

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Chingua-Penn Plantation

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number N side SR 1998 .2 mi. W of jct SR 1987 N/A not for publication

city or town Reidsville vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Rockingham code 157 zip code 27323

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.)

William J. Pin, Jr. 2-15-93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of Federal agency and bureau _____

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

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
8	1	buildings
6	1	sites
8	2	structures
1		objects
23	4	Total

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

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

-0-

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Domestic: secondary structure

Landscape: garden

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

~~Recreation & Culture: Museum~~

Domestic: secondary structure

Landscape: garden

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Eclectic

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls stone

log

roof slate

other iron

Narrative Description

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

Name of Property

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Landscape Architecture
- Social History

Period of Significance

1923-1942

Significant Dates

1923
1925

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Ingalls, Harry C.: architect
Harries, William E.: landscaper
(see continuation sheet)

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Chinqua-Penn Archives

Chinqua-Penn Plantation

Name of Property

Rockingham County, North Carolina

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 22.793 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 17 6 1 68 2 5 4 0 2 7 4 2 1 0
Zone Easting Northing

3 17 6 1 6 3 6 0 4 0 2 6 9 6 0 1
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title M. Ruth Little

organization Longleaf Historic Resources date November 30, 1992

street & number 2709 Bedford Ave. telephone 919-836-8128

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27607

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

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

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

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name

street & number telephone

city or town state zip code

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

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

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Rockingham County, NC

Description

Chinqua-Penn Plantation is a 23 acre country estate located on the Wentworth Road (SR 1998), approximately two miles northwest of Reidsville, a small tobacco-related town in Rockingham County, in the northern piedmont near the Virginia border. The estate, developed by Jeff and Betsy Penn, contains a sprawling 1925 manor house, a picturesque gate lodge complex ("Lodge Group"), a Chinese pagoda adjacent to a swimming pool, a greenhouse, and extensively landscaped grounds containing a number of structures, including stone "sentry houses" along the main drive, a rustic stone bridge, a rookery, and a grape arbor. In addition to the general grounds, containing a mixture of native and planted hardwoods and evergreens, there are four distinct gardens: the formal garden, the herb garden, the rose garden, and the cutting garden. All of the buildings, structures and landscape design, which are counted as 23 contributing resources, were developed in the 1920s and 1930s. The four non-contributing resources consist of the Penns' cemetery, established in 1946 when Jeff Penn died, and a maintenance shop and two picnic shelters that are of recent construction.

C (site) 1. Landscape Design. 1923-1925.

The grounds were created gradually during the 1920s out of the cleared fields that made up the site in 1922 when the Penns acquired it. The only trees on the grounds were the pines along the Wentworth Road and a group of pines where the cemetery is now located. The overall landscape design, consisting of the lodge group adjacent to the road, the winding drive leading to the crest of the hill where the manor is located, the location of the swimming pool, and rookery, was done from 1923 to 1925 by William E. Harries, landscape architect of Buffalo, New York. The "Italian" or formal garden, rose and herb gardens, and front axis of fountain, cascade, pool and pagoda were probably the result of collaboration between the architect and landscape architect, since the entrances, windows, terraces and porches provide vistas to these areas.

All of the plant material was introduced by gardeners working under the Penns. The grounds are informally planted with a wide variety of hardwood and evergreen trees, shrubs, and flowers. Curvilinear lawns are interspersed with stands of trees and shrubbery, and a number of rustic stone benches are placed throughout the grounds. Among the trees are Chinese fir, thread-leaf maple,

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American chestnut, crepe myrtles, redbuds, oaks and hollies. The Penns had a large vegetable garden (shown on the site plan between the greenhouse and the grape arbor) that no longer exists. Just west of the grape arbor is a pecan grove consisting of a double row of old pecan trees, probably planted soon after the house was built. The earliest gardener was Warren Gordon.¹ The next was Gordon Hurleman, a Swiss-born gardener brought from Buffalo to Chinqua-Penn. He is said to have landscaped the fountain and cascade to the pool. Richard Liebscher, a German-born gardener, worked there in the early 1930s, and is said to have laid out the cutting garden.² Charles Talley, a Rockingham County native, was in charge of the gardens from the 1930s until Mrs. Penn's death in 1965.

C (building) 2. Manor House. 1923-1925.

Designed by New York architect Harry C. Ingalls and built from 1923-1925, the house is a rustic manor built in the shape of a "Y". The east and north wings, both two stories high, form the top of the "Y" and the southwest wing, the longer wing, is one and one-half stories high and forms the base. The east wing contains the reception hall and living room; the north wing is the bedroom wing, and the southwest wing contains the dining room, kitchen, service areas and servants' quarters. [See first and second floor plans, Figs. 1-2.] The rustic exterior of stone rubble walls and horizontal log walls and the broad hipped roofs of slate, with exposed eave rafters, shed-roofed dormer windows and central stone chimney stacks, blends comfortably into the rolling hills of its site. After all, the stone was quarried on the plantation, and the oak logs also came from the site. The pronounced horizontality of the design also relates the building to its site.

The design is a unique, masterful blend of native rustic materials, refined 1920s craftsmanship, and architectural artifacts salvaged from various European and Oriental countries. On the exterior stone and slate predominate, giving an overall quiet harmony that the interior lacks due to its deliberate mingling of architectural styles and historical periods. Windows are metal casements set generally in double bands, but also occurring singly and in bands of three and four. The front entrance and rear living room wall contain ornate Tudor Revival bay windows. The front bay window is an oriel, supported on a bracketed wood base decorated with a carved vine pattern and armorial crest. The large living room window has decoratively turned colonnettes between casements. The

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massive double front doors, imported from Venice, are of latticed wood with a matching segmental-arched transom screen. A variety of stone chimney stacks project from the roof, and there are several exterior end chimneys as well.

The Y shape of Chinqua-Penn allows almost every room of the north and east wings to open onto a porch or terrace, and, in fact, these wings are almost completely enclosed by porches and terraces. On the south side of the east wing, the front entrance has a stone balustraded terrace with huge flanking concrete statues of dogs, imported from Italy. Beside the entrance terrace is an engaged gallery with large-scale stone pillars and a stone floor. At the east end of the wing is another similar gallery with a fireplace set into the chimney of the gable end. Along the long north wall of the wing is a stone terrace with a balustrade (not shown on floor plan). This flows into the "Dance Terrace," made of stone, with translucent tiles in the shape of a giant "P" that was originally illuminated.³ The rear elevation (north) of the east wing, above the Reception Hall, has a recessed balcony overlooking the formal garden. At the north end of the north wing is a stone porch that connects with the master bedroom and sitting room. The sitting room actually projects at an oblique angle out from the northwest end of the north wing. Three sets of French doors in the solarium open onto a stone terrace overlooking the rose garden. This has an ornate cast-iron framework that originally supported a canvas awning (now gone). The only other exterior ironwork is a wrought-iron railing at the entrance to the north wing beside the Dance Terrace. The railing features owls and squirrels in a leafy vine, and a rooster and two fighting cats perch on top.

The interior of the house, unlike the exterior, is overpoweringly eclectic in style and opulent in detail. There is a wide variety of room shapes, from rectangular to octagonal to square to oval, indicating the influence of Baroque and Rococo forms on the overall design. The floor plan flows in a logical progression of public, private and service areas, and is said to contain twenty-seven rooms on the two main floors, but in reality has many more partitioned spaces than that. The spaces flow largely in a linear progression through the wings, from the grand stair hall, known as the Clock Hall, at the juncture of the three wings. The east wing contains the Reception Hall and Living Room, the north wing contains the Mud Room, Solarium, and master suite, and the southwest wing contains the Dining Room, Breakfast Room, and kitchen complex. On the second floor are bedrooms. The east wing contains only one bedroom, the Front Guest

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Room, located over the entrance hall, with the library located along a balcony above the living room, and the music room, known as the Velvet Room, above the west end of the living room. The north wing contains four guest bedrooms, and the southwest wing contain servants quarters.

East Wing

The front doors open into the Entry Hall, with a second set of double doors opening into the Reception Hall. Both rooms have an ornate plasterwork cove cornice and ceiling of Jacobean style. A fifteenth century Byzantine mosaic of Moses is set into a lunette above the doors. Opening off the Entry Hall are a Powder Room on the left and a men's room on the right. A small half-bath adjoins each room. The men's room is finished plainly. The Powder Room is a mirrored boudoir, with mirrored walls above the paneled wainscot, a mirrored ceiling, and mirrored doors. The room was planned as a replica of Marie Antoinette's boudoir. An Italian artist, Professor Pompeo Coccia of Rome, painted delicate, colorful Rococo floral designs on the mirrors.

The Reception Hall extends through the east wing, and has a huge picture window containing a single pane of glass that provides a vista out to the terrace and formal garden. The segmental-arched transom is painted with the Penn and Spencer coats of arms, flanked by branches of chinquapin trees. This room contains oak wall paneling that was salvaged from an early seventeenth century English country house of Jacobean style. Along the west wall is a marble fireplace with an ornate paneled overmantel with marquetry panels and caryatid figures, taken from the same house. Wide pegged oak floor boards cover the floors here and in many of the other rooms.

On the east wall of the Reception Hall, a triple-arched entrance canopy that is the most exotic architectural feature of the house opens into the Living Room. The entrance canopy is supported by marble columns with composite capitals that were apparently imported from Italy. They support round arches, set with a series of imported Spanish tiles depicting the life of Don Quixote. The canopy supports a sculptured, balustraded balcony opening off the second floor music room. The living room floor is sunken two steps below the level of the entrance hall, and a narrow marble fountain is set in the central arch.

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The Living Room occupies the remainder of the east wing, and is 55 feet long, 35 feet wide, and soars 35 feet high to the peak of the roof, with exposed heavy-timbered roof trusses. This room is the most dramatic room in Chinqua-Penn and more than matches the grandeur of the baronial hall at Biltmore Estate, the grandest private residence in North Carolina. The Penns, influenced by the Spanish Colonial Revival movement of the 1920s, intended the living room to resemble the nave of a Spanish church in proportions and finish. Although a massive bay window rises through two stories to illuminate the north wall, this vast space is rather gloomy because no direct light reaches it on the other three walls. It has a high paneled Renaissance style wainscot built of pecky cypress from Florida. Above, the walls have a rough plaster finish. The most dramatic feature is the roof trusses, which are painted to resemble a provincial Spanish church with gaily colored folk art patterns. These were painted by a Swedish artist. Chinese temple lanterns hang from the trusses. At the east end is a stone chimney that rises up to the roof peak, with a stone Italian Renaissance mantelpiece imported from Florence. An arcaded mezzanine, containing the Library, extends along the east and south walls at the second story level. The Library is lit by small dormer windows. The bays of the mezzanine have wrought-iron railings of curved Renaissance design, with torchholders at intervals along the top rail. The mezzanine continues as a narrow passageway around the east wall of the living room, behind the fireplace, to a narrow circular stair at the northeast corner of the living room, which descends into the living room. Jeff Penn called the Living Room the Music Room because the organ pipes, located below in the basement, piped music through floor ducts and filled this room with sound.⁴

Clock Hall

West of the reception hall is the stair hall, called the Clock Hall because of a French Rococo floor clock that stands there. The semicircular hall has a semicircular cantilevered wooden staircase rising to the second floor. The walls on the first and second floor are sheathed in oak paneling from the same English house salvaged for the Reception Hall. The stair railing is cast-iron, with delicately spiraled rails and a variety of decorative motifs, including the "JBP" monogram of the Penns. The ceiling is decorated in the richest coffered plaster design of any ceiling in the house. A massive chandelier from Venice hangs from the second story ceiling into the stair well. Several closets open off the

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hall, including a telephone booth closet on the first floor and one on the second that provided privacy to callers.

Southwest Wing

The Clock Hall opens into the Dining Room, an intimately proportioned oval room that forms the base of the southwest wing. The room has a set of metal French doors that open onto a stone terrace on the main (southeast) facade (also not shown on floor plan). A colonade of fluted columns opens into the Breakfast Room to the rear. Walls and ceiling have finely crafted flat-paneling made of whitewashed Swedish pine. Borders of chinquapin leaves decorate the ceiling panels. At the south end is a marble fireplace. Mirrored folding doors decorated with gold vine designs close the opening to the Breakfast Room.

The Breakfast Room is essentially a large bay that extends out into the Rose Garden, with a window wall with tiers of built-in shelving and a bank of built-in planters decorated with Roman revival plaster relief decorations. It is one of the most original rooms at Chinqua-Penn. Inspired by the decoration of Roman villas at Pompeii, the room has a mosaic floor, plaster walls painted and stenciled with gay Pompeian designs in yellow, maroon and green, and a leaded glass ceiling with recessed lighting. The glass is painted with personifications of the four seasons. All of the painting was done by Professor Pompeo Coccia, whose signature and the date 1925 are painted in one corner. The mosaic floor, the bay window, and the glass ceiling were made in New York. One of the two inner corners of the room has a delicately proportioned corner cupboard with a pedimented surround; the other has a similar surround around a narrow doorway into the service area.

The rest of the southwest wing contains service areas. Adjacent to the Dining Room is a large butler's pantry lined with original china and silver storage shelves. Off this room is a large storage closet. The next room is the large kitchen with yellow tiled walls with a blue ceiling border. At one end is a range of recent vintage with a huge range hood built into the ceiling. At the other end, a Jewett brand refrigerator, of paneled oak construction with porcelain interior, is built into the wall so that it is accessible from either the kitchen or but-

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ler's pantry. The kitchen cabinets appear to be original, and are of simple wooden construction with glass knobs.

Behind the kitchen are two narrow pantries, and at the southern corner of the wing is a servant's bedroom and private bathroom. It is simply but carefully finished with plaster walls and molded trim. A narrow hallway extends along the rear wall of this wing, connecting all the service rooms with a stair in the northwest corner to the upstairs and to the basement. At the west corner there is a small room that now contains benches and a water cooler, and an engaged porch that was originally open and was enclosed with glass after 1965. A set of steps descends from the porch to the parking area.

North Wing

The main hall of the north wing is the Solarium, entered from the Clock Hall. This impressive corridor of Renaissance design has three sets of metal French doors opening onto the terrace adjoining the rose garden. The room has a marble floor with an inset Renaissance design, marble walls, and a flat ceiling with exposed wooden beams painted in folk art designs by a Swedish artist. The entrance doors at each end of the solarium, with free-standing columns of walnut decorated with a floral design, are Italian Renaissance artifacts. Beside one of the French doors, another historic artifact, a marble relief panel depicting the life of Buddha, carved in India in the thirteenth century, is set into the wall.

The first room located off the Solarium is the Mud Room, really a den or tack room with log walls and stone floor. The Penns used this rustic room to relax after horseback riding. One end of the room has a built-in refrigerator and bar constructed from an antique carved Swedish chest. At the other end is a large stone fireplace. The ceiling has rough-hewn exposed wooden joists. Just north of the Mud Room is a full bathroom with original tile and fixtures. Beside this is a narrow stair hall known as the Back Stair Hall, with an outside entrance onto a small, recessed stone terrace. The stairs have a heavy wrought-iron railing.

A hallway leading to the master bedroom suite adjoins the north end of the Solarium. It is lined on both sides with large cedar closets concealed behind paneled walls. The hall opens to the Sitting Room, set on a diagonal axis. Corner cupboards built in three corners and a diagonal doorway in the fourth

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corner create an octagonal room. The room is decorated in the Renaissance style with plaster walls and ceiling and heavy Renaissance door and window surrounds and corner paneled cupboards. The fireplace has an antique Italian mantel which the Penns purchased in Rome, decorated with panels containing plaster relief sculpture. A door near one corner opens out to the north porch and a door in another corner leads into the Master Bedroom.

The Master Bedroom is finished like the Sitting Room, and has a plaster and wood Renaissance style mantel. The master bath and dressing room adjoin by a small hallway. The bath contains a porcelain tub, a separate tiled shower with twelve shower heads, a toilet, a bidet and a sink. Unlike the rest of the house, it is a spartan room of modern design, tiled completely with sea green ceramic tile. The large dressing room contains closets and built-in drawers which extend from floor to ceiling.

Second Floor: North Wing

The Back Stair Hall leads up to guest quarters. There are four large bedrooms along a narrow hallway, two with private baths and two which share a bath. The design of each bedroom is based on a different stylistic period and country. The northernmost bedroom is the Chinese room, which was inspired by a Shanghai residence where the Penns had stayed. The window and door surrounds, wainscot and mantel are of Chinese design, with a red, green, and black color scheme, and the doorknobs are of a green jade-like material. The doors have an applied bamboo design in the top panel and plaster relief decoration appears in the lintels of the door frames. The original silver-backed Chinese wallpaper is still in place. The bathroom, finished in green tile, continues the Chinese motif. The next bedroom, the French Room, has French provincial design, with classical woodwork, a low paneled wainscot, and a private pink-tiled bathroom. The adjacent room, the Empire Room, also has classical trim, as does the adjoining smaller room, the Italian Room. An orange-tiled bath joins the two bedrooms. The Italian Room, said to have often been used by children, opens onto the upstairs balcony off the Velvet Room.

Second Floor: East Wing

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The second floor of the east wing contains the Velvet Room, the Front Room, and the Library. The Velvet Room is adjacent to the stair hall, and is a low-ceilinged space that opens onto the rear balcony and overlooks the living room through open archways. The room is so-named because its plaster walls are covered with velvet curtains, possibly installed for soundproofing since this room houses the organ. The plaster ceiling has relief decoration of a flock of ducks in flight. Mrs. Penn donated the organ and pipes to the Reidsville First Baptist Church, but they were recently returned to Chinqua-Penn and are now being reinstalled.

Adjacent to the Velvet Room is a fifth guest bedroom, the Front Room, so-called because it is located directly above the main entrance and has an expansive view of the fountain and Chinese Pagoda out of the triple-casemented oriel window. It has classical trim and a private orange-tiled bath.

Second Floor: Southwest Wing

The second story of the southwest wing contains servants quarters. Here are four bedrooms flanking a narrow hall, a large white-tiled bathroom, and a sewing room containing a well-lit alcove and built-in drawers for linen storage. At the west end of the hall is the servant stair which descends to the first floor hall. The finish in this wing is far simpler than in the rest of the house. Floors are wooden, walls and ceilings are plaster, and doors and windows have wide plain surrounds.

Attic

The attic is reached through an enclosed staircase off the upstairs stair hall. It is an unfinished storage space that extends only above the north wing and above the Velvet Room, where a special room called the Tin Room is located. The room is lined with tin and has a heavy tin-covered door, and Mrs. Penn stored her furs and valuable clothing here. In the attic, the steel reinforcement frame, added a few years ago to support the Venetian chandelier below in the stair hall, is visible.

Basement

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The basement is reached by a stair beneath the main stair, by a stair beneath the servant's stair, and through several exterior entrances. It is a tall, subterranean space that extends beneath the entire house and is built of reinforced concrete walls. It contains a large number of separate rooms that are part of the original design, including several vault rooms with heavy batten doors for the storage of valuables, a walk-in refrigerator room, a wine cellar, a room containing two 10,000-gallon water tanks that form a water reserve system from the well, and two rooms that originally held the organ pipes, whose sound was piped throughout the house through special ducts.

The Lodge Group. 1923. This consists of an L-shaped group of four connected buildings that span the two main entrances to Chinqua-Penn. These were the first buildings constructed, and provided the building crew with experience in combining construction techniques of log and stone. Jeff Penn considered their design to be "Swiss architecture."⁵

C (building) 3. West Cottage. Picturesque 1-1/2 and 2-story log and stone cottage with a gable slate roof, interior stone chimneys, metal casement windows, and shed dormers. The interior has small rooms with corner stone fireplaces, plaster walls, and simple trim. A stone gate spanning the west entrance drive connects the east end of this cottage to the west end of the East Cottage. At the west end is a detached wing, angled to the northwest, consisting of a single large room, which apparently originally functioned as one of the laundries. The connecting breezeway contains a stone stairway with a rustic roof that leads to the upper story of the West Cottage. The Penns lived in this cottage during 1924 and 1925 while the main house was being built. Later this was used for servants quarters.

C (building) 4. East Cottage. This cottage is smaller than the West Cottage but of similar form and detailing. The first floor has always been the caretaker's quarters, and the upstairs was a separate staff apartment. A covered stone stair ascends to the upper story as part of a breezeway connecting this to the laundry.

C (building) 5. Laundry. 1-1/2-story horizontal log building with stone chinking that forms the south wall of the main gate. The entrance gate is a massive stone arch with a replacement wrought-iron gate. The laundry and the garage

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form a narrow passageway and the gate is at the inside edge of the two buildings. This building was apparently built to house the laundry; since 1966 it has contained rest rooms.

C (building) 6. Garage. 1-1/2-story vertical log building with stone chinking, shed dormers, and a polygonal hipped belfry with an iron weathervane depicting a scene from the Rip Van Winkle story. The garage has four bays, three of which still contain the diagonal batten garage doors. One bay has doors installed when the building was converted into the ticket sales and gift shop. At the north end is an addition called the Treasure Room, where some of the Penn art objects are displayed.

C (building) 7. Clock Tower. 1931. Seventy-five foot high, 3-story stone clock and bell tower consisting of a ground story containing square windows; a tall second story housing the bells, with a set of slender open Gothic arches on each elevation; and a third story containing a clock on each face. A hipped slate roof with a weathervane caps the tower. The first floor is unfinished and is said to have served as a smokehouse, and has iron hooks in the ceiling joists. The tower was built by J.S. Skambato, the Italian rock mason who constructed the house. The tower houses an Edward Howard clockworks and a J.C. Deagan tower chimes. The Penns built the tower so that they and their staff could hear the chimes as they were out farming or horseback riding on the estate.

C 8. Gate. (structure) ca. 1925. At the beginning of the main drive, near the lodge courtyard, is a wrought-iron gate with stone piers. The lower tier of the gate has the "JBP" monogram found in the stair railing of the house, while the upper has the chinquapin motif, squirrels and owls sitting among the tendrils of a vine in the same whimsical style found in the terrace railing adjacent to the back stair hall.

C 9-10. (structures) Sentry Houses. ca. 1925. At each end of the driveway is a sentry house. Each one is a narrow stone enclosure with a gabled slate roof cantilevered over the front, with a lantern hanging from the roof. These are fairly small in scale and are primarily decorative.

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C (structure) 11. Japanese Bridge. ca. 1925. The design of the arched stone bridge over the main drive just before the Rookery was inspired by a bridge which the Penns saw in Nikko, Japan. It has an openwork stone balustrade. Each bridge corner has a stone sentry house, identical to the free-standing ones described above but integral to the stone construction of the bridge.

C (object) 12. Entrance Fountain. ca. 1925. A large round basin with lead edging decorated with chinquapin branches, crafted in New York, has a stone sculpture in the center that the Penns purchased in France. It is copied from a fountain at Versailles, and represents a cupid shooting an arrow from which a jet of water rises. The driveway circles around the fountain. The landscaping of the fountain area was apparently by Gordon Hurleman.

C (structure) 13. Cascade. ca. 1925. The fountain's water drains under the driveway to a stone cascade, where it is channeled into the swimming pool. Gordon Hurleman apparently designed the cascade.

C (structure) 14. Pool. ca. 1925. The swimming pool, of cast concrete, was built at the same time or soon after the main house. It is rectangular, with a paved terrace.

C (building) 15. Chinese Pagoda. 1932. This substantial building, which serves as the pool house, faces the main house entrance, on an axis with the fountain, cascade and pool. The original pool house was a rustic log structure; while on a trip to China, the Penns decided to replace it with a pagoda. The Ingalls architectural firm researched pagoda design at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in order to design this building. It is constructed of the same stone as the rest of the buildings, and has a hipped, tile roof with up-turned corners supporting Oriental lanterns. The first story of the pagoda is a raised basement with a recessed porch that faces south, away from the main house entrance. This level was originally used as dressing rooms for the pool, and now is used for storage. The main story is an open pavilion with a balustraded walkway around all four elevations. The temple roof has authentic Chinese tiles imported by the Penns around the edge, with facsimile tiles made in New York covering the remainder. A wooden screen of posts and a frieze encloses the pavilion, and a wooden balustrade encloses the walkway. All of the wooden trim is of heavy oriental design and is painted bright red.

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The pagoda houses a Buddha that Mrs. Penn inherited from her mother.⁶ The Buddha sits in a shrine in the rear wall, inside a niche lined with ornate ceramic tile. The tile floor of the pavilion was copied in New York from a Chinese rug. The ceiling is of brightly painted coffered wood. Jeff Penn called this his summer "tea-room."⁷

C (structure) 16. Rookery. ca. 1925. South of the pagoda and adjacent to the main driveway is a series of stone pools and shrines which was called the Rookery by Harries, the landscape architect.⁸ It is sometimes referred to as the pagoda garden or as the fish ponds. The design takes advantage of the sloping topography and serves as a drainage basin for the swimming pool just on the other side of the pagoda. Two fish ponds cascade down the hill, with a stone walkway between them. The ponds are now drained. The rustic stonework of the ponds and stone walkway between them is quite picturesque. Several large pottery storage jars and a group of approximately three foot high plaster statuettes of Mexican figures (brought from the Windmill Site) stand in the nearby ivy. This area is densely shaded by evergreen trees.

C (site) 17. Formal Garden. ca. 1925. Jeff Penn called this the "Italian Garden."⁹ The rectangular garden extends from the terrace behind the living room north to a grouping of antique statuary consisting of an antique marble fountain and storage jars imported by the Penns from Budapest, and two large Renaissance style concrete urns. The side borders are planted with shrubs and flowers.

NC (site) 18. Penn Cemetery. 1946. At the north end of the formal garden, in a stand of pine trees that predate the landscaping design, are the graves of the Penns. Each has an identical simple rectangular marble plaque set flush in the ground.

C (structure) 19. Windmill Site and Root Cellar. ca. 1936. Located at the north edge of the grounds, about 100 yards north of the house, is the site of the windmill. It burned ca. 1941. Jeff Penn had wanted a windmill for many years, and had an architect design an authentic 3-story Dutch style windmill.¹⁰ It was built over a well and was intended to pump water, but did not work satisfactorily. It was converted to an exotic playhouse, with a tap room on the

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first floor, a second floor balcony, and a third floor guest bedroom. All that remains today is the stone dance terrace which encircled the windmill, a stone table and benches and a tall stone chimney with an adjacent barbecue oven. The windmill was the site of barbecues and picnics. The walkway leading from the formal garden to the windmill is lined with a row of evergreen trees and a row of four stone benches, containing a sequential arrangement of Spanish tiles depicting the life of Don Quixote on the backs of the benches.

The windmill was set on top of a large subterranean root cellar, approximately 100 feet in length, constructed of concrete walls and ceiling covered with earth. There are windows and doors in the east bank of the hillside. The inspiration for this structure came from a roof cellar Jeff Penn saw on one of his travels. Vegetables grown on the property were stored here during the winter.

C (site) 20. Rose Garden. ca. 1925. The symmetrical rose garden arranged with paths radiating from a central fountain adjoins the stone terrace outside the Solarium and Breakfast Room. Mrs. Penn said that she and Jeff planned this themselves.

C (site) 21. Herb Garden. ca. 1925. The formal grid-plan herb garden with a central rustic lattice arbor is located on the west side of the southwest service wing, adjacent to the rose garden and convenient to the kitchen area.

C (site) 22. Cutting Garden. early 1930s. Located on the west side of the house, between the herb garden and the grape arbor, this garden has serpentine paths leading out from a well house built of copper. The garden was designed by Richard Liebscher, an early horticulturist, in the 1930s on the site of the earlier cutting garden. The whimsically designed wellhouse, moved here from the windmill site after the windmill burned, has a stone base and a copper roof supported on columns of copper in the shape of stalks of cattails.

C (site) 23. Grape Arbor. ca. 1932. Along the west edge of the grounds is the grape arbor, constructed of 17 steel arches that form a long curve. The steel was brought from Greensboro. Alternating arches have fieldstone pier bases; the others spring directly from the ground. The stone piers were built by Italian mason Louis Ross, and have built-in light fixtures and occasionally have stone benches or tables projecting from them. One post has an attached stone

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planter. Scuppernong vines grew here, providing grapes for wine made in the basement of the big house. The grapevines froze in the 1950s and were not replanted.¹¹ To the east is a small orchard and the site of the vegetable garden, neither of which is counted as a separate resource.

(Greenhouse 1928)
W.H. Lutton Co.
1927-1928

C (building) 24. Greenhouse. ca. 1928. According to plaques affixed to the greenhouse, the building was manufactured by the Wm. H. Lutton Co., greenhouse builders, of Jersey City, New Jersey. Greenhouse blueprints in the Chinqua-Penn archives were drawn by King Construction Co. of North Tonawanda, New York, dated 1927 and 1928. Perhaps King Construction Company erected a Lutton greenhouse. It consists of a central 1-1/2-story stuccoed potting house and five glass greenhouse wings extending from the sides and rear. The entire complex is almost unaltered. The picturesque potting house has stucco applied to look like cake frosting and is painted a forest green to convey a naturalistic, mossy appearance. Other features of the house are a round-arched batten door, a pedimented stoop with half-timbered gable, dormer windows, a gabled slate roof, metal casement windows with original flower boxes, and copper gutters. The greenhouses are equipped with a steam heating system and hydraulically operated windows. Original wooden cabinets and work tables line the interior of the potting house. On the east side of the greenhouses are a group of four long cold frames of concrete and glass.

NC (building) 25. Maintenance Building. ca. 1985. This one-story frame, hip-roofed maintenance building, containing two vehicle bays, was constructed by N. C. State University.

NC (structures) 26 and 27. Picnic Shelters. 1970s-1980s. Two rustic wooden picnic shelters stand adjacent to the parking area, at the main entrance to Chinqua-Penn.

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Statement of Significance:

Chinqua-Penn Plantation, a twenty-three acre estate near Reidsville in Rockingham County, was created by tobacco factory heir Jefferson Penn and his wife Betsy from 1923 to the 1930s, and has been operated by the University of North Carolina system as a public attraction since 1966. The rustic stone and log twenty-seven room mansion, designed in a hunting lodge style by New York architect Harry Ingalls, holds a series of exotic period rooms of Spanish, Italian Renaissance, English Jacobean, Pompeiian, Chinese, and Classical Revival styles in which period marble columns and fireplaces, oak paneling, and relief carvings salvaged from Europe and Asia blend with reproduction paneling, plasterwork, decorative painting, ironwork, and trusswork to create a flamboyant backdrop for an extensive collection of art objects from throughout the world. The grounds contain a group of gate lodges which housed servants, a reproduction Chinese pagoda, a large greenhouse, an Italian style bell tower, and numerous formal and informal gardens. Landscape architect William E. Davies of Buffalo laid out the grounds as a picturesque complement to the rustic mansion. Chinqua-Penn is one of the few grand early twentieth-century country estates in North Carolina, and perhaps the most personal architectural statement created by any of the state's wealthy elite during the era.

Historical Background

From 1913 to 1922 Thomas Jefferson ("Jeff") Penn acquired four adjacent farms containing approximately 1,200 acres along the Wentworth Road northwest of Reidsville. The farm containing the future site of Chinqua-Penn mansion and grounds was bought from P. E. and C. M. Wilson in 1917 and contained 172.56 acres on both sides of the road.¹²

Jeff Penn was born in 1875 at Penn's Store, the son of Frank Reid and Annie Spencer Penn of Penn's Store, Patrick County, Virginia. About this time his father moved the family to Reidsville and formed the F. R. Penn Tobacco Company with his brother, S.C. Penn, to manufacture chewing and smoking tobacco. Jeff attended the local schools and the University of Virginia. Young Penn worked for eleven years as a sales representative for his father's company out of San Francisco and Shanghai, China. In 1911 the company was sold to American Tobacco Company. Unlike his brother Charlie, who became one of the key

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executives at American Tobacco Company, Jeff took a different path and became investment broker and farmer. When Jeff's sister married a Buffalo man, Jeff followed her to that city and established a brokerage business.¹³ About this time he also began to purchase land near Reidsville which he named Corn Jug Farm, where he began development of a Holstein dairy herd. Eventually Penn owned some 1,200 acres at the farm. He was known throughout the South as a pioneer of modern dairy methods.¹⁴

In 1915 Jeff married Genevieve Schoellkopf Vom Berge, who died in childbirth in 1919. In 1923, at the age of forty-eight, he married his deceased wife's first cousin, Margaret Beatrice (Betsy) Schoellkopf, of Buffalo, New York, who was forty-one. The Schoellkopfs were a prominent family who developed Niagara Falls as a power source. Jeff and Betsy were kindred spirits who shared a passion for travel and collecting art objects. In 1962 Mrs. Penn reminisced about her move to North Carolina:

The year before we were married, Jeff brought me down here and showed me this place. He asked me if I would like to live here or in a home he had on the lake shore outside of Buffalo. I, of course, knew that part of the country very well, and in the winter it is very cold and dreary; so immediately I decided that I would like to live here.¹⁵

The Penns lived in New York while the lodges were being built in 1923. Between 1924 and 1925 they alternatively lived in the West Cottage and travelled while the main house was constructed. They moved in December of 1925, but the house was not fully completed until 1926 or 1927, as blueprints were still being drawn in 1926.¹⁶ During these years they took a series of European and world tours and purchased many art objects which they had sent to Chinqua-Penn. The name is a pun based on the chinquapin (dwarf chestnut) native to the farm. (The chinquapins have since died of a blight.)

Although the Penns hired professional architects, landscapers, and artisans to carry out their plans, the estate is the realization of Jeff's personal vision. In 1922, during the planning phase, he wrote to a prospective landscaper that he wanted to create a "combination farmhouse-hunting lodge built out of rock and logs" set on on his property at the top of a picturesque knoll from which the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains is visible.¹⁷ Jeff had strongly developed aesthetics

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and a keen sense of place. He instructed Harry C. Ingalls, the New York City architect, to design a house of stone and logs so that it will "conform with that country there."¹⁸ Harry Ingalls began his architectural career as a theatre designer in New York City and later specialized in country houses for wealthy clients in such locales as Long Island and Palm Beach, Florida.¹⁹ Jeff's correspondence shows that he considered several architects before selecting Ingalls, probably because he felt that Ingalls could best embody his picturesque vision for Chinqua-Penn. The Chinqua-Penn Archives document Jeff's constant correspondence with the architect and other professionals who were designing and executing the estate. He kept track of all details of the construction from the specially-ordered bay windows, wainscoting, and ceiling moldings down to the nails and lumber. He monitored hardware placement, and personally reviewed every payroll.

Penn desired both quality craftsmanship and employment for local Rockingham County workers. His solution was to hire union laborers to oversee the local hired hands. He brought in cabinetmakers from New York, electricians from Georgia, and plasterers from Virginia. When the union electricians staged a strike to protest Penn's unwillingness to run a closed shop, Penn fired the striking workers and replaced them with others who had no opposition to his policy.²⁰

The variety of artisans who contributed to Chinqua-Penn is remarkable, and much of the correspondence and invoices documenting their contribution to the house survives in the Chinqua-Penn Archives.²¹ The stonework was done by a team of masons. Mrs. Penn recalled only one of them by name:

J. S. Skambato, the rock mason, was an Italian but I have forgotten where we found him. He was with us quite a few years. He built the house, the tower, and the windmill. He did not build the lodge. Of course the lodges are not nearly as artistic, nor as well built. But he did all the other work and much later built the dam at the lake. He was remarkable. He could pick up a stone and place it where it fitted exactly and never have to fumble around or cut.²²

Other known artisans are the McClamroch Company of Greensboro, who did the tile work, J. W. Gilman, who did the plaster, and Gilbert Murtagh, Inc., who did the millwork.²³ Professor Pompeo Coccia of Rome did the decorative painting in the Breakfast Room and Powder Room. An unidentified Swedish artist did the

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ceiling trusses in the Living Room and Solarium. The wrought-iron driveway gates, the main stair railing, the Dance Terrace railing and the railings of the Library balconies were custom-made for Chinqua-Penn. Metal worker Samuel Yellin, of Philadelphia, visited Chinqua-Penn and did some sketches in 1925, but it is not known if he actually executed any of the ironwork. The Penns did pay a large sum to the ironwork firm Stern & Matzner for unidentified ironwork.²⁴ The location of this firm is unknown. The conventionally designed cast-iron support for the awning over the Rose Garden terrace is said to be a copy of the ironwork at Jeff Penn's grandparents' home in Virginia, and to have been made in Danville, Virginia.

The blueprints of Chinqua-Penn, drawn from 1923 to 1926, indicate that the house was built as designed by New York architect Harry Ingalls except that a three-story central tower was omitted. The later construction of the Clock Tower beside the lodges perhaps satisfied this need. The interior design evolved as a collaboration between architect and clients. While the house was being built, the Penns purchased the bulk of the art objects. The whole house is a souvenir of their travels, and the tapestries, sculpture, chandeliers, furniture, mosaics and other objects were bought with the house in mind, without professional advice. The Penns bought with enthusiasm and abandon, arranging their art in an idiosyncratic, fearless way, as this 1962 interview between Mrs. Penn and Dean Merib Mossman of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro indicates.

Dean Mossman: How did you and Mr. Penn decide what you were going to get as you went about?

Mrs. Penn: Well, whatever seemed to please us. And we tried to buy things that would fit what we thought would look best in different rooms.

Dean Mossman: Did you and Mr. Penn enjoy going to antique shops wherever you were?

Mrs. Penn: Oh, very much. It got to the point when we were motoring the chauffeur would point out the antique shops to us and we would go in and look around. Sometimes we had luck and sometimes we didn't. But it was fun buying them anyway or looking them over.²⁵

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As with the architectural designs, the evolution of the landscaping was directed in every detail by Jeff Penn. He hired William E. Harries, of the firm of Harries & Hall, Landscape Architects & Engineers, of Buffalo, to draw the site plan that set the location of the main features required by Jeff: the entrance drive, rookery, swimming pool, general planting, and arrangement of frontage on the concrete highway. Jeff wanted a plan that "an intelligent gardener can interpret."²⁶ He wanted to create a picturesque landscape with clumps of trees and shrubbery which softened and blended the lodge into its site. He wanted pines and evergreens, nut and fruit trees of all types, and all types of perennials. Harries worked closely with architect Ingalls throughout the construction of the lodges and main house.

After Jeff and Betsy moved to Chinqua-Penn, Jeff combined farming with managing his own investments. He always maintained an office in Reidsville, where he had an assistant who kept track of his diversified investments. Jeff managed Chinqua-Penn Plantation, containing approximately 900 acres of farmland surrounding the estate, with the same attention to detail that he had devoted to the creation of the house and grounds. At the same time that the house was being built, he constructed the main cattle barn, which had the latest automatic milkers. For some years the farm dairy sold milk in Reidsville. Jeff experimented constantly with animal breeding and new crops, and considered his farm a demonstration farm where local farmers could learn to give up their over-dependence on tobacco and diversify into dairying, livestock, and poultry.²⁷

Life at Chinqua-Penn resembled life on an English estate. The Penns spent most of their time there and entertained lavishly. They invited people from great distances to parties, and guests often stayed for long visits. The Penns had no children and lived a life of leisure, travelling frequently and entertaining a wide range of family and guests at Chinqua-Penn Plantation until Jeff Penn's death in 1946. The Penns grew many types of unusual plants and vegetables and even made their own wine. The grape arbor was built about 1932 with stone piers constructed by Louis Ross, the last master mason employed by the Penns, and steel arches brought in from Greensboro. Scuppernong grapes were grown, and the butler was in charge of making wine. The cider mill was in the basement, where wine was fermented in wooden kegs.²⁸

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The Penns did not neglect their civic duties to the community, and were deeply involved in Reidsville business and charities. Jeff was chairman of the county Committee on Economic Development, on the county school board, and chairman of the board of the First National Bank of Reidsville.²⁹ The Penns held farm meetings and community barbecues and the annual Reidsville Community Chest kick-off parties at Chinqua-Penn.³⁰ Betsy was particularly interested in the Girl Scouts, and created the Chinqua-Penn Girl Scout Camp on a site some ten miles from Chinqua-Penn. Jeff Penn died on January 7, 1946, while on a visit to Hot Springs, Virginia.

Betsy's philanthropy continued after Jeff's death. In 1959 she gave the entire plantation to the University of North Carolina, with a life estate for herself. She established the Betsy-Jeff Penn 4-H Conference Center and Summer Camp on the original Corn Jug Farm property, north of the house on the lake which the Penns created.³¹ Betsy died on February 21, 1965, at the age of eighty-three. The house, the art collections, and the grounds were placed under the care of the University of North Carolina, Greensboro. Since 1966 it has been open to the public, and some 30,000 visitors annually have toured the estate. In 1986 management was taken over by another branch of the university system, North Carolina State University at Raleigh. In 1991 the estate was closed due to a lack of funding, and its future is now uncertain. A regional task force, Chinqua-Penn Foundation, Inc., is currently formulating a preservation plan.

Architecture and Landscape Context: Early Twentieth Century Country Estates in North Carolina

Although the working country estate created by wealthy industrialists as a show-place for their taste and collections of art was a widespread phenomenon in the United States in the early twentieth century, Chinqua-Penn is one of a handful of such estates built in North Carolina during the period. The first and most magnificent of this type of estate is Biltmore Estate [National Historic Landmark] near Asheville, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, completed in 1885 for George Vanderbilt. The 200-room mansion in an estate of 125,000 acres set the national model for theme rooms designed for the display of European art works and architectural artifacts. Vanderbilt gave architect Richard Morris Hunt freedom to express his sophisticated Beaux Arts aesthetics as applied to the Early Renaissance French

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chateaux style, and Biltmore is an impersonal architectural statement, unlike the collaborative design of Chinqua-Penn.

Early twentieth-century country house architecture in North Carolina falls largely into a national, urban framework. Key examples are Reynolda House in Winston-Salem, built 1914-1917, and Graylyn, built 1929-1932. These were the creations of wives of wealthy tobacco industrialists and express personal ideals on a grand scale.³² Reynolda and Graylyn are closer in time, concept, and social heirarchy to Chinqua-Penn than to Biltmore. Reynolda was designed by Charles Barton Keen and landscaped by Thomas Sears, leaders in the Philadelphia country house movement, and was a sixty-room stucco and clay-tiled mansion of intentionally understated Beaux Arts design that was modestly nicknamed by the family "The Bungalow." It sits on a prominent ridge and is approached by a long curving drive. The classical revival style rooms and porch areas are elegantly appointed with paneling, carving, tile and ironwork by Philadelphia artisans. Sears's landscape design contains a formal English garden, a greenhouse area, a cutting garden, and some 200 acres of wooded park land. The 1,000 acre estate, located a few miles from Winston-Salem, was intended to be a self-sufficient estate and model farm community fulfilling Katharine Reynolds's progressive vision of introducing diversified, modern agricultural methods and of improving the rural life of North Carolinians. The servants quarters and outbuildings are grouped into a complex, set adjacent to the road, called Reynolda Village. Here picturesquely designed buildings of similar design to the main house contain servants' cottages, barns, a garage, a blacksmith shop, a power plant, a post office, and other similar buildings.³³ The design of Chinqua-Penn lacks the cool restraint of Reynolda House, and Chinqua-Penn Plantation, although a model farm, lacks the broad social goals of Katharine Reynolds's program of progressive agriculture and domestic science at Reynolda.

Graylyn, constructed in 1929 to 1932 across the road from Reynolda for Bowman Gray, president of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, then the most successful tobacco company in the United States, is a mansion set on some seventy gently rolling acres embellished with an elaborate stone garage-servants quarters complex and a guest house. Designed by Winston-Salem architect Luther Snow Lashmit in the Norman Revival style and built out of native North Carolina stone, the house has an exterior severity that contrasts with the eclectic opulence of the interior, whose rooms vary from medieval to English Georgian to Turkish.

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The interior has notable ironwork by Joseph Barton Benson of Philadelphia, elaborate and extensive handpainted tile, and painted and plastered decoration by a Baltimore decorator. As at Biltmore, but unlike Reynolda, imported architectural artifacts are incorporated, including French and English medieval and eighteenth-century paneling. Thomas Sears designed Graylyn's grounds as an informally landscaped park in the English style, with a small ornamental lake (now drained), long approaches to the house, a spacious lawn planted with clumps of trees, and formal areas of terraces, pools, fountains, statuary, and shrub and flower beds.³⁴ In its exotic theme rooms and incorporation of architectural artifacts, Chinqua-Penn resembles Graylyn on a smaller scale. Like Biltmore and Reynolda House, however, Graylyn was decorated by a professional interior decorator and is a more impersonal architectural statement than the highly personal Chinqua-Penn.

Social History Context

Chinqua-Penn has statewide significance for its evocation of the life style of the leisured upper classes whose fortunes came from the large corporate tobacco, textile and utility conglomerates in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The three major tobacco industrialist families in North Carolina were the Dukes of Durham, the Reynoldses of Winston-Salem, and the Penns of Reidsville. Jeff Penn's fortune was based on his stake in the Penn family tobacco business, absorbed by American Tobacco Company in 1911. His own astute investments and his wife's fortune from her family's Niagara Falls power company allowed Jeff and Betsy to live glamorous and cosmopolitan lives. Richard J. Reynolds, of R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, and James B. Duke, head of American Tobacco Company in Durham, were principal competitors in the 1910s. Both developed huge country estates during this period. Reynolds built Reynolda; Duke's country estate was not in North Carolina, but in New Jersey. He had a magnificent 2,200 acre estate in Somerville on which he lavished time and money in horticulture and landscaping.³⁵ James B. Duke's American Tobacco Company bought F. R. Penn Tobacco Company, the company established by Jeff Penn's father and uncle, in 1911. Jeff's older brother, C. A. "Charlie" Penn, became assistant production manager in New York and perfected the blend for a new cigarette, Lucky Strike, which became one of the all-time leading brands in tobacco history.³⁶

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Jeff Penn was not an industrialist, but a gentleman farmer, and he had a much larger role in Chinqua-Penn than Reynolds or Duke had in their estates because he had the time to devote to it. Penn fits the role of the leisured dilettante rather than the industrial executive. Chinqua-Penn is comparable to Reynolda and Graylyn only in the deliberate grand scale of the architecture and the total concept of its landscaped grounds with auxiliary buildings. Chinqua-Penn is not the impersonal product of professionals, but the realization of Jeff Penn's vision of the good life in the rural South. Penn had already built one rural estate on the shore of American Lake near Buffalo, where there were gate lodges, and he apparently refined this model at Chinqua-Penn. Because he was relocating from New York, he brought professionals from there down to Reidsville to shape his new estate. Biltmore reflects the incredible grandeur of the "Gilded Age," Reynolda reflects the clarity of Beaux Arts planning interwoven with the romantic English cottage movement, and Graylyn reflects the height of 1920s ostentation. Chinqua-Penn is an elegant, highly individual memorial to the Grand Tours of the 1920s, with its exotic period rooms a blend of exquisite craftsmanship and eclectic art objects from around the world.

Jeff and Betsy Penn's eclectic taste and passion for collecting art objects and even salvaging exotic architectural antiquities from the far corners of the world were common to their social class. While the Penns were creating their cosmopolitan mansion in the 1920s, Isabelle Stewart Gardner created the Gardner Museum in Boston and William Randolph Hearst (a close friend of the Penns) created Hearst Castle in California. Harry Ingalls, who started his career as a theatre designer and went on to specialize in country houses, provided the perfect theatrical backdrop for the Penn's idiosyncratic collection of art objects. Chinqua-Penn has statewide significance as the most ebullient and theatrical embodiment of the "Roaring Twenties" in North Carolina architecture.

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Footnotes

- 1 Jeff Penn letter to W. E. Harries, October 5, 1923, "Landscaping" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.
- 2 Interview with Walter Liebscher, Reidsville, Nov. 11, 1992. Walter is the son of Richard.
- 3 Cathy Johnston interview with Charles Talley, January 1987, transcribed in "Chinqua-Penn Plantation Grounds Tour Workbook," Cathy Johnston master's thesis in Landscape Architecture, School of Design, North Carolina State University, Spring 1987, copy in SHPO file.
- 4 Guide to Chinqua-Penn Plantation, written by Jeff Penn ca. 1934, Chinqua-Penn Archives.
- 5 Guide to Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Jeff Penn.
- 6 Margaret M. Holt, Chinqua-Penn Plantation guidebook. Raleigh: North Carolina State University Print Shop, 1968, 36-37.
- 7 Guide to Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Jeff Penn.
- 8 William E. Harries letter to Jeff Penn, August 23, 1923. "Landscaping" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.
- 9 Guide to Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Jeff Penn.
- 10 Transcript of interview with Paul Schoellkopf, Jeff Penn's nephew, January 1989. Copy in Chinqua-Penn Archives.
- 11 Ruth Little interview with Charles Talley, October 28, 1992.
- 12 Rockingham County Deed Book 185, 477.
- 13 Paul Schoellkopf interview.
- 14 Lindley Butler, "Thomas Jefferson Penn," draft of entry for the Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, to be published in 1993, editor William S. Powell.

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¹⁵ Quoted in Holt guidebook, 2.

¹⁶ The last dated blueprint by Ingalls in the Chinqua-Penn archives is for the library, dated 4/10/26.

¹⁷ Jeff Penn letter to J. Van Lindley Nursery Company, Pomona, N.C., October 11, 1922. "Landscaping" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

¹⁸ Jeff Penn letter to Harry Ingalls, November 3, 1922. "Architect" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

¹⁹ Henry F. Withey & Elsie R. Withey. Biographical Dictionary of Deceased American Architects. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970, 315.

²⁰ P.J. Bell, Chinqua-Penn Plantation guidebook. Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 1987, 10.

²¹ One of many boxes of Penn business papers in the Chinqua-Penn Archives contains file folders in which the construction correspondence is separated by headings, including architect, landscape, windows, floors, plaster, greenhouse.

²² Quoted in Bell guidebook, 8.

²³ Information from the "Cost of Construction" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

²⁴ Correspondence in "Metal Work" file; accountant's report in "Cost of Construction" file, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

²⁵ Quoted in Holt guidebook, 15.

²⁶ Correspondence between Jeff Penn and William E. Harries, 1923, "Landscaping" File, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

²⁷ Newspaper clipping, ca. 1934, in Chinqua-Penn Archives.

²⁸ Ruth Little interview with Charles Talley, October 28, 1992.

²⁹ Butler biographical entry.

³⁰ Holt guidebook, 4-5.

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31 Butler biographical entry.

32 Catherine Bishir, North Carolina Architecture. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990. 445-448.

33 Margaret Supplee Smith, "Reynolda: A Rural Vision in an Industrializing South," North Carolina Historical Review, Vol. LXV, No. 3, July 1980. 287-313.

34 H. McKelden Smith, Graylyn National Register Nomination, 1977. Copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

35 Smith, "Reynolda: A Rural Vision in an Industrializing South," 301.

36 Lindley S. Butler, Rockingham County: A Brief History, Raleigh: N. C. Department of Cultural Resources, 1982, 77.

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Continuation Sheet: Item 8: Architect/Builder

Hurleman, Gordon, gardener
Gordon, Warren, gardener
Liebscher, Richard, gardener
Coccia, Pompeo, painter
Skambato, J.S., stonemason
Ross, Louis, stonemason
McClamroch Company, tilework
Gilman, J.W., plasterer
Gilbert Murtagh, Inc., millwork
Stern & Matzner, ironwork

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Holt, Margaret M. Chinqua-Penn Plantation. Raleigh: North Carolina State University Print Shop, 1968.

Interviews via telephone conducted by M. Ruth Little:

Liebscher, Walter. Reidsville, Nov. 11, 1992.

Talley, Charles. Reidsville, October 28, 1992.

Johnston, Cathy. "Chinqua-Penn Plantation Grounds Tour Workbook," Master's Thesis, Landscape Architecture, North Carolina State University, Spring 1987.

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_____. Guide to Chinqua-Penn Plantation. manuscript, ca. 1934, Chinqua-Penn Archives.

Rockingham County Deed Book 185, 477. Microfilm, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh.

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Schoellkopf, Paul. Transcription of interview conducted in January, 1989. Chinqua-Penn Archives.

Smith, H. McKelden. Graylyn National Register Nomination, 1977. Copy on file at the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

Smith, Margaret Supplee. "Reynolda: A Rural Vision in an Industrializing South," North Carolina Historical Review. Vol. LXV, No. 3, July 1980, 287-313.

Withey, Henry F. & Elsie R. Bilgraphical Dictionary of Deceased American Architects. Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc., 1970.

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Continuation Sheet: Item 10: Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries are shown on the enclosed survey map, drawn by Michael S. Nixon, October 1991, at a scale of 1" = 100'. This survey was made for the owner, North Carolina State University, to define the house grounds.

Boundary Justification

This 22.793 acre parcel contains all architectural features and landscape features that are associated with the domestic estate, as opposed to the agricultural features that occupy the remaining acreage.

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Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Rockingham County, NC

The following pertains to all photographs:

Chinqua-Penn Plantation

Rockingham County, North Carolina

Photographer: all photos are by M. Ruth Little unless otherwise specified

Date: October 1992 unless otherwise specified

negative location: North Carolina Division of Archives and History,
Raleigh, NC

Note: Some of the photographs date from 1983, but the appearance of the resources depicted has not changed. These photographs were used primarily because they are winter views and illustrate some of the resources more fully.

1. Overall from south. Michael Southern, 1983.
2. Front view from south.
3. Front view from southwest.
4. Front view from southeast lawn. Michael Southern, 1983.
5. Rear view of East Wing.
6. Living Room. Photographer unknown. Date: ca. 1986. (Publicity photograph made for North Carolina State University.)
7. Living Room entrance canopy.
8. Breakfast Room. View of window wall.
9. View from Breakfast Room into Dining Room.
10. Sitting Room. View of a cupboard.
11. North Wing hall.
12. Chinese Room. View of mantel.

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Chinqua-Penn Plantation, Rockingham County, NC

13. Lodge Group. View from northeast.
14. Clock Tower. View from west.
15. Chinese Pagoda. View from northeast.
16. Japanese Bridge. View from east. Michael Southern, 1983.
17. Gate. View from northwest. Michael Southern, 1983.
18. Greenhouse. View from northeast. Michael Southern, 1983.
19. Grape Arbor. View from south.
20. Maintenance Building. View from northeast.

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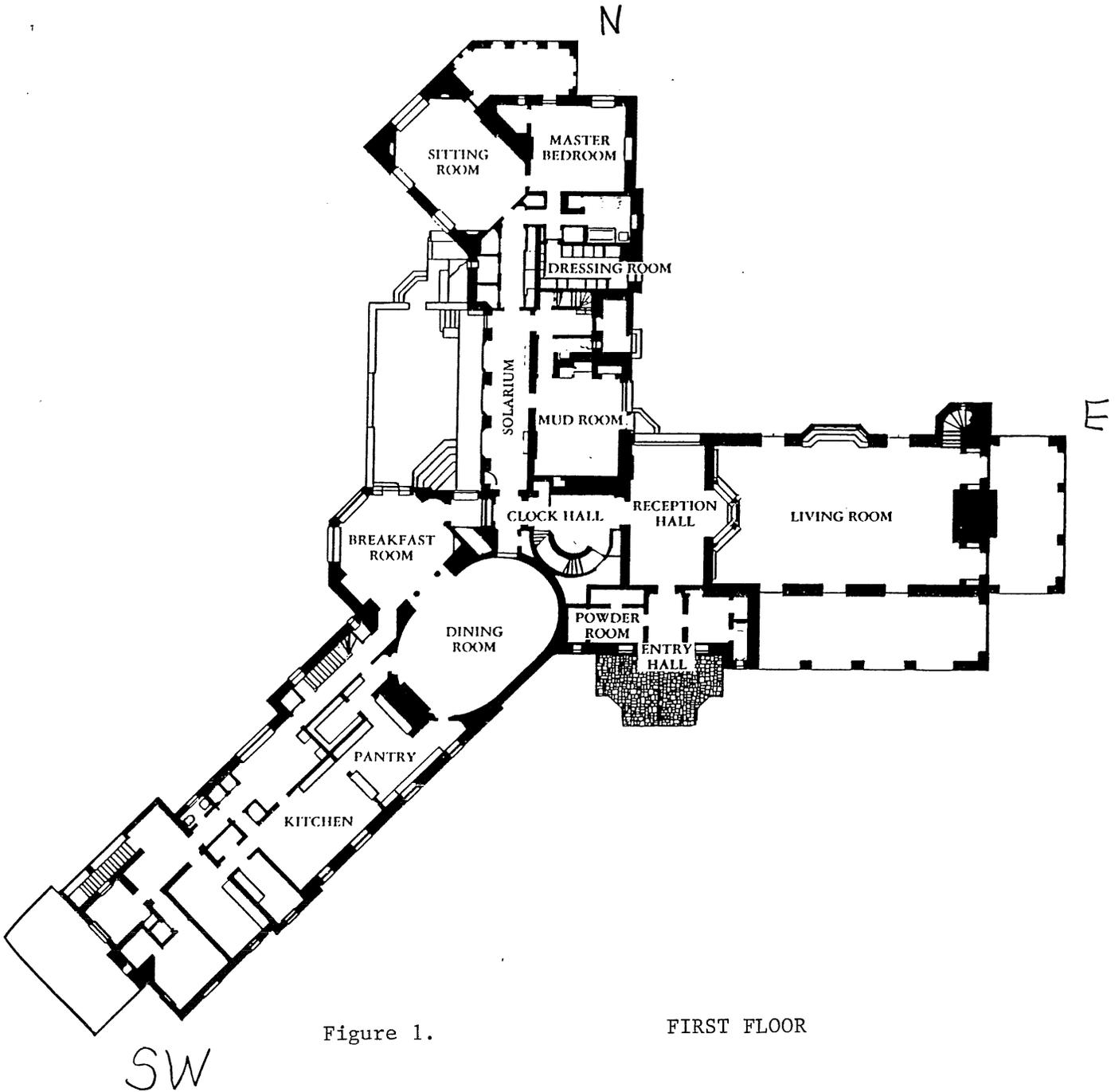


Figure 1.

FIRST FLOOR

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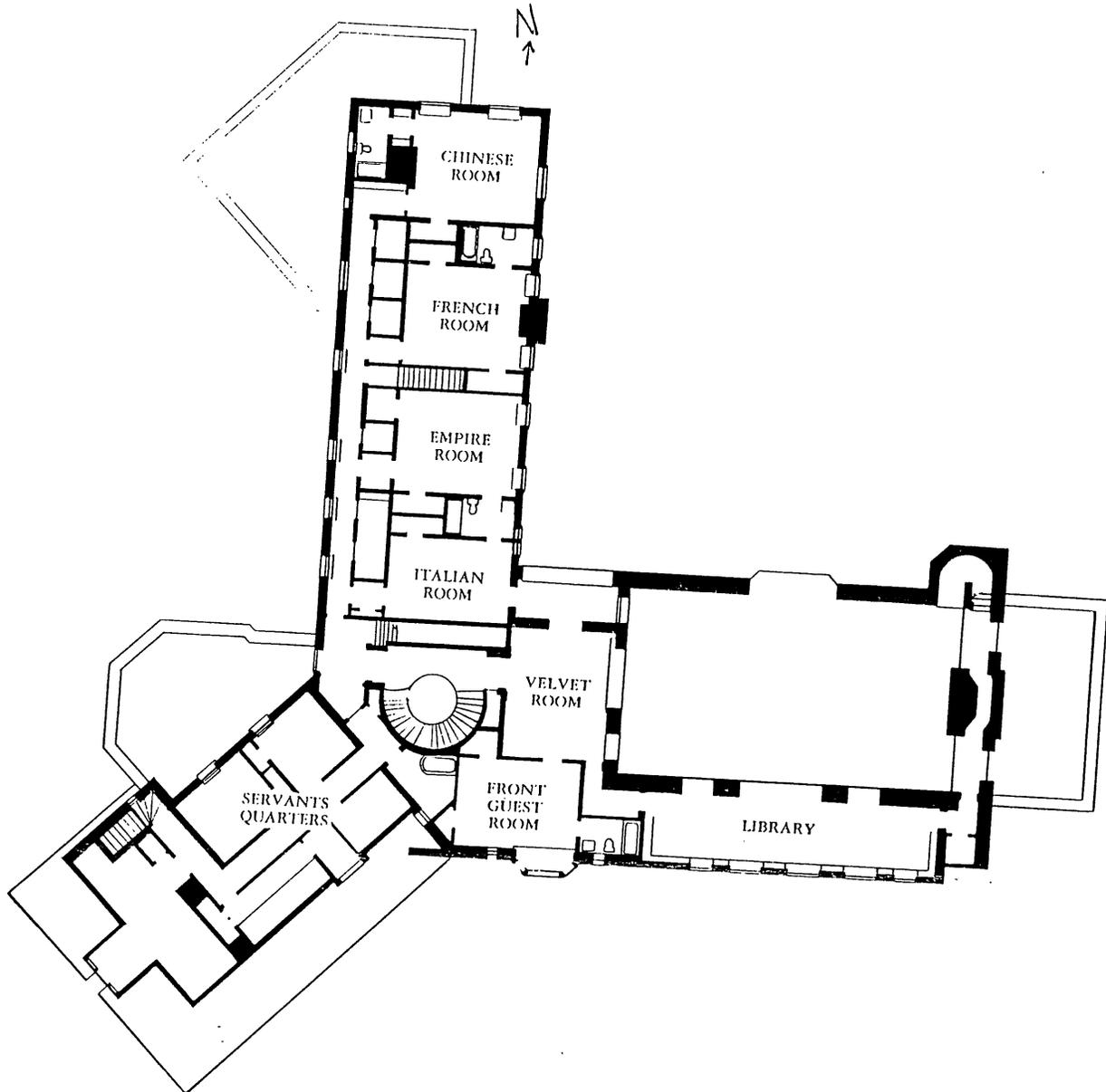


Figure 2.

SECOND FLOOR

CHINQUA-PENN PLANTATION HOUSE

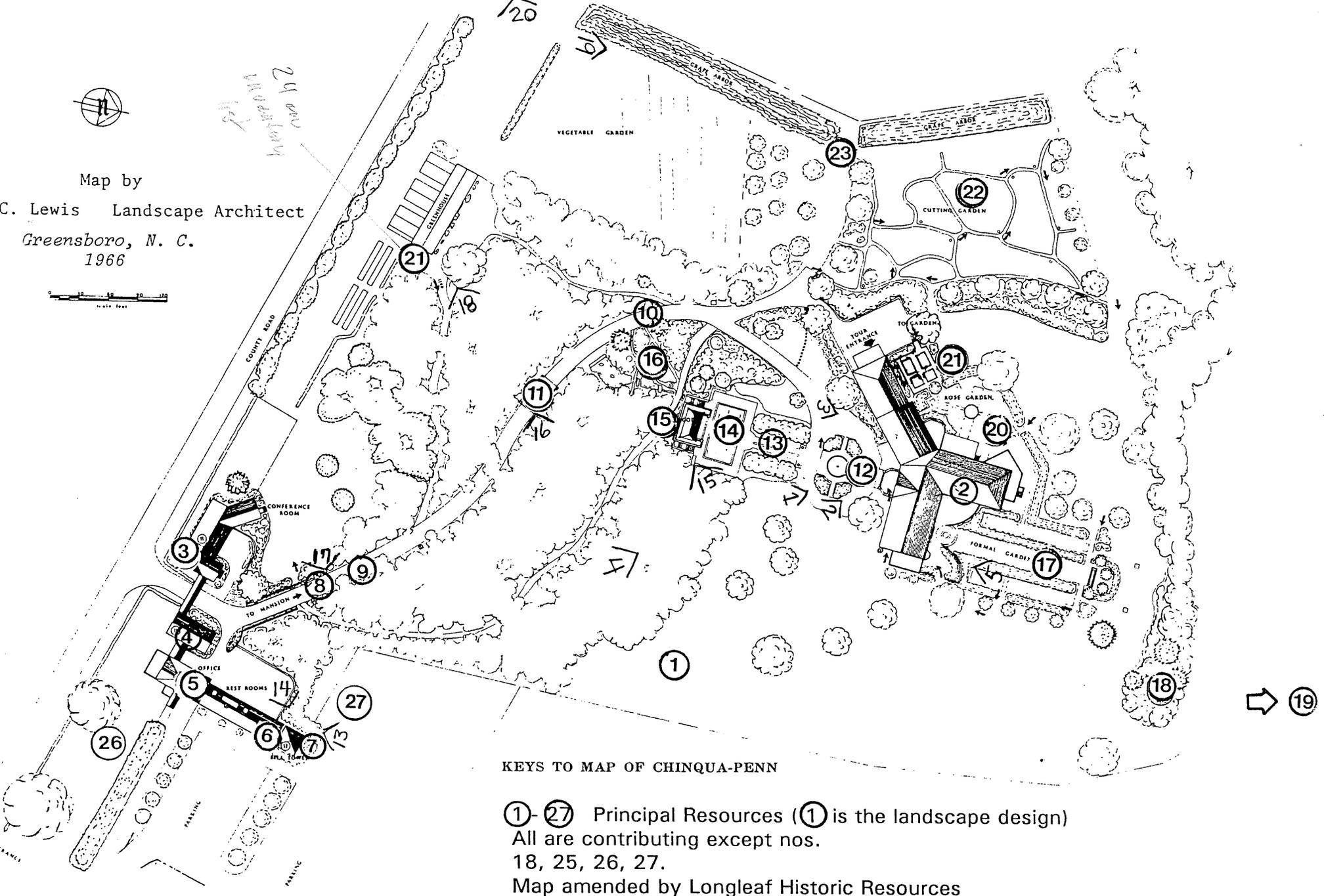
OPERATED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO



Map by
C. Lewis Landscape Architect
Greensboro, N. C.
1966



*24 over
18*



KEYS TO MAP OF CHINQUA-PENN

- ①-②⑦ Principal Resources (① is the landscape design)
- All are contributing except nos. 18, 25, 26, 27.
- Map amended by Longleaf Historic Resources
- November 1992



