

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 any 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 Rothstein, Mae and Philip, House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 912 Williamson Drive n/a not for publication

city or town Raleigh vicinity n/a

state North Carolina code NC county Wake code 183 zip code 27608

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Jeffrey A. Cross SHPO 2/25/05
Signature of certifying official Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh Associated with the
 Faculty of the NCSU School of Design, Raleigh, NC, 1948-1972

**Number of contributing resources previously
 listed in the National Register: 0**

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: domestic Sub: single dwelling residence

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: domestic Sub: single dwelling residence

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

- Modern Movement
- International Style

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Brick
- roof Other: built up with washed gravel surface
- walls Wood
- other Glass
- Brick

Narrative Description

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

See attached.

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.)

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

B removed from its original location.

C a birthplace or a grave.

D a cemetery.

E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

F a commemorative property.

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1959

Significant Dates

1959

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Architect: Small Jr., G. Milton

Builder: Walser, Frank

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Name of Property

Wake County, North Carolina
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.035 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing
1 17 712200 3964220
2 _____

Zone Easting Northing
3 _____
4 _____
____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marita H. Gilliam

organization _____ date November 29, 2004

street & number 912 Williamson Drive telephone 919 834 5800

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27608

12. 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name Marita H. Gilliam

street & number 912 Williamson Drive telephone 919 834 1891

city or town Raleigh state NC zip code 27608

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 the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Wake County, North Carolina

Description

The Mae and Philip Rothstein House, a single family, one-story residence designed by G. Milton Small Jr. in 1959, is a prime example of International Style architecture as introduced to the United States by Mies van der Rohe. Coming upon the low-slung, modern house set back on a large lot sloping upward on Williamson Drive, the passerby is surprised by its contrast to other, traditional homes in Hayes Barton, a neighborhood of graceful, winding streets dotted with substantial homes on large lots. Commissioned as the residence of Mae and Philip Rothstein, the house is sited on a slope facing south astride a one-acre lot, its eighty-foot length seeming to span the lot's width to yield an imposing presence on the slope. Towering pines and oaks protect the home from the sun's blaze in summer, while the sun passively warms the home in winter. Bountiful gardens in the rear of the property provide another visual surprise, while the grounds visible from the street feature azaleas, dogwoods, a live oak, and a thread-leaf Japanese maple.

As one approaches the house by a circular drive which follows the curve of an old stone wall, the house's basic form—a long rectangle measuring eighty by twenty-seven feet—is exaggerated by the architect's use of strong horizontal and vertical lines, reminiscent of Mies's Farnsworth House. And yet, the low-pitched, gable-front roof, not a flat roof, dominates the facade. While the gabled roof may not be Miesian, it has proved to be very practical. No water pools on the roof, and after forty-five years, the rubber membrane of the built-up roof remains impermeable.

The copper gutters on the east and west ends of the roof collect water and funnel it to downspouts. These downspouts are truncated to a mere thirty-two inches, dispersing water to the concrete splash pans below. To reinforce the facade's strong horizontal lines, the roof's soffit and fascia are wide and its overhang is three feet. The deck, which wraps the house on the south, east, and west with a narrow steel railing, both decorative and protective, provides another important horizontal line. But the roof's three-foot boxed overhang, which covers only two-thirds of the width of the deck, has given rise over time to a structural problem. The decking and the supporting joists below have rotted and are scheduled to be replaced in kind.

The vertical lines of the body of the house are emphasized by grey painted tongue and groove wood sheathing punctuated by four bays of single-pane windows and doors. The three-tiered floor-to-ceiling windows consist of a first tier of aluminum-framed horizontal sliding windows; a second tier of fixed rectangular windows; together, these two tiers reach a height of six and one-half feet; and a third tier of sloped transoms which vary in height depending on the slope of the roof, so that some of the bays soar to ten feet at the apex of the gabled roof to make a strong, vertical exclamation point. Four entry doors and two pairs of French doors are incorporated in the bays. All doors and windows are encased in simple wood strip casing. Like the front facade, the rear, north-facing facade has identical and equally strong vertical and horizontal lines, four bays, and a brick chimney almost at the center of the eighty-

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foot span. Originally, a concrete patio, accessed from the family room, linked the house to the garden. Both the east and west elevations are blind, having neither doors nor windows, except for twin tool closets on the east side which are built in flush to the tongue and groove siding.

The house's most spectacular effect is its Miesian floating appearance. Its two-inch by ten-inch joists, supported by short sixteen-inch square piers and projected beyond the foundation to cantilever the deck, make the house in its front and side elevations appear to float above the ground, while its rear, north-facing facade meets the slope at grade level. Thus, the architect designed a one-story home on a sloping lot without disturbing the topography.

Grounding the floating form is its base—a brick masonry foundation, visible under the decking, suggests a lower level, reachable by both exterior and interior staircases, neither of which is readily visible. Also grounding the floating form at the front entrance and the driveway's end are two sets of stairs, the treads of which are formed by steel pans of poured concrete. A cantilevered concrete platform linking the sets of stairs is supported by two steel post columns. Careful to not intrude upon nature, the builder poured concrete for the platform around the base of a tree which pierces the platform. Washed white gravel covers the ground around the entire perimeter of the home's foundation.

The elegant simplicity of the exterior architecture is repeated in the interior of the house. The rectangular space is divided into three zones: a central living space, a master suite on the east end, and a guest suite on the west end (Exhibit A). The living space measures twenty-six by forty-three feet and comprises living room, dining room, family room, and kitchen in one, unified volume. White walls soar to ten feet at the apex of the sloped ceiling which is made of acoustical tile. Three five-inch-diameter steel post columns support a single twelve-inch by eight-inch enclosed, sloped I-beam which bisects the ceiling longitudinally, thereby supporting the roof. Originally, white vinyl tile covered the floor, but the installation of wall to wall carpet in 1979 marred the tile, making it unsightly to expose at present. The window bays dominate the space. The present owner has removed all draperies to provide views of garden and woods, in keeping with the architect's intention of integrating the interior and the exterior. The design of the house and its setback from the street permit those on the inside to look out without the disadvantage of those in the right-of-way looking in.

Throughout the living area and master suite, walnut paneling, reminiscent of Mies's use of it in the Farnsworth House, is proportional to the bays. None exceeds the six-and one-half-foot height of the fixed portions of the windows. The sloped ceilings are employed throughout the house, except for the inner hallways which are six and one-half feet in height.

Economy of design, based on the Miesian ideal, substitutes furniture and cabinet placement for floor-to-ceiling interior walls in the central living area. The more formal living area features seating around

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Mae and Philip Rothstein House
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the focal point of the fireplace. It is brick, painted white, and soars from the raised hearth to the ceiling. Above the fireplace, a decorative copper hood added in 1979 is similar in appearance to the functional hood which Milton Small designed, tested, and used in his own home's fireplace design.¹ Like all family rooms, the family area, in the northeast portion of the central living space, features seating and television, but by removing a pair of chairs, the entire living area becomes one.

The dining area performs its function. However, the original west wall-hung sideboard has been removed, and the west half wall on which it hung has been extended to ceiling height. So, too, one of the supporting post columns in the dining room has been enclosed by the formation of a short wall at right angles to the west wall. On the west wall's other side, which is the main entry hall, another wall-hung cabinet has also been removed.

The all-electric kitchen, part of the central volume, is treated as a piece of furniture, its cabinets adding to the richness of the space. These cabinets provide an abundance of storage and serve to divide the space: a six-and-one-half-foot-tall by seven-and-one-half-foot-long by one-and-one-half-foot-deep walnut unit features storage cabinets on its kitchen side and a china and linen cabinet on its dining side. A three-and-one-half-foot-tall by fourteen-foot-long by three-foot-deep walnut bar separates the kitchen from the family room and features china cabinets (their interiors painted Chinese red) on the family side and storage, double sink, and dishwasher on its kitchen side. Housed in the walnut bar on the kitchen side are a pull-out stand for an electric mixer or food processor and a cutting board, disguised as a drawer. Another walnut unit—six and one-half feet tall by eleven feet long by two feet deep—separates the south-facing work space from the basement staircase and houses the refrigerator, stove, range, and storage cabinets. While the overall dimensions of the kitchen—eight feet by nineteen feet—suggest a narrow area, the design of the custom-made cabinetry permits an open, spacious feeling. A final set of walnut cabinets—six and one-half feet tall by six feet long by two feet deep—added in 1979 on the east wall of the kitchen, features a wet bar, more storage cabinets, an icemaker, and a wine cabinet. The cooktop and its custom-made hood, the two-bay sink, and the oven are original. Flooring is black ceramic tile, and white laminate countertops are used here and in the bathrooms. Finally, a vertical, white laminate panel trimmed in walnut and linked at right angles to the cooktop cabinet by dowels, conceals the basement stairwell from the dining area.

The second volume, the master suite on the east side of the house, is accessed from a small hallway, which also provides entry to the powder room off the family area, and features white plaster walls, sloped ceiling, wall-to-wall carpet, and an entire north wall of windows. Opposite that window wall is a wall which is walnut-paneled to a height of six and one-half feet which divides the space between bedroom and bath and dressing rooms. The Rothsteins chose to place twin beds against the north-

¹ June V. Small (Mrs. G. Milton Small Jr.), interview by author, 912 Williamson Drive, May 4, 2004.

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facing window wall for bedtime viewing of a TV and speakers built into the upper, white-plastered area above the south-facing paneled wall. On the bathroom side of this wall are multiple cabinets for linen storage, including a hamper. One gains access to the bath and dressing rooms via walnut doors at either end of the walnut-paneled wall. Divided by the shared water closet and unusually large (five foot by five foot) shared shower, his and her bathrooms provide dressing and closet space as well as privacy and warmth, for the black-tiled ceramic floor features radiant heat. The bathroom sinks and walnut vanities are original, as is the vanity lighting which surrounds the mirrors. All fixtures, toilet, and shower are original to the house, although the shower's translucent glazed walls facing the two bath areas have been replaced with transparent, tempered glass. Another bay of windows, facing south and containing a set of French doors at each end of the outer clear glass wall of the shower, opens onto the deck and fills the space with light.

Like the master suite on the east side of the house, the guest suite on the west side features white plaster walls and sloped ceilings, but also features hardwood floors. The suite is entered from the living space via a small hallway which opens onto the two bedrooms and the guest bath. The bathroom contains all of its original fixtures, white ceramic tile, and white vinyl tile. The bedrooms are small, each having one window bay in its three-part configuration.

In summary, the interior of the house is consistent with the exterior architecture. It features sloped ceilings, three-tiered window bays, entry and closet doors with casings, hallway doors without casings, simple two-inch baseboard moldings throughout, no ceiling moldings, and two hallway storage closets which are painted Chinese red on the interior. There is no attic. The half-basement houses the laundry and utility functions. Lighting fixtures are original, except in the dining area.

A single addition has been made to the house since it was built in 1959. In 2001, the present owner, using Umstead Construction as designer and builder, added a porch at the rear of the house in the patio area. Using the original plans to design the addition, Gary Umstead pointed out that a screen porch had been drawn as part of the deck but never built. The architect had built a large screen porch in his own house, using it as an outdoor living space, as David R. Black described in National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Small House.² Following precisely the horizontal and vertical forms of the original house plans, the builder incorporated the foot-high brick masonry wall which separated patio from garden. The porch's built-up sloped roof, its grey-painted exterior, and white-painted interior

² David R. Black, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, "Small House," Raleigh, North Carolina, July 26, 1994, Sec. 7, page 2.

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with natural concrete floor, continue the use of materials of the original structure. Milton Small himself emphasized the importance of the porch: "Nobody sits on their porches any more," he once said wistfully.³

Otherwise, the house is as built, and the owner has taken care to retain all architectural elements of the original design. The condition of the house is excellent, with the exception of the decking and joists which are in need of immediate replacement.

³ G. Milton Small Jr., "Attention to Detail, Love of Simplicity Small's Hallmarks," interview by Steven Litt, *News & Observer* (November 3, 1985): 10H.

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Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Wake County, North Carolina

Summary Statement of Significance

The 1959 Mae and Philip Rothstein House is the work of G. Milton Small Jr., advocate of the International Style who was instrumental in its spread in North Carolina during the 1950s and 1960s. As a student of Mies van der Rohe, he used the modernist vocabulary in all of his work, receiving a dozen awards for commercial and residential work in the course of his career. In 1963, he was made a fellow of the American Institute of Architects. The Rothstein House is a prime expression of Miesian ideals and fulfills the requirements of Criterion C by embodying the aesthetic achievement of a master as a distinctive example of the modernist period. Small deliberately revealed the Miesian philosophy for all to see: use of vertical and horizontal planes to define form; exposure of its structure through the use of steel posts; clear definition of base, body and roof; integration of outdoors and indoors via large window walls; and use of rich interior finish materials. The Rothstein House also satisfies the requirements of Criteria Consideration G, for the less-than-fifty-year-old dwelling has been widely recognized as a significant and largely intact residential design by a leading master of modernism in North Carolina. Its architectural context has been documented in the multiple property documentation form, "Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh Associated with the Faculty of The North Carolina State University School of Design in Raleigh, North Carolina," prepared by David R. Black and accepted by the National Register in 1994.

Historical Background and Additional Context

Early in the twentieth century, the city of Raleigh, like many other urban areas, began to expand into the suburbs, aided by the streetcar. Escaping the grit of the city with its poverty and minorities, the prosperous wanted home ownership and became customers of enterprising developers who were turning farmland into neighborhoods. The streetcar enabled these new homeowners to forsake the horse and buggy as they commuted to their downtown offices. By 1912, Carolina Power & Light Company extended the Glenwood Line to Bloomsbury Park, an amusement park near the present Carolina Country Club. Neighborhoods for both the middle- and upper-classes sprung up along Glenwood Avenue, including Bloomsbury, Georgetown, Vanguard Park, Roanoke Park, and Hayes Barton. Hayes Barton was designed by Earle Sumner Draper, the "preeminent New South landscape architect" who had just completed the design of Charlotte, North Carolina's Myers Park. Platted in 1920, Hayes Barton was laid out to include Draper's "signature elements. The roads are fitted to the contours of the land, creating opportunities for small park areas, often in the street medians. The roads follow the lower land leaving the hillsides for the houses and the trees and vegetation that linked the design to nature."⁴

⁴ Sherry Joines Wyatt et. al., National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historical and Architectural Resources of the Five Points Neighborhoods, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1913-1952," November 8, 2001, Sec. E, 9.

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The history of The Rothstein House begins with the subdividing of the old Bunn estate, a property which sits astride the corner of Iredell and Williamson drives in Hayes Barton. In 1923, the graceful knoll attracted Mr. and Mrs. J.W. Bunn, whose family of five children had outgrown their home in Cameron Park. Built in 1924, the Bunn estate consisted of five acres with an Italian Renaissance house sited facing the corner of Iredell and Williamson. "It was the first house on Iredell," Julian W. Bunn Jr. declared. "There were no paved streets, no water lines. We were in the country . . . Williamson Drive was a cart path from Glenwood to Oberlin . . . for horse and wagon going to and from work." But the Great Depression had its effect on the Bunn finances and "back in the thirties when we needed the money, my father sold that corner off, a part of which was the tennis court. By that time we had stopped using it," Julian Bunn explained.⁵ A stone retaining wall is all that remains of the tennis court.

The subdivided lot was sold and resold a number of times until 1958 when Philip L. and Mae S. Rothstein purchased it from Israel S. and Bertha N. Rubenstein of Greensboro, North Carolina.⁶ Robert Rothstein, Philip's younger brother, recalls that Sam Rubenstein (later Ruby) was the owner of Raleigh Wholesale Jewelry and a family friend. Philip was one of three sons of Henry Rothstein who emigrated from Lask, Russia, in 1904 following a pogrom. The brothers Philip, Al, and Robert founded the firm Southeastern Radio in Raleigh in 1939: "We were brothers, and we were partners," Robert said. "If someone [one of the brothers] bought something they liked, they bought three."⁷

One Saturday evening in 1949, Robert and Marion were dining at the Bon Air Club on Western Boulevard, when Marion introduced herself to a couple seated by themselves near the dance floor. It was Milton and June Small, recent transplants from Chicago. At the time, Small was working for William Henley Deitrick, a prominent Raleigh architect. "I want to get into practice myself," Milton confided. "What a coincidence!" Robert responded. "I've got a lot."⁸ Thus began an architect-client relationship which eventually included all three brothers.

G. Milton Small Jr. was the son of traveling salesman George Milton Small and Elsie Sigmon Small and was born in Collinsville, Oklahoma, in 1916. As a typical boy, he built things, most notably a roller coaster incorporating the roof of the garage of his childhood home. "He always wanted to be an architect," his widow June V. Small recalled during a visit to the Rothstein House. "His mother encouraged him," she said, as she encouraged his sister who became a world renowned concert pianist. The family moved to Norman where Milton graduated from its public high school and then went on to architecture and engineering at the University of Oklahoma, where Henry Kamphoefner was an

⁵ Julian W. Bunn Jr., telephone interview by author, April 22, 2004.

⁶ *Wake County Register of Deeds*, Book 1310, Page 18.

⁷ Robert I. and Marion R. Rothstein interview, 204 Kelso Court, Cary, North Carolina, April 24, 2004.

⁸ *Ibid.*

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assistant professor of architecture. “They didn’t get along,” June V. Small recounted. Strong egos clashing over architectural issues, “They didn’t speak.”⁹

Following graduation, Small practiced architecture in Norman and Washington, D.C., and when World War II broke out, he volunteered in the U.S. Navy, “having trouble getting in because of eyesight,” his widow recalls. As an ensign, Small was assigned to the Sea Bees, a construction battalion, and was sent to Okinawa as part of a support team shortly after the Allies’ invasion. Returning to Norman, Oklahoma, after the war, he joined Joseph Boaz to form an architectural practice.¹⁰ Then, with the help of the G. I. Bill, he went to graduate school in Chicago, studying at the Armour Institute, now Illinois Institute of Technology, under Mies van der Rohe. Small took Advanced Architecture I and II, Theory of Dwelling and Housing, and Theory of City Planning.¹¹ No doubt Mies’s weak English limited his lecturing, but his teaching style was thoroughly European:

Already, the assumption of the curriculum was that the students must first master its ideas before challenging them . . . Mies rejected the American tradition of the university as a testing ground for the ideas of students. He did not believe that the students could possibly be in a position to doubt and criticize until they had mastered for themselves the logic of the method and system he proposed.¹²

Small, the student of Mies, had surely matured since his undergraduate days when he argued with Kamphoefner. In 1947 after graduate school, Small joined the Chicago architectural practice of Perkins and Will, architects “with a conscience,” June V. Small remembers.¹³ But when Henry Kamphoefner, who in 1948 had become dean of the newly established North Carolina College School of Design, suggested to William Henley Deitrick, the leading proponent of modern architecture in Raleigh and the head of the North Carolina AIA, that he hire Small for Deitrick’s growing architectural practice, Milton and June Small’s future was determined.¹⁴ Deitrick offered the job to Small, and Perkins and Will asked, “What would it take to keep [you]?” Small, in his plain-speaking style, replied, “Nothing.” The harsh climate, not architectural issues, was the motivation for the Smalls to make the move, June V. Small recalls.¹⁵ However, Small did have reservations about joining the Deitrick firm. In a letter to

⁹ June V. Small interview.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Rolf Achilles et. al., *Mies van der Rohe, Architect as Educator*. Catalog for the exhibition: Mies van der Rohe Centennial Project. Chicago, Illinois: 1986, 154, 163.

¹² *Ibid.*, 62.

¹³ June V. Small interview.

¹⁴ David R. Black, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, “Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh Associated with the North Carolina State University School of Design, Raleigh, North Carolina, 1948-1972,” July 26, 1994, Sec. E, page 32.

¹⁵ June V. Small interview.

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Kamphoefner, he registered his doubts about Deitrick's dedication to modern architecture: "He [Deitrick] was also quite frank that he would not turn down a commission just because the client insisted on a Georgian edifice."¹⁶

Milton Small's most important contribution to North Carolina architecture was his advocacy of the International Style. That was the reason he was recruited by Deitrick, who "carried on a wide and diversified practice, training several generations of young architects" in the old Raleigh Water Works tower.¹⁷ In 1948, Small, as "architectural designer," began designing the new, modern Carolina Country Club, the previous building having been destroyed by fire. Using the Miesian vocabulary, the new clubhouse featured clearly demarcated base, body, and roof—a foundation of native stone masonry and buff brick, exposed steel beam posts, floor to ceiling glazing, and a flat roof.¹⁸

Small stayed with Deitrick for little more than a year and in 1949 opened his own practice. His first solo commission was the Robert Rothstein house, a modest, hipped-roof, one-story dwelling at 2337 Churchill Road in Raleigh. As Robert remembers, "Milton liked the lot because its front faced north and the back faced south." Small suggested building the house with glass across the rear so the sun would warm the home in the winter. Robert admired the architect very much: "The beauty of Milton [is that] . . . whatever he does is extremely functional." A later addition to the house designed by Small for Robert's aging parents included a flat-roofed, cantilevered wing. Small also designed a home for his own family using the Miesian vocabulary: distinct architectural divisions of base, body, roof. Set on a brick masonry base, the body of the structure features floor to ceiling windows on the east-facing side, augmented by a screened porch cantilevered over the foundation. The three other sides of the house are sheathed in Weldtex exterior plywood and feature grouped casement windows in a three-tiered vertical arrangement. A masonry staircase and cantilevered platform with steel railings permit easy access to the courtyard and entry. The house, built in 1951, was the architect's laboratory for architectural design, and Small made a number of additions to it in 1961.¹⁹

Nevertheless, Small's primary focus was the design of commercial and institutional buildings. It was here that Small employed the International Style so fitting to industrial use, and it was industrial work which provided income for the fledgling architectural firm. Small augmented his income in the early 1950s by becoming a part-time faculty member of North Carolina State College's School of Design. However, it appears that he taught for only one semester, winter 1951-52. Small had been licensed to

¹⁶ David R. Black, "Early Modern Architecture...." Sec. E, 32.

¹⁷ C. David Jackson and Charlotte V. Brown, *History of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, 1913-1998: An Architectural Heritage*, Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Chapter, The American Institute of Architects, 1998, 179.

¹⁸ "Carolina Country Club," *Progressive Architecture*, Volume 32 (October 1951), 84-85.

¹⁹ David R. Black, "Small House," Sec. 7, page 2.

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Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Wake County, North Carolina

practice architecture in North Carolina in 1949 and had joined the AIA North Carolina Chapter in 1952.²⁰ Reuniting with his old partner, he formed Small & Boaz in 1955, but by 1960 it dissolved.²¹

As the years passed, Small's work and reputation grew, culminating in a fellowship in The Institute of American Architects in 1963. In total, he received ten Awards of Merit from the AIA.²²

The residence of Mae and Philip Rothstein won additional awards: it was chosen by *Architectural Record* as "One of Twenty Best Homes in the United States in 1960."²³ It also was the only Small-designed residence (and one of only three modernist houses) listed in *North Carolina's Capital: Raleigh*, a volume dedicated "to light torches in imaginative and discriminatory preservation."²⁴

No doubt the collaboration of the Rothsteins and their architect enabled these honors. Mae Rothstein was involved in the design of the home from the beginning. She selected the lot with the help of her sister-in-law Marion, who knew that Mae wanted to live in Hayes Barton.²⁵ Mae reportedly had excellent taste, as reflected by her background in the fashion industry. She was born in 1914 in Durham, North Carolina. Her first marriage, to William Spencer, ended in divorce but produced a son, William J. R. Spencer.²⁶ He and his mother moved to Raleigh's Cameron Village neighborhood in the early 1950s when Mae was offered the opportunity to open a millinery department in Ellisberg's, a high-fashion ladies apparel shop in downtown Raleigh. Often on Saturday afternoons, the Rothstein brothers would go shopping on Fayetteville Street, stopping in at McJoseph's and Ellisberg's where Morty and Chickey Ellisberg introduced Philip to Mae. Courtship followed, and after they married in 1956, the Rothsteins made plans to build a house. Coincidentally, the Smalls knew Mae when they were neighbors in Cameron Village, June V. Small remembers, but it was Robert Rothstein's influence and his own Small-designed home that convinced Mae and Philip to use Milton Small.²⁷

²⁰ David R. Black, "Early Modern Architecture in Raleigh," Sect. E, page 32; and C. David Jackson and Charlotte V. Brown, 179.

²¹ Kim Weiss, "Remembering G. Milton Small, FAIA," Talk of the Triangle, *Spectator* May 14, 1992, 3-4.

²² According to notes supplied by June V. Small, the Awards of Merit were for: Nuclear Laboratory and Research Building, North Carolina State College, Raleigh, 1952, Gregory Poole Equipment Company, Raleigh, 1956, The Mr. and Mrs. G. Milton Small Residence, 1957, Home Security Life Insurance Company, Durham, 1959, The Mr. and Mrs. J. Gregory Poole Residence in association with George Matsumoto, 1960, Classroom and Administration Building, Atlantic Christian College, Wilson, 1961, The Mr. and Mrs. Philip L. Rothstein Residence, 1962, National Headquarters Building, American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists, Research Triangle Park, 1965, Northwestern Mutual Insurance Company, Raleigh, 1969, and Branch Bank and Trust Company, Fayetteville, 1970.

²³ "Open Plan, Strong Lines in Graceful Combination," *Architectural Record's Houses of 1960: (Mid-May 1960)*, 100-102.

²⁴ Elizabeth Culbertson Waugh, *North Carolina's Capital: Raleigh*, Raleigh, N.C.: The Junior League of Raleigh, Inc., 1967, Preface, v.

²⁵ Robert and Marion Rothstein interview.

²⁶ William J.R. and Carolyn Spencer interview by author, 912 Williamson Drive, May 15, 2004.

²⁷ Robert and Marion Rothstein interview.

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Selecting a modern design for a home to be built in tradition-bound Hayes Barton took courage. Philip “had visions beyond most men,” according to his brother Robert, and Mae always “wanted to do things differently,” Carolyn Spencer recalls.²⁸ The couple was comfortable in making an architectural statement. Mae was responsible for the selection of the interiors. No doubt she endorsed the Miesian touch of rich, exotic woods, for she was very “concerned that the walnut paneling’s grain carefully matched” in each application to the cabinetry. She was equally concerned about the foundation’s white, washed stones, prodding the builder, Frank Walser, to use extra heavy polyurethane film under the stones to prevent weeds from growing up, her son recalls.²⁹ Mae “requested a clean, crisp house, a black and white house, including the white vinyl floors used throughout with which she is very happy.”³⁰ The black touches in the interior consisted of three black post columns, black tile in the master bathroom, and black refrigerator and oven. The current owner has modified the color scheme somewhat, using light grey, black, white, silver, and beige.

Indeed, Mae Rothstein was a perfectionist. Even her own family could not enter her home without first removing their shoes, Bill Spencer remembers. She was so meticulous that she was her own housekeeper, according to Marion Rothstein. “She wouldn’t leave the house to grocery shop, go to the beauty salon . . . go anywhere without wiping the last water spot off the stainless steel sink,” Bill Spencer said. Having chosen a black and white house, Mae added the color red for accent and featured it in Chinese red silk grass cloth on the west wall of the living area and in the interiors of the china and linen cabinets. She was “excellent at putting things together,” Carolyn Spencer commented, characterizing her as a “bubbly” personality who made a statement both in the home and in her fashion sense.³¹

Happily married for twenty years, Mae and Philip Rothstein died within six weeks of each other in 1976. Although Mae was diagnosed with colon cancer two years before her death, Philip must have believed that he would die first, for his intention that he “give and bequeath to my wife, if she survives me, absolutely and forever, all the rest and residue of my Estate” failed to convey. Two interim

²⁸ *Ibid.*; Spencer interview.

²⁹ Spencer interview.

³⁰ Architect’s Note, n.d., on file in Small/Kane Architects, provided to author by photocopy.

³¹ Spencer interview.

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owners, The Crossland Company and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Williams III, occupied the house until 1981, when the present owner purchased the property, residing in it to this day.³²

³² *Wake County Register of Deeds*, Book 2494, 140, Book 2494, Page 144, Book 2704, Page 581, Book 2951, Page 929, and Book 3211, Page 86.

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Rothstein, Robert I. and Marion R. Interview at their residence, 204 Kelso Court, Cary, North Carolina, April 20, 2004.

Small, G. Milton III. Interview at Small/Kane Architects, 3105 Glenwood Avenue, Raleigh, North Carolina, April 21, 2004.

Small, June V. (Mrs. G. Milton Small Jr.). Interview, 912 Williamson Drive, May 4, 2004.

Spencer, William J.R. and Carolyn. Interview, 912 Williamson Drive, May 15, 2004.

Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundaries of the Mae and Philip Rothstein House nomination encompass all of parcel 2995 as shown by the bold line on the accompanying Wake County Orthophotographic Map #1704.10 drawn at a scale of 1 inch = 100 feet.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Mae and Philip Rothstein House nomination include all of the original lot on which the house was constructed.

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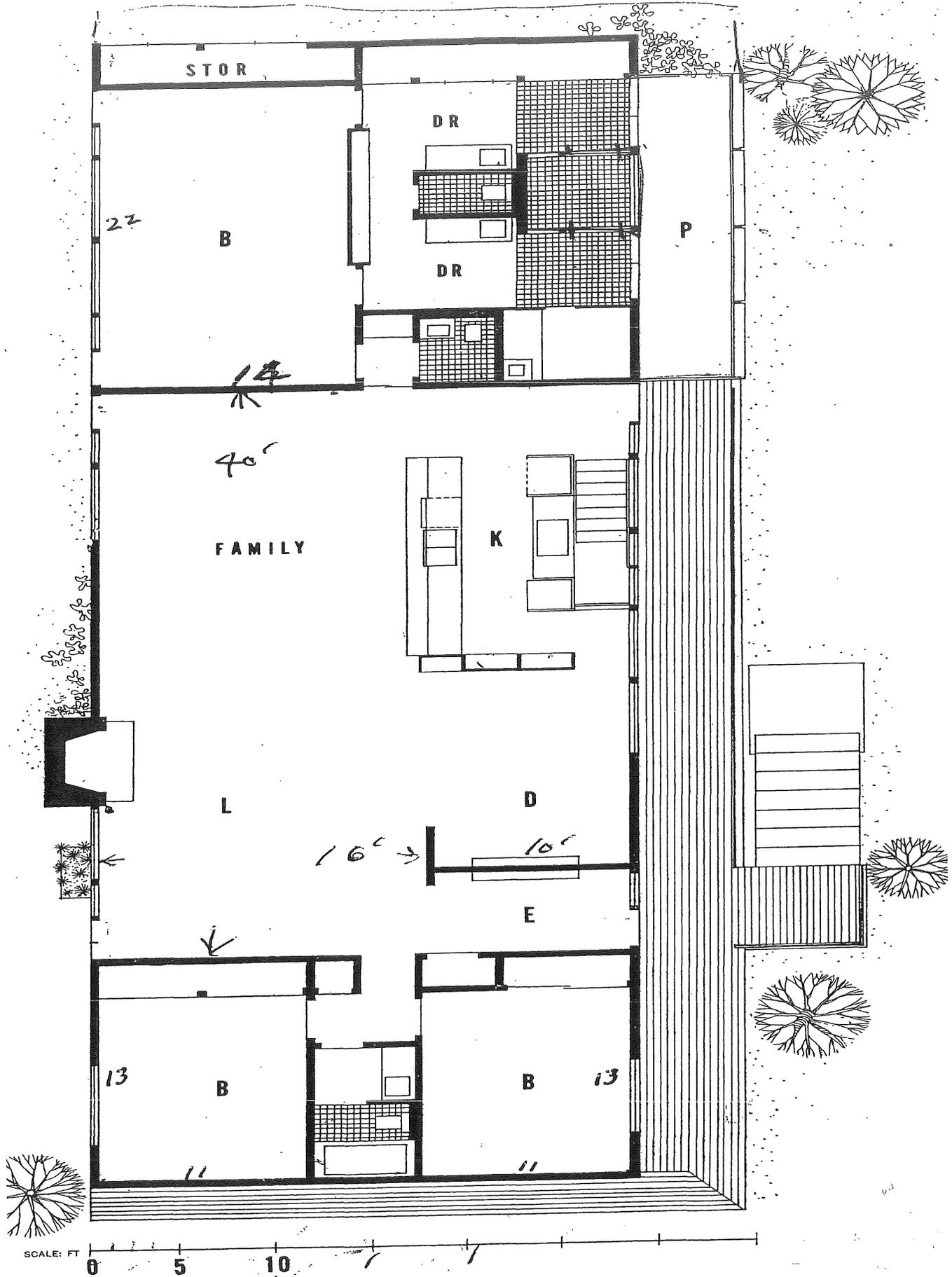
Section Number Photos Page 15 Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Wake County, North Carolina

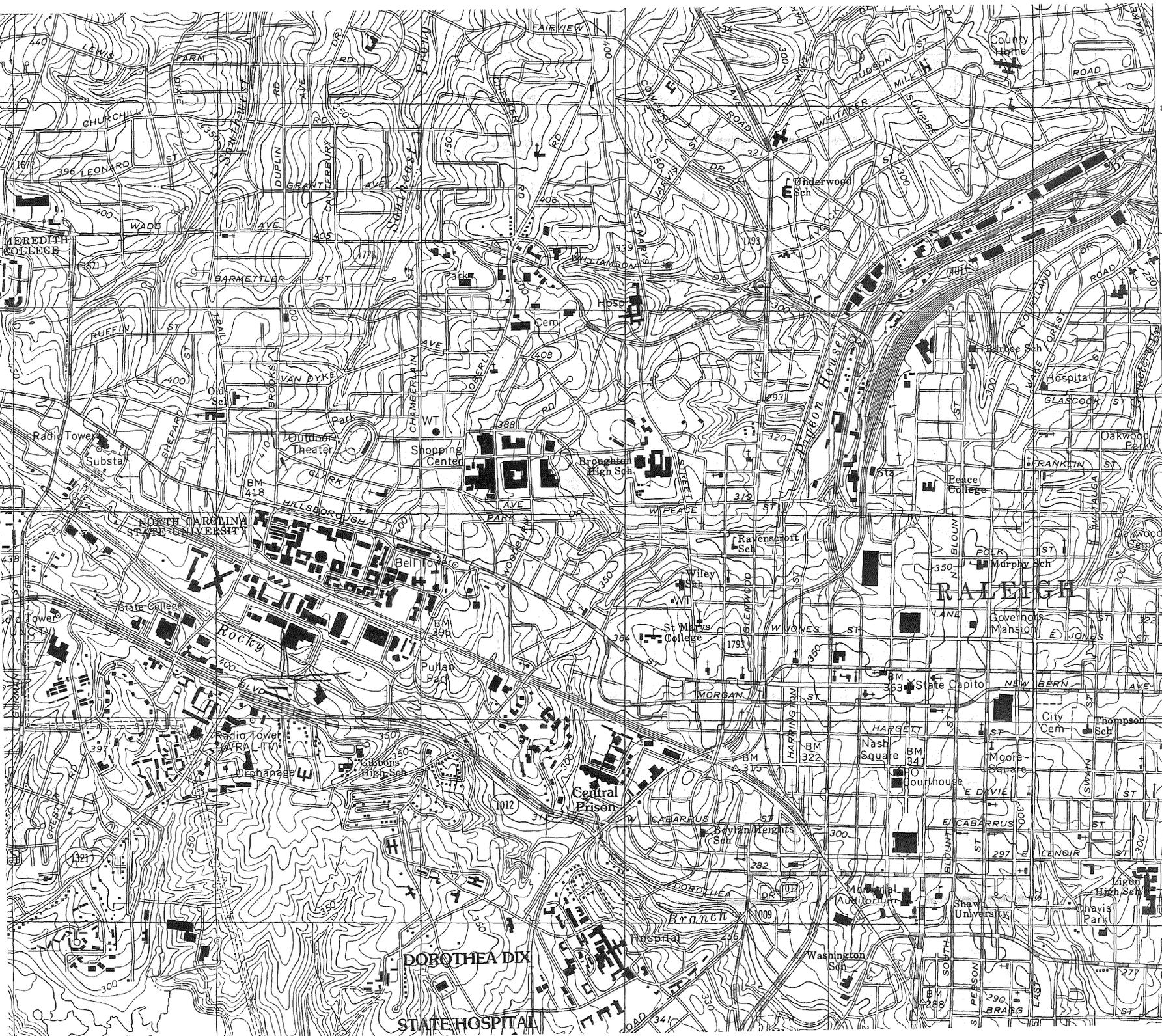
Photographs

The following applies to all accompanying photographs:

Mae and Philip Rothstein House
Wake County, North Carolina
Taken by C. R. Brown, 4/04 (except for no. 9 and 10, as noted below)
Negatives on file at the N. C. Office of Archives and History

- 1) Main façade, to N-NW
- 2) Oblique view of main façade from driveway, to NW
- 3) Rear and west side elevations, to SE
- 4) East side and rear elevations, to W-SW
- 5) Close-up of main façade showing main entrance, to NE
- 6) Interior view from living room area looking towards front wall with dining room and kitchen
- 7) Interior view from family room area looking towards living room area, with kitchen to left
- 8) Master bedroom, looking towards walnut-paneled wall and doors to bathroom (left) and main living area
- 9) View to N of main facade, ca. 1960 documentary photo taken by J. R. Molitor
- 10) View to SE of rear elevation, ca. 1960 documentary photo taken by J. R. Molitor





36°15'

Mae + Philip Paldan
House
912 Williamson Dr
Raleigh
Raleigh West Quad
Wake Co., NC
Zone 17
N: 3964220
E: 712200

47°30'

36°30'

36°15'

36°15'

