

ST. ELIZABETHS HOSPITAL, PINE  
(Building No. 6)  
539-559 Cedar Drive, Southeast  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS DC-349-AA  
*HABS DC-349-AA*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ST. ELIZABETHS HOSPITAL, PINE (BUILDING 6)

HABS NO. DC-349-AA

**Location:** 539–559 Cedar Drive SE, Washington, D.C., on the West Campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital

**Present Owner:** General Services Administration, United States Government

**Present Use:** Vacant (rehabilitation of St. Elizabeths West Campus in progress)

**Significance:** Pine (Building 6) is significant for its association with the treatment of mental illness at the St. Elizabeths campus. As part of the Center Building group (Buildings 1 through 6), Pine formed an integral part of the function and use of the campus for the treatment of mental illness and related disabilities and remained in use for patient treatment into the second half of the twentieth century. Although physically part of the Center Building group, Pine, built in 1884, was a relatively late addition to the complex and is more reflective of the expansion of the campus that occurred in the late nineteenth century. Upon its completion, Pine housed female patients of the most disruptive and unruly class.

Pine is also significant for its architectural design. The design incorporates some Gothic Revival-style elements, such as window hoods and wood window sash with narrow divided lights, which characterize the Center Building group. Pine also features elements that relate it to the free-standing buildings built at the same time (for example Home, Building 36), such as a continuous sheet metal cornice, rather than the crenellated parapet wall used elsewhere in the Center Building group. The open concrete porch added to Pine in the 1920s is distinctive for its streamlined, industrial aesthetic; this porch served as a prototype for porches added later to the West Wing (Building 3) and Garfield (Building 5), among other buildings on the campus. Pine was connected to a railway system that ran through the basement of the Center Building group and adjacent free-standing buildings. Originally, the railway system allowed for the quick transport of food from the bakery and kitchen as well as supplies between buildings.

**Historians:** Mike Ford, Kenneth Itle, Tim Penich, and Deborah Slaton, Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.

## PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History

1. Date of erection: 1882–1884<sup>1</sup>
2. Architect: Edward Clark<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> 1882 and 1884 *Annual Reports*.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: St. Elizabeths Hospital (then the Government Hospital for the Insane) was placed under the control of the Department of the Interior by an act of Congress on March 3, 1855. The hospital remained under the control of the Department of the Interior until 1940, when St. Elizabeths was transferred to the Federal Security Agency. The Federal Security Agency was a new government agency that oversaw federal activities in the fields of health, education, and social insurance. In 1953, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare was created. At that time several of the functions of the Federal Security Agency, including control of St. Elizabeths Hospital, were transferred to the new department.<sup>3</sup> In 1968, St. Elizabeths was transferred to the National Institute of Mental Health, an agency within the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The Institute sought to demonstrate how a large mental hospital could be converted into a smaller, more modern facility for training, service, and research.<sup>4</sup> In 1979, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare became the Department of Health and Human Services with the creation of the Department of Education. The Department of Health and Human Services retained control of the St. Elizabeths Hospital west campus until 2004, when the property was transferred to the GSA.<sup>5</sup> The campus facilities were stabilized and the buildings were mothballed by 2005.<sup>6</sup>

In the original use of the Center Building group, the central wing of the Center Building (Building 1) housed administrative facilities. Male patients occupied the western wing of the Center Building and the adjoining West Wing (Building 3), while female patients occupied the eastern wing of the Center Building and the adjoining East Wing (Building 4). Patients were segregated by ward so that the most severe or violent patients were located in more secure wards farthest from the central wing. When it was added to the Center Building group in 1882–1884, Pine housed female patients of the most disruptive and unruly class.

Because of overcrowding in the late nineteenth century, the orderly arrangement and segregation of patients by condition, diagnosis, and sex was gradually lost. As part of an administrative restructuring in the first decade of the twentieth century, patient ward facilities were reconfigured to accommodate as many patients as possible. A part of the campus redevelopment initiated by Superintendent Richardson in the early twentieth century included the reorganization of patient housing so that orderly classification could be restored. As a result, almost all of the Center Building group was allocated to white male patients and, in conjunction with Willow (Building 8), was referred to as the West Side Department after 1905. The Pine wards were designated for the most “disturbed” male patients.<sup>7</sup>

Pine was used as a male patient ward building until 1970 when patients were transferred from all pre-1900 buildings. Dormitories constructed during the Nichols and Godding era, which constituted half of the west campus buildings and included the wards of the Center Building

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<sup>2</sup> Edward Clark, the Architect of the Capitol at the time, is credited with designing and overseeing the construction of Home (Building 36) in 1882. A slightly modified version of Home was the basis for the plan and design of Pine.

<sup>3</sup> *Federal Register*, accessed at <http://www.federalregister.gov/agencies/saint-elizabeth-s-hospital>, January 5, 2012.

<sup>4</sup> 1970 *Annual Report*.

<sup>5</sup> *St. Elizabeths West Campus: Cultural Landscape Report*, Heritage Landscapes, Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners, and Robinson & Associates, Inc., prepared for the General Services Administration, April 2009, V.2.

<sup>6</sup> *St. Elizabeths West Campus Preservation, Design, & Development Guidelines*, Oehrlein & Associates Architects and Robinson & Associates, Inc., Architectural and Historical Research, prepared for the General Services Administration, November 10, 2008, 18. A photograph of the building taken in 2005 by FMG Architects shows the building in a stabilized and protected state.

<sup>7</sup> 1905 *Annual Report*.

group, were cleared and patients were relocated to the lettered buildings of the west campus or to the east campus.<sup>8</sup> Based on available documentary sources and physical evidence, it appears that Pine has mostly remained vacant from 1970 to the present day.

By 1980, the Center Building group housed administration offices for the Management Analysis, Engineering, Facilities Management, General Services, Nutrition Services, Internal Audit, Housekeeping, and Industrial and Environmental departments. The Dixon Plan Foster Care program was also headquartered in the building as well as a staff lounge and gymnasium located on the second and third floor, respectively, of the Center Building.<sup>9</sup>

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Not known
5. Original plans and construction: As outlined by the Kirkbride plan, the original design for the Center Building was composed of a four-story Center Building, with attached wings stepping down to three- and two-story buildings. Superintendent Charles Nichols opted to complete the project through a series of orchestrated phases of construction. Construction started with the West Wing with the intent that, upon substantial completion of that portion of the building, patients most urgently in need of care would be the first admitted.

In 1853, construction of the West Wing began as the first component of the Government Hospital for the Insane. By January 15, 1855, the westernmost sections of the West Wing had been enclosed and completely furnished. By 1856, all five sections of the West Wing building were complete and ready for occupancy by ninety patients.

In the fall of 1856, work began on the second phase of construction, consisting of the Center Building (Building 1). The Center Building was completed in 1859; upon its completion, male and female patients could be further segregated. Female patients, temporarily housed in the West Wing building, were moved to the Cherry, Chestnut, and Cedar wards, located in the three-story eastern wing of the Center Building.

In 1859, the third phase proceeded with the construction of the East Wing, completing the symmetrical plan of the Center Building group as originally designed by Charles Nichols and Thomas Walter.<sup>10</sup> Although the exterior was completed in 1860, the interior remained mostly unfinished due to the Civil War. Finally, in 1866, the Locust Ward was completed, followed by the Birch Ward in 1868, and the Spruce Ward in 1869.<sup>11</sup>

In 1869, Dawes (Building 7, no longer extant) was added to the complex. Dawes was a three-story brick structure extending from the south end of the West Wing. This was followed by the construction of Garfield (Building 5) attached to the western end of the West Wing in 1871–1872, as well as the construction of an south addition to the Center Building central wing (Building 2) and a fourth floor at the eastern and western wings of the Center Building in 1874.

For many years, superintendents Nichols and Godding had been petitioning Congress for funds to construct an additional facility to house female patients. In 1882, an appropriation was finally approved for construction of the two-story ward building designated to house female patients of

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<sup>8</sup> 1970 *Annual Report*.

<sup>9</sup> Office of the Superintendent, *Master Facilities Use Plan* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> 1860 *Annual Report*, 542.

<sup>11</sup> 1867, 1868, and 1869 *Annual Reports*.

the most disruptive and unruly class.<sup>12</sup> The new building, Pine, was initially called Retreat in the 1884 *Annual Report*.<sup>13</sup>

The structure was connected through an enclosed narrow corridor to the east facade of the East Wing. The exterior of the two-story brick structure maintained the Gothic Revival-style cast iron window hoods of the older portions of the Center Building group, but with a simple cornice and low-slope hip roof rather than the crenellated parapet used elsewhere on the Center Building group. The south and east facade featured projecting two-story octagonal bays. A fire stair was constructed on the south end of the east octagonal bay of Pine.

The building, containing the Pine and Larch wards, was oriented on a north-south axis and had a T-shaped plan identical to that of Home (Building 36), which was completed in 1883 to house disabled volunteer soldiers. Home was designed as a four-story detached patient ward by Edward Clark, resident architect of the United States Capitol building. Although only a two-story building, Pine retained much of the architectural detail, construction methodology, floor plan, and interior finishes as Home. It is presumed that the plan and design of Pine were adapted from Clark's architectural drawings for Home.

The wood finish of the halls is in ash, of the rooms in Georgia pine. The floors of the corridors are laid on fire-proof arches; the corridors themselves are subdivided into three compartments by partitions and doors of hammered glass, and at the ends they expand into pleasant bays. Nowhere is there a dark place, and the interior light, even on a cloudy day, is almost synonymous with sunshine.<sup>14</sup>

Existing physical evidence suggests that Pine was similar to Home in that it had unusually thick exterior walls constructed of two wythes of brick separated by an air space. Both Home and Pine had open wall cavities that incorporated heating flues and allowed for efficient heating of the interior space.

The walls, both the interior and exterior, are of brick; the outer ones are built with an air space, and the heating flues projected from these within the rooms. The heat thus entering at the outer side, the ventilating flues being placed in the corridor walls, the warmth of the entire room secured.<sup>15</sup>

6. Alterations and additions: Throughout the remainder of Superintendent Godding's tenure, construction at the Center Building group focused on improving plumbing and fire safety conditions and upgrading interior spaces to accommodate the hospital's growing needs. Between 1882 and 1885, wood staircases in the Center Building group were replaced with iron to address issues of fire safety. Additional fire walls and doors had been installed throughout the complex to separate wards.<sup>16</sup> Throughout Godding's tenure, appropriations were made for the reconstruction of floors in the Center Building group. Appropriations were requested in small increments, one or two wards at a time, and were awarded in 1883, 1895, and 1901. As described in the *Annual Reports*, floors at selected locations were modified by the removal of wood framing or brick arches and subsequent replacement with steel beams. The new flooring material was laid over

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<sup>12</sup> 1882 and 1884 *Annual Reports*.

<sup>13</sup> Historically, this building is referred to as "Retreat" or "East Wing Extension," although currently it is identified as Pine.

<sup>14</sup> 1884 *Annual Report*, 440.

<sup>15</sup> 1884 *Annual Report*, 439, describing Pine, and existing physical evidence.

<sup>16</sup> 1882 and 1885 *Annual Reports*.

top. The change in structure was initiated over fire safety concerns as the steel-framed floors were more fire-resistant and would thus reduce the risk.<sup>17</sup> Based on existing physical evidence, it is not clear where this work was performed at the Center Building group; however, some areas of the corridor floor construction in Pine include a steel beam structure.

The exterior fire stair on the south end of the east octagonal bay of Pine was removed following the completion of adjacent Willow in 1895.<sup>18</sup>

Minor alterations and various repairs were made to the Center Building group throughout the tenure of Superintendent White. In 1904, Alexandria Iron Works was commissioned at a cost of \$1,500 to install fireproof ironworks in the Center Building group.<sup>19</sup> The exact location where these ironworks were installed is unknown. In 1907, work was contracted for the replacement of deteriorating electrical and plumbing facilities throughout the Center Building group.<sup>20</sup> Toilet systems encased in wood were replaced, and tile flooring and marble partitions were installed within lavatory rooms.<sup>21</sup>

Throughout the early 1910s, the existing roofing of the Center Building group was removed and replaced with new tin. Reroofing of the entire Center Building was completed in 1916. As noted in the 1915 *Annual Report*:

We are continuing our practice of replacing old roofs by putting new roofs in various portions of the old Center Building. We have purchased the necessary tin to continue this practice and expect in another year the whole of the old building will have been overhauled and new roofs put in place.<sup>22</sup>

In 1925, the two-story southeast porch addition to Pine was completed. The brick structure had a flat roof and large metal-framed windows and was situated on a concrete foundation. Glass block was embedded in the concrete floor slab between the first and second floors and in the concrete roof. The 1925 *Annual Report* noted:

The porch adjacent to retreat ward, an appropriation for which was made under the hand of “Sun parlor” is now under construction, the side walls being about ready to receive the roof. The metal window guards on the first floor have been replaced, the floor lights have been delivered, and this porch should be completed at an early date.<sup>23</sup>

At the beginning of Superintendent William Overholser’s tenure (1937–1962), efforts were made to renovate the Center Building, including continued alterations to fireproof the building as well as work to restore the north facade of the center tower entrance. As part of an effort to fireproof the building, wood stairs, floors, and doors were removed and replaced with iron staircases, concrete terrazzo floor slabs, and Kalemein doors (a composite fire-rated door construction

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<sup>17</sup> 1883, 1895, and 1901 *Annual Reports*.

<sup>18</sup> 1898 archival photograph.

<sup>19</sup> Correspondence between Superintendent Richardson and the Department of the Interior, December 26, 1904.

<sup>20</sup> 1907 *Annual Report*.

<sup>21</sup> Archival photograph obtained from the National Photo Company and dated between 1902 and 1932. Source: Library of Congress.

<sup>22</sup> 1915 *Annual Report*, 23.

<sup>23</sup> 1925 *Annual Report*. “Retreat” was the historic name for Pine. The floor lights refer to the glass block inset in the concrete.

composed of a solid wood core and a galvanized sheet metal cladding).<sup>24</sup> Upgrades were made to the existing plumbing system and guard screens were added to the windows to enhance security.<sup>25</sup>

Electrical improvements to the Center Building and West Wing were planned in 1953, immediately following the transfer of the west campus to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and completed by 1955.<sup>26</sup> Similar electrical upgrades were made to the East Wing in 1956.<sup>27</sup> These improvements were a precursor to the campus-wide upgrades and helped define the scope of electrical alterations. Upgrades to Pine were completed by 1964.

In the 1960s, an extensive effort was made at St. Elizabeths Hospital to modernize mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems in the aging west campus buildings. The effort was initiated in response to the series of conflagrations that had plagued the campus for the previous two decades. In 1961, a fire in the Larch Ward of the Pine Building resulted in a patient fatality. Funds were quickly directed by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare towards creating a campus-wide plan to improve fire suppression plans, plumbing facilities, heating units, and electrical systems.

In 1963, an \$865,000 appropriation was made for the installation of sprinkler systems in non-fire-resistant buildings. The suppression unit consisted of surface-mounted sprinklers and was installed in every room. That same year, a study of the existing plumbing and electrical systems was initiated. The study led to the appropriation of funds for a multi-million-dollar building facilities modernization project. Plans for building alterations were generated between 1963 and 1965 and included the replacement of electrical wiring and outlets, upgrades to lavatory and plumbing systems, and the installation of fluorescent light fixtures. All additions were surface-mounted. Construction began in 1966 and continued through 1970.<sup>28</sup>

An occupational therapy room, located on the fourth floor of Pine, was converted into a gymnasium in 1955.<sup>29</sup>

The tin roof of the Center Building group was entirely replaced in 1959. The project included the replacement of defective wood sheathing and the installation of approximately seventy roof ventilators.<sup>30</sup> New downspouts were installed in 1960.<sup>31</sup>

In 1962, Superintendent Overholser retired and became the last superintendent to reside in the Center Building. Due to its dilapidated condition, Dawes was demolished in 1965. Other projects initiated in 1967 aimed to improve security and safety. Metal-framed screen doors and windows were installed throughout the Center Building group and stair wells were renovated to incorporate code compliant handrails.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> 1938 *Annual Report*.

<sup>25</sup> 1939 *Annual Report*.

<sup>26</sup> 1956 construction documents.

<sup>27</sup> 1956 construction documents.

<sup>28</sup> 1961–1968 and 1970 *Annual Reports*. Construction documents from 1960 and 1963.

<sup>29</sup> 1955 *Annual Report*.

<sup>30</sup> 1959 *Annual Report*.

<sup>31</sup> 1960 *Annual Report*.

<sup>32</sup> 1967 construction documents.

In 1969, historic wood flooring was repaired and replaced and existing linoleum and carpeting was removed throughout the Center Building group. The floor was structurally reinforced with steel framing and resilient flooring was laid. Sheet vinyl was applied to corridors and vinyl-asbestos tile was installed over repaired wood flooring or plywood underlayment in all other areas.<sup>33</sup>

There is no evidence or documentation of other changes to Pine after patients were transferred from all nineteenth-century buildings in 1970.

## B. Historical context<sup>34</sup>

In 1852, St. Elizabeths Hospital was established in large part through the efforts of Dorothea Lynde Dix, who led a national crusade for the ethical and humane treatment of the mentally ill. Under the direction of Superintendent Charles Nichols (1852–1877), the hospital endeavored to become a curative treatment center for the mentally ill of Washington, D.C., and the United States Army and Navy. Patients were grouped into wards by their perceived mental condition and emphasis was placed on creating a peaceful and serene family environment in which to rehabilitate.

Nichols's first responsibility was to identify an ideal location for the federal hospital. Working with Dorothea Dix, a suitable site was found. The 185-acre farm owned by the Blagden family possessed many of the attributes deemed necessary for a hospital site, and was purchased for a reasonable price of \$25,000. The property was situated on a bluff overlooking Washington, D.C., Alexandria, and Georgetown. As a former farmstead, the site consisted primarily of cultivated land with the remaining landscape being timber. Two springs were located on the grounds that supplied fresh water and provided drainage. An additional 8-acre tract with an existing wood-framed structure was obtained in December 1852 at a cost of \$2,000. The structure was located on the Anacostia River and was to function as a wharf, allowing direct access of goods and materials to the site.<sup>35</sup>

Nichols undertook the design of the first hospital buildings using principles outlined by Thomas Kirkbride for the ideal arrangement of structures for treatment of the mentally ill. The initial structure consisted of a central administrative building with a linear organization of wings and a symmetrical plan. Using this arrangement, patients could be separated by gender, with males in the west wing and females in the east wing; as well as by severity of their illness, with the most "violent" or "excited" patients to be housed in the outermost wings. Kirkbride's principles were eventually published, as *On the Construction and General Arrangement of Hospitals for the Insane*, in 1854. Nichols made modifications to the Kirkbride plan by setting the wings in echelon, thus improving circulation through the building and enhancing the benefits of natural light and ventilation. Kirkbride's more linear plan called for building wings to be oriented in the same direction, with a slight offset. Nichols advocated the development of cross-wings that were situated perpendicular to the primary axis and linked the wings together. The stair-stepped plan also provided more interior space and allowed the wings to be connected through a series of corridors.

Nichols enlisted Thomas Ustick Walter, a Philadelphia architect, to assist in finalizing the design of the Center Building group. Walter, who had previously designed Moyamensing Prison in Philadelphia, had moved to Washington, D.C., to supervise work at the United States Capitol. The

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<sup>33</sup> 1969 construction documents.

<sup>34</sup> A context history for the entire St. Elizabeths West Campus, as well as an overview history of the Center Building group, is to be developed under separate cover as part of this HABS documentation project.

<sup>35</sup> *Report of the Secretary of the Interior*, 33rd Congress, 1st sess., S. doc. 35, February 21, 1854, 6.

result of Nichols's and Walter's collaboration was a handsome Gothic Revival building complex that served as the center of hospital administration and patient treatment throughout Nichols's tenure as superintendent.

During the Civil War, construction at St. Elizabeths was halted as the hospital tended to Union soldiers housed in tents on the property grounds. Following the Civil War, Congressional legislation on July 13, 1866, extended medical services at St. Elizabeths to include military veterans seeking medical attention for issues of mental illness.<sup>36</sup> New patient facilities were required to keep up with the increased population of Civil War veterans and change in treatment needs.<sup>37</sup>

In 1877, William Godding assumed control of St. Elizabeths Hospital and adopted the principles of his predecessor. Godding's tenure was marked by rapid growth of the patient population and overcrowding of the hospital. Construction efforts were increased to keep up with hospital needs. Godding encouraged the construction of small, free-standing cottage buildings to promote a healthy environment and facilitate the orderly separation of growing patient groups. The change in architecture was a shift from Nichols's institutional to domestic imagery in caring for the chronically ill.

Starting in 1878 with Atkins Hall (Building 31), the ward buildings were constructed as detached cottages, clustered into small groups. Each building group was designed and designated for a specialized patient type.<sup>38</sup> The architecture allowed for the orderly separation of patients and maintained the peaceful family atmosphere of the ward units but without the constraints or limitations of a single large building. At the Center Building, new construction was focused on expanding the female ward facility and improving existing plumbing and building facilities.

The Center Building housed the superintendent and staff and was the hub of administrative activity; however, the institutional architecture and divided plan of the Center Building group did not embody the cottage-plan approach to treating mental illness adopted by St. Elizabeths Hospital under Superintendent Godding. A new administration building was required to meet to the needs of the growing patient population and reflect the current methods of treatment.

Alonzo Richardson took office in 1899 and was immediately faced with issues of hospital overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and an aging building stock. Superintendent Richardson approached Congress for a large appropriation and outlined a plan for an extensive and important building campaign that would provide adequate space for patients and staff and improve the campus infrastructure. Congress responded by approving the Sundry Civilian Appropriations Act, which allocated \$1,500,000 for the expansion of the Government Hospital for the Insane to house 1,000 patients and 200 employees through the construction of fifteen new buildings.<sup>39</sup> Improvements were made to the Center Building group during the Richardson era in an effort to make them safe and functional as patient wards.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *An act to extend to certain persons the privilege of admission, in certain cases, to United States Government Asylum for the Insane*, 39th Congress, 1st sess., July 13, 1866, 89–94.

<sup>37</sup> *Cultural Landscape Report*, II.14.

<sup>38</sup> 1938 Key Plan of Buildings.

<sup>39</sup> 69th Congress, 2nd sess., House of Representatives, *Investigation of St. Elizabeths Hospital: Letter from the Comptroller General of the United States*, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, July 1, 1926), 68.

<sup>40</sup> *Report of the committee to consider the Organization and Needs of the Government Hospital for the Insane to the Secretary of the Interior*, 1911, 7.

William White was appointed superintendent upon the sudden death of Alonzo Richardson in 1903. It was under White's direction that the preferred method of treatment shifted from the humane environment to a more scientific approach. Research, experimental therapies, and medical prescriptions became the rule for treating patients. St. Elizabeths became the foremost clinical institution in the United States for the scientific study of psychology and psychoanalysis.<sup>41</sup> Throughout White's tenure, St. Elizabeths Hospital continued to grow as a clinical institution, patient hospital, and research facility. Construction on the west campus continued into the White era and was focused on improving infrastructure and existing building stock. Following completion of the Richardson expansion project, routine maintenance continued on the Center Building group to address evolving safety issues, deteriorating building condition, and the reorganized administrative system.

In 1946, it was determined that patients from the United States Army and Navy would no longer be admitted to the hospital. St. Elizabeths was relieved of the governing civilian body as well as the issue of overcrowding that had overwhelmed the institution since the end of the Civil War. The dramatic administrative changes continued when the federal government shifted control to the newly created Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1953. Development at St. Elizabeths Hospital responded through the gradual relocation and consolidation of patient services from the older facilities of the west campus to the newly constructed east campus. With few exceptions, new construction was limited to the east campus, while the existing structures of the west campus were renovated, maintained, or demolished, depending on their physical condition.

## **PART II: ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION**

### **A. General Statement**

1. Architectural character: Pine is a two-story structure that is T-shaped in plan. The structure has a three-story rectangular wing at its west end that connects to a two-story corridor link to the east elevation of the East Wing. A small bathroom wing is also located on the west side of the south wing. A reinforced concrete two-story porch addition is located between the south and east wings of the original T-shaped plan and connects Pine to adjacent Willow. Exterior character-defining features of Pine include brick and stone masonry detailed with string courses; Gothic Revival-style decorative elements including cast iron window hoods; sheet metal cornice and standing-seam metal roofing; wood-framed multi-light windows; and wood stile-and-rail doors. On the interior, character-defining intact original elements include plaster wall and ceiling finishes with plaster cornices and iron bullnose edges at wall corners, wood trim and stile-and-rail doors, wood window trim, iron staircases, and cast iron ventilation grilles.
2. Condition of fabric: At the time of the field survey for the Historic Structure Reports/Building Preservation Plans project in 2009, Pine was in poor condition overall. Exterior conditions of note included cracking, spalling, displacement, and deterioration of mortar throughout the masonry walls; corrosion, cracking, and missing portions of cast iron trim; wood decay, loss of paint, and broken glass at wood window sash; and obstructed roof drainage, especially at the porch addition. On the interior, major condition issues related primarily to previous moisture infiltration and included the past removal of some areas of original floor construction; deterioration and cracking of remaining floor finishes; damage and decay to interior wood trim and other components; loss

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<sup>41</sup> *Cultural Landscape Report*, IV.7–8.

of paint, cracking, delamination, and wholesale loss of plaster finishes; and deterioration and localized failure of floor framing systems. The concrete structure and glass block skylights of the porch addition were particularly deteriorated.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 100'-0" long by 135'-0" wide and 30'-0" tall above grade.
2. Foundations: Pine has a brick and stone masonry foundation. The foundation of the two-story porch addition is concrete, with a basement-level concrete slab on grade.
3. Walls: The exterior walls of Pine are constructed primarily of red clay brick masonry in a common bond pattern, with headers every six to eight courses. The masonry units are typically 8-1/4 inches long and appear to be a low-fired clay brick. A painted three-course high corbelled brick band extends between the second floor window sills. At the top of the basement level there is an angled water table. On the north elevation and the east elevation north of the two-story porch addition, the water table is a continuous sandstone masonry course. On the other elevations, the water table consists of molded brick, with sandstone used as lintels above basement-level window openings and at building corners only.

At the three-story portion of the building only, there is a continuous painted cast iron string course above the head of the third floor windows and approximately ten brick courses below the cornice. The brick masonry between the string course and cornice is painted.

The exterior walls of the day porch are clad with brick masonry in a common bond with headers every sixth course. The structural piers are expressed as projecting brick pilasters. The first and second floors have simple concrete lintels and rowlock brick sills. Above the second floor window lintels, the brick masonry corbels outward, with dentil detailing at the second course above the lintels.

4. Structural system, framing: Pine has load-bearing clay brick masonry walls at the building perimeter and interior that run east to west in the north portion and north to south in the south portion of the T-shaped plan. The exterior and corridor walls are typically 18 inches thick with four wythes of masonry and serve as the primary support from the foundation to the roof framing. The interior corridor walls support a wrought iron beam and brick arch floor system at the central corridor on the first floor level. The brick arch floors, present beneath the main corridors of the first level, are supported by wrought iron beams with flange widths varying between 3 and 5 inches. The beams are spaced approximately 4 to 6 feet on center and span between corridor walls. The arches are a single wythe rowlock brick courses and have an amplitude (rise at arch midspan) of about 5 to 6 inches between the supports. The finish floor system over the masonry arch includes a wood sub floor on sleepers and a cementitious fill.

The walls between rooms flanking the corridors are typically 9 inches thick with two wythes of masonry and bear on masonry arches that span between the primary bearing walls. The floors in rooms flanking the corridors and upper floor levels have 3-inch by 9 1/2-inch (actual) joists spaced approximately 15 inches on center with tongue-and-groove subflooring and finish flooring. The joists typically span between exterior walls and corridor walls. The assembly also has a counter floor with wood fillets secured to the sides of the joists that support wood planks and a cementitious fill material, apparently provided for sound isolation. Portions of these floors

have been replaced with temporary floor systems composed of 2-inch by 8-inch joists and plywood decking.

The bathroom wing floors have expanded steel diamond mesh reinforcing and span between intermediate iron beams that pocket into the masonry perimeter walls. The floor slab thickness could not be measured, but is estimated to be approximately 6 inches including the tile finish. The iron beams have flange widths of 4 inches and are spaced approximately 4 feet 9 inches on center.

The two-story portion of the building has a hip roof with slope of about 13 degrees. The roof has 3-inch by 5-1/2-inch (actual) rafters spaced at approximately 24 inches on center with a continuous 3-inch by 5-inch ridge beam. The rafters are notched and bear on continuous 1-inch by 4-inch members on top of the masonry walls of the corridor below. The walls are braced by masonry buttresses with 8 inch corbels spaced at approximately 7 feet 10 inches on center. The rafters have notched ends at a continuous sill plate set into notched lookout members that bear on the exterior masonry walls and 2-inch by 12-inch (actual) ceiling joists. The roof decking over the rafters is 1-inch-thick by 12-inch planks. The framing at the hips is similar but is supported by wood-framed walls rather than the masonry walls below. The roof of the bathroom wing is similar wood-framed construction.

The three-story section of the building has a hip roof with slope of about 22 degrees. The roof has 3-inch by 5 1/2-inch (actual) rafters spaced at approximately 24 inches on center with a continuous 2-inch by 8-inch ridge beam. The rafters are notched and bear on a knee wall assembly consisting of a continuous 3-inch by 6-inch (actual) beam supported by 3-inch by 4-inch posts spaced from 4 to 6 feet on center. The posts bear on 1-inch by 12-inch (actual) sill plates that span across 2-inch by 12-inch ceiling joists spaced at 48 inches on center. The rafters have notched ends that engage a continuous sill plate set into a notched outlook member that bears on the exterior masonry walls and 2-inch by 12-inch (actual) ceiling joists. The roof decking over the rafters is 1-inch-thick by 12 inch planks.

The two-story porch addition is a reinforced cast-in-place concrete structure consisting of flat slabs supported by beam and column assemblies. In some bays, the cast-in-place concrete slabs incorporate glass block skylights. The slab thickness could not be measured but is estimated to be approximately 5 inches. The beams are 12 to 14 inch wide and extend approximately 12 to 15 inches below the slab; the column is 16 inches square. The configuration of embedded steel beams and/or reinforcing within these systems was not confirmed during this investigation.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, porticoes, bulkheads: At the north elevation of the three-story portion of the building, sandstone steps with cast iron pipe handrails lead to a first floor door opening. At the north elevation of the connecting corridor between Pine and the East Wing, sandstone steps descend from grade to a sunken basement-level door opening. At the south elevation of the connecting corridor, a door opening leads to a concrete paved loading dock supported on a concrete masonry knee wall; the loading dock spans the entire width of the connecting corridor between the adjacent walls of Pine and the East Wing. Near the south end of the west elevation of the south wing there is a pair of door openings at the first level. Wide cast iron exterior stairs are present across the pair of door openings. Remnants of iron pipe handrails are present along these stairs.

A three-level iron fire escape is located at the center bay on the south elevation of the three-story portion of Pine. It is surrounded by a wire mesh fence and supported by decorative wrought iron brackets.

6. Chimneys: None Present.

7. Openings

- a. Doorways and doors: The first floor south stair has two exterior door openings with seven-panel hollow metal doors and wire screen transoms. The exterior door and frame are missing at the first floor of the northwest stairwell. At the connecting corridor, the first floor exterior door is a metal-clad four panel stile-and rail door with a six-light transom.
- b. Windows and shutters: The window openings have painted Gothic Revival-style cast iron hoods and painted cast iron window sills. The paired windows have one hood and are separated by a thin brick column. The typical paired window type is double-hung with fifteen-over-fifteen light sash, and the single windows typically have eighteen-over-eighteen sash. There are also isolated eight-over-eight wood double-hung windows. At the basement level, the openings have sandstone lintels that are part of the sandstone water table. The basement-level sills are painted sandstone.

The two-story porch addition has openings on the south and east walls. These openings are secured by expanded metal mesh security grilles.

The basement level has several vent openings at the south and west facades that consist of Flemish-bond brick masonry with header bricks omitted to create ventilation openings.

8. Roof

- a. Shape, covering: The main roof area at the two-story portion of Pine is a hip roof covered with standing-seam galvanized sheet metal, over which an elastomeric coating has been applied. The roof at the three-story portion is also a hip roof covered with standing-seam galvanized sheet metal, over which an elastomeric coating has been applied. The connecting corridor between Pine and the East Wing has a similar gable roof covered with standing-seam galvanized steel sheet metal, over which an elastomeric coating has been applied. The two-story porch addition has a low-slope roof covered with a built-up membrane coated with an aluminum coating. This roof originally had three large skylights; these skylights have been capped with temporary wood roof structures that are covered with a similar built-up membrane.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Pine has a painted sheet metal cornice that is integrated with a built-in gutter at the perimeter of the hip roofs. The built-in gutter was formerly drained by internal leader piping but has been altered to drain via non-original external prefinished steel downspouts that penetrate the sheet metal cornice.

The two-story porch addition roof has a brick masonry parapet wall topped by a brick header course as a coping. The top several courses of the parapet wall corbel outward to define a cornice.

- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Sheet metal ventilators are located along the ridges of the roofs at both the two-story and three-story portions of the building.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Pine is located at the east end of the Center Building group between the East Wing and Willow. Pine is two stories above grade with a basement/crawl space, and a small third floor at the northwest corner. The plan of both primary floors is nearly identical. Each floor functioned as its own ward, with the first floor known as Pine and second floor as Larch.

As originally constructed, Pine was T-shaped in plan, with a double-loaded corridor on the first and second floors running north-south and a transverse east-west corridor at the north end. At each floor, the north-south corridor is double loaded and contains bedrooms. There is a stairwell on the southwest side of the north-south corridor and a bathroom wing midway on the west side of the north-south corridor. At the south end of the corridor there is an open alcove. At the first and second floors, the transverse corridor is double loaded and is intersected by the north-south corridor. At the west end of the east-west corridor there is a connection to the East Wing and a stairwell. At the east end of the east-west corridor there is an alcove open to the corridor. Adjacent to the stairwell and connecting corridor, there is a sitting room and dining room at each floor. Larger rooms at the intersection of the north-south and east-west corridors served as dormitory-style bedrooms.

The bathroom wing at the west side of the north-south corridor is generally rectangular and includes four rooms—a lavatory, toilet, shower, and a linen closet—all situated along a narrow hall. The hall connects the bathroom wing to the main north-south corridor. At the far end of the bathroom hall there is a lavatory. South of the lavatory, there is a toilet room. The shower room is located east of the toilet room. East of the shower room there is a linen room.

A small third floor is located adjacent to the stairway and above the dining room and sitting room, at the west end of the east-west corridor. The third floor contains a single large room divided by a wide arched opening. At the first and second floors, off the eastern alcove located at the end of the transverse corridor, there is a passage to the two-story porch addition between Pine and Willow.

2. Stairways: Pine has two stairwells, one at the northwest corner of the building, and one located west of the octagonal bay on the south facade. The northwest stairwell leads from the basement floor to the third floor. The south stair leads from the basement to the second floor. At both stairs, the landing floors are structural iron panels with iron baseboards at the wall. The stairs have iron treads and risers. Each run of stairs has metal pipe handrails. The stairwell walls are plaster, painted a dark color on the lower half of the wall and a lighter color on the upper portion. The interior doors to the stairwell are seven-panel hollow metal doors.
3. Flooring: Most interior spaces have vinyl asbestos tile flooring, installed over linoleum and original wood flooring. Due to deterioration and subsequent partial removal of floor finishes and/or the entire floor construction, temporary painted plywood flooring is also present. The west sitting rooms have carpet tile over tongue-and-groove wood flooring. Throughout the bathroom wing, the floors are 2-inch white hexagonal ceramic tile or terrazzo with a concrete or terrazzo base. The two-story porch addition has concrete floors.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are typically painted plaster applied directly to the brick masonry wall construction, with iron bullnose trim at wall corners. The partitions in the bathroom

wing are painted 2-1/2-inch-thick cement plaster reinforced with expanded metal lath and steel angles. The ceilings are plaster on wood lath. Plaster cornices are present in the corridors.

Typical interior finishes in the two-story porch addition include exposed brick walls and exposed concrete ceilings. The original brick masonry exterior walls of Pine, complete with wood windows and cast iron trim, are visible from the interior of the two-story porch addition.

## 5. Openings

- a. Doorways and doors: Typical original interior doors are painted, two-panel stile-and-rail solid wood doors. The door frame is stained and painted wood and includes either a five-light wood transom or a metal grille transom. In the west wing sitting rooms, paired wood stile-and-rail doors, each with seven panels, provide access to the East Wing. At the third floor, the gymnasium has both four-panel wood stile-and-rail doors and one four-panel hollow metal door.
- b. Windows: The interior window sash is typically painted white, and the trim, originally stained and varnished, has been painted brown. Some windows have metal security grilles on the exterior and/or inward swinging metal security screens on the interior. The two-story porch addition has skylights; glass block units are embedded in the concrete floor slab between the first and second floor and in the roof of the structure to allow natural light to enter the space.

6. Decorative features and trim: The corridors, alcoves, sitting rooms, and connecting corridors have a plaster crown molding at the ceiling wood baseboard. Painted wood baseboard is present in most rooms.

The second floor landing of the northwest stair has a gas-light rosette on the east wall and a built-in cabinet at the top of the stairs.

7. Hardware: Interior doors typically have cast iron pull handles on the corridor side only and key holes with iron escutcheons. Some doors, such as at the stairwells and exterior doors, have mortised iron locksets and round knobs.

A dumbwaiter shaft and a closet are located in the southeast corner of the dining room tier. The dumbwaiter has stainless steel access doors.

## 8. Mechanical Equipment

- a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Heat and ventilation is typically provided to each room through a grille opening near floor level on the corridor wall and a grille opening near ceiling level on the exterior wall, connected to vertical air shafts built into the thickness of the brick masonry walls. A wide variety of ventilation grilles are present, some of which incorporate integral dampers that allowed the vents to be opened and closed for seasonal adjustment. Hot water radiators with exposed piping are present in the shower rooms of the bathroom wing. Similar exposed hot water piping is present at the alcoves, sitting rooms, and dining rooms, although the radiators have been removed.
- b. Lighting: The building has a mixture of ceiling-mounted dome-style light fixtures and suspended fluorescent fixtures. Exposed electrical conduit is present throughout the building.

- c. Plumbing: Domestic water and drain piping is surface-mounted throughout the bathroom wing. Some historic porcelain plumbing fixtures remain in the lavatory and toilet. Pine has a non-original surface-mounted fire sprinkler system.

D. Site

1. Historic landscape design: Documentation of the landscape of the west campus of St. Elizabeths Hospital can be found in Historic American Landscape Survey documentation submittal DC-11.

The Center Building group is situated on a bluff that overlooks the Anacostia River and the Washington, D.C., skyline to the north and west. The immediate site slopes to a ravine at the northwest and is heavily forested. Cedar Drive provides access to the north entrance of the Center Building group and separates the building from the ravine. The immediate landscape to the south consists of a flat grass-covered lawn with mature trees. To the north and east of Pine, the gently sloping landscape consists of a grass lawn and large trees. To the southwest of Pine, there is a large paved service courtyard. Linden (Building 28) is located close to the southwest corner of the south wing of Pine. The south end of Pine abuts a small parking lot, which is separated from the building wall by a strip of mown grass. Willow is connected to the east side of the porch addition.

### **PART III: SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

- A. Architectural drawings: Copies of architectural drawings are included in the attached Supplemental Material. The archival drawing documentation is in the collection of the General Services Administration.
- B. Early Views: Copies of selected early and historical views of Pine are included in the attached Supplemental Material. The original photographs and other archival photographic documentation are in the collection of the General Services Administration, the Library of Congress, the National Archives, College Park, Maryland, or the St. Elizabeths Hospital Health Sciences Library archives on the St. Elizabeths East Campus.
- C. Interviews: No oral history interviews were performed for this documentation project.
- D. Selected Sources:

*Centennial Papers: St. Elizabeths Hospital, 1855–1955.* Winfred Overholser, ed.  
Washington, D.C.: Centennial Commission, St. Elizabeths Hospital, 1956.

*Condition & Reuse Assessment: St. Elizabeths West Campus (draft).* Oehrlein & Associates  
Architects. Prepared for the General Services Administration, January 4, 2006.

*The DHS Headquarters Consolidation at St. Elizabeths: Final Master Plan.* Oehrlein & Associates  
Architects and Robinson & Associates, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration.  
November 10, 2008.

*General Correspondence and Other Records of the Federal Board of St. Elizabeths Hospital.*  
Records of the Office of the Superintendent, (1855–1967), Record Group 418.

*Historic Preservation Report: St. Elizabeths West Campus*, John Milner Architects. Prepared for the General Services Administration. December 7, 2005.

*Historic Structure Report: Center Building Group (Buildings 1 through 6), St. Elizabeths West Campus, Washington, D.C.* Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration, March 12, 2010.

Library of Congress. Washington, D.C.: Geography & Maps Reading Room. Collection contains various topographical maps for the District of Columbia and St. Elizabeths campus from 1855–1985.

*Maps and Plans of the Government Hospital for the Insane (St. Elizabeths Hospital), 05/27/1839–12/14/1938.* Department of the Interior, St. Elizabeths Hospital (1916–06/30/1940). Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital, 1820–1981. Record Group 418, National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland.

National Archives and Record Administration. Textual Documents Division. Washington, D.C. Record Group 418, Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital. Entry 20, Records of the Superintendent, Annual Report of the Subordinate Units, 1919–1966.

National Archives and Record Administration. Textual Documents Division. Washington, D.C. Record Group 42, Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital, National Archives, Washington, D.C.

National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Cartographic and Architectural Drawings Division, College Park, Maryland. Record Group 418, Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital, National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland.

National Archives and Records Administration at College Park, Cartographic and Architectural Drawings Division, College Park, Maryland. Record Group 48, Records of the Secretary of the Interior.

*Photographic Prints of Buildings, Grounds, and People, 1870–1920.* Department of Health, Education and Welfare, St. Elizabeth Hospital (04/11/1953–08/09/1967). Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital, 1820–1981. Record Group 418, National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland.

*Photographs of Structures at St. Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, D.C., 1968.* Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Public Health Service, Health Services and Mental Health Administration, National Institute of Mental Health, Saint Elizabeths Hospital, Office of the Superintendent (04/01/1968–07/01/1973). Records of St. Elizabeths Hospital, 1820–1981. Record Group 418, National Archives at College Park, College Park, Maryland.

*St. Elizabeths Hospital Historic Resources Management Plan.* Devroux & Purnell Architects-Planners, PC, with Betty Bird, Historian, and Rhodeside & Harwell Inc., Landscape Architects. Prepared for the D.C. Office of Business and Economic Development and the Office of the Assistant City Administrator for Economic Development, Washington, D.C., September 1993.

*St. Elizabeths Hospital Tunnel Inspection Report.* Burgess & Niple, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., February 2006. Accessed through the General Services Administration archives.

*St. Elizabeths West Campus: Cultural Landscape Report,* Heritage Landscapes, Preservation Landscape Architects & Planners, and Robinson & Associates, Inc. Prepared for the General Services Administration. April 2009.

*St. Elizabeths West Campus Preservation, Design, & Development Guidelines.* Oehrlein & Associates Architects and Robinson & Associates, Inc., Architectural and Historical Research. Prepared for the General Services Administration. November 10, 2008.

E. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: Extensive research on the history of Pine has been performed for this and other studies, as documented in the publications and other sources listed above.

F. Supplemental Material:

1. National Archives, Record Group 418.
2. National Archives, Record Group 418.
3. GSA Archives, image DC1472SE0P024.
4. GSA Archives, image DC0080SE0120.
5. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0005.
6. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0006.
7. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0007.
8. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0008.
9. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0001.
10. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0002.
11. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0003.
12. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0004.
13. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0P001.
14. GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0001.

#### **PART IV: PROJECT INFORMATION**

This historical narrative was prepared by WJE in conjunction with Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC, who prepared the measured drawings, and Leslie Schwartz Photography, who prepared the photographic documentation. The HABS documentation was completed for the General Services Administration.

**HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY**

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

PINE (Building 6)  
St. Elizabeths West Campus  
539–559 Cedar Drive SE  
Washington, D.C.

HABS No. DC-349-AA



*Figure 1. View from southwest of Pine, 1899. Linden is at the right edge of the image, and the East Wing is at left.  
Source: National Archives, Record Group 418.*



*Figure 2. View from the north of Pine, 1899. Source: National Archives, Record Group 418.*



*Figure 3. View from the northeast of Pine, 1899. Source: GSA Archives, image DC1472SE0P024.*

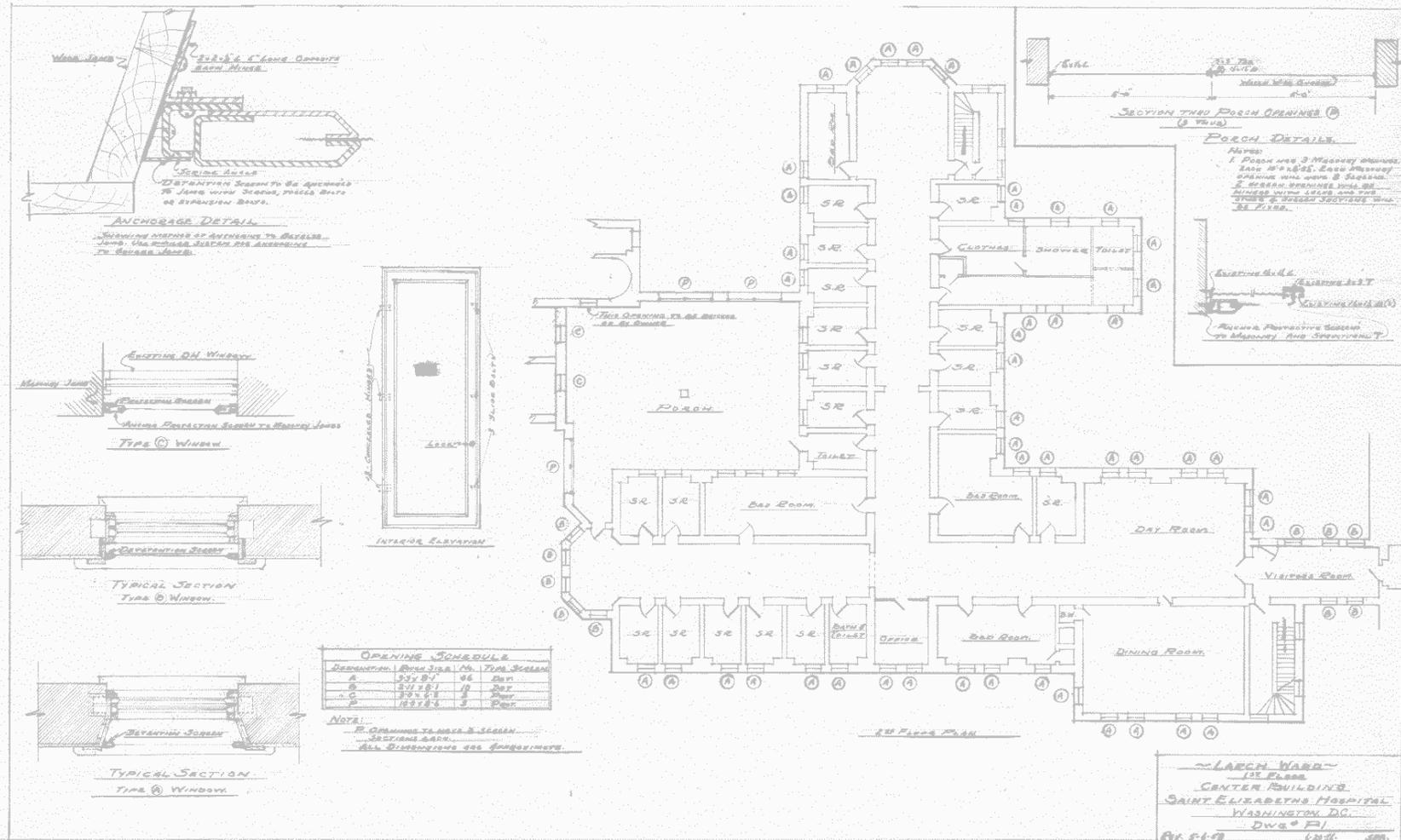


Figure 4. Second floor plan of Pine showing window replacement, 1956. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0080SE0120.

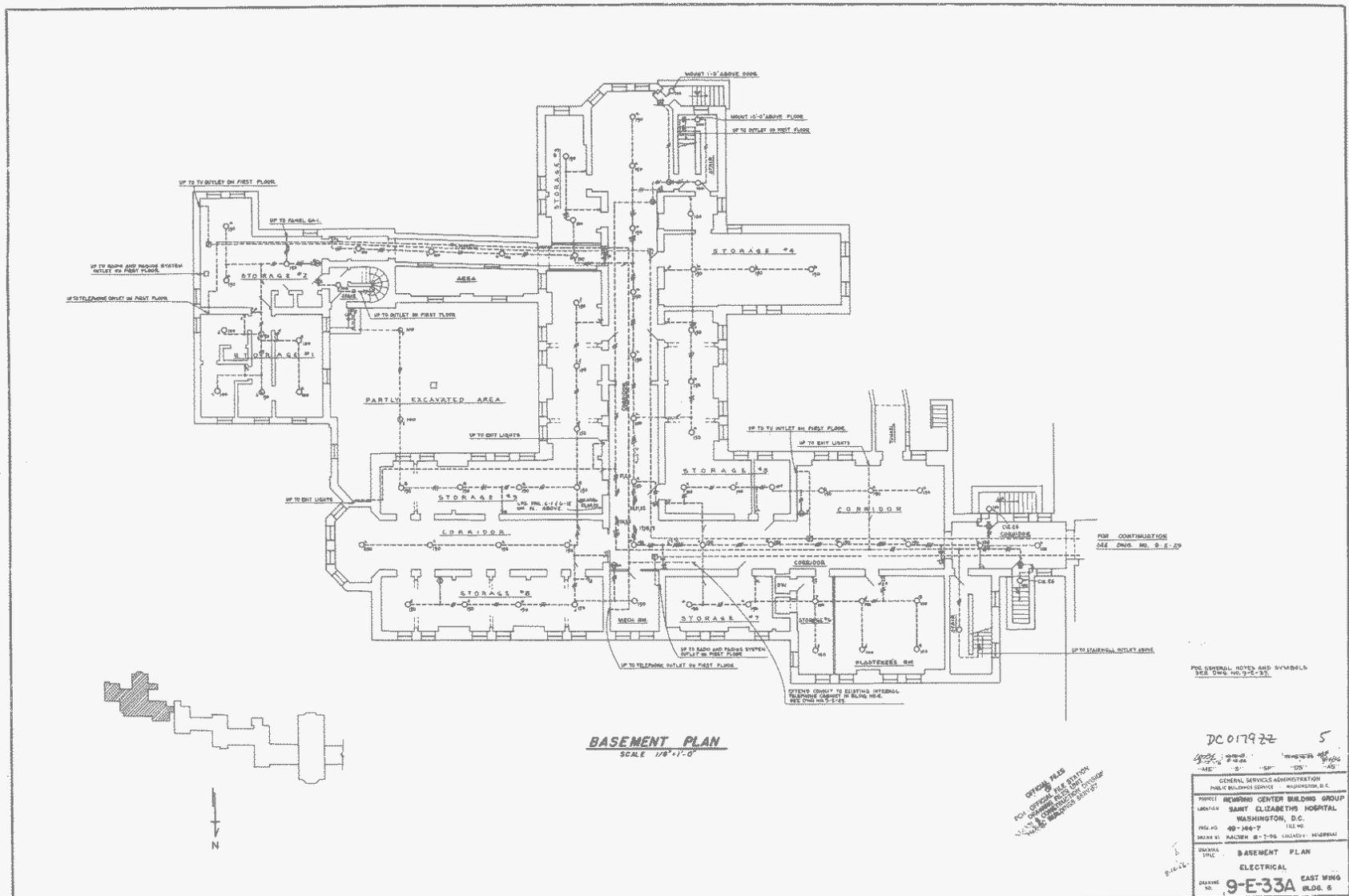


Figure 5. Basement plan of Pine showing electrical improvements, 1956. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0005

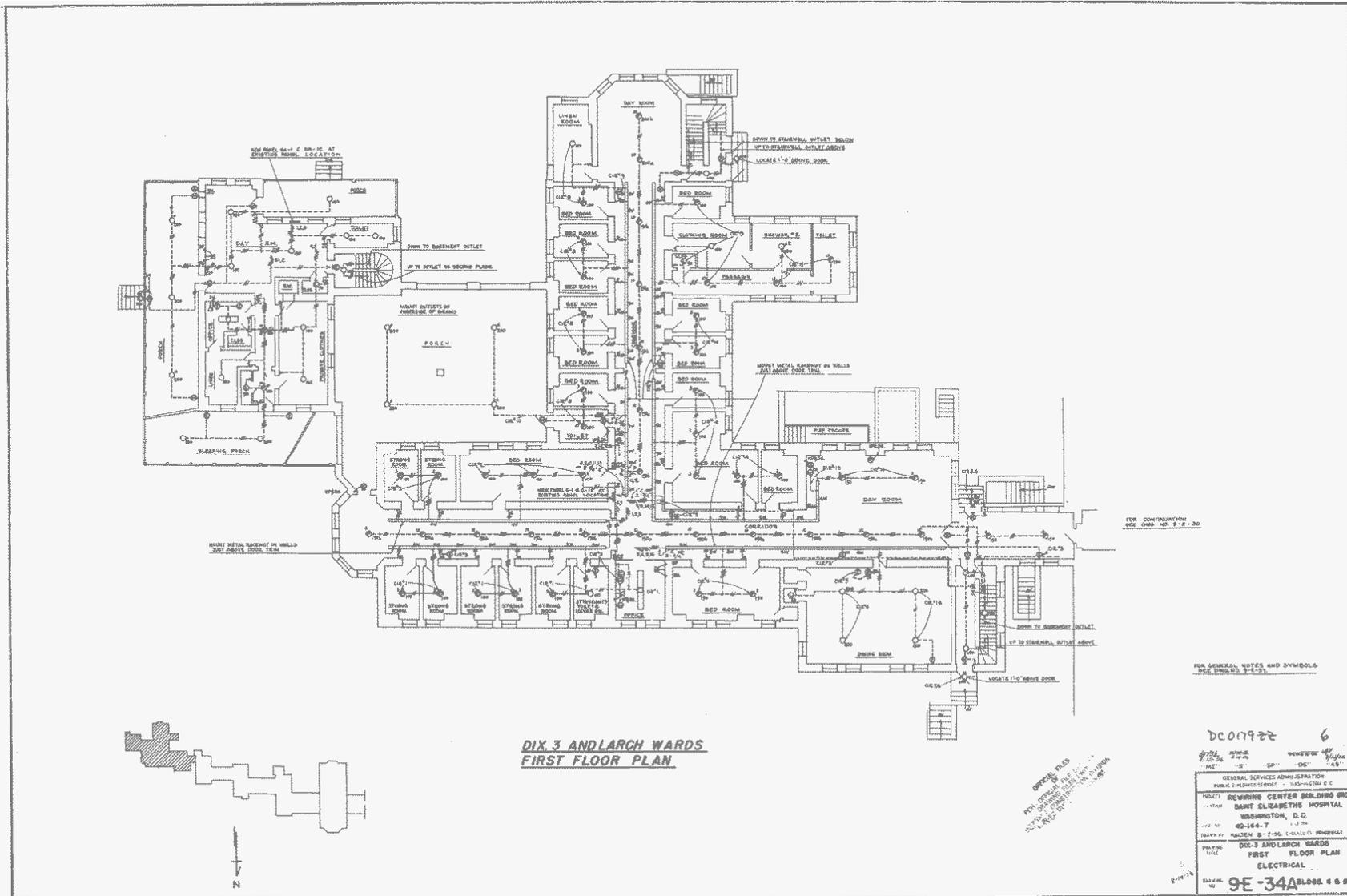


Figure 6. First floor plan of Pine showing electrical improvements, 1956. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0006.

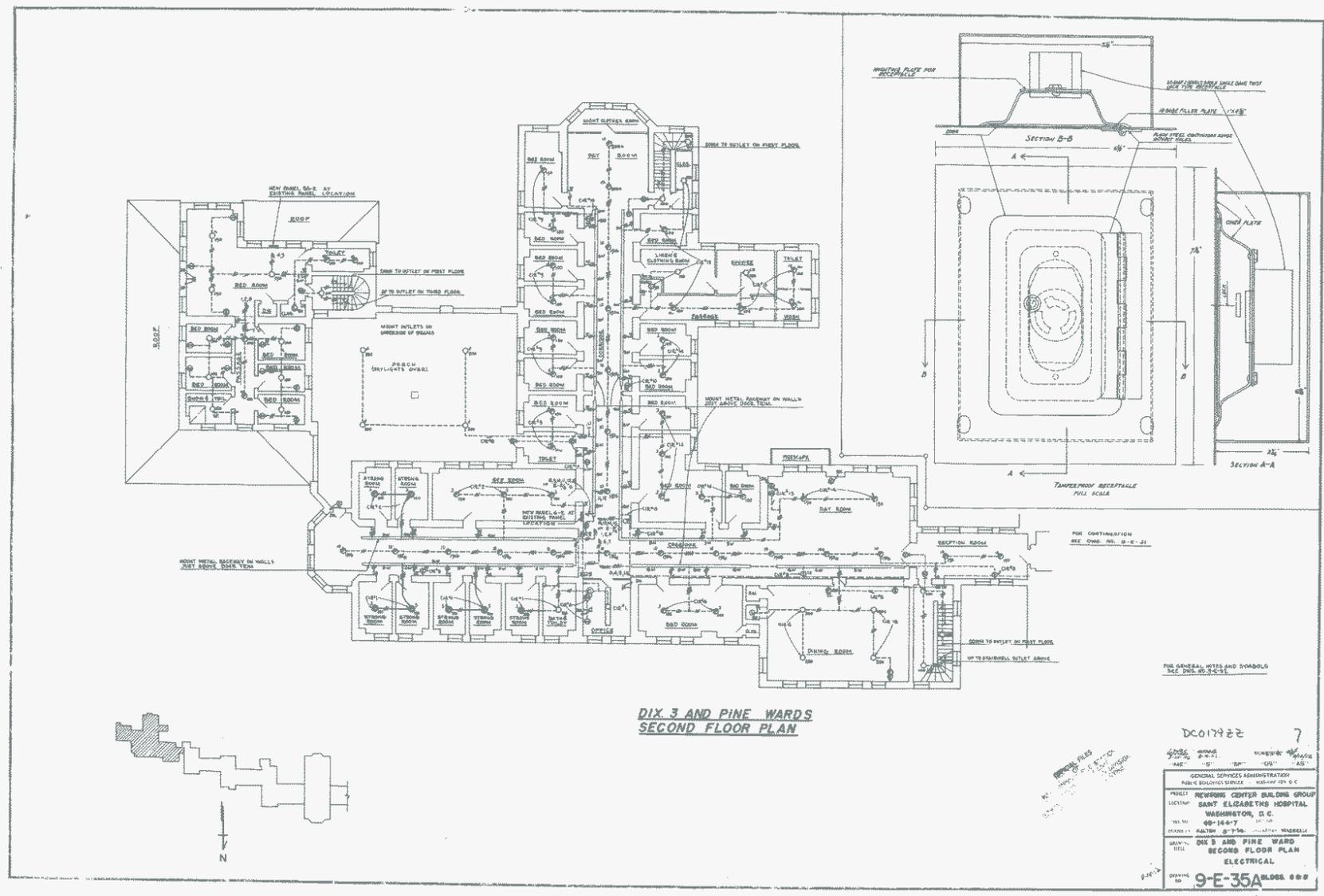


Figure 7. Second floor plan of Pine showing electrical improvements, 1956. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0007.

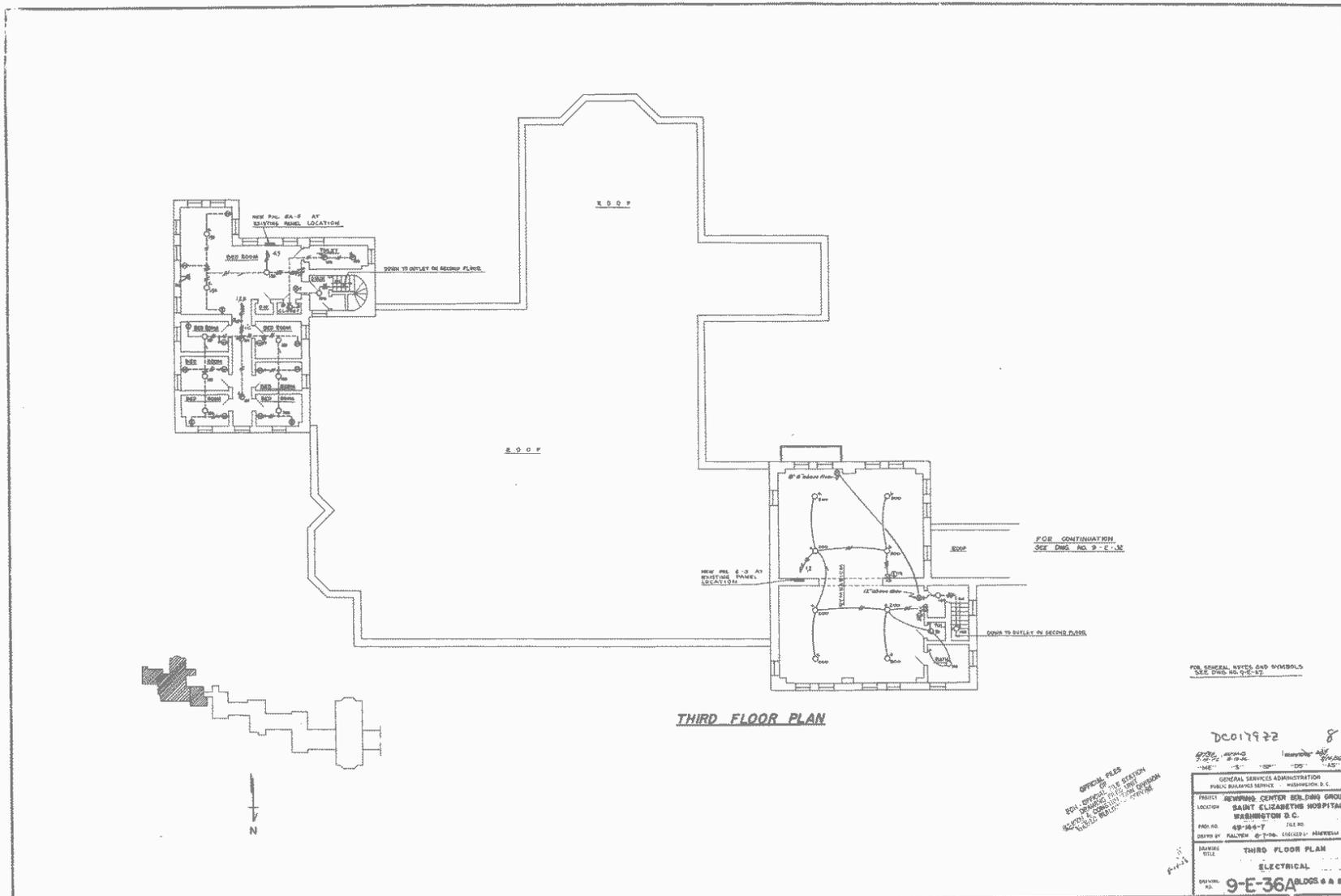


Figure 8. Third floor plan of Pine showing electrical improvements, 1956. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0008.

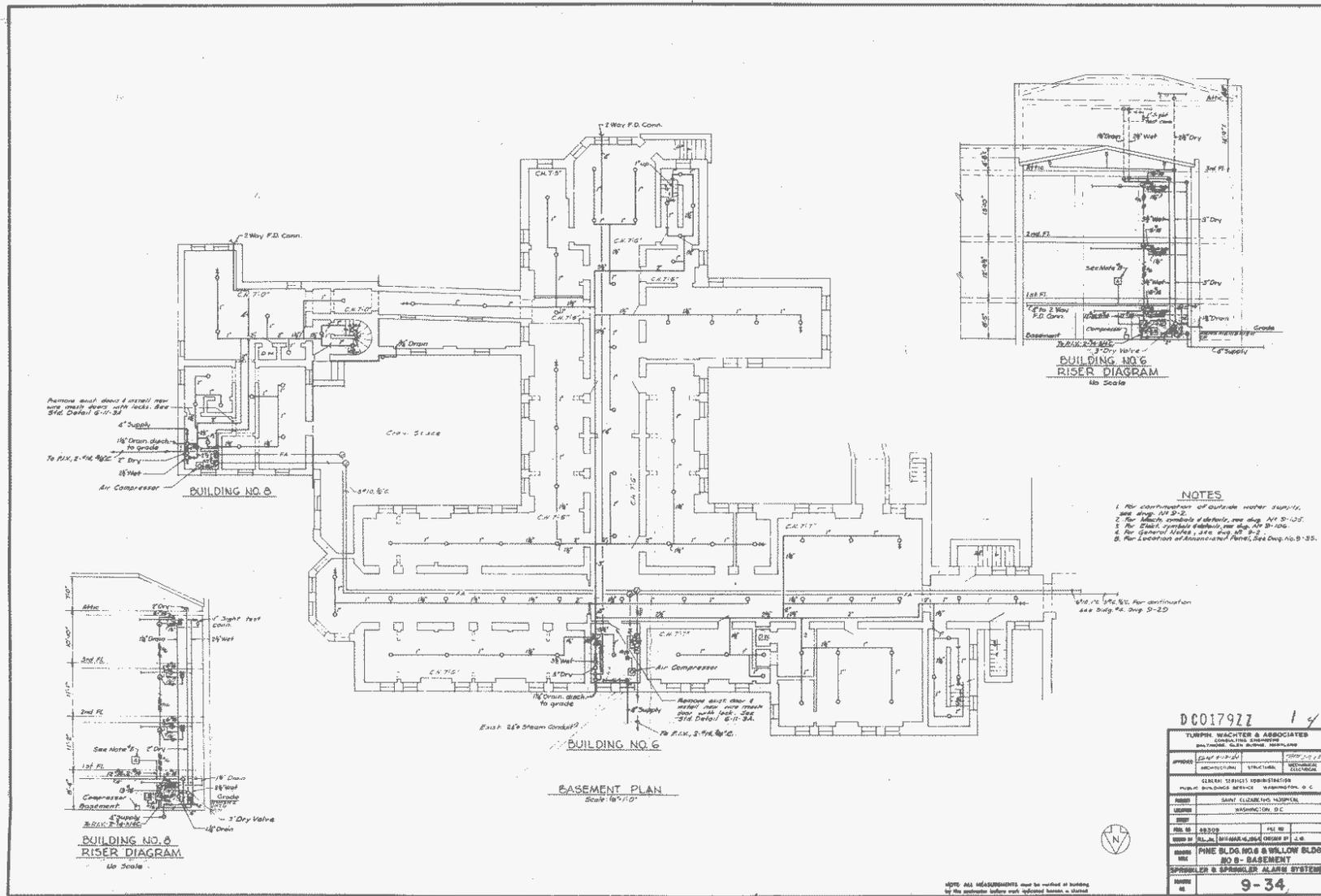


Figure 9. Basement plan of Pine showing fire suppression system improvements, 1964. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0001.

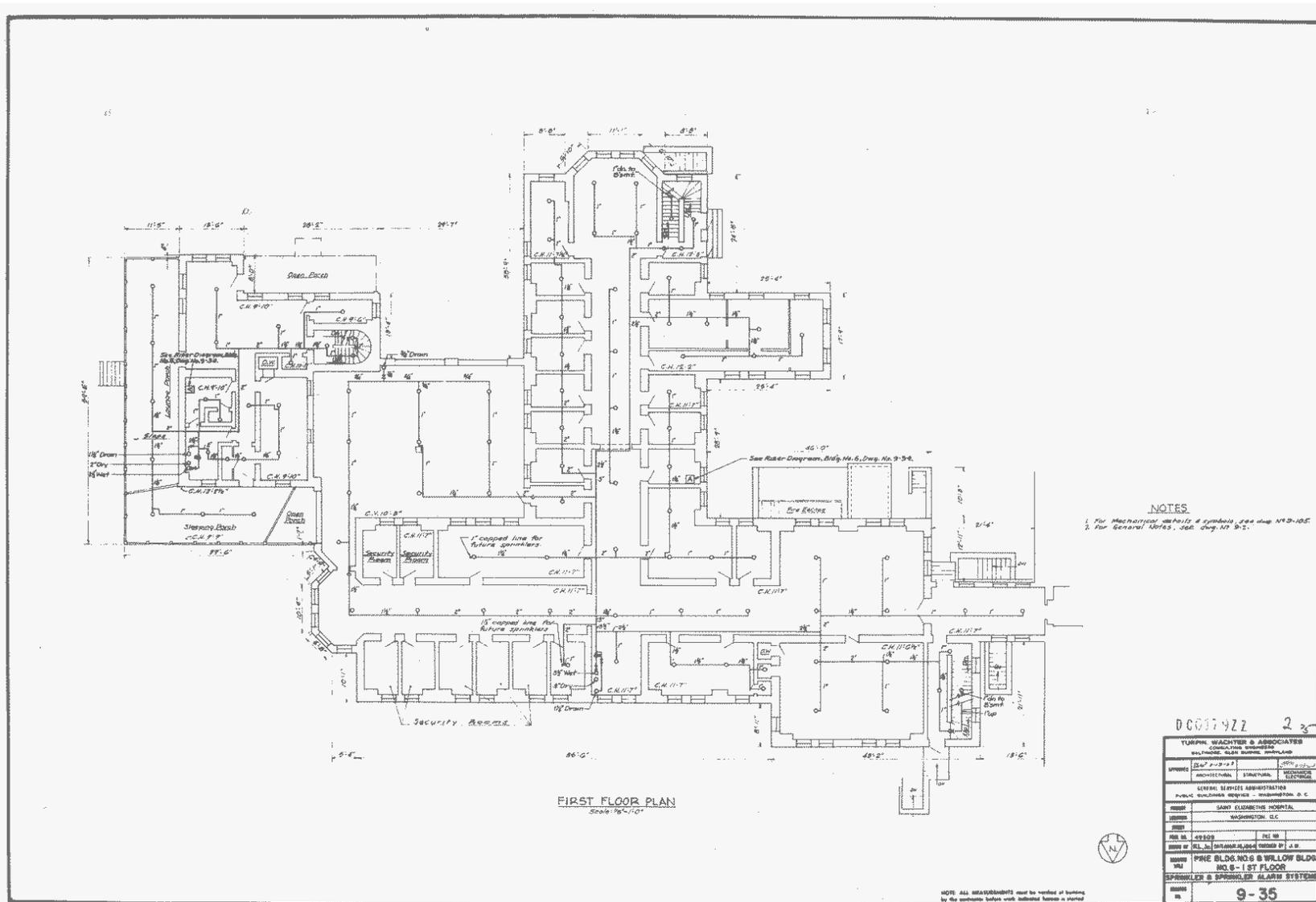


Figure 10. First floor plan of Pine showing fire suppression system improvements, 1964. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0002.

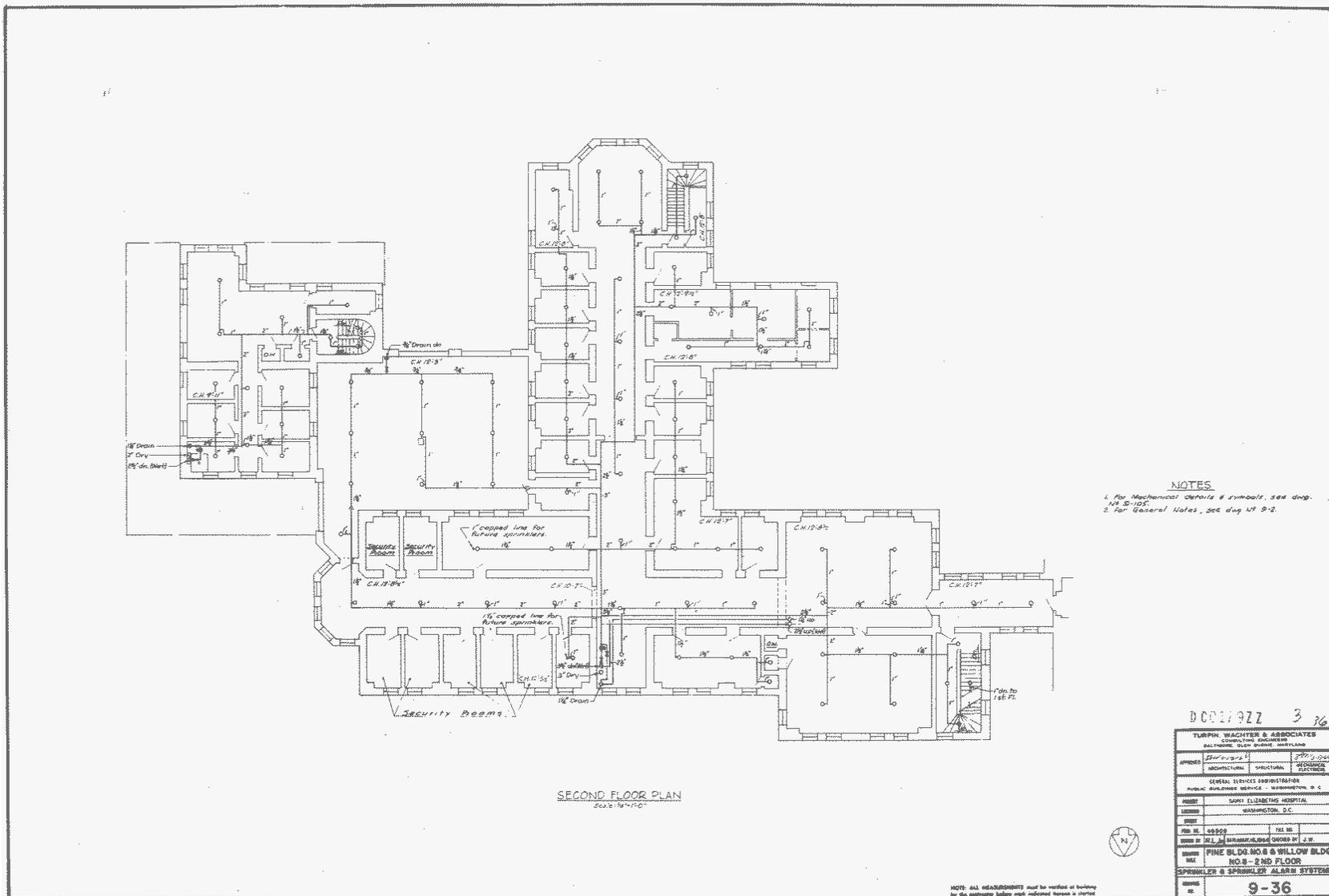


Figure 11. Second floor plan of Pine showing fire suppression system improvements, 1964. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0003.

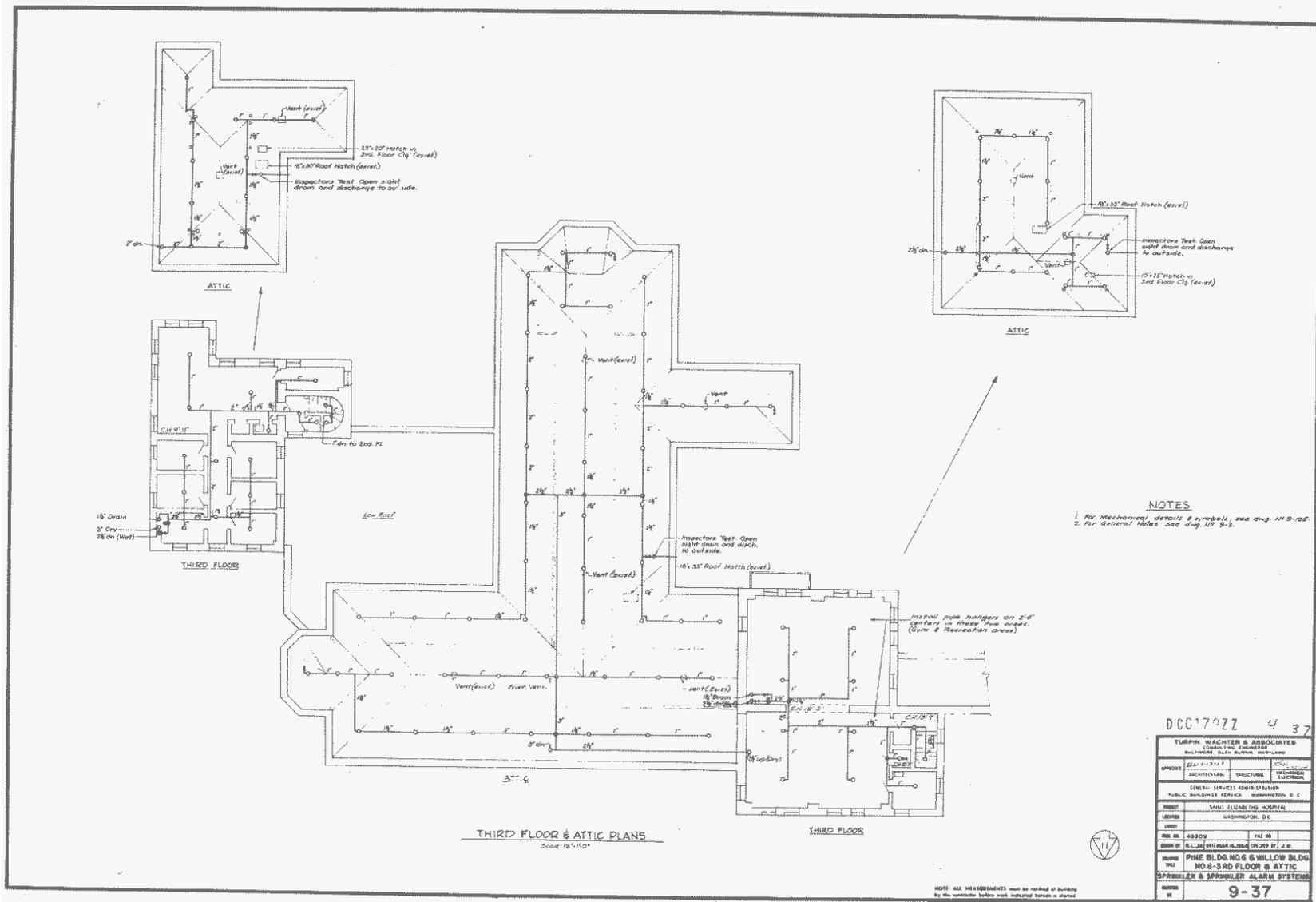


Figure 12. Third floor plan of Pine showing fire suppression system improvements, 1964. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0004.

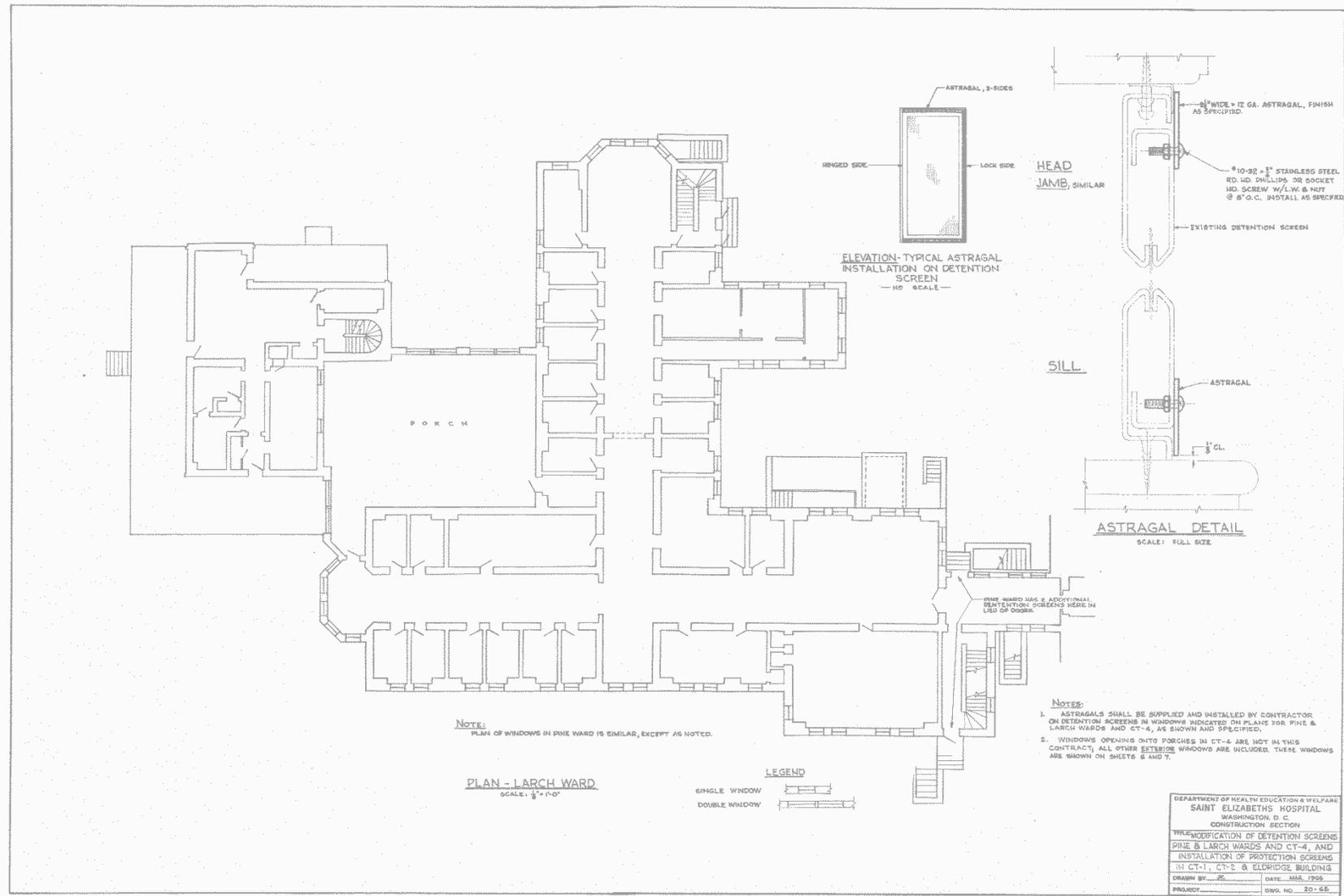


Figure 13. First floor plan of Pine showing detention screen installation, 1965. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0P001.



*Figure 14. Partial south elevation of Center Building with East Wing on the left hand side of the image, Pine on the right, 1964. Source: GSA Archives, image DC0179SE0001.*