

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



OMB No. 10024-0018

1208

1. Name of Property

historic name Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Walton Smithers, House

other names/site number The Cedars

2. Location

street & number 15834 Highway O [n/a] not for publication

city or town Lexington [X] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Lafayette code 107 zip code 64067

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO

Date 30 April 1999

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments [].)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

[X] entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet [].

[] determined not eligible for the
National Register.

[] removed from the
National Register

[] other, explain
See continuation sheet [].

Signature of the Keeper

Date

Edson H. Beall

9/29/99

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Walton Smithers, House
Lafayette County, Missouri

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>3</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

N/A

Number of contributing resources
previously listed in the National
Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Queen Anne-Eastlake

Materials

foundation Sandstone

walls Shingle

roof Weatherboard

other Asphalt

Narrative Description

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

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Lafayette County, Missouri

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

Periods of Significance

Circa 1887

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested

☐ previously listed in the National Register

☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register

☐ designated a National Historic Landmark

☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

☒ State Historic Preservation Office

☐ Other State Agency

☐ Federal Agency

☐ Local Government

☐ University

☐ Other:

Name of repository: _____

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Walton Smithers, House
Lafayette County, Missouri

10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property** 2.3**UTM References**

A. Zone Easting Northing
15 423740 4332480

B. Zone Easting Northing

C. Zone Easting Northing

D. Zone Easting Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger Maserang/Historian

organization DNR/Historic Preservation Program date July 19, 1999

street & number P.O. Box 176 telephone 573/751-0504

city or town Jefferson City state Missouri zip code 65102

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

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

Property Owner

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

name William J. and Elaine B. Durigan

street & number 15834 Highway O telephone 660/259-4962

city or town Lexington state Missouri zip code 64067

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers, House
Lafayette County, MO

SUMMARY: Constructed circa 1887, the Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers Stramcke House at 15834 Highway O near Lexington in Lafayette County is an asymmetrical 2½-story Queen Anne-Eastlake style frame residence with a full basement. The Stramcke House exemplifies the Hipped Roof with Lower Cross Gables and Spindlework subtypes as defined by McAlester and McAlester.¹ Painted in two shades of blue with gray and yellow accents, the house's multi-textured walls rise from a sandstone foundation. Features include a round three-story tower with a conical roof, a wraparound veranda with Eastlake supports and spindlework, gable ornamentation including stickwork and a sunburst panel, a complex roofline with a fully bracketed cornice, cutaway bays with corner bracing and a richly appointed interior highlighted by varnished oak, walnut, pine and other woods. Exterior wall surfaces on the front two thirds of the house are clad with patterned wood shingles. Located one and a half miles south of Lexington along a lightly traveled state highway, the house stands out on the surrounding landscape which consists largely of corn fields and newer houses. The outbuildings are gone but the Stramcke House itself has changed little since its construction. Both the interior and exterior exhibit a high level of integrity of design, materials, craftsmanship, workmanship, feeling and association. Some porch balusters and other exterior wood pieces are due for replacement because of deterioration and the house needs repainting, but overall its condition is very good. The period of significance is based on the year of construction, circa 1887. Three noncontributing buildings--a circa 1989 garage and workshop and two small storage sheds--are also within the property boundary.

ELABORATION: The Stramcke House faces north from its location within a 2.3 acre, trapezoidal tract approximately 0.8 mile south of the intersection of Missouri Highways 13 and O. The right-of-way for Highway O, formerly known as the Columbus Road, serves as the western edge of the parklike, wooded tract. A driveway curves around the house's west and south elevations. The terrain is generally level but tapers somewhat toward the rear of the building. A sandstone sidewalk curves around the east elevation between the main and rear porches. A noncontributing 30' x 62' metal-sided garage and workshop, circa 1989, is near the house's southeast corner. The only other buildings on the property are two small sheds used for storage. They are noncontributing and nondescript (see site plan).

The Stramcke House has an irregular footprint, measuring approximately 50 feet lengthwise not counting the veranda and back porch. The width ranges from approximately 21½ feet in the rear portion to approximately 38 feet at the cutaway bay windows. The house has a raised foundation consisting of coursed rock-faced sandstone blocks. The full basement is divided into five rooms with load bearing sandstone walls. The base of the three-story tower forms a round corner in the room used as a fruit cellar. The original roof consisted of wood shingles but the present roof is asphalt, pierced by four chimneys.

The primary north elevation consists of three bays and, on the northwest corner, a three-story tower with a conical top which is the house's highest point. Along the front is a one-story open porch which begins at the east corner, wraps around the base of the tower and continues for a few feet into the west elevation. Porch decoration including heavy turned, tapering supports and a spindlework frieze consisting of fat round beads associate the house with Eastlake styling. A projecting gable above the porch entrance contains a panel with the raised design of an elaborate sunburst with an eye, and floral embellishment. Massive curvilinear corner brackets contain panels of reeding. Balusters are tapering, simplified versions of the

¹Virginia and Lee McAlester, A Field Guide to American Houses (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), pp.262-273.

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main supports. The porch ceiling is filled with what appears to be narrow pieces of beadboard, which are arranged in zigzag and other patterns. The wooden porch deck rests on sandstone piers. Lattice panels fill the gaps between piers. Curved, molded sandstone sides flank the sandstone steps at the main porch entrance below the sunburst. A few feet away is a shaped sandstone carriage step. A flight of wood steps provides access to the porch where it wraps around to the west.

Wall surfaces in this part of the house are clad with imbricated wood shingles, painted light blue. The textured surface is interrupted by cornerboards and occasional raised horizontal boards, painted a darker blue. Various details such as brackets are painted gray. Yellow is sparingly used for additional accent, and orange appears in the intricately painted sunburst. The front entrance within a projecting portion of the facade is double-leaf, consisting of two oversize panel doors with transoms. East of the entrance is an oversize window with a fixed transom of stained and leaded glass. A regular one-over-one sash window is in the recessed portion of the facade west of the entrance. Extending outward from the northwest corner, the tower contains three one-over-one sash windows shaped to match its rounded form.

Second floor window openings containing one-over-one wood sash are arranged symmetrically above the window and door openings on the first floor. The heads are flush with the lower edges of the bracketed cornice boards. The pedimented gable of the projecting portion contains decorative stickwork in a crosshatching pattern and, centered, a pair of narrow one-over-one sash windows. The third story of the tower contains three curved windows similar to those on the lower floors. A frieze band which wraps around the house at the cornice between the second and third floors is decorated with evenly spaced small curvilinear brackets. Similar brackets are arranged around the base of the tower's conical roof. Near the top of the lively roofline, a tall gabled hip contains more decorative crosshatching. A chimney of shaped masonry protrudes from the ridge.

Like the north elevation, the west elevation is dominated by the three-story tower which, viewed from the east, has the silhouette of a rocket poised for launching. The contour of the tall gabled hip above the north half of the house is clearly visible. A two-story, three-sided cutaway bay with a pedimented gable begins at the south edge of the wraparound porch. At both levels, each of the bay's angles contains a one-over-one wood sash window with those in the angle parallel to the facade being the widest. The pedimented gable contains a round window opening with a quatrefoil-like overlay. Another chimney of patterned masonry pierces the roof just south of the gable. Scrolled corner braces, some of which retain pendants, contain spindlework insets. South of the cutaway bay, a pair of slender one-over-one sash windows is found at each level where the rear staircase is located. Then the west wall jogs inward three feet, and imbricated shingles are replaced by weatherboarding in the narrower rear portion. On each floor in this section, two regular double-hung windows are aligned one above the other. The first floor wall continues six feet beyond the south wall of the house, forming the enclosed west side of the otherwise open back porch.

The east elevation has a cutaway bay similar to the one on the west but with a more rearward location. In effect, this bay has a fourth side where the house narrows. A small porch with turned supports, a spindlework frieze and a balustrade similar to those on the main porch is adjacent to the north side of the bay, under a hipped roof. A back porch is at the south end of the facade. Its turned supports have less ornate capitals than on the other two porches and the frieze contains a pattern of diagonals rather than spindlework. Imbricated shingles cover the walls except for a weatherboarded portion behind the cutaway bay. Fenestration consists of a round window in the pedimented gable, a single-leaf entrance to the side porch, and one-over-one wood sash in three widths. Windows in the cutaway bay are aligned above one

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another, as are windows in the extreme north and south ends of the facade. As on the west, the facade's widest windows are in the middle plane of the cutaway bay. A pair of slender windows is upstairs above the side entrance, at a stairway landing. A single slender window is upstairs adjacent to the side wall where the house narrows instead of above a symmetrically placed regular window on the first floor. A chimney emerges from the gable above the cutaway bay.

The south (rear) elevation has a full-width back porch under a hipped roof. The porch is open except for the west side which is weatherboarded. On the west, the porch rests on the main foundation. Three stone piers support the remainder of the floor. The space below the porch is used for storage. The porch's tapering supports and pilasters have simpler capitals than those on the house's other porches. The frieze consists of sticks arranged in a diagonal pattern, like a series of slanting Ys. Balusters are similar to those on the other porches. The rear facade is weatherboarded. Main floor fenestration consists of a single-leaf entrance in the west third of the facade and a one-over-one sash window in the east third. Upstairs, individual sash windows are located near the two corners. The south end of the tall gabled hip above the front portion of the house contains decorative half-timbering and a small attic window. A centered chimney protrudes just above the cornice of the lower hipped section, at the rear.

The interior of the Stramcke House remains in very good condition, with a preponderance of original fabric and with its original layout intact. In addition to a large reception hall, main floor space consists of a living room which incorporates the tower, a dining room, a library or study and a kitchen. Upstairs are four bedrooms, a dressing room, a bathroom and a long hallway. The interior is richly appointed with oak millwork on the first floor and pine, with bullseye corner blocks, upstairs. Notable original features include an ornate main staircase, four sets of sliding pocket doors, seven fireplaces with mantels, paneled aprons under windows, built-in kitchen cabinets and, in an alcove of the large reception hall, built-in love seats. Doorways throughout the house have glass transoms. Doors are paneled, and retain their original hardware. Rooms have tall ceilings, papered walls with picture moldings and are typically carpeted. The large front window has a leaded art glass transom.

Each mantel (four on the main floor, three upstairs) is ornate with a different design. The mantels appear to be made of oak, walnut and possibly mahogany or cherry, carved and shaped in a variety of intricate forms and patterns; on some, classical figures are depicted in glazed tile. In the living room, the mantel is canted in the angle between two walls.

The lower landing of the open main staircase, a compound L-type made of oak, is in the reception hall east of the entrance. Twin newel posts contain side panels and foliated caps. Balusters (five per step) are unusually delicate; several are missing. Stringers are bracketed and the exposed underside is paneled. Newel posts at landings have knoblike drops. Both the main staircase and an enclosed compound L-type secondary staircase, in a well between the kitchen and library, ascend to the spacious attic. Winder stairs within the same back stairwell lead to the basement.

An early photograph confirms the impression that the Stramcke House is essentially unaltered. The original slate roof has been replaced with asphalt shingles and the chimneys have been shortened, although they are still relatively tall and the masonry is patterned. The original color scheme is unknown but the historic view shows trim painted in one or more darker colors for contrast, as in the present house. The house has been wired for electricity and has a modern kitchen and two bathrooms. One bathroom was installed in a former pantry adjacent to the kitchen. Another bathroom was created upstairs,

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apparently in the corner of a bedroom or former closet. For the most part, the house is furnished with attractive period pieces. Structurally, the house appears to be quite sound although some of the exterior woodwork, which has deteriorated, is due for replacement. Over the years, porch floors and steps have been rebuilt and such things as balusters have been replicated, but the original form has been retained.

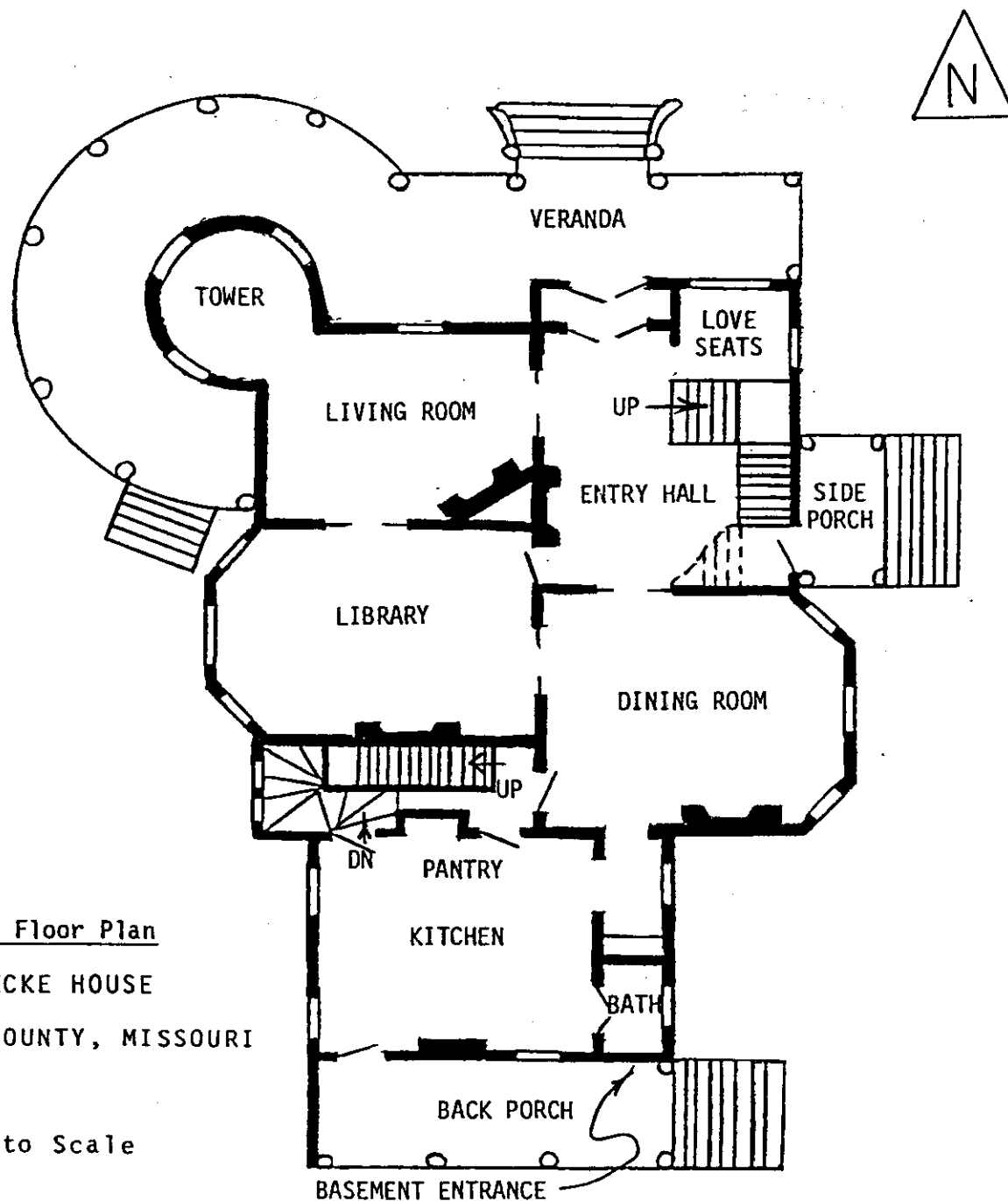
Photographs for the nomination were taken in 1995. Their accuracy was verified in July 1999, and no significant alterations have been made to the house.

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**Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers, House
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First Floor Plan

STRAMCKE HOUSE

LAFAYETTE COUNTY, MISSOURI

Not to Scale

Greatest Overall Dimensions
Approximately 38' x 58'
(Excluding Porches)

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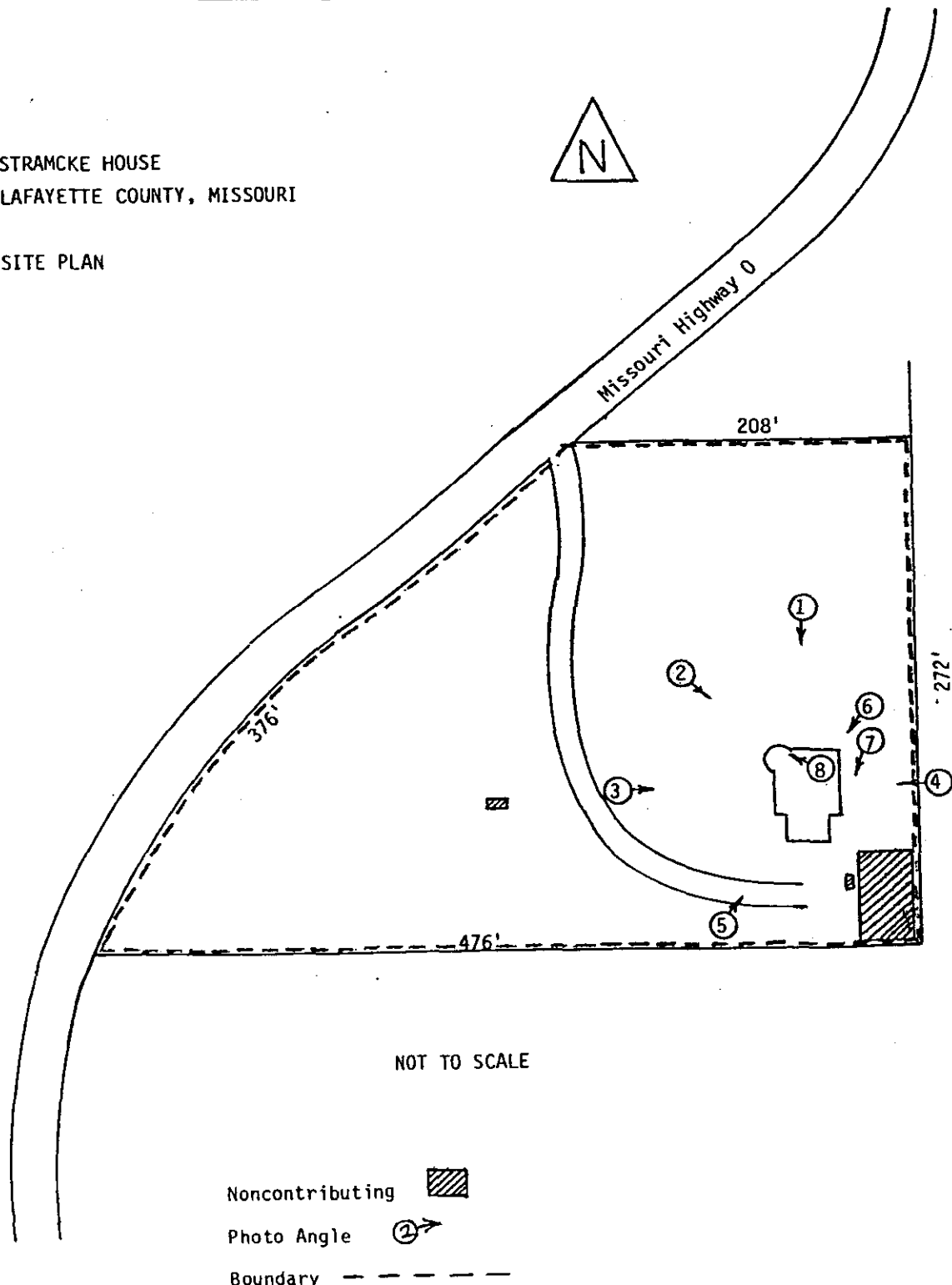
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STRAMCKE HOUSE
LAFAYETTE COUNTY, MISSOURI

SITE PLAN



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Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers, House
Lafayette County, MO

SUMMARY: The Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers Stramcke House 15834 Highway O, Lexington vicinity, Lafayette County, is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Built as a single family dwelling circa 1887, the 2½-story house is an exuberant and well-preserved local example of Queen Anne-Eastlake architecture, exemplifying the Hipped Roof with Lower Cross Gables and Spindlework subtypes as defined by McAlester and McAlester.² Standing like an exotic blue castle within a rural landscape, the Stramcke House is among the most ornate and extensively detailed of frame Queen Anne style residences in Lafayette County. From its complex and lively roofline to its exquisitely fashioned veranda, the exterior abounds with contrasting materials, textures and colors. Highlights include a round three-story tower with a conical roof, a sweeping veranda with Eastlake detailing, bracketed cornices and cutaway bays. The richly appointed interior retains its original staircases, mantels and other fine woodwork in walnut, mahogany, oak and pine. Historic photographs confirm that the original appearance of the Stramcke House has been carefully maintained over the years. The Stramcke House today exhibits a high degree of integrity of design, materials, craftsmanship, workmanship, feeling, and location. The period of significance, circa 1887, reflects the date of construction.

ELABORATION: Builder Thomas Talbot Stramcke and his bride-to-be, Rebecca Walton Smithers, apparently met in St. Louis where she lived and where he was employed by a local company, possibly a stockbrokerage, after attending business school there in the late 1860s. Shortly after their marriage on December 14, 1869 (Stramcke's 23rd birthday), they settled in Lafayette County where Stramcke's family resided, on a 370-acre farm near where the present house would be constructed in circa 1887. According to family tradition, the new residence is a replica of a Queen Anne house which Stramcke saw and admired in St. Louis while visiting his in-laws there or on a business trip. Prior to construction of the present house, the family lived in a two-story weatherboarded log house which was later dismantled. The Stramcke's remained on the farm until the last of their five children was grown, then moved to Lexington, three miles to the north, at some point around the turn of the century.³

Born in 1846 in central Lafayette County, Thomas Talbot Stramcke was the only son of Samuel Benjamin Stramcke and Anna West Smith Stramcke to survive infancy. Although born in New York, the elder Stramcke owned slaves and supported the Confederacy. Thomas Talbot Stramcke's mother, Anna West Smith, migrated with her family from her birthplace in Lexington, Kentucky, to Lexington, Missouri. Samuel Benjamin Stramcke amassed considerable wealth as a merchant and land speculator, and upon his death in 1883, Thomas Talbot Stramcke was the sole heir. In 1871, Samuel Benjamin Stramcke's tax bill listed 31 different pieces of real estate with an assessed valuation of \$34,500 (the actual value was probably two or three times that amount). Although Thomas Talbot Stramcke perhaps had no need to work if he managed his finances wisely, he apparently continued his

² McAlester and McAlester, op cit., pp. 262-273.

³ Biographical information used in this nomination is primarily from a monograph titled "Rebecca W. Smithers and Thomas T. Stramcke: Their Ancestors and Their Descendants," compiled by Edward Aull Jr., a grandson of the Stramckes, in 1976. House history is largely based on an essay written by Aull in 1977 titled "The Old Stramcke Place."

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father's business in real estate.⁴ Later after moving to Lexington, if not before, he became involved in coal mining. Forty-six mining companies were in Lafayette County by 1900.⁵

A grandson of the Stramcke's, Edward Aull Jr., recalled that the house was known as The Cedars because of the many cedar trees that once graced the yard and lined the driveway. In a brief house history titled "The Old Stramcke Place," Aull also noted that the building was reportedly assembled with screws rather than nails. The house was originally furnished "with handsome light fixtures, carpets, and massive mahogany furniture, as well as more fragile gold furniture. Keiths of Kansas City [provided] curtains, draperies, and other furnishings," Aull wrote. He noted that as a child his youngest aunt, Irene Stramcke, used the tower as her playroom. "Incidentally, it was rather difficult for a young bride, reared in St. Louis, to adjust to conditions in the country in those days," Aull wrote of his grandmother, Rebecca Walton Smithers Stramcke.

Today the Stramcke House, a "painted lady" in shades of blue with gray, yellow, and orange accents on the rural landscape three miles south of Lexington, remains the most ornate and extensively detailed of frame Queen Anne style houses in Lafayette County. An equally fine and detailed Queen Anne style house rendered in brick rather than frame is the circa 1885 Taubman House at 1522 South Street in Lexington (Old Neighborhoods Historic District, Historic Resources of Lexington MRA, 8/04/83). Like the Stramcke House, the Taubman House is of 2½ stories with a veranda curving around the base of a three-story conical tower. The best frame Queen Anne style house within the Lexington MRA may be the circa 1894 George Johnson House at 102 S. 30th St. (individually listed 7/08/93). However, for all its features, the Johnson House is considerably less complex than the Stramcke and Taubman examples. In the MRA cover document, the Queen Anne style was recognized as the most prevalent of the city's three principal architectural styles (the other two were Greek Revival and Italianate), with more than a hundred buildings extant as of 1980. Except for a few jewels, however, most of Lexington's Queen Anne buildings have less architectural significance than buildings rendered in the earlier popular styles, Greek Revival and Italianate.⁶ While the Stramcke House is not within the city limits of Lexington, its proximity obviously associates it with the same context.

⁴After a 10 day visit to St. Louis, Stramcke "reports his interests in real estate improving," said The Lexington Post on Feb. 10, 1888.

⁵Katherine Wilson Sellers, Historical Glimpses of Lexington (Lexington: The Lexington Library and Historical Association, 1980), p.34.

⁶In 1980, the "Historic Resources of Lexington" MRA nomination identified 479 significant properties erected within a 109-year timeframe, 1830-1939. Three historic districts were defined, containing 460 significant buildings, structures, objects and sites. In addition, 19 significant noncontiguous properties were identified outside the district boundaries. Although the Stramcke House was outside of the MRA, it was among those identified (#586, Stramcke House). In 1988, the Stramcke House was also among the properties identified in a countywide architectural survey, "Architectural Resources of Lafayette County, Missouri" (Inventory Form No. 83, Durigan Residence/Stramcke House).

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Victorian elements appeared on local buildings as early as 1875, but the main Queen Anne building period in Lexington (and for Lafayette County overall) was from circa 1880-1900. Originally a product of Richard Norman Shaw and other English architects, the Queen Anne style, which had relatively little to do with Queen Anne, became fashionable in America after it caught the interest of highly-regarded architect Henry Hobson Richardson. In 1874, Richardson applied horizontal bands of contrasting materials and textures to the Watts-Sherman House at Newport, Rhode Island, and the new look was born. Widely publicized and copied, Richardson's interpretation of the style gradually evolved into other forms. While early Queen Anne houses with half-timbering or of patterned masonry construction reflected their medieval antecedents, later models were more flamboyant with extensive scrollwork, spindlework and other forms of gingerbread ornamentation. In the 1890s, Free Classic styling, a precursor of Colonial Revival, became the final stage of Queen Anne evolution in America. The related Shingle style developed separately from some of the same sources including both Shaw and Richardson.⁷ While the Stramcke House is extensively covered with patterned wood shingles, it is distinguished from the much less elaborate Shingle style by the presence of corner boards and spindlework, among other things.

Richardson's support notwithstanding, the development of Queen Anne architecture seems to have benefited from a kind of "back to the future" movement. In 1877, Boston architect R. S. Peabody, who had recently observed English expressions of the style during a trip to London, suggested that Queen Anne was a particularly appropriate style for America, and in fact was "our legitimate field for imitation" because of its similarity to the architecture of America's colonial period. Peabody's lecture promoting Queen Anne architecture was published in the April 28 issue of American Architect and Building News. His point of view was well received because of a growing perception that the earlier Greek Revival, Gothic and Second Empire styles that flourished earlier were second-hand rather than truly American. Ultimately, Queen Anne succeeded in America "not because it was sensible but because it was pretty, and because by the 1870s it exactly suited the mood of the public."⁸

Constructed in circa 1887, the Stramcke House represents the middle period of Queen Anne architecture not only chronologically but in terms of its appearance. While some of the house's gables contain decorative stickwork resembling the half-timbering associated with Shaw's prototypes, such details as the sweeping veranda with its tapering turned porch supports and frieze consisting of fat beads evolved as the style was increasingly Americanized. Charles Locke Eastlake, a British architect and interior designer, is credited with developing and promoting the type of gingerbread found on the Stramcke House, notably the turned posts resembling massive table legs, heavy spindlework and robust brackets. In the 1870s and 1880s, Eastlake-inspired detailing was employed on Stick as well as Queen Anne houses. With Eastlake detailing extended over an entire house rather than applied primarily to porches, as in the case of the Stramcke House, prominent architectural historians such as

⁷ McAlester and McAlester, op cit., p. 290; Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light: The Queen Anne Movement 1860-1900 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 1, 218-220.

⁸ Mark Girouard, Sweetness and Light: The 'Queen Anne' Movement 1860-1900 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 63, 208-209.

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Marcus Whiffen and John J.-G. Blumenson described "Eastlake" as a separate, individual style in their guides to American architecture.⁹

While Stramcke's choice for an architect is undetermined, a likely local candidate was W. S. Epperson. Epperson, whose office was in Lexington in the 1880s, designed numerous private and commercial buildings throughout the area as well as in Kansas, Texas and probably other states. In the 1890s, Epperson moved to Sedalia where his commissions included such impressive Queen Anne style buildings as the Cassidy House, the Glass House and probably the National Register-listed Henry Harris House. During the 1880s, Thomas W. Bast—who later achieved fame by designing most of the original permanent buildings on the Missouri State Fairgrounds, along with many others in Sedalia—was employed by Epperson as a draftsman. It is, of course, possible that Stramcke sought out and commissioned the architect responsible for designing the Queen Anne style house that he fancied in St. Louis and wanted replicated outside of Lexington.¹⁰

Since Stramcke's social, business and even relatively minor construction activities were regularly reported in the Lexington newspapers even though he lived three miles south of town, there is the possibility that additional house history may yet be discovered. For example, The Lexington Register on October 15, 1885 reported that "Mr. T. T. Stramcke and wife returned from St. Louis, Saturday morning, accompanied by their daughter, Miss Mary, who has been spending several months at Asbury Park and other Eastern points." On December 10, 1885, The Register reported that "Mr. Thomas Stramcke contemplates remodeling the Crump House, Main and Thirteenth Streets [which he apparently owned as investment property]." The Lexington Post on December 9, 1887, reported that "Mr. Thomas Stramcke underlaid the sidewalk on his premises with a bed of sand to insure its solidity in wet weather."

The Durigans who currently own the property are not related to the Stramckes but they have lived in the house since 1975, a longer period than the builder. The Stramcke House is essentially unaltered, as various owners have replicated deteriorated elements and resisted any temptation to install metal siding. The original roof was slate rather than asphalt, and modern heating, plumbing and electrical systems have been installed but these updates were sensitively implemented. The once-extensive acreage has dwindled over the years and the outbuildings originally associated with the house are gone. What remains, however, is the best and most exuberant frame interpretation of a Queen Anne style house in Lafayette County. A textbook-quality example of the style, the Stramcke House

⁹ McAlester and McAlester, op cit., pp. 268; John J.-G. Blumenson, Identifying American Architecture (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1982), pp. 59, 63; Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780 (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1976), pp. 115-120, 123-124.

¹⁰ Brief reports of Epperson's activities are reported in various issues of The Lexington Register and The Lexington Post. Unfortunately, issues for the period during which the Stramcke House is believed to have been constructed are not available. The Harris House, 705 W. 6th St., Sedalia, was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on 7/10/79. The Cassidy House, 706 W. 5th St., the Glass House, 117 W. 7th St., and St. Patrick's Church, E. 4th and S. Washington Streets, were identified in a 1984 survey of residential and outlying commercial structures in Sedalia. See Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory (Form Nos. 22, 44, and 127, respectively), Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City.

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Lafayette County, MO**

possesses a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, craftsmanship, workmanship, feeling and association. For all of these reasons, the circa 1887 Stramcke House is eminently eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Lafayette County, MO

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Section 10 Page 13

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers, House
Lafayette County, MO

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description: The boundary of the Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Walton Smithers Stramcke House is shown as the solid heavy line on the accompanying Ownership Map, Lafayette County, Missouri, No. 041-10-5, dated 10-27-81. Dimensions of the trapezoidal tract are 208 feet by 272 feet by 476 feet by 376 feet. The right-of-way for Missouri Highway O, the old Columbus Road (to Columbus in Johnson County, immediately south of Lafayette County) forms the west boundary.

Boundary Justification: The boundary encompasses a 2.3 acre tract on which the Stramcke House stands as the only extant property from the period of significance. This tract represents the remaining intact acreage which is historically associated with the house. Two of the three noncontributing buildings are inconspicuous sheds and the third is a ubiquitous type of metal sided building. Most of the yard around the house, particularly to the north and west, is shaded and parklike and contributes to a heightened ambience.

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Section Photographs Page 13

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Smithers, House
Lafayette County, MO

Photographs

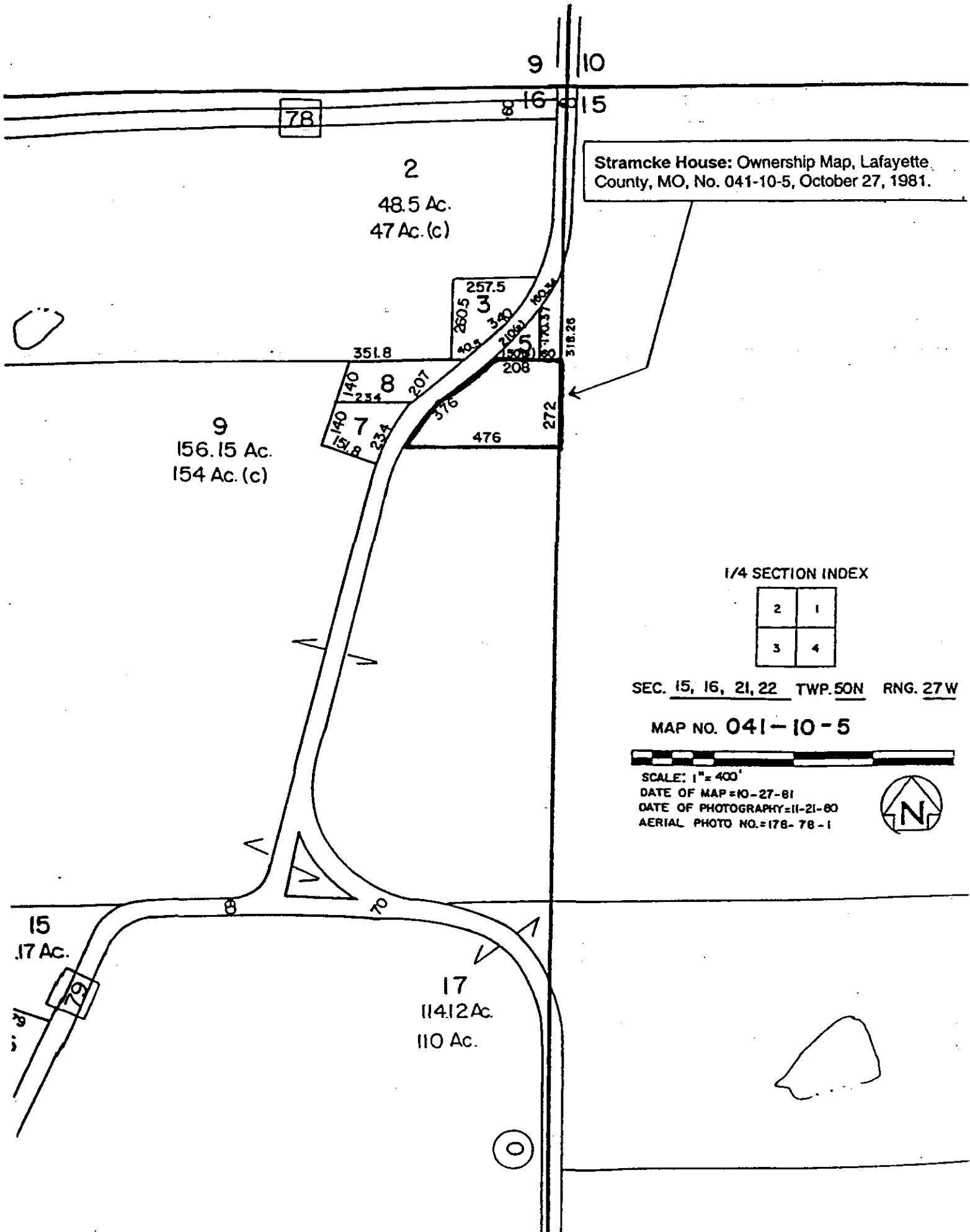
The following information is the same for all photographs:

Stramcke, Thomas Talbot and Rebecca Walton Smithers, House
Lexington vicinity, Lafayette County, Missouri
Steven E. Mitchell, 1-13; photographer unknown, 14
March 1995, 1-13; circa 1900, 14

Missouri Cultural Resources Inventory, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Jefferson City

List of Photographs

1. Primary (north) facade, facing south.
2. North and west elevations, facing southeast.
3. West elevation, facing east.
4. East elevation, facing west.
5. West and south elevations, facing northeast.
6. Main porch detail, facing southwest.
7. Side porch, facing southwest.
8. Detail of main porch ceiling, facing west.
9. Detail of main porch ceiling, facing east.
10. Reception hall with main staircase, facing north.
11. Staircase detail, facing east.
12. Dining room view, facing south.
13. Mantel in living room, facing southeast.
14. Historic view of main facade, facing south.



Stramcke House: Ownership Map, Lafayette
County, MO, No. 041-10-5, October 27, 1981.

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2	1
3	4

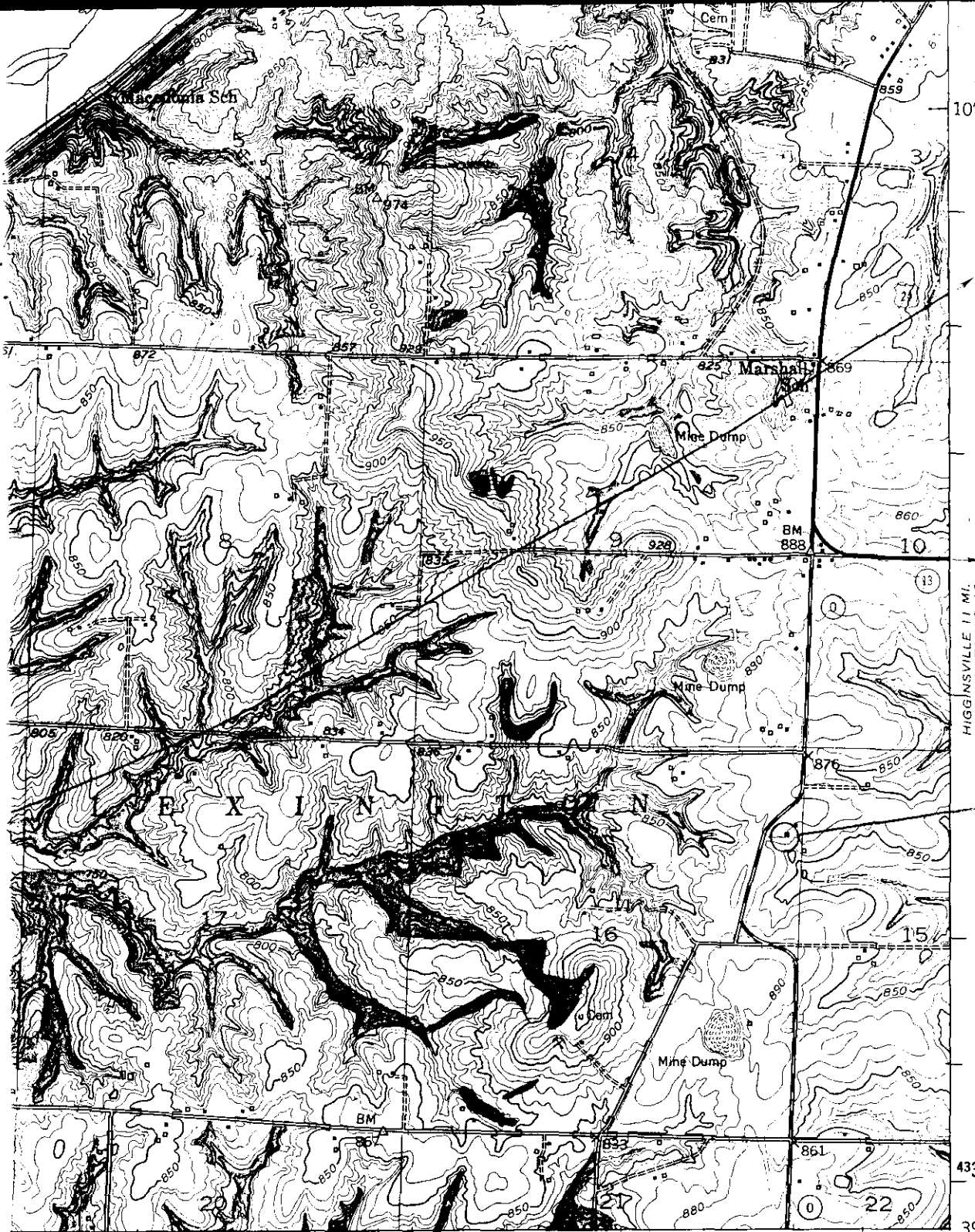
SEC. 15, 16, 21, 22 TWP. 50N RNG. 27W

MAP NO. 041-10-5



SCALE: 1" = 400'
DATE OF MAP = 10-27-81
DATE OF PHOTOGRAPHY = 11-21-80
AERIAL PHOTO NO. = 178-78-1





DOVER 11 MI
WAVERLY GUNG U.S. 650 11 MI

HIGGINSVILLE 11 MI.
15 MI. TO U.S. 40

STRAMCKE, THOMAS
TALBOT AND
REBECCA WALTON
SMITHERS, HOUSE
LAFAYETTE COUNTY,
MISSOURI

15/423700/4332425
UTM REFERENCES

4331000m.N.

39°07'30"
93°52'30"

INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C.—1963
MR 7292

8.3 MI. TO INTERSTATE 70

ROAD CLASSIFICATION
1963

Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt - - - - -

U. S. Route

State Route



QUADRANGLE LOCATION

LEXINGTON WEST, MO.

N3907.5—W9352.5/7.5

1949



















