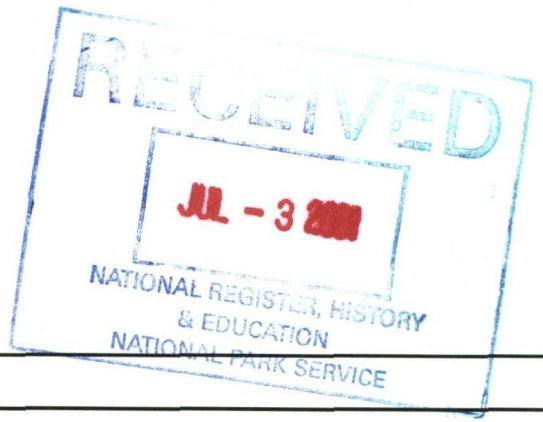


(Oct. 1990)

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

874



1. NAME OF PROPERTY

HISTORIC NAME: Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
OTHER NAME/SITE NUMBER: St. Mary's Academy; Edgar & Lutie Perry Estate

2. LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: 701 E. 41st St. **NOT FOR PUBLICATION:** N/A
CITY OR TOWN: Austin **VICINITY:** N/A
STATE: Texas **CODE:** TX **COUNTY:** Travis **CODE:** 453 **ZIP CODE:** 78751

3. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

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

Signature of certifying official

6-24-01

Date

State Historic Preservation Officer, Texas Historical Commission

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 commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

- 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): _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

8/8/01

5. CLASSIFICATION

OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY: Private

CATEGORY OF PROPERTY: District

NUMBER OF RESOURCES WITHIN PROPERTY:	CONTRIBUTING	NONCONTRIBUTING
	7	1 BUILDINGS
	1	0 SITES
	5	0 STRUCTURES
	0	0 OBJECTS
	13	1 TOTAL

NUMBER OF CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES PREVIOUSLY LISTED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER: 0

NAME OF RELATED MULTIPLE PROPERTY LISTING: N/A

6. FUNCTION OR USE

HISTORIC FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC/single dwelling, secondary structure
 EDUCATION/school, education-related=housing
 RELIGION/religious facility, church-related residence
 RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium, sports facility
 LANDSCAPE/garden

CURRENT FUNCTIONS: DOMESTIC/single dwelling
 EDUCATION/school, education-related=housing, office
 RELIGION/religious facility
 RECREATION AND CULTURE/auditorium
 LANDSCAPE/garden

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Italian Renaissance; Gothic Revival
 Modern Movement: International Style

MATERIALS: FOUNDATION CONCRETE
 WALLS STUCCO, STONE/limestone
 ROOF TERRA COTTA, OTHER/composition shingle
 OTHER

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (see continuation sheets 7-5 through 7-14).

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Description

The Perry Estate/St. Mary's Academy Historic District occupies a 9.86-acre tract close to the southeast corner of the historic Hyde Park neighborhood in what is now Central Austin. It is across 41st Street from the historic Hancock Recreation Center (originally the Austin Country Club) and across Red River Street from the Hancock Shopping Center (once a portion of the Austin Country Club golf course). Waller Creek runs through the property and its activities have carved out a gentle promontory on which the Perry Mansion is sited. The district is defined by a stone perimeter wall on the 41st Street and Red River Street sides. There are two periods of significance associated with this site. The first period of significance is the period of the ownership and development of the site by Edgar Howard Perry, a prominent businessman and influential community leader in Austin in the first half of the 20th century. A majority of the contributing resources of this site were constructed during this period, including the mansion and three other accessory buildings, as well as the perimeter site wall, the bridge, and both formal gardens. The second period of significance (1947-1950) is associated with the occupation of the site of Saint Mary's Academy, a private school that played a significant role in education in Austin during this period. Contributing buildings from this period include a large rectangular stuccoed building with a gabled roof (Classroom Building), an L-plan stuccoed 1-story building with a gabled roof (Convent), and a stuccoed Gothic Revival chapel with a gabled roof and bell tower.

The Perry Mansion is a 2-story, generally symmetrical Italian Renaissance style house (1926-1928) consisting of a central block flanked by two pavilions with a service ell on one end. The walls are concrete stucco and the roof is covered with terracotta half-barrel tiles. The north (primary) entrance is a triumphal arch composition and the south entrance a barrel-vaulted loggia with a projecting tiled terrace. The main entry door contains an exquisite leaded glass window with a peacock and foliage motif. The interior of the house features a spiral staircase and oval library, as well as many other rooms and hallways, most lit by wrought iron fixtures original to the building. Other contributing buildings on the site of the same vintage include a two-story Mediterranean garage structure (Garage Apartment), a one-story Jacobean Revival H-plan building with gabled roof (Lodge), and a one-story stucco T-plan building with gabled roof (Bowling Alley).

The Mansion is in pristine condition. There have been no additions to the structure, and the only changes over time have involved decorating, such as wallpapering a room or replacing a chandelier. The Garage Apartment is in good condition, but the integrity was compromised slightly in 1947 by the walling in of the original three garage door openings to create classrooms. The Bowling Alley is in good condition on the exterior, but the interior has been remodeled to accommodate classrooms. The Lodge remains much as it was constructed originally, with the addition of a small shed to the back wall and a wooden wheelchair ramp to the porch. The site also features a stone bridge (Roman Bridge), a formal garden with two terraces and fountain (Italian Garden), a tiled terrace with fountain (South Terrace Garden), a swimming pool, a tennis court, the remains of a creek-fed swimming hole, and an interior site wall.

The second period of significance (1947-1950) is associated with the occupation of the site of Saint Mary's Academy, a private school that played a significant role in education in Austin during this period (Map 6). Contributing buildings from this period include a large, rectangular, stuccoed building with a gabled roof (The Classroom Building); an L-plan stuccoed one-story building with a gabled roof (Convent); and a Gothic Revival chapel (Chapel), stuccoed, with a gabled roof and bell tower. The tennis court was the only structure added during this period and it is considered non-contributing. The remaining building on the site, LaBelle Hall (noncontributing), was completed in 1964 and lies between

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the Perry Mansion and the Classroom Building. This International Style building is visually recessive and sympathetic with the older buildings in its construction, with its surface treatment of stucco and limestone in a pattern similar to that used in the original exterior site walls. The Classroom Building has retained most of its interior and exterior integrity with the exception of an addition attached to its east side. The Convent has retained most of its structural integrity with the exception of the addition of two doors centered on both sides of longest wing. A wooden arbor has also been constructed on both sides of this wing. The Chapel is in good condition and retains most of its original characteristics. The main site features of the estate are relatively undisturbed, though in poor condition, except for the Perimeter and Interior site walls and the South Terrace, which are in good condition.

Buildings Associated with the Perry Estate (1917-1944)

Perry Mansion (Contributing)

The Perry Mansion is a two-story, generally symmetrical Italian Renaissance style building, completed in 1928, consisting of a hip-roofed central block with two sets of paired hip-roofed pavilions on either side and a service ell. The walls are concrete stucco and the roof covered with terracotta half-barrel tiles.

The dominant feature of the north facade is a triumphal arch composition leading to the main entrance of the house. The arch is supported by four pilasters with full entablature and features a keystone volute. The central arch is a barrel vault lit by a hanging lantern, flanked by two wrought-iron sconces on the front face, and ornamented by a hand-cranked door bell device. Each of the flanking arches originally framed a terracotta jar, but are empty today. The front entrance door surround is a round-headed architrave with a foliated rope motif and an inset disc in the tympanum. The entrance floor within the arch structure is paved with a molded, Mexican-style ceramic tile.

Above the front arch composition are five 6/6 windows ornamented with a wrought-iron decorative balcony. The roof over the main block features bracketed eaves with wooden modillion blocks and is drained by a copper pipe that emerges below the eaves, but immediately disappears into the face of the building. Two semi-hexagonal elements flank the main entrance feature, with a 6/6 window in the center of the east wall and a leaded glass window, stained or dyed lavender and blue, with an ornamental Juliet balcony in the west wall.

Extending out from the main block is the first set of pavilions. The north facade of the east pavilion has three 6/6 windows with round-headed transoms above, and a band under the top 6/6 windows. The top band of windows around the entire building originally had wooden shutters, which have since been removed. The north facade of the west side has a set of symmetrically placed wrought-iron window grills. Behind one of them is a 6/6 window with a tympanum; the other grill is blind. The two pavilions are ornamented with rounded quoining on the corners. In the far sets of pavilions, the north facade of the west end has two 6/6 windows on the second level with a door below. The north facade of the east end has a set of 4-light French doors with flanking sidelights and transoms, surmounted with rinceau. There are five 8-light casement windows above. The east end of the east pavilion is symmetrical with three 6/6 windows above and three triple 4-light windows with transoms. The south side of the east pavilion approximates the north side.

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At the far west end of the main building is a service ell. The north front of the ell has a central door with a wrought-iron bracketed hip roof hood, small 6-light flanking windows with a 6/6 double window above. The fenestration on the east side of this wing is irregular.

The south side of the main block has two projecting corner pavilions and an inset barrel-vaulted loggia, supported by cast-stone Corinthian columns. The inside wall of the loggia has five sets of French doors with semi-circle transoms and is ornamented with cast stone Corinthian brackets. The entablature above the arches displays six orondels. The second level above contains five 6/6 windows, once with wooden shutters. The east wall inside the loggia features a large niche with a large cast-stone jar and grotesque Bacchus-like mask from which the water supply falls. On the west wall, there is a 6/6 window with a round-headed transom. The side pavilions off the main block are symmetrical with rounded, quoined corners with five 4/4 windows above, and those below having round-headed transoms. The south side of the far west pavilion approximates the east pavilion. The west side of the service ell has a central chimney with an inset round-headed window on the second floor, the chimney being flanked with 6/6 windows on the first and second floors, and the north end of the basement level. On the south end of the basement level is a 3/3 window.

From the triumphal arch on the north side, one enters the front vestibule through a leaded glass door with a striking peacock and foliage motif. The vestibule itself is tiled in a black and white marble checkerboard pattern. The opposite wall features a triumphal arch opening with side niches and a round headed tympanum with rinceau. The walls of the hallway feature ornamental plasterwork cornices.

On the east side of the front vestibule is the entrance to the oval-shaped, walnut paneled library. The room features a fireplace with carved wooden mantle and ceiling medallion. On the west side, corresponding to the library in placement is the entrance to the spectacular oval-shaped stair hall. The room features a spiral walnut staircase with a wrought iron railing and carved walnut banister as well as a foliated chandelier suspended in the center of the stair spiral. The chandelier is suspended by an unusual chain made of diamond and quatrefoil shapes. In the stair hall on the first floor is the door to a small elevator and the entrance to a charming powder room lined in its original green tile.

Entering the building from the south loggia, one moves into an oak-floored gallery room the length of the loggia. The ceiling of this room is composed of five upholstered panels with wrought iron lanterns suspended from each panel. Separating each panel are walnut-paneled beams with acanthus brackets. The gallery terminates on the east and west ends with double 5-panel doors set in a reveal with a rinceau motif and ornamental radiator vents. At the east end of the gallery is the entrance to the symmetrical living area. The five-bay vaulted ceiling is supported by carved limestone Corinthian capitals and features an orndel above the west entrance. In the center of the east wall, flanked by two doors, is a Renaissance-style carved limestone fireplace with garlanded brackets and an acanthus and ribbon motif. The room is lit by wrought iron sconces and two wrought iron chandeliers.

The far east room features another Renaissance-style carved limestone fireplace with a slanted stone hood. It is flanked by two doors with wrought iron gates. The coved ceiling has an ornamental cornice and the floor is covered in colorful encaustic tiles. The room is lit by two wrought iron chandeliers. At the west end of the gallery is the entrance to the dining room. The room is fully paneled in walnut with a walnut cornice. The ceiling features bas-relief ornamental band of rosettes and foliage. The original wrought iron chandelier has since been replaced by a crystal chandelier. From a side door in the hall outside this room, one can access the front service hall, which features the original walk-in safe.

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Past the dining room is a tiled, plaster-walled breakfast room, featuring wooden corner cabinets with scalloped shelves with bell-shaped cabinet frame tops. Next to this room is the butler's pantry, which retains its original cabinetry with 3-light and 6-light glass doors. A Formica counter surface and linoleum tiling are later additions.

Beyond these rooms, in the service ell, is a kitchen -- an unusual survival with its original sinks, cabinets, wall tiles and service call box. Next to the kitchen is another service room from which extend the servants stairs to the second floor and access stairs to the basement. The basement with its original laundry sinks, still functions as a laundry. The boiler room next door now contains the HVAC units and duct work.

The spiral staircase leads up to a sitting room in the center of the second floor. At the top of the stairs, the wide oak flooring changes to narrow flooring. The entrance to the sitting room is flanked by two Corinthian columns and pilasters and arched hallway openings to the east and west are supported by Corinthian pilasters. Throughout the upstairs, each door is a three-paneled with a narrow central panel. Hallways are lit by small wrought iron light fixtures.

Down the curved east hallway are four bedrooms with corresponding bathrooms. The bathrooms are especially charming rooms featuring wicker toilet chairs, tulip-shaped carved wooden toilet seats, and colorful tile work in lavender, pink, blue, beige, and brown, respectively. On the east end of this wing is the master bedroom suite. One of the master bedrooms has plaster walls divided into paneled sections, a cornice with dentil work, and a foliated chandelier. This room also has a jewel safe hidden in a closet. From this room is access to the blue-tiled bathroom and a dressing room that features a built-in vanity with a scalloped top and a beaded crystal chandelier. Next to this room, on the far east end of the wing is a sleeping porch. To the west is the other master bedroom that accesses the brown-tiled bathroom. Down the west hallway are other bedrooms with bathrooms attached, including one in charming "party pink" and another in lavender. At the end of the hall is a bedroom suite that contains a beige and turquoise tiled bathroom, a dressing room with several cedar-lined closets, and a sleeping porch at the far end. Other rooms at this end once housed servants and their activities, such as linen storage and light food preparation. This is also where the service stair enters the second floor.

The building is insulated by 3" of cork board in the walls and 6" of cork in the attic. One-quarter inch steel plates were originally installed and still remain between the ceiling of the second floor and the attic, functioning as a fire wall. The attic is unfinished.

The mansion building possesses the highest integrity of all the site buildings of this period. There have been no additions to or subtractions from this structure. No walls have been moved, nor rooms remodeled. Even the kitchen retains its original cabinetry, including hardware, sink, and the original servants call box. Some of the original decorative pieces remain in the house, including two paintings in the hallway, as well as the original wicker seats built for the toilets. The small hallway elevator remains in working condition and most of the rooms are lit by original chandeliers. The only major change has been the addition of a central air conditioning system and even this was routed through the original duct system for heating.

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Garage Apartment (Contributing)

The Garage Apartment is a two-story Mediterranean hip-roofed rectangular structure of concrete stucco walls and half-barrel terracotta tiles on the roof. The ground floor was once a three-car garage with arched tympanums above each of the three original openings. These openings were sealed off with wood in 1947. The two side openings now have wooden 8-light casement windows and the central opening has a door (the only entrance to the ground-floor room). There are two wrought-iron sconces flanking these openings on the first floor level.

A concrete exterior stairway to on the west end leads to the tiled porch of an apartment on the second floor. The second floor also features an inset porch--a full length loggia supported by square stucco piers (possibly Wrightian-inspired). The porch is lit by three hanging wrought-iron lanterns. The rear facade of this structure reveals a basement level entrance, the building being three stories on this side. A sunken entrance leads to two doors and one window. The first level above the basement has two windows and the second, three windows. The Garage Apartment has a high level of integrity with the exception of the sealed garage openings. This work could be easily removed to restore that portion of the building. The storage areas in the basement of this building are in poor repair and show rot in the doors and windows.

Lodge (Contributing)

The building once called "The Lodge" is a one-story, symmetrical, gabled, H-plan Jacobean Revival building, with half-timbering, scored concrete stucco, a stuccoed chimney with ornamental brick work, and terra cotta chimney pots. The building also sports limestone buttresses (which are unusual for that style), a concrete terrace, and limestone skirting. The windows are 1/1 and possibly came from a turn-of-the-century house, since this is an unusual configuration for a house built in the 1920's. The screens are wooden with an 8/2 arrangement. At the peaks of the south gable ends are louvered oculi. This building shows a fairly high level of integrity with the exception of a small shed addition on the back wall and a wheelchair ramp that extends out from the porch. Both of these additions could be removed without damage to the original structure.

Bowling Alley (Contributing)

The building once called "The Bowling Alley" is a one-story, symmetrical, T-shaped, gabled, composition-roofed structure with a stone skirt on its east and south sides (possibly added after 1944). The east end is the head of the "T" and has a central door with a wood bracketed hood, flanked by 1/1 windows that are probably from an older structure. The south side of the east block has paired 1/1 windows; the west side of the east block has one 6/6 window. The south side of the west end has two doors and three 6/6 windows in an ABBAB pattern. The west end has one centered 6/6 window and no stone skirt. The north side of the west leg approximates the south side, only with windows in place of doors and no stone skirt. The north side of the east end has no windows. This building has not been structurally altered since its construction, but interior remodeling and the possibly later addition of a stone skirt gives it only moderate integrity. The bowling alley equipment is no longer in place..

Site Features Associated with the Perry Estate (1917-1944)

Perimeter Wall

Surrounding the site on the south and east sides is an ashlar-patterned limestone wall with steel insets on the south side. The wall is punctuated with large stone columns capped with cast concrete. Sources say that this was one of the earliest features built on the site and that Perry employed masons from Mexico for its construction. It is pierced by three

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vehicular and three pedestrian entrances. The vehicular entrance columns still support metal gates and were once topped with wrought-iron lanterns similar to those on the mansion. The primary pedestrian entrance, at the base of the stairs leading from the south terrace, is impressive with its matching lanterns, its ornamental metal gate, and cast concrete faux-marble landing (Photo 26). Another pedestrian entrance opens on to the formal garden and has an ornamental gate as well. The third pedestrian opening was probably installed during the St. Mary's period and now features a modern ornamental gate. The wall is in good condition but is of moderate integrity because most of the wrought-iron lanterns are missing.

Roman Bridge

On the lower part of the site, the driveway extends from the entrance gate and over a stone bridge that spans Waller Creek. It has been described as a "Roman Bridge", or, an "Italian Bridge". The bridge arches in the middle then its low walls flatten out to hold the remains of what used to be wrought iron lanterns. Its structure is of concrete, but it is faced in a gold-colored natural limestone, possibly from the site. The bridge is in good condition but is of moderate integrity because most of the wrought-iron lanterns are missing.

Italian Garden

The most significant of the site features is the terraced formal garden located on the southeast corner of the property. This garden is arranged in a generally symmetrical pattern of four quadrants bisected north to south and east to west by brick walkways and is bordered by another brick walkway. The main approach is from the upper terrace where the chapel is now sited. On this upper level was once a feature called "The Tea Garden" in 1928, but there are no available photographs of that feature. From the upper terrace, one descends down a twenty-two foot wide flight of cast concrete steps to a brick walkway. This walkway leads to the center of the garden, once a functioning fountain with a pool and statuary.

The fountain structure is generally rectangular, formed with cast concrete pieces with concave arches at each corner. At the center of each of its four sides is a semi-circular projection upon which once sat a green ceramic frog that spouted water into the pool. At the center is a cast concrete pedestal which originally held a statue called "The Three Graces" and later supported a statue of the Virgin Mary. The fountain structure is now filled with dirt and functions as a flower bed; its pedestal supports a concrete bird bath.

The brick walkway expands and encircles the fountain structure, its shape echoing the concave arches at the fountain corner. The walkway continues from the south side of the fountain, narrows to seven feet and ends at an iron gate set into the masonry and iron perimeter wall. Another seven foot walkway begins at the west perimeter and runs to the fountain and beyond to the east perimeter wall.

At the far end of the east-west walkway are the remains of a wall fountain set into a niche in the perimeter site wall. Originally, water flowed from a grotesque wall piece (missing) into a small pool below. The backdrop of this fountain is inlaid tile in turquoise and orange and there is a pair of low shelves on either side of the fountain that originally held two terracotta decorative jars.

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The far west end of the walkway once led to an informal rock garden. No physical evidence of this garden remains, but it can be seen in early photographs. Evidently, a path led up the hill through this garden, and probably ended at the south terrace.

The brick walkways of the formal garden are edged in some areas by overgrown yaupon hollies, which were once part of a clipped shrubbery edge surrounding each quadrant of the garden. Other plant materials of historic value include, crape myrtles, wisteria, iris, abelia, and an exotic cedar at the west end of the east-west walkway. Early photographs also show a variety of other plant materials and garden furnishings such as potted evergreens and small statues.

The grand staircase down to the garden is in excellent condition and the structure of the garden is still in evidence. However, owing to the poor condition of the two fountains, the missing fountain statuary, and the poor condition of the remaining vegetation, this garden has only moderate integrity.

South Terrace

The South Terrace is a dominant feature when the site is viewed from inside the house, being an extension of the south loggia structure. An encaustic floor extends from the interior of the loggia out to the cast concrete balustrade that enclosed the upper portion of the terrace. There are two carved canterra benches facing the house on the south edge of the terrace.

From each end of the upper terrace, stairs lead down to a semi-circular red-tile walkway which terminates at a two-tiered marble fountain on axis with the mansion. At the center of the south side of the terrace, a set of stairs lead to a tile walkway, again on axis with the mansion, that continues past the fountain and ends at a set of stairs. A series of stairs and landings lead from the terrace down to the main pedestrian gate on the south side of the site. At the top of these stairs are placed two marble lions, facing south.

With the exception of the post oaks, most of the plant material in this area is modern and does not reflect the original planting concept. Most glaring is a boxwood hedge which outlines the tiled walkway and blocks the view to the south. Portions of the balustrade of the upper terrace are damaged and the tile walkways are cracked in places. However, because the fountain is in good working condition and repairs to the area would be minor, this garden has a high level of integrity.

Other Site Features

Other site features include a recreation area behind the Garage Apartment featuring a concrete swimming pool and an ornate limestone BBQ pit, both original to the property during the first period of significance. There is a sunken paved area that connects these features to the apartment, but in such a way that suggests that the pool was perhaps a later addition, although probably during Perry's tenure. There are also the remains of what was once a creek-fed swimming hole down in the Waller Creek basin. Apparently, the creek was dammed to create a pond, but in the 1950's the city purchased an easement and removed the dam, probably for flood-control reasons.

The interior of the site is divided, slightly above the 100-year floodplain line, by another limestone wall. This wall is similar in construction to the perimeter wall and features the same columns and caps, so it was most likely built

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around the same time. Further up the slope is a third wall that connects the Mansion with the Garage Apartment. This wall is lower than the masonry walls and is surfaced with stucco to match the buildings. Where it meets the driveway, the wall terminates on one side with a round column and on the other with a charming scrolled vase pedestal.

Architecture and Site Features Associated with St. Mary's Academy (1947-1950)

Classroom Building (Contributing)

The Classroom Building is a large, rectangular, composition shingled, one-story stuccoed masonry structure with N-S gable ends. The interior rooms include a combination gymnasium/auditorium in the north end and classrooms flanking a central hallway for the south two-thirds length of the building. The north and south entrances are double doors with metal bracketed hoods. The south entrance is framed by modern stone walls perpendicular to the building. The north end of the west side has irregularly spaced steel casement windows, while the south end has five bays of triple 10-light steel casement windows, regularly spaced. The south end of the east side has eight 3-window units approximating the west side. The slightly projecting pavilion on the once-exposed north end of the east side was obscured by the later addition of LaBelle Hall. Period photographs show an exterior door at that location and a niche containing a statue on the wall between that door and the north end. The rounded edge on the lower portion of the roof of the structure is unusual and may point to the use of a Quonset structure in its fabrication. The ceiling of the gymnasium end (north) of the structure is curved as if following an arched superstructure.

Because the addition of LaBelle Hall obscured the primary entrance to this building, as well as the only ornamentation, the niche, the integrity of this building is only moderate. However, there has been no structural change to the building nor any major remodeling of any kind, so it's possible that the removal of LaBelle Hall could reveal the entrance and niche intact.

Convent (Contributing)

On the far north east corner of the site is an L-shaped structure with a gabled, composition shingled roof that once served as the convent for St. Mary's Academy. The west side of the main leg of the building has a central door (added later) and an ABAABAAB window pattern with A=8-light casement with transom and B=6-light casement with transom. The pattern along the east side of the main leg approximates the west side. The short leg of the building has an 8-light casement window on the north and south wall and two on the west. On the north side is stair leading to a basement level. The south end of the main leg has a door with a stucco-bracketed hood and flanking 8-light windows with transoms. This building has a moderate integrity because of the recent addition of a double door on both sides of the main leg of the building. A free-standing wooden arbor with gables over the doors has been recently constructed along both sides of this leg. Also very recently, a concrete ramp has been added to access the service ell of the building.

Chapel (Contributing)

The Chapel is a rectangular simple Gothic Revival structure with a gabled, composition shingled roof. The east entrance pavilion is symmetrical with central double doors, with two inset archways, corner buttresses, and a central pointed arch. The main block has a gabled roof with a central pointed arch that has a louvered vent on both gables. The north side of the main block has three bay sections broken by buttresses, each with two 3-light casement windows with a pointed, arched 3-light transom above. The north west bay has a central door with one inset arch and the buttress just to the east is an open curved bell tower. The west end facade of the main block is broken only by two symmetrical side

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windows. The south side of the main block approximates the north side, excepting the bell tower. The Chapel has a high level of integrity. No additions nor other major changes have been made to this simple structure. The only changes have been cosmetic--the window panes have been recently replaced and a bas-relief lotus blossom added above the side entrance door.

Tennis Court (contributing)

The tennis court is the only site feature added during the second period of significance (1947). It is in fair condition and contributes as a structure to the historic value of the site.

LaBelle Hall (Noncontributing)

This building, constructed in 1964, is a split-level structure designed in the International Style. It lies between the mansion and the classroom building and was built by St. Mary's Academy to house offices, classrooms, a cafeteria and locker rooms. The building is visually recessive -- the surface treatment of stucco with limestone skirting in an ashlar pattern and the composition shingled roof is evocative of earlier materials used on the site. The building consists of two blocks connected by a hyphen. The east block ranges from one level at its east end to two levels at its west end. The north side facade has a door at either end on the upper level and ten bays of 1/1 windows with transoms, also on the upper level. The west end has a sliding glass door in the center on the lower level. The south facade approximates the north except for the doors and the fact that the windows are obscured with red paint. The Perry Mansion is connected with the east block by an uncovered raised concrete walkway. The main entrance to the east block from the mansion is through a centered pair of carved wooden doors at the end of the walkway. The hyphen is two-story, narrow, and accessible by double doors from the north side. The west block is one-story and is accessible not only via hyphen, but from the north side through both a double glass door and a single wooden door, and from the south side through a single door leading in from a brick patio. This block connects directly to the Classroom Building and obscures a slightly projecting entrance pavilion on the north end of its east side. LaBelle Hall has high integrity, but is in poor condition, and because of its construction date is considered non-contributing.

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
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Summary of contributing properties

The Perry Estate, including the South Terrace Garden and the Italian Garden, fountains, benches and small objects, counts as a single historic **site**. Some landscape features such as the bridge and walls are substantial in size and scale and have been noted separately in the contributing count. The system of stone walls is counted as a single **structure**.

Feature	Type	Date	Contributing
Perry Estate grounds, including formal gardens, fountains and objects	site	c.1917 - c.1928	X
Perry Mansion	building	1926-28	X
Garage Apartment	building	1920s	X
Lodge	building	1920s	X
Bowling Alley	building	1920s	X
Convent	building	1949	X
Classroom Building	building	1949	X
Chapel	building	1949	X
LaBelle Hall	building	1964	noncontributing
Bridge	structure	1920s	X
Swimming Pool	structure	1920s	X
Greenhouse	structure	1920s	X
Perimeter, Interior & Parking Court Walls	structure	1920s	X
Tennis Court	structure	c.1949	X

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 VALUE, 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: N/A

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE:

EDUCATION, ARCHITECTURE, LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE, POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

PERIOD OF SIGNIFICANCE: 1920-1944; 1947-1951

SIGNIFICANT DATES: 1920, 1928, 1947

SIGNIFICANT PERSON: Perry, Edgar Howard

CULTURAL AFFILIATION: N/A

ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Thompson, Henry Bowers

NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (see continuation sheets 8-15 through 8-26).

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

BIBLIOGRAPHY (see continuation sheets 9-27 through 9-18).

PREVIOUS DOCUMENTATION ON FILE (NPS): N/A

- 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 (*Texas Historical Commission*)
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: (Austin History Center)(Catholic Archives of Austin, Texas)

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Statement of Significance

The Perry Estate/St. Mary's Academy Historic District is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, in the area of Architecture and Landscape Architecture for the design of the buildings and grounds associated with the Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate from 1917 to 1944. The district is also eligible under Criterion B, the area of Politics/Government, for its association with Edgar H. Perry a notable Austin businessman and community leader. The district is also eligible under criterion A, in the area of education for its association with Saint Mary's Academy, a notable parochial school in Austin. As a property built by a religious institution, Criteria Consideration A applies to the nomination of the academy.

The Perry Mansion, designed by Henry Bowers Thomson, is a fine example of an early 20th century Italian Renaissance Style house. The site, including the formal terrace garden, is a good example of the style of landscape design for estates of its kind during the "Country Place Era" in the United States. Therefore, the Perry Estate is significant in the area of Architecture (the mansion) and Landscape Architecture (the site).

The Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate is a symbol of the success of Edgar Howard Perry, Sr., a prominent businessman and community leader in Austin in the first half of the twentieth century. He and his colleagues were responsible for the majority of the growth and development of downtown and suburban Austin from the 1920's to the 1950's. His friends numbered among the wealthiest and most powerful in the city during that time and his influence ranged even into national politics. During the first period of significance (1917-1944), his friendships with powerful leaders such as Austin Mayor Tom Miller and Senator Lyndon Johnson put him in the place of an influential mediator to help move along civic projects such as the Austin (Tom Miller) Dam and the first federal housing project in the country, Rosewood. Because of Perry's occupation of the estate, the property is significant under Criteria B in the areas of Politics/Government and Social History.

St. Mary's Academy was the first parochial school in the Austin area, and, during its life span (1885-1968), was the pre-eminent parochial school in Central Texas. St. Mary's Academy occupied the Perry Estate site during the second period of significance, during which time the newly-formed Austin Diocese constructed the classroom building, the convent, and the chapel to expand the school's facilities. During this period, the school housed and educated many girls from prominent Central Texas families, as well as girls from other southern states and from as far away as Mexico City. The expansion campaign represented by these buildings marks the beginning of the most successful decade in St. Mary's history. The estate is significant under Criterion A in the area of Education because of its association with St. Mary's Academy.

History of the Property

Edgar Howard Perry, an active member at the Austin Country Club (now Hancock Golf Course), purchased a large tract of land east of the club's golf course around 1917. The club bought the land from him soon afterward to expand the course to eighteen holes and sold Perry the house that was on the land. He then purchased a 9-acre gravel pit site just north of the Country Club (a portion of the current Perry Estate site), relocated the house to the north side of the site, facing Red River, and built a sunken garden in the gravel pit. For several years following, he and his family used the house and garden as a country place for weekend parties (Solcher). In 1925, Perry bought a dairy at the southwest corner

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of his property, bringing the property up to its current acreage. Shortly after expanding the site, he hired a rock mason to build the stone and iron fence that surrounds the property on the east and south sides.

During 1927, the mansion building was constructed and the Perrys moved in sometime in January of 1928. The original house was demolished sometime during this period and some of the materials possibly used in constructing some of the smaller structures on the property (the lodge and bowling alley). Perry and his wife lived and entertained at the mansion until they sold the estate to Herman Heep in 1944. The Perrys had decided to relocate to the Driskill Hotel (in which they owned shares) due to a war-induced shortage of help.

Meanwhile, the administration of St. Mary's Academy had begun to look for more suitable accommodations to house the school's growing numbers and to expand the physical education program. It was also important to remove the school from the busy central business district of Austin with its traffic, noise, and congestion (AAS 4/27/47). In 1947, the newly formed Austin Catholic Diocese completed negotiations to purchase the Perry Estate from Herman Heep. Immediately after the purchase, the Sisters of St. Mary's began to prepare the property so that it would be ready for classes to start that fall.

In 1949, the school completed the classroom building, the convent, and the chapel, all designed by Carl H. Stautz, who later also designed portions of Concordia University. It was also during this time that the tennis court was constructed. These additions marked the beginning of the most successful decade of St. Mary's Academy.

In 1964, the school constructed LaBelle Hall, the last building to be added to the estate. Designed by William O'Connell of O'Connell-Probst, this building was planned to contain a large cafeteria, administrative offices, faculty offices and new locker rooms for the classroom building gymnasium. Despite the ambitious facility expansion in 1964, by 1968 enrollment in St. Mary's had dropped so much that the administration decided to join forces with the Holy Cross brothers of St. Edward's High School, which had closed the year before. They changed St. Mary's to a co-educational school, and rename it Holy Cross High School. Holy Cross lasted only four years—it closed in 1972 due to a lack of students.

Since the closure of the academy, the property has housed many different schools and arts organizations, including Athens Montessori School, Austin Ballet Theatre, Christian Academy of Austin, Town and Country School, The Perry School, and St. Francis School. The estate is currently owned by the Organization for Atma Vidya Educational Foundation, which operates the Atma Vidya Memorial School, an elementary school, out of the convent building and the bowling alley. The Phoenix School, a local private high school, is currently housed in the classroom building. Other organizations occasionally lease space in other buildings around the estate, including two churches that hold services in the chapel. The classroom building auditorium is used almost every weekend for performances of dance and theater and the living room of the mansion is home for many chamber music concerts throughout the year.

Criterion C - Architecture and Landscape Architecture

The Country Place Era

The Perry Mansion estate was constructed toward the end of what is often called "The Country Place Era", a

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period of markedly increased development in the United States of the suburban or rural estate by the middle and upper classes from around 1890 to 1929. It is the place of the estate in this period, the trends of the time typified in both its architectural and landscape architectural design, that makes it significant under Criterion C.

During the Country Place Era, there were several strong influences on taste and design that guided the development of this type of estate. One early influence was the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 in Chicago which, with its architectonic spaces and formal layout, fed a rising public interest in historicism in architecture, sometimes called the Beaux-Arts Movement and its expression in site planning, often referred to as called "neoclassical." Another influence was the publication in 1894 of Charles Platt's Italian Gardens, a charming study in pen and watercolor of many Italian villas Platt had visited, with their formal terraced gardens and beautiful water features.

During this time there was increased travel to Europe by American architects, such as Platt, to study at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The École des Beaux-Arts promoted historicism in architectural design, expressed in spaces and details that referenced classical architecture and strong spatial relationships between all parts of a site. Also strongly influential on estate design was the travel to Europe of the wealthy clients of these architects, many of whom brought back, not only a first hand appreciation of classical European architecture and garden design, but artifacts of the same, ornamenting their mansions and gardens with antique and hand-crafted items from all over Europe.

Concurrent with these influences were other major trends that encouraged the development of the country estate. One was the rise of "The Country Life Movement", an intellectual and philosophical movement that promoted rural living as the antidote to the ills of urban life. Its practical application was to discourage the increasing emigration to urban areas which was creating more social and economic problems in the cities. The result, however, was the romanticization of the country life in the imagination of the middle and upper classes. That, along with the invention of the automobile, the affordability of rural land, and the stress caused by living in increasingly crowded cities, made rural and suburban living more attractive and possible.

Trends in Architecture of the Period

The École des Beaux-Arts stressed historicism in architectural design. Most architect-designed buildings of this time copied historical architectural traditions, such as Ancient Classical, Medieval, Renaissance Classical, or Colonial American. This period of looking back for design inspiration was a part of the general intellectual trends of the time, the focus on the past as a way of ordering a rapidly changing social and economic environment. Especially strong after World War I, these period styles were dominant in domestic architecture.

The Perry Mansion was designed and constructed in the Italian Renaissance style, a later style of the Beaux Arts era. The Italian Renaissance style was first used in houses in 1883 in New York and its use spread throughout the country as a welcome contrast to the earlier Victorian styles. As the decades passed, the employment of this style became more and more skilled, especially as architects and their clients traveled more frequently to Italy. The Italian Renaissance style was seen most frequently in landmark residences in larger metropolitan areas, so its presence in Central Texas was unusual for the times.

Typical features of this style include entry areas accented by columns, arches above windows, wide eaves

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supported by decorative brackets, tile roof coverings, hipped roof form, symmetrical facade, stuccoed walls, and smaller and less elaborate upper story windows—all found in the Perry Mansion structure. Some variations on this style also found in the Perry Mansion are projecting wings, full width porches, and high-style elaborations such as quoining.

Henry Bowers Thomson, Architect

The Perry Mansion was designed by Henry Bowers Thomson and is one of the largest houses on a true estate in Central Texas constructed between the World Wars. The mansion structure itself is significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a fine example of an early 20th century Italian Renaissance Revival house of the Country Place Era, designed by a well-known Texas architect of the time.

Henry Bowers Thomson was born in 1882, to a prominent ranching family of Austin. He was raised and educated in Austin, completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Texas with a bachelor of science degree. From there, he went to MIT in Boston, where he received a master's degree in Architecture. After graduation, he traveled in Europe extensively, where he studied classical and historic architecture, and from which he developed his strong historical style. Though his early years were spent in Austin, Thomson set up his architecture practice in Dallas where the opportunities were greater for the ambitious architect. His practice, set up originally under his own name, later became known as Thomson and Swain.

Thomson's best work in Dallas and around Texas were his residential designs. The AIA guide *Austin and its Architecture*, notes that "Henry Bowers Thomson provided very subtle residential versions of Beaux-Arts classicism...though [he] could also work in the less formal Mediterranean villa style..." (*Austin and its Architecture*, 1976). Others described him as an eclectic designer, capable of mastering many styles including Tudor, Georgian, Neoclassical, Italianate, Spanish, and French. (Preservation Dallas).

Thomson and Swain also designed institutional and commercial buildings in Dallas, including the Dallas Aquarium (collaboration with Fooshee & Cheek and Flint & Broad), the Cotton Exchange Building, an addition to the Adolphus Hotel, and the Maple Terrace Apartment House. He was once the president of the Dallas Society of Architects and mentored many of the leading architects in Dallas, such as Mark Lemmon, Wilson McClure, and both Fooshee & Cheek (Preservation Dallas). Thomson is known primarily for his work in Dallas, but the two "sister ship" houses he designed in Austin, the Perry Mansion and the Reed Mansion, are significant not only for their style and design, but for their connection to each other through the association of the Perry and Reed families.

Trends in Site and Landscape Design of the Period

The influence of Beaux Arts historicism became important in not only in building design, but in site and landscape design as well. Landscape design in the 18th and early 19th centuries in America had been heavily influenced by the English landscape school with its naturalistic style of landscape designs. Country estate houses were reached by following curving drives that meandered through the countryside displaying a changing scenery and glimpses of rustic structures placed in the landscape.

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Later, the growing interest in historical reference created more of a focus on a formal type of site design, especially as seen in Italy, where indoor and outdoor spaces are strongly related and connected by axes. This style of garden design, called Neoclassical, had several key features: proportional relationships between spaces, varying levels through terracing, crossing primary and secondary axes, and strong termini for axes (Volkman 1994 and 1993). Other features of this style are architectonic water features, upright plant material reinforcing spaces and axes, transitional spaces such as porches that link the inside to the outside, and a framework of primarily stone walls and terraces that organizes the plant material. Sculpture, as well as colorful plant material, such as annuals and perennials, was included to enliven the space.

The Perry Estate Site Development

The Perry Mansion estate is a good example of a suburban estate of this period and is one of the largest still existing in its entirety in Central Texas. Although the addition of St. Mary's buildings did compromise the integrity of the original site composition, the original buildings, most of the garden spaces and the circulation patterns are still basically intact.

The site development in the first period of significance (1917-1944) can be divided into two parts. The first part was the time between 1917 and 1927, prior to the construction of the mansion (Map 4). During this time, there was another house on the site, on the northeast quadrant of the current property. This was the house that was moved from the country club property across the street to Perry's property and used as a weekend home. After this house was moved to the site, the terraced formal garden was constructed in the Neoclassical style. Given that Perry had already been traveling in Italy, and that he had probably been influenced by garden design there, and other influences mentioned above, one could speculate that he constructed the garden in an axial relationship to the house. This would explain its location today and the fact that it is no longer in any particular spatial relationship with any building existing on the site. The perimeter wall, constructed in 1925, created an enclosure integral to a garden of that type.

This garden is typically Neoclassical in many ways. Perry took advantage of the quarry excavation to create two terrace levels for his garden, the upper level being defined by a classical balustrade and curved seating area that overlooks the lower garden. The lower space features two crossing axes, the major from the top of the terrace stairs, terminating at the ornamental gate in the perimeter wall and the minor from the entrance to the rock garden, terminating at the ornamental wall fountain. The lines of the axes were emphasized by the yaupon hedges that lined each quadrant. The center of the garden was originally a formal fountain with a classically-derived sculpture. Old photographs show at least one other statue placed at the terminus of a walkway.

Sometime around the time of the construction of the mansion, the first house was demolished or moved. This left the terraced formal garden stranded in the southeast corner without a relationship to any structure. Perry must have been sensitive to this, because the solution was to establish what was called the Tea Garden at the top of the terrace stairs. There was most likely a pathway connection from the South Terrace to this garden that helped tie the outdoor areas together spatially. However, all that is known was its approximate location--there are no photographs of this garden and no remnants or other evidence of its existence. The chapel built by St. Mary's stands today in its place.

The second part of the first period of significance included the construction of the mansion and accessory

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buildings and amenities, as well as the driveway and parking court still extant on the property (Map 5). The siting of the mansion is typical of buildings of its type, being at the highest point on the site. The parking garage and the low ornamental wall to the west enclose the parking court, creating a space typical of Neoclassical site design. The placement of the driveway as well as the Lodge and Bowling Alley, however, refers more to the earlier Romantic style of site design, being set apart and in a grove of trees down by Wailer Creek like follies in the landscape.

An excellent description of the entry experience, written by Homer L. Fry, a landscape architect, was published in a local newspaper:

September in Italy?--A motor of week-end guests swings through the gates, up the sweeping drive, and over the Italian stone bridge with its wrought iron lamps reflected in the waters of the canal; past an old iron wellhead and the lodge, half lost in the oaks; into the walled motor court north of the villa. There is a suggestion of warm hospitality in the mammoth old Monastery lantern, and intimate beauty in the scroll and vase pedestal that terminate the court wall. The car stops beside the stately pilastered motor entrance, the guests descend, and, I must break the spell--Italy?--no indeed. We have just entered the E. H. Perry Estate.¹

The South Terrace Garden was built as an extension of the house into the landscape in the Neoclassical style. The upper level actually shares a floor surface with the loggia and seems to pull the inside space outward into the landscape. An axis drawn from the center of the back loggia crosses this upper level, moves to and then past the marble fountain on the lower level and, taking a slight angle, terminates in the large ornamental gate in the south perimeter wall. The gate is actually slightly off axis with the house, probably because the wall was built and the gate set in before the house was constructed. The previously planned location of the house must have been shifted during the design period, possibly for structural reasons.

The South Terrace Garden is now lined with a clipped boxwood hedge that follows the walkways. During the Perrys' tenure, this hedge was not there and the space was much more open. At that time, the space read clearly as two terraced, symmetrical levels. Because the view from this garden was directly toward the Austin Country Club, one could see and be seen in the way that Perry must have wanted. Important site features no longer in existence include the Rose Garden (Photo 32), which was to the northeast of the mansion; the Tea Garden; and the Rock Garden. The approach to the Rose Garden was along pathway on axis from the north main entrance of the mansion, leading to the greenhouse, where it took a ninety degree turn and terminated in a perfect brick circle pathway that defined the garden. This garden was quite typical of the Neoclassical style in its geometric form, its year-round display of annual and perennial color, and the presence of garden furniture. Homer Fry writes of this garden:

"The rose garden lies north of the motor court, along a brick walk bordered with old fashioned sweet lavender and multi-colored periwinkles, against a background of gold and green camphor hedge. The garden is circular surrounded by everblooming Baby Orleans roses. The beds are bordered with spicy Chinese pinks. A white seat covered with climbing roses and a sundial complete the picture."

¹ Fry, Homer. "'Handsome New Home of Mr. And Mrs. E.H. Perry Nearing Completion North of County Club.'" Undated article found in Edgar Howard Perry, Sr. vertical files. Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.

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The Tea Garden is mentioned only briefly in Mr. Fry's essay and is described as being "canopied by century old oaks." The Rock Garden is briefly mentioned as well: "...one discovers a charming path of field stones bordered by delicate rock garden plants and vines." However, it can be seen in several early photographs of the site as being located on the hillside west of the Italian Garden.

St. Mary's Academy on the Site

When the Academy first occupied the site, it was housed in the mansion. The upstairs functioned as a dormitory, while the downstairs held offices and classrooms. Almost immediately, the doors of the three-car garage were walled in to create another classroom on its first floor. During that time, the lodge was transformed into the home economics lab and the bowling alley into a cafeteria. Initially, no changes were made to the site with perhaps the exception of plantings.

In 1949, the Academy completed the convent, the chapel, and the classroom building (Map 6). The location of the chapel on what was once the tea garden site brought about the most dramatic spatial change to the site during this period. The convent made less of a spatial impact on the site because its walls, parallel to the perimeter wall and set into the north east corner of the site, enhanced the already existing enclosure of the rose garden. That space is still in existence and currently functions as a play yard for the school. The classroom building, located beyond the interior stone site wall and below the site line to the west from the mansion, was of less impact visually from the mansion and main court itself.

In 1964, LaBelle Hall was completed as the last addition to the site up to the present. It was located on the site so to further enclose the existing parking court of the mansion's north entrance and does not intrude on any of the main site features on the upper level (Map 7).

Comparison with Other Estates in Austin of the Period

It is important to compare the Perry Mansion with other large houses on estates in the Central Texas area. Of particular interest is its similarity with the Reed Mansion. Designed by the same architect in the Italian Renaissance style, the Reed Mansion displays similar architectural features. Little is known, however, about its original site design or outdoor structures.

Another valuable comparison would be with Laguna Gloria, a large estate in west Austin, that was constructed approximately ten years prior to the Perry estate. The Laguna Gloria mansion, built in 1916, was designed in what has been called the Mediterranean style (sometimes called Italian), but by Harvey L Page of San Antonio. Like the Perry estate its gardens were also designed in the Neoclassical style, and even more skillfully than the Perry gardens. Being of the same social and economic strata, it is likely that the Perrys visited the owners of Laguna Gloria (Henry Sevier and Clara Driscoll Sevier) and were inspired by the estate to construct one along the same lines.

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Criterion B - Politics/Government

Edgar Howard Perry

The Perry Estate was built as a symbol of the success of Edgar Howard Perry, Senior, a prominent businessman and philanthropist in Austin in the first half of the twentieth century. He and his colleagues were responsible for the majority of the growth and development of downtown and suburban Austin from the 1920's to the 1950's. His friends numbered among the wealthiest and most powerful in the city during that time and his influence ranged even into national politics. Because of Perry's occupation of the estate during one of his most influential periods, the property is significant under Criterion B for Politics/Government and Social History.

Edgar Howard Perry was born in Caldwell, Texas, January 4, 1876, the fourth child of Johnson William Perry, a Confederate veteran, and Lucinda Valentine Perry. The family moved around in young Perry's early years and finally settled on a farm in Rockdale, Texas. In 1892, Perry entered Baylor University, where he studied law until the cotton trading business lured him away in 1894. While at Baylor, he made business and personal contacts that remained important to him throughout his life, such as his friendship with Tom Connally, former U.S. Senator, who was a fellow freshman.

In 1894, Perry went to work for George H. McFadden, a cotton brokerage company, in their Taylor, Texas office. He continued on with that company as a cotton grader and buyer until 1910, during which time he lived and worked all over Texas, until finally settling down in Austin in 1904. In Austin, Perry supervised 8-10 cotton buyers until he purchased McFadden's Austin office in 1910, complete with personnel, and reorganized it as E. H. Perry & Company.

During his travels through Texas with McFadden's company, Perry met Miss Lutie Pryor, whom he married in Dallas on December 13, 1896. Their only child, Edgar Howard Perry, Jr., was born in 1900. As the owner of E.H. Perry & Company, Perry, twice accompanied by his wife, toured Europe and Asia to market his cotton. He was also often accompanied by his colleagues Sheppard King of Dallas and Will Clayton of Houston, and with him, they set up accounts in England, France, Spain, Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, and Japan. It was on these trips that Perry must have developed the Continental sense of style and taste which influenced his choices when building and furnishing his mansion and grounds a decade later.

E. H. Perry & Company became so prosperous, that Perry took on David C. Reed as partner in 1914. The two partners not only sold cotton, but began to invest in other enterprises ranging from a sheep ranch in Menard County, to cotton gins, compresses, oil mills, and a hotel. The house built by David Reed's family is the "sister ship" to the Perry Mansion, having been designed by Henry Bowers Thomson in the same style and scale and constructed around the same time.

As his firm became more successful, Perry began to purchase and redevelop properties and buildings on and close to Congress Avenue. In 1913, he constructed a two-story building at Fifth and San Jacinto to house his cotton offices on the second floor and on the first, a bath house, supplied by an artesian well. Another early project involved the redevelopment of the 400 block of the east side of Congress Avenue, which at the time consisted of shooting galleries and pool halls. Later, in the late 1940's, in partnership with Max Brooks, architect, Perry constructed the Commodore Perry

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Hotel at the northwest corner of 8th and Brazos and then the Perry-Brooks Building on the southwest corner in 1950.

In 1953, Perry was selected at Austin's Most Worthy Citizen for his contributions to the city of Austin in business and charitable works. Some of these included helping to guarantee funds to keep the University of Texas in Austin and increasing support for the Red Cross, the March of Dimes, and the Community Chest, the YWCA, as well as donating land for civic projects. He also served in 1953 as the vice-president on the Austin Symphony Orchestra Society Board and later became honorary chairman of the Board. Perry was the chairman of the Austin's first campaign for polio funds, and served as director of Security Trust Company of Austin and director in the Austin National Bank.

Edgar Perry During the Period of Significance

Perry, from his early years in the cotton business, until his death, cultivated friendships among the powerful and potentially powerful. Of particular interest is his relationship with Tom Miller, mayor of Austin from 1933-1949, and his later association with Lyndon Johnson. Perry and Miller were two of the most powerful and influential men in Austin from the 1930's to the 1940's and, as urban entrepreneurs," created the foundation upon which modern Austin was built (Orum).

In 1928, when his mansion was just completed, Perry was still running his cotton business, but in 1929, at age 53, he retired, and fortunately for him, did so shortly before the stock market crash. At this point, with his business closed and his money safely invested in real estate, he had more time to become involved in the many civic projects which earned him so much recognition in his later years. The height of his involvement in championing the City of Austin through civic projects was during the period of the New Deal, which began in 1933, with the creation of the National Recovery Act. Because Perry and Miller were supporters of Roosevelt and his New Deal, they managed to maintain an excellent relationship with the federal government, which in return poured money into many civic projects that paved the way for Austin's growth and prosperity. These projects included the 330-unit Rosewood Housing Project, the first one of its kind in the country, built while Perry was chairman of the local federal housing agency. Another project was the Austin Dam (Tom Miller Dam), for which Perry chaired the Citizen's Advisory Committee that led the effort to get federal funding for the project.

One of Perry's most interesting and important associations was with Lyndon B. Johnson. Perry met Johnson in 1937, when the latter approached Perry for financial support while running for the unexpired term of the late Congressman James P. Buchanan. Perry chose to support Johnson, out of a group of five or six other local candidates and through this support Johnson was able to win the Senate seat. Later, Johnson was able to repay Perry by his influence in obtaining federal funding for projects in Austin. Both Johnson and Perry, each recognizing the strategic importance of the other, mutually cultivated their relationship over the years. While Johnson was Senator, Perry declared him "sort of like a son. Lyndon is a hard working, efficient man and he calls on me now and then when I can do something for him" (Adair:153). Perry and Johnson maintained a friendship up until Perry's death in 1961, just two years before Johnson assumed the presidency. As late as 1956, Perry recalls that "I wrote [Johnson] that my great ambition was to ring the White House door some day and say to the person who answered, 'I want to see Lyndon'" (Orum:76).

Edgar Perry was not interested in being a politician himself. It seems that Perry's most important contribution to the growth of Austin came from his role as friend, supporter, and mediator for the politically placed. Lyndon Johnson was

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

quoted as saying "I have often thought of Commodore Perry as the Barney Baruch of Austin. He is always in the forefront of every effort to foster the further cultural and civic development of that beautiful city....He is, in short, that dependable Rock of Gibraltar type every city needs to insure its progress" (Odum: 74). Perry was especially important as friend, supporter and mediator to not only Johnson, but Austin Mayor Tom Miller as well. Perry and Miller first knew each other as business associates, beginning when Perry gave Miller a loan of \$750 to get him started in the cotton business. Miller became very successful in business and had a hand in several types of businesses when he decided to run for mayor in 1931. Perry continued his association with Miller, and, by 1933, when the National Recovery Act was passed, they had cemented a friendship based on a passionate concern for their city and its recovery from the Depression.

One of the first projects that Miller and Perry worked on with Senator Johnson was the Austin Dam. There had been a movement afoot since the early part of the century to control the flooding of the Colorado in Central Texas and the destruction of life and property it caused. Up until the beginning of the New Deal, construction of these dams was funded privately. However, these efforts were met with failure and frustration time and time again, as dams were either destroyed by unprecedented flooding or were never completed due to mismanagement or withdrawal of funding. By 1915, two dams had already been constructed in Austin and were subsequently destroyed by flooding.

In 1933, Perry and Miller had enough foresight and creativity to see the New Deal as the ticket for the recovery and development of Austin. And in 1937, in Lyndon Johnson, they saw their opportunity for success in rebuilding Austin through a direct access to federal funding for dams and other civic projects. By 1940, although federal funding had never before been used to build dams, Johnson had directed money to construct four dams in Central Texas, including the Austin Dam. The success of the project was due to the combined efforts of Tom Miller, then mayor, and Edgar Perry, head of the Citizen's Advisory Committee and their support of Johnson and the Roosevelt Administration. It was Perry, however, that greased the wheels to make the project a reality. In 1939, Tom Miller became very concerned about the power-generating potential of the dams along the Colorado. At the time, the City of Austin had its own utility system, the profits of which made up for the abundance of tax-exempt properties in Austin such as the Capital Complex and the University of Texas. Because the power generated by the dams could be sold at a much lower rate, he felt that the city's system could not compete in price and that they would lose revenue. Johnson did not respond satisfactorily enough to the mayor's concerns, so much that Miller threatened to pull the city out of the project. Perry rescued the project by hosting a meeting at his mansion between Miller and Johnson to help them develop a compromise. It is not known exactly what was said behind those closed doors, but Perry helped Miller and Johnson heal the rift and the Austin Dam project went on from that time without a hitch. And thanks to Perry, Miller and Johnson's reconciliation paved the way for more successful federally funded projects in Austin, such as schools, sewer systems, playgrounds, parks, and new roads.

Another project that was made possible by the combined efforts of Perry, Miller, and Johnson was the first federal housing project in the country, Rosewood. With the passage of the Wagner-Steagall bill in 1937, the federal government has made known its intention to provide federally-funded housing for the poor in the United States. The new Senator Johnson moved quickly and by 1938 had obtained \$450,000 for the construction of low-income housing in Austin. Immediately, there were concerns from the construction and real estate industry and many business leaders who accused those who supported the project of being socialists and dictators. However, Edgar Perry, as newly appointed head of the Austin Housing Authority, and Tom Miller worked together with others to convince nay-sayers to support the project. Rosewood Housing Project was finally completed in 1939.

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Criterion A - Education

St. Mary's Academy

St. Mary's Academy was the preeminent parochial school in the Austin area for over 90 years, a period during which the academy educated daughters of some of the most prominent citizens of Austin, as well as wealthy girls from as far away as Mexico City. St. Mary's occupied the Perry Mansion site late in the second period of significance, from 1947 to 1950, and the school's importance in education during that period makes the Perry Estate significant for Criterion A.

St. Mary's Academy was run by the Sisters of the Holy Cross, which was originally founded at Le Mans, France. St. Mary's Academy was established on donated land in 1874 in a two room cabin, the site of which is now the sacristy of St. Mary's Cathedral in downtown Austin. There were only two faculty and four or five students, one of which was Lizzie Lubbock, the daughter of late Governor Lubbock. However, the school grew so quickly that in 1885, a new school was built to accommodate the Sisters and the growing number of boarders. St. Mary's Academy remained on that site for the next 61 years.

By the 1940's, the administration of St. Mary's began to look for more suitable accommodations to house the school's growing numbers and to expand the physical education program. It was also important to remove the school from the busy central business district of Austin with its traffic, noise, and congestion (AAS 4/27/47). In 1947, the newly formed Austin Catholic Diocese completed negotiations to purchase the Perry Estate from Herman Heep, who had purchased the property from Perry in 1944. Immediately after the purchase, the Sisters of St. Mary's began to prepare the property so that it would be ready for classes to start that fall.

In 1949, the school completed the classroom Building, the convent, and the chapel. These additions marked the beginning of the most successful decade of St. Mary's Academy. Photographs show a large and lively student body engaged in academic studies, as well as sports, complete with cheerleading squads. The school was equipped with the latest in technology in language labs and audio-visual aids and there were frequent visits to the Texas legislature. During this period, several girls were selected from St. Mary's for Girls State, a summer camp that was frequently a stepping-off point for future involvement in state politics.

By the 1960's, Catholics schools, especially in the United States, found themselves on shaky ground--social change brought into question the role of the parochial school and even the role of nuns in the life of the nation and the world. Enrollment in St. Mary's began to fall, even though the administration optimistically constructed a modern building in 1964 to house a new cafeteria and other facilities. By 1968, enrollment had suffered so much that the administration decided to join forces with the Holy Cross brothers of St. Edward's High School, which had closed the year before, change St. Mary's to a co-educational school, and rename it Holy Cross High School. Holy Cross lasted only four years--it closed in 1972 due to a lack of students.

Summary

The Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate has a complex history in terms of site development, but the most important physical elements of the estate have remained intact and are of high to moderate integrity. It is an excellent and important

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

local example of a suburban estate of this period and is one of the largest still existing in its entirety in Central Texas. The present owner of the property is the Organization for Atma Vidya Educational Foundation. This is non-profit organization sponsoring the Sri Atmananda Memorial School, which models the teaching approach based on ancient Indian tradition. The mansion and other buildings on the property house the school and the Foundation's outreach programs. The Phoenix School, a private high school, is currently housed in the classroom building. Other organizations occasionally lease space in other buildings around the estate, including two churches that hold services in the chapel. The classroom building auditorium is used almost every weekend for performances of dance and theater and the living room of the mansion is home for many chamber music concerts throughout the year.

There are tentative plans for expansion of the Anna Vidya Memorial School program into junior high and high school education. For this reason, the Organization is considering renovating existing buildings or possibly constructing new buildings to house more students. Because the school is operated by volunteers and funded entirely by private donations, money for hiring preservation consultants and for restoration is very limited. If this property is listed on the National Register, it will become eligible for funding for preservation consultants and restoration from a number of sources, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Texas Historical Commission, and the City of Austin.

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF PROPERTY: 9.86 acres

UTM REFERENCES	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
1	14	622620	3352800	3	14	622860 3352500
2	14	622920	3352640	4	14	6225600 3352660

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION The boundary of the Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate is shown on the accompanying survey plat entitled: "Survey, Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate, 1987" See page 10-29.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION The surveyed plat shows the legal boundary of the district. The nomination includes all property historically associated with the district.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE: Laura L. Knott

ORGANIZATION:

DATE: October 1, 2000

STREET & NUMBER: 4909 Sylvandale Drive

TELEPHONE: (512) 445-0350

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78745

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

CONTINUATION SHEETS

MAPS (see continuation sheets Figure-30 through Figure-35)

PHOTOGRAPHS (see continuation sheet Photo-40)

ADDITIONAL ITEMS (see continuation sheets Figure-36 through Figure-39)

PROPERTY OWNER

NAME: Organization for Atma Vidya Educational Foundation

STREET & NUMBER: 701 E. 41st St.

TELEPHONE: (512) 467-7756

CITY OR TOWN: Austin

STATE: TX

ZIP CODE: 78751

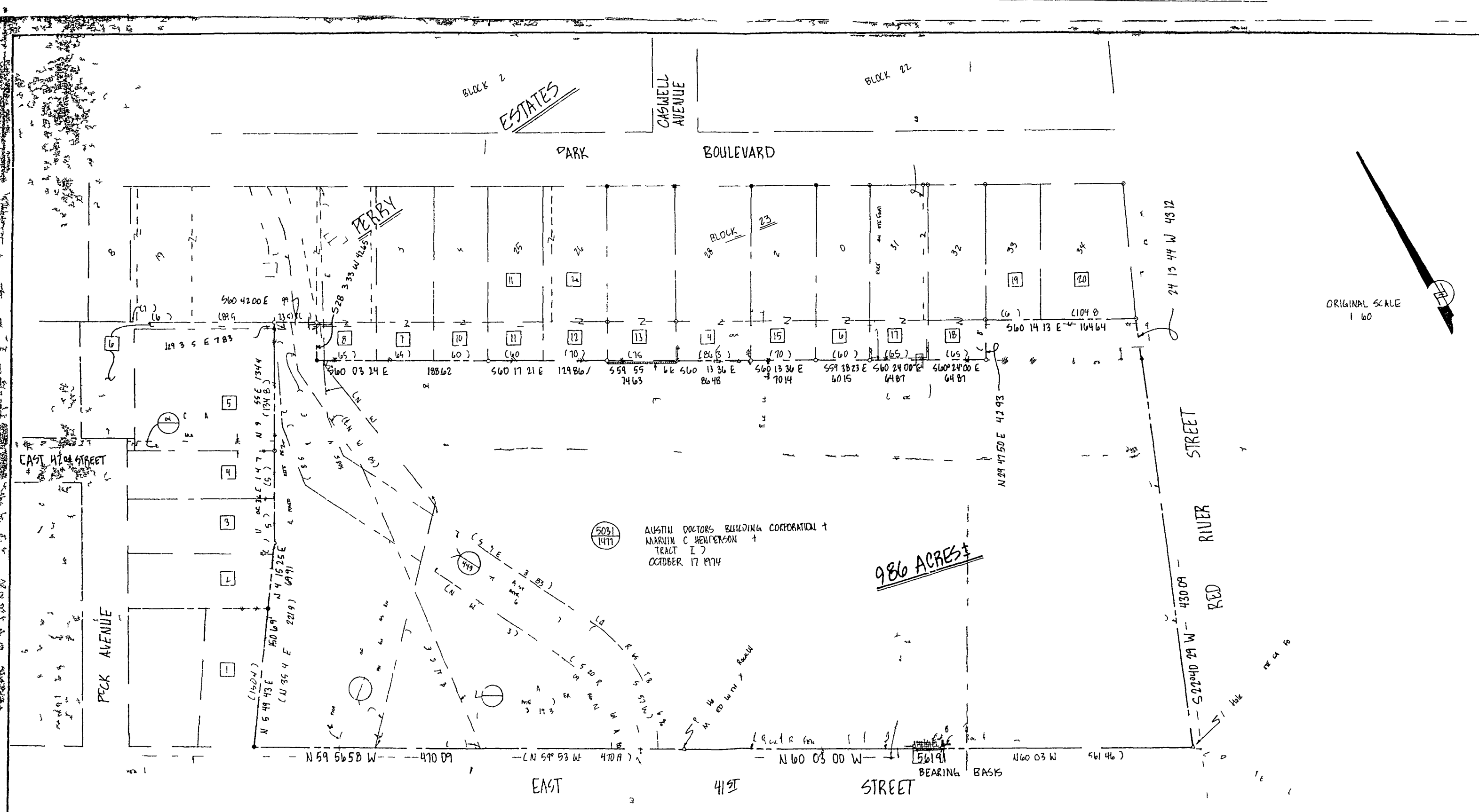
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Section 10 Page 29

Perry Estate / St Mary's Academy
Austin Travis County Texas

Section 10 -- Boundary Description
Survey Map 1987 (reverse)



BLOCK 2
ESTATES

BLOCK 22

CASWELL AVENUE

PARK BOULEVARD

BLOCK 23

FERRY

ORIGINAL SCALE
1/60

EAST 41ST STREET

PECK AVENUE

STREET

RIVER

RED

5031
1471
AUSTIN DOCTORS BUILDING CORPORATION +
MARVIN C HENDERSON +
TRACT I)
OCTOBER 17 1974

986 ACRES ±

560 4200 E
129 3 5 E 183
560 03 24 E
188 62
560 17 21 E
129 86
559 55
74 63
66 560 13 36 E
86 48
560 13 36 E
70 14
559 38 23 E
60 15
560 24 00 E
64 87
560 24 00 E
64 87
N 29 47 50 E 41 93
N 59 56 58 W 470 09
(N 59 53 W 470 09)
N 60 03 00 W 561 91
N 60 03 W 561 46)
24 13 44 W 48 12
104 0
164 64
BEARING BASIS

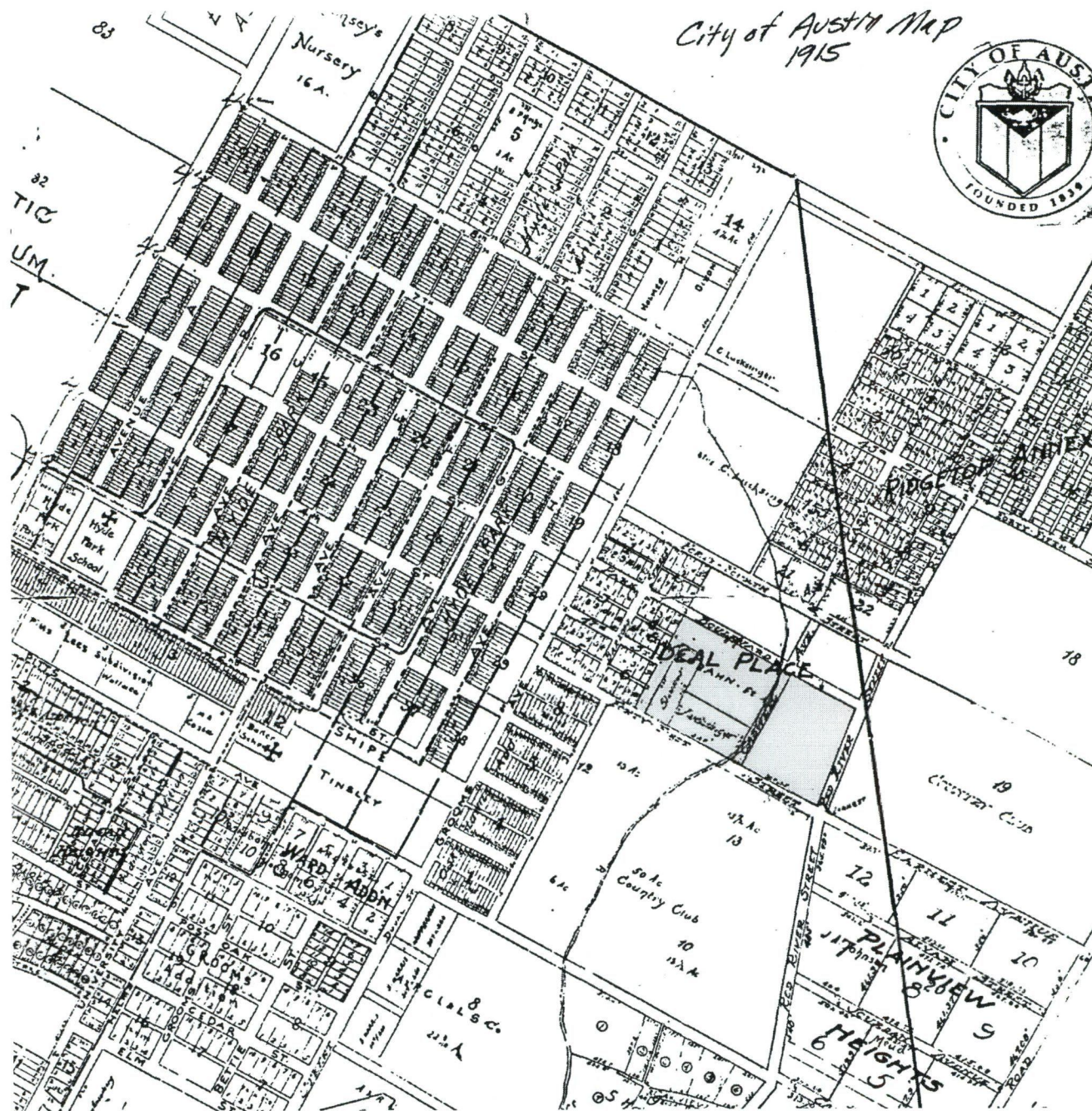
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 30

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 1: City of Austin map, 1915 (Source: City of Austin, Texas GIS Service)



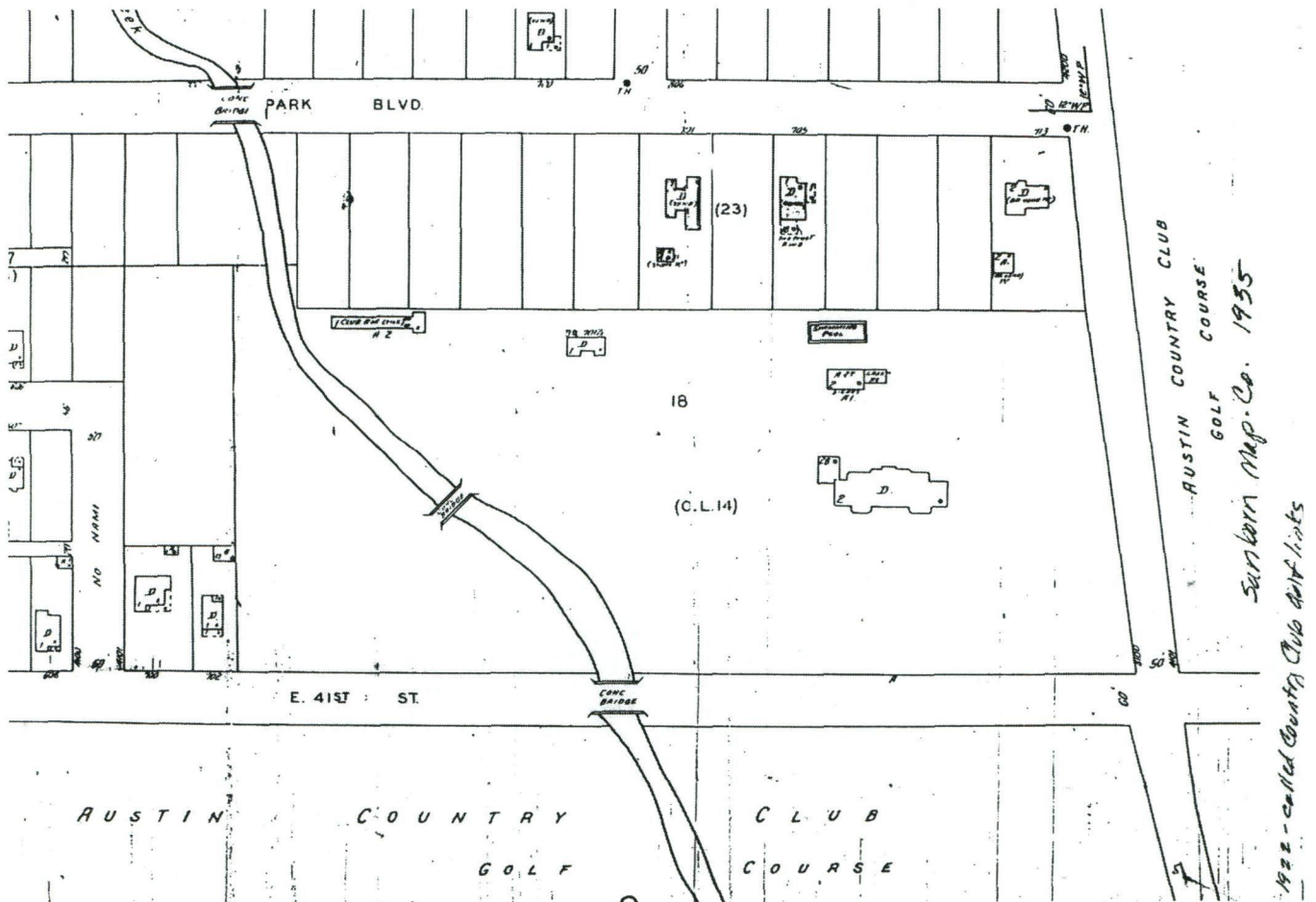
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 31

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 2: Sanborn Map, 1935



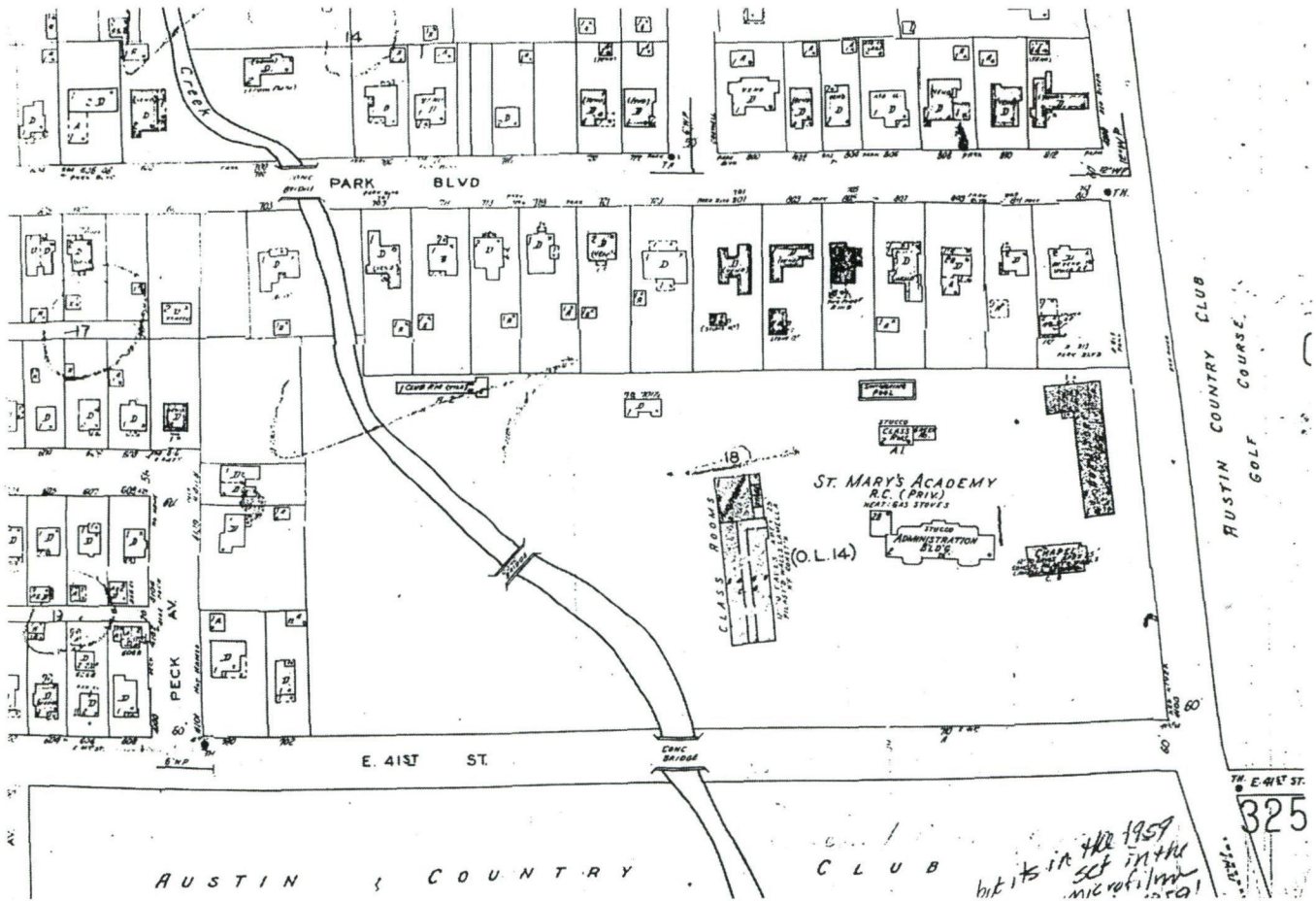
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 32

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 3: Sanborn Map, 1959



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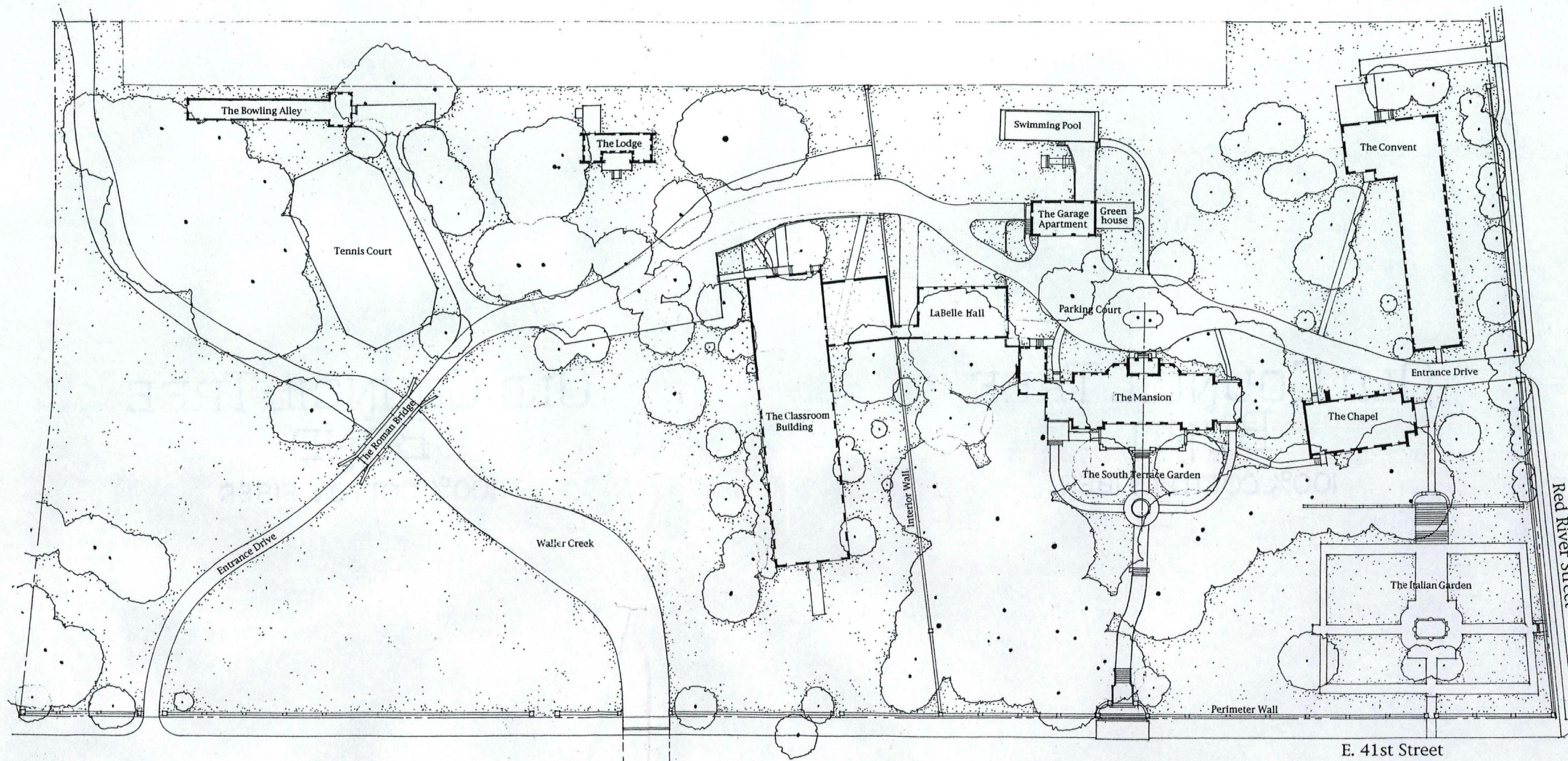
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 33

Perry Estate / St Mary's Academy
Austin Travis County Texas

Figure 4 Site Map – September 2000 (reverse)

9
1



The Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate

Site Map - Current Day

Laura L. Knott,
Landscape Architect
Scale: 1" = 30'-0"



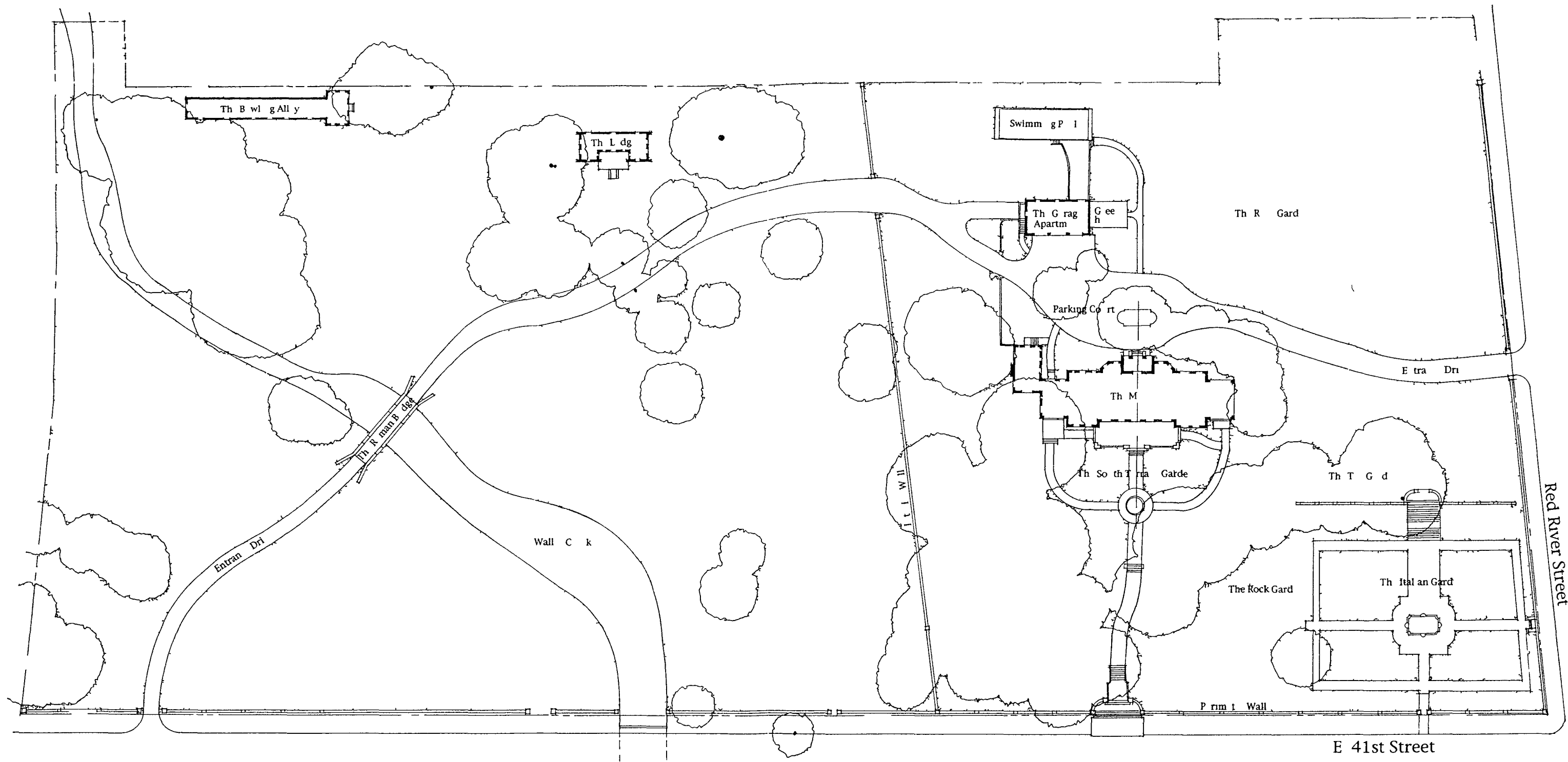
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 34

Perry Estate / St Mary's Academy
Austin Travis County Texas

Figure 5 Site Map – First Period of Significance (reverse)



The Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate

Site Map First Period of Significance

La L Kn tt,
Land pe Ar h
S 1 1 30 0



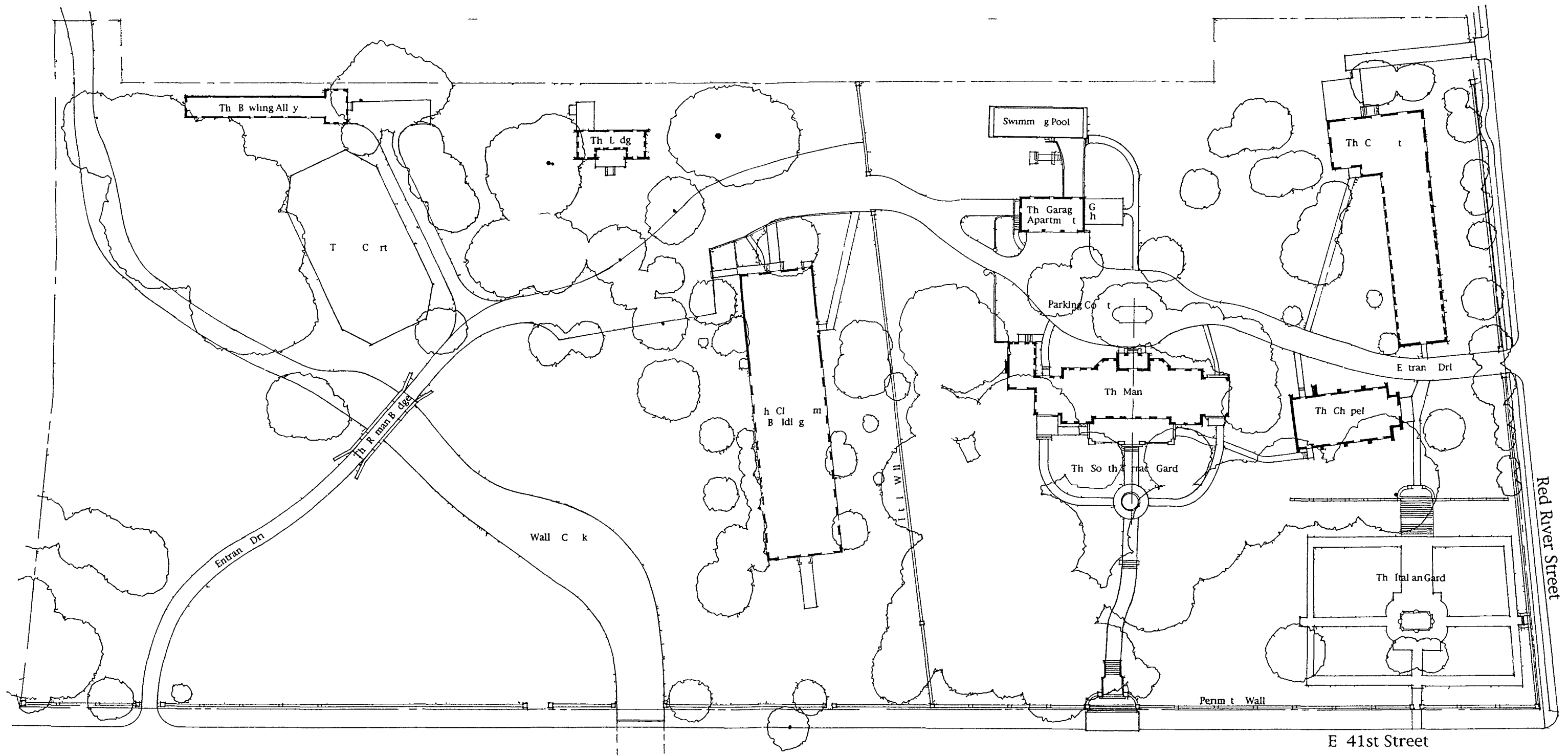
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 35

Perry Estate / St Mary's Academy
Austin Travis County Texas

Figure 6 Site Map – Second Period of Significance (reverse)



The Edgar and Lutie Perry Estate

Site Map Second Period of Significance

La L Kn
 La d pe Ar h
 S al 1 30 0



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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 36

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

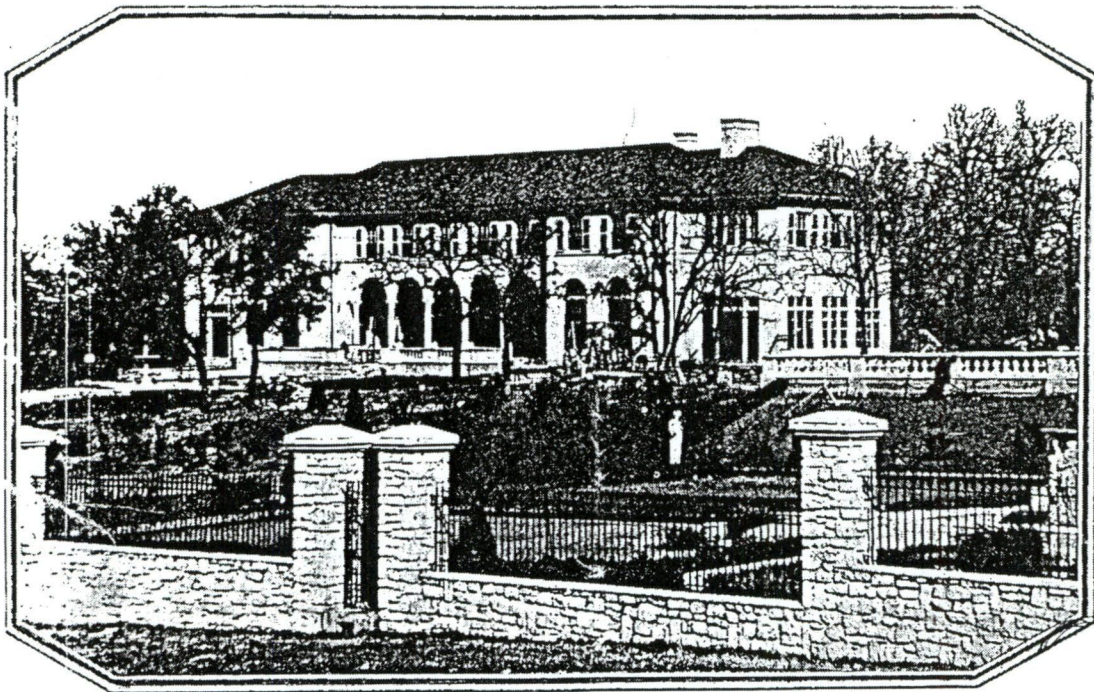
From newspaper article, c.1928

Source: *Edgar Howard Perry, Sr. vertical files. Austin History Center, Austin, Texas.*

PAGE SIX

GOSSIP

Handsome New Home of Mr. and Mrs. E. H. Perry Nearing Completion North of Country Club



A Glimpse Into the Future—at The Perry Estate

—Gazley Co.

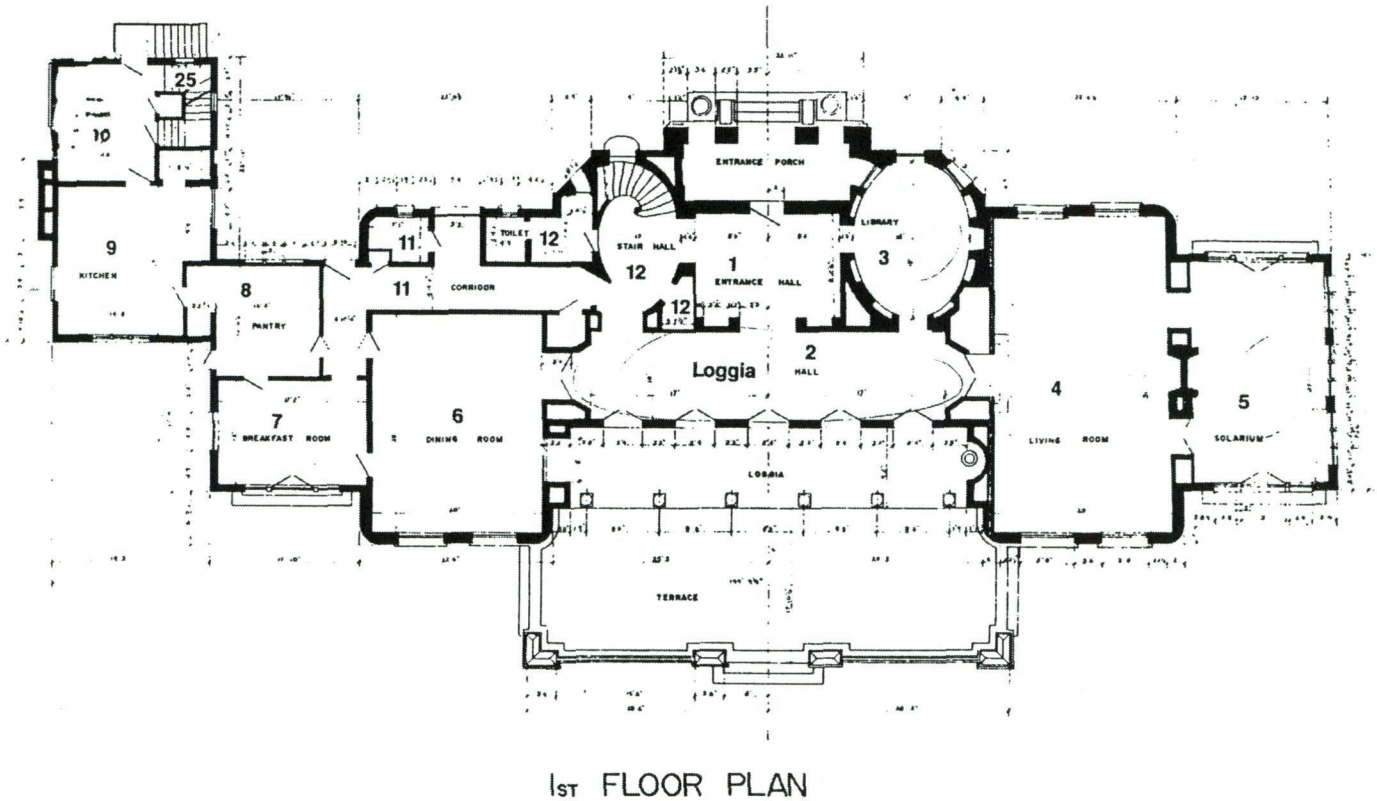
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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 37

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 7: Perry Mansion, First Floor Plan (Source: Austin History Center)



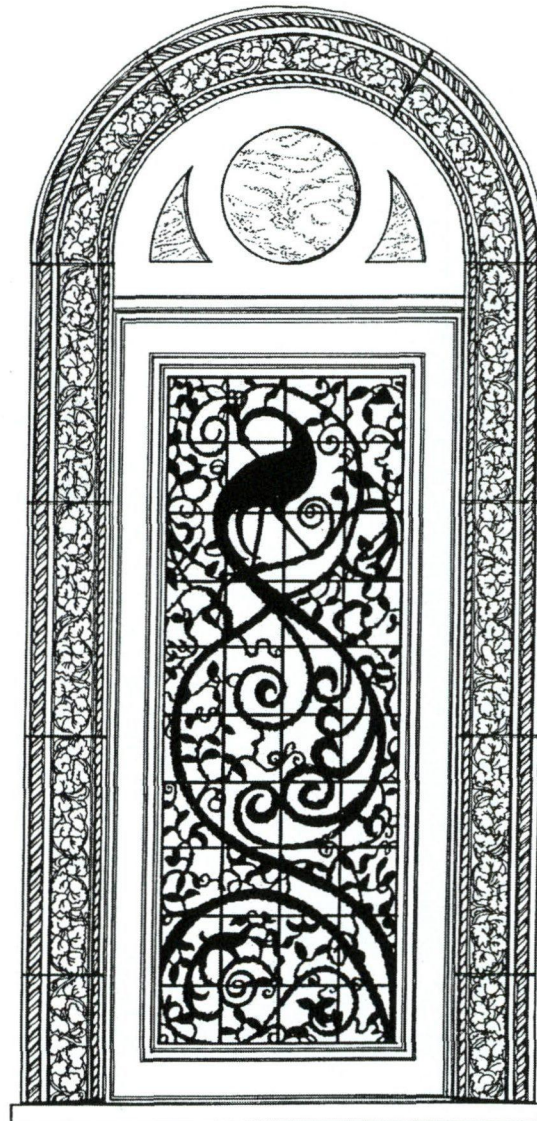
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Section FIGURE Page 38

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Figure 8: Peacock Door (Source: Austin History Center)



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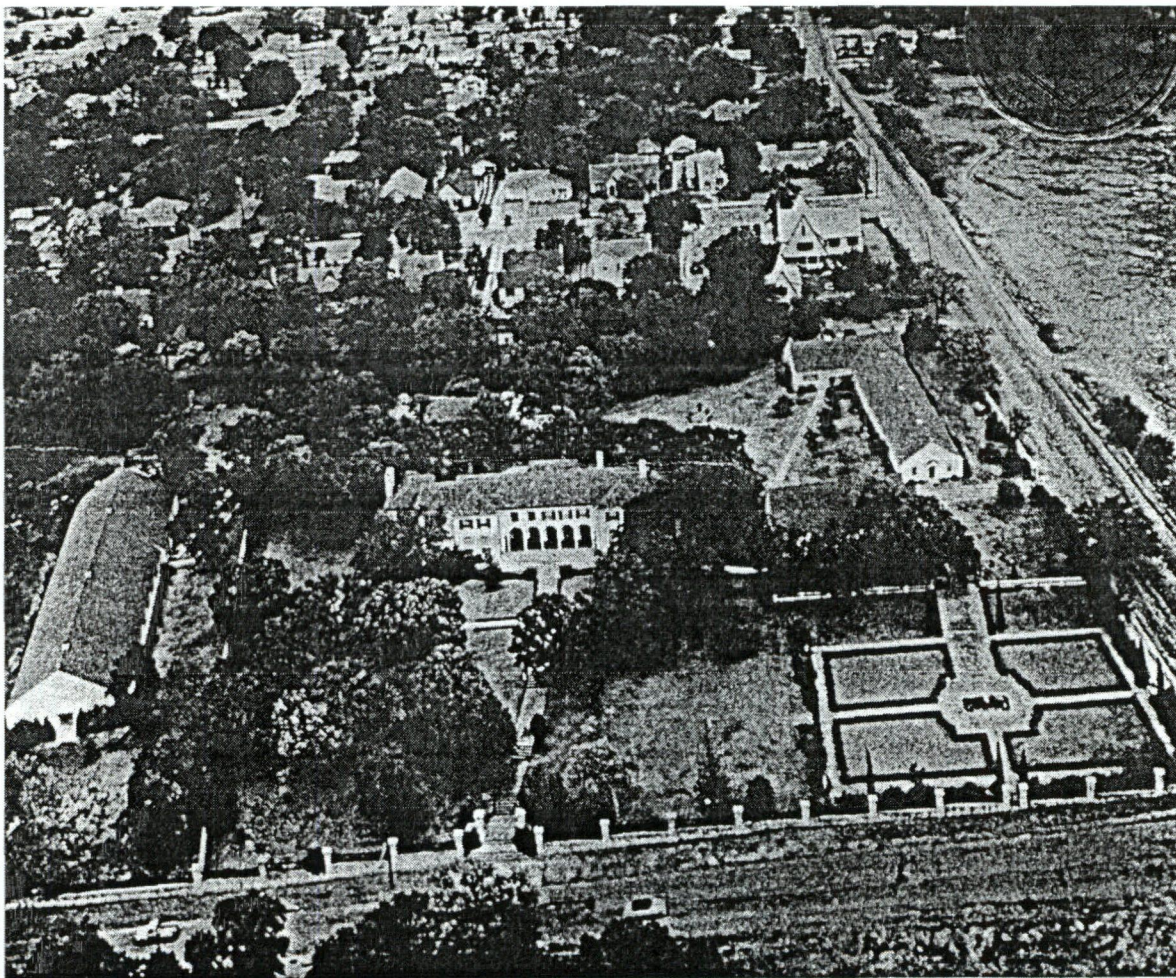
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section FIGURE Page 39

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Undated brochure, c. 1950

Source: *St. Mary's Academy vertical files. Austin History Center.*



Saint Mary's Academy

710 E. FORTY-FIRST STREET
AUSTIN 5, TEXAS

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Section FIGURE Page 40

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas

Perry Estate / St. Mary's Academy
Austin, Travis County, Texas
Photographed by Laura Knott
September 2000
Negatives on file with the Texas Historical Commission

Mansion, North Façade
Camera facing Southeast
Photo 1 of 8

Mansion, South Façade
Camera facing northwest
Photo 2 of 8

Italian Garden
Camera facing south
Photo 3 of 8

Garage Apartment
Camera facing northeast
Photo 4 of 8

Lodge
Camera facing southwest
Photo 5 of 8

Bowling Alley
Camera facing northwest
Photo 6 of 8

Convent
Camera facing southwest
Photo 7 of 8

Chapel
Camera facing northeast
Photo 8 of 8

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Perry Estate--St. Mary's Academy

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TEXAS, Travis

DATE RECEIVED: 7/03/01 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 7/17/01
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/02/01 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 8/18/01
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 01000874

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 8/8/01 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

ENTERED AUG 08 2001

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY
701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 1 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY
701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 2 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 3 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY
701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS
PHOTOGRAPH 4 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 5 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 6 of 8



PARKING
→

PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

701 EAST 41ST STREET

AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

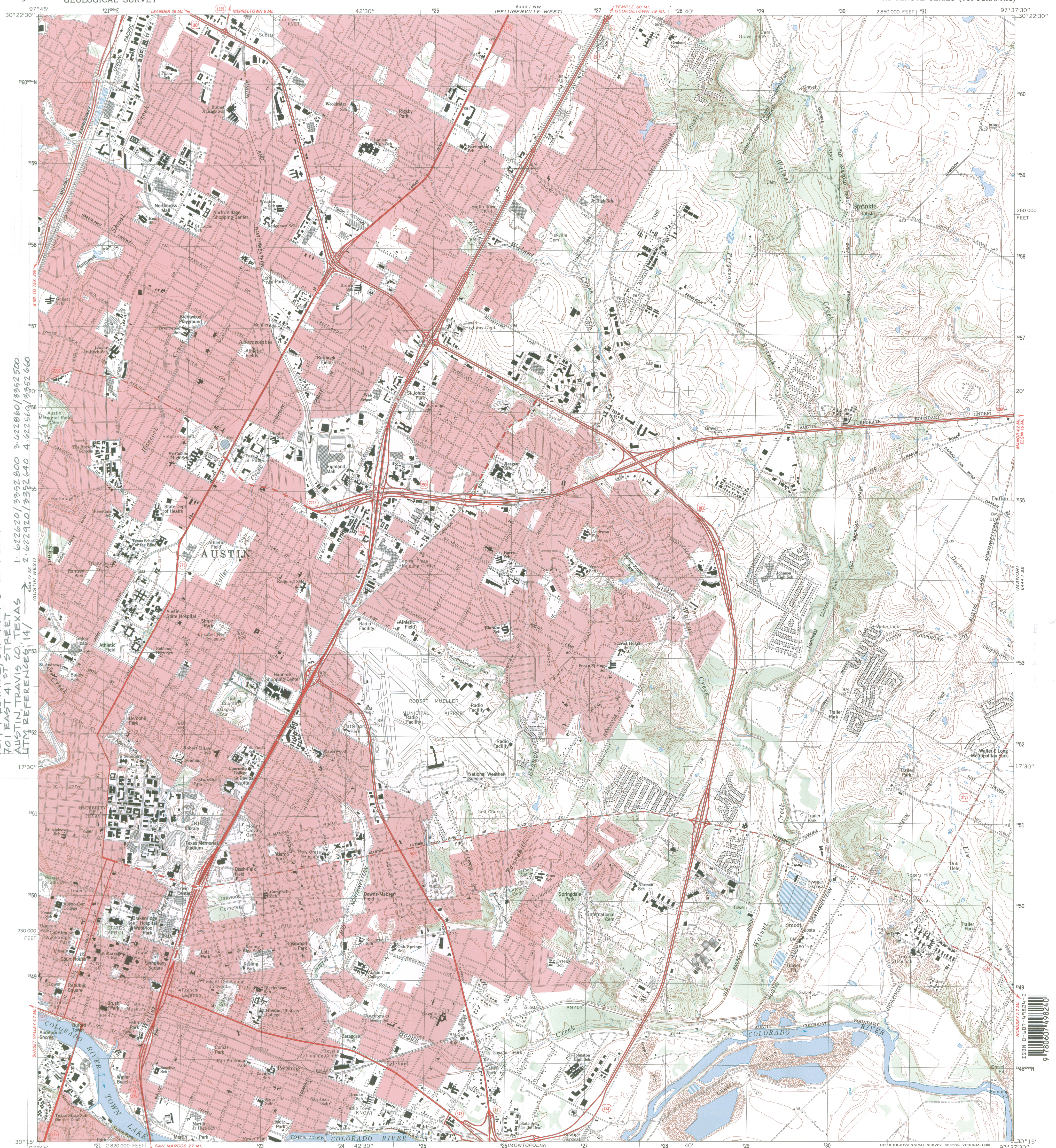
PHOTOGRAPH 7 of 8



PERRY ESTATE / ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

701 EAST 41ST STREET
AUSTIN, TRAVIS CO., TEXAS

PHOTOGRAPH 8 of 8



PERRY ESTATE/ST. MARY'S ACADEMY
701 EAST 41 ST STREET
AUSTIN TRAVIS CO, TEXAS
UTM REFERENCES: 14/

1. 622620/3352800 3. 622860/3352500
2. 622920/3352640 4. 622560/3352660

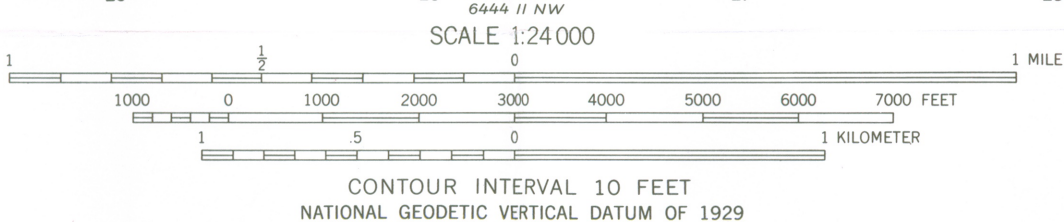
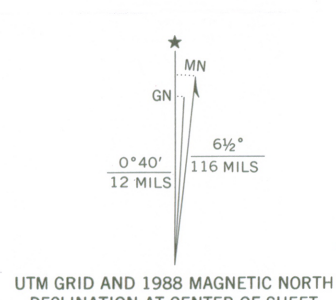
Maped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with City of Austin

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1952. Field checked 1954. Revised from aerial photographs
taken 1985. Field checked 1986. Map edited 1988

Projection and 10,000-foot grid ticks: Texas
coordinate system, central zone (Lambert conformal conic)
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 18 meters south and
28 meters east as shown by dashed corner ticks

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



3097-242

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway, hard surface	Unimproved road
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

AUSTIN EAST, TEX.
30097-C6-TF-024

1988
DMA 6444 1 SW-SERIES V882

