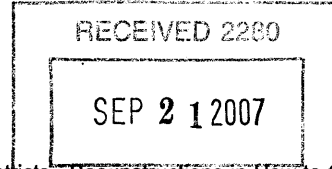


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM



1115

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 any 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 BLANDFORD

other names/site number FMSF#LA3352

2. Location

street & number 28242 Lake Terry Drive

N/A  not for publication

city or town Mount Dora

vicinity

state Florida

code

FL

countv Lake

code

069

zip code

32757

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.)

Barbara C. Mattick/DSHPO 9/11/07  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

11.1.07

Blandford  
Name of Property

Lake Co., FL  
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)

- buildings
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	6	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	6	total

**Name of related multiple property listings**  
(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  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals: Tudor Revival  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> & Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements:  
Bungalow/Craftsman

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE  
walls WOOD  
roof SLATE  
other

**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:

- 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):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 36) 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)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

**Period of Significance**

1927-1945

**Significant Dates**

1927

**Significant Person**

Bland, William Thomas, II

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Patterson, Chester

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of Repository

# \_\_\_\_\_

Blandford  
Name of Property

Lake Co., FL  
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 12

UTM References

(Place additional references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	7	4	3	4	4	2	0	3	1	8	1	3	8	0
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
2	1	7	4	3	4	5	8	0	3	1	8	1	2	8	0

3	1	7	4	3	4	5	8	0	3	1	8	1	1	0	0
	Zone		Easting					Northing							
4	1	7	4	3	4	4	2	0	3	1	8	1	1	0	0

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 Stevenson, Linda/Robert O. Jones, Historic Preservationist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date September 2007

street & number 500 South Brounough Street telephone 850-245-6333

city or town Tallahassee state FL zip code 32399-0250

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 William Bland

street & number 28242 Lake Terry Drive telephone 352-521-4111

city or town Mount Dora state FL zip code 32757

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 amend 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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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Section number 7 Page 1 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY FLORIDA**

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**SUMMARY**

The Bland Homestead, named "Blandford," is located at 28242 Lake Terry Drive, Lake County, Florida. The property was named Blandford by its original owners and creators, William Thomas Bland II and Aura Bland. Its architecture is based on a design by New York architect Chester Patterson in the picturesque tradition of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century revival styles. The architecture shows the influences of the Tudor Revival and Craftsman building styles. Originally built in 1923-1924, the first house was completely destroyed by a tornado, and the current house was rebuilt to the same design in 1927-1928. Rising from a stone foundation, the approximately seven thousand square foot, L-shaped, shingle and siding clad building has a steeply pitched slate roof. The house exhibits the character defining features of the Tudor Revival Style, including several cross gables with curved eaves. Although the house is predominately one story, the west wing of the L-shaped plan has a second floor. The interior of the house reflects the Craftsman influence in the large exposed wood roof framing members and the massive stone fireplace that dominates the great room. The building is in excellent condition and has had little alteration since its construction in 1927 and the addition of a two-story wing in 1931.

**SETTING**

Blandford is located seven miles south of the town of Mount Dora, and southwest of Lake Terry (Photos #1&2). The property was developed for citrus groves before the initial construction of a house in 1923. The property is accessed from the main east/west Lake Jem Road by a drive leading north to Lake Terry. The crushed rock and asphalt paved access road to the house passes through citrus groves that have been in cultivation for over eighty years (Photo #3). The house is set in a cleared area. While the surrounding landscape retains its agricultural character, some nearby modern housing developments are beginning to encroach on the predominately rural landscape.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION**

**Residence  
Exterior**

The house is organized in an L-shaped plan. Although the structure is predominately one story, the west wing that forms the short leg of the "ell" has a second floor. Typical of the Tudor Revival Style that formed the basis for the design, the features include steeply pitched gable roofs, cross gables with curved eaves, pointed arches over some of the doors, and narrow multi-paned windows in multiple groups. The house has elements that recall Craftsman Style features, such as the exposed decorative rafter ends, wood shutters, exposed hand-hewn post and beam structure in the porch areas and the use of natural "rustic" materials. Built from native stone and heavy timbers, the house is clad on the exterior with stained finish wood siding and wood shakes that have a

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Section number 7 Page 2 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY FLORIDA**

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soft brown patina. The roof originally had wood shakes that matched the walls. Due to concerns about lightning and wildfires, the current owner has replaced the shakes with grey green slates. A small area of wood shakes was left under the slates at the south entrance porch roof as a record of the early roof covering. The house is aligned northwest to southeast.

The southwest (entrance) facade has a main side gabled roof with exposed decorative rafter tails (Photo #4). The south entrance porch is covered with a curved eaves that flanks the large cross gable (Photo #5). The windows are grouped together to form areas of void space in contrast to the solid walls. Bracket supported awnings that are covered with metal v-crimp panels provide shade for the grouped windows on the façade (Photo #6). The side porch on the southwest corner of the building has diagonal column brackets (Photo #7). The western most cross gable has a triple casement window grouping with vertical board shutters and the door into the service hall features a pointed arch under the curved eaves of the cross gable (Photo #8). An original exterior light fixture is at the top of the arch. A second cross gable towards the east end of the facade balances the overall composition. A chimney that is visible above the main roof is clad with white stucco.

The northwest elevation has a long shed dormer with multi-paned grouped casement windows for the second story rooms (Photo #9). This elevation contains a second small porch tucked under the gable end (Photo #10).

The southeast elevation has the simplest composition of all the elevations with one main gable end. The office door at the south corner is covered with a small bracketed shed roof (Photo #11). A window composed of a pair of sashes is in the first story, and a single window is in the second story.

The northeast (lakeside) elevation is a picturesque composition of side gabled and cross-gabled roof forms (Photo #12). The side-gable roof has three small cross gable dormers. Pointed arch timber frame the glass openings of the sunroom (Photo #13). The second story cross-gable has two windows; one composed of a group of three casement sashes, and one window with a group of two (Photo #14). A large screened one-story porch is located on this two-story wing. The porch has heavy timber vertical posts with curved brackets (Photo #12).

**Interior**

The L-shaped plan is organized with an informal arrangement of interior spaces. Circulation between the rooms is direct, with little space devoted to hallways. The plan is organized into three zones. The southeastern section contains two bedrooms, baths and an office. The central section contains the major public rooms, including the great room and the sunroom that opens directly onto views of the lake. The northwest side contains the two-story section that forms the short leg of the "ell" and is oriented in the northeast/southwest direction. This wing contains a bedroom and the billiard room below along with the service spaces, and a second master suite of private rooms above (see floor plans). This wing was constructed in 1931 and is fully integrated into the

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Section number 7 Page 3 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY FLORIDA**

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composition of the facades and the function of the entire house. The interior finishes throughout the house reflect the Craftsman influence. All the walls and ceilings are covered with tongue and groove cypress boards oriented either horizontally or vertically. Original wrought iron light fixtures are throughout the interior and exterior of the house.

The central section contains the main entrance foyer that has an intimate scale and opens directly into the expansive space of the great room. (Photo #15). This major space reflects a heavy influence of the Craftsman Style in the use of rustic natural materials. This room also hints at the influence of the rustic tradition of the great lodges of the Northwest Territories, where Bland had spent several months with his new bride. Exposed hand-hewn post and beam cypress framing forms a major decorative element of the room (Photo #16). The ceiling vaults up over 25 feet. The massive limestone boulder fireplace anchors the east wall of the room. Above the fireplace is the "minstrel's gallery," a narrow balcony that is set behind the stone chimney and overlooks the space. (Photo #17). A round arched-top door tucked under the balcony leads to the east wing (Photo #18). Four pairs of French doors, three sets in the great room and one set in the dining room, open into the sun room. The exterior wall is enclosed with ingenious sliding wood and glass doors that cover the angular arched and screened openings that face the lake (Photo #19). Opening into the west end of the great room, the formal dining room features a beamed ceiling with rough hewn exposed beams, vertical cypress boards on the walls and a built-in corner china cabinet (Photo #20).

The southeast side bedroom #1 features a bay window with a window seat (Photo #21). The heart pine floors and cypress wall and ceiling boards are typical of the interior finishes found throughout the house. A limestone fireplace is in the corner of the office (Photo #22). The bath off of bedroom #2 has a tile wainscot placed over the wood walls.

The northwest end of the house was constructed in 1931. The billiard room has more formal interior finishes, including the exposed ceiling beams and decorative wood paneling with vertical trim boards (Photo #23). The stairway up to the second floor is tucked into an alcove leading from the billiard room (Photo #24). The angled passage at the south side of the room leads to the parlor, a small room on the southwest end of the house. This room has a vaulted ceiling, a grouping of three double hung sash windows and a door onto the southwest porch (Photo #25). Similar to many rooms in the house, the parlor retains its original light fixtures. The northwest side kitchen retains its original cupboards, sink and vertical board paneling (Photo #26). The butler's pantry has wood and glass cabinets and wall finishes (Photo #27). The bathroom off of the northwest bedroom has the original shower controls and fixtures (Photo #28). The second floor rooms of the 1931 addition have sloping ceilings and similar finishes to the first floor rooms (Photo #29).

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Section number 7 Page 4 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**ALTERATIONS**

Tile was added to the master bath in the 1940's. In the late 1940's the main kitchen had installed a new stainless steel sink and sheet vinyl covering the cabinets. The vinyl was removed about 2004 and the kitchen floor was restored to the original wood. At this time the wood cabinets were removed because of damage and new open wood shelves were installed, modeled after the 2<sup>nd</sup> kitchen in the west wing of the house. A restored 1920's sink, refrigerator and stove were placed in the kitchen for an authentic 1928 match to the rest of the house. Bathrooms received new toilets. A dressing area and closet space was built into the master bedroom without removing any original walls.

The only major alteration to the exterior was the change in roof covering from wood shingles to slate by 1995, to alleviate concerns over the threat of fire caused by lightning in the rural setting. From the extensive archival documentation in the possession of the current owner, it is known that the original wood shingles were made by the Crio-dipt Company of North Tonawanda, New York. Cut from selected clear red cedar with vertical or edge grain, the gable end wall shingles were 24" long in Grey Blue #207, and the roof shingles were a blend of four colors in 18" shingle lengths. The colors were made from pigments ground into linseed oil and suspended in a vehicle of refined creosote.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (Non-Contributing)**

Adjacent to Lake Terry, northwest of the main house, is one historic outbuilding used for boating related storage. Constructed with wood siding exterior, the small rectangular shed has an asphalt shingle roof (Photo #30). This building is not related to either the architectural or commercial areas of significance and is therefore non-contributing. A boat house shelter adjacent to the storage building has collapsed and is no longer extant.

There are five additional buildings to the south of the main house. These pole barns and storage sheds have gable roofs, and are used for agricultural support activities (Photo #31). All are historic and date from the 1920s and 1930s, and are under the separate ownership of Blandford Inc. These buildings are not related to either the architectural or commercial areas of significance and are therefore non-contributing.



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Section number 8 Page 1 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**SUMMARY**

Blandford is nominated to the National Register for its local significance under Criteria B and C for its architectural significance and for its association with William Thomas Bland II. Bland was a major figure during the Depression and World War II era banking in Orlando. President Franklin Roosevelt closed all of the banks nationwide in 1933, but through Bland's persistence and skillful management, he opened a new bank in 1934. The creation of this new bank gave Orlando the critical commercial boost needed to build the economy during the Depression and World War II. The bank grew to become SunBank, N. A.,<sup>1</sup> and in 1985, SunBank was merged to form SunTrust Banks, Inc.<sup>2</sup> Blandford is also significant for its architecture. The design of the house is a unique and outstanding example of Tudor Revival architecture of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with Craftsman influence in its adaptation to the Florida climate. It is a good example of the types of estates established in the agricultural areas of central Florida during the boom period of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Built in 1927-1928, a major second story addition in 1931 provided living quarters for Mr. Bland's mother. The house has remained essentially unchanged since this period. The residence retains its integrity of location, design, setting, feeling, materials and workmanship, and is still owned by the Bland family.

**HISTORIC CONTEXT**

Prior to the early 1920s, the property was unimproved land set amidst the lakes a few miles to the south of the town of Mount Dora, a prominent community in Lake County. Mount Dora was founded in 1882, and the area was first known for cattle ranching and citrus groves from the 1880s onward.<sup>3</sup> The citrus industry faced various perils, including a severe winter freeze in 1894 that led to massive crop damage.

The same land speculation activity that shaped Florida history in the 1920s was experienced in the Lake County region. The "land boom" that led to increases in population and land values had collapsed by 1926, beginning a period of intense pressure on the assets of the state's banks. This trend was made worse by two devastating hurricanes in 1926 and 1928. In 1929, a wide scale invasion of the fruit fly, first discovered in groves near Orlando, damaged the citrus industry.<sup>4</sup> The crash of the stock market in 1929 led to the Great Depression and severe impacts on the banking industry nationwide.

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<sup>1</sup> Powers, Ormond. *SunBank Fifty Years. The SunBank story 1934-1984.* Chapter 48.

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.suntrust.com/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_2\\_224\\_866\\_0\\_43/http%3B/portlet-ice.suntrust.com/Portlets/iwcc/IWCCDisplay.aspx?gid=PN2n7B86%2FPVOAXy%2FXeLZrc7f%2FuMRgZNasgu](https://www.suntrust.com/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_2_224_866_0_43/http%3B/portlet-ice.suntrust.com/Portlets/iwcc/IWCCDisplay.aspx?gid=PN2n7B86%2FPVOAXy%2FXeLZrc7f%2FuMRgZNasgu) . SunTrust Corporate Communications, October 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Kennedy, William T. *History of Lake County Florida*, p. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Tebeau, Charlton. *A History of Florida*, Third Ed. p. 379.

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Section number 8 Page 2 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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**HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE**

**William Thomas Bland II**, the only child of William Thomas I and Bertha Helen, was born November 27, 1894, in Atchison, Kansas. His father had been the mayor, county attorney, judge, and prominent businessman in Atchison, and a U.S. Congressman in 1919, serving one term.

William II toured Europe in the summers of 1912 and 1913 and at the age of 19 became a free-lance photographer for The London Daily Mirror, England's largest newspaper. He photographed the Balkan War in the summer of 1913. He studied law at George Washington University through 1917, and joined the Army that year. After leaving the Army in 1919, in 1920 he began working for his father who was then a Congressman in Washington, D.C., until his father lost he bid for reelection in 1921.

The family then relocated from Kansas to Orlando, Florida. His father purchased 25 rural acres beside Lake Jem in Lake County, for his son to start a citrus and nursery business. William II married Aura May Wimer, on December 23, 1923, at St. Luke's Cathedral in Orlando. She was born May 25, 1898, in Tampa. By the time of their marriage William had built a home in the middle of his groves at the Lake Jem. Built from hand hewn Florida lumber, the home was rustic, resembling a north woods cabin. The couple named their home and property "Blandford." He had planted citrus and other tropical plants. The groves and nursery plant business was running by 1923 and ten years later, he had expanded to 105 acres.

The year 1928 brought many difficulties. On January 15th, William II's father died unexpectedly. His father had served as president of The First National Bank in Orlando, and was serving as the first president of the new Orlando Utilities Commission. At this same time banks across the country were experiencing excessive withdrawals, and bank failures in South Florida were beginning to impact Central Florida banks. There was one run on the First National Bank, but calm was restored. In the spring a tornado hit the Bland's home in Lake Jem and destroyed it. William watched Aura and a visiting friend, Sam Sadler, blown from inside the house to the outside. He witnessed Sam being flung into Aura, knocking her to the ground near the lake dislocating both her shoulders. If not for Sam hitting her, she would surely have been being blown into the lake and drowned. The tornado also took out many citrus trees.

The Blands decided to rebuild and obtained architectural plans from New York architect Chester Patterson, and custom built their new home by 1929 in the same location. Logs were cut and hand hewn on the property. William's mother moved in with them by 1931; they had added a second story wing onto their home for her private quarters. On May 5th, 1932, their only child, William Thomas Bland III, or Bill, Jr., was born.

The stock market crash of 1929 helped bring on the Great Depression. In March of 1933, The First National Bank in Orlando, where William held 90 shares and was a director, was closed by president Franklin D.

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Roosevelt's order, as well as every bank in the nation on a temporary basis. Banking Holidays, as they were called, were a dire effort to stop the panic. Bland's primary devotion was to his citrus groves and nursery business, and he had no plans to ever be a banker. But at the closing of First National, he became committed to help resurrect the local banking economy of Orlando. Orlando had five banks prior to the Banking Holiday. Only one bank, Florida National, owned by the wealthy Dupont family, was permitted to stay open. The Reconstruction Financial Corporation (RFC) had taken receivership of First National and wanted all of the directors and stockholders to make monetary amends to the non-stockholders whose deposits were lost. Bland had financed his home and citrus business, and they owed \$13,000 more in bank loans than they had in deposits.

As a former director of the bank, Bland had relationships with Federal Reserve Deputies in Atlanta, and was chosen by the other directors to negotiate a possible reopening of the bank. Trips to Atlanta and Washington were unsuccessful. He and two other former directors, P. Murphy and E. C. Langston, decided to charter a new bank, although with a shortage of cash, it appeared a long shot. They met in Washington with the owner of the bank building, F. Morse of Rochester, New York, who agreed to buy \$35,000 worth of stock. Florida's U.S. Senator, Duncan Fletcher, encouraged Bland to proceed. Fletcher helped arrange meetings with the RFC and the Treasury Department Comptroller's offices in Washington. Bland made 13 trips to Washington to untangle the regulations of the multiple government bureaus involved. The RFC finally agreed to buy \$100,000 worth of stock if the new bank directors could sell \$150,000 of stock.

T.K. Johnson joined the group and assisted with local stock sales. They traveled the entire county and some days did not sell a single share. They failed to reach their goal, for in 1933 people resented banks and had no money to buy stock. Bland persuaded the Federal Reserve to lend them the money on their own assets, so the new directors provided their financial statements and signed notes. The Blands risked their home and business. Lastly, they convinced Morse to buy more stock as their last effort. He agreed, but with stipulations to be made President of the new bank. Bland negotiated the agreement and the new bank was chartered in December 1933. The new bank was named First National Bank at Orlando. The only difference between the old bank name and the new one was the use of "at" instead of "in." The new bank opened for business February 14, 1934, with 117 stockholders,<sup>5</sup> in the same building as the old one at the corner of Church and Orlando Avenue (now Orange Avenue). The U. S. Treasury Comptroller said the task was "Herculean" in a congratulatory letter to him.<sup>6</sup>

Orlando Sentinel editor, Martin Anderson wrote in his column dated the day the bank opened, "The success of a bank depends on the talent and ability of its personnel...it is also so gratifying to know Bill Bland, scion of a man who for so long guided the destinies of this same bank (referring to the old First National that closed)...and under whose leadership it developed into an institution of strength and conservatism...we are back in business

<sup>5</sup> Orlando Morning Sentinel, Thursday February 15, 1934. Front page article and article on page 4.

<sup>6</sup> Letter from W.R. Roper, Comptroller of the Currency, Treasury Department to Mr. W. T. Bland, dated February 15, 1934, from papers in the private collection of W. T. and Aura Bland.

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Section number 8 Page 4 **BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA**

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with two banks...the turning of a new leaf in the economic development of Orlando.”<sup>7</sup> The appreciation seems to have been mutual between Bland and the citizens of Orlando, for Bland referred to his new bank as a “hometown” bank for all local citizens.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Bland became president of the bank and a very active Chairman of the Board until he retired in January of 1945. He remained a citrus grower but relied on his foreman to run operations while the family temporarily rented a house in Orlando, and returned to Blandford on weekends. The bank’s president, Linton Allen, was called to military service during World War II as a procurement officer in Tampa. During the war, Bland successfully ran the bank operations and the campaigns for war loans and bonds. In his report to the stockholders January 12, 1943, he reported that over \$ 2 million in war bonds were purchased and that the bank itself bought over \$ 2.9 million in bonds. They loaned \$ 1.6 million so local manufacturing could fulfill military contracts. First National deposits were at an all time high in 1943. By July of 1943, the bank purchased the building they had occupied since 1934 for \$180,000. Bland became the Chairman of the Orlando War and Community Chest, and the bank displayed patriotic murals, war exhibits, including a 2-ton “Block Buster” bomb in the lobby. Aura served with the Red Cross as Chairwoman for Production which oversaw providing goods, including the sewing of garments for servicemen and their families.

After sixteen years during the toughest time economically for the nation and Florida, Bland in January 1945, decided to retire from banking and sold all of his stock to Linton Allen. Allen returned from military duty and stepped easily into a prosperous and profitable bank. Bland retired to his home and agricultural dream of his citrus and nursery business.

By 1984, celebrating 50 years in the community, First National had become SunBank, and in 1985 became SunTrust Bank.<sup>9</sup> For the rest of their long lives, W.T. and Aura lived at Blandford, their only home. He stayed active in his citrus business. With his son Bill, Jr. they began raising beef cattle, and had acquired a total of 3,000 acres in Lake County. Aura ran their home office. She secured all the documents that are now part of their legacy. W.T. Bland passed away November 16, 1990, at the age of 95, only days from his 96<sup>th</sup> birthday. In his memory, Aura made a donation to the City of Mount Dora to build a new public library. In 1991, the library was publicly named for him in his honor. They were generous philanthropists for numerous causes, including The Waterman Foundation, which serves Florida Hospital Waterman in Tavares. Aura Bland passed away January 2, 1998, at the age of 99. Both she and William had died peacefully at home at Blandford. Their wishes were to have their ashes spread over their citrus groves and ranch. Bill, Jr. had saved his father’s ashes and with the passing of his mother, combined them and carried out their wish.

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<sup>7</sup> Bland, Mary J., *The American Fathers of William Thomas Bland III. A historical family remembrance.* p.26, referencing the column in the Orlando Morning Sentinel, February 15, 1934.

<sup>8</sup> Bland, Mary J., *The American Fathers of William Thomas Bland III. A historical family remembrance.* p.23.

<sup>9</sup> SunTrust Corporate Communications newsletter, October 2004.

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The First National Bank at Orlando remains at 190 South Orange Avenue in Orlando, and is locally designated a historic landmark. Unfortunately the interior which housed Bland's office has been greatly modified, eliminating his historic work space. Blandford was his only home and retains his office, and is, therefore, the appropriate site for historic biographical association.

**ARCHECTURAL CONTEXT**

**Tudor Revival**

A Tudor Revival was a popular form of residential building during the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Based on early English to Late Medieval forms, structures and hand craftsmanship, the buildings had steeply pitched, gabled and cross gabled roofs; exposed half timbering; tall and narrow multi-paned windows; and prominent chimneys often with chimney pots. Timber construction with its exposed truss systems restricted the width of interior spaces so larger buildings usually had extensions and cross-gable roofs. Ornamentation was sometimes based on Renaissance motifs (Jacobean) or Craftsman esthetic popular in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Exterior walls were usually of brick, and wood exterior were uncommon. True exposed half timber were rare with applied half timber present on about half the residential stock. Front gables were dominant in the United States.

**Craftsman**

The Arts and Crafts Movement embodied a philosophical reaction to the industrial age that emphasized the development of individual craftsmanship in building construction, furnishings, and landscape. August Pugin and William Morris were two of the most prominent proponents of the movement in England. The movement developed in the United States during the 1880s, and the magazine House Beautiful, gave voice to the philosophy beginning in 1895. Gustav Stickley, who had a furniture company, began publishing the Craftsman magazine in 1901, which featured house designs as well as furnishings. He articulated a philosophy of honesty of materials and fabrication, simplicity of design, and utility of the product. His house designs included many windows to utilize natural light. The architectural Craftsman Style, popular from 1905 to 1930, derived its name from the influential Craftsman publication. The style was typified by low-pitched gable roofs with broad eaves and exposed rafter ends. Full and partial porches were supported by large square columns, often tapered or "battered" columns placed on pedestals. Fenestration usually included multi-light upper sash with single-light lower sash. The lack of ornamentation and use of indigenous materials resulted in a variety of exterior materials in different regions of the county. Interiors emphasized the natural, unpainted, often rustic materials, and the workmanship. Sophisticated joinery often included pegs of contrasting woods. Installed cabinets, display shelves, and sitting nooks were common features.

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**ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Bland Homestead exemplifies the Tudor Revival style popular in early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The house is unique in its stylistic adaptations to the Florida climate, with a blending of the high style Tudor Revival forms and massing and Craftsman influence in the construction details and material selection. The house was based on drawings by the New York architect Chester Patterson, and was designed in the picturesque tradition of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century revival styles. Patterson was known for his revival style designs for wealthy clients.<sup>10</sup>

W.T. Bland II received a set of plans from the architect for the Beyer House, an elegant Tudor Revival design to be built in upstate New York (Figure #1). Mr. Bland made modifications to the house design for adaptation to the site and Florida climate and his sketches are preserved on the back of a set of blueprints of the original design (Figure #2). These modifications include the addition of a Sunroom on the north side to capitalize on the lake views and long banks of windows in the shed dormers on the main house to enhance natural ventilation and cooling. The resulting design is a reflection of Mr. Bland's personal taste in the blending of Craftsman elements into the exterior and interior design.

The Tudor Revival Style formed the basis for the design, and the architectural features include steeply pitched gable roofs, cross gables with curved eaves, pointed arches over some of the doors, and narrow multi-paned windows in multiple groups. Other elements recall Craftsman Style features, such as the exposed decorative rafter ends, wood shutters, exposed hand-hewn post and beam structure in the porch areas and the use of natural "rustic" materials such as the rock fireplace surround.

Aura Bland passed away in 1944, and her quarters are left in their original condition.

The house is preserved with the original furnishings and fully functional systems, as the sole heir and son, W.T. Bland III, wishes. The house maintains its original integrity of location, context, and setting. It is the intent to preserve this exceptional example of a regional interpretation of two significant trends in architectural design and the way of life associated with the property.

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<sup>10</sup> Set of blueprints of house designed by Chester Patterson, architect, and sketches by Mr. Bland, from the W.T. and Aura private collection.

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**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

Tax ID #11-20-26-050000000300; Victoria Settlement 12-20-26. Triangular parcel of Lot 3 lying southwesterly of Lake Terry, west 330 feet of Lot 8, PB1, page 61, Orb 261, page 810.

Contains about 12 acres immediately adjacent to the main house.

National Register boundary is bounded by the parcel boundary on the east, south, and west, and the lake edge on the north.

**BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

This boundary contains the land that was a part of Mr. Bland's earliest family land holdings from the 1920s.



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**PHOTOGRAPHIC LIST**

1. Blandford, Lake Terry Drive, Mount Dora
2. Lake County, Florida
3. Eric Kramer
4. November 2005
5. College of Design Planning and Construction, University of Florida, Gainesville
6. Southwest elevation, looking northeast
7. Photo #1 of 31

The following items apply to all photographs except where noted otherwise:

6. Southwest and northwest elevations, looking northeast
7. Photo #2 of 31
  
6. Adjacent groves, looking north
7. Photo #3 of 31
  
6. Southwest elevation, looking northeast entrance porch
7. Photo #4 of 31
  
6. Main entrance porch, looking southeast
7. Photo #5 of 31
  
6. Southwest elevation details, looking north
7. Photo #6 of 31
  
6. West corner porch, looking east
7. Photo #7 of 31
  
6. Pointed arch doorway in southwest elevation, looking northeast
7. Photo #8 of 31
  
6. Northwest elevation, looking east
7. Photo #9 of 31

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6. Incised porch in northwest elevation, looking east

7. Photo #10 of 31

6. Southeast elevation, looking north

7. Photo #11 of 31

6. Sunroom portion of northeast elevation, looking west

7. Photo #12 of 31

6. Northeast elevation, looking west

7. Photo #13 of 31

6. South elevation of northwest "L," looking north

7. Photo #14 of 31

6. Interior of great room from foyer, looking northeast

7. Photo #15 of 31

6. Great room, looking northwest

7. Photo #16 of 31

6. Great room, looking southeast

7. Photo #17 of 31

6. Arched top door, looking south

7. Photo #18 of 31

6. Sunroom, looking southeast

7. Photo #19 of 31

6. Dining room, looking northwest

7. Photo #20 of 31

6. Bedroom #1

7. Photo #21 of 31

6. Office with fireplace, looking north

7. Photo #22 of 31

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6. Billiard room, looking north

7. Photo #23 of 31

6. Billiard room, looking west

7. Photo #24 of 31

6. Parlor, looking southwest

7. Photo #25 of 31

6. Kitchen, looking west

7. Photo #26 of 31

6. Butler's pantry, looking northeast

7. Photo #27 of 31

6. Original shower fixture, looking south

7. Photo #28 of 31

6. Second floor sitting room, looking northeast

7. Photo #29 of 31

6. Storage building by lake, looking west

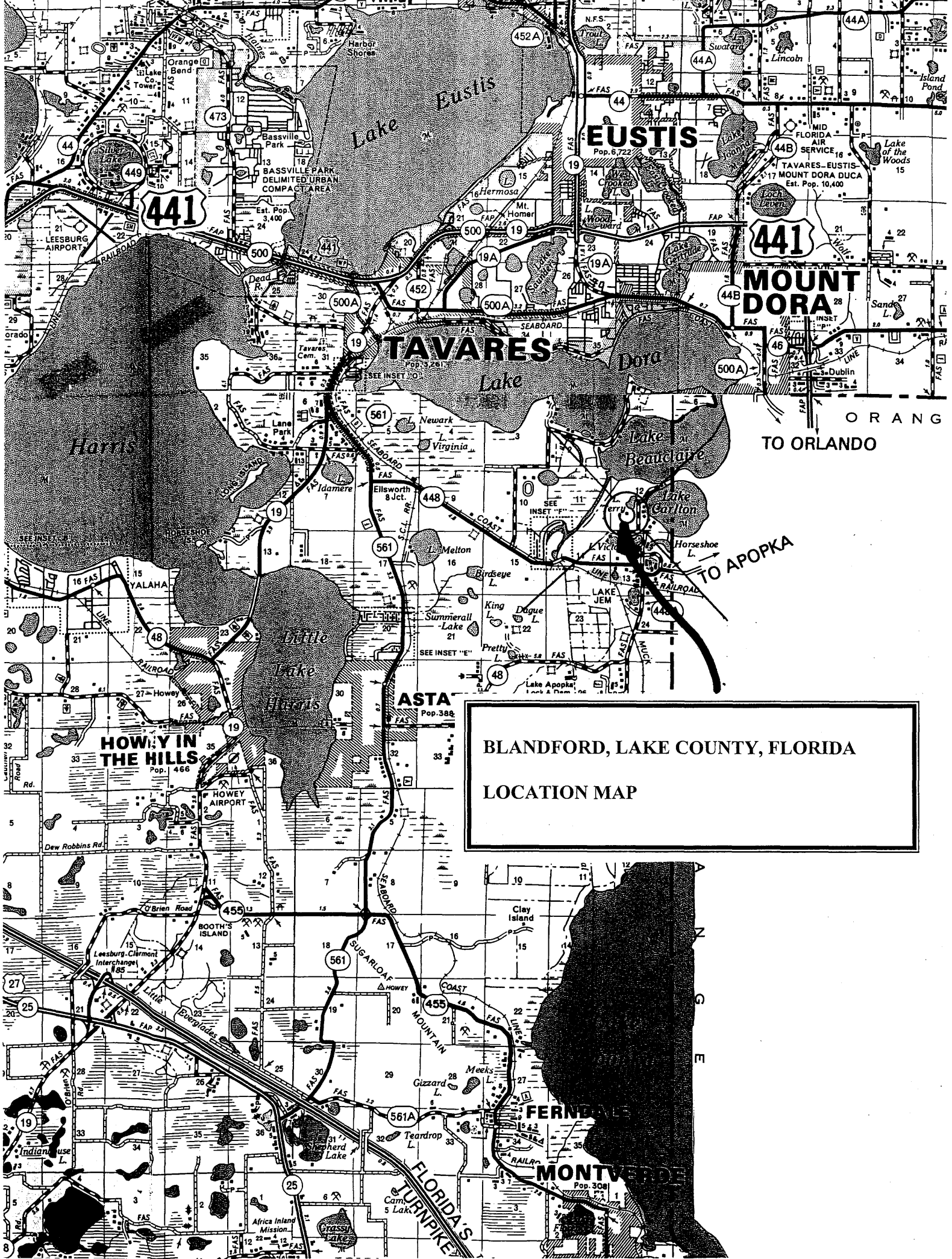
7. Photo #30 of 31

3. Mary J. Bland

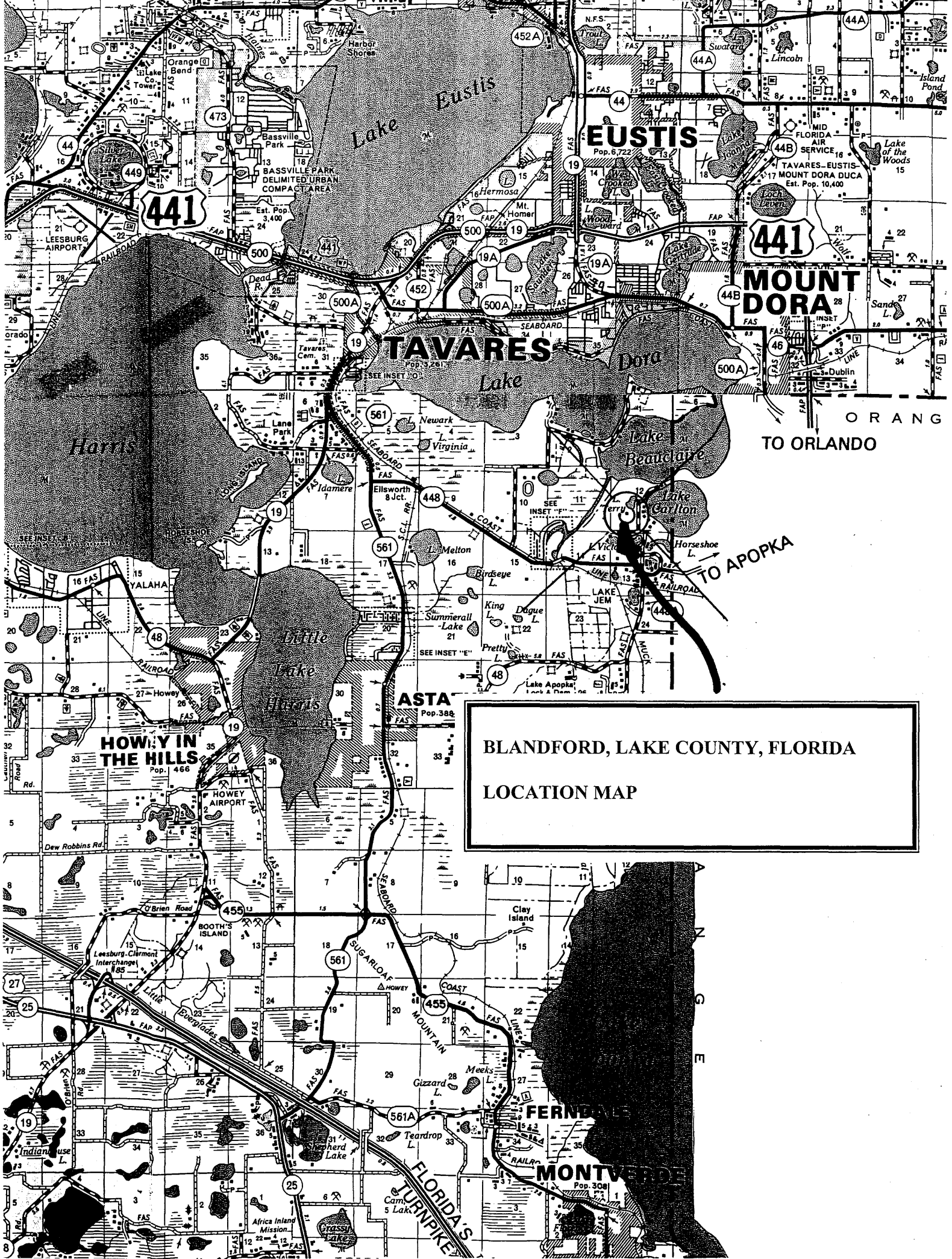
4. November 2006

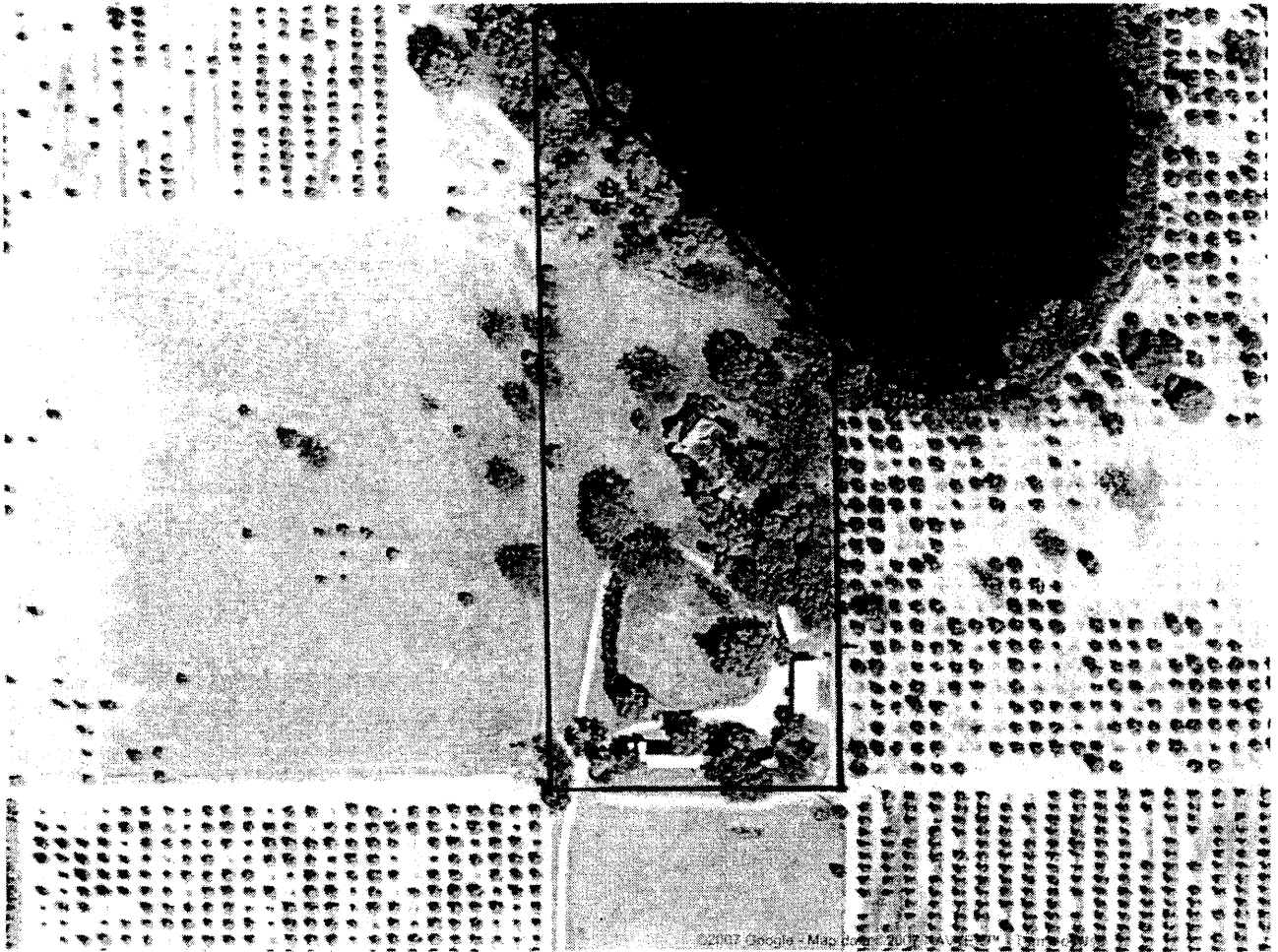
6. Agricultural service buildings, looking southeast

7. Photo #31 of 31



BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
LOCATION MAP

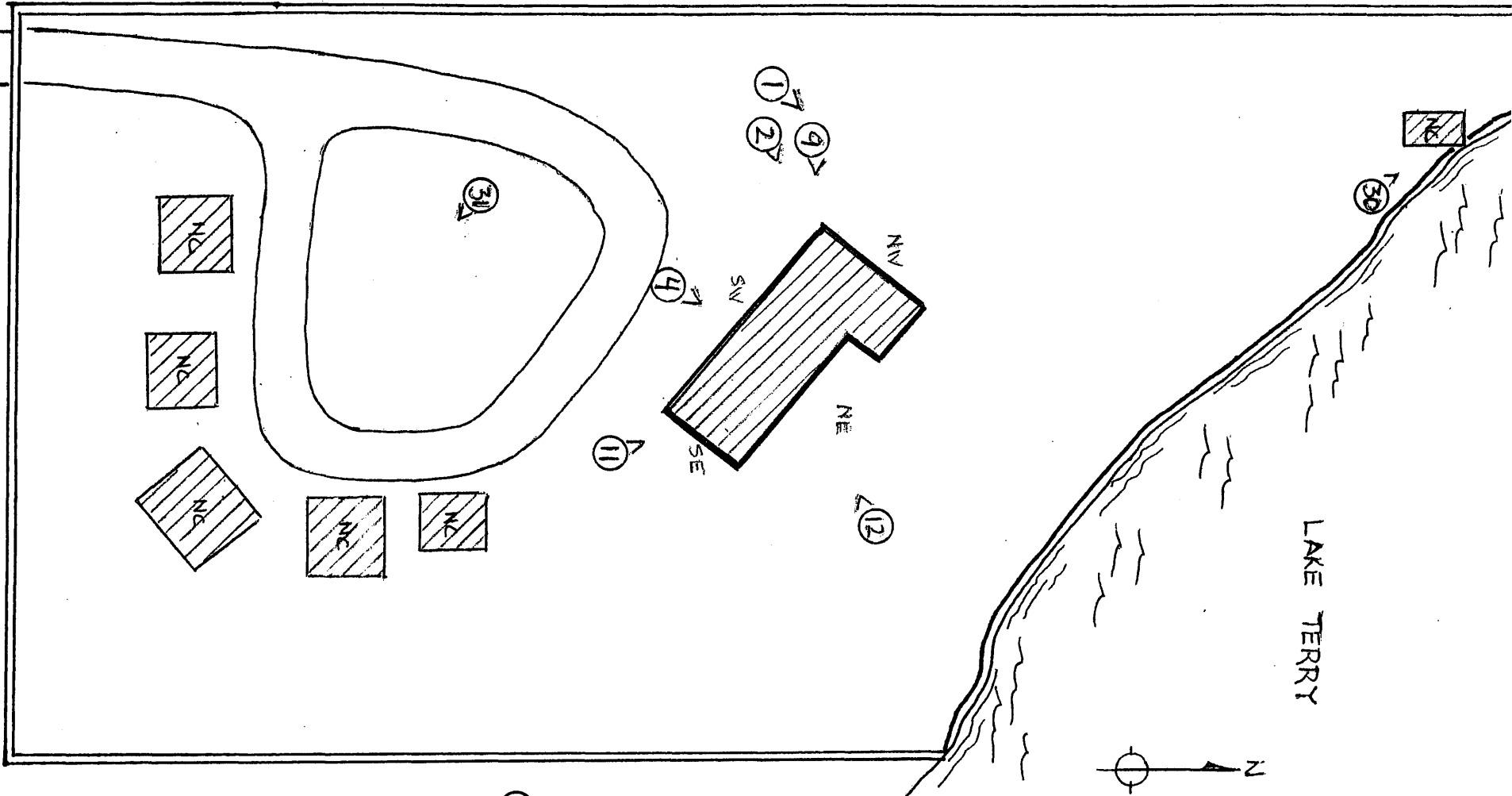





**BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SITE PLAN**

National Register Boundary






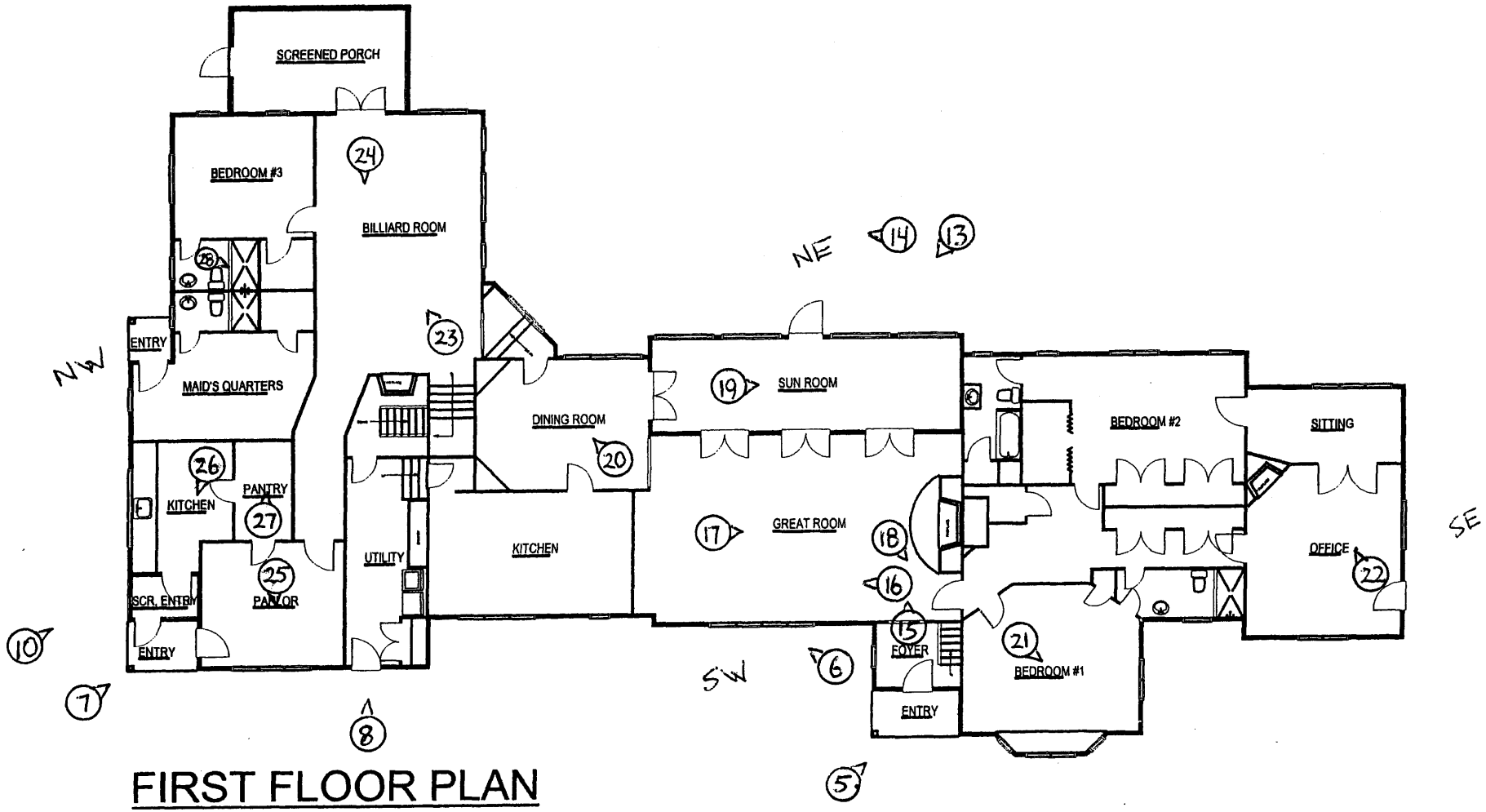
**BLANDFORD, LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA  
SITE PLAN**

National Register Boundary &  
Photographic Diagram 

NTS

LAKE TERRY

**BLANDFORD, LAKE COUTNY, FLORIDA**  
**Floor Plan & Photo Diagram**   
**First Floor**



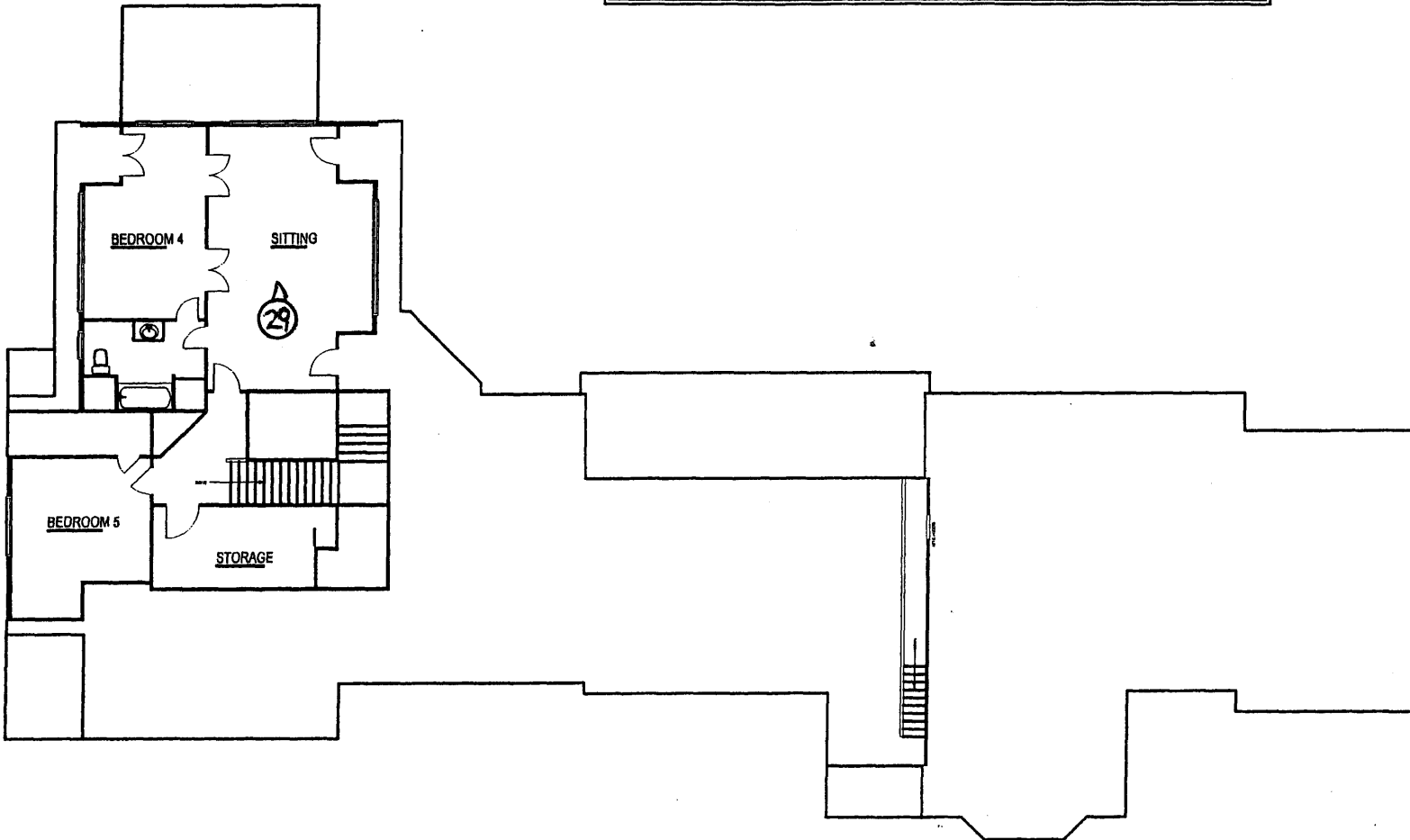
**FIRST FLOOR PLAN**



BLANDFORD, LAKE COUTNY, FLORIDA

Floor Plan & Photo Diagram

Second Floor



SECOND FLOOR PLAN





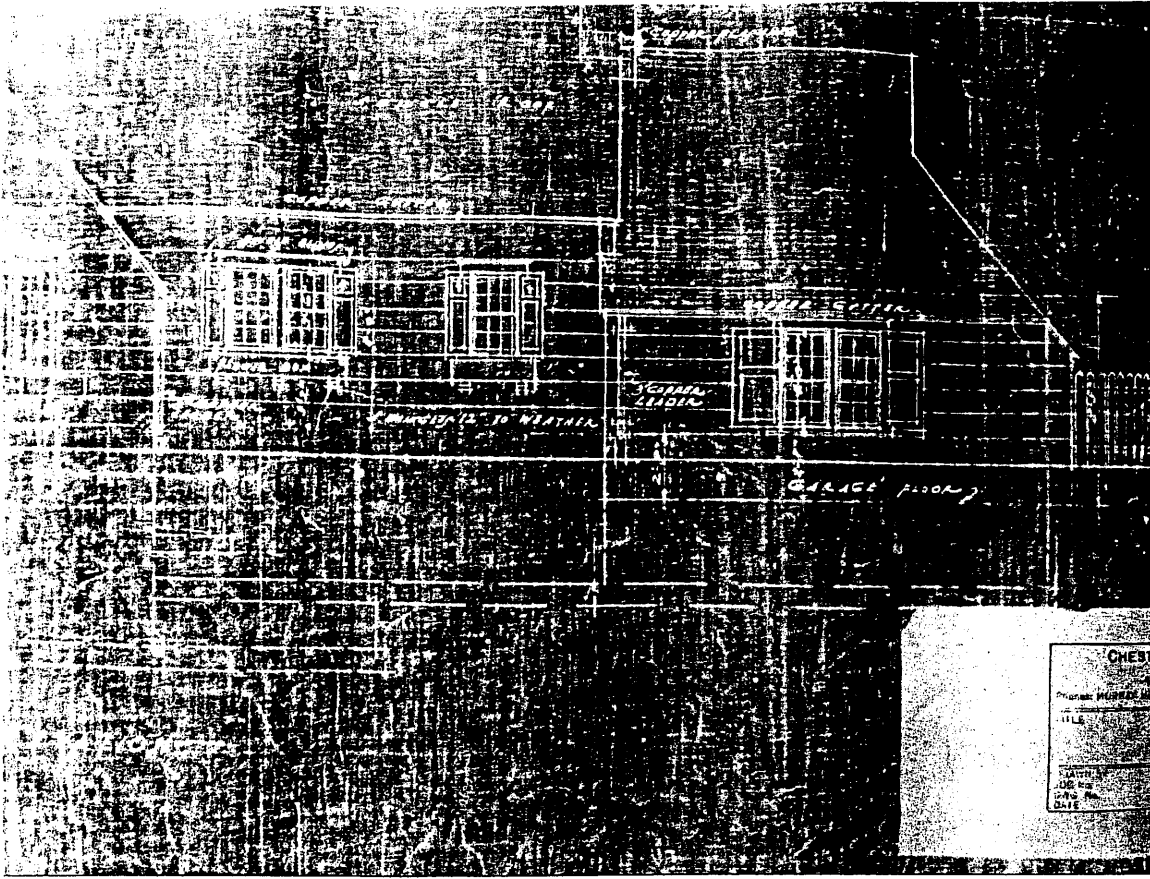


Figure 1  
Blueprints for the house that served as the basis for design for the Bland's home, designed by the architect Chester Patterson of New York. - From the W.T and Aura Bland private collection

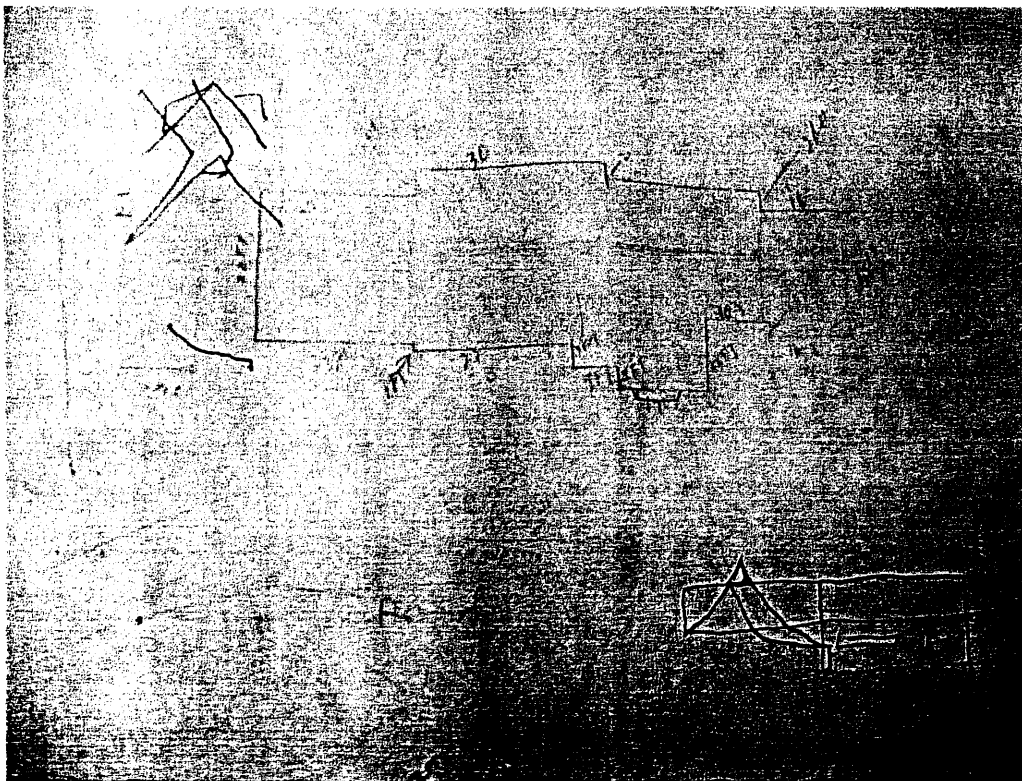


Figure 2  
Hand Sketches of W.T. Bland II on the back of the blueprints to customize the house design. - From the W.T and Aura Bland private collection