

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Ricketts House
other name/site number: Stevens Residence

2. Location

street & number: 2301 Washington Boulevard not for publication:
city/town: Huntington vicinity:
state: W. Va. code: WV county: Cabell code: 011 zip code: 25705

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally ☒ statewide locally.
(See continuation sheet.)

William G. Lauer
Signature of Certifying Official

6-6-94
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

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 this property is:

Signature of 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):

Ricketts House
Name of Property

Cabell County, WV
County and State

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5. Classification

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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) ☐ object
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	TOTAL

Name of related multiple property listing N/A

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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6. Function or Use

=====

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

=====

7. Description

=====

Architectural Classification:

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH & 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS:

Eclectic: Tudor, Prairie School

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation STONE

Walls STONE

Roof ASPHALT SHINGLES

Other STONE - chimney

STUCCO - soffit

Narrative Description

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

Ricketts House
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8. Statement of Significance

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Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

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 significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1924-1925

Ricketts House
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Significant Dates

1924 - Design
1925 - Construction/Completion

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Levi J. Dean, Architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of Repository: _____

Ricketts House
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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property: less than one (1) acre

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

1	<u>17</u>	<u>376690</u>	<u>4251590</u>	2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

 see continuation sheet

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

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

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11. Form Prepared By
=====

Name/Title: Carl F. Agsten, Jr., Architectural Historian

Organization: WV Div. of Culture & History Date: April 10, 1994

Street & Number: Cultural Center Telephone: (304) 558-0220

City or Town: Charleston State: WV ZIP: 25305

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Additional Documentation
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Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

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

Ricketts House
Name of Property

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

Name: Dr. Sarah Louise Cockrell Stevens

Street & Number: 2301 Washington Blvd. Telephone: (304) 522-8755

City or Town: Huntington State: WV Zip: 25705

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

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

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1

Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Description

The Ricketts House is a large stone residence of unique design and exceptional craftsmanship. It occupies a wooded corner lot near the top of Washington Boulevard, in an affluent suburb of Huntington. Designed by Levi J. Dean in 1924 and built the following year at a cost of \$125,000, it represents the largest residential work of this prominent local architect, and probably his finest as well. The house was commissioned by John G. Ricketts, a land owner and developer of the areas known as Fairfax Court, Ricketts Place and Holswade Park, which were all developed as residential neighborhoods in the 1920s. Ricketts met financial ruin in 1929 and the house came under the ownership of Samuel Biggs, just four years after its construction. The Biggs family lived there from 1929 until 1946, when it was sold to Francis A. Scott. The current owner, Dr. Sarah Louise Cockrell Stevens, has lived there since 1954, when she and her husband, Dr. Richard Stevens, acquired the house from Francis Scott. The demands of raising their seven children in the house required that the Stevens family use creativity in adapting the original four-bedroom layout, but changes to the house have had very minimal impact upon its historic integrity.

On August 31, 1923, John Ricketts and his two partners filed a map with the Assessor's Office which identifies two areas planned for residential development, named Ricketts Place and Fairfax Court, at the top of Washington Boulevard. Ricketts chose a generous corner lot in the area named Ricketts Place for the construction of his own home. Its location inside a gentle curve of the newly-constructed boulevard gave it a prominent exposure from the street, as indicated by historic photographs taken not long after the construction of the house (attached).

The enormous size of the house (nearly 16,000 square feet in area) is not readily apparent from the street, due to its horizontal orientation and its position within a grove of mature oaks. What is striking upon first observation is the large and unusual roof. The roof is low in pitch, and consists of a complex form of 9 ridges, 13 valleys and 15 hips. The ridge lines are punctuated by four large stone chimneys. The roof shingles, which are seven layers in thickness, are molded in a curved fashion along the oversized eaves and eyebrow dormers, creating an undulating texture which simulates thatch.

The original roof of cedar shingles has been replaced following its destruction by fire on April 9, 1969. The new roof consists of asphalt shingles, which were hand cut on site and layered thickly in wave courses to carefully replicate the historical appearance of the building. One

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Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Description (continued)

change in the roof's appearance was changed in its reconstruction, however: a greenhouse was added to the southeast corner of the upper floor, creating an open gable with skylights where there was once a hipped end. This change, while significant, is not a detractor from the building's historic character.

The exterior walls of the Ricketts House are of rough-cut stone laid in irregular courses. The masonry joints are raked deeply, accentuating the rough texture of the stone walls. Lintels over the windows and doorways are keyed, with skillful transitions to the irregular coursing of the walls.

The stonework of the hip-roofed entrance pavilion is richly detailed with thick, tapered piers and large segmental arches on three sides. The visual highlight of this stone pavilion is a keyed oval opening on the east side.

A similar porch extends from the northeast corner of the house, forming a porte cochere. The area between the two pavilions is a large open terrace, which serves as the transition between the formal entrance and the service entrance.

Large casement windows, typically paired, are closely spaced in all exterior elevations. To allow still more light into the interior spaces, most exterior doors are paired french doors. The living room features a large bow window on the north elevation, consisting of five paired casement windows. Light to the second story is provided by three large and unusual dormers, which are essentially shed dormers with shingles flowing over the sidewalls.

Original construction prints for the building are extant, and indicate a building of substantial construction. The six existing sheets (which are in the possession of Levi J. Dean's son, Keith Dean of Huntington, West Virginia) are identified as follows:

Sheet #1	(no title--foundation/basement plan)	June 21, 1924
Sheet #2	Floor Plan	July 12, 1924
Sheet #3	Roof Plan (includes attic/second floor plan)	" "
Sheet #4	North Elevation and South Elevation	" "
Sheet #5	West Elevation and East Elevation	" "
(no #)	(no title--two cross sections)	(no date)

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Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Description (continued)

The drawings indicate that the basement slabs range in thickness from 4" to 6.5"; and are heavily reinforced with steel bars. The first-floor structure consists of 15" and 18" steel beams, with floor joists spaced on 12" and 16" centers. The masonry walls are backed with a frame of 2x6 wood studs.

The house has a full basement with 9' ceiling height, and measuring approximately 6,200 square feet in area. The space includes a three-bay garage, which opens to the lower south elevation. It also contains space for the heating plant, a laundry, and a fruit storage room. All walls except the north wall contain windows, and the south wall has an exterior door. Because of this, the remaining basement space has been used at times as both an apartment and an office.

The first floor is the main living and entertaining space. The rambling form of the exterior walls follows the functional layout of these generously proportioned rooms. The entrance pavilion on the north side of the house opens into a large reception hall, which measures 15'x26'. Rooms for entertaining--that is, the dining room, reception hall, living room and sun parlor--are arranged along the north wall of the house. Eight-foot-square cased openings tie this arrangement of rooms together along an east-west axis.

The living room, measuring 32'x22', is the grandest space in the home, with a 20' bow window on the north wall and a large chandelier at center. The extraordinary element in the room is the mantelpiece on the west wall, which is of Scottish origin. According to Dr. Louise Stevens the mantelpiece was imported for John Ricketts by A. B. Closson of Cincinnati. The piece, which is ten feet high and ten feet wide, is sculpted of a dark wood (unidentified), and features two stylized heads on either side of a large shield bearing a coat-of-arms.

Two pairs of french doors lead from the living room, on each side of the Scottish mantelpiece, to a sun parlor which is surrounded on three sides by large casement windows.

A cluster of rooms containing the kitchen, breakfast room, "cold room" and toilet are arranged in the southeast corner of the first floor. As with all the rooms, the kitchen is generously sized. It has featured, from its original construction, such modern utilities as a hooded range, incinerator and a large refrigerator.

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Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Description (continued)

In 1966 the Stevens family converted an area that was once an outdoor terrace into a transitional indoor/outdoor space by covering the terrace with a skylight structure of unique design (see attached photograph). Its contemporary form is Chinese in flavor, with large curving soffitts of wooden strips extending on four sides from the central skylight. The fountain and tile floors of the original terrace, which remain in place, are complimented today with a lush variety of plants filling the space.

The southern wing of the first floor, which is primarily above the garage, contains the master bedroom, "boy's room" and guest room. All three bedrooms have bathrooms and dressing rooms attached. The master bedroom has a fireplace on the south wall, flanked by paired casement windows with window seats.

The upper floor served originally as the maid's quarters and an enormous playroom. Although it is essentially an attic space, the area is well lit by long dormer windows. With such ample space in this attic area, the Stevens family was able to add enough bedrooms to accommodate their seven children. In 1954 they added a spiral staircase in an unused hallway space to provide a second egress from the attic in case of fire.

Another addition to the property, reportedly built by Biggs (the second owner), is a free-standing playhouse constructed to the rear of the house. It measures roughly 12'x25', with wood siding and a low-pitched saltbox roof. Though its age is greater than fifty years and remains in fair condition, it does not contribute to the architectural significance of the property.

Today the house is in good condition, with some minor maintenance required, most notably to the stucco of the eaves. The careful stewardship of the house by its residents of the past forty years, the Stevens family, has allowed the house to retain its exceptional character despite the changing needs of its occupants.

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Section number 8 Page 1

Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Statement of Significance

The Ricketts House is a significant and well-preserved work of the prominent Huntington architect, Levi J. Dean. The size of the commission, with a total cost of \$125,000 as indicated in the architect's records, stands out among Dean's residential projects. This accounts in part for the freedom and creativity exercised throughout the design.

The Rickett's House represents a unique and thoroughly American approach to the construction of an English manor house. The design of the roof, which closely resembles thatch, indicates a style which Virginia and Lee McAlester identify as a "rare but very distinctive subtype" of the Tudor Revival: the false thatched roof (A Field Guide to American Houses). The interior trim and layout of the rooms is typically English as well.

Essential elements of the house's design, however, betray its total departure from the Tudor style. The horizontality of the building's rambling form is unlike the Tudor. Even the roof, which is so clearly represents thatch, is low in pitch and lacks the typically Tudor gable front gable.

The low-pitched, hipped roof with large overhanging eaves, along with the overall horizontality of the design, indicate Dean's assimilation of the Prairie Style. This is a style which was short-lived among architectural fashions (roughly 1905-1915), but which had a profound and lasting impact on American design. Though the house is by no means a pure expression of the Prairie style, many of the building's elements are distinctive in their expression of the style. The horizontal arrangement of the casement windows, the massive tapered columns of the stone pavilions, and the overall arrangement of the rooms are examples of Dean's understanding of Prairie houses.

Dean's residential work was primarily Colonial and Tudor Revival in style. His many house designs were built in Huntington with only a few exceptions, most notably the Tudor Revival R.T. Price House of Williamson (Mingo County), which is currently the only house by Levi J. Dean listed on the National Register.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2

Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Statement of Significance (continued)

Dean was born in Gassaway (Braxton County) in 1878, one of thirteen children born to George W. and Mary Jane Davis Dean. His training in architecture came from ICS (International Correspondence School) of Scranton, Pennsylvania. He began his practice in Charleston, but moved to Huntington in 1906. He had three children by his first marriage, to Ada Leonora Johnson, who died in 1910. In 1912 he married Susie Ada Turner. Of the three children from his second marriage, two shared his architectural practice in later years. Keith and Brooks Dean joined their father under the name of Dean and Dean.

The bulk of Levi J. Dean's commissions were concentrated in the areas of church and school buildings. In commercial architecture, he was responsible for all of the stores for O.J. Morrison's, a major retailer in the state. He designed courthouses in Ripley and in Pikesville, Kentucky. A partial list of Dean's commissions, as compiled by the architect in 1940, is printed in the R.T. Price House nomination. The commissions, about 140 in number, are scattered throughout the state and into Kentucky and Ohio.

As in the Ricketts House commission, Dean often exercised a great deal of design freedom in his eclectic use of revival styles. His work is original, fanciful and even idiosyncratic. His own office building, built in 1927, was an unusual mix of Moorish Revival and a more modest commercial style. Dean's design for the B'Nai Israel Orthodox Synagogue in Huntington, still extant, is an eccentric but beautiful mix of Moorish and Deco styling.

The enormous size of the Ricketts House, and the generous size of its budget, gave Levi J. Dean an opportunity to create a residence of unique design in Huntington. The result is an English manor house in the Prairie Style, which couldn't be more appropriate as the highest style of American suburbia in the 1920s.

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Ricketts House
Cabell County, WV

Bibliography

Gioulis, Michael. "R.T. Price House, Mingo County, West Virginia."
Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, 1991.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. A Field Guide to American Houses. New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1992.

Miller, Doris C. A Centennial History of Huntington, W. Va.. Huntington,
WV: Franklin Printing Company, 1971.

Wallace, George Selden. The Cabell County Annals and Families. Richmond,
VA: Garrett & Massie, 1935.

Wallace, George Selden. Huntington through Seventy-Five Years.
Huntington, West Virginia, 1947.

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is a corner lot on Washington Boulevard, as shown on Cabell
County Assessor's Map 62. It is the portion shaded on the attached map.

Verbal Boundary Justification

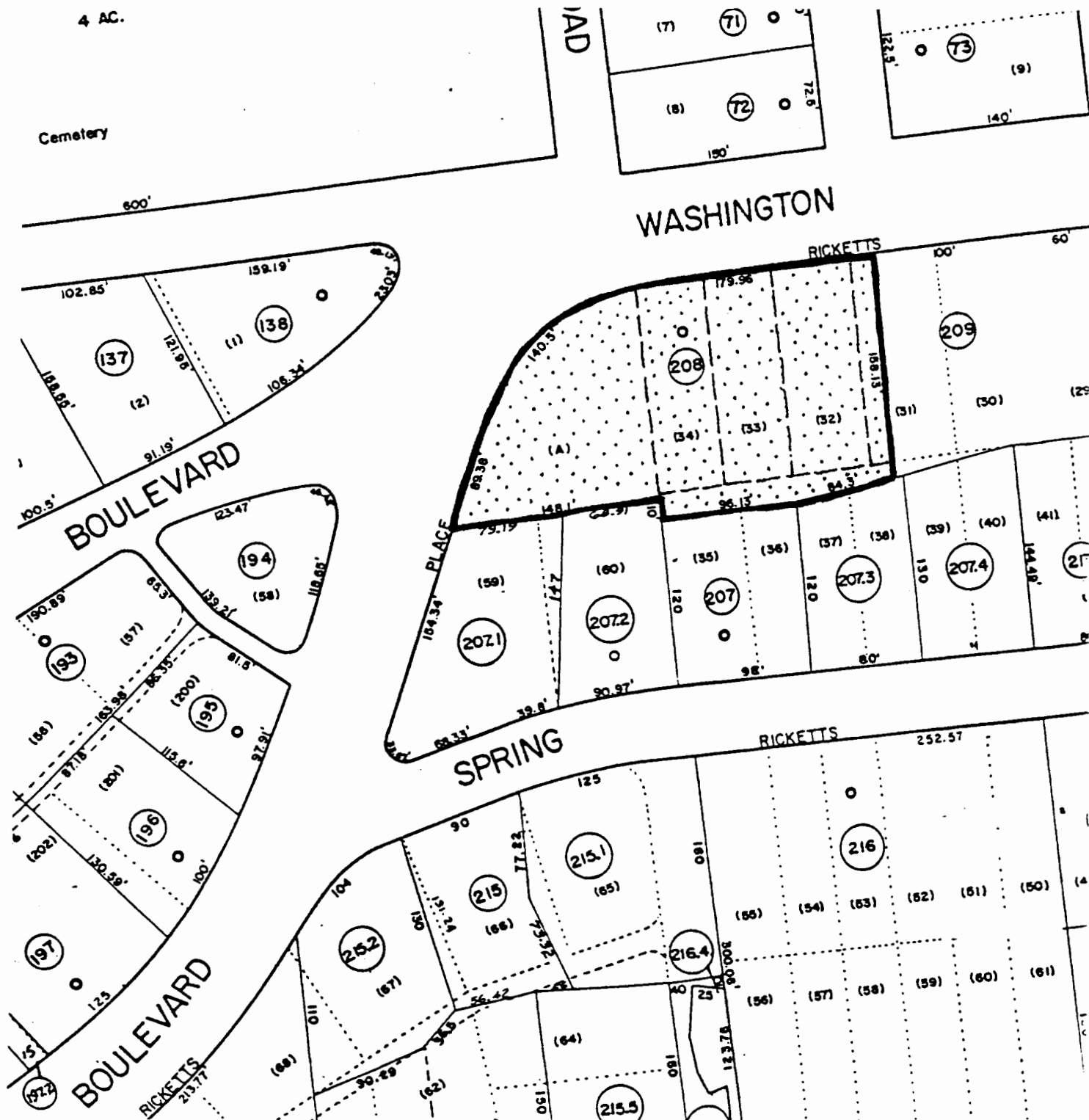
The property is the full extent of land historically associated with the
nominated building.

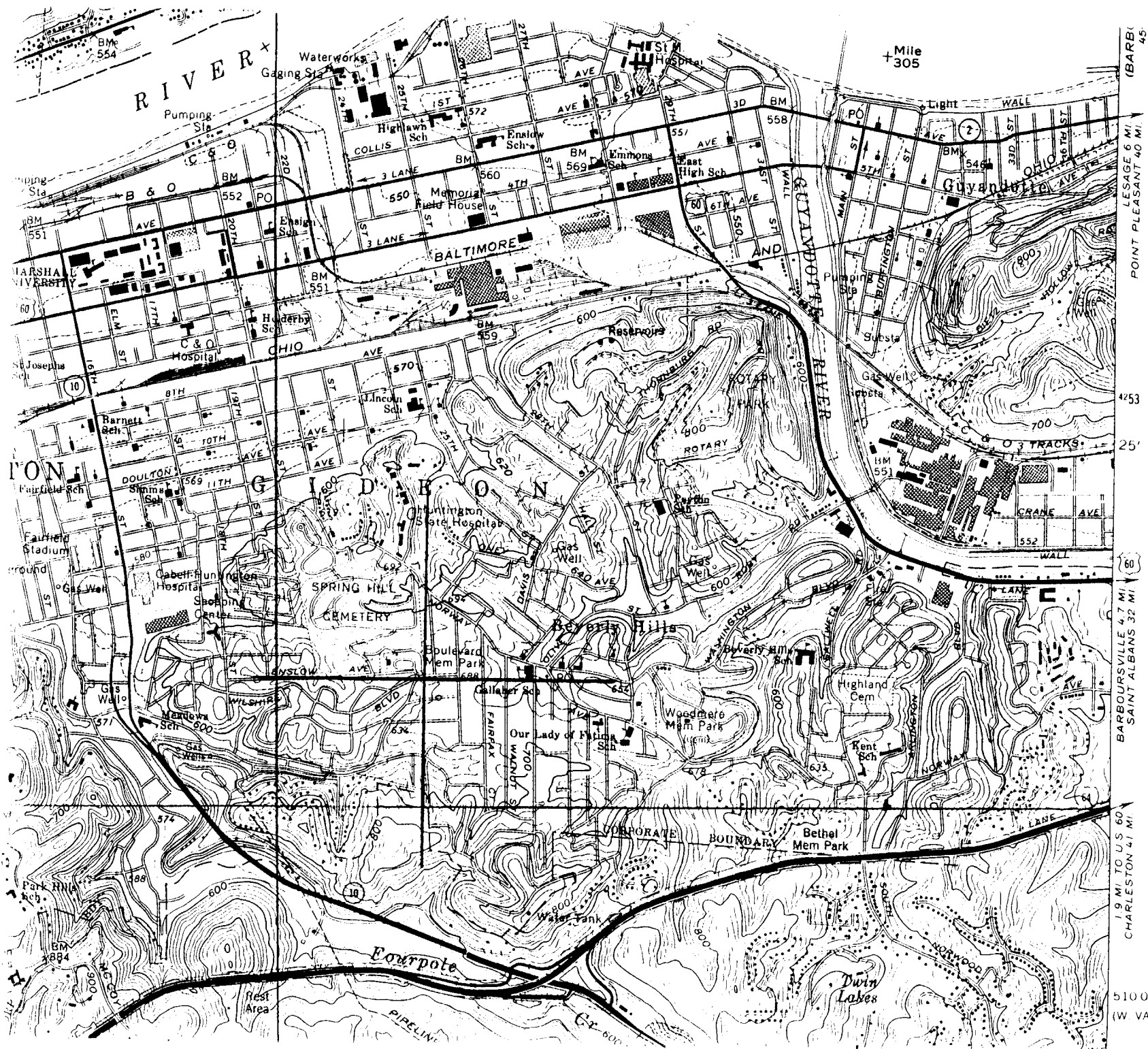
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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

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from Cabell County Assessor's Map #62





RICKETTS HOUSE
 CARROLL COUNTY, MD
 UTM:
 17/276690/4251590

19 MI TO US 60
 CHARLESTON 41 MI
 510 000 FEET
 (W VA)
 BARBOURSVILLE 4.7 MI
 SAINT ALBANS 32 MI
 POINT PLEASANT 40 MI
 LESAGE 6 MI
 (BARB) 45

