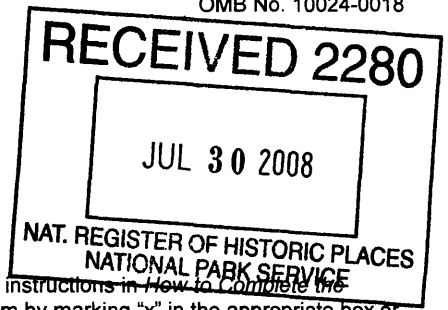


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



289

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 *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 an 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 Colored Hotel
other names/site number Patterson's Hotel; American Legion Post No. 188

2. Location

street & number 208 Nash Street N/A not for publication
city or town Union City N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Obion code 131 zip code 38261

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for 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.)

Richard L. ...
Signature of certifying official/Title

7/24/08
Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

Arada McClelland

8-11-08

Colored Hotel
Name of Property

Obion County, TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object |

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Hotel

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Concrete Block Building

foundation Concrete
walls Concrete Block, Metal, Weatherboard
roof Asphalt
other Wood

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 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 grave
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

c.1945 – c.1975

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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): N/A

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- Previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Colored Hotel
Name of Property

Obion County, TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre Union City, Tenn 427 NE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u> Zone	<u>316903</u> Easting	<u>4032861</u> Northing	3	<u> </u> Zone	<u> </u> Easting	<u> </u> Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Nathan Montague, Brian Beadles / Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Tennessee Historical Commission date 08/07/07
street & number 751 Ashland Ave telephone 716.352.6666
city or town Buffalo state NY zip code 14222

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 SHPO or FPO.)

name Earnest Daniels
street & number 712 Melrose St telephone 731.885.3745
city or town Union City state TN zip code 38261

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 listing. 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 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 Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

DESCRIPTION

The Colored Hotel in Union City (pop 10,876), Obion County, Tennessee, is located at 208 Nash Street. The Colored Hotel is a simple two-story concrete block building constructed circa 1945 with additions from the 1960s and 70s. It has a flat roof and a rectangular plan. A one-story, shed-roofed concrete block kitchen is connected to the building at the west end of the south façade and was also built circa 1945. The first addition was built circa 1965 and is adjacent to and connected to the original building at the east end of the north facade. While it mimics the original building in materials, style, and shape, it is only about 1/3 as deep. The third and fourth additions were added circa 1975. The third addition was added to the west façade of the circa 1965 addition and is wood-framed, shed-roofed, and covered in metal siding. The fourth addition was also built circa 1975 and is one story high, is sided with weatherboard, and has a shed roof. It is connected to the west facade of the hotel.

The building lies in a sparsely developed commercial and residential area. A residence to the south and a restaurant to the north flank it. To the east of the building, across the street, lies mostly vacant land that once contained a small airport. The main façade faces the street and the building abuts the sidewalk (Photos 1, 2, and 3). There is a lawn behind the building but no other landscaping, shrubs, or trees are on the property. The rectangular building features concrete block walls and a shed roof with little added ornamentation.

The east (front) façade has a vertical seam that divides the original building and the circa 1965 addition into a southern half and a northern half (Photo 1). The façade contains a total of eleven openings (one door and ten windows). Eight of the ten windows are boarded up. The southern half of the facade contains symmetrical fenestration, unlike the addition. The first floor has a central entry flanked by window openings. The entrance consists of two concrete steps rising to a replacement metal door surrounded by circa 1980 decorative wood pilasters. The two first floor windows that flank the main entrance each contain a fixed picture window surrounded by four-pane sidelights and a four-pane transom. Most of the glass is broken or missing. The second floor has a central window opening flanked by replacement one-over-one double-hung windows. The circa 1965 addition has stone windowsills and rectangular holes that once contained air conditioning units. The first floor of the addition has two window openings that have been boarded. The second floor has three replacement one-over-one double-hung windows and rectangular holes that once contained air conditioning units. The east façade features two identical stepped parapets, each capped by tile coping, several pieces of which are missing.

The north façade contains two distinct sections: the circa 1965 addition comprises the eastern part and the circa 1975 addition comprises the western part (Photo 2). The circa 1965 addition has two boarded up window openings, one on each story. The parapet wall steps down toward the rear of the building and has tile coping, several pieces of which are missing. The circa 1975 section of the north façade is composed of metal siding and has a metal door as its only opening.

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Section number 7 Page 2

Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

The shed roof slopes down from east to west. The original north façade of the hotel is apparent behind the circa 1975 addition. It has a parapet wall that steps down all the way from the primary façade to the rear of the building. It is capped with tiled coping as well.

The west (rear) façade contains three distinct sections: the northern half of the west façade is the metal-sided circa 1975 addition; the southern half of the rear façade that contains a small one-story, flat-roofed clapboard circa 1975 addition with a metal door; and the original rear façade of the Colored Hotel above that (Photo 3). The rear façade of the northern circa 1975 section is a blank wall with metal siding. The one-story rear addition has a shed roof, weatherboard siding, and a single entry. The original section of the west façade has three openings on the second floor. The original wood back door is centered on the second floor and two windows are missing glass and are partially boarded up. The ghost of an original covered stairway that led from the second floor to the first floor can be seen on the original façade (Photo 2). The roof extends out over the wall to form an eave with exposed wood beams underneath.

The south façade contains a wall of the original hotel and a small one-story, shed-roofed, concrete block addition with two boarded up windows (Photos 1 and 3). The wall has a boarded up doorway at the east end of the façade. There are three window openings on the second floor. The windows are missing from the openings. This façade also has a stepped parapet wall with tile copings.

The first floor of the Colored Hotel contains five distinct areas: the original restaurant and bar, the original kitchen area, the circa 1965 additional floor space, the circa 1975 dance floor addition, and the circa 1975 storage area. The interior of the first floor has been modified significantly since the hotel was built but the original floor plan has been retained. Some of the wall and ceiling material is missing or has been replaced. Original features include the ceiling sheetrock, wood stairway up to the second floor, the doorframes that once led to the original bathrooms, and the layout of the bar and kitchen (Photos 4-8). The circa 1965 addition has an open floor plan that leads to bathrooms at the northern end of the building (Photo 9). The bathrooms in the circa 1965 addition replaced the original bathrooms, which became used for storage. The circa 1975 addition also has an open floor plan, with a dance floor and bar (Photo 10). Low walls delineate the original and additional spaces (Photo 11). The ceiling in the open areas is supported by a series of rectangular wood columns. The first floor maintained its original function as a bar and restaurant from the time the building was built until a few years ago.

The second floor of the hotel contains the original eight hotel rooms and a bathroom for hotel guests, and the circa 1965 addition containing three rooms and a public bathroom (Photos 13-19). The original hotel's second floor has a central hallway with four small rooms on each side (Photo 14). At the west end of the hall are a small bathroom for hotel guests (containing a tub, sink, and toilet) and a door leading outside (Photo 13). The bedrooms are painted different colors and each room has one window. Small gas heaters, none of which remain, heated the rooms (Photo 15).

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National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

The walls in the rooms are either painted concrete block or covered in sheetrock (Photo 16). The ceilings are also covered in sheetrock. The floor plan of the second floor of the hotel remains intact but is in poor condition. The circa 1965 addition has three bedrooms on the east side of a hallway, and a bathroom on the north end of the hallway. The entrance to the addition was cut through an original bedroom (Photo 18). The hallway has a low wall and overlooks the circa 1975 dance floor (Photo 19). The circa 1965 rooms were laid out like the original hotel rooms but included individual air conditioning units. The second floor retains its original door trim as well as some of the original doors.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Colored Hotel is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A as a significant building for African-American social history in Union City. The Colored Hotel was built during a time when it was often difficult for African-American travelers to find accommodations and services. During segregation it was the only hotel in Union City that was open to African-Americans. The hotel also served food and drinks and was an important part of the local African-American community. The building retains integrity through the period of significance that spans circa 1945, which represents the approximate construction date of the original section, through circa 1975, which represents a change in ownership as well as a shift in the focus of the business from hotel to entertainment.

A sizable and active African-American neighborhood emerged in the northeast section of Union City in the first half of the twentieth century. An examination of Sanborn maps reveals the location of at least five African-American churches, as well as three dance halls, and a school that are labeled as colored within the neighborhood. This neighborhood is located on the east side of town, and just north of U.S. Route 51. The Colored Hotel is located on the eastern edge of this neighborhood.

U.S. 51 is a busy interstate highway that was built through Union City in the 1920s. It is a north-south route that is currently about 1,200 miles long and runs from Wisconsin to Louisiana. It has historically been an important route from Memphis to Chicago and many travelers, both white and black, stayed in Union City on their trips between the two cities.

By the 1920s, Americans were taking advantage of the relatively new and affordable freedom that came with automobile travel. The construction of new and better roads allowed Americans to travel greater distances from home. As more and more people began to drive longer distances, businesses began to open that catered to the needs of travelers. Union City was no exception. City directories show that at least three hotels opened in or near downtown. Additionally, a 1927 Sanborn map reveals the location of a filling station, and an auto sales and service station along U.S. 51. Despite the rising numbers of travelers there was no hotel in Union City that catered to African-Americans during this early period of automobile travel.

Because the rise of automobile travel occurred during the era of segregation, African-Americans who took part in the new national trend found that this "freedom" was accompanied by the reality of racism: few roadside services, like hotels and restaurants, catered to African-Americans. Long-distance travel, especially in the South, was often a risky and difficult task.

"...In 1933, Alfred Edgar Smith, an early black motorist, referred to "a small cloud that stands between us and complete motor-travel freedom." "On the trail," Smith continued, "this cloud rarely troubles us

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

in the morning, but as the afternoon wears on it casts a small shadow of apprehension on our hearts and sours us a little. 'Where,' it asks us, 'will you stay tonight?'"¹

This level of discrimination was also felt by entertainers and musicians who traveled and often performed for white audiences. Louis Armstrong in a 1961 *Ebony Magazine* article recalled his experiences while touring in the 1930s. "Lots of times we wouldn't get a place to sleep. So we'd cross the tracks, pull over to the side of the road, and spend the night there. We couldn't get into hotels. Our money wasn't even good."² Armstrong also noted that the lack of services for African-American travelers was not limited to the South, rather it was seen equally in all parts of the country.

In an effort to relieve the pressure of searching for hotels and services annual guide books were produced that listed the locations of known African-American establishments. *The Green Book* began in 1936 as a guide to establishments in New York, but demand was so great that beginning in 1937 it was expanded to be a national directory. It listed the names and addresses of hotels, restaurants, taverns, service stations, barber shops, and other businesses that would cater to the African-American traveler. Most listing were for businesses in large to mid sized cities. The 1940 edition of *The Green Book* had listings for hotels and tourist homes in Bristol, Chattanooga, Clarksville, Knoxville, Memphis, Murfreesboro, and Nashville.³

It was common practice in many communities that did not have accommodations for African-American travelers for African-American women to take in boarders as a way of supplementing their income. The location and availability of these kinds of rooms were often sporadic and known only by word of mouth. It is not known how common this practice was in Union City, but the location of the large African-American neighborhood near U.S. 51 suggests that it was at least present.

In the 1940s, recognizing a need for a hotel along U.S. 51 that would cater to "colored" travelers; Bama Gordon decided to build a hotel. The hotel was built on the southeast end of the African-American neighborhood and immediately adjacent to U.S. 51 as it entered the town. It was the only known hotel in Union City that served African-Americans. Local oral tradition asserts that it was the only African-American hotel between Chicago and Memphis. This claim, however, has not been substantiated.

By 1951, the Colored Hotel was being run by Imogene Gordon. She advertised from 1951 to 1955 in the Union City Telephone Directory, that the hotel served "colored." Imogene also promoted her

¹ Lyell Henry. "Accommodations 'For Colored'." *SCA Journal* (Fall 2005): 5.

² Armstrong, Louis. "Daddy, How The Country Has Changed!", *Ebony Magazine*. May 1961. pg. 81.

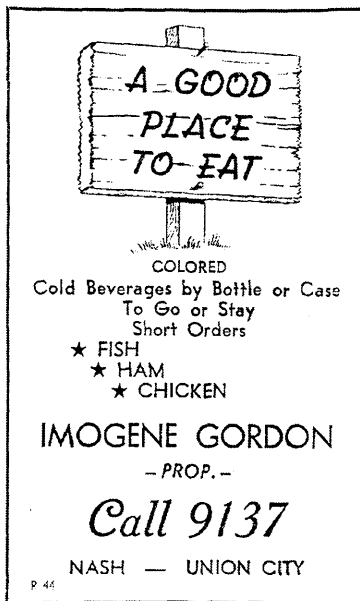
³ *Ebony Magazine* also produced a yearly vacation guide that listed hotels and resorts. This guide catered to wealthy African-Americans

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Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee



business as a restaurant with a quarter page advertisement in the 1955 Union City Directory. The fact that she paid for a relatively large advertisement suggests that the business was successful. In 1956, the hotel changed hands and was described in the Union City Directory as "Ezell Patterson's Hotel". It advertised that it had air conditioned rooms, daily rates, and a coffee shop. The hotel was called "Patterson's Hotel" until at least 1968, according to the Union City Directory listings that are available. In these directories this is one of only four hotels in town and the only that allowed African Americans. From 1958 through 1968 Patterson's son-in-law, Harry D James, was the manager. He and his wife, Loueia, also lived at the hotel. Patterson retained ownership of the building until 1975 when he sold it to his daughter and son-in-law. The James' owned the property until 1979. It is not known exactly when the building stopped being used as a hotel, but it was being used as an American Legion Post by 1983.

While there is no written history of the building, oral history asserts that this was not just a place for road-weary African-Americans to rest. It was also an important place for local blacks to gather and socialize on the weekends, often serving up to 200 people at a time. It became a regular stop for entertainers like Ike and Tina Turner, Carla and Rufus Thomas, B.B. King, and John Lee Hooker. These performers often stayed here and either played here or next-door at a now-demolished dance hall. It is not known when the neighboring dance hall was in operation, but it was described as "unoccupied" in a 1975 deed. This coincides with the dance floor addition of the Colored Hotel, perhaps signaling that the center of music and entertainment had shifted from the neighboring building to the Colored Hotel. By this time, desegregation in the South had lessened the need for African-American hotels, and the focus of the Colored Hotel shifted away from overnight accommodations for travelers to entertainment.

The Colored Hotel stands as a monument to the history of segregation and as a symbol of an African-American community that actively resisted oppression by finding a way to take part in the growing national trend of automobile travel.

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Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 8

Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Colored Hotel is at 208 Nash Street, Union City, Obion County, Tennessee. It is located on parcel 010.02 on Obion County tax map 0491. The scale of the attached map is 1"=200' and is the best available.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property stands on its historic lot, which contains all of the property historically and currently associated with the Colored Hotel.



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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 9 Colored Hotel
Obion County, Tennessee

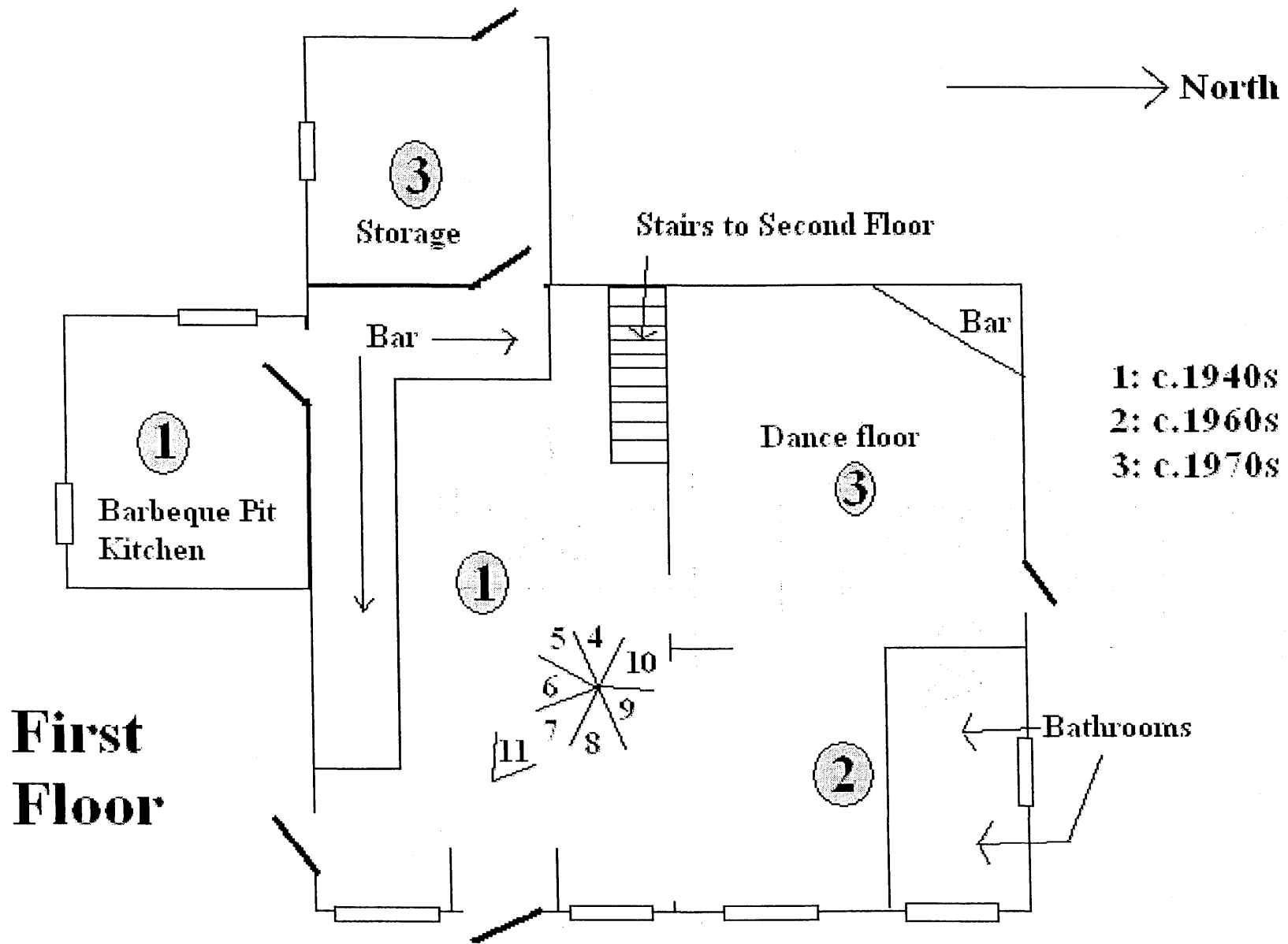
Colored Hotel, Union City, Obion County, Tennessee

Photos by: Nathan Montague
Tennessee Historical Commission

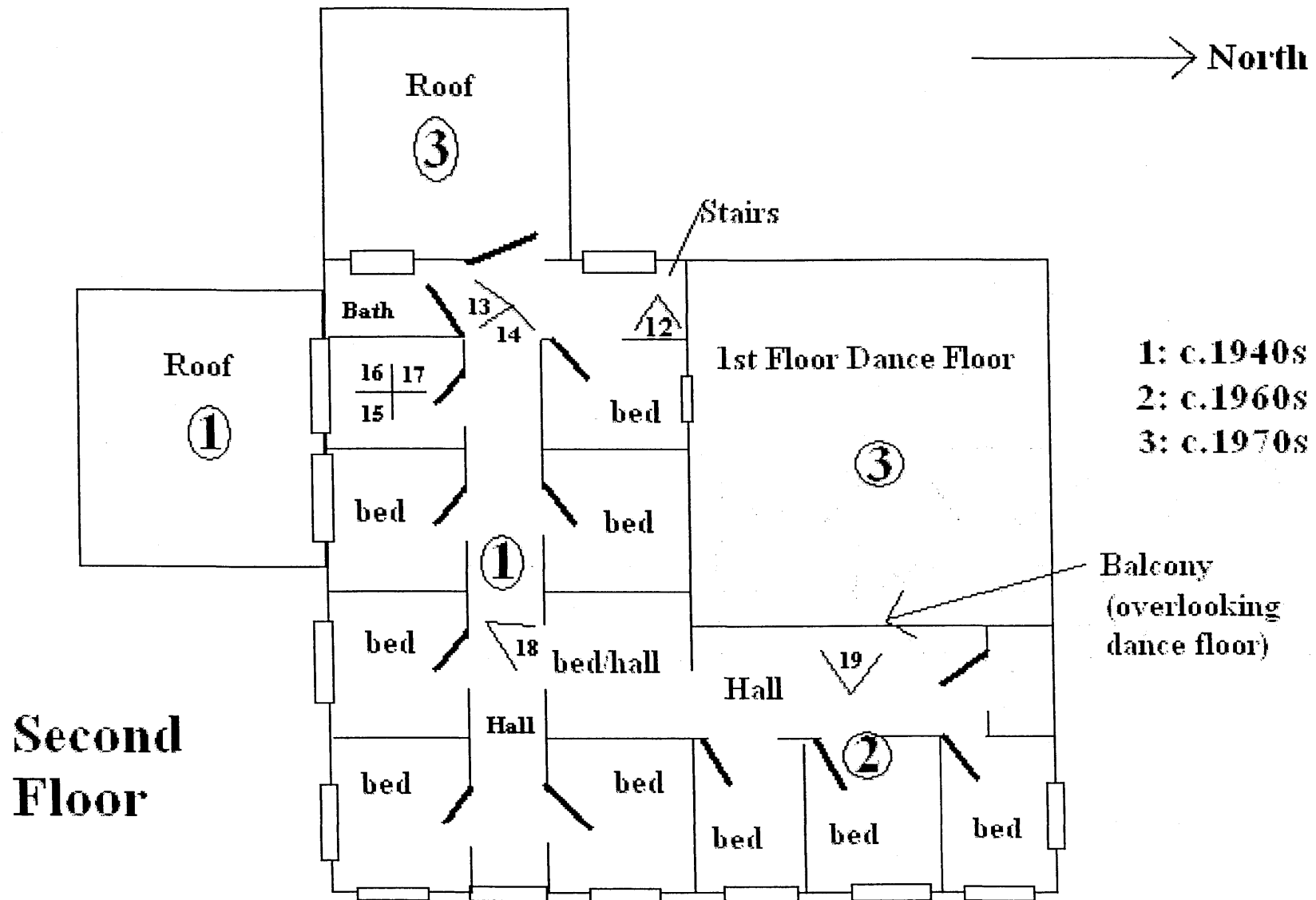
Digital negatives at Tennessee Historical Commission

Date: June 2007

1. Colored Hotel East and South Facades, facing northwest
2. Colored Hotel North and West Facades, facing southeast
3. Colored Hotel South and West Facades, facing northeast
4. Original Bar Restaurant, facing west
5. Original Bar Restaurant, facing southwest
6. Original Bar Restaurant, facing south
7. Original Bar Restaurant, facing southeast
8. Original Bar Restaurant, facing east
9. 1960s Addition, facing northeast
10. 1970s Dance Area, facing northwest
11. Original and Addition Division, facing northwest
12. Original Second Floor Stairs, facing east
13. Original Second Floor Bath, facing south
14. Original Second Floor Hall, facing east
15. Original Typical Bedroom, facing southeast
16. Original Typical Bedroom, facing southwest
17. Original Typical Bedroom, facing northwest
18. Original Bedroom Hall to 1960s Addition, facing northeast
19. Second Floor From 1960s Addition to 1970s Addition, facing west

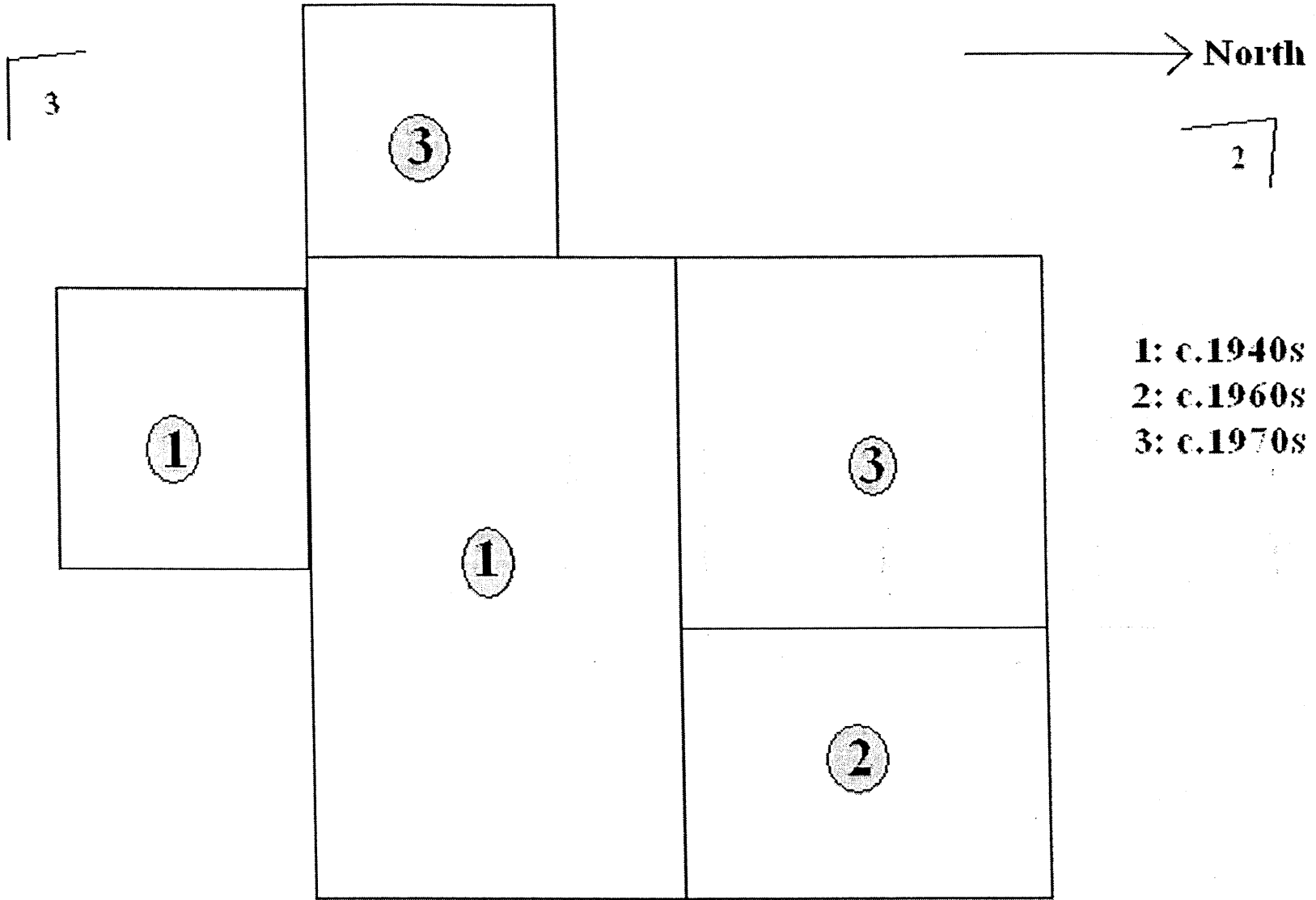


208 Nash Street



Second Floor

208 Nash Street



1: c.1940s
2: c.1960s
3: c.1970s

208 Nash Street

3

2

1