

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

309

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name: New Haven Lawn Club

other names/site number: N/A

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number: 193 Whitney Avenue not for publication: N/A
city or town: New Haven vicinity: N/A
state Connecticut code CT county New Haven code 009 zip code 06511

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

 3/13/03
Signature of certifying official Date

Director, Connecticut Historical Commission
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 Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description	New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven New Haven County, CT	7-2
-------------	--	-----

with 20-over-20 glazing, wooden hoods, and iron railings. The end bays have blind arches. The upper floor has a row of shorter rectangular windows with six-over-six glazing. A limestone belt course runs at the floor level of the middle level, and pilasters flank the end bays on the middle and upper levels. Old photographs show a Chinese fretwork railing along the ridge of the roof; it has been removed.

The ballroom and lounge wings are similar to each other, but slightly different in width and pattern of openings. The lounge wing is the narrower. Facing the tennis courts, it has a bay window of wood, flanked by single pilasters topped with urns. A small window with a grille sits atop the bay window's roof. Another bay fills the front of the hyphen. The ballroom wing is wider; it too has a bay window facing the courts, but with four pilasters. The upper two levels of the wings sit back from the basement level, creating terraces overlooking the tennis courts. The terraces continue along the southwest side of the lounge and the southeast side of the ballroom. At the south corner of the ballroom terrace, brick stairs provide access to the ground level.

The southwest side of the lounge wing has two more bay windows of the type described above, plus pilasters, and urns. The southeast side of the ballroom wing has a row of double-height windows with segmental-arched tops and stone keystones. A later iron stair runs down along the side of the building from the northeast end of the terrace on this side, partly obscuring an open arcade on the lower level.

A separate entry for the ballroom faces northeast along the axis of the Humphrey Street drive (**Photograph 4**). This is the opposite end of the central block from the main entrance. At ground level is the entry: double doors with glazing and a leaded-glass transom (**Photograph 5**). The entry is sheltered by a semi-octagonal porch of iron filigree with slender finials at the angles, a concave roof of copper, and an anthemion-like finial at the peak of the roof. Rectangular lanterns flank the porch; each has a white glass shade and a metal overlay in the form of an anthemion. A Diocletian window appears high in the wall above the entry. Paired pilasters outline the block. The outer ones are rusticated, the inner ones plain and capped with urns. A wooden tablet similar to the one at the main entry lines the roof between the urns.

To the left (east) of the ballroom entry is the northwest side of the ballroom wing. It resembles the southeast side, except that there is no

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven 7-4
New Haven County, CT

of flowers fills a crossetted overmantel panel. The room has four bay windows, one on each of the short sides and two on the long side. Sheet metal wall sconces hang on the walls.

From the southeast side of the entrance lobby a short, curved passage leads to a long corridor overlooking the tennis courts. The original plans call this the Porch (**Photograph 13**). The ceiling is covered with acoustical tiles and light is provided by a series of flush light fixtures with strings of crystals. The original light fixtures, shown in old photographs, had shallow bowls of opaque glass on a simple framework of slender pipes. One side of the Porch is lined with tall windows overlooking the tennis courts, the other is screened from the main dining room by a line of piers. The piers are fluted on the sides facing the Porch and the dining room, while the other two sides are flat. Every other opening is filled with a small built-in bench with a Chinese fret back. The walls have a chair rail, a picture rail, and a cornice. Boxed-in radiators are located between the windows. The floor is of terrazzo in a checkerboard pattern. The western end of the Porch has been walled off to create a coat room.

The main dining room, located behind the Porch, is a long rectangular room with slightly beveled ends (**Photograph 14**). Acoustical tile has been added to the ceiling. Three crystal chandeliers provide lighting. Old photographs show four-armed Moderne fixtures with a rectangular lantern at the end of each arm; each lantern had a metal overlay in an anthemion pattern similar to those on the lanterns flanking the ballroom entry. The walls display a chair rail with plaster wainscot, a picture rail, and a cornice. On the long wall opposite the porch are five shallow, arched recesses; the outer two contain doors to the kitchen while the center three are lined with mirrors above the chair rail. In old photographs they are lined with patterned wallpaper. At each end is a fireplace with a facing of Siena marble and a surround featuring fat pilasters with fluted capitals, each flanked by two half-pilasters with stylized Corinthian capitals (**Photograph 15**). Above each fireplace is a mirror framed and divided into sections by narrow fluted moldings. There is a keystone at the top center of the mirror. Architectural Forum describes the room as having "a color scheme of warm gray and gold ... the mirror frame is gold ... [and] The wood

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description	New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven New Haven County, CT	7-6
-------------	--	-----

of the room; at the entry end are also rectangular openings for a projection booth. At the bottom of the wall is a chair rail and a paneled wainscot. The windows have reeded surrounds and segmental-arch tops. Between them are sconces in the form of a crown with an arrow sticking up through the center and four strings of crystals. The stage has a reeded proscenium and a raised floor; its walls are covered with raised panels. On the southwest wall are two openings to the vestibule; these have reeded surrounds that continue up to two small balconies. The balconies' fronts are covered in mirrors, but the openings themselves have been blocked up for air-conditioning vents. Between the openings is a fireplace (**Photograph 18**). Its wooden mantel is supported by two fluted consoles; the frieze between them is incised with a floral pattern. A tall mirror above the mantel is made up of small rectangular panes held in place by rosettes at the corners. The frame is of wood, originally silver, in the form of clustered plant stalks and drapery. The Ballroom floor is of maple.

A stair leads from next to the Card Room to the lower level, where it ends in an octagonal lobby with plaster walls and a tile floor. The lobby provides access to the locker rooms, the Grill Room, and a loggia. Plaques listing Club champions hang in the small passage leading to the loggia (**Photograph 20**).

The locker rooms retain their original configuration, but have been redecorated with new lockers, carpeting, and plumbing fixtures. The Grill Room also has been redecorated and reconfigured several times. It currently has a ceiling of stained wood boards, plaster walls, and a wainscot of narrow wood strips, also stained (**Photograph 19**). The fireplace has a wooden mantel, stained to match the other woodwork. Beyond the Grill Room, a serving pantry and the original Squash Lounge have been combined into a bar with wainscot and woodwork to match the Grill Room's (the building, constructed during Prohibition, originally had no bar). An original fireplace remains on one wall. Both the Grill Room and the bar open onto the Loggia, which has been enclosed to serve as a dining area. The loggia has modern glazed doors in the original arches and a wooden ceiling matching that of the Grill Room.

Also on the lower level are a boiler room, storage and service spaces. A workroom under the ballroom vestibule has been converted to a pro shop. It opens onto the lower terrace. Under the ballroom are four squash courts, reconfigured from the original five.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Description	New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven New Haven County, CT	7-7
-------------	--	-----

The upper level of the central block contains a series of small rooms off a central corridor. Two, identified as card rooms on the original plans, are now used as offices, as are some of the guest rooms. Another guest room is now used as a board room. All the rooms have plaster ceilings and walls and carpeted floors.

The principal elements of the grounds are the parking lot and eight tennis courts, plus one half-court. The courts have been resurfaced with an artificial material that imitates the properties of clay courts and have new fencing, but their configuration matches the original site plan (**Photograph 7**). Because they retain the historic layout, the tennis courts are considered a contributing structure. Of more recent date are two paddle tennis courts, considered a noncontributing structure.

A swimming pool was added to the east of the ballroom and the north of the tennis courts in the 1950s; it was rebuilt in 1989, and a new, L-shaped bath house was added at the same time (**Photograph 8**). The pool and bath house are both considered noncontributing. A concrete-block shed, located beyond the pool, is also considered noncontributing.

Plantings have always been simple; a plan in the Orr papers shows barberry hedges at the two forecourts, a few shade trees, and a mix of evergreen shrubs and flowering plants such as lilacs, azaleas, wisteria, and cherry trees. Most of the property not given over to other uses simply had grass. Although little if any original plant material survives, the current landscape continues to reflect this simplicity.

=====
8. Statement of Significance
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: state .

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.)

A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a 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: Architecture

Social History

Period of Significance: 1891 - 1952

Significant Dates: 1931

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Douglas W. Orr

William Douglas

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

X See continuation sheet.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Significance New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven 8-2
New Haven County, CT

organizations -- men's and women's clubs, singing and special interest groups -- proliferated all up and down the social scale. Scholars have connected this phenomenon to the growth of the cities and the consequent loss of informal social patterns that characterized smaller communities.

New Haven in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was one such growing city. Manufacturing formed the largest part of the city's economy, and the thriving factories attracted new workers, swelling New Haven's population from 62,882 in 1880 to 164,443 in 1950. On the social scene, the city participated in the nationwide proliferation of clubs. Dozens were formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, ranging from the Winchester Rod and Gun Club to the Women's Choral Society, from the Young Men's Institute to the Saturday Morning Club.²

Tennis probably came to New Haven through the city's business and Yale connections with New York. A group of New Haveners apparently started a tennis club in the summer of 1884; the organization is first mentioned in the New Haven Register on 25 September of that year.³ In 1891 the New Haven Lawn Club was formally incorporated in order, as the Articles of Association state, "to promote outdoor and indoor sports in the city of New Haven, and to provide for its members means for the enjoyment of the same..."⁴ A separate organization, The New Haven Lawn Company, was formed at the same time to sell stock to raise money for buying land and a clubhouse. Over the years, the Club has gradually acquired most of the Company's stock.

The same year that it was incorporated, the Lawn Company purchased an interior lot with access to Whitney Avenue, a developing upper-middle class neighborhood. A clubhouse was erected almost immediately; it was expanded several times in the ensuing years. In addition to regular play, the Lawn Club held tournaments, both among its own members and with other

² Arnold Guyot Dana, "New Haven Old and New, 1641-1947," scrapbooks in the collection of the New Haven Colony Historical Society. Volume 97 and 98 contains information on clubs and other social organizations.

³ Information on the history of the New Haven Lawn Club comes primarily from E. J. Shumway, Floyd M. Shumway and Richard Hegel, *New Haven Lawn Club Association, The First One Hundred Years* (New Haven: New Haven Lawn Club Association, 1991).

⁴ New Haven Lawn Club Association, Bylaws, 1904, p. 3.

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

See continuation sheet

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 repositories: New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven Colony Historical Society

=====

10. Geographical Data

=====

Acreage of Property 6.38

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing

1 18 674140 4575710

See continuation sheet.

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

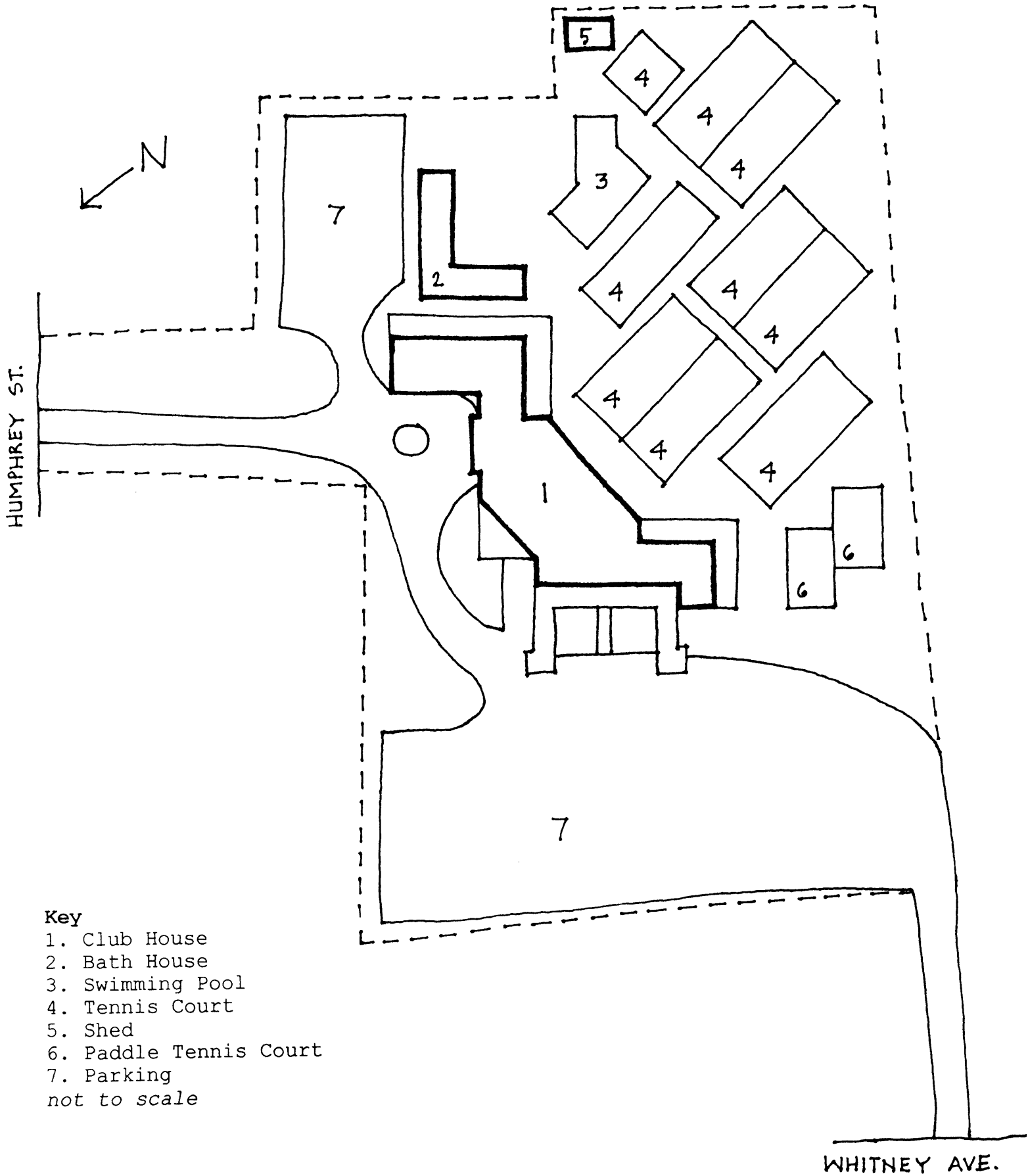
name: New Haven Lawn Company

street & number: 193 Whitney Avenue telephone: 203.777.3494

city or town: New Haven state: Connecticut zip code: 06511

=====
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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Figure 1 -- Site Plan



Key

- 1. Club House
 - 2. Bath House
 - 3. Swimming Pool
 - 4. Tennis Court
 - 5. Shed
 - 6. Paddle Tennis Court
 - 7. Parking
- not to scale

Figure 2 -- Original Floor Plans

From "New Haven Lawn Club, New Haven, Connecticut," *Architectural Forum* 57, 2 (August 1932), pages 122, 123. See Section 7 for alterations.

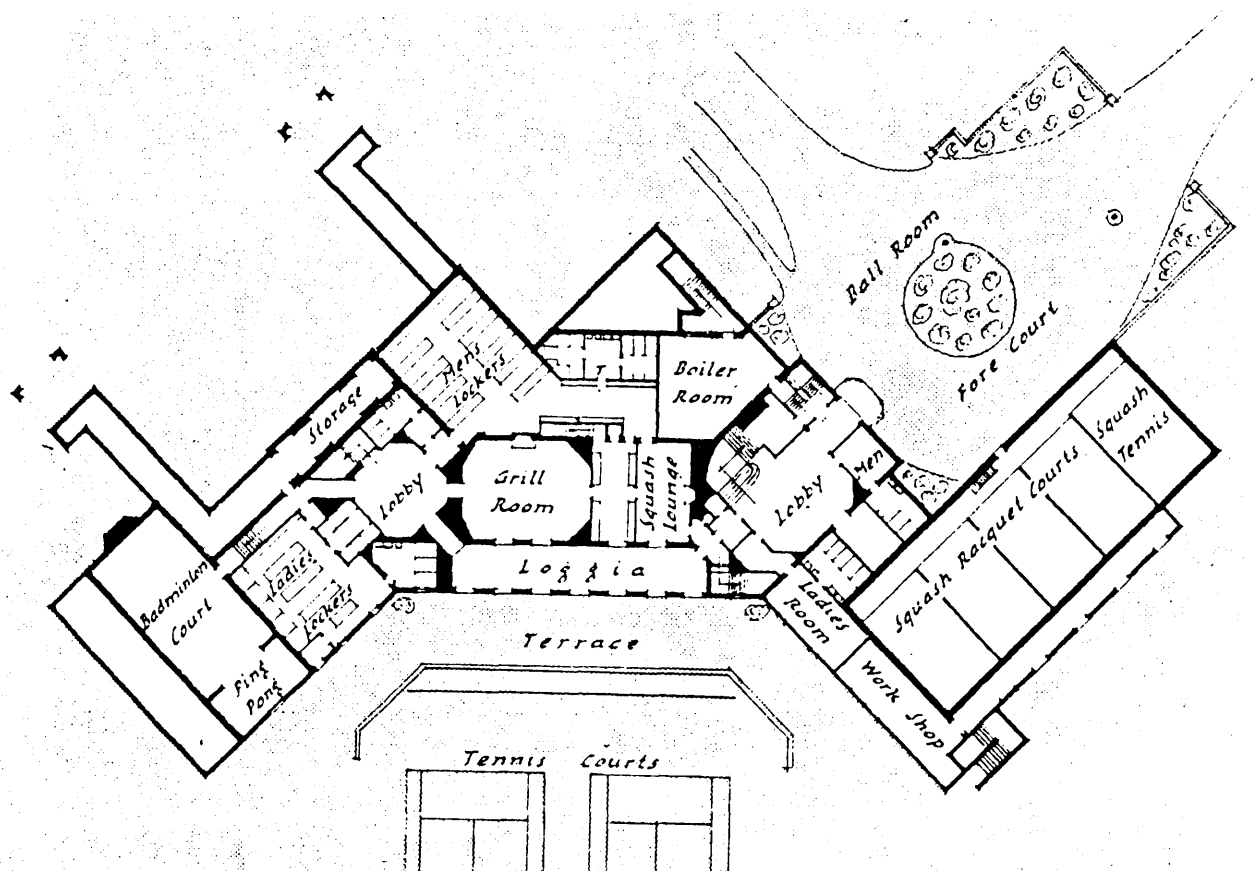
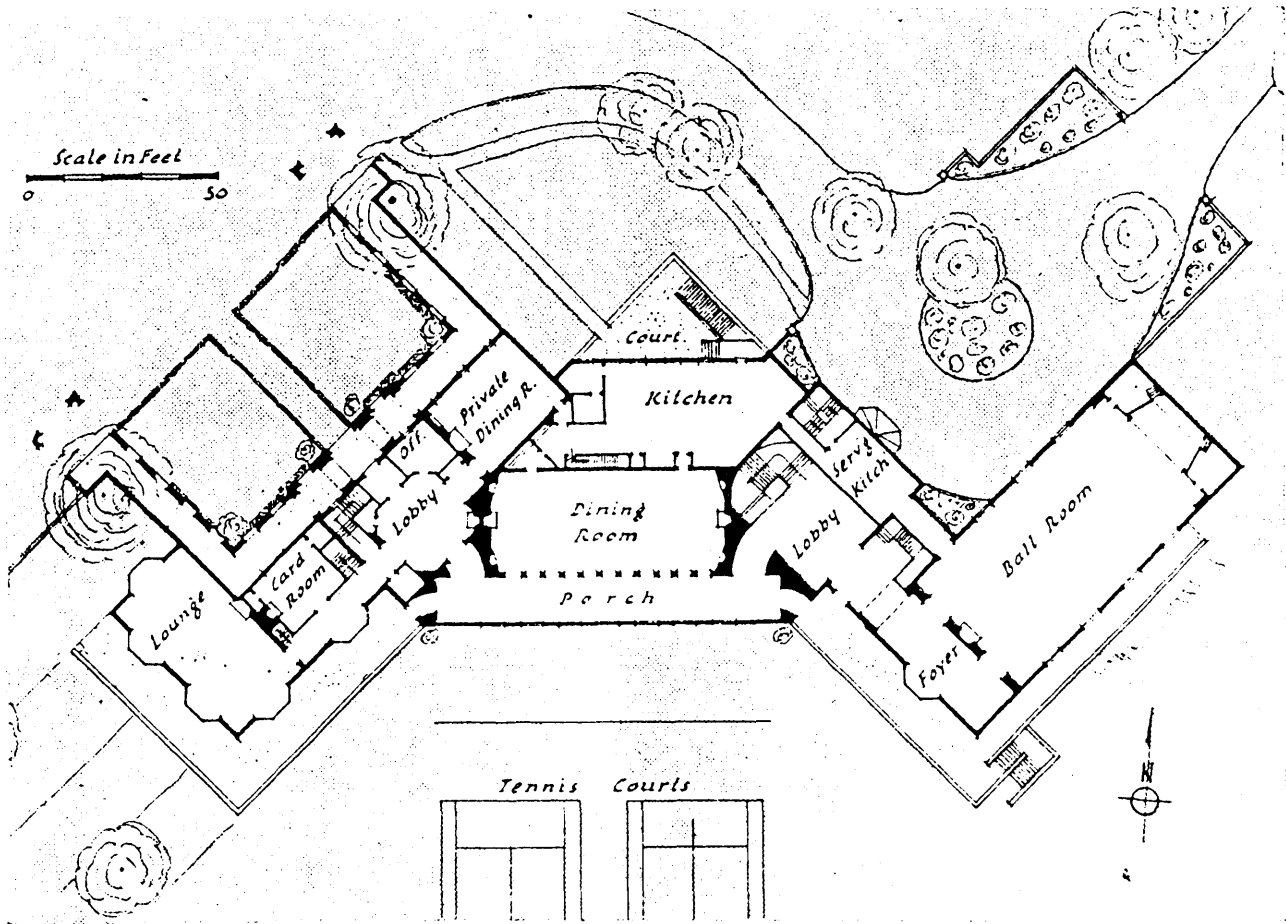


Photo Key

