



KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CENTER FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH

120 West Tenth ▪ Topeka, Kansas 66612-1291 ▪ 913/296-3251
FAX #913/296-1005

KANSAS MUSEUM OF HISTORY

6425 South West Sixth ▪ Topeka, Kansas 66615-1099 ▪ 913/272-8681

Certification of State Register Listing

The Register of Historic Kansas Places includes all Kansas properties nominated to the National Register as well as lower threshold properties which are listed on the state register only.

Property Name: **ST. JOHN'S ORPHANAGE**
Address: **720 NORTH 4TH STREET, KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101**
County: **WYANDOTTE COUNTY**
Legal: **LOTS 1- 10, BLOCK 153, WYANDOTTE CITY, A SUBDIVISION IN KANSAS CITY, KANSAS**
Owner: **STRAWBERRY HILL MUSEUM, ADRIAN NOSTAV, DIRECTOR**
Address: **409 BARNETT, KANSAS CITY, KANSAS 66101**

National Register eligible _____

State Register eligible XXX

This property was approved by the Kansas Historic Sites Board of Review for the Register of Historic Kansas Places on **FEBRUARY 25, 1995**.

I hereby certify that this property is listed on the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

2.25.95

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name St. John's Orphanage
other names/site number Scroggs, Mrs. John B., House; St. John's Children's Home;
Strawberry Hill Museum

2. Location

street & number 720 North 4th Street ☐ not for publication
city, town Kansas City ☐ vicinity
state Kansas code Ks county Wyandotte code 209 zip code 66101

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u> </u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this
☐ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the
National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.
In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the National
Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Domestic: institutional housing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Recreation and Culture: museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne

OTHER

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls brick

stone

roof asphalt

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The St. John's Orphanage (1887, 1922, 1924, 1925-26, 1929-30) is located in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood adjacent to the central business district of Kansas City, Wyandotte County, Kansas (pop. 146,000) at the intersection of North 4th Street and Ann Avenue on all of lots 1 through 10, Wyandotte City.

The orphanage consists of the original Queen Anne residence built in 1887, and four additions built in 1922, 1924, 1925-56 and 1929-30. The original residence is a two and half story, irregular plan, red brick, pyramidal roofed structure with a veranda porch and three story round tower. The additions are two to three stores in height with a full basement. They are rectangular structures with red brick and grey stone walls, hipped roofs, and minimal detailing.

Original Residence

The site of the 1887 house consisted of six lots on the southwest corner of 4th Street and Ann Avenue, on the eastern slope of what was then called Splitlog's Hill. The house sits elevated on a terrace some ten to fifteen feet above 4th Street, and looks out over the whole broad confluence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers. A high stone wall contains the terrace along the street, with an ornamental iron gate bearing a prominent letter "S" leading to the steps that, paralleling the wall but behind it, rise above the crest of the terrace to the level of the veranda.

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

The house is of brick with stone and wood trim and ornamental shingles in the gables, in a broad yet restrained interpretation of the Queen Anne style. Much of the wood detailing is Classical in derivation but handled quite freely. It is obvious that in designing the house, Braecklein looked to the origins of the Queen Anne style in the work of English architect Richard Norman Shaw, rather than to some of the more extravagant American versions of the Queen Anne that all but ignored the Shavian example.

Irregular in plan, the main part of the house initially suggests a short-legged L, with one leg facing east and the other north. An adjoining, rectangular service wing runs north-south, paralleling the back of the L but off-set to the south. At the northeast corner of the northern leg of the L is a round, three-story tower (two stories on the original drawing), with a conical roof. The bulk of the house is of two and one-half stories, with a steeply pitched, pyramidal roof punctuated by four prominent dormer windows, one per facade, and four secondary gables, also one per facade. The east, south and west gables are open, while that on the north that engages the upper story of the tower is hipped. The roof of the service wing is also hipped, the ridge running north-south, with four tall dormers similar to those of the main roof, again one per facade. A two story, engaged octagonal bay below the south gable marks the southwest corner of the L, looking toward the site of St John the Baptist Church.

At the first floor level, a stone veranda with a shed roof supported by attenuated wood columns extends across the full width of the front of the house, with a broad, low-pitched pedimented gable marking the entry just to the right

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3

of center. An unroofed portion of the veranda originally curved around the north corner to terminate at the round tower. The south end of the veranda ends in a projecting curved bay which, unlike the north end, is covered by a curving extension of the veranda roof. At some point, the wood columns were replaced with more substantial supports of brick, the veranda was extended along the south side of the house, and an enclosed sun porch added in front of the octagonal bay to the east wall of the service wing.

The 4th Street facade is divided into two equal halves, the south half pulling slightly forward and being crowned with an elaborately ornamented pedimented gable containing a pair of attic windows. The entry, with its own pediment as noted, occupies the south half of the north half of the facade. Above the entry, on the veranda roof at the second floor level, is a balcony porch with its own pedimented roof echoing that of the entry below. The east attic dormer with a very steeply pitched, octagonal hipped roof is centered above and behind the balcony.

The majority of the fenestration is double-hung and regularly spaced, often in pairs. The sills are of cut stone, while the much heavier rectangular stone lintels are rough faced. The first floor windows of the main block are of particular note, as each has a transom containing stained and leaded glass, with no two alike. A large single window of stained and leaded glass is set to the right of the front door on the first floor, illuminating the stair hall. A similar window, double hung with an arched top, is placed in the north wall to the left of the tower midway between the first and second floors, giving light to the upper part of the stair. The north attic dormer is centered above

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4

this window.

The continuous wood cornice is massive, in keeping with the bulk of the house, and is ornamented with a staggered double row of dentils. Where the cornice crosses the front of the principal facade pediment it is broken, the projecting ends carried on massive brackets while the center portion is supported by brick corbels, which in turn rest on a continuous rough faced stone lintel at the head of the second floor windows. Similar continuous lintels top both the first and second floor windows on the north tower. Where the cornice intersects the tower, its line and depth are continued by another horizontal band of terra-cotta or pressed brick, ornamented with a foliate pattern. The continuous lintel above the third floor tower windows forms the base of the tower cornice, and is also ornamented with a running pattern. Originally, no windows other than those of the tower and the stair hall were present in the north facade of the main block.

The bulk of the rear service wing (now largely obscured) was quite plain, except for its north side which faced toward Ann Avenue but was set some sixteen feet south of the north facade of the main block. The two windows of the first floor dining room on that side continued the ornamental frames and transoms of the other first floor windows. Between these windows a blank panel of brick projected forward, flanked by brick piers and the whole supported by brick corbeling out from the foundation wall. This panel marked the location of the built-in sideboard on the interior. The projection was topped by a pediment which peaked between the two second floor windows. The face of the pediment would appear to have been ornamented with an all-over foliate design executed

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

in plaster.

The remainder of the service wing was quite plain and without ornamentation. As shown on the still extant south facade, the one-over-one double hung windows on the first floor have plain, cut stone sills and are topped with segmental arches formed by three header rows of brick. The second floor windows have similar sills but rectangular heads formed by the bottom of the wood cornice. The cornice itself is a narrower, simplified version of that on the main block of the house, with only a single row of dentils. At one time there was apparently a one story, screened rear entry porch on the west side of the service wing, but that has been replaced by a later addition.

The interior of the house is as fine as the exterior, with beautifully crafted woodwork, built-ins, tile-faced fireplaces, and the occasional use of lincrusta wall coverings. The principal first floor spaces are arranged along an east-west axis, the axis being formed by the double door of the front entry into the stair hall, the door from the stair hall into the north end of the family parlor, the door from the family parlor into the dining room, and a window in the dining room's west wall. The north half of the stair hall is occupied by the main stair, which rises through three turnings and two landings to the second floor. The landings are each illuminated by one of the stained glass windows referred to above. The effect of light coming through the hall windows and the stained glass transoms is particularly noteworthy. The stair itself is of wood, elaborately carved, turned and paneled, and like all the first floor woodwork gives evidence to a very high level of craftsmanship.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 6

To the south of the stair hall and occupying the southeast corner of the first floor is the ladies parlor, with a pair of large windows opening onto the veranda. Pairs of pocket doors give access from this room to both the stair hall and the larger family parlor to the west. Above the pocket doors the upper parts of the openings are filled with elaborate spindle work having the appearance of a woven mesh.

The family parlor runs north-south, and with its large, four window bay on the south end and the adjoining library on the north, accessed through yet another pair of pocket doors, sets up a secondary axis. (A window in the north end of the library completes the axis, but this is a later addition.) The west wall of the family parlor contains a fireplace with a tile surround, an ornamental iron grate, and an elaborate wood mantel featuring a large circular mirror and four very unusual attenuated wood columns. To the left of the fireplace is a single door leading out to the sun porch, with a stained and leaded window and a stained and leaded transom above. The south bay is the full width of the room but is set off from it by a paneled molding in the form of a flattened arch. Radiators are set beneath each of the four windows but hidden from view by perforated metal screens.

The library is to the north of the family parlor, and includes the first floor level of the round tower at its northeast corner, which may have served as a reading alcove. The north wall of the room, which now has a window to the left of the opening into the tower, was originally blank and may have contained bookshelves. The east wall just to the right of the tower opening still retains the room's chief feature, a fireplace with a tile surround and hearth and another

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 7

wood mantel only slightly less elaborate than that of the parlor. The west wall contained two windows, one of which is now blocked while the other has been converted into a door into the 1924 chapel.

To the west of the family parlor, reached through a pair of multi-paned French doors, is the dining room. (The doors may be a later addition, replacing portieres.) A panel wood wainscot runs completely around the room to a height of approximately five feet. To the right of the entry on the east wall is a third fireplace, backing up to that of the parlor. There is another tile surround and hearth, but the mantel appears to be of a cast material rather than wood, and is more consciously Classical than the other decorative features. The top of the mantel is the same height as the wainscot, and above this the chimney breast is faced with lincrusta. Centered in the north wall is an elaborate built-in sideboard and china hutch of wood. This was originally flanked by windows but both have been converted into doors into the 1924 chapel; nevertheless, the stained and leaded transoms are still in place. Also of interest is a radiator which incorporates a built-in warming oven. To the south of the dining room is the original kitchen area, occupying the south half of the service wing and including the original service stairs.

The second floor of the main block contains the original family bedrooms, one each above the ladies parlor, the family parlor and the library, accessed from a central hall running east-west. Here the treatment is much less elaborate than on the first floor, with relatively simple moldings and plastered walls. Various alterations have occurred over the years, primarily with the addition of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 8

closets, but the general layout is still evident. A room over the front part of the stair hall gives access through its double windows to the balcony noted on the east facade. The second floor of the service wing originally contained the servants' quarters. A wood-paneled ballroom was placed on the third floor under the tall roof, illuminated by the four dormer windows and the attic windows in the east, south and west gables.

First Addition

The first addition came in 1922, to the west of the service wing on the rear of the house. The addition is a two and a half story rectangular block adjacent to the service wing but extending as far north as the north wall of the library. The walls are of red brick, atop a stone foundation that is high enough at its north end to allow for full height basement windows. The regularly spaced windows are one-over-one double hung with stone sills, most with segmental arched tops similar to the first floor windows on the service wing. However, the windows on the north facade have rectangular stone lintels which help visually tie the addition to the original house. The roof is hipped, but with a lower slope than that of the service wing. There is an overhang but no cornice. This addition contained a large dining room for the children accessible from the family dining room in the house, two dormitories, a study room, a nursery, a kitchen and a laundry room, all executed in a very plain and functional manner.

Second Addition

In 1924, a small chapel was added to the north end of the original service wing. It was fitted into the space formed by the library on the east, the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 9

dining room on the south and the 1922 addition on the west, but projects some ten feet beyond its flanking units. Given the drop in elevation to the north, the chapel addition appears a full three stories in height on its north facade. The addition is faced in a rough faced ashlar, gray in color. The roof is a shed extension of the service wing's hip, with minimal overhang and no cornice. At the basement level is a garage door with a small square window to its right. On the first and second floors are two rows of four evenly spaced double-hung windows, with continuous sills and large rectangular lintels which read as part of the overall ashlar pattern.

On the basement level the new addition contained a garage, while the first floor contained the chapel proper. As noted above, the dining room's two first floor windows became doors giving access to the chapel while a third door led from the library. The second floor also contained a single room, and as on the first windows were converted into doorways. The chapel was blessed on June 24, 1924.

To judge from the stonework, at the same time the chapel was constructed an exterior porch and stairway were added to the north end of the 1922 addition, giving access from the children's dining hall to the adjacent playground. The stairway is faced in a rough faced ashlar like that of the chapel and continues the plane of the chapel facade. A wood sleeping porch was also added at the second floor level above the open first floor porch, but this may have been done at a later date.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 10

Third Addition

In 1925 plans were initiated for a much larger chapel to be built to the north of the front part of the house, eliminating the northern sweep of the veranda and running to the north property line. In addition to a larger chapel, the new extension contained a dining room and bedrooms for the Sisters, a new girls' dormitory and a playroom for the children. The addition was almost certainly architect-designed, although by whom is not presently known. It is possible that the architect was Henry W. Brinkman of Emporia, who did a great deal of work for the Leavenworth Diocese in the 1920s and '30s.

The three-and-a-half story structure is clad in beautifully dressed and laid grey stone, in a rough faced ashlar similar to the first chapel, rising sheer from the front terrace just a few feet back from the original retaining wall. All fenestration consists of multi-paned metal casements. The chapel windows on the second floor (continuous with the first floor of the house) are arched and somewhat larger than the others, this being the only indication of internal function. The roof is hipped, but with a considerably lower pitch than that of the house. A strongly projecting cornice also echoes that of the house, but without any ornamental elaboration. The connecting link to the original house is quite nicely handled, the east facade of the link continuing the plane of the veranda rail and columns. The round tower is engaged on its eastern edge by the west wall of the addition, leaving the north half of the tower still visible and unaltered.

On the interior, doors lead from both the veranda and from the stair hall

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 11

into the chapel link. Because of the way in which the main stair was designed, the latter opening could be cut without any alterations to the stair. As noted, the new chapel occupies the entirety of the second floor level of the addition, while the third floor (an extension of the house's second floor level) originally was partitioned for living quarters but now serves as a single multi-purpose space. The first floor, at the basement level of the house, contained a large playroom for the children accessible from the adjoining playground.

As with the first chapel, the second has an extension that may or may not be contemporary. This is a two story garage adjacent to the northwest corner of the new chapel. In material and detail it matches the adjoining block, its north wall in the same plane as the north wall of the chapel, but with a flat roof screened by a low parapet. At the ground level, two garage doors open out onto Ann Avenue. The second floor, accessible from an exterior stair on the south side, contains a small apartment for staff.

Fourth Addition

A fourth and final addition was begun on June 2, 1929. This was placed at the southwestern corner of the property, adjacent to and continuing the original (1922) dormitory addition. The new addition adjoins the southwest corner of its predecessor but extends to the south property line. Like that first addition it is clad in red brick on a stone foundation, but is even more austere in appearance. It is a severe rectangular block with an overhanging hipped roof but no cornice. The regularly spaced double-hung windows have brick sills and steel lintels. There are no discernable ornamental features. The interior

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

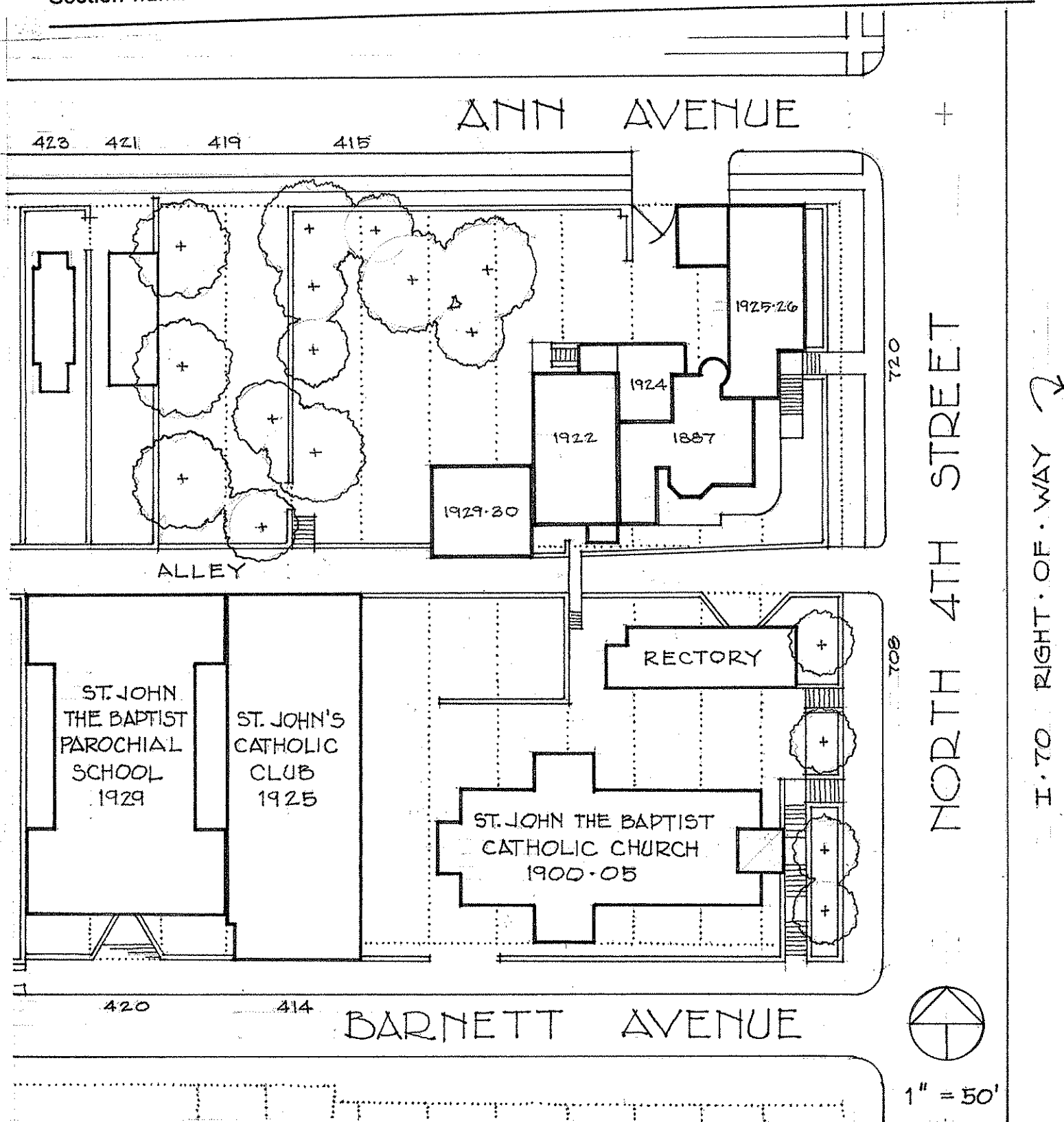
Section number 7 Page 12

consisted of a new, large laundry room, a boys' dormitory, nine bath cubicles plus showers, a playroom for the day nursery, and a study room.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

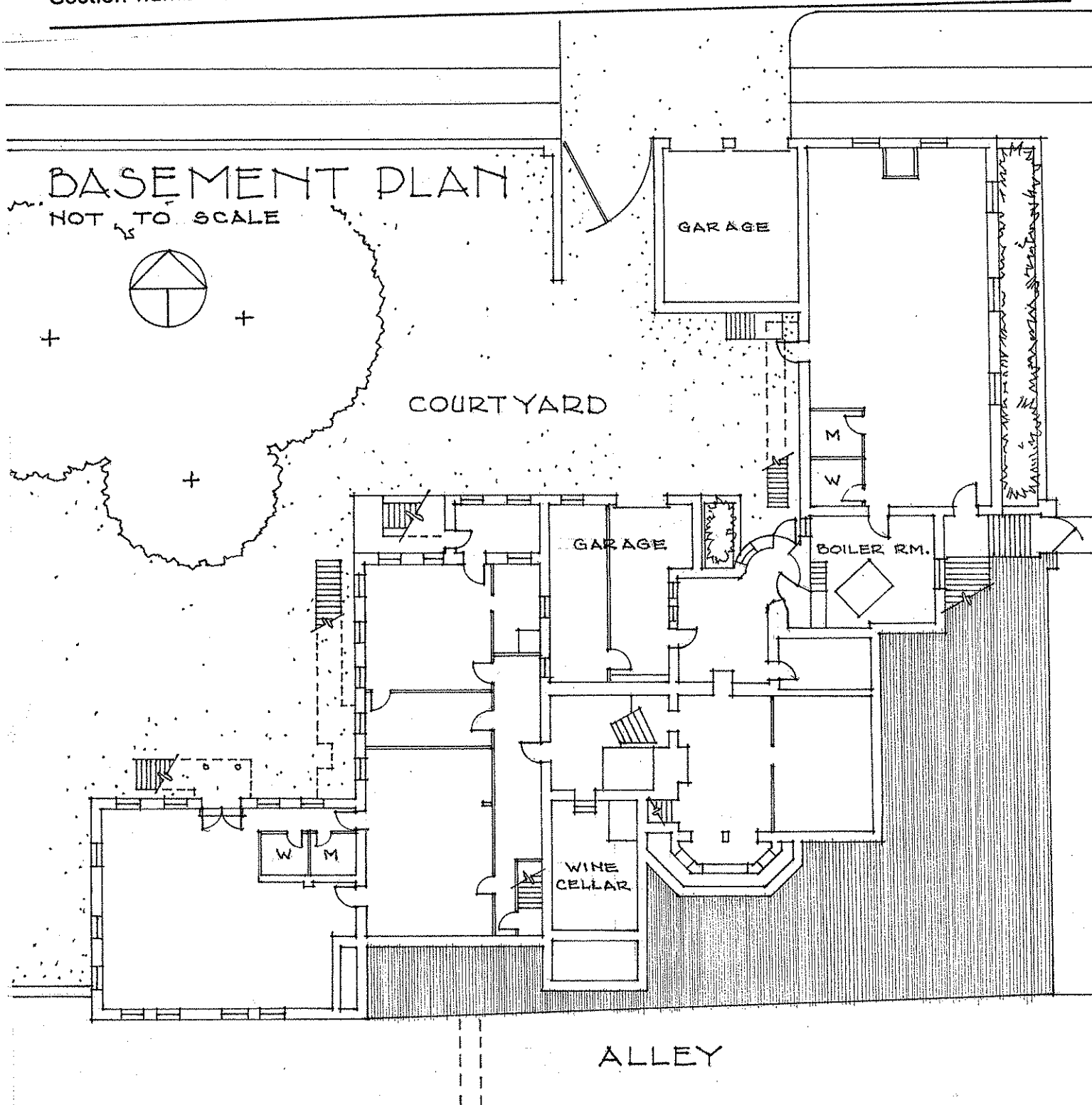
Section number 7 Page 13



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 14

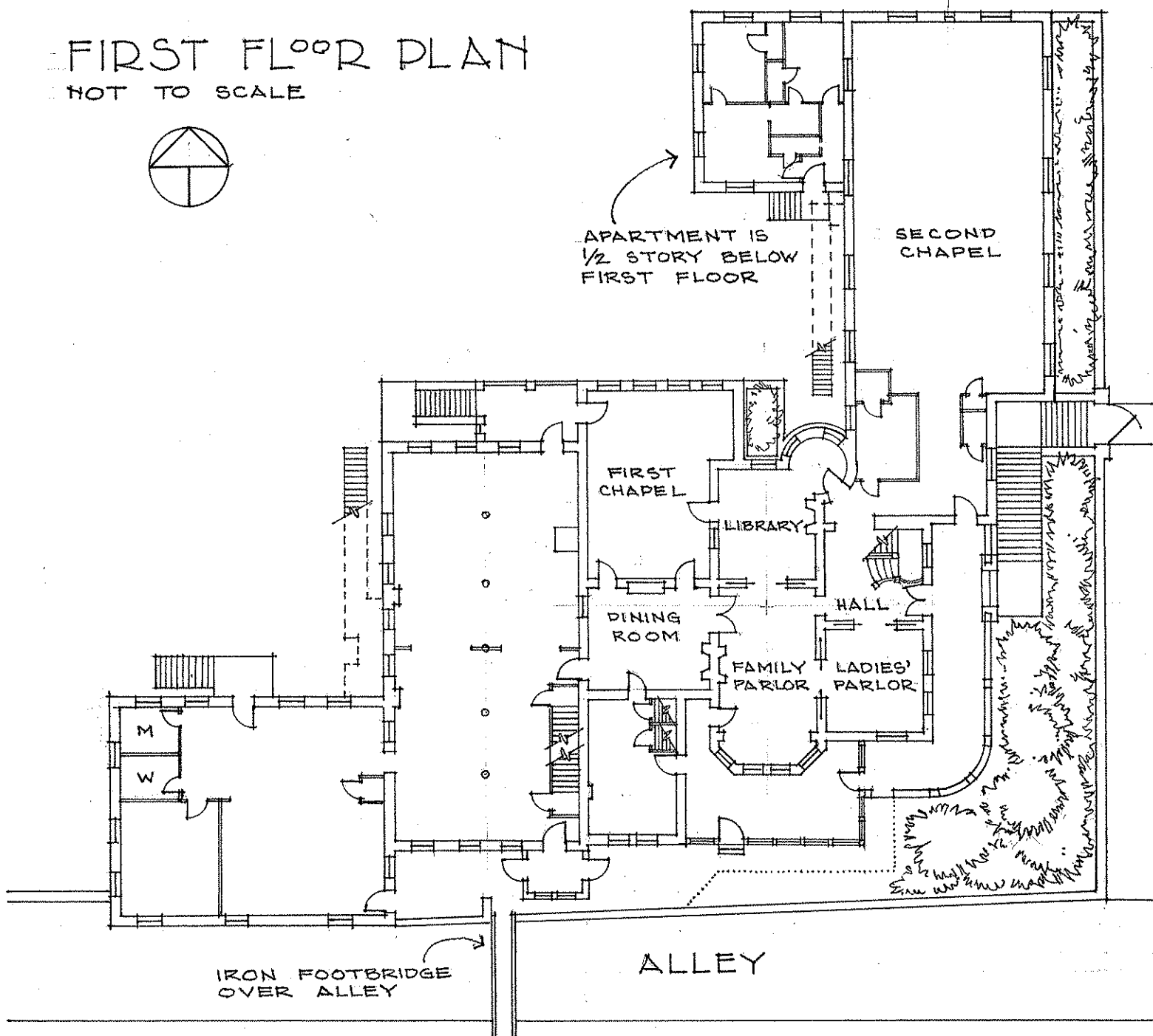
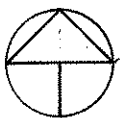


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 15

FIRST FLOOR PLAN NOT TO SCALE

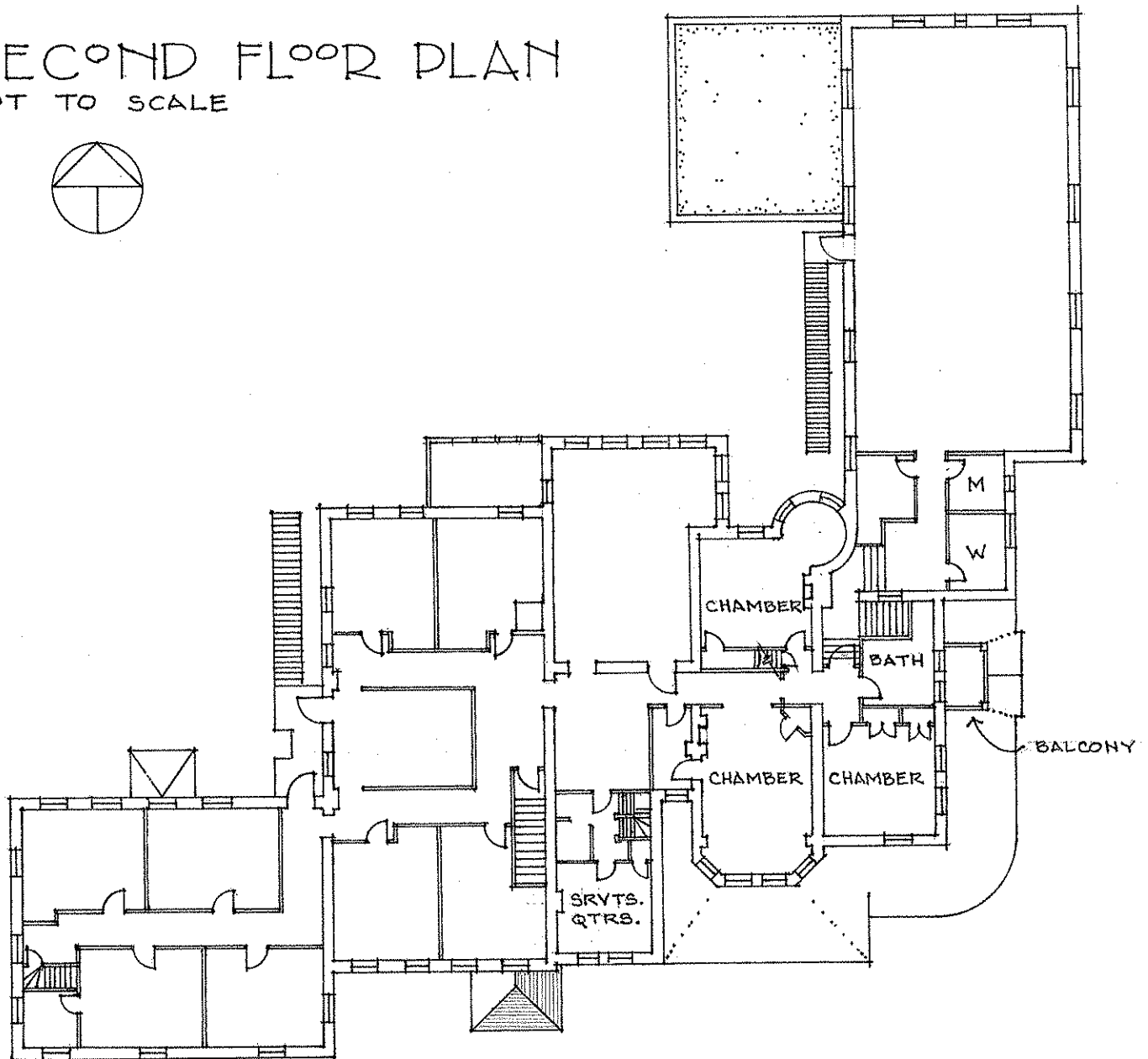
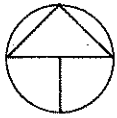


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 16

SECOND FLOOR PLAN NOT TO SCALE

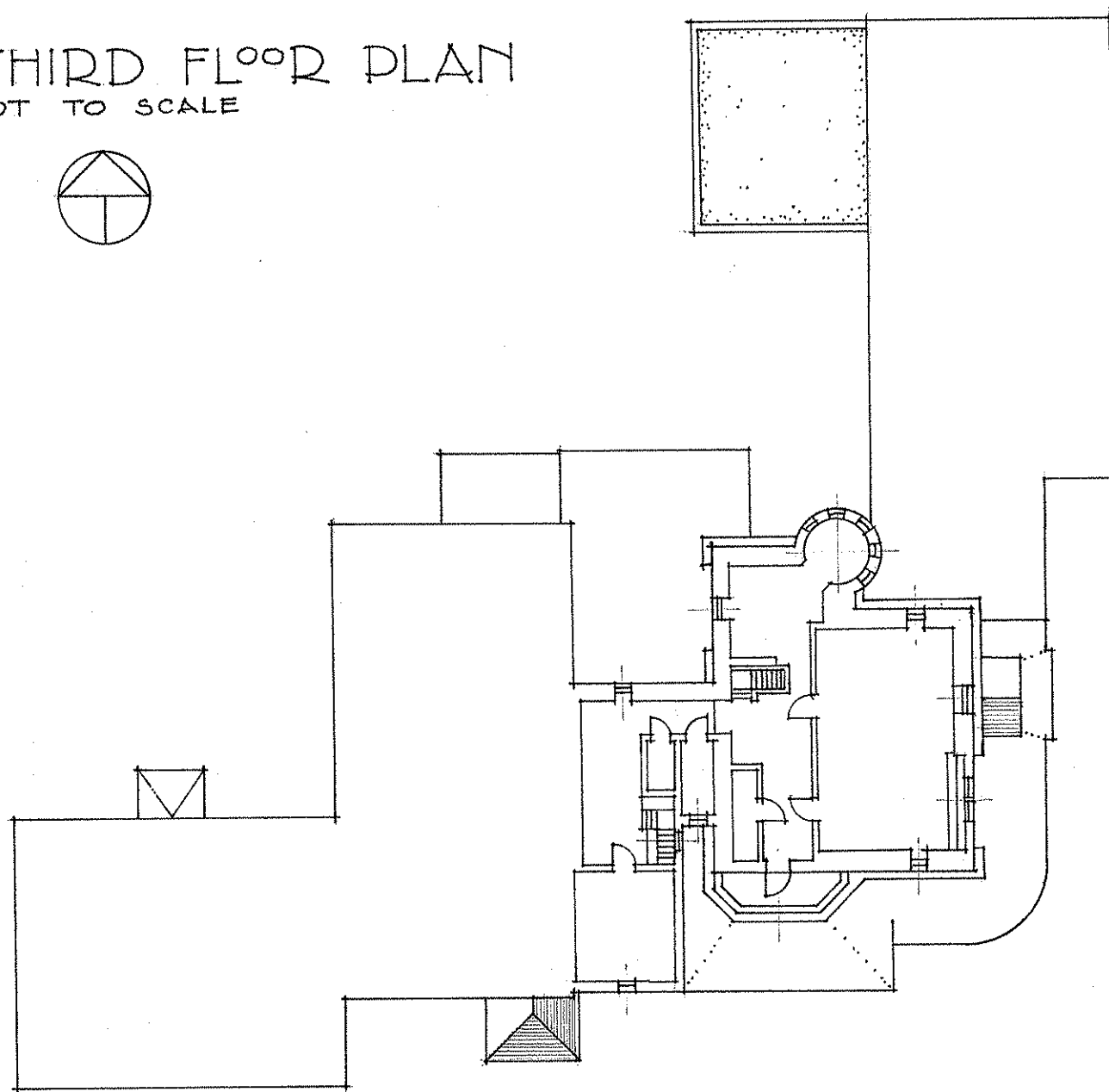
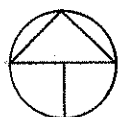


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 17

THIRD FLOOR PLAN
NOT TO SCALE

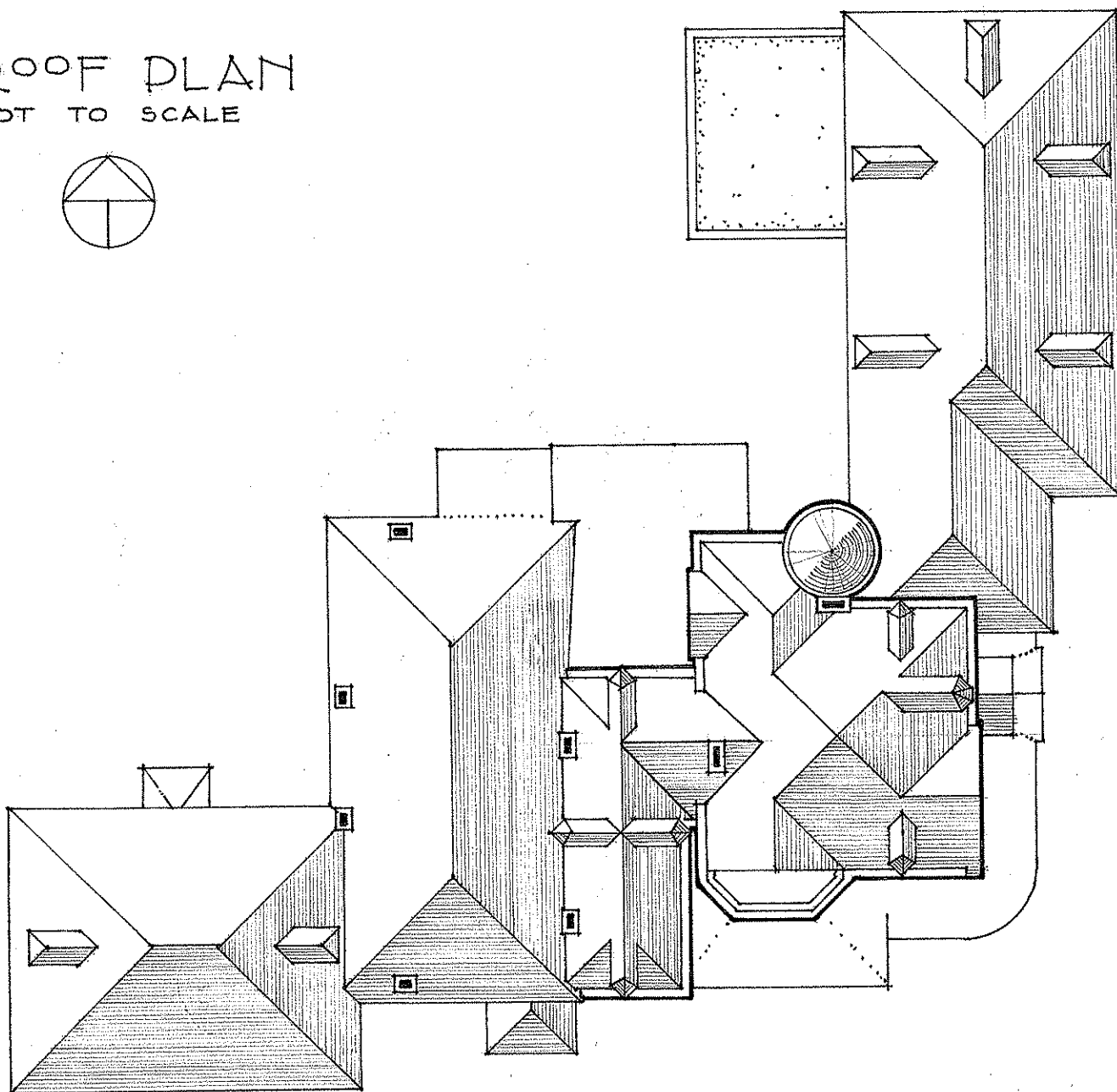
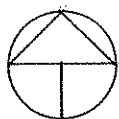


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 18

ROOF PLAN
NOT TO SCALE



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 19

PHOTOGRAPHS

1. St. John's Orphanage
2. Wyandotte County, KS
3. Anthony L. Kovac
4. November, 1993 (#2 through #29)
5. Anthony L. Kovac, 3704 Everett Avenue, Kansas City, KS 66102
6. and 7. #1 Aerial view from the east-southeast showing entire complex
(circa 1955, photographer unknown).
- #2 East facade, looking west (1887 house to the left, 1925-26 chapel
addition to the right).
- #3 Detail, east facade of 1887 house, looking west.
- #4 North facade of rear additions, looking south (left to right, 1924
chapel, 1922 addition and 1929-30 addition).
- #5 Detail, west facades of 1922 and 1924 additions, looking east.
- #6 South facade, looking north (left to reight, 1929-30 addition,
1922 addition and 1887 house). Note iron footbridge over alley.
- #7 Detail, south facade of 1887 house showing service wing and sun
porch, looking north.
- #8 Detail, southeast corner of 1887 house, looking northwest.
- #9 Detail, east facade of 1887 house, looking west.
- #10 Detail, first floor window of 1887 house, looking north.
- #11 Detail, southeast corner of first floor veranda of 1887 house,
looking northeast.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 20

- #12 Detail, upper portion of south facade of 1887 service wing, looking north.
- #13 Interior detail, 1887 stair hall, looking north.
- #14 Interior detail, baluster, rail and spindles of 1887 main stair, looking north.
- #15 Interior detail, arched opening beneath 1887 main stair, looking north.
- #16 Interior detail, stained and leaded window at first landing of 1887 main stair, looking east.
- #17 Interior detail, fireplace and mantel on west wall of 1887 family parlor, looking west.
- #18 Interior detail, door to sun porch from 1887 family parlor (to left of fireplace), looking west.
- #19 Interior detail, south window bay in 1887 family parlor, looking south.
- #20 Interior detail, antique organ against east wall of 1887 family parlor, looking east.
- #21 Interior detail, fireplace and mantel on east wall of 1887 library, looking east.
- #22 Interior detail, antique bookcase in northwest corner of 1887 library, looking northwest.
- #23 Interior detail, head of door opening between 1887 dining room and family parlor, looking east.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 21

- #24 Interior detail, fireplace and mantel on east wall of 1887 dining room, looking east.
- #25 Interior detail, built-in sideboard and china cupboard in north wall of 1887 dining room, looking north.
- #26 Interior detail, radiator with built-in warming oven on south wall of 1887 dining room, looking south.
- #27 Interior detail, door between 1887 dining room and 1922 dining hall (originally led to enclosed rear porch), looking west.
- #28 Interior detail, 1922 dining hall looking north. Note large dumbwaiter against east wall (at right rear).
- #29 Interior detail, 1925-26 chapel looking north. Altar in non-original, was relocated from the adjacent St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

8. Statement of Significance

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

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Social History

Architecture

Period of Significance

1887 - 1986

Significant Dates

1887, 1919,

1922, 1924,

1925-26, 1929-30

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Braecklein, John George

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The St. John's Orphanage (1887, 1922, 1924, 1925-26, 1929-30) is being nominated to the National Register under criteria A for its historical association with the social history of the community as an orphanage and day school serving a distinctive Eastern European immigrant population for over 70 years, and under criteria C for the architectural design of the original residence, both exterior and interior, and the care with which subsequent additions were carried out.

The St. John's Orphanage includes the original Queen Anne style residence and four additions carried out within a span of eight years following the property's conversion to an orphanage. The house, one of the most distinguished in Kansas City, Kansas, was designed for Mrs. John B. Scroggs, wife of a prominent local attorney. The project was the first in the very long and prolific career of local architect J. G. Braecklein, and one of the most elaborate. The house was purchased from Mrs. Scroggs' heirs in 1919 for use as an orphanage and day school. Four additions were subsequently made to the house, of varying quality and architectural interest but continuing the original use of materials and leaving the main facade and ornate interiors intact.

Margaret E. Kerstetter, the future Mrs. John B. Scroggs, married James A.

☒ See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 2

Cruise in Wyandott, Kansas (the present Kansas City, Kansas) on May 3, 1864. She was born in Stark County, Ohio on February 1, 1843, the third child of Jacob and Elizabeth (Shenberger) Kerstetter. Cruise was born in Albany, New York on February 7, 1839, the son of Maurice and Catherine (Landers) Cruise. He came to Kansas in the period just before the Civil War. Despite his youth, the 23-year-old Cruise was elected Clerk of the District Court for Wyandott County in 1862, and held that position together with the related office of Register of Deeds for over ten years. He was also elected to the office of City Clerk in 1866, 1867, 1868 and 1869. The simultaneous holding of multiple offices was highly unusual, particularly for a young man still in his twenties, and would seem to reflect favorably on both his abilities and his political skills.

James and Margaret Cruise eventually had five children: Eugene C. (born 1865), Maurice M. (born 1867), Chauncey F. (born 1869), Emma (born 1870), and Delia (born 1872). Chauncey died in infancy, and Eugene as a young man of 24. The location of the Cruise house is uncertain. There is some indication that it may have been on the site of the present house and was at least partially incorporated into the new structure, but if so, no trace of the first house is now visible. Unfortunately, there are no city directories or insurance maps available for the period prior to 1887, and the earliest water permit of record for the Scroggs house/St. John's Orphanage complex dates from 1956.

James A Cruise died on May 19, 1873, at the age of 34. His position as Clerk of the District Court was filled by G. W. Betts. Two years later, on

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 3

June 1, 1875, the widowed Margaret E Cruise married prominent local attorney John B. Scroggs.

John B. Scroggs was born in Canton, Ohio on November 24, 1838. After a public school education, he read for the law in a law office in Bucyrus, Ohio, and was admitted to the Ohio bar. He eventually moved to Freeport, Illinois, where he was in partnership with Col. Thomas J. Turner. In 1866 he arrived in Wyandott, where he soon became one of the leading attorneys in the county. (It is interesting to note that he was the only non-Indian invited to speak at the Wyandot Indians' annual Green Corn Feast, held in Wyandott on August 15, 1868.) In his early years in the county, he was associated in his law practice with General Bartlett. Following their marriage, John B. Scroggs resided with Margaret and her children in the Cruise house. The couple had just one child of their own, John Eldon Scroggs, who was born on August 21, 1876, and died at the age of 6 months.

In 1887, after twelve years of marriage, John and Margaret Scroggs built what was to be one of the most prominent houses in the newly-consolidated city of Kansas City, Kansas. One source states that it was at least in part built in rivalry of the 1884 home of Luther H. Wood, a local attorney and real estate developer. The Scroggs chose as their architect John G. Braecklein, a young man of 21 who had just established his own practice. Braecklein's original design for the house still exists, in the archives of the Wyandotte County Museum. The ink and watercolor rendering of the main facade, labeled "Residence for Mrs. John B. Scroggs, Esq.," shows the house essentially as built but with

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 4

certain significant differences in the details.

The site of the new house consisted of six lots on the southwest corner of 4th Street and Ann Avenue, on the eastern slope of what was then called Splitlog's Hill, just two blocks south of what was then the heart of the downtown business district, and looking eastward over the whole broad confluence of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers. The city was expanding and growing in a building boom that encompassed both Kansas Citys, only to end in the Panic of 1893 and the resulting national business depression. Of the various large and distinguished residences that were built in Kansas City, Kansas during this period, the Scroggs house was perhaps the most elaborate (and is certainly so among the few remaining).

John and Margaret Scroggs lived comfortably in the house with her three surviving children. Around them, however, the neighborhood gradually changed. Much of the housing subsequently built on Splitlog's Hill (now called Strawberry Hill) was quite modest, intended to house railroad and packing house workers in close proximity to their places of employment. Following the packing house strikes of 1893, and particularly after the great 1903 flood, many of the residents on the Hill were Croatian immigrants from what later became Yugoslavia. In 1900, construction began on a church for a Croatian parish, St. John the Baptist at 4th and Barnett, just south of the Scroggs house. The one intervening residence became the church rectory. Designed by (and in part constructed by) the church's pastor, Father Martin Davorin Krmpotic, St. John's was completed in 1905.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5

In 1890, Margaret's daughter Emma Cruise married John E. McFadden, and the couple resided in the house with Emma's mother and step-father. John B. Scroggs died on June 28, 1899, at the age of 60. Margaret E. Cruise Scroggs survived him by seventeen years, dying on December 10, 1915. The house then passed to the McFaddens.

John E. McFadden was born on November 1, 1862 in Gananoque, Ontario, the son of Edward and Bridget (Malone) McFadden. Like James A. Cruise, his parents were Irish immigrants. The family moved from Ontario to Michigan, and in 1871 settled on a farm in Jackson County, Kansas. John McFadden attended Lane University in Lecompton, then taught school in Jackson County. In November, 1887, he entered a law office in Kansas City, Kansas to further his study of the law. He was admitted to the Kansas bar in 1889, and following his marriage entered into a partnership with his father-in-law. John and Emma McFadden subsequently had one daughter, Margaret Scroggs McFadden, born on November 28, 1892. Margaret grew up in the Scroggs house, and in turn was married there in 1916 to T. P. Palmer.

As a result of the world-wide influenza epidemic of 1918-19, many children in the St. John the Baptist parish were orphaned. Father Krmpotic began making arrangements to organize a day nursery and orphanage for children who had lost one or both parents, to be placed under the care of the Sisters of St. Francis of Christ the King. John McFadden had become good friends with his next-door neighbor, Father Krmpotic, and he told the priest that he would be interested in selling the Scroggs house. The purchase was subsequently arranged on August

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6

15, 1919, by Sister M. Bonaventure, superior of the order, for the amount of \$15,400. This was probably only a third or less of the house's actual value, but still a substantial sum for the parish. The Sisters supplied a \$3,000 down payment and \$12,000 was raised in the parish, including a \$1,000 donation by Father Krmpotic. St. John's Orphanage was solemnly blessed by the Right Reverend John Ward, Bishop of the Leavenworth Diocese, on Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 1919.

The first children to be admitted to the day nursery were Mary, Barbara, and Helen Fabac, who had lost their mother to tuberculosis. They were joined in August, 1920 by two Polish children whose mother had abandoned them. The first actual orphans to be admitted to the home, on November 25, 1920, were Kate, John, Anne and Helen Sushan. The initial staff consisted of a housemother, Sister M. Benigna, a cook, Sister M. Emiliana, and Sister M. Julia in charge of the laundry, while two eighth grade girls from the adjacent St. John the Baptist School, Mary Simunjak and Anne Tomasich, helped with the children. Despite the change in use, the Sisters maintained their beautiful house with only minimal alterations inside and out. And as enrollment grew, various additions were carried out but always with the least possible impact on the fabric of the original house.

The first addition came in 1922, to the west of the service wing on the rear of the house. This addition contained quarters for the children: dormitories, dining room, kitchen, laundry, and a nursery. Erected at a cost of only \$10,164, it left the original house free for use as the Sisters' quarters, thus helping in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7

the preservation of the original interiors. The cornerstone for this first addition was blessed by Father Krmpotic on July 23, 1922.

In 1924 a small chapel was added to the north end of the original service wing. A garage was located on the ground floor and a day room on the second floor, with the chapel proper on the first floor. This addition was blessed on June 29, 1924.

It soon became evident the the new chapel was woefully inadequate for the orphanage's needs. Plans were consequently initiated for a much larger chapel to be built to the north of the front part of the house. In addition to a larger chapel, the new extension contained a dining room and bedrooms for the Sisters, a new girls' dormitory, and a playroom for the children. The second and third additions were almost certainly architect-designed, although by whom is not presently known. It is possible that the architect was Henry W. Brinkman of Emporia, who did a great deal of work for the Leavenworth Diocese in the 1920s and '30s. The cornerstone for the new chapel was laid on December 3, 1925. Completed at a cost of \$23,540, the latest addition to the orphanage was blessed by Monsignor Krmpotic¹ on July 4, 1926.

A fourth and final addition was begun on June 2, 1929. This was placed at the southwestern corner of the property, adjacent to and expanding the functions of the original dormitory wing. The new addition was completed on February 14, 1930, at a cost of only \$6,886. Monsignor Krmpotic provided the materials and supervised the construction, as he had done with St. John the Baptist Church some

¹ Father Krmpotic was elevated to the rank of Rt. Rev. Monsignor by Bishop Ward on December 3, 1922.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8

twenty-five years before. Such continued expansion was necessary, as by 1931 the orphanage cared for sixty-eith children.

The only further expansion at St. John's Orphanage came in the form of additional outdoor play area for the children. In January, 1935, the home just to the west of the orphanage at 415 Ann Avenue was purchased for \$2,775. It was demolished, the ground leveled, a retaining wall built and a fence installed for less than \$500.

Prior to 1940, the orphanage (now called St. John's Children's Home) had operated on an ad hoc basis. On August 9, 1940, the home received its first license from the Kansas State Board of Health, and was authorized to care for 70 children. Thereafter, the licensed number of children varied from year to year, but there was no apparent diminishment of need. In 1954 a second house to the west, at 419 Ann Avenue, was purchased for \$5,000. Again the house was demolished and the ground leveled, this time to provide a playground for the day nursery children.

With this final addition the property reached its present size. In 1958, all of the houses to the east of 4th Street were demolished for the construction of I-70 highway. St. John the Baptist parish suffered a serious loss, as many long-time residents of the Strawberry Hill neighborhood were forced to move elsewhere. (Thirty-six years later, this wholesale destruction is still recalled with pain and anger.)

Some interior remodeling of the children's quarters at the home was carried out in 1959, with Joseph B. Shaughnessy, Sr. as architect, and further changes

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 9

were carried out in 1960. In 1961, the home was tuckpointed, the interior of the chapel remodeled, and a number of lesser improvements were undertaken as well. But despite these efforts, the 1960's saw the beginning of a steady decline in the number of children that St. John's Children's Home served.

After many years of service the home was finally forced to close, its functions usurped by different programs and changing times. In 1986, the Scroggs house and related properties were acquired by the Strawberry Hill Ethnic Cultural Society, Inc. The Society was formed to promote and preserve the ethnic heritage of the Strawberry Hill community, operating the home as the Strawberry Hill Museum and Cultural Center. The original Scroggs house, never significantly altered, is being restored with great care as an historic house museum, including original furnishings obtained from the descendents of Margaret Cruise. The remainder of the former orphanage includes museum exhibits of Croatian and Strawberry Hill history and artifacts, a gift shop, and a cultural center with a wide variety of community-oriented activities. Undertaken with sensitivity, foresight and careful planning, the activities of the Society would seem to assure that the Scroggs house and St. John's Orphanage will continue to enhance Kansas City, Kansas with its presence for many years to come. In furtherance of this, the St. John's Orphanage was approved for designation as a Kansas City, Kansas Historic Landmark by the City Council on September 27, 1990.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Baldwin, Sara Mullin (editor). Who's Who in Kansas City. Hebron, Nebraska: Robert M. Baldwin Company, 1930.

Braecklein, J. G., documents on file, Harry M. Trowbridge Collection, Archives, Wyandotte County Historical Society & Museum.

Braecklein, J. G. "Front Elevation: Residence for Mrs. J. B. Scroggs, Esq." Unpublished drawing, Archives, Wyandotte County Historical Society & Museum. Noted in the architect's own hand as, "First Commission received by J. G. Braecklein."

Braecklein, J. F. Portfolio of Photographs, elevations and plans of buildings and homes in Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas. Kansas City: self published, 1901.

☒ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .75 acres

UTM References

A

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

B

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

C

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

D

Zone	Easting	Northing
------	---------	----------

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1 through 10, Block 153, Wyandotte City, a subdivision in Kansas City, Wyandotte County, Kansas.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes all extant property historically associated with St. John's Orphanage.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Larry K. Hancks/Principal Planner

organization Planning and Zoning Division, City of K.C.K. date August 5, 1994

street & number 701 North 7th Street telephone (913) 573-5750

city or town Kansas City state Kansas zip code 66101

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

City directories for Kansas City, Kansas, 1887-88 et seq.

Greenbaum, Susan D. et al. Strawberry Hill: a neighborhood study.
Kansas City, Kansas: City of Kansas City, Kansas, 1978.

"History of St. John's Home, Kansas City, Kansas, 1919-1967." Kansas
City, Kansas: no date (c. 1967). Unpublished paper in the possession
of the Strawberry Hill Ethnic Cultural Society, Inc.

Hopkins, G. M. A Complete Set of Surveys and Plats of Properties in
Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. Philadelphia: G. M.
Hopkins, C. E., 1887.

Morgan, Perl W. History of Wyandotte County, Kansas and Its People.
2 vols. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911.

Obituary, J. G. Braecklein, The Kansas City Star, October 8, 1958: 2F.

Personal files and recollections of Thomas Cruise Palmer, son of
Margaret McFadden Palmer.

St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, Kansas City, Kansas, 1900-1975:
Diamond Jubilee. Kansas City, Kansas: 1975.

Sanborn Map Company, The. Insurance Maps of Kansas City, Kansas.
4 vols. and index. New York: Sanborn Map Company, 1931.

Wyandotte County and Kansas City, Kansas. Historical and Biographical.
Chicago: The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1890.