

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Crawford, West J., House
Other names/site number N/A
Name of related multiple property listing Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, TN
(Remove "N/A" if property is part of a multiple property listing and add name)

2. Location

Street & Number: 290 S Lauderdale Street
City or town: Memphis State: TN County: United States
Not For Publication: N/A Vicinity: N/A Zip: 38126

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 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:
 national statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A B C D

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting Official: **Date**

Title: **State of Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property:

WOOD: Weatherboard; BRICK; STONE; METAL
BRICK; ASPHALT

Narrative Description

The West J. Crawford House is a two-story Italianate residence located at the intersection of East Pontotoc Avenue and South Lauderdale Street in Memphis, Tennessee. The Crawford House was once a Contributing building to the Vance-Pontotoc Historic District (NR Listed 3/19/1980, Delisted 3/18/1987). Facing west on South Lauderdale Street, the West J. Crawford House was built in 1877. It is surrounded by residential and religious properties. The house's character-defining features include its irregular plan, brick veneer exterior siding, continuous concrete foundation, original arched hooded wood windows on the west, south, and north elevations, overhanging eaves, decorative brackets with detailed molding, dentil work, classical first-level wooden porch with Doric columns, iron balustrade, cornices with detailed molding, and a ca. 1905 stone foundation. The property includes one other Contributing resource, a ca. 1888-1897 two-story carriage house.

Site Features and Setting

The West J. Crawford house sits on a 0.268-acre grassy lot above street grade at the intersection of South Lauderdale Street and East Pontotoc Avenue. The house is primarily situated on an east/west axis. The façade (west elevation) faces South Lauderdale Street, and its south elevation faces East Pontotoc Avenue. A paved concrete sidewalk runs parallel to the façade and south elevation on South Lauderdale Street and East Pontotoc Avenue, respectively. The façade is accessed by a series of concrete steps and landings. Six

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concrete steps lead from the sidewalk to the first landing, with five more concrete steps leading from the first landing to the porch. The steps are flanked on either side by decorative wrought iron railing with floral/vine detailing. A U-shaped gravel driveway accesses the property on East Pontotoc Avenue. The driveway runs parallel to the rear (east elevation) and in front of the Carriage House. Four concrete steps lead up from the street level sidewalk to a poured concrete path. This path runs in a straight line and terminates at a poured concrete landing in front of the Carriage House's south elevation door. The Carriage House is located roughly forty feet northeast from the rear of the house. The Crawford House is bounded on the north by a vacant lot, to the east by trees and vegetation, to the south by East Pontotoc Avenue, and to the west by South Lauderdale Street. Mid-to-late-twentieth century single-family homes are located across the street to the south and west. Nearby National Register-listed properties include the Grace Episcopal Church (NR Listed 03/15/2004) to the south, Griggs Business and Practical Arts College (NR Listed 3/21/2023) to the southwest, First Baptist Church (NR Listed 03/15/2005) to the northwest, and the Universal Life Insurance Company (NR Listed 07/24/2007) also to the northwest.

WEST J. CRAWFORD HOUSE (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING) CA. 1877

The West J. Crawford House is a two-story Italianate townhouse with a continuous concrete foundation. The concrete foundation is exposed on the south, north, and east elevation. The foundation on the south elevation also contains decorative foundation vents. The roofs are covered in metal and gable throughout, with the exception of a flat roof portion on the northwest corner of the façade. All three chimneys are encased in stone. Windows are in vary sizes and double hung configuration but are original wood. All windows and trim on the south, north, east elevations are painted white, but the windows are painted black on the west elevation.

Façade (West Elevation)

The west elevation is clad in brick and capped by an irregular roofline. Concrete steps access a ca. 1905 full length Classically influenced wood porch sat upon a stone foundation and capped by a flat metal roof supported by four Doric columns. A decorative wrought iron balustrade with floral and vine detailing encloses the porch. Two metal vents are located in the stone foundation of the porch. The porch shelters a recessed entrance flanked on either side by decorative pilasters and crowned with overhead wood panels. The entrance is filled with double doors with aluminum niches. Two decorative alcoves and original metal milk delivery doors are also located within the entrance. Two woods, double hung, one-over-one light, segmental arch windows are located to the south of the main entrance. The windows are capped by an elaborate hood and sat upon stone sills.

Three windows are located on the second story. All are wood, double hung, one-over-one light segmental arch windows capped by elaborate hoods and sat upon stone sills. A decorative metal attic vent is located directly above the northernmost window. Decorative brickwork and a round metal attic vent are located above the two southernmost windows and beneath the roofline gable peak. Decorative brick pilasters flank the two windows. Italianate brackets and dentil work are visible on the roofline. The northernmost window and entrance are located beneath a flat roof section, while the two southernmost windows on the first and second floor are located beneath a gable roof section. Stone-carved cornices extend slightly from the façade. Two interior stone chimneys are positioned on the southern and northern ends of the segmented roof.

South Elevation

The south elevation sits upon a continuous concrete foundation and is capped by a gable roof. A watertable is visible and pierced at regular intervals by segmental arch openings filled with decorative metal vents. A flat

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roof, two story, three-sided bay projection is roughly located at the midway point of the elevation. There are six window openings on the first floor, with a further six window openings on the second floor above each first floor window. The westernmost first floor window is filled with a wood, double hung, two-over-two light, segmental arch window sat upon a stone sill and crowned by a single course decorative brick hood. The east and west windows of the bay projection feature the same window configuration, with the middle window infilled with brick. The two easternmost windows are filled with wood, double hung, four-over-four light segmental arch windows sat upon a stone sill capped with a double course brick segmental arch.

The first and second story are separated by a brick belt course. The westernmost second floor window reflects the first floor configuration. The west window of the bay projection is filled with a wood, double hung, two-over-two light, segmental arch window sat upon a concrete sill and crowned by a single course decorative brick hood. The central and east window of the bay projection match the first-floor configuration. The two easternmost windows are filled with wood, double hung, one-over-one light segmental arch windows sat upon a stone sill capped with a double course brick segmental arch. A brick belt course is located above the windows. Attic vents are visible above each window (above the belt course) with the exception of the second easternmost window. The vent above the central bay window has been infilled with brick, and the remainder of the vents are of decorative metal. A chimney pierces the roofline on the east end of the elevation. Italianate brackets and dentils are visible on the elevation's east end and bay projection. The stone-carved cornice is visible throughout the elevation.

East Elevation

The east elevation is considered the rear elevation and is front-gabled. The remnants of a parapet are visible on the southern half of the roofline. A square, brick chimney is also visible on this elevation. The continuous concrete foundation is not visible on the northern end but is visible on the southern end. The northern end has an enclosed back porch that is covered with weatherboard siding and wood lattice. The back porch was enclosed between 1924 and 1934 by the Carimi family. A set of three concrete steps leads up to a wood lattice door. Above the door is a shed roof wood overhang supported by two wood posts. A wood, double hung, one-over-one light segmental arch window with stone sill and a wood, double hung, four-over-four light window are located on the second story.

North Elevation

The continuous concrete foundation is not visible on the eastern end but is visible on the western end of the elevation. The eastern end of the roof is gabled while the western end is flat. The west end of the elevation is covered in brick, and dentil work and stone carved cornices are visible on the roofline. A single wood, double hung, two-over-four light segmental arch window with stone sill is located on the second story of the brick portion of the north elevation. The eastern end is clad in a mixture of materials. The first story is clad in wood board, and the second story is clad in weather board, composite siding, and wood lattice. The first story section is a continuation of the enclosed porch on the east elevation. A single, wood, double hung, two-over-two light window is located on the first story.

Interior

Unless otherwise noted, all interior walls and ceilings are covered with plaster except the kitchen, where the plaster was removed to expose brick siding. First level flooring consists of original Morado wood planks, while the antique wooden stairwells showcase painted black cocobolo wood planks. Second level flooring consists of original tongue-and-groove heart pine planks. Every room and closet have 10-foot original four-panel wood doors with mortised locks and porcelain silver doorknobs. Five original mantles can be found within the residence, each varying in character and style. Trim throughout is wood. Single-field, wood,

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stepped casings surrounding the doors and windows. Light fixtures are original, and each room is equipped with 19th-century push-button light switches.

First Level

The main entrance opens into a grand foyer with twenty-foot ceilings. The focal point of the grand foyer is the antique Victorian wooden stairwells, which ascend to the enclosed porch hallway and the second level. The stair rail is adorned with a Victorian Italianate newel post, featuring carved acorn top and spiral twist design carved wooden spindle balusters. A four-panel wood door with two light wood transom is located on the east wall of the foyer and opens into a half bath and laundry room. The laundry room features a four light, wood, oval window above the laundry machine on the south wall.

Four panel wood double doors lead from the foyer to the living room. Crown molding and decorative trim are located throughout. A fire place with wood mantle, metal firebox doors, and tiled flooring is located on the south wall. Chandeliers hang from stone molding on the plaster ceiling. Two, wood, six panel, pocket doors are located on the east wall and lead into the dining room.

Like the living room, crown molding and decorative trim are visible throughout the dining room. A fire place with wood mantle, carved metal firebox door and tiled flooring is located on the south wall of the dining room. Chandeliers with stone moldings hang from a plaster ceiling. A four-panel wooden door on the east wall of the dining room leads to a closet. Another four-panel wooden door on the east wall grants access hallway that showcases original butler's pantry cabinets and a transom window above.

The butler's pantry leads to the kitchen. The plater wall was removed sometime between 2011-2023. A four-panel door north wall in the northeastern portion of the room leads from the kitchen to the enclosed porch. A wood stairwell leads up to the second floor.

Second Level

The main staircase leads to a landing before bending back in a U shape to access the main second floor hallway. A four panel wood door with wood two light transom located on the first landing accesses an enclosed hallway. A wood, three panel, single light door is located on the north wall and accesses the back stairwell. Three wood steps access a wood, six panel door with a wood, two light transom on the south wall. This door leads into the southeast bedroom.

The southeast bedroom features a fireplace with wood mantle, carved metal firebox door, and tiled flooring. Exposed brick is visible above the fireplace. Three wood steps lead to a wood, four panel door on the west wall. This door accesses the master bathroom. The bottom portion of the bathroom wall is covered in wood vertical board bordered on the top by wood trim. An opening on the north wall accesses a small bathroom closet. A four-panel wood door on the west wall of the bathroom accesses the master bedroom.

The master bedroom features wide crown molding and a stone fireplace with carved metal firebox door and tiled flooring. A four panel wood door on the east wall accesses a closet, and a door on the north wall access the main second story hallway. The eastern wall is adorned with ornamental corner trim, accented by a decorative finial, and features a four-panel wooden door. This door accesses the den. Like the bedroom, the den features wide crown molding and a fireplace with wood mantle, carved metal firebox door, and tiled flooring. A wood four panel door on the north wall accesses the main second story hallway. Within the main second-story hallway, five wood panel doors are distributed. Two northern doors lead to two separate closets

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with plaster walls and wood trim, while the southern door leads to the master bedroom and den. Finally, there's one last door, leading to a bathroom with plaster walls and wood vertical board bordered on the top by wood trim, completing the ensemble.

CARRIAGE HOUSE (CONTRIBUTING BUILDING) CA. 1888-1897

The Carriage House is a two story, brick, metal gable roof, rectangular building with continue brick foundation. A one story shed roof addition constructed between 1888 and 1897 is located on the south elevation (façade). It is clad in brick and roofed in metal. All four windows are filled with wood, double hung, one-over-one light replacement windows sat upon brick sills. A replacement four panel metal door is centered on the elevation. Discolored bricks to the east and west of the main entrance indicate previous entrances that have been bricked up. Two, wood, double hung, two-over-two light windows crowned by segmental arch brick and sat upon stone sills are located on the second story of the façade. Cast iron bars are located in front of the windows.

A metal, six panel door is visible on the west elevation of the shed roof addition. Vertical vinyl siding is located in field above the doorway, between the shed roofline and the brick siding. A second metal six panel replacement door is located on the first story of the carriage house proper, north of the shed roof addition. It is crowned by two course segmental arch brick work. It is flanked on the north by a wood, double hung, one-over-one light window crowned by a decorative brick hood design and sat upon a stone sill. The same window configuration is located directly above the first story window on the second floor. A circular shape attic vent is visible just beneath the gable peak and is surrounded by decorative brick work.

The north elevation features two woods, double hung, one-over-one light windows sat upon stone and brick sills and capped by two course brick segmental arches. The westernmost window is flanked on either side by two openings filled with decorative cast iron vents. These vents are also sat upon stone sills and capped by two course brick segmental arches. Two, wood, double hung, two-over-two light windows are located on the second story, directly above their first story counterparts. They also rest on stone sills and are capped by two course brick segmental arches.

The east elevation showcases a round wooden window positioned just below the gable roof. Below that window is a one wooden, double-hung, two-over-two light window, adorned with a painted brick sill and capped by two-course brick segmental arch. Additionally, another wooden, double-hung, three-over-one light window, also features a painted brick sill and capped a two-course brick segmental arch. The shed addition is visible.

The carriage house is considered contributing because it embodies many of the same features of the Italianate style exhibited on the main house, including its brick veneer siding, original arch hooded wood windows, and concrete keystone ornamentations. The building was also present during the Period of Significance and was designed to complement the house and serve an essential function for the family.

INTEGRITY

The West J. Crawford House has a high level of integrity. The property remains at its original location, above the street grade of South Lauderdale and East Pontotoc Street, facing west on South Lauderdale. The setting has changed since the Period of Significance due to establishment of the public housing projects like Foote Homes and Cleaborn Homes and the demolition of neighboring historic structures. The area also suffered from suspected arson cases, destroying twelve landmark homes. These events disrupted the

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neighborhood's historical significance, severing the building's direct association with Millionaire Row, the esteemed neighborhood known for its Victorian mansions. However, the area remains primarily residential in nature, and many of the new residential constructions feature similar setbacks from the main roads. The West J. Crawford retains its integrity of materials, design, and workmanship, as shown by the retention of its character-defining features, including brick veneer siding, continuous concrete and foundation, original hood wood windows in various configurations, and classical first-level porch with Doric columns, overhanging eaves, dentil work, decorative brackets with detailed molding, and concrete keystone ornamentations. The contributing carriage house also retains historic features including concrete keystone ornamentations and hooded wood windows. Both buildings have retained its historic interiors and exterior. Despite the removal of two doors leading to the kitchen and the elimination of one plaster wall on the southern end of the kitchen between ca. 2011-2023, the updated roofing material ca. 1992, the installation of the enclosed porch between ca. 1924-32, and carriage house replacement windows between ca. 1924-32, these modifications have not impacted the physical characteristics that define the Italianate style. Due to the retention of important character defining features and materials, the West J. Crawford House property also retains its integrity of association and feeling.

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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.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C 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.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1876-1907

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Criteria Considerations

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

N/A

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The West J. Crawford House is locally significant under Criterion C in Architecture for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Italianate style. The house's character-defining features include its irregular plan, brick veneer exterior siding, continuous concrete foundation, original arched hooded wood windows, overhanging eaves, decorative brackets with detailed molding, dentil work, classical first-level wooden porch with Doric columns, iron balustrade, cornices with detailed molding, and stone foundation. The Period of Significance is ca. 1876- ca. 1907, beginning with the construction of the house and ending with the construction carriage addition. The West J. Crawford House is the only remaining Italianate example on Lauderdale Street and one of the last three in the formerly listed Vance-Pontotoc National Register Historic District. The West J. Crawford House meets the registration requirements for the Residential Properties type under the Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, TN, Multiple Property Documentation Form. The house also meets the Individual Historic Residences property type requirements under the Residential Development in Memphis, 1865-1950 historical context.

Narrative Statement of Significance

History of the West J. Crawford House

The first resident of 290 South Lauderdale Street was West J. Crawford. Born on November 1, 1844, in Vicksburg, Mississippi, Crawford moved to Memphis to seek his fortune. Crawford served in the Confederacy during the Civil War and married Annie Louise Thompson on November 11, 1874.¹ Following the end of Reconstruction, Crawford acquired undeveloped land on Lauderdale Street.² The neighborhood surrounding Lauderdale Street was known as "Millionaire's Row" and was occupied by wealthy and influential Memphians.³ The neighborhood consisted of a mixture of Italianate, Queen Anne, and Victorian Houses. Crawford constructed an Italianate-style residence on this tract of land between 1876 and 1877. He made several modifications during his residency, including adding a full length, classically influenced front porch in 1905 and constructing a carriage house on the east edge of the property between 1877 and 1888.⁴

Crawford became involved in the cotton industry while living at 290 South Lauderdale. A highly successful entrepreneur, he assumed the presidency of the Cotton Exchange in 1885-86. Three years later, he took the helm as the publisher of the newly established *Memphis Commercial*, leading a group of investors. Bringing on John M. Keating, the longtime editor of *The Appeal*, as his editor, he steered the newspaper through its initial years. However, by 1894, *The Appeal* faced financial turmoil due to overexpansion and fierce competition from five other Memphis newspapers, resulting in receivership. Seizing the opportunity, Crawford's group acquired the struggling newspaper and merged it with his own, forming *The Commercial Appeal*. Under his guidance, the newspaper not only survived but thrived, expanding its editorial services and production facilities. From 1894 to 1923, Crawford remained the lead owner and founder, overseeing the publishing company. Despite his significant contributions, his enduring legacy shared the stage with C. P. J.

¹ *The Book of Three States: Notable Men of Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee*. (Memphis: Commercial Appeal Publishing Company, 1914), p. 7; "West James Crawford," *Find A Grave*, 2010, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/55448835/west-james-crawford>.

² Shelby County, Tennessee, Deed Book 0113. 1876. p. 225.

³ *The Commercial Appeal*, Nov 10, 2002. p. 70.

⁴ Jones, Jarayda J. Oral interview by Esosa Osayamwen. April 22, 2023.

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Mooney, the managing editor often regarded as the greatest newspaperman in Memphis history.⁵ Crawford departed the house in 1914 and moved to a Colonial Revival property on the NW corner of Madison and Parkway (part Overton Parkway Historic District, NR 11/18/1999).⁶

West J. Crawford House on Lauderdale Street remained vacant until it was purchased by Santina Carimi, an Italian immigrant, in 1924. Santina Virga Carimi resided in the property until her death on January 24, 1977.⁷ Upon her passing, the property was inherited equally by her daughters, Lucille Carimi and Jennie J. Carimi. Lucille, also known as Lucia Carimi, passed away on October 9, 1993, leaving her share of the property to Jennie J. Carimi, who remained the sole owner until she died in 2010. Lucia, a devout Catholic, held a special place in her heart for her family's property, which they called home for 100 years. The only notable changes made to the property throughout their ownership were replacing the roofing material in 1992 and the enclosure of a back porch between 1924 and 1934.⁸

During the Carimi tenure, the West J. Crawford House was listed as a contributing resource to the Vance-Pontotoc National Register Historic District in 1980. Unfortunately, the Vance-Pontotoc Historic District was delisted in 1987 following the destruction and demolition of the neighborhood's homes. Several homes were destroyed by fires under mysterious circumstances in 1982. Jennie Carimi recalled smelling smoke and fearing that her house was on fire, but she soon discovered that the abandoned house across the street was burning. Twelve historic homes burned down, and residents suspected arsonists.⁹ Once prosperous and filled with Italianate townhouses and Queen Anne homes, the neighborhood continued to deteriorate. Although the historic buildings were not spared from random fires, Jennie Carimi remained committed to the neighborhood and her home, hoping others would join her in improving the area. There were efforts to clean up and preserve the space, but they were unsuccessful in the long term. As a result, more mansions were demolished or fell into disrepair. Jennie spent her entire life in her ancestral home, and some speculate that two robberies may have confined her to the residence. She lived alone until her passing in 2010.¹⁰

The current owners of the property acquired the Crawford House in 2010.¹¹ The current owner, hailing from South Memphis, shared that she and her husband have ancestral ties to the area. In a bid to reconnect with their heritage, they decided to move from the suburbs back to their "roots." The owner's mother's family lived just two blocks away until her mother turned eight. Her great-grandparents resided one block to the west, at Pontotoc & Fourth, and her great-great-grandparents lived two blocks away on Tate St. Driven. To

⁵ "Crawford Supervised Growth Era." *The Commercial Appeal*, April 21, 1991, Memphis, Tennessee, p. 126.

⁶ *R.L. Polk's & Company 1914 Memphis City Directory*, 1914, p.1650; "Thank you, Crawford-Howard Foundation." *Friends for Our Riverfront*, 2006, <http://www.friendsforourriverfront.org/2006/01/thank-you-crawford-howard-foundation.html?m=0>.

⁷ Shelby County, Tennessee, Deed Book 0113. 1876. p. 225..

⁸ Barbara K. Renfrow, "Colonel West J. Crawford Estate House: Later Occupied by the Carimi Family Approximately 100 Years," *The Keystone* 12, no. 3, 2011.

⁹ Charles Goodman, "Vance-Pontotoc Lives with Arson," *Memphis Press-Scimitar*, April 7, 1982.

¹⁰ Renfrow, "Colonel West J. Crawford Estate House: Later Occupied by the Carimi Family."

¹¹ Shelby County, Tennessee, Deed Book 0113. 1876. p. 225..

The Crawford House was determined eligible by the Tennessee Historical Commission in 2019 following Section 106 review. The Jones family was not informed of their determination by the consultant. After learning about the property's eligibility, the owners sought National Register listing.

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make a positive impact, the Jones family settled in the area to improve the neighborhood.¹² Under the Jones, two doors leading to the kitchen was removed and one plaster wall on the southern end of the kitchen was eliminated between ca. 2011-2023. The couple intends to restore the aging building.

Architectural Significance

The West J. Crawford House is locally significant under Criterion C in Architecture for embodying the distinctive characteristics of the Italianate style. The house's character-defining features include its irregular plan, brick construction, arched hooded wood windows, overhanging eaves, decorative brackets with detailed molding, dentil work, classical first-level wooden porch with Doric columns, iron balustrade, cornices with detailed molding, and stone foundation. The carriage house is considered contributing to the property's significance because it was designed to complement the main house. Prominent features of the carriage house include its brick construction, arch hooded wood windows, and concrete keystone ornamentations.

The Italianate style was a popular architectural trend that emerged in the 1830s and continued well into the 1870s. It represented a departure from the formal classical ideals of the past and embraced the romanticism of the Picturesque movement. As a form of Victorian architecture, it was characterized by a withdrawal from classical models and a shift toward texture, color, and asymmetry. The era was marked by a range of unconventional and complex styles that emerged as a reaction against the ordered and sensible architecture of the past. Italianate architecture flourished in America, particularly in expanding towns and cities of the Midwest and northeastern seaboard. The Italianate houses that graced the suburbs and countryside during this period were highly romanticized interpretations of the villas found in Tuscany, Umbria, and Lombardy. Its square towers, asymmetrical floor plans, broad roofs, and generous verandas characterized it.¹³ Italianate-style wood townhouses also became a prominent architectural style in San Francisco. The style was less common in the southern states due to the Civil War, Reconstruction, and the economic depression of the 1870s, which hindered new construction.¹⁴

However, the Italianate architectural style holds particular significance in Tennessee due to the state's unique historical circumstances during the Civil War. Tennessee's distinction as the first state to surrender to the Union Army played a role in mitigating some of the economic repercussions experienced by other southern states. As the first Confederate state to rejoin the Union, Tennessee experienced a relatively smoother transition back into the Union and, consequently, suffered less damage to its infrastructure and economy.¹⁵ As a result, Tennessee experienced a surge in development during Reconstruction. With its ornate features, grandeur, and sophistication, the Italianate style gained popularity in Tennessee during this period of recovery.

¹² Jarayda J. Jones, oral interview by Esosa Osayamwen, April 22, 2023.

¹³ James Patrick, *Architecture in Tennessee, 1768-1897* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981). p. 141-166.

¹⁴ Rachel Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1997), p. 143.

¹⁵ Randal Rust and Robert Tracy, "Reconstruction." *Tennessee Encyclopedia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press), October 8, 2017.

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Renowned Tennessee architects Adolphus Heiman and Edward Culliat Jones played an important role in introducing the Italianate style in Tennessee. Heiman and Jones toured Europe and studied the architectural styles popular there. These architects added their own unique touches and embellishments to what they learned, and in the process created a truly indigenous Italianate style that blended with the country's architectural landscape. An example of such blending in a broader Tennessee context is the Belmont Mansion (NR Listed 05/06/1971) in Nashville, constructed between 1840 and 1853. Design by Heiman, the Belmont was designed to become the center of social life in the flourishing city of Nashville. Adelia Acklen, widowed by Isaac Franklin and renowned as the wealthiest woman in the South, retained ownership of the exquisite Fairview Plantation in Sumner County, a gift from Franklin. Her ambition was to transform Belmont into Nashville's premier showcase, and she spared no expense in executing her plans.¹⁶ The building comprised a central two-story block, elevated above the ground on a basement that extended beyond the ground level with an entrance graced by a recessed portico. Flanking this central section were two-story wings of lesser height. Delicate, lace-like wrought-iron balconies adorned the front of these wings.¹⁷ The evolution and expression of Italianate architecture in Memphis came later than the Belmont Mansion and was tied to the work of Edward Culliat Jones and his partner Matthia Harvey Baldwin. Together, the two designed the Jesse Busby House (ca. 1866; part of the Vance-Pontotoc Historic District, NR 03/19/1980, removed NR 03/18/1987) and the Woodruff-Fontaine House (ca. 1870, NR Listed 12/11/1972), both notable local examples of the Italianate style.^{18,19} The Woodruff-Fontaine House boasted interiors adorned with carved cornices, sixteen-foot ceilings, plaster arabesques, sculpted woodwork, and radiant chandeliers.

Though the exact date of the first Italianate building constructed in Memphis is unknown, we can speculate the style arrived and gained popularity between 1845 to 1890 when dozens of Victorian homes were built along "Millionaire's Row," an exclusive wealthy neighborhood in Memphis.²⁰ The Vance and Lauderdale areas, once considered part of Millionaire Row and the Vance-Pontotoc neighborhood, boasted an impressive concentration of Italianate, Queen Anne, and Victorian frame houses constructed from the mid-nineteenth through the early-twentieth century. Vance-Pontotoc once contained the largest outstanding collection of Italianate townhouses in West Tennessee.²¹ Notable Italianate examples included the Jesse J. Busby House and the West J. Crawford House. The Busby mansion was initially built for cotton merchant Jesse J. Busby in 1866 and can be found at 678 Vance.²² The Jesse Busby House featured ornamental brackets, cornices, cast iron attic vents, pressed metal window heads, arched windows, an arched entrance, rusticated columns, carved wood columns, dentils, and a jigsaw balustrade, crowned by a distinctive gable above the second floor. The West J. Crawford House was also constructed in the Italianate style a short distance from the Busby House in 1876.

¹⁶ Herbert L. Harper, "Belmont," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1971. p. 4.

¹⁷ Randal Rust and Leslie N. Sharp, "Heiman, Adolphus," *Tennessee Encyclopedia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press), October 8, 2017.

¹⁸ Eugene J. Johnson and Robert Douglass Russell, *Memphis, An Architectural Guide* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990) pgs. 164-169.

¹⁹ Randal Rust and Perre Magness. "Jones, Edward Culliat." *Tennessee Encyclopedia* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press), October 8, 2017.

²⁰ "Ghost from the Past: The Mystery of Latham House," *Commercial Appeal*, Memphis, Tennessee, Sep 30, 2008.

²¹ Rodney, Gary D. "Vance-Pontotoc Historic District.", p. 21

²² Johnson and Russell, *Memphis, An Architectural Guide*, p. 169.

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Though Millionaire Row and Vance-Pontotoc was home to affluent white residences in early Memphis history, the area gradually diversified following the 1878 yellow fever epidemic.²³ Empty lots sprouted mansions as people returned to the city to rebuild and revitalize their homes. Examples include the construction of the James G. Boyd House in 1878 at 380 Lauderdale and the Robert R. Church House in 1888 at 362 Lauderdale (neither are extant). Boyd was a former Black Union soldier, and Church was the first Black Southern millionaire.²⁴ The Italianate style architecture represented significant technological advancements during the Industrial Revolution. Balloon-frame construction, featuring lightweight materials, supplanted the traditional heavy-timber framing. This shift encouraged architects to explore diverse Victorian styles in their designs.²⁵ The era was also a time of economic growth for many, and there was a desire to showcase wealth and property through architecture. This led to the construction of elaborate and ornate homes, especially for the upper class.²⁶ Therefore, the urbanization and redevelopment efforts contributed to Memphis's expansion, particularly in the previously underdeveloped Lauderdale area.²⁷ The Italianate style, with its countryside charm and association with the elite members of society, resonated with the post-war period and became a popular choice for a newly emerging middle-class.²⁸ Once considered too costly to reproduce, they were now less expensive, so families and builders could use them as reference manuals to design their buildings. These architectural styles reflected the recovering city's changing landscape and aspirations.

As the Great Depression and World War II unfolded, Millionaire Row underwent profound changes, prompting affluent white families to abandon their opulent mansions. This transformation led to the repurposing of Vance-Pontotoc mansions as a prominent residence for middle and upper-middle-class African American families. A significant Italianate building for Black Memphians in the area was Griggs Business and Practical Arts College which offered practical skills for working- and middle-class jobs. The building featured dentil moldings and a prominent Victorian staircase (NR Listed 03/21/2023).²⁹ However, the departure of white residents coincided with the disappearance of numerous homes in the vicinity. In 1941, plans to construct the segregated Black housing projects, Foote Homes, at the Vance and Lauderdale Street intersection resulted in the demolition of multiple Victorian houses. Additionally, further properties were razed to make way for the development of Cleaborn Homes on Lauderdale Street in 1953.³⁰ Despite the destruction brought about by racial urban renewal policies, the Busby, Crawford, and Griggs Business and Practical Arts College stand as the lone survivors representing Italianate architecture in the historic African American neighborhood of Vance-Pontotoc.

Similar examples of the West J. Crawford House were the John Alexander Austin House (NR Listed 06/12/1984), the demolished Patrick Henry Hayley House (part Vance-Pontotoc Historic District, NR

²³ Preston Lauterbach, *Beale Street Dynasty: Sex, Song, and the Struggle for the Soul of Memphis*, p. 70.

²⁴ Preston Lauterbach, *Beale Street Dynasty: Sex, Song, and the Struggle for the Soul of Memphis*, p. 70.

²⁵ "Victorian Era Architecture: Architectural Style and Sensitive Rehabilitation 1850 to 1900." *Nashville Old House Series*. <https://filetransfer.nashville.gov/portals/0/sitecontent/HistoricalCommission/docs/Publications/OHS-Victorian.pdf>.

²⁶ Virginia McAlester and Arcie Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses: The Definitive Guide to Identifying and Understanding America's Domestic Architecture*, p. 214.

²⁷ Preston Lauterbach, *Beale Street Dynasty: Sex, Song, and the Struggle for the Soul of Memphis*, p. 70.

²⁸ Carley, *The Visual Dictionary of American Domestic Architecture*, p. 143.

²⁹ Stephanie Wade, "Griggs Business and Practical Arts College." p. 9.

³⁰ Preston Lauterbach. "Memphis Burning." *Place Journal*, 2016. <https://doi.org/10.22269/160307>.

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03/19/1980, removed NR 03/18/1987), and the John S. Toof House (NR Listed 03/25/1982) in Shelby County, TN. The Patrick H. Hayley House reflects the quintessential features of Italianate design. The two-story brick structure incorporates wood brackets, a jigsaw cornice, an ornamental attic vent, and pressed metal window ornamentation. The L-shaped veranda, adorned with carved wood brackets, dentils, and a jigsaw balustrade, adds a touch of elegance. These elements collectively capture the essence of Italianate architecture, blending intricate detailing with a harmonious balance of forms.³¹ The John Alexander Austin House boasts a front facade that is a lively testament to Italianate design. The entrance door, nestled in a slight recess, is adorned with fine Victorian moldings and side panels. The western portion of the house continues this aesthetic, featuring a projecting rectangular bay of two stories. This bay is intricately decorated with corbeled panels, arches, cornices, and hoods, adding a dynamic and visually captivating element to the overall design.³² Meanwhile, the John S. Toof House introduces its unique characteristics with round windows encircling metal ornamentation on either side and above a larger window, contributing to its distinctive appearance. The west elevation showcases a metal dentill cornice along the third story, three stucco chimneys, plain segmental arched windows, and a projecting three-story bay. This combination of elements adds a layer of complexity and individuality to the Italianate framework.³³

These houses, both in suburban dwellings, were designed to reflect the free and romantic spirit associated with the villas of Italy. The use of ornate door and window designs, heavily bracketed cornices, and high stoops with robust cast-iron stair rails were distinctive features of the style. In terms of architectural elements, the Italianate structures incorporated various design elements from Italian villas and palazzos. These included inset panels, paneling, hood molding, corbel stones, pendant drops, colonnettes, and cornices. The entablature, adorned with acanthus leaf friezes and egg-and-dart molding, further contributed to the ornate nature of these buildings.³⁴

The Crawford House exterior exhibits several characteristics reminiscent of the Italianate architectural style. One prominent feature often found in Italianate designs is the use of mass-produced cast iron or pressed metal decorative elements, which can be seen adorning the house's balconies, porches, and fences. These intricate details contribute to the home's overall ornate and elegant appearance. In this home, the porch serves as a focal point. While classical Doric columns are more commonly associated with architectural styles like Classical Revival and Colonial Revival, they have also been incorporated into later Queen Anne and Italianate designs as they merged with evolving architectural trends. The subtle inclusion of Doric columns adds a classical touch that blends harmoniously with the Italianate influences. The West J. Crawford House also showcased semi-elliptical brickwork adorned with keystone ornamentation around windows embellished with Italianate moldings. Its gently sloping roofs and deep overhanging eaves further exemplify the critical characteristics of Italianate architecture, making it a prominent focal point. The projecting bay windows further distinguish the Crawford house, breaking the typical box-like building and horizontal lines of the style to create a sense of depth and visual interest.

³¹ Rodney D. Gary, "Patrick H. Hayley House." p. 2.

³² John L. Hopkins, "Austin, John Alexander House." p. 1.

³³ Eleanor D. Hughes, "Toof, John S., House." p. 1-2.

³⁴ Meghan White, and Carol Highsmith, "What Is Italianate Architecture," National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2019, <https://savingplaces.org/stories/what-is-italiana-te-architecture>.

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Inside the house, notable features include the living room, grand foyer, and formal dining room, each adorned with exquisite light fixtures. These fixtures, commonly suspended from stone moldings, illuminate the spaces elegantly. During the Victorian Era, the choice and design of chandeliers held significant social significance, particularly among the aristocracy. The material, design intricacies, and size of a chandelier determined an individual's social status and influence. As a testament to this, Queen Victoria dispatched the heaviest chandelier ever sent to a royal in Istanbul, emphasizing her considerable power and prestige.³⁵

Registration Requirements

The West J. Crawford House meets the “Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, TN” Multiple Property Documentation Form registration requirements for individual historic residents as laid out in Section 4, pages 32-33. To be eligible for listing under the multiple, a property must be associated with residential development with Memphis’ corporate limits from 1865-1950; must be an outstanding local example of a specific house type as identified in the multiple’s context; retain a high degree of exterior and interior integrity; and retain integrity of setting.

The Crawford House was finished in 1877 in the then-city limits of Memphis, which satisfies the first registration requirement. The Crawford House is also an important local example of the Italianate style. It is located in the former Vance-Pontotoc Historic District and is surrounded primarily by a mixture of twentieth and twenty-first century residences. The two remaining Italianate buildings in the former neighborhood are the Jesse J. Busby House and the Griggs Business and Practical Arts College. Though the Crawford House shares features of the Italianate style with the two buildings, such as the hooded windows, decorative brackets, dentil work, and masonry exterior, the Crawford House distinguishes itself through its classical porch, distinctive concrete keystone ornamentations, and bay window projection. As such, the building meets the second registration requirement. The exterior and interior also retain a high degree of integrity, including the retention of its character-defining features, including brick veneer siding, continuous concrete and foundation, original hood wood windows in various configurations, and classical first-level porch with Doric columns, overhanging eaves, dentil work, decorative brackets with detailed molding, and concrete keystone ornamentations. The interior also retains a high level of integrity, retaining character defining features such as original wood tongue-and-groove floors, wood doors with mortised locks and porcelain silver doorknobs, original wood trim, wood door and window surrounds, plastered walls, and staircase. This level of integrity ensures the building meets the third registration requirement. Finally, the Crawford House retains its integrity of setting. Though the residential neighborhood has changed dramatically since it was listed and delisted, the property remains surrounded primarily by residential units. These newer houses retain appropriate spacing and location on their respective lots, and all associated roads remain in their original location unaffected by urban renewal or road projects. The Crawford House meets the fourth and final registration requirement, and thus qualifies for listing under the “Historic Residential Resources of Memphis, Shelby County, TN” Multiple Property Documentation Form.

³⁵ “A Short But Sweet History of Chandeliers,” Olde Good Things, 2019.
<https://ogtstore.com/blog/a-short-but-sweet-history-of-chandeliers/>.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):		Primary location of additional data:	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)	X	State Historic Preservation Office
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously listed in the National Register		Other State agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	previously determined eligible by the National Register		Federal agency
<input type="checkbox"/>	designated a National Historic Landmark		Local government
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #		University
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #		Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #	Name of repository:	
Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): SY-8091, SY-20995, SY-21078			

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.268 **USGS Quadrangle** NORTHWEST-MEMPHIS, 404-NE

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (These coordinates should correspond to the corners of the property boundary. Add additional coordinates if necessary. Enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

- | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 35.135693 | Longitude: -90.043405 |
| 2. Latitude: 35.135877 | Longitude: -90.043381 |
| 3. Latitude: 35.135834 | Longitude: -90.042821 |
| 4. Latitude: 35.135630 | Longitude: -90.042819 |

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The house is on Lot 1, Block 56, in South Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee. It is situated at the intersection of South Lauderdale Street's east line and Pontotoc Avenue's north line. Starting from this point, the house is positioned by moving northward along the east line of South Lauderdale Street for 70.0 feet. Then, it extends eastwardly in parallel with Pontotoc Avenue, covering 166.5 feet. After that, it continues in a southerly direction, parallel to South Lauderdale Street for 70.0 feet. Finally, it shifts westwardly along the north line of Pontotoc Avenue, encompassing 166.5 feet until reaching the starting point.³⁶ The enclosed boundary map depicts the property boundaries.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundary includes the nominated 0.268-acre property, which contains all the resource and land historically associated with the West J. Crawford House.

³⁶ Shelby County, Tennessee, Deed Number: 10129743, 2010.

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USGS Topographic Map

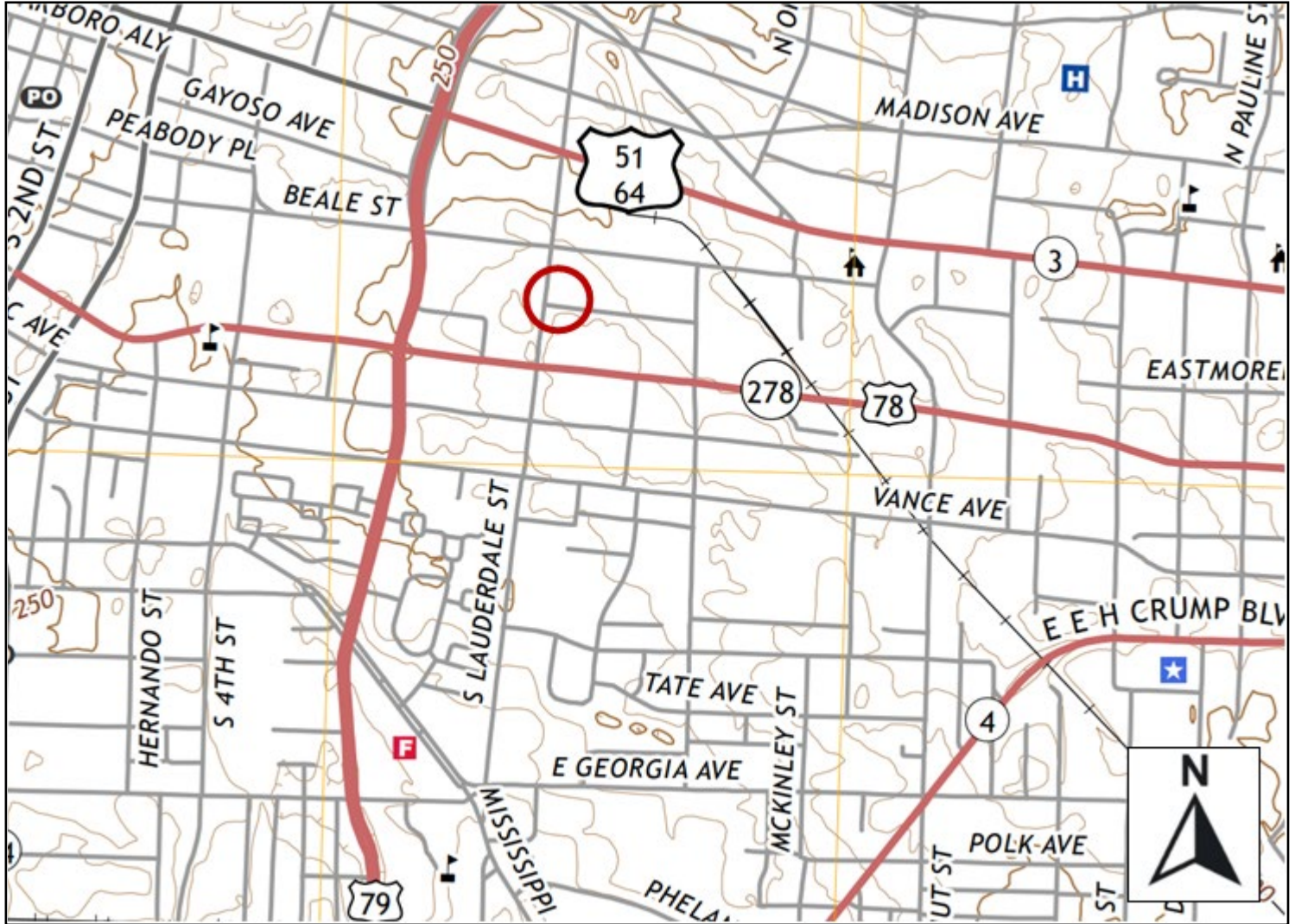


Figure 1: Red circle indicates location of the West J. Crawford House. Map courtesy of the United States Geological Survey.

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Boundary Map

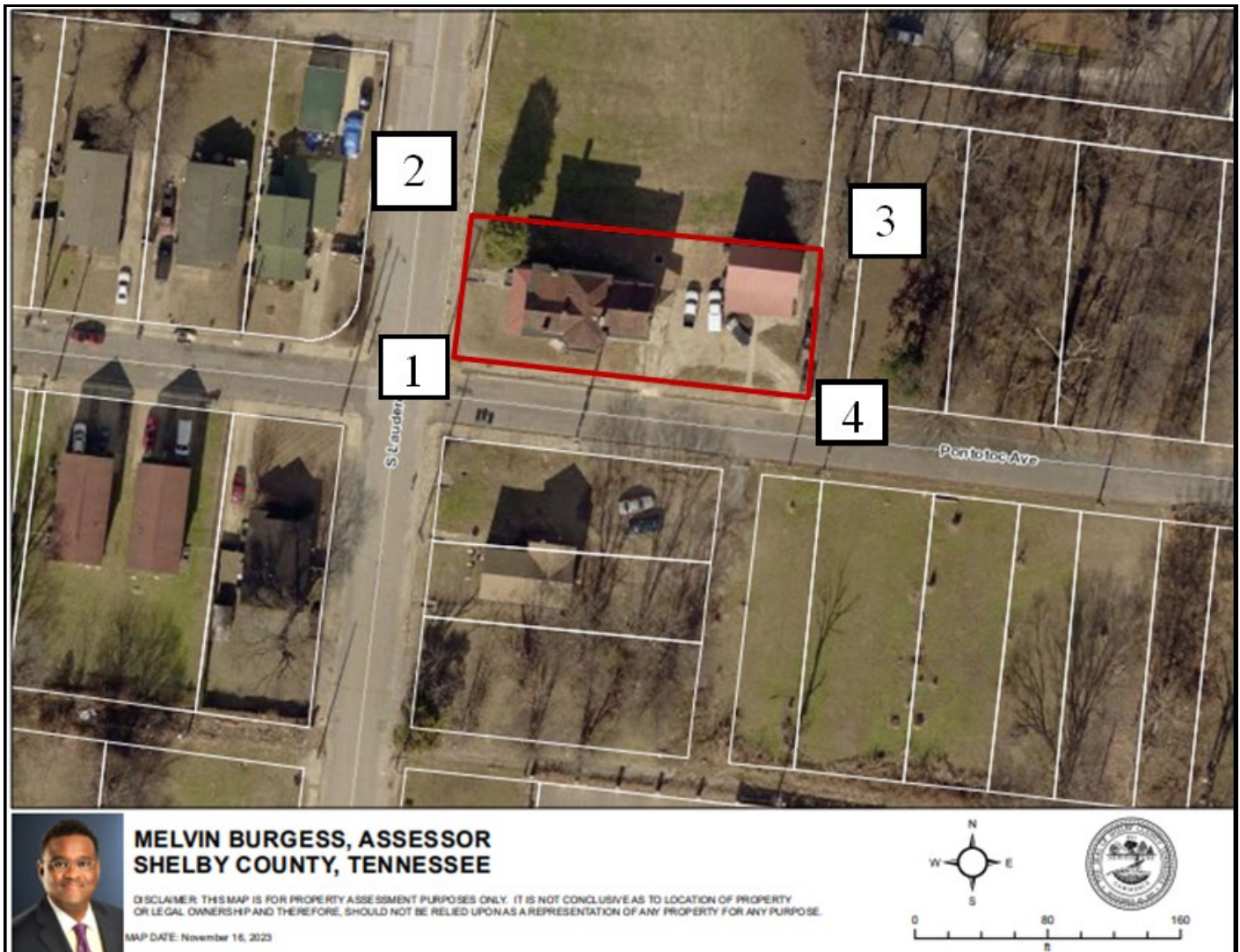


Figure 2: Red lines indicate the boundary of the property, and the numbers correspond with the latitude and longitude points listed in Section 10. Image courtesy of the Shelby County Assessor's office.

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11. Form Prepared By

Name Esosa Osayamwen & J. Ethan Holden

Organization Individuals

Street & Number Remote Date Jun 22, 2023

City or Town Memphis Telephone 731-803-0818

E-mail eosayamen0@gmail.com State TN Zip Code 38305

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Photographs** (refer to Tennessee Historical Commission National Register *Photo Policy* for submittal of digital images and prints. Photos should be submitted separately in a JPEG or TIFF format. Do not embed these photographs into the form)
- **Additional items:** (additional supporting documentation including historic photographs, historic maps, etc. can be included on a Continuation Sheet following the photographic log and sketch maps. They can also be embedded in the Section 7 or 8 narratives)

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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Photo Log

Name of Property: West J. Crawford House
City or Vicinity: Memphis
County: Shelby County State: Tennessee
Photographer: Esosa Osayamen
Date Photographed: April 29, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 34. Front façade detail featuring porch, keystone ornamentation around the windows, and original door. Photographer facing east.
- 2 of 34. South elevation detail featuring a side view of the porch. Photographer facing north.
- 3 of 34. Southeast oblique. Photographer facing northeast.
- 4 of 34. South elevation detail featuring a bay window—photographer facing northeast.
- 5 of 34. South elevation. Photographer facing north.
- 6 of 34. Northeast oblique. Photographer facing southwest.
- 7 of 34. East elevation. Photographer facing west.
- 8 of 34. Door detail. Southeast oblique. Photographer facing east.
- 9 of 34. West elevation of the Carriage House. Photographer facing southwest.
- 10 of 34. South elevation of the Carriage House. Photographer facing north.
- 11 of 34. East elevation of the Carriage House. Photographer facing west.
- 12 of 34. North elevation of the Carriage House. Photographer facing south.
- 13 of 34. Detail of showing keystone ornamentation on the Carriage House. Photographer facing south.
- 14 of 34. Interior detail of grand foyer. Photographer facing northwest.
- 15 of 34. Interior detail of the four-panel door. Photographer facing northeast.
- 16 of 34. Interior detail of the living room. Photographer facing south.
- 17 of 34. Interior detail of the dining room. Photographer facing west.
- 18 of 34. Interior view of butler pantry. Photographer facing east.

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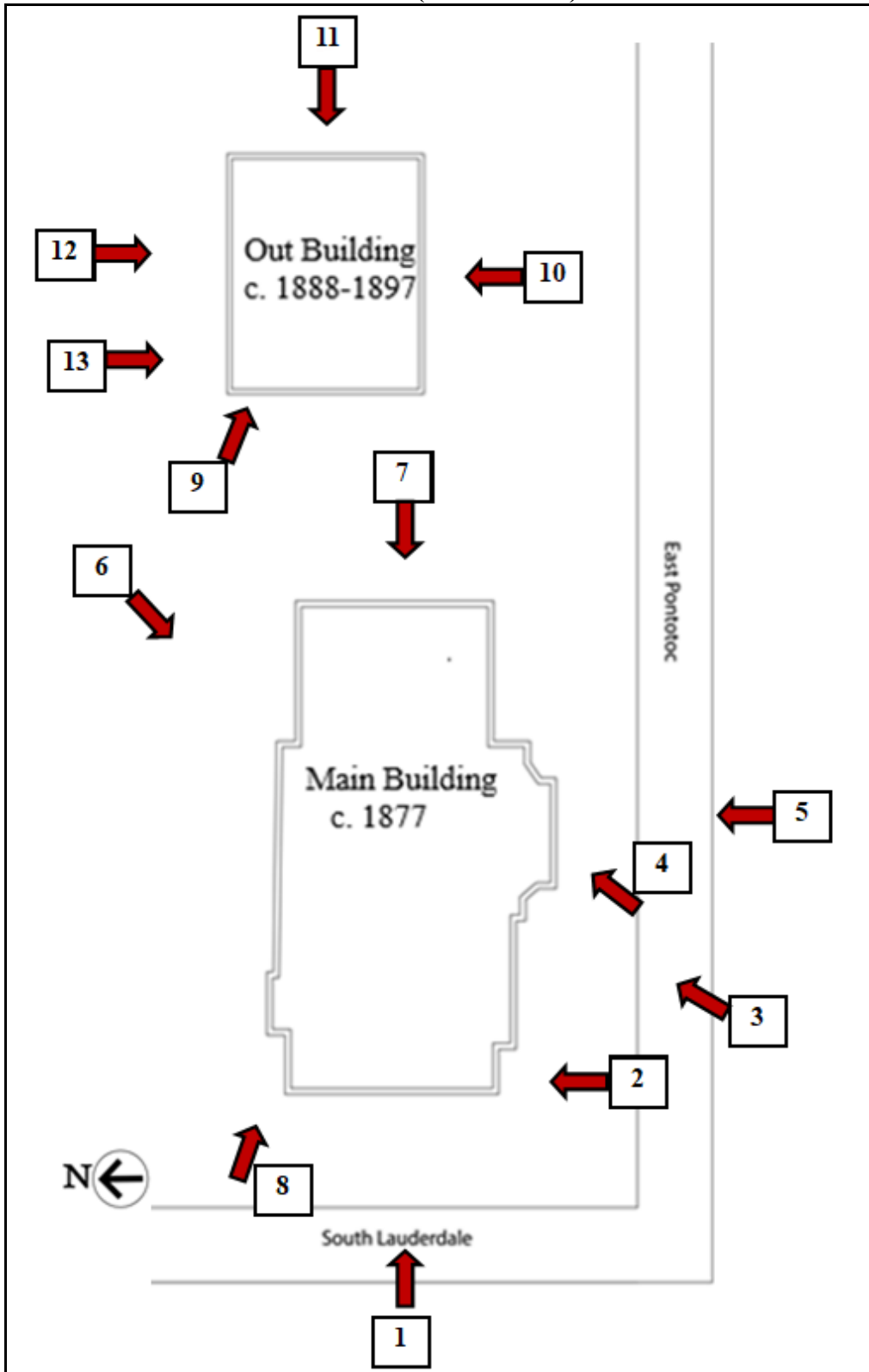
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- 19 of 34. Interior view of kitchen. Photographer facing south.
- 20 of 34. Interior view of oval window in half-bath half laundry room. Photographer facing south.
- 21 of 34. Interior view of half-bath half laundry room. Photographer facing northeast.
- 22 of 34. Interior view of back stairwell. Photographer facing west.
- 23 of 34. Interior view of hallway of enclosed porch area. Photographer facing west.
- 24 of 34. Interior view of second bedroom. Photographer facing south.
- 25 of 34. Interior view of mantel in second bedroom. Photographer facing west.
- 26 of 34. Interior view of steps that lead to the master bathroom. Photographer facing northwest.
- 27 of 34. Interior view of master bathroom. Photographer facing northeast.
- 28 of 34. Interior view of a firebox door in the master room. Photographer facing east.
- 29 of 34. Interior detail of push light. Photographer facing north.
- 30 of 34. Interior view of the master bedroom. Photographer facing southeast.
- 31 of 34. Interior view of the den. Photographer facing southwest.
- 32 of 34. Interior view of the mantel on the upper level in the den. Photographer facing south.
- 33 of 34. Interior detail of upper-level stairway towards the enclosed porch entrance. Photographer facing northeast.
- 34 of 34. Interior detail of upper-level stairway. Photographer facing west.

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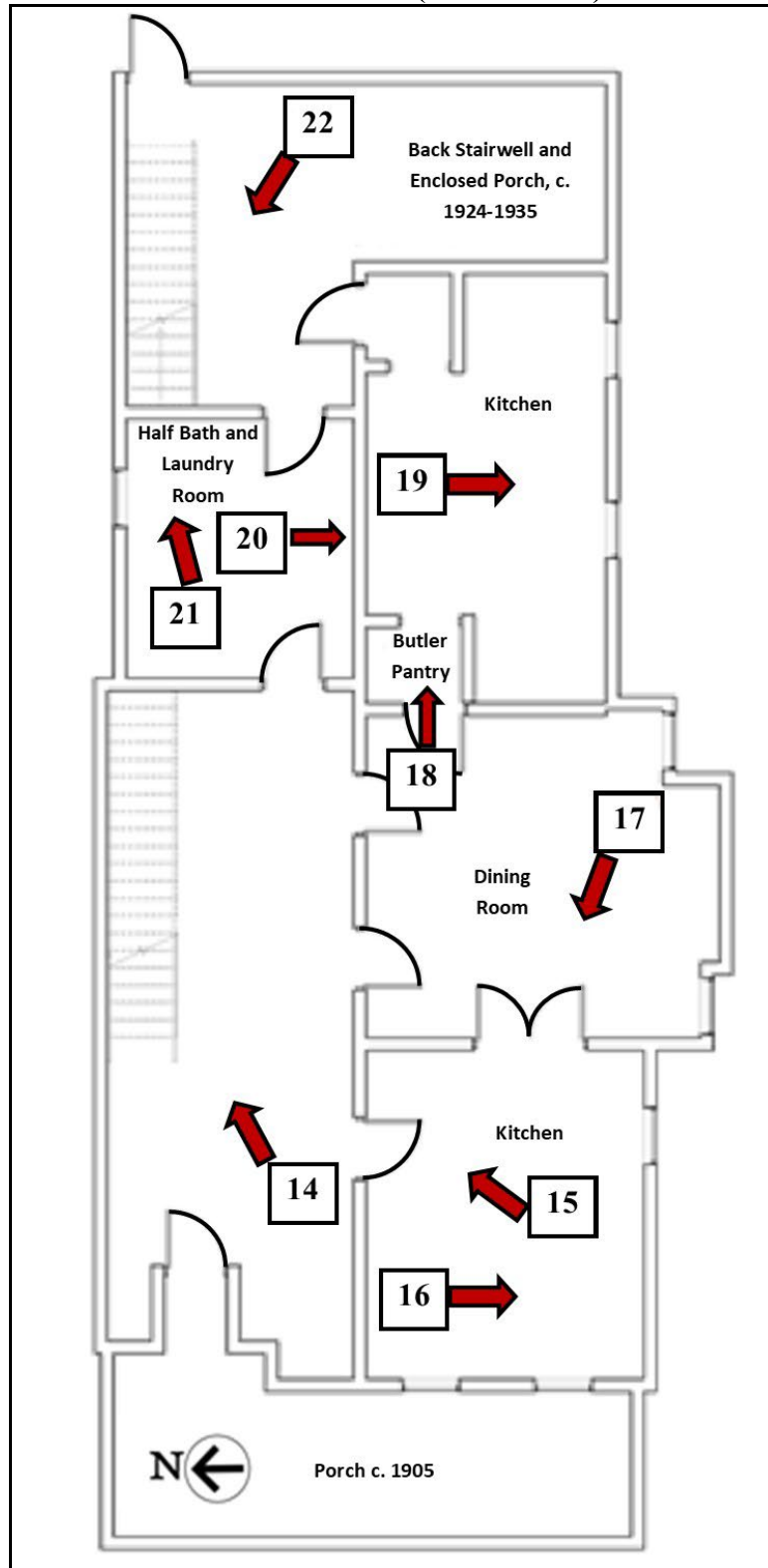
Site Plan (Not to Scale)



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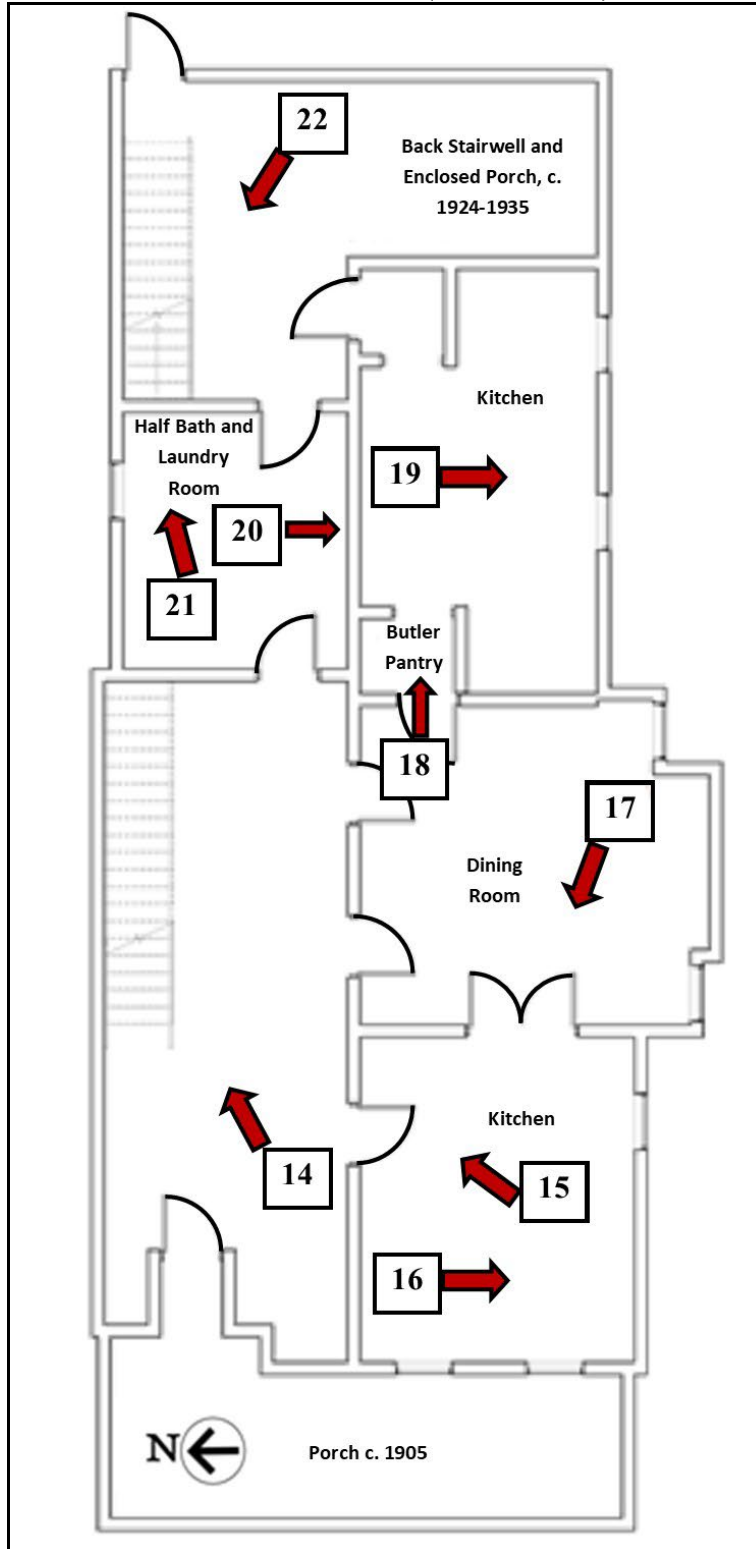
First Floor Plan (Not to Scale)



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Second Floor Plan (Not to Scale)



Property Owner(s):

(This information will not be submitted to the National Park Service, but will remain on file at the Tennessee Historical Commission)

Name Jarayda Jenell Payne
Street & Number 290 Lauderdale St Telephone 901-270-3736
City or Town Memphis State/Zip Tennessee/ 38126



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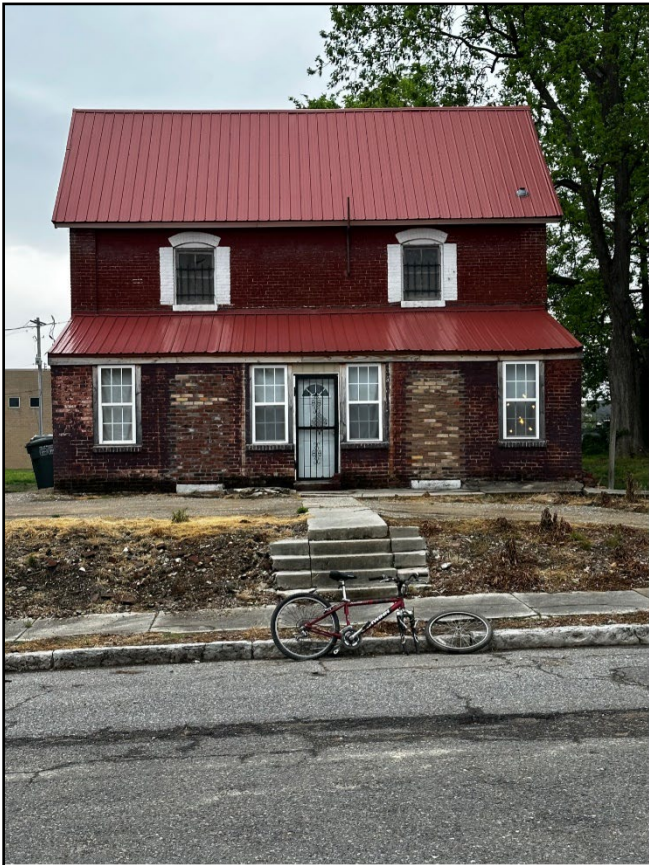
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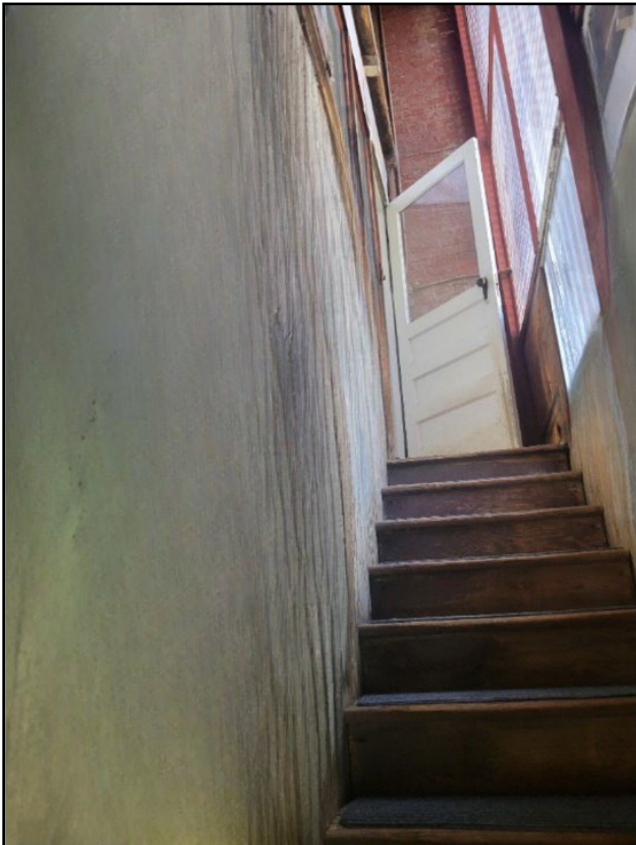
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