

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **DEC 23 1985**

date entered **FEB 6 1986**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic Robert R. Blacker House

RECEIVED

AUG 15 1985

and/or common Blacker-Hill House

OHP

**2. Location**

street & number 1177 Hillcrest Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town Pasadena n/a vicinity of Congressional District 022

state CA 91106 code 06 county Los Angeles code 037

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Barton English

street & number Redstone Ranch, Ranch Road #1

city, town Stonewall N/A vicinity of state Texas 78761

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the County Recorder of Los Angeles

street & number 227 North Broadway Room 25

city, town Los Angeles state California 90012

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

by David Gebhard and Robert Winter

date Published by Peregrine Smith, Inc. 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records c/o Dr. David Gebhard, Department of Art University of California

city, town Santa Barbara state CA

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ n/a
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Robert R. Blacker House is a wood-shingled, two-story, U-plan, Craftsman-style single-family residence with approximately 7,184 square feet of living space designed by Charles and Henry Greene in 1907. The pitched shake roof, wide eaves with exposed, carved rafter tails, heavily timbered terraces and balconies, carved beams, dramatically placed porte cochere and horizontal bands of wood-frame casement windows reinforce the horizontality of the building and integrate it with its informally landscaped .95 acre corner site. High quality materials and craftsmanship were used throughout the house. The Greenes personally supervised the acquisition of building and finishing materials and the manufacture of all the accessories they designed. Furnishings, light fixtures, garden furniture and pots and the Japanese-influenced landscaping were all designed for the house by the Greenes as part of a total concept. Although some alternations have occurred, the building retains a high degree of structural and decorative integrity. The nominated property is the remnant of the original 5½ acre lot, subdivided about 1948. The Greenes considered the Blacker House to be their finest work.<sup>1</sup>

#### EXTERIOR

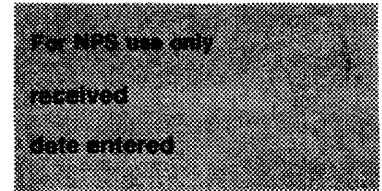
The house is sited on a slight rise near the southeast corner of Hillcrest and Wentworth Avenues. Approaching from either street, the focal point of the site is the driveway, which is placed on a diagonal to the house in a direct line with the corner. The concrete driveway is bordered with brick and is flanked at the corner by two low clinker brick gate posts. Moving down the driveway toward the house, the most dominant architectural feature is the stepped clinker brick pillar that supports the flat-roofed porte-cochere and blocks the view of the front entrance.

Built in a direct line with the corner of the lot, the porte cochere spans the driveway, which circles underneath it, then doubles back to exit at the corner entrance. A secondary driveway begins at the south end of the lot along Wentworth Avenue and runs along the west side of the house, providing access to the service entrance. This drive forms a junction with the main drive at the porte cochere (see sketch map for driveway location.)

<sup>1</sup> "My Interviews with Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster. AIA Journal, p. 206.

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One Hundred Years of Architecture in America: 1857 - 1957,  
Celebrating the Centennial of the American Institute of  
Architects, F.A. Gutheim. Reinhold Publishing Co., 1957, pp.  
55-56.

"Ten Tours of Pasadena," Urban Conservation Department/Cultural Heritage Committee, City of Pasadena. Tour No. 4, 4th reprint, 1985.

"List #1 of Private Buildings of Architectural Significance Worthy of Preservation in the San Gabriel Valley," Pasadena Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, November 21, 1961. Architecture: Pasadena, Architectural Tours and Lists, Section XII. Pasadena Public Library.

"11 Walks for You to Take in Pasadena," Cultural Heritage Committee, City of Pasadena, 1973. Architecture: Pasadena, Architectural Tours and Lists, Section XII. Pasadena Public Library.

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The porte cochere is constructed of variously angled, stepped and carved beams and rafters all working in an asymmetrical harmony with the house. Pegs bind together the beams and form a subtle decorative pattern.

The brick front porch is entered directly from the porte cochere; the steps angle out from the house in a direct line with the porte cochere and the driveway.

A clinker brick foundation set with black mortar supports the house. Three interior chimneys also are constructed of clinker brick and black mortar and are capped with stucco.

Each of the four facades offers a subtle variation on the Greenes' extensive use of wood, stained and leaded glass and clinker brick. In all there are 750 exposed beams, each one rounded at the edges and the corners, and approximately 192 windows in the house.

The house is framed of Oregon pine with sidewalls of split shakes.<sup>2</sup> Found on all four facades are horizontal bands of mahogany-frame casement windows, articulated with flat board molding and lintels. Fascia boards and some beams are bound together with decorative wrought iron bands and embellished with scarf joints, a Greene and Greene hallmark. Horizontal beams used in some places as siding create a counterpoint to the rectangular shingles found over most of the exterior. Second floor balconies are protected with carved handrails. Attic vents in the gables are adorned with an interlocking horizontal and vertical stick pattern.

During construction, all exposed lumber was cleaned with a wire brush and construction specifications for all exposed beams and porch railings required that no nails be used. The beams are held together with dowel pegs and/or wrought iron bands. Copper downspouts are integrated with the exterior patterns and fenestrations to enhance the overall exterior design.

Focal points of the front (north) facade are the porte cochere, the teak entry portal embellished with tree-of-life patterned stained glass panels, a multipaned oriel window, also filled with richly colored stained glass and numerous other stained glass transoms and windows.

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<sup>2</sup> "Some Sources of Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster, *AIA Journal*, pp. 45-46.

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Balancing the porte cochere projection is the first floor terrace and second floor balcony positioned at the northeast corner of the house. It serves the living room and an upstairs bedroom and is accessed on the first floor by six French doors with carved wood decoration that are set in a two-sided bay. This terrace and bay are the focal points of the east facade. (Photographs of the east elevation are unavailable due to the abundance of large plants and the building's proximity to the property line.)

The sculptured lot slopes gently downhill toward the south, and the house is designed to take maximum advantage of the terrain. The rear (south) elevation incorporates two two-story wings flanking a recessed brick terrace. The terrace is reached from the rear of the entry hall by four French doors with carved wood decoration. From the garden, the terrace is reached by means of a terraced brick walkway.

The second floor of the rear (south) elevation incorporates a balcony (on the southeast wing) that is reached through six French doors with carved wood decoration. The doors are located in a two-sided bay. A screened-in sleeping porch with a clipped corner is found on the second floor of the southwest wing. This corner has a pattern of protruding beams and is a focal point of the rear facade.

Located in the basement level of the southeast wing is a paneled billiard room that opens directly onto the garden level through a teak and stained glass door. Sheltering the door is a pitched-shed roof, covered with a Malthoid-type material.

The west elevation is comprised of a flat, continuous two-story facade that is visually made three dimensional by the use of varied fenestration, siding patterns and the protrusion of a first story Malthoid-type porch roof. This flat, shed roof shelters a service entrance.

GROUNDS

Informal landscaping influenced by Japanese-garden design surrounds the house. The front (north) garden contains two large cedar trees, a variety of small palms and other evergreen trees and shrubs set in a large expanse of lawn. In the circular bed near the porte cochere are a Japanese stone lantern and mosses covering a sculptured mound. The east garden is very narrow as it spans the space between the house and the property line. Large

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evergreen shrubs in this space shelter the house, creating a shady area. In the rear (south) garden are two remnants of the original lily pool. One is located near the terrace, the other is found near the southeast property line. The wisteria-covered pergola still stands in the southwest portion of the rear garden. The west garden boasts a large palm and a mature deodar set in a large lawn area. Twelve of the original flower pots designed by the Greenes remain on the grounds.

INTERIOR

The interior floor plan is a formal one with large rooms arranged around a central entry hall. The house contains 13 rooms, four bathrooms, two terraces, one sleeping porch, two balconies, a 3,549 square-foot basement with a paneled billiard room and a full unfinished attic. The total living space of the house, including the basement, but excluding the balconies, terraces and the attic, is approximately 10,733 square feet.<sup>3</sup>

In the interior, wood is used lavishly. The entry hall is completely paneled; a wave patterned base board flows up the wall, following the outline of the stair risers. Interior paneling is teak and mahogany and peg detailing is done in ebony and mahogany.<sup>4</sup> Maple and white cedar are also found in the house.<sup>5</sup>

The living room ceiling surfaces between the beams originally were decorated with a subtle lily pad relief, which recalls the water lilies found in the gardens. The bas-relief was covered in gold leaf.<sup>6</sup> In addition, a subtle frieze in a fruit-blossom branch design was sketched in the dining room by Charles Greene.<sup>7</sup>

Lighting fixtures, and many doors and windows were designed by the Greenes using wood and stained glass. These pieces were made in the Los Angeles shop of Emile Lange, who had been a student of Louis Comfort Tiffany.<sup>8</sup> Doors to closets, storage and service areas are concealed in the paneling of major spaces and are opened by the touch of an electric button.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> City of Pasadena Archives, Building Inspection Slips.

<sup>4</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art, p. 154

<sup>5</sup> Pasadena City Archives, Building Inspection Slips

<sup>6</sup> Op. Cit., p. 154

<sup>7</sup> "My Interviews with Greene and Greene," p. 206

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 206 and Greene and Greene: Architecture ..., p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture ..., p. 154.

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The basement level billiard room, located in the southeast wing, has a ground and polished terrazzo floor. The walls are paneled in a soft redwood brushed to bring out the grain, and finished with a faint stain. A standing urinal is concealed in the wall paneling at one corner.<sup>10</sup>

ALTERATIONS

Although nearly all of the architectural features of the house itself remain intact, some alterations to both the house and the site have occurred. Originally the house was located on approximately 5 1/2 acres of land. Bounded on the west by Wentworth Avenue and on the north and east by Hillcrest Avenue, the site included "picturesque" gardens with a large free-form lily pool, a wisteria-covered pergola sited as a visual extension of the southwest wing of the house, large ceramic garden pots, a garage with chauffeur's quarters, a keeper's house and a small garden lath house. All of these elements were designed by the Greenes. The garden was probably constructed by George Chisholm, who ran a nursery.<sup>11</sup>

About 1948, the second owner of the property subdivided the estate into eight separate lots. The keeper's house and the chauffeur's house and garage were each converted into single family residences on separate lots. The addresses of these buildings are 1208 and 1200 Wentworth Avenue, respectively. The five new lots created from the gardens received new construction and the eighth lot remained the site of the Blacker House. Most of the lily pool and rear garden was destroyed at the time of subdivision. Landscaping has grown between the subdivided lots and the Blacker House parcel, visually and physically separating them. Thus the Blacker House stands as an individual entity surrounded by its own modified gardens.

The original furnishings were sold by an owner subsequent to the Blackers, some time after 1946,<sup>12</sup> the gold-leaf covered living room ceiling has been painted green, some original wood-frame windows in the service entry have been replaced with aluminum-frame louvered windows, and most recently approximately 50, or nearly all of the major lighting fixtures have been removed from the house. Some may be sold and others may remain in a private collection.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 154

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>12</sup> "Greene and Greene of Pasadena." L. Morgan Yost. AIA Journal, p. 115.

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These alterations do detract somewhat from the total concept as designed by the Greenes, but only the removal of the lighting fixtures is a major alteration to the house itself. The removal of the fixtures has a negative impact on the house because they were designed for the individual spaces they illuminated and were a part of the whole. However, the remainder of the three-dimensional form is virtually intact.

SUMMARY

The Robert R. Blacker House is one of the best works of Charles and Henry Greene. Following the tenants of their own Craftsman design philosophy, the Greenes developed a house that incorporates the finest materials and craftsmanship in a sophisticated, knowledgeable building that is well integrated with its surroundings. Although the furnishings, lighting fixtures and a major portion of the garden have been removed from the site, the Blacker House retains its structural and virtually all of its decorative integrity.



## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1907

**Builder/Architect**

Architects: Charles and Henry Greene  
Builders: Dawson and Daniels

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Robert R. Blacker House, built in 1907, is significant for architectural reasons as one of four of the best works of Charles and Henry Greene. Located in a city famous for the Greenes' work and in a neighborhood known for its noteworthy architecture, the Robert R. Blacker House epitomizes the Greenes' Craftsman design philosophy as it brings together the very finest quality materials and craftsmanship.

Influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement, the building traditions of Japan, their own manual training background<sup>1</sup> and the architectural traditions of the United States,<sup>2</sup> Charles and Henry Greene developed a unique architectural style that rejected academic design vocabulary. Their style was drawn from nature and incorporated native materials, exposed structural members and the highest quality craftsmanship. The Greenes' work, in its mature form, capitalized on the mild southern California climate by integrating indoor and outdoor living spaces in structures that seem to visually grow from the terrain. Their design philosophy influenced the local vernacular California Bungalow style and has come to have indirect impact on modern architecture.<sup>3</sup> Charles and Henry Greene moved from Boston to Pasadena in 1893, opening an architectural office there in 1894. During their California career (which as a collaborative effort ended in 1922 when they dissolved their partnership), the Greenes are thought to have designed approximately 540 buildings. The Greenes contributed to the evolution of American domestic architecture during the formative period of the modern house by solving design problems realistically and sensitively. They stood for the best in bungalow design and made the term "California house" a synonym for the best in contemporary building.<sup>4</sup> In 1948, they were honored for their work by the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.<sup>5</sup> In 1952, the American Institute of Architects awarded them a special citation for their contributions to American domestic architecture.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> California Design: 1910. Timothy J. Andersen, et. al., p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies. Reyner Banham, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> "My Interviews with Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster, AIA Journal, p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> Pasadena Star News, 6-5-52.

<sup>6</sup> This 10-2-54 Obituary Henry Mather Greene

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property  $\pm$  .95  
Quadrangle name Pasadena, California

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	3	9	5	5	4	0	3	7	7	6	6	2	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diane Hlava

organization Pasadena Heritage date August 15, 1985

street & number 80 West Dayton Street telephone (818) 793-0617

city or town Pasadena state California 91105

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Guatteri 12/9/85

title State Historic Preservation Officer date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

William B. Burky  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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Charles Sumner Greene (1868 - 1957) was the older of two sons born to Thomas Sumner Greene and Leila A. (Mather) Greene in Cincinnati, Ohio. Henry Mather Greene (1870 - 1954) was 15 months younger. When Charles and Henry were 11 and 10, the family moved to Saint Louis. There the boys attended the newly founded Manual Training School of Washington University. The Greenes studied a regular high school curriculum as well as carpentry, woodworking, metalworking and toolmaking. Upon graduation, they enrolled at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The Greenes' first designs were Victorian, and it wasn't until Charles returned from a 1901 trip to England, where he was probably more fully exposed to the Arts and Crafts philosophy, that the brothers' style began to evolve. In 1902, the Greenes began to design not just houses but a total concept, one that included related landscaping and furnishings.<sup>7</sup>

Their interest in exposed structural members, integration of building and site, and the use of native stone and woods, clinker brick and intricate joinery can be seen in a number of houses built between 1902 and 1909. Between 1907 and 1909, the Greenes designed their seven most highly refined domestic concepts.<sup>8</sup> Four of these, the Robert R. Blacker House, (1907, Pasadena), the David B. Gamble House (1908, Pasadena), the Charles M. Pratt House (1909, Ojai) and the William R. Thorsen House (1909, Berkeley) are considered to be the finest remaining intact, or nearly intact, examples of the Greenes' mature style.

These are the masterpieces of their career,<sup>9</sup> and in the Blacker House the Greenes' refined their previous stylistic experiments. Exterior spaces became as important to the total design as the interior spaces,<sup>10</sup> and the level of sophistication found in the furnishings, joinery, interior decorative elements and the landscaping reached a level of mastery not seen in previous work. The Blacker House stands out, for the above reasons, because it was the first commission where funds were available to finance the Greenes' highly developed design ideas and their desire to use the finest materials and craftsmanship,<sup>11</sup> and because it served as a benchmark from which later designs evolved.

<sup>7</sup> California Design: 1910, pp. 98, 100, 101.

<sup>8</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art. R.L. Makinson, pp. 150-187.

<sup>9</sup> Op. Cit., p. 101.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>11</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art, p. 155.

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The formal floor plan is apparently not of the Greenes' design. The Blackers had originally hired the architects Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey, who were then in practice together, to design a home for their Oak Knoll site. Hunt and Grey developed plans for a formal two-story Mission Revival-style stucco residence<sup>12</sup> to be set in the center of the 5 1/2 acre site among formal gardens.

After the San Francisco earthquake of 1906, Mr. Blacker became concerned about the safety of the proposed house, especially the footings and substructure. When he expressed his concerns to Hunt and Grey and was unsatisfied by their reply, Mr. Blacker dismissed them from the project. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Blacker engaged the services of the Greenes.<sup>13</sup>

The Greenes kept the Hunt and Grey floor plan presumably because the Blackers liked it. In place of the projecting entry shelter designed by Hunt and Grey, the Greenes designed the recessed entry porch and the porte cochere. The recessed porch necessitated a more shallow interior entry hall, but save for that and another minor change, the Greenes' floor plan placed the rooms of the Hunt and Grey design in similar relationships.<sup>14</sup>

The exterior of the house bears no resemblance to the design selected by Hunt and Grey. If the Greenes were restricted in exercising full creativity on the interior, they more than compensated for the restriction in their design for every other aspect of the house and "picturesque"<sup>15</sup> gardens.

First the Greenes moved the house from the center of the lot to the northwest corner.<sup>16</sup> Then they offset the building's symmetry, which was somewhat predetermined by the interior floor plan, by adding the massive asymmetrically placed porte cochere. This element ties the building to its site<sup>17</sup> and downplays some of the verticality created by its two-story height. Horizontal beams form a string course along the west and southwest elevation, and

<sup>12</sup> "Some Sources of Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster. *AIA Journal*, p. 45.

<sup>13</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art. R.L. Makinson, p. 150.

<sup>14</sup> "Some Sources of Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster. *AIA Journal*, p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> "Some Sources of Greene and Greene," p. 45.

<sup>16</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art, p. 150.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 150.

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these elements along with the varied fenestration, the heavy, carved timbers, the bays, the balconies and terraces and the stained glass combine into a rich architectural vocabulary that is singularly the work of Charles and Henry Greene.

The Blacker House has been cited as worthy of preservation by the Pasadena Chapter of the AIA<sup>18</sup> and has been included in many architectural tours sponsored by that organization. It has also been featured on two Pasadena Heritage architectural tours and soon will be considered by the City of Pasadena for Landmark status. The Blacker House has been the subject of numerous general readership articles since 1908, and was identified by the AIA in 1957 as one of the 65 most significant buildings in the country. The house was cited as an outstanding example of architectural continuity and rebellion.<sup>19</sup>

Although the Blacker House has been called one of the Greenes' "ultimate bungalows"<sup>20</sup> as a tribute to its fine materials, craftsmanship and design, it seems the house was not contemporarily referred to as a bungalow,<sup>21</sup> probably because of its cost, which is estimated to have been between \$100,000 and \$200,000.

Like many of the Greenes' clients and many of the residents of the prestigious Oak Knoll neighborhood, Robert R. Blacker (1847 - 1931) and his second wife, Nellie C. Blacker were people of considerable means who came to Pasadena to retire. Mr. Blacker, a native of Ontario, Canada, moved to Michigan at the age of 21. He located in the town of Manistee and made his fortune in the lumber business. In 1906, he came to Pasadena and retired. In 1907, he engaged the Greenes to design his permanent California residence.<sup>22</sup> Mr. Blacker was a dedicated supporter of the California Institute of Technology and served as a trustee for 12 years. He contributed funds to Cal Tech for scholarship endowments and for the construction of the Blacker Residence Hall.

<sup>18</sup> List of Structures Worthy of Preservation..., Pasadena Chapter AIA, 1961.

<sup>19</sup> One Hundred Years of Architecture in America..., F.A. Gutheim, pp. 55-56.

<sup>20</sup> Greene and Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art, p. 150.

<sup>21</sup> "Some Sources of Greene and Greene." Clay Lancaster. AIA Journal, p. 46.

<sup>22</sup> Pasadena Star News, 12-7-16.

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The Robert R. Blacker House is one of four masterpieces designed by Charles and Henry Greene. It is one of their most creative and sophisticated designs and one of the most significant residential buildings of the 20th century. It came into being as a result of Mr. Blacker's foresight and patronage and sheltered him during a 26-year period when he supported the educational community of Pasadena. For these reasons, the Robert R. Blacker House is worthy of being listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies, Reyner Banham. Harper & Row: New York, 1971. pp. 68, 69, 71, 73, 102.

One Hundred Years of Architecture in America: 1857-1957, Celebrating the Centennial of the American Institute of Architects, F. A. Gutheim. Reinhold Publishing Co., 1957. pp. 55-56.

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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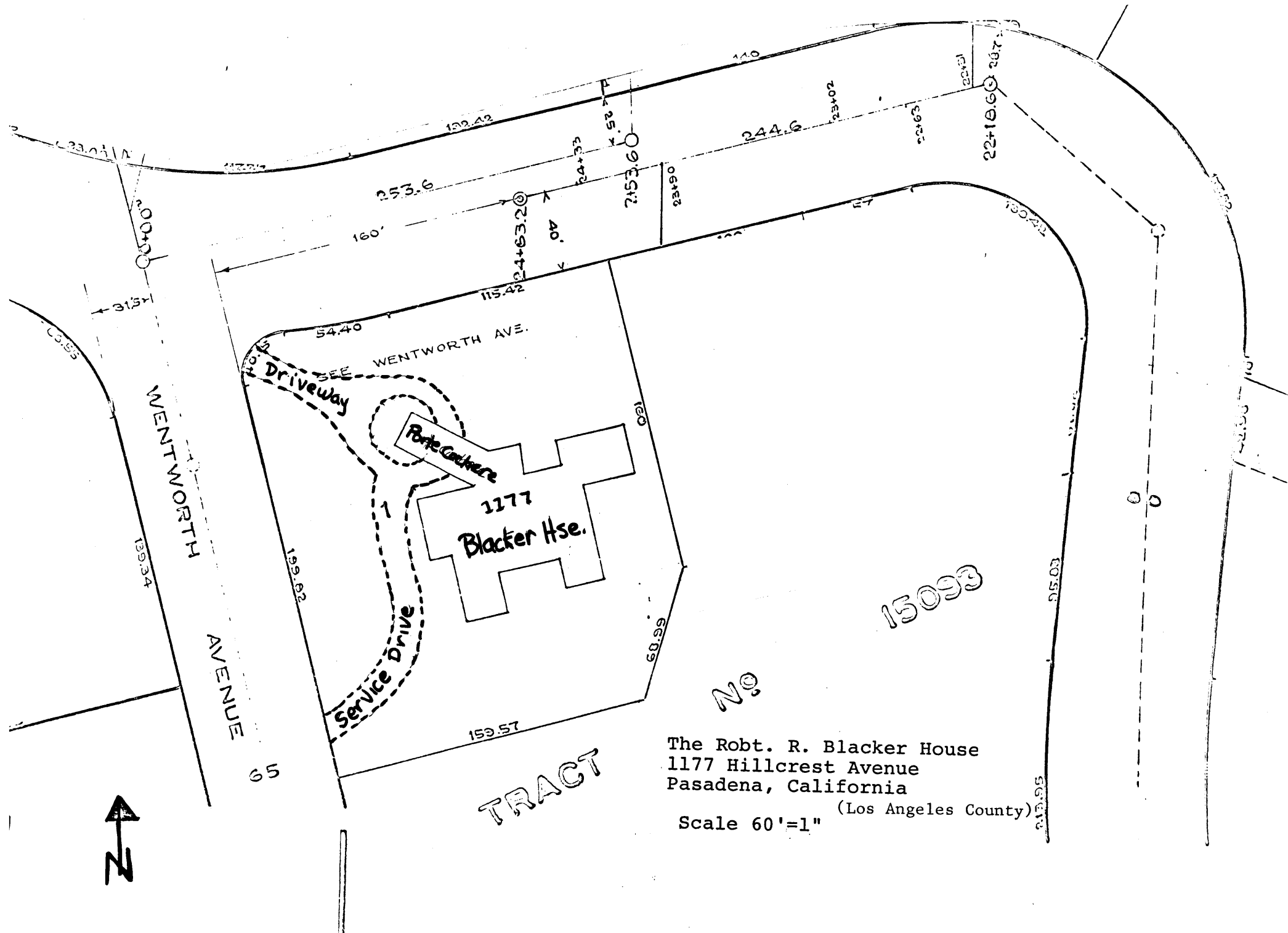
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Page 1

Lot 1 Tract 15093 as per map recorded in Book 315 Pages 25 and 26 of Maps in the office of the County Recorder of said County. AKA Assessor's parcel number 5325-026-001. Originally 5 1/2 acres, the Blacker House was located on Lot 10. Since about 1948 when Lot 10 was subdivided into eight separate parcels, the Blacker House has occupied Lot 1, a .95 acre site. Landscaping has grown up between the Blacker House and the subdivided parcels, and fencing further separates the Blacker House from its neighboring structures. No visual or physical continuity remains between the subdivided parcels and the nominated property.



**TRACT**

The Robt. R. Blacker House  
 1177 Hillcrest Avenue  
 Pasadena, California  
 (Los Angeles County)

Scale 60'=1"

