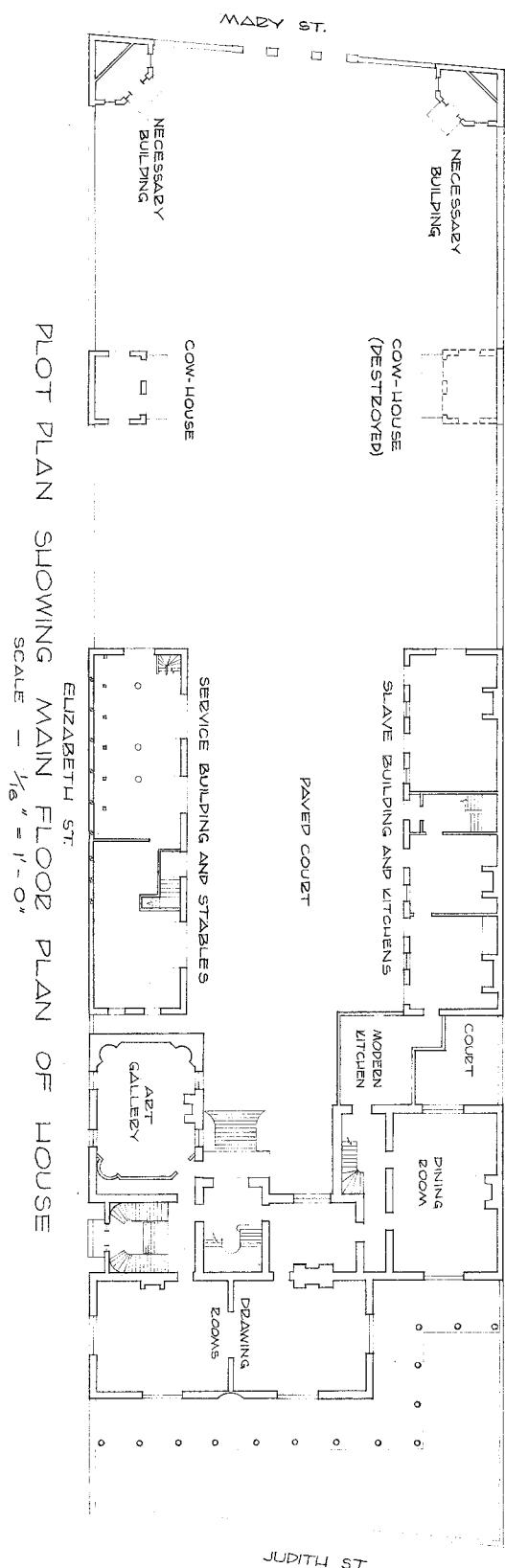


ROBINSON-AIKEN HOUSE

48 ELIZABETH STREET, CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA



AN UNUSUALLY COMPLETE SURVIVING EXAMPLE OF A FINE ANTE-BELLUM PLANTER'S TOWN HOUSE GROUP. ONCE THE HOME OF GOVERNOR WILLIAM AIKEN, THIS WAS BUILT EARLY IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY AND ADDED TO DURING THE GREEK REVIVAL PERIOD. IT CONTAINS A MONUMENTAL ENTRANCE HALL AND ROOMS USED BY THE GOVERNOR FOR ENTERTAINING. THE SERVICE BUILDINGS ARE NOTABLE INDIVIDUALLY AND AS AN ENSEMBLE.

THIS PROJECT WAS FINANCED BY FUNDS OF THE "MISSION 66" PROGRAM OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE. MEASURED AND DRAWN JUNE, 1963, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF JAMES C. MASSEY, SUPERVISORY ARCHITECT, H.A.B.S., AND PROFESSOR HABLEY J. MCKEE, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, BY STUDENT ASSISTANT ARCHITECTS ROBERT A. BUSSEY, VALU UNIVERSITY, MARK W. STEELE, UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY, AND MARTIN E. WEL, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, AT THE CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, FIELD OFFICE.

MARK W. STEELE, DEL.

ROBERT A. BUSSEY, DEL.

GRAPHIC SCALE - FEET

1/16" 0 5 10 20 30 40 50

NAME OF STRUCTURE

NAME OF STRUCTURE
MARK W. STEELE

SURVEY NO. SC-269

SOUTH CAROLINA LOWCOUNTRY
PROJECT 1963
UNDER DIRECTION OF UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN

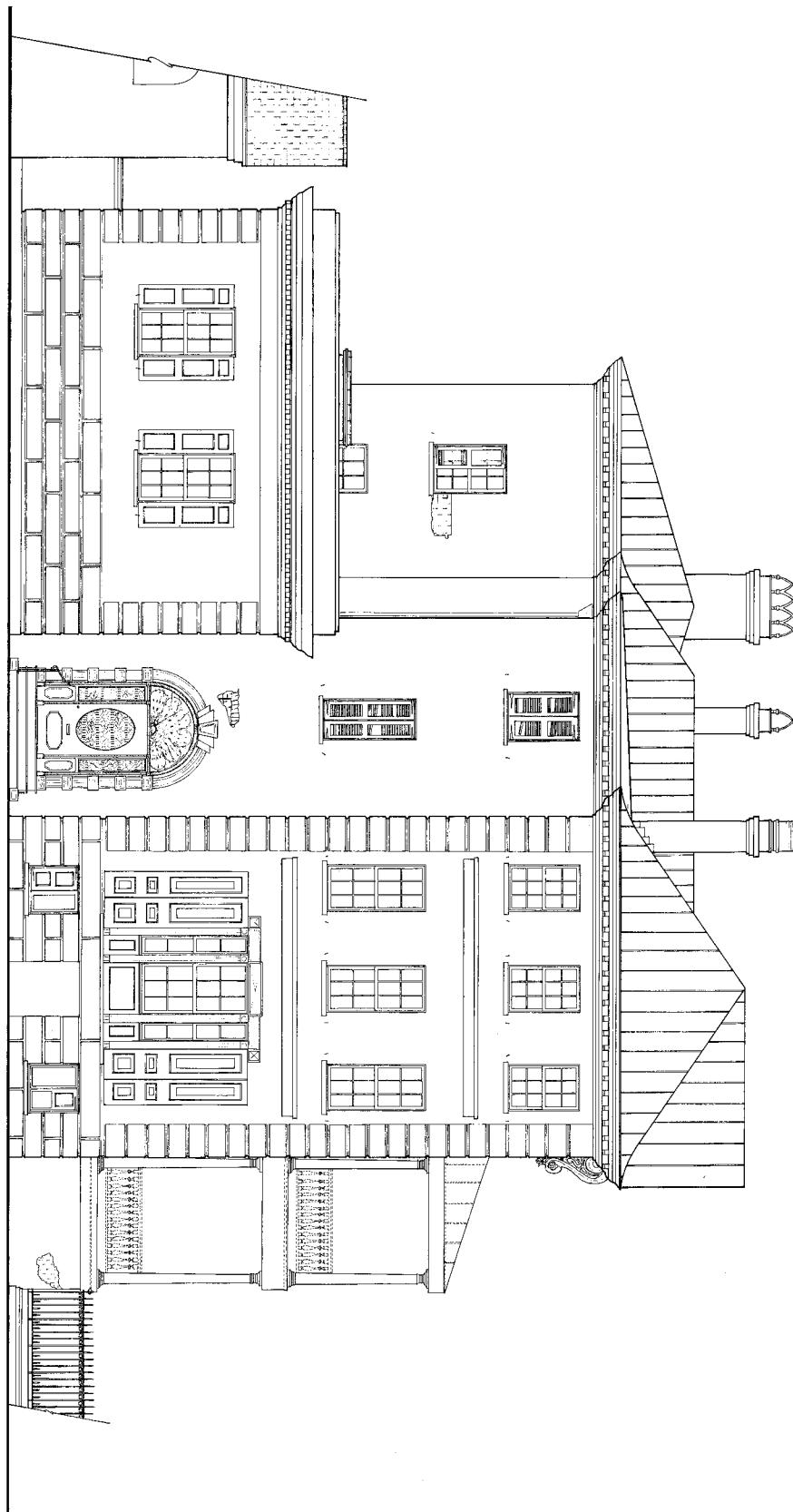
48 ELIZABETH STREET, CHARLESTON, CHARLESTON COUNTY, S. C.

HISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 1 OF 1 SHEETS

NAME OF STRUCTURE
MARK W. STEELE

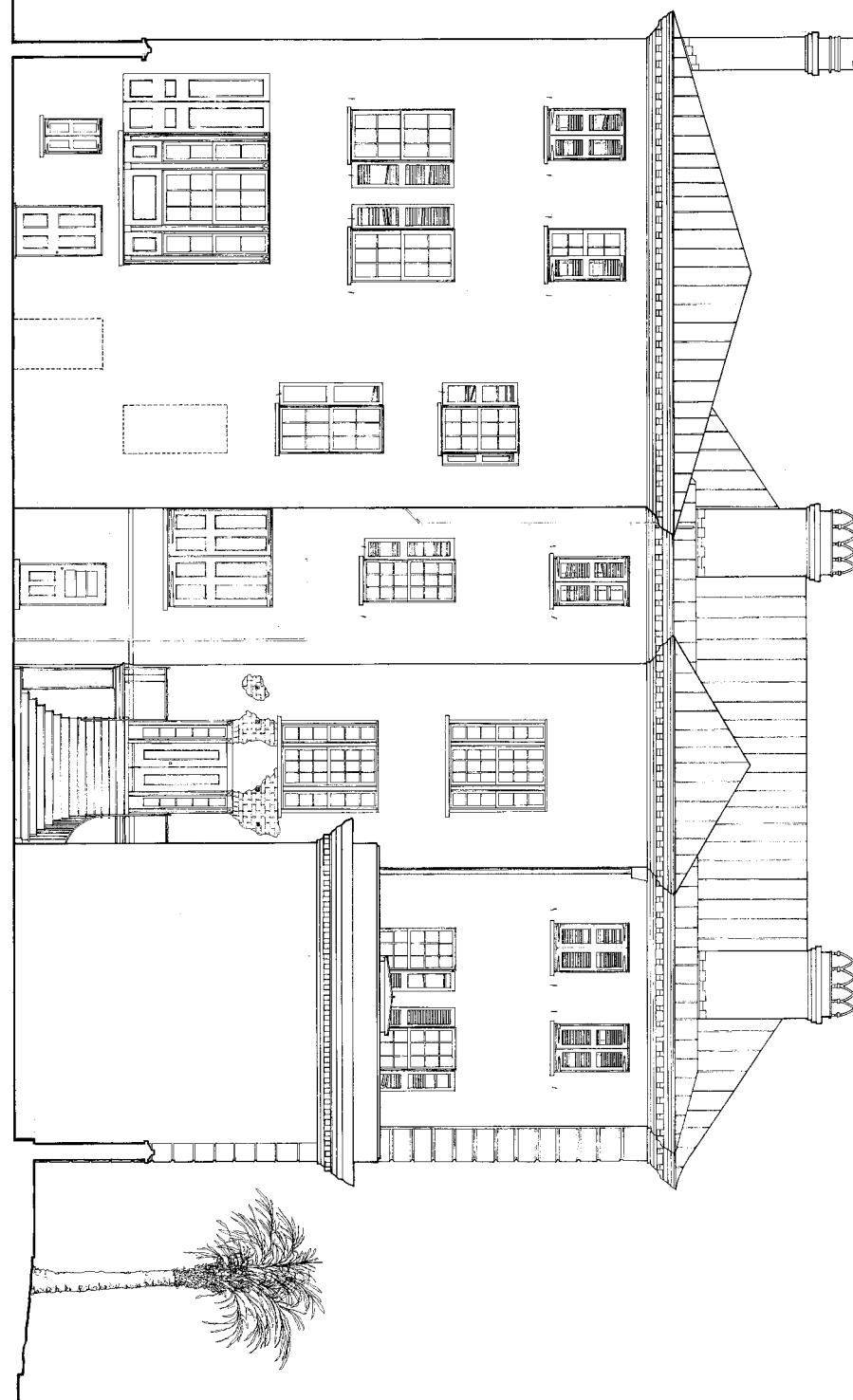
Scale of Feet
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 ft

West Elevation

Metric Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 cm

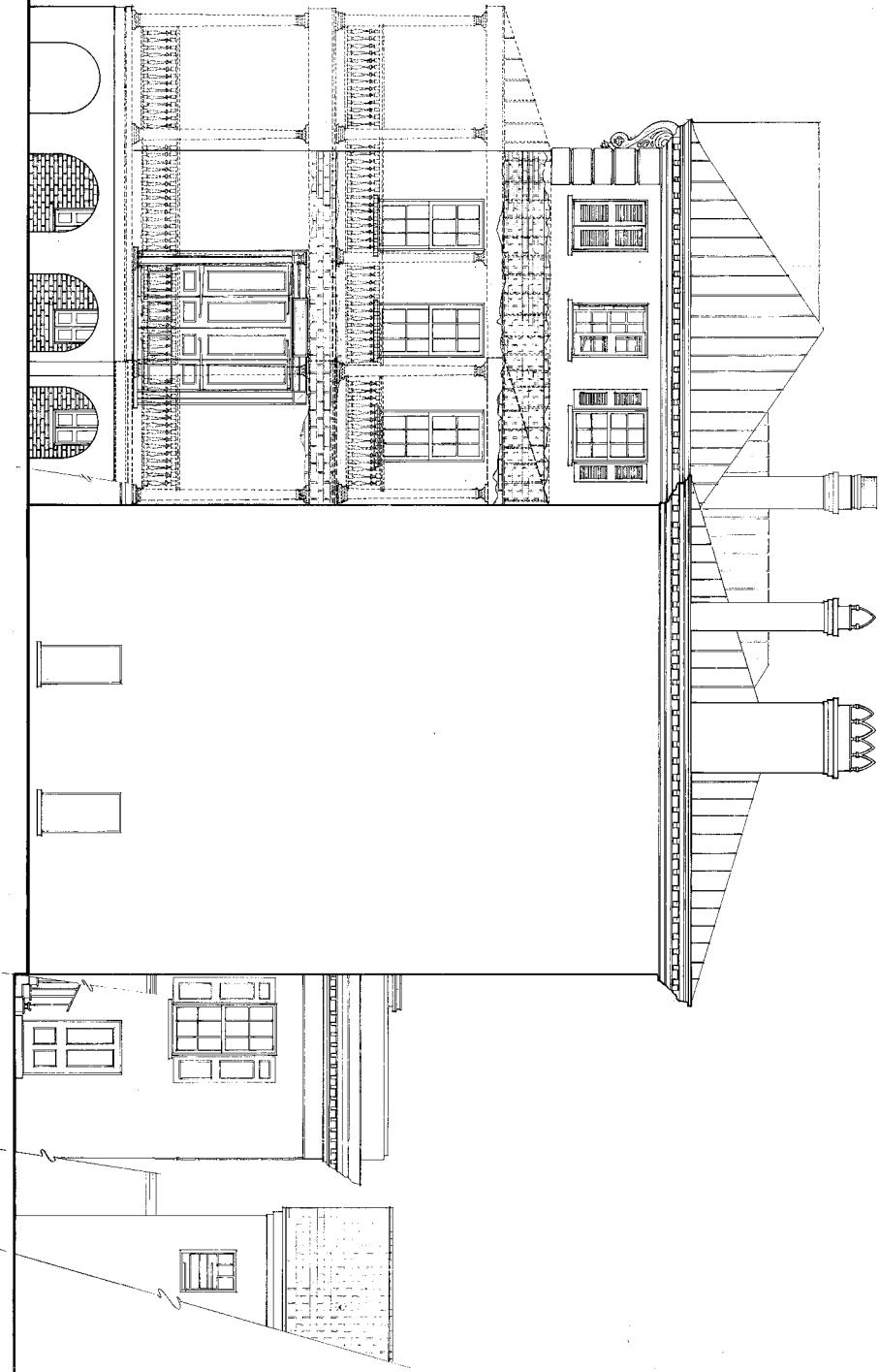
Scale of 1 foot
16 ft

North Elevation

Metric Scale
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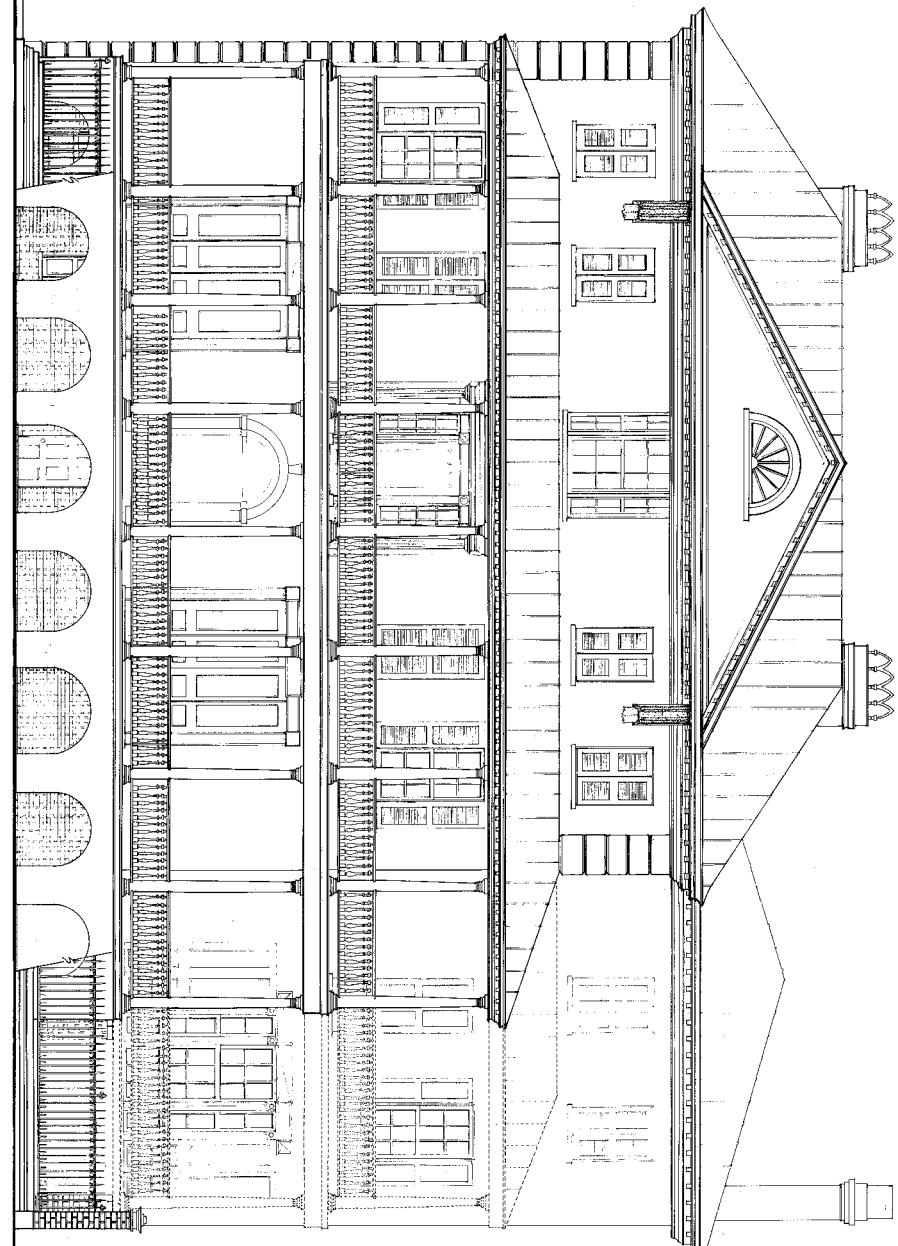
Scale of Feet
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 ft

East Elevation

Metric Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 cm

Scale of Feet
0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18

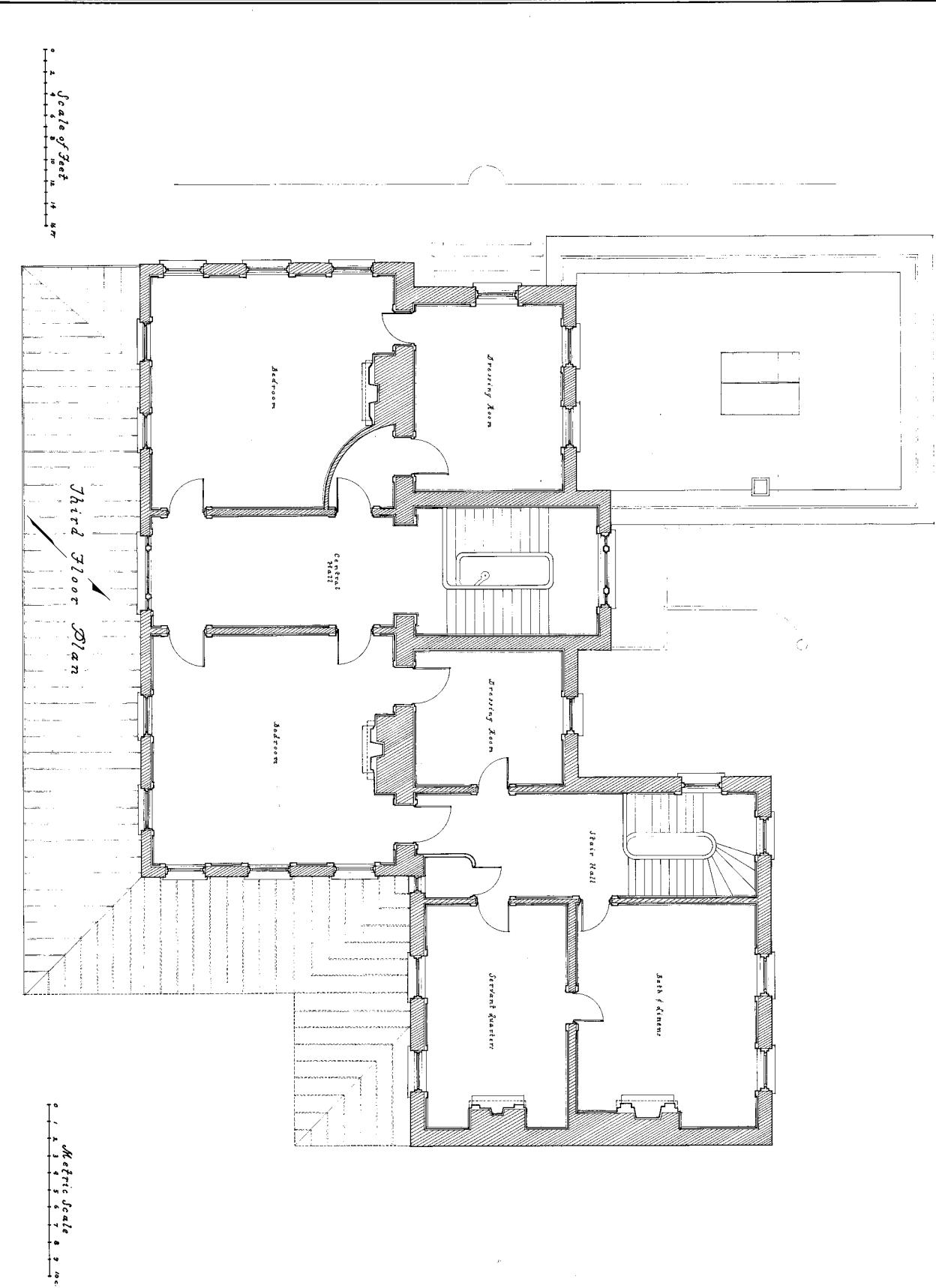
South Elevation

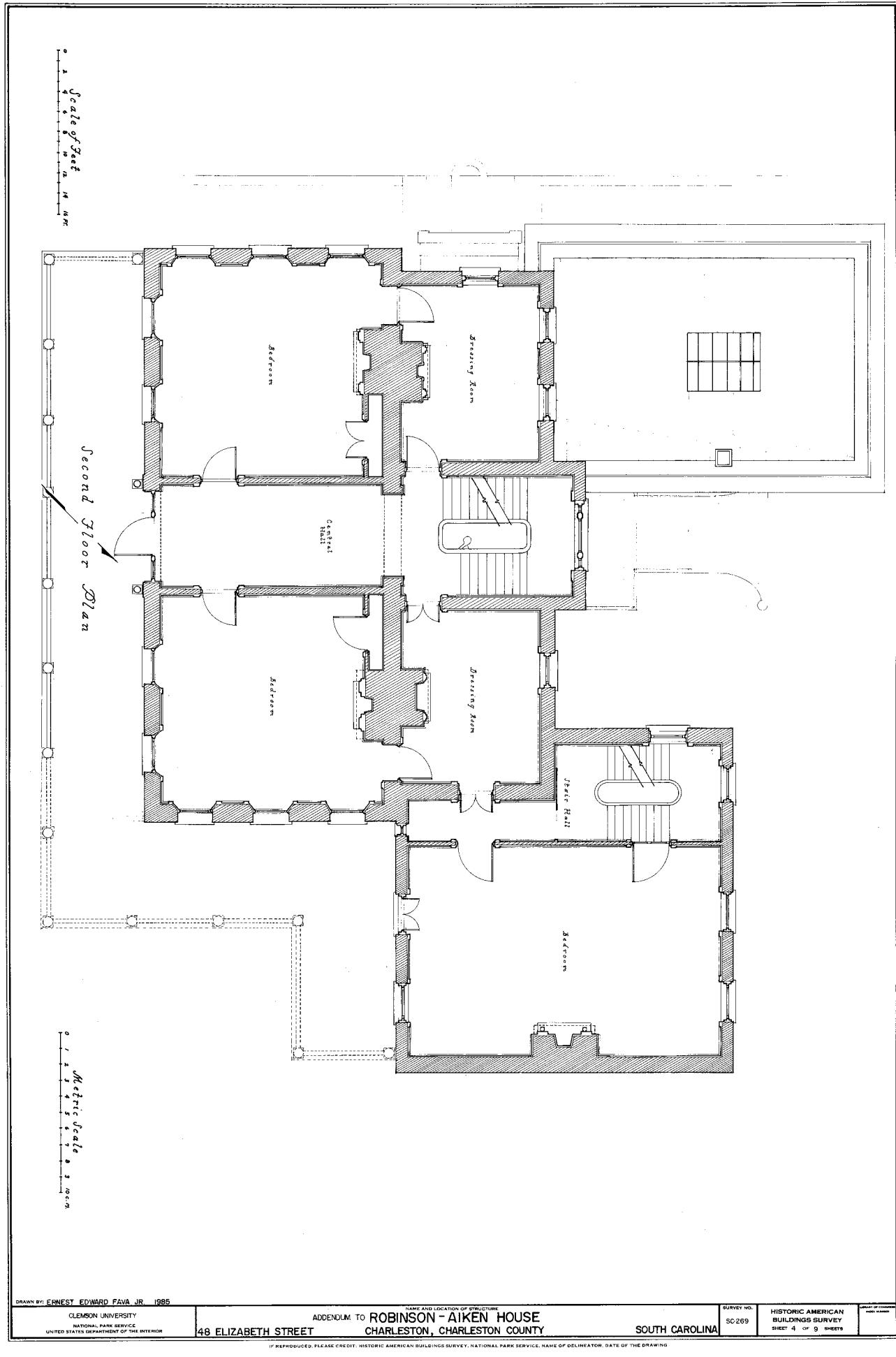
Metric Scale
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

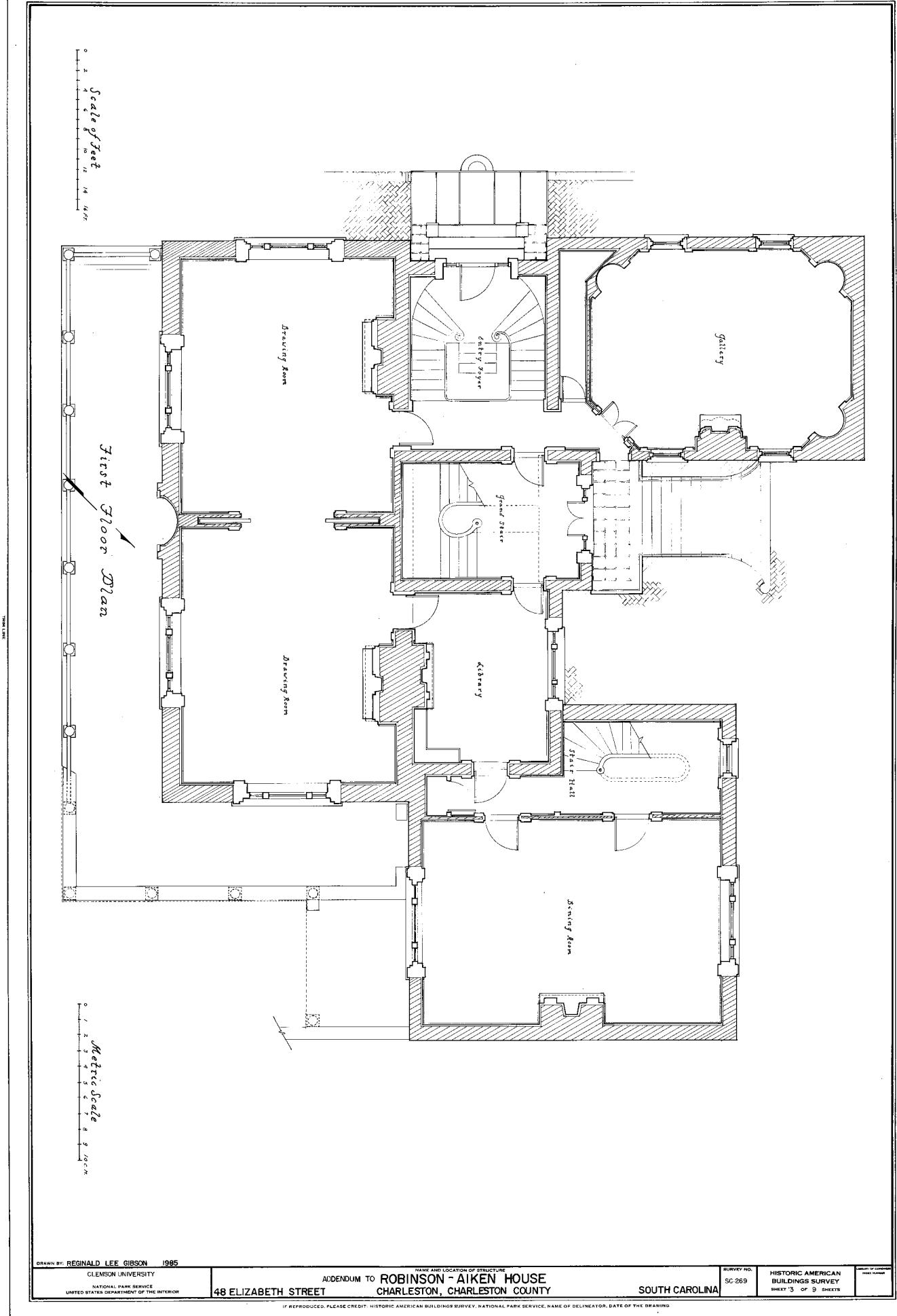
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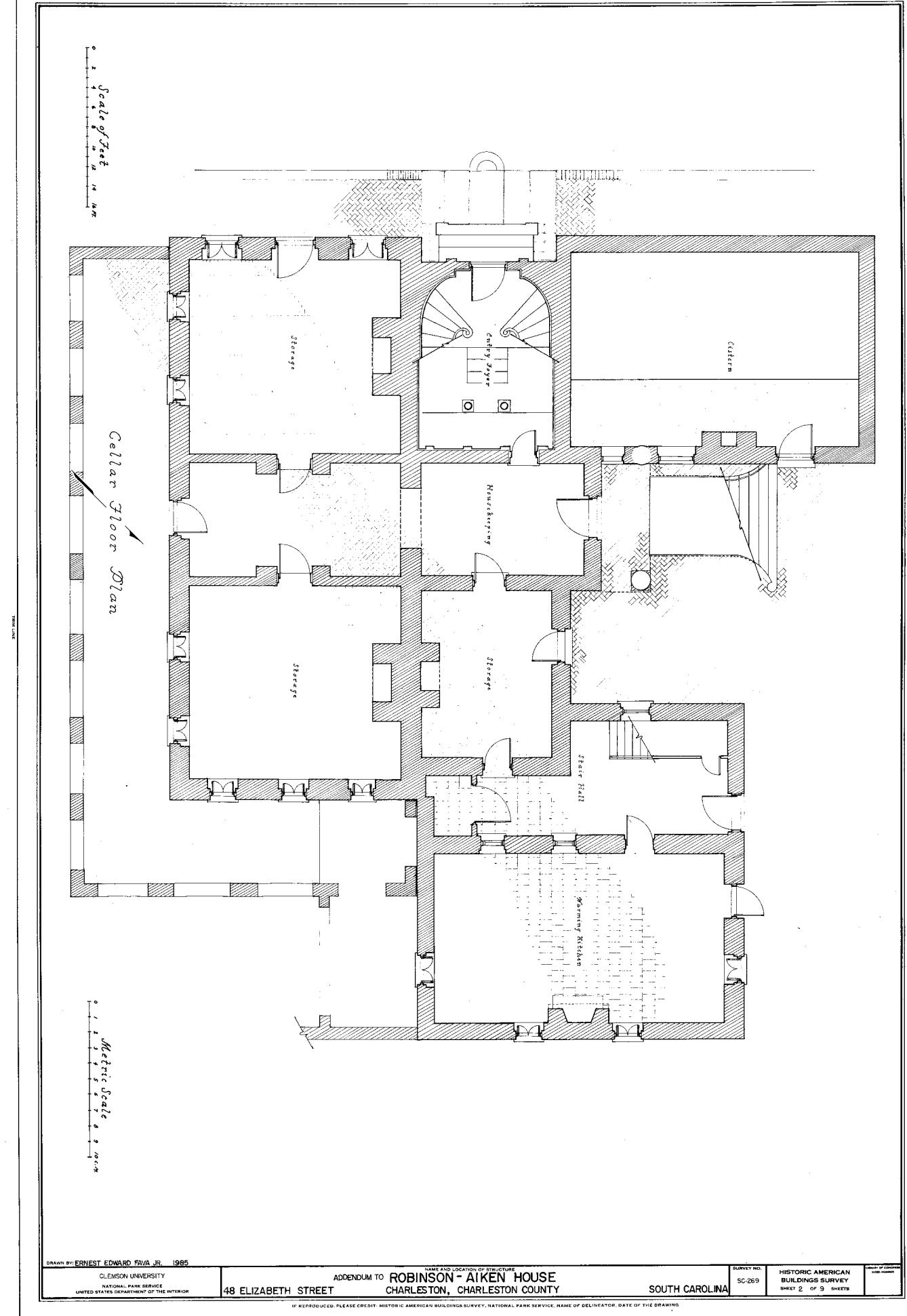
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIORNAME AND LOCATION OF STRUCTURE
ADDENDUM TO ROBINSON-AIKEN HOUSE
48 ELIZABETH STREET
CHARLESTON, CHARLESTON COUNTYSURVEY NO.
SC-269
SOUTH CAROLINAHISTORIC AMERICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY
SHEET 6 OF 9 SHEETS

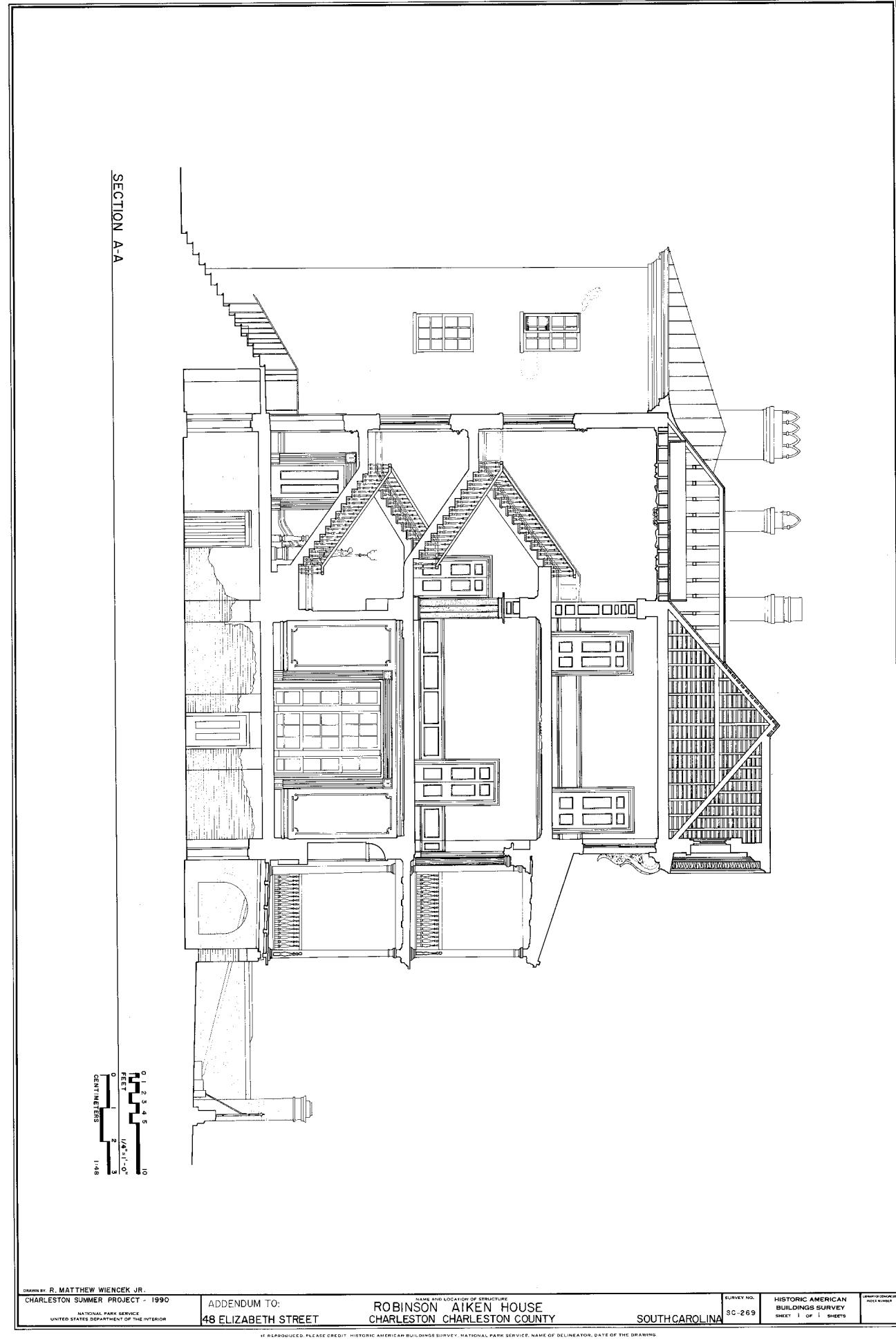
MAP OF COMPLEX











STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

THE GOVERNOR WILLIAM AIKEN HOUSE IS SIGNIFICANT BOTH IN TERMS OF ITS ARCHITECTURE AND ITS HISTORY. ARCHITECTURALLY IT CHRONICLES VARIOUS CHANGES IN DESIGN WHICH OCCURRED DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY. HISTORICALLY, IT DESERVES RECOGNITION AS HAVING BEEN OWNED BY BOTH WILLIAM AIKEN, SENIOR AND JUNIOR -- TWO LEADING SOUTH CAROLINIANS.

THE STRUCTURE WAS BUILT CA. 1820 BY JOHN ROBINSON, A MERCHANT. IN 1825, ROBINSON ADVERTISED THAT THE MANSION WAS FOR SALE, AND IN 1827 WILLIAM AIKEN, SR., ACQUIRED IT. AIKEN WAS PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA CANAL AND RAILROAD COMPANY AND WAS A MEMBER OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FROM 1824 UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1833.

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AFTER HIS FATHER'S DEATH, WILLIAM AIKEN, JUNIOR, (1806-1887) ACQUIRED THE PROPERTY. A RICE PLANTER, AIKEN SERVED IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1838-1841) AS WELL AS IN THE SOUTH CAROLINA SENATE (1842-1844). FROM 1844 TO 1846 HE SERVED AS GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AND HE LATER SERVED THREE TERMS IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (1851-1857).

AIKEN WAS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL TRUSTEES OF PEABODY EDUCATIONAL FUND AND WAS ALSO AN ART COLLECTOR (IN 1858 HE ADDED A WING TO HIS HOUSE TO DISPLAY HIS COLLECTION MUCH OF WHICH IS STILL INTACT AND WILL BE RETURNED TO THE HOUSE ONCE IT IS RESTORED). AIKEN DIED IN 1887. THE HOUSE REMAINED IN THE POSSESSION OF HIS DESCENDANTS UNTIL THE 1930S. IT IS NOW OWNED BY THE CHARLESTON MUSEUM WHICH PLANS TO RESTORE IT AS PART OF THE MUSEUM COMPLEX.

ARCHITECTURE:

THE AIKEN HOUSE EXEMPLIFIES THE CHANGES WHICH OCCURRED IN ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY. THE UPPER FLOORS REFLECT THE REFINED QUALITIES (IN BOTH WOODWORK AND PROPORTION) OF THE LATE FEDERAL PERIOD. THE MAIN FLOOR (RENOVATED FROM 1833-1836) EXEMPLIFIES THE HEIGHT OF GREEK REVIVAL DESIGN, WHILE THE ART GALLERY (ADDED IN 1858) INDICATES THE MOVEMENT INTO THE VICTORIAN PERIOD. ACCORDING TO AN ARCHITECTURAL GUIDE TO CHARLESTON BY ALBERT SIMONS AND W. H. JOHNSON THOMAS, THE AIKEN HOUSE WAS "THE MOST IMPOSING RESIDENCE OF ITS PERIOD."

