

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001074

Date Listed: 9/3/92

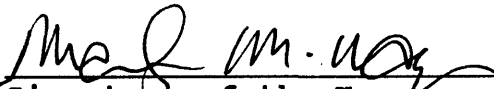
Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House
Property Name

Decatur
County

TENNESSEE
State

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.


Signature of the Keeper

9/3/92
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

Section No. 5

The count is amended to show the barn and stone jar house as contributing buildings and the walkway and cistern as contributing structures.

This change was confirmed by phone with the Tennessee SHPO (9/3/92).

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

1074

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 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 Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Highway 114-Clifton Ferry Road N/A not for publication

city or town Bath Springs N/A vicinity

state Tennessee code TN county Decatur code 039 zip code 38311

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 forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Herbert L. Hays 7/16/92
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State of 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:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keeper <u>Ma J. M. [Signature]</u>	Date of Action <u>9/2/92</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House
Name of Property

Decatur Co., TN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
		sites
<u>2</u>		structures
<u>2</u>		objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Healthcare: Clinic

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: I-House

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone piers, white oak logs
walls yellow poplar weatherboard, white oak boards

roof tin

other limestone, brick

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is: N/A

- 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.

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 #

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Health/Medicine

Architecture

Period of Significance

1900-1929

Significant Dates

1900

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Brooks, Dr. B. Martin

Brasher, John

Pickens, Henry

Weston, Dave

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House
Name of Property

Decatur Co., TN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1 1/2 acres

Bath Springs, 23NE

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	6	4	0	1	1	3	0	3	9	2	2	1	0	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

3

Zone		Easting				Northing								

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 Nita Rutledge Vaughn

organization Private Consultant date 1-26-92

street & number 109 E. Canby Circle telephone 901-925-3097

city or town Savannah state TN zip code 38372

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 B. M. Brooks, Jr. & Blache Broosk Turner

street & number Route #1, Clifton Ferry Road telephone (01-549-9676

city or town Bath Springs state TN zip code 3831

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including 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 20503.

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Decatur County, TennesseeNARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

The Dr. Beauregard Martin Brooks House is located in Bath Springs, Tennessee in the southern part of Decatur County. It is on the Clifton Ferry Road six miles from the Clifton Ferry Landing and the Tennessee River and twelve miles from the county seat of Decaturville. Built circa 1900, by Dr. Brooks and local labor, it uses native materials including white oak, yellow poplar, red cedar, yellow pine, field limestone, and clay. The two-story frame I-house has a one-story 1908 addition that changed the shape to an L-plan. The house rests on hand hewn white oak and red cedar log supports and limestone piers. It features an external limestone chimney on the eastern elevation which serves fireplaces in the eastern rooms. An internal brick chimney serves the west rooms with flues for wood stoves. Yellow poplar weatherboards and flush boards cover the 1900 portion of the house, while rough-cut white oak vertical boards cover the 1908 addition. In 1988, the weatherboarding of yellow poplar was removed from the house because of the poor condition of the boards. Loose nails enabled the boards to be removed without further damage. The under side of the boards was found to be in good condition so the weatherboarding was reversed and nailed back on the house. At the same time, two of the red cedar log sills under the porch on the north facade were replaced with cedar logs hewn and notched to match the original ones. In 1990, the 1908 bedroom was divided so a portion could be used for a bathroom, and running water was installed in the kitchen.

Several changes have occurred to the house, many of them historic. In 1908 a three room one-story addition, with porch, enclosed the eastern end of the rear porch. This addition provided space for a bedroom, dining room, and kitchen. At this time, the use of the kitchen in the cellar was discontinued. The original side gabled roof was constructed on two foot white oak boards. This roof was replaced in 1923 with the same material and was replaced again in 1943 with two foot cypress boards. The boards were sawn into two foot lengths, riven with a metal wedge and wooden mall, and nailed to the roof supports, one row lapping over the next row. The last wooden roof was removed in 1976 and replaced with a tin roof which is still in place. A sulphur spring on the property and a cistern dug in 1900 served the water needs of this home until 1930. During a severe drought in the summer of 1930 a well was dug and a well house was built over it. It was attached to the southern end of the porch across from the kitchen. Illumination for the house was provided by coal oil lamps and lanterns from 1900 and 1949. In 1949, the house was wired for electricity. In 1971, a propane gas heater was installed in the downstairs east room.

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Decatur County, Tennessee

Running water was added in the kitchen in 1990 and a Franklin Stove with stove-pipe for heat was placed in the downstairs west room in 1992.

Contributing outbuildings and features include a 1900 limestone slab walkway, a 1900 cistern, a 1917 barn and a 1925 stone jar house. A 1942 log smokehouse replaced an earlier structure and is non contributing. The Brooks House has been owned and occupied continuously by the Brooks family since 1900. The house has undergone few modern changes and retains its historic and architectural integrity.

A full length two-story porch covers the five bay northern facade. An interesting feature of this porch is that it has never had a balustrade. The flooring on the lower and upper level of the porch is of pine and portions of these porch floors that had rotted were replaced in 1988. The first story entrance is a central double-leaf door with 4/4 double-hung sidelights, while the upper story is accessed by a central single-leaf door. Two 4/4 double-hung sashes flank the entrances on both stories. These windows are original and are 7'4" in height on the first floor and 5'9" in height on the second floor.

The western elevation of the Brooks' house has no windows in the 1900 section. The one-story rear porch, enclosed in 1908, is visible from this view. The western elevation of the 1908 addition features a narrow porch giving access to the three rooms of the addition by means of three doors opening into these rooms. In 1990, the western half of the 1908 bedroom was converted into a bathroom so, at the present time, the door that formerly opened into the 1908 bedroom now opens into the 1990 bathroom. The dining room door has a double-hung window to the north of it. The 1930 well house is attached to the southern end of this porch, across from the kitchen door, and actually obstructs the view of the kitchen door on the western elevation.

The eastern elevation of the 1900 portion of the house contains two 2/2 double-hung sashes and an external limestone chimney. The chimney is mortared with a mixture of lime and red clay, with the exception of minor repair work done with modern materials. Under the eastern elevation, limestone slabs are stacked from the ground up to form a hearth. The 1908 portion has two 4/4 double-hung sashes, one located in the bedroom and one in the dining room. A door leading to the kitchen has been covered up and is no longer in use. At one time there were steps leading from this kitchen door to the ground, but there are no visible signs of these steps today.

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Decatur County, Tennessee

The southern elevation of the house reveals the original two-story portion, the enclosed porch, and the 1908 addition. Four-over-four double-hung sashes and a single-leaf door are visible. At the southern end of the porch there are stairs leading to the ground. The kitchen is located to the east of these stairs. To the west of these stairs, and on the same level as the porch, is the well house. The well house is covered with white oak boards.

The interior of the cellar kitchen is covered with pine. At one time pine covered the floor, but the floor at the present is dirt. A small limestone fireplace with flue above is still located on the western wall of the kitchen, which was used from 1900-1908. The back (northern) wall of the kitchen is supported by a very large limestone slab. Hewn logs at the top of this wall provide additional support under the house. One small window on the southern elevation provided light and this opening is still visible. The plank door to the west of the window opening is very low and is still in place. Floor joists from the rooms above were exposed in the kitchen and used to hold vegetables, etc. These joists are still visible, as are shelves used to hold kitchen supplies.

The 1900 portion of the house consists of a center hall plan. Two rooms are located to the east of the hallway, one upstairs and one downstairs, and two matching rooms are located to the west of the hallway. The hallway measures 15'1" by 8', with the stairs on the west side of the hall. The handrail, banisters, and newel posts are constructed of walnut and were made by Dr. Brooks. The stairway is minimally embellished with molding below the risers and treads. Walls of the hall are made of 4" wide dressed pine, while the pine floorboards are 3 1/2" wide.

On the main floor, the room located to the west is accessed by a single-leaf door opening at the foot of the stairs in the hall. Walls and ceiling in this room are of 6" wide dressed pine. However, three walls and the ceiling are covered with wallpaper and the wood of only one wall is exposed. The interior wall has a narrow brick circa 1900 chimney with a flue for a wood stove. The bricks are mortared with a lime and red clay mixture. This room measures 15'1" north to south and 14'11" east to west and the exposed pine floorboards are 2 1/2" in width. During the winter of 1992, a Franklin stove with a modern stovepipe was installed next to the brick chimney for the purpose of heating this room.

The room to the east of the hallway is accessed by a single-leaf door opening into the hallway. The 6" wide dressed pine walls are covered with a thin layer of paper similar to wallpaper, but without color or pattern.

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This room measures 15'1" north to south and 15'6" east to west and the exposed pine floorboards are 3 1/2" in width. On the eastern wall is a large limestone fireplace topped with a simple wooden mantle. The opening to this fireplace is boarded over and concrete was poured over the limestone hearth in recent years due to cracking of the stones. A propane gas heater on the hearth was installed in 1971 for heating this room. The ceiling in this room features the exposed floor joists and floorboards from the upstairs room. It is the only room in the house where these were left exposed. The ceiling height between the joists is 8'10". Built into the ceiling over the fireplace is a wooden boxed in area providing extra support for the limestone hearth in the upstairs room directly overhead.

The bedroom of the 1908 addition is accessed by a single-leaf door from the downstairs east room. The room measured 15'3" east to west and 9'9" north to south in 1908, but in 1990 the room was divided in half by a wall and the western half converted to a bathroom. A door in the dividing wall gives access to the other half which is now used for storage. This room is located directly behind the downstairs east room or to the south of it.

The 1908 dining room is immediately behind or to the south of the bedroom/bathroom and is accessed by a door from the kitchen. The dining room measures 15'3" east to west and 7'11" north to south. The pine walls in this room are covered with modern wallboard. Located to the south of the dining room is the 1908 kitchen, measuring 15'3" east to west and 7'8" north to south. Its pine walls are covered with modern wallboard.

The second story hallway has a number of wooden shelves constructed in 1900. They were used by Dr. Brooks to hold his medicine and supplies. At the present time they are used for storage.

The upstairs west room is accessed by a door opening from the hallway. The dimensions of this room match those of the downstairs west room, but the ceiling height is 6'7 1/2". The walls and ceiling are of 6" wide dressed pine and are covered with thin paper similar to wallpaper, but without pattern or color. The interior wall has a brick chimney with a flue which is no longer in use. The stovepipe installed in 1992 in the lower room extends through this room and through the roof. Exposed pine floorboards are 4" wide.

The upstairs east room is accessed by a door from the hallway. A limestone fireplace on the eastern wall is 4'4" across, considerably smaller than the downstairs fireplace. This fireplace remains open and is 14" deep. The original limestone hearth is intact. The walls are of 6" wide dressed pine

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Decatur County, Tennessee

and are being stripped of their covering of wallpaper over newspaper. The ceiling is covered with sound-deadening felt used with wallpaper and has a height of 6'7 1/4 ". Exposed pine floorboards are 2 1/2" wide.

The house is located in a rural farm area in the extreme northeastern corner of a 30 acre tract of land. However, the nominated area is only the 1 1/2 acres immediately around the house. Built on a slight rise of ground at the front with the elevation dropping at the back, the facade of the house is approximately 50' from the Clifton Ferry Road. A limestone walkway, circa 1900, leads from the facade porch to the road. The boundary on the east is a fence row located 20' from the eastern elevation of the house. A fence row on the western elevation provides a natural boundary between the yard surrounding the house and an open field. A natural division between the yard and an open field on the southern elevation provides the fourth boundary for the 1 1/2 acres. All outbuildings, contributing and noncontributing are located within these boundaries. A number of large oak and cedar trees surround the house.

A 1917 barn constructed of planks is located on the southwestern corner of this 1 1/2 acres. Although it is in a poor state of repair, it still retains integrity. A limestone jar house, circa 1925, is located in the southeastern portion of the yard and approximately 20' from the house. It is constructed of small limestone rocks mortared together and topped with a tin roof supported on four posts outside the four corners of the jar house. This house was used for storing canned goods and the shelves are still intact inside. The 1900 cistern is located on the eastern side of the house and is covered over with tin. A 1900 walkway constructed of limestone slabs leads from the porch on the northern facade to the Clifton Ferry Road. All outbuildings and features above date prior to the death of Dr. Brooks and are contributing. A log smokehouse, circa 1942, and considered to be noncontributing is located on the northern side next to the jar house. It features a roof of cedar shingles and replaced an earlier smokehouse on the property.

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Decatur County, TennesseeSTATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Dr. Beauregard Martin Brooks House is being nominated under criteria B and C for its local significance in the areas of health/medicine and architecture. Under criterion B the house is significant for its association with Dr. Brooks, a well-known physician in Decatur County, Tennessee for thirty-six years. From the time Dr. Brooks moved into the house in 1900 until his death in 1929, the building served as his office, clinic, and pharmacy. He ministered to hundreds of families within Decatur, Wayne and Perry counties and was one person on whom the community frequently depended. Brooks graduated from the Memphis Hospital Medical College in March of 1893 and began his medical practice at a time when physicians were called upon to take care of the sick, act as dentists, and dispense drugs. Dr. Brooks was known to be scrupulous in the matter medical hygiene. The medicines and instruments he carried with him for fighting death and disease fit easily into two small saddlebags slung across the back of his horse. Dr. Brooks made the rounds of his patients for thirty-one years before consenting to buy a car in 1924. Even then he was forced to use a horse when muddy roads made it impossible to take his Ford Model T touring car on rounds.

The Brooks House is significant under criterion C as a good example of an I-house that has retained a high degree of integrity. The two story frame house was constructed in 1900 by Dr. Brooks and local builders. The stone chimneys and foundation, two story front porch, and the main entry with sidelights are some of the distinguishing features on the exterior. Inside, the house still retains its original stair, doors, fireplaces, and wood floors and ceilings. The house was the first two story residence built in Bath Springs and is one of the few extant historic houses in the county.

Beauregard Martin Brooks was born December 31, 1861 at Old Carrollville in Perry County. From the time he was a small child he wanted to become a doctor. As young as 5-6 years of age he would collect seeds from plants and put them in bottles and pretend they were medicine. Along with his regular schooling he obtained some old medical books from a doctor and studied them. Around the age of 26 he and a brother went to work for a patent medicine company in Missouri. They peddled patent medicines as far as East Tennessee, separating for weeks at a time and then meeting up somewhere on the trail and spending time together before separating again. After nearly a year on the road Brooks was increasingly dissatisfied with this job. While traveling for the patent medicine company he was courting a girl back home. A letter in the possession of Martin Brooks, Jr. reveals

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this dissatisfaction. Dated June 9, 1887 at Winchester, Tennessee and addressed to Miss Cora Bruce, the letter reads

"Dearest Girl, While time and opportunity affords me the chance from my weary and unpleasant business I will write you a few lines though doubt they will be appreciated. Miss Cora, you will please excuse me from being so hasty to write but as you have already learned from my letter that I am not enjoying the business. I hope you all had a nice time at the church on the 8th of June. So I will close hoping this will not be _____ unsatisfactory. A true friend and so shall remain.

After a year of peddling patent medicines Brooks returned home to Old Carrollville and continued to court Cora Bruce. They were married on December 23, 1888 and lived at Old Carrollville with his family. A son, Walter Kendrick, was born in 1891 and during that year Brooks made the decision to attend medical school. His wife and son moved to Decaturville in Decatur, County and lived with her sister and brother-in-law while he attended the Memphis Hospital Medical College from 1891 until 1893.

From Saddlebags to Science, A Century of Health Care in Memphis, 1830-1930 by Patricia M. LaPointe documents the organization of this institution, lists professors and classes offered, fees, and other information. Dr. William E. Rogers organized the Memphis Hospital Medical College in 1877. The outbreak of yellow fever in Memphis in 1878 and 1879 delayed the opening of the school until the fall session of 1880. Steady growth of the school through the 1880s resulted in the first enlargement of the facilities in 1892. An advertisement for the 1894-95 session lists professors in the fields of diseases of the ear, eye and throat, children and women, study of obstetrics and gynecology, principles and practices of surgery and clinical surgery, diseases of the rectum and chest, instruction in microscopy, histology, pathology and bacteriology, anatomy, chemistry, pharmacy, physiology, practice of medicine and hygiene. The expenses of attending the school included a matriculation fee of \$5.00, demonstrators ticket of \$10.00, professors ticket full course \$50.00, and a graduation fee of \$30.00. Daily clinics were held, bedside instruction given and, in the area of clinical advantages, the school claimed Memphis was unsurpassed by any city in the southwest. Myra Looney Wood, great-granddaughter of Dr. Brooks, has in her possession the completion card in Practical Anatomy of B. M. Brooks of Tennessee from the 1891-92 session of the Memphis Hospital Medical College. She also has a notebook belonging to Brooks with his handwritten notes on the diagnosis and treatment of certain diseases including smallpox, ulcers and cancers of the stomach and meningitis. By

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attending the Memphis Hospital Medical College, Brooks chose a school that could give him a full course of instruction in the medical field with some of the most advanced knowledge and modern techniques in use at that time.

Martin Brooks, Jr. states that his father paid around \$10.00 a month for board while staying in Memphis during school sessions, which lasted from early fall to early spring. By comparison, an advertisement for the Medical Department of the University of Tennessee in Nashville for 1892-93 session states that "boarding, fuel and lights were cheap and that a student practicing economy could bring their entire expense of a collegiate session within the bounds of \$150.00". (Information contained in this advertisement was obtained from a telephone conversation with Anne Bunting of the Health Science Library at the University of Tennessee at Memphis on January 13, 1991.) He came home between sessions and put into practical use what he had learned that session by practicing medicine. This was an accepted practice at the time and usually done in the company of an established physician. After attending the Memphis Hospital Medical College for three years, Brooks received the degree of Doctor of Medicine. His certificate is dated March 30, 1893 and states "I have the pleasure of informing you that your final examination for the degree of Doctor of Medicine has proven satisfactory. You will therefore present yourself at the Lyceum Theatre this evening at 7:30 o'clock and receive your diploma." The notice is signed by the Dean of the school. A copy of the 1893 Memphis Medical Monthly, Volume 13 is found on page 181 of From Saddlebags to Science. One announcement in this publication is of the thirteenth annual commencement of the Memphis Hospital Medical College. A total of 90 men are listed as having received their degrees, including Brooks. The framed diploma received by Brooks upon graduation in 1893 is hanging in the home of his granddaughter, Nancy Alexander Price, in Odenton, Maryland.

After graduating from medical college, Dr. Brooks returned to Decatur County and began his medical career. He joined the ranks of the medical profession listed in the census records of Decatur County since the mid-1800s. The files of Simon Rulin Bruesch, M. D., retired anatomy professor and historian at the University of Tennessee Memphis Medical College, are found in the Health Science Library of that institution. His files record the census records of physicians in Decatur County. An 1850 census listed 16 physicians, ranging in age from 24 to 80. An 1880 census listed 19 physicians, ranging in age from 25 to 74. By 1900, the census lists 14 physicians, 1 druggist, and 1 midwife. The physicians ranged in age from 33 to 67 with Beauregard Martin Brooks listed as age 38. Dr. Brooks practised in Decatur County and also crossed the Tennessee River into Perry County and Wayne County. When called upon to minister to the sick in

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Decatur County, Tennessee

Perry County he rode on horseback to the bank of the river where a bateau would be waiting for someone to carry him across. Another horse would be waiting on the opposite bank for him to continue the journey to his patient. When his services were needed in Clifton in Wayne County he would travel by horseback to the Clifton Ferry Landing and take the ferry across the Tennessee River.

Physicians in Decatur County and surrounding areas relied on one another for consultation in difficult cases. Dr. Brooks relied on a surgeon to perform major surgical procedures needed by his patients. The physicians he worked with the most were Dr. Rogers and Dr. Wylie in Decatur County and Dr. Parker in Saltillo in nearby Hardin County. The Decatur County physicians are documented in the History of Decatur County, Tennessee by Lillye Younger.

Dr. Brooks ordered from pharmaceutical companies by mail and the medicines were shipped by rail to Perryville, loaded on a steamboat and left at Bob's Landing approximately 3 1/2 miles from Bath Springs. The liquid medicines were in a concentrated form and came in large stone jugs packed in straw in wooden crates. After being unloaded from the steamboats at Bob's Landing they were delivered to Dr. Brook's home by a wagon and team. He combined distilled water with the concentrated medicines and filled smaller bottles for his patients. Two of these stone jugs as well as the saddlebags of Dr. Brooks are in the possession of Bill Alexander of Savannah, Tennessee, a grandson of Dr. Brooks. Bill Alexander and his wife Patricia also have a Day Book or daily record belonging to the doctor. His handwritten Day Book records that from May 1892 to 1895 he delivered 64 babies. Dr. Brooks stopped counting at 300 babies delivered and conservative estimates are that he delivered as many as 1,000 during his years in the medical profession. His usual fee for delivering a baby during the early years of his practice was \$5.00 and increased to \$10.00 in later years. The Day Book records numerous visits to families and charges for those visits and medication. The charges ranged from 25 cents to \$1.00 in most cases. The records also indicate that he sometimes did not charge for a visit and that, in the case of serious illness, indicated by daily visits over a period of 5-10 days, he charged less and less and finally did not charge. He frequently was not paid for his services and at other times was paid with corn, cotton, molasses, potatoes, chickens, hay, pork, beef, flour and other items.

When Dr. Brooks went into practice in Decatur County the law regulating the practice of medicine in the State of Tennessee had been passed a scant four years before. From Saddlebags to Science relates that this legislation

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Decatur County, Tennessee

requiring all physicians to be registered was to protect the public from imposters and those poorly educated in the field of medicine. The 1800s and early 1900s saw the beginning of organized medicine. The American Medical Association was founded in 1847 by U. S. doctors to raise the nation's medical standards. The files of Simon Rulin Bruesch, M. D. at the University of Tennessee in Memphis list Dr. Brooks as a member of this organization.

Brooks subscribed to several medical journals and kept abreast of new developments as much as possible. He made trips to Nashville periodically to visit a Dr. Haggard and a Dr. Floyd, considered by some to be two of the most qualified physicians in the state. He would discuss new medicines or treatments with them and come home to Decatur County better prepared to help his patients.

After graduation in 1893 Dr. Brooks moved his family to a frame boarding house located at Old Center on the Decaturville Road about 3 miles from Bath Springs. While he set about establishing a medical practice his wife Cora took care of their two sons and ran the boarding house. They lived in this house for a year and in 1894 moved to a house belonging to a Dr. Allen on the Saltillo Road and about 1 1/2 miles from Bath Springs. Dr. Allen at this time left Decatur County and Dr. Brooks took over his practice. This information is provided by Martin Brooks, Jr. and documented in the History of Decatur County. While living in the Allen house, Dr. Brooks purchased land across the road and built a house for his family in 1895. Two daughters were born to Cora and Martin Brooks while living in this house, Mae in 1895 and Nona in 1898.

In 1899 Dr. Brooks once again prepared to move his family. Deed Book 15, pages 517-518 in the Register of Deed Office in the Decatur County Courthouse records a transaction between J. R. Shannon and wife Mattie and B. M. Brooks. In the Second Civil District in Bath Springs, Dr. Brooks purchased 60 acres of land for \$1,050. He paid \$400.00 down with a note due November 1, 1901 for \$325.00 at 6% interest and a second note due November 1, 1902 for the same amount. This deed was signed November 1, 1900. Martin Brooks, Jr. and Blanche Brooks Turner both state emphatically that their father built the house on this property in 1899 and that the family moved in during the month of January 1900. The location chosen by Dr. Brooks for a home for his family was in the heart of Bath Springs, geographically near the center of his practice and a historical location from a medical sense. The History of Decatur County and People in Action (also by Lillye Younger) record that Dr. William Hancock started a health resort in the southern part of Decatur County near a cluster of sulphur

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Decatur County, Tennessee

springs in 1840. He built a large log resort hotel with paved walks leading to bathhouses at the springs. Dr. Hancock is credited with the naming of Bath Springs for these sulphur springs. He practiced at the health resort from 1840 to 1860 and passed away in 1866. The property Dr. Brooks chose for his house was on part of the tract of land belonging to Dr. Hancock and had one of the springs on it.

The year 1899 was a busy one for Dr. Brooks with the building of a new house for his family along with his medical practice. Dr. Brooks was from a pioneer family, well versed in the art of doing for himself, and was credited with being a better than average carpenter. Brooks built the wood mantle in the downstairs east room and the banisters, handrails and newel posts on the stairs. He hired John Brasher to build the limestone chimney and a brick chimney and Henry Pickens was hired to help with the heavy labor and to dig a cellar for a kitchen. Dave Weston was hired to cut, hew and notch with a broad axe the white oak log supports under the house and the red cedar log sills under the porch. The house was built with a cellar kitchen, center hallway, four rooms. By 1908 Dr. Brooks had been practicing medicine for 15 years and was a very busy man. When an addition on the house was necessary he had no time to build it or oversee the building of it. The one-story 3 room addition on the south side of the house changed the shape to an L and added a bedroom, dining room and kitchen. This addition was built in a large part with materials and labor in lieu of payment for medical services rendered by Dr. Brooks.

The Brooks family used the water of the sulphur springs on the property for washing and drinking as well as other water needs. It was hauled to the house in wooden barrels in a wagon. A cistern was dug on the east side of the house 1899 to store rainwater for drinking and cooking. An ingenious gutter system designed by Dr. Brooks was constructed from two boards nailed together to form a V. A series of these gutters or troughs channeled the rainwater into the cistern. The first one was attached to the back edge of the roof on the southern elevation. This gutter drained into a trough that emptied into a barrel elevated on a post and filled with charcoal. After filtering through the charcoal a spigot on the side of the barrel released the rainwater into another trough attached to a second barrel at a lower level and filled with gravel. After filtering through the gravel a spigot released the rainwater into the last trough into the cistern. The cistern was 12-15 feet deep and 3-4 feet across with plastered walls. It held an estimated 1,000 gallons of water. A round wooden lid was designed to fit tightly over the top to keep debris out of the water and over this was a small structure along the lines of a well house. This system was opened when it rained and closed after the rain stopped. While other families

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suffered from diseases or illness caused by contaminated drinking water, the Brooks family had no such worries.

Upon completion of the house and cistern in January 1900, Dr. Brooks moved his wife and four children into their new home. Between the years 1900 and 1908 three more children were born to Martin and Cora Brooks. Another daughter, Blanche, was born in 1902 and a son, Martin, Jr., was born in 1906. Their last child, a daughter, was born in 1908 and named Flavius.

In 1909, due to the death of her husband, the mother of Dr. Brooks moved in with the family, bringing to a total of ten persons living in the house. In the fall of 1909 Dr. Brooks moved his wife and children to Clifton, Tennessee where the children of school age would have the advantage of instruction at the Frank Hughes College. Dr. Brooks remained in the house at Bath Springs because of his medical practice. His mother also remained to keep house for him, enabling him to continue his practice without interruption. He would cross the ferry when time permitted and visit with his family in Clifton. His wife and children remained at Clifton through the school session of 1909-10 returning to Bath Springs in March of 1910. Dr. Brooks' mother fell and broke her hip in the early spring of 1910 and the family did not return to Clifton to attend school. The quality of education of his children and other children in the area continued to be a source of concern to Dr. Brooks and his wife. The Bath Springs School building was inadequate for the needs of the children and in 1911 Dr. Brooks and his wife donated land for a new building. In addition, to the land Dr. Brooks donated some of the building materials and helped build the combination school/church. Dr. Brooks and his family were members of the Bath Springs Baptist Church which shared the building with the Bath Springs School.

Like many rural physicians, Brooks was "on call" night and day. The sound of a horse running at a great speed signaled that someone needed him immediately. In the middle of the night, while eating a meal with his family, during church services, with snow on the ground or when tired or ill he never faltered in caring for the sick. Although he had purchased a car, on January 7, 1929 he called on dozens of patients while making his rounds on horseback due to the muddy condition of the roads. Returning home late in the evening he collapsed suffering from a slight stroke. He was revived and spent a comfortable night. Upon arising the next morning he built a fire, ate the breakfast his wife prepared for him and spent the morning teaching his grandchildren their Sunday School lesson. At 10:00 a.m. he collapsed and died from complications of a stroke, high blood

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pressure, and old age. Dr. Beauregard Martin Brooks was 67 years of age when he died and he was the last practicing physician in Bath Springs.

The 1900 portion of the house is two rooms wide, two rooms in height, and one room deep with a central hall and stairs - an archetypical I-house. It was constructed with local labor and materials. Dr. Brooks personally constructed a large part of the house and oversaw the rest. The handrail, banisters, and newel posts of the central stair were all crafted by Dr. Brooks. He utilized walnut found on the property and fashioned the stair with a pocket knife, drawing knife, and plane. Two chimneys were erected, one of fieldstone and one of brick from an abandoned ore furnace. The house is supported by limestone piers and white oak logs hewn with a broad axe. Siding from the house was cut from yellow poplar, dressed at a sawmill. Support sills under the porch are of red cedar and the interior walls and floors are made of pine. The side gable roof was originally sheathed with two foot white oak boards, but this has knkow been changed. The two story front porch never had railings, an unusual feature for porches of this type. The interior of the residence is very simple, with wood fireplace surrounds, wood shelves, and simple window surrounds. The quality of workmanship and materials is still evident in the house today. Dr. Brooks made good use of native materials and his own knowledge of construction. The house is an intact example of a basic I-house form in Decatur County. Only one other building and two iron furnace sites in Decatur County are listed in the National Register. The John P. Rains Hotel (NR 11/21/78) is a two story brick commercial building constructed in 1898. While no comprehensive survey of I-houses in Decatur County has ben undertaken, the Brooks house is thought to be one of the few extant historic residences in this rural county that retains such a high degree of integrity.

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Decatur County, TennesseeMAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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Wood, Myra Looney. Great-granddaughter of Dr. Brooks.

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Note: The 87 year old son of Dr. Beauregard Martin Brooks, Martin Brooks, Jr., is still in the Dr. Brooks' House in Bath Springs, Tennessee. Blanche Brooks Turner, the 90 year old daughter of Dr. Brooks is a resident of the Decatur County Manor Nursing Home in Parsons, Tennessee. Martin Brooks, Jr. in particular has a keen memory for dates and facts. All of the information about Dr. Brooks and the Dr. Brooks' House, unless stated otherwise in the text, was obtained from taped interviews with Martin Brooks, Jr. and Blanche Brooks Turner from September, 1991 to January, 1992.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Dr. Brooks House is located in the extreme northeastern corner of a tract of land containing 30.5 acres. The area nominated is approximately 1 1/2 acres containing the house, all outbuildings, contributing and noncontributing and the yard surrounding the house. The house is approximately 50' from Highway 114 or the Clifton Ferry Road on the northern facade. On the southern elevation there is a natural division between the yard and an open field and this provides the fourth boundary. Beginning at point A the boundary moves west along the property line approximately 150', thence southerly approximately 375', thence east approximately 150', thence north along the property line approximately 375' to the point of the beginning.

The tax map for this nomination has the scale 1" = 400'. This scale tax map is prepared by the Tennessee State Board of Equalization for rural areas. In the past, the Tennessee Historical Commission has used this scale map for nomination and had found that the 1" = 400' adequately meets our office needs. The Tennessee Historical Commission does not have the facilities to prepare maps to the scale preferred by the National Park Service. To supplement this map, the nomination includes a detailed verbal boundary description.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The 1 1/2 acres of the nominated area contains the house and all outbuildings and is the center of activity for the property. The nominated area includes sufficient acreage to provide a historic setting for the house.

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Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House
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Dr. Beauregard Martin Brooks House
Clifton Ferry Road
Bath Springs, Tennessee
Photos by: Kenny Walker
Date: March 9, 1992
Negatives: Tennessee Historical Commission
Nashville, Tennessee

North facade, facing south, 1900 limestone walkway
#1 of 25

West elevation, facing east
#2 of 25

East elevation, facing west
#3 of 25

South elevation, facing north
#4 of 25

North facade detail, double entrance doors
#5 of 25

North facade detail, doors on upper and lower level porches, no handrails
#6 of 25

Southwest elevation, shed addition to left of center, well house attached
to porch
#7 of 25

Southeast elevation, 1908 addition
#8 of 25

Interior, downstairs west room, overview
#9 of 25

Interior, downstairs east room, overview, door on right entered 1900 porch,
1908 bedroom
#10 of 25

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Brooks, Dr. Beauregard Martin, House
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Interior, downstairs east room, boxed in support over mantle for upstairs
hearth

#11 of 25

Interior, hall downstairs, stairs, window on landing

#12 of 25

Interior, stair detail

#13 of 25

Interior, downstairs hall, door on south elevation closed, stair detail

#14 of 25

Interior, upstairs hall, stair detail

#15 of 25

Interior, upstairs hall, shelves Dr. Brooks used for medicines and
supplies, door opening onto upstairs porch

#16 of 25

Interior, upstairs east room, overview

#17 of 25

Interior, 1908 kitchen, overview

#18 of 25

North facade, upstairs porch, facing west

#19 of 25

1908 addition on right, facing north into hall downstairs, opening under
stairs to left of door covered by flag

#20 of 25

Interior of well house, attached to 1908 porch in 1930, facing west

#21 of 25

1917 barn, facing south, on back southwest corner of boundary of area
nominated

#22 of 25

1942 smokehouse of log, 1925 stone jar house, facing east

#23 of 25

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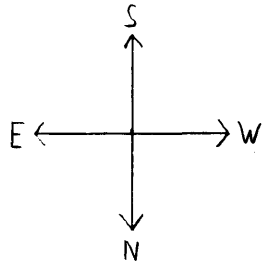
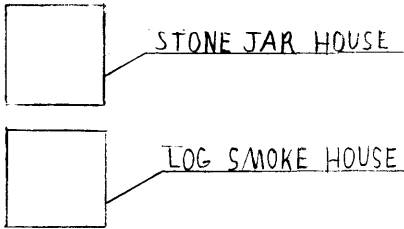
1900 cistern
#24 of 25

Interior, cellar kitchen, fireplace with flue
#25 of 25

OPEN FIELD

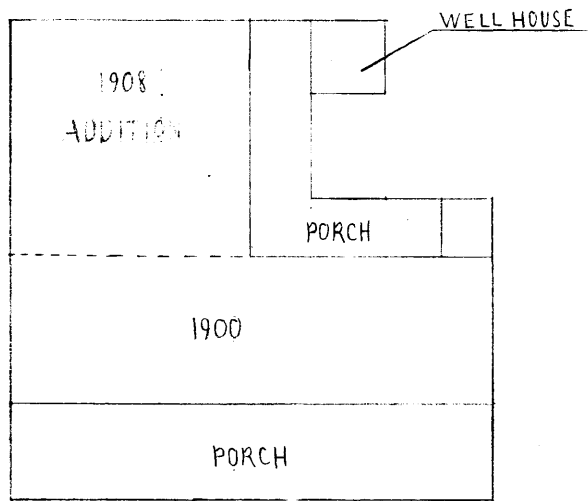
DR. BROOKS HOUSE CIRCA 1900 BATH SPRINGS TN.

PLANK BARN 1917



WOODS

CISTERN



1 1/2 ACRES

FENCE ROW

OPEN FIELD

FENCE ROW

← TO CLIFTON FERRY

HIGHWAY 114

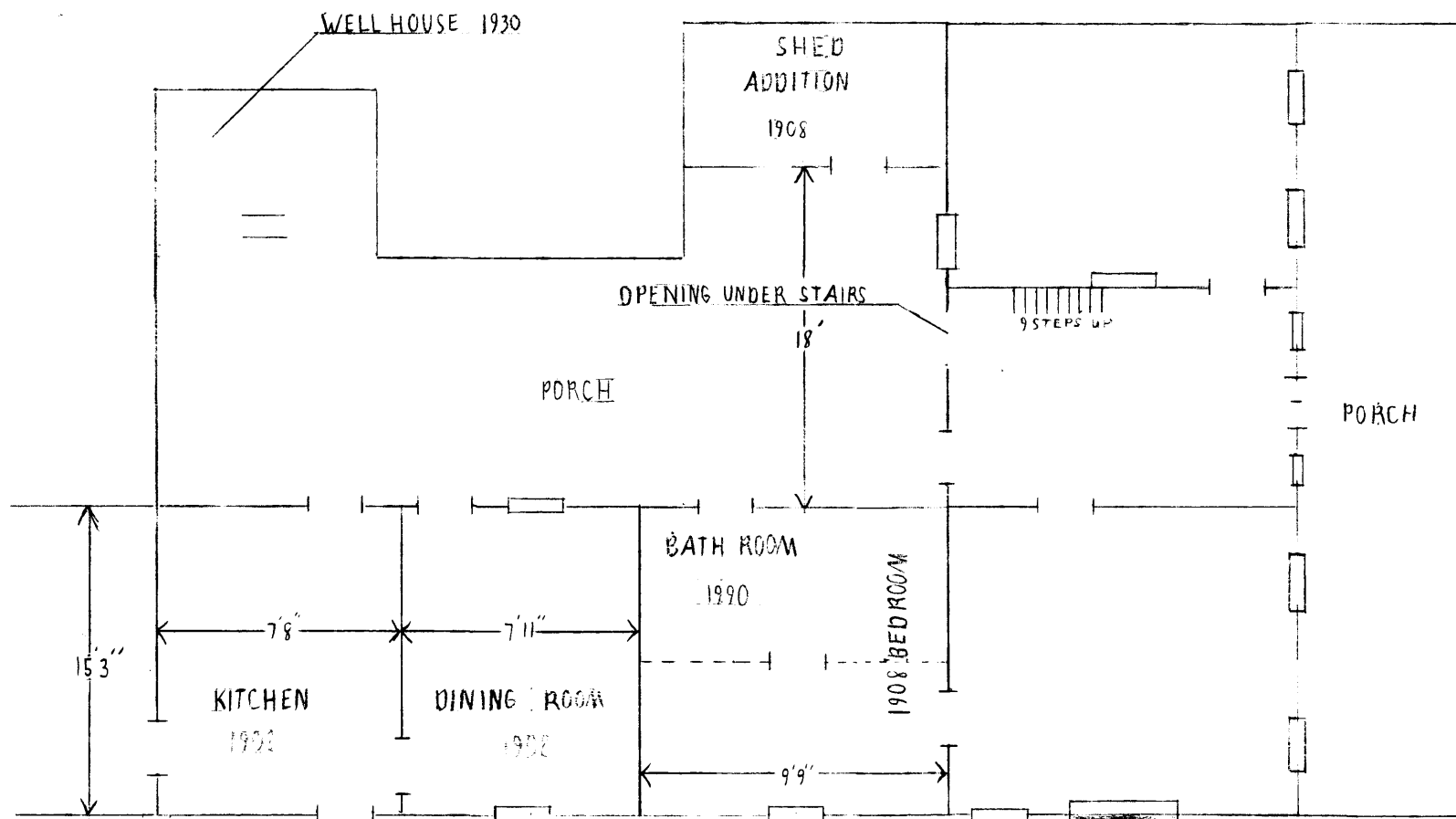
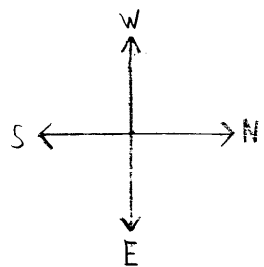
TO DECATURVILLE →

SITE MAP

DR. BROOKS HOUSE

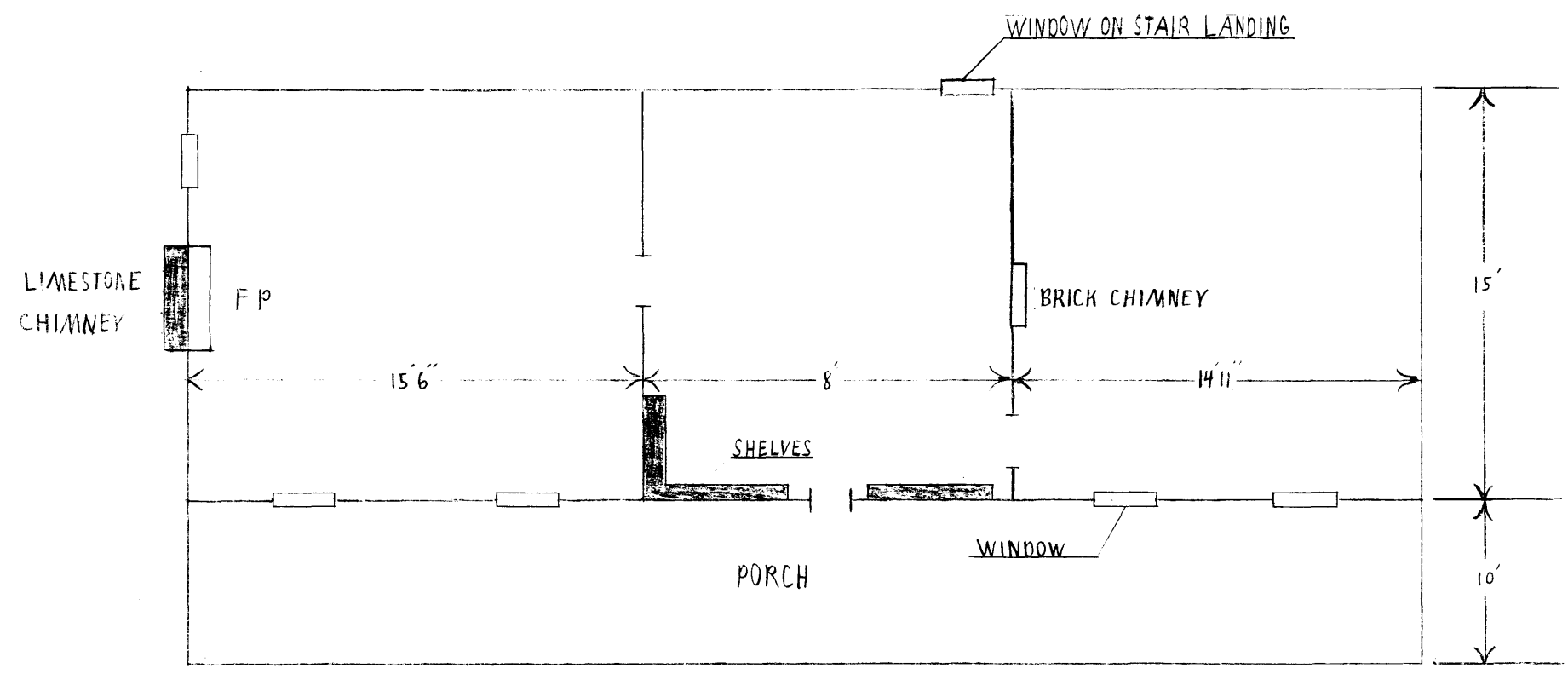
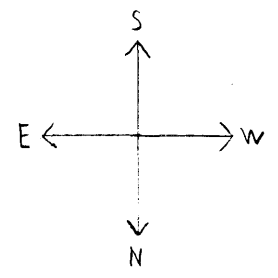
CIRCA 1900

1908 ADDITION



DR. BROOKS HOUSE

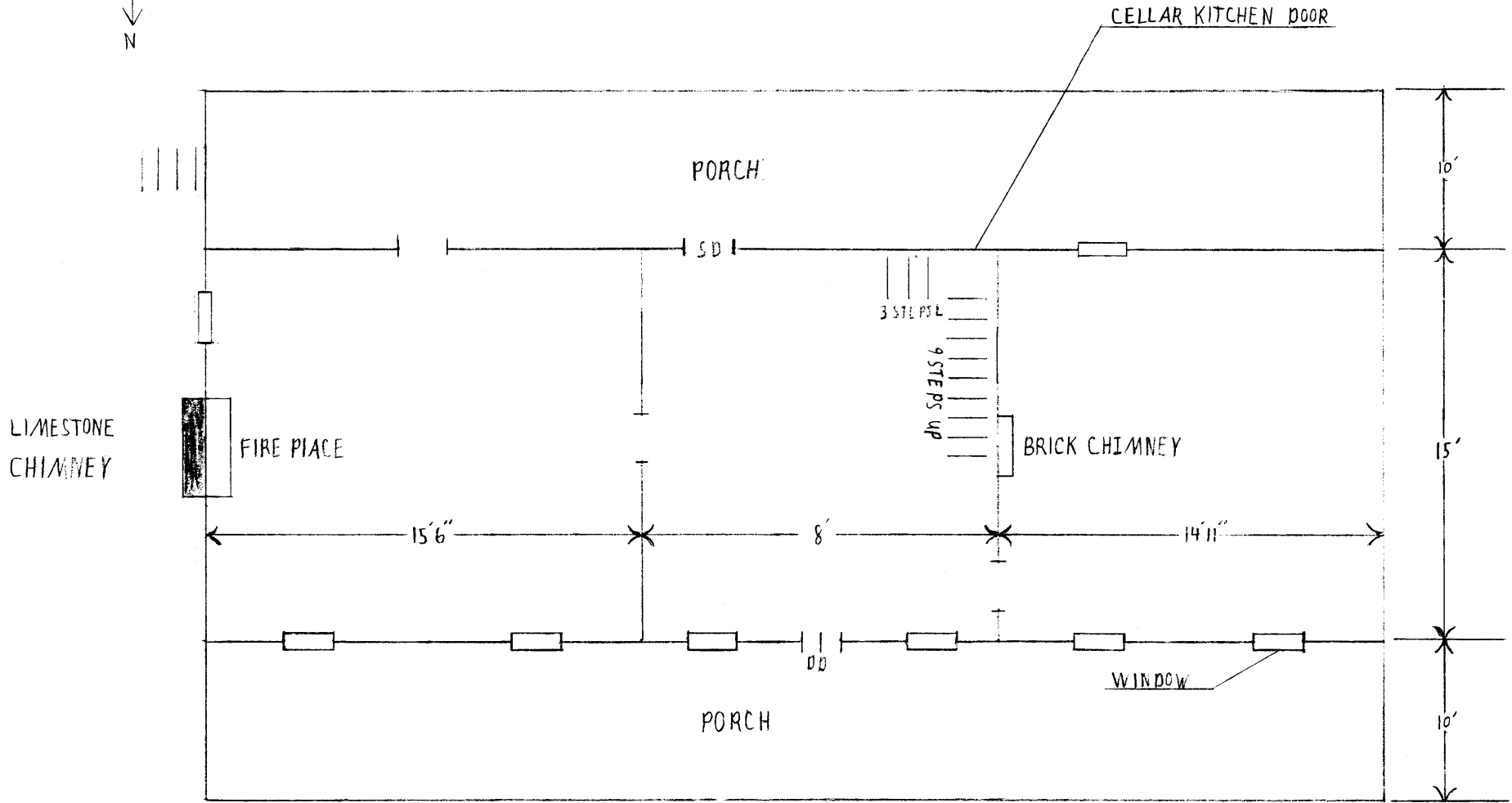
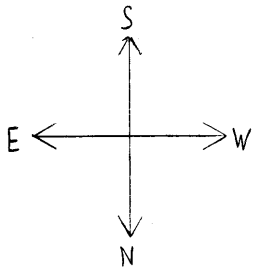
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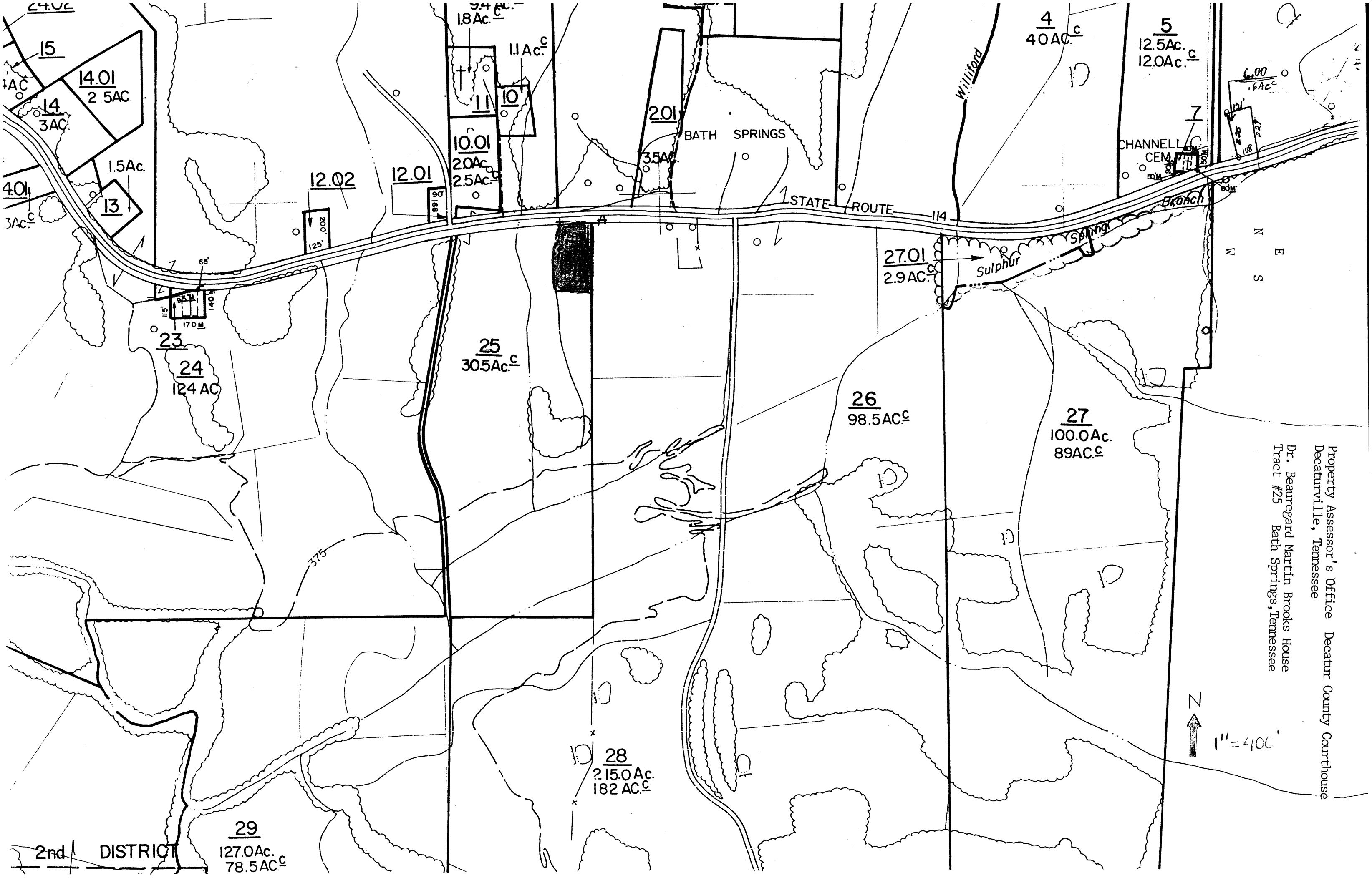
SECOND FLOOR

DR. BROOKS HOUSE

CIRCA 1900



FIRST FLOOR



Property Assessor's Office Decatur County Courthouse
 Decaturville, Tennessee
 Dr. Beuregard Martin Brooks House
 Tract #25 Bath Springs, Tennessee