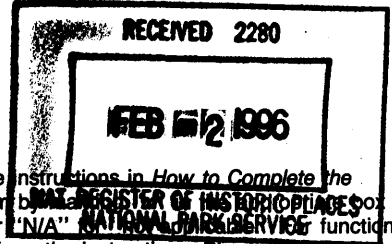


2-22

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 the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A". 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 TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 235 S.W. 4th Avenue n/a not for publication

city or town Lake Butler n/a vicinity

state Florida code FL county Union code 125 zip code 32054

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.)
Suzanne P. Walker/Deputy SHPO 1/25/96
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Florida State Historic Preservation Officer, Division of Historical Resources
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:
- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)

Elson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 2/29/96

Entered in the National Register

Townsend, James W., House
Name of Property

Union County, Florida
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/> district
<input type="checkbox"/> site
<input type="checkbox"/> structure
<input type="checkbox"/> object

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

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

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

Hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vernacular

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick Pier

walls WOOD/ Weatherboard

roof METAL/ Iron

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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

ca. 1891-1944

Significant Dates

ca. 1891

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Townsend, James W.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown/unknown

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 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Townsend, James W., House
Name of Property

Union County, Florida
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

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3	3	2	1	6	4	0
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Zone

Easting

Northing

2

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3

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--	--	--	--	--	--

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Zone

Easting

Northing

4

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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 Paul Weaver/ Sherry Piland, Historic Sites Specialist

organization Bureau of Historic Preservation date January 1996

street & number R.A. Gray Bldg., 500 S. Bronough St. telephone (904) 487-2333

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 _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetTOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.Section number 7 Page 1

The James W. Townsend House, located at 235 Southwest Fourth Avenue, Lake Butler, Florida, was constructed ca. 1891. The one-story, frame building rests on a raised, brick pier foundation. The exterior finish is drop-siding. The Townsend House has an irregular ground plan with a series of encircling verandas on the north and west elevations and interior sides. The wood windows throughout the house are 2/2, double-hung sash. The complex roof is surfaced with galvanized iron in a V-crimp pattern. Two brick chimneys with corbelled caps and hoods, centrally placed on the ridge line, break the roof plane on the south and east wings. An exterior brick chimney is located at the north end of the east wing.

SETTING

The Townsend House is located along the former Atlantic Coast Line Railroad right-of-way in an older residential neighborhood. Other residences are located to the south and west. A brick garage and vacant lot are located to the east. To the north is a commercial building. The house is two blocks south of Main Street, the historical commercial and governmental center of Lake Butler. Southwest Fourth Street Avenue, formerly Dekle Street, runs due south of Main Street. The lot on which the Townsend House is sited, at the northeast corner of Southwest Fourth Avenue and Knight Street, covers slightly less than one-half acre and is roughly rectangular in form. It is landscaped with magnolia, pecan and oak trees, azalea beds, sago palms, and St. Augustine grass. A non-historic metal picket fence runs around the perimeter of the property.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Townsend House has an unusual floor plan, with rooms in a linear arrangement, each with access to a veranda. The main facade of the Townsend House faces west (Photo 1). A veranda extends along this facade and turns the corner to also extend along the north elevation. The primary entrance, approached by a flight of steps, is at the south end of the veranda. The four-panel, wood, entrance door has two arched lights in the upper panels (Photo 2). A hinged transom surmounts the door. Another flight of steps is located at the north end of the main veranda, facing west (Photo 3).

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**

Section number 7 Page 2

The house has three sections; each section has a gable or cross-gable roof. A double-parlor wing is at the south end of the house, the L-shaped center section contains bedrooms, and a rear wing is located at the east end of the house. Two flights of steps at the rear of the house provide access to the kitchen and to a hallway (Photo 4).

The windows of the parlor wing have shaped lintels. The west gable end is given an ornate treatment with spindle and lattice work, and sawn barge boards (Photo 5). The eaves are open and feature exposed rafters. A frieze of vertical boards divides the horizontal drop siding of the main walls from that of the gable ends walls at the north end of the rear wing and the west end of the parlor section (Photos 5 and 6).

The numerous doors and windows of the Townsend House provide ample cross ventilation. The wood panel doors frequently have intact original hardware. Screen doors are also a common feature.

The veranda that extends along the west and north elevations of the house is supported by chamfered posts with highly detailed brackets and a spindlework frieze beneath the porch roof. The porch balustrade has turned balusters (Photo 7). A similar veranda, although slightly less ornate, is located on the east and south elevations, overlooking a small courtyard area (Photo 8). A flight of steps provides access to this rear veranda. Both verandas are six feet deep, sloped to drain rainwater away from the house, and are covered by low-pitched hip roofs.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The interior of the Townsend was designed as a private residence, but with an unusual floor plan. Since the house has few interconnecting hallways, access to the rooms is primarily by way of the verandas. The primary entrance door leads into a hall. A door at the rear of the hall provides access to the rear veranda (Photo 9). To the south of the hall are two parlors, sharing a double fireplace. The fireplaces in the parlors are particularly decorative, with spindles, brackets, saw-tooth detailing, and beaded board panels set at forty-five degree angles (Photos 10 and 11).

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**

Section number 7 Page 3

Two bedrooms are located across the entry hall to the north of the parlors, and also share a double fireplace (Photo 12). Originally, two more bedrooms extended to the east. The easternmost bedroom of this segment of the house has been converted into two large bathrooms.

The rear wing, running north/south, contains a kitchen, living room, and bedroom with a fireplace (Photo 13). The bedroom originally served as an office for Mr. Townsend and a hallway separated it from the living room. A doorway at the west end of the hall provided access from the front veranda. That doorway no longer exists; however, a door at the opposite end of the hall provides a rear exit. Closets have been built into the hallway.

The most exceptional feature of the interior is the woodwork. All the floor, wall, and ceiling finishes were milled lumber, with a variety of beaded boards used on the walls and ceilings (Photos 9-12). The floors were constructed of heart-pine boards, but have been covered with carpeting and tile. The ceilings are twelve-feet high. Most of the rooms also have vertically oriented, two-inch wide, tongue-and-groove wainscoting capped with chair rails. The ceiling of the west parlor features diagonal beaded boards.

ALTERATIONS

The Townsend House is currently well-maintained and remarkably unchanged since the time of its construction. Its unusual floor plan allowed the house to be easily adapted for use as a bed and breakfast without significant alterations. Several bathrooms have been added to individual rooms. The bathroom walls do not extend to the ceiling, so they are clearly read as additions and do not obscure the sense of the original space. Although the date is unknown, the east wing was probably an early addition. Its materials, overall design, and individual features are nearly identical to the original portions of the building. The only significant alterations are the conversion of one bedroom into two bathrooms, and the conversion of the rear hallway into storage space.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**Section number 8 Page 1

The James W. Townsend House, Lake Butler, Florida is significant under Criterion B for its association with James Walter Townsend, an individual prominent in the development of the timber and naval stores industries in north central Florida. The ca. 1891 house has architectural significance under Criterion C as a fine local example of a vernacular residence with fine Queen Anne decorative elements.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

When Lake Butler was founded in 1859, it became the county seat of New River County, later renamed Bradford County during the Civil War. Lake Butler, located on the line of the cross-state Florida Railroad, developed into a small, rural community. The economy of the town was based on agriculture and the harvesting and processing of timber products such as lumber and naval stores.

Lake Butler and Starke had a long-standing rivalry over the location of the county seat. In 1875, Starke received a majority of the votes in a county-wide referendum, and the county seat was moved there. Following a successful legal challenge by residents of Lake Butler, the county seat was returned to its original location. Another election in 1887 returned the county seat to Starke. After several attempts to have the county seat returned to Lake Butler, it appeared the only solution to the rivalry was to create a new county. After an unsuccessful attempt in 1911, the residents of Lake Butler were finally successful, and in 1921 Union County was created from a portion of Bradford County, and Lake Butler became the permanent county seat of the new county.

Lake Butler has remained a small community throughout its existence. In 1886, it had a population of 200. Surrounding farms produced cotton, oranges, and sugar. The town had four general stores, a school, two hotels, saw and grist mills, and three churches. The town's growth over the next several decades was steady, but unspectacular. By 1912, the population had increased to 850. A Civic League for women was founded in 1912, and the organization sponsored several beautification projects. The Civic League later changed its name to the Lake Butler Woman's Club. Two major railroads, the Georgia, Savannah and Florida and the Atlantic Coast Line, served the town. In 1918, there were two banks, one of which was the Farmers and Dealers

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Continuation SheetTOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.Section number 8 Page 2

Bank, partially owned by J. W. Townsend. During the mid-1920s, Union County High School was established, and a municipal electric facility and cold storage facility were constructed. In 1925, the population of Lake Butler reached 900. It declined to 886 in 1936. Following World War II, Lake Butler remained a small community whose economy depended primarily on agriculture and employment generated by the state prison system. Its current population is approximately 2,500.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The original owner of the Townsend House, James Walter Townsend, was born near Hinesville, in Liberty County, Georgia, in 1864. He was educated locally, and as a youth worked on his father's rice plantation. In 1884, he and his older brother, William, formed the firm of Townsend and Townsend, a company dedicated primarily to the production of turpentine.

The naval stores industry consisted of harvesting resin, the sticky gum from pine trees. The resin was then distilled to secure spirits of turpentine and rosin. Other products of the industry were tar, pitch, and various gums and pine oils. During the 1870s, there was a boom in the naval stores industry in Georgia and the Carolinas. The rapid industrialization of the United States caused an ever increasing demand for naval stores. The demand for pine products in America and Europe quickly exhausted the available stands of pine lands in Georgia, where the Townsend brothers originally operated. They later relocated to North Central Florida where great stands of virgin forest were available for harvesting.

William Townsend moved to Lake Butler, Florida, around 1889, where he taught school and began to acquire pine lands for turpentine production. James Townsend subsequently joined him, and the brothers became major producers of naval stores in Florida. Their operations were located in portions of what are now Union, Bradford, Clay, Volusia, Marion, Putnam, and Hillsborough counties.

The brothers married sisters after settling in Lake Butler. James W. Townsend married Lora Naomi Dekle in March, 1891. His brother married her sister, Susie. They were the daughters of T. I. Dekle. James W. Townsend and his wife probably built their

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**Section number 8 Page 3

home shortly after their marriage. The Townsends had ten children. They added the rear wing in response to their growing family; however, the date of its construction is not known.

The Townsend brothers continued to expand their business interests. They became involved in cattle ranching, lumber mills, and construction. They built a number of commercial buildings and private residences in Lake Butler, including their own houses. In 1907, the Townsend brothers dissolved their partnership and William Townsend went into semi-retirement. Thereafter, James Townsend continued expanding his business interests to include thousands of acres of land, herds of cattle, three turpentine stills, and controlling interest in the Farmers and Dealers Bank at Lake Butler. The younger Townsend served as president of the bank during the 1910s and 1920s. Following completion of his residence, he constructed the Townsend Building (NR 1992), a commercial structure in Lake Butler, and the J. W. Townsend House, a family retreat at Orange Springs in Marion County (NR 1988). James W. Townsend died at Lake Butler on September 23, 1944. His wife continued to reside at the family home until her death on February 8, 1958.

ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Townsend House is a significant example of vernacular architecture, using locally milled lumber in its construction. Vernacular architecture embraces a diversity of folk and mass-produced building forms that were transmitted by memory or by pattern book. Vernacular buildings were designed and constructed by lay builders who drew upon traditional building techniques and contemporary stylistic preferences for their inspiration. These vernacular structures can be amalgams of building traditions and style, or may reflect the personality of the builder. Primary consideration was given to providing functional and comfortable spaces for the owners. Frequently vernacular buildings reflect a local adaptation to landscape, climate, and cultural patterns. Nineteenth century industrialism made it possible to standardize and mass produce building elements and disseminate them across the country. Decorative features were often applied liberally, exhibiting stylistic references without in and of themselves constituting a style of architecture. Building plans form varied, irregular footprints. Clapboard, patterned wood

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Continuation Sheet**

TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.

Section number 8 Page 4

shingles, and board-and-batten serve as common exterior wall fabrics.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The James W. Townsend House is a particularly unusual vernacular house. The house was constructed by its owner, using high quality, locally produced materials. Its unusual floor plan reveals a strong personal touch and the owner's desire to create a comfortable home for a large family. The design, with a raised foundation, double verandas, and multiple doors and windows, also demonstrates a consideration of effective ways to adapt to Florida's tropical climate, and the desire to provide adequate cross-ventilation, shade, and indirect light.

Because of Townsend's prosperity and his ties with the lumber and building trades, he was able to embellish his vernacular home with Queen Anne decorative features. This is seen primarily in the use of a variety of milled lumber and in the decorative treatment of the primary gables.

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Continuation Sheet

TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.

Section number 9 Page 1

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**

Section number 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundaries, shown on the site plan as a dashed line, correspond to Parcel No. 31-05-20-16-000-0020-0, as recorded in the Union County Property Appraiser's Office.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the James W. Townsend House.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.

Section number Photo Page 1

1. James Townsend House, 235 Southwest Fourth Street
2. Lake Butler, Union County, Florida
3. Paul Weaver
4. May 1995
5. Historic Property Associates, P.O. Box 1002, St. Augustine, Fl.
6. Main (west) facade on right, north elevation on left; view looking southeast
7. Photo No. 1 of 13

Items 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs

6. Detail, main entrance, west facade; view looking east
7. Photo No. 2 of 13

6. North elevation, view looking south
7. Photo No. 3 of 13

6. Detail, steps at south end of east elevation; view looking southwest
7. Photo No. 4 of 13

6. Detail, west gable, view looking east
7. Photo No. 5 of 13

6. Detail, north elevation; view looking southwest
7. Photo No. 6 of 13

6. Detail, west veranda; view looking southeast
7. Photo No. 7 of 13

6. South and east elevations, with view into rear courtyard; view looking northwest
7. Photo No. 8 of 13

6. View looking east through hallway from main entrance
7. Photo No. 9 of 13

6. Detail of fireplace, west parlor; view looking east
7. Photo No. 10 of 13

6. Detail of fireplace, east parlor; view looking west
7. Photo No. 11 of 13

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Continuation Sheet**

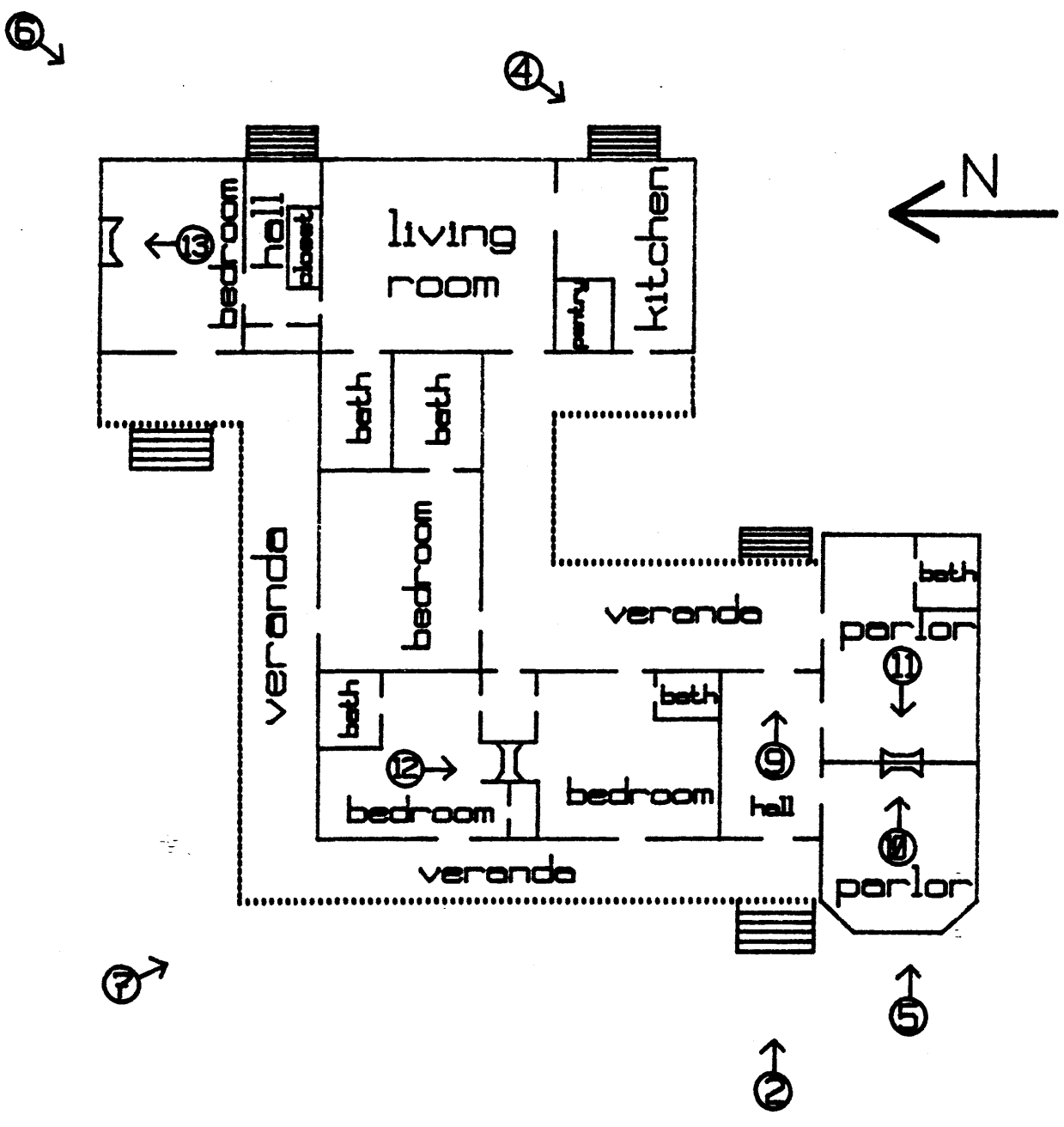
**TOWNSEND, JAMES W., HOUSE
LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.**

Section number Photo Page 2

6. Detail of bedroom fireplace; view looking south
7. Photo No. 12 of 13

6. Detail of fireplace, rear wing of house; view looking north
7. Photo No. 13 of 13

JAMES W. TOWNSEND HOUSE
 LAKE BUTLER, UNION CO., FL.
 Approx. Scale: 0.5"=8'
 Photo Direction ○→

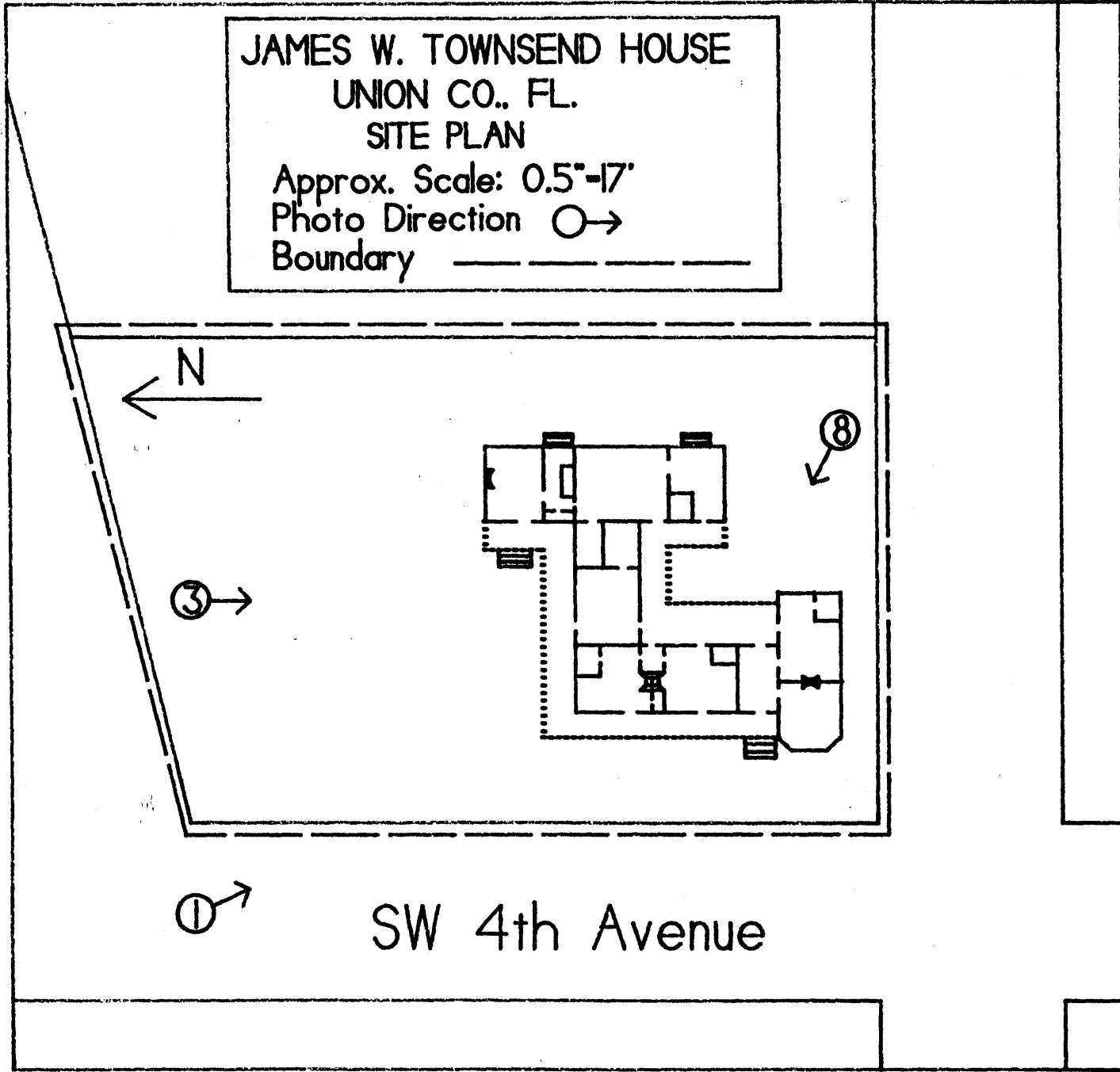


JAMES W. TOWNSEND HOUSE
UNION CO., FL.
SITE PLAN

Approx. Scale: 0.5"=17'

Photo Direction ○→

Boundary - - - - -



SW 4th Avenue