

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 Phillips, Homer G., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 4524 Cottage Avenue not for publication N/A
city or town St. Louis vicinity N/A
state Missouri code MO county Saint Louis [Independent City] code 510 zip code 63113

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.)

Mark A. Miles DECEMBER 31, 2008
Signature of certifying official Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date
Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

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

Signature of commenting official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
 entered in the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
 determined eligible for the National Register _____
 See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register _____
 removed from the National Register _____
 other (explain): _____
Signature of 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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	_____	Total

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

"Historic and Architectural Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri"

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

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Domestic Sub: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Vernacular Residence

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

roof asphalt

walls brick

other terra cotta

concrete

Narrative Description

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

See Continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

See Continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

9. Major Bibliographical References

(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

See Continuation Sheet for Section No. 9

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage-Black

Period of Significance

1917-1921

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Phillips, Homer G.

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: Cultural Resources Office
Planning & Urban Design Agency
City of St. Louis, Missouri

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than 1 acre

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

1 15 739648 4282946
Zone Easting Northing

2 _____
Zone Easting Northing

3 _____
Zone Easting Northing

4 _____
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.)

See Continuation Sheet for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathleen E. Shea/Andrea Gagen -- Jan Cameron, editor
organization City of St. Louis Cultural Resources Office date 18 September 2008
street & number 1015 Locust Street, Suite 1100 telephone 314-622-3400
city or town Saint Louis state Missouri zip code 63101

See Continuation Sheet for Section No. 11

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/title Thornton, Burnetta; and Henderson, Steven & Denise
street & number 4544 Cottage Avenue telephone _____
city or town Saint Louis state Missouri zip code 63113

See Continuation Sheet

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.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to range from approximately 18 hours to 36 hours depending on several factors including, but not limited to, how much documentation may already exist on the type of property being nominated and whether the property is being nominated as part of a Multiple Property Documentation Form. In most cases, it is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form to meet minimum National Register documentation requirements. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section Number: 7 Page 1

Phillips, Homer G., House	St. Louis [Independent City], MO	Historic and Architectural Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], MO
name of property	county and state	name of multiple property document

Summary:

Constructed in 1908, the Homer G. Phillips House located at 4524 Cottage Avenue, St. Louis [Independent City] is the only extant structure associated with the life of Homer G. Phillips, a prominent St. Louis attorney and political activist during the first three decades of the 20th Century. The one story brick house with flat roof fits within the definition of the associated property types contained in the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form, the “Historic and Architectural Resources of the Ville [Independent City], Missouri,” under Associated Property Type Number 2, Vernacular – single and multi-family residences (1880-1930).

Elaboration:

A “one-story brick dwelling,” by the Trade Realty & Building Company, was one of eight residences built on the 4500 block of Cottage Avenue in 1908 for a total cost of \$14,400.¹ Of the four houses that remain, 4524 Cottage is the most intact example. Rising from a low terrace and occupying nearly the full width of its narrow lot, the house is a one-story, brick common-bond structure that proclaims a vernacular origin by its form and scale, while its detailing incorporates simplified elements of the Craftsman style popular in its day. Rectangular in plan, the house has a flat roof and coursed limestone foundation. The two-bay front façade is composed of stretcher bond that continues down the front foundation to an ashlar limestone sill. Limestone also creates a heavy watertable that forms the sill of the first story window. Projecting brick stretchers create a stringcourse at the front elevation, a course below the simple boxed cornice; false quoins formed by courses of raised brick extend down both ends of the facade. A rather low-pitched false mansard roof has eaves that flare out slightly at the roof line. Stepped brick parapets on either side are highlighted by a raised course near the top of each step to create a decorative cap. At the center of the false mansard, its original slate shingles covered by composition roofing, a small pedimented dormer with extended eaves is centered, its recessed gable covered in slate shingles (now painted). Crown molding forms the cornice and raking cornices. The shingled dormer has a single fixed window with four lights.

In the eastern bay, a large, doublehung window is placed asymmetrically under a brick label molding formed by projecting headers and rowlocks. Centered below it is a paired basement window with two square casements. Both openings are placed under steel lintels. The western bay contains a

¹ City of St. Louis building permit and data engineering records, St. Louis City Hall, Microfilm Department.

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single-leaf entry under a small, hipped roof entry porch. The porch carries a simple denticulated entablature resting on two wooden Tuscan columns. The base of the porch, originally frame, has been replaced with a poured concrete stoop, installed in 1957, when a bulge in the front facade was repaired.² A simple wrought iron handrail runs along the perimeter of the porch and down the west side of the concrete steps.

The remainder of the house has not been painted except for the quoins that return at both east and west elevations. On the east façade, two doublehung one-over-one windows with painted wood lugsills are placed under double rowlock, segmental arches. The coursed rubble stone foundation is exposed on this elevation, as is a single interior chimney near its center, between the windows. A metal gate with a chain link insert closes off the gangway between 4524 Cottage and the house to the east.

Three windows are visible on the west elevation. Each also has a double rowlock, segmental arch and wood sill. The northernmost window is a small casement; the other two windows are double-hung one-over-one: that at the rear has a high sill. The stone foundation is exposed at this elevation as well.

From the rear of the building the straight back of the false mansard and the flat roof behind it can be seen. On this elevation, the windows display triple rowlock segmental arches and wood sills. Primary windows are one-over-one, while the basement window is a fixed single light sash. A simple shed roof wood porch covers the rear entry into the residence. About two feet of the limestone rubble foundation is visible at the rear elevation.

The Homer G. Phillips House, at 4524 Cottage Avenue, retains the historic integrity of its architecture and site. Alterations are minor and reversible: primarily the replacement of the primary entry door and front window, with no change in opening size or exterior trim; installation of red composition shingles over existing slate; and painting of the front façade.

² Ibid.

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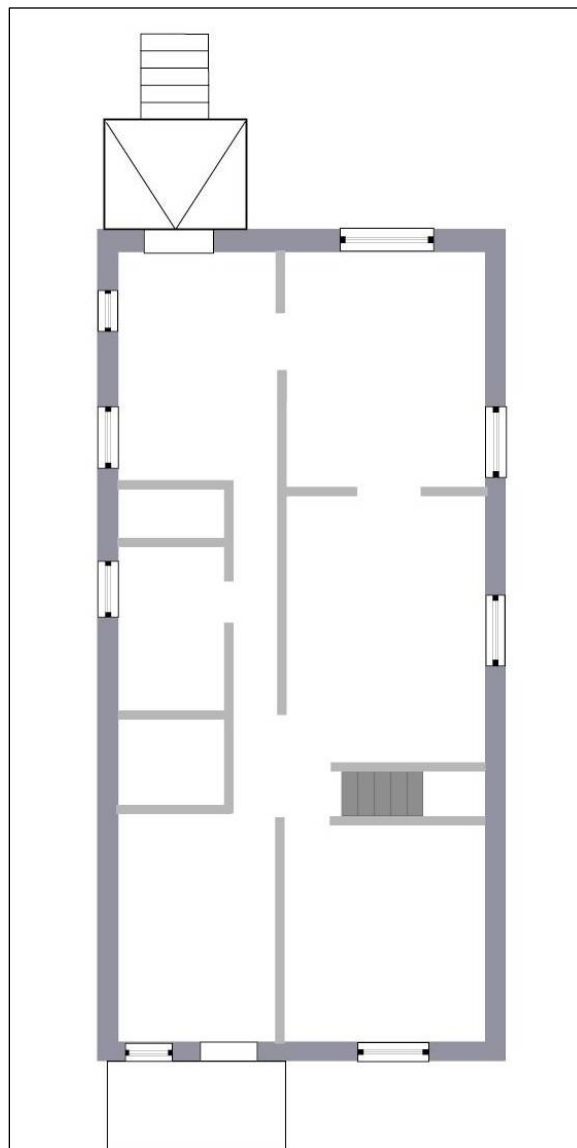


Fig. 1 — First story floor plan

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Phillips, Homer G., House	St. Louis [Independent City], MO	Historic and Architectural Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], MO
name of property	county and state	name of multiple property document

Summary:

The Homer G. Phillips House, 4524 Cottage Avenue, St. Louis [Independent City], is locally significant under Criterion B in the area of ETHNIC HERITAGE: BLACK; and is associated with Historic Context No. II: The Ville as a Center for Black Culture, 1910-1950, as defined in the Multiple Property Document Form, "Architectural and Historic Resources of The Ville, St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri." The house is the only extant residential property in St. Louis that is associated with the life of Homer Garland Phillips, the "Lost Leader of St. Louis."³ Phillips, a prominent St. Louis attorney and influential member of the Missouri Republican Party, was an important activist on behalf of St. Louis' African American population. He was widely recognized as a leader not only in St. Louis but also at state and national levels. Phillips is remembered today as the single most important factor in the effort to achieve a state-of-the-art City Hospital for St. Louis' woefully neglected and underserved black population. The proposed hospital would be located in The Ville neighborhood, the cultural heart of the African American community, and would soon become a nationally-recognized teaching hospital, responsible for providing training and education for hundreds of black doctors and nurses from around the nation. Phillips, his wife Ida and his father-in-law lived in the house at 4524 Cottage from at least 1917 through 1921, the property's period of significance. It was during this time that Phillips worked hardest on organizing support for a municipal bond to finance the new hospital. In all, his fight took more than 15 years, from 1915 to his untimely death at the age of 51 in 1931. Phillips never lived to see the hospital's completion seven years later, when it was named in his honor.

BACKGROUND:

Phillips was born in Smithton, Missouri near Sedalia, on April 1, 1879.⁴ The U. S. census for 1880⁵ lists only two black heads-of-household named Phillips in the Smithton area: Wesley Phillips, 52, a

³ "Our History," Mound City Bar Association, <www.moundcitybar.com/history.html> (accessed 9 August 2008).

⁴ Ancestry.com. *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*, "Homer Garland Phillips, World War I Draft Registration Card" jpeg image, *Ancestry.com* (Online: The Generations Network, Inc., 2005), [Digital scan of original records in the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.], <<http://www.ancestry.com/search/default.aspx>> (accessed 5 August 2008).

⁵ Only fragments of the U.S. census for 1890 information are available; and by that time, according to written accounts, Phillips was living with his aunt, whose surname name is unknown. 1880 U.S. Federal Census (Population Schedule), Washington, DC, subscription database, [Digital scan of original records in the National Archives, Washington, DC], <<http://www.ancestry.com>>, 27 June 2005.

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laborer; and Samuel Phillips, 39, also a laborer. Phillips' association with either family cannot be definitely confirmed; but in 1911, he signed Samuel's death certificate in Sedalia, demonstrating an intimate connection with him.⁶ Phillips' biographers have stated that his father was a Methodist minister who died when he was a small child and that he was raised by an aunt.⁷ Phillips attended Howard Law School in Washington, D.C., working at the Department of Justice while still a student.⁸ While at Howard, Phillips boarded for a time in the Washington home of the poet Paul Lawrence Dunbar.⁹

After law school, Phillips returned to Missouri. The 1910 U.S. census shows him as an attorney in general practice, living in Sedalia.¹⁰ He moved to St. Louis, and opened a law practice there probably shortly after his marriage to Ida Perle Alexander,¹¹ an actress and noted soprano, on 5 June, 1912 in

⁶ Missouri State Archives, "Samuel Phillips death certificate", PDF image, *Missouri Digital Heritage* (Online: Missouri Office of the Secretary of State, 2007-2008), Missouri Death Certificates, 1910-1957, [Digital scan of original records in the Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, Missouri], <<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/>>, accessed 5 August 2008. In the 1880 census, Samuel and his wife Caroline have ten children, ranging in age from 12 years to 2 months. They had had a child nearly every year of their marriage; and there is a gap between Wesley, 2 and George, 2 months. Homer would have been just 1 year old at the time.

⁷ This version can be traced to an article on the founding of Homer G. Phillips Hospital by Dr. H. Phillip Venable, head of its Department of Ophthalmology from 1943 to its closing in 1979. Venable, who came to St. Louis as an intern at Homer G. Phillips Hospital in 1939, eight years after Phillips murder, could not have known him personally. See H. Phillip Venable, "The History of Homer G. Phillips Hospital," *Journal of the National Medical Association*, November 1961. Reprinted in Gerald Early, ed., *'Ain't But a Place,' an Anthology of African American Writings About St. Louis*, (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 1998), 325-326.

⁸ John A. Wright, *Discovering African American St. Louis: A Guide to Historic Sites*, (St. Louis: Missouri Historical Society Press, 2002), 55.

⁹ Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) was the first African American poet to win national acclaim. He produced many poems, in standard English and in dialect, essays, novels and short stories before his early death from tuberculosis at 33. "Paul Lawrence Dunbar Biography," Paul Lawrence Dunbar Website, University of Dayton, Ohio <<http://www.dunbarsite.org/biopltd.asp>> (accessed 9 August 2009).

¹⁰ 1910 U.S. Federal Census (Population Schedule), Washington, DC, (St. Louis Public Library, photocopy of original records in the National Archives, Washington, DC).

¹¹ Ancestry.com. Missouri Marriage Records, 1805-2002, "Homer G. Phillips and Perle Alexander" jpeg image, *_Ancestry.com_* (Online: The Generations Network, Inc., 2007), [Digital scan of original records in the Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, MO], <<http://www.ancestry.com/search/default.aspx>>, accessed 5 August 2008.. See also Wright, 55.

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St. Louis at the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church.¹² On his draft card in 1918 (he never served in the military), Phillips listed his occupation as a lawyer, self-employed. He is also noted on the card to be tall, of slender build, and with black hair and brown eyes.¹³ According to a profile published by the Mound City Bar Association, Phillips was said to be a man with few intimate friends but many adversaries, more concerned with fighting for a cause than with dealing with minutiae. And while his political prominence could have made him wealthy, he often passed up lucrative cases in favor of those that truly interested him.¹⁴

In 1918, the Phillips were living at 2335 Market Street (demolished ca. 1960) in the Mill Creek Valley area, one of most vital African American communities in the City,¹⁵ and also one of the few areas where blacks could live and purchase property. A short time later, the Phillips moved to the house at

¹² The service was performed by Pastor W. Sampson Brook, nationally-prominent minister of the A.M.E. church. St. Paul, then at Leffingwell and Chestnut in the Mill Creek Valley, was the largest African American congregation in St. Louis. When its building fell victim to urban renewal in the 1960s, St. Paul purchased its current sanctuary at 1260 Hamilton. Richard R. Wright, *Centennial Encyclopedia of the African Methodist Episcopal Church*, (Philadelphia: Book Concern of the A.M.E. Church, 1916), 361, "Documenting the American South," University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, <<http://docsouth.unc.edu/church/wright/illustr.html>> (accessed 6 August 2008).

¹³ Ancestry.com. *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*. Ancestry.com. *World War I Draft Registration Cards, 1917-1918*, "Homer Garland Phillips, World War I Draft Registration Card" jpeg image, *_Ancestry.com_* (Online: The Generations Network, Inc., 2005), [Digital scan of original records in the National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C.], <<http://www.ancestry.com/search/default.aspx>>, accessed 5 August 2008.

¹⁴ Mound City Bar Association. The Mound City Bar Association, organized in 1922 as the St. Louis Negro Bar Association, was the local representative of the National Bar Association, and is one of the oldest black bar associations west of the Mississippi River.

¹⁵ The Mill Creek Valley, running from 20th Street to Grand, and from Olive to the railroad tracks on the south, was home to a large African American population. Along with tenements for black laborers and more substantial housing for the middle class, the area was home to a thriving entertainment district in the 'Chestnut Valley,' along Chestnut and Market near 20th Street. Scott Joplin and other musicians played ragtime and jazz music here at Tom Turpin's Rosebud Cafe and other nightspots. The Mill Creek also boasted major African American institutions as the Pine Street YMCA, the Wheatley YWCA, Vashon High School, St. Paul A.M.E Church, St. Elizabeth's Catholic Church and School, and Union Memorial United Methodist Church. After World War I, thousands of rural blacks from the South moved into the area. A massive civic improvement bond issue was passed in 1954: at the time, Mill Creek's population was nearly 20,000 persons, or roughly 5,600 families, and was nearly 95 percent black. Demolition of buildings began in 1959. The area is now occupied by St. Louis University and other large scale development.

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4524 Cottage, which had been purchased by Ida's parents in 1916.¹⁶ The U.S. census two years later shows Phillips, age 40, listed as a lawyer in general practice, living in the house at 4524 Cottage with Ida his wife, and John Alexander, his father-in-law.¹⁷ By the time of the next census, Phillips and his wife had left 4524 Cottage for a larger house at 1121 Aubert Avenue (demolished 1993).¹⁸ No other extant residential property has been identified with this important African American.

Phillips died on 18 June 1931, a victim of homicide, shot in the head and back while waiting for a streetcar on his way to his office. All city newspapers—black and white—carried the story on page one. His attackers were reportedly the husband and cousin of a client who had disputed Phillip's legal fee in an estate case.¹⁹ The two were arrested and tried separately for the murder, but both were later acquitted by juries for lack of evidence.²⁰ "Tens of thousands" of mourners were reported to have viewed the body as it lay in state from Saturday to Sunday at St. Paul Church;²¹ hundreds more attended his funeral, filling St. Paul Church and the streets outside. Among them were the most prominent African American leaders and many white politicians, judges and attorneys.²² Phillips was buried in St. Peter's Cemetery, among many other prominent black Americans.²³ In a prescient

¹⁶ St. Louis Assessor, Book 1163.90. John D. W. Alexander and his wife, Mary W. purchased the property from Frank and Ima Brown. Mary owned the house until 1935, when she deeded it to her son Gustave D. Alexander and her surviving daughter Bertha Woods. Alexander and his wife, Felicia, owned the house until 1946.

¹⁷ 1920 U.S. Federal Census (Population Schedule), St. Louis (Independent City), MO, ED 529, Sheet 4A, Dwelling 70, Family 90, John O. W. Alexander household, jpeg image, (Online: MyFamily.com, Inc., 2005), subscription database, [Digital scan of original records in the National Archives, Washington, DC], <<http://www.ancestry.com>>, accessed 26 June 2005.

¹⁸ Phillips was living in the Aubert house at the time of his murder in 1931.

¹⁹ "Prominent Attorney and Civic Leader Slain by Two Assassins While on Way to His Office," *St. Louis Argus*, 19 June 1931, 1.

²⁰ "Jury Frees McFarland," *St. Louis Argus*, 19 February 1932, 1.

²¹ "Two Youths Indicted by Grand Jury, Charged with Murder of Atty. Homer G. Phillips," *St. Louis Argus*, 20 June 1931, 1.

²² As an example of how Phillips was respected by both white and black legal communities, Judge H. H. Hamilton, presiding judge of assignments in the criminal courts paused his court four minutes on the morning of Phillips' death "to pay tribute and respect to a murdered colleague." See "Two Youths Indicted by Grand Jury," 1.

²³ On his death certificate, the names of Phillips' mother and father are stated as "unknown." His date of birth, 1880, is also incorrect: he was born 1 April 1879. Missouri State Archives, "Homer G. Phillips death certificate", pdf image, *Missouri Digital Heritage* (Online: Missouri Office of the Secretary of State, 2007-2008), Missouri Death Certificates, 1910-1957, [Digital scan of original records in the Missouri State Archives, Jefferson City, Missouri], <<http://www.sos.mo.gov/archives/resources/deathcertificates/>>, (accessed 5 August 2008).

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moment during the eulogy, Reverend Noah Williams said: “Among the many great deeds Mr. Phillips has done for us was to get the negro City Hospital started. The hospital, or some other building, should be named in honor of him.”²⁴ His wife survived him by less than three years, dying after a short illness in May 1934.²⁵ A monument to Phillips and his wife was erected in St. Peter’s by the City’s African American community in 1994.²⁶

PROFESSIONAL LIFE:

A 1914 amendment to the St. Louis City Charter allowed citizens’ initiative petitions to be placed on the ballot: in 1916, such a petition was the basis for a referendum intended to ban negroes from attempting to moving onto blocks that were predominantly occupied by whites.²⁷ Churches, schools and other public buildings had also to be segregated. Building permits could be issued only after formal declaration was made that the site would be occupied by “white” or “colored” persons. A massive propaganda drive asserted that: “[The] Negro invasion [is a] danger far greater than flood, fire or tornado. It is imperative that we forestall this danger.” The voter was assured that the proposed law was “....not undemocratic or un-American, for all good laws ...seek to bestow the greatest good on the greatest number.”²⁸

Phillips’ political career had begun almost the moment he arrived in St. Louis in 1912. By the time of the referendum on segregation, Phillips had a prominent role in the Missouri Republican Party and, with Roger Baldwin (one of the future founders of the American Civil Liberties Union) worked to mobilize voters against the proposal. With backing from the fledgling National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Phillips filed a lawsuit—ultimately unsuccessful—against the special election. In February, 1916, City voters overwhelmingly approved the proposal, making St. Louis the first U.S. City to pass such mandatory segregation laws by a public vote. The passage of the referendum was a tremendous political disappointment for the African American community, especially after the successful election of an all-Republican Board of Aldermen to support a

²⁴ “Throngs Attend Funeral of Slain Negro Attorney,” *St. Louis Star*, 23 June 1931, 10.

²⁵ Missouri State Board of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, Certificate of Death, File No. 18857; Registered No. 5370.

²⁶ “Homer G. Phillips,” Find A Grave, <<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=5606>> (accessed 8 August 2008).

²⁷ Robert I. Vexler, ed., *St. Louis A Chronological & Documentary History 1762-1970*, (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Oceana Publications, Inc., 1974, 102.

²⁸ Vexler, 102.

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Republican mayor.²⁹ Two years later, however, the U. S. Supreme Court nullified the action by striking down a similar statute in a Kentucky case.³⁰

The passage of the segregation ordinance showed Phillips that even Republican white politicians could not be relied upon where African American interests were concerned. Phillips joined with attorneys George Vaughn and Crittenden Clark; Charles Turpin (the first black St. Louisan to win public office—as constable, in 1910); Missouri Grand Knights of Pythias Grand Chancellor Aaron Lloyd; and St. Louis Argus newspaper publisher Joseph E. Mitchell to form the Citizens Liberty League in December of 1919. The League was an effort to promote and endorse African American political candidates; to elect more of them to public office and on state and national Republican Party committees, and as delegates to the Republican Convention.³¹ The Citizen’s Liberty League later fought against segregation; inadequate hospital care for African Americans; the frightening increase in the number of lynchings; and the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan. According to historian John Wright, a major result of the Committee’s work was the 1927 construction of Vashon High School, the City’s second and largest high school for African Americans.³²

On 2 July 1917, a vicious race riot broke out in East St. Louis, Illinois, just across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. The city was home to railroad yards, numerous stockyards and meat packing plants; and if workers went on strike, employers hired African Americans as strikebreakers. Several white men attacked the black part of town on July 2. Thirty-nine blacks were killed, many injured, while the East St. Louis Police and Illinois National Guard, which had been called in to control the riot, did nothing to stop the massacre.³³ In the aftermath, ten African Americans but only four whites were convicted of murder. The NAACP, in a calculated strategy, hired prominent white lawyers to lead the

²⁹ Debra Foster Greene, “Just Enough of Everything: The St. Louis Argus in Its First Decade,” Business and Economic History Online, Vol 4, 2006, Business History Conference Website
<<http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/2006/greene.pdf>> (accessed 6 August 2008)., 8.

³⁰ Vexler, 102.

³¹ Smith, Jeffrey E., “The African American Experience,” in “A Preservation Plan for St. Louis,” Heritage and Urban Design Division, St. Louis City, Missouri, 92. See also Greene, 6.

³² Wright, *Discovering African-American St. Louis*, 38; 49.

³³ Gerald W. Heany and Susan Uchitelle, *Unending Struggle: the Long Road to an Equal Education in St. Louis* (St. Louis: Reedy Press, 2004, 65.

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defense team,³⁴ but Phillips, called “the most outstanding black attorney in St. Louis,”³⁵ was the leading African American on the team.

The National Bar Association (NBA) was founded by 12 African American lawyers in 1925. When the NBA was founded, there were fewer than 1,000 African American lawyers in the United States. The organization quickly grew to 200 members within the first year.³⁶ Phillips was a founding member of the St. Louis chapter, the St. Louis Negro Bar Association (now the Mound City Bar Association). The association was one of the first black bar associations established west of the Mississippi River.³⁷ At the time, black attorneys were not permitted membership in the American Bar Association, nor its local chapter, the all-white St. Louis Bar Association. Phillips was elected President of the National Bar Association in 1927.³⁸

In 1918, Phillips made his first attempt at public office when he ran for Justice of the Peace on a ticket with Charles Turpin for Constable. He lost in the primary. In 1925, Phillips ran for Congress in the 12th District, again unsuccessfully,³⁹ this time against his long-time associate and rival, George Vaughn.⁴⁰

In addition to his political activities, Phillips was also greatly concerned with the welfare of the City’s African Americans: he was one of the original owners of the *St. Louis American*, a weekly newspaper devoted to African American issues that began on March 17, 1928 and continues publication today.⁴¹

³⁴ The white attorneys were St. Louisan Charles Nagel, Secretary of Commerce and Labor under President Taft, and two prominent East St. Louisans: Samuel W. Baxter, a well-known railroad attorney, and Thomas M. Webb, the leading criminal lawyer in southern Illinois. Mark Robert Schneider, *We Return Fighting: the Civil Rights Movement in the Jazz Age*, (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2002), 137.

³⁵ August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, *Along the Color Line*, (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 138.

³⁶ “The NBA Perspective,” National Bar Association, <<http://www.nationalbar.org/nba/index.shtml>> (accessed 8 August 2008).

³⁷ “The NBA Perspective,” National Bar Association, <<http://www.nationalbar.org/nba/index.shtml>> (accessed 8 August 2008).

³⁸ “Our History,” Mound City Bar Association, <www.moundcitybar.com/history.html> (accessed 9 August 2008).

³⁹ “Prominent Attorney and Civic Leader Slain,” 1.

⁴⁰ “Homer G. Phillips, Negro Lawyer, Slain,” *St. Louis Star*, 18 June 1931, 1.

⁴¹ Debra Foster Greene, “Just Enough of Everything: The St. Louis Argus in Its First Decade,” Business and Economic History Online, Vol 4, 2006, Business History Conference Website <<http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/2006/greene.pdf>> (accessed 6 August 2008).

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He was also a leader of the People's Finance Corporation,⁴² which was created to provide non-traditional financing to enable African Americans to purchase property when major white-controlled banks refused to lend to them.

HOMER G. PHILLIPS HOSPITAL:

In 1915, Phillips became active in, and soon began to lead, the fight to build a municipal hospital in St. Louis that would not only serve the African American community, but would also train Negro doctors and nurses.

The struggle to establish adequate medical facilities for St. Louis African Americans had begun a year earlier, when a committee of black doctors was formed to pressure local politicians to provide adequate medical facilities for Negro physicians and their patients. At the time, no private hospital would allow black doctors privileges to admit and treat patients. Phillips requested Mayor Henry Kiel to assign black physicians to the care of black patients at City Hospital. The Mayor responded by acquiring the derelict and vacant Barnes Hospital, at Garrison and Lawton Avenues, in Mill Creek Valley, and renovating it as City Hospital No. 2 (demolished ca. 1960).⁴³ The hospital had only a 177-bed capacity. In 1919, its staff consisted of a Superintendent, a resident in medicine and surgery, and a small number of graduate and student nurses. The hospital's visiting staff was comprised of faculty members from Washington University: black doctors were employed only as associate staff. Two years after it opened, the building was clearly inadequate, its halls crowded with patients awaiting treatment.⁴⁴

In 1915, Homer G. Phillips was sharing an office with Dr. Wallace B. Christian, a leading member of the committee of Negro doctors. At the request of Dr. Christian,⁴⁵ Phillips became a leader of the citizen's committee supporting the doctors in their first campaign to force the City administration to provide more appropriate medical facilities for its black citizens. Phillips used his political

⁴² "Two Youths Indicted by Grand Jury," 1.

⁴³ Dora A. Wesley, Wiley Price and Ann Morris, *Lift Every Voice and Sing: St. Louis African Americans in the 20th Century*, (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 6. Black physicians could treat their patients at the People's Hospital, Theresa and Pine Streets (demolished ca. 1950) or at the Catholic St. Mary's Infirmary (NRHP 2007).

⁴⁴ Venable, 324.

⁴⁵ Early, 326. Dr. Christian would later become Superintendent of Homer G. Phillips Hospital. Mary M. Stirtz, Carolyn H. Toft and James Denny, "Lewis Place Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, St. Louis (Independent City), 1979.

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connections in the local Republican Party and his citizen’s committee to personally spearhead the drive to seek passage of an \$87 million municipal bond issue, which ultimately passed in 1922. It was understood that \$1.2 million of it would be set aside for construction of new medical facilities for black citizens and medical professionals.

Despite passage of the bond issue, some factions in City government objected to a new African American facility, suggesting construction of an “annex” for black patients on the existing City Hospital. Attempts were made to restrict construction of a separate hospital and to build an annex to City hospital for black patients instead.⁴⁶ Attorney Phillips knew this proposal would defeat the entire purpose of the bond issue: Negro patients would still be cared for by white physicians, and Negro doctors and nurses would not have the opportunities they needed to advance their skills and training.

Using his political connections with members of the St. Louis Board of Aldermen, Phillips began to lobby, demanding that the new hospital be constructed as a stand-alone building located within the ‘premier’ African American community of the Ville. He envisioned a hospital facility that would attract black doctors, nurses and other professional staff, serve as a training ground for future African American medical professionals and offer complete medical services to the black St. Louisans, within the black community. He went to his political ally, Alderman Niederlucke, Chairman of the Board of Aldermen Welfare Committee. After much wrangling and delay, he won Board approval to locate the hospital, and a nursing school, in the Ville neighborhood, which at that time was the center for African American life and culture within the St. Louis region. Construction for the new hospital began under Mayor Victor Miller in 1932 and when the building was completed in 1937, it had 728 beds, and 49 bassinets, and a total cost of \$3,160,000.⁴⁷ Phillips leadership was acknowledged on 22 February 1937 when the Homer G. Phillips Hospital (NRHP 1982) was officially dedicated.⁴⁸

Phillips left a legacy that included not only the Homer G. Phillips Hospital and Nursing School, but also that of a pioneer black attorney, civil rights leader and Republican political activist. He is described rather romantically by the Mound City Bar Association as:

⁴⁶ Norbury Wayman, “Grand Prairie,” in “History of St. Louis Neighborhoods,” St. Louis Community Development Agency, Neighborhood Histories Project, 1978, 17.

⁴⁷ The Hospital consisted of five main buildings: service administration, a north and south ward, a nurses’ residence and a training school. A school of medical records library science; and a school for X-ray Technicians were later added. Mitchell F. Rich and Woodrow Jones, *Public Policy and the Black Hospital: From Slavery to Segregation to Integration*, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1994), 58,

⁴⁸ “World’s Finest Negro Hospital Dedicated,” *St. Louis Daily Globe-Democrat*, 23 February 1937, 5A.

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The Lost Leader:

Phillips was the indomitable figure in civic and public life of St. Louis, although he never held public office.... was a stalwart Republican yet his independence once led him against a local mayoralty ticket... was a par excellent speaker of the daring and persuasive type... his determined and intelligent leadership in the fight for the new City Hospital was a standout... he was a stickler for securing the inside facts and figures, and then fighting with them like a U.S. Grant around Richmond... was a man of few intimate friends and thus not without a levy of personal foes... he suffered with weak arches and wore expensive shoes and always fine felt hats... but he owned no automobile and died not a well-fixed man, which is not in keeping with his many opportunities to have "made money" because of his influence... a lawyer of large capabilities but he did not like small-bore, detail practice ... and to his solid memory the two million dollar city hospital is named in his honor... a man for all of that." ⁴⁹

⁴⁹ "Our History," Mound City Bar Association, <www.moundcitybar.com/history.html> (accessed 9 August 2008).

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA:

Acreage of Property: Less than 1 acre.

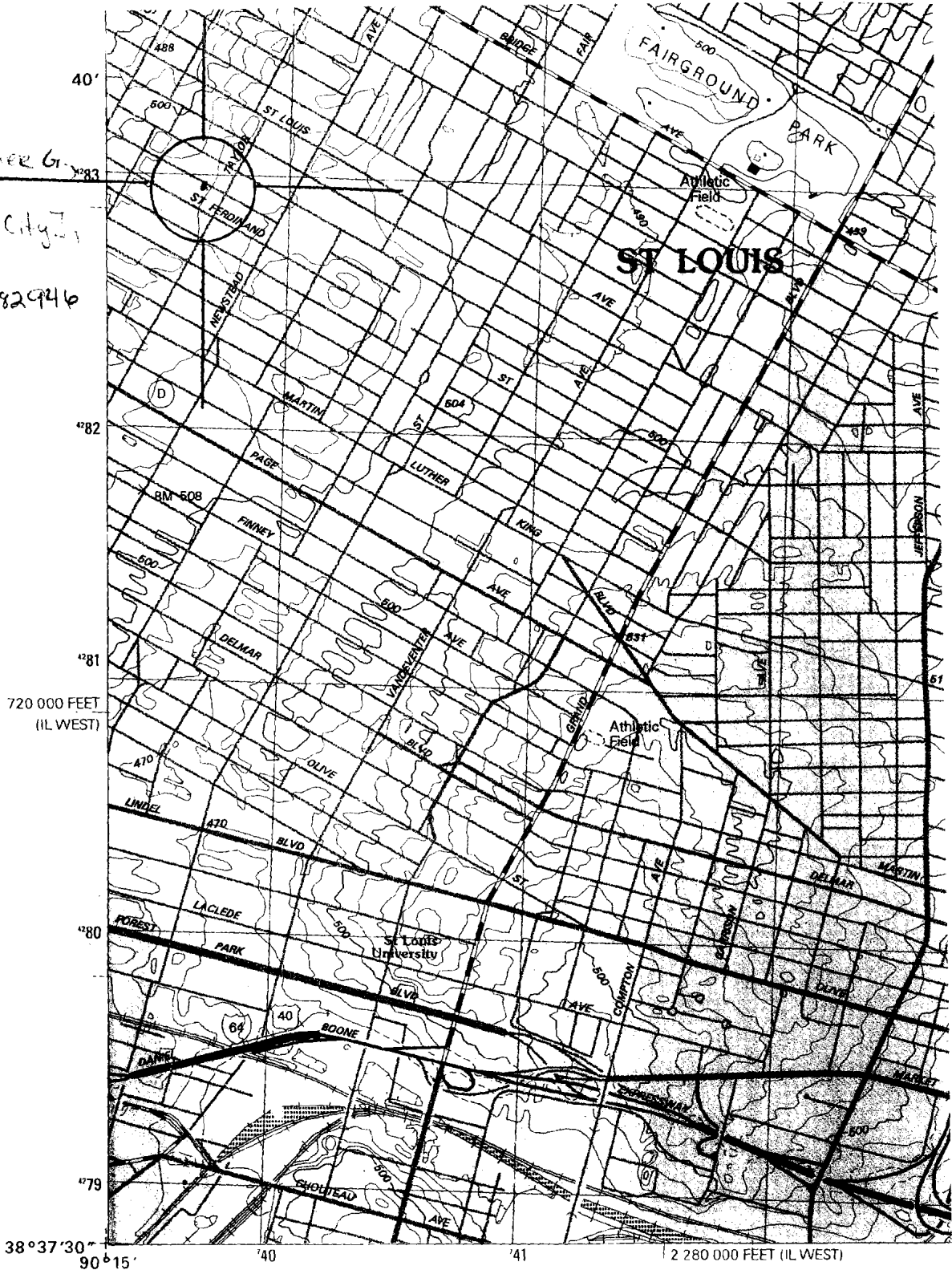
Verbal Boundary Description: City Block 3717 Cottage Avenue, 25 feet by 130 feet 10 inches, Hickman's Addition, Lot 49

Boundary Justification: The current boundaries encompass all of the land associated with the house since before 1889, as well as all which is currently associated with the house.

PHOTO LOG

- Photo #1 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Front (north facing) facade looking directly south
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #2 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – West facade looking southeast at the building with a portion of the front façade of 4522 Cottage to the right
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #3 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – East façade looking southwest at the building
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #4 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Rear (south facing) looking directly north
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #5 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Detail of front porch and main entry, looking southwest
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #6 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Detail of Front façade window
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #7 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Detail of front false dormer, looking directly south
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #8 — 4524 Cottage Avenue – Streetscape looking southeast
Photographer: Jan Cameron, June, 2005
- Photo #9 — Homer G. Phillips as a young man, c. 1915

Phillips, Homer Gr.
 House
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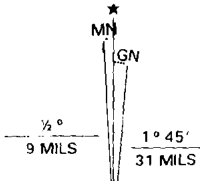
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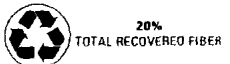
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Homer G. Phillips