

HISTORIC STRUCTURES REPORT AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

(Abridged here as supplement to Save America's Treasures Grant 2007 Application)

GREEN-MELDRIM HOUSE

1 West Macon Street
Savannah, GA, 31401



Figure 1: View from Macon Street (closed in 1960)

PREPARED FOR:

THE WARDENS AND VESTRY OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, SAVANNAH, GA

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INTRODUCTION

Study Summary: In SAT application

Project Data:

1. Location: 14 West Macon Street, Savannah, Chatham Co., (First Congressional District) GA, 31401.
2. Ownership: The Wardens and Vestry of St. John's Church, Savannah, GA.
3. Landmark Status: National Historic Landmark, Building #74000664. Architect: John S. Norris. Style: Gothic Revival. Historic Person: General William T. Sherman. Significant Years: Construction began in 1850, completed 1853 for cotton factor Charles Green. Sherman made it his Savannah headquarters 22 December 1864—1 February 1865. Area of significance: Architecture, Military. Also listed on National Register of Historic Places as contributing historic property in the Savannah National Landmark Historic District.

4. Methodology:

This report is based on a multi-disciplined investigation into the architectural and engineering condition of the Green-Meldrim House and Rectory, starting with a review of existing documentation of the house and its history a) in possession of St. John's Church; b) available from the Historic American Building Survey (HABS GA-222); and c) in the Georgia Historical Society (see Bibliography).

The team then performed an investigative survey of the property, both Parish House and Rectory. During the survey, the team located, identified, analyzed, and photographed existing conditions. After comparing these with historic documentation of the property, they then prepared initial repair proposals for estimating purposes.

In order to facilitate costing and design development, the author has utilized in the Condition Assessment the ASTM "Standard Classification for Building Elements and Related Sitework—Uniformat II." Each section contains a) description, b) observations, and c) recommendations. The treatment and work recommendations are prioritized as follows:

- a) Life Safety—dangerous or life-threatening items requiring immediate attention;
- b) Critical Repair—items requiring stabilization or protection to prevent further deterioration; and
- c) Non-critical Repair—items requiring attention for functional or aesthetic reasons.

For the purposes of the Save America's Treasures 2007 Grant application, the sections on the interior of the building describing areas that are in fairly good condition have been omitted.

5. Project Participants: In SAT application

Part1: Developmental History:

1. Historical Background and Context:

Green-Meldrim House, Savannah GA

Charles Green, cotton exporting magnate, constructed his new residence (now the Parish House) and service building (now the Rectory) between 1850 and 1853 on the southwest Trust Lot (90 x 180 feet) of the newly created Jasper Ward, facing Madison Square. Having arrived in Savannah from England in 1833 at the age of twenty-six, possessing education, experience as a mercantile clerk, connections in Liverpool, but no capital, by 1850 Green had amassed a fortune as a cotton factor and ship owner. Green commenced the house at this time on the occasion of his second marriage.

Green envisaged a mansion of lavish expenditure and unique design which should eclipse all others. Designed by architect John S. Norris, of New York and Savannah, the house is full of novel and intriguing technology, which has been both its strength and its failure over the years. Norris designed the house in his signature eclectic transition classic/romantic style, by superimposing Gothic Revival details on a house “whose simple rectangularity and symmetry are indicative of classic rather than gothic ideas.” The *(Savannah) Daily Morning News* of 26 April 1851 observed the new house taking shape on Madison Square. “*It will be a splendid mansion, also in the Gothic style, very rich in its details, but simple and chaste, yet imposing, in its genial effect. It is to be constructed of brick, stucco & stone. Its sculptured tracery, its bay and oriel windows, and its elegant outline will give it a novel and graceful appearance. It is to be the residence of Charles Green, Esq.*”

2. Chronology of Development and Use:

Green Family records reveal that the house cost \$93,000 to build, \$40,000 of which covered materials, including stone and brick, brought from England as ballast in Mr. Green’s ships. The house was a center of the social and cultural life of Savannah.

With the outbreak of the War Between the States, Green and his partner Andrew Low financed the Confederate blockade-runner *Fingal* on her successful trip to Savannah from England through the blockade. The *Fingal* arrived in November 1861. Confederate authorities later converted *Fingal* into the iron-clad *C.S.S. Atlanta*. Meanwhile, Federal agents arrested Green on his return from England and imprisoned him in Boston for three months, when he was released in February 1862 on his bond as a British subject. On General Sherman’s entrance into Savannah at the end of the “March to the Sea” from Atlanta, Green offered his house as Sherman’s personal headquarters. An amiable relationship developed between the two men. [See appendix: letter from Sherman to Green’s son written 21 March 1862 describing his stay at the house.]

Upon the death of Mr. Green in 1881, the house became the property of his son, Edward Moon Green. Disenchanted with the cotton market, Edward moved to France, clearing the house of all the family papers, furniture, etc., but leaving original mantel pieces, parlor mirrors, and some gasoliers, consoles and statuary. Unfortunately the collection of Charles Green’s personal papers documenting the construction of his house, together with much of the original furniture, are now in a private collection in France, inaccessible to the public.

Green-Meldrim House, Savannah GA

On 14 July 1892 Judge Peter W. Meldrim purchased the house. He became mayor of Savannah in 1897, president of the American Bar Association in 1912, and judge of the Eastern Judicial Circuit of Georgia until his death in 1933. The house continued to be a center of the social and political life locally and nationally under both Peter Meldrim and his wife Frances Casey Meldrim. In early December 1898, they hosted President McKinley for dinner, on the occasion of his inspection of the Seventh Corps, U.S. Army, in embarkation camp in Savannah headed for occupation duty in Cuba.

On December 30, 1943, after fifty-one years of residence, the Meldrim family sold this historic house to the Wardens and Vestry of St. John's Church. The Meldrim's left all the original elements of the house that had come to them in its purchase, other than the statuary which they put on loan at the Telfair Museum of Art in Savannah.

3. Physical Description:

The two-story structure now known as the Green-Meldrim House occupies the southwest Trust Lot of Savannah's Jasper Ward, with formal garden to the east, facing Madison Square, and service area alongside the old stable and servants' quarters to the south west. The site is 60 feet by 180 feet and is bounded by Harris Street to the north, Whitaker Street to the west, Macon Street to the south, and Bull Street and Madison Square to the east. The front entrance portico faces onto Macon Street. In 1960, the city of Savannah gave St. John's Church permission to close the section of Macon Street between the Parish House and the church. This is now a garden. An arched covered walkway now joins the two contemporary buildings, St. John's having been built in 1854.

There are 21 measured drawings (done in 1965) and 21 photographs (one from 1934, twelve from 1936, and eight post-1968) of the house on file with the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS NO. GA-222). These are available to the public on the internet, and the summary pages are included in the Appendix.

Norris's many unique features include windows and shutters that slide into pockets in the brick wall. Imported crenellated parapet stones "fly" above the edge of the roof, allowing water to flow beneath into copper cornice gutters. The cast iron oriel and bay windows are of perpendicular style with crenellated "flying" parapets and iron roofs, being composed out of a kit of parts. The monumental cast iron portico is also unique, and contrasts with the delicate and fanciful pagoda style veranda on either side. The capability existed in Savannah to produce these cast iron elements. With the resources at Green's command, he most like ensured that the manufacturer literally broke the mold after their production.

Although joined, the Rectory is approximately nine feet lower than the Parish House and much narrower, but has the same parapet detail. The windows are smaller but similar, and have the same stone head and sill moldings. Ceiling heights on both floors were originally 11'0", the first floor being now slightly reduced by the raised wooden floor installation.

CONDITION ASSESSMENT

(Abridged here as supplement to Save America's Treasures Grant 2007 Application)

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A: SUBSTRUCTURE

A10: FOUNDATIONS

A1011 Wall Foundations

Description:

The building is composed of two parts, the present Parish House (originally main residence) and the present Rectory (originally servants' quarters, kitchen, and stable), both two stories high, and joined. The walls of the entire building, including the foundation, are constructed of brick and stone imported from England. The brick used is highly porous and protected above ground by stucco or facing stone. The interior rising walls under the main house were determined to be four bricks thick at the time of the HVAC installation. The exterior rising walls are thicker again.

Observations:

- It is only possible to examine the wall foundations where there are basement chambers. The east chimney stacks of the Parish House extend at least five feet underground. The Rectory cellar walls extend at least seven (see 2011 below).
- The same porous English brick is used underground as above ground.
- The masonry walls increase in thickness below first floor level.
- There is no sign of foundation settlement due to the original design of the structure.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 3)** Continue examination of the basement chambers and under-floor areas to expand the understanding and interpretation of the structure.

A1031 Slab on Grade

Description:

The Rectory originally had flagstone floors at ground level. The easternmost room of the present Rectory (shown as the "dish-store room" on the 1943 plan) is now the maintenance room, with garage door onto Harris Street. This room still has the original square-cut flagstone floor. Flagstones may remain under the newer wood floor. Basement areas described below also have masonry floors on grade.

Observations:

- Other than the remaining rectory slabs and basement areas, there are no slabs on grade.

Recommendations:

- **Rectory floor (Priority 2):** Check that remaining original flagstones are not retaining dampness.
- Protect the original flagstones in case of future restoration.

A20 BASEMENT CONSTRUCTION

A2021 Basement Walls

Description:

1. **Under-Floor Spaces:** The Parish House first floor is raised three feet above the surrounding ground and supported by rising masonry walls. These spaces are neither

accessible nor vented, although containing air conditioning ducts installed in 1968 from above by cutting through the floor.

2. **East Veranda:** There is a floor access flagstone set behind each chimney (See Figure 21). The northernmost has a small hole in the middle, and is mortared shut. The



Figure 3: Chimney base access

southernmost flagstone has no lifting hole, but can be levered open. Inside is a brick lined chamber 7'6" deep and 6'0" x 2'6" in plan at the top. The east (outward facing) wall goes straight down the 2'6" height of the veranda above ground. It then expands into a shallow horizontal arched retaining wall. The (west) chamber wall/main front wall foundation steps out one brick below floor level. The brick is the same English brick of which the rest of the house is constructed.



Figure 4: South east chamber

A possible flue cleaning access point, or heating duct originates near the top of the chamber under the chimney stack. Inspection of the top of this stack shows there are two flues, one for each of the fireplaces in the two rooms above. Two 55 gallon oil drums are wedged into the chamber midpoint, blocking the view below. They could be either a safety precaution due to the depth of the chamber, or may be part of a 20th Century oil heating system.



Figure 5: Furnace room

3. **Back Piazza:** This is a continuation of the east and south veranda and once extended down the entire west side of the Parish House. The north end is now a modern kitchen, plus a large modern fire stairs and arcade to church encroach. The same brick chambers may occur at the bases of the two west chimneys as in 1 above. However, the access points are covered by new flooring or storage cabinets. The piazza once fronted on what is now the Rectory garden. A high brick wall now cuts out a narrow yard alongside the piazza containing three heat pumps. A hatch cover at the side of the piazza opens to a narrow curved brick staircase leading under the piazza to a small vaulted room of Savannah gray brick, identified on the 1943 plans as the "furnace room" and also shown on HABS dwg. 1.

There is an almost horizontal galvanized pipe in the southeast corner leading towards the southwestern chimney stack. This may be a modern pipe placed inside an older brick vent that leads to the same chamber arrangement as described above. There is no staining from flue gas so it may be a heating duct. Remains of a smaller east opening may be a flue to an odd single flue chimney stack seen on the roof between the two large west stacks.

This, combined with the room's small size (approx 2'6" x 5'8"), indicates an oil or gas furnace. A large HVAC duct from the return air grill in the floor of the adjacent cross hall fills much of the chamber, bending 90 degrees from east to north. On the west wall an opening approximately 12" x 18" leads outside. It is now filled with rubble including bits of the original Parish House tile floor removed in 1968. This opening is directly under one of the load bearing cast iron columns of the back piazza, undermining it. Difference in the brick and the undermining of the column suggest the chamber was added after the house was built.



4. **Rectory Cellar:** There is a Cellar (approx. 10' x 21') accessed originally by a trap door from the original main kitchen, as shown on the 1943 plan and on HABS dwg. 1. It is now accessible through a brick walled shaft beneath the Harris Street sidewalk grating, 2'6" square by 5 feet deep, with a 2 foot square access hole through the cellar wall. The cellar is full of broken flagstones displaced by the installation of the plumbing and air conditioning. It is crisscrossed by electrical wires, water and sewer pipes, and air conditioning ducts.

Figure 6: Furnace room opening under piazza column.

The ceiling has three shallow brick vaults supported by steel beams running east/west. The floor appears to be stone. The walls are English brick with piers to carry the kitchen fireplace above, but no flue. Brick stairs go up to the original kitchen trapdoor now sealed by the new wood floor. A 12" diameter opening in the northeast corner floor may be a well or a drain, although it presently has a stone blocking it about a foot down.

The sidewalk shaft location is shown on the 1943 plan. The original top bricks reveal a shallow sloping chute, probably designed for the delivery of ice blocks and groceries. It has been deepened to allow human entry, and is lined below with more modern red bricks.

5. Whitaker Street grating (see 2022): This covers a shallow trench leading under the original tack room, now the Rectory parlor. The tack room/stable carriage door above this grill was filled in during the rectory conversion. It is likely the opening was installed then as an air vent. Certainly, air can be felt rushing from it.

Observations:

- As a result of the removal of the foundation to the back piazza column, there is a small settlement crack in the stucco covering to the beam above this column, two stories up.
- The Harris Street grate cannot be locked and represents a security risk.



Figure 7: Rectory cellar

Recommendations:

- **Cellar Access: (Priority 1):** Access through Harris Street grate and over the heap of flagstones is dangerous and insecure. Either restore the internal access hatch and stair, or clear out the rubble and put lock on grating. (Do archaeological analysis of rubble; identify and keep important pieces.)
- **Archaeology: (Priority 1)** Do an archaeological investigation, including GPR scan, to locate additional underground features and find flooding source.
- **Parish House Column Foundation (Priority 1):** Determine if there is a beam holding up the column over the furnace room vent. If not, fill furnace room opening and install a new support system. (Do archaeological analysis of rubble; identify and keep important pieces).
- **Under-floor Spaces: (Priority 2)** Do further study of under-floor areas, including the records of the Parish House HVAC installation. It is important not to have totally sealed areas under the house, as there is no way to check for damp,

termites, or mold infestations. There should also be ventilation for the wooden joists.

- **Underground chambers: (Priority 3)** Study to aid in the interpretation of the house.
- **Cellar Interpretation: (Priority 3)** Study this unique space to aid in the interpretation of the property. It is a most impressive ante-bellum urban kitchen arrangement. [See appendix: 10 December 1856 article from (*Savannah*) *Daily Morning News*, with full description of reception held at Charles Green's residence.]

A2022: Moisture Protection

Description:

In spite of the porosity of the English bricks and the care with which they are waterproofed above ground, there is no moisture protection to the basement areas. As Savannah is built on a 40 foot high sand bluff this should not be a problem, unless there is a localized underground water source near the building. Only the Rectory shows damp penetration.

Observations:

- There is no sign of dampness rising from the foundations of the Parish House.
- The exterior (Harris Street) wall of the Rectory cellar is supersaturated, with disintegrating mortar and wet bricks.
- The bottom of the Harris Street cellar entrance shaft is swampy and a sump pump has been installed draining into the old well/drain.



- The flagstone sidewalk adjacent to the cellar entrance shaft is settling and shows signs of washout or another underground chamber.
- The cellar appears to have been flooded on a regular basis, partially from the Whitaker Street sidewalk grating described above. This is a result of poor street drainage (grating is barely above gutter level).
- The cellar well or drain may also be a source of flooding, possibly being connected to a blocked storm sewer.

Figure 8: Cellar well or drain

- There is rising damp at the base of the wall between the original Rectory stair hall and the present maintenance room (described in Section 1031 above). This may be the result of a leaking underground pipe. There is also no threshold at the door.
- The northeast Rectory copper downspout empties into a cast iron leader which goes under the sidewalk. Where it goes from there is unknown. It could even go

under the Rectory to an underground water cistern in the Rectory garden as in other John Norris houses of the period. The system may be blocked and/or leaking.

- There is a hairline crack passing up through the northernmost wall and stone window heads and sills of the west (Whitaker Street) elevation, starting at sidewalk level. This is most likely a result of the vibrations from the large amount of traffic on Whitaker Street. It does not appear to be active. However, there is a damp area on the inside of the wall. As this is the back wall of the original stable, there may be an old drain under the wall that is the source of the crack.



Figure 9: Cellar grate in Harris Street sidewalk

- **(Priority 1):** Determine alternative source for Rectory under-floor venting than the Whitaker Street grating, which should be filled.
- **(Priority 2):** Whitaker Street wall foundation should be exposed at the base of the crack to investigate the condition of the foundation and possible damp source.
- **(Priority 2)** Take up flagstones in maintenance room to investigate base of the Rectory east interior cross wall

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1):** Confirm the source of the cellar flooding.
- **(Priority 1):** Test all the underground drains for leaks and blockages.
- **(Priority 1)** Confirm the source of the water at the base of the Harris Street access shaft and coming through the north cellar wall. This may be a broken city pipe. The water meter box and associated city water access points are only a few feet away in the tree lawn, and a sprinkler supply pipe leads through the cellar to the Rectory garden.

B: SHELL

B10: SUPERSTRUCTURE

B1010: FLOOR CONSTRUCTION

B1012: Upper Floors Construction

Description:

The internal Parish House first floor is 3'2" above ground level, on wooden joists supported by external and rising internal masonry walls, and consists of tiles and slate laid on mortar on wooden boards.

The second floor of the main house has T&G heart of pine floor boards anchored directly to the wood joists which span east/west, and are supported on the external and central hall walls. Distance between the first floor ceiling and the second floor is 1'6".

The second floor of the back piazza has T&G boarding set to a slight slope. Wood joists span east/west from exterior masonry wall to iron beams supported by iron columns. The first floor ceiling is T&G boards with some degree of mildew. The second floor ceiling is of plaster. A modern steel fire stairs penetrates down to the first floor.

Parish House attic access is by ladder through a hatch in the ceiling of the north east corner of the upper piazza. Wide unfinished pine boards originally covered the ceiling joists which now have blown insulation between them. Many of these boards have been removed for insulation, HVAC, and electrical work. The large attic contains a curved brick wall supporting the framework for the staircase dome (now wrapped in insulation) and oculus, and is lit from the skylight box above (See Figure 29).

The converted Rectory first floor has recycled antique T&G pine boards. These are set approx. 3" above the original floor on sleepers except in the new living room (formerly tack room) which has joists, vented through the Harris and Whitaker Street sidewalk gratings.

The second floor of the rectory has the original T&G heart of pine floor boards, anchored directly to the wood joists spanning north/south. Alterations made to the floor at the time of the Rectory conversion include installation of a second staircase and closing the feed chute to the stable below.

Rectory attic access is by ladder through a hatch in the ceiling of a bedroom closet at the east end of the Rectory. The attic floor joists are filled with blown insulation. There are no attic floor boards.

Observations:

- The Parish House under-floor spaces do not appear to be vented, but there is no sign of dampness or mold.
- In 1968, in order to install the under-floor HVAC system, the original floor tiles



Figure 10: HVAC grill in Dining Room floor

- (but not the original slate) were removed for access. Similar new tiles were laid throughout in their place. They made no provision at the time for future maintenance access.
- All wooden floors are in excellent condition.
- There is no way to access the east end of the Rectory attic as the way is blocked by a chimney and HVAC ductwork.

- Access to the Parish House attic is difficult and dangerous, necessitating climbing a twelve foot ladder and then climbing through a small hatch. There is no light switch.

Recommendations:

- **Under-floor Access (Priority 3):** Design access panels to under-floor areas to avoid hurting the floor finishes during future maintenance.
- **Attic Access (Priority 3):** Improve Parish House attic access. Add second Rectory hatch to facilitate access to west end.
- **(Priority 3)** Remove mildew, clean and paint the back piazza T&G first floor ceiling.

B1015: Exterior Stairs and Fire Escapes

Description:



Red sandstone steps rise 2'6" beneath the front portico to the south veranda. On either side are composite red sandstone bases for cast iron light standards and for the monumental portico cast iron columns. There are iron handrails either side (See figure 27).

Two sets of flagstone steps rise from the front garden to each end of the east veranda. These do not have handrails.

Flagstone steps rise to the back piazza from underneath three heat pumps. The steps formerly linked the back piazza with the back garden.

Figure 11: Main entrance stairs

A modern iron fire escape with intermediate landing has been added inside the two story back piazza.

Flagstone steps rise from the Whitaker Street sidewalk to the back door of the Rectory.

Observations:

- The red sandstone front steps have multiple earlier patches, some of which have discolored and are starting to fail. The exterior surface is delaminating in places. The full weight of the iron portico is resting on the composite red sandstone blocks either side of the steps, and the bolts holding them in place are starting to rust, as are the bolts holding the iron lampposts.
- The back piazza steps are now separated from the Rectory garden by a high modern wall. A modern kitchen now extends into the back porch and across part of the top of these stairs which are overrun by the air conditioning unit piping (See Figures 2 and 6).

- The Whitaker Street steps encroach awkwardly onto the sidewalk. This was a ground level stable access door originally. The flagstones are broken and loose in places.



Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2):** Use properly tinted Jahn M70 mortar or equivalent to repair the damaged red sandstone entrance steps. Prior to repair, prep the iron portico columns, lampposts, and handrail bases to remove all rust and recoat to prevent future oxidation.
- **(Priority 2):** Repoint the Whitaker Street Rectory steps and patch with tinted Jahn M70 mortar or equivalent.

Figure 12: Rectory from Whitaker Street

- **Restoration of Back Piazza Steps (Priority 3):** This would require the removal of the HVAC units, modern wall, and the kitchen extension, and is not feasible at this time. However, they should be protected for possible future restoration (see Figure 6).

B1019: Other Floor Construction

Description:

The east and south verandas of the Parish house and the first floor of the west piazza are raised 2'6" above ground, and have a yellow sandstone flag floor, most likely set in mortar on wood boards and joists, but possibly on fill (See Figure 21). As the perimeter is faced with vertical slabs of sandstone, it is not possible to see under the floor to establish the exact structure.

The surface of the veranda and piazza flagstones is chiseled to prevent slipping. It also was treated in some way to harden the surface, producing a darker surface layer. Much of this has now delaminated.

The Rectory original kitchen floor consisted of flagstones on mortar over shallow brick vaults supported by iron beams spanning east-west over the cellar below. This is now hidden under the new wood floor.

Observations (B1010):

- Veranda and Back Piazza Floor: The stone is delaminating and eroding depending on level of traffic, proximity to the weather, and presence of decorative ironwork

trellis supports. Expansion of the iron has caused cracking and spalling at the support points, leaving parts of the veranda roof and decorative ironwork unsupported.

Recommendations

- **Veranda Floor (Priority 1):** In the areas where the sandstone flagstones have worn away around the iron trellis supports, use properly tinted Jahn M70 mortar or equivalent to repair the missing stone. Prior to repair, prep the iron railing to remove all rust and recoat to prevent future oxidation.
- **Veranda and Back Piazza Floor (Priority 1):** In areas where delamination has caused ponding water or a tripping hazard, resurface the remaining sandstone to a smoother finish by means of pneumatic tools or refinishing equipment. Otherwise leave as is.



Figure 13: Eroded support to veranda trellis

B1020: ROOF CONSTRUCTION

B1022: Pitched Roof Construction

Description:

At present one must crawl around the northwest Parish House chimney stack to access the roof hatch.

The hipped roof is constructed of single-span rafters that run north, south, east and west to hip rafters which join at the apex. As the plan is rectangular, the roof slopes vary slightly. The joists are 7 3/4" x 3" actual size @ approx. 24" centers birdsmouthed on north and south walls which are one brick course higher than the east and west walls. There are no wall plates or hurricane straps. There are intermediate strut supports and purlins supported on brick piers, including a long section of the east cross hall wall extending up to the roof, and the two west chimney stacks (and third intermediate stack). The roof is decked with approximately six-inch wide wood sheathing, spike nailed to the rafters. The brick supports to the "flying" parapet stones can be seen penetrating the perimeter roof structure with the inside face of the copper gutter behind them.



Figure 14: Parish House North and South rafters, with brick parapet support

The Rectory roof is L-shaped, abutting the rear wall of the Parish house, and terminating in a hip at the south end of the L. It also has varying slopes to accommodate the varying widths of span. Joists are birdsmouthed onto 9" brick walls. There are no wall-plates or hurricane straps. A ridge beam runs east-west down the middle of the attic, supported at one end by the Parish House west wall and the other by a chimney, with intermediate wood struts. The tops of the joists are birdsmouthed onto the top of the ridge beam. Three chimney stacks stabilize the roof. The brick supports to the stone parapet can be seen penetrating the perimeter roof decking with the inside face of the copper gutter behind them.

Observations:

- Main Roof and Rectory Roof: The joists do not appear to be attached to the brick wall with any great security, rather simply resting on them. However, the weight of the heart of pine roof, the lack of exposed edges (other than the back piazza), the parapet anchoring system, and the large chimney stacks penetrating the roof provide enough security for the house to have withstood the great hurricane of 1893 (the last severe hurricane to hit Savannah).
- The perimeter roof decking is damaged by an excessive number and size of nails used for roof repairs in 1950's, including tie-backs to parapet stones.

Recommendations:

- **Roof Structure (Priority 1):** An historic restoration structural engineer should analyze the roof structure of both the Parish House and the Rectory and make recommendations. The necessity to redesign the parapet supports provides an opportunity to upgrade the roof anchoring and support system as well.



Figure 15: Parish House south east hip rafter

- **Decking (Priority 1):** Remove the six inch nails from the roof decking and repair same. This can be done when the parapet tie-backs are removed and a new copper roof installed.

B1023: Canopies

For Back Piazza, Veranda, and Front Portico, see B2015 below (Balcony Walls and Handrails)

For Bay and Oriel Windows, see B2020 (Exterior Windows)

B1029 Other Roof Systems

For Parapets see B2012 below (Parapets)

B20: EXTERIOR ENCLOSURE

B2010: EXTERIOR WALLS

B2011: Exterior Wall Construction

Description: (See HABS dwgs. GA-22-4 to 7)

Architectural image is that of a Medieval English abbey. Cast iron columns, portico, and bay and oriel windows give the effect of Medieval stone tracery. Crenellated parapets and high articulated chimney stacks embellish the skyline. The well built and substantial walls are of imported English brick and stone. The window heads and sills are cut sandstone. The porous brick is protected from the elements by facing the base of the wall with yellow sandstone flags and stuccoing the rest.

A unique feature of the exterior brick walls is the pockets on either side of the window openings into which the windows and shutters can slide. This necessitates additional wall thickness.

There are ten masonry chimney stacks of varying size. The six large stacks have two flues each, although they are faceted to indicate three flues each. The Rectory also has a high faceted single flue stack. The Parish House has two small chimneys with single Victorian terra cotta pots are set behind the east parapet. The northern one serves

the middle second floor room fireplace. Its southern mate is a dummy, put in to maintain the symmetry. Early 20th Century photographs of the property show high faceted masonry flues here, the same as the Rectory. There is a hole through the stone cornice face of the east elevation into the flue directly under the small north chimney. A modern square single flue stack is set between the two Parish House west stacks that may be associated with the furnace room (Section A2021).

Brick corbelling in the attic expands the plan of the two large Rectory chimney stacks. A pipe hole is open into the attic through the east side of the east stack.

The stone parapets are dealt with in section B2010 below. The columns, portico and veranda are described below as a continuation of this section.

Conversion of the Service building into a Rectory and the 1960 closing of Macon Street initiated alterations to the walls (See Figures 2, 9 and 25):

1. Arcade link brought into garden and new brick wall inserted enclosing HVAC units.
2. Rectory garden wall reduced in height and new gates added.
3. Original east (garden) facing tack room and commode doors converted into windows by addition of new reproduction precast sills and windows.
4. Infill of first floor Whitaker Street double door opening to tack room and stable, and insert of reproduction precast head, sill and window. Plinth stones were recycled from



5. the Rectory garden wall new gate openings. Sidewalk grate added.
5. Infill of central second floor Whitaker Street feed storeroom opening and insert of reproduction precast head, sill, and window.
6. Insertion of garage door opening in Harris Street elevation to allow conversion of former kitchen store room into a maintenance room. (see A1030) The original window, shutters, stone head and sill may be stored on site.

Figure 16: Stone drip mold showing erosion and stucco problems

By 1962, workmen removed the original wall (but not chimney) stucco and sandblasted the English brick, which remained exposed for thirty years. A private memorial by a parishioner made it possible to reinstate the stucco in 1990.

Observations:

- Stone window sills and heads are in fairly good condition. Those on the Harris Street (north) elevation have staining from organic growth, some natural erosion of stone, and a few cracks. The cracks on the Whitaker Street elevation have been discussed in A2021.

- The base plinth stones show delamination in places, staining from organic growth, particularly on north side along Harris Street (see Figures 9 and 13), and damage to those on the Whitaker Street elevation, some of which were moved.
- The original stucco was a thin parging coat applied directly to the masonry. The new stucco included a base of metal lath. The new stucco is consequently thicker than the stone window heads, joins awkwardly, and leaves no room for caulking at the windows. It is also not a historic color.
- There are no expansion joints in the new stucco so cracks have formed at window heads and sills.
- The decorative scoring is not deep enough, and the block size is too large.
- Downspouts and lightning cables were not all properly reinstalled after new stucco applied. Misaligned or missing downspouts have caused rust stains on the stucco below the east oriel windows, and water stains, biological growth, and erosion at the north east corner and at the west side of the north bay window.
- The Rectory garden wall sandstone coping is delaminating with consequent staining of wall stucco below (see Figure 12).

Recommendations:

- **Crack repair (Priority 2):** The Whitaker Street crack which extends through two sills, a header, and the stucco should be monitored to determine if there is still movement. Use crack monitoring test strips. If the crack is stable, then an injection of the Jahn M30 or M40 or equivalent would be a suitable repair.
- **Biological growth (Priority 2):** Remediate on plinth facing stones with the use of



Jahn D/2 or equivalent. Biological growth that is left unchecked can cause accelerated deterioration of substrates.

- **Chimney Stucco (Priority 2):** Check for soundness and replace as necessary.
- **Copings (Priority 2):** Repair or replace the delaminating sandstone copings to the Rectory garden wall.
- **Stucco stains (Priority 2):** Remove the rust and water stains caused by missing or misaligned downspouts and delaminating coping stones. After caulking all cracks, paint with elastomeric paint.

Figure 17: Crack in Whitaker Street Rectory wall

- **Stucco (Priority 3):** In the long term, the stucco should be removed and a thinner coat applied with correct scoring block pattern, and proper sealing to openings.

B2012 Parapets

Description: (see HABS dwg. 222-11, and AHWS roof dwgs in appendix)

The crenellated “flying” parapet stones are supported above the roof by brick piers, which can be seen from the attic (see Figure 14). The number of crenellations on individual parapet stones ranges from one to eight (see Figure 2).



Corner stones are cut in an L shape in plan. The individual stones are clamped together forming a continuous ring around the perimeter of the Parish and Rectory roofs. They are not attached to the brick supports below, relying on gravity only. The original standing seam copper roof is shown in the 1965 HABS drawings. Rain water is designed to flow under the parapet stones into perimeter copper cornice gutters. The supports for the parapet stones were originally carefully wrapped in copper to protect them from weathering.

Figure 18: "Flying" parapet to north wall of Parish House

Observations:

- The brick parapet supports are failing in places, particularly on the south wall, causing the stones to shift outwards. Workmen in 1968 tied the stones back into the roof structure with iron rods and removed the original copper roof system inside the parapets, replacing it with tar and shingles (see Figure 2). They also put six inch nails through the roof decking, and removed some of the intermediate supports to the larger stones.
- Stones have continued to shift and tar flashings have failed causing continued erosion of the supports. A few stones have cracked at clamp location breaking the continuity of the structural ring. A substantial section of the south main parapet is leaning outwards. There is also one place on the main east parapet next to the northernmost of the small middle chimneys where the stones have shifted.
- The outside face of the copper support flashings is still there, but the rest is either gone or covered with tar. In certain places the support has eroded significantly. There is one just below the roof access hatch which has a hole through the tar into which you can put your hand, i.e. there is a void where there should be a solid.
- Some stones are a composite and the top sections have fallen off. Some missing pieces are stored in attic.
- The heat pumps on the rectory roof, particularly the older, larger, one, are very unsightly as they interfere with the intended architectural effect of the parapet and articulated chimneys. The presence of the parking lot across the street allows the Rectory to be seen from angles it was never intended to be seen from. Not only

are the HVAC units highly visible, but the spaces underneath the parapet stones also show most disconcertingly, particularly when the sun is at certain angles.



Figure 19: Leaning south parapet

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1):** An historic restoration structural engineer should do an analysis of the parapet support system of both the Parish House and the Rectory and make design recommendations. It is the intension to preserve the original stones in their original locations, ideally without tie-backs, and without cutting through the original clamps. However, this may not be feasible.
- **(Priority 1):** Structurally stabilize the parapets on newly engineered support system. Stainless steel angles could be added at existing or intermediate locations, determined in coordination with the design of the new copper roof. Stitching or partial replacement may be necessary in places. As the exterior brick wall is thinner in the Rectory than the Parish House, the support solutions may have to be different.
- **(Priority 1)** Parapet stones need to be patched, cleaned and reset.
- **(Priority 2)** Reattach the broken pieces that can be located.

B2013: Exterior Fencing (see HABS dwg. GA-222-13)

Description:

The formal front garden is enclosed by the original iron fence supported on a sandstone base. In the 1890's Judge Meldrim added a second layer of ornamental ironwork on top

of the original. There is a double system of vertical bracing bars. Gate to front garden not original. Rectory garden iron gates are not original.

Observations:

- Ironwork support points have rusted and expanded, eroding the stone base, and leaving the fence unsupported in places.
- Fence is undulating due to support problems.
- Base stones themselves are misaligned, spalling, missing pieces, and covered with biological growth in places.
- Hollow cast iron base rail of the 1890 fence extension is in poor shape and some sections have fallen off. These have been salvaged and stored.
- Practically no parts are missing to the original fence, but some corroded support points must be replaced.
- There is an excess of paint on the ironwork which is now peeling and flaking.



Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1)** Identify points where the ironwork is no longer supported and reconstruct the support using Jahn or equivalent mortar.
- **(Priority 1)** Prior to repair, prep the fence supports to remove all rust and recoat to prevent future oxidation.
- **(Priority 1)** Clean, repair, patch, and reset base stones as necessary.
- **(Priority 1)** Inspect, replace as necessary bolted ironwork connections.
- **(Priority 1)** Realign and stabilize the fence to the extent that it can be done without dismantling it, if possible. Note: if the ironwork is removed for repair, great care must be taken to make sure it fits back together again correctly. The base stones and ironwork support points are irregular.
- **(Priority 2)** Replace missing or damaged decorative parts.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean, repaint ironwork as necessary.

Figure 20: Front formal garden fence support failing

B2015 BALCONY WALLS AND HANDRAILS

Back Piazza:

Description: (see HABS dwgs GA-222-7 and 12)

The two story back piazza is contained within the overall main roof. Three bays of structural cast iron columns are quatrefoil in plan, and carry iron beams. Decorative iron tracery of Gothic perpendicular inspiration fills each bay (See Figure 2).

Observations:

- Previous sandblasting and painting of the back piazza is spotty. Ironwork in fairly good shape.
- There may be some decorative iron parts missing.
- First floor ceiling mildewed.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Treat hairline crack in stucco at top of middle column that is without support. (see section A2021 regarding furnace room).
- **(Priority 3)** Complete cleaning and painting of the ironwork. Identify and reconstruct any missing pieces.



Veranda:

Description: (see HABS dwgs GA-222-4 and 5)

The south and east verandas have standing seam pagoda style hip ended copper roofs on T&G boards attached to ornamental bowed iron ribs bolted to the iron trellis work. The south veranda is bisected by the entrance portico. The trellis work consists of arched infill panels between decorative openwork columns. There are two bays to the west of the entrance portico and three bays to the east. The veranda continues around the south east corner. There are five more bays on the east elevation. The same upper railing system was added to the south elevation as to the formal front garden in the 1890's.

Observations:

- Trellis sits directly on soft sandstone which has eroded, leaving the trellis work inadequately supported, particularly on the north east corner (see Figure 13).

Figure 21: East veranda

- The paint has been stripped from the underside of the west end of the south veranda roof, but never repainted. The paint on the ceiling boards of the rest of the veranda is peeling in places. The boards all appear to be in good condition, except localized exposed points, particularly abutting the main portico.
- Either the ironwork has eroded at the veranda corners, or the corners weren't closed by the openwork tracery, relying instead of the vertical extension of the roof supports.

Recommendations:



Figure 22: South east veranda corner

- **(Priority 3)** Remove rust stains from the existing copper roof if possible.
- **(Priority 3)** Clean, repaint and repair as necessary the exposed T&G decking/ceiling to the pagoda roof.

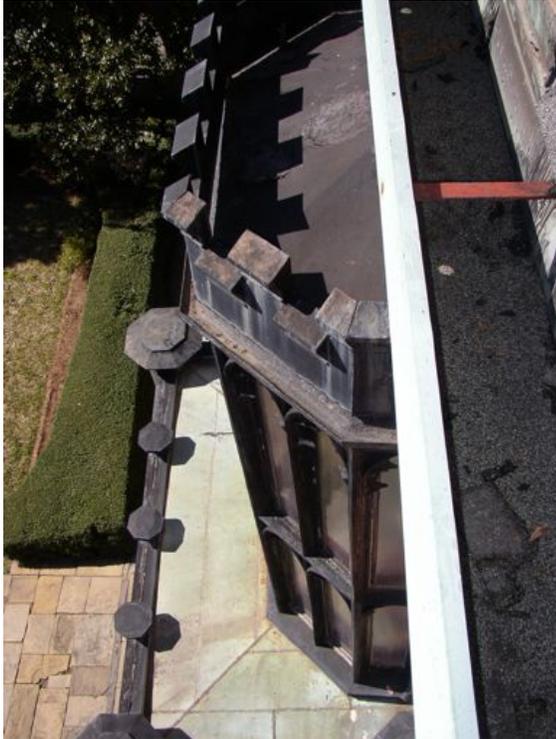
Portico:

Description: (see HABS dwgs GA-22-8 to 10)

Monumental cast iron entrance portico over the front steps includes lamp posts either side (See Figure 27).

The roof is an almost flat structure, copper clad, spanning from below the sill of the iron south bay window to a wooden upstand set in the iron canopy supports. The ceiling of the canopy is T&G boarding, probably attached to wood joists. It is not possible to see inside the canopy roof structure. The smaller caps of the portico are copper, while the large caps are iron. In such cases, the copper has been painted or stained black. There is a lot of overlap between the copper work and the ironwork. Water drains behind the upstand to east and west chutes discharging onto veranda roof below

- **(Priority 1)** Insert new supports as necessary (may necessitate shoring of the veranda roof structures to ensure no stress is put on the connection system). Check alignment.
- **(Priority 1)** Inspect, replace as necessary any structural iron parts of the pagoda roof and supports.
- **(Priority 1)** Inspect, replace as necessary bolted ironwork connections.
- **(Priority 1)** Treat trellis supports to prevent further corrosion of stone floor slabs.
- **(Priority 2)** Replace or repair as necessary decorative ironwork parts.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean, repaint ironwork as necessary.
- **(Priority 2)** Check pagoda copper roof flashings, gutters, and downspouts and repair or replace as necessary.



Observations:

- The spectacular and unique ironwork suffers from rusting and excess paint. Parts have fallen from the entrance portico due to water getting inside the cast iron structure.
- For some reason, the copper flashing was not taken completely over the top of the portico upstand, leaving a gap between the inside and outside face which was later filled with caulk which then failed. No maintenance manual came with this house, and a lot of damage has occurred through not knowing what to do with the water getting through the top of the upstand, i.e. keep it out, let it flow through and the air circulate, or worst case (which was done) leave it open at the top and seal it at the underside.

Figure 23: Roofs of south bay window and portico

- Two of the corbels fell and their tips broke off. The third was taken down in advance. Some of the bolts were left half unscrewed in the columns, probably while trying to take down the remaining corbels. One set of corbels remains with moss growing out of it.

Recommendations:



Figure 24: Portico losing parts due to rust

- **(Priority 1)** Solve problem of water getting behind the cast iron ornaments, causing the welds to rust and ornaments to fall.
- **(Priority 1)** Dismantle, refinish, recast as necessary, and reconstruct decorative infill sections and lamp posts
- **(Priority 1)** Check, tighten, replace as necessary all bolts to the columns and structural components of the portico. Determine if it is necessary to remove altogether for further repair. This would entail temporary shoring of portico roof structure and south bay window.
- **(Priority 1)** Restore the copper roof, keeping original pieces as much as possible.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean, repaint, repair, and/or replace as necessary the portico ceiling.

B2020 EXTERIOR WINDOWS

Parish House And Rectory Wood Windows And Shutters:

Description:

All the windows and shutters set in the main walls of the Parish House and Rectory are designed on the same basis. A three dimensional wood frame divides the individual window sections. These are supported on pairs of brass wheels and slide on brass tracks into pockets in the masonry walls. A drainage channel is formed in each sill to allow water to drain under the brass shutter track. The windows are not subjected to the wear and tear of hinges, but where the drainage hole has become blocked, the sills have rotted. Because of the new stucco, it is not possible to tell if there were drainage holes in the pockets themselves. The windows on the first floor of the Parish House extend to the floor. (See HABS drawings 16, 17, and 18)

Observations:

- Four replacement windows are installed, two at the Whitaker Street tack room door and feed entrance, and two at the Rectory garden tack room back door and commode door. One of these may possibly be recycled from the garage entrance.
- One original window was removed to make the garage door into the maintenance room. The shutters at least may be in the ceiling space over the remodeled Parish House kitchen.
- The original windows and shutters have their original brass locks and wheels and those to the Parish House are in good condition and still operational. However, they suffer from opened joints, excess peeling paint, occasional rotted sills, and some loose or missing pieces (See Figure 17).
- The Rectory shutters have been sealed and painted into their wall sockets, and the windows are painted shut.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Clean, repair and repaint the 12" deep wood window surrounds.
- **(Priority 2)** Insure that both the sliding windows and shutters are operational.
- **(Priority 2)** Inspect each window and shutter component. Clean, repair and paint as necessary.

South Bay Window:

Description:

The south bay window is of cast iron construction with integral iron faceted roof and cast iron flying parapet (see Figure 23). An integral iron cornice gutter collects rain water which drains into a downspout and chute on the east side ending at sill level, designed to throw water clear of the wall and onto the portico roof below. The base of the bay window is inset into the front portico roof. Intricate copper flashings start at sill level (which is in fact floor level of the second floor). Cast iron perpendicular style tracery encloses floor to ceiling wood windows. These were originally opening casements with etched glass (same as front door side lights), but were replaced with fixed panes of modern textured glass, and some of the horizontal mullions removed.

Observations:

Green-Meldrim House, Savannah GA

- There are multiple layers of peeling caulk and paint
- Parts of the windows are rotting.
- The cladding parts that have been damaged can be unscrewed and repaired. The bases of the vertical cladding separations between the windows have large amounts of caulking, probably damaged from rough handling when the casements were changed out.
- The sills of this window appear to be iron, but in fact are copper stained to look like iron.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Preserve as much of the original copper flashing to the portico roof as possible, particularly the copper sill flashing, stained to look like iron. Clean and refinish in situ.
- **(Priority 2)** Dismantle the iron tracery parts, clean and refinish. Check face plates.
- **(Priority 2)** Repair the localized rotting wood windows.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean and repaint all iron parts, particularly the iron roof.
- **(Priority 2)** Check alignment and attachment of down spout.
- **(Priority 3)** Research historic photographs and other sources to determine exactly how the original opening casements were constructed. Include their reconstruction in the long range plan.



Figure 25: Harris Street (North) elevation

North Bay Window:

Description:

The north bay window is two stories high and of cast iron construction with integral iron faceted roof and cast iron flying parapet. Cast iron perpendicular style tracery encloses floor to ceiling wood windows. These were originally opening casements with etched glass (same as front door side lights), but were replaced with fixed panes of modern textured glass, and some of the horizontal mullions removed. An integral iron cornice gutter collects rain water which used to drain into an iron downspout against the wall on the west side (now missing). There are flat iron panels between the articulated heads and sills of the windows of the two floors. The plinth wall facing stones continue around the base of the first floor, below the floor level cast iron sill. The Harris Street front garden fence ends at the east side of the bay window base, enclosing a narrow strip of planting. East of the bay window the sidewalk extends up to the plinth facing stones (See Figure 9). The sidewalk drain connection has been plugged.

Observations:

- Missing downspout is causing water to stain the adjacent stuccowork, and cause biological growth to flourish on the plinth wall facing stones.
- Exterior has been recently thoroughly patched, caulked and repainted. However, this is primarily a temporary patch job.
- Some damage was done to the removable iron face plates and not all bolts put back when casements removed. All problems have been caulked over.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Replace the missing downspout. It may be in the attic.
- **(Priority 3)** Dismantle the iron tracery parts, clean and refinish. Check face plates.
- **(Priority 3)** Research historic photographs and other sources to determine exactly how the original opening casements were constructed. Include their reconstruction in the long range plan.



Figure 26: Oriel window downspout

Oriel Windows:

Description:

The four oriel windows are of cast iron construction with integral iron faceted roof and cast iron flying parapet. An integral iron cornice gutter collects rain water which drains down the south side of each window ending in a chute at sill level which is designed to throw water clear of the wall and onto the veranda roof below.

The exterior iron base expands up to the sill level in a series of corbels. Cast iron perpendicular style tracery encloses wood windows surrounding a window seat. These were originally opening casements with etched glass, which were replaced with fixed panes of clear glass.

Observations:

- Rainwater from misaligned downspouts is running down the sill and corbels and rusting and staining the sill itself, the stucco and the copper veranda roof below.
- Paint is peeling and flaking.
- The bases of the vertical cladding separations between the windows have missing bits, probably from rough handling when the casements were changed out.
- The wood of the windows is rotting in places.
- Water is penetrating to the interior edges of the windows and patching caulk is peeling off.



Figure 27: Front door and portico

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Downspouts must be aligned to throw water clear of sill and wall.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean and refinish in situ. Check face plates, and remove, repair and refinish as necessary. The cladding parts that have been damaged can be unscrewed and repaired.
- **(Priority 3)** Research historic photographs and other sources to determine exactly how the original opening casements were constructed. Include their reconstruction in the long range plan.

B2030 EXTERIOR DOORS

Description:

There are very few exterior doors as the first floor windows slide open to provide ready access to veranda and back piazza. The doors are all exquisitely detailed.

Observations:

- The main front door to the Parish House has shrunk slightly. Original latch doesn't catch properly, although dead bolt can still be locked with original key.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1)** Enable main front door latch to catch properly and check all locks.
- **(Priority 3)** Paint and repair as necessary.

B30 ROOFING

B3010 ROOF COVERINGS

For Back Piazza, Veranda, and Front Portico, see B2015 above (Balcony Walls and Handrails)

For Bay and Oriel Windows, see B2020 (Exterior Windows)

B3011 Roof Finishes

Description:



The present main roof to the Parish House and Rectory is shingles on tar, with tar flashings. The original copper was removed to install tie-backs to the stone parapets (See Figures 2, 18, 19).

Observations:

- There is now heavy build-up of accumulated tar and shingle layers.
- The tar is cracked at the horizontal joint between parapet stone and brick support.
- It was a great mistake to remove the original copper roof and install such a temporary one in its place, necessitating multiple layers over time. However, they did try to maintain the architecturally significant parapets. One of the main conservation challenges of this project will be to design a better solution.

Figure 28: Parapet tie-back

Recommendation:

- **Main House and Rectory Roof (Priority 1):** Reinstall copper roof to original design, and remove tie-backs after stabilizing parapet.

B3014 Flashing and Trim

Description:

The original roofs of the Parish House and Rectory were of copper with copper flashings and trim. When the copper roof was removed, some of the flashings and trim were left in place including the outer face of the parapet flashings but not the critical inner face (See Section 2012 above, Parapets). The present tar and shingle roof recycles some of the old copper flashings in a careless manner (See Figure 23). Everything else being made out of tar (See Figure 33). There may be more original flashings that have been buried in tar. The multiple parapet tie-backs are flashed with tar only.

The South Bay Window is designed as an integral part of the front Portico roof, with quite sophisticated copper flashings and trim which are intact, but which have been misunderstood from a maintenance point of view. (See Section B202 above, Exterior Windows).

The roofs, gutters, downspouts, flashings and trim of the north and south Bay and eastern Oriel Windows are self contained iron constructions. (See Section B2020 above, Exterior Windows)

Observations:

- The flashings and trim of the Parish House and Rectory roofs are totally failing, particularly around the parapet stones, parapet tie-back points, and chimneys.
- A recent major effort was made by the maintenance team of St. John's to install crickets at the chimneys and repair a major leak resulting from failed flashings at one of the parapet tie-back points.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1)** The whole parapet tie-back system should be removed and the original support system reinstalled, only on a much more secure footing. Multiple tie-backs create an almost impossible flashing condition (the original reason for the removal of the original copper roof).
- **(Priority 1)** Wherever possible, the original copper flashings should be saved and integrated into the proposed new copper roof. Otherwise new copper flashings must be provided.

B3016 Gutters and Downspouts (See AHWS roof plan in Appendix)

Description:

Copper Cornice gutters are separated at elevational mid-points (expansion joint) and flow down to the four corners. They are supported by a masonry ledge and by iron gutter brackets set at approximately 4'0" centers (See Figures 2, 12, 28, and 25).

Observations:

- The downspouts appear to be undersized, particularly where the main roof downspouts discharge onto the veranda or rectory roofs.

- The copper downspouts that go into cast iron leaders on the north elevation may be blocked.
- Downspouts are missing in places and lightning rods not attached properly to walls (See Figure 25).
- There are dents in several parts of the original copper downspouts and cornice gutter, particularly on the north side.
- Damage done during removal and later replacement of stucco.
 1. Oriel windows, causing rust stains on east stucco
 2. Missing main downspout at north east corner causing staining to stucco, biological growth, and deterioration of stone floor and facing of veranda, and stone base plinth.
 3. Missing downspout from north bay window causing staining to stucco, biological growth and deterioration of stone plinth facing.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2):** Repair the original copper cornice gutters and downspouts to the Parish House and Rectory Main Roof, including removing dents, cleaning cast iron interior gutter brackets or replacing with new stainless steel ones.
- **(Priority 2):** Calculate the required downspout sizes and make modifications as necessary compatible with preservation standards.
- **(Priority 2):** Check all underground drain lines connected to the gutters and clear as necessary.
- **(Priority 2):** Replace any missing downspouts to match existing, including the northeast main roof downspout and the north bay window downspout.
- **(Priority 2):** Check all downspout fastenings to walls and replace as necessary, particularly the rectory garden downspout.
- **(Priority 2):** Check alignment of gutters to ensure they do not discharge in a harmful way, particularly those on the oriel windows and at the northwest corner of the rectory.
- **(Priority 3)** Removing stains if possible from the copper.

B3020 ROOF OPENINGS

B3021 Glazed Roof Openings

Description:

The top of the original skylight box is gone, with sheet of plastic now chained down over it. It originally opened to vent the gas light ring around the base of the stair dome and oculus (See Figure 33).

Observations:

- The whole assembly needs to be studied for clues as to its original configuration, either photographs of the original skylight or a study of other contemporary buildings, particularly any done by John Norris.

Recommendations:

- Restore the original skylight if possible.



Figure 29: Attic view of dome, oculus and skylight

B3022 Roof Hatches

Description:

The attic can be accessed through a hatch in the top of the east wall at the northeast corner of the upper piazza. There is a small hatch to the Parish House roof set in a low point of the roof behind the northwest chimney. It must be manually unhooked and lifted out of the way.

There is no hatch to the Rectory Roof.

Observations:

- At present there is no roof hatch directly to the Rectory roof; it is accessed either by a ladder down from the main roof or directly by extension ladder from the ground (See Figure 2).

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Install a new Parish House roof access hatch, preferably in a more accessible location.
- **(Priority 2)** Install a Rectory roof access hatch, or a permanent ladder between the two roofs if it is not visually intrusive.

C: INTERIORS

C30 INTERIOR FINISHES

The Parish House first floor ceiling height is 14'3½", and the second 11'7". The interior doorways are capped by overhanging Gothic cornices of American black walnut. Elaborate crown moldings are stucco-duro. The doorknobs, hinges, keyhole escutcheons and covers are silver-plated. Intact original details include Carrara marble mantels, crystal gasoliers, and large pier and over-mantel mirrors in gold leaf frames brought from Austria.

C3030 Ceiling Finishes

Description

The interior of the Green Meldrim House has elaborate and very beautiful plasterwork. This includes the ceilings, some of which are coffered; the cornice moldings at the top of the walls; central ceiling medallions, and the beautiful dome at the top of the stairs.



Figure 30: Excess and flaking paint to moldings

Observations:

- There are multiple layers of peeling paint throughout, and localized cracks. The Dome is suffering particularly from excess peeling paint, obscuring the refinement of the exquisite details.
- The air conditioning ducts in the ceiling are causing condensation on the surrounding ceiling creating a haven for mold and mildew.

Recommendation

- **(Priority 3)** Clean and repair interior plaster ornament throughout the Parish House.



Figure 31: Interior of dome over stairs. Note ring of gas jets at base for lighting.

- **(Priority 3)** Clean and repair the plaster ceilings.
- **(Priority 3)** Identify and repair isolated cracks.
- **(Priority 3)** Restore dome over the stairs.
- **(Priority 3)** Study and Repair the opening mechanism and glazing to the oculus at top of the dome. It was smoked glass, but is now Styrofoam.

D: SERVICES

D30 HVAC

Description:

The HVAC system was originally installed in 1968. Individual units have been upgraded from time to time. There are two that are elderly and are so large they are unsightly or in the way, i.e. the heat pump on the roof of the Rectory, and the air handler in the maintenance room.

Observations:

- The main air handler and the main electrical service panels are in the maintenance room.
- Installation of the HVAC system under the first floor of the parish house resulted in damage to the original tile floor. The original tiles were taken up and sold individually as a fund raiser. Similar tiles have replaced them. Under floor access is still difficult and a better set-up for maintenance work needs to be worked out.
- Parts of HVAC system are old. Many ducts have been in place for over thirty years. Some are dirty and system staining ceilings.
- The heat pumps on the rectory roof, particularly the older, larger, one, are very unsightly as they interfere with the intended architectural effect of the parapet and articulated chimneys.



Figure 32: Second floor ceiling HVAC duct

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 2)** Upgrade older HVAC system components, particularly large unit on Rectory roof and the air handler in the maintenance room.
- **(Priority 2)** Clean ducts and balance system to prevent staining of ceilings around vents.
- **(Priority 3)** Examine long range possibility of removing the HVAC units from the Rectory roof altogether.

D40: FIRE PROTECTION

D4030 Fire Protection Specialties:

Description:

The pipe hole in the flue in the Rectory attic and damage to the stone cornice face of the east elevation at the flue directly under the small north chimney confirm the importance of checking any chimneys that might be used. At present most flues are sealed at the top with sheets of copper.

There is a lightning rod composed of heavy copper cable at the apex of the roof to the Parish House. Three heavy copper cables extend out from the base, one to the northeast corner of the Parish House(See Figure 25), one to the southwest corner of the Parish House, and one goes down onto the Rectory roof ending up on the south elevation at the west end.

Observations:

- These cables must have been detached either when the stucco was removed or fifty years later when it was restored. They are simply hanging loose down the side of the building. They are attached to the ground, but are most unsightly.

Recommendations:

- **(Priority 1)** Clean and reline any chimney flues in active use.
- **(Priority 1)** Insure that the three lightning rod cables are properly attached to the wall, preferably behind the downspouts, and all connections checked and in full working order.

D50 ELECTRICAL (Priority 1) Check that no obsolete systems are still in use, and upgrade as necessary.



Figure 33: Skylight box with lightning rod behind at apex of roof and cables extending in three directions to ground.

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“BALL TO THE VIRGINIA DELEGATION”¹

“A ball was given at Savannah, Ga., on the 9th inst., by Charles B. Green, Esq., to the Virginia delegation in attendance on the Commercial Convention. The correspondent of the Petersburg Express says:

The great Reception Entertainment held last evening at the residence of Charles B. Green, Esq., in the ‘West End,’ was every sense of the term a grand affair. From eight o’clock until twelve, there was one continuous stream of persons pouring in and out of the magnificent parlors. A fine band, stationed in a recess adjacent to the spacious hall, discoursed most exquisite music, while the ladies and gentlemen so disposed, danced nimbly and gracefully.

The dining room was literally one vast collection of cakes, ices, confectionary and champagne bottles. Pyramids of candies and confections towered to the lofty ceilings, and when the doors were thrown open, the scene was quite amusing. Ices dissolved more suddenly than represented in that great spectacular drama known as the ‘Sea of Ice,’ pyramids tottered and fell as though shaken by some abrupt upheaving of the earth, and corks popped more rapidly than guns ever fired at Alma, Inkerman or Malakoff.

The host and his lady were stationed in the first parlor on the right of the front entrance, and received the Virginia delegation singly, the Chairman, Thomas S. Gholson, Esq., introducing each one as rapidly as circumstances would allow. The house is universally conceded to be one of the most unique and superb family mansions on the continent.

The furniture is unsurpassed in any quarter. The parlors are adorned with four magnificent mirrors, fourteen feet high and seven in width. The hall is hung with oil paintings, one of which, a life size picture of the Virgin Mary, alone cost \$900. The dome was brilliantly illuminated last evening with a circle of gas jets, numbering in all 98, which shed a soft but brilliant and beautiful light upon the gay and merry mass of human beings that thronged the various rooms and hall below. The reception, the crowd, the mansion, its furniture and the entertainment, is the absorbing theme this morning.”

¹ (*Savannah*) *Daily Morning News*, 17 December 1856, p. 6, col. 3.

GENERAL SHERMAN'S LETTER
TO DOUGLASS GREEN, SON OF CHARLES GREEN

"5th Avenue Hotel,
New York
March 21, 1886

*Douglass Green, Esq.
165 West 58th Street,
New York.*

My dear Friend:—

Your note of Mch 19 reminds me of the promise made to write you of my first meeting your father Charles Green, Esq., in Savannah, Ga., Dec. 22, 1864.

I was then in command of an Army of sixty thousand men which had marched from Atlanta to Savannah. The advance of the two wings commanded by Generals Howard and Slocum entered the city the day before, viz. Dec. 21. I at this time was absent with Admiral Dahlgren; but early on the morning of the 22nd I rode from my bivouac on the Road to Kings bridge into the city which was as quiet and peaceful as to-day.² No signs of disorder or violence. With a small staff and a few orderlies I rode down Bull Street recognizing many of the houses and squares with which I was familiar prior to 1846, and reached the River Bank below the Pulaski Hotel. There I dismounted, went on top of some public buildings in which was quartered a Regular Guard,³ saw the smouldering remains of the Confederate navy yard and unfinished Ram burnt 'twas said by Commodore Tatnall, as also the wreckage of the floating bridge by which the Confederates had retreated into South Carolina; then remounting we rode back to the Pulaski Hotel where I was arranging with the Landlord (whom I had known in New Orleans) for quarters and stabling for my Headquarters during our intended stay of a month in Savannah, when your father, Charles Green came close to my horse, and said 'General Howard has already selected your Headquarters.' I enquired, 'Where?' He said, 'My house close by, one of the best if not the very best in the city, large, commodious, fully furnished, with large stabling and vacant lot for wagons and spare houses.' I answered that I did not like to occupy a private house, because no sooner were we gone than we would be charged with stealing, pilfering and all sorts of false nothings.⁴ He answered that he was incapable of such meanness, that his family were away and all he needed was the use of two rooms above the dining-room for himself and his man servant; that if I did not take his house some other General officer would, and he much preferred me. Whilst we were thus conversing, I on horseback and he standing

² The Ogeechee Road led to King's Ferry across the Ogeechee River.

³ Possibly the City Exchange.

⁴ Sherman is dissembling here, and contradicts himself a few lines later. He and his officers always appropriated private homes as their quarters along their route of destruction. For example, during their occupation of Savannah, Major General Giles E. Smith of Sherman's army appropriated the home of Dr. Louis A. Falligant, a communicant of St. John's Church, for his headquarters. At a meal before leaving for South Carolina, the drunken General Smith bragged that his men would burn Columbia when they captured that city. "The Burning of Columbia Pre-determined," *Savannah Morning News*, 14 May 1873 and 23 May 1873.

Green-Meldrim House, Savannah GA

close, my staff officers were out looking for a livery stable convenient to the 'Pulaski.' One by one they returned unsuccessful; when I made further inquiries of your father about the stabling and yard I remarked that I was about to ride the Interior Lines and would look at his place on my way back. At that time I was about 45 years old and your father seemed about 55, neatly dressed fine fresh color, like an Englishman manifestly a gentleman of refinement and culture. I then started off, saw Generals Howard, Slocum and the guard judiciously posted, and fetched up at your well-known house, where your father was waiting for me. He showed me the house with its well-arranged and well-furnished rooms, pictures and statuary, and my Quarter Master examined the stable and stable-yard, pronouncing them ample for our needs. Long before dark we were established therein. Your father retained the two rooms over the dining hall for himself and servant. We had all else. We had our own cook and servants, and your father often took lunch or dinner with us. My recollection is that the Parlor remained unchanged, and there I saw the principal citizens of Savannah who had remained, and also a great many visitors from the North who came by sea, among these the Secretary of War, Stanton, Adj. Gen. Townsend, Quarter Master Gen. Meigs, the newly appointed Collector Simon Draper, etc., etc. Colonel L.M. Drayton had the two rooms over the Parlor as quarters and office. I had the room on the second floor, right of the Hall, and the other Aids Audenreid, McCoy and Nichols were scattered in the house. We remained in that house all of January 1865, until I started for the North Feb. 1, and during all that time the most friendly relations subsisted between your father and myself.

It is now a matter of history that my Army marched Northwards through South and North Carolina when the Rebellion collapsed by the surrender of Lee at Appomattox, and of Johnston at Durham. The very moment this conclusion was reached I returned to Savannah by way of Wilmington and Charleston reaching Savannah May 1, 1865. I went to your father's house as a second home and he was glad to see me, and share in the general rejoicing that the war was over. I have already sent you some of his letters which demonstrate his personal feelings toward me, but I did not have the opportunity to see him again till about 1879 when I went from Washington to Savannah en-route to Florida with General and Mrs. Van Vleit, and two of my daughters, Lizzie and Elly.

As soon as he learned that I was in Savannah he wrote me a very kind note saying that he was not well, and asking me to waive all formality and come to him at my house. I did so, taking my children along, and we had a long and most charming visit to him, to the family and to the House.

This was shortly before his death. My recollections of your father are all of the most kindly nature. He was a Gentleman in the highest sense, handsome in person, hospitable, and with sense which enabled him to guide his course in one of the mightiest tempests of passion which ever occurred on Earth. I am glad you are collecting for the use of his children and grandchildren testimonials of his worth, or more real value than an inherited title.

With great respect,
Your Friend,
W.T. Sherman"

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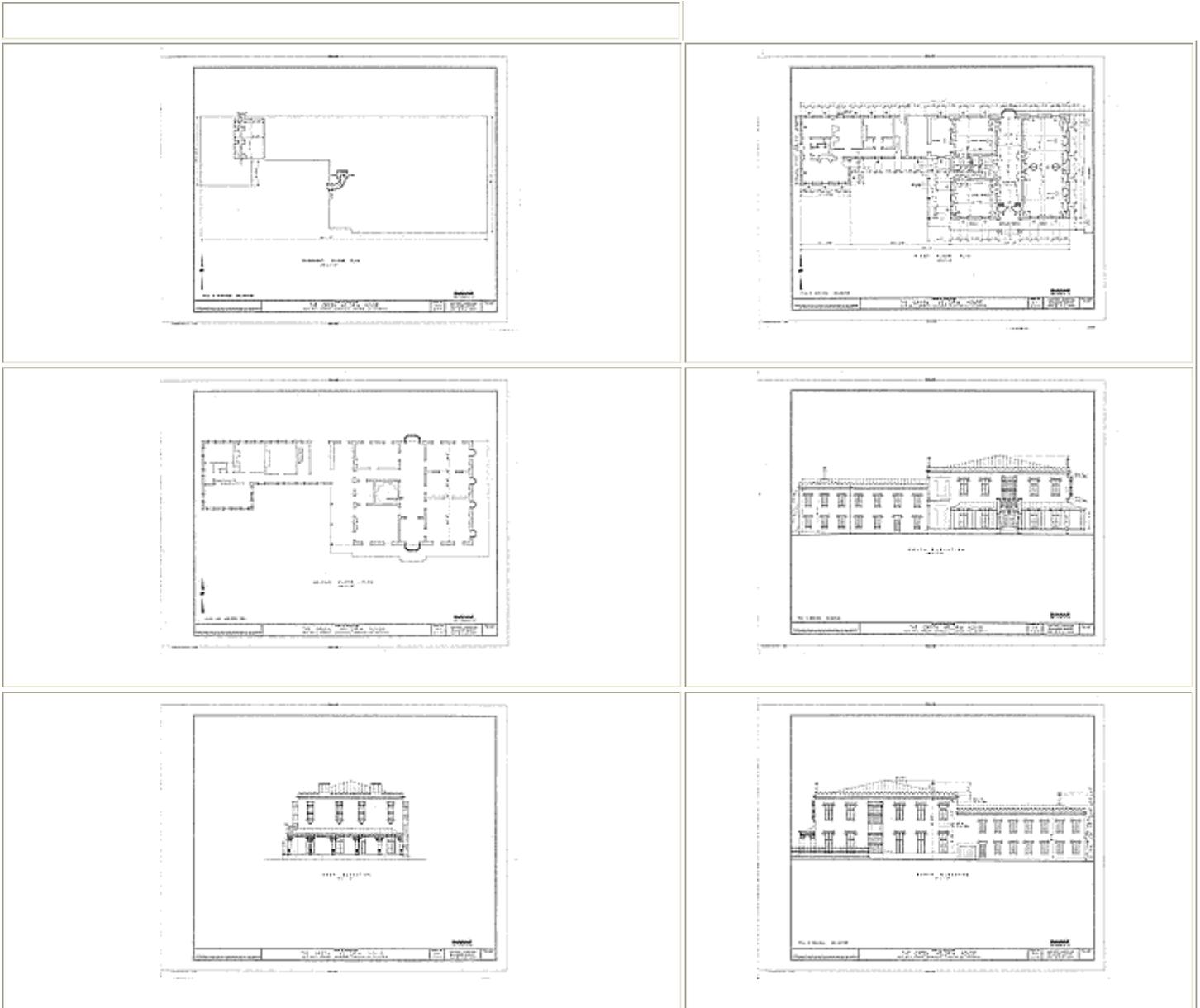
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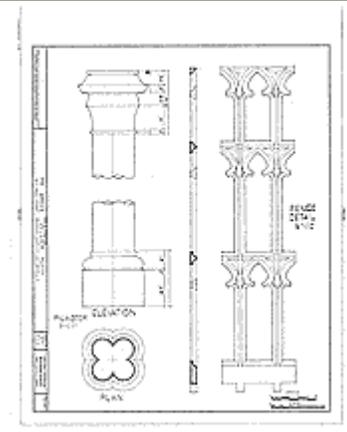
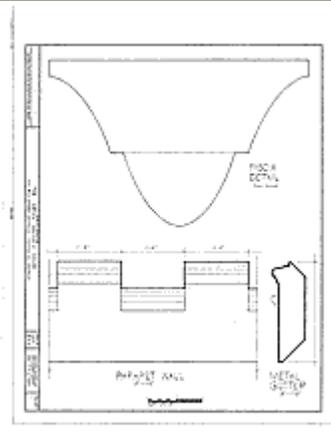
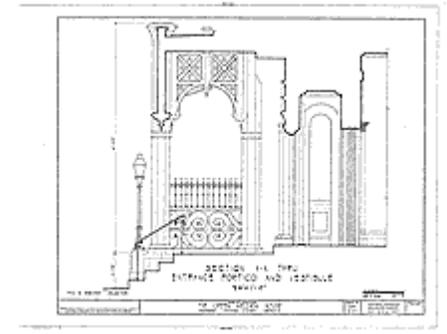
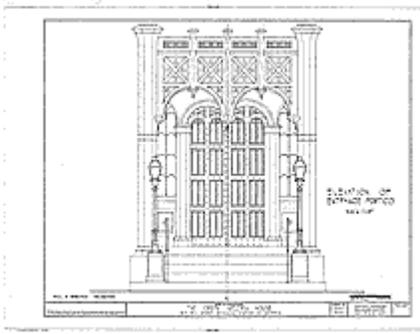
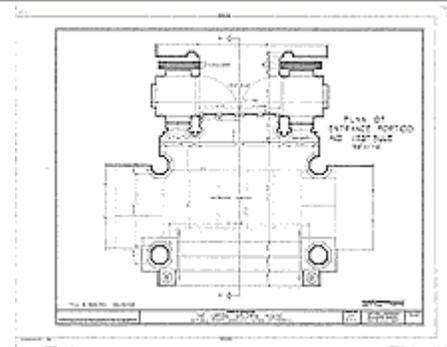
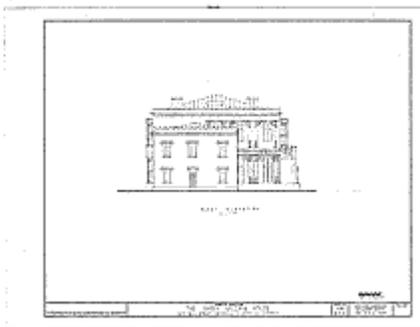
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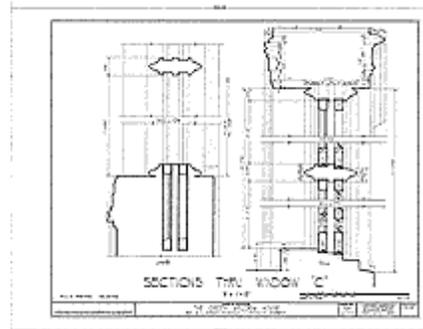
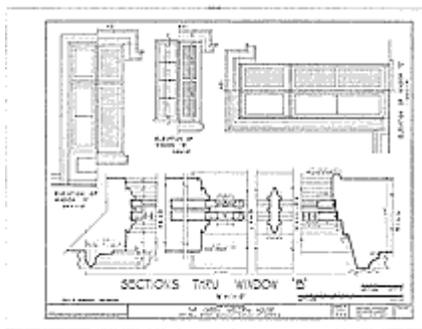
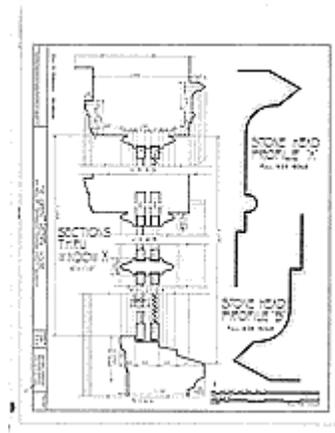
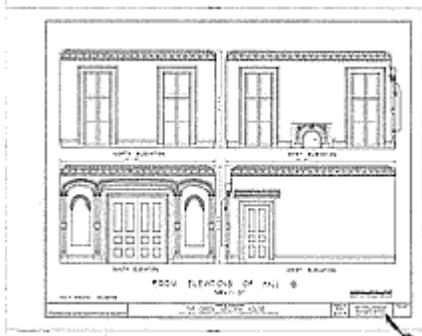
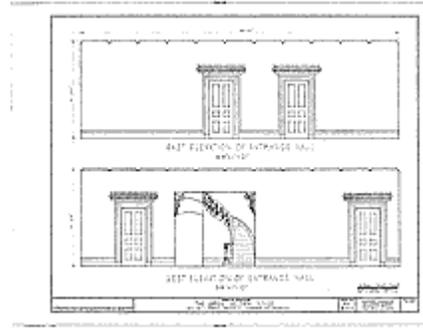
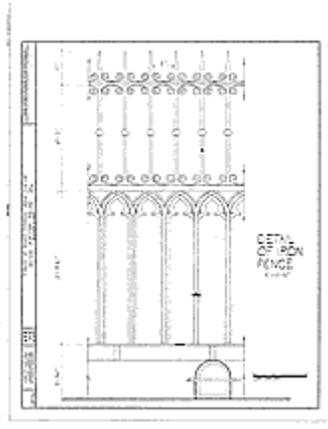
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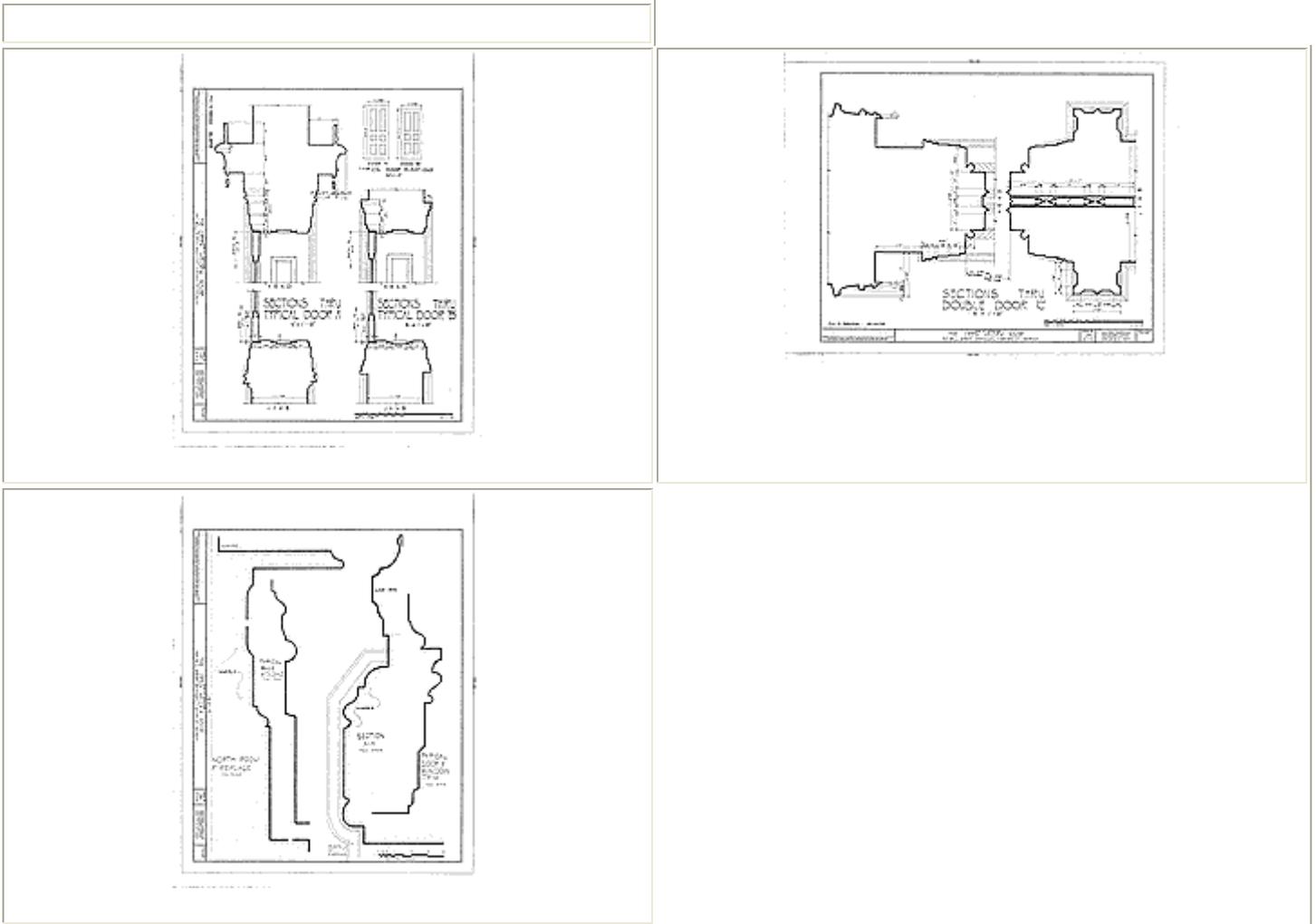
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