

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: GEORGIA	
COUNTY: BIBB	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:  
\* P. I. Hay House *NAL*

AND/OR HISTORIC NAME:  
William B. Johnston - Hay House

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
934 Georgia Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:  
Macon

STATE: Georgia      CODE: 13      COUNTY: Bibb      CODE: 021

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes: Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No: <input type="checkbox"/>
Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input type="checkbox"/>	Public Acquisition: In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input type="checkbox"/>		

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural  Commercial  Educational  Entertainment  Government  Industrial  Military  Museum  Park  Private Residence  Religious  Scientific  Transportation  Other (Specify)  Comments

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME:  
P. I. Hay Foundation

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Southern Trust Building

CITY OR TOWN: Macon      STATE: Georgia      CODE: 13

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Bibb County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Macon      STATE: Georgia      CODE: 13

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: About two acres

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: 1. The Historic Architecture of Macon by Carl Feiss and Russell Wright

\* DATE OF SURVEY: 1970      Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Middle Georgia Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Macon Coliseum

CITY OR TOWN: Macon      STATE: Georgia      CODE: 13

\* 2. Historical Survey by Middle Georgia Historical Society  
1970 Local

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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ENTRY NUMBER:      DATE:      FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Good <input type="checkbox"/>	Fair <input type="checkbox"/>	Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/>	Ruins <input type="checkbox"/>	Unexposed <input type="checkbox"/>
INTEGRITY	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	Altered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Unaltered <input type="checkbox"/>		Moved <input type="checkbox"/>	Original Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This large magnificent 24 room Italian Renaissance Villa was built from 1855 through 1860. Standing on a sloping site overlooking the city and the river, the Brick Structure contains a full basement, two high-ceiling floors and a third living level concealed from the outside by bulls-eye windows and the sloping roof.

The house is entered up twelve curved marble steps to the one story front portico that extends the width of the main house supported on Corinthian Columns. The center of the porch has a glass slab that emits light to the wine cellar below. Surrounding the glass insert is a fish scale design marble porch floor. On the main floor there are tall, arched, and keystone french windows and wide double doorway. The flat roof of the single story portico is balustraded to form a balcony the full width of the building. This is accessible from any of the five second floor french pedimented windows. Over this group of windows is a band of stone molding which forms a string course around the central unit. Between this and the modillioned cornice are spaced the five bulls-eye windows.

The roof is low-pitched, hipped type covered in terneplate with standing joints. Four decorative brick chimneys topped with tall earthenware pots add an exotic note. On either side of the main unit is a single-story wing, one room deep, with a glazed monitor roof capable of flooding the rooms below with light.

The unique and massive front doors are several inches thick and feature carved lions beads in high relief at the center and upper panels of etched glass. The wide front hall is floored with white and black marble and has a heavy central archway resting on large and intricately molded corbels. The fancy paneled ceiling has elaborate plaster frieze and cornice. Arched openings lead from this hall to the adjacent spaces and contain rosewood paneled sliding doors. Other doors have etched glass panels.

Behind the entrance hall is the stair hall with the carved mahogany staircase containing two deep wood-lined niches for vases. The one on the landing is hinged and can be swung aside to reveal a secret room that was made use of by the Confederacy toward the end of the War Between the States.

Opening off the front hall to the left is a sitting room and the library, and to the right is a long drawing room. Opening off the stair hall to the left and right, forming the two side wings is the dining room and ballroom. These are even more elaborate and artful than the halls and are decorated with sculptured white marble, carved and molded wood, and intricate stucco work enlivened by loops and whorls, quirks and latticing, all in the best of taste.

The ballroom in the right hand single storied wing was originally intended as an art gallery. The ceiling is 30 feet high and deeply coved above an extraordinarily detailed modillioned cornice. This 50-foot-long coved area centers on a tremendous skylight with stuccoed borders and decorative panels from which hang a pair of huge Waterford-crystal chandeliers.

The dining room is Italian in treatment containing a high vaulted ceiling totally covered with recessed oak paneling. The center panel is a skylight from which hangs a crystal chandelier.

The drawing room contains the most elaborate ceiling in the mansion, the work of stuccadors brought from Italy more than 120 years ago. The detail of the frieze and cornice is almost beyond belief.

The entire house is topped by a massive octagonal stone cupola with alternating arched and bulls-eye windows, scroll brackets, and a balustraded octagonal lantern with a walkway.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

6. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Pre-Columbian  16th Century  18th Century  20th Century   
 15th Century  17th Century  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1855-1860

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/>	Education <input type="checkbox"/>	Political <input type="checkbox"/>	Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/>
Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/>	Engineering <input type="checkbox"/>	Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Specify) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Historic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Industry <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/>	Invention <input type="checkbox"/>	Science <input type="checkbox"/>	
Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Landscape <input type="checkbox"/>	Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/>	
Commerce <input type="checkbox"/>	Architecture <input type="checkbox"/>	Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/>	
Communications <input type="checkbox"/>	Literature <input type="checkbox"/>	Theater <input type="checkbox"/>	
Conservation <input type="checkbox"/>	Military <input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Music <input type="checkbox"/>		

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)

This magnificent Italian Renaissance Villa was built for William B. Johnston, 1855-60, after he and his wife, Ann Tracy, returned from their honeymoon in Italy. With them they brought plans, artisans, landscape gardeners, and furnishings for their future home which would include nineteen Cararra marble mantels, and a five-hundred pound front door with solid silver hinges. When the house had been under construction for one year, William Makepeace Thackeray visited Macon, commented on Macon's "pretty houses," and wrote a letter to his daughters in London describing his friends, Mr. and Mrs. William B. Johnston.

Several years before, Mr. Johnston had begun his business career by being elected a Director of the Ocmulgee Bank in 1837 and of the Macon Manufacturing Company in 1849. In 1862 Johnston was appointed Premier in conduct of the operations of the Confederate Depository in Macon. This was the most important depository in the South, second only to the one at Richmond. At one time there was \$1,500,000 in gold held here, and in February, 1864, the Macon Depository took in more than \$15,000,000 in a seven-day period during the funding of the first issue of Confederate notes. Perhaps this money was hidden in the secret room off the stairway of Johnston's mansion, thus accounting for this home being the target of enemy shells during the siege of Macon in July, 1864.

After the War Between the States ended, William B. Johnston resumed his business career by running his jewelry store, the largest between Macon and New Orleans. In 1865 Johnston was elected president of the Central Railroad, and in this capacity, was successful in his efforts, despite unfavorable economic conditions, to raise \$1,000,000 to rebuild the railroad destroyed by Sherman.

Later, Johnston was one of the organizers and directors of the City Bank, and a director of the State Road. In 1869 he was elected president of Cotton States Life Insurance Company.

Mr. Johnston died in 1886, one of Macon's wealthiest citizens, a self-made man, and an active member of Christ Episcopal Church.

After Johnston's death, this lovely home was occupied for many years by his daughter, Mary Ellen, and her husband, Judge William H. Felton. In 1886 Mr. Felton was elected to the State Legislature, and in 1896 was appointed judge of the Superior Court of the Macon Circuit where he served for nearly twenty years. Continuing his interest in civic and charitable affairs, Judge Felton was elected a trustee in 1906 for the Georgia Academy for the Blind which opened for operation in its new building the following year, having been originally built in 1852.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Butler, John C. History of Macon and Central Georgia. Macon, Georgia, 1879.  
 Jones, Mary Callaway. Macon's Heritage in Architecture. Macon, Georgia, 1939, revised 1957.  
 Perkerson, Modora Field. White Columns in Georgia. New York, 1952.  
 Work Projects Administration. Georgia, A Guide to Its Towns and Countryside. The Georgia Board of Education, D40.  
 Young, Gholson & Hargrove. The History of Macon, Georgia 1823-1949. Macon, Georgia, 1950.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
NW	Degrees Minutes Seconds 32° 50' 28"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 83° 38' 03"		Degrees Minutes Seconds 32° 50' 26"	Degrees Minutes Seconds 83° 38' 4"	
NE	32° 50' 26"	83° 38' 01"				
SE	32° 50' 24"	83° 38' 03"				
SW	32° 50' 25"	83° 38' 06"				

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Mr. John J. McKay, Jr., President**

ORGANIZATION: **Middle Georgia Historical Society, Inc.** DATE: **Feb., 1971**

STREET AND NUMBER: **c/o Macon Coliseum**

CITY OR TOWN: **Macon** STATE: **Georgia** CODE: **13**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: Mary Gregory Jewett  
 Title: State Liaison Officer

Date: April 19, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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(Continuation Sheet)

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(Number all entries) P. L. Hay House 934 Georgia Avenue, Macon, Georgia

7. DESCRIPTION

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This is reached from an interior circular stair and provided a view of the river for the owner.

The kitchen originally was in the basement and service to the dining room was by way of a dumb-waiter. A later owner added a kitchen to the rear of the dining room. The house contains speaker tubes for communicating between floors.

The attic contains a 20,000 gallon copper water tank to which water was pumped from a spring on the original site.

The brick for the house were made on the nearby farm of the owner. Either, through not being pleased with the brickwork, or wanting to achieve more waterproofness or uniformity in appearance, a thin layer of cementitious material colored with brick dust was applied to the exterior face of the brick walls and a head of mortar was meticulously added to the face to simulate mortar joints. This has weathered off in the more exposed areas.

A copy of the hand-penned "Carpenters Specifications" dated October, 1855, gives credit to the drawings to T. Thomas & Sons, Architects, corner of Broadway and Grand Street, New York City. Other sources refer to construction under the direction of the Architect James B. Ayers. Both may be correct.

The mansion is without question the finest, most elaborate residence in Macon, and one of the more outstanding in the United States.

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(Number all entries) P. L. Hay House

934 Georgia Avenue

8. Significance

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After the Feltons' deaths, the house was sold in 1925 to P. L. Hay who found it a perfect setting for collected art treasures. In 1904 young P. L. Hay with a "shoe-string" capital established The Bankers Health and Life Insurance Company which became one of the most far-reaching enterprises in the South. In 1940 Mr. Hay built the most perfectly equipped office building in the Southeast, the Bankers Insurance Building, the last word in architecture at that time, and the pride of Macon for many years.

Intermingled with his business interests, Mr. Hay served as a City Alderman for four years, chairman of the Community Chest Drive, member of the Stadium Commission, President of the Macon Kiwanis Club, and as a Mason and a Shriner. To complete his list of activities, one should add that P. L. Hay was a religious man, chairman of the Board of Directors and of the building committee of the First Church of Christ, Scientist.

Park Lee Hay, an active civic and business leader, and Mrs. Hay, active in patriotic and cultural affairs, were responsible for preserving the magnificent home and assembling the exquisite present day furnishings. The Hay heirs now make available to the welcomed public the beauties of this ante-bellum mansion.

This place is one of the most fabulous in the Southeast, both from an architectural and artistic standpoint, and because of the prominence of the people who have lived here.

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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

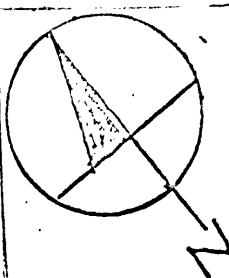
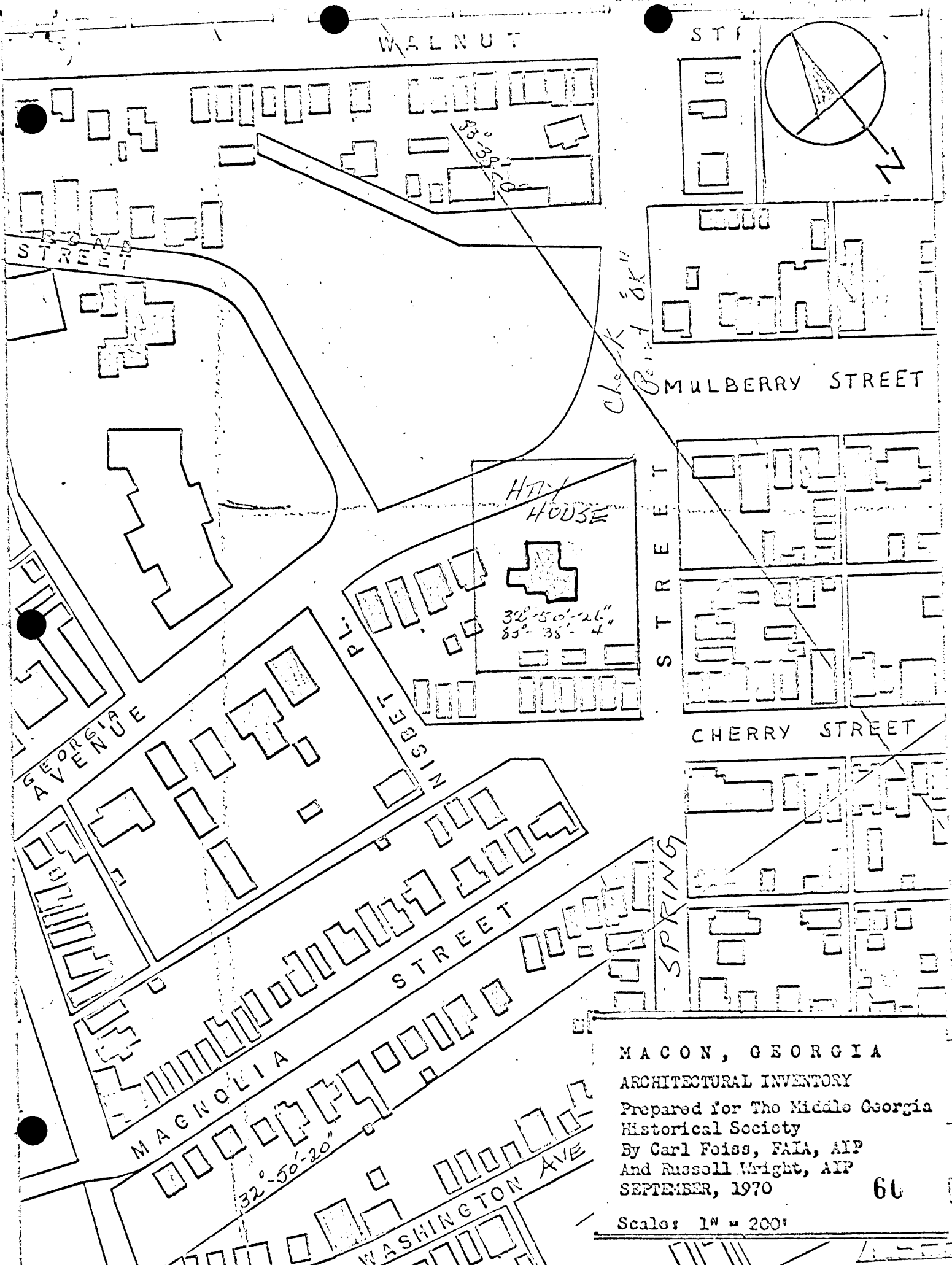
NATIONAL LANDMARKS STATEMENT OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

JOHNSTON-HAY HOUSE

Macon's Renaissance Revival Johnston-Hay House stands in magnificent contrast to the general run of Georgia's nationally important antebellum mansions, which were almost without exception in the columned neo-classical tradition. And at the same time, the quality and grandeur of its Italian Renaissance revivalism puts it into a special class which transcends even the best of the stucco-covered "villas in the Italian Style" popularized by A. J. Downing and others. The elaborate, three story, 24 room brick mansion was built in 1855-60 for the prominent Macon businessman, William B. Johnston, who upon returning from his honeymoon in Italy was inspired to build an American version of an Italian Renaissance villa. Apparently he even brought from Italy artisans, landscape gardeners and furnishings including nineteen carrara marble mantels and a five hundred pound front door with silver hinges.

Two names have been associated with the design of the Hay House, James B. Ayres of Macon and T. Thomas and Sons, Architects, New York City. It is reasonable to conclude that the house was actually designed by T. Thomas and supervised by the local builder, James B. Ayres. Thomas, English born and trained, in 1837 helped to form a National Institute of Architects, which 20 years later re-organized into the American Institute of Architects. One of Thomas's most important structures in New York was the Astor Library, an imposing Italianate structure on Lafayette Place. James B. Ayres, born in Woodridge, New Jersey, was a prominent Macon builder.

The Hay House with its flight of full width curved marble steps, Corinthian portico, octagonal cupola and elaborate interiors including much plaster frieze and cornice work is unique in Georgia. The ballroom alone is 50' long and has a 30' coved ceiling; a painted glass set of window lights lights the massive carved mahogany staircase; and the attic contains a 20,000 gallon copper water tank into which water was pumped from a spring.



*check 'OK'*

*SPRING*

MACON, GEORGIA  
 ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY  
 Prepared for The Middle Georgia  
 Historical Society  
 By Carl Foiss, FALA, AIP  
 And Russell Wright, AIP  
 SEPTEMBER, 1970

Scale: 1" = 200'