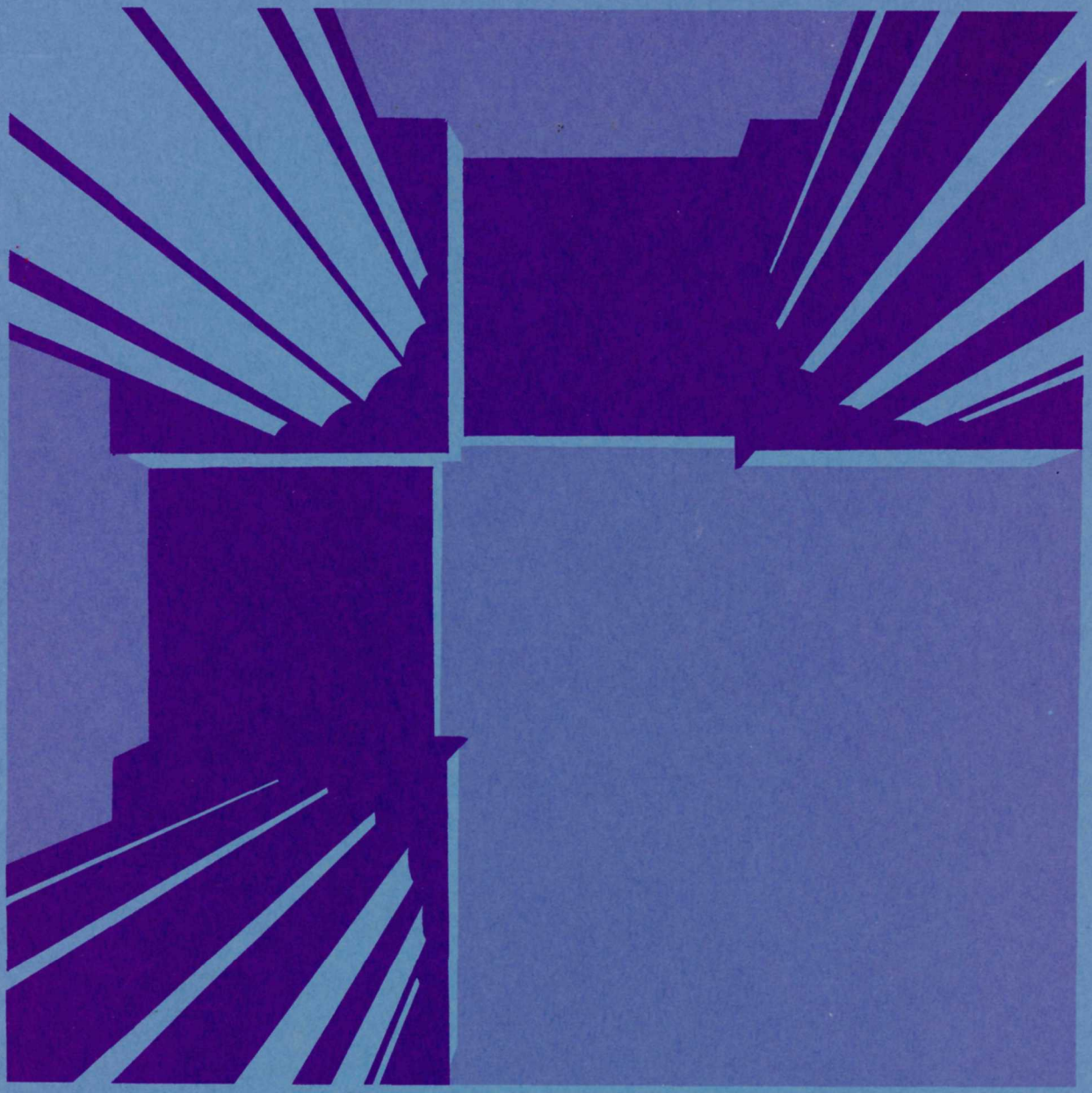

DOCUMENTING A LEGACY

40 YEARS OF THE HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, NOVEMBER 1, 1973 - JANUARY 31, 1974

Graceful arcs of red granite paving stones at the intersection of M and Bank Streets in Georgetown, Washington, D.C. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Sept. 1969. DC–252

Documenting a Legacy

40 Years of the Historic American Buildings Survey

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Documenting a legacy.

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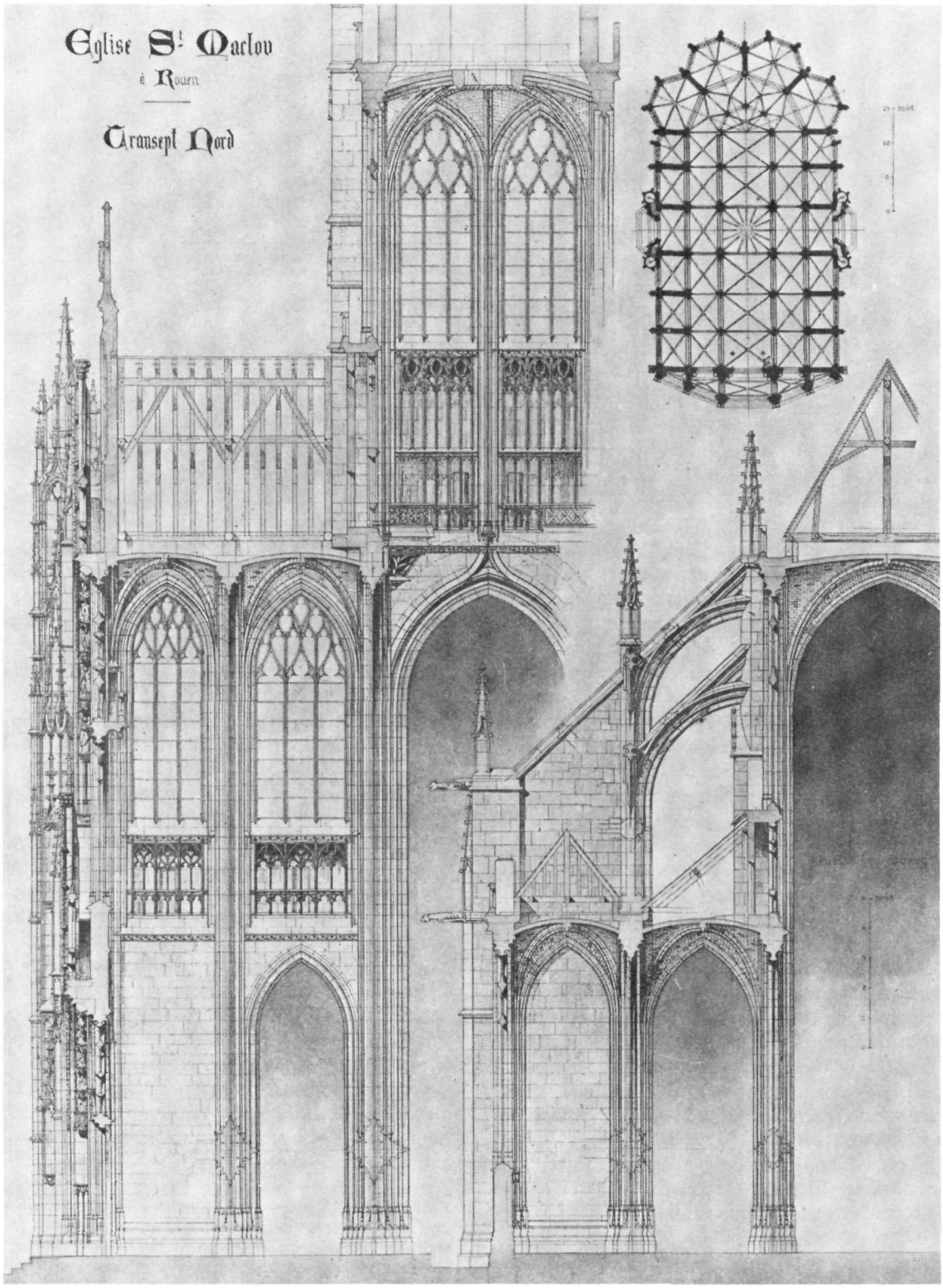
The Clinton Avenue Historic District in Kingston, N.Y., was recorded in 1972. NY–5561, sheet 2

Out of times of social turmoil have come two of the Western world's most active programs for the documentary recording of historic structures. As early as 1793 the Revolutionary Convention expressed concern for France's historic monuments by establishing a Commission temporaire des arts which attempted to call a halt to the widespread neglect and destruction caused by revolutionary fervor and iconoclasm. However, it was not until after the July Revolution of 1830 that effective steps were taken to implement an inventory program which included both preservation and restoration. The Ministry of Education under François Guizot created the post of inspector general of historic monuments. Finally, in 1837, it was realized that this "one-man" concept was inadequate and the inspector general was replaced by a Commission des monuments historiques, the agency which still today has the primary responsibility for the restoration and care of France's historic monuments. An integral part of the work of this commission and its professional staff has been the creation of an archival collection which is now one of the largest collections of architectural records in the world.

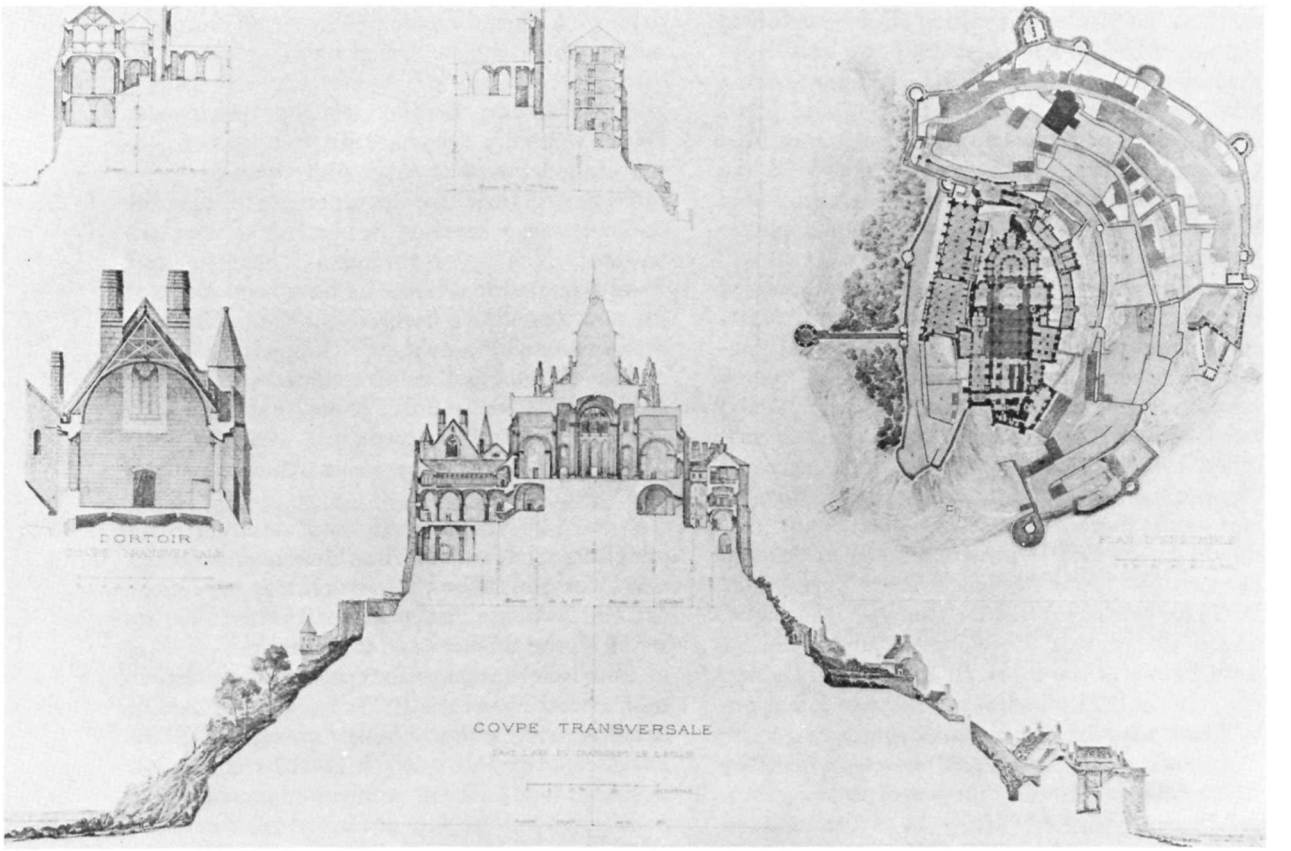
Created approximately a century later, and paralleling these developments in France, the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was formed in response to the grave economic and social problems of the Depression. Although the Survey was initially conceived as a federal relief program to employ architects, the measured drawings and photographs that were produced by these professionals form the nucleus of a national archives of historic architecture. Based in part on the precedent of the Pictorial Archives of Early American Architecture—a pioneering attempt financed by the Carnegie Foundation beginning in 1930—HABS was formally organized in 1933 as a cooperative effort of the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects (AIA). The National Park Service administers the program through its Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C.; the Library of Congress cares for the collection and arranges for its use by the public; and the American Institute of Architects serves in an advisory capacity, particularly through its Committee on Historic Resources.

HABS is now 40 years old. Measured drawings still form the nucleus of its collections. This type of recording, however, now is carried on through a system of summer student projects. Every summer, eight or more teams are sent into the field; each consists of a supervisor, a project historian, and three or four draftsmen. These are generally

This report was prepared by members of the Survey's staff: John Poppeliers, chief; Allen Chambers, Jr., architectural historian; Caroline R. Heath, curator; Ursula M. Theobald, architectural historian; and Rodd L. Wheaton, architect.


Eglise St. Maclou
à Rouen
Transept Nord

The Church of St. Maclou at Rouen (left) and the Abbey of Mont St. Michel (below), drawn for the French Commission des monuments historiques. From John V. Van Pelt, Selected Monuments of French Gothic Architecture (*New York: Pencil Points Press, 1924*).



university personnel: the supervisor being a professor of architecture; the historian, a doctoral candidate in architectural history; and the draftsmen, architectural students. Projects vary considerably in scope. Most deal with a particular geographic entity which has a concentration of historic buildings; others are organized on a thematic basis. Upon the completion of a summer project, the records are edited in the Washington office of the National Park Service and transmitted to the Library of Congress, where they become part of the permanent archival collection of the Prints and Photographs Division.

Five years ago, the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Library of Congress sponsored a joint exhibition entitled "Preservation Through Documentation." Held in conjunction with the Survey's 35th anniversary, this retrospective exhibition stressed the various activities of HABS and highlighted the new directions in which the Survey was proceeding. The accompanying catalog (printed in the October 1968 issue of the *Quarterly Journal*) emphasized that HABS had already recorded 13,000 structures with 30,000 measured drawings, 40,000 photographs, and 10,000 data pages and had thus com-

pleted its formative period. HABS was then on the threshold of investigating new methods of archival preservation and management and beginning to develop new methods of recording.

One of the first steps in implementing these new techniques has been the improvement of the archival permanency of the materials transmitted to the Library. Issued to summer teams as early as 1966, plastic drafting film—considered indestructible—is now used almost exclusively for measured drawings. Since 1969 HABS has used a permanent, durable archival bond typing paper for the data pages accompanying the measured drawings. This paper, prepared for high folding endurance and tear resistance, has an estimated life of 300 years. It is now used for all photo-data books transmitted to the Library.

Traditionally, HABS records have documented individual monuments of historic and architectural importance. Growing environmental concern, however, has suggested that the Survey reevaluate this narrow—though still useful and valid—concept. The relation of buildings to each other, the placement, character, and design of features such as fences, landscapes, street furnishings, and thoroughfares are all subjects that should be studied if preservation is to develop beyond the "historic-house museum" syndrome. In 1970, a historic district study on Nantucket traced the physical development and architectural history of the town. In 1971, Coral Gables, Fla., and in 1972, the Stockade area of Kingston, N.Y., were recorded in a similar manner.

Another new "technique" is exemplified by the ambitious recording project of the Lee family home, Stratford Hall, in Westmoreland County, Va., which includes 34 sheets of measured drawings, 139 photographs, and 13 data pages. Supplementing the basic set of measured drawings, a second annotated set provides a detailed historic record of all alterations, additions, and restorations. A similar project, begun in 1959 at Hampton (Hampton National Historic Site) in Towson, Md., includes not only the mansion but all of the 22 auxiliary structures of the plantation complex.

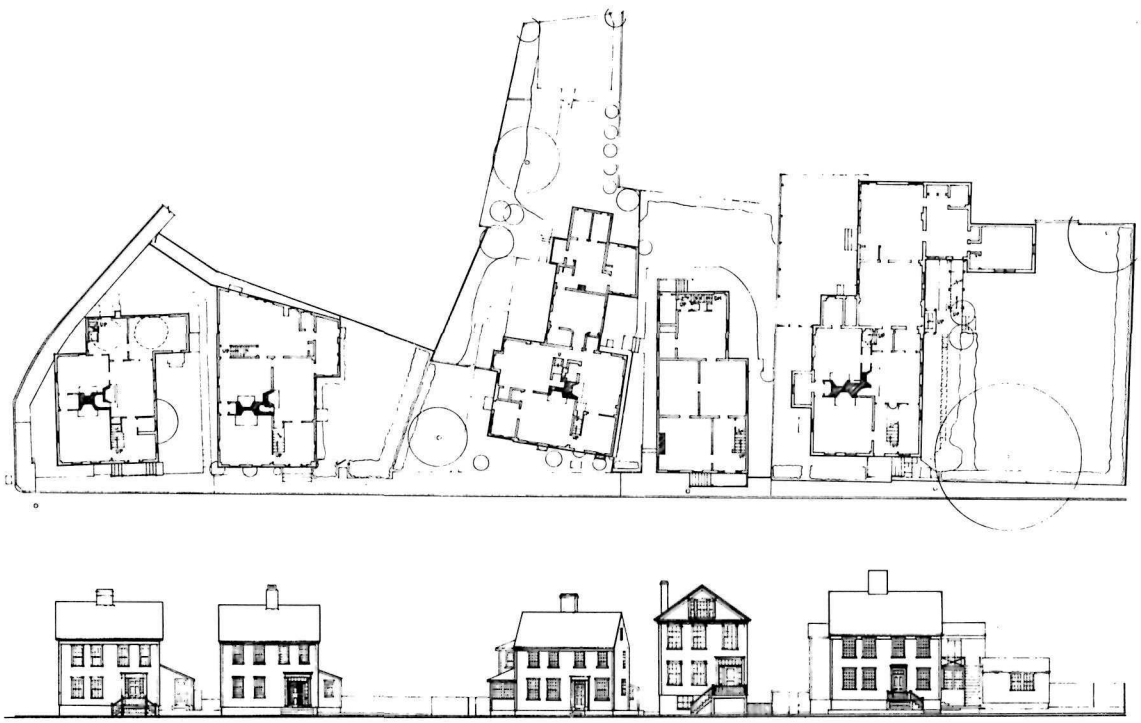
This expansion in the concept of subject has obviously necessitated the utilization—and exploration—of new and more complex recording techniques such as photogrammetry and aerial photography, which are particularly helpful in documenting historic districts and complexes, such as Fort Mifflin, in Philadelphia, which was recorded in 1969–70.

Photogrammetry is a process which uses photographs to produce accurate measured drawings. The usual method employed today is stereophotogrammetry, which uses two photographs (stereopairs) taken at successive camera stations to create a three-dimensional projected or optical model which can be scaled or measured in all directions and plotted directly from the photographs. Because of the relatively high cost, photogrammetry has generally been restricted in the United States to large and complex structures, to structures that are otherwise inaccessible or dangerous to measure by hand, or to those situations which are regarded as "emergencies." Photogrammetric stereopairs have been made of the now demolished Stock Exchange in Chicago, the threatened Wainwright Building in St. Louis, and the extant Hotel del Coronado in San Diego. During 1972, an unusual photogrammetric and aerial photography project was undertaken by Prof. Perry Borchers at several Indian pueblos in Arizona.

Color, like design, scale, and material, is an integral part of a building. Measured drawings and black-and-white photographs cannot convey the effect which the color element contributes. In 1971 the Survey started to explore the use of color photography. Except for a few water-color renderings of the 1930's from New Mexico, Arizona, and Louisiana, this represents the first use of color recording in the HABS archival collections. The lack of archival permanency in color photography has obviously been a major obstacle, and the Survey's staff photographer, Jack E. Boucher, is now evaluating several systems.

To enlarge the collection, HABS encourages donations of documents which conform to the standards outlined in the manual *Recording Historic Buildings* (1970), which was written by Prof. Harley J. McKee. This important and unique publication, now available through the Government Printing Office, will possibly be translated into Spanish for use in Latin America.

Public availability of the Survey's records has always distinguished HABS from similar archival collections in Europe. If the program is to have the impact that its originators envisioned, all



In historic district studies, HABS focuses on relationships between buildings and aspects such as the scale, rhythm, and relation of solids to voids within a street facade. Appurtenances, landscaping details, and street furniture are also featured.

The first large-scale historic district study undertaken by HABS was done on Nantucket in the summer of 1970. Among the records produced was this drawing of several houses on India Street. In addition to elevation drawings of the street facades, the sheet includes plans of the five houses and landscape features. The plans show clearly that the houses are not arranged uniformly parallel to the street, a fact that might not be immediately apparent from the elevations. MASS–1013, sheet 3

records must be readily and widely available. This concept has resulted in several publication series. The HABS catalog series started in 1934 with a single-volume national catalog; other cumulative national catalogs were published in 1935, 1938, and 1941; these were followed in 1959 by a supplement. Altogether these volumes contain entries for 7,888 structures, or less than half of the structures now recorded by the Survey. Because of the size of the collection, HABS began several years ago to issue catalogs on a state and regional basis. These generally have been published cooperatively with local governmental or private agencies. The *Utah Catalog,* one of seven published thus far, is profusely illustrated and contains an essay on the architectural history of the state in addition to the catalog entries. Publication of this catalog in 1969 was under the auspices of the Utah Heritage Foundation. A second series, known as "Selections from the Historic American Buildings Survey," was started in 1966. These volumes—which now number 15—reproduce the historical and architectural written data sheets that have been deposited in the Library and are illustrated by photographs and

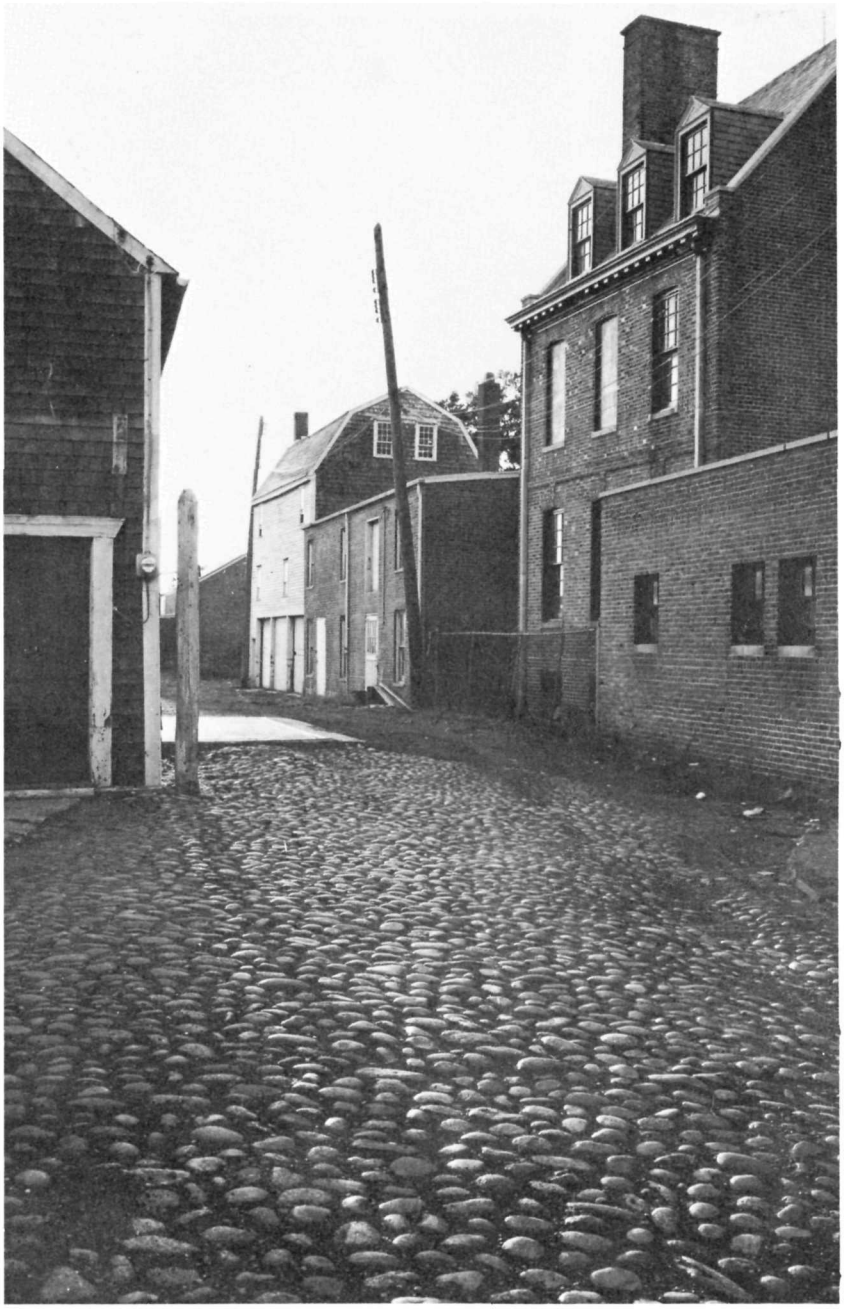
These Victorian storefronts on the Public Square in Nashville, Tenn., vary in design, but the similarities in their materials, scale, and proportions produce an overall unity. Cast iron was used for the cornices and the pilasters which divide the ground floor bays. TENN–16, sheet 3

measured drawings. They present a representative selection of the structures recorded by HABS. Frequently, these "Selections" are organized on a geographic basis and are based on a particular recording project. Future volumes, however, such as that for early 20th-century movie houses and theaters, will occasionally be thematic. Another series, of folio editions, has included the publication of HABS measured drawings, such as those which document Frank Lloyd Wright's famous Robie House in Chicago.

As a corollary to the publications program, HABS has expanded its exhibition program to assist in bringing the collection to the public. Subsequent to the 1968 Library of Congress exhibition "Preservation Through Documentation," HABS has mounted traveling displays on "The Historic Architecture and Urban Design of Nantucket" and "The Spanish Tradition in American Architecture." Current plans call for the development of similar exhibitions on both the Germanic and French traditions in American architecture and on the American Revolution, which will be the Survey's major contribution to the Bicentennial celebration.

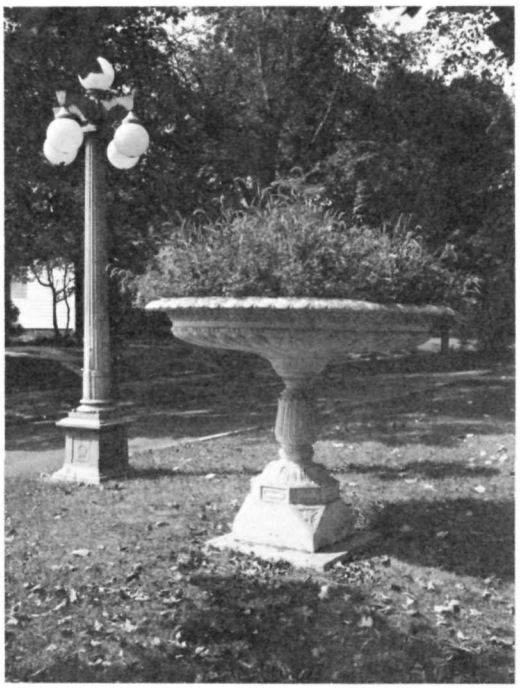
The collection has grown rapidly over the past few years, and requests for information and reproductions of material in the collection have increased so notably that the Survey is now in great need of quick and efficient retrieval methods. Investigations are currently being made to ascertain which of the various computer systems will suit these needs most effectively.

For 40 years HABS has been one of the major training grounds in the fields of historic architecture and preservation. A recently compiled "roster of HABS alumni" has indicated that perhaps 80 percent of all professionals in these fields in the United States have been associated with the Survey at one time—a remarkable record in education! Early in this century the Commission des monuments historiques in France published



Without the cobblestone paving, the quality of the surroundings of the Steven's Wharf Buildings in Newport, R.I., would be greatly diminished. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Sept. 1969. RI–304

five volumes of architectural drawings from its archives; the preface of a 1924 American edition of a selection of these published drawings commented that the authors of the drawings—men such as Viollet-le-Duc, Lassus, Rouillet, Ballu, Boeswillwald, Formige, DeBaudot, Normand, Paulin—had become famous and prominent leaders in the fields of restoration and historic architecture. This, too, is a remarkable record and a tribute to a tradition that is still being carried on and emulated in the United States by the Historic American Buildings Survey.

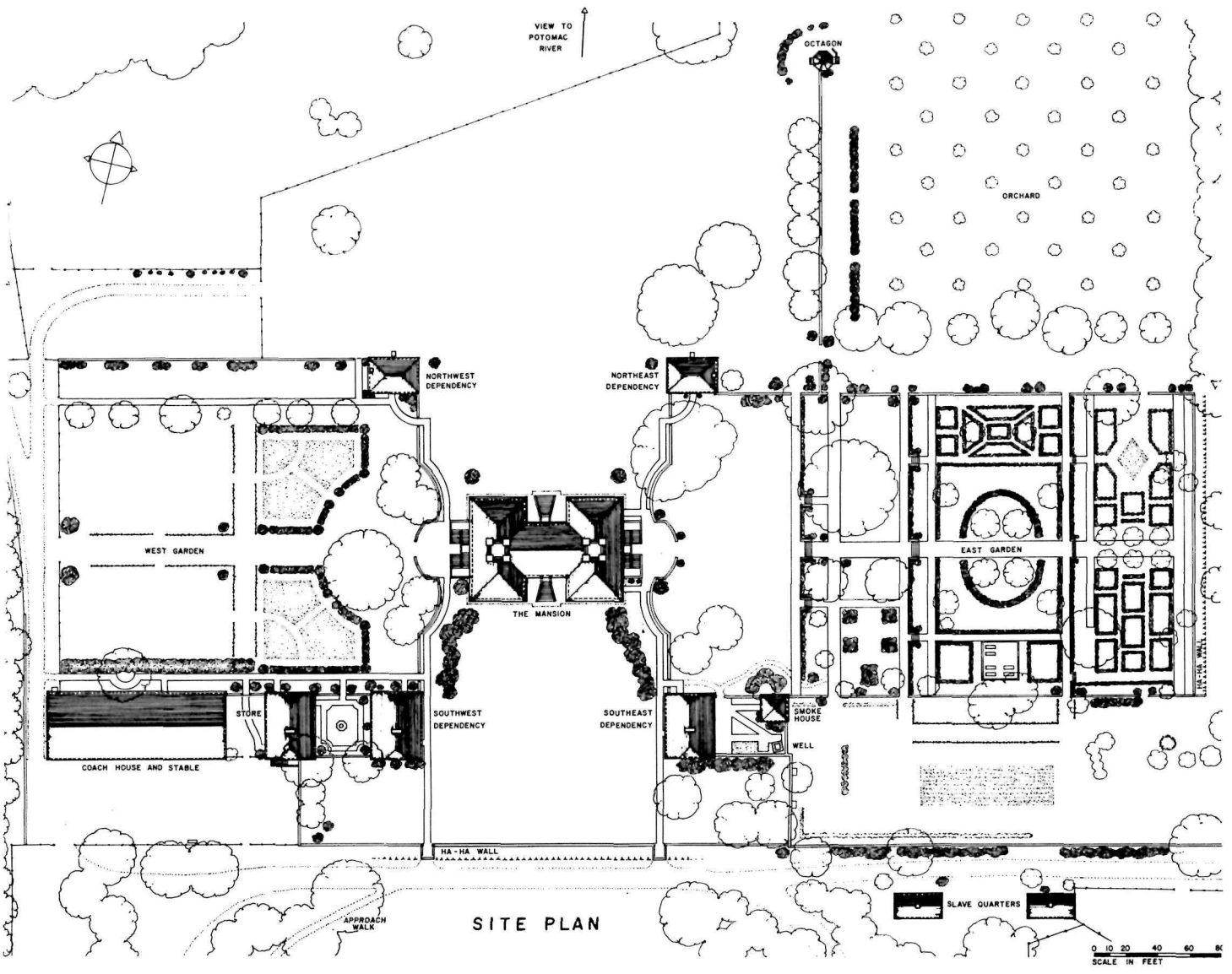


"Street furniture" includes items such as fences, fountains, lamp posts, and even pavements. These frequently unacknowledged details can lend charm and depth of character to a neighborhood, and in recent area-recording projects, HABS has emphasized such features.

This cast-iron coal chute cover (right), embellished with a stylized leaf pattern, is located on 31st Street, in Georgetown, Washington, D.C. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Sept. 1969. DC–252

Also in Georgetown is the fire department call box (above), one of many like it. The call box itself is a tabernacle set in a frame adorned with acanthus leaves, bay leaves, and berries. DC–252

Woodruff Place in Indianapolis, Ind., was platted in 1872. An early example of a planned neighborhood, it is still decorated with many of its original street furnishings, such as the planter and street lamp (above, right). Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Aug. 1970. IND–57

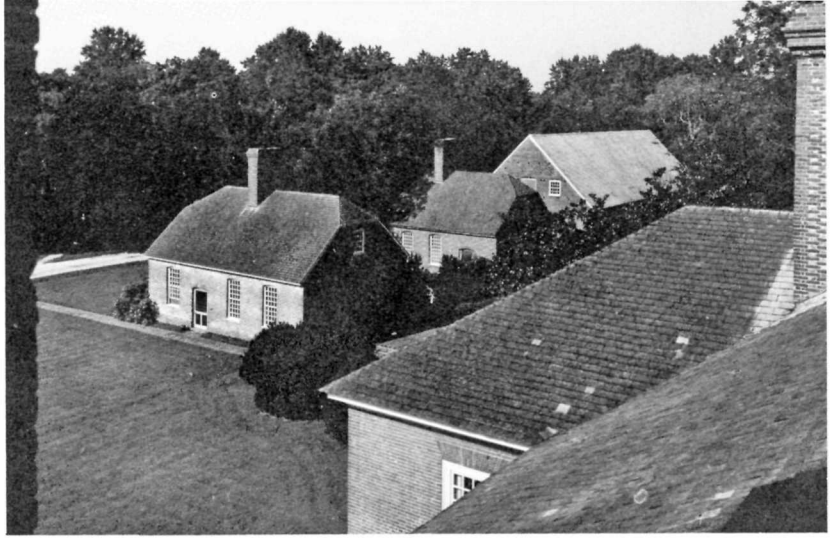


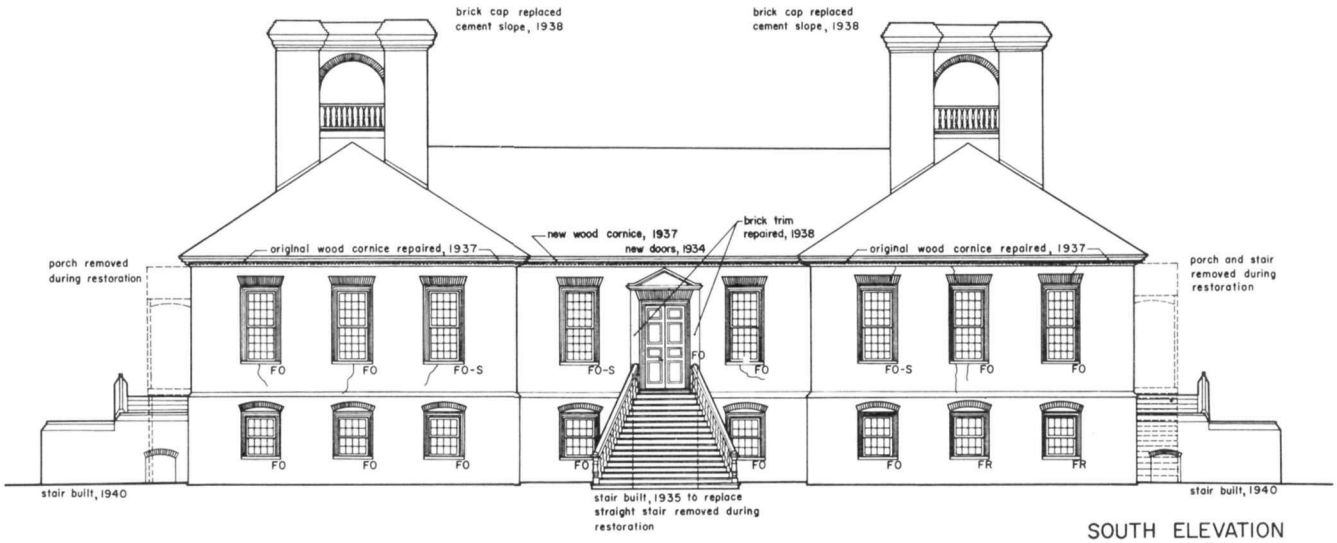
SITE PLAN

Stratford Hall, in Westmoreland County, Va., is an outstanding example of Georgian domestic architecture. Stratford was built for Thomas Lee and was completed around 1730. The interiors were remodeled in the late 18th or early 19th century by Gen. Henry (Lighthorse Harry) Lee, father of Gen. Robert E. Lee. In 1929, the house was purchased by the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation, Inc., which has restored it and opened it to the public.

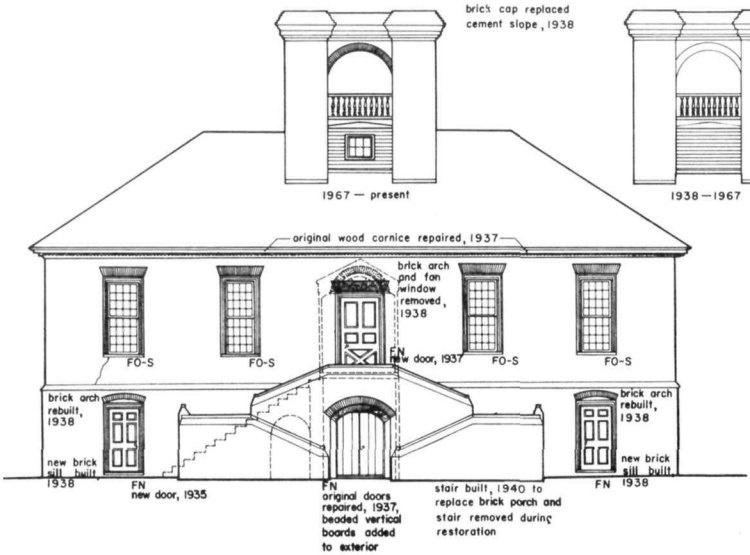
In 1969, HABS and the Lee Memorial Foundation undertook an extensive recording project of the house, its dependencies, and grounds. The study sought to record not only the complex as it stands today but also how it has changed over the years. The 34 sheets of measured drawings, 55 exterior and 82 interior photographs, and 13 data pages make Stratford Hall one of the most completely documented structures in the HABS collections.

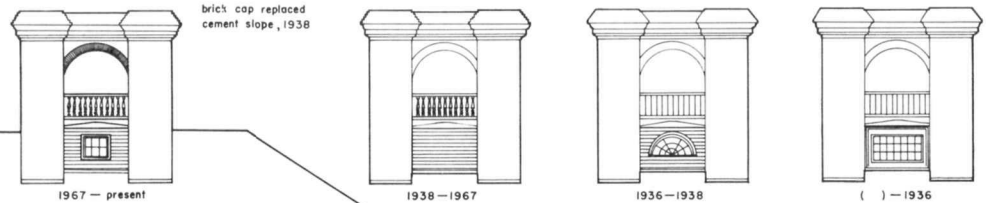
Because of the importance of the setting to the house, the relationship of the house to its dependencies, and the elaborate formal landscaping, the Stratford Hall series has a very detailed site plan. LC–DRA HABS VA–307, sheet 2





SOUTH ELEVATION





present railing constructed during this period

brick cap replaced cement slope during this period

19 century railing on platform until restoration

window changes similar on west chimney platform

FO - frame original
FR - frame repaired
FN - frame new
S - sill original — all other sills on main floor and all sills on ground floor replaced, 1934-38
all sashes on both main and ground floor replaced, 1934-38
head members of all window frames are original
all cracks in exterior masonry repaired, 1938

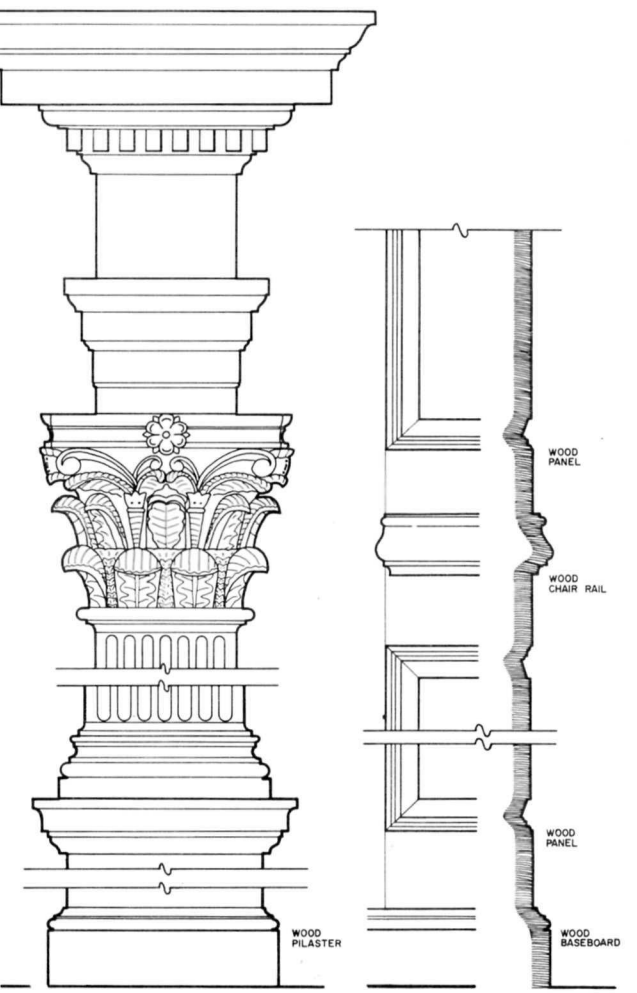
EAST ELEVATION

0 5 10 20 30
SCALE IN FEET

The Stratford plantation dependencies were carefully designed and placed to harmonize with the manor house. This view (left), from the west chimney platform of the mansion, shows the southwest dependency, the store, and the coach house and stable. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, 1969. LC–NEG HABS VA, 97– ——, 4E–4

This annotated measured drawing (left, below) of the south and east elevations of Stratford Hall records various changes and the years in which they occurred. LC–DRA HABS VA–307, sheet 30

A photograph can be a useful complement to a measured drawing, as in the case of a pilaster capital in the Great Hall at Stratford. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Aug. 1969. LC–NEG HABS VA, 97– ——, 4–40; drawing, LC–DRA HABS VA–307, sheet 23



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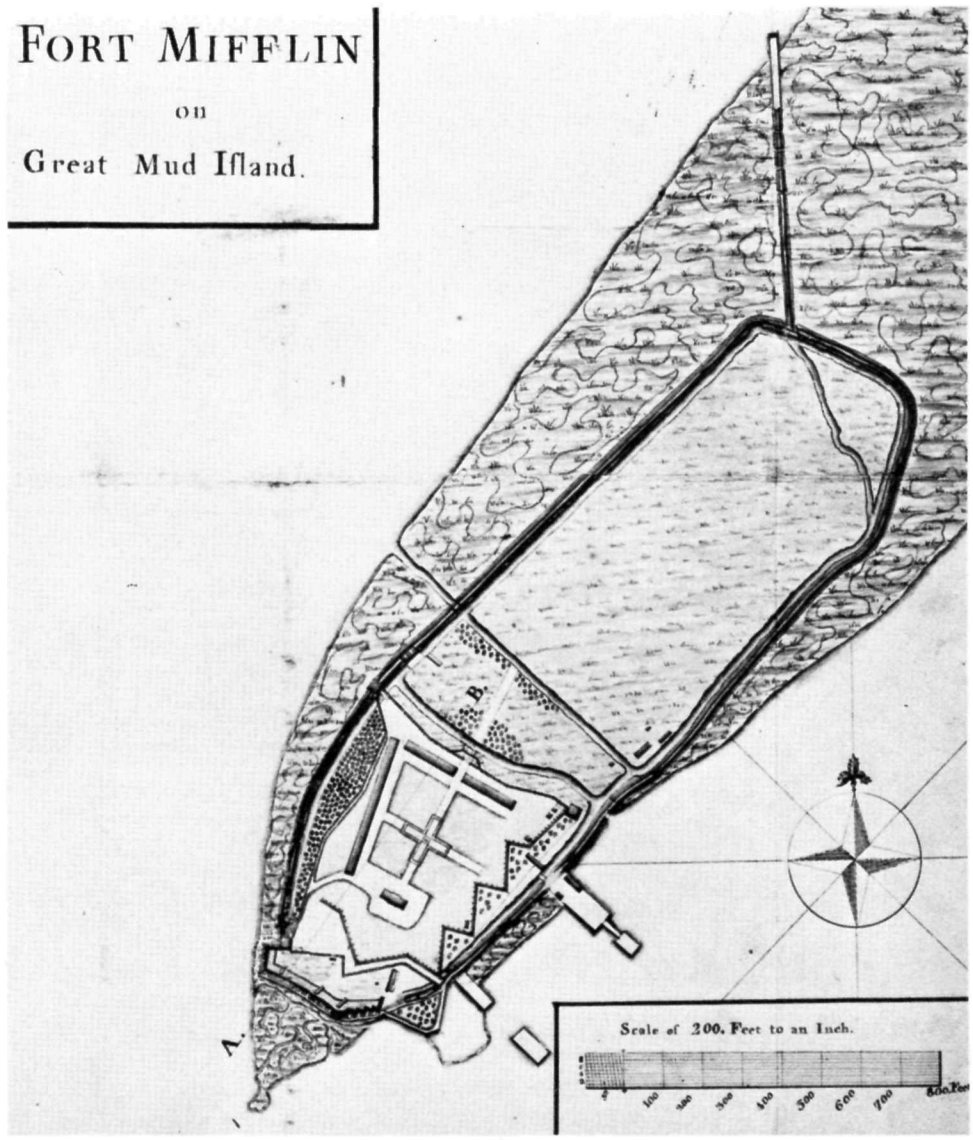
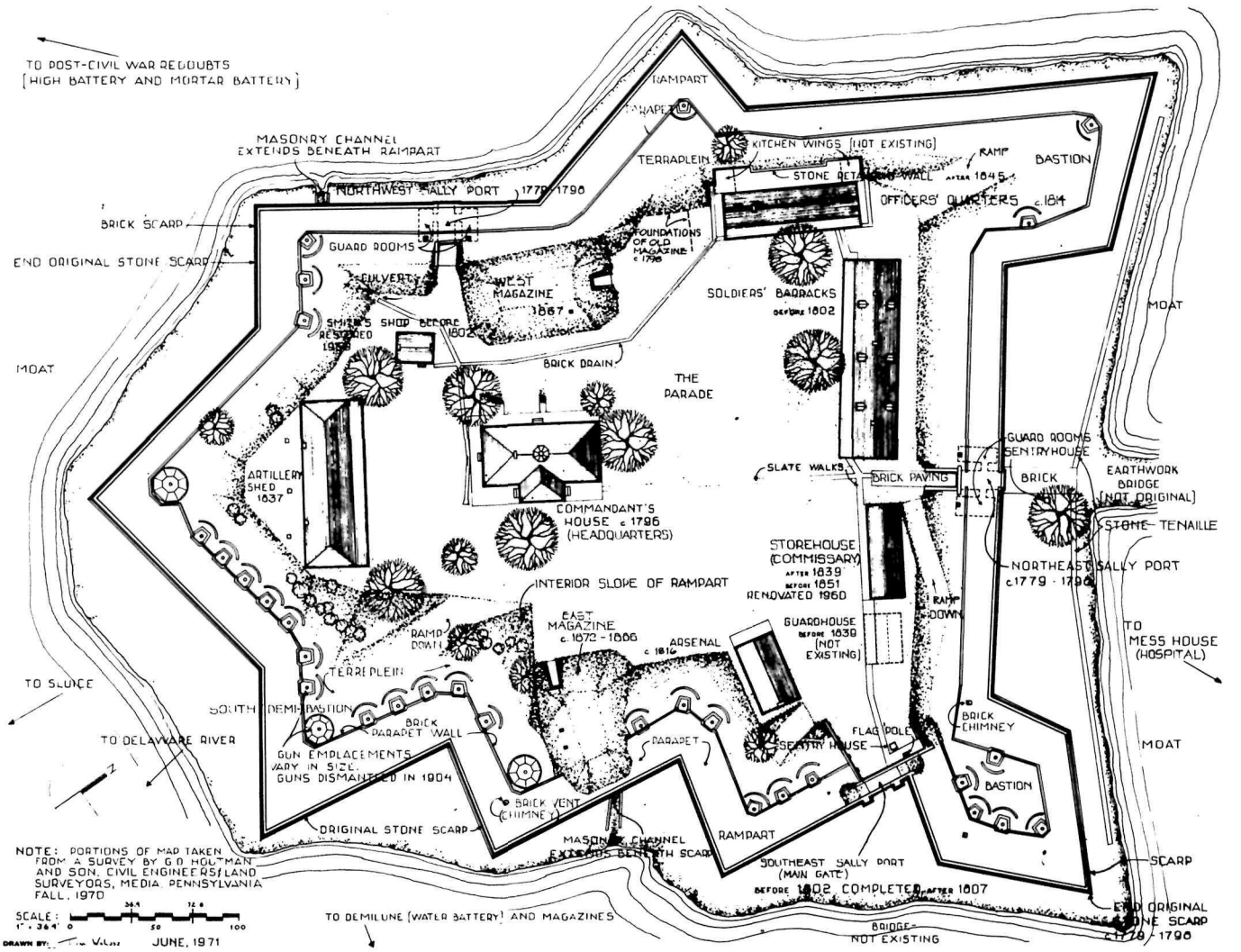
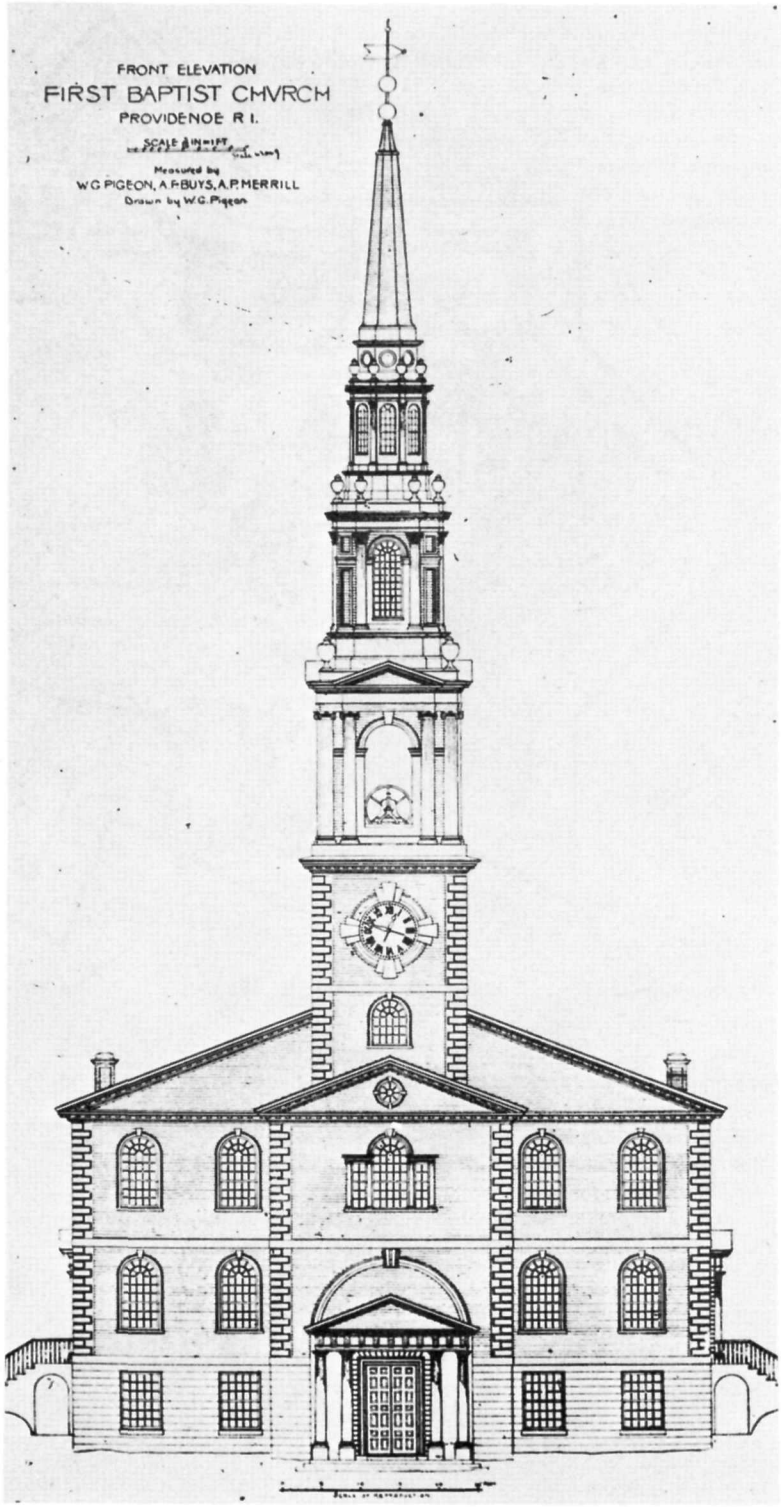
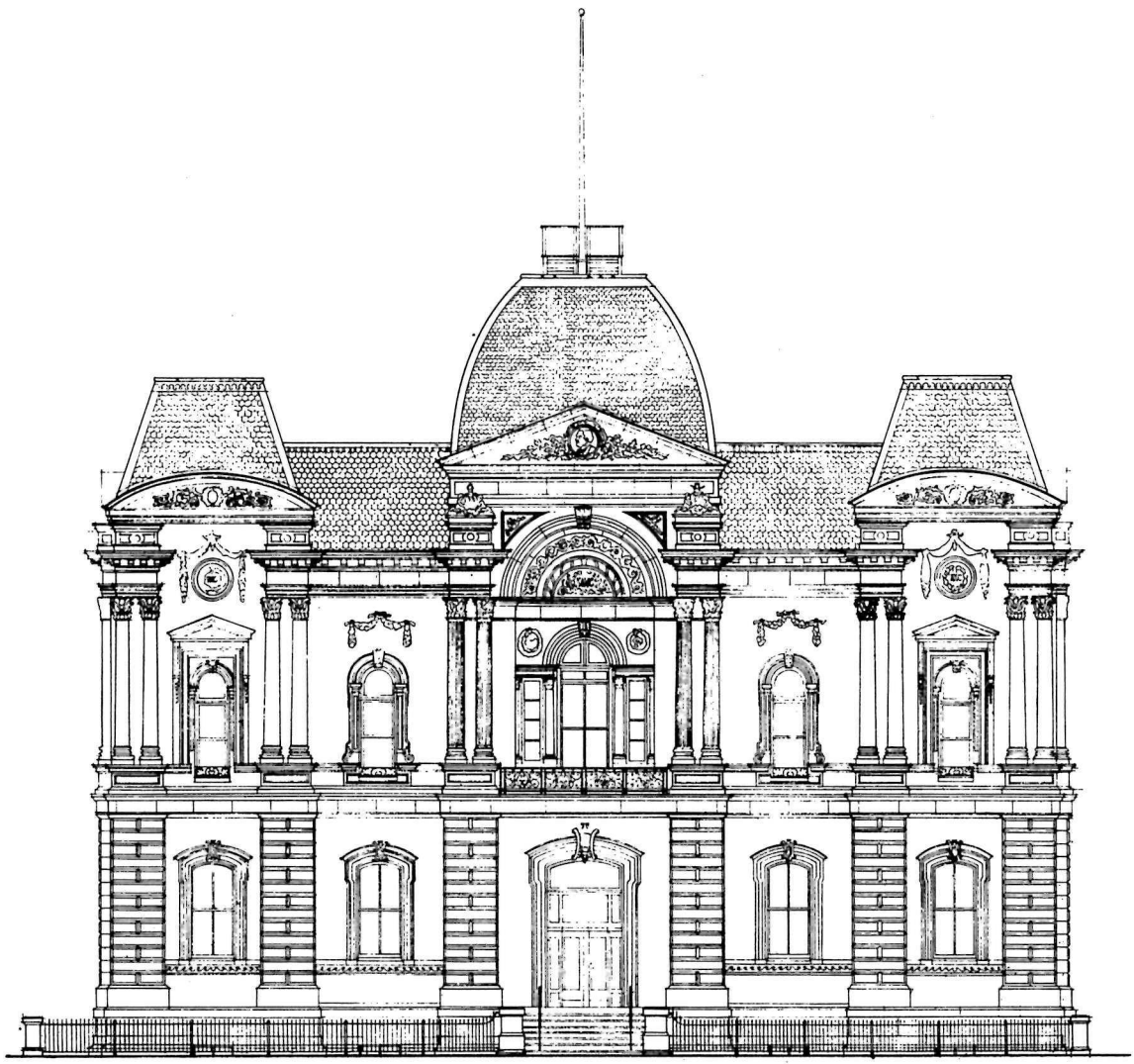
Fort Mifflin, on Mud Island in the Delaware River, was an important defense of Philadelphia. Razed by the British in 1777 and deserted, it was rebuilt after the Revolution and is now being restored by the city of Philadelphia. This plan of Fort Mifflin—a detail from "A Survey of the City of Philadelphia and its Environs"—was drawn in 1777 by P. Nicole under the direction of British cartographer John Montresor. It serves as a valuable record of the original layout of the fort. Map from the Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress. LC–NEG USZ62–44848



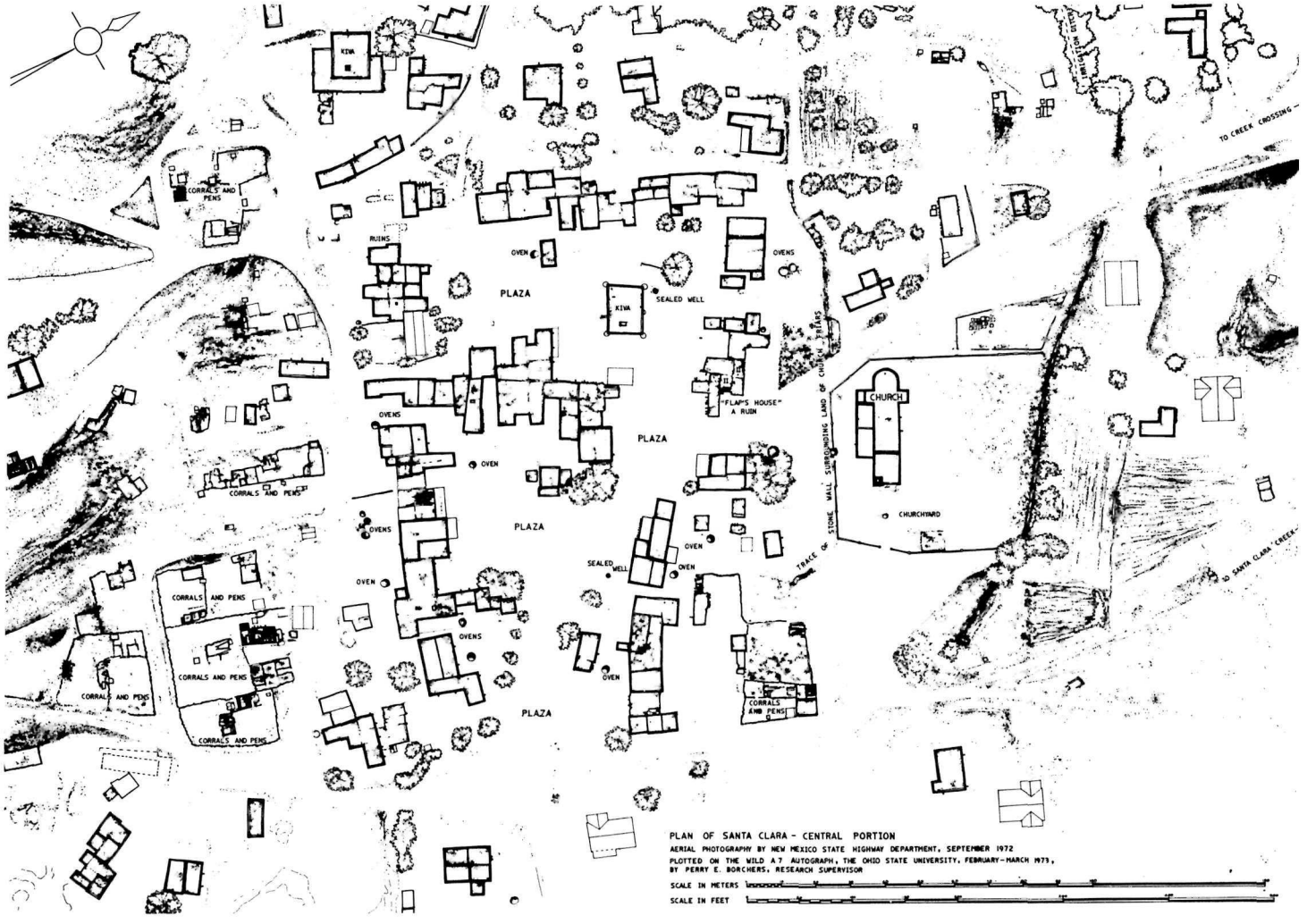


Both present and past structures are identified and dated in this drawing of Fort Mifflin. While the buildings have changed since 1777, the original stone scarp has remained largely the same.
PA–1225, sheet 3 of 3


FRONT ELEVATION
FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
PROVIDENCE R I.
Measured by
W.G. PIGEON, A.F.BUYS, A.P. MERRILL
Drawn by W.G. Pigeon



Before the advent of photogrammetry, buildings such as the First Baptist Meetinghouse in Providence, R.I. (LC–NEG HABS RI, 4–PROV. 1–19), with its ornate spire, had to be measured and drawn by hand—a laborious, time-consuming, and sometimes inaccurate procedure. Today, buildings of similarly intricate detail can be recorded by stereophotogrammetry. This technique was used in drawing the Renwick Gallery in Washington, D.C. (above), which was designed by James Renwick for W. W. Corcoran and built in 1859. LC–DRA HABS DC–49, sheet 1



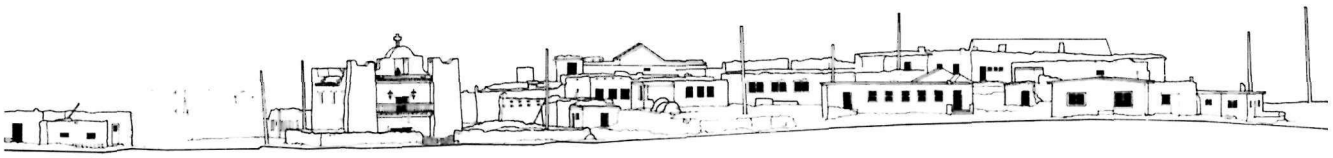
PLAN OF SANTA CLARA - CENTRAL PORTION

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY NEW MEXICO STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT, SEPTEMBER 1972

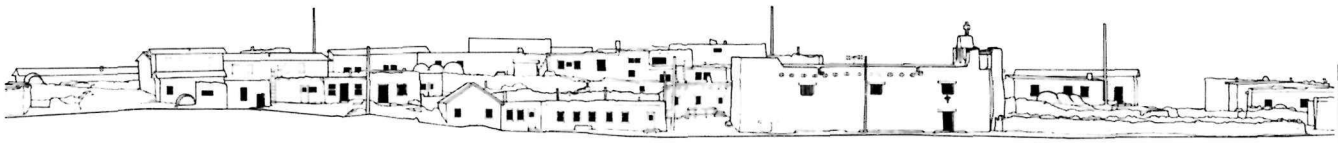
PLOTTED ON THE WILD A7 AUTOGRAPH, THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, FEBRUARY-MARCH 1973, BY PERRY E. BORCHERS, RESEARCH SUPERVISOR

SCALE IN METERS

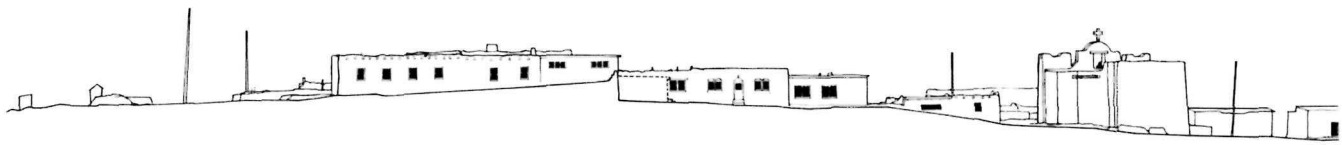
SCALE IN FEET



SECTION THROUGH ZUNI EAST OF THE CHURCHYARD, LOOKING WEST BY SOUTH

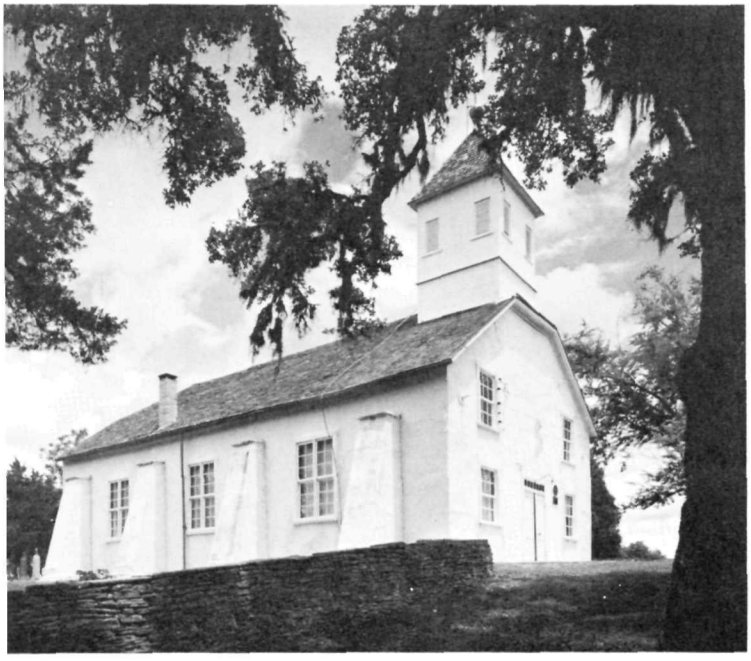


SECTION THROUGH ZUNI SOUTH OF THE CHURCH, LOOKING NORTH BY WEST



SECTION THROUGH ZUNI WEST OF THE CHURCH, LOOKING EAST BY NORTH

Aerial stereophotogrammetry made possible these detailed records of the Santa Clara (left) and Zuñi Pueblos (above), in New Mexico. In a vernacular building complex such as a pueblo, the irregularities of terrain and arrangement of the structures, as well as their interaction, can be measured and drawn most accurately from photographs. Santa Clara, NM–98, sheet 1; Zuñi, NM–99, sheet 3



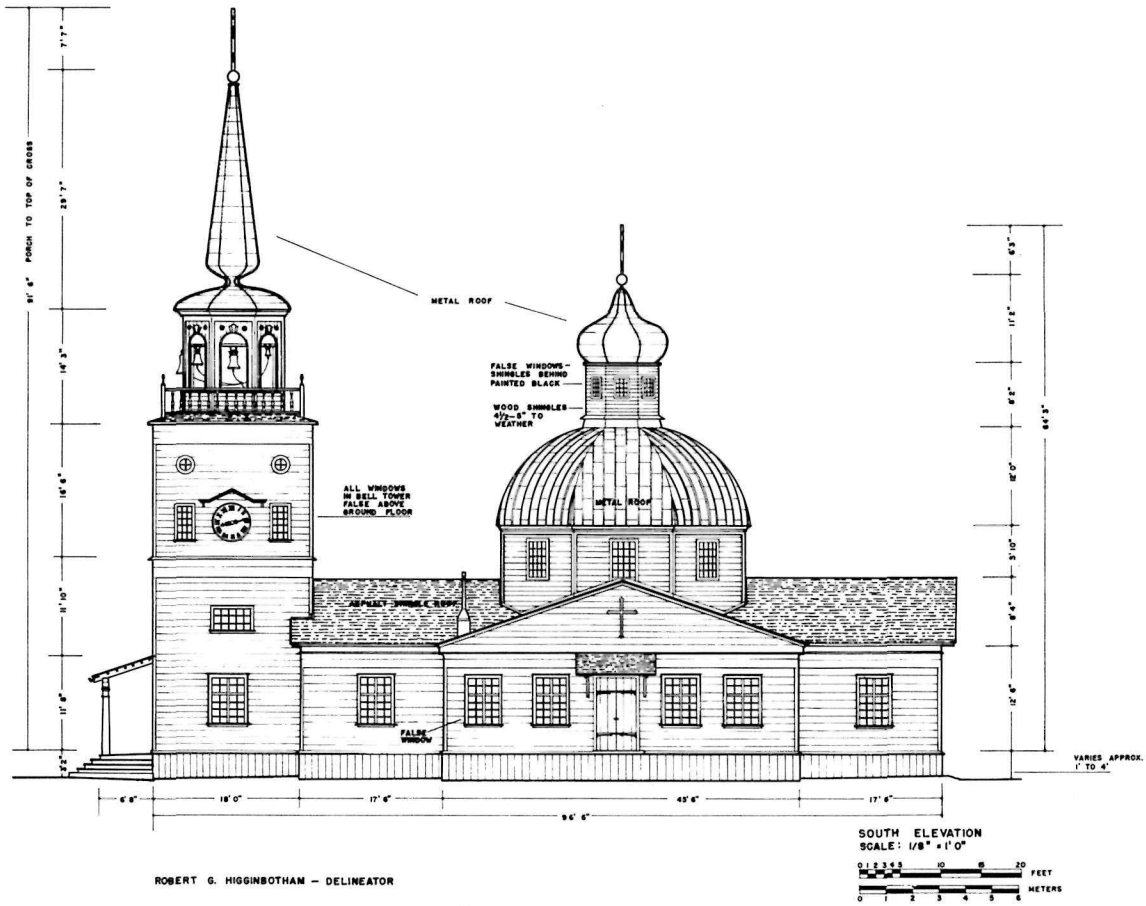
Throughout the United States, buildings show the influence of techniques and designs from other times and other cultures.

The traditions of Germanic folk architecture shaped the Kautz barn (above), built about 1877 near Shawnee, Pa. PA–1246, sheet 8

The Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Round Top, Tex. (left), was erected in 1866–67 and also reflects the sturdy native building traditions of German settlers in the Texas hill country at that time. Photo by Roy Pledger, July 1972. TEX–3124

An Austrian woodcarver built the Robert Machek House in Milwaukee (right, above), using motifs from the Alpine chalet style with which he was familiar. WIS–250, sheet 4

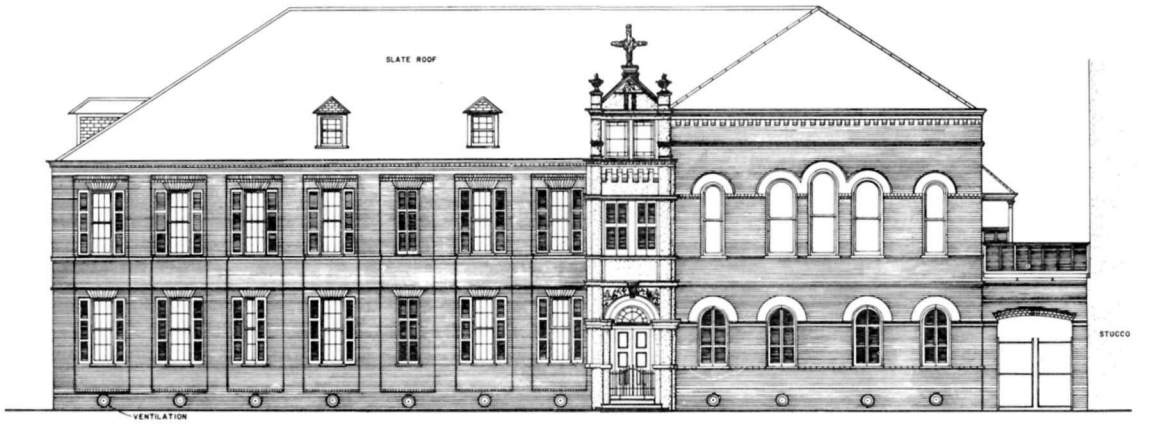
St. Michael's Cathedral, in Sitka, Alaska (right), was built in 1844–48 to serve as the Russian Orthodox Cathedral for "Kamchatka, Kurille and the Aleutian Islands." One of the most elaborate Russian buildings in the United States, it burned in 1966, but existing HABS drawings have been used in its reconstruction. LC–DRA HABS ALAS–1, sheet 2



SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'0"

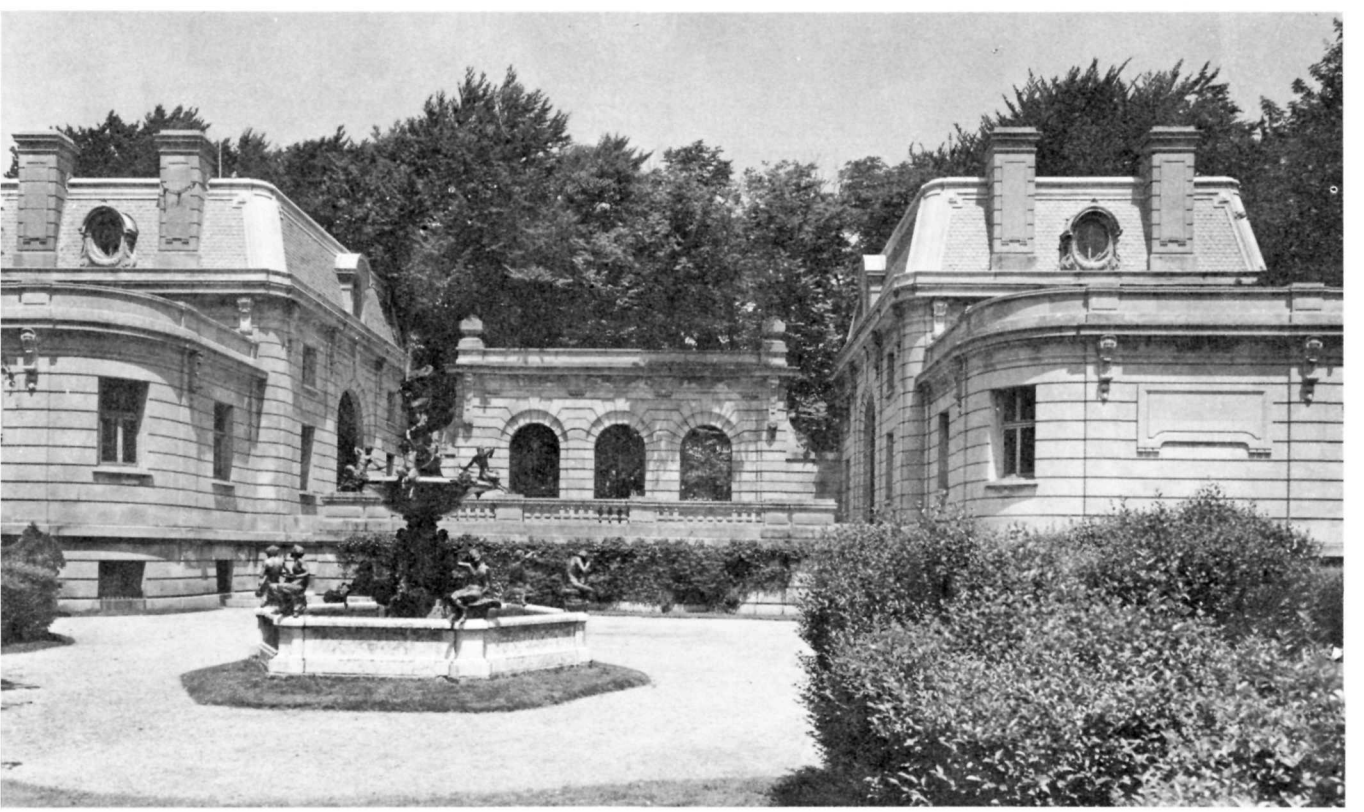
ROBERT G. HIGGINBOTHAM – DELINEATOR

Built before 1764, the De Mesa-Sanchez House in St. Augustine, Fla., is an example of our Spanish architectural heritage. Although it has been altered and added to over the years, it still maintains its original character in the massive stone masonry construction, relieved by delicate wrought iron and overhanging balconies.
Patio, from east (above). Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Feb. 1965. LC–NEG HABS FLA, 55–SAUG. 33–5
Facade, from southwest (right). Photo by Prime A. Beaudoin, Aug. 1961. LC–NEG HABS FLA, 55–SAUG. 33–3
First floor, east room (below). Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Feb. 1965. LC–NEG HABS FLA, 55–SAUG. 33–8



The Convent of the Holy Family in New Orleans (above) dates from 1891, but such features as the elaborate portal harken back to the city's French architectural heritage. The convent was demolished in 1964. LA–1124, sheet 3

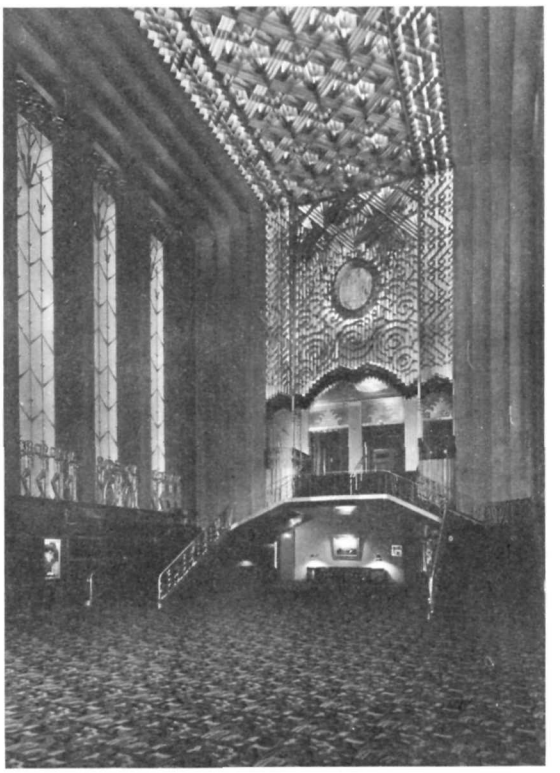
The Elms, in Newport, R.I., was designed by Horace Trumbauer for Edward J. Berwind. The house was built in 1900–1901; the garage and stables shown below date from 1911. Mansard roofs, oval dormers, and rigid formality in planning and design are all characteristic of the transplanted Louis XIV style. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, 1969. RI–344



The 1920's and 1930's saw the construction of many movie theaters across the United States, and in their design, scale, and decoration, they were often tangible reflections of the glamor and exuberance of the movie industry and of the age itself.

The Indiana Theater, Indianapolis, Ind., is a major example of an elaborate 20th-century motion picture palace. It was designed by the Indianapolis firm of Rubush and Hunter and opened on June 18, 1927. Capping the Spanish churrigueresque style facade is the rectangular panel shown here, with portrait medallions of Ferdinand and Isabella on either side of an ornamental niche. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Aug. 1970. IND–101

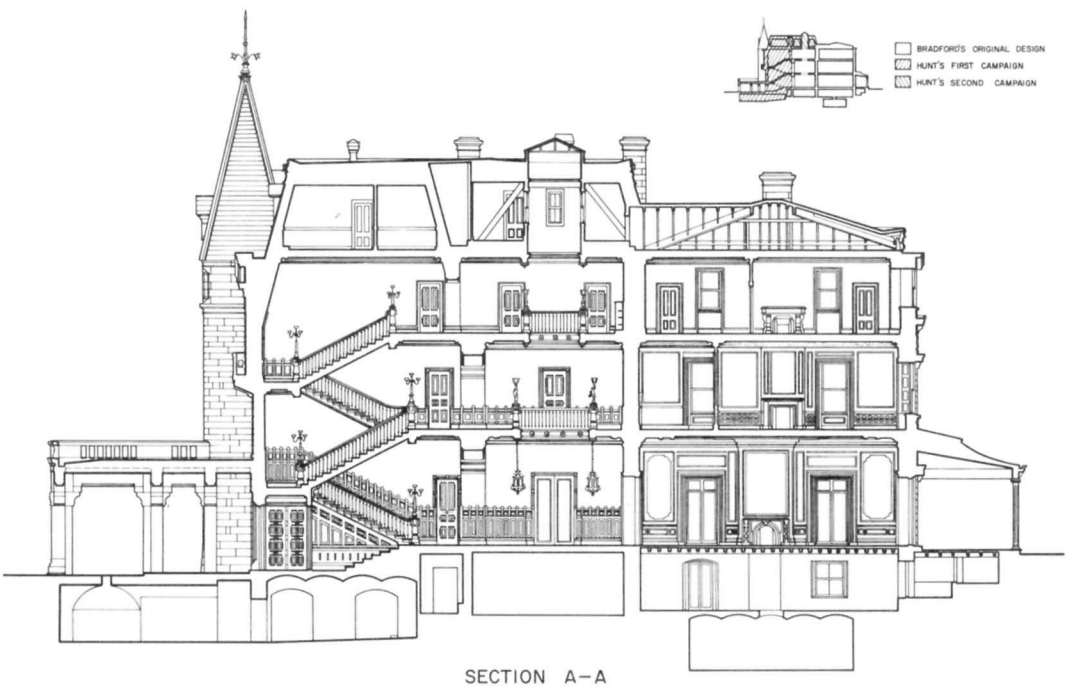
Indiana Theater lobby, looking east (left). This impressive entrance space is essentially Spanish in flavor, though the stairs at the end of the room lead to a landing whose major design element is a framed mural of the Taj Mahal. This lobby is similar in proportion to that of the Paramount Theater (below). The difference in feeling between the two is primarily a matter of decoration. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Aug. 1970. IND–101



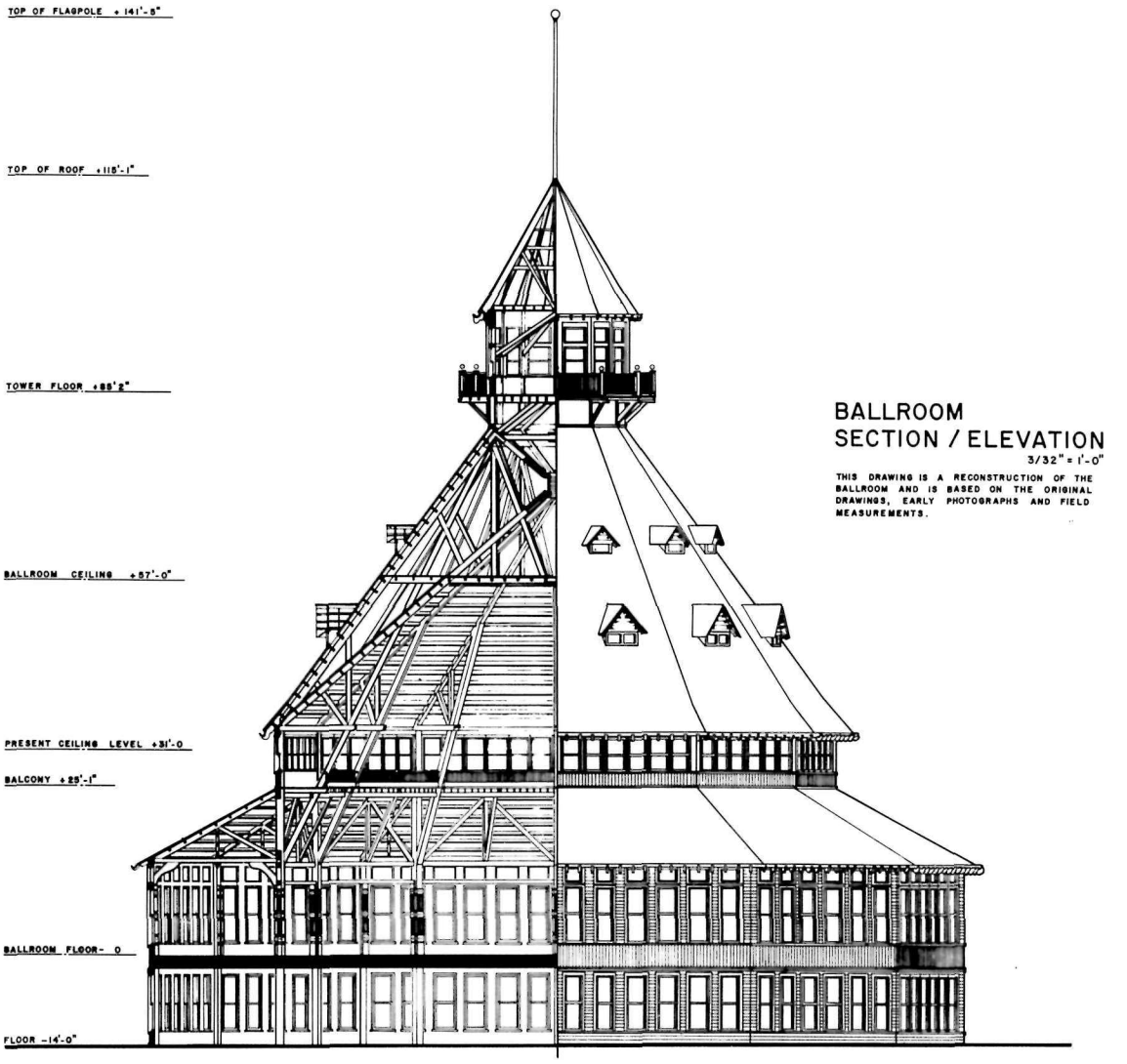
While many other movie palaces harkened to past styles, the Oakland, Calif., Paramount Theater was up to date (right). Designed by James R. Miller and Timothy Pflueger, and opened in December 1931, the Paramount is a masterpiece of the "moderne" or Art Deco style. Copy of Gabriel Moulin photo by Jack E. Boucher, July 1972. CAL–1976

The auditorium of the B. F. Keith Theater in Boston (left) employs classical and baroque motifs. It was designed by Thomas W. Lamb and built in 1927–28. Photo by C. John Macfarlane, Jan. 1971. MASS–1078

Cheshire No. 1 Mill, Harrisville, N.H. Built in 1847, this granite structure served as a woolen textile mill from 1850 to 1971. It was documented by HABS in 1968 as part of a larger thematic recording project, the New England Textile Mills Survey. Partly as a result of this survey, the Historic American Engineering Record, a companion program to HABS, was established in 1969 to focus attention on our engineering and industrial heritage.
Photo by Jack E. Boucher, 1969.
LC–NEG HABS NH, 3–HAR 3–2

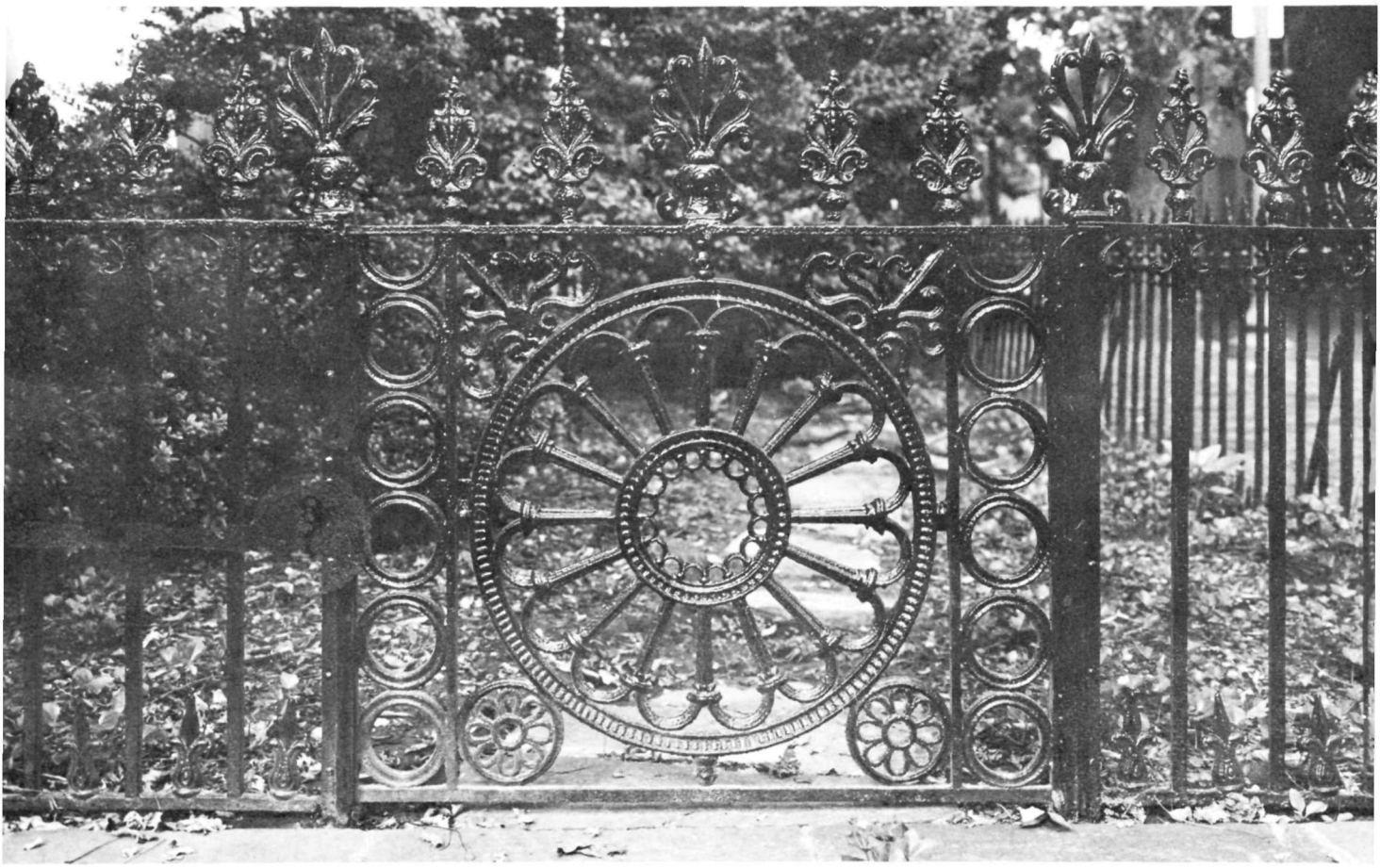


SECTION A–A



Sectional drawings assist in understanding such complex structural conditions as those in the ballroom (above) of the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, Calif., and the Château-sur-Mer in Newport, R.I. (left). Hotel, CAL–1958, sheet 8; Château, RI–313, section A–A

Detail of cast-iron fence, Robert P. Dodge House in Georgetown, Washington, D.C. The central feature of this elaborate fence is the gate, patterned after the tracery in a medieval rose window. Photo by Jack E. Boucher, Sept. 1969. DC–246



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