NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FINAL

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 Wilson, Robert L., Home

other names/site number 057-464-37072

2. Location

street & number 273 South 8th Street N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Noblesville N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Hamilton code 057 zip code 46060

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 consider 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: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ 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:)

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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	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

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling
DOMESTIC: Multiple Dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE: Professional
COMMERCE/TRADE: Specialty Store

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE
walls BRICK
STONE: Limestone
roof ASPHALT
other METAL: Cast Iron
WOOD

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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, 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.

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

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 of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

Areas of significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

c.1868-c.1898

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Wild, Leonard W.

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

9. Major Bibliographical 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 if 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:

Wilson, Robert L., Home
Name of Property

Hamilton County, IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

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

	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	584000	4433050
2			
3			
4			

☐ 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 Carol Ann Schweikert

organization _____ date 12/3/2007

street & number 307 N. 10th Street telephone _____

city or town Noblesville state IN zip code 46060

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 0r 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 TSM Property LLC

street & number 273 South 8th Street telephone 317-770-9399

city or town Noblesville state IN zip code 46060

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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this 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 the 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.

INTRODUCTION

The Robert L. Wilson House is a 2-story, brick Italianate home constructed in the late 1860s. The home is situated on three lots in Mrs. R.L. Wilson's subdivision of lot 1 in Leonard Wild's addition to Noblesville. The home is sited well back from 8th Street, almost hidden by landscaping. An early brick walk laid in the herringbone pattern remains visible leading from a parking lot to the home's front door.

The home has four sections and was likely constructed in three parts. The original, "L" plan and a single-story rectangular building in the back were likely the original sections, built together with the rear building as an outbuilding, such as a summer kitchen. Sometime before 1898, the two were joined by a 1½-story section with a back porch. This section was constructed with a basement. The third section is the small one-story room on the south side. All four sections were in place by 1898. The most significant alteration since 1898 was the enclosure of the rear porch after 1945.

EXTERIOR

The Wilson Home sits on a limestone and brick crawlspace and basement. Materials did not change significantly between the construction periods, making it difficult to ascertain the exact timeframe. On the exterior, there are few clues to the different sections, except for the basement windows and the brick foundation on the south side addition.

The exterior walls of the home's foundation and basement are limestone and the interior are brick. The only exceptions are the south side addition and the porches, both of which have brick foundations. The brick foundation on each of the porches has been encased with a cement coating that is deteriorating, exposing the original brick. Work in the crawl space for HVAC left loose bricks in the basement. Examination of the bricks revealed slight imperfections in the brick surfaces, likely because they were hand-made.

The exterior of the Wilson Home is dominated by three, two-level cast iron porches (Photos 1-4) approximately 3-4 feet deep. The porches are located on the north, south and east elevations. The east side porch is the primary one and is wider than the other two. On the 1st floor, the porches have bead board ceilings; the balcony floors are a rubber-type roofing material. Although none of the 2nd floor balconies have doors, they could be accessed via the tall windows. The overall design in the cast iron is composed of vines with leaves and grapes. The 1st floor columns have two interweaving vines with leaves and grapes. A spandrel, in the same pattern, runs along the 1st floor roofline. Flowers in the corners connect the columns and spandrel. Two weaving vines create arches in the bays between the columns. The wide, flat balusters in the first floor railings have interwoven vines with the grapes as the primary focal point on each. Simple flat bars serve as the hand rail and bottom rail on the railings. The 2nd floor balcony railings match the 1st floor, but with piers instead of the full height columns. The piers match the design of the 1st floor columns, are slightly taller than the railing and have ornate caps. The cast iron remains in good condition with only a few missing pieces.

The original rear porch was enclosed sometime after 1945 (Photo 3). This alteration resulted in the retention of the roofline cornice and brackets and in the covering of the exterior with aluminum siding. In addition, modern, c. 1950, windows were installed in the west elevation and an exterior door on the narrow south end.

The home's roofline varies with the different sections of the house (Photos 1-4). The main 2-story home has a cross-gable roof. Gable roofs are found on both the 1½-story addition and one-story rear wing. The south side addition has a hipped roof. The rear porch has a shed roof. The Wilson home features a deep eaves and tall wood frieze boards with pairs of brackets on each section, except for the south side addition. The wood brackets along the eaves of the 2-story L-plan, the 1½-story and single-story sections match in design.

The primary windows in the Wilson Home are tall, narrow, six-over-six double-hung sashes. Most have exterior storms, but these impede little of the view. Each window has a large limestone sill and header. The windows in the bathroom addition are small casement sashes with segmented brick arches. The basement windows are short, wide openings with three vertical panes. The openings in the one-story rear section have been altered. The size and location of the original openings are visible in the brickwork. The gables on the north, south and east facades have octagonal windows with raised brick hoods (Photo 5).

East Elevation
The primary elevation facing South 8th Street is a gable-front elevation with the widest of the three 2-level cast-iron porches (Photo 1). The door and window openings are symmetrically placed on this façade. The entrance is located near the southeast corner. The original door is deeply recessed from the brick façade with a massive limestone header and sill. The door facing is lined with decorative recessed panels. Narrow recessed panels flank the door. The door itself has a large glass pane in the upper half of the door (Photo 6). The glass pane has a round arched top and inverted V-shape on the bottom. Molding loosely frames the glass pane. The lower 1/3 of the door has a hexagon-shaped panel. The door retains its original hardware and doorbell which was patented October 22, 1860. A modern aluminum storm door has been added to the entrance.

Two window openings are located north of the door. On the 2nd floor, three window openings are vertically aligned with the 1st floor openings. Centered in the gable is an octagonal window opening with brick headers forming a hood. The deep eaves along the gable are accented with paired brackets (Photo 5).

South of the door and deeply recessed from the east elevation is a narrow elevation with two window openings, one on each floor, matching those previously described.

North Elevation
The north elevation clearly shows the three sections of the house (Photo 4). The east section is the original 2-story house. The first segment consists of two windows on each floor, vertically aligned. The eaves are accented with paired brackets. The 2nd segment in the original home is the south side gable which mimics the front gable, but is narrower with 2 bays instead of 3. Each floor has two symmetrically spaced openings, a window and door on the 1st floor and two windows on the 2nd. This gabled section also has a 2-level cast iron porch that matches the design on the east elevation, but is narrower, with only two arched openings, not three. Like the front porch, the original brick foundation has been encased in a cement coating. The entrance underneath the porch is similar to the front, but less dramatic with a shallower frame and no recessed panels. The door itself is also slightly simpler with two thin round arch panes in the upper half and simple recessed panels below. The gable has the same bracketed cornice and hexagonal window as found on the east gable.

The middle section of the house on this elevation is the 1½-story section, believed to be an addition. The window openings match the previous section. The roofline is accented with pairs of brackets. A single basement window opening centered in the façade is visible above ground. A coal chute is located near the northwest corner of the section.

The last section on this elevation is what is believed to be an outbuilding for the original home, possibly a summer kitchen. This section projects slightly out from the previous section and contains two openings, a door and a window. The door is high on the wall with a limestone header and sill. The door and storm door are modern. This roofline has the same bracketed eaves as the previously described sections. The existing window is much shorter, but has the same limestone header and sill seen elsewhere in this home. Since the façade below this window shows a large brick infilled area, the original window was probably similar to those in the rest of the house and its header and sill were re-used for the smaller window.

South Elevation
The original home and multiple alterations are also visible along the south elevation (Photo 3). In the original 2-story home, a solid brick wall with no openings is recessed from the south side gable. The gable is a mirror image of the north side gable with matching window and door openings. This gable elevation has the same 2-level cast iron porch, bracketed cornice and hexagonal window.

The 1½-story addition is only partially visible due to the bathroom addition. The original rear porch (Photo 3) has been enclosed and an entrance created in the south end of the porch. The entrance has a modern door and aluminum storm door.

The south elevation on the one-story section has two window openings, neither of which is original (Photo 3). A square casement window near the southwest corner utilizes an original window header. Brick infill near this opening was likely an original window that was enclosed and the header re-used. A small, narrow double-hung window was added near the enclosed porch. The eaves retain their original paired brackets.

The one-story bathroom addition extends out from the façade of the 1½-story section. This addition is brick construction with a hipped roofline. There are two windows in the addition on the east and south elevation. The windows are casement windows with segmented brick arches.

West Elevation
The west elevation has multiple sections (Photo 3). The primary 2-story house is only partially visible above and around the 1½-story addition. The roofline along this section has the deep bracketed cornice. A narrow brick chimney was added later to the 2-story section near the northwest corner. The 2-story section has no exterior window openings.

The 1½-story section has the bracketed cornice. A single, tall, narrow window is centered in the gable, above the rear porch roof. The west elevation of the one-story section is barely visible due to the proximity to the adjacent building. However, you can see an area of cement block in the center of this elevation that enclosed a previous opening.

A rear porch in the "L" of the rear plan was enclosed with aluminum siding (Photo 3). The bracketed roofline remains intact. A pair of narrow window openings, c. 1905, is located in the west façade.

INTERIOR

The interior of the home retains a high percentage of the original layout and architectural elements including trim, windows and door openings. Alterations within the period of significance changed some interior elements, particularly those which have been "modernized" like heating, plumbing and lighting. Room uses have also changed due to modernization and changes were necessary in the transition of the home from a single-family residence to a boarding house to a commercial structure.

Modern alterations have had little effect on the plan, doorways, window openings or interior woodwork. The most significant interior changes were converting and updating the single-story rear section to a modern kitchen. For the most recent use, an interior furnishing shop, the home had numerous shelving units throughout the downstairs, many attached to the walls and window frames. These did not affect the interior trim or significant historic features except to necessitate plaster repair. The home had some modernization in terms of wiring chases along the wall and surface-mounted light switches and outlet boxes. No original light fixtures remain from the home's early gas lighting.

The house appears to have been constructed in sections based on the layout, trims, and construction. However, the exact timeframe is uncertain. The front "L" plan was likely the original home with the one-story rear section as a summer kitchen. The construction of this rear building matches the original with a limestone foundation, brick exterior and plaster interior. The one-story room had been updated with modern interior materials on the floor and walls as well as a dropped ceiling. These changes updated this space for continued use as a kitchen. Additionally, as a summer kitchen, this room probably never had ornate woodwork or extensive trim found elsewhere in this home. The modern materials have all been removed, revealing the original plaster wall and ceiling and wood floor.

The two rooms between the front "L" and the one-story are 1½-story, have the only basement rooms in the house and have different interior window and door trim.

Basement
The basement of the home consists of just two rooms underneath the middle (1½-story) part of the house. The poured concrete floor was added later. The 1st floor joists are visible. The basement may be accessed by one of two staircases. An interior stair is located between Rooms 3 and 4. A 2nd staircase is accessed through a door in the floor of the enclosed rear porch. This staircase ends at a 4-panel door that opens into the basement rooms. Based on construction, this was likely the original basement entrance.

The crawl space beneath the "L" footprint is visible through holes cut in the brick walls for the HVAC. Joists in this area are a full 12" deep while the joists in the basement rooms are 10-11".

1st Floor
Throughout the home's long history, the room uses on the 1st floor have changed. Modern improvements added things like electricity and indoor plumbing and eliminated the need for a cooking fireplace or wood cook stove. The formal parlor is obvious and rooms 1 and 2 were probably a kitchen and family/dining room originally. The home was enlarged with the 1½-story addition in the 1890s. After this, it was used as a boarding house and the room uses during this period are less certain.

Entry Hall
The long, narrow entry hall is dominated by the staircase along the south wall (Photo 7). The large round newel post tapers from the base to the carved cap. The balustrade has delicate turned spindles. The original handrail was carved from just two pieces of wood and pieced in the middle in a barely visible seam. A modern handrail has been added to the wall along the south side of the staircase. Carved trim runs along the string of the staircase. The newel post, balustrade, handrail and stair trim remain stained.

Two rooms are accessed directly from the entry hall, the formal parlor through a doorway on the north side and Room #2 through a doorway at the west end of the hallway. The wide door trim has a complex profile with varying widths of flat and convex profiles forming a shouldered architrave molding (Photo 6). Near the top of the door openings, the trim widens about one inch with mitered joints. The baseboards are more than one foot tall with curved trim along the upper edge and deep toe molding. The entry hall floor is cherry. The staircase steps are concealed under outdated carpet.

Formal Parlor
The formal parlor (Photo 8) has a single doorway from the entry hall with an infilled transom. The door has been removed. A wide, double-door opening visually divides the formal parlor from the adjacent room on the west side. The hinge indentations in the doorway were infilled with stained wood blocks some time ago. Although many doors have been removed throughout the home, this is the only doorway where the hinge indentations were infilled. Both of these door frames have decorative recessed panels. The flooring between the parlor and adjacent room has mismatched patches, possibly due to alterations or a widened doorway. The ornate door and window trim matches the door trim in the entry hall (Photo 16).

The six-over-six windows in this room have recessed panels below the sills (Photo 16). The baseboard matches the hallway. The display shelving once along the south wall has been removed. The deeply recessed window frames have display shelving (Photo 16). The floors are cherry, like the hallway. The flooring and baseboard in the middle of the south wall have a wide patched area. Both the floor and baseboard are slightly different from the original and there are distinct seams on each end of the area. With the lack of a fireplace in this area and the early construction of this home, it seems likely this area was originally a large fireplace that was removed.

Room #1
The room adjacent to the formal parlor was likely used as the dining room and/or family room (Photo 8) originally. Its use while a boarding house is unknown. The window and door trim is similar to the entry hall and formal parlor, but here the trim does not widen at the top. The window openings do not have the decorative panels below the sills. The baseboard in this room matches the hallway and formal parlor, but the toe molding has been removed. The floor is cherry. Modern display shelving was removed from the west and south walls.

The exterior door in this room opens into the north side porch. This door is original with two tall, narrow glass panes with round arches. Simple horizontal panels run along the lower half of the door. The glass pane in the transom remains intact. A modern storm door has been added to the opening.

This room has two single interior doorways, one on the south wall to Room #2 and one on the west wall to Room #4. Both doorways have recessed panels in the facing, enclosed transoms and hinge indentations from

the original doors (now missing). Trim on the doorway into Room #2 matches the ornate trim previously described. Trim on the doorway into Room #4 matches the simpler trim in the 1½-story addition suggesting this doorway was altered or added with the addition.

Room #2
This room has four interior doorways and one exterior. The trims match those in Room #1 (Photos 9, 10 & 17). The exterior door on the south wall opens onto the south side cast iron porch. The door matches the exterior door in Room #2 and retains its original hardware and transom. A modern storm door was added to this opening. The two window openings in this room on the east and south walls match those in Room #1.

This is the only downstairs room with a fireplace. The fireplace is located on the north wall and extends out into the room. The fireplace has a carved slate mantle and surround. The firebox was altered to a natural gas fireplace. The fireplace opening is trimmed in black tile and the original cover is missing. The hearth, level with the floor, has beige and brown tiles laid in a diagonal pattern with a decorative patterned edge. Next to the fireplace is a built-in cabinet with tall double doors (Photo 17). The cabinet is the same height as the doorways and has matching trim. The doors have recessed panels and original hardware. The interior surface of the doors is a golden-colored, stained finish.

The interior doorway on the west wall is a wide, double-door opening into Room #3. The hinge indentations on this doorway have not been infilled. The upper transom-area of this doorway has modern framing and a white panel, a significantly different treatment than the other 1st floor transoms. Two single doorways, at right angles to one another, are located in the northwest corner of this room. One opens into Room #4 and the other into Room #2. Both have infilled transoms and hinge indentations from previous doors. The trim on all three of these door openings matches the other door and window trim in this room and all three have recessed panels in the door frames.

A vent in the ceiling of this room provided heat from the fireplace to the room directly above. Modern shelving was removed from the east and west walls. The floor is also cherry. The edge of the flooring is uneven along the line in the doorway where it abuts the flooring in Room #3.

Room #3
This long, narrow room has oak floors, slightly different in width than the original cherry flooring. This side of the shared doorway with Room #2 as well as the window and original doors all have wide trim, but with simpler curved profile than the trim previously described. Two to three inches of baseboard in a slightly different style is infilled on either side of the doorway with Room #2. The doorway on the west wall was an exterior door to the rear porch. With the porch enclosed, the door was removed. The downstairs bathroom opens off the south wall of this room. The door is a later style with basic narrow trim.

Room #4
Room #4 (Photo 11) has interior doorways accessing Rooms 1, 2, 3 and 5. The window and door trim match the style found in Room #3. This room has one unusual feature, a recessed nook in the north wall for a telephone, possibly the original location of the first phone for this home. This room has oak flooring like Room #3. This is also the only room in the home with chair rail. The chair rail is a simple design with angled edges. An infilled area of the floor, approximately 2 feet by 4 feet, is visible along one area of the east wall, probably from an earlier chimney and wood stove. One area of baseboard trim on the west wall is slightly different because of the infilled doorway, more visible on the opposite side.

The rear staircase and basement stair run along the south wall of this room. Both are enclosed. The wood treads and risers remain visible on the staircase to the 2nd floor. The basement stair is accessed via a door in a small nook between Rooms #3 and #4. This staircase is an open stair.

Room #5
This small rectangular room probably served as a summer kitchen when the home was original built. The exterior door on the north wall has a modern door. The original door into the enclosed porch also remains operable. None of the original window sashes remain, but infilled openings are visible where the original openings were located. The existing windows are modern sashes, c. 1950s, and much smaller than the original.

Bathroom
The bathroom is likely the last addition to this home and is accessed via a door in the south wall of Room #3. The small room is a slight step down from the adjacent floor level. The room has linoleum on the floor and dated fixtures. The ceiling is significantly lower in this room than the remainder of the house.

Enclosed Porch
The 1½-story addition included a small rear porch. The porch was enclosed after 1945. A large, hinged door in the floor of the porch accessed a second basement stair (removed). The interior of the porch is in deteriorated condition. The room layout in the 1½-story addition has changed somewhat. An enclosed doorway is visible in the northeast corner of this porch and would have opened into Room #4. The porch has three doorways, an exterior door in the south wall and interior doors into Rooms #3 and #5.

2ND FLOOR
Upstairs, the "L" plan follows the same layout as the 1st floor with three rooms and the hallway. Bedrooms #1 and #3 have matching trim to their downstairs neighbors. Bedroom #2 has trim matching the 1½-story addition, suggesting this room was altered when the addition was constructed. Except for the hallway, most of the trim upstairs is painted. The original ceiling heights, 10-12 feet, are intact.

Upstairs Hallway
The upstairs hallway matches the 1st floor with the ornate balustrade. A window is located at the east end and doorways on the north and west walls. Door and window trim and baseboards match the 1st floor hallway. The doorways into the bedrooms have recessed panels on the deep door facings. The three doorways along this hallway retain their rectangular glass transoms that appear to be operable. Unlike the 1st floor, several original doors remain intact. The floors match the downstairs hallway.

Bedroom #1
Bedroom #1 is located at the east end of the hallway. The original four-pane door remains in place. The window and trim match the front parlor. The original floors are cherry. The room has two closets on the west wall, one original (south), and one added (north). The original closet has been converted to utilities. The original door remains in the opening, but the lower panel was removed to install a vent for the HVAC unit. The 2nd closet has a modern door and trim.

Bedroom #2
Bedroom #2 (Photo 14) is located through a 4-panel door at the west end of the hallway. This bedroom is an "L" configuration with a fireplace in the same location as the room below. This fireplace is also natural gas and retains its front panel. The fireplace has shelving units on both sides with trim to match the door and window trim in this section of the house.

Bedroom #3
Bedroom #3 (Photo 13) has two window openings on the north wall and a closet on the east. The wood floor, door and window trim match Bedroom #2. The original 4-panel doors remain in place.

Rear ½-story
The rear ½-story (Photo 15) is divided into three spaces, a small bathroom and closet along the south wall, with Bedroom #4 on the north. The rear staircase runs through the middle. A simple square handrail and balustrade frame the stair opening.

The bathroom door and closet door are solid-wood, four-paneled doors. Since they were constructed together, the wood floor and trim in this room matches Rooms 3 and 4 on the first floor. The bathroom has older fixtures with a small shower located under the eaves.

The Wilson Home retains a high percentage of original fabric including plaster walls and ceilings, original flooring, door and window trim, baseboards and room layout. Although its uses over the past 130+ years have altered the home, these alterations have not had a negative affect on many of the home's key architectural features.

INTRODUCTION

The Robert L. Wilson Home is eligible for listing for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, Architecture, for its depiction of the Italianate style. Built c. 1868, this home is one of the older, high-style homes in Noblesville and one of the very few brick Italianate homes. Several Italianate style homes are scattered around Noblesville's historic neighborhoods, but they are all frame homes with brick or stone foundations. Several early additions to the house were in place by 1898; the home's period of significance is c. 1868 – c. 1898.

History
The Robert L. Wilson Home is a 2-story Italianate-style home constructed by Leonard Wild, a German immigrant. During the 50+ years he lived in Noblesville, Wild became a well-known businessman and contractor in Noblesville. Yet, when Wild built this home, he had not yet obtained the prominence he would during his lifetime. Wild settled in Noblesville in 1855, working as a farm hand and later in a warehouse. Through hard work and determination, he became part-owner of a mill and owner of the farm he originally worked on. He platted four additions to Noblesville. He owned a dry goods store. He was director of the Citizens State Bank for many years. The Wilson Home was likely one of his first large construction projects and considering its size, prominent location, and degree of details, may have garnered additional work for him. Other local projects include his Italianate home on Pleasant Street, his Queen Anne home on Conner Street, homes for two daughters, the Wild Block on North 9th Street, the Wild Opera House (demolished), the 2nd Ward School (demolished) and Craycraft Dry Good Store renovations. Wild's description in a 1915 biography as an "extensive builder" seems quite appropriate. His obituary in 1909 stated he "probably erected more buildings in this city than any other man and he always put up the best."

Robert L. Wilson purchased four acres with this home from Wild in the early 1870s. It is unknown whether this was a speculative project for Wild or whether Wilson contracted with Wild to build the home. The 2-story brick home was located in Wild's 1st addition to Noblesville, which included streets named "Leonard" and "Wild"; both street names were eventually changed. Wilson later sold two acres west of this home to W.H. Craig, who then platted his 1st addition to Noblesville.

Wilson was a banker, farmer, trader and merchant during his lifetime. He was born in Franklin County, Indiana in 1828 and settled in Noblesville in 1859. He married Mary Emeline Jameson in 1856 and had two children. His first wife died in 1871 and he married Frank Pettijohn. Wilson had three children by Frank, two daughters and a son. A son died in 1890 and a daughter died in infancy. Like Wild, Wilson was on the board of directors for the Citizens State Bank for many years and served as its president as well.

At his death in 1897, his wife, Frank, inherited all the household goods in the residence. His will specified that his real estate be divided equally between his wife, son and daughters. His wife and son were named

executors and managers of his real estate. The two acres around this home were divided into twelve lots. Lots 2-6 and part of lots 1 and 12 were sold. Mrs. Wilson retained lots 7-11 and part of lots 1 and 12. Between 1898 and 1905, Mrs. Wilson converted this home to a boarding house and constructed a 2-story, Victorian home for herself at the corner of Cherry and 8th Streets.

In 1910, Alice Harris, a widow with six children, operated the boarding house for Mrs. Wilson. Residents were primarily Alice's children consisting of two married daughters and their husbands, two unmarried daughters, and a son. Two boarders also lived here. Mrs. Wilson sold the home in 1911 and remained in the house nearby until her death in 1930.

Between 1911 and 1922, the home went through five owners. During this time, it remained a rental property. For several years in the mid 1910s, the boarding house was managed by William and Lydia Poer. In 1922, the house and lots were purchased by Miss Mary Brown. She never married and lived in this home with her two brothers who also never married. While the Browns resided here, the home had two addresses, 273 South 8th Street and 640 Hannibal Street. The Browns lived at 640 Hannibal and rented the South 8th Street address. When Miss Brown died in 1924, her funeral was held in this home. The home and lots were divided between her brothers who continued to reside at 640 Hannibal.

Walter inherited the home from his sister. For 18 years he was part-owner of a cigar store on the south side of the square. He and his brother Will also managed several rental properties in Noblesville.

Walter died in 1935 and the home's next owners continued to utilize the home as a rental. In 1942, it was sold to Ralph and Ethel Roudebush who began the transition of the home from multi-family residential to commercial. At first, they resided in part of the home while operating their interior design business here. Since the 1970s, the home has been used solely for commercial purposes.

CRITERION C: ARCHITECTURE

The Robert L. Wilson Home is an excellent example of early Italianate architecture in Noblesville. Noblesville has several large, ornate, high-style homes. Most, however, date to the building boom following the discovery of natural gas in the 1880s. This home is unique for its brick construction in the Italianate style and for its size and ornate architecture in Noblesville's early development.

The Italianate style is one of the early architectural styles utilized in Noblesville. Although other Italianate homes remain extant here, they are frame construction. The R.L. Wilson House is one of (if not the only) brick Italianate homes in Noblesville. It is also probably the largest. When built, few structures compared to this home in size and style.

The exterior of the home is dominated by three cast-iron porches with 2nd floor balconies, all original to the home. These are noted on the earliest Sanborn maps and are in excellent condition for their age. For this early time period in Noblesville, the cast iron porches reflect the wealth and prominence of Wilson and are unequaled in Noblesville.

The deep eaves, cornice and pairs of brackets are key elements of the Italianate style. The tall, narrow windows are typical for the time period. The primary entrance facing 8th Street is representative of the Italianate style. The door is deeply recessed and ornamented with brackets and recessed panels. The transom above the window has an oval pane, slightly more decorative than a typical rectangular pane. The core of the house reflects vernacular traditions, with its variation of the gable-front type, six-over-six windows, and simple limestone slab lintels and sills.

The ornate interior wood work also reflects the Italianate style and Wilson's prosperity. The carved stair, substantial newel post, heavy window and door trim, deep baseboards all convey high-style, wealth and prominence.

Although only about the first 30 years of the home's 137-year history were spent as a single-family home, it retains a high percentage of the plan and layout typical for single-family homes of its era. The two parlors with large double doors dividing the spaces were common.

More ornate woodwork in the "entertaining" rooms of the house is not unusual. The home's current condition is surprising for the long history as a boarding house, rental property and commercial property. The size of the doorways between the original home and the addition as well as the mix of trims on these doorways make it difficult to determine the original layout and traffic flow through these spaces. The biggest architectural loss is the removal of most of the original interior doors.

In the 1870s, this must have been one of Noblesville's premiere homes. Its size, ornate architecture, detailed interior and four acres of land, would have all set it apart from the surrounding neighborhood and town. When this home was built, many of the commercial buildings on the downtown square were the early simple, frame structures. This home's construction was quite likely a frequent topic of conversation around the square. As the county seat, Noblesville was expanding steadily, but slowly. The vast majority of Noblesville's high-style upper class homes were constructed following the gas boom which brought significant investments and growth here in the 1890s.

Rumors and questions abound in Noblesville about whether William Conner's Noblesville home is actually part of the Wilson Home. Conner was a significant pioneer in Central Indiana during the Native American contact period; his 1823 brick house on nearby Allisonville Road is listed on the National Register. William Conner lived in Noblesville from 1837 to 1855 in, as his son George described, a 1½-story, brick colonial

style house. Rumors sometimes suggest that Conner's home was enlarged and altered for Wilson. However, examination of written documents and the home itself makes this unlikely. First, in 1909, George described his father's Noblesville house as being *on the site now occupied* by the old R.L. Wilson home. Second, there is no visible evidence in the 1½-story section to suggest this was a free-standing home. Additionally, the 1871 improvement values of $4,000 suggest a large, new structure rather than an altered home. Finally, while early maps show Conner's home in this vicinity, it does not appear to be the same location as the home today.

CONCLUSION

The Robert L. Wilson House is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places for its representation of the Italianate style of architecture. It is one of Noblesville's few brick Italianate homes. The home is highly ornamented and well-representative of Noblesville's early high-style architecture. Its construction by Leonard Wild, a well-known Noblesville contractor and its association with Robert L. Wilson, a prominent Noblesville resident, are notable and contribute to the home's importance.

The Robert L. Wilson Home has been used for a variety of uses, single-family residential, boarding house, two-unit rental and commercial property. These uses have necessitated some alterations including the removal of doors to accommodate the commercial traffic flow and the enclosure of the rear porch. However, none have had a significant adverse affect on the home's architectural significance or its portrayal of the Italianate style.

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Boundary Description

The R.L. Wilson House sits on lots 9 and 10 and part of lot 8 in Mrs. R.L. Wilson's addition to Noblesville. The boundaries encompass all of lots 9 and 10 and part of lot 8. The western boundary is drawn three inches west of the elevation and runs from the north side of the east/west alley on the north side of the house to the curb on the north side of Hannibal.

Boundary Justification

These boundaries encompass only the house and a most of the lots which have remained part of the house since its construction. The western boundary is drawn to exclude a modern, non-contributing building constructed outside the period of significance. This building is located immediately adjacent to, but not touching the rear of the house.

PHOTO LOG

Information applies to all photos:
Robert L. Wilson Home
Hamilton County, IN
Ron Silver
July 7, 2007
Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology

East elevation looking west
Photo #1

South elevation looking north
Photo #2

South and west elevations looking northeast
Photo #3

North elevation looking southeast
Photo #4

Octagonal window in east gable looking west
Photo #5

Front door looking southeast
Photo #6

From 2nd floor down staircase looking northeast
Photo #7

Front parlor into Room #1 looking west
Photo #8

Room #2 looking northeast
Photo #9

Room #2 looking northwest
Photo #10

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number __Photo Log *Robert L. Wilson House, Hamilton County, IN*

Room #4 looking east
Photo #11

Room #5 looking east
Room #12

Bedroom #3 looking northeast
Photo #13

Bedroom #2 looking southeast
Photo #14

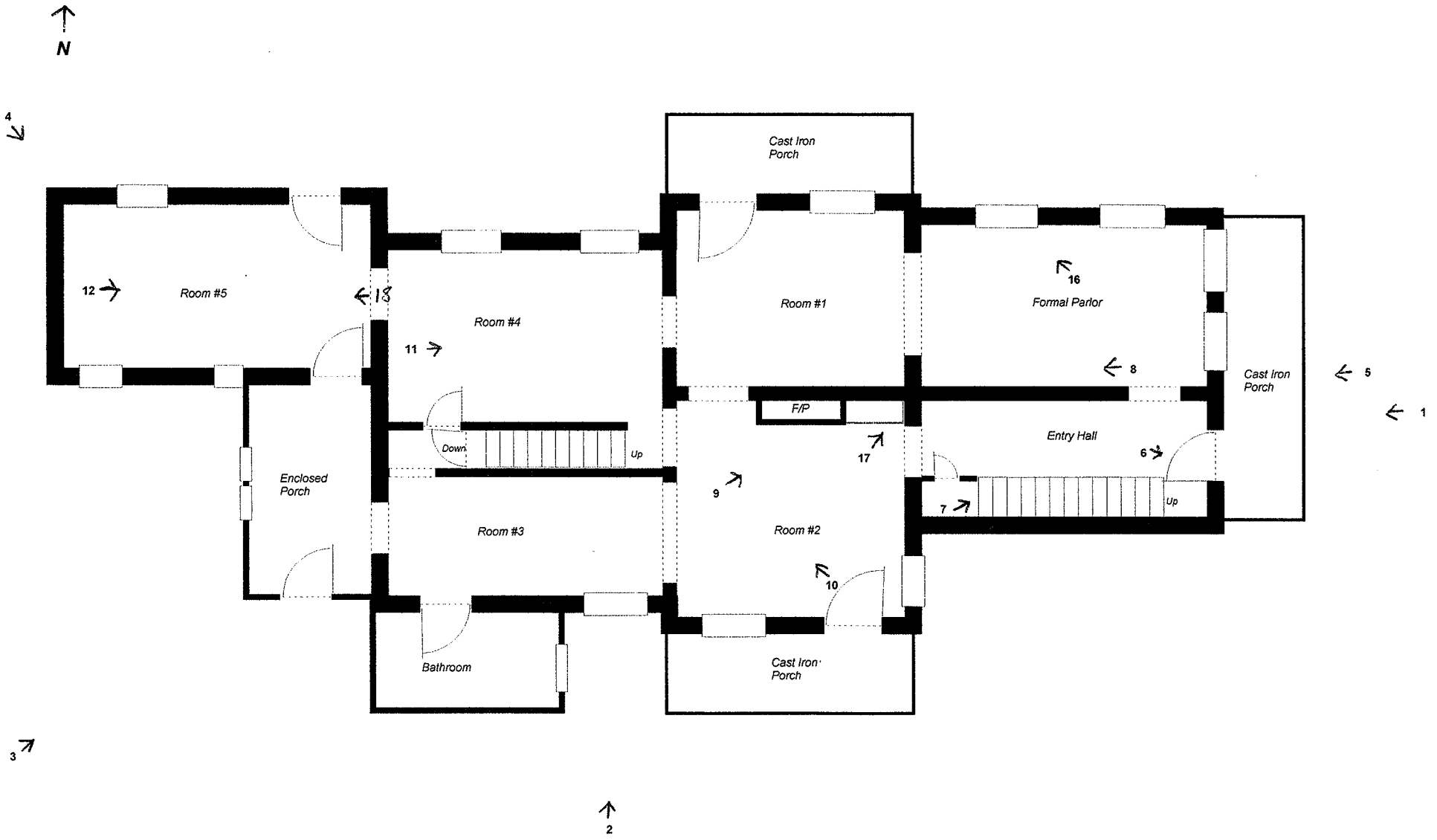
½-story addition/Bedroom #4 looking east
Photo #15

Window on north wall of formal parlor looking northwest
Photo #16

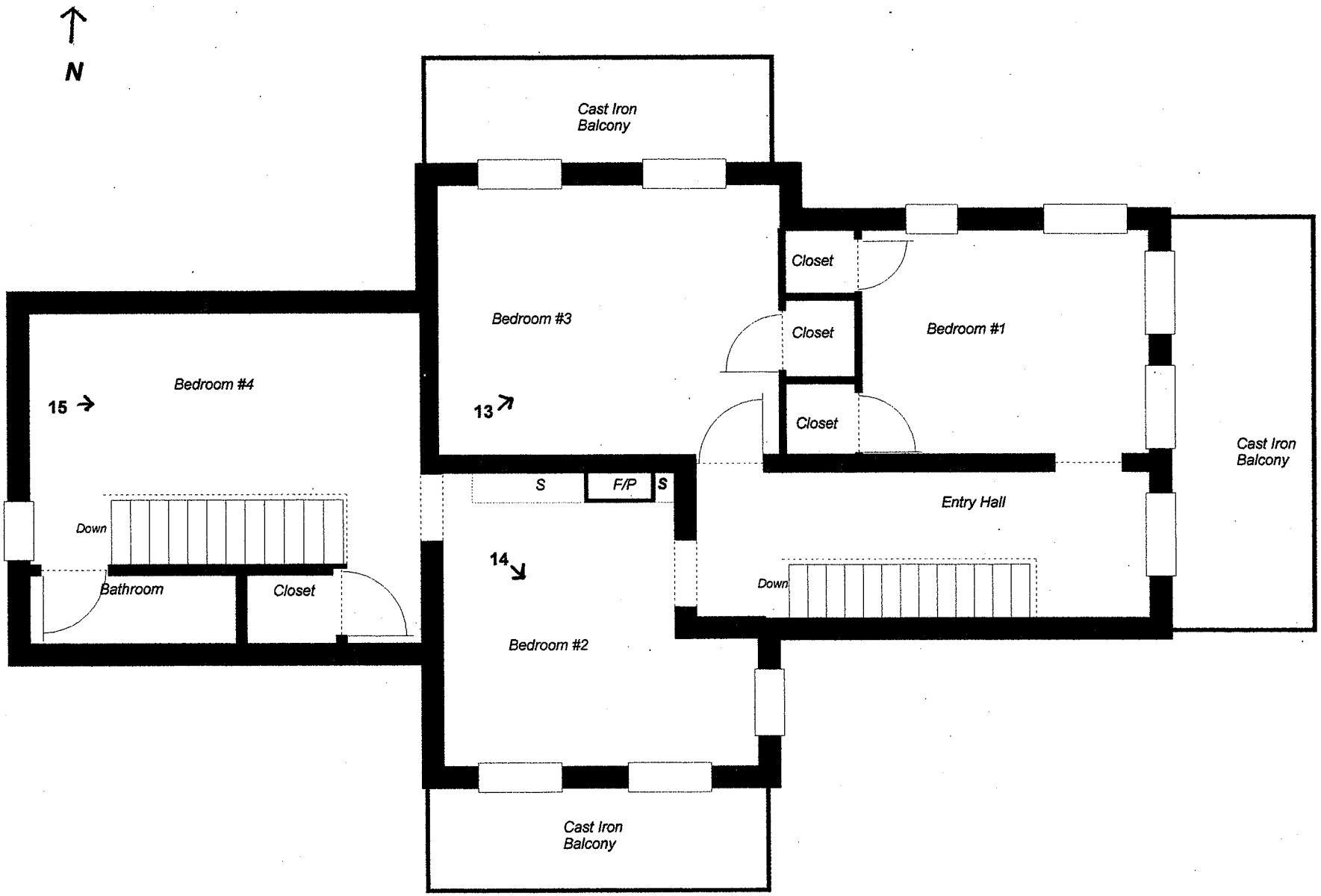
Built-in cabinet in room #17 looking northeast
Photo #17

Summer Kitchen – bare plaster walls and ceiling
Photo #18

Robert L. Wilson House
Hamilton County, Indiana
Not To Scale



Robert L. Wilson House
Hamilton County, IN
2nd Floor
Not To Scale



Robert L. Wilson House #1

Robert L. Wilson House #3

Robert L. Wilson House #4

Robert L. Wilson House #7

Robert L. Wilson House #17

Robert L. Wilson House #18