

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



**1. Name**

historic The Herman Uihlein House  
and/or common The Grant C. Beutner House

**2. Location**

street & number 5270 ~~North Lake Drive~~ not for publication  
city, town Whitefish Bay vicinity of congressional district  
state Wisconsin code 55 county Milwaukee code 079

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Grant C. Beutner  
street & number 5270 N. Lake Drive  
city, town Whitefish Bay vicinity of state Wisconsin 53217

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Milwaukee County Courthouse  
street & number 901 North Ninth Street  
city, town Milwaukee state Wisconsin

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date 1980  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records State Historical Society of Wisconsin  
city, town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

## 7. Description

<u>    </u> excellent	<u>    </u> deteriorated	<u>    </u> unaltered	<u>  X  </u> original site
<u>  X  </u> good	<u>    </u> ruins	<u>  X  </u> altered	<u>    </u> moved    date _____
<u>    </u> fair	<u>    </u> unexposed		

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

Dramatically sited on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan in the village of Whitefish Bay, the Herman Uihlein house is an imposing limestone residence, characterized by classical detailing, ornate craftsmanship, and eclectic interior design. Constructed between 1917 and 1919, the exterior of the house reflects a monumental yet restrained classicism while the interior boasts a variety of period designs executed in lavish materials.

The two-story house (with full basement and attic story) measures approximately 110' x 50' and is situated on a three acre tract of land with a commanding view of the lake. The exterior walls are constructed of smooth, buff Bedford limestone blocks extracted from a single level of an Indiana quarry, with stone details carved at the construction site.

The symmetrical front facade is dominated by a projecting central pavilion enclosing the first story entry and sheltering a second story balcony. The pavilion is surmounted by a full entablature (with bracketed cornice) and crowned with a balustrade. Colossal Ionic pilasters and engaged columns (with carved tobacco leaf motifs), coupled on either side of the entry, rise two stories to support the entablature.

Set within a rounded arch, the front doorway is screened by an elaborate scrolled and floriated wrought-iron grille. Above the entry, the second story balcony rests on richly carved limestone ancon and consoles. The balcony railing is fashioned of wrought-iron with a stylized hop medallion (symbolizing the brewing interests of the Uihlein family). French windows provide access to the balcony.

Six tall multipaned casement windows on both stories are disposed symmetrically across the front facade of the house, while projecting limestone stringcourses articulate the horizontal divisions of the composition. Round headed first story windows rise the full height of the story from the sill course atop the raised basement. Second story windows rest on a stone sill course and rise to the stringcourse beneath the frieze. Between the first and second story windows, wrought-iron balconnets, embellished with hop medallions, rest on carved consoles. The cornice is supported by paired brackets and sheltered by the overhanging eaves of the low-pitched, red tile hip roof.

The side and rear elevations feature the same details: symmetrically arranged round headed windows (or French windows) on the first story, with ornamental molding, raised stringcourses demarcating horizontal divisions, and a bracketed cornice beneath overhanging eaves. The rear is characterized, however, by projecting wings on either side of a large central window. The wings frame a shallow courtyard which is enclosed by a limestone balustrade and approached by terraced steps. A small courtyard projecting off the southern wing and enclosed by a balustrade, is approached from the house through French windows. Five limestone chimneys rise above the roof ridge and dormer windows in the rear light the attic-level living space.

The circular driveway is bordered by a low balustrade in front of the house and a one-story limestone garage, crowned with a balustrade, is connected to the house on the north side.

The interior of the first floor is organized around an axial central hall from which project the major public rooms. Entered through a vestibule (with travertine walls, patterned

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floors of three marbles, and wrought iron grilles), the dramatic central hall is dominated by a sweeping grand staircase which rises against the eastern wall to a landing overlooking the hall, and then divides into two flights which rise to the second story. The staircase railing is delicately crafted of wrought iron in a floriated design, with successive panels joined by intertwining vines and embellished with organic emblems. Flanking the base of the staircase (and flanking the window at the stair landing) are iron torcheres and wall sconces of similarly ornate design.

Against the south wall of the hall, a large Italian Renaissance-styled fireplace is constructed of buff Amherst sandstone with elaborately carved classical ornament (including dentils, bead-and-reel and egg-and-dart moldings and a rinceau with mascarons in the frieze). A wrought-iron fireplace screen and andirons remain from the hall's original furnishings.

The walnut doors at the front entry are surmounted by a carved, floriated transom and the walnut pipe organ chamber and grilles on either side of the doors feature carved spindles. On the south wall, entrances to the drawing room and solarium are encased in walnut frames crowned with carved pediments embellished with acanthus scrolls. The coffered ceiling of the hall is ornamented with decorative plasterwork and embossed rosettes. A chandelier (not original to the house) lights the hall. The walls are constructed of Caen stone and the floors are marble.

Projecting off the southwest corner of the hall, the front drawing room reflects a restrained French classical influence. Panelled walls with delicate pargework rise from the dado to a cove molding. The ceiling is embellished with ornamental plasterwork. The room is brightly illuminated by an arcade of round headed windows which rise from floor to ceiling. Parquet floors and a small canvas mural above the entry complement the formality of the design.

The solarium extends off the southeast corner of the hall and is enclosed by cut limestone walls punctuated with round headed windows. A mural, depicting a formal garden and executed in muted colors, ornaments the frieze. The room includes a fireplace with a marble mantle and a polychromed iron chandelier with matching wall sconces.

The front library, approached from the hall through a rounded arch, reflects a Jacobean motif with panelled oak walls, oak pilasters with strapwork carving, and a Tudor-arched fireplace with elaborately carved oak mantle. Pegged walnut floors and bronze chandeliers and wall sconces ornament the room. Built off the library (added about 1930), a small gameroom features teak panelled walls and an adjoining bar room has a domed ceiling covered (as are the bar's walls) in lacquered gold-leaf foil.

The dining room, opposite the library on the east side of the house, is distinguished by an ornamental plaster ceiling and original silver chandelier. (The original panelling and fireplace mantle were removed in the 1940s.)

The second floor contains ten bedrooms, four baths, and a central hallway with Caen stone walls and ornamental cornice.

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The basement and attic include extensive storage space, and some living space. The first floor kitchen retains original built-in refrigerators. All the original flooring--marble, maple, and oak--has been preserved except in the kitchen where quarry tile has been installed. About 40% of the original lighting fixtures remain and, except in the kitchen, all the original plumbing fixtures, manufactured by Hoff and Billings of Milwaukee, have been retained.

Set back on a three acre lot, and approached by a circular drive, the Uihlein house is situated on the crest of a bluff which drops gently to the lake. Although located in a densely settled suburban community, the siting and size of the lot create the illusion of a remote estate, an appropriate setting for a self-consciously "majestic" home.

## 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** 1917-1919 <sup>1</sup> **Builder/Architect** Kirchoff and Rose <sup>2</sup>

### Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

An architectural landmark in the village of Whitefish Bay since its construction in 1919, the Herman Uihlein house ranks among Milwaukee County's most significant examples of the classical tradition in early twentieth century residential design. Distinguished by an academic synthesis of Renaissance Revival and Beaux-Arts motifs, a lavishly ornamented interior, and the work of master craftsmen, the Uihlein house is an imposing suburban "villa", palatial in both conception and execution.

The formally balanced composition, highlighted by classical detail, symmetrical fenestration, and a monumental pavilion, was designed by Milwaukee architects Kirchoff and Rose and constructed of Bedford limestone from a single level of an Indiana quarry. Extensive and elaborately crafted ornamental ironwork—including an intricate front doorway grille and a majestic stairway railing—were designed by master craftsman Cyril Colnik who reputedly spent three years completing the commission. The carefully detailed period interiors, executed in a variety of marbles, carved stone, and ornamental plaster, are embellished by the ornately carved woodwork of the Matthews Brothers firm, and are considered among the finest in the area. Interior fixtures of bronze, silver, and iron complement the richness of the design.

A reconnaissance survey conducted by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin in 1980 identified the Uihlein house as the finest example of its type and period of construction in the village. Even when evaluated in the context of the county's lakeshore estates, stretching from Milwaukee to Fox Point, the house is distinguished by its design, scale, setting, and interior. A guidebook to architectural resources in southeastern Wisconsin identifies the house as "one of the best built and most finely detailed" in the Milwaukee area. Indeed, the outstanding craftsmanship exhibited on both the interior and exterior place this house in the first rank of "classical" homes of the period in Wisconsin. The architectural firm of Kirchoff and Rose designed frequently for the Uihlein family and their businesses; commissions included the former Second Ward Savings Bank building (now the Milwaukee County Historical Center), 1911-1913 (NRHP, 1973); the Tivoli Palm Gardens, 1901 (Walker's Point Historic District, NRHP, 1978); and the Paula and Erwin Uihlein house, 3319 N. Lake Drive, 1913. Formed in 1894 as a partnership between Charles Kirchoff (? - 1915) and Thomas Leslie Rose (1867 - 1935), the firm continued under the same name after 1915 when Roger Kirchoff succeeded his father upon the latter's death. Two years later, the firm accepted this commission.

Born in Austria in 1871, Cyril Colnik studied ornamental ironwork in Vienna before coming to Chicago in 1893 to work at the German exhibit at the Columbian Exposition. The next year, he moved to Milwaukee and by the early twentieth century had established himself as the city's leading craftsman in ornamental ironwork. In addition to his work for the Uihlein house, Colnik did commissions for the Pabst, Trostel, and Allis families as well as "most of the millionaires" residing in Milwaukee. His decorative designs can still be seen in the Lloyd Smith house (now Villa Terrace Museum), 1923 (NRHP, 1974); the Frederick Pabst house, 1890 (NRHP, 1975); and other Milwaukee buildings. Examples of Colnik's work (and some of his drawings) are included in the collections of the Milwaukee Public Museum and the Milwaukee Public Library.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

"H.A. Uihlein Dies in Texas," Milwaukee Journal, March 14, 1942.  
 Zimmerman, H. Russell. "Uihlein Mansion Recalls Era." Milwaukee Journal, September 23, 1974.  
 See footnotes, Item 8, for further bibliographic information.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 3 acres  
 Quadrangle name Milwaukee, WI 7.5' Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	1 6	4 2 7 2 9 0	4 1 7 7 1 3 4 1 5 1 0	B					
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C				D					
E				F					
G				H					

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is described as follows: South 25' Lot 8, all of Lot 9, Block 1, Pabst Whitefish Bay Plat, Village of Whitefish Bay, Milwaukee Co., WI

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	<i>N/A</i>	code
state	code	county		code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Leonard T. Garfield, historian; Thomas P. Wolfe, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
 organization State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 5/7/1983  
 street & number 816 State Street telephone (608) 262-2970  
 city or town Madison state Wisconsin 53706

# 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



title Director, Historic Preservation Division, SHSW date NOV. 21, 1983

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

Entered in the National Register

date

12/22/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Established in Milwaukee in 1857 by E. P. and A. R. Matthews, the Matthews Brothers Furniture Company (known after 1891 as the Matthews Brothers Manufacturing Company) remained a nationally recognized interior woodworking firm until the middle of the twentieth century. Although the firm's Milwaukee commissions included the Frederick Pabst house in addition to the Uihlein house, the company had a nationwide clientele, designing woodwork for the Allegheny County Courthouse, Pittsburgh; the Copley Plaza hotel, Boston; the Henry Ford house (Fairlane), Dearborn; the Al Ringling house, Sarasota; and the Palmer House hotel and Tribune Tower building, Chicago.<sup>8</sup>

Historical Background:

The first residence constructed in the "Pabst Whitefish Bay subdivision," the Herman Uihlein house was built on the former grounds of one of Wisconsin's great beer gardens. Captain Frederick Pabst established the Pabst Whitefish Bay Resort in 1888 as an eighteen acre pleasure resort offering recreation, fresh fish, band music, and, of course, Pabst beer. The resort was a popular retreat for nearby urbanites who travelled to the site on the streetcar lines which came from Milwaukee. But the appeal of the resort had faded by the twentieth century and in 1914 the complex was closed and the buildings razed.<sup>9</sup>

In 1915, the Uihlein family purchased a lot near where the bandstand stood. Although suburban homes had already begun to dot the landscape, replacing farmland and changing the character of the old fishing village, the Uihlein house introduced a new scale to the village. Completed after three years of work, the house was larger and more pretentious than any earlier--or later--house in Whitefish Bay.

Herman Uihlein, son of long-time Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company president Henry Uihlein and heir to a substantial family fortune, was not closely identified with the daily operation of the brewery, although he had served on the board of directors. Born in 1886, he graduated from Cornell University in 1908, studied law at Columbia for two years, and took his first job in 1911 when he was appointed president of the newly-formed Lavine Gear Company, a manufacturer of steering gears for trucks.<sup>10</sup> Capitalized at \$40,000, the firm had amassed \$1,000,000 in capital by 1918, the year that Uihlein constructed his house.<sup>11</sup> Uihlein served as president of the company (which later became known as the Ben-Hur Manufacturing Company) until his death in 1942 at the age of 52. In 1931, he became president of Manerlein Investment Company, a realty firm, and he also served as vice-president of the Sanitary Refrigerator Company in Fond du Lac. Together with his wife, the former Claudia Holt, Uihlein was a leading patron of the Milwaukee Philharmonic symphony orchestra.<sup>12</sup> After Uihlein's death, Mrs. Uihlein remained at the house until 1946 when it was sold to a real estate holding company.<sup>13</sup> In 1953, the mansion was purchased by the Milwaukee vice-province of the LaSalette Fathers, who used the building as a mission house for five priests and two brothers.<sup>14</sup> In the late 1970s, the Grant C. Beutner family purchased the home, and have carefully maintained and restored the property since that time.

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Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup>H. Russell Zimmerman, "Uihlein Mansion Recalls Era," Milwaukee Journal, September 23, 1973. Zimmerman had access to the 134-page specification book as well as other drawings and plans of the house.

<sup>2</sup>Zimmerman, "Uihlein House Recalls Era."

<sup>3</sup>Zimmerman, "Uihlein House Recalls Era." See also "The Residence of Mr. and Mrs. Herman A. Uihlein," Town Topics :the Journal of Society, August 21, 1930, n.p.

<sup>4</sup>H. Russell Zimmerman, The Heritage Guidebook to Landmarks and Historical Sites in Southeastern Wisconsin (Milwaukee: Heritage Banks, 1975), p. 94.

<sup>5</sup>Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Co., 1956), p527.

<sup>6</sup>Judith Simonsen, "Cyril Colnik," Lore, 31, No. 2 (Summer, 1981), pp. 22 - 27.

<sup>7</sup>John Gregory, History of Milwaukee, Vol. IV (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1931), pp. 102 - 104.

<sup>8</sup>"Matthews Brothers Manufacturing Company," Milwaukee Journal, January 3, 1931.

<sup>9</sup>Bayrd Still, Milwaukee: The History of a City (Madison: State Historical Society, 1965), p.404, Milwaukee Writers Project, History of Milwaukee Co. (Milwaukee: 1947), pp. 636-637.

<sup>10</sup>Gregory, History of Milwaukee, Vol. II, p. 660

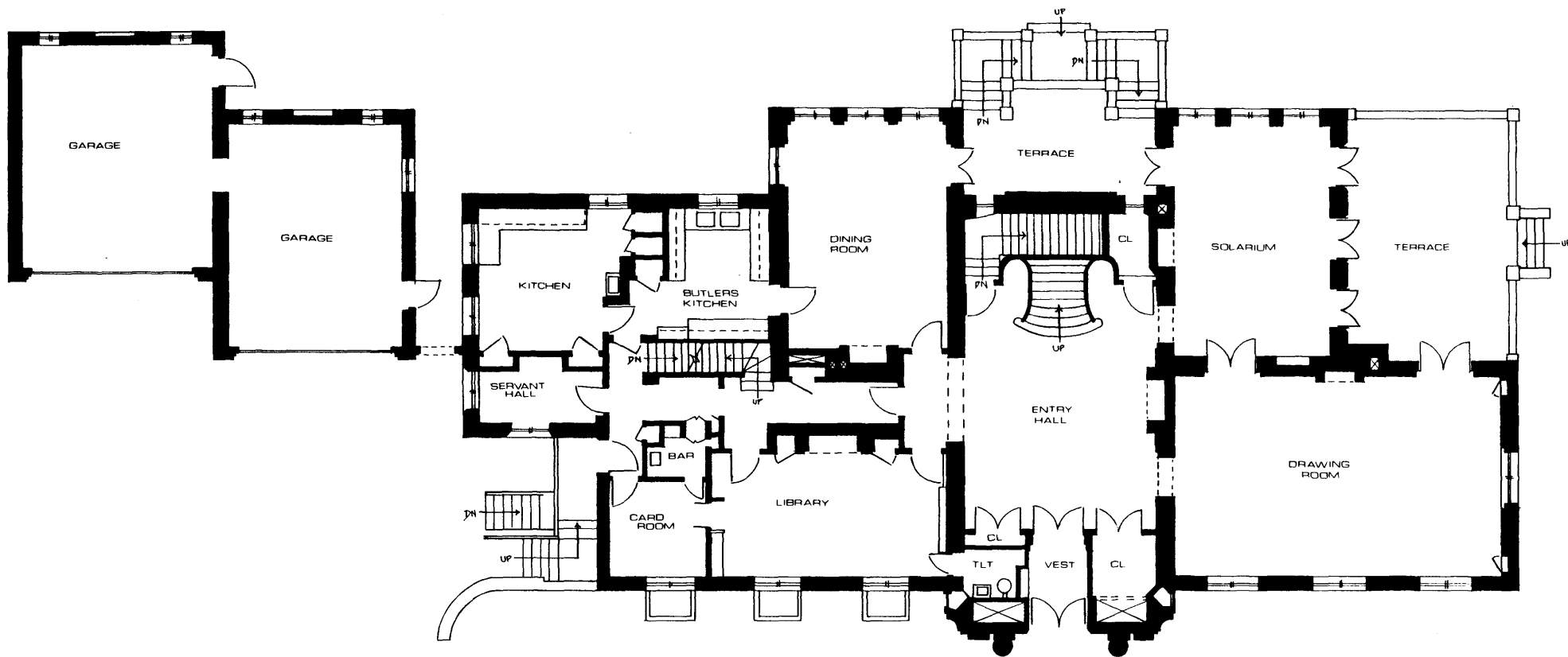
<sup>11</sup>History of Milwaukee, City and County, Vol. II (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1922), p. 435.

<sup>12</sup>"H. A. Uihlein Dies in Texas," Milwaukee Journal, March 14, 1942.

<sup>13</sup>"Uihlein Home is Being Sold," Milwaukee Journal, June 26, 1947, part II, p. 8.

<sup>14</sup>Zimmerman, "Uihlein Mansion Recalls Era."





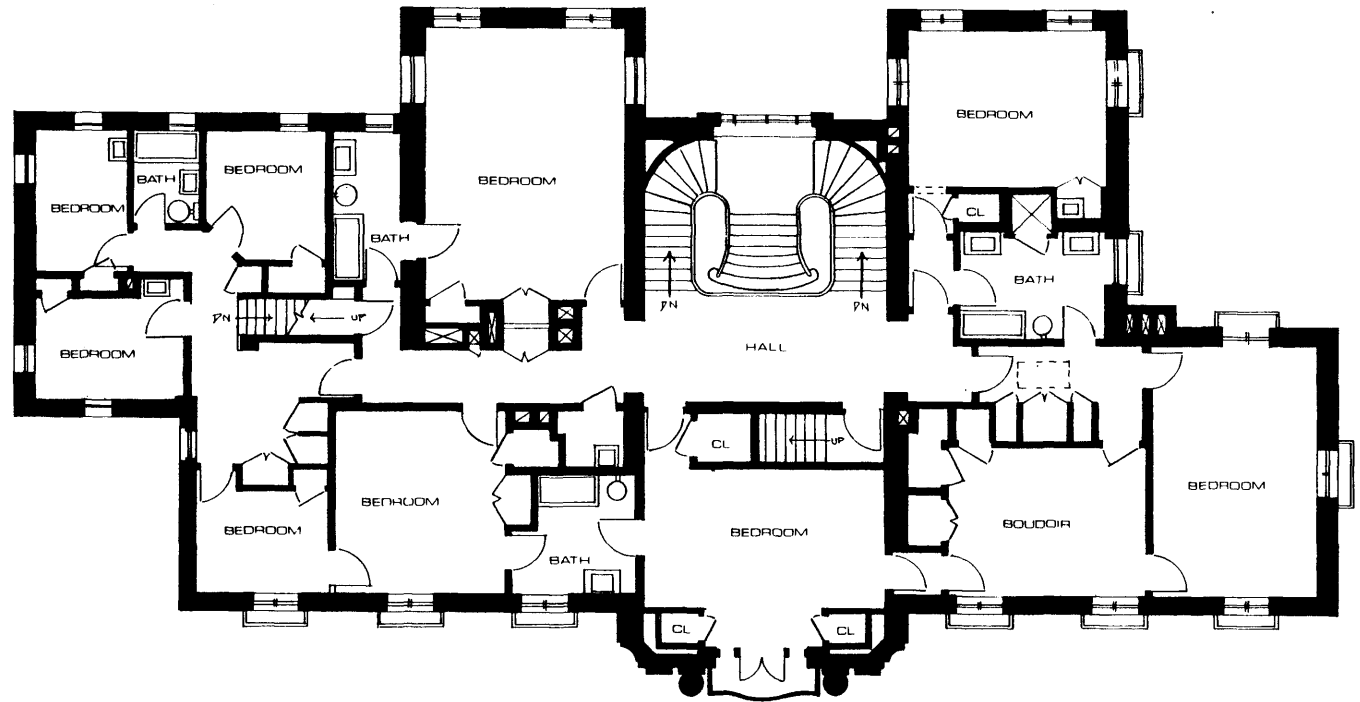
FIRST FLOOR  
 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

## The Herman Uihlein House

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Whitefish Bay, Milwaukee Co., Wi.

Architects: Kirchoff & Rose (1919)



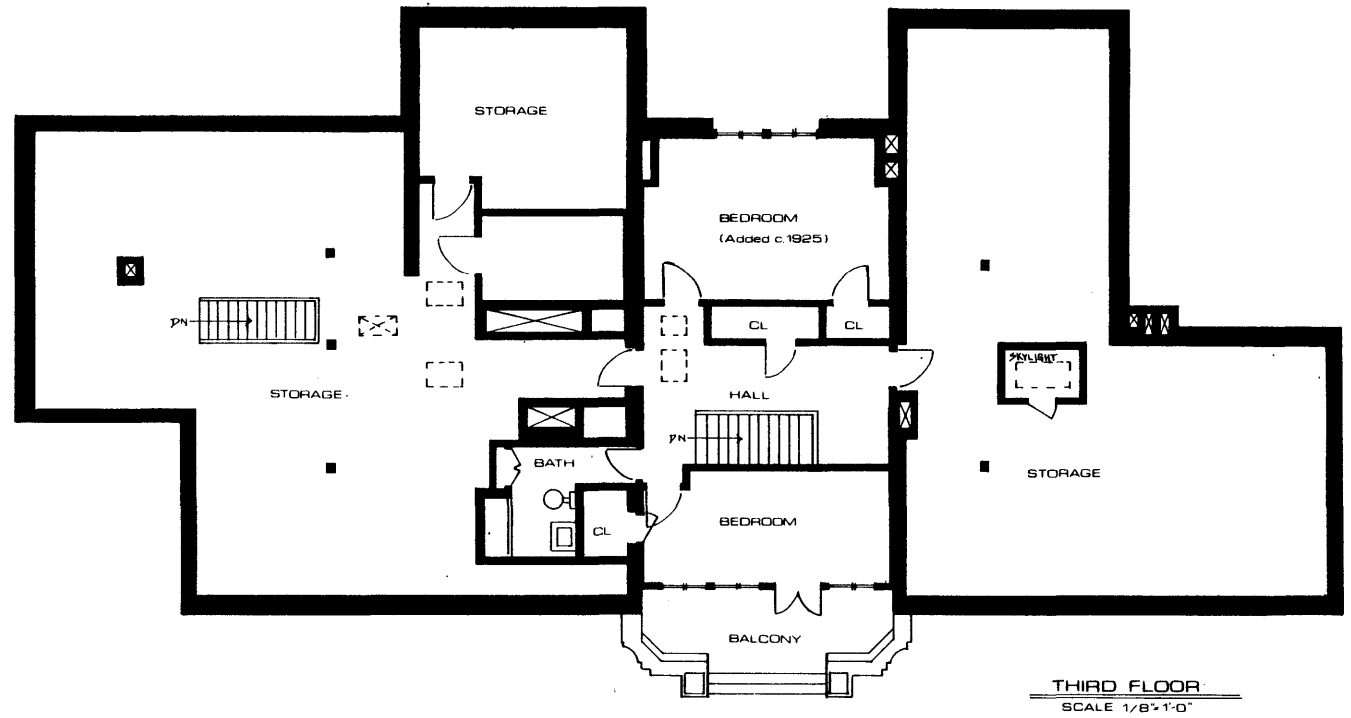
SECOND FLOOR  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

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