

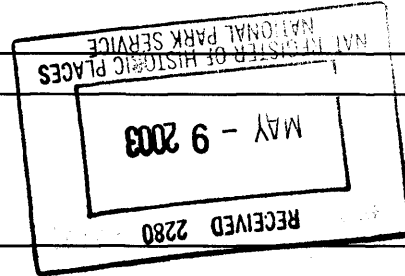
537

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Pyle-Davis House  
other names/site number N/A



## 2. Location

street & number 202 Massachusetts Boulevard  
city, town Demorest ( ) vicinity of  
county Habersham code GA 137  
state Georgia code GA zip code 30535

( ) not for publication

## 3. Classification

### Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

### Category of Property:

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

### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

buildings	2	0
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	2	0

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination 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 the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

*Russell Clark*

Signature of certifying official

*5-5-03*

Date

*to* W. Ray Luce  
Historic Preservation Division Director  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency or bureau

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

*Elson H. Beall* *6/23/03*

( ) determined eligible for the National Register

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register

( ) removed from the National Register

( ) other, explain:

( ) see continuation sheet

*per*

Keeper of the National Register

Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING  
SECONDARY STRUCTURE/GARAGE

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/SINGLE DWELLING  
SECONDARY STRUCTURE/GARAGE

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN/QUEEN ANNE  
OTHER/QUEEN ANNE HOUSE

### Materials:

<b>foundation</b>	Stone/Granite
<b>walls</b>	Wood/Weatherboard
<b>roof</b>	Metal/tin
<b>other</b>	N/A

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

Demorest is located in western Habersham County in northeast Georgia. The Pyle-Davis House is located on a corner lot in Demorest overlooking Lake Demorest and surrounded by Piedmont College. It is one of the last remaining houses from an 1890s planned community that was never fully realized. The town of Demorest eventually developed around the early houses of that community. Constructed in 1891, the Queen Anne house (photographs 1, 2, and 3) has a pressed metal cross-gabled roof, is covered with clapboard siding with bands of decorative sawn clapboards (photographs 3, 4, and 5), and has a one-story wrap-around porch on two sides of the house (photograph 1). The porch has turned posts and turned balusters along with a spindle frieze (photographs 2 and 6). Recessed chamfered bays are located on two corners of the house (photographs 4 and 7). This feature, in which the second floor overhangs the recessed portion of the first floor, is typical of Queen Anne-style houses, although it is unusual in Georgia. Windows are one-over-one double-hung-sash with the exception of three first floor windows that have colored glass squares on each side of the window (photograph 4, first floor window at left). There is a diamond-shaped red glass window in the stairwell (photographs 4, 5, and 13). A bay window was added in what is now the den in 1993 (photographs 2 and 12).

There are two doors next to each other on the front porch, Eastlake in style, with a single pane of glass at the top half of the door and applied moldings on the bottom half (photograph 7). One opens into a side entry hall and the other opens directly into the living room. There are four rooms and an entry hall on the first floor. The entry hall (photographs 8, 9, and 13) is wide and has a staircase with

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 7--Description

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an unusual railing (photographs 9 and 13) to the second floor and entrance into the dining room. The first floor has plaster walls and ceilings, and stained oak floors in the dining room (photographs 10 and 11) and living room (photographs 10 and 11). The floor in the entry and den are pine (photographs 8 and 12). Decorative trim is stained (photographs 8, 10, 12, and 13). The enclosed side porch now houses a laundry area, half bath, and a small screened porch. Much of the woodwork and the plaster walls on the first floor date to 1939 when the Davis family acquired the house, which was in need of repair and maintenance.

The second floor has three bedrooms (photographs 14 and 15), a hallway, an enclosed sleeping porch that was added before 1920, a bathroom, and a rear stairway (photograph 15). A small hall from the staircase leads to the bedrooms and bathroom. The second floor has painted wood floors and painted beaded board walls and trim. The ceilings on the second floor are also beaded board except for two of the bedrooms where the ceilings have been sheet rocked.

There is one outbuilding, a painted small wooden barn now used as a garage (photographs 17, at right, and 18), located on the far right side of the front lawn.

The grounds include a large front lawn (photographs 1, 16, 17, and 20) that gently slopes toward the street. There is a low stone retaining wall (photographs 1 and 16) at the sidewalk with cement steps up to the lawn (photograph 1). The landscaping is informal with several varieties of trees and shrubs. The back lawn is terraced.

The Pyle-Davis House is located northeast of downtown Demorest in an area now dominated by Piedmont College. The school was established in 1897 as the J.S. Green Collegiate Institute and conducted classes for first grade through the junior year of college. The name was changed to Piedmont College in 1903. Owners of the Pyle-Davis House rented rooms to students and faculty throughout most of the history of the house. Today, the college surrounds the house on all sides, with buildings (photographs 19 and 20) and parking lots (photograph 19) visible from all sides.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A       B       C       D       E       F       G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

Architecture  
Community Planning and Development

**Period of Significance:**

1891

**Significant Dates:**

1891-Construction date of the house

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

J.W. Watt-Builder  
C.R. Pyle-Builder  
Tom Stiles-Carpenter for 1939 renovations

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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**Statement of significance (areas of significance)**

The Pyle-Davis House is significant in the area of architecture as a good and intact example of a Queen Anne house. According to Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings, Queen Anne was Georgia's most popular 19<sup>th</sup>-century style. The style was widely used in many variations all over the state from the 1880s to about 1910. Character-defining features of the style exhibited by the Pyle-Davis House include the asymmetrical form with complex roof and wall shapes; variety of textures, materials, and detailing; open and flowing floor plan; asymmetrical wrap-around porch supported by turned posts; recessed chamfered bays; and gable decoration. Other features of the house include stained glass windows, Eastlake detailing on doors, and the unusual sawn decorative clapboard on the exterior of the house. The significance of the house is enhanced by an informal, picturesque landscaped yard compatible with the architectural style of the house.

The Pyle-Davis House is also significant in the area of community planning and development as one of the last remaining houses of a planned community. The City of Demorest was founded by the Demorest Home, Mining, and Improvement Company. Residential lots were 50 feet x 150 feet, and a lake, a city park, and a commercial district were part of the planned community. The founding of Demorest was part of the national City Beautiful movement (1890-1910) that advocated that a beautiful city could be an effective social control device. The town was named after William Jennings Demorest of New York who was a well-known prohibitionist, publisher, and philanthropist. The original deeds for the lots included a clause that stated that if any alcoholic beverages were sold or served, or there was prostitution or gambling on the property, it would revert to the Company. Little of the planned community actually developed according to the plan; this house is one of the few surviving buildings directly associated with the planned development.

**National Register Criteria**

The Pyle-Davis House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A in the area of community planning and development as one of the last remaining houses of a planned community in Demorest, Georgia. It is also eligible for listing under Criterion C as an excellent example of a Queen Anne style house constructed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance for the Pyle-Davis House is 1891, the construction date of the house.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The two contributing resources included in the nominated property are the main house and the

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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accompanying garage and includes the landscaping and compatible setting of the buildings. There are no noncontributing resources on the property.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

**\*\*NOTE: The following history was compiled by Jorene Martin, Preservation Planner, Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center, and Mary Davis Garrison, property owner, February, 2002. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

The town of Demorest, Georgia, had a unique beginning with the formation of the Demorest Home, Mining and Improvement Company as a corporation on February 21, 1889. This corporation was composed of a group of nine prohibitionists whose goal was to build a model city without alcohol in a cultural environment where schools, churches and industry would be promoted for the development of ideal home and family life.

On July 21, 1889, the corporation purchased the Henry A. Rosignol estate, and the organizers from northeastern, mid-western and southern states came with their families to build permanent homes in a planned model city that they named for a noted philanthropist and prohibitionist of the time, William Jennings Demorest of New York.

The Pyle-Davis House and property is one of the last remaining parcels of the original Rosignol estate that is privately owned and still serving its original purpose as a dwelling since 1891. The house is a standing tribute to the idealism of a group of men who sought to build a complete and model town, which would provide a wholesome atmosphere for families after the turmoil of the Civil War and reconstruction of social priorities in the nation.

The developers (from Indiana, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Ohio), wishing to appeal to settlers from all over the nation, named streets of their town for states and for trees. The extensive advertisements to many States, and the success of the early town are well documented. A quotation is given from "The South Atlantic" of Augusta, Georgia, on the rapid growth of the real estate business in the South showing Demorest as a "prime example of the unique social and economic development of the South" in this particular time frame just before the national depression began in 1892, which Demorest felt in concentrated form.

Massachusetts Boulevard, on which the Pyle-Davis House sits, was the only "boulevard" developed and designated in the plat of the planned city which was surveyed and drawn by J.A. Reynolds C.F. to advertise the original sale of lots by the company. The boulevard, which was the scenic lake drive, begins near the center of town on Central Avenue (Historic Highway 441). It bordered the Demorest Springs Park on one side, the J.S. Green property (Dr. G.W.D. Patterson's Post Office) on the other and curved alongside Demorest Lake to the bridge over the lake dam.

The Pyle-Davis House is approximately 220 yards from the center of town and from the curved

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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hillside overlooks both the park and the southern end of the lake. It is the only building left standing of the six original homes that were built on Massachusetts Boulevard. Hanging in the house is a framed original plat of the town on which the words are printed: "First great auction sale of lots in Demorest will be October 16, 17, 18 of 1890."

The deed to the present Davis property was recorded on December 1, 1890, to Margaret E. Coleman of Fountain City, Indiana, from the Demorest Home, Mining and Improvement Company for \$150.00. A deed was made from Coleman to Kate Watt for \$150.00 in February, 1892, and in September of that same year Watt, whose husband J.W. Watt was a builder and co-owner of the Bathtub Factory, sold this lot #16, on which the house stands, to Mary B. Pile [sic] of Kentucky for \$550.00. The house at that time must have been partially built to attract that price increase in seven months.

The Davises have a letter from the granddaughter of C.R. Pyle saying she lived in the house with her mother until 1893 when the house was new. The original deeds to this property contain the unique stipulation for prohibition and morality standards that were omitted from all deeds only a few years later. The deeds state that there can be no vinous or intoxicating beverages stored, served or sold, no prostitution, no gambling or the deed would be returned to the company.

On November 14, 1899, the property was sold from M. Pile [sic] to L.H. Laughton for \$300.00 (indicating a loss of \$250.00) and in February, 1902, the next recorded deed is made from J.S. Adams to E.D. Hendrickson, both of whom were officers of the Demorest Bank. During this time, the Demorest Home, Mining and Improvement Company went into bankruptcy (1895) and, with the economic depression of the time, many people could not meet their fiscal responsibilities. This situation probably accounts for the length of time it took to complete the Pyle-Davis House and for the rapid change of ownership during those years.

Many of the founders and early settlers continued to live here permanently as their aspirations for a city that provided "good homes, schools, churches and industry" were being realized. Another advertising pamphlet published in December, 1893, shows two hotels, several businesses and links eleven industries. The Demorest Normal School opened in 1893 (four years after the city was chartered and the same year that the Demorest Home, Mining and Improvement Company began bankruptcy proceedings). An 1894-95 catalogue of the school states: "Many of our best students prefer to rent rooms in nearby homes where will be expected of them the courtesies and decorum of home. In spite of hard times, we expect double our enrollment next year." The Pyle-Davis House was home to many students and faculty over the next 100 years.

In 1911, W. Baxter Smith acquired the property from E.D. Hendrickson and the Smith family lived in the house for some years. Henkel, the son, and Virginia, the daughter, who wrote the 1941 History of Demorest, attended Piedmont College and Mr. Smith taught at the College. The family rented rooms in the house to students and visitors. Baxter Smith told Ross Davis that he planted the third cedar tree in front of the house in 1925.

The "Anagraph" for July 30, 1896, from Demorest states "attractive homes invite visitors to take



National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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rooms during this time with many activities centering around Lake Demorest...". Several hundred people gathered from neighboring counties; the band played frequently on the pavilion." The pavilion was directly in front of the view from the Pyle-Davis House porch, which was the center of many happy gatherings from its earliest days. One visitor recalls that meals were often served from this house to guests from out of town. "Great Fourth of July celebrations were held on the lake for many years. One picture shows twenty-seven boats on the lake in 1891 with an estimated eighty people in them." These celebrations still continue in the town and in the park with hundreds of people attending.

On April 14, 1927, Baxter Smith sold the property to J.B. McJunkin and in May, 1934, J.B. McJunkin sold it to his son J.N. McJunkin. During these years the house fell into disrepair and J.N. McJunkin sold the property to Ross F. Davis on February 4, 1939.

Ross Davis, with his family, moved into the house on March 1, 1939. He stated: "Renters had lived in the house for a number of years and had not taken care of it. Nails had been driven into the walls to hang clothes on. In the kitchen there were two iron tubs and an iron hot water tank. We first covered the well on the back porch. We made a box about four feet square at the top to form a lid and poured a concrete slab over it. The well had about fifteen feet of water when the lake was up and went down when the water level there was down." The family lived in the rooms upstairs, using the back stairway from the kitchen, while the repair work was done. Mrs. Davis's uncle, Tom Stiles of North Carolina, was the carpenter and lived with the family for one month while installing the French doors, the oak floors and window sashes. Jess Williams of Alto and his brother did the plaster walls and the painting. Hoyt Watson of Demorest repaired the plumbing, and new water lines were installed.

Soon after the Davises bought the house it became a meeting place for Girl Scouts, school board and committee meetings, and circle and women's club meetings. The house lent itself well for parties and receptions. The Davis family rented rooms to many students and teachers, and there was a warm feeling of respect and cooperation among them. Music was always in the house. Mrs. Davis sang, the children practiced piano and a canary named Bubbles lived in a cage hung beside the kitchen window for many years. In 1945, twelve members of the Athens Presbytery Youth Council were entertained for a weekend retreat, the girls taking the upstairs and the boys the downstairs. In 1949, the house was the scene of the wedding reception for the Davis's daughter and in 1947 the rehearsal dinner for the wedding party of their son was held in the house. In 1978, a fiftieth wedding anniversary reception and in 1991, a ninetieth birthday reception included many area residents. The house was opened in 1984 for the Tour of Historic Homes and Places.

As Fourth of July celebrations continued to be big events in Demorest, many visitors continued to gather in the shade of the front porch during the day and to view the fireworks from this vantage point at night. Through the years, art classes from Piedmont College, as well as elementary school students and local artists have studied the architecture of the Pyle-Davis House and its setting beside Demorest Lake.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Section 8--Statement of Significance

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The Pyle-Davis House continues to be a stately landmark in an area that has changed with great rapidity as other nearby buildings have been demolished and the population of Piedmont College and the county continues to grow. The house is now surrounded by the college campus. For many former students, faculty and area residents, it is the place they can still return to walk through the kitchen, sit on the front porch and feel the quality of life and the gracious hospitality that has endured throughout the entire twentieth century.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Curtis, Debra A. "Demorest Commercial Historic District." National Register Nomination Form. September, 1989. On file at Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Demorest Home, Mining and Improvement Company. Demorest, Habersham County, Georgia: Its Location and Wonderful Natural Advantages, 1889.

Demorest Normal School 1894-95 Catalog.

Demorest Women's Club. Fourth Annual Tour of Demorest Historic Homes and Places. 1984.

Harrison, Bette. "Demorest Couple Celebrating 70 Years Together," The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, March 3, 1998.

"In Memoriam-William Jennings Demorest," Demorest Family Magazine, Volume XXXI, Number 8, June, 1895.

"New England in Georgia," Georgia Living, March, 1989.

Sibley, Frank J. Demorest and Northeast Georgia: The Health Region of the World. Atlanta: Mutual Printing Company, 1893.

Smith, Virginia. History of Demorest. 1941.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been issued  
date issued:
- 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, Specify Repository:

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A**

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## 10. Geographical Data

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**Acreage of Property**      Less than one acre

### **UTM References**

A)    Zone 17      Easting 266708      Northing 3827524

### **Verbal Boundary Description**

The proposed boundary of the nominated property is indicated on the attached map by a heavy black line.

### **Boundary Justification**

The proposed boundary of the nominated property includes the Pyle-Davis House, garage, and the intact portion of land that was historically associated with the house.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Holly L. Anderson, National Register Historian  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**mailing address** 156 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** April 23, 2003  
**e-mail** holly\_anderson@dnr.state.ga.us

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Jorene Martin, Preservation Planner  
**organization** Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center  
**mailing address** P.O. Box 1720  
**city or town** Gainesville **state** Georgia **zip code** 30503  
**telephone** (770)538-2626  
**e-mail**

- ( ) **property owner**  
( ) **consultant**  
(X) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

**name/title** Mary Davis Garrison, property owner  
**organization**  
**mailing address** 954 Chenocetah Drive  
**city or town** Cornelia **state** Georgia **zip code** 30531  
**telephone** (706)778-8369  
**e-mail**

- (X) **property owner**  
( ) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

**Property Owner or Contact Information**

**name (property owner or contact person)** Mary Davis Garrison  
**organization (if applicable)**  
**mailing address** 954 Chenocetah Drive  
**city or town** Cornelia **state** Georgia **zip code** 30531  
**e-mail (optional)**

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

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**Name of Property:** Pyle-Davis House  
**City or Vicinity:** Demorest  
**County:** Habersham  
**State:** Georgia  
**Photographer:** James R. Lockhart  
**Negative Filed:** Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**Date Photographed:** October, 2002

**Description of Photograph(s):**

Number of photographs: 21

1. Front (south) façade and east façade; photographer facing northwest.
2. East façade and rear (north) façade; photographer facing southwest.
3. West façade; photographer facing south.
4. Detail, west façade; photographer facing southeast.
5. Front façade; photographer facing northeast.
6. Porch detail; photographer facing southeast.
7. Front entrance; photographer facing northwest.
8. Interior, first floor, entrance hall; photographer facing southeast.
9. Interior, first floor, entrance hall; photographer facing southwest.
10. Interior, first floor, original living room into dining room; photographer facing west.
11. Interior, first floor, dining room into original living room; photographer facing southeast.
12. Interior, first floor, den; photographer facing southeast.
13. Interior, first floor, entrance hall, staircase detail; photographer facing west.
14. Interior, second floor, bedroom; photographer facing northeast.
15. Interior, second floor, bedroom; photographer facing north.

National Register of Historic Places **Continuation Sheet**

Photographs

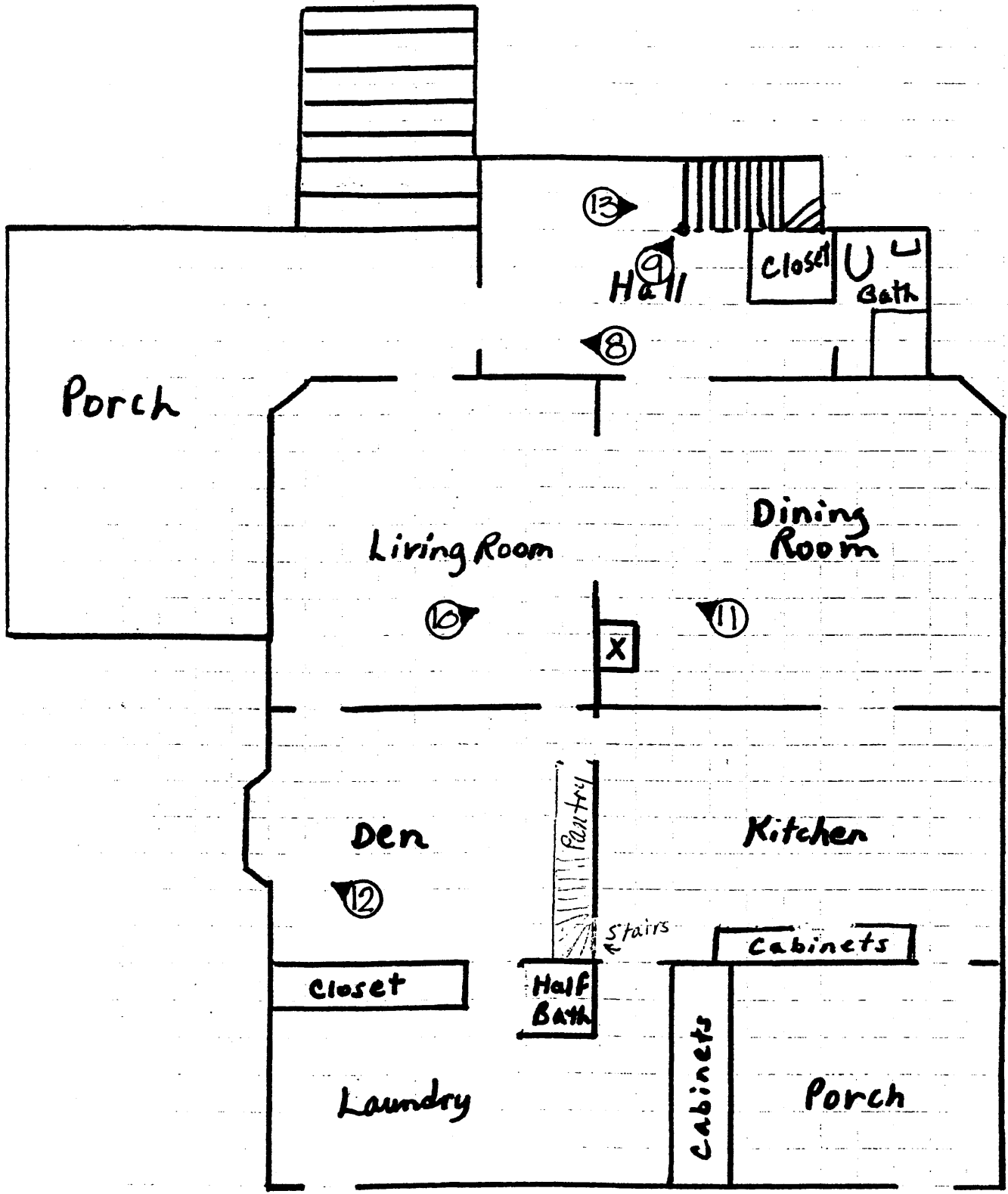
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16. Front façade; photographer facing northeast.
17. East façade and garage, at right; photographer facing northwest.
18. Garage; photographer facing southwest.
19. Pyle-Davis House, at left, and Piedmont College, at right; photographer facing north.
20. Pyle-Davis House, at left, and Piedmont College, at right; photographer facing north.
21. East façade; photographer facing northwest.

(HPD WORD form version 11-03-01)

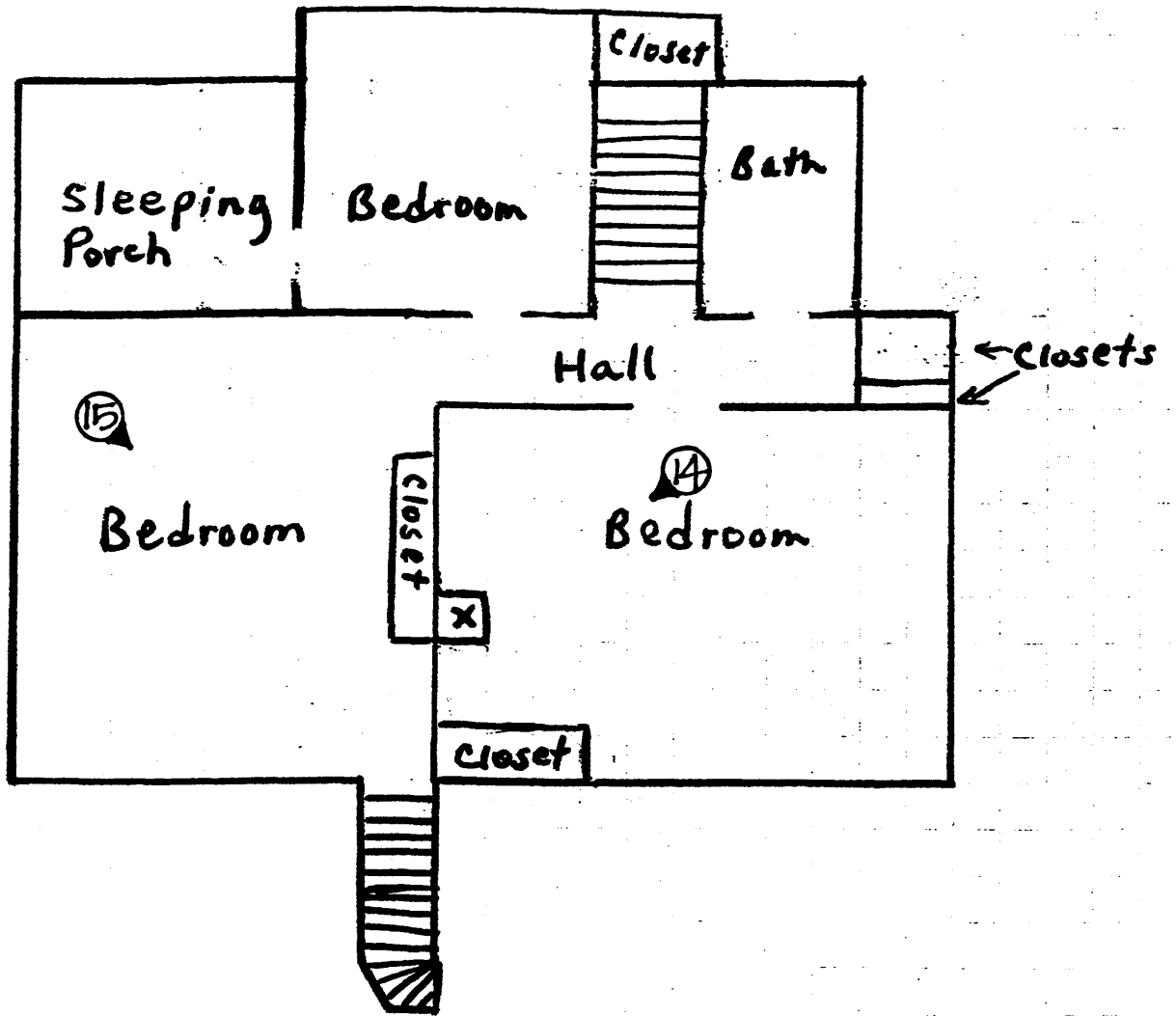
# Sidewalk

Pyle-Davis House  
Demorest, Habersham County, Georgia  
First Floor Plan  
Photograph Direction/Number: ①  
Scale: Not to scale  
North: ↘





Pyle-Davis House  
Demorest, Habersham County, Georgia  
Second Floor Plan  
Photograph Direction/Number: ①  
Scale: Not to scale  
North: ↘



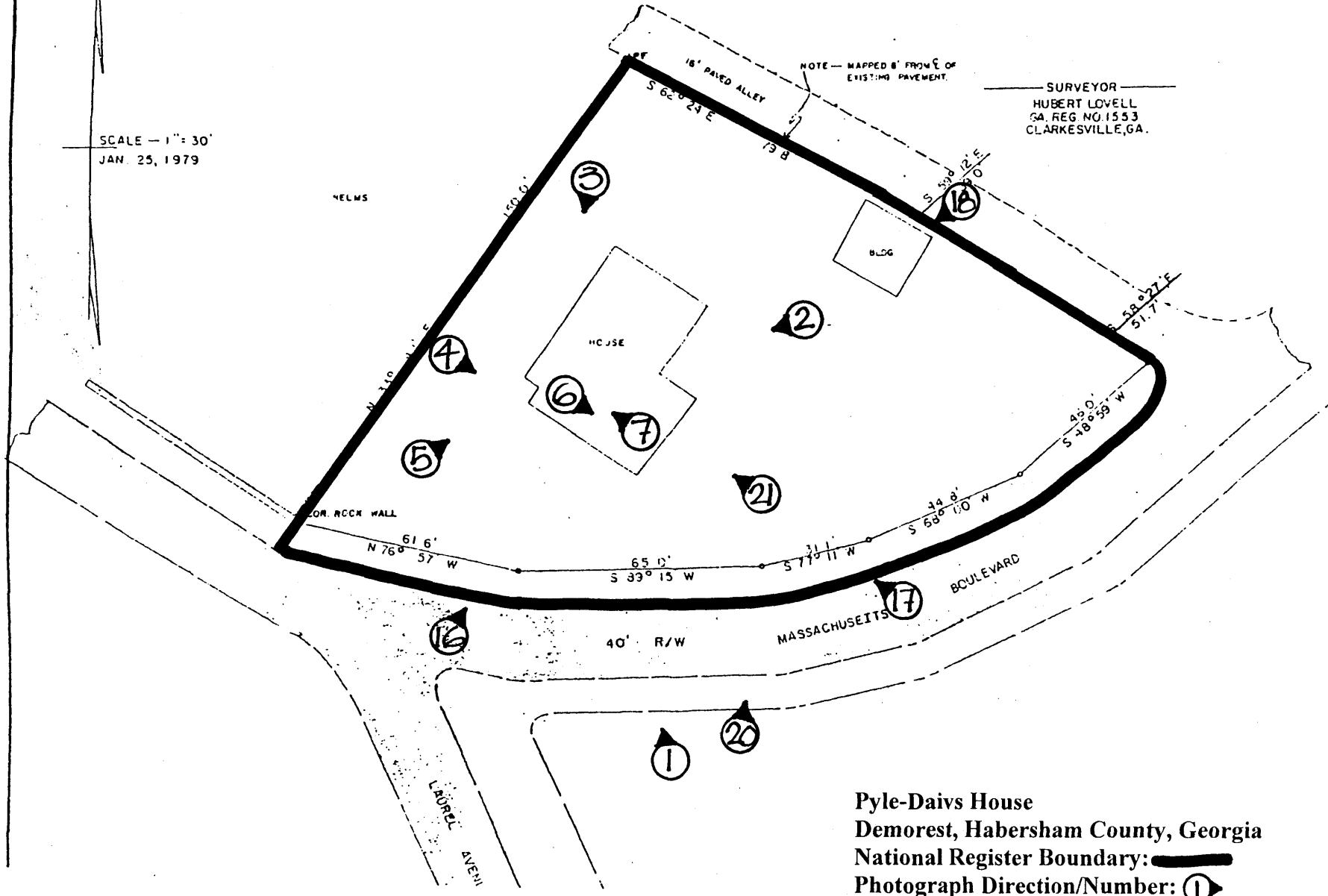
X = chimney

PROPERTY OF  
**ROSS F. DAVIS**  
 HABERSHAM COUNTY  
 GEORGIA

NOTE  
 PROPERTY IS PART OF  
 LOT 15 & LOTS 16, 17, 18,  
 BLOCK 10, LOCATED IN  
 LL 72 OF THE 10TH LAND  
 DIST., CITY OF DEMOREST.

SCALE — 1" = 30'  
 JAN. 25, 1979

SURVEYOR  
 HUBERT LOVELL  
 GA. REG. NO. 1553  
 CLARKESVILLE, GA.



Pyle-Davis House  
 Demorest, Habersham County, Georgia  
 National Register Boundary: **—————**  
 Photograph Direction/Number: **①**  
 Scale: 1"=Approximately 37'  
 North: ↑

*Handwritten notes on the right margin:*  
 Pyle-Davis House  
 Demorest, Habersham County, Georgia  
 National Register Boundary: **—————**  
 Photograph Direction/Number: **①**  
 Scale: 1"=Approximately 37'  
 North: ↑