

NOV 20 1979

County Hamilton

Inventory # I-10-635

Temp. Field # 10

HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

Historic Name The Frances Willard Home Common Name The W.C.T.U. Bldg.

Owner Central Church of Christ Address 400 Vine Street

Property Location 615 Lindsay Street

Map: Quad Name Chattanooga No. 105-SE Edition 1969

Historical Data: Date of Construction 1927 Source _____

See Attached Sheet

Informant _____ Address _____

Present Use Vacant Original Use Apartments

Original Location X Moved? _____ Date _____

Site Bldg. X Structure _____ Object _____ Part of District Thematic District

Areas of Significance Social/Humanitarian

Eligible for NR? Yes Why? _____

Property endangered? No By what? _____

Photos: B&W: Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Date taken _____ By _____

Color: Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Date taken _____ By _____

Location of Negative _____ Comments _____

Recorded by: Martha Carver Date Recorded: February, 1979

Address: Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission

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Architectural Data: Construction: Frame Log Brick Stone

No. of stories 4 Roof type Gable Material Shingle Original?

Wall covering: weatherboard B&B Vertical board None

Tongue and Grooved Sawn Other

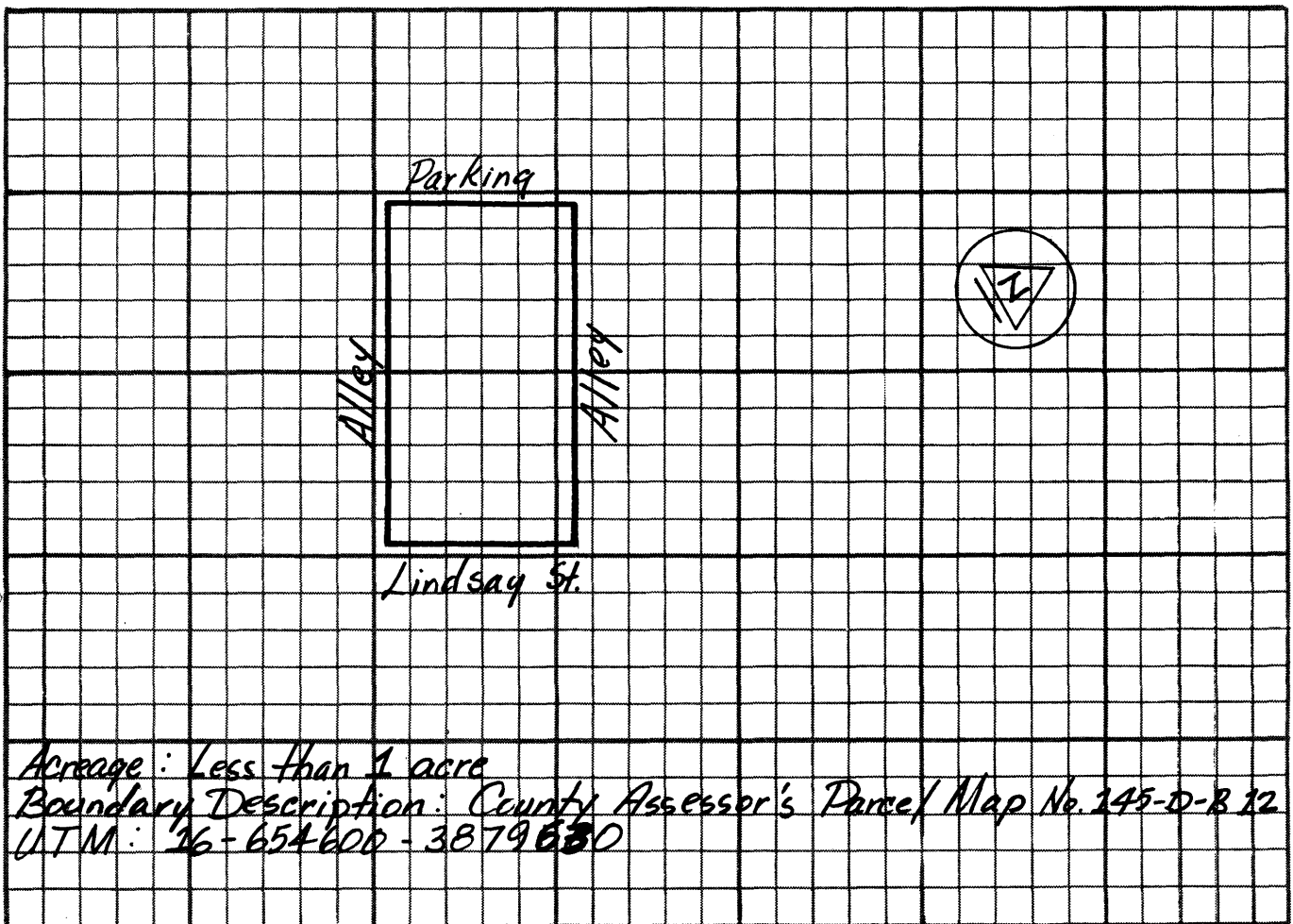
Chimney: No. 6 Location End Interior Material Brick

Foundation: Pier Stone Brick Other

Basic Plan Rectangular

Architectural Notes Restrained Georgian Revival, belt course above first floor, balustraded roof; entrance area has arched doorway with fanlight, balustrade, and Doric Columns.

Sketch Plan Below (include North, door and window locations, etc.):



During the 1880's, Chattanooga was beginning to grow rapidly and many new jobs became available. As a result, The Frances Willard Home was established in 1887 as a home to provide a protected home environment for young women from rural areas who had come to the city seeking these jobs. This home was the result of efforts of the Chattanooga Chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, established in 1882 as one of the first W.C.T.U. chapters in Tennessee.

The concept of this type of home originated with Frances Willard's "Rest Collage" experiment of a residential club for business women in Illinois. This "club" provided home comforts for young women who had moved there looking for work. Frances Willard herself was a college teacher, lecturer, news paper editor, and author who became the foremost organizer and leader of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, serving as its world president. This organization is considered an important component of the nineteenth century women's movement in American history.

Although the usual conception of the W.C.T.U. is one of a single issue society, it actually had a broad base of activities concerning the underprivileged. The Rest Cottage concept was one of these social programs promoted by this group. This specific program did not become a widespread movement and few homes were organized. Chattanooga's home organized in 1887, was named for Ms. Willard who visited the city that year. This is believed to be the only such home organized in Tennessee. In the late 1920's, when the current structure was built, this was also the only home in the country whose property was owned exclusively by a local W.C.T.U. chapter.

In the early years the home was located in various places, but in 1890 it moved into a permanent home for the next thirty years. By the 1920's, these facilities were not sufficient for the number of women seeking rooms, and the W.C.T.U. began the construction of a new building adjacent to their former structure. In 1928 the new home was opened, an event a local editorial labeled "of superlative importatnce to this community" (Chattanooga Times, 3 March 1928). Today, none of the former Frances Willard Homes remain; thus this 1928 structure is the only building remaining in Chattanooga associated with this concept.

In 1976, due to financial reasons, the W.C.T.U. deeded the property to Central Church of Christ. Unable to complete its original plans of converting the building into facilities for the elderly, the Church is currently attempting to sell the property.

