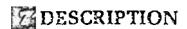
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The William J. Murphy House is a two-and-one-half-storey red brick structure. The plan is rectangular. The roof is a combination of hips and jerkinhead gables. A hipped dormer with double windows is located on the north elevation. On the front (east) elevation are two dormers and a pedimented jerkinhead gable. The gable contains a single doublepaned window. The window is slightly recessed, and the walls are rounded where they join the window. Centered on the front elevation is a hipped dormer which contains a recessed porch. The porch opening is divided into three sections. The middle section is wider and longer than the sides. The side sections are supported by Ionic columns. A garland frieze is located above the columns. A smaller hipped dormer is located on the north end of the front elevation. Across the front elevation is a singlestorey porch. The porch is supported by Ionic columns. The porch roof is balustraded, and its frieze is decorated with garlands. Double doors open from the second storey onto the porch roof balcony. On the north elevation is a porch which is detailed like the front porch. On the rear is a two-storey frame enclosed porch. The north elevation has a two-storey chamfered bay. The main entrance is a glazed single-panel door which is inset between Ionic columns. The columns support a stone impost which supports a dressed stone lintel. The entrance to the porch balcony is inset under a rusticated stone lintel which is supported by carved stone scrollbrackets. Windows are one over one (1/1) double hung, and they have stone lintels and sills. Windows are asymmetrically placed, The front and side steps, water table, and porch wall coping are dressed stone. The foundation is rusticated stone.

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The house has eleven foot (11') ceilings, and the exterior walls are twelve inches (12") thick. There are three fireplaces downstairs. Each is detailed in a different order: Ionic, Corinthian, and Doric. The second floor fireplaces are classically styled, but they are less ornate. All of the fireplaces are coal burning, and they have cast-iron covers.

Alterations

The house has been converted into four apartments, but there is no structural damage. The top of the north bay has a skylight.

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EI SIGNIFICANCE

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	7 1	INVENTION						

SPECIFIC DATES

ca. 1895

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

T.T. Reddick (Unconfirmed)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William J. Murphy House is a large Neo-Colonial Revival dwelling that was built in Fort Smith, Arkansas, in the 1890's. It was built for William J. Murphy, a prominent Fort Smith businessman. The building gains historical significance through its association with Murphy. The house is also architecturally significant. The stone trim around openings and the classical detailing of the porches are of particular importance.

William J. Murphy moved from St. Louis to Fort Smith, Arkansas, in 1885. In Fort Smith Murphy became a successful businessman. He founded the W.J. Murphy Saddlery and Harness Company which for decades was one of the largest such companies in the Southwest. Murphy managed the company until his death in 1935, after which date the company closed. Murphy was also a director of Merchants National Bank in Fort Smith for 35 years.

Murphy ordered the construction of the W.J. Murphy House in the 1890's as a gift for his wife, Mollie. The design for the house is attributed to local architect T.T. Reddick, but Reddickiss connection with the house is not confirmed. An important design consideration was that the house be planned so that it could accomodate large social events. When completed, the building was one of the premier social centers in Fort Smith. During one two-week period, nine dances took place in the house. Among the well-known guests who were entertained in the house were Judge Isaac Parker (Fort Smith's "hanging judge") and international opera stars Ernestine Schuman-Heink and Galli Curci. Several governors and congressman were also guests of Murphy.

The large two-and-one-half-storey house is rectangular in shape. The roof is a multiple combination of hips and jerkinhead gables. Each elevation is asymmetrical. Two one-storey porches project from the house. One spans the entire length of the east elevation (facade). A balcony occupies the roof of this porch. The other porch is a small portico that is positioned on the north elevation. The portico is also topped by a balcony. A two-storey bay is also located near the rear of the north elevation. Two dormers rise from the roof on the east elevation. One is large and is centrally positioned; the other is small and is set near the northern side of the roof. Five corbelled chimneys are ranged on the roof in an irregular fashion.

A variety of facing materials were used in the construction of the Murphy House. The walls are red brick. The foundation is rusticated stone, and the lintels and sills for windows are smooth dressed stone. A weatherboarded, two-storey shed-roof addition is attached to the rear (west) of the house.

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CONTINUATION SHEET.

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All openings are rectangular. Windows are one-over-one (1/1) double-hung. The front entrance is centered on the east elevation. It is comprised of a single door and transom. The entrance is recessed in the brick wall. It is flanked by free-standing unfluted columns which possess Ionic capitals. The columns support stone inposts which, in turn, support a stone lintel.

Double doors open to the east elevation balcony. These doors also occupy a recess in the brick wall. The stone lintel for the balcony doors is sustained by stone scroll brackets.

The detailing for the Murphy House is classical and elaborate. Both porches are similarly detailed. Each is sustained by unfluted columns with Ionic capitals. Carved festooning decorates the frieze of each porch. The balconies which are located above the porches are balustraded. The large central dormer on the east elevation also features unfluted columns with Ionic capitals and festooning in the frieze. The columns for the dormer are diminutive in scale.

The treatment for the gable-end on the east elevation is unusual. The gable-end is shingled. Centering it is a window that is recessed back from the plane of the wall. The shingled wall curves to form this recess.

The interior of the house features eleven foot (11') ceilings and classical detailing. The most distinctive interior elements are the six classically modeled fireplaces. Three are located on the first floor, and three are on the second floor. Each of the first floor fireplaces is detailed in a different classical order: Ionic, Corinthian, and Doric. The second floor fireplaces are less elaborate. All of the fireplaces are coal burning and have cast-iron covers.

Few alterations have been made to the interior. The house is divided into four apartments. The building was not structurally damaged when it was converted into apartments. The top of the bay on the north elevation has been replaced with a skylight.

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Abstract . Mosley Abstract Company, Fort Smith.

Hempstead, Fay. Centennial History of Arkansas, Vol. II. S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1922.

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