Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC: Ross House

AND/OR COMMON: Audrain County Historical Museum

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 501 South Muldrow — __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN: Mexico — __ VICINITY OF — CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #10 - Hon. Harold L. Volkmer

STATE: Missouri — CODE: 29 — COUNTY: Audrain — CODE: 007

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	__PUBLIC	X OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	X MUSEUM
X BUILDING(S)	X PRIVATE	__UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	__PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
		__NO	__MILITARY	__OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: 1. Audrain County Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER: 501 South Muldrow

CITY, TOWN: Mexico — __ VICINITY OF — STATE: Missouri 65265

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER: Audrain County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN: Mexico — STATE: Missouri 65265

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: 1. Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue

DATE: 1963 — __FEDERAL X STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: State Historical Society of Missouri

CITY, TOWN: Columbia — STATE: Missouri 65201

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2. City of Mexico
City Hall
Mexico, Missouri 65265

ITEM NUMBER 6 PAGE 1

2. Missouri State Historical Survey
1977 state
Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 176
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

distance of 160.0 feet; thence east parallel to the south line of said Lot 1 a distance of 320.0 feet to the point of beginning.

ITEM NUMBER 11 PAGE 1

2. Mr. W.E. Witchie
1411 South Western Street
Mexico, Missouri 65265

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	__UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	X ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Ross House faces east onto South Muldrow Street from a central location in Robert S. Green Memorial Park.

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The house is of a classically-derived style, modified by Italianate decorative features. The imposing two story pedimented portico, the fenestration and the entrance faithfully reflect a classical influence; brackets occur, however, where dentils or modillions would be expected, and together with the jig-work balustrades soften the classicism with an eclectic touch.

EXTERIOR

Over-all dimensions. The main block of the building is square in shape with modifications in the form of a rear (west) section consisting of caretaker's quarters and a pantry and restroom. The caretaker's quarters have been enlarged by means of a one story addition which is attached to the rear section. On the first story, the rear section extends beyond the main block to form bay windows on the north and south facades. The north bay window has been obscured, however, by a hyphen that adjoins the rear portion of the main block to provide egress from the Ross House to the American Saddle Horse Museum, which for the purposes of this nomination is an intrusion. The connecting passageway bends 45° to the west so that the Saddle Horse Museum is aligned obliquely to the Ross House along a northwest-southeast axis. Because of this, the Saddle Horse Museum appears to retire discreetly into the background, minimizing visual competition with the main house.

The main block of the Ross House measures approximately 42 feet wide (primary facade) by 36 feet deep. The rear section is 14 feet deep by 50 feet wide and the attached cottage is 21' X 29'. The portico is 13' X 8'.

The house rests on a partial basement, is two stories high and has a small attic which permits access to a widow's walk that capps the structure.

Construction materials and colors: A cut stone foundation supports a frame building sheathed with clapboards. The attached cottage, however, employs vertical board and batten siding. The space between the wall studs is interfilled with brick nogging. Sections of the wall flanking the doorway leading from the Ross House to the Saddle Horse Museum have been left exposed to permit public inspection of this type of construction. The building is presently painted ivory yellow with white trim.

Openings. The primary facade presents a three bay arrangement. The two-story portico forms the central bay, and on each story features identical doorways containing single-leaf four panel doors surrounded by side lights and transom lights that contain hand-painted panes imported from Czechoslovakia. Enframing this arrangement on each story are unfluted pilasters supporting an entablature.

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The outer bays contain paired, shuttered four-over-four light double hung sash windows surmounted by plain entablatures. The second story windows on all facades are slightly diminished in scale from those of the first story.

The north and south facades of the main block are four bays deep with single six-over-six light double hung sash windows set into plain enframements. A fifth bay is created on these facades by the rear section with projecting first story bay windows. The west facade contains three windows identical to those on the north and south facades, plus two smaller windows. The attached caretaker's cottage has three windows and an entrance door.

Chimneys. Four brick chimneys contained within the fabric occur in the main block. They are symetrically distributed two each on the north and south facades. A portion of the northeast chimney block on the first story is exposed to comprise the wall surface between the first and second bays.

Roof. A hip roof covered with asphalt shingles, and truncated to accomodate a widow's walk, capps the main block, while a shingled gable roof covers the attached cottage. A slight rake occurs in the cornice of the rear section (fifth bay of the north and south facades).

Decorative details. Principle decorative features consist of jig-work railings, brackets and fluted columns and pilasters. Paired, fluted doric columns, square in shape, support the two-story portico. The inner columns are more slender than the outer ones. Grooved brackets, that rise in two curves with pendents at each termination, line the soffits of the cornices separating the two stories of the portico, and the cornice and raking cornice of the pediment. Larger versions of these same brackets occur under the eaves of the cornice of the main block on all but the west facade. Jig-work railings are found on the first and second story of the portico, and encloses the widow's walk. These railings are composed by what appear to be balusters in silhouette form alternating with acorn drops, above which there is a frieze perforated by a serially distributed diamond pattern (on the portico railings only). The widow's walk railing is similar but utilizes different scaling and a variation in design.

INTERIOR

A 12' X 19'6" basement, built in the 1940's to accomodate a heating unit, originally was constructed with concrete block walls and dirt floor which have since been reinforced with poured concrete walls and floor.

On the first floor, a central hallway runs east-west the entire length of the main block. At the west end of this hall, a doorway grants access to the caretaker's cottage in the rear and to the bathroom and pantry. Two rooms of nearly

equal size are located on the south side of the hall. These are the parlor (southeast room) which measures 16'4" X 17'3", and the library (southwest room) measuring 16'4" X 17'8". A single large room, the drawing room, (formerly the double parlor) is found on the north side of the hall; it's dimensions are 16'5" X 35'3". From the southwest section of the hallway just beyond the entrance to the library, an open-well U-plan stairway ascends to a landing, then to the second floor. An inlaid bird's-eye maple star is set into the newel cap of the tapered octagonal newel post which is made of walnut as is the bannister and the balusters (presently painted white).

Four doorways grant access from the hallway to the parlor, library and either end of the drawing room. Each contains a single-leaf four panel door surmounted by a transom containing hand-painted Czechoslovakian panes. The jambs of these doors feature crossettes above which are projecting cornices. Crossettes and cornices also enhance the enframements of the drawing room and library windows. Only the parlor utilizes a different decorative motif. Here, a denticulated frieze replaces the crossettes on the windows and doors. Dentils also decorate the fireplace mantel entablature that is supported by pilasters. The fireplace is framed by a cast-iron segmental arched front plate. Each room in the main block of the Ross House contained a fireplace and the chimney breasts project into the rooms. All have been sealed, however, except for those in the downstairs front rooms, and in only two rooms, in addition to the parlor, are there still mantels: the east end of the drawing room on the first floor and the southeast room (children's room) on the second floor. Both mantels are simpler in design than that of the parlor, and the one remaining in the drawing room is not original.

All first floor ceilings are 9'8" in height, as are those of the second floor. The original wide board flooring on the first floor has been covered by contemporary hardwood flooring.

The second floor is similar in disposition to the first, except that the north half is divided into two rooms instead of one continuous drawing room, and the decorative detailing is not as rich. The doorways leading off the hall are identical to those downstairs except that the transoms lack hand-painted panes. A one-run, and very plain, stairway without a railing grants access from the second floor hallway to the attic. A door, no longer used, at the west end of the hall once opened to the upstairs bedrooms of the servant's (now caretaker's) quarters. Contemporary pine flooring covers the upstairs floors.

The attic is a simple unfinished room of recent construction. Access to the widow's walk is gained through this room by means of a ladder attached to one wall leading to a trap door.

ALTERATIONS

The Ross House was built as one project and has not undergone major exterior changes except on the rear (west) facade. The house originally had a rear addition consisting of a large kitchen with porches on the north and south sides. A door led from the kitchen to the dining room (now the library). One of the porches, the north one, was enclosed. Stairs in the kitchen, still there, led to upstairs servant's quarters--presently the fifth bay of the north and south facades.[2] The kitchen had a large fireplace at the west end while at the east end on the first floor of the rear addition were found the pantry and storage area for china, etc. Sometime, probably in the 1940's, the kitchen fireplace was removed and the west half of the kitchen area was converted into a double car garage. The east half and back stairs were left intact. In 1968, the garage was converted by the Audrain County Historical Society into a caretaker's apartment.[3]

The house was originally painted a chocolate brown color.[4]

Other alterations include:

1. Unknown date:
   a) all but two of the eight fireplaces, those in the front rooms of the first floor, have been bricked in
2. 1929-1930:
   a) folding doors in the drawing room were removed; these doors once served as partitions for a double parlor
   b) a stairway in the dining room (now library and office) that led to the room above was removed[5]
3. 1958-1970:
   a) partial basement was installed in late 1940's to contain a heating unit; this basement was rebuilt in 1968
   b) hardwood flooring was laid over the original wide boards on the first floor
   c) second floor joists were replaced because of weakness and new flooring laid[6]
   d) window in northeast corner of drawing room was removed to create the passageway to the American Saddle Horse Museum
   e) shutters added to the primary facade windows.[7]

CONDITION

The house is well maintained and in good condition.

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SITE

The Ross House and grounds are contained in a 160' X 320' lot that is part of the approximately ten acre Robert S. Green Memorial Park.

CONTENTS OF HOUSE AND GROUNDS

1. Ross House contents. The Ross House is presently a museum and headquarters for the Audrain County Historical Society. On the first floor, the parlor (southeast room) is furnished with period antiques donated by the Ross family in memory of Judge and Mrs. James E. Ross who occupied the house for some fifty years. The library (southwest room) serves as the business office and archives for the Society. The drawing room (north room) is used for the Society's meetings and displays a valuable collection of Currier and Ives prints.

The northeast room upstairs is furnished as a period bedroom. Directly across the hall (southeast room) is the "children's room" which exhibits the Creasey doll collection. The remaining upstairs rooms (southwest and northwest rooms) and the hallway contain display cases which exhibit 19th century memorabilia, wearing appearel, household items and an interesting pressed glass collection that was assembled by the late Mrs. A.P. Green.[8]

2. Associated with the grounds are the following features:
   a. The American Saddle Horse Museum, which is attached to the Ross House by a passageway. It is a colonial-style, one-story frame building sheathed in clapboard and painted ivory yellow with white trim to match the Ross House. The building is four bays wide, not including the passageway. A lean-to porch spans the northernmost three bays which is supported by four turned posts resting on a brick stoop. The gable roof of the museum is topped by a cupola. Double-leaf Eastlake-style doors grant entry to the interior. This building was dedicated on August 16, 1977, and contains 877.8 square feet of floor space in which to exhibit pictures, trophies, ribbons, and equestrian articles associated with Audrain County's renowned saddle horse industry. Featured prominently are items associated with Tom Bass, who was born into slavery and went on to become one of the greatest horse trainers of his day. In 1973-1974, a storage room was added onto the west end of the Saddle Horse Museum to provide an additional storage facility.[9]
   b. The grave of Rex McDonald is located in front of the Museum where he was reburied. Rex McDonald is considered by some to be the greatest five-gaited horse ever shown. He died in 1913. His grave consists of an engraved headstone surrounded by a chain fence connected to obelisk-shaped posts.[10]

c. An iron fence placed in front of the Ross House approximately fifty feet back from South Muldrow Street and between the front entrance and east drives. This fence is a section from an iron fence originally surrounding the Audrain County Courthouse in 1870. It was donated by the city and installed in July, 1970.[11]

d. Millstones, mounted on the lawn near the visitor's parking on the south side of the Ross House, which were used in Audrain County's first grist-mill built in the 1850's. Near the millstones is also a more primitive grindstone of aboriginal origin.[12]

e. The old courthouse bell, obtained in 1976 and mounted on a concrete base with appropriate bronze plaque on the lawn just south of the Ross House. This bell was originally in the dome of the Audrain County Courthouse, built in 1868-1869, and was used to call court sessions, town meetings and other gatherings. It also tolled the death of presidents.[13]

PRESENT STATUS

Owned and maintained by the Audrain County Historical Society, the continued preservation of the Ross House is assured.

FOOTNOTES

1. "Audrain County Historical Society Newsletter," V. IV, No. 4, October 1968, np.; Statement by Roy Creasey to W.E. Witchie, November 15, 1976.

2. Wilbur Ross Hubbard to Robert S. Green, President, Audrain County Historical Society, October 1, 1958, Contained in files of Audrain County Historical Society. This letter includes hand-drawn floor plans made by the writer's 93-year-old mother, Etta Ross Hubbard; it is from these sketches that the above information was taken.

3. Data excerpted from a draft National Register Inventory-Nomination Form prepared by Mr. W.E. Witchie.

4. Robert S. Green, President, Audrain County Historical Society, to Wilbur Ross Hubbard, January 13, 1959, contained in files of Audrain County Historical Society.

5. Data excerpted from a draft National Register Inventory-Nomination Form prepared by Mr. W.E. Witchie.

6. Ibid.

7. Based on examination of photographs taken ca. 1958, photographer unknown, (filed with Audrain County Historical Society). No shutters are shown in these photographs.

8. Lynn Elmore, "Historic Mexico Home Preserved as Museum," The Missouri Antiquer and Auction Guide, February 14, 1975, pp. 8-9; "Audrain County Historical Society Museum" (Brochure).

9. "George Lee Doors given for Horse Museum Building," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, August 11, 1969; "New Saddle Museum Dedication August 16", Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, July 28, 1970; "Dedication of the American Saddle Horse Museum," n.n., August 16, 1970.

10. Ibid.

11. Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, July 27, 1970; Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, July 29, 1970.

12. "Millstones From Audrain's First Mill Now Repose on County Museum Lawn", Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, August 14, 1970; "Indian Grain Grinder Back in County of it's Origin", Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, June 8, 1974.

13. "Old Bell Given Place of Honor", Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, March 30, 1976.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	X ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
X 1800-1899	__COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION	
__1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	X POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		X INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1857 BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ross House, constructed in 1857, is significant as a rare, if not unique, example of frame constructed Classically-derived architecture in Audrain County, and as the residence of some of the area's leading citizens.

The house contains an interesting blend of classical and Italianate decorative elements sensitively scaled and proportioned, suggesting the involvement of an architect or unusually talented builder. It was to prove an elegant and congenial residence for the prosperous and aspiring families who lived within its walls.

The property on which the Ross House was to be erected was first entered on August 30, 1838, by George F. Muldrow. This transaction followed by just two years two noteworthy events: the organization of Audrain County in December, 1836, and nine months earlier, the platting of the town of Mexico. Less than a year after Muldrow purchased what was to become known as the Ross property, he and his wife Margret were divorced, and she received possession of the property. In 1857, Margret Muldrow sold it to John P. Clark, husband since 1846 to her daughter Mary.[1]

John Clark was born in Virginia in 1819, but his parents soon removed to Kentucky and eventually to Illinois. Education opportunities were limited in frontier Kentucky, but Clark was ambitious to learn and educated himself. He decided to enter business, first in Illinois where he lived until 1843. That year, he left heading for the prairie country of North Missouri and the little village of Mexico. Although this town was only just beginning to evolve from the frontier stage, it was a county seat with a bright future. In Mexico, Clark soon married and opened a school that was to prove successful. He also entered politics and delt in real estate. By 1856, he could take satisfaction in his accomplishments: his business was prospering and he had just been elected to the County Court.[2]

The following year, he was ready to construct a residence worthy of his means and social standing on his newly purchased property. His imposing mansion was constructed of lumber hauled by team and wagon from Hannibal, Mo.[3] and built to rival if not eclispe all others in Audrain County. By the provincial standards of ante-bellum north Missouri, it was generously, though eclectically, equipped with fluted columns and pilasters, scaled brackets, and a jigwork widow's walk from which to observe rolling prairie instead of paddle-wheel

steamboats; inside, a reception hall with curving staircase separated a sitting room with denticulated cornices and mantel from the double parlor with its crossetted window and door enframents capped by projecting cornices. It was a fitting seat for an aspiring man rising from humble origins.

The mansion had been standing three years when the Civil War erupted. In the first year of the conflict, U.S. Grant, then a colonel, was dispatched to take charge of the laxly disciplined Union Soldiers stationed there, and to afford a measure of protection to the surrounding area from the depredations of roving guerilla bands. When Grant grew weary of camp life, he would often repair to the residence of Judge Clark for diversion and relaxation. While in Mexico, Grant was informed of his promotion to bregadier-general. It is reported that in later life, President Grant still remembered with warmth and affection the hospitality of Judge Clark and the people of Mexico.[4]

Although Judge Clark was to have a long and successful business and political career, he chose for some reason to dispose of his mansion, and in 1867, it was sold to Colby T. Quisenberry, who named the house "Graceland." Quisenberry must have brought some wealth with him when he arrived from Kentucky three years earlier. He became well known for the importing and breeding of fine short-horns and pure-bred Berkshires and Cotswolds. His interests also included thoroughbred horses and to him has been attributed the introduction of blooded horses into Audrain County. Were this attribution to be based on fact, an illustrious niche would be reserved for Quisenberry in the annals of Audrain County, a region known throughout the world for the production of champion saddle horses.[5]

Quisenberry's tenure in "Graceland" was briefer than Clarks', and in 1874, the property changed hands once more. The new owner was James E. Ross and his family would live in the house for half a century. James Evans Ross appeared in Mexico in 1855, aged twenty-four. In addition to whatever financial reserves he possessed, he brought with him from his native Pennsylvania a distinguished lineage. He was born on the farm that William Penn granted to his great-great-grandfather, and that forebearer's brother was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. But young Ross was not in line to inherit the farm, so he headed west to seek his fortune.

At St. Louis, in a fateful meeting with the president of the North Missouri Railroad, he was advised to establish himself in Audrain County. The coming years were to confirm the soundness of that advice: the town of Mexico would swell from 960 people in 1860, to over 5,000 in 1900, the year Ross died, (in another fifty years, it would double again); and in that span, three railroads would extend their lines through or near its city limits.

In 1859, James Ross was united in marriage with Miriam Elizabeth Warren, whose descent from Delaware ancestors was as distinguished as his own and the young couple set up household on a farm west of Mexico where they resided for the next fifteen years. Successful in his affairs and concerned for the education of his children, Ross moved his family to town to be near the newly established Hardin College.[6]

Memories have been preserved of the house the Ross family moved into and occupied for so many years. These memories depict one of the town's "elegant" residences, dominating a gracious setting that featured a brook in the back and a rustic bridge in the front garden in which grew rare flowers including Dutchman's Pipe Vine. At 93, Etta Ross Hubbard could still vividly recall the house's interior--the arrangement of the rooms, the fineness of the woodwork, and especially the double parlors where she was married in 1890. A double parlor was essential to any fashionable house of the period, and the one in the Ross house received its builder or architect' most lavish attention in the assembling of the matching mantels and the folding doors that connected the twin rooms.[7]

Before James Ross's death on January 4, 1900, he was to become one of the area's most notable men. He was a prudent investor, and held extensive real estate in Audrain County and in Texas. Governor Hardin, also of Mexico, appointed him to a term on the county court. He helped to launch the Mexico Savings Bank, and was president of that institution during the last three years of his life.[8]

The house remained in the Ross family until 1920 when it was sold to Elwyn R. Locke. Benjamin and Emily Locke came to Audrain County from Kentucky the same year the Ross House was built, and their son who was to eventually own that mansion, "Ellie," was born six years later on July 18, 1863. E.R. Locke spent part of his youth in the Dakota territory but was back in Audrain County by 1892, and in that year became associated with the Bank of Laddonia which had just opened. Subsequently, he was involved in real estate, and late in his long business career, he helped his son, Sam, operate a chain of retail groceries. But it for his involvement in the utilities industry that E.R. Locke is best remembered. This involvement began in the early 1900's when he and his brothers purchased Mexico's electric plant. This plant became one of the first in the Nation to combine electric, gas, water and steam heating systems in one central unit. In 1909, the company built the first transmission system in Missouri--a line to Centralia fourteen miles away.[9]

Just three years after E.L. Locke became the proprietor of the Ross House, he and his brothers sold their plant to the Missouri Power and Light Company. This company retained E.R. Locke as the head of their investment company.[10]

Around this same time, 1923, E.R. Locke became involved with his son and later owner of the Ross House, Sam Locke, in the operation of the Mexico Wholesale Grocery Company and Missouri Stores, which was a chain of up to thirty-one retail groceries. This enterprise prospered until the advent of the Depression. This event marked the beginning of hard times for the Locke family, and the failing grocery business drained their reserves until it finally succembed in 1934. One economizing step resorted to by the Lockes was to convert the Ross House into apartments. In effecting this transformation, the "mutilation" (as a Ross family member later characterized it) occured: the dismantling of the elegant folding doors of the double parlor, the removal of fireplace mantels, the taking-down of the stairs that led from the dining room to the second floor. The Ross house has not yet recovered from these alterations.[11]

Sam P. Locke, already mentioned, received the house from his parents on July 1, 1941. He was born in 1897, and was educated as an engineer before entering the ill-fated grocery business. After this business failed, he was compelled to drive a truck part-time, but was mostly unemployed. This enforced idleness provided him the opportunity to combine his engineering training with an inventive flair. In the backyard of the Ross House, he attempted to devise a stove that would efficiently burn the cheap grade coal he had bought for economy's sake. After several attempts, he finally developed a fire brick lined stove that would hold a fire and readily consume any grade of coal without producing clinkers. This invention was to evolve into the famous "Warm Morning" Stove. From a modest beginning, selling the stoves out of the back of his car, Locke's stove business increased to a point by the end of the 30's that he leased his patent to a Kansas City firm in order to keep up with the demand. Business received another boost when the "Warm Morning" was selected for use by the armed forces during World War II. In 1942, 2,000 stoves a day were being produced and in 1946, the millionth stove came off the assembly line.

Sam P. Locke's "rags to riches" story was celebrated in one of Dale Carnegie's national columns, and he eventually earned a considerable sum from his royalties which was in turn invested in Audrain County real estate; he was one of the county's largest land owners at the time of his death at age 64 in 1962.[12]

Four years before his death, Sam Locke sold the Ross House to the City of Mexico. At that time, the house had been abandoned for some years and the lot on which it rested had become overgrown. The Audrain County Historical Society then acquired the house for $10,000 and invested another $50,000 in renovation and furnishing it. The ground on which the Ross House stands is leased by the Society from the city for one dollar per year and is renewable.[13]

The survey of Missouri's historic sites is based on the selection of sites as they relate to theme studies in Missouri history as outlined in "Missouri's State Historic Preservation Plan." The Ross House, therefore, is being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as an example of the themes of "Architecture," and "Society."

FOOTNOTES

1. Deed Record held by City of Mexico; Floyd Calvin Shoemaker, Missouri and Missourians, V. II (Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1943), p. 872; that Clark married Margret Muldrow's daughter is conjecture based on an examination of Federal Census Records. In 1840 Muldrow had a daughter, not named, between 5-10 years of age; were she ten, then she would have been 16 when she married Clark, and the 1850 Census reveals that the Mary Muldrow Clark married in 1846 was 16. See: 1840 Missouri Census (Riverside, California: Frances R. Nelson and Glen Brouse, 1975), p. 10; 1850 Federal Census for Audrain County, Missouri (Chillicothe, Missouri: Elizabeth Prether Ellsberry, Box 206, nd.), p. 20; History of Audrain County, Missouri (St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1884), p. 714.

2. History of Audrain County, pp. 712-715.

3. "Brick Inner Wall Shows at Museum," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, July 2, 1971.

4. Joan Barthel, "Missouri Museum Honors Grant and Ex-Slave," The New York Times, June 25, 1961; E.R. Locke, "Early Audrain History," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, March 22, 1943; Missouri and Missourians, II, p. 872.

5. Barthel, The New York Times, June 25, 1961; The History of Audrain County, pp. 370-371; Lynn Elmore, "Historic Mexico Home Preserved as Museum," Missouri Antiquer and Auction Guide, February 14, 1975, p. 8.

6. Walter Williams, ed., History of Northeast Missouri (Chicago-New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1913), pp. 1805-1806; Missouri and Missourians, VI, p. 814; V. II, p. 872.

7. Mrs. George Maurice Morris [grand-daughter of James Ross] to Charles Van Ravenswa Director, Missouri Historical Society, August 14, 1958; Mrs. George Maurice Morris to Robert Semple, City Manager, Mexico, Mo., August 14, 1958; Wilbur Ross Hubbard to Robert S. Green, President, Audrain County Historical Society, October 1, 1958; Mrs. George Maurice Morris to Robert M. White II, May 16, 1959. Copies of all of the above contained in the files of the Audrain County Historical Society.

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ROSS HOUSE

8. Walter Williams, ed., pp. 1805-1806; "Judge Ross Will," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, February 21, 1900.

9. "E.R. Locke Dies At 84 After Illness," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, January 21, 1948.

10. "E.R. and Ben N. Locke to Head Investment Department of Missouri Power and Light Co.," Mexico [Missouri] Intelligencer, February 22, 1924.

11. Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, January 21, 1948; "Funeral Services Pending for Sam P. Locke, Dead at 65," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, November 9, 1962; Hubbard to Green, October 1, 1958.

12. Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, November 9, 1962; "Sam Locke, Mexico Inventor of Coal Stove, finds his Cloud Lined with Silver that Jingle, Jangle, Jingles," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, September 18, 1943; Carnegie article reprinted in: "Locke Stoves Bring City Fame From All Parts of the World," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, August 12, 1943; "Locke Warm Morning Stove Standardized by OPM For U.S.," Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, May 21, 1942.

13. Barthel, The New York Times, June 25, 1961; Data excerpted from a Draft National Register Inventory-Nomination Form prepared by Mr. W.E. Witchie.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. "Audrain County Historical Society Museum." (Brochure.)

2. Barthel, Joan. "Missouri Museum Honors Grant and Ex-Slave." The New York Times, June 25, 1961.

3. "Brick Inner Wall Shows At Museum." Mexico [Missouri] Ledger, July 2, 1971.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 1.2 acres

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	15	595960	4338540
B			
C			
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION A tract of land located in the SW 1/4 Section 26, Township 51N, Range 9W, in the City of Mexico, Audrain County, Missouri, described as follows: Commence at the southeast corner of Lot 1, Green Park Subdivision, a subdivision in the City of Mexico, Audrain County, Missouri; thence north along the east line of said Lot 1 a distance of 190.0 feet to a point of beginning; thence continue north along the east line of said Lot 1 a distance of 160.0 feet; thence west parallel to the south line of said Lot 1 a distance of 320.0 feet; thence south parallel to the east line of said Lot 1 a

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

1. James M. Denny, Section Chief, Nominations-Survey

ORGANIZATION Department of Natural Resources, Office of Historic Preservation

DATE January 4, 1978

STREET & NUMBER P.O. Box 176

TELEPHONE 314/751-4096

CITY OR TOWN Jefferson City

STATE Missouri 65101

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___ STATE ___ LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE Robert L. Brownell

TITLE Director, Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE February 8, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 892-453

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

ROSS HOUSE

4. Creasey, Roy. Statement to Witchie, W.E. November 15, 1976.

5. Data excerpted from a draft National Register Inventory-Nomination Form prepared by Mr. W.E. Witchie.

6. "Dedication of the American Saddle Horse Museum." n.n., August 16, 1970.

7. Elmore, Lynn. "Historic Mexico Home Preserved as Museum," The Missouri Antiquer and Auction Guide, February 14, 1975.

8. "E.R. Locke and Ben N. Locke to Head Investment Dep't of Missouri Power and Light Co." Mexico (Missouri) Intelligencer, February 22, 1924.

9. "E.R. Locke Dies at 84 After Illness." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, January 21, 1948.

10. "Funeral Services Pending for Sam P. Locke, Dead at 65." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, November 9, 1962.

11. "George Lee Doors Given for Horse Museum Building." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, August 11, 1969.

12. Green, Robert S., President, Audrain County Historical Society. Correspondence with Hubbard, Wilbur Ross, January 13, 1959.

13. History of Audrain County, Missouri. St. Louis: National Historical Company, 1884.

14. Hubbard, Wilbur Ross. Correspondence with Green, Robert S., President, Audrain County Historical Society, October 1, 1958.

15. "Indian Grain Grinder Back in County of it's Origin." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, June 8, 1974.

16. "Judge Ross Will." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, February 21, 1900.

17. Locke, E.R. "Early Audrain History," Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, March 22, 1943.

18. "Locke Stoves Bring City Fame From All Parts of the World." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, August 12, 1943.

19. "Locke Warm Morning Stove Standardized by OPM for U.S." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, May 21, 1942.

20. Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, July 27, 1970.

21. Mexico (Missouri Ledger, July 29, 1970.

22. "Millstones From Audrain's First Mill Now Repose on County Museum Lawn." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, August 14, 1970.

23. Morris, Mrs. George Maurice (grand-daughter of James Ross). Correspondence with Van Ravensway, Charles, Director, Missouri Historical Society, August 14, 19

24. Morris, Mrs. George Maurice. Correspondence with Semple, Robert, City Manager, Mexico, Mo., August 14, 1958.

25. Morris, Mrs. George Maurice. Correspondence with Robert M. White II, May 16, 195

26. "New Saddle Museum Dedication Aug. 16." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, July 28, 1970.

27. "Old Bell Given Place of Honor." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, March 30, 1976.

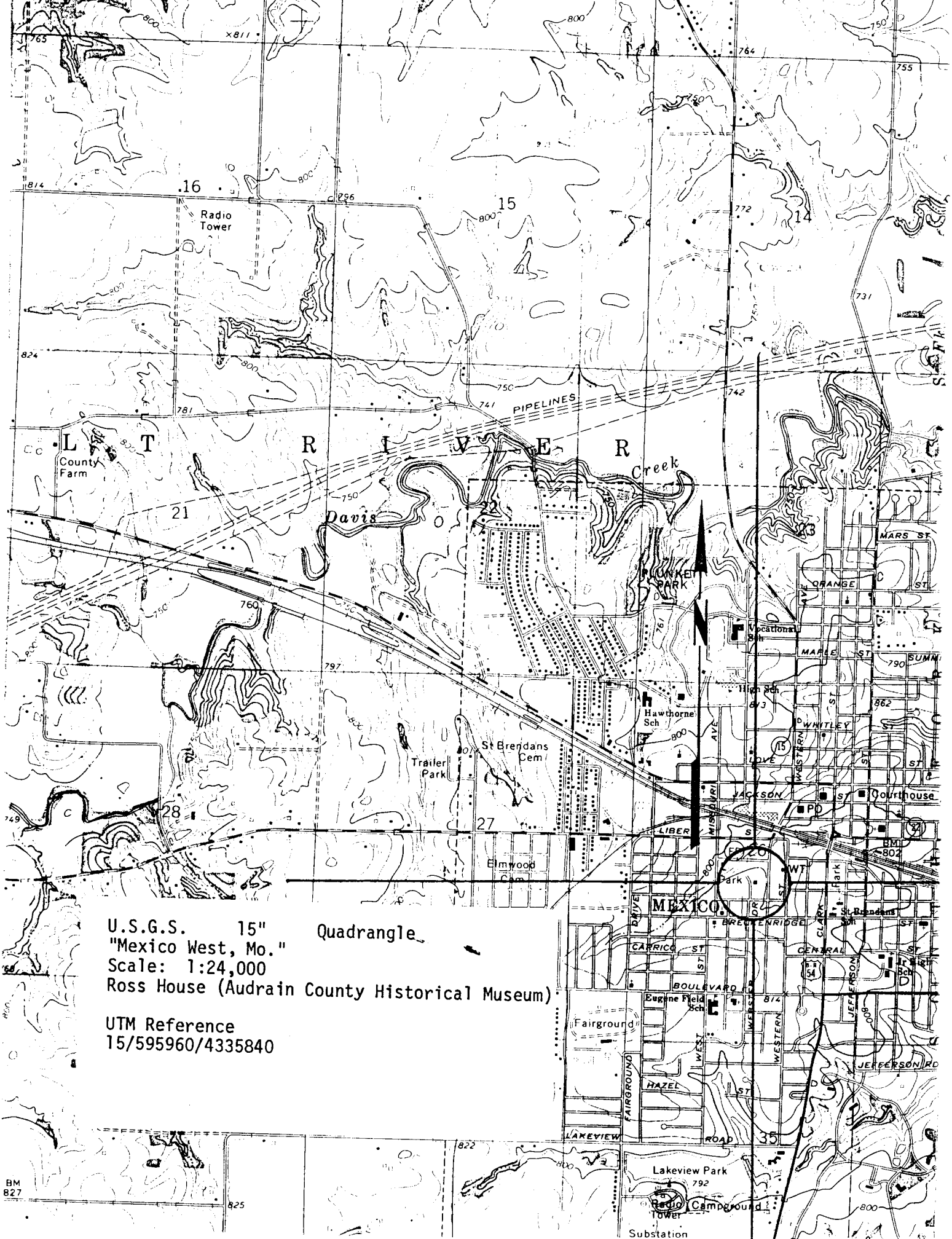
28. "Sam Locke, Mexico Inventor of Coal Stove, Finds His Cloud Lined With Silver That Jingle, Jangle, Jingles." Mexico (Missouri) Ledger, September 18, 1943.

29. Shoemaker, Floyd Calvin. Missouri and Missourians, Vols. I and II. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1943.

30. Williams, Walter, ed. History of Northeast Missouri. Chicago-New York: The Lewis Publishing Co., 1913.

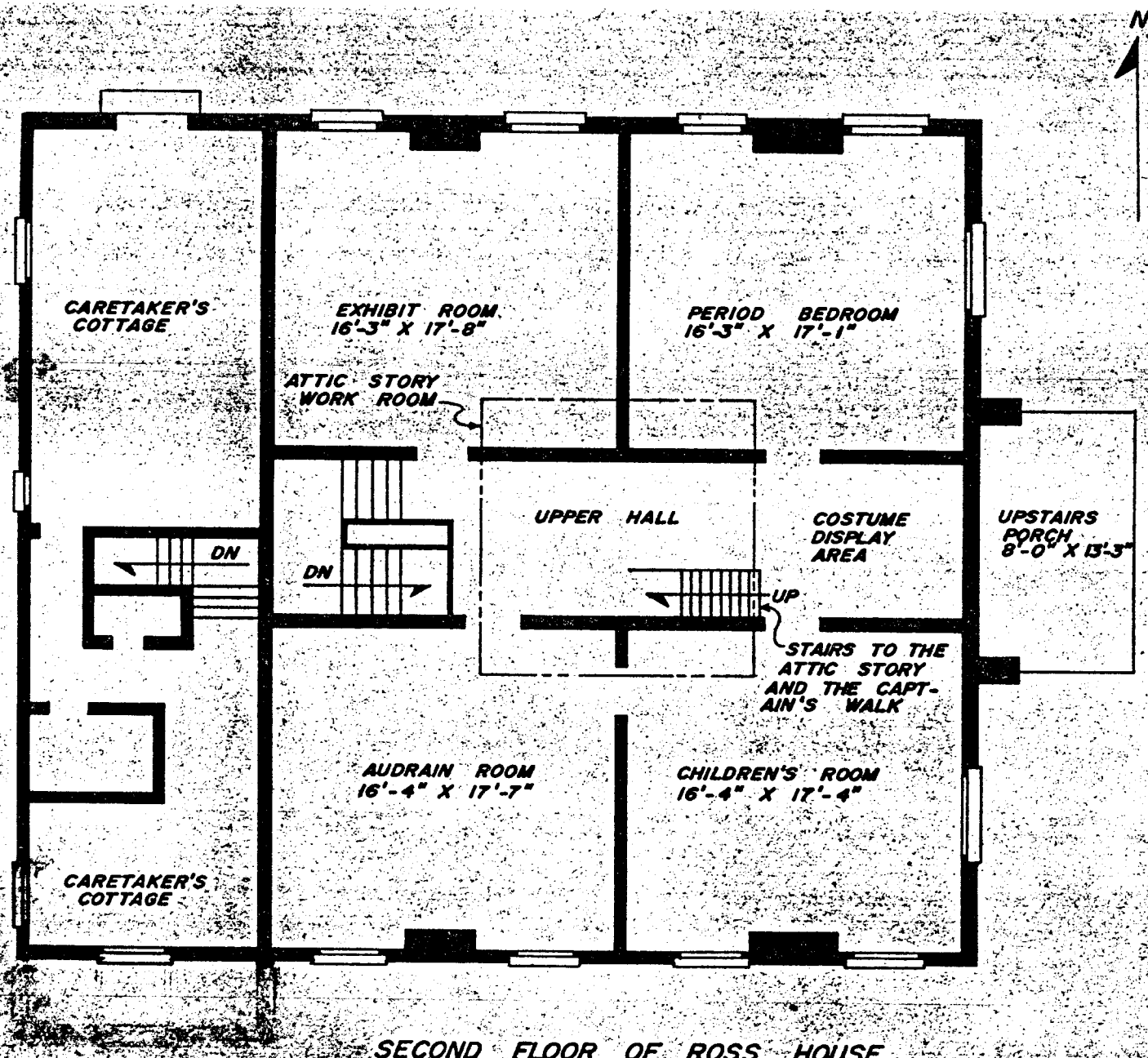
31. 1840 Missouri Census. Riverside, California: Frances R. Nelson and Glen Brouse, 1975.

32. 1850 Federal Census for Audrain County, Missouri. Chillicothe, Missouri: Elizabeth Prather Ellsberry, Box 206, n.d.

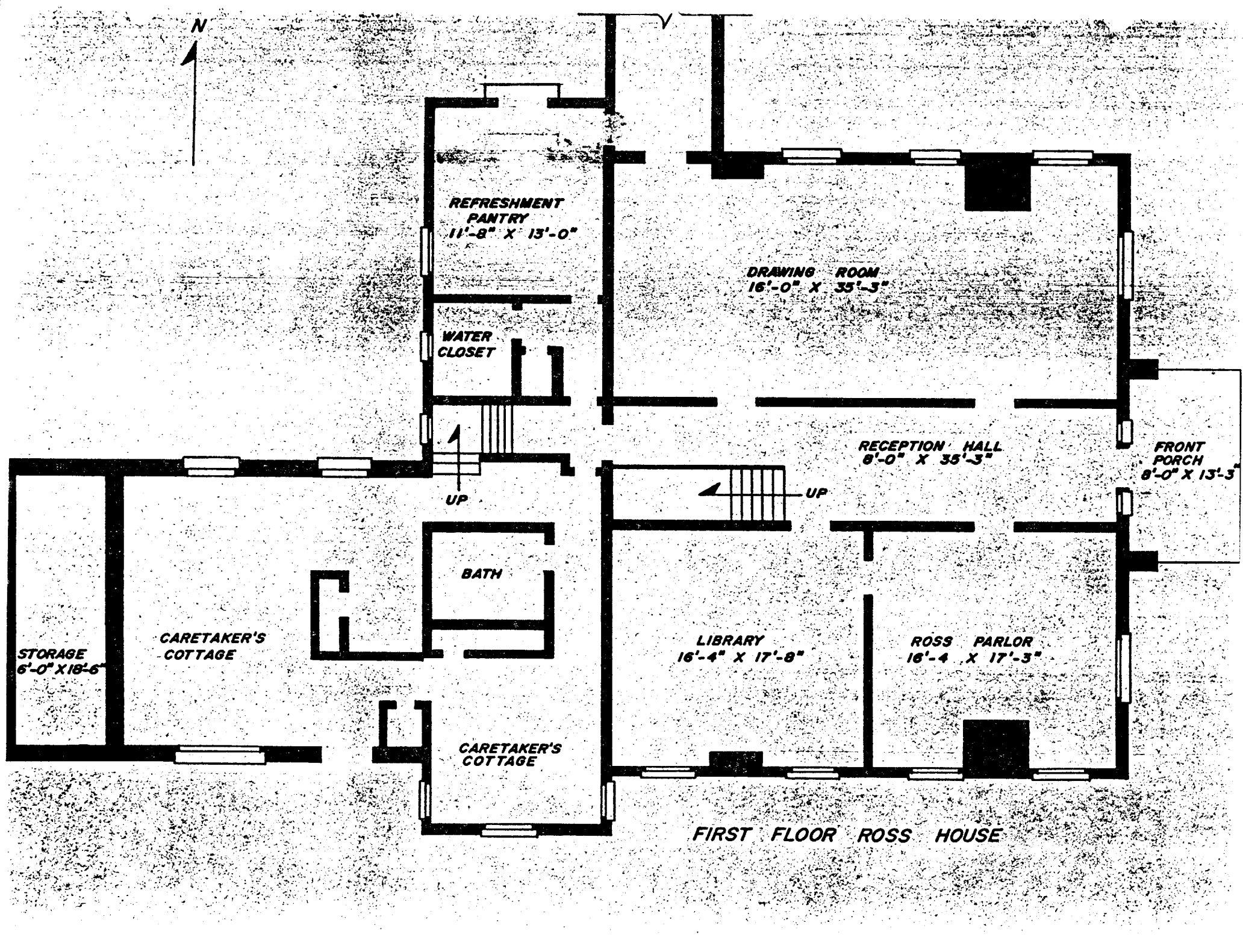


U.S.G.S. 15" Quadrangle
"Mexico West, Mo."
Scale: 1:24,000
Ross House (Audrain County Historical Museum)

UTM Reference
15/595960/4335840



SECOND FLOOR OF ROSS HOUSE


N
REFRESHMENT
PANTRY
11'-8" X 13'-0"
WATER
CLOSET
DRAWING ROOM
16'-0" X 35'-3"
RECEPTION HALL
8'-0" X 35'-3"
FRONT
PORCH
8'-0" X 13'-3"
UP
UP
BATH
STORAGE
6'-0" X 18'-6"
CARETAKER'S
COTTAGE
LIBRARY
16'-4" X 17'-8"
ROSS PARLOR
16'-4 X 17'-3"
CARETAKER'S
COTTAGE
FIRST FLOOR ROSS HOUSE

Ross House
Audrain County, Missouri

The following is true for all photographs unless otherwise noted:

Ross House
501 S. Muldrow
Mexico, Audrain County, Missouri
Photographer: unknown
Date: c. 1978
Date of NR listing: 7/26/1978
Negatives on file at the Missouri State Historic Preservation Office

1. East façade, looking northwest.
2. East and north facades, looking southwest.
3. East façade, looking west.
4. Porch detail, east façade, looking west.
5. Porch detail, east façade, looking west.
6. Porch detail, east façade, looking west.
7. Entrance detail, east façade, looking west.
8. South façade, west corner, looking northwest.
9. South façade, looking north.
10. North façade and east elevation of saddle horse museum, looking south.
11. North façade looking southwest.
12. East façade of saddle horse museum, looking west.
13. West façade, looking east.
14. East façade of saddle horse museum, looking northwest.
15. West façade of house (north corner), and portions of the west façade of the saddle horse museum, looking east.
16. South façade and portions of saddle horse museum, looking north.
17. Interior, parlor door, looking north (?).
18. Interior, hall door, looking south into parlor.
19. Interior, fireplace.

The following photographs were taken by Robert S. Green.

20. East and north facades, looking southwest. Date 9/1/1958
21. East and south facades, looking northwest. Date 9/1/1958
22. East façade and front lawn, looking west. Date 9/1/1958
23. South façade, looking northeast. Date 9/1/1958
24. East façade, date unknown.