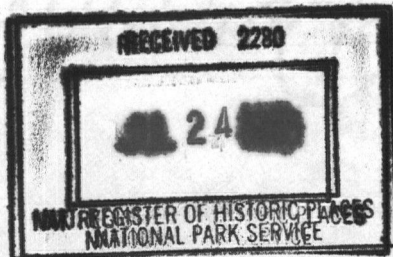


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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

1. Name of Property

historic name May, David and Mary House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 3723 Washington Avenue  not for publication

city or town Cincinnati  vicinity

state Ohio code OH county Hamilton code 061 zip code 45229

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.)

Bauhan Stone Dept. Head Planning, Inv. & Reg. 7-19-96  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Ohio Historic Preservation Office - OHSHP0  
State of Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

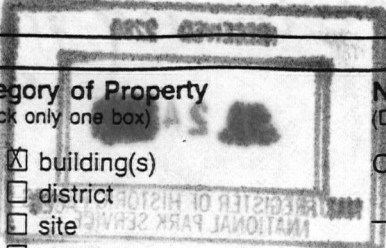
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall Keeper Entered in the National Register 8-22-96  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action



5. Classification

Ownership of Property  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property  
(Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
3	0	Total

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals:

Italian Renaissance, French Renaissance

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone

terra cotta tile

roof

other

Narrative Description

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

OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
NATIONAL REGISTER

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Continuation SheetMay, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, OhioSection number 7 Page 1

The David and Mary May House is located at the northwest corner of Washington and Norway Avenues in North Avondale, a Cincinnati neighborhood which is about four miles northeast of Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati. Avondale, situated between I-71, and I-75, and south of the Norwood Lateral (State Route 562), is bounded on the north by the City of St. Bernard, on the east by the City of Norwood, on the south by the Cincinnati neighborhoods of Walnut Hills and Corryville, and on the west by the hilltop neighborhood of Clifton. Originally a single distinctive suburban village, Avondale is today essentially two separate neighborhoods, North and South Avondale, with east-west Gholson Avenue the dividing line.

The David May House is located on Washington Avenue in North Avondale, just two blocks north of Gholson Avenue. The three-story mansion of Indiana limestone was designed in a blend of the Italian Renaissance and French Renaissance Revival styles by architects George B. McMiller and Robert F. Taft. This firm practiced in Cincinnati from 1901 until 1926 from offices at 2349 Plum Street, and from 1927-1955 in the Hulburt Block at Sixth and Vine Streets. Although the firm was active for over 50 years, no other houses have been attributed to them. Robert F. Taft, a distant relative of the political Taft family, was listed in the 1901 Williams Cincinnati City Directory as a bookkeeper and cashier with his home listed at 317 Laurel Street. The next year the firm began as McMiller & Taft, but even by 1927-28, they were identified as contractors and builders in the Williams Directories.

The elegant stone house was built in 1910 in an attractive formal setting on 11 acres with a sunken garden, a private park, flower beds, and a stone two-car garage. The house, garage, and garden are on the front 1.75 acres of the lot, but the private park to the rear was sold and subdivided for houses in the 1930s.

From Washington Street, the house is reached through a pair of ornate wrought iron gates attached to two 8-foot high square stone posts that have incised corners. (Photo #1) A wrought iron filigreed arch, 12 feet above the patterned brick driveway, has an historic lamp suspended from the arch's center. Each post is decorated with a classical design in relief, a capstone, and conical-shaped stone ball. The post on the right has a bronze plaque which was added in the 1980s by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Edward T. Buford, Jr. It reads, *The May House, (David and Mary May), 1910, French Renaissance, Architects McMillan and Taft.* (Photo #2) Flanking the gateway is another smaller set of square stone posts which are less ornate and are topped only by a capstone and conical-shaped ball. Several gas lamps are on the Norway Street side of the property, but none are in front of the house on Washington Street. (The spelling of the architect listed as McMillan should actually read McMiller.)

The house sits back from the street and is framed by mature pine trees. The brick driveway extends from the gateway entrance to create a circular driveway around a slight knoll in front of the house which is its east facade. (Photo #3) The main facade of the stone mansion is an excellent blend of the North Italian mode and the French Renaissance Revival styles. It has two levels of stone steps

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Continuation SheetMay, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, OhioSection number 7 Page 2

which lead to an open veranda that spans the front of the house. In the center of the veranda are three elegant full-height double doorways. Each doorway has a trabeated round-arched portal decorated with wood tracery, floral swags, and a keystone. The three doorways are enframed by four Tuscan columns that have plain capitals which support platforms for stone urn-like statuary. Above the three doorways and recessed behind the capitals and pedestals of the columns is a heavy architrave with dentils. It has a projecting beltcourse that runs the width of the entrance. Directly above this feature is a decorated frieze in relief with three centered cartouches and floral roping. This wide frieze is the base for the three rectangular windows with molded surrounds and tracery on the second floor. At the roof level are three pedimented dormers with segmental arched hood molds and drop labels at casement windows. The dormers have scrollwork at their bases where they attach to the roof. (Photos # 4, 5, 6)

The north facade of the house also has three sets of double doors. (Photo #7) All three doorways open onto a single-tier open portico that is 27 feet in length by 12 feet in width. The porch has a stone floor, a coffered ceiling that has a pattern of recessed squares, and a heavy wrought iron light fixture. The edges of the portico are defined by six stone tapered columns with unadorned capitals which support the plain entablature and dentilated cornice of the green tile roof. A stone balustrade has decorative balusters, and stone steps lead down to the driveway and eventually to the sunken garden.

The wide stone steps are on two levels, with three steps each. They are flanked by two levels of low stone walls which lead to the brick driveway which almost encircles the house. The brick driveway is a continuation of the one at the stone entranceway off Washington Street at the front of the house. The drive circles around the north side of the house toward the garage located in the rear of the house. The driveway exits onto Norway Street on the south side of the house.

On the north side of the stone portico across the brick driveway is the sunken garden. An open latticework concrete wall provides the upper level for the garden which is about 15 feet lower. The wall has two square posts with stone griffin statues on either side of a landing that serves two descending curved stairways. Each stairway has 15 steps and is lined on both sides with latticework walls. The double staircases gracefully arch down into the landscaped garden that is about 60 feet in length by 40 feet in width. In between the two staircases, a ten-foot high solid stone curved wall has a six-foot high niche with a sea shell spout and water fountain.

The sunken garden is a beautiful element of the Italian Renaissance formal style. It has a series of four rectangles with four different patterns and surfaces, each set within the larger rectangle. The smallest rectangle is made up of three contiguous concrete pools with raised sides and center spigots. The three shallow pools are surrounded by a stone walkway that has a raised stone curbing. It provides a base for four stone urns which are evenly spaced around the pools. On all sides of the stone walkway is a

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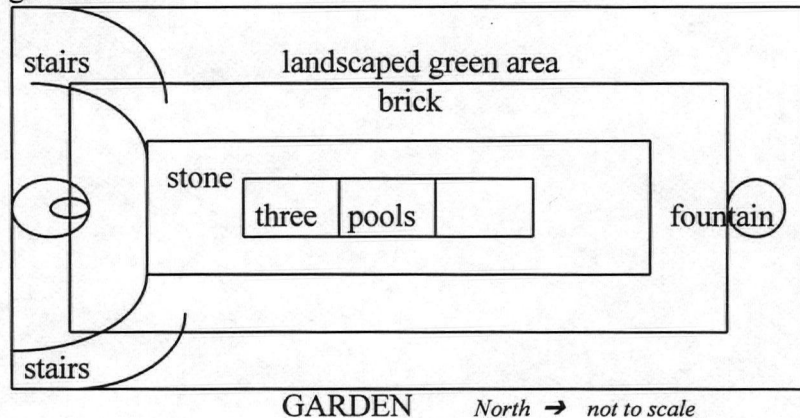
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 7 Page 3

patterned brick path that links the south wall where the niche and the double staircases are to the large circular fountain at the north end of the garden.

On three sides of the brick portion is a landscaped green area filled with ivy and flowers in the softly sloping area of the yard. The colossal fountain at the north edge has a wide bowl and fluted base. Tuscan statuary rises from the center of the stone bowl. The fountain is at the north boundary of the property. (Photos # 8, 9)



The rear of the house faces the west across the brick driveway and toward the two-car stone garage that sits at the west edge of the property line. The irregular U-shape of the house incorporates a first-floor porte cochère that supports a second floor bedroom on the northwest corner. The extension of the U on the southwest side includes the kitchen, pantry, and a stone porch that has been enclosed. In the center of the U, under the huge stained and leaded glass window that lights the interior foyer and open staircase is the Rookwood Room, shown on the floorplan as the Great Room. (Photo #12) (Continuation sheet #4)

Directly behind the house is the square Indiana limestone two-car garage. The garage doors have a molded surround with a decorative keystone between the two doors. Above the door openings, a recessed panel with scrollwork on the ends supports three square windows with double hung sashes. The flat roofline is embellished with a cornice that has scroll-like modillions and stone returns with recessed panels and parapet. (Photos 10, 11, 13)

The south side of the house is symmetrical with two round arched windows in the kitchen and dining room beneath a double beltcourse that incorporates open balconies at the two full-size windows on the second floor. Between the two windows are three narrow double hung sashes. The green tile roof has an overhang with modillions. (Photos # 14, 15)

The interior of the house is elegant with a central foyer that has Classical elements of Doric columns, open staircase with curved stairway and open landing lighted by a massive window. The living room has an ornate fireplace, coffered ceiling, and hardwood floors. The "Great room" listed on the floorplan has an original Rookwood tile fireplace, round arched niche with statuary, fluted pilasters and pastoral murals. There have been no major changes to the interior except for an open rear porch which was enclosed for the mud room. (Continuation sheet #4)

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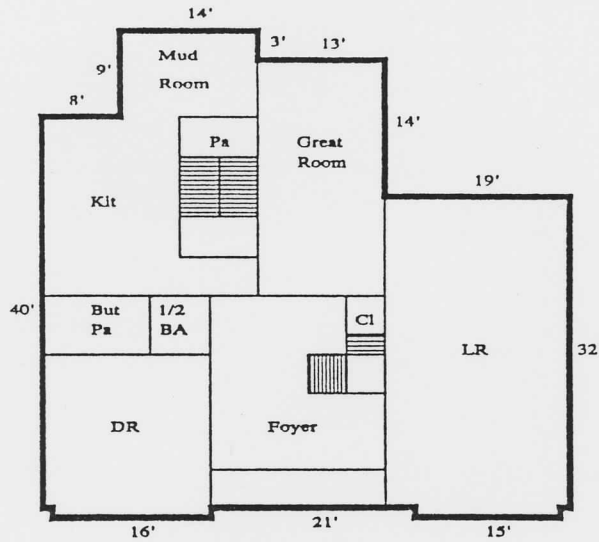
National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

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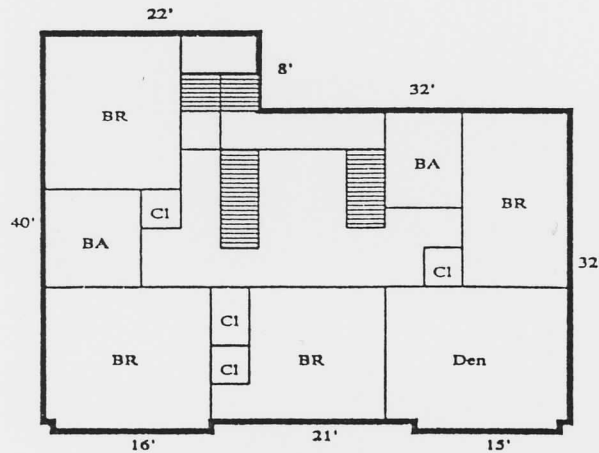
David and Mary May House  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Hamilton County, Ohio



North



First floor



Second floor

SCALE: 1 Inch = 20 feet

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Social History

Period of Significance

1910- 1946

Significant Dates

1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

McMiller & Taft

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.75 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 116 716510 4336430
Zone Easting Northing

3 Zone Easting Northing
4 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

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

Boundary Justification

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Ann Olding
organization Old World Research, Inc. date November 15, 1995
street & number 2453 Fairview Avenue telephone 513-721-7727
city or town Cincinnati state OH zip code 45219

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

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

Property Owner

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

name Mr. and Mrs. O. Lavelle Bond
street & number 3723 Washington Avenue telephone 513-961-7821
city or town Cincinnati state OH zip code 45229

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

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

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Hamilton County, Ohio

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Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

The David and Mary May House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Eligible under Criterion A, the house is one of the elegant residences which represent the establishment of Avondale as Cincinnati's most elegant Jewish neighborhood for a half-century from 1900 to the 1950s. The 1910 May House is also eligible under Criterion C because it is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style. Found in early 20th century architect-designed houses throughout the country, the style was built primarily in major metropolitan areas prior to World War I until its decline in popularity during the Depression era of the 1930s.

Historical Significance- Criterion ABrief History of Avondale

The rolling land that became Avondale is about four miles northeast of Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati. In the 1830s, a few Cincinnati businessmen built homes near Reading Road, an early road to Lebanon, and began commuting to their establishments in the city. Ironworks' owners, such as Miles Greenwood and Stephen Burton, either used their land for farming or held it as investments. By 1846, properties were subdivided, and wealthy merchants and manufacturers built homes on large spacious lots, just as others of their class were doing in Clifton, Mt. Auburn, and Walnut Hills. In 1853, it is said that Mrs. Stephen Burton gave the district the name of Avondale because she saw a resemblance between the stream behind her house and the Avon River in England. Two large parcels of land were purchased by the Cincinnati and Chicago Railroad in 1854, and H. C. Freeman, the company surveyor, identified the new combined subdivision as Avondale. The village was given the name when it was incorporated in 1864. For the next thirty years, the Village of Avondale struggled to control crime that plagued its wealthy citizens, but was more successful with improving roads and laying sewer lines. Continuous annexation attempts were made by the City of Cincinnati in an effort to regain the population and tax income migrating to the suburbs.

For most of the nineteenth century, Avondale was populated mainly by Protestants of the merchant class of English and German ancestry. Established during this period were the pre-Civil War farmhouses of Stephen Burton and Miles Greenwood, owners of the Eagle Iron Works, and the 1870 Parish of Grace Episcopal church on Reading Road. Andrew Erkenbrecher spearheaded the founding of the Zoological Society of Cincinnati at 3400 Vine Street in 1873. Also remaining is an early Catholic congregation, organized by Irish domestics soon after the Civil War. The Irish were part of the small number of middle or lower-income residents that included the 8 to 10% who were black. In the 1890s, well-to-do German Jewish families which were not welcomed by the select social circles that dominated suburbs like Clifton, began moving into Avondale, primarily to its northern part.

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May, David and Mary, House  
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Section number 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Page 6 \_\_\_\_\_

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The Reform Jews moved from the downtown basin into northern Avondale where they erected large, tastefully styled homes on rolling, landscaped lawns. In 1910 David and Mary May joined the successful Jewish families in Avondale where they built a three-story limestone mansion on Washington Avenue. They owned the house and lived in North Avondale until their deaths.

After Avondale was annexed by the City of Cincinnati in 1896, streetcar lines were laid in 1903. This allowed less affluent Cincinnatians access to Avondale. Many Greek Americans and Eastern European Jews, who were generally Orthodox, joined the exodus of Reform Jewish families leaving the declining and congested West End to new, less expensive subdivisions of southern Avondale. These new immigrants profoundly changed the social character of Avondale.

As the migration accelerated, most of the Avondale suburb became a Jewish colony. The Orthodox Jews infiltrated the southern part of the suburb and gradually established a shopping district along Reading Road near Rockdale Avenue. The older Jewish families moved still farther out into upper Avondale that is today a highly attractive residential district of massive homes and apartment hotels, imposing temples and synagogues, and old trees and gardens along Rose Hill Avenue. Robert Mitchell provided the community's first planned residential subdivision, offering 112 lots on Lenox Place, Reading Road, Paddock Road, and Rose Hill, Beechwood, and Mitchell Avenues. His son, Richard Mitchell, had the architectural firm, Samuel Hannaford & Sons, design a home in 1892 at 3 Burton Woods Lane in northern Avondale. (Listed in the National Register of Historic Places) Housing construction began about 1900 on winding streets with large lots and wide front lawns. Prosperous Cincinnati families, some non-Jews, built substantial homes in fine examples of English Medieval, Tudor Renaissance, Classical Revival, English Cottage Revival, and Italian Renaissance styles. The divergence between the northern and southern parts of Avondale began and eventually splintered the once unified Avondale community.

From the 1920s until the end of World War II, 60 per cent of the suburb's population was Jewish. Known as "the gilded ghetto," Avondale was the home of a variety of Jewish institutions and businesses that had originated in the old Jewish neighborhoods of the West End. Seven synagogues or temples were built along Reading Road, Washington Avenue, and Rockdale Avenue between 1902-1926.

After World War II, the character of Avondale changed again. Reasonable mortgage rates allowed younger Jewish residents to buy more modern homes in the newer suburbs, and older people began to move away as the large homes became too difficult for them to maintain. In the late 1940s, Jewish families, many from Avondale, moved to middle-income homes in communities on the northern edge of Cincinnati.

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Continuation Sheet**May, David and Mary, House  
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As Avondale residents re-established communities farther north, middle-income black families often replaced them because Avondale was one of the few desirable neighborhoods open to them. Under the Cincinnati Department of Relocation, more than 220 black families were settled in Avondale through urban renewal and displacement from the West End so that by 1959, the southern portion of Avondale had become predominantly black. Gholson Avenue, several blocks south of the David and Mary May House, was the dividing line between the northern more affluent section and the southern section that was victimized by "white flight."

Dramatic racial turnover and declining property values were not universal in Avondale. North of Gholson Avenue, the expensive houses on large lots were less likely to be sub-divided into low-rent apartments. North and South Avondale became increasingly distinct and separate neighborhoods. In 1956, city planners identified southern Avondale as blighted and in need of rehabilitation. The City's Renewal Project I only caused more problems because the work completed between 1965 and 1975 benefited the university and hospitals, not the residents. The frustration caused by the city's failure to fulfill its promises and by the massive displacement of 40,000 people from the West End, many into South Avondale, fueled anger and resentment among its black residents. In the late 1960s, a time of urban rioting throughout America, these feelings were expressed between 1967-70 in a series of riots and firebombings that damaged many of South Avondale's commercial and institutional buildings and drove out most of the remaining white businesses.

The city responded in 1971 with a second renewal plan, Avondale II, which emphasized the creation of a "town center" business area with a shopping mall at Reading Road and Rockdale Avenue where the riots had occurred. Rejuvenation has been extremely slow and uneven, and much of the responsibility for further improvement passed largely into the hands of community groups.

**Brief History of Judaism in Cincinnati**

The neighborhood of Avondale most completely exemplifies Jewish settlement in Cincinnati from 1900-1950, even though there are now essentially two separate neighborhoods, North and South Avondale. As was typical of Jewish ethnic communities in other cities in the country, Jews settled in concentrated neighborhoods during the nineteenth century and until the end of World War II. The cohesiveness of Jewish communities dissolved after the 1960s, and now Jewish families have moved to all parts of Greater Cincinnati.

The history of Judaism in Cincinnati began in 1817 upon the arrival of English Jews, the Jonas and Moses families. Prior to 1830 no more than 150 Jews, mostly of English ancestry, lived in the city.

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Hamilton County, OhioSection number 8 Page 8

They first settled downtown east of Main Street between Third and Fifth Streets. In 1836, they built the first synagogue west of the Alleghenies near the corner of Sixth and Broadway in Cincinnati. In 1840, a German Jewish peddler, Philip Heidelbach, opened a clothing store at Front and Sycamore Streets. Many Jews remained peddlers for only a short time but became successful in well-defined sectors of the economy, notably the garment industry. They developed an informal credit system of their own to stimulate investment in business. By 1860, the manufacture, distribution, and sales of men's ready-made clothing and other apparel supplied at least a portion of the livelihood for well over one-half of Cincinnati's Jews. Sixty-five to seventy wholesale clothing firms in the city were Jewish owned, and Cincinnati was proclaimed "the ready-made clothing capital of the West" by Stephen G. Mostov. In his 1983 manuscript entitled, "*A Jerusalem on the Ohio*," he reviewed Jewish economic history in Cincinnati from 1840-1875. Not all Cincinnati Jews were involved in the clothing trades, but they also worked, among other things, as peddlers, clerks, salesmen, bookkeepers, doctors, and even cigar manufacturers.

Jews were drawn from downtown to the West End as early as 1821 when Nicholas Longworth sold a small plot of land near Chestnut Street and Western Row (now Central Avenue) for use as a Jewish cemetery. The West End, now bounded by Central Avenue on the east, the Mill Creek on the west, Bank Street on the north, and the Ohio River to the south, was first subdivided in 1816. It became home to wealthy men of English backgrounds, such as William Barr, James Gamble, and William Betts. In addition to the homes of the wealthy, the West End also had a large unimproved subdivision, some factories, and worker housing. By 1845, no more than 2,500 Jews were living in the city, but the figure increased to 10,000 by 1860. Many Jews began moving from downtown into the West End as the first residents, non-Jews, moved away to hilltop suburbs.

During the period of national expansion after the Civil War as Cincinnati became the fifth largest city in the country, commercial construction in the downtown exploded. Cincinnati's Jews left their homes in the downtown and moved, in large numbers, to the then-prestigious West End. In 1866, the first Reformed Jewish congregation west of the Alleghenies dedicated the Issac M. Wise Temple on Plum Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets, one block from Central Avenue. Two years later, Bene Israel, the oldest and largest Jewish congregation in Cincinnati, sold their Sixth and Broadway Street house of worship and consecrated a synagogue at Eighth and Mound Streets. The first Jewish Hospital was on Central Avenue, the Hebrew Union College, begun in the vestry rooms of the Plum Street and Mound Street Temples, moved in 1881 to Sixth and Cutter Streets. Wealthy Jewish families built fashionable townhouses from the 1870s to the 1890s on both sides of Central Avenue at Eighth and Ninth Streets, which is only one block from the Issac M. Wise Temple. By 1900, nine of the eleven Jewish congregations were in the West End.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

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As the first residents, primarily Reformed Jews, began moving to hilltop suburbs, growing numbers of immigrant Jews replaced them. Many were impoverished and from backgrounds that left them poorly prepared for life in a crowded urban setting. After the turn of the century, German Reform Jews tended to settle in northern Avondale, while Walnut Hills and southern Avondale became home for many Eastern European Orthodox Jewish families.

The only exception to the Jewish migration to northern parts of Cincinnati took place about 1906 when a small Jewish settlement was started in Price Hill. United Jewish Charities moved a number of families to this neighborhood on the western side of Cincinnati so that members with tuberculosis could receive treatment at the sanitarium. By the 1920s, although the area was predominantly Catholic, many Sephardic Jews from the West End had settled near Glenway Avenue. This Spanish sect traces its roots to Jews who were expelled from Catholic Spain during the Inquisition, and have their own rituals and customs. They bought their own cemetery on Sunset Avenue, and in 1934, they dedicated the Synagogue of Sephardic Beth Shalom. The Spanish Jews in Price Hill were joined after World War II by Jewish Holocaust survivors. However, because the location was inconvenient, in 1987, they sold their synagogue, which was the only one of its kind in Ohio. They assimilated into the Ashkenazic Jewish mainstream, and joined other families which moved into Avondale, Bond Hill and Roselawn.

After the second World War in the late 1940s, Jewish families, many from Avondale, moved to middle-income homes in Paddock Hills, Bond Hill, Golf Manor, and Roselawn. In the 1960s, upper-income Jews moved to Amberley Village. Today, these five communities contain twelve of Cincinnati's seventeen Jewish congregations. (See maps on Continuation sheets #13,14.)

### History of David and Mary May's migration in Cincinnati

The story of David and Mary May fits into Cincinnati's history of Jewish migration. In Cincinnati, Jewish communities were concentrated in four major areas: (See map, page 14)

- ① downtown at Sycamore and Broadway, primarily between Third and Fifth Streets
- ② the West End
- ③ North and South Avondale
- ④ the automobile suburbs of Paddock Hills, Bond Hill, Golf Manor, Roselawn, and Amberley Village

David May was born December 20, 1857, in the downtown Jewish community where his father, Issac May, owned a large livery business. David lived with his family on Walnut Street, attended the public schools, and began his career as an employee of Jacob Sachs & Co., clothing merchants. At the

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Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Page 10 \_\_\_\_\_

age of 26, he moved to the West End and started his own business. The furniture company, with partners Harry Stern and Aaron Waldheim, was located in 1885 in the West End at the corner of Sixth Street and Western Row (now Central Avenue). In 1903, the firm built a ten-story brick building 100 x 100 feet, one block from Central Avenue at Fifth and Elm Street. At that time, the May-Stern Company became the largest establishment of its kind in Cincinnati. They also had two warehouses in Cincinnati, twenty-eight other stores in various parts of the country, and a large mail order house in Chicago. The members of the company had commenced as small business men, and had developed into extremely wealthy men. The firm also operated a real estate business in Cincinnati, under the name of Waldheim Realty Company. A principal holding was the Irwin Building at Fifth and Race Streets. During the 1890s and early 1900s, David and Mary May lived in the Grand Hotel, an elegant residential hotel built in 1874 at Central Avenue and Fourth Street.

Once again, David May followed the Jewish migration path in Cincinnati when in 1908 he and his wife left the West End to move to Avondale, the third Jewish community in Cincinnati. At first, they lived just off Reading Road in an 1895 Queen Anne house at 709 Glenwood Avenue. When their Italian Renaissance mansion was completed in 1910, they moved to 3723 Washington Avenue.

From 1910 until their deaths, David and Mary Gilroy May lived in the stone mansion at 3732 Washington Avenue. At age 74, Mr. May died at his home where the funeral service was held. At this time, Mr. May was president of the nationally known chain of furniture stores in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Dayton, Ohio. At his death in 1932, during the Depression, stores in New York, Cleveland, and Chicago had been closed, and the store in St. Louis was being closed. Mr. May was a member of the Cincinnati Club, Chamber of Commerce, Plum Street Temple, and Knights of Pythias. His will provided for the creation of a \$500,000 trust fund and for the erection of a \$25,000 mausoleum for his body. Bequests were made to Mr. May's brother and niece, and various charitable organizations, including four Jewish ones: Jewish Hospital; Hebrew Union College; the National Jewish Hospital for Consumptives in Denver, Colorado; and the United Jewish Social Agencies. Since the couple was childless, the residue of the estate, with over \$500,000 in personal property, went to the widow, Mrs. Mary Gilroy May. She lived alone in the house until 1945, and died on June 6, 1946. The house was listed as vacant in the Williams Directory from 1945-50. The story of this family's migration stopped after World War II because they had no children, and their fortune was dispersed among charities and siblings.

From 1950 until 1967, another Jewish family, Samuel B. Zussman, President of H. Zussman & Sons Co., lived in the house. He owned one of the largest clothing stores in Cincinnati. His father, Hirsch Zussman, was listed as a second-hand clothing shop owner in 1910. By 1918, he established the H. Zussman & Sons Co. and constructed a seven-story building at 309-311 Elm Street. The firm

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetMay, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, OhioSection number 8 Page 11

remained in the building until 1988. It was included in the West Fourth Street Historic District, which is listed both on the National Register of Historic Places and as part of the Cincinnati Local Historic District. In the early 1990s, the building was converted into downtown offices.

The third owners from 1968 to 1983 were Irma C. and Edward T. Buford, Jr., He was the physician in charge of the Scientific Blood Center. For four years from 1983-1987, the Brothers of Christian Science occupied the house. The Opera Guild redecorated it for a fund-raiser, the Designer Showcase, in May, 1988. The present owners, Mr. and Mrs. O. Lovelle Bond bought the house and moved there in November, 1989. Mr. Bond is an executive at the Procter and Gamble Company and Mrs. Bond owns a catering business.

Architectural Significance- Criterion C

The three-story mansion is eligible for listing under Criterion C because it is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance style with some Beaux Arts details. Their house is typical of the elegant mansions built in Avondale and across the country during the Eclectic movement. This was an era of excellence that drew on the full spectrum of architectural tradition -- English Medieval, Chateausque, Tudor Renaissance, Classical Revival, English Cottage Revival, and Italian Renaissance. Eclecticism began quietly in the last decade of the 19th century as fashionable, European-trained architects designed landmark period houses for wealthy clients who made great fortunes and paid no income taxes.

Classically inspired designs, based upon formal, academic philosophy and Beaux-Arts based training of architects occurred simultaneously with Prairie Style and the Arts and Crafts Movement at the turn-of-the-century until roughly WWI. One focused on academic, classical traditions, such as The Breakers (1892) in Newport, RI; the Columbus Foundation (1904) at E. Broad Street in Columbus, Ohio; the George King House (1908) in Marion, Ohio; and Kingwood (1926) in Mansfield, Ohio. The other broad approach to American architecture at the turn of the century and the early 20th century focused on more regional, vernacular organic expressions, including the Frank Lloyd Wright Home and Studio (1889) in Oak Park, Illinois; the Gamble House (1908) in Pasadena, California; and the Robie House (1909) in Chicago Illinois.

The classically styled house at 3723 Washington Avenue was placed in an attractive formal setting of eleven acres with a sunken garden on the north side. A private park and flower beds also formed part of the grounds. The house was on a quiet thoroughfare lined with many thick old trees and impressive

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 8 Page 12

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homes. At its northern end, the avenue dipped and turned suddenly into a wooded, sparsely settled ravine through which it led up into the torturous streets and lanes of elegant Rose Hill. Typical of the huge elegant homes in the neighborhood of North Avondale are those in the Rose Hill Park Subdivision, a planned residential subdivision dominated by fine examples of English Medieval, Tudor Renaissance, Classical Revival, English Cottage Revival, and Italian Renaissance styles, built by jeweler Frank Herschede, distiller Charles Fleischmann, and Barney Kroger, a non-Jew. Additional Avondale homes listed in the National Register of Historic Places are the A. E. Burdhardt House (1887) and the Richard Mitchell House (1892), both built by non-Jews.

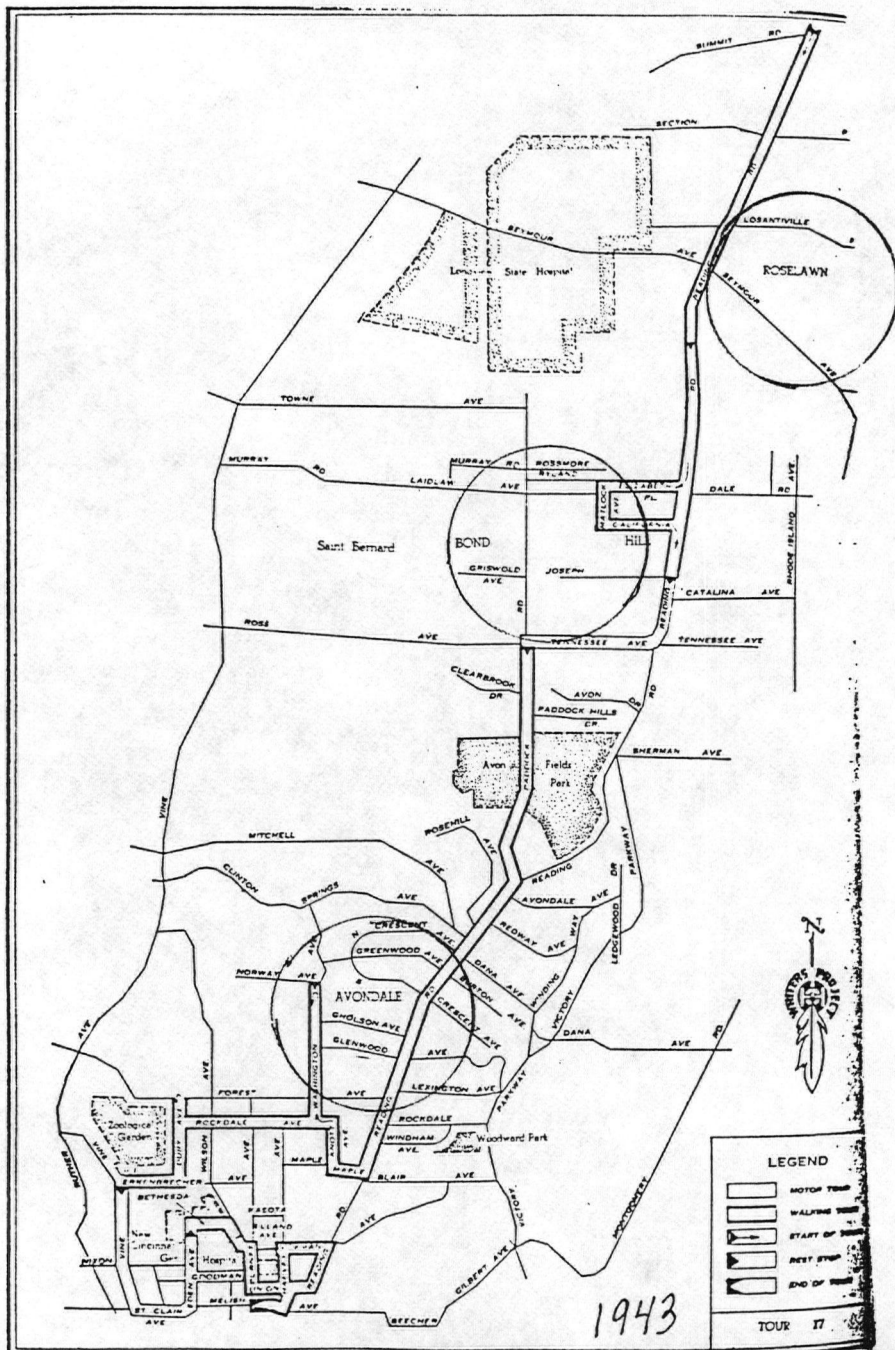
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

David and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

Hamilton County, Ohio



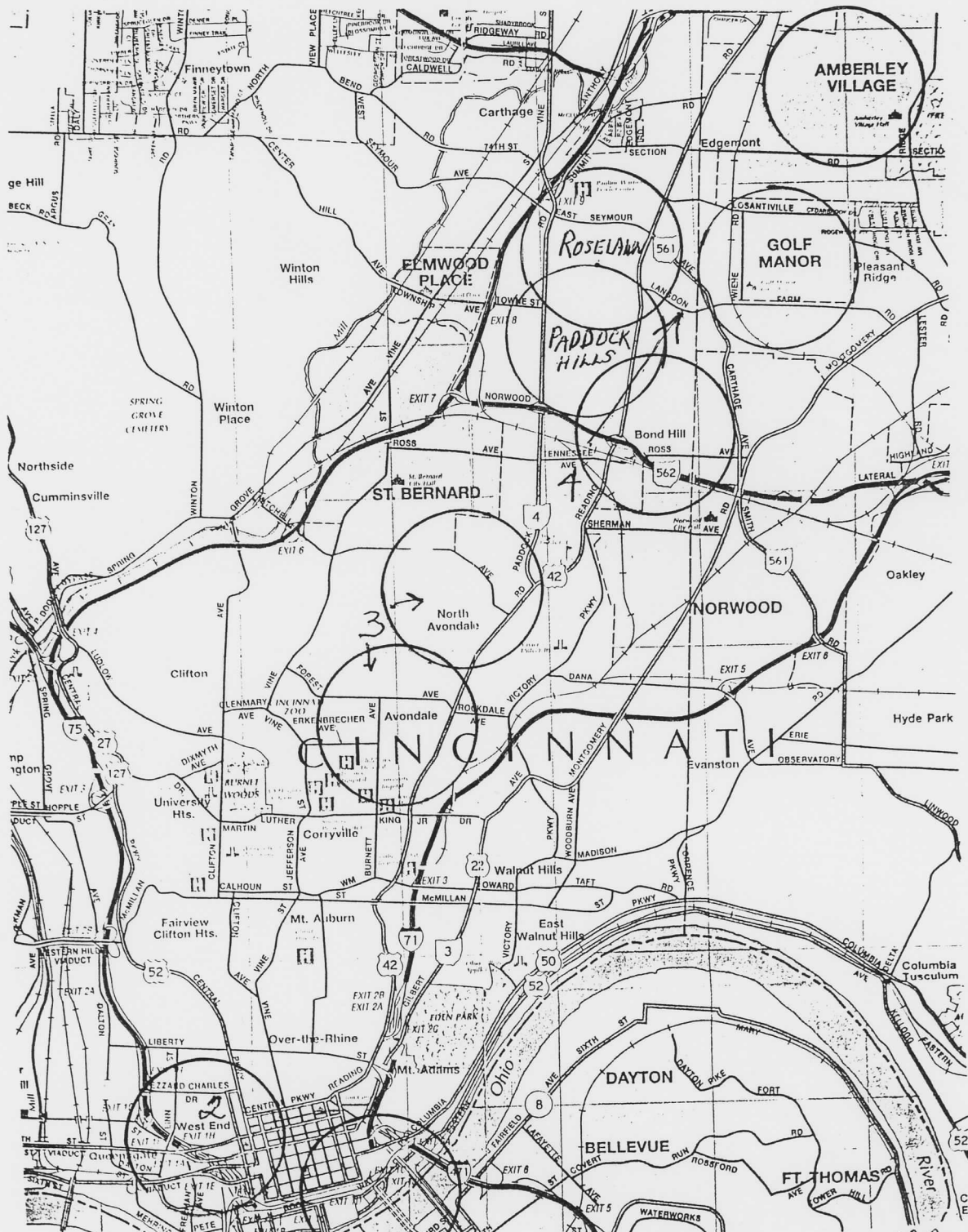
CINCINNATI: A GUIDE TO THE QUEEN CITY  
AND ITS NEIGHBORS CITY OF CINCINNATI  
1943

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

David and Mary May House  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 8 Page 14



CIRCLES ADDED  
BY MARY ANN OLDING  
1996

MAP HAMILTON CO 1990  
HAMILTON COUNTY ENGINEER'S

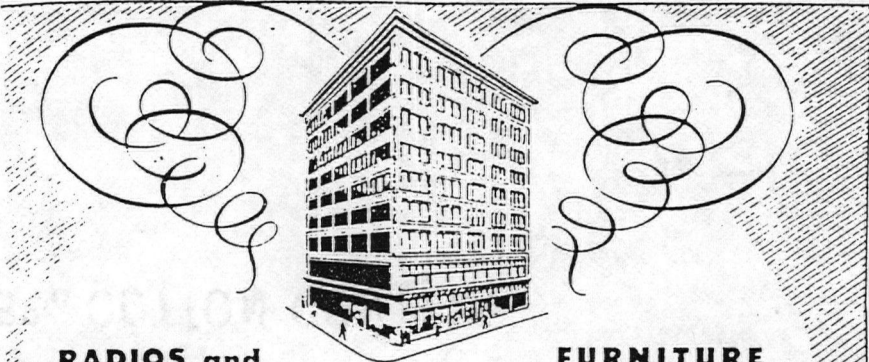
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 8 Page 15

FURNITURE 69



**RADIOES and APPLIANCES** **FURNITURE**  
*for Every Home*

*"Serving HOMES for 64 Years"*

**7 Full Floors to Select From**  
•  
**Wide Choice of Nationally Advertised Merchandise**  
•  
**Cash, Charge or Convenient Terms**

*Store Is Always Open to Visitors. So Come In and Look Around*

**MAY-STERN'S**  
**PARKWAY 3250**  
FIFTH and ELM

1951 DIRECTORY

WILLIAMS CITY DIRECTORY  
1951

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number 9 & 10 Page 16

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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*Cincinnati Enquirer*. March 26, 1932 15:1; May 6, 1932 17:4; October 18, 1932- 2:2;  
November 12, 1962 20:2; March 14, 1946 16:2

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*North Avondale Community Master Plan*, 1967.

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*Sanborn Insurance Map*, 1922

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*Williams City Directories*, 1901-1990

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10. Geographical Data

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Verbal Description

The property is 1 3/4 acres, or all of Lot 5 in Avon Acres Subdivision in the neighborhood of North Avondale, a neighborhood in the City of Cincinnati. The land parcel is bounded on the east by Washington Avenue, on the south by Norway Avenue, on the west by Lot 4, and on the north by a line drawn when the north portions of the original lot were subdivided. (See Plat map, Continuation sheet 17)

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

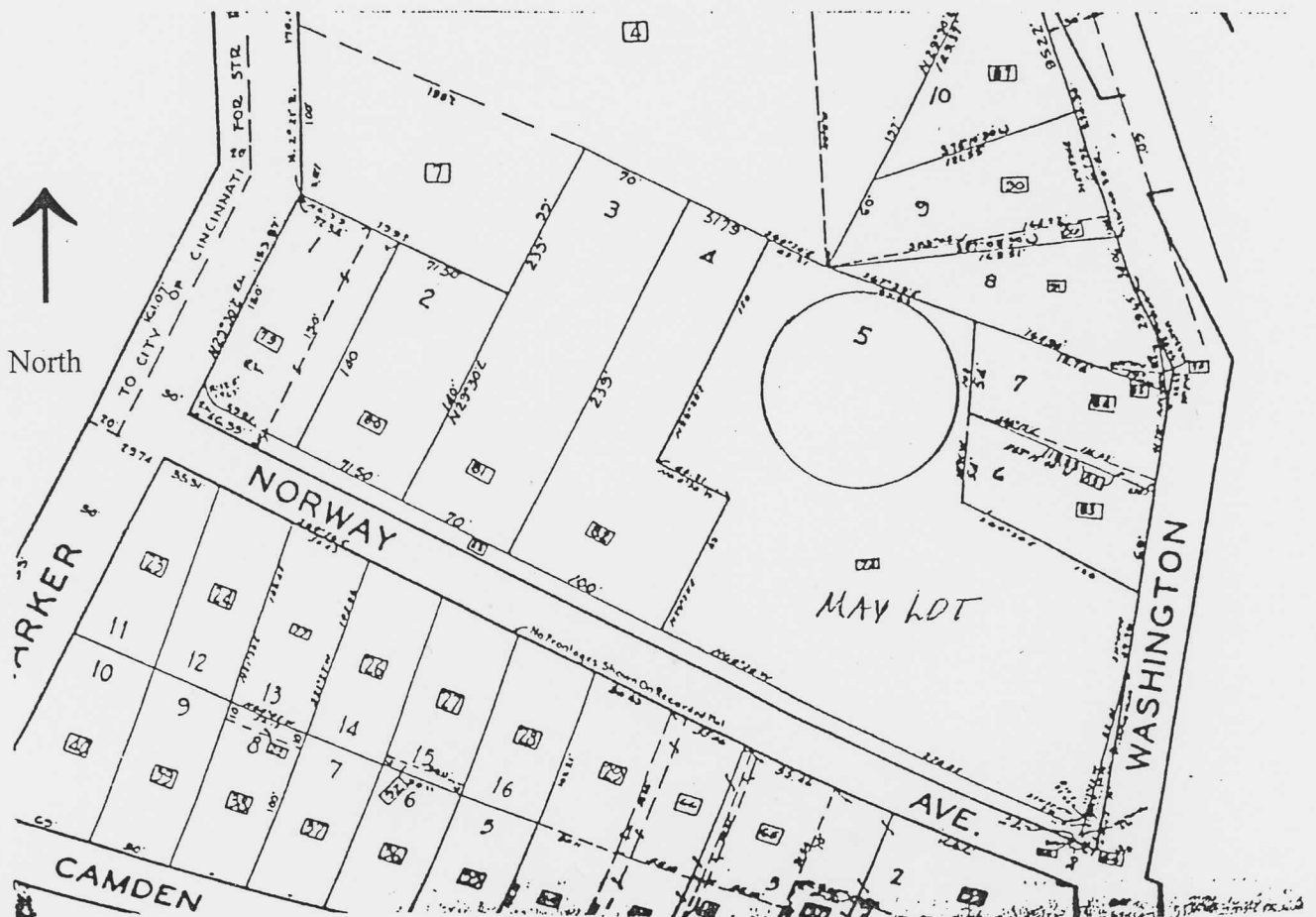
Section number 9 & 10 Page 17

### Boundary Justification

The nomination includes all of Lot 5 where the house, garage, and sunken garden are.  
The rest of the land in the original 11 acres has been sold off and subdivided.

The courthouse reference is found in Deed Book 114, Plat #0001,  
Parcel #0078.

CITY OF  
CINCINNATI 1943



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetDavid and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Avenue  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45229Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 18

## PHOTOGRAPHS

David and Mary May House

3723 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio 45229

Photographer: Mary Ann Olding, 10/95

Location of negatives: Mr. and Mrs. O. Lovelle Bond, owner

Photograph Number	Description of Views
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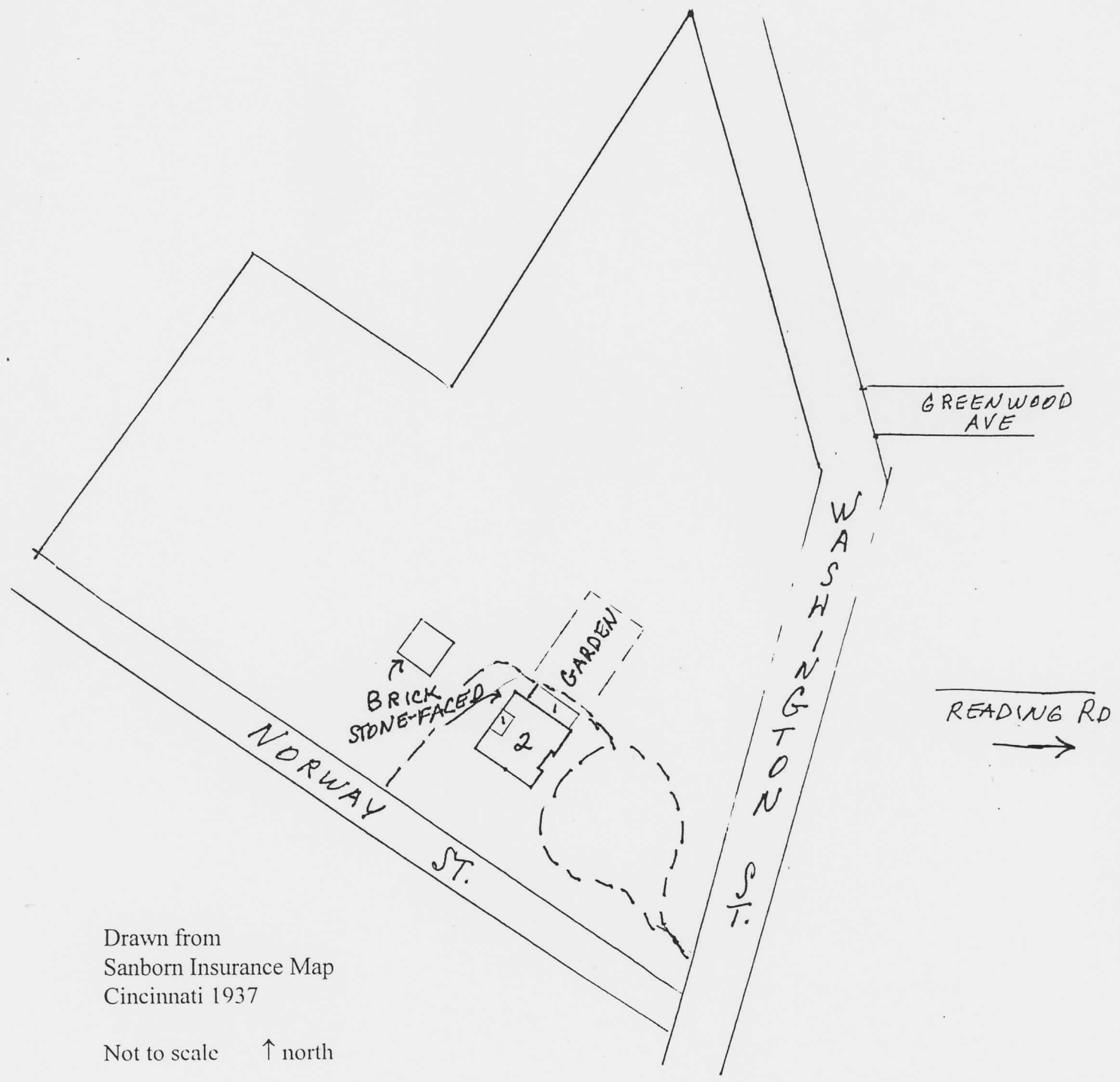
- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | Gates and entrance off Washington Avenue, facing west                             |
| 2  | Gates and long distance view of house, facing west                                |
| 3  | Long distance view of house across knoll and circular brick driveway              |
| 4  | East facade of main entrance to house, facing west                                |
| 5  | Close-up of main entrance to house, facing west                                   |
| 6  | Close-up of steps and central pavilion of house                                   |
| 7  | View of side portico, photographer facing south                                   |
| 8  | View of sunken garden and side portico, photographer facing south                 |
| 9  | View of curving stairway toward side portico, photographer facing south           |
| 10 | Rear of house, photographer facing east   |
| 11 | Front facade of garage, looking from north side of side portico and sunken garden |
| 12 | Front facade of stone garage, photographer facing west                            |
| 13 | South side of garage looking toward the rear of house, photographer facing east   |
| 14 | South facade of house, photographer facing north                                  |
| 15 | Southeast corner of house, photographer facing northwest                          |
| 16 | Interior foyer on first floor, looking toward staircase                           |
| 17 | Interior-Great room with Rookwood Fountain  |
| 18 | Interior-Great room-close-up of Rookwood Fountain                                 |
| 19 | Interior-Great room-looking toward entrance, photographer facing east             |
| 20 | Interior-dining room looking toward foyer   |
| 21 | Interior-upstairs bathroom  |

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

May, David and Mary, House  
Hamilton County, Ohio

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 19



Drawn from  
Sanborn Insurance Map  
Cincinnati 1937

Not to scale    ↑ north

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: May, David and Mary, House

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: OHIO, Hamilton

DATE RECEIVED: 7/24/96                      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 8/06/96  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 8/22/96                      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/07/96  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 96000931

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    8-22-96 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the  
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



1

David & Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati Ohio  
Gates and entrance  
Photographer  
Mary Ann Oeding

10/95

NOR 00+05 GNHNR+01RM 290

Kodak PROFESSIONAL PAPER • PAPIER • PAPER

Kodak PAPER • PAPIER • PAPER

Kodak PROFESSIONAL PAPER • PAPIER • PAPER

Kodak PROFESSIONAL PAPER • PAPIER • PAPER

Kodak PAPER



THE MAY HOUSE  
(DAVID AND MARY MAY)  
1910  
FRENCH RENAISSANCE  
ARCHITECTS: McMILLAN AND TAFT

2

David and Mary May House  
3123 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Gates and main  
east facade of  
house

Photographer Marilyn Tedig

19/95

NOR 00493 GHNNA-010M 290



3

David and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio

Long view of main  
facade of house

Photographer Marilyn Ditz

10/95

NOR 00105 GINNIN+14RM 290



A

David & Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

East main facade  
of house

Photographer Mary Ann Dwyer

10/95



5

David + Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio

East facade of main house

Photographer Mary Ann Deitz

10/95



6. David and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Facade of main house

Photographer Mary Ann Edgington  
10/95



7

David + Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio  
View of open porch

Photographer: Mary Antelberg

10/95



J

David + Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio

Garden on north side  
of house

Photographer Mary Ann Edging

10/95

SEP 08:04 GINN-05AM 298



9

David & Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

Garden on north side  
of house

Photographer Mary Ann Tilling

10/95



10

David & Mary May House  
3123 Washington Ave.

Cincinnati, Ohio

View of garage from  
north side of house  
driveway between  
open porch and garden  
Photographer

MaryAnn Teding

10/95



11

David + Mary Mayhouse  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
East facade of garage  
Photographer Marilyn LeDing

10/95



12

David & Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Rear of main house  
photographer Mary Ann Edging

10/95



13

David & Mary May House  
3123 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Rear of garage toward  
rear of house  
Photographer Marilyn D'Amico

10/95



14

David and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio

South facade of  
main house

Photographer Mary Ann Eding

10/95



15

David and Mary May House.  
3123 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Southeast corner of  
main house  
Photographer Mary Ann Ewing  
10/95

NOV 08 10 05 AM '95



16

David and Mary May House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Interior of foyer

Photographer Mary Ann Deitz

10/95

NOR 004 02 GNINPH 08PM 290



Shot #17 2/96  
May, David & Mary House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Hamilton County  
Interior - Front Room  
with Bookwood Trim.

NOR 11401 GNNNN-09PU 401



NOR 00102 6N111-11M 401

Photo # 18 2/96  
May, David & Mary House  
3723 Washington Ave.  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
Hamilton County  
Interior - Close-up  
of Hookwood Fountain







960002201 44119

Photo # 20 5/96

May, David & Mary  
Hansel

3723 Washington Ave

Anemate Wis  
Hamilton County

Interior - Dining  
room looking  
toward foyer

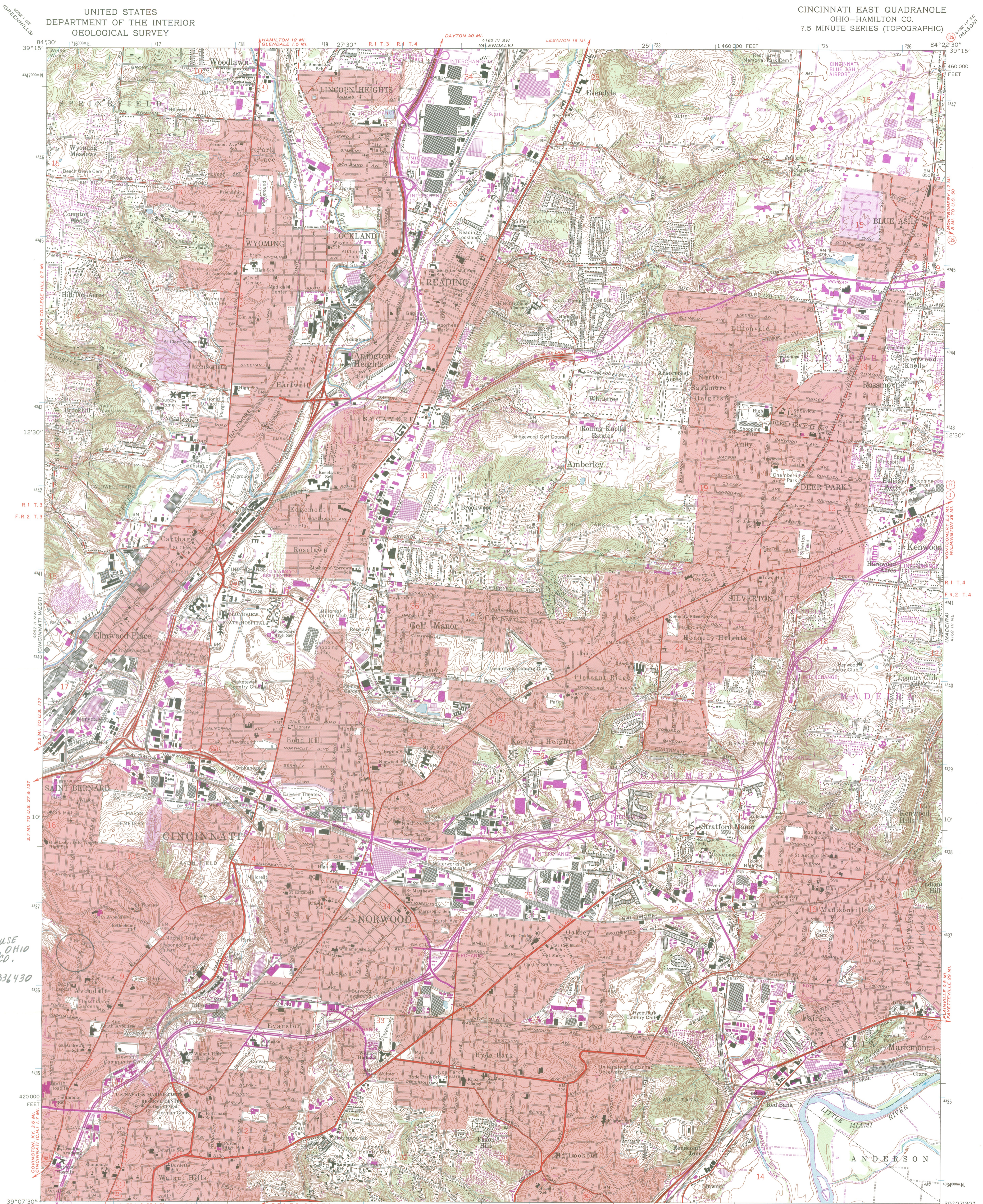


Chrs #21 2/96

May, David & Mary  
Wise

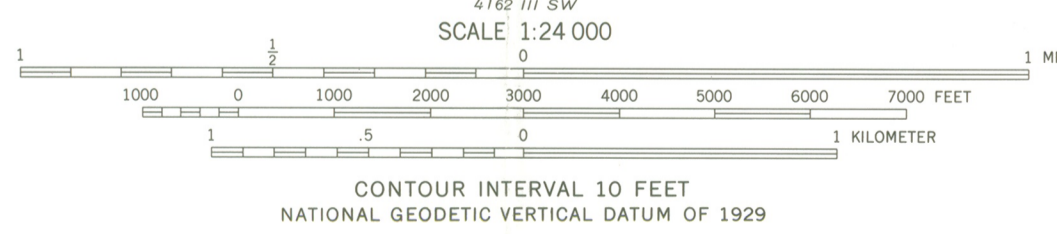
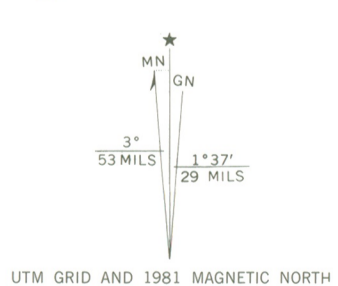
3123 Washington Ave.  
Anacostia Ohio  
Hamilton County  
Inter - upstairs  
bathroom

MOR 11+01 GHHNN+02PAU 401



DAVID MAY HOUSE  
CINCINNATI, OHIO  
HAMILTON CO.  
UTM:  
16 716510,4336430

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and City of Cincinnati  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
taken 1949 and in part by City of Cincinnati. Field checked  
1953. Revised 1961  
Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Ohio  
coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse  
Mercator grid ticks, zone 16, shown in blue. 1927 North  
American Datum. To place on the predicted North American  
Datum 1983 move the projection lines 3 meters south and  
6 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Area east of the Little Miami River lies within the Virginia Military  
District. Area west of the Little Miami River lies within the Between  
the Miamis. Land lines based on the Great Miami River Base. Dotted  
land lines established by private subdivision of the Symmes Purchase  
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of  
the National or State reservations shown on this map



ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
Interstate Route	U. S. Route
	State Route

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation  
with State of Ohio agencies from aerial photographs taken 1979  
and other sources. This information not field checked. Map edited 1981  
Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

CINCINNATI EAST, OHIO  
39084-B4-TF-024  
1961  
PHOTOREVISED 1981  
DMA 4162 III NW—SERIES V882

