

HAYT FARMSTEAD, MANSION
Route 311
Patterson
Putnam County
New York

HABS No. NY-6300-A

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NY,
40-PAT,
2-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HAYT FARMSTEAD, ~~Hayt Mansion, Building A~~ HABS NO. NY-6300-A

LOCATION: Route 311, Patterson, Putnam County, New York

PRESENT OWNER: Rosebud Development, Inc., Cornwall Hill Road,
Patterson, New York

PRESENT USE: Vacant

STATEMENT OF

SIGNIFICANCE: The Hayt mansion is a distinguished example of Italian Villa design, constructed in the late 1850s. The informal, asymmetrical massing is a primary characteristic of Victorian architecture in the picturesque mode, the Italianate details fully representative of the architectural fashions of the period. The house was constructed as part of a rural estate developed by James R. Hayt, a New York City businessman, as his place of residence upon retirement, and remained in the Hayt family until 1920.

I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: Initial development of this property as a rural estate is attributed to James R. Hayt and estimated to have taken place between 1852, when he first purchased the property, and 1860, at which date he was recorded as residing in Patterson. The original construction of the house is thus estimated to have occurred between those years.

2. Architect: Not Known.

3. Builder, Contractor Suppliers: Not known.

4. Original Plans and Construction: No original plans or early views have been located for this property.

5. Alterations and Additions: The two-story kitchen section at the southwest corner of the house was built under the occupancy of James R. Hayt's son, Ezra, sometime between 1875 and 1894. Other alterations, the dates of which are not known, include installation of electricity and modern plumbing systems.

II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

1. Architectural Character: The Hayt mansion is a large frame dwelling in the Italian Villa style, with dressed stone foundation and exterior walls clad in horizontal flush boarding. Major exterior features include round-arched windows, bracketed, overhanging eaves, and narrow lozenge-shaped lights set in the wide frieze to illuminate the attic. The facade is dominated by a full-height projecting pavilion flanked by porches with bracketed eaves and posts. Crowning the asymmetrically-massed house is an octagonal belvedere which, in addition to offering an excellent view of the surrounding area, serves as a skylight for the interior dome over the main staircase. Other notable interior features include marble Italianate-style mantelpieces, plaster cove moldings and hallway arches with foliate brackets.

2. Condition of Fabric: The house is in good structural condition; however, it has been vacant for several years and exhibits deterioration from lack of maintenance and from vandalism.

B. Description of Exterior

1. Overall Dimensions: The house is asymmetrically massed, measuring roughly 60 feet east-west and 55 feet north-south. It has two full stories above the basement, plus a partially finished attic and rooftop belvedere. A large two-story flat-roofed kitchen section, filling in the southwest corner of the structure, was added after original construction.

2. Foundations: The foundation, encompassing a partial basement, is constructed of rubble granite. The exterior of the foundation above grade level is faced with dressed gray granite blocks with tooled margins and pointed finish.

3. Walls: The exterior is clad with horizontal matchboard approximately 3" wide, except for the south wall of the kitchen section, which is clapboarded. Most of the corners have beaded corner boards.

4. Structural System: The house is of braced frame construction, with sawed members and brick nogging. The principal members exhibit pegged mortise-and-tenon joining. The only visible floor systems are those viewable within the basement; these consist of 3" x 9-1/2" joists, 16 inches on center, mortised into a center beam oriented perpendicular to the plane of the facade. The roof is framed with sawed members with mortise-and-tenon joining. The flat-roofed sections are carried on vertical posts set on timber spread-footers to distribute the load. The gable-roofed section features sawed rafters butted against a large plank ridgeboard and stiffened with nailed collars.

5. Porches: The two principal porches are located on the main (north) elevation, flanking a projecting gabled pavilion. Both have 4" tongue-in-groove flooring, flat roofs, projecting molded cornices with small scroll brackets, square posts with open-spandrel brackets, and low railings with turned balusters. On the east end of the south elevation is a hipped-roofed sun porch, extensively glazed with 9/9 double-hung sash on the east and 15/15 double-hung sash on the south. The windows are carried between square posts with simple cyma caps, and the narrow cornice is ornamented with small scroll brackets. A second porch, toward the center of the south elevation, has a hipped roof, square post and molded fascia. At the east end of the south elevation is a third porch, with hipped roof.

6. Chimneys: There are five chimneys, rising from stone foundations and emerging from the roofs as rectangular brick stacks with corbelled caps. They are painted red with white trim. One is located toward the center of the roof; two in the

southeast portion of the roof; one toward the northwest portion of the roof; and the last near the southwest corner.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and Doors: See sketch plans for location of entrances to the house. The principal entrance is located on the north elevation, east of the projecting pavilion. It is framed by a strongly-molded architrave and has two double-leaf doors. The outer "storm" doors are of wood, with tall round-arched windows, the lower portions of which are fitted with wooden lattice. The inner doors also have tall round-arched windows, and modern brass knobs. Between the pairs of doors is a sliding pocket door fitted into the wall east of the entrance.

Two entrances from the west front porch are framed with strongly-molded architraves and fitted with two pairs of 8-light French doors. The outer transom lights have round-arched heads, while the inner transom lights are rectangular. Secondary entrances in the south side feature molded architraves, two-light transom panels, and wooden doors with four vertical panels.

b. Windows and Shutters: Windows in the library, parlor and dining room (see sketch plans) are paired 1/1 double-hung sash with round-arched heads. The library and parlor windows also feature 4/4 exterior storm windows. In the original portion of the house, remaining windows on the first floor and all second floor windows are 2/2 double-hung sash in which both lights of the upper sash have round arches. All windows in the original portion of the house are set in simple, but strongly-articulated surrounds with projecting molded cornices. Many are still fitted with round-arched louvred wooden shutters secured with flat scroll-shaped holdbacks at the outer bottom corners. The kitchen section in the southwest corner of the house has 6/6 double-hung sash windows in simpler, rectangular surrounds, plus louvred wooden shutters. The attic level is illuminated by narrow horizontal lights with rounded ends, set into the frieze.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: Roofs of the original portion of the house are flat, but sloped at the outer edges to end in wide, flaring eaves with molded fascia. The projecting pavilion at the north elevation has a shallow gable roof, and the roof of the southeast kitchen addition is completely flat. All roofs are covered with rolled asphalt or asphalt shingles.

b. Cornice, eaves: The soffits of the broadly overhanging eaves are ornamented with simple scroll brackets. The broad

frieze is set off by a narrow molding, and pierced at regular intervals by narrow attic windows.

c. Belvedere: An octagonal belvedere is positioned on the roof slightly to the east of the projecting pavilion. A short conical roof flares to the horizontal at the eaves, which are embellished with large scroll brackets at each corner. Each of the eight sides has 2/2 double-hung sash, with round-arched upper lights. The roof culminates in a simple copper finial.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor Plans: See sketch floor plans for arrangement of rooms. The first floor is arranged in three "zones," consisting of main hall and principal rooms (library, parlor and dining room) in the east half; a secondary hall with associated rooms in the northwest corner; and kitchen/servants area in the southwest corner. The basement area lies beneath the first and third zones: beneath the northwest portion there is only a crawl space.

The "zone" comprising rooms and halls in the northwest portion of the house is only indirectly accessible from the remainder of the building. However, unlike servants' quarters, which are readily identified by location over the kitchen, narrow back stairs and modest architectural finishes, the northwest spaces contain features and finishes identical to those found in the eastern portion of the house. These factors suggest that the northwest portion of the house was originally constructed as an "apartment" for James R. Hayt's parents-in-law, Ezra and Abigail Ayers, who at that time were in their eighth decade.

2. Stairways: Stairways are positioned at four locations, for which see sketch plans. The principal stair, rising along the east wall of the main hall, curves toward the top to the second story hall. This stair has a shaped railing, turned balusters, turned newel with circular flattened cap, and stair ends ornamented with narrow moldings and flat scroll-sawed applied elements, the latter of which are carried around the fascia formed by the edges of the second floor around the stairwell. The secondary stair, in the northwest portion of the house, has a quarter-turn with landing, and features the same railing, balusters and newel, but lacks stair-end ornament. The third, servants', stair, off the west end of the kitchen, is an enclosed structure with winders. Beneath it is a short flight of steps to the basement. The fourth stair is an enclosed flight leading from the second floor hall to the attic.

3. Flooring: The library and dining room have parquet flooring consisting of one-foot squares each containing nine strips, each square laid so that the strips are perpendicular to

those of adjacent squares. The main hall, parlor, secondary hall, and two first-floor rooms in the northwest corner have 1-1/2" tongue-in-groove flooring laid on the diagonal. The hall between the kitchen and dining room has black and white square linoleum tiles, the kitchen red and white square linoleum tiles. The floors of the pantry and laundry room are covered with black and white ceramic tile in a basketweave pattern.

On the second floor, the main hall is covered with wood-grained linoleum. The floor of bedroom #1 is covered with red wall-to-wall shag carpeting, that of bedroom #3 with dark blue linoleum, and that of bedroom #5 with wood-grained linoleum. The remaining bedrooms in the original portion of the house, as well as bedroom #7 in the servants' area above the kitchen, have floors covered with a "parquet" fashioned from six-sided pieces of tan, brown and red-brown canvas glued onto a burlap-like backing. Bedroom #6, also in the servants' area, has linoleum flooring consisting of wood-grained squares.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The primary wall and ceiling finish is painted plaster on lathe. The main hall, secondary hall, all principal first floor rooms and all bedrooms except the servants' bedrooms have run-in-place plaster cove moldings which vary in width depending upon the importance of the room but not in essential detail. The main hall, parlor, dining room and library also feature 3-foot dados formed by placement of a bold torus molding or chair rail above the baseboards. The principal spaces on the first floor appear to have been painted a light blue with cream or ivory trim. This color scheme appears to have also been used for the second floor hall. The bedrooms exhibit more variety: #1 and #5 have pale blue walls with white ceiling and trim; #2 and #6 pink walls with white ceiling and trim; #3 and #8 yellow walls with white ceiling and trim. Bedroom #4 and its associated dressing room are finished with a boldly-patterned floral paper featuring dark red, blue and gold flowers and swags. Bathrooms #1 and #2 have cream or ivory walls above black and white floor and ceiling tile.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: Treatment of these features is fairly consistent throughout the house. Openings are framed with strongly-molded but simple architraves. Doors have four vertical slightly recessed panels, each edged with a simple bolection molding. Most are fitted with iron box locks with brown or white porcelain knobs, and white porcelain covers with a stylized foliate design over brass keyhole plates. In the dining room, two French doors open onto the sunroom directly to the south. These doors are fitted with full-length paneled folding shutters with porcelain knobs.

b. Windows: Windows are set in simple molded frames and commonly have recessed panels below the sills or built-in wooden radiator covers with paneled ends. The windows in the northwest room on the first floor are also fitted with paneled sliding pocket shutters pierced with four circular openings along the top for illumination. The windows of the room directly above this have interior casement "storm" windows. The library windows, as well as the east window of the dining room, are fitted with paneled folding shutters.

There are, in addition to the windows, three other sources of natural illumination. The floor of the belvedere contains a circular skylight, with two semicircular pebble-glass windows which can be replaced by a circular screen for ventilation. This skylight illuminates the central portion of the east half of the house, as it is positioned atop an interior dome (see below) directly above the main stair. The secondary stair in the northwest portion of the house is also illuminated from above, by a rectangular skylight with paneled reveals. This skylight receives its illumination from another skylight set into the roof directly above it. The third skylight is positioned above the small vestibule between the pantry and the door to the cistern "well."

c. Decorative features and trim: All principal first floor rooms and all but the servants' bedrooms on the second floor contain marble mantelpieces with round-arched openings, keystones, paneled spandrels and shaped shelves. Colors are primarily gray, white, and mottled gray-white, except for the mantelpiece in the library, which is a mottled yellow-brown. These mantelpieces may have originally framed coal grates; most, however, have been filled in and all have cast-iron cover plates.

Decorative archways occur at three locations in the house: off the east side of the main hall, and at the north and south ends of the second floor main hall. The arch on the first floor is elliptical, with paneled soffit and plaster acanthus-leaf brackets. The second floor arches are round, and have similar, although smaller, plaster brackets.

A circular interior dome, divided into quadrants by applied moldings, is positioned above the main stair. The lower edge of the dome is ornamented with a narrow acanthus molding. The lantern above the dome opens into the floor of the belvedere, where it is edged by a simple railing. Built into the curved wall near the top of the main stair, below the dome, is a round-arched niche of a size appropriate for the placement of statuary.

The library contains built-in floor-to-ceiling bookshelves framing the window in the east wall, and half-height bookshelves

are present on the west wall of the room immediately west of the parlor. In both instances, the bottom two shelves are enclosed within paneled doors. The dining room also contains built-in shelving, positioned to either side of the window in the east wall. These shelves have elliptical-arched tops, and paneled doors enclosing the lower two shelves. Centered in the north wall of the dining room is a deep, elliptical-arched recess framed with a simple molding.

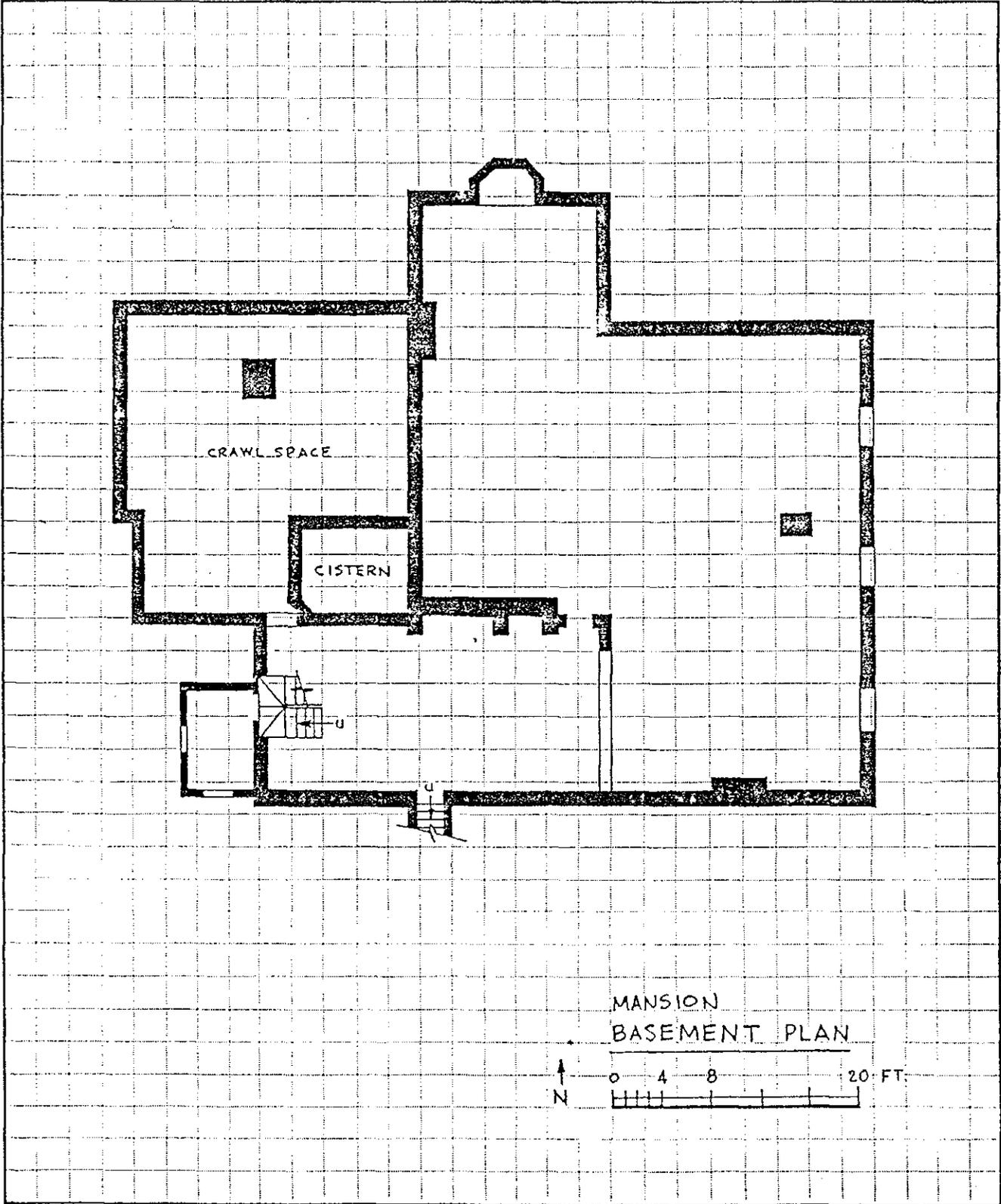
7. Mechanical Equipment

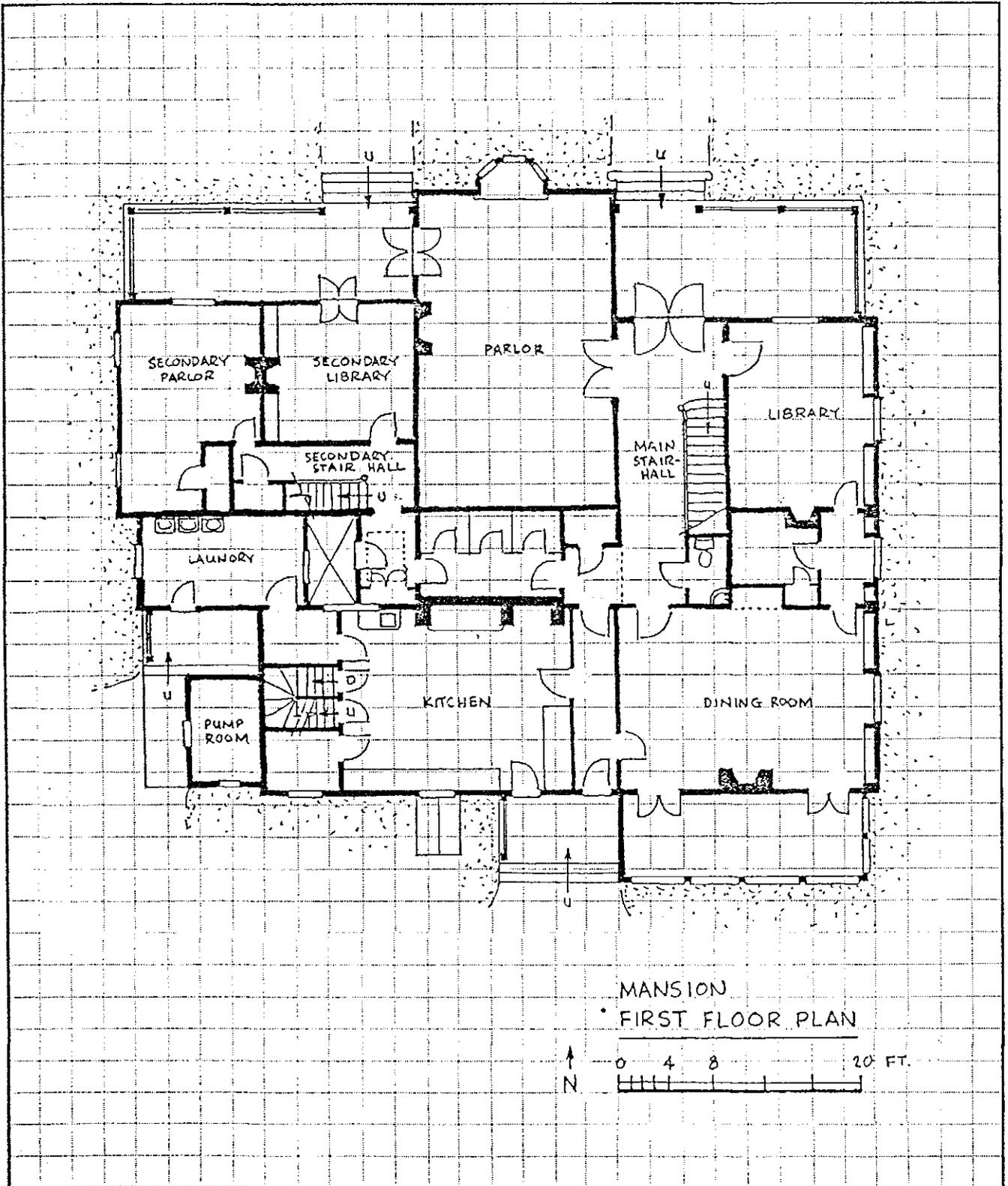
a. Heating: Given the presence of carefully built-in wooden covers over floor-mounted radiators, it appears that the house may have originally been heated by a circulating hot water system, subsequently augmented by free-standing floor-mounted radiators with a cast foliate motif. Coal fires may have also been used to supplement the central heating system on a room-by-room basis. In addition, the kitchen contains a built-in cast iron wood burning cookstove bearing a plate reading "Richardson & Boynton Co. 'perfect' Wood Cookstove, 114-E."

b. Lighting: Nearly all light fixtures have been removed. Most rooms, however, appear to have had one fixture mounted on the ceiling at the center. Wall-mounted fixtures appear to have been present in the dining room, parlor and northwest room on the first floor, supplemented by moveable lamps supplied with electricity from baseboard outlets. The three major light fixtures remaining in the house are located in the first and second floor stairhalls and in bedroom #6. The first floor fixture, positioned over the foot of the main stair, has five bulb sockets suspended beneath brass caps from a ring hung on a chain from the ceiling. The second floor hall fixture, positioned at the north end of the hall, has an acorn-shaped white glass globe. The remaining bedroom fixture consists of three foliate brass arms suspended from a chain.

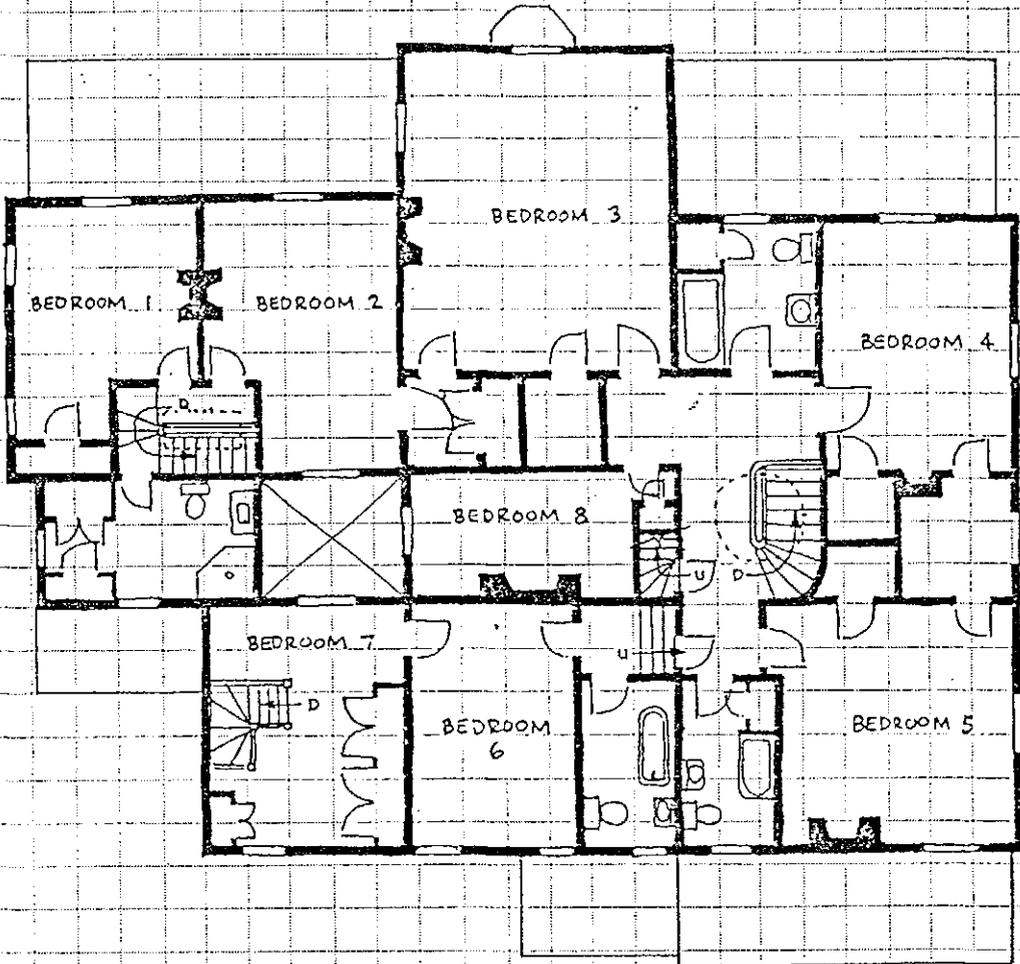
III. PROJECT INFORMATION

Prepared by: M.H. Bowers
Architectural Historian
Louis Berger & Associates, Inc.
February 1989





MANSION
• FIRST FLOOR PLAN



MANSION
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

