

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received JAN 8 1986  
date entered 2/6/86

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

## 1. Name

historic David Lyman II House

and or common Lyman Homestead

## 2. Location

street & number 5 Lyman Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Middlefield

N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut

code 09

county Middlesex

code 007

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name Lyman Farms, Inc.

street & number 5 Lyman Road

city, town Middlefield

N/A vicinity of

state Connecticut

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

Town Clerk's Office

street & number Town Hall

city, town Middlefield

state Connecticut

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

See continuation sheet.

title State Register of Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1985

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Connecticut Historical Commission

city, town Hartford

state Connecticut

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved    date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The David Lyman II House, a Gothic Revival-style building built between 1859 and 1864, is located in Middlefield, Connecticut, a rural town approximately ten miles west of Middletown, the county seat. It faces east and sits on the rise of a hill at the south-west corner of Route 157 (Durham Road) and Lyman Road (Photograph #1). A golf course, orchards, and farmland, all belonging to Lyman Farms, Incorporated, encompass the house. The Town of Durham lies to the southeast. The surrounding built environment consists of scattered eighteenth-, nineteenth-, and twentieth-century residences and outbuildings.

Two-and-one-half stories in height, the house is L-shaped with three major sections: a main block (41½' x 34½'), a two-story west wing (29' x 48'), and a two-story south wing (16' x 21½'). The main block (1863-64) post dates the two wings (1859) and probably utilizes the foundation materials of the original house (1785) that stood on the site until 1863. (See Exhibit A for a diagram.)

The house (Photograph #2) utilizes post-and-beam construction, is sheathed with clapboard, and rests on a brownstone foundation. Its gable roof, oriented ridge-to-street, is covered with polychrome patterned slate. The form of the main block displays characteristics of the Georgian style, including symmetry, a five-bay facade, one of two original twin chimneys, and the typical, center hall plan. Its Georgian-style form is embellished, however, with Gothic Revival and Italianate-style detailing. Perforated vergeboards and finials are located on all of the gable and dormer ends, and the dormers of the wings display crossbracing, features of the Gothic Revival style. Italianate-style brackets and exposed rafters are found on the porticos and overhanging eaves.

The main block features a one-story portico. Chamfered posts topped with scroll-sawn brackets and flattened arches extend the full length of the five-bay facade. The posts and brackets are paired in the center to highlight the main entrance. Above the entrance on the second story is a paired window which breaks up the five-bay pattern. A gable-roofed dormer interrupts the eaveline trimmed with exposed rafters. Two arched windows, matched with shutters, display perforated vergeboards and bracketed finials. The roof is crowned at the ridge with an Italianate-style cupola with paired round-arched windows on each side. Its bellcast roof and overhanging eaves reveal exposed rafter ends.

The north elevation of the house includes the main block and the west wing (Photograph #3). A one-story bay window, decorated with brackets, projects from the main block, as does a twentieth-century exterior chimney. The connecting wing is less decorative than the facade of the main block, but it has similar architectural details. Six bays in length, the two-story wing has a one-story screened-in porch which is adorned with square posts and brackets. Two small gable-roofed dormers with four-paned sash are decorated with crossbracing, unlike the dormer on the main block's facade (east).

The south elevation of the west wing is similar to the north except that it has an open porch for three-quarters of its length (Photograph #4). The two dormers feature similar decorative details. A brick chimney and decorative roof vent project from the slate roof.

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The History and Architecture of Middlefield, Connecticut, 1981  
Greater Middletown Preservation Trust  
27 Washington Street, Middletown, Connecticut 06457

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The west and south elevations exhibit the decorative perforated vergeboards and exposed rafter ends (Photograph #5). Located in the attic story of the west elevation of the main block is a twentieth-century, shed-roofed dormer. A small entry porch shelters the south entrance on the south wing (now used as an apartment).

Five outbuildings are located to the southwest of the house. Most notable among these are a clapboard carriage house (Photograph #6) and laundry (Photograph #7) decorated in the Gothic Revival style. The gable ends feature crossbracing, finials, and brackets. Also, a half-story, gable-roofed brick gashouse that once contained a carbide gas system for lighting the house lies to its west (Photograph #8). It displays supporting brackets and a four-paned round-arched door.

The interior of the house contains a large central hallway with a wide, triple-run staircase (Photograph #9) that divides the house in half to form four rooms with two on each side of the hallways. (See Exhibits B, C, and D for floor plans.) The interior partition wall on the north side of the first floor of the main block, however, was removed to create one large room during the early twentieth century (Photograph #10). The plaster cornice moldings found in the hallway and in the south and north parlors are perforated with a foliated relief pattern (Photographs #11 and 12). An oversized entry door with sidelights lies opposite the staircase, which has turned balusters and a molded handrail. Scroll-sawn details adorn the casings of each step as well as the base of each landing (Photograph #13 and 14). Original heavily molded door surrounds exist on all entrances to the hallway. Three rooms on the first floor contain round-arched white marble fireplace surrounds with volute keystones (Photograph #15). A black marble fireplace surround exists in the southwest room.

The second floor, also two rooms deep on either side of the central hallway, possesses distinctive plaster cornice moldings in the northwest bedroom, which is entered through a decorative round-arched passway (Photograph #16). In this room, the plaster molding, unlike the pattern found on the first floor, displays a perforated talon and grapevine pattern. The southeast bedroom contains a white marble fireplace surround similar to those found on the first floor. The northeast room features a heavily molded wood fireplace surround.

Equally notable are the enameled wood cooking stoves and built-in wood bin in the kitchen (west wing). The third floor of the main block, which once served as the servants' and farm workers' quarters, is partitioned into four rooms. Here also is the entrance to the cupola by way of an enclosed spiral staircase. The original hardware and iron gas-light fixtures remain throughout the house.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion	
1400–1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science	
1500–1599	x agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture	
1600–1699	x architecture	education	military	social	
1700–1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian	
x 1800–1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater	
1900–	communications	x industry	politics government	transportation	
		invention		other (specify)	

Criteria B & C

**Specific dates** 1859, 1864      **Builder/Architect** Russell, Rufus G., New Haven (architect)

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The David Lyman II House has local historical associations with one of Middlefield, Connecticut's prominent agricultural and industrial families, who owned the property for over 230 years (Criterion B). Having established a prosperous farm by the middle of the nineteenth century, David Lyman II helped to develop the Town of Middlefield by founding the Metropolitan Washing Machine Company and the Airline Railroad. In 1863 New Haven architect Rufus G. Russell designed this well-preserved house, one of the finest examples of the Gothic Revival style in the greater Middle-town area (Criterion C).<sup>1</sup>

### Historical Significance

David Lyman II (1820–1871) was a direct descendant of Richard Lyman, an English immigrant who came to Boston in 1631. In 1635 Richard joined the Reverend Thomas Hooker to found Hartford. His grandson Ebenezer (1682–1762) moved to Durham in 1737 and also purchased land in Middlefield. Ebenezer's fourth son John (1717–1763) and his wife Hope moved to Middlefield in 1741 after buying 165 acres of land that today form the core of Lyman Farms, Incorporated. John's son David (1746–1815) continued to run the Lyman farm, as did David's son William (1783–1869). William married Alma Coe, daughter of another prominent Middlefield family, who bore seven children, one of whom was David II.

David II was appointed trustee of his ancestral homestead at the age of 27 and enlarged the house before 1860 by adding two wings to an original main block built by his grandfather in 1785. In 1863 David II moved the original block to another site at the intersection of Main Street and Reed's Gap Road in Middlefield, where it still serves as a residence. During the same year he commissioned Rufus G. Russell of New Haven to create the present main block of the house.<sup>2</sup> Richard Powell was employed as the stone mason in 1864.<sup>3</sup> According to Lyman's ledgers dating from 1849–1870, Lyman was very involved in the construction and furnishing. In 1864 he reported a total of \$18,104.13 in his house account.<sup>4</sup> By 1865 he listed \$11,227.71 spent on new house furniture, pianos, and all fixtures.<sup>5</sup> Lightning rods installed cost \$26.40.<sup>6</sup>

David Lyman II, like generations before him, continued to operate the 500-acre farm founded by John Lyman. Vegetables and peaches from a small orchard were sold locally to supplement the Lyman income, and at the turn of the century the farm specialized in fruit and breeding sheep. So acclaimed was the farm that in 1899 it was featured in the Eastern editions of the American Agriculturist, the New England Homestead.<sup>7</sup> However David Lyman was not financially dependent on his farm. As a young man he had developed business skills from working with a New Haven merchant and later for the famous New York–West Indies merchants, Alsop and Chauncey. By 1861 he established the Farmers Milling Company and co-founded the Metropolitan Washing Maching Company along with his father William and Moses Terrill. At one time the Metropolitan Washing Machine Company employed about 160 men who manufactured over 400 wringers a day. It utilized six buildings with over 20,000 square feet and a sales office and showroom in New York City.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2

Quadrangle name Durham

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UTM References

A 

1	8	6	9	0	9	8	0	4	5	9	6	1	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Middlefield Land Records-- Volume 21: Page 490

The house and its two-acre plot lie in the north section of Lot 20: Map 17.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries N.A.

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ruth A. Bedrosian, Program Director, Edited by John Herzan, National Register Coordinator

organization Greater Middletown Preservation Trust date July 1985

street & number 27 Washington Street telephone (203) 346-1646

city or town Middletown state Connecticut

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

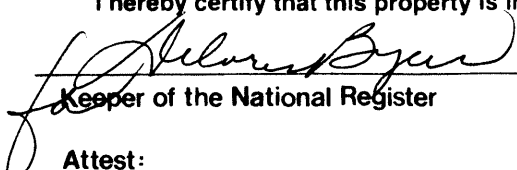
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

Director,

title John W. Shannahan, Connecticut Historical Commission date 12/26/85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

  
Keeper of the National Register

date 2/6/86

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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Lyman's greatest contribution was in founding the Airline Railroad, of which he served as the first president. It ran from New Haven to Middletown, then to Willimantic. Naturally Middlefield's depot was convenient for shipping the products of the Metropolitan Washing Machine Company. Lyman also worked against Hartford interests to charter a railroad bridge across the Connecticut River at Middletown, and he finally obtained the right to bridge the river from Congress.<sup>8</sup> The bridge opened in July of 1871, a few months after Lyman's early death at the age of 51.

Lyman's widow Catharine and sons Henry (1856-1879) and Charles Elihu (b. 1857) continued to operate the farm. His oldest son William (b. 1854) was well-known for his inventions: the Lyman Gun Sights and the Lyman Bow-facing Rowing Gear. His patented scopes and gunsights were supplied to the United States Army during three wars. The Lyman family still owns and manages the home and some 1,100 acres. Produce is sold in the Apple Barrel near the house.

Architectural Significance

The David Lyman II House is an outstanding example of the work of Rufus G. Russell (1823-1896). One of the best-known architects in New Haven, he apprenticed under Henry Austin and soon was recognized as 'one of the principal architects of the period . . . mainly identified with the High Victorian Gothic style of the '70s . . . ." He designed numerous buildings in New Haven: the Calvary Baptist Church (1871) on Chapel Street, the New Haven Gas Company (1872) on Crown Street, and the Humphrey School (1877) on Humphrey Street. In 1866 he designed the residence of Nicholas Countryman, one of New Haven's leading builders, which displays features similar to those of the David Lyman II House.

Russell undoubtedly was challenged by Lyman's commission. The architectural evolution of the house reveals that Russell was restricted to the defined space of an earlier building and two adjoining wings. In addition, Lyman wished to retain the Georgian-style form original to the house, yet adorn it with Gothic- and Italianate-style details. Russell utilized post-and-beam construction in the main block, a method outdated by 1860 in New Haven but still prevalent in Middlefield. To the five-bay, two-story house he applied a sophisticated Italianate-style porch and cupola. He dressed the gable and dormer ends with well-crafted vergeboards, finials, and brackets. Well-articulated details were also added to the interior. The perforated and raised, foliated talon and grapevine patterns of the cornice moldings are most unusual to the area. Black and white marble fireplace surrounds further enhance the large rooms.

Most notable is the excellent state of preservation of the house. Modern alterations have been limited to a twentieth-century exterior chimney, a shed-roofed dormer, and the removal of a partition wall on the north side of the main block.

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NOTES:

<sup>1</sup>Based on the architectural and historical surveys conducted by GMPT in northern Middlesex County.

<sup>2</sup> David Lyman II Historical Collection, Ledger A, 1863, p. 286.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 296.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> David Lyman II Historical Collection, Ledger I, 1865, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> David Lyman II Historical Collection, Day Book A, 1863, p. 344.

<sup>7</sup> The David Lyman II House and several members of Charles Elihu Lyman's family are pictured in a photograph on the front cover of this magazine.

<sup>8</sup> J. H. Beers, Commemorative Biographical Record of Middlesex County, Connecticut (Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1903), p. 107.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth Mills Brown, New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1976), p. 7.



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Page 1

Beers, J. H. Commemorative Biographical Record of Middlesex County, Connecticut.  
Chicago: J. H. Beers & Co., 1903.

Brown, Elizabeth Mills. New Haven: A Guide to Architecture and Urban Design.  
New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1976.

Cunningham, Janice P. The History and Architecture of Middlefield, Connecticut.  
Greater Middletown Preservation Trust, 1981.

David Lyman II Historical Collection. General ledgers, 1849-1870. Property of  
the Lyman family.  
Middlefield Land Records

Middletown Land Records

New England Homestead, 12 August 1899.

Rufus G. Russell Collection. New Haven Colony Historical Society. Miscellaneous  
architectural drawings.

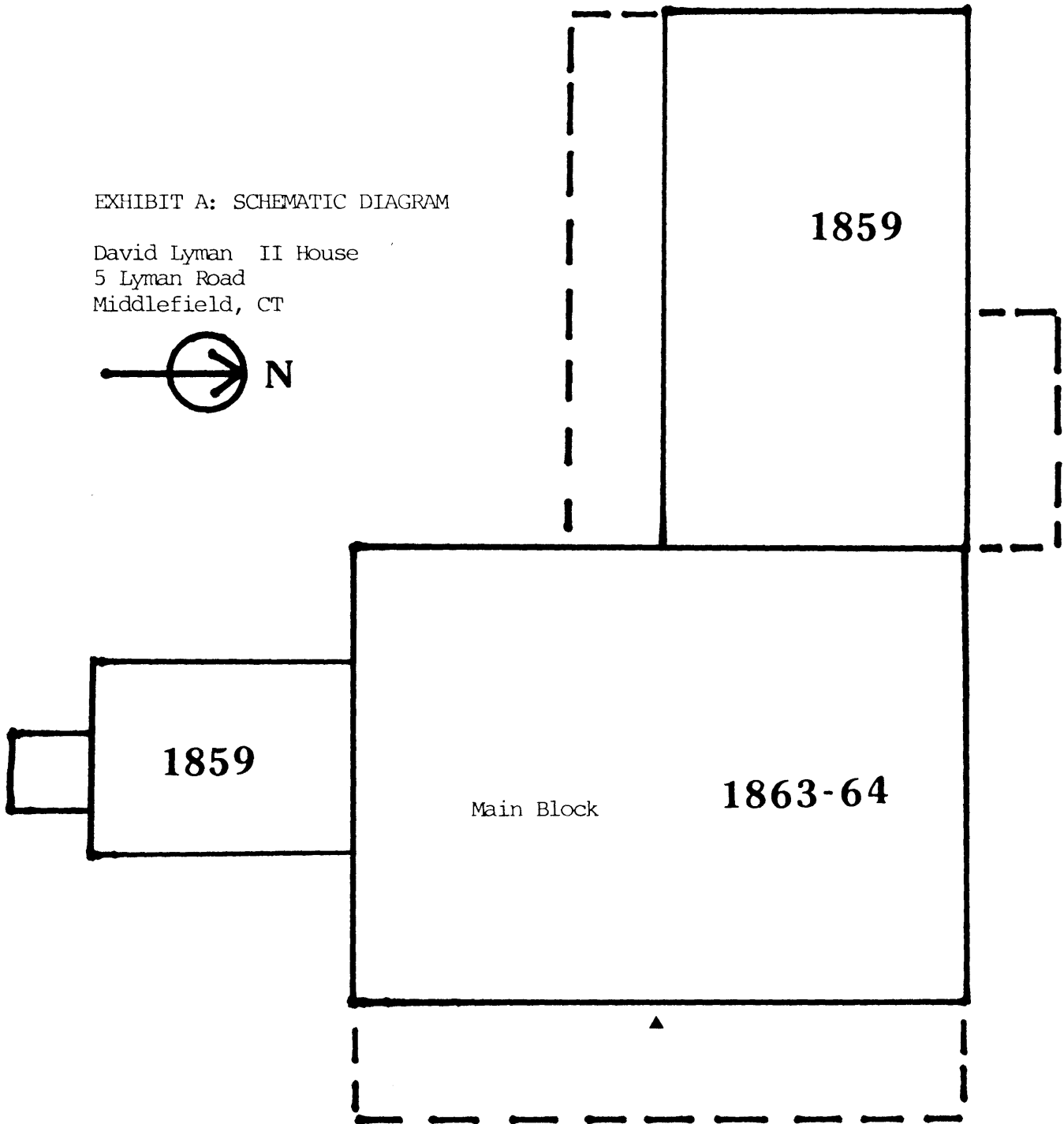
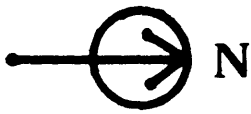
1851 Clark Map

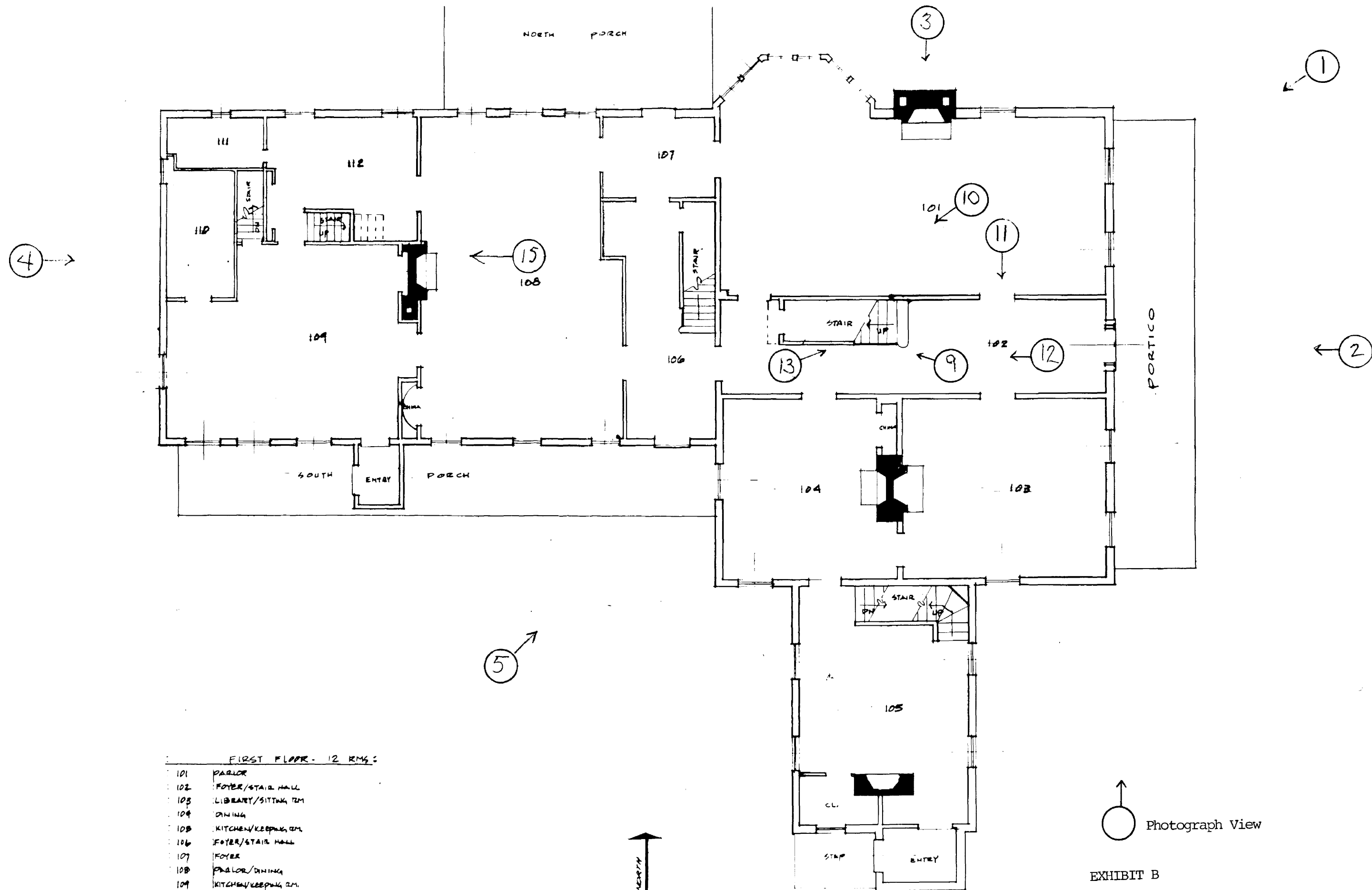
1859 Walling Map

1874 Beers Atlas

EXHIBIT A: SCHEMATIC DIAGRAM

David Lyman II House  
5 Lyman Road  
Middlefield, CT

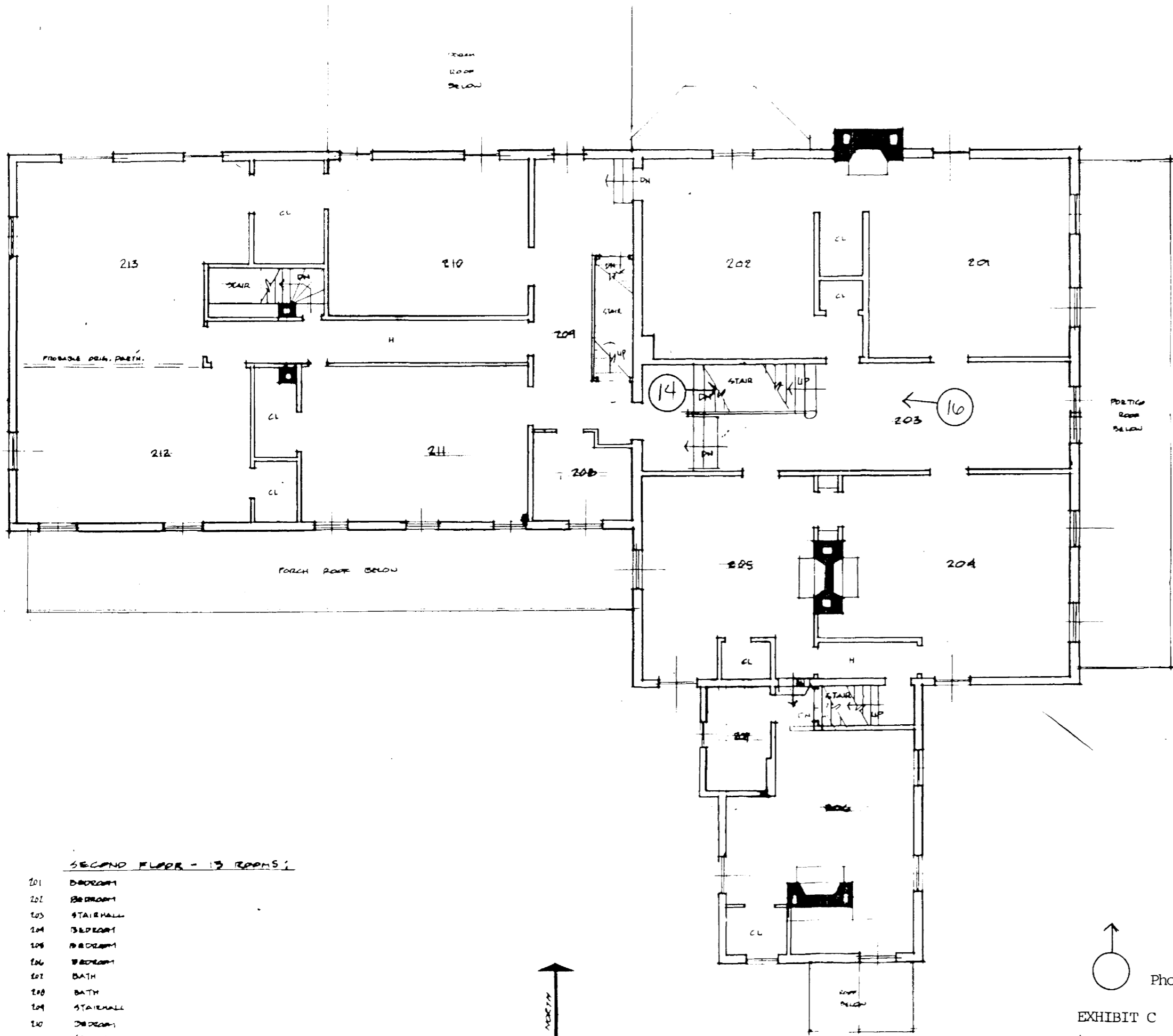




- FIRST FLOOR - 12 RMS:
- 101 PARLOR
  - 102 FOYER/STAIR HALL
  - 103 LIBRARY/SITTING RM
  - 104 DINING
  - 105 KITCHEN/KEEPING RM
  - 106 FOYER/STAIR HALL
  - 107 FOYER
  - 108 PARLOR/DINING
  - 109 KITCHEN/KEEPING RM
  - 110 PANTRY
  - 111 LAV.
  - 112 OFFICE

 Photograph View

EXHIBIT B  
 PRELIMINARY - EXISTING CONDITIONS - PLAN  
**LYMAN HOMESTEAD**  
 LYMAN ROAD AT ROUTE 47 MIDDLEFIELD, CT  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0" DEC. 17, 1984

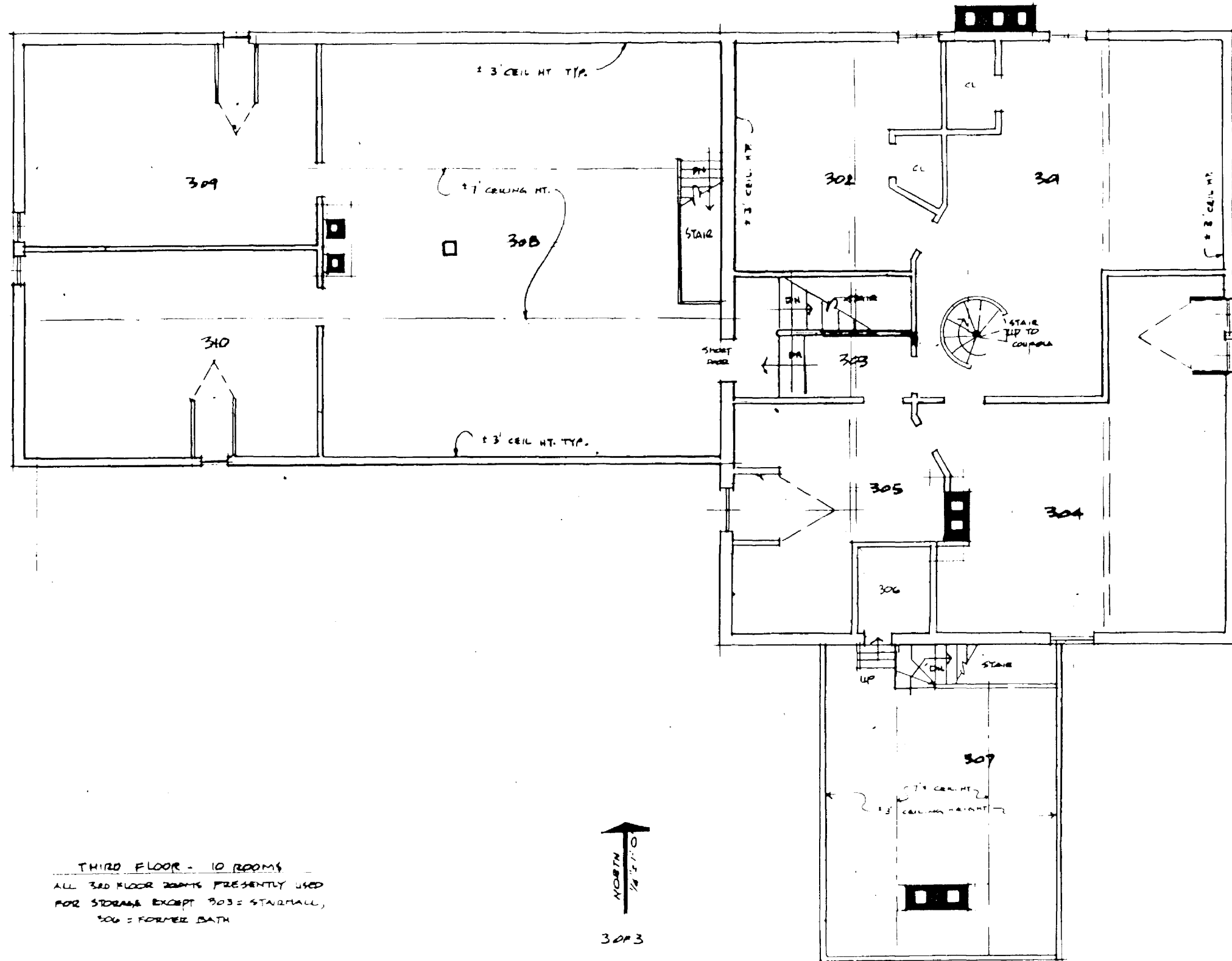


SECOND FLOOR - 13 ROOMS:

- 201 BEDROOM
- 202 BEDROOM
- 203 STAIR HALL
- 204 BEDROOM
- 205 BEDROOM
- 206 BEDROOM
- 207 BATH
- 208 BATH
- 209 STAIR HALL
- 210 BEDROOM
- 211 SEWING RM
- 211 BEDROOM
- 213 BEDROOM



EXHIBIT C  
 LYMAN HOMESTEAD  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0" DEC. 17, 1984



THIRD FLOOR - 10 ROOMS  
 ALL 3RD FLOOR ROOMS PRESENTLY USED  
 FOR STORAGE EXCEPT 303 = STAIRHALL,  
 306 = FORMER BATH



EXHIBIT D  
 LYMAN HOMESTEAD  
 SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0" DEC. 7, 1984