick exterior was used on the W.A. Bauman house (constructed in 1927, at 216 Lake Park Dr., Winona). The complex elevations, similar to that found at Eastcliff, are elegant without being a dogmatic interpretation of a domestic style. All reveal the hand of a masterful architect in their form and composition. Together they represent some of the best examples of the firm's 1920s domestic architecture.¹⁵

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The Johnston firm was hired again in 1930 to design the addition of a separate garage, pool, and bathhouse, while also redesigning the servant's rooms and the portion of the main house that had been a three vehicle garage into a series of bedrooms.¹⁶ The cost for the additions was \$20,000 for the bathhouse, pool, and garage, and \$15,000 for alterations to the main house. A profile of the site was written in the November 1931 issue of *The Amateur Golfer*, a periodical that presented Eastcliff as its "Home of the Month."¹⁷ The mansion's informal hospitality was considered noteworthy. Numerous large trees on the site gave the estate a secluded atmosphere, enhancing an inward focus. The central courtyard behind the main house featured a professional style tennis court (complete with its own judge's stand), and a large swimming pool, while the surrounding 1.65 acres of grounds were described as kept "comparatively wild." Moving indoors, the complex floor plan that was a feature of Howard Johnston, manifested itself as numerous comparatively small rooms, most decorated with their own playful motif (such as large peacocks adorning the walls of the dining room).¹⁸ Other rooms were devoted to specific uses, such as a small room just off the front entrance made up as a telephone booth, complete with its light source coming through an opaque glass ceiling, and a blackboard on the wall for writing messages. Separate hallways on each level provided mobility through much of the mansion. A significant remark made by one of the guests and quoted by the article mentioned a room as "delightfully unusual" – a statement that could very well be applied to the entire original house.¹⁹

Unusual could also be applied to the time period when the mansion was constructed. The decade within which Eastcliff was constructed coincided with a major shift in public behavior. The First World War was over, and the nation was eager for a 'return to normalcy.' The large-scale mobilization of the nation during the world conflict, and the ensuing widespread destruction overseas, dislocated politics and society. Many people lost confidence in the established civil and political principles that had led to the conflict. The decade after the war, known as the 'Roaring Twenties,' favored new ideas, styles, and methods meant to improve life. This vibrant spirit was captured and cast into the immutable fabric of the house Howard Johnston designed and Edward Brooks chose to build. The linear floor plan, unique

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interior decoration, and sprawling expanse make Eastcliff one of the very best examples of the American 1920s Colonial Revival style found in Saint Paul.²⁰

Edward and his wife, Markell, entertained as guests or visitors many people of national recognition at Eastcliff, including Helen Keller (with whom he developed a friendship), Katherine Hepburn, Clark Gable, and Noel Coward.²¹ The mansion remained the residence of Edward Brooks the rest of his life, despite a family inheritance circa 1930 of an opulent Lake of the Isles estate in Minneapolis. Edward died of a heart attack on December 8, 1954, at the age of sixty-six. Four years after Edward passed away, his widow and children graciously donated the mansion to the University of Minnesota, as a new residence for the University President. The previous presidential residence, the Pillsbury House (built in 1877), was in need of renovation (it was later razed). As in the case of the State Governor's residence, the lower floor was made accessible to the public (to use for official receptions and gatherings) while the upper level became the private space for the president and his family. Eastcliff received a major renovation costing nearly \$1.5 million between 1985-1988.²² The first floor was remodeled, yielding its linear, small room arrangement in favor of a more practical, open layout in the north wing. The separate hallway and servants quarters were eliminated, the dining room and kitchen facilities were enlarged, and generally the first floor was made more functional for entertaining large numbers of guests. The changes to the first floor reflect current needs and uses. The facade and the grounds received less extensive alterations, and externally the house remains much as it did seventy years ago. Portions of the first floor interior notwithstanding, the property retains the over all character of the original.

The Brooks House is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C because it embodies distinct characteristics of a type and period of construction. Stately yet informal, Eastcliff is one of Saint Paul's finest and largest remaining urban estates and is an exceptional example of the Colonial Revival residential architecture produced by the Clarence H. Johnston firm in the 1920s.

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¹ Sonia Bowe-Gutman, *Turning the Leaves, The Brooks Family Tree*, Minnesota: s.n., 1995m 144.

² Paul Larson, *Minnesota Architect, The Life and Work of Clarence H. Johnston*, Afton: Afton Historical Society Press, 1996, 144.

³ Virginia Savage and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984, 326.

⁴ Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul C. Larson, *History and Architecture of St. Paul, 1840-1985*, (Unpublished manuscript), August 1988, 22-23.

⁵ Historic Sites Survey, 176 N. Mississippi River Boulevard (Brooks House-East Cliff), Ramsey County Historical Society, Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission, 1981, p.2; *Architectural Record*, vol. 54, no. 5 (Nov. 1923), 480-481.

⁶ Paul Larson, 154-156.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Historic Sites Survey, Ibid.

⁹ Bowe-Gutman, 144.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Paul Larson, 144.

¹² Paul Larson, 156.

¹³ Paul Larson, 145.

¹⁴ Paul Larson, 156; "The University's White House," *The Minnesota Star*, July 27, 1977, 7.

¹⁵ Paul Larson, 156.

¹⁶ Paul Larson, 181.

¹⁷ "The Home Of the Month," *The Amateur Golfer*, November 1931, 35-58.

¹⁸ Ibid. 38.

¹⁹ Ibid. 58.

²⁰ Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul C. Larson, 22.

²¹ Edward Brooks, Jr., Letter dated March 25th, 1972; as found in, *East Cliff Docent Handbook*, 1980.

²² "Audit reveals Eastcliff failures, 'slush' fund," *Star Tribune*, March 10, 1988, 1-5.

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Interview with Margaret "Tracy" Moos, former wife of Malcolm Moos who was President of the University of Minnesota from 1967 to 1974

"Saint Paul, Minnesota, vol. 7, map 715," Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1927

"Saint Paul, Minnesota, vol.7, map 715," Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, New York: Sanborn Map Co., 1949

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Verbal Boundary Description:

DESNOYER PARK
RAMSEY CO., MINN.

VAC ALLEY ADJ AND LOTS 1 THRU 4 AND
NLY 40 FT OF LOTS 5 AND 16 AND
ALL OF LOTS 17 THRU LOT 20 BLK 60

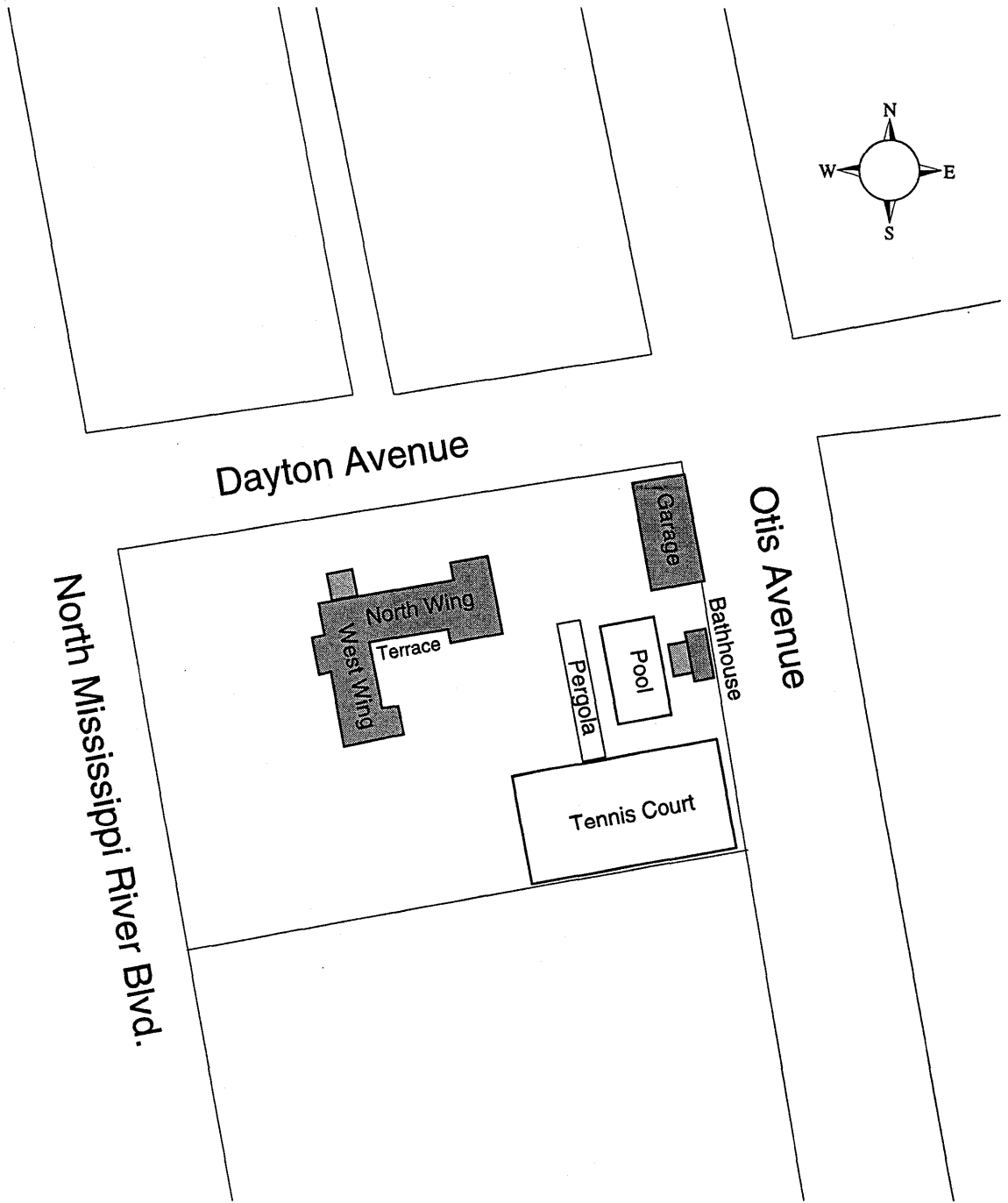
Boundry Justification:

The boundary includes the parcel of land that has historically been associated with the property.

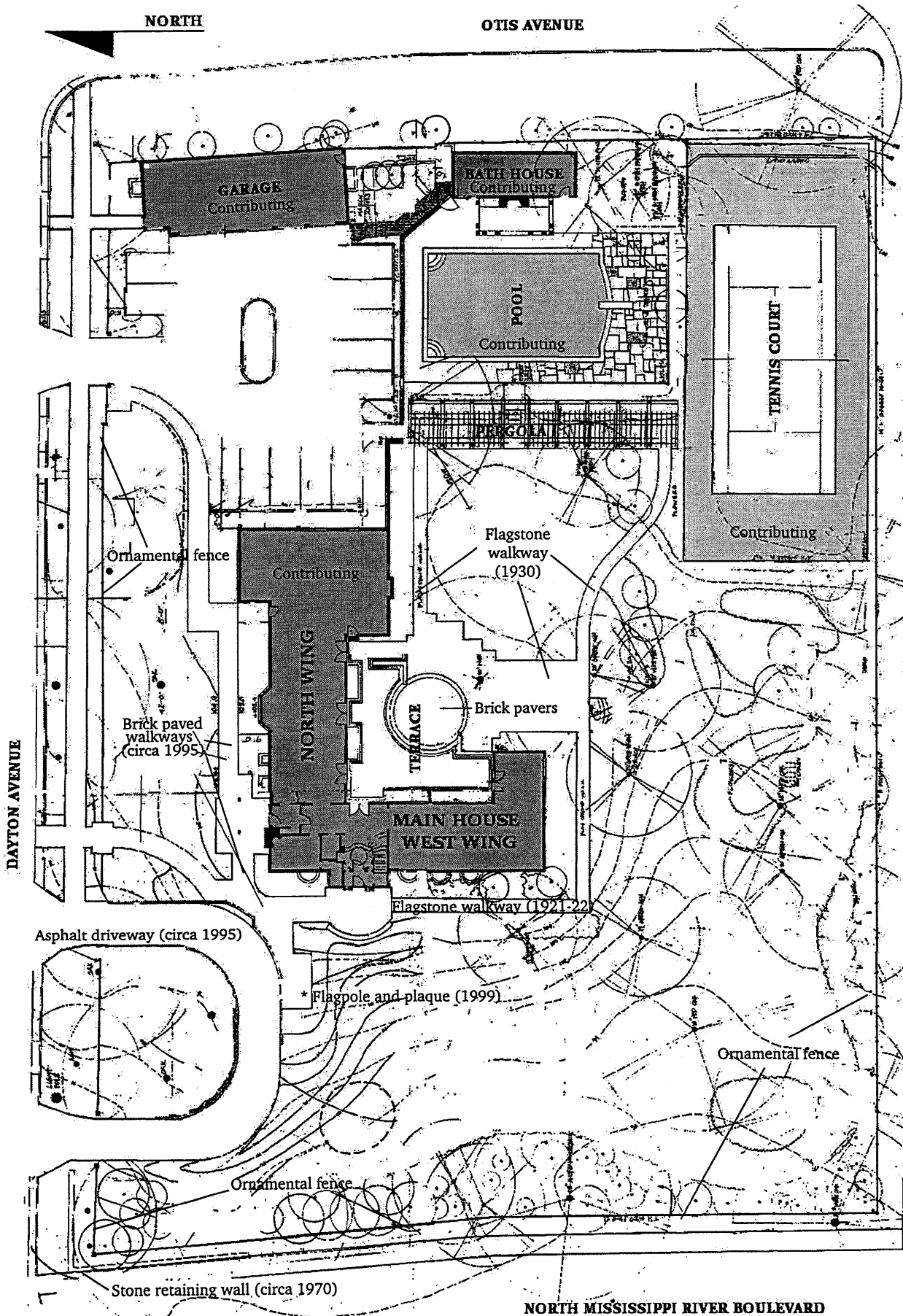
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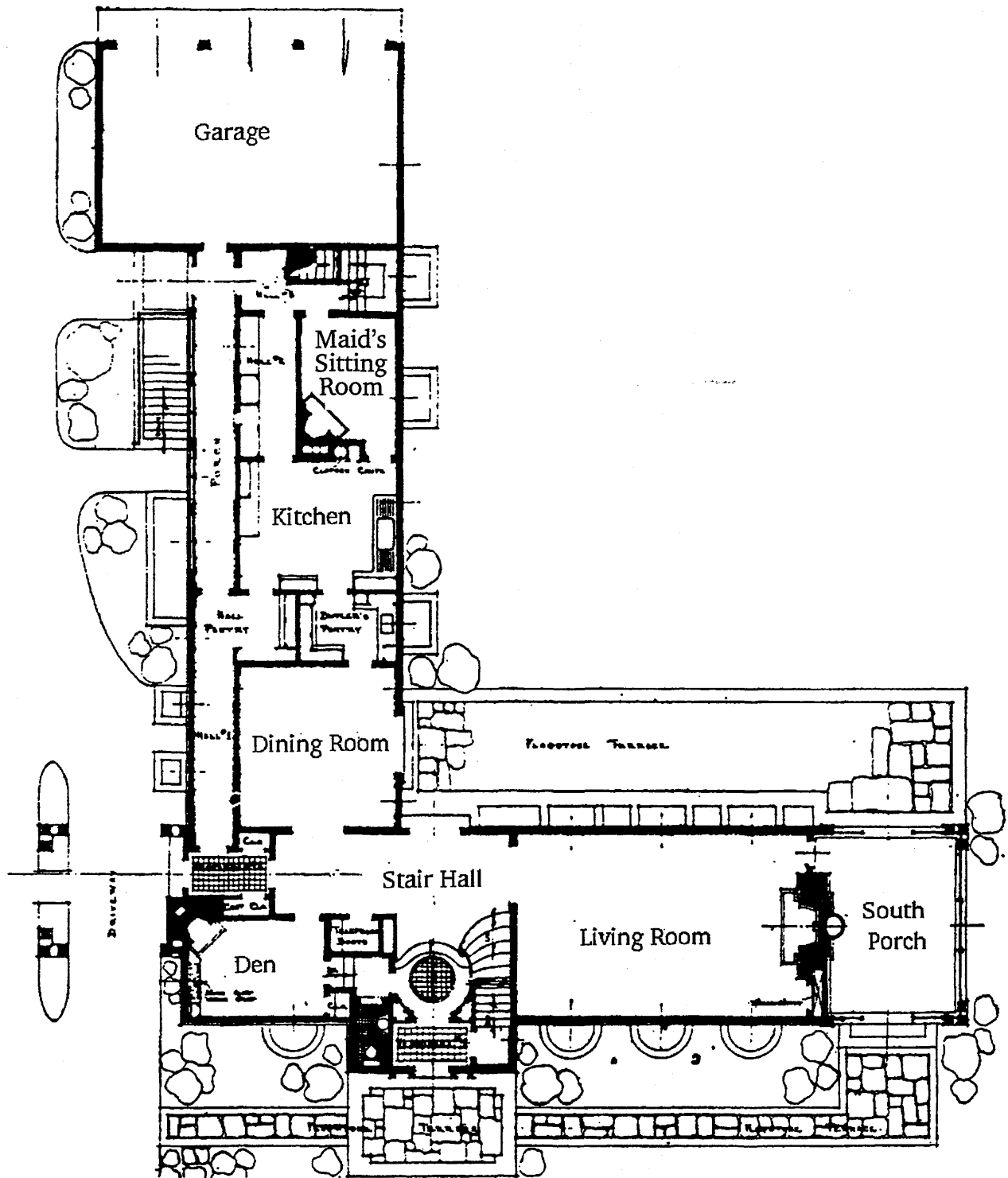
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from Miller Dunwiddie Inc. ARCHITECTS
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- 7 Brooks House second floor, 1999**
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Inner court and original pool, 1924
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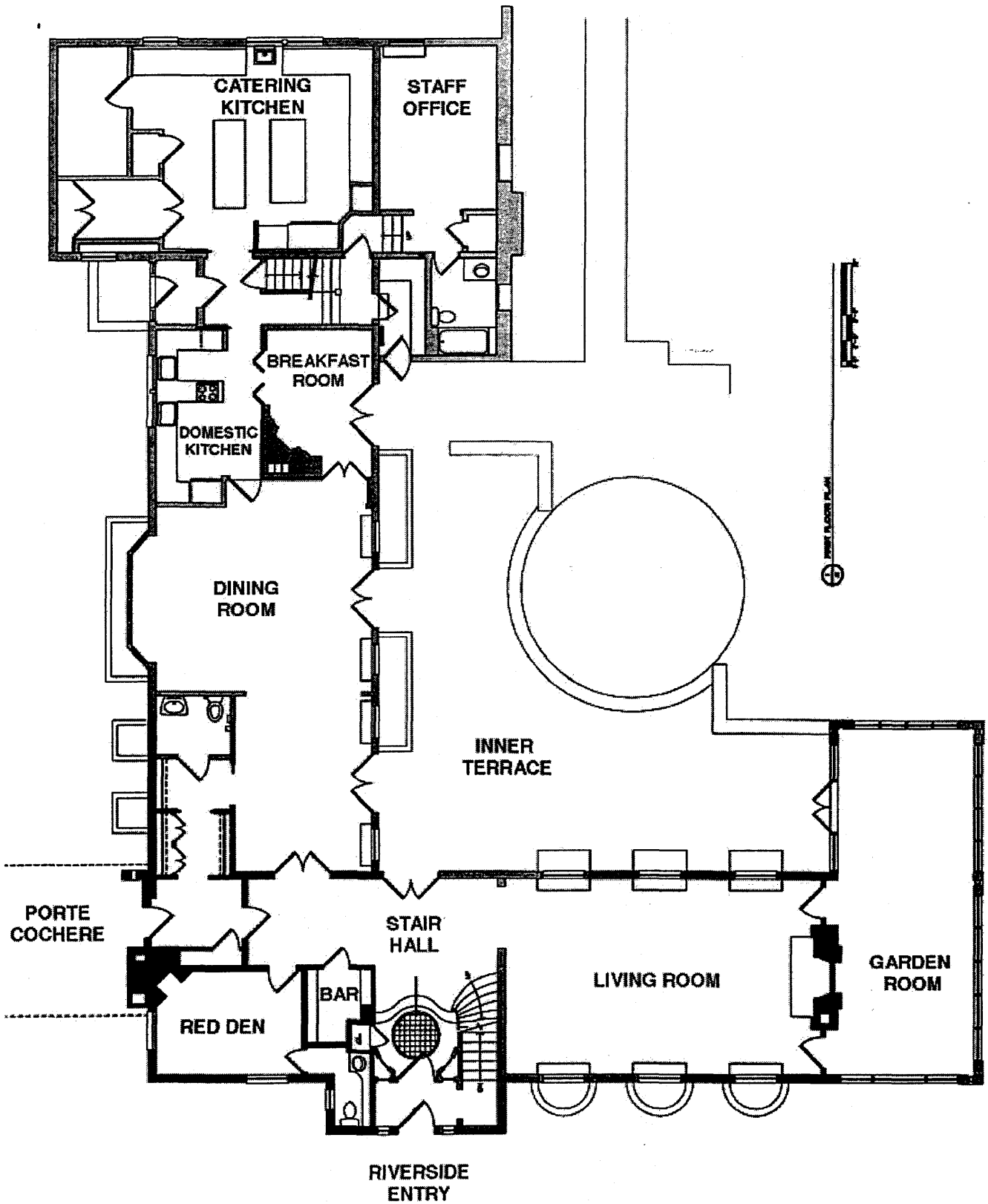


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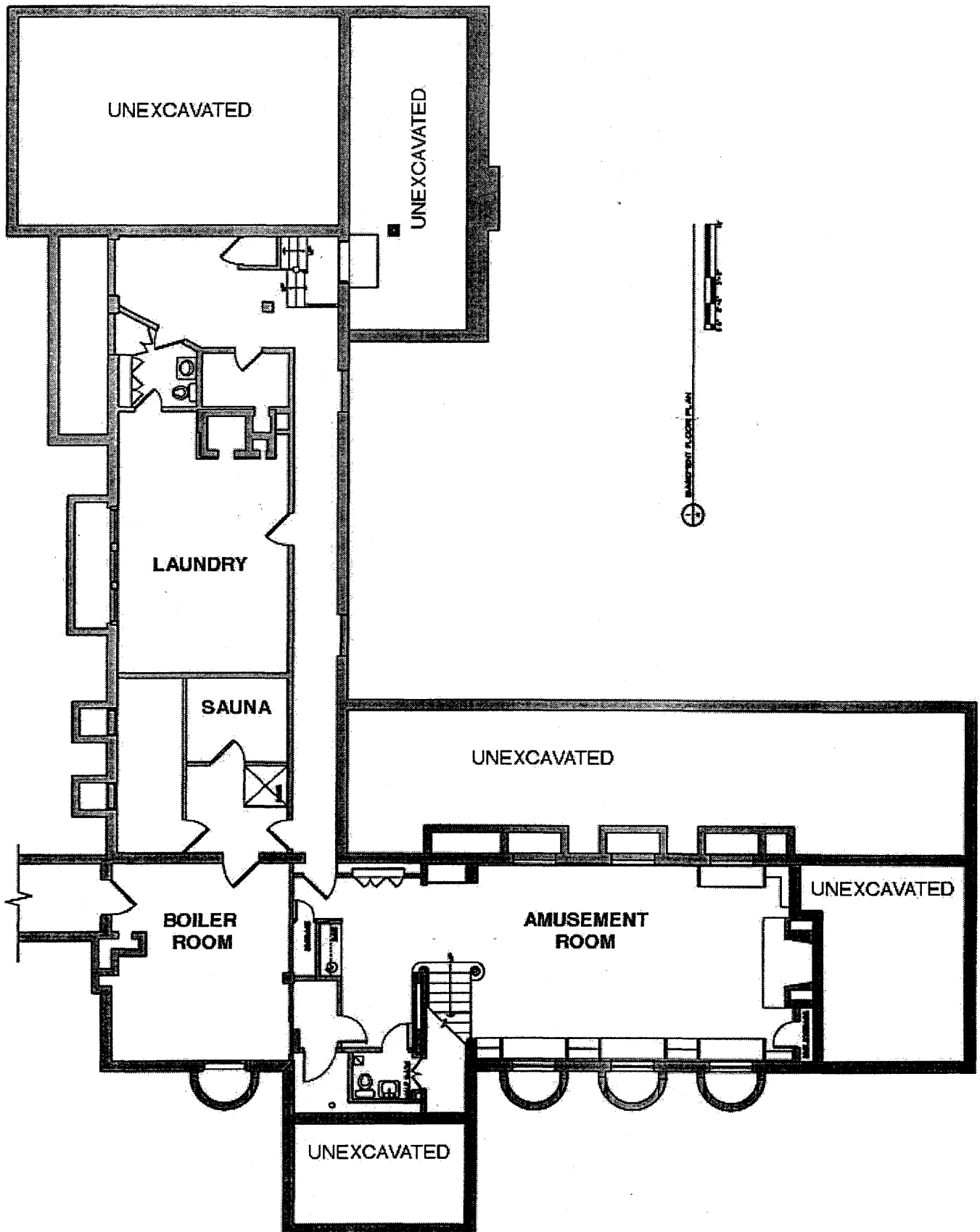




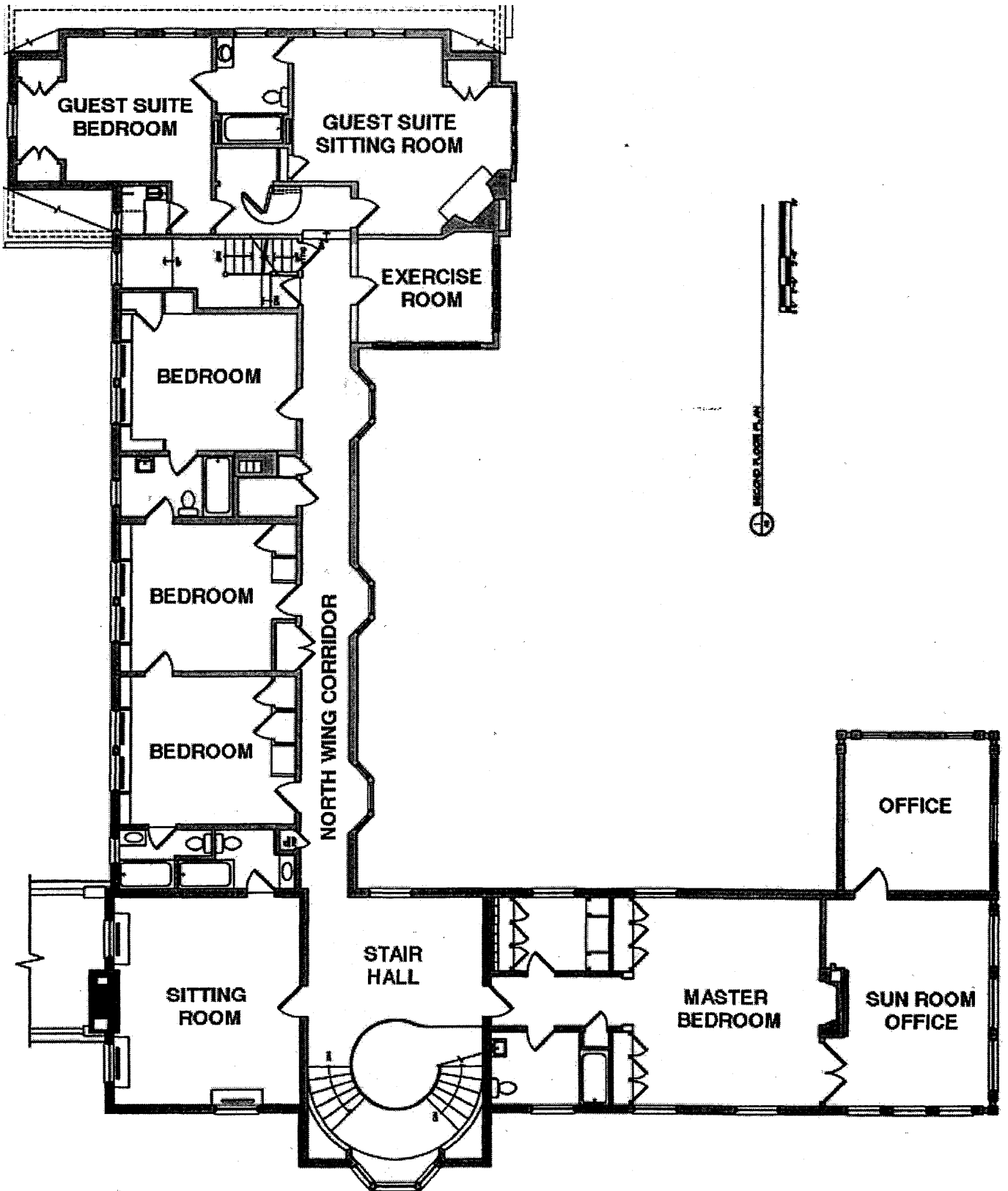
Brooks House first floor as it appeared in 1923



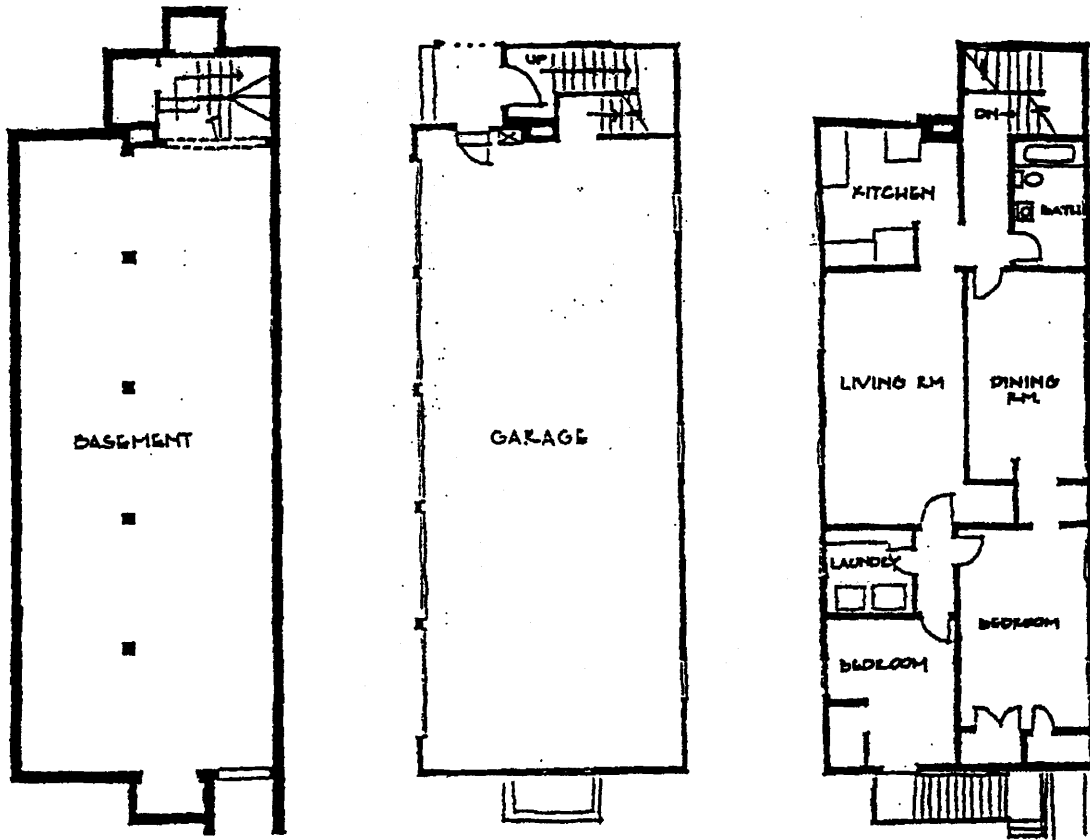
Brooks House first floor, 1999



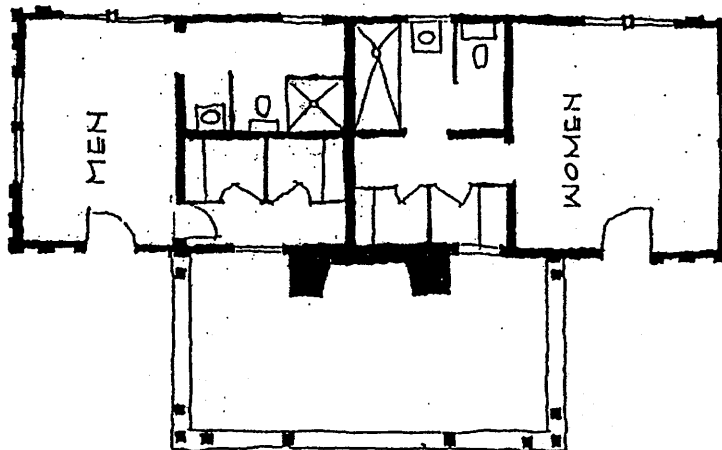
Brooks House basement 1999



Brooks House second floor



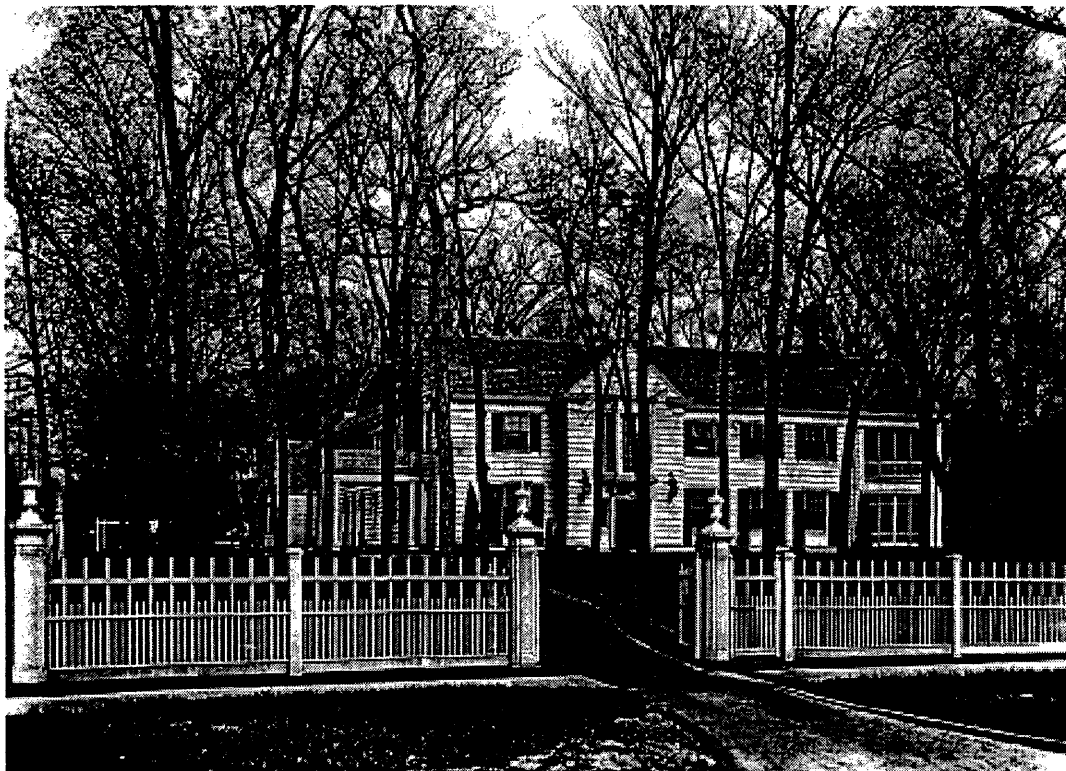
Garage/apartment plans



Bath house plans



Front elevation before fence construction, 1922



Front elevation, 1923



Front elevation looking to the northeast, 1923



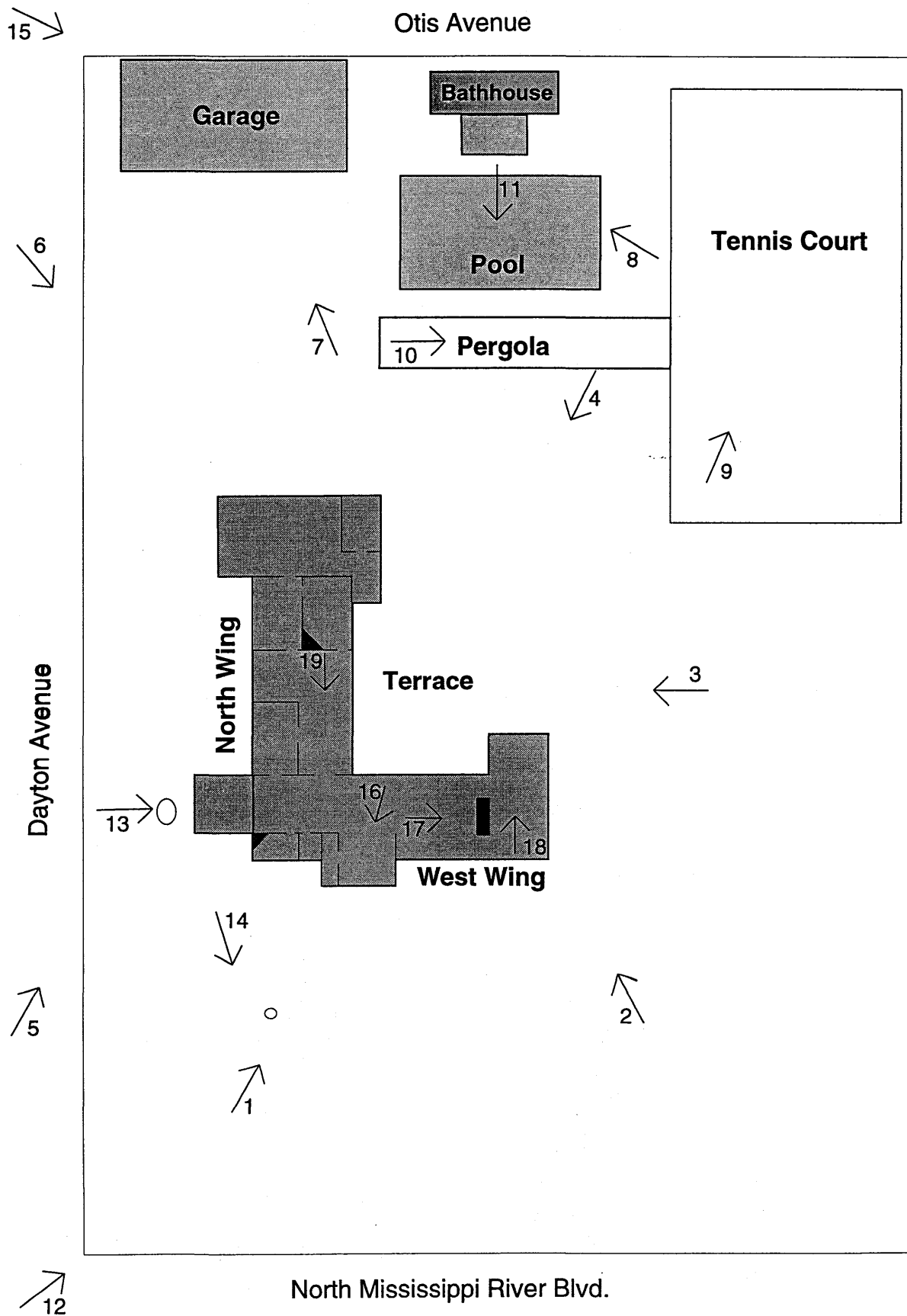
Main entrance, 1923



Inner terrace, 1923



Inner court and original pool, 1924



**Photographic Key to Exterior and Interior
Black and White Photographs**