

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House

Other names/site number N/A

Name of related Multiple Property Listing N/A

## 2. Location

Street & number 344 North Ellis Street

N/A
-----

 not for publication

City or town Cape Girardeau

N/A
-----

 vicinity

State Missouri Code MO County Cape Girardeau Code 031 Zip code 63701

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:     A     B   X   C     D

Toni M. Prawl 05/04/15  
Signature of certifying official/Title Toni M. Prawl, Ph. D., Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

    entered in the National Register     determined eligible for the National Register

    determined not eligible for the National Register     removed from the National Register

    other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House  
Name of Property

Cape Girardeau, MO  
County and State

**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	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	<b>Total</b>

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

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling  
DOMESTIC: secondary structure  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>th</sup> AND 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS\  
Colonial Revival  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: Limestone  
walls: BRICK  
\_\_\_\_\_  
roof: ASBESTOS  
other: WOOD  
\_\_\_\_\_

**NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION ON CONTINUATION PAGES**

Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House  
Name of Property

Cape Girardeau, MO  
County and State

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1904

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Blackwood, Lewis Brinton

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE ON CONTINUATION PAGES

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House  
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## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreeage of Property** Less than one acre

### Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1 37.30944 -89.52734 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

2 \_\_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Latitude: Longitude: Latitude: Longitude:

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)  
\_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1927 or \_\_\_\_\_ NAD 1983

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (On continuation sheet)

**Boundary Justification** (On continuation sheet)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Emily Sajdak, Stephanie Buchanan, and Dr. Steven Hoffman. Revised by Rachel Barnhart.

organization Southeast Missouri State University, SHPO date 28 January 2013, rev. April 2015

street & number One University Plaza telephone (573) 225-8393

city or town Cape Girardeau state MO zip code 63701

e-mail emily@sajdak.us and sbuchanan1s@semo.edu

## Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **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. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Photographs**
- **Owner Name and Contact Information**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**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.460 et seq.).

Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House  
Name of Property

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**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

## Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

## Photo Log:

Name of Property: Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House

City or Vicinity: Cape Girardeau

County: Cape Girardeau State: Missouri

Photographer: Emily Sajdak

Date  
Photographed: February 27, 2012

**The accuracy of these photographs was checked and confirmed by Dr. Steven Hoffman in April 2015.**

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 8: Western elevation, facing east.
- 2 of 8: Northern elevation, facing southwest.
- 3 of 8: Eastern elevation, facing west.
- 4 of 8: Southern elevation, facing northeast.
- 5 of 8: Interior stairway balustrade.
- 6 of 8: Interior stairway.
- 7 of 8: Ornamental swag detail.
- 8 of 8: Entryway.

## Figure Log:

Include figures on continuation pages at the end of the nomination.

Figure 1: Contextual map of the Wilson House

Figure 2: Site map of the Wilson House

Figure 3: First floor plan of the Wilson House and photo key

Figure 4: Non-contributing outbuilding

Figure 5: Sanborn map, 1908.

Figure 6: Photo table of Wilson House, 321 Ellis St., 537 Alta Vista Dr., 520 N. Pacific St, and 850 Alta Vista Dr.

Figure 7: Photo table of 833 Merriwether St., 239 N. Middle St., and 118 N. Ellis St.

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Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House
Name of Property
Cape Girardeau, MO
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

### Summary

The J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson House is located at 344 N. Ellis Street in Cape Girardeau, Missouri in a residential neighborhood close to the Southeast Missouri State University campus. Constructed in 1903-1904, it is a two-and-a-half story, red brick Colonial Revival style house with a hipped roof, a rooftop balustrade, and a central hipped dormer located on the north, east, and west elevations. Windows on the primary (western) elevation have jack arches with flared brick voussoirs while those on the secondary elevations have segmented arch lintels. The symmetrical primary elevation is characterized by a one-story full-width porch supported by Tuscan columns and topped with a balustrade. The second level of the façade has a centered bay door flanked with pilasters and multi-light double-hung windows. The bay is accentuated with a decorative wood surround and dentiled cornice. A two-story octagonal tower marked with decorative swags and with a conical roof and finial is sited on the northwest corner of the house. A non-contributing garage sits on the southeast corner of the property. The garage was built during the latter half of the twentieth century and is non-contributing due to its age. The Wilson House retains integrity and conveys its architectural significance as an exceptional early example of the Colonial Revival style in Cape Girardeau.

### Elaboration

#### Setting

The Wilson House is located in a residential neighborhood at the southeast end of the campus of Southeast Missouri State University. Interstate 55 is located approximately two miles to the west of the property, and the Mississippi River is located less than a mile to the east, marking the eastern border of the state (Figure 1). The Oliver-Leming House, listed in the National Register in 1980, is located across the street to the northwest of the nominated property. The Wilson House lot is slightly elevated from the roadway and is bound by concrete sidewalks to the north and west, a feature of the residential neighborhood. The northern boundary of the lot is defined by North Street, the western boundary by N. Ellis Street, and the eastern boundary by an alleyway that bisects the block (Figure 2). The southern boundary coincides with the edge of the parcel and abuts a multi-story church complex. With the exception of the complex, the immediate area retains much of the look and feel of a twentieth-century residential neighborhood. The Wilson House is set back from the road and is surrounded by green lawn and several mature deciduous trees. Seven concrete steps with an iron handrail lead from the sidewalk at the western edge of the lot up to a straight concrete path leading to the middle of the front porch of the house. A non-contributing front-gabled wood garage sits at the eastern boundary of the lot and faces north. A small concrete

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pad sits directly in front of the garage and leads to the alleyway at the eastern edge of the lot. The garage is non-contributing because it is less than 50 years old.

### Exterior

The first level of the façade, or western elevation, has three bays containing (from north to south) a one-over-one wood double-hung window, a central wooden door with wide sidelights and a transom, and another one-over-one wood double-hung window (Photo 1). The first level is characterized by a full-width porch with a brick foundation and concrete floor with centered concrete steps leading to the entrance door. The porch is supported by four Tuscan columns and two engaged Tuscan columns where the porch meets the house. The columns are connected by a decorative wooden balustrade with turned balusters. The porch has a flat roof and a dentiled cornice. The porch roof is topped with another decorative wooden balustrade. The second level of the façade contains three bays and features a centered wooden bay projection with a wood multi-light door flanked by pilasters and six-over-six wood double-hung windows. The wooden surround of the projection is topped with dentils. The first and third bays contain one-over-one wood double-hung windows topped with flared brick voisoirs forming a jack arch. The cornice above the second level features decorative modillions. The hipped roof is clad in metal and asbestos diamond-shaped shingles. A hipped dormer projects from the center of the roof and contains two wood double-hung windows with diamond-shaped muntins in the upper sash. A delicate vertical vine carving is applied to the wood panels between and flanking the windows within the dormer. The top of the hipped roof is clipped and framed with a decorative balustrade. The eaves of the roof are lined with decorative modillions on all elevations. The house's limestone foundation is visible on all elevations where it is not concealed by porches or shrubbery. Chimneys rise from the northern and eastern slopes of the roof. A third chimney rises from the southern ridge of the roof and breaks through the rooftop balustrade.

A two-story octagonal tower with a prominent conical roof is affixed to the northwest corner of the house. It has a limestone foundation containing a casement window with two lights. The body of the tower has five bays. From west to north, the second and fourth bays are devoid of fenestration. The first, third, and fifth bays contain a one-over-one wood double-hung window on each level. The windows have brick sillcourses and are topped with flared brick voisoirs. The cornice of the tower features classical ornamental swag and garland appliqué, dentil molding, and brackets at the corners. A pressed metal finial tops the flared conical roof.

The northern elevation has three bays. From west to east, the first and second bays contain a one-over-one wood double-hung window in both levels. The easternmost bay also contains a one-over-one wood double hung window in each level, but these are placed lower on the elevation than the other windows. All windows have segmented

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Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House
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arch lintels and stone sills. The dormer is clad in metal diamond-shaped shingles and contains a one-over-one wood double-hung window (Photo 2).

The northernmost bay of the eastern elevation contains an entry door. South of this bay, a two-story cross gable with a pediment extends from the elevation. The northern wall of the cross gable contains a one-over-one wood double-hung window at the first level. The southern side of the eastern face of the cross gable contains a one-over-one wood double-hung window in each level. A smaller window pierces the foundation below. All windows have segmented arch lintels and stone sills. The pediment of the cross gable is outlined with modillions under the eaves. The southern wall of the cross gable contains an entry door that is accessed via a porch. The porch covers the two bays of the southern portion of the eastern elevation and is comprised of brick piers connected with wood latticework supporting the wood plank landing. Wood steps lead to the landing, and the flat porch roof is supported by square posts connected by a simple balustrade. The roof of the porch is outlined with a wood balustrade formed by crossed wood planks. The southernmost bay on this elevation contains a door on the first level and a narrower door with a transom on the second level. The second bay contains a one-over-one wood double-hung window on the first level. A hipped roof dormer extends from the roof and contains a one-over-one wood double-hung window (Photo 3).

The eastern side of the southern elevation contains a two-story projecting bay topped with a hipped roof. The three faces of the projecting bay each contain a one-over-one wood double-hung window on both levels. A centered two-light casement window pierces the limestone foundation on the bay. The western end of the southern elevation is pierced by a one-over-one wood double-hung window on both levels. Another two-light casement window is within the limestone foundation. These windows are placed adjacent to the projecting bay, leaving the westernmost end of the elevation void of fenestration. All windows have segmented arch lintels and stone sills.

### Interior

The interior of the Wilson House features a large, open entryway, atypical for the time period (Photo 8). One of the most prominent features of the first floor is the central stairway with turned wood balusters (Photos 5,6). In addition to the large entryway and prominent stairwell, the first floor features a parlor, dining room, kitchen, living room, and a bathroom. The living room is located north of the entryway at the front of the house and includes the footprint of the attached octagonal tower. The dining room is located to the south of the entryway at the front of the house. The parlor is situated at the southeast corner of the house and is accessed via the dining room. The kitchen and bathroom are located at the rear of the house and are accessed from a hallway to the east of the stairwell. The back porch is accessed via the kitchen. Decorative interior



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details include pressed tin on the ceiling, wood ornamental swag, and wood crown molding (Photo 7).

### Conclusion

The J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson House continues to be used as a residence and retains its historic character-defining details on the exterior and the interior. It maintains integrity of location, setting, materials, design, workmanship, feeling, and association. The exterior of the house remains in good condition and its significant Colonial Revival architectural style has been preserved. The first floor interior layout remains true to the original design and intention. As a significant example of the Colonial Revival style in Cape Girardeau, the Wilson House effectively represents the period of significance, 1904.

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Wilson, J. Maple and Grace Senne, House
Name of Property Cape Girardeau, MO
County and State N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

### Summary

The J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson house, located at 344 North Ellis Street in Cape Girardeau (Cape Girardeau County), Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register at the local level under Criteria C in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The Wilson house, built from 1903 to 1904, is significant in Cape Girardeau as an exceptionally intact example of an early-twentieth-century Colonial Revival style residence. Furthermore, the architecture of the Wilson house is significant because it reflects a transition in the middle and upper classes' architectural tastes from the Victorian aesthetic toward burgeoning revival styles. This shift in architectural preferences is important because it altered how residential neighborhoods appeared not only in Cape Girardeau, but all across the country.

Lewis Brinton Blackwood designed the house for pharmacist J. Maple Wilson and his wife, Grace Senne. Blackwood's design retains a prominent two-story octagonal turret, a hallmark of the Queen Anne style, but affixes it to a symmetrical primary massing that eschews the multiple rooflines that typically define Queen Anne houses. The main body of the Wilson house is decidedly Colonial Revival in shape and design, and features a hipped roof with balustrade, a full-width columned front porch, a deep cornice lined with modillions, and a centered door flanked by large sidelights. The turret is lined with Adamesque swags at its cornice. The Wilson house gracefully recalls the reign of the Queen Anne style while showcasing the Colonial Revival style that was growing in popularity at the turn of the twentieth century. The period of significance is 1904, the year the Wilson house's construction was completed.

### Elaboration

#### Cape Girardeau at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

Cape Girardeau, located along bluffs fronting the west bank of the Mississippi River, was established in 1808. Throughout the 1800s, the city's economy thrived due to commercial activity stemming from its steamboat port.<sup>1</sup> As Cape Girardeau became a major distribution center for goods, its commercial and residential sectors expanded. In the 1850s, residential areas extended out about six blocks west of the commercial area of the city fronting the Mississippi.<sup>2</sup> While the Civil War briefly brought the city's economy to a standstill, industry and distribution continued after the war, and by the 1870s the city's population had risen to 3,640.<sup>3</sup> However, the advent of rail

<sup>1</sup> Philip Thomason, "Historic and Architectural Resources of Cape Girardeau, Missouri", Multiple Property Document Form, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior (2000), E-1.

<sup>2</sup> Thomason, E-3.

<sup>3</sup> Thomason, E-4.

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transportation and its advantages of speed and geographic accessibility over the steamboat began to erode the city's vitality by the end of the 1800s. As long as Cape Girardeau did not have a rail line, its business prospects suffered.<sup>4</sup> Under the direction of Louis Houck, the Cape Girardeau Railway Company completed the first railroad through the city and eventually established a line that indirectly linked Cape Girardeau and St. Louis by 1900. The St. Louis and San Francisco Railway Company bought the lines established by Houck's entrepreneurship and developed them further, establishing direct links from Cape Girardeau to both St. Louis and Memphis by 1904, the same year that the Wilson house's construction was complete.<sup>5</sup>

Once Cape Girardeau was well-connected by rail at the dawn of the twentieth century, the city's commercial business, and thus its population, rebounded and rose prolifically.<sup>6</sup> Cape Girardeau experienced a population boom from 4,815 in 1900 to about 16,000 by 1930.<sup>7</sup> Residential areas continued to expand to the west as the population steadily climbed. It was in this climate of growth and opportunity that the Wilson house was constructed, therefore, it is not unreasonable to link this spirit of optimism to Blackwood's and the Wilson's choice to design their family home in a revived and increasingly popular architectural style.

### Architectural Significance

Constructed in 1903-1904, the Wilson house is a significant example in Cape Girardeau of an early representative Colonial Revival style residence that still draws influence from the Queen Anne aesthetic. Built at the turn of the twentieth century, the house was conceived during a time when admired architectural aesthetics were transitioning from the Victorian age of Queen Anne toward revival styles, including those reminiscent of America's colonial era. In their seminal book *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Virginia and Lee McAlester define 1880 to 1955 as the range of the Colonial Revival style's popularity.<sup>8</sup> The Queen Anne style was in fashion in America from 1880 to about 1910.<sup>9</sup> The Wilson house's completion date of 1904 places it squarely in a period of time when the Queen Anne style's influence was beginning to wane while Colonial Revival was rising in prominence. A study of architectural surveys conducted in residential neighborhoods adjacent to and directly south and east of the campus of

<sup>4</sup> Thomason, E-6.

<sup>5</sup> Thomason, E-7.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003), 321.

<sup>9</sup> McAlester, 263.

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Southeast Missouri State University (SEMO) shows that the Wilson house stands apart as an early example of this transition in design aesthetics.<sup>10</sup>

The Colonial Revival style became popular during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, especially after the Philadelphia Centennial of 1876, which was credited with “awakening an interest in [American] colonial heritage.”<sup>11</sup> Prior to the early 1800s, most Americans did not think highly of the colonial styles of architecture, instead preferring to look toward other influences for their buildings. Starting in the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the American perspective slowly shifted to a more favorable view of colonial architecture and many architects and builders began to incorporate more colonial details into their architecture.<sup>12</sup> Historian W. Barksdale Maynard stated that “it was only a matter of time before architects, already accustomed to the intellectual appropriation of colonialesque elements of the English cottage, would fashion an explicit colonial revival.”<sup>13</sup> By the late nineteenth century, then-popular architectural styles such as Queen Anne and Shingle were subject to the Colonial Revival style’s influence.<sup>14</sup> This resulted in what McAlester defines as the Queen Anne free classic subtype. McAlester notes that some early Colonial Revival houses (from 1880 to about 1910) were asymmetrical, featuring a projecting wing on one side of the house<sup>15</sup>, and then further goes on to state, “The line between some late free classic Queen Anne houses and some early Colonial Revival examples is not a sharp one.”<sup>16</sup>

It is within this atmosphere of shifting ideas and architectural preferences that the Wilson house was designed and constructed. The Wilson house can be identified as an example of McAlester’s asymmetrical Colonial Revival subtype, one of the most common subtypes present before 1910.<sup>17</sup> The symmetry of the Wilson house’s primary façade is accented with its towering garlanded octagonal turret, which rises slightly higher than the primary roofline. A cross gabled wing projects from the eastern (rear) elevation of the house and more closely recalls the Queen Anne style’s tendency to avoid flat wall surfaces. Another full height bay window juts from the southern elevation. However, the primary elevation of the house is an exercise in symmetry. The full-width one story porch lined with dentils and the deep eaves lined with modillions horizontally partition the façade into three symmetrical spans. The entry door is flanked by two large

<sup>10</sup> Southeast Missouri State University, Historic Preservation Program, *Normal-Sprigg Historic District Survey*, 2009; *North Sprigg-North Middle Local Historic District Survey*, 2010; *Pacific-Sprigg Survey Part I*, 2000.

<sup>11</sup> McAlester, 326.

<sup>12</sup> W. Barksdale Maynard. “Best, Lowliest Style!” *The Early Nineteenth Century Rediscovery of American Colonial Architecture*, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Vol. 59, No. 3 (Sep., 2000), 338.

<sup>13</sup> Maynard, 353.

<sup>14</sup> McAlester, 326.

<sup>15</sup> McAlester, 321.

<sup>16</sup> McAlester, 327.

<sup>17</sup> McAlester, 326.

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N/A

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sidelights, and the fenestration is evenly spaced on the façade. The Wilson house is built of red brick, a common cladding utilized in the Colonial Revival style, and the windows are topped with flat lintels composed of flared voissiors. The central bay is the most elaborate on all stories, further lending a sense of balance. The first story contains the entry, while the second is elaborated by a bay window with multiple lights. The central bay of the half story contained a dormer window with hipped roof and diamond-shaped muntins. The façade is further balanced by a hipped roof topped with a decorative balustrade. It is these characteristics which draw the 1904 Wilson house out of the Queen Anne free classic mode and place it squarely within the Colonial Revival style.

As the commercial sector of Cape Girardeau grew, so too did its residential areas. Residences dating from the late 1800s to the first half of the twentieth century can be documented in neighborhoods that developed west-northwest of the city's commercial district. Built in 1904, the Wilson House is sited northwest of the city's historic commercial district. The Oliver-Leming House (NR\_1980) is located directly across North Street from the Wilson House and was built in 1899 in the Neoclassical Revival style. A study of architectural surveys focusing on the residential areas immediately north and west of downtown Cape Girardeau reveal that the Queen Anne and, later, the Colonial Revival styles were both commonly utilized. The Wilson House's unique transitional design and excellent integrity set it apart from other Queen Anne and Colonial Revival style houses in Cape Girardeau. Southeast Missouri State University has a strong presence in Cape Girardeau; SEMO campus buildings are located within two blocks of the Wilson House. The influx of students has led to the conversion of many historic single-family houses into multiple-family housing and the clearing of historic buildings for campus projects. Despite these pressures, the Wilson House has remained a single-family residence and is currently owned by a descendant of the original owners. The house retains excellent integrity of its interior layout and details and its exterior design and ornamentation, making it a significant example of an early Colonial Revival style house in Cape Girardeau.

Further examination of architectural surveys reveals that the design of the Wilson House is unique in Cape Girardeau, and is important as it clearly represents the burgeoning popularity of the Colonial Revival style at the turn of the twentieth century. Other Colonial Revival style houses in the immediate vicinity of the Wilson House include 325 North Sprigg Street (1915), 321 Ellis Street (1920), 537 Alta Vista Drive (1930), 520 North Pacific (1936), and 850 Alta Vista Drive (1940) (See Figure 6). The residence at 325 North Sprigg Street, built 11 years after the Wilson House, shares similar design qualities with the nominated property but lacks detail or form that could be associated with the Queen Anne style.<sup>18</sup> 325 North Sprigg Street is a representative

<sup>18</sup> Southeast Missouri State University, Historic Preservation Program, *Normal-Sprigg Historic District Survey*, 2009. Form CGSEA001-0082.

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example of the Colonial Revival style that would continue to influence residential architecture in Cape Girardeau. McAlester notes that in the first decades of the twentieth century, the wide distribution of photographs and drawings in books and periodicals expanded the nation's understanding of the original Colonial designs, and as a result future iterations of the style demonstrated a desire for a higher level of accuracy.<sup>19</sup> This progression towards attention to historical accuracy is evident when viewing 321 Ellis Street (1920), 537 Alta Vista (1930), 520 North Pacific (1936), and 850 Alta Vista (1940).<sup>20</sup> The Wilson House is significant as an important visual link in the built environment that shows the transition of architectural trends from the Queen Anne style toward revival styles.

When the Wilson House was constructed in 1904, the free classic subtype of the Queen Anne style was still being utilized on houses in Cape Girardeau's historic residential neighborhoods. Houses within ½ mile of the Wilson House that illustrate this include 833 Merriwether Street (1902), 239 North Middle Street (1904), and 118 North Ellis Street (1910) (see Figure 7). These residences incorporate columned porches and show more restraint than typical Queen Anne houses. However, their variegated rooflines and overall irregular massings are more aligned with Queen Anne than Colonial Revival. The Wilson House, in contrast, was built the same year as 239 North Middle Street, but utilizes design elements that place it within the Colonial Revival aesthetic. While Cape Girardeau has many Queen Anne free classic and Colonial Revival historic houses, the Wilson House is distinct among them for its unique transitional design and preserved exterior ornamentation and interior layout.

### J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson

The Wilson House was originally owned by J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson, who married in 1894. Wilson commissioned the house in 1903 because Grace wanted to start a family in a different house than the wooden frame one that originally stood on the property. The floor plan she designed was meant to be much more open than the frame house, as well as being more family friendly. The couple gave the commission to L.B. Blackwood and also contracted with William Taylor to build the house. Ultimately, the project cost the Wilsons approximately seven thousand dollars.<sup>21</sup>

Prior to establishing a pharmacy with his father and brother, J. Maple Wilson attended the State Normal School in Cape Girardeau and then the University of Missouri in Columbia. He also taught science and penmanship at the local Normal School, which

<sup>19</sup> McAlester, 326.

<sup>20</sup> Southeast Missouri State University, Historic Preservation Program, *Normal-Sprigg Historic District Survey*, 2009. Forms CGSEAS001-0048, 0009, 0003, 0070.

<sup>21</sup> Terri Foley, "J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson House (Saved)." *Southeast Missourian*, February 18, 2007.

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was located just one block north of the nominated property. The Wilson family's pharmacy was first located at 111 North Main Street in Cape Girardeau. In 1924 the pharmacy was moved to 1230 North Main Street to better serve the Red Star area of town near the International Shoe Factory. In 1939, Wilson sold the drug store and retired.<sup>22</sup>

After J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson died, their daughters, Mary Wilson and Ellen Wilson Wilcox, took over ownership of the property. Mary Wilson worked as a teacher at Washington Elementary School for fifty years and the two of them kept the home in the family until their deaths in 1991 (Mary) and 1993 (Ellen). In 2005, Judith Cureton, the granddaughter of J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson, obtained ownership of the home to keep the house in the family.<sup>23</sup>

### Lewis Brinton Blackwood

Lewis Brinton Blackwood was a prominent architect credited with several buildings in Cape Girardeau. He was born in New Jersey in 1844 and moved to Kansas early in life. After visiting Cape Girardeau at the turn of the twentieth century, Blackwood began advertising his services in Cape Girardeau publications in 1903 and established an office in the city the following year.<sup>24</sup> This was during a vibrant time, as the population was rising, construction was booming, and the World's Fair in St. Louis was underway. The Wilson house, completed in 1904, must have been among Blackwood's first projects in Cape Girardeau. In addition to residences, Blackwood designed religious and commercial buildings. As Blackwood's reputation grew, many prominent Cape Girardeau citizens began to hire him to design buildings. Blackwood's local buildings include the old Centenary Church building (located immediately south of the Wilson House), the First National Bank, and the Liberty Carriage Factory, in addition to a Main Street storefront, a library, a clubhouse, and a YMCA building, among others. Blackwood also designed several well-known local houses, including the Abraham Russell Ponder House at 141 S. Louisiana Avenue (NR\_2008). After returning to St. Louis in 1907, the architect still visited Cape Girardeau frequently to supervise construction. L.B. Blackwood died in St. Louis in 1911.<sup>25</sup> The Wilson house is one of only a few of Blackwood's residences in Cape Girardeau still standing.

<sup>22</sup>Tom Neumeyer. *Cape Girardeau Then and Now*. Frank Nickell, ed. (Cape Girardeau: Southeast Missouri State University's Center for Regional History, 2009), 216-217.

<sup>23</sup>Property Record of 344 N. Ellis Street, 16-719-00-33-008: Cape Girardeau County Mapping and Appraisal, Jackson, Missouri.

<sup>24</sup>Morgan Lake. "Abraham Russell Ponder House." Cape Girardeau, Missouri. National Register Nomination. National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, 2008, 8-15.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid, 15-16.

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### Conclusion

The J. Maple and Grace Senne Wilson House in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level for its architectural significance as an early example of Colonial Revival design. The house retains integrity, as the interior layout is preserved and the exterior design and form is unchanged from the period of significance, 1904. The Wilson House is unique among other Colonial Revival style houses in Cape Girardeau as an early example that also retains influence from the Queen Anne style in the form of a prominent octagonal turret with finial. The Wilson House's architectural language is an important component of Cape Girardeau's built environment because it exemplifies the transition in popular tastes from Queen Anne to revival styles at the turn of the twentieth century.



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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Lot 30 in Range F on the Cape Girardeau City Planning Map.

**Verbal Boundary Justification**

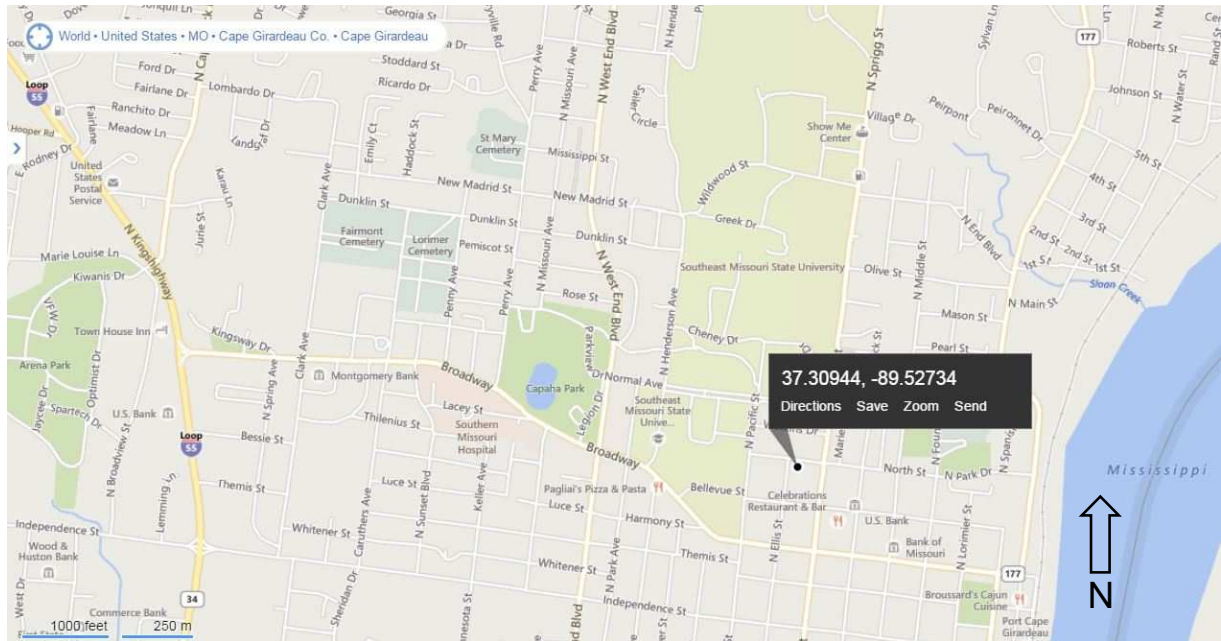
The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the building.

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Figure 1: Wilson House, Contextual Map. Source: Bing.com, accessed April 2015.

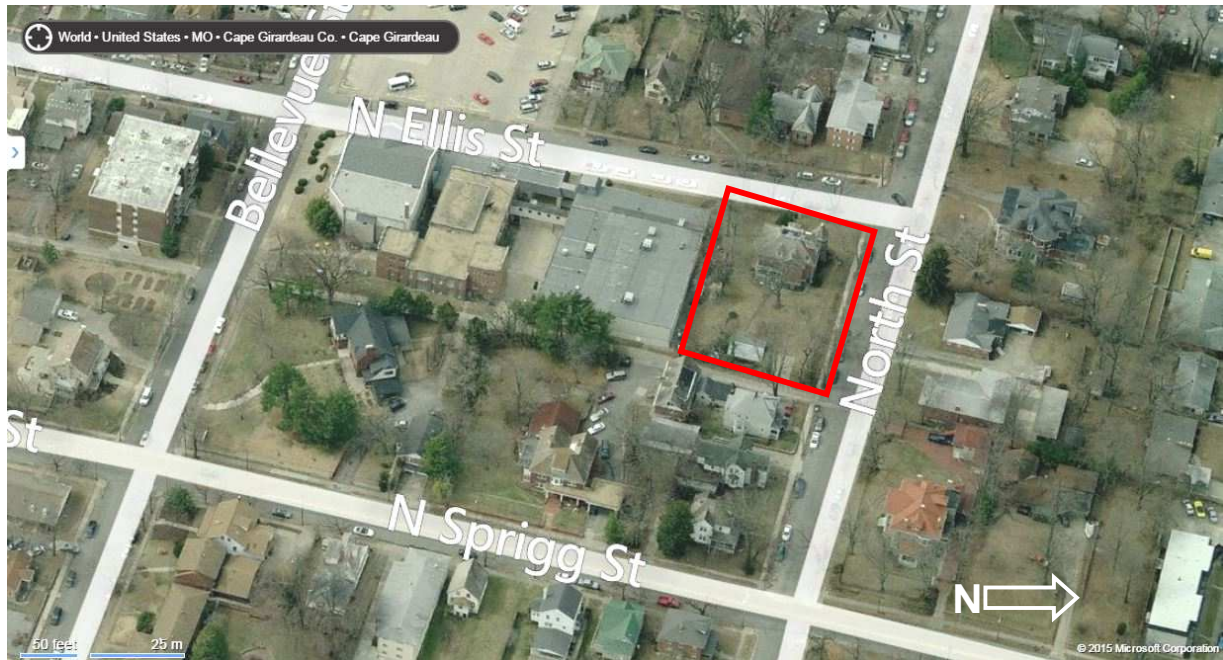


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**Figure 2:** Wilson House, National Register Boundary Map. Source: Bing.com, accessed April 2015.



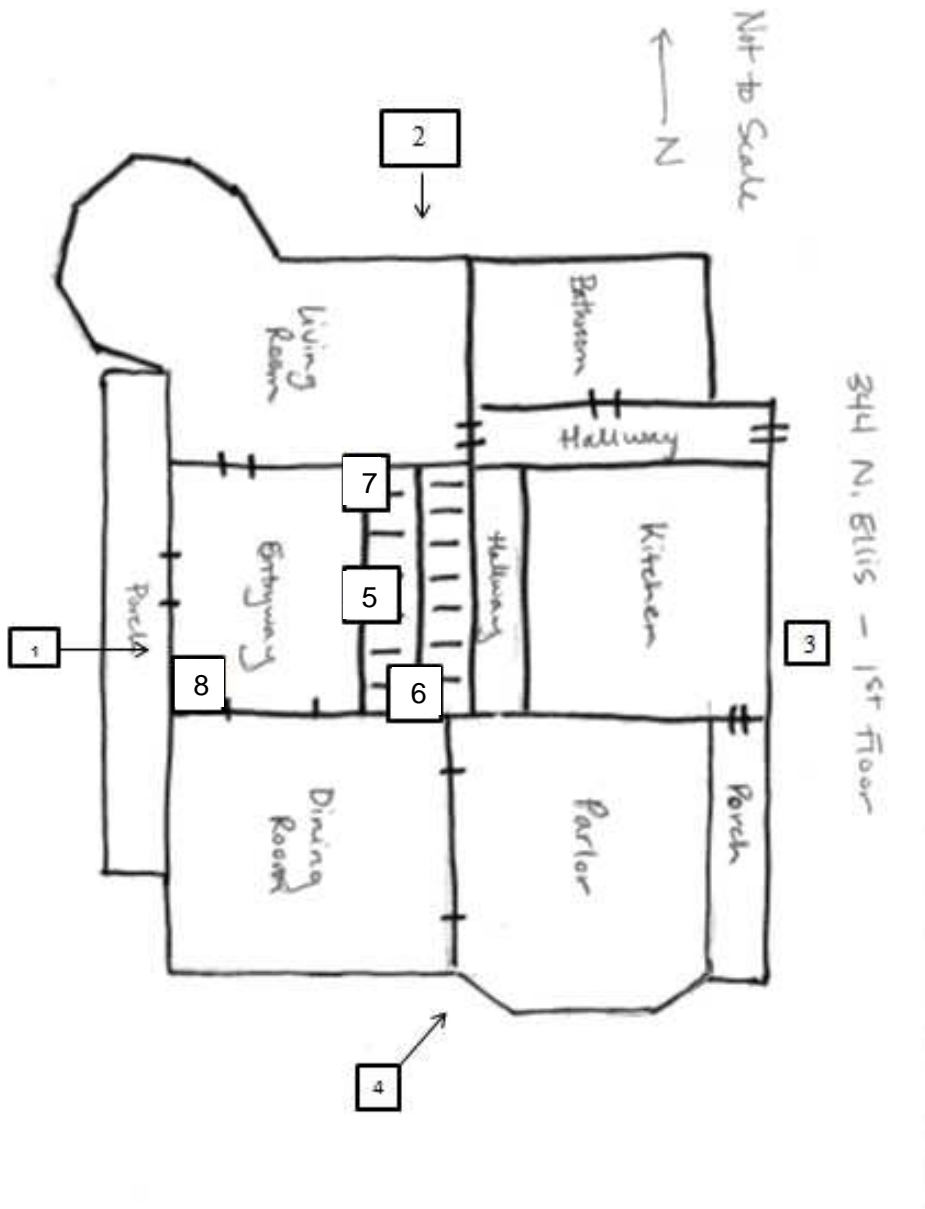
+37.30944, -89.52734

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Figure 3: Wilson House, First Floor Plan and Photo Key. Source: SEMO.



Dimensions: Main building (without tower, projections, bays, etc): 29'x48'  
Front porch: 35'x8'  
Rear porch: 22'x6'

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**Figure 4:** Non-contributing outbuilding on property. Source: Google maps, accessed April 2015.



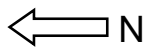
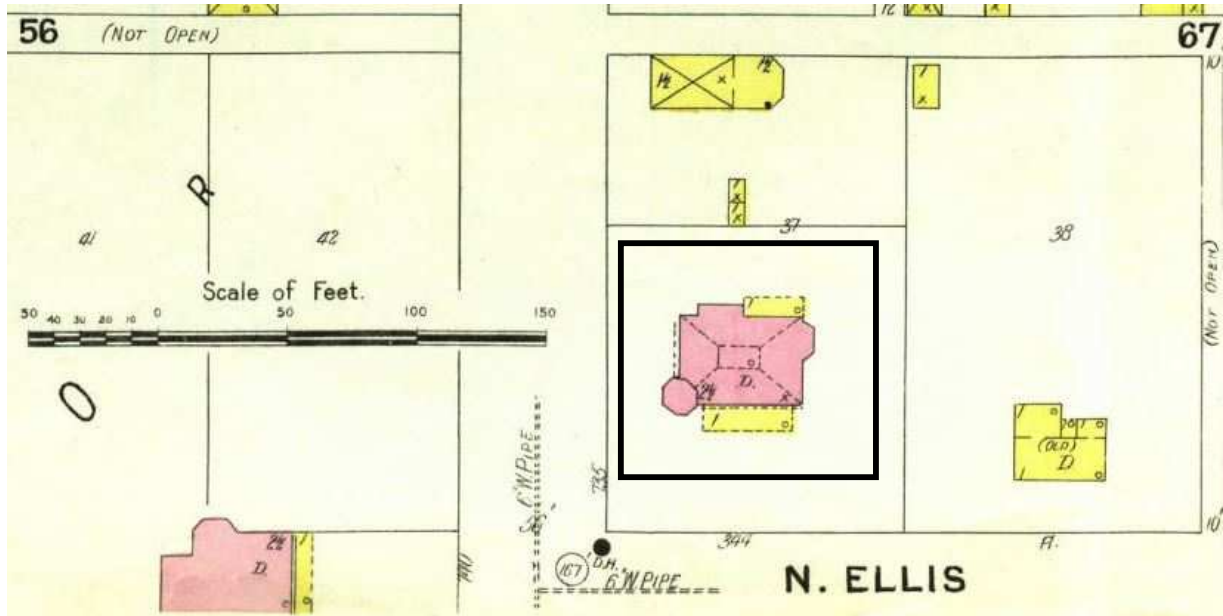


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**Figure 5:** Sanborn Map, 1908. Nominated property outlined in black.

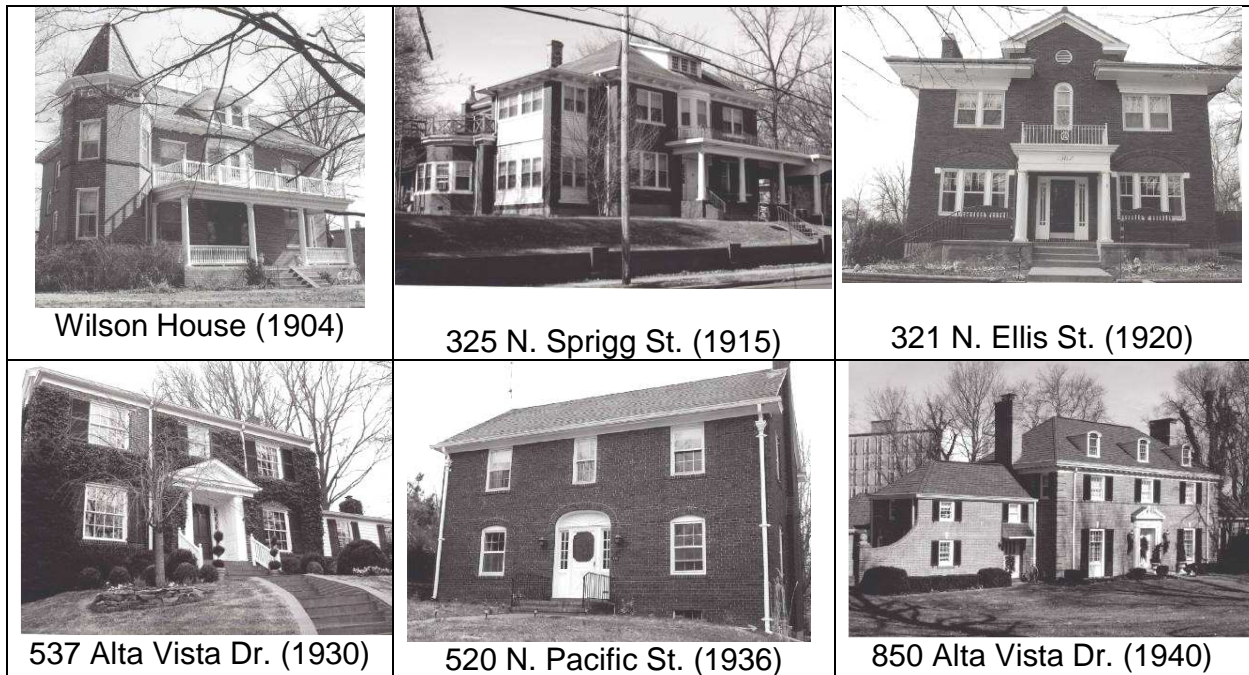


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**Figure 6:** Photo table. Source: *Normal-Sprigg Historic District Survey*, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Historic Preservation Program, Southeast Missouri State University, Spring 2009.



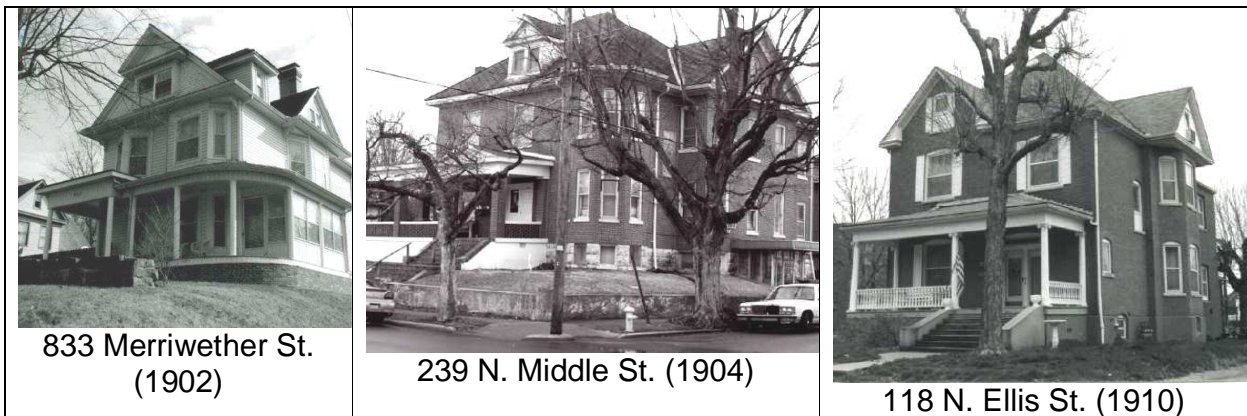


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**Figure 7:** Photo table. Source: *Pacific-Sprigg Survey Phase I*, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Historic Preservation Program, Southeast Missouri State University, Spring 2000; *North Sprigg-North Middle Local Historic District Survey*, Cape Girardeau, Missouri, Historic Preservation Program, Southeast Missouri State University, Spring 2010.







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