

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name The Hermitage
other names/site number Adams, John Ottis and Winifred Brady, Home and Studio

2. Location

street & number 650 East 8th Street N/A not for publication
city or town Brookville N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Franklin code 047 zip code 47012

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 36CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

The Hermitage
Name of Property

Franklin IN
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building
- district
- site
- structure
- object
- landscape

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	1	buildings
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
5	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

1

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional

EDUCATION: School

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC: Hotel

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Bungalow/Craftsma

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: METAL: Steel

other: GLASS

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
removed from its original location.
a birthplace or grave.
a cemetery.
a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
a commemorative property.
less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ART

Period of Significance

c1898-1927

Significant Dates

c1898

1910

1913

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Adams, John Ottis; Adams, Winifred Brady

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Adams, John Ottis

Steele, Theodore Clement

Steele, Brandt

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository:

The Hermitage

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 6.06 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

16	671760	4365360
Zone	Easting	Northing

2

Zone	Easting	Northing

3

Zone	Easting	Northing

4

Zone	Easting	Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martha J. Shea, owner and Paul Diebold

organization _____ date 03/18/2003

street & number 650 East 8th Street telephone 765/ 647-5182

city or town Brookville state IN zip code 47012

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Martha J. Shea

street & number 650 East 8th Street telephone 765/ 647-5182

city or town Brookville state IN zip code 47012

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section 7 – Description

The Hermitage stands on the banks of the East Fork of the Whitewater River at the end of 8th Street on the outskirts of Brookville, Indiana. The property is bounded on the north and east sides by the remnants of a levee built after the Flood of 1913, on the south by 8th Street, and on the west by Market Street. The site slopes up gently from the Whitewater's wooded banks to a small ridge where the home was built. The grade changes dramatically to the rear of the house, making a full two and one-half stories of floor space where the front section on the rise is one and one-half stories. Resources include: the site (as used by the resident artists for inspiration, also including a remnant of an earthen levee built after the 1913 flood and brick walks); the house; a c.1900 gazebo; a c.1900 pergola; and an outhouse. All these contribute to the heritage of the property. The only non-contributing building is a c.1946 two-car garage.

James Speer had built a house on this site in 1835. It was originally a one and one-half story, weatherboarded house with a gable roof, ridge line running north and south. Cedar shingles covered the roof. There were dormer windows; three on the east slope and one on the west slope. Portions of the framing and shell of this c.1835 were recycled when J. Ottis Adams reconfigured the house in 1898. In the spring of 1913, flood waters rushed down the Whitewater Valley. The rear ell and the north studio were heavily damaged, however, the front rooms, porch, south studio and pergola / gazebo survived. Adams rebuilt the ell and north studio in the same year.

Exterior:

From the c.1835 house, Adams and Steele added artist studios to the north and south, constructed a large porch across the front, placed openings where needed, and substantially altered and enlarged any rear ell the house may have had. Various interior features, such as an original mantelpiece in the living room, were removed and replaced by a marbleized slate mantle during the 1898 reconfiguration. The exterior is covered in wood clapboard siding. The foundation is of coursed rubble limestone. The front section of the house is a side-gabled, one and one-half story mass, with a 112' long one story porch across the front. The porch is carried beyond the side walls four or five feet and in plan projects forward at the north and south ends, forming a block letter "I". The roof pitch breaks to cover the porch. The extending ends of the porch have hipped roofs. The porch deck is wooden and it rests on limestone footings. Seventeen square tapered wood columns support the porch; in the projecting sections of the porch, simple railings run between the columns to enclose it.

Under the porch, openings are functionally placed around interior uses. Doors to the studios are placed closer toward the center, leaving blank wall spaces on either end of the front elevation. The north section has a door and small stained glass window. Next, roughly centered, is a triple window group with three-light transoms. Each sash has decorative criss-cross Arts and Crafts style muntins arranged to form three large rectangular panes bordered by three small rectangles top and bottom (the leaded glass of this window is best seen on the interior). Next to the south is a transomed door, then two more windows, and finally, another transomed door leading to the south studio. The main roof of the front of the house is

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broadly pitched, covered in standing seam metal, and has close eaves. Four shed dormers break off of the main roof above the front wall. The dormers to the north have two twelve-light casement windows each. The southern most dormer is larger, with two pair of twelve-light casements flanking a single twelve-light. Roughly in the center of the roof, a brick, double flue chimney rises. The north wall also has an exterior chimney, with one flue.

The north elevation includes an exposed basement level with tripled large six-light casement windows. Aligning above it on the main floor is a pair of multi-paned casement windows (originally with wooden shutters). Centered immediately over this are three fixed sash. Each fixed window has muntins arranged to form panes into a center cross surrounded by square and rectangular panes. This entire grouping is not centered under the peak of the gable, since the roofline has a "catslide" to the west. A brick exterior chimney stands just west of the window composition; it is corbelled. West of the chimney, there is a basement window and a small first story multi-paned casement window with wooden shutter. The attic level gable end has a small casement window with wooden shutters.

The south elevation includes the opposite gable end and a view of the rambling ell. The front section has the projecting porch to the east, and centered on the wall, a triple group of multi-paned casement windows with multi-paned transoms. A pair of six-over-six double hung sash with shutters fill the top of the gable end. Balancing the porch, a small hip roofed projection that houses part of the south studio has a small window centered in the south wall. The west slope of the front gable roof has two shed dormers, the southern most one resembling the smaller front dormers. West of the hip roofed studio section and set well back from it, the ell rises to two and one-half stories. There is a massive shed dormer across most of the ell on this face. A variety of large paired casements, and smaller windows line this very informally designed wall. The shed dormer has three pairs of large casements, and a chimney at the southeast corner. The shed dormer at that point steps back to merge with a half gable that joins the ell to the front block. There is an additional shed dormer on top of the shed dormer on this elevation. A free-standing pergola with gazebo and stone piers runs parallel to the south face of the ell. Stone steps facing north lead down to the back yard, which is at a lower grade.

The west elevation is dominated by the gambrel-roofed two and one-half story ell. The south face of the ell has been described. The lower level is sheathed in a kind of asphalt shingle material. The end of the ell has an at-grade door, right beside the pergola steps, and a small square window. The lower corner of the ell has pairs of sixteen-light windows, set high on the wall. The first floor of the ell end has a bank of four one-over-one sash at the south edge. Centered in the end of the gambrel roof is a grouping of three casement windows. The attic level has a pair of small casement windows. The eaves are close and the "gable" end has short returns. Moving around to the north face of the ell, a square shaped room on each level adds a vertical, hipped roof mass projecting from the junction of the ell and main house. The basement level has multi-paned windows toward the west corner as described. Spaced well toward the house is another window, this being a one-over-one double hung. There are three similar double hung

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windows on the main floor above this section, one toward the west corner, and two centered over the eastern most basement window. Next, comes the tower-like section, projecting ten or twelve feet from the inside corner of the ell and main block. This section has a horizontal multipaned window on its west face and two vertical ten-light casement windows on the north face. The main level is an enclosed porch with large openings divided by mullion posts. Above this are vertical paired casements on the west face and three grouped multi-paned casements on the north elevation. The complex roof line of the ell begins with a double pitched gambrel style roof at the west end. There are two differing shed dormers, one to the west has paired windows and a chimney run through its east half. Awkwardly abutting it is a shed dormer that projects forward and whose walls drop down to break the cornice line, almost more like a jettied bay. It has a small horizontal window. Then, at the corner, is the hip roof of the tower-like section, and a shed dormer adjoining it.

The rear wall of the front part of the house is likewise rambling and functional in design. Moving north from the tower section on the basement level, are small casement windows, one diminutive four light, the next a twelve-light. A doorway follows, then a six-over-six double hung sash. Under the blank wall of the north studio are two one-over-one sash. The main floor has two transomed pairs of leaded casement windows fashioned from "bottle glass." Next is a double hung window with six over six sash. There is a building seam where the north studio adjoins. The studio's west wall is totally blank. The roof line pitches up and forms a wall dormer over the south half of rear wall. It has two paired twelve-light casements.

Interior:

The eclectic character of the exterior is also present inside the Hermitage. Floors are wood, walls are plaster on lath, and moldings are simple. However, moldings vary from fine quartersawn oak surrounds, to painted boards with square corner blocks. Baseboards are painted, and have a series of moldings at the top. Windows are leaded, bottle glass, art glass, or simple clear sash. The interior was functionally arranged to accommodate two working artists and their families. Rooms or features that appear to be placed randomly are in fact ingeniously placed to allow natural light to penetrate the interior. In some cases, the early 19th century roots of the place show, such as in the central hall configuration, or in mantelpieces. The overall effect is that of an individually developed Arts and Crafts bungalow.

The front door under the long porch leads directly into a stair hall. The stairs rise in a single run to an intermediate level landing. The balustrade is of painted wood and is molded in profile. Balusters are simple square profiled posts, of painted wood. Newels are very simple and square profiled, with molded cap. A skylight of leaded stained glass, lit by a rooftop skylight, illuminates the stairwell at the intermediate landing.

Right of the stair hall, is a den, lit by triple windows, the panes, as mentioned in the exterior description, are formed into three large rectangles. Clearly visible from the interior is the leaded work of these

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windows, the transoms having interlocking round arches topped by circles. The main windows' large rectangles have ogee arches, the bottom small panes, circles. When raised, the ogee arches and interlocking arches form hearts – the window was a wedding gift to Winifred Adams from her husband, artist J. Ottis Adams in 1898. The surround is painted and there are raised panels below the windows. There is a c.1835 mantelpiece on the north wall of the den, and a large cased opening leading to the library. The library has a focal point of west-facing paired and transomed casement windows of leaded amber “bottle glass” with oak surround and with an inglenook built-in bench of oak beneath it. The transom “bottle glass” is grouped to form quatre foils set into roundels and trefoils set into ogee arches. Adams designed the oak shelving, built-in cupboards and a built-in desk installed in 1898 in this room.

Passing back through the front stair hall and moving to the south, one reaches the living room. The living room has simple painted wood surrounds. The east wall has two symmetrically placed double hung windows with painted surrounds and panels below. On the south wall is a marbleized slate mantelpiece installed in 1898, with fireplace. A significant focal point in this room are the French doors with transom leading to the south studio. The leaded art glass for the doors was designed in about 1898 by Brandt Steele, son of artist T.C. Steele. The glass is Art Nouveau / Arts & Crafts in style, with a lower motif of stylized floral patterns, a central portion of amber opalescent glass with “stem,” leading to an overscaled flower in bloom. The transom has leaded lancets with irises at the top of each arch.

A large cased opening connects the living and dining rooms. Moldings are painted in the dining room. The south wall has an original (c.1835) wood mantelpiece and fireplace, with window seat just west of it. The windows are casements with transom, the bench has cushions and its wood front skirt board is painted wood. The north wall likewise has a bench, this with fixed multi-paned windows spanned by a large multi paned transom. These windows steal light from the screened-in porch and bring it to the interior. A short hall behind the dining room leads to stairs, a laundry room, and to the west, the kitchen. The kitchen was reconfigured in 1980, including elimination of a pantry, new cabinets, and new finishes. The laundry room had been a china closet.

The first floor studios are unusual spaces, completely suited to the needs of artists of the period. Entry to the south studio is via the Brandt Steele-designed French doors, or, from the front porch there is a door directly into the room. This eighteen by thirty foot room was added to the house in 1898, specifically for studio space. The south studio has a large bank of windows facing south, and one small window on the west wall (to avoid crossing light). Each studio room has high ceilings lined with beaded edge beams. On the exterior, some windows to this room that appear to merely have shutters drawn are in fact walled over completely on the interior. There is a set of enclosed stairs on the north wall.

The north studio is entered from the previously mentioned library. It also has a small foyer room at the southeast corner, with direct entry from the front porch. The foyer room has a small art glass window facing onto the porch, designed by Adams. Moldings are painted wood. The opening into the studio has

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a perforated board under the lintel. The north wall of the north studio has the five window grouping described on the exterior, with three windows over two. There is one multi-paned window to the west of these. The ceiling also admits light via a wooden frame indirect skylight, which in turn admits light from a skylight in the roof of the attic above. At the southwest corner of the room, doors lead to a hall which leads to stairs, either up to the attic or down to the basement.

Reaching the second floor from the front stairs intermediate landing gives the visitor many choices of direction. From the landing, stairs double back 180 degrees to reach an upper hallway, while another flight leads north to reach a bedroom. A broad set of steps leads west to a hall in the ell. Finishes on the upper floors are simple: painted surround boards, painted doors and carpeted floors with the old wooden flooring underneath.

Across the east (front) of the house, are the rooms lit by double casement dormers. The northernmost room is unfinished attic space, yet it is well-lit with dormers and a skylight to illuminate the studio below it. Next to the south is a bathroom, with fixtures installed in 2000, in a former bedroom. This room was within the original c.1835 house. A landing divides the bath and a bedroom to the south. This south bedroom has a full dormer window, and one-third of a dormer to the south. The other two windows of this larger dormer light a stairway and the bedroom over the south studio.

Moving back toward the ell, a square hall opens to three bedrooms and a bathroom. Following the 1913 flood, this ell was substantially rebuilt and these upper bedrooms were added. Each bedroom has casement windows, designed to fit into a slot in the sill, but when pulled up, the hinges allow them to swing open. The bathroom was added to this floor in 1913 as part of the reconstruction of the house.

Outbuildings / grounds:

Pergola / Gazebo: A pergola of six square stone piers eight feet high, with three foot high walls of basketweave-laid brick connecting the bases of the piers, is on the south side of the house. It is a separate, free-standing structure. An overhead wooden shelter of open beams and joists runs atop the piers. The bricks are stamped AF&S for Anthony Fries and Sons, a local brick works destroyed in the 1913 flood. The pergola terminates at its west end with a hip roofed gazebo. Low stone walls encircle three-fourths of the gazebo area, which is supported on five posts. Lattice work encloses the gazebo and a small cupola sits atop the pyramidal hip roof. The pergola / gazebo was built in about 1900.

Garage: Built in 1946, the garage is too recent to be considered contributing. It stands west of the gazebo. A gravel drive running north – south off of a curving drive on the south edge of the property serves the garage. It is a twenty-two by twenty-six foot, wood framed, wood weatherboard sided building with a gable roof covered in fiberglass shingles. The south side has two overhead doors. The west and east walls have double hung windows, one each, and the north side has two. The northeast corner has a personnel door with wooden gabled hood and a small concrete slab under it. The west side of the garage

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has a shed addition at a lower grade. The addition has multipaned windows on the south, west and north sides and door on the south.

Outhouse: There is an outhouse located just off of the southwest corner of the garage. It likely dates from around 1900. It is a four foot square, wood weatherboard sided structure with a gable roof. The door is on the east side. The siding is cut out above the door in the classic star and moon motif; on the west side, there is a star cut-out. The interior accommodates two seats.

Section 8 – Statement of Significance

The Hermitage is historically significant for its role in the Hoosier School art movement, and especially for its close, personal connection to two of the movements' best remembered artists, J. Ottis and Winifred Adams. The Hermitage meets National Register criterion A due to its connection to the Indiana art scene, and Criterion B for its association with both J. Ottis and Winifred Adams. J. Ottis Adams and fellow painter T.C. Steele "discovered" the home in 1897; the two remodeled the house in 1898, and the Adamses repaired it following the Flood of 1913. J. Ottis continued to paint here until his death in 1927, Winifred Adams lived here and in Indianapolis until 1945.

The Cultural Significance of the Hoosier School Art Movement

Judging from the prevailing cultural attitude of most mid-nineteenth century Indiana towns, Indiana seemed to be an unlikely candidate to house a regionally acclaimed fine art movement. Most artists were itinerant painters from points east. They traveled between larger towns, hoping to garner commissions for portraits from wealthier residents. By the 1850s, some portraitists had settled in town. Indianapolis also attracted panorama artists, who created large, temporary murals for patrons who charged admission fees to the public.

By the 1870s, a native-born generation of artists was maturing in Indiana. The capital city was becoming a center of German culture as those who sought better times in the United States were at last prospering. Social clubs, music performances and new architecture were changing the image of Indianapolis. Many of Indiana's most promising artists, T.C. Steele, William Forsyth, J. Ottis Adams, and Otto Stark, had met at art gatherings, or at Herman Lieber's art and framing studio on Washington Street. The five decided to study at the Royal Academy in Munich. They arranged financing from the city's leading businessmen, and set to depart in 1880. Most sought funds in return for copies of masters they would see in Europe, others received donations.

At this time, the art schools of Europe focused on a rigid hierarchy, with figural, often allegorical, work being the most prized. Landscapes, genre scenes and still lifes were usually considered to be lesser subjects, though English landscape painters of the late 18th / early 19th centuries, and the acclaim of the Barbizon School in France had begun to legitimize landscape as an equal art form to figural work. Greek

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and Roman classics were the foundation of the prevailing academic style, realism and tight rendering techniques were celebrated. The Royal Academy in Munich was second only the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in reputation and it drew many Midwesterners. The Hoosier painters hoped to follow the lead of artists like William Merritt Chase or Frank Duveneck. Both had Hoosier roots, studied at Munich, and became nationally known. The painting style in Germany featured tonality – use of contrasting dark and light to create tension and drama – in landscapes and figural work. While painters in the Munich style eschewed bold color, rich brush strokes enlivened their canvases.

It is not known exactly how or when the Hoosier painters encountered the revolutionary new art, Impressionism. Certainly, the movement was in full swing during their years in Munich. The first Impressionist show was April 15, 1874, at the studio of a photographer on the Boulevard des Capucines in Paris. A critic who attended the show responded disparagingly to Monet's painting, "Impression – Sunrise." The label stuck. The work of the artists in the show, including Degas, Renoir, and Monet, departed sharply from that of the academics. They used open brush strokes of nearly pure color, painted plein-air, often focused on landscapes, and rejected the classicism of the academies. It would have struck a cord with the Americans, who, like proto-Impressionist Gustave Courbet, always preferred to paint on location and appreciated landscapes over figural work. Otto Stark, a close friend of Adams' and later part-time resident of the Hermitage, painted "French Garden" in 1887, during his last year in Europe. The piece clearly owed much to the French Impressionists. Most Americans, artist or not, would know little of Impressionism until Frenchman Paul Durand-Ruel shipped hundreds of French works to New York for a major show in 1886.

As the five Hoosier artists returned to Indiana and went about their lives in the 1880s and 1890s, a seminal event put the Midwest in the national cultural limelight for the first time. The 1893 Worlds Columbian Exposition in Chicago focused attention on the architecture, art and culture of the "new" states. Exhibits of American art were held as part of fair, and pieces by Steele and Forsyth were included. In 1894, the Indianapolis Art Association hung an exhibit featuring T. C. Steele, William Forsyth, Otto Stark and Richard Gruelle in the Dennison Hotel in Indianapolis. A few months later, art critic Hamlin Garland of Chicago brought the exhibit to Chicago's Auditorium Building, and it included two works by Adams. The show, titled *Five Hoosier Painters*, brought critical acclaim to the movement.

The five continued to correspond, various members collaborating at different times, into the early 1900s. Forsyth and Adams started an art school in Muncie, and later taught together at the fledgling John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis. Adams, Forsyth and Steele were founding members of the Society of Western Artists in 1896. Steele and Adams together founded a studio at the Hermitage in Brookville in the 1890s, where Stark was a frequent guest. Acclaim for the Hoosier School from critics in Chicago and other major cities continued as the artists formed studios, and taught subsequent generations of artists in the American landscape tradition. By the time that Indiana was in the midst of the Great Depression, the original five Hoosier School artists had passed away. They left a cultural legacy throughout Indiana; in

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Muncie, Brookville, Brown County, and in Indianapolis, in Irvington, Broad Ripple, and Herron-Morton neighborhood, that continues to this day.

John Ottis Adams, Winifred Brady Adams and the Hermitage

J. Ottis Adams (1851-1927) is an acknowledged master of the Hoosier School, original member of five Indiana painters selected for the inaugural Chicago show that put the movement in the national limelight, and winner of prizes at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis, International Exposition of Fine Arts in South America (held at various nations' capitols, 1910), and various Indiana shows. J. Ottis is listed in *Who Was Who in American Art*, as well as two early art history references, *Art and Artists of Indiana*, and *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*.

Winifred Brady Adams (1871-1955) was also an acknowledged Hoosier master. She studied at the Drexel Institute, Philadelphia; the New York Art Students League and with Douglas Volk, H. Siddons Mowbray and William Merritt Chase. She exhibited at the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition, received prizes at a Richmond, Indiana show in 1913, at Herron Art Institute in 1926, Hoosier Salon, 1926 (in Chicago), Muncie Art Association, and a 1943 award once again at Richmond. She is listed in the initial (1926) publication of the *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors, and Engravers*, and in the 1916 edition of *Art and Artists of Indiana*, as well as the *Dictionary of Women Artists (1985)* and *Who Was Who in American Art (1985)*.

Several historic properties have a significant association with the Adamases: a lakeside cottage in Michigan used by the Adamases still survives, and Herron School of Art where Adams taught still exists as it was in his day. Homes in Muncie and Southport are unaccounted for. It appears that a small wooden office that J. Ottis Adams adapted for a studio in Ronnoc Park, New Smyrna, Florida, still survives. A later New Smyrna studio cannot be located. Winifred lived at both the Hermitage and in later years at 524 N. Central Court (extant) following J. Ottis' death. Yet of all these, the Hermitage was always the touchstone for the family.

The Hermitage also has significant ties to the lives of several Indiana artists that constitute a "pattern of history" under Criterion A: Theodore Clement Steele, and Otto Stark. In addition to these painters, the Adams' art school in the Hermitage provided instruction for the next generation of Hoosier School artists.

Adams demonstrated talent at an early age. He was born to a farming family in Amity, Johnson County, Indiana, in 1851. With meager instruction in the arts, Adams eventually found his way to Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana. In 1872, he was finally able to seriously study fine art. He abandoned Wabash College to study at South Kensington School, in London, England. As was the custom of the day, Adams spent a good deal of time copying masters in the great galleries, especially the pre-Impressionist works of Constable and Turner. Adams graduated from South Kensington in 1873, and eventually returned to Indiana. He set up a portrait studio in Seymour, Indiana, and also worked in

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Muncie, before joining the other Indiana artists in Germany for seven years. After returning to Indiana in 1887, Adams settled in Muncie, created an art school in the Little Block (demolished), and also taught in Fort Wayne. One of his students, Winifred Brady, had studied at Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, and took classes from William Merritt Chase in New York. The two would eventually marry. The break for Adams came in 1894, with the Chicago show of *Five Hoosier Painters*. He joined the Society of Western Artists, a group that promoted the arts in the Midwest, as a charter member in 1896, and became its president in 1908 and 1909.

Adams and Steele painted together in Europe; now the two began to plan summers painting at Indiana sites. In 1896, they chose rural, scenic Franklin County, Indiana. The artists returned in 1897 for the season. One day late in fall, Steele and Adams found what seemed to be an ideal location for a permanent studio on the edge of Brookville, Indiana. It was a settlement-era wood frame house, called the Butler House. After negotiations with Mr. Amos W. Butler, Steele and Adams bought the house in 1898. They added studios to either end, a large porch, and modified the interior so that it had separate apartments for each painter and their guests or families. Steele's wife, Libbie, named it the Hermitage due its tranquil setting.

Steele and Adams had intended the Hermitage to be a summer retreat, however, with Adams' marriage to Winifred Brady in 1898, it became more of a permanent home. Libbie Steele's death in 1899 to tuberculosis stunned Theodore. He did not settle into the Hermitage as planned, but continued to come in summers to paint. The Adams moved from Muncie and settled into their Brookville home, though winters were often spent in a downtown Indianapolis apartment. This suited Adams' dual interests in Indianapolis – the new Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis had hired him to teach painting – and in Brookville, where solitude encouraged his work. The Adamses soon bought a home at 2022 N. Pennsylvania, it was here that J. Ottis died in 1927. The home was demolished in the 1960s. The Adams bought Steele's share of the Hermitage in 1907, the year that Steele established his Brown County home and studio.

Winifred outfitted the south studio for her own use following Steele's sale, and continued to use it for many years. Here, she specialized in still life work, using family china and floral arrangements from the grounds and environs of the Hermitage. Like J. Ottis, under whom she studied before their marriage, her style was loose and Impressionistic. She selected subject materials that reflected light in different ways, so that her still life pieces were as challenging as her husband's landscapes.

In 1905, the Adams became linked to another Hoosier tradition, that of spending summers in Michigan. An enclave of Ball family members (to which Adams now belonged by marriage to Winifred) had built cottages on Lake Michigan. J. Ottis and Winifred were given Bluebell, a bright blue wood-framed cottage with art studio. J. Ottis Adams spent many summers painting the scenery around Leland. The

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cottage still exists. Recently, the owners placed an addition on it, but the original cottage and studio room remain much as when the Adamses visited.

The Hermitage became closely tied to the lives of several Hoosier School artists. Not only do works by Steele and especially Adams feature the home, its gardens, or grounds, but others came to paint here. Otto Stark was a frequent guest, for example. In 1910, Adams took up once again his idea of a private art school. He had resigned from the Herron faculty and hoped to spend more time at home. The Adamses offered room and board at the Hermitage for a fee, in addition to a seven week full summer course in landscape painting. Artfully printed brochures featured an etching of Brookville nestled in hills on the cover, and included photos of the house and scenic possibilities around it. They continued to offer the course for four years.

In the spring of 1913 came the disastrous flood that damaged the rear ell of the Hermitage, and washed away one of the studio rooms. John and Winifred decided to stay and rebuild the house. The house was complete again by the end of the year, in time for Adams to participate in another major event in the Indiana art scene. The City Hospital on the near west side of downtown Indianapolis had just completed a major expansion. To create a positive environment, hospital officials hired William Forsyth to manage installation of a series of large murals in the building. It was the largest public art project of its kind in the state, before the WPA Post Office mural project of the 1930s. Adams executed his share of the murals on canvas at the Hermitage, before their installation at City Hospital.

On doctor's orders, J. Ottis began to spend winters in Florida in 1915. In 1920, he and fellow painter Otto Stark rescued an old wooden office in an estate called Ronnoc Park, in New Smyrna, Florida for use as a studio. Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway reached this part of Florida in 1892, attracting seasonal settlers and, often, artists. A section of Highway 1 now cuts through the Ronnoc Estate, and the former studio building was moved back 10-15 feet, but still appears to exist at 603 ½ Faulkner Street. Adams returned for a number of years. In 1922, he built a new studio in nearby Coronado Beach (a city directory entry exists for a "John Adams Apts, home Flagler Ave., Coronado Beach"). Renting part of a home, or constructing additional rental space, was a common practice in this part of Florida at the time. The 1922 studio home likely survives, but there is insufficient evidence on its location. J. Ottis Adams continued his works in the Impressionist style, but always reflected specific locales, whether Michigan lake shores or woods, or palm tree studded scenes in Florida, or, the beauty of the Whitewater valley.

Adams died in 1927. Winifred continued to live in the Hermitage and carried on her own art career there. She remained until selling the property to Edward and Mary Rusterholz in 1945. Martha Shea bought the property in 1978, and today it is a bed and breakfast inn. When Ms. Shea bought the Hermitage, many original furnishings and belongings -- some visible in paintings by the Adamses -- remained in the house. They add to the integrity of feeling that the house conjures to present-day visitors.

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Section 9 – Bibliography

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Telephone interviews with Paul Diebold: Elizabeth (Bracken) Wiese (owner of Bluebell cottage), November, 2003; Caroline F. Brady, great niece of J.O. Adams, November, 2003; Susan Adams, granddaughter of J.O. Adams, November, 2003.

Section 10 – Geographical Data, Verbal Boundary Description

The following described real estate in the Town (now city) of Brookville, Indiana, to-wit: Beginning at a point which is on the North line of Eighth Street, and on the East line of Market Street, in said town, and running thence East along the North line of Eighth Street, a distance of 497.5 feet; thence North, 2 degrees West, 440 feet; thence North 66 degrees West, 322 feet; thence North, 20 feet; thence North 67 degrees West, 182 feet to the East line of Market Street, extended; thence South on said extended East line of Market Street, 660 feet, to the place of beginning, containing 6.06 acres, more or less, subject to applicable Planning and Zoning Ordinances, and to legal streets and alleys.

Boundary Justification

This is the historic property boundary. A city park surrounds the Hermitage on three sides.



CEDAR GROVE 4.7 MI.
HARRISON, OHIO 17 MI.

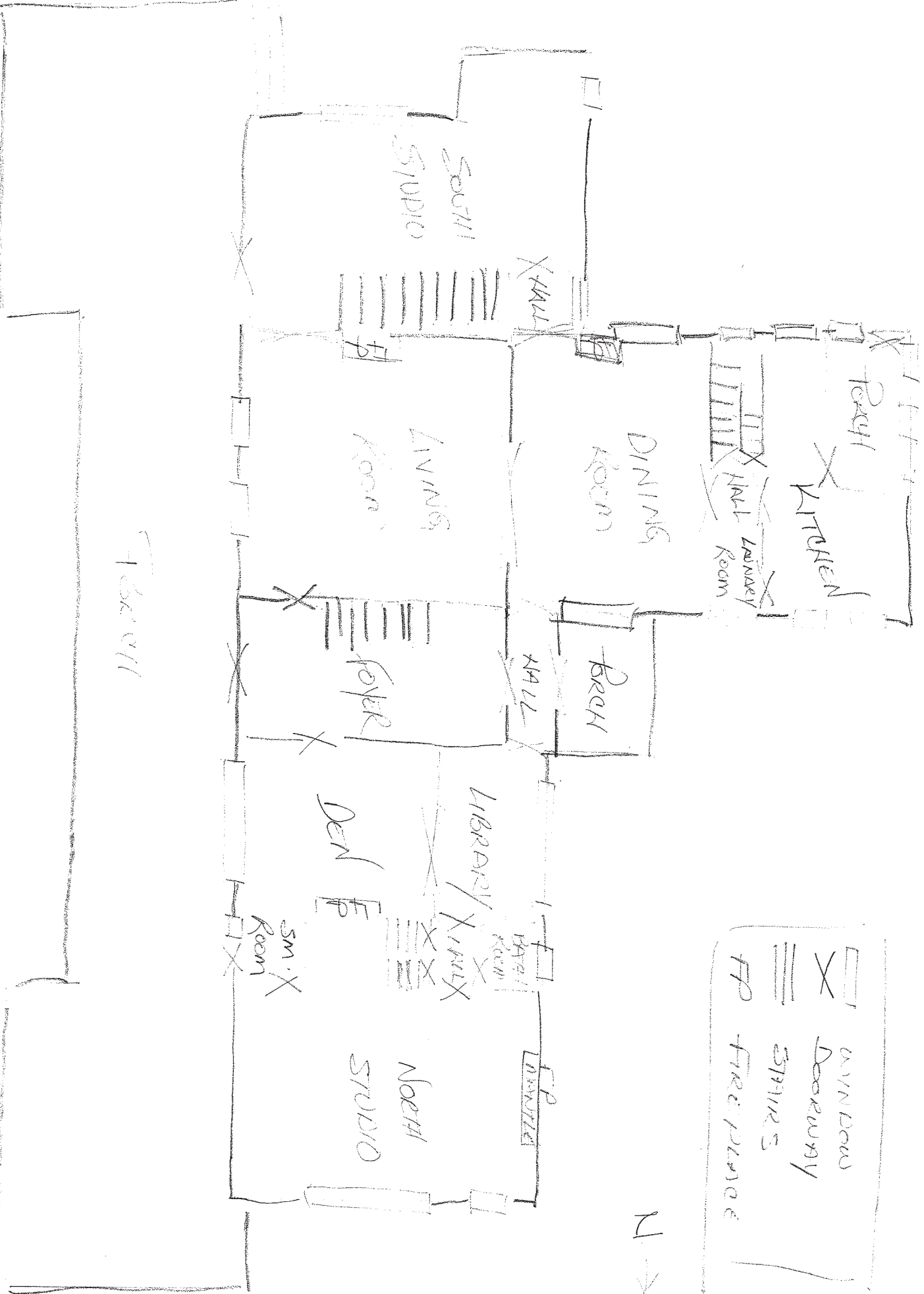
4364

25 / MOUNT CARMEL 7 MI.

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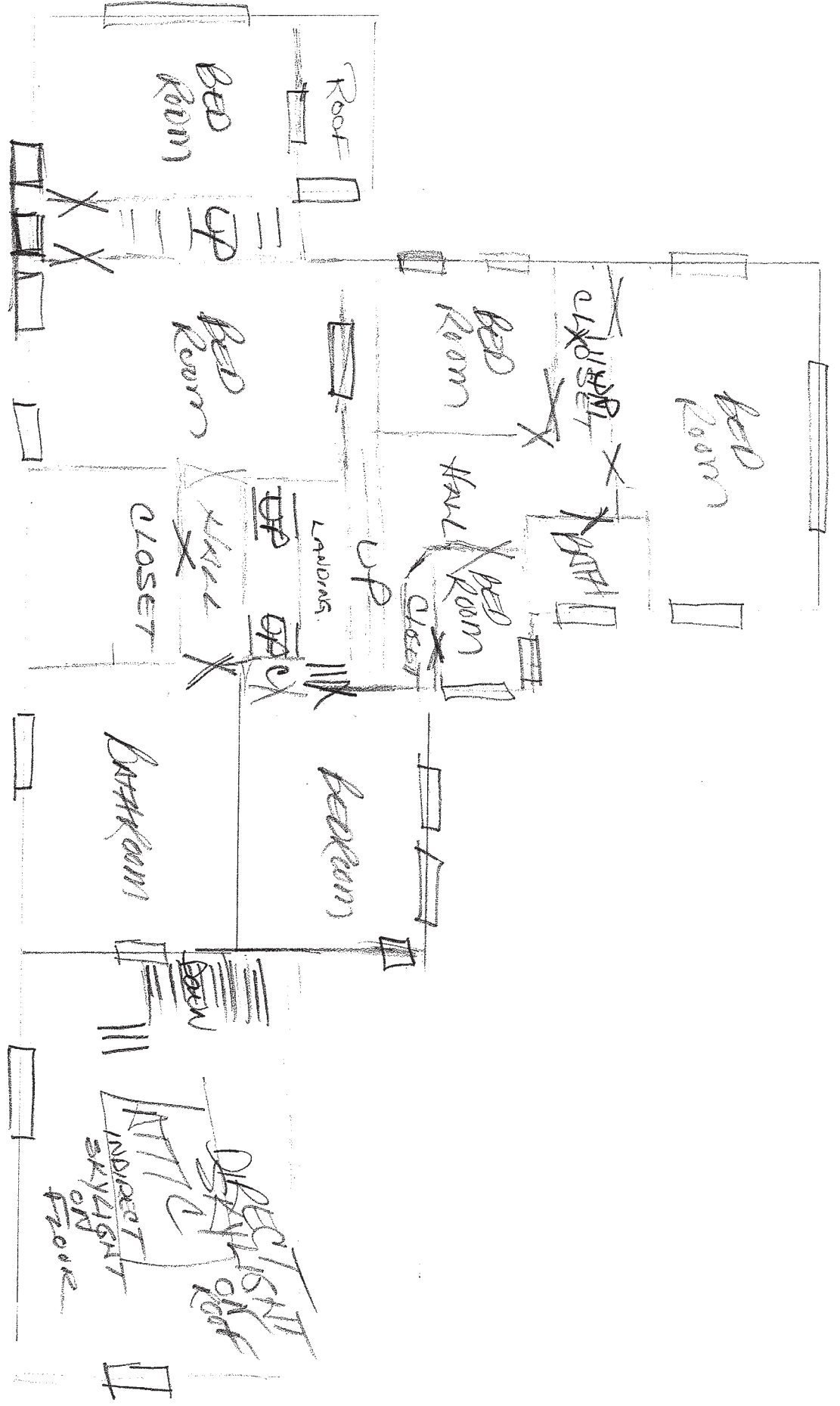
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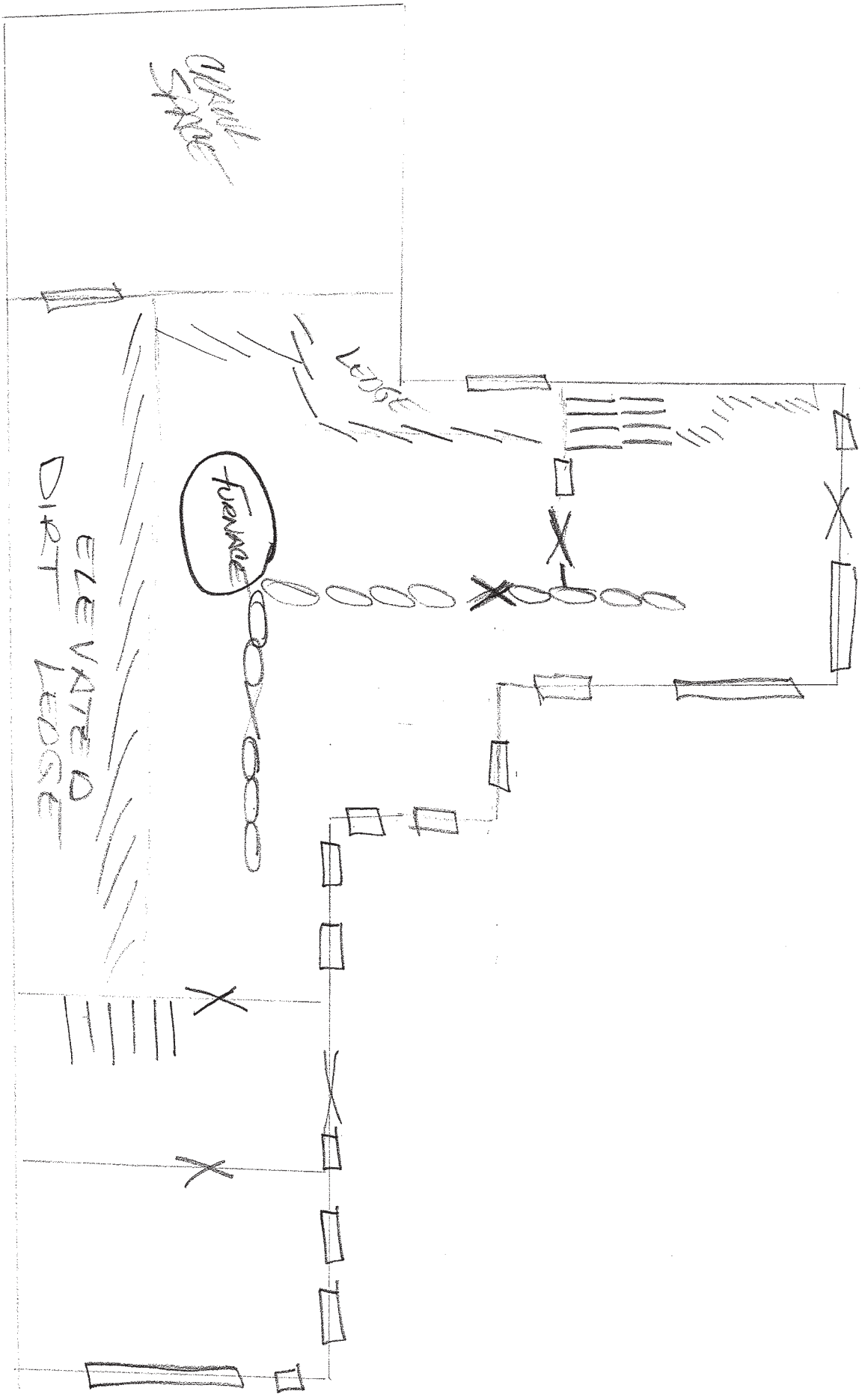


THE FURNITURE — 1ST LOOK

THE HERMITAGE

2ND Floor





THE LEAD BASE CASE MENU

