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SEP 30 1988

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
National Park Service

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 "NA" 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 Douglas and Charlotte Grant House
other names/site number Douglas and Charlotte Grant House

2. Location

street & number 3400 Adel Street S.E. | | not for publication
city, town Marion | | vicinity
state Iowa code 19 county Linn code 113 zip code 52302

3. Classification

| Ownership of Property | Category of Property | Number of Resources within Property | |
|---|---|---|-----------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing | Noncontributing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local | <input type="checkbox"/> district | 1 | 0 buildings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State | <input type="checkbox"/> site | 0 | 0 sites |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal | <input type="checkbox"/> structure | 0 | 1 structures |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> object | 1 | 0 objects |
| | | | 1 Total |
| Name of Related multiple property listing: Iowa Usonian Houses by Frank Lloyd Wright | | Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0 | |

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet, section _____ page _____.

James P. Jach DSHPO
Signature of certifying official
Bureau of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau
Date *Sept 23, 1988*

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet National Register criteria. See continuation sheet, section _____ page _____.

Signature of commenting or other official
Date
State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet, section ___ page ___
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet, section ___ page ___
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

[Handwritten Signature]

11/9/88

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)
Domestic - Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)
Domestic - Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)
Wrightian

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)
foundation Limestone
walls Limestone, Glass
roof Concrete
other Steel Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheet, section 7 page 2

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D
 Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1949-51

Significant Dates
1949-51

Cultural Affiliation
N.A.

Significant Person
N.A.

Architect/Builder
Wright, Frank Lloyd

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above. See continuation sheet, section 8 page 2

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet, section 9 page 2

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

- Primary location of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other

Specify repository:
University of Washington

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 40

UTM References

A |1|5| |6|1|3|7|3|0| |4|6|5|1|8|8|0|
Zone Easting Northing
C |1|5| |6|1|4|4|5|0| |4|6|5|2|0|3|0|

B |1|5| |6|1|3|8|7|0| |4|6|5|1|5|2|0|
Zone Easting Northing
D |1|5| |6|1|4|3|5|0| |4|6|5|1|6|3|0|

See continuation sheet, section _____ page _____

Verbal Boundary Description See continuation sheet, section 10 page 2

Boundary Justification See continuation sheet, section 10 page 2

11. Form Prepared By

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preparer Ralph J. Christian, Architectural Historian
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date 9/7/88
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Description

The Douglas Grant house is a linear house built along the fall of a hill. Its uniquely beautiful exterior walls are of limestone quarried from the site, and its roof is one great monolithic concrete slab. The design of the Grant house is powerful and dramatic. With two full stories and over 3,000 square feet, the Grant house is the largest of the Iowa Usonian and the least typical; yet, the style and "grammar" of the house is unmistakably Usonian.

The Grant House is located on 40 acres of wooded land between Cedar Rapids and Marion in Linn County, in eastern Iowa. The site overlooks Indian Creek, on the southern slope of the creek's steep valley. Possessing the rural qualities of unspoiled natural beauty, the property is actually within the Marion city limits and is only a few blocks away from the main avenue of Cedar Rapids, the second largest city in Iowa. Nevertheless, it is only in winter, after the trees have lost their leaves, that the Grants are aware of the city which surrounds them. The Grants purchased this property in the 1930s. Ten of the original 50 acres were later sold by the family to help finance their Wright-designed house.

Mr. Grant is a retired executive of a local Cedar Rapids television station and Mrs. Grant is a retired television program host. The Grants have three grown children.

The long, narrow Grant house was designed with a 4'-0" x 4'-0" unit module, or grid. The house is basically four units wide and twenty six units long at the upper level, 16'-0" x 104'-0"; four units wide by twenty-two units long at the lower level. The monolithic reinforced concrete slab roof, measured from the end of the carport to the edge of the 8'-0" cantilevered living room overhang, is nearly 132'-0" long. The main entrance to the house is at the upper level on the north side. The entrance walk, passing along the north side of the house from the carport, is protected by a deep overhang of the roof. The entrance loggia, bedrooms, and bathrooms make up the upper level.

From the upper level entrance loggia, the lower level living areas are reached by descending a long flight of low stone steps running along the north wall of the house. Edgar Kaufman, Jr., in Taliesin Drawings described this stairway as ". . . one of the most grand and dramatic stairways ever invented, straight as an arrow between two steeply rising walls of stone, for over forty feet." (p. 22) The living room which this stairway descends into is a great two-story space with glass walls to the north, west, and south. Tall 11'-0" high pairs of glass doors open from the living room to terraces on the north and south.

Three steps up from the living room is the much more intimate dining room. The dining room was designed completely open to the living room; at the meeting of these two spaces, the fireplaces of each room share one great stone masonry mass. These are magnificent fireplaces, built of the same limestone as the walls of the house, with

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open stone hearths at floor level. Although each fireplace is scaled to the proportions of its room, the scale of each is grand, and the character is rustic. The height of the opening of the living room fireplace is over five feet high.

Open to the dining room is the well-lit, approximately 10'-0" x 14'-0" kitchen. Beyond the kitchen there are storage areas, utilities, laundry, and a cellar, all windowless and set into the side of the hill below grade as a basement. From the north door of this utility-storage area a flight of exterior steps leads back up to grade. A steep, narrow, interior stairway leads from this utility area back up to the locker room, or "mud room," of the upper level.

Following the Usonian model, the plan of the Grant house places emphasis upon the large living room and the dining area which flows from it. The upper level of the Grant house can be compared to the bedroom wing of a single-story Usonian. And, although the ceilings are not raised, the adjacency of the kitchen to the utility area is typical Usonian planning. For this region, only the full stairways and the utility "basement" are atypical.

The Grant House is built integral with its sites, with both levels opening directly to the outdoors. At the upper level, the front entrance opens on grade, and across the entrance loggia glass doors open out to a sunny balcony. Each of the children's bedrooms also opens through glass doors to the balcony, and the master bedroom opens to its own private on-grade terrace. At the lower level, in the living room of the Grant house, the line between indoors and outdoors is nearly transparent. Through the several pairs of glass doors in the living room then sweeps out from the house to meet the natural grade of the site.

The materials of the house include native limestone, concrete, steel, and glass. Red tidewater cypress has been used for all exterior doors and casement windows, interior partition walls and flush doors, and all built-in furniture.

The beautiful limestone of the Grant house is very distinctive. Each stone is very thin, generally no more than 2" in thickness, and varies in length from 6" to 18" or more. Its color varies from warm gray to yellow, with horizontal veins. The exterior walls are built as cavity walls with a 2" air space for insulation. A wooden form was used in the construction of these walls which kept the wall width consistent and kept the exterior surfaces true. As it is explained by Kaufman, "Inside this (the wooden form) the stones could be lined up true and square, while all trimming and sloppiness could be relegated to the narrow interior cavity. . ." The mortar between the stones kept to the inside, ". . . not showing at all on the surfaces, so that each course of stone is outlined in deep, crisp shadow, textured like a true dry wall." The limestone walls of the Grant house were so successful that Mr. Wright would direct his students, and other clients, to study them.

Originally, all of the glass in the Grant house was single-pane polished plate

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glass, double-pane insulating glass being disdained by the architect. At present, all of the single-pane glass yet remains but for three double-pane windows which the Grants later installed in the west end of the living room. These insulating windows are fixed and replaced three pairs of tall casement-type windows.

It is steel "T"s, slightly larger than those of the Walter house but used in a similar fashion, which form the vertical support of glass walls and window bands throughout the Grant house. The "T"s are painted the same dark red color as those of the Walter house. They generally are space 4'-0" on center. Unlike the Walter house where the fixed glass is held with wooden stops, the fixed glass in the Grant house is held by metal angles, or clips. The thin detail is the ultimate in minimalism.

In the living room, where the floor to ceiling height is approximately 15'-0", the fixed windows are very large, measuring 2'-0" x 8'-0", 4'-0" x 8'-0", and one 4'-0" x 11'-0"; the fixed transom windows measure 4'-0" x 4'-0" or 8'-0" x 4'-0". Another alteration to the window design in this room occurred after one of two original 8'-0" x 8'-0" fixed windows was blown out on a windy night. The large window originally spanned the last two bays of the south living room wall and was mitered at the corner to the 2'-0" x 8'-0" fixed window of the end wall. When the blown-out window and its twin on the north wall were replaced, additional metal supports were installed to divide the 8'-0" x 8'-0" areas into three smaller sections. The mitered corner has been retained but now, more securely, between two 2'-0"-wide windows.

In the living room of the Grant house, the thin glass and metal walls are transparent not only to the entering light, but to changes in temperature as well. Compared to the usual sense of warmth and security created by Wright's work, this room is physically and psychologically cold. In warm weather these thin glass walls are surely a delight, barely obstructing the beautiful views, but in cool weather distracting condensation runs down the glass, and on the coldest days frost may form.

In the dining room and kitchen, the window band is mixed with fixed and operable windows. The windows look out over a high planter in the dining room. The exterior wall of the kitchen is pushed out flush with the planter and is wrapped with windows. Corners are mitered. Compared to the typical windowless Usonian kitchen, with high ceiling and skylight, the kitchen in the Grant house is more traditional. Fixed glass in this room replaces original casement windows.

The windows of the master bedroom are fixed, floor-to-ceiling windows with mitered glass corners. There are two pairs of glass doors which open to the terrace on the south. The children's bedrooms also have floor-to-ceiling glass walls with, as mentioned previously, pairs of doors which open onto the cast concrete balcony. Even the bathroom opens onto this balcony through a glass door. The band of windows above the main stair is of fixed windows only. The narrow windows of the master bathroom and locker room are all operable.

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The floors of the Grant house are of either limestone or concrete. The stone flooring generally defines the most public spaces in the house. The entrance walk is of stone and the floor of the loggia is finished with stone. The main stair down from the loggia is stone and the living room floor and the terraces off the living room are of stone. Each of the three fireplaces in the house, in the living room, in the dining room, and in the master bedroom, have limestone hearths. The remaining floors are red colored concrete with the lines of the 4'-0" unit module etched in the surface.

The floors of both the upper level and lower level of the Grant house are heated by Wright's system of radiant, or "gravity," heat. The system is divided into six zones and has two separate thermostats and pumps. The original oil burning furnace has been replaced with a furnace which uses natural gas. When the Grants are away from the house in winter, antifreeze is circulated through the floors' wrought iron pipes before the system is closed down.

The Grant house is far from being energy efficient. No one, not even Mr. Wright, anticipated the increases which have occurred in the price of fuel. The Grant house is expensive to heat; the living room is particularly difficult. In that drafty room the radiant heat from the floor is supplemented with baseboard heaters below the windows of the west wall. In the autumn of 1985, the Grants built a temporary glass wall (visible in Figure 23) between the living room and dining room. Closed off from the living room, with a small wood burning stove at the fireplace, the dining room has become the Grants' cold weather living room.

The roof of the Grant house, as previously mentioned, is one monolithic reinforced concrete slab. It is penetrated only by the stone chimney masses of the living room-dining room and master bedroom, by the furnace and plumbing vents, and by drain pipes around the slab's perimeter. Cantilevered overhangs vary from 4'-0" to 8'-0"; the carport roof extends approximately 20'-0" from the house. The edge of the roof slab is canted, clean and sharp compared to the curved edges of the roof slab of the Walter house. The decorative copper fascia which Wright had intended for this canted edge was omitted due to the high price of copper after the war. The slab is reinforced with top and bottom layers of steel mesh.

According to Mr. and Mrs. Grant, the most significant maintenance problems through the years have been with the roof. The roof slab's protective layers of built-up roofing have been replaced several times. The original built-up roof was sealed with tar and topped with light-colored gravel. The gravel, intended to reflect the sun's heat, proved ineffective. Summer sun caused the tar to bubble and the roof's watertight seal was lost. The present built-up roof is composed of a layer of 1" styrofoam insulation, rolled roofing, and cold tar; it is topped with a shiny, silver-colored, fibered-aluminum sealer. Because the rooftop is visible from the driveway approach, the appearance of the roofing is important. The silver-colored sealer is unfortunately distracting, but it is preferred by the Grants over a leaky roof.

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Like the concrete roof slab, the upper-level floor of the Grant house is a reinforced concrete slab. In the sequence of construction, the upper-level floor slab was cast after the masonry walls were laid and before the roof slab was poured. Floor-to-ceiling height in the upper-level bedrooms and in the lower-level dining room, kitchen, and utility area is 6'-9".

Inside the Grant house, the wood partition walls of the upper level are finished with horizontal battened boards of red tidewater cypress. The batten design (Figure 19) is identical to that of the Walter house. In the Grant house, these partition walls are of thin sandwich construction. The inner layer of the sandwich was built with boards left over from the concrete form work; they stand vertically and have building paper tacked to either side. Securing the horizontal cypress boards, the cypress battens are nailed through to the inner layer of wood. At the lower level, the thin partition between the dining room and the stairway is actually a stepped glass wall with narrow panes of glass between cypress mullions. Above the high back of the built-in seat in the dining room there is a similar window band.

In the bedrooms the Grants built Wright-designed wardrobes, desks, and shelves of cypress. The three children's rooms are very small, but with built-in furniture these compact rooms are organized and uncluttered. The bedrooms are pleasant little rooms with cypress walls, cypress furniture, and sunny south-facing window wall opening to the balcony. The third bedroom overlooks the living room.

The master bedroom is the most beautiful and comfortable room in the house. This room was designed as a bedroom-sitting room for Mr. and Mrs. Grant. The east and west walls are of stone, the south wall is glass with doors opening to the grade-level terrace. Wardrobes, tables, and shelves of cypress are built-in. The stone fireplace, like the brick fireplaces of the Walter house, is integral with the exterior wall; its cantilever design is geometric and clean. The stone hearth of the ample fireplace is open and continuous with the concrete floor; the cantilevered hood is raised approximately 4'-0" above the hearth. The materials and design of this room give it a strong, elegant character. The low ceiling creates an intimate scale.

In the dining room, built-in furniture includes the high-backed seat along the wall adjacent to the kitchen, and cabinets for phonograph and radio built into the exterior stone wall. In the living room, a built-in bench was designed to stretch the length of the west wall. The bench was built but has since been removed. Other Wright-designed furniture which the Grants built has also been replaced; only a couple of the original tables remain in this room.

Hardware in the Grant house, as in the Walter house, is minimal. Most distinctive are the brass piano-type hinges of the interior doors and cabinetry. The wood throughout the interior was finished with tung oil; exterior wood is unfinished. The concrete ceilings and balcony walls are painted, with sand blown into the final coat. With regard to fabrics, Wright did not select fabrics and rugs for the Grant

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house, but he did suggest and approve a fawnish gold-colored fabric for the living room curtains. Those original gold curtains of cotton fabric have since been replaced and now lighter-colored insulating fiberglass curtains are hung in the living room.

Light fixtures in the Grant house are recessed in the concrete ceilings. Bare bulbs are housed in simple, regularly spaced square recesses which were formed when the concrete slabs were poured; wiring runs through conduit embedded in the slabs. Natural light floods this house through the south-facing glass walls. As originally designed, the Grant house was shaded by a great maple tree which stood near the southwest corner of the living room. The Grants have since lost the tree and now the unfiltered summer sun is too direct. Mrs. Grant recalled during the author's visit that when the large maple was still standing, patterned sunlight would shine into the living room with a green cast in the summer and an orange cast in the autumn.

In spite of the problem of direct summer sun in the living room, the Grant house remains cool and comfortable without mechanical air conditioning or forced ventilation. Mr. Wright designed for natural ventilation, each room opening to the outside with pairs of doors or casement windows. Deep overhangs shade glass walls; and, in summer, the concrete floors and stone walls naturally remain cool.

Inspecting the exterior of the Grant house and the surrounding grounds, the only outbuilding on the property is a workshop located southeast of the house, down the hill from the circle of the driveway and out of view from the approach. This structure was not designed by Wright. There was also no specific landscaping designed by Wright. The Grants have introduced numerous ornamental shrubs and fruit trees, as well as flower beds and garden. In the woods surrounding the house there are maple, oak, hickory, ash, ironwood, and sumac.

The west end of the Grant house is raised above grade by a high stone retaining wall. This retaining wall is continuous around the living room's north terrace and arcs around the south terrace until it dies into the side of the hill. A small, irregular-shaped swimming pool, not of Wright design, was later added to the south terrace. The north side of the Grant house, with its high limestone walls, raised terrace, and two massive stone piers jutting out from the wall at the entrance and at the foot of the main interior stairway is most notable for its monumental scale and for the clean horizontal line, like a prairie horizon, of the roof slab. The lively south elevation is likewise strong, dramatic, and horizontal.

The Grant house has been well maintained and is in good condition. There have been no significant alterations. When Mr. Wright designed this house for the Grant family, no consideration was made for later expansion, and none has been desired. The house was built as Wright specified, and because the stone and much of the labor was their own, the Grants were able to considerably reduce the cost of construction. They estimate that their house cost \$30,000 to construct in the 1950s; it was assessed at nearly four times that amount in 1985.

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Douglas and Charlotte Grant House

Significance

The Grant House is a linear house built along the fall of a hill. Its uniquely beautiful exterior walls are of limestone quarried from the site, and its roof is one great monolithic concrete slab. The design of the Grant House is powerful and dramatic. With two full stories and over 3000 square feet, the Grant House is the largest of the seven Iowa Usonian Houses and the least typical, yet the style and "grammar" of the house is unmistakably Usonian.

Of the Iowa Usonians, the Grant House is one of the earliest, built at the close of World War II, completed approximately one year after completion of the Walter House (Buchanan County), and significantly similar to the Walter House. Like the Walter House, the Grant House was masterfully integrated with its site; the structural systems were unconventional and notably minimalized; materials were naturally expressed; and plate glass was employed in great expanses. The distinctive limestone walls, with the appearance of having been dry-set, were so successful that Mr. Wright is known to have directed his students and even his clients to study this house. The main stair was described by Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., in Taliesin Drawings (p. 23), as ". . . one of the most grand and dramatic stairways ever invented. . ." Like the Walter House, the Grant House is significant for expanding the definition of Usonian design. With this project, Wright successfully applied the Usonian concepts of simplicity and economy to a substantial two-story home. (See Walter House National Register Nomination).

The Grant House is an exceptional house which broke completely with tradition. It is significant as it challenged conventional residential planning, structural design, and style, and captured the attention of designers, architects, and scholars. The Grant House has been widely published, appearing in architectural texts and journals, regional journals, and various Frank Lloyd Wright catalogues. The house and grounds are of continuing interest to architectural scholars, photographers, and historians.

Unconventional or "modern" features of the Grant house, characteristic of Wright's Usonian design and ideals include: integrated house and site, opening house to the outdoors; horizontal emphasis in mass and proportion; open planning based on grid system emphasizing one large living-dining area; car port rather than garage; slab-on-grade construction with radiant heat system embedded in slab; flat roof with varied ceiling heights inside; window walls and horizontal window bands; climatic considerations including natural lighting and ventilation, and solar control; natural expression of materials; use of thin, "sandwich-constructed" wood walls; built-in furniture; and a large scale fireplace, a central hearth.

Edmond Whiting House in neighborhood of Grant House is built of stone from Grant quarry and is of a Usonian-type design, influenced by the original owner-designer's apprenticeship with Frank Lloyd Wright, and presumably influenced directly by the Grant House.

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In the history of modern architecture, the Grant House serves Iowans as a primary source, it is "living" history, an authentic Frank Lloyd Wright Usonian house essentially unchanged. To study this house is to visit the past, to touch the world of a master architect, and to catch the spirit of architecture on the cutting edge in the America of the late 1940s. To interpret contemporary architecture we must understand where it has come from; the Grant House is a piece of the past with which we can measure the present.

Mr. and Mrs. Grant first contacted Mr. Wright in December of 1945. They had been impressed with the portfolio of Wright's work published in the January 1938 Architectural Forum and felt that Mr. Wright was the best architect to design a house for them using the limestone from their property. The stone is thin and irregular and most builders at that time would not work with it.

Initially, Mr. and Mrs. Grant only considered asking Mr. Wright to recommend one of his advanced students to design the house, but, taking a chance, they asked Wright himself to accept the job. The architect took an interest in the Grant's project and their desire to use the site's limestone. He promptly responded to their letter with this note:

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Grant: Of course it's possible. Come up to see me in May and I will discuss your problem with you. (Grant, p. 25)

This they did, first meeting Wright at his home near Spring Green, Wisconsin, in May of 1946.

"We liked each other from the beginning," wrote Mrs. Grant in a 1959 article for The Iowan magazine. "He was understanding and truly interested in our desire to build a house of our own stone." (p. 25) The Grants made several trips to Wisconsin to visit with Wright, where they were his guests at Taliesin. Wright did not make a practice then of visiting the sites of all his residential projects, but he seems to have been interested in meeting and working with his clients.

On one of their first visits to Taliesin, Mr. and Mrs. Grant took with them a list of all the features they hoped to include in their new house. Because Mr. Wright had left his glasses in another room, he asked the Grants to read the list to him. "When we had finished, he sat a few minutes and said, tapping his head, 'I have your home all designed. All I have to do is put it on paper.'" (p. 25-26)

The Grants received preliminary drawings of their house by November of 1946. Reproductions of Wright's first study sketches of the Grant house are included in Frank Lloyd Wright, Drawings for a Living Architecture. The house as built varies from the preliminary drawings only in the addition of an entrance into the utility area from the north side of the house; in the lengthening of the house by one 4'-0" bay, increasing the size of the kitchen and of the children's bedrooms above; in the elimination of a

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fourth fireplace which was designed for the bedroom overlooking the living room; in the omission of both a decorative copper fascia for the concrete roof and a decorative copper grille across the window band of the main stairway; in the use of wood sash in place of steel sash for windows and glass doors; and in the addition of a stone pier-storage space which supports the far end of the carport.

Finally, Mrs. Grant has written of Mr. Wright, "Contrary to what a lot of people thought, he was a wonderful person to work with. Our ideas counted too!" (p. 26) The Grants feel that their house is the best house Wright designed--because it was perfectly designed for them.

After waiting for the removal of wartime building restrictions and an end to building material shortages, construction of the Grant house began in September of 1949, and by December of 1950 the family had moved into the partially completed house. During construction the Grants acted as their own general contractor, hiring subcontractors for concrete work, masonry, plumbing, and carpentry. John DeKoven Hill was Wright's representative on this project and was involved with the Grants in some of the actual construction of the house, although at no time did he reside in Cedar Rapids. When problems arose which no one at the site could solve, phone calls were made to Taliesin.

The Grants were at the building site every day and did a great deal of the construction work themselves. They quarried all of the limestone on their own. They were surveyors and heavy equipment operators preparing the site for the excavation crew. With masons they laid the stone of the masonry walls and they laid the stone floors. In the autumn of 1950 they were up on the roof for its two-day pouring, holding the reinforcing in place and finishing the surface. They also did all the electrical work, built the interior partitions and much of the furniture, and they did the landscaping. Although the Grants moved into their house in late 1950, the house at that time was not even completely enclosed, and construction work, in some form, continued for at least the next ten years. Mr. Wright visited the Grant house only once, an unexpected visit in the early spring of 1951.

The Grant house is significant for its use of an irregular local stone, a stone which would likely have been shunned by other designers, but which under Wright's direction was formed into distinctive walls of natural beauty. The Grant house exemplifies Wright's ideal of using natural materials in a manner true to their nature. The Grant house is further significant, much as the Walter house is significant, for expanding the definition of Usonian. Here, with the Grant house, Wright has applied Usonian concepts to a substantial two-story dwelling.

In Taliesin Drawings, Kaufman concludes that the Grant house, "Whether seen from without or within . . . is one of Mr. Wright's most finely tempered designs, well carried out and well set in a lovely landscape." (p. 23)

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Frank Lloyd Wright, Taliesin Drawings: Recent Architecture of Frank Lloyd Wright Selected from His Drawings, comments by Edgar Kaufmann, Jr. (New York: Wittenborn, Schultz, 1952), p. 23.

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Continuation Sheet

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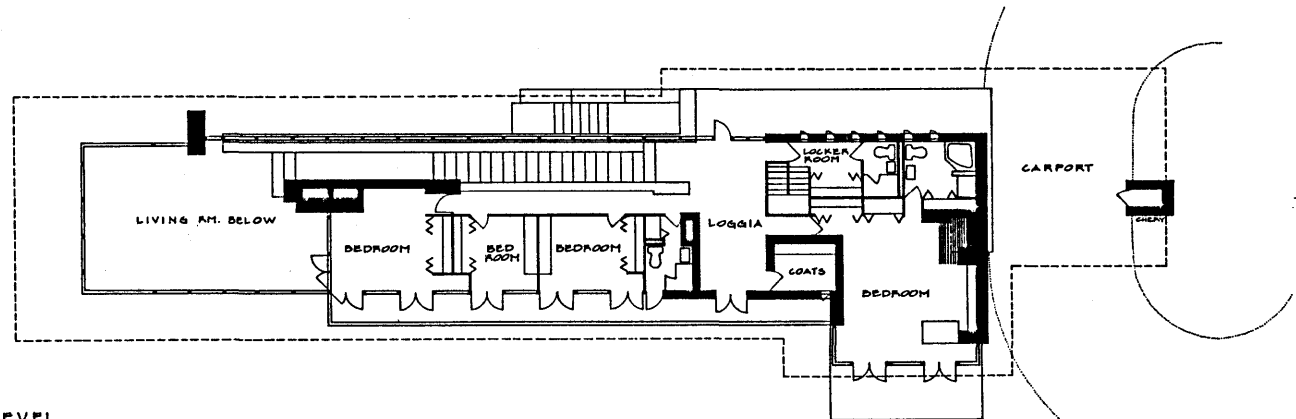
Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property encompasses N65RDS 1.6FT. NE SE-EX Grants 1st & Ex TH PT E & ADJ Lot 5 Grant 1ST and EX V1672 P297, T11, T83, Range 7.

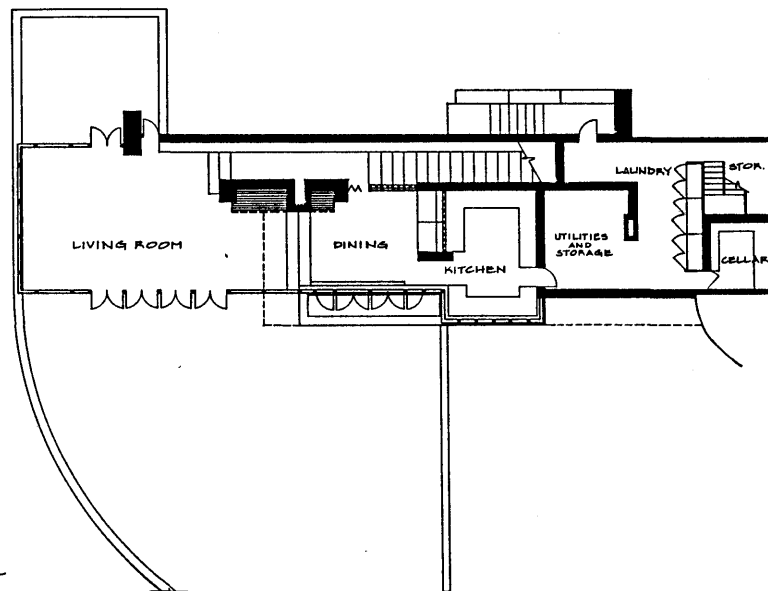
Boundary Justification

The boundary described above contains 40 acres and consists of the Grant House and its surrounding acreage. It is being nominated in its entirety because site was an integral part of usonian design in terms of Wright's philosophy of living in harmony with nature.

GRANT HOUSE, CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA.



UPPER LEVEL

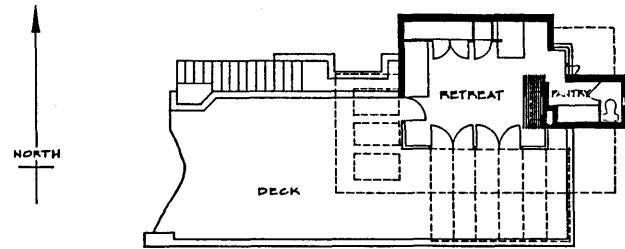


LOWER LEVEL

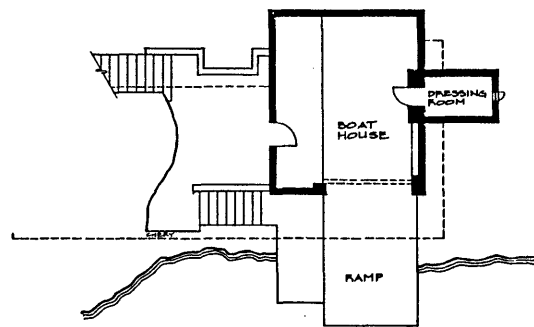


from Frank Lloyd Wright's Iowa Usonian
University of Washington Master's Thesis
by Cheryl Peterson

WALTER RIVER PAVILION, QUASQUETON, IOWA.



UPPER LEVEL



LOWER LEVEL

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