**United States Department of the Interior**
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in 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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Nichol, Charles E., House

other names/site number

## 2. Location

street & number 231 West Commercial Avenue N/A [ ] not for publication

city or town Lowell N/A [ ] vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Lake code 089 zip code 46356

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X 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** X **local**

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

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 or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 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

Charles E. Nichol House
Name of Property

Lake Co., IN
County and State

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- [X] private
- [ ] public - Local
- [ ] public - State
- [ ] public - Federal

**Category of Property**
(Check only **one** box.)

- [X] 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 | district |
| 0 | 0 | site |
| 0 | 0 | structure |
| 0 | 0 | object |
| 2 | 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**

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling
DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

**Current Functions**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne
LATE VICTORIAN: Romanesque

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK
STONE: limestone
roof: ASPHALT
other: WOOD: weatherboard

## Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### Summary Paragraph

The Charles E. Nichols House, constructed in1902 in Lake County, Indiana, is a stately Queen Anne brick residence located on the west side of the town of Lowell. The house is located on the town's main thoroughfare in a residential neighborhood consisting of variety of early 20th century home styles.

### Narrative Description

Prominent Lowell businessman Charles E. Nichols built this regal home with classic Victorian, Queen Anne design elements, including a stately tower with conical roof, side bay windows, and a bracketed balcony above the front entrance. This two and a half story brick home rests on a split-face block foundation and has a cross hipped roof with hipped dormers sided in clapboard and painted white. Massive dressed limestone lintels and sills accent the windows and a frieze board with wood block dentils tops all walls and porches. The exterior is brick, worked in common bond. The interior walls are lath and plaster. The home has approximately 2,480 square feet of living space and sits on a half acre city lot.

Viewing the house the north-facing facade (Photo1), four concrete steps lead up to the front door at the northeast corner of the house (Photo 2). The spacious porch precedes the inset front entry and continues around the east side of the house, extending back to the dining room bay. Originally, this space was framed by a screened in porch, and although the screening and frame were removed and replaced mid-century with ornamental iron posts, the original bead board ceiling and dentiled roof line help to maintain turn of the century authenticity. The original wood porch floor was also replaced mid-century with a simple concrete floor that sits atop a concrete block foundation. The original entry door is oak panel with a single oval window. A transom window crowns the entry and both the door and transom are protected by a brown storm door and window frame that is complementary to the time period.

Directly above the entry, the second story houses a balcony recessed under the main roof, framed with two ornamental support brackets painted white. Mid-century, a scrolled iron handrail replaced the original wood handrail. To the west of the stairs, there is an eight foot flat section of wall housing a single, double-hung window on both the first and second stories. All windows are wood with aluminum storm windows. A block glass basement window is visible below. Above the second story, a hip style dormer with painted wood clapboard houses a single, double-hung window. Continuing westward, a large two story cylindrical tower

forms the northwest corner of the house. The tower houses three double-hung, curved glass windows on each story. A soldier course of slightly darker brick circles the tower just above the second story windows with two stretcher courses directly above. Continuing upward, a projecting stretcher belt of brick provides additional accent. The conical roof is covered with architectural shingles and a cone shaped finial crowns the tower with distinction.

The view from the western facade (Photo 3) begins at the north end with the previously described tower portion. Moving beyond the tower to the south is a small, receding section of wall that shelters the monumental 30 foot chimney. Extending west from the chimney is a protruding square bay section. Each story of the bay contains a paired, double-hung window with continuous lintel and sill. To the south of the bay section the wall recedes again and continues for 18.5 feet, creating the southernmost portion of this facade (Photo 4). At the far north end of this section there are two unusually narrow windows, one on each story. Continuing south on the first story there is a larger paired, double-hung window, followed by a single, double-hung window at the far south end. Three glass block basement windows are visible. On the second story there is an additional single, double-hung window located directly above the paired window on the first story.

Viewing the house from the southern facade (Photo 5), a wood frame, screened-in porch is located at the western end. A hip roof shelters the porch. Originally the porch stairs and floor were made of wood materials and supported by stone piers. The piers were replaced mid-century by a concrete block foundation and poured concrete steps and floor. The ceiling of the porch is bead board. There is a single, double-hung window on the second story and two narrower, single, double-hung windows on the first story, one of which is enclosed in the screened porch. To the east of the porch is a covered, bulkhead type outdoor basement entry followed by a block glass basement window.

The view from the eastern facade is particularly elegant (Photo 6). At the south end there is an six foot wide flat section of wall that houses a single, double-hung window on the first floor. Following to the north is a two story, semi-octagonal bay, housing three single, double-hung windows at each story. The front entry porch roof and floor are integrated into the entire northernmost third of the bay. Two basement windows are visible, one toward the rear of the house and one in the center of the bay. Continuing northward from the bay is a 19 foot section of wall with a single, double-hung window at the far north end of the first floor and an identical second story window located directly above. An additional paired, double-hung window with continuous lintel and sill is also located on the second story, just to the south. At the end of this 19 foot section the wall recedes, accommodating the front door entrance. The remaining six foot flat section of wall forms the northernmost section of the eastern facade. A bracketed balcony above is a predominate feature of this house. A single, double-hung window on the east facade allows entrance to the upper level balcony.

The wood frame hip roof, dormer roof, and conical tower roof are protected by asphalt architectural shingles. The house was most recently re-roofed in 1992, replacing the former shake shingles.

Entering the Nichols House one is transported to the turn of the 19th century by the splendor of the late Victorian design elements. The richness of the wood, the elegant wall covering, and the antique fixtures create an appealing sense of grandeur. The original, stained oak door has a large oval window and the original hardware. A beveled, leaded glass transom window crowns the doorway. The initial entry is a small, 6' by 6' room with a single, double hung window on the east wall (Photo7). The wallpaper is a formal, traditional design in cream and gold. The 18 inch beige travertine tile was recently installed, but complements the original elements.

In all of the first story rooms four inch window and doorway trim is topped with a dentiled cornice and baseboards measure a substantial ten inches in height, as is common in many historic homes. Five panel doors are oak with meadows style brass backplate and doorknob. All woodwork is original oak. The walls are painted plaster, with the exception of the wallpapered front entry. Ceilings are 9'6" high, with the exception of

the kitchen ceiling, which is lower at 8' 8". The original, three-column cast iron radiators with embossed scroll design provide each room with even heat.

Beyond the entry (Photo 8), the staircase is directly ahead and to the left. The entire stair area is framed by two painted oak archways supported by classical columns. One arch encompasses the lower third of the stairway and the other frames the entry to the parlor (Photo 9). The center post of this archway serves as the newel post for this beautiful staircase and rests on the second step, which is preceded by a bullnose step, adding visual appeal. The painted, oak panel wall extends from the first floor all the way up the stairway and continues on the underside of the third section of stairs, visible from below. Ascending the stairway, there is a box newel post topped with a ball finial at each of the two landings and another at the top of the stairs (Photo 10). Square balusters support the sturdy beveled handrail. The balusters, newel posts, and risers are painted white, creating a contrast with the stained oak treads and handrail. There is a small doorway at the base of the stairs, which leads to a storage closet.

The expansive parlor is so spacious that it accommodates two separate seating areas. All of the original oak woodwork in this room is painted white. In the center of the room on the west wall is the original fireplace. (Photo 11) The classical style, oak mantle has fluted pilasters with plinth block bases and a reeded area in the center of the frieze board. A dentiled cornice spans the area below the mantle shelf. The mottled, cream colored brick that surrounds the fireplace opening provides further detail. The northern half of the parlor (Photo 12) extends into the majestic tower area. Three tall, curved glass windows bathe the room in light and provide this formal area with a spectacular focal point (Photo 13). Another single, double hung window at the northeast corner provides additional lighting and the radiator on the east wall evokes a feeling of the time period in which the house was built. Another outstanding feature of this north section of the room is the hardwood flooring. The center of the this section of the room and the tower are oak, laid in a diagonally-oriented, square basket weave pattern and framed by an intricate oak and walnut, diamond geometric pattern bordered with narrow strips of alternating woods. This design frames the northern half of the room, encompassing the tower also. The seating area at the southern end of this parlor (Photo 14) has plain, narrow strips of oak hardwood flooring. There is a paired, double-hung window on the west wall and another heat register stands on the south wall. At the south end of the parlor there are two doors, almost side by side (Photo 8). The door to the east enters the dining room and the door to the west leads to the kitchen.

Entering the kitchen from the parlor, a door to the right opens to the basement stairs. Beyond that door, the room expands to the west (Photo 15). This section of the kitchen has a small eating area and room for a refrigerator. At the far west end of the north wall, another door opens to the back stairway, which ascends to the upper level. The west wall houses a paired, double-hung window with a short heat register directly below. A doorway at the far west end of the south wall leads to a small back entry room. This back entry room is a simple room with plaster walls and a single, double hung window on the west wall. The door leading outside to the screened in porch is on the south wall and the floor is the same linoleum as is found in the kitchen. Returning to our original point of entry into the kitchen and looking straight ahead, the room continues straight through a galley-like section (Photo 16), then makes a left turn and continues for another 14.5 feet (Photo 17). The south wall of this final section of galley has a single, double-hung window over the sink that looks out to the backyard. This two section galley houses the built-in maple cabinets installed in the late 60's by well known Lowell cabinetmaker Walter Yurglas. The walls of this room are painted yellow and the floor is covered in an earth-tone colored, geometric patterned linoleum, installed at the same time as the cabinets. Standing at the far east end of the kitchen galley area one can continue straight into the small half bath (Photo 17) or turn to the left and enter the dining room (Photo 18).

The half-bath was remodeled by the new owners in 2007. This renovation replaced a mid-century remodel with a sink and fixtures more in keeping with the original time period. A reproduction pedestal sink and faucet is located at the southwest corner of this tiny bathroom. The nickel plated faucet with porcelain lever handles

are key in achieving the authentic look of the bathroom. The flooring is one inch, hexagon shaped ceramic tile in black and white. The lower half of the wall is covered in white subway tile, with the upper wall painted a light green. A single, double-hung window is located on the east wall, with a short heat radiator directly below. The five-panel stained oak door is on the west wall of the bathroom.

From the east end of the kitchen one can proceed north to the formal dining room (Photo18). Its elegant appeal explains why dining has been a pleasure at the Charles E. Nichols House for more than a century. A bay window forms the entire east wall, with each section of the bay housing a single, double hung window (Photo 19). Unlike the painted white woodwork throughout much of the first floor, the woodwork in this room is stained oak. A heating radiator rests on the north wall (Photo 20). The floor is oak, with thirteen narrow strips of alternating oak and walnut framing the perimeter with contrast and visual appeal. The plaster walls are painted a warm butterscotch color. There is a stained oak, five panel door at the northwest corner of the room (Photo 21) which leads back into the parlor.

Ascending the front stairway, one reaches the second story, open hallway (Photo 22). From the open hallway, a bannister overlooks the stairway below and a paired, double-hung window dominates the east wall.

The upstairs trim, baseboards and five panel oak doors with original bronze, meadows style hardware are the same as are found on the first story below. A significant number of doors on this level have a painted frame surrounding a stained oak door. The walls are plaster and the upper level ceilings are 9 feet in height. The flooring is the original oak, with the exception of the bathroom.

Turning to the right, on the north end of the house, is the study. This room houses the upper portion of the tower at the northwest corner. The tower has 3 curved glass windows and includes a tall radiator (Photo 23). The flat section of the north wall has a single, double hung window. The east wall of this room has a single, double hung window overlooking the balcony at the north end and to the south there is a closet door located near the entry. A single, double-hung window is located on the east wall of the closet. The north wall of the closet provides space for hanging clothing and the entire south wall features built in drawers for additional storage. (Photo 24). The walls of this room are painted a butterscotch color.

Returning to the top of the stairs, there is a closet set on a northwest angle located straight ahead (Photo 22). This convenient linen closet has a painted, built-in dresser and shelves. Moving south from the linen closet is a doorway to the guest bedroom (Photo 22). There is a radiator on the south wall and a large paired, double hung window dominating the west wall (Photo 25). There is a closet on the east wall at the northern end and the entry is centered on that same wall (Photo 26). The walls in this room are painted a cream color and the woodwork is accented in beige, with the exception of the doors, which are stained oak.

Exiting the bedroom and looking directly ahead one has a view of the hallway balcony overlooking the stairs and the massive paired, double-hung window located directly above. The walls surrounding the stairway and those in the hallway are painted a beige color.

Moving south down the hallway (Photo27) there is a doorway on the west wall which opens to the back stairway leading down to the kitchen. The stair steps are covered in an aged, speckled linoleum and the walls are painted the same beige as the hallway. There is a very narrow, double-hung window at the base of this stairway (Photo 28).

Continuing further down the hallway and to the left (Photo 27), one enters the master bedroom. The entire eastern wall is formed by the large bay and has three double-hung windows, one at each section of the bay. This east wall is painted a rich burgundy color for accent (Photo 29). The south wall of this room has a door leading to a closet in the center (photo 30) and the west wall has the entry door in the center (Photo 31). The walls, other than the previously mentioned east wall, are painted a cream color. The woodwork is painted white, with the exception of the five panel stained oak doors.

At the end of the hallway is the entrance to the master bathroom (Photo 27). Originally this doorway led to a bedroom and another doorway (which no longer exists), just south of the back stairway entry, led to a very narrow bathroom. In 2008 these two rooms were combined to create a spacious master bath. As with the downstairs bathroom, the remodel actually restored the feel of the time period in which the house was built, as the bathroom had been previously remodeled with mid-century materials and style elements. The spacious master bath has the original radiator and closet door on the east wall (Photo 32). There is a single, double-hung window on the south wall overlooking the backyard. A shower was installed in the southwest corner using black and white subway tile for the walls and a glass door at the entry. There are two side by side, reproduction pedestal sinks, each with its own built-in reproduction era medicine chest above, on the west wall. Additionally, there is single, double-hung window on the northern end of that west wall (Photo 33). A door on the west end of the north wall leads to the attic. There is a toilet slightly to the east of that. A reproduction acrylic tub sets near the inset portion of the east wall. The brushed nickel faucets with porcelain lever handles on the sinks and tub further the original feel. White wainscoting covers the lower portion of the walls and the upper portion is painted a cheerful green. The floor is done in white, one inch hexagon ceramic tile, identical to the downstairs bath, but without the black accent tiles. All of the original oak woodwork in this room, including the attic door, are painted white, with the exception of the entry door and the door to the closet, which are stained oak.

From that attic door at the north end of the master bath, stairs lead up to the unfinished, half story attic. On the north end of the attic (Photo 34) there is a single, double-hung window housed in a north-facing dormer. There are two additional dormers on the east side of the attic. Each of these dormers also house a single, double-hung window.

The unfinished basement is comprised of three rooms with open doorways centered in the dividing walls. New glass block windows replaced the plain glass windows in 2007. The ceiling exposes the rafters above and the floor is cement. The home is heated with a Weiler-McLean hot-water boiler located at the north end of the basement.

Originally a carriage house, the free standing, brick garage is located at the southwest corner of the house. A lean-to was added to the rear and the original garage door was replaced mid-century. A wider garage door was added to accommodate the larger cars that were produced as the century progressed. The newer, white paneled garage door has eight six-pane windows at the top. The decorated white verge board which accents the roof peak was added in 2008 (Photo35). On the eastern facade there is an original single, six-pane double-hung window in the center and a six panel door painted white at the northern end of this facade (Photo 36). There is also a small double-hung window on the east side of the lean-to, which was added in the latter half of the century. The lean-to spans the entire southern facade of the garage. This extension of the garage is covered in lap board siding painted red and has a small, double-hung window on both the east and south sides. The west wall of the garage also has an original six-pane, double-hung window.

## 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.
- [x] 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.

### 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

c. 1902

### Significant Dates

c. 1902

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

unknown

### Period of Significance (justification)

Since the house is significant under Criterion C, and had no later alterations of importance, the period of significance is limited to the date of construction/completion.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

None.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Charles E. Nichols House, built in 1902, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C because locally, it is an outstanding example of a Late Victorian Queen Anne domestic architecture in the Lowell area. Nichols, an owner of two feed stores and vice-president of the local bank, commissioned the house from an unknown architect or builder. Both Nichols' success and the opulence of the house are indicative of a period of sustained growth for Lowell, Indiana.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Criterion C:

The Victorian Era, fueled by the industrial revolution, afforded and allowed the average homeowner to incorporate more creative, intricate, and elaborate design elements into their homes. The Queen Anne style was greatly influenced by English architect Richard Norman Shaw, whose work melded English cottage ideals with the elaborate, decorative impulse of the Victorian Era. The Queen Anne gained popularity from the late 1870's through the beginning of the 1900's. In this tradition, Charles E. Nichols commissioned a Late Victorian house that was appropriate for a prominent Lowell businessman and his family.

The Nichols House has all the key characteristics of Queen Ann design: irregular, asymmetrical massing, large porches, vertical bays and towers. The exuberant surface ornament so often associated with the style was substituted for a more chaste exterior of brick with limestone detail. The emphasis on heavy masonry shows some influence from the Romanesque style, a late Victorian alternative to the Queen Anne style.

The Charles E. Nichols House, which was rated as outstanding in the Lake County Interim Report, compares favorably with other Queen Anne houses in Lowell. The J.Claude Rumsey House, circa 1906, is located several blocks to the northeast at 709 Michigan Avenue and was rated as outstanding in the Lake County Interim Report. This well maintained, one and a half story, frame house rests on a brick foundation, has a cross-gabled roof and is sided with horizontal wood clapboard, painted white. Multiple gables, a wraparound porch, and short Queen Anne tower with curved glass windows add to its charm. A frieze board with decorative wood block dentils add detail at the roof lines.These houses have some similarities, such as the elaborate tower, hipped roof and dentiled rooflines. Both houses also possess the picturesque massing that symbolizes the Victorian Era, however the J. Claude Rumsey's appeal leans in the direction of quaint and cottage-like in contrast to the regal and stately appearance created by the brick facade, stone lintels, attic dormers, towering chimney and deeply bracketed balcony of the Charles E. Nichols House.

Another house rated as outstanding in the Lake County Interim Report is a Free Classic/Queen Anne, circa 1900, located two blocks to the west at 490 Commercial Avenue. This two and a half story frame house has a cross gabled roof, a tower, and a wraparound front porch with classical columns and a segmental pediment over the porch entry. The horizontal clapboard siding is painted a maroon color and the very plain window trim is accented in gray. This house is similar to the Charles E. Nichols house in both size and massing, which contributes to the stately and elegant appearance of both. In contrast, the gables of the 490 Commercial house are covered with fish scale shingles, painted in alternating colors of gray, maroon, yellow and white, giving it a slightly flamboyant appearance compared to the conservative feel created by the brick facade, limestone lintels, and plain white clapboard that accents the dormers of the Nichols house.

The Charles E. Nichols House can also be compared to the Martin Driscoll House, another Queen Anne, circa 1900, located several blocks to the east at 520 Franklin Ave. This historic, two and a half story frame

Queen Anne house was also rated as outstanding in the Lake County Interim Report. The first story of the front facade has a large window on the first floor with a single door to the west and the second story of this facade has just one plain, double-hung window in the center. It has a partial wrap around porch and a two story bay on the west facade, however the porch on this house does not integrate itself into the bay. At the attic level of the front facade are two rectangular windows with three ornamental brackets supporting a small overhang. These historic homes have some similarities including the decorative dentils at the roof line, a two-story bay, and graceful support brackets at the upper levels. Although the Martin Driscoll house is a treasured historic home with thoughtful artistic design elements, it lacks the stately and picturesque massing that characterize the C.E. Nichols House. At this point in time it is visually apparent that the upkeep and maintenance of the Driscoll House's exterior leaves much to be desired in comparison to the very well preserved and maintained exterior of the Charles E. Nichols House, which continues to grace the town's main thoroughfare as a highly visible landmark.

The Charles E. Nichols House is eligible for the National Register of Historic places under Criterion C because locally it is an outstanding example of Late Victorian Queen Anne architecture. The well preserved facade, the presence of a two and a half story tower, the two story bays, elegant limestone lintels, attic dormers, and decorative, dentiled rooflines demonstrate both fine artistic workmanship and thoughtful architectural design. Careful renovations by the current owners have restored the home's original, turn of the century feel. Superior construction and meticulous maintenance of the property has preserved the quality of the original elements of the exterior as well as the interior. For these reasons, the Charles E. Nichols House should be added to the National Register of Historic Places.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

Historical Context:

At the turn of the century Lowell was located far enough away from the Calumet region to be called an agricultural town. Surrounded by prairie land and groves, the south Lake County area was dotted with farms, dairies, and truck gardens. In A Standard History of Lake County and the Calumet Region, Lowell was described at that time as "the acknowledged trading center of the three southern townships, as it is also the nucleus for many of the social and religious activities of that section of Lake County." The town, which was founded by Melvin Halsted in 1852, was so named due to the fact that its water facilities and milling industries at that time bore resemblance to those of Lowell, Massachusetts. The Souvenir Edition of Lake County, 1906 gives the following definition of Lowell at that time: "It has an electric plant and has long held the reputation of being one of the best trading points on its railway line, owing to the excellent farming community surrounding it and the high grade of farmers that support it by their patronage in trade."

The Charles E. Nichols House was built in 1902 by Charles Elmer Nichols. Mr. Nichols was the sixth child born to Horatio and Eliza (Kenyon) Nichols on Dec. 14, 1861 at the family farm in West Creek Township. For a brief time he lived in Chicago and then Crown Point, but soon returned to Lowell where he became a prominent businessman. He married Edna M. Smith on June 25, 1888. The Nichols had one daughter, Stella Nichols (Hildebrandt). Mr. Nichols purchased the property at 231 West Commercial on March 10th, 1902 for the sum of $50.00. Five days later an announcement was published in the Lowell Souvenir announcing Mr. Nichols' intention to begin work on a "commodious brick residence" for his family. We know that the house was completed that year because a subsequent item in the October 11, 1902 edition of this paper carried the following "Local Brief": "Mr. and Mrs. C.E. Nichols' new residence on the west side will be fitted up with

elegant furniture throughout. This residence is a credit to Lowell. The family has moved into it, although men are still at work on the inside finish."

Mr. Nichols was the proprietor of the C.E. Nichols Grain & Hay Company, president of the Nichols Grain & Hay Company at Cook, and also held the position of vice-president of the Lowell National Bank. In addition, he served for many years as a Republican committeeman representing the 2nd precinct. After living at the 231 West Commercial residence for 16 years, the Nichols family sold the house to James and Nettie Black and moved to California where Nichols was associated with his son-in-law, Harvey A. Hildebrandt, in operating the Santa Monica Ice Company. He eventually retired in 1937, residing in Santa Monica until he passed away on November 27, 1942 at 80 years of age.

James and Nettie Fuller Black owned the house from 1918 through 1934. The Black family's move from their rural Lowell farm to town was prompted by World War I and the presumption that their 3 sons, whose help was needed to maintain farm operations, would soon be drafted into service. Black was a farmer, landowner, and served for 17 years as the 3rd District County Commissioner in Lake County. Granddaughter Ruth Van Duersen has many fond memories of the time she and her brother James M. Van Duersen spent there at their grandparents home.

In 1931 James Black moved to a rural location in Thayer, IN, and gifted the house to his daughter, Mabel Van Duersen. Mabel immediately sold the house to Dr. Neal Davis and his wife Doris on contract. Dr. Davis moved into the house and began making payments in 1936. Records show that improvements he made that year included a rewiring of the house and a sewer connection. After making his final payment to Mrs. Van Duersen in March of 1941, the house was then recorded in the Davis' name. Dr. Davis served as a general practitioner in the town of Lowell for several years before leaving Lowell to complete his residency as an anethesiologist at Northwestern University in Illinois, eventually settling near Ogden Dunes, and finally in Texas. In 1950 they sold the house to Castle Brownell.

Records show that Castle D. Brownell and his wife Virginia owned the house between 1950 and 1955. Mr. Brownell worked as a salesman for an interior design company and his wife was a homemaker. The Brownells and their two children, Parker and Barbara, had only been living in the house for 2 years when Mr. Brownell suffered a fatal heart attack while spending the evening at home with his family. At that time Mrs. Brownell divided the house into two apartments, residing with her children on the lower level and renting out the upper level. A wall was built in the living room area near the stairs to separate the home into apartments.

In 1955 she sold the house to Lyle G. Mitchell and his wife Mildred. An entry in the "Social Notes" section of the Feb. 3, 1955 Edition of the Lowell Tribune announced that the Mitchells had purchased the home at 231 West Commercial and would be moving in around March 1st with their four children. The family, originally from nearby Lake Dalecarlia, lived there for only two years.

In 1957 the Mitchells sold the house to Dr. Leonard J. Anglis and his wife Monica. Dr. Anglis served as a respected dentist in the town of Lowell for many years. He and Mrs. Anglis raised their 3 children, Leonard Jr., Christina, and Joseph in this house. Upon moving in, they converted the two flat back to a single family dwelling by removing the wall in the living room, which had been previously erected to create the separate units. Throughout the very late fifties and early sixties many of the doors and hardwood floors were refinished, kitchen cabinets were installed, and the garage door was enlarged. A new roof was most likely added in the early 60's because it was at this time that the dormer windows were replaced (historic photo shows double-hung windows with 4-pane top windows) and clapboard siding replaced the shake roof shingles that had previously adorned the dormers' exterior. The Anglis family created a lifetime of memories in this house, residing there for 45 years. By the 90's, although the roof had been completely re-shingled in the earlier part of

that decade, the condition of interior of the house was in a state of decline. The Anglis family sold the house in 2002 and moved to a residence in Lowell that would be easier to maintain in their senior years.

Mark Sanders and Diane Sanders purchased the house in July of 2002. Mark, a second generation firefighter, and Diane, a graphic artist, share a love for antiques and historic homes and immediately began the process of restoring the house to its original grandeur and turn of the century feel. Over the previous decade the inside of the house had declined and was in need of some refurbishing. The Sanders set to work immediately to bring the home back to its previous luster. They stripped off layers of wallpaper, repairing cracked walls and finishing with paint and wallpaper. Many evenings were spent hand-rubbing the doorknobs and back plates to reveal their original bronze finish. They brought in professional floor finishers in to refinish the original hardwood floors, which had been covered with carpet. At the time of purchase, the upstairs consisted of 4 bedrooms and a very long and narrow bathroom. The Sanders combined the existing bathroom with a smaller bedroom at the south end of the house to create a spacious new master bathroom, yet managed to design it in such a way as to preserve the original heat radiator, doors and woodwork in that room. The Sanders replaced the mid-century bath with reproduction sinks, tub, and toilet, returning the overall feel of the home to its original Victorian elegance.

The Nichols home is featured in the Historic Homes Walk, on the Lowell Public Library website, and Historic Homes brochure. In 2007 it was also featured in the Lowell Garden Walk.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

"Castle Brownell Dies Suddenly", Lowell Tribune, March 13, 1952

Death Notice, Unidentified Newspaper, Richard Schmal (Lowell Historian) Collection, hand-dated Dec. 3, 1942

William Frederick Howat, ed. A Standard History of Lake County, IN and the Calumet Region, Volume I, Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1915

William Frederick Howat, ed. A Standard History of Lake County, IN and the Calumet Region, Volume II, Lewis Publishing Company, Chicago, 1915

Lake County Interim Report , Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1996

Local Briefs, Lowell Souvenir, January 18, 1902

Local Briefs, Lowell Souvenir, March 15, 1902

Local Briefs, Lowell Souvenir, October 11, 1902

"Lowell Indiana Sesquicentennial, 1852-2002, Lowell Sesquicentennial Committee, 2002

McAlester, Virginia, and Lee McAlester, Field Guide to American Houses. New York, Alfred Knopf, 2006

Our American Heritage, 1852-1952. Lowell Centennial Inc., 1952

"Pioneer History: The Souvenier Album of Lake County," Lowell Tribune, November 26, 2000

Social Notes, Lowell Tribune, February 3, 1955

Souvenir Album of Lake County, 1906, E. E. Woodcock, 1906

"The Town of Lowell After 1900," Lowell Tribune, Richard C. Schmal, June 24, 1997

Interviews:
Conducted by Cathy LaReau

Mark & Diane Sanders (present owners of the Charles E. Nichols Home) 12/14/08

Ruth Van Duersen (granddaughter of James & Nettie Black, daughter of Mabel VanDuersen, previous owners) 1/10/09

Leonard Anglis Jr., DDS (son of former owner Leonard J. Anglis, Sr., DDS) 1/30/09

Lenora Nomanson (long time Lowell resident and former co-worker of Dr. Neal Davis) 2/2/09

Richard Schmal (Historian for the town of Lowell) 2/3/09

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #_____
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #_____

**Primary location of additional data:**

_X_State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____089-370-93190_____

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

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

| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 16 | 464150 | 4570800 | 3 | | | |
| 2 | | | | 4 | | | |

Charles E. Nichol House
Name of Property

Lake Co., IN
County and State

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

A part of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northwest 1/4 of Section 26, Township 33 North, Range 9 West of the 2nd Principle Meridian,described as commencing 41 5/7ths rods East of the Northwest corner of said Section and running thence South 14 rods; thence East 5 rods; thence North 14 rods; thence West 5 rods to the place of beginning, in the Town of Lowell, Lake County, Indiana, more commonly known as :

231 Commercial Avenue
Lowell, IN 46356

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

This is the historic boundary.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cathy LaReau

organization _____ date March 2009

street & number 15615 Colfax St. telephone 219-696-6492

city or town Lowell state IN zip code 46356

e-mail _____

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

## Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:** Charles E. Nichols House
**City or Vicinity:** Lowell, IN
**County:** Lake **State:** Indiana
**Photographer:** Cathy LaReau
**Date Photographed:** January 22, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing south, exterior north façade.
**1 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 22, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southwest, exterior northeast façade.
**2 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 22, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, exterior west façade.
**3 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, southern section of west exterior façade.
**4 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing north, south exterior façade.
**5 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, east exterior façade.
**6 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northeast, interior front entry.
**7 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southwest, view from front entry.
**8 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, interior front staircase.
**9 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing north, upper portion of front staircase.
**10 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, interior parlor fireplace.
**11 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing north, interior north section of parlor.
**12 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northwest, interior tower in parlor.
**13 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northwest, interior southern section of parlor.
**14 of 36.**

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southwest, interior west section of kitchen.
**15 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southeast, interior L-shaped galley section of kitchen.
**16 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, interior east section of kitchen with view into half bath.
**17 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southeast, interior south wall of dining room.
**18 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northeast, interior east wall (bay) of dining room.
**19 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northeast, interior north wall of dining room.
**20 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, interior west wall of dining room.
**21 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, interior 2nd story landing.
**22 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northwest, interior 2nd story study, tower section and section of north and west wall.
**23 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, interior east wall of 2nd story study.
**24 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, interior 2nd story guest bedroom, west wall.
**25 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northeast, interior 2nd story guest bedroom, east wall.
**26 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing south, interior 2nd story hallway.
**27 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, interior back stairway to kitchen.
**28 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing east, interior 2nd story guest room, east wall (bay).
**29 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southeast, 2nd story guest room, south wall.
**30 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northwest, interior 2nd story master bedroom, west and north wall.
**31 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing southeast, interior 2nd story master bath, east and south wall.
**32 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** January 10, 2009
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing northwest, interior 2nd story master bath, west and north wall.
**33 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing north, interior attic, northern section.
**34 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing south, exterior garage, north wall.
**35 of 36**.

**Date Photographed:** December 14, 2008
**Description of Photograph(s) and number:** Camera facing west, exterior garage, east wall.
**36 of 36**.

Charles E. Nichol House
Name of Property

Lake Co., IN
County and State

**Property Owner:**

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

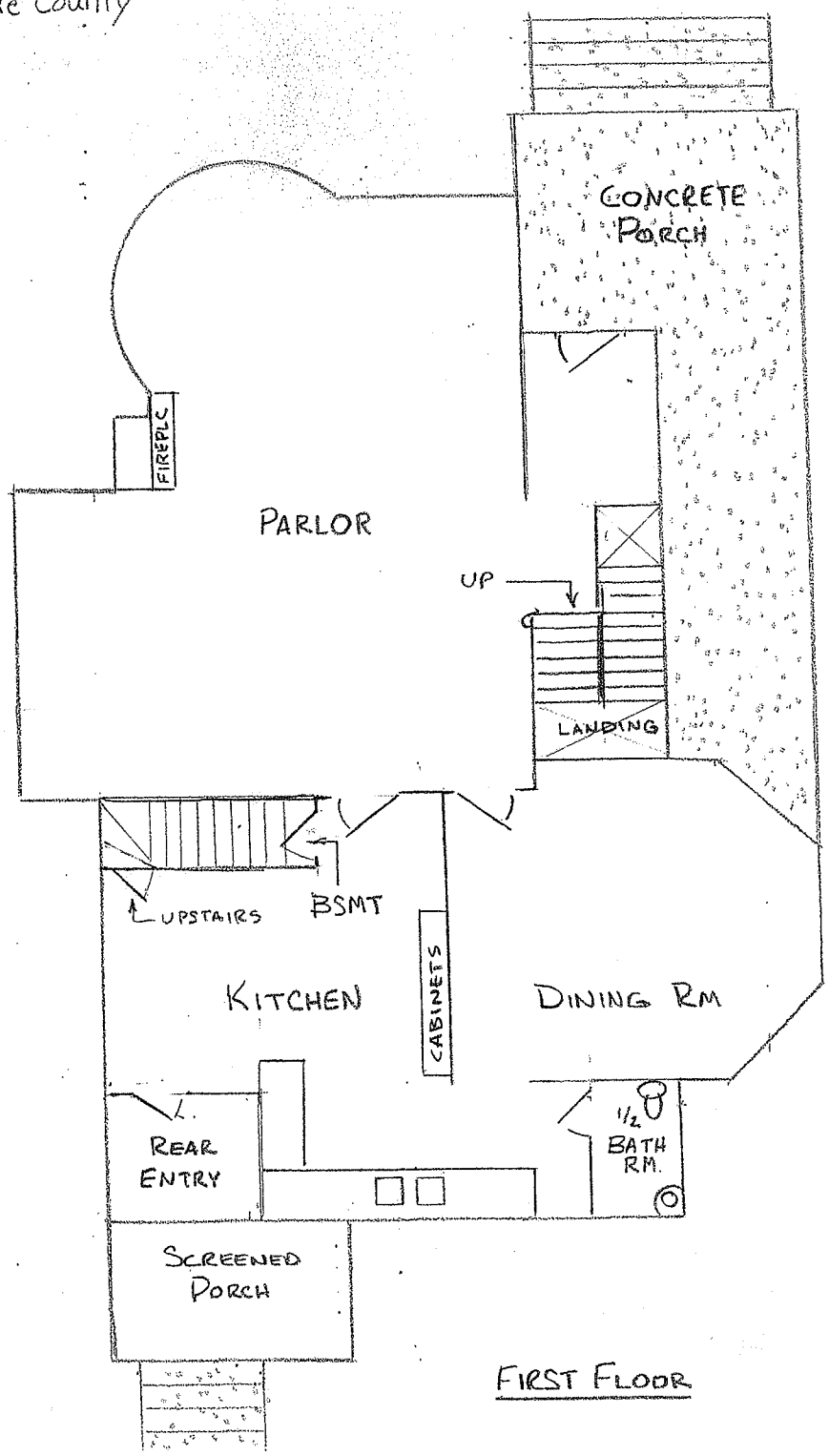
name Mark and Diane Sanders

street & number 231 W. Commercial Ave. telephone

city or town Lowell state IN zip code 46356

**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 18 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.

Charles E. Nichols House
IN - Lake County

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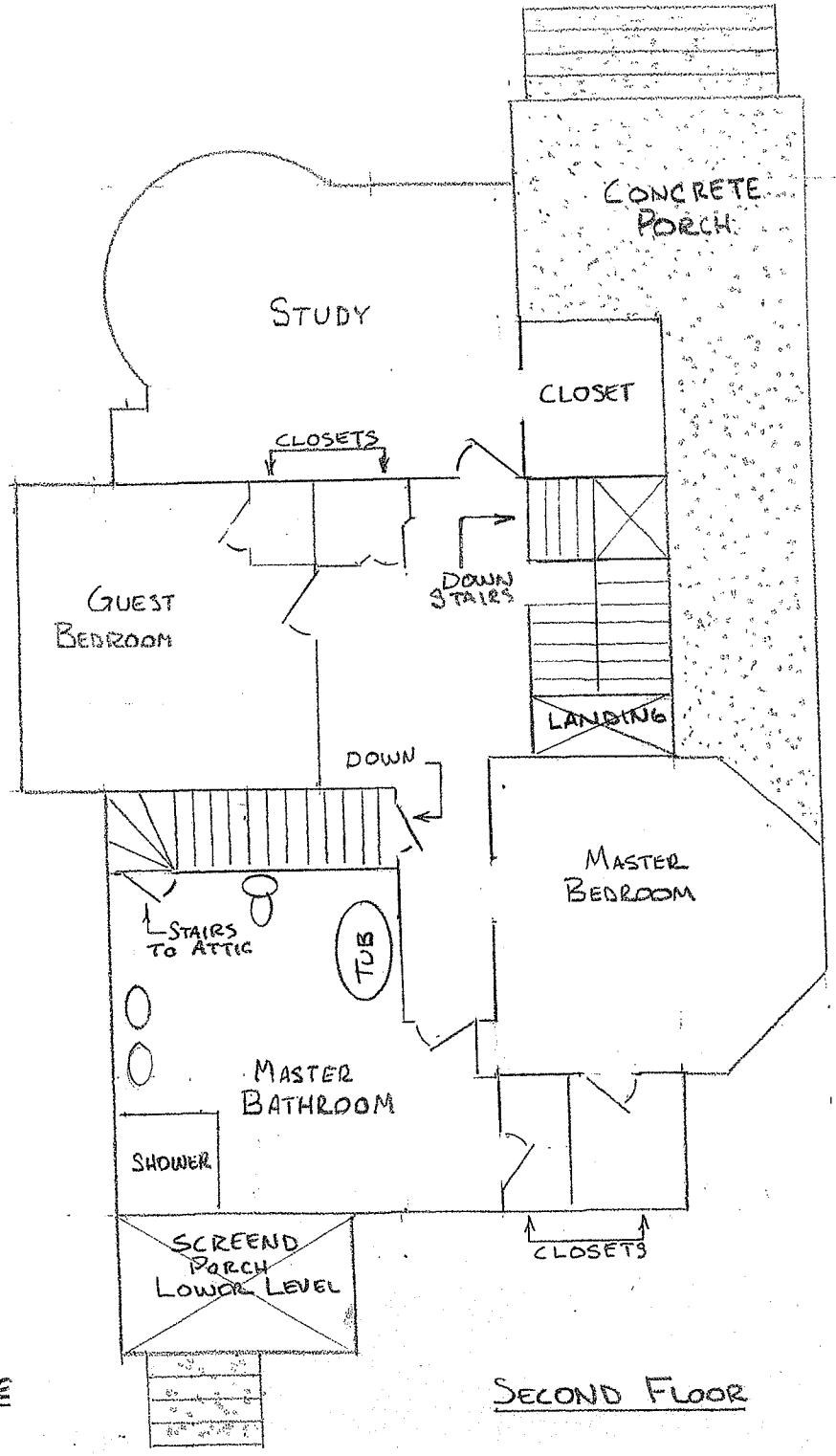



SECOND FLOOR

Charles E. Nichols House
IN - Lake County

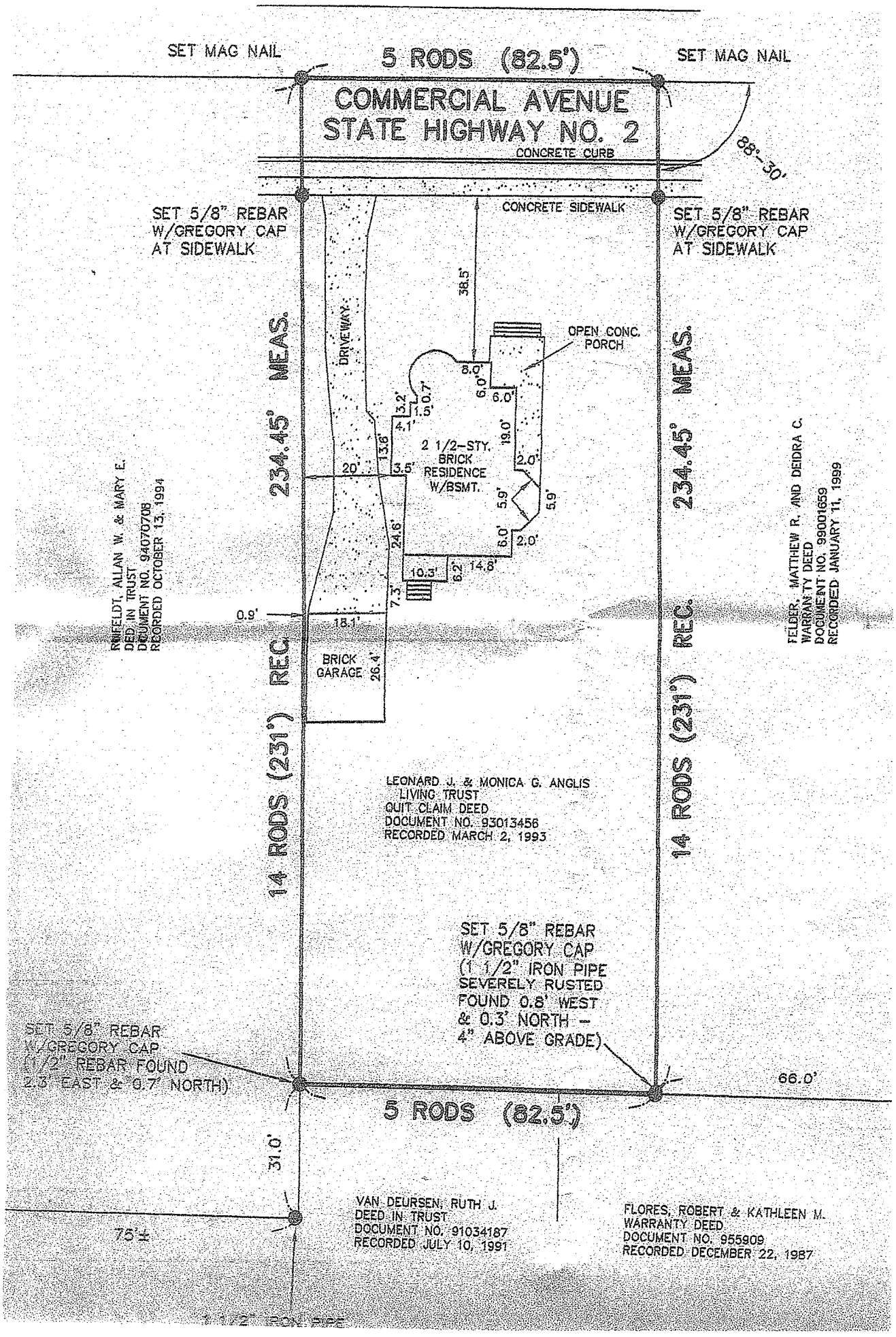
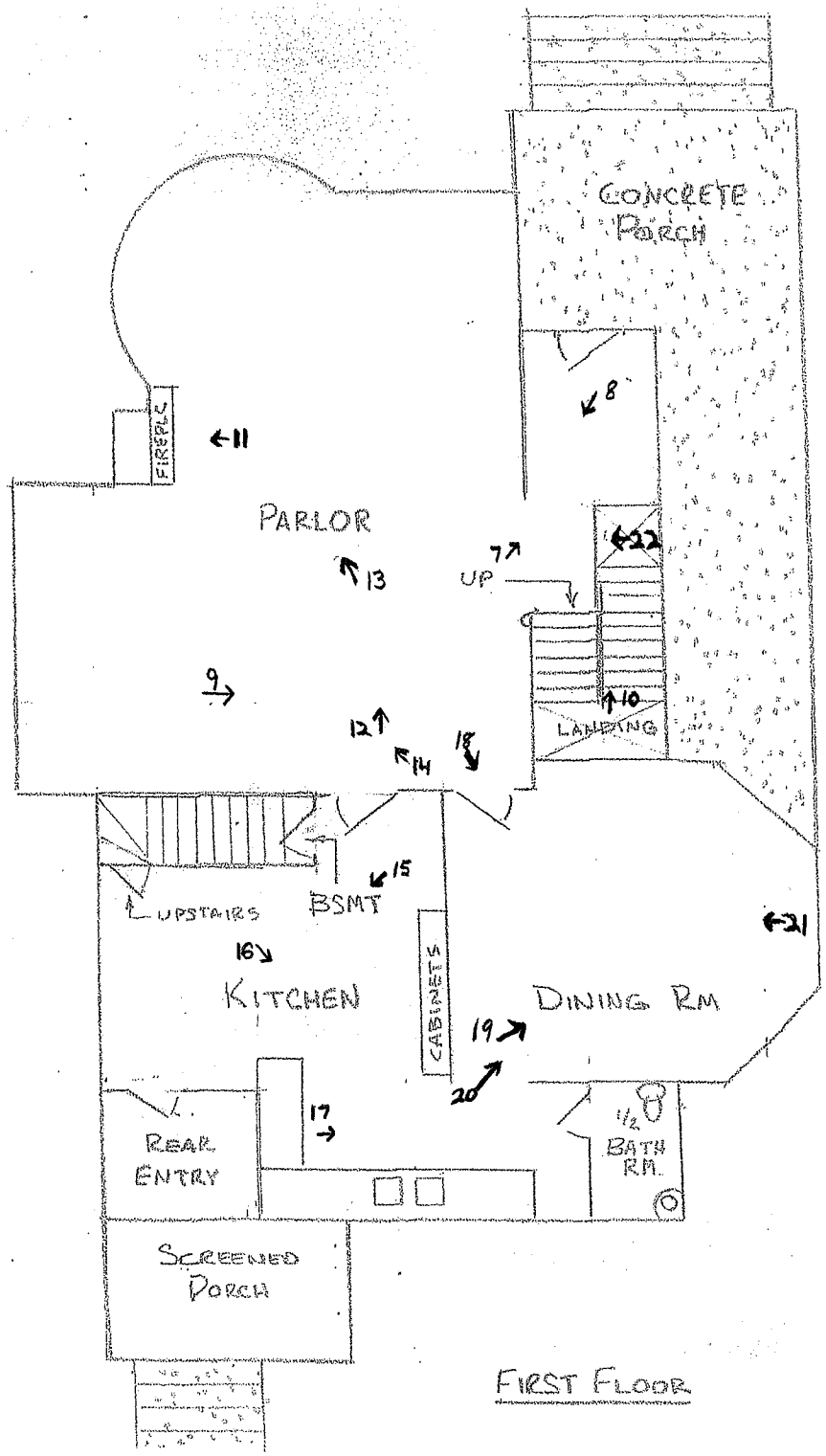


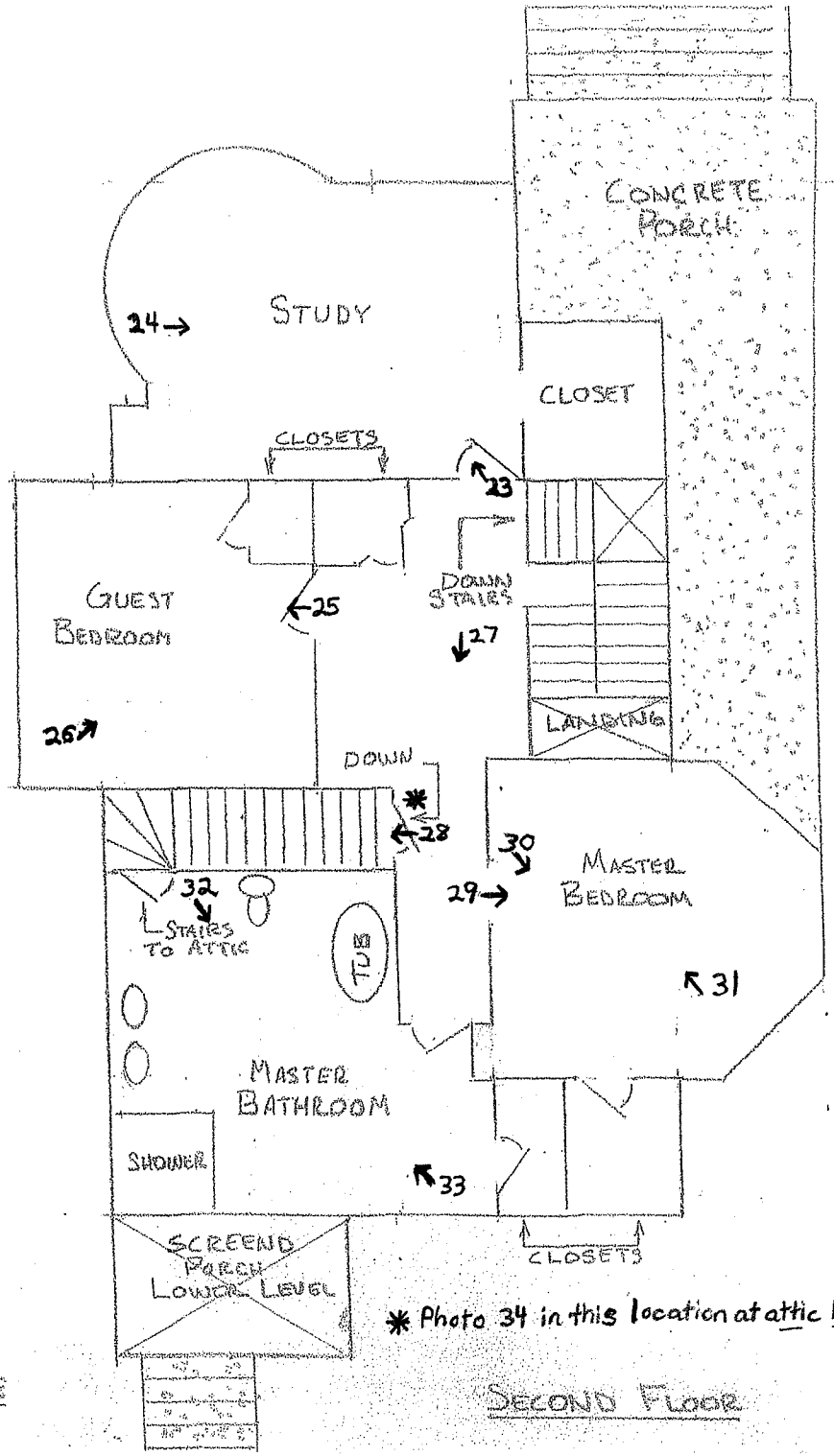
Photo Key




FIRST FLOOR

N

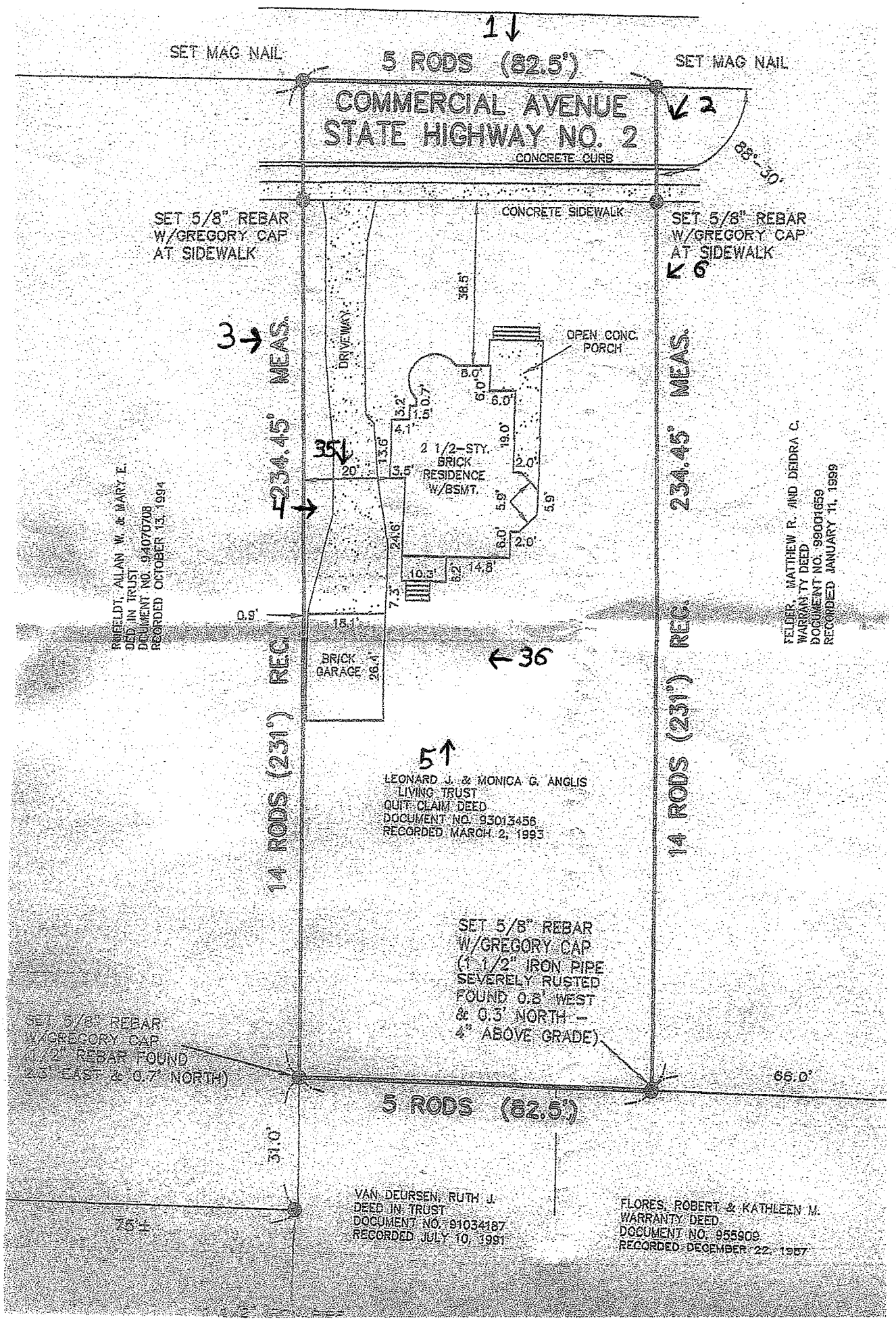
1/8 SCALE




* Photo 34 in this location at attic level

SECOND FLOOR

Photo Key #1-6, 35, 36



Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 2

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 3

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 5

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 6

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 9

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 12

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 23

Charles E. Nichols House, Lake Co., IN photo 36