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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in "Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms" (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Spotswood Hall  
other names/site number Smith, Shelby, House

### 2. Location

street & number 555 Argonne Drive, NW  
city, town Atlanta (N/A) vicinity of  
county Fulton code GA 121  
state Georgia code GA zip code 30305

(N/A) not for publication

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property:

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

#### Category of Property:

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

#### Number of Resources within Property:

#### Contributing

#### Noncontributing

buildings	1	1
sites	0	0
structures	0	0
objects	0	0
total	1	1

Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of previous listing: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Resources of West Paces Ferry Road MRA

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets the National Register criteria. ( ) See continuation sheet.

Richard Coates  
Signature of certifying official

12-18-01  
Date

ec W. Ray Luce, Division Director and  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

**5. National Park Service Certification**

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

( ) entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

( ) determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

( ) determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

( ) removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_

( ) other, explain: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) see continuation sheet \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of the National Register

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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## 6. Function or Use

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### Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

### Current Functions:

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

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## 7. Description

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### Architectural Classification:

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

### Materials:

foundation	STONE: granite
walls	WOOD
roof	SLATE
other	N/A

### Description of present and historic physical appearance:

Set at the top of a hill with a sweeping lawn, Spotswood Hall is located in a historically and currently upper-class residential neighborhood in northwest Atlanta, in the area known as Buckhead.

### SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

Built in 1913, its original design attributed to architect A. Ten Eyck Brown, and enlarged and remodeled by Atlanta architect Philip Trammell Shutze in 1933, Spotswood Hall is a two-story, frame, Classical Revival-style house set on a two-acre lot on Argonne Drive in northwest Atlanta. The house sits at the edge of a sweeping lawn atop a prominent hilltop that falls rapidly away to the east and south (photographs 1, 2, and 3). The house is five bays wide and three bays deep with a two-story bay on the east side, a one-story porch on the west side, and a one-story kitchen wing at the rear. The foundation is rusticated granite and the hipped roof is slate. Exterior features include a monumental, pedimented portico with Ionic columns, modillions, and six-over-six double-hung windows. There is a fanlight above the front entrance, and the second story features a cantilevered balcony and a door with sidelights.

In 1933, Atlanta architect Philip Trammell Shutze remodeled the house. The 1933 renovation did not substantially alter the exterior, even as Shutze enlarged the house from 3,600 to nearly 6,200 square feet. Shutze specified that the house's original architectural details be continued in the rear additions and the one-story sun porch on the east side of the house. The rear additions include a new rear entrance with a one-story, pedimented porte-cochere with Doric columns and a semicircular, half-domed alcove that leads to a six-paneled door that is surmounted by a fanlight and flanked by a pair of Ionic columns topped with large, turned-wood finials (photographs 4 and 5).

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### Section 7--Description

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During the 1933 remodeling, the original interior was gutted with major changes to the original floor plan and a redesign of the interior. Much of the rear (north) wall was removed and Shutze added a new entrance rotunda, a paneled library, and a large powder room (photograph 13--library). Athos Menaboni, the celebrated painter who decorated many Shutze houses, painted the walls of the rotunda using an Oriental motif (photograph 12). The original staircase, located on the west side of the former entrance hall, was replaced by a curving staircase cantilevered on the east wall which rises to a second-floor stair hall that is colonnaded on the north side and lit by a circular skylight (photograph 7--first floor entrance hall and photograph 14--second floor stairhall). On the first floor, Shutze removed a wall to create an expansive living room on the west side of the entrance hall (photographs 10 and 11). On the expanded second floor, Shutze created an elaborate stair hall with five bedrooms, a sewing or servant's room, and five full baths (photograph 15--bedroom). The house's original plaster walls, ceilings, doors, and woodwork were replaced with Shutze's custom-designed millwork and new plaster walls and ceilings. The baseboards and mantles were also replaced and new plaster cornices were designed for the stair halls, living room, and dining room (photographs 8 and 9). In addition, Shutze designed numerous cabinets, bookcases, a linen press, and other interior features.

The only outbuilding is a 1992 noncontributing garage (photograph 6). There have been minimal changes to the house since 1933. Landscaping includes a sweeping lawn, mature hardwoods, and planted beds.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

NOTE: The following description was prepared by Tommy H. Jones, "Spotswood Hall," Historic Property Information Form, August 18, 1999. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

Attributed to A. Ten Eyck Brown and remodeled by Philip Trammel Shutze in 1933, Spotswood Hall is a two-story, wood-framed, Classical Revival-style house set on a 2.07-acre lot on Argonne Drive in northwest Atlanta. Glimpsed through trees and dense natural vegetation along the entire Argonne Drive frontage, the house sits at the edge of a sweeping lawn atop a prominent hilltop that falls rapidly away to the east and south. The original driveway, which was located off Argonne Drive several hundred feet east of the existing driveway entrance, ran in front of the house to a semi-circular drive off of Arden Road. The original driveway entrance may have remained after the 1933 remodeling, but instead of running in front of the house, it was routed to the rear where a circular turn-around was designed for the porte cochere entrance. The existing driveway is modern and a garage was constructed behind the house in 1992. The driveway was changed as a result of the subdivision of the property in 1968.

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### Section 7--Description

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As designed by A. Ten Eyck Brown in 1913, the house consisted of a two-story main block, five bays wide, three bays deep with a one-story kitchen wing at the rear. The 1933 remodeling expanded the house in the rear but left most of the original exterior intact.

The house is fronted by the 1913 pedimented portico supported by great Ionic columns. A one-story porch flanks the west side of the house and is connected to the front portico by an open terrace, which is decked with terra cotta tile and extends across the front of the house. The cantilevered second-story balcony and a two-story bay on the east side are both features of the original plan. The house has a rusticated granite foundation and has brick chimneys. The main roof is hipped with a balustraded widows walk and is slate. The balustraded roof of the side porch is tin. The exterior and trim are wood.

The 1933 remodeling of the house did not substantially alter the original Classical Revival design of the exterior. Even as Philip Shutze enlarged the house from approximately 3,600 to nearly 6,200 square feet, he specified that the house's original architectural details be continued on the additions. Shutze replaced the original one-over-one, double-hung sash with six-over-six, double-hung sash. Shutze removed the lower story of the two-story polygonal bay on the east side of the house and replaced it with a balustraded, one-story sun porch that balanced the one-story porch on the west facade. The original double, two-panel front doors were replaced with a six-panel door and the sidelights, fanlight, and oriel window were probably replaced as well. Shutze may have redesigned the original roof balustrade, which is only barely visible in the early photographs, but the Shutze-designed balustrade was removed in the 1950s. The existing balustrade was reproduced from the original Shutze drawings by the present owners.

The rear of the house was redesigned in 1933 with the additions producing a new entrance to the house which features a one-story, pedimented porte cochere supported by four wood, Doric columns set on a cut-stone plinth. Entrance to the house from the porte cochere is through a semicircular, half-domed alcove and a six-panel entrance door that is surmounted by a semi-circular fanlight and flanked by a pair of wood Ionic columns topped with large, turned-wood finials. On the rear shed roof, Shutze added two dormers with round-arched windows, and for the basement, he designed a series of semicircular windows that, with the shallow gable of the porte cochere and the design of the rear entry, suggests the Regency style which typified much of Shutze's work late in the 1930s.

Behind Brown's Classical Revival facade, the interior of the house was gutted and radically altered by Shutze in 1933 with major changes to the original 1913 floor plan and an almost complete redesign of the interior. Much of the original rear (north) wall of the house was removed, and across the rear and along the original kitchen wing, Shutze added a new circular entrance hall (the rotunda), a paneled library, and a large powder room. The original staircase, which rose along the west side of the original entrance hall, was replaced by the curving staircase cantilevered from the

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east wall of the hall and rising to a second-floor stair hall. The second-floor stair hall is colonnaded on the north side and is lit by a circular skylight.

In addition, Shutze removed the wall and fireplaces between the two rooms on the west side of the first-floor entrance hall and combined the spaces into a living room that is 34 feet long. Construction of the sun porch necessitated removal of the original bay window in the dining room, which Shutze also redesigned. The original kitchen, scullery, butler's pantry, and service stair remained in place in the northeast side of the first floor, although Shutze added cabinetry in the kitchen and pantry and an elegant service porch off the east side of the kitchen.

On the second floor, the original 1913 plan featured two bedrooms on the west side of the stair hall, one bedroom on the east side, and a fourth bedroom or sitting room at the south end of the hall, opening onto the second-story balcony. All of the bedrooms had closets and there were at least one bathroom and another sitting room on the northeast side of the second floor. During his 1933 remodeling, Shutze expanded the floor and created his magnificent stair hall along with five bedrooms, a sewing room or servant's room, and five full baths. In the expanded basement beneath the new library, Shutze created a "playroom," which was used by the Hill's teenaged daughter for parties. A half-bath was added with the playroom, and the earlier bedroom, furnace room, and wine cellar remained in the basement beneath the original kitchen wing.

The house's original 1913 plaster walls and ceilings and woodwork were almost completely removed in 1933 and replaced by Shutze's custom-designed millwork. The service stair and balustrade may be the only 1913 woodwork left in the house. All of the doors were replaced, although Shutze used one of the original exterior doors in the attic for the skylight access. The door, which has full-length beveled plate glass, still has its original lock-set and ornately decorated cover plates. The original, one-over-one, double-hung windows were replaced along with all of the interior window and door casings. Baseboard and mantelpieces were also replaced, and new plaster cornices were designed for the stair halls, living room, and dining room. In addition, Shutze designed numerous cabinets, bookcases, and other interior features including the magnificent linen press, a major design feature of the second-floor stair hall. Walls and ceilings are plaster except in the library where the walls are wood paneled.

Athos Menaboni, the celebrated painter who decorated many Shutze houses in the second quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, painted the walls of the rotunda using an Oriental motif. Signed and dated 1933, the rotunda painting remains one of the most significant features of the house. In the room above the library, Shutze had the walls and ceiling decorated for what was to be the Hill's daughter's bedroom, but the decoration is no longer visible and may have been lost.

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### Section 7--Description

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While the historic kitchen, scullery, and butler's pantry were combined into one space in the 1970s, the period bathrooms remain intact. The second-floor bathrooms still contain most of their original cabinetry including a dressing table Shutze designed for the Hill's daughter as well as original pedestal sinks, corner tubs, and showers. One bathroom contains all of the original fixtures, including the toilet, all of which are blue porcelain. Although common after World War II, colored bathroom fixtures were just coming onto the market in the early 1930s. Two of the 1933 toilets and what may have been a base cabinet from the 1933 kitchen are in storage in the furnace room.

Other changes since 1933 have been minor. The side porch was screened by the Hills and a garage was added to the property in 1992.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

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**Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:**

nationally       statewide       locally

**Applicable National Register Criteria:**

A       B       C       D

**Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):**  N/A

A    B    C    D    E    F    G

**Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions):**

ARCHITECTURE  
ART

**Period of Significance:**

1913; 1933

**Significant Dates:**

1913--construction of the house; attributed to A. Ten Eyck Brown

1933--remodeling of the house by Philip Trammel Shutze and paintings by Athos Menaboni

**Significant Person(s):**

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation:**

N/A

**Architect(s)/Builder(s):**

Brown, A. Ten Eyck--architect (attributed)

Menaboni, Athos--artist

Shutze, Philip Trammel--architect

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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#### **Narrative statement of significance (areas of significance)**

Located in a prominent upper-class neighborhood in an area northwest of downtown Atlanta known as Buckhead, Spotswood Hall is an excellent example of an early 20<sup>th</sup>-century Classical Revival house and an excellent example of the work of three of Atlanta's premier artisans.

Spotswood Hall is significant in the area of architecture as an excellent example of a Classical Revival-style house and as an example of the work of two important Atlanta architects. According to Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings (1991), the Classical Revival style was very popular in Georgia from the 1890s through the 1930s. Spotswood Hall exhibits architectural features commonly found on early 20<sup>th</sup> century examples including a two-story entry porch, the presence of a porte cochere and one-story side porches, and a symmetrical facade with a central entrance accented with a fanlight.

Spotswood Hall is also significant in the area of architecture as a design of two important Atlanta-based architects. The 1913 house is attributed to A. Ten Eyck Brown (1878-1940), who is principally noted for his large institutional and commercial buildings. The house features a two-story, pedimented portico with Ionic columns. Philip Trammell Shutze (1890-1982) redesigned the interior and rear of the house in 1933 but preserved nearly all of Brown's Neoclassical exterior. The dramatically redesigned interior, which includes a rotunda decorated by the renowned artist Athos Menaboni, echoes some of Shutze's most important work from the 1920s. The remodeling of Spotswood Hall was one of Hentz, Adler, and Shutze's few commissions in 1933 and 1934, when the Depression forced the partners to forego their salaries in order to keep the firm afloat.

The house is significant in the area of art for the Oriental murals in the rotunda painted by Athos Menaboni (1895-1990). Menaboni was one of Atlanta's most popular artists and became known for his bird paintings in the 1940s, including his bird illustrations for The World Book Encyclopedia. His work appeared in numerous magazines including Time, Sports Illustrated, and Audubon. His bird paintings also appeared on former Coca-Cola magnate Robert Woodruff's Christmas cards for 44 years. Menaboni painted murals in several Philip Trammell Shutze-designed houses including the National Register-listed Swan House in Atlanta, the National Register-listed "Big House" on Sapelo Island, and Spotswood Hall.

#### **National Register Criteria**

Spotswood Hall is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C as an excellent example of a Classical Revival-style house and as an example of the work of two important Atlanta architects. The house is also eligible under Criterion C for its preserved rotunda murals painted by renowned artist Athos Menaboni.

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**Criteria Considerations (if applicable)**

N/A

**Period of significance (justification)**

The period of significance for Spotswood Hall is 1913 for the design and construction of the house attributed to the architect A. Ten Eyck Brown. The second period of significance represents the remodeling of the house by Atlanta-based architect Philip Trammel Shutze.

**Contributing/Noncontributing Resources (explanation, if necessary)**

The contributing building is the house. The noncontributing building is the 1992 garage.

**Developmental history/historic context (if appropriate)**

**NOTE: The following developmental history was prepared by Tommy H. Jones. "Spotswood Hall," Historic Property Information Form, August 18, 1999. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.**

In the early 1900s, Atlanta's residential development was still concentrated in the streetcar suburbs that developed around the city in the 1890s. For the upper-class, development of Ansley Park in 1904 and Druid Hills in 1909 continued and expanded on the concept of the garden suburb that was pioneered by Joel Hurt in Inman Park in 1889. With the rapid expansion of automobile use in the years leading up to World War I, developers were no longer tied to the streetcar lines and began catering to those who could now escape from the confines of the city. The construction of Spotswood Hall dates to this early pre-war period when the development of the residential area now generally known as "Buckhead" was only just beginning.

As the death of his brother in 1903 precipitated the development of Ansley Park, so the death of Wesley Collier in 1906 set the stage for the development of Peachtree Heights Park. In May 1910, Etetus Rivers and Walter P. Andrews, executors of the Wesley Collier estate, sold Collier's old farm to the Peachtree Heights Park Company. The sale included 500 acres in three land lots including over 3,000 feet of frontage along the west side of Peachtree Road north of Peachtree Creek. By the spring of 1911, the company cut Wesley Avenue through from Peachtree Road to Howell Mill Road and work was underway creating Habersham Road from Peachtree Battle Avenue to Pace's Ferry Road.

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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In 1911, Atlanta's mayor Robert F. Maddox built "Woodhaven," the first of the great country estates along Pace's Ferry Road, and the Tuxedo Park Company acquired 300 acres of the old Dickey estate along Pace's Ferry Road to begin their own residential development. "Already," the Atlanta Journal noted in reporting the first auction of lots in May 1911, "the colony along Pace's Ferry Road is accorded first place in suburban development in Atlanta." The area was incorporated into the city limits in 1954, and West Pace's Ferry Road and adjacent streets have remained some of the city's most prestigious addresses.

Intent on capitalizing on the development of Peachtree Heights Park and Tuxedo Park, the North Highland Investment Company bought an option on 97 acres in the north half of Land Lot [LL] 143 from Mrs. Marian L. Dolphyn in January 1913. An Oklahoma resident, Dolphyn owned the property since the early 1900s and her sale of the property for \$34,000 was an example of the rapid increase in property values that attended the new suburban developments in the area. The contract laid out a series of payments to be completed by January 1917, but as lots were sold in the meantime, Mrs. Dolphyn agreed to transfer title to the company at \$350 per acre. As was the case with much of Atlanta's early 20<sup>th</sup> century residential development, the property was sold "with the restriction that no part of the same shall be sold to persons of color within sixty (60) years from this date."<sup>1</sup>

Until 1913, the only road through LL 143 was a branch of Howell Mill Road that ran in a northeasterly direction, following the route of what are now Dover Road, Arden Road, and the northern segment of Habersham Road. In order to subdivide the property, a new road was laid out that curved to the west from the recently completed Habersham Road and, following the natural contours of the land, wrapped the south face of the prominent hilltop in the northwest side of LL 143 before ending at the old Howell Mill Road on the west. The old road to Howell Mill was christened Hemphill Road (now Arden Road) and the new road was named Peachtree Heights Road (now Argonne Drive). Even though the North Highland Investment Company's tract was not a formal part of the Peachtree Heights development, which was designed by the famed New York firm of Carrere and Hastings, the company's plans for development of the north half of LL 143 were meant to complement and expand what was begun in Peachtree Heights Park.

### Shelby Smith

One of the 10 investors in the North Highland Investment Company was Shelby Smith, Sr. (18781-1943), who began the first of two terms on the Fulton County Commission in April 1911, just as development was beginning in Peachtree Heights Park. Smith moved to Atlanta from northwest Georgia shortly after his marriage to Nell Littlefield in 1899 and established himself here as a road and grading contractor in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By the time he was elected to the county

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<sup>1</sup>Fulton County Deed Book 356, p. 30.

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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commission, Smith lived on Ormewood Avenue in southeast Atlanta. In 1913, Smith was elected chairman of the county commission and set about building his own showplace in the new northwestern suburbs.<sup>2</sup>

In November 1913, Smith paid the North Highland Investment Company \$4,000 for a 6.14-acre parcel that encompassed the entire hilltop on the north side of Peachtree Heights Road at Hemphill Road. With a magnificent view to the city on the south, the lot presented one of the most prominent building sites in the entire area. Few details of the house's construction can be documented. Being outside the city limits, there was no building permit, but in December 1913, W. J. Wilson completed a plat of Smith's property which showed the footprint of the house and a garage to the rear, suggesting that the house had already been built. When the information for the 1915 city directory was compiled in the fall of 1914, Shelby Smith gave his address simply as Peachtree Heights Road, and it is assumed that the house was completed by the end of 1913.<sup>3</sup>

The house's Neoclassical Revival design is attributed to A. Ten Eyck Brown (1878-1940), one of Atlanta's best-known architects in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. With Morgan & Dillon, Brown designed the Fulton County Courthouse, which was in the planning stages since 1907 although work did not get underway until 1911, just as Shelby Smith began his service on the county commission. Unfortunately, the house does not appear in either of Brown's two lists of projects (1913 and 1924), neither of which may have been all-inclusive. Nevertheless, Smith served on the building committee for construction of the new courthouse and would certainly have been acquainted with Brown. More important, Smith's daughter is reported to have believed that the house her father built in 1913 was the work of Brown.

Featuring a facade dominated by a two-story pedimented portico supported by elaborate Ionic columns, Smith's house was an excellent example of early 20<sup>th</sup> century Neoclassical Revival-style architecture. The architecture of Chicago's World Columbian Exposition in 1893 sparked a renewed interest in Classical design of all sorts, and by 1895, an eclectic "Neo-Classical" style developed out of earlier Georgian, Adam, Early Classical Revival, and Greek Revival precedents. Although never as popular as the Colonial Revival style, Neoclassical Revival-style architecture enjoyed great popularity in the years before World War I, and in a second phase of development, the style

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<sup>2</sup>Peggy Reeves, "Spotswood Hall takes Margorie Bell on a trip down memory lane," Northside Neighbor, 1989. Marjorie Bell was Shelby Smith's daughter. Shelby Smith is named on two plaques in the lobby of the Fulton County Courthouse, one designating his service on the commission and the other, his service on the building committee for the courthouse. Other biographical information was supplied by Mrs. Bell's daughter, Gladys Bell Mitchell.

<sup>3</sup>Fulton County Deed Book 318, p. 401-402; Plat Book 6, p. 46. The plat, dated December 8, 1913, is entitled "Property of Shelby Smith" and shows the house and garage but no other landscape features.

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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continued to be used until the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some Neoclassical Revival-style houses are masonry, a notable example being Asa Candler's "Callen Castle" (1903) in Inman Park, but wood-framed examples are more typical. The Zuber-Jarrell House (1905) on Flat Shoals Road in southeast Atlanta is another excellent wood-framed example of the style and is particularly interesting in that its floor plan and many of its architectural details are almost identical to those of the 1913 plan of Spotswood Hall.

Development of Peachtree Heights and adjacent areas was slowed by the outbreak of World War I, and throughout the war years, Smith's house remained relatively isolated. Smith retired from the Fulton County Commission in 1914 but continued his career as a real estate developer and road builder, working "from Florida to Tennessee," according to his daughter, with some of his work taking him out of the city for a year or more at a time.<sup>4</sup> Described as a "wheeler-dealer" by one descendant, Smith sold the house and its 6.4-acre lot in 1918 and moved to an as-yet-unidentified Peachtree Heights Road address where he resided until 1921. He died while working in Gainesville, Georgia, in April 1943 and was buried in Westview Cemetery in Atlanta.

#### Lucian Lamar Knight

The new owner of the house was Lucian Lamar Knight (1868-1933), a noted editor and historian.<sup>5</sup> A graduate of the University of Georgia in 1888 and trained as a lawyer, Knight went to work for the Atlanta Constitution in 1892, beginning a 10-year career as a popular reporter and editor. Knight resigned from the paper in 1902 to study theology at Princeton and was ordained a minister in the Presbyterian Church in 1905. Unfortunately, his 10-year marriage to Edith Nelson began to unravel at that time, and on the verge of a nervous breakdown, Knight went to Europe in early 1906. By the end of the year, Knight moved to California where he joined a Los Angeles law firm. While in California, he lived on Catalina Island and compiled the first of several major works on Georgia's history, Reminiscences of Famous Georgians. Published in 1907 and followed by a second volume in 1908, these books established a direction for the rest of Knight's life.

Knight returned to Atlanta in 1908 where he worked as managing editor for a publishing company and as an associate editor for the Atlanta Georgian. In 1913, Knight succeeded former governor William Northen as compiler of state records, and over the next five years, saw publication of four volumes of the state's Colonial Records; Georgia's Landmarks, Memorials, and Legends in two volumes; and six volumes of A Standard History of Georgia and Georgians.

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<sup>4</sup>Peggy Reeves, "Spotswood Hall takes Margorie Bell on a trip down memory lane," Northside Neighbor, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Coleman & Gurr, "Lucian Lamar Knight," Dictionary of Georgia Biography, Vol. II.

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Knight finally divorced his first wife in 1909, and in 1909, he married Rosa Talbot Reid, who shared his love of history. In 1910, the Georgia State Legislature created the Department of Archives and History and appointed Knight as its first director. In November 1918, the Knights bought the Smith house, which was rechristened "Spotswood Hall," reportedly in honor of one of Knight's ancestral homes.

Knight had the misfortune to spend the first part of his tenure fending off the first of several efforts over the years to abolish the Department of Archives and History, but with his wife's assistance, he was able to bring some semblance of order to the state's records. By the time he retired from the department in 1925, the state had a "secure and permanent archives."

By the time Knight retired, Peachtree Heights Road had been renamed Argonne Drive, in memory of one of the greatest battles of World War I, and other houses were being built along the street. Spotswood Hall was featured in Annie Hornady Howard's Georgia Homes and Landmarks in 1929, but Knight's comfortable retirement was interrupted by the stock market crash in October of that year. Within a year, Knight saw much of his wealth wiped out and in November 1930, he was forced to sell Spotswood Hall. "Regarded as one of the feature residential transactions of the season," according to a contemporary newspaper account, the sale was reported to have garnered \$50,000. The newspaper further reported that "It is understood that Dr. Knight plans to go to Florida for the winter." In fact, the Knights did not return to Atlanta but lived in Safety Harbor, Florida, before moving to St. Simon's Island, Georgia, in 1931. Knight died of heart failure in Clearwater in November 1933 and was buried at Christ Church at Frederica on St. Simon's Island.

#### Walter Clay Hill, Sr.<sup>6</sup>

The new owner of Spotswood Hall was Walter Clay Hill, Sr. (1880-1962), who is noted chiefly for his life-long career helping built the Retail Credit Company into a major international corporation.<sup>7</sup> Born in Monticello, Georgia, Hill graduated from the University of Georgia, where his uncle Walter B. Hill was chancellor. He married Rebecca Travers and in 1904, went to work for the Retail Credit Company (now known as Equifax). Founded in 1899, the Retail Credit Company had already grown beyond Atlanta when Hill joined the firm, and the company expanded rapidly, opening offices in Montreal and Toronto, Canada in 1919. The company prided itself on its ability to promote from within, and by the time the company was incorporated in 1913, Hill had become vice-president. He eventually became president and chairman of the board and remained a director of the company until his death in 1962.

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<sup>6</sup>"Walter C. Hill Dies; Retail Credit President," Atlanta Constitution, 19 October 1962.

<sup>7</sup>Fulton County Book 1317, p. 476.

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### Section 8--Statement of Significance

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The Hills and their three children resided on Peachtree Circle in Ansley Park prior to moving into Spotswood Hall in 1931. Well known in Atlanta, Hill was a member of the First Presbyterian Church as well as the Piedmont Driving Club, the Capital City Club, and the Commerce Club. He began a long tenure as a trustee of the Atlanta Art Association in 1928 and later, would serve terms as its vice-president, president, and chairman of the board. He was also a member of the Atlanta Historical Society and listed his hobbies as painting and jewelry-making. A small painting he made of the house now hangs in the living room of Spotswood Hall.

By the time the Hills acquired Spotswood Hall in late 1930, the economy was rapidly collapsing, and Hill may have had little time or inclination to contemplate remodeling his new home. The Depression deepened in the early 1930s and not until Roosevelt's "Hundred Days" in the spring of 1933 did confidence begin to rebound. Perhaps Hill, too, felt more confident about the future and saw the advantage to be gained in the Depression's cheap materials and cheaper labor.

The house on Argonne Drive was nearly 20 years old by then and although the Neoclassical exterior remained as handsome as ever, the house was not particularly large and the interior was by then somewhat less than fashionable. So by the spring of 1933, Hill engaged the services of Atlanta's premier architectural firm, Hentz, Adler, & Shutze, to enlarge the house and redesign the interior.<sup>8</sup> Philip Trammell Shutze (1890-1982) had firmly established his reputation in the 1920s with a variety of spectacular designs that culminated, perhaps, in his magnificent design for Edward Inman's Swan House in 1928. By 1933, the Depression forced the firm's partners to forego their salaries for two years and it is likely that the Hill commission was one of the firm's most important jobs during that period. In the end, Shutze's remodeling of the house, which was completed in 1934, insured that Spotswood Hall would remain one of the city's great architectural landmarks.

### Recent Ownership

The growth of Atlanta's northwestern suburbs was slowed by the Depression and World War II, but by the time most of the area was annexed into the city in 1954, demand for building sites in northwest Atlanta increased dramatically. In the 1950s and 1960s, a number of the old estates and large lots were subdivided for construction of another generation of upper-class residential development. In 1952, Hill began subdividing his 6.4-acre lot, selling two lots that year, a third in 1954, and a fourth in 1961. However, the Hills appear to have made few changes to the house itself. Hill died in October 1962, and his widow continued to occupy the house until her death in 1967.

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<sup>8</sup>Listed as Job #707, 25 sheets of drawings for this remodeling are included in the collection of the Atlanta History Center.

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Section 8--Statement of Significance

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In July 1968, Hill's estate sold Spotswood Hall to John W. Callahan along with "all of the following items as presently installed in said house: (a) all air conditioning units, (b) linen press, (c) all wall-to-wall carpeting, (d) all venetian blinds and all curtains and drapes in said house."<sup>9</sup> At the same time, development of Arden at Argonne began on the northern part of Hill's old estate, including the sites of the estate's garage, stable, and servant's house (all no longer extant), all of which were remodeled by Shutze in the 1930s. Also by the 1960s, the driveway from Argonne Drive was closed and entry to the property was via a driveway at the rear from Arden at Argonne.

In February 1977, Callahan sold Spotswood Hall to Ian Robert Wilson, an executive with Coca-Cola. Wilson redesigned the kitchen by removing the scullery and butler's pantry and combining the spaces. A cabinet that may have come from one of these spaces is now located in the furnace room.

In 1982, the house was purchased by Frank Jameson Rees and his wife Ruth Andre Rees, who are thought to have installed the existing driveway from Argonne Drive, connecting it to the old driveway at the rear which still continues through to Arden at Argonne. They lived in the house until March of 1988 when they sold Spotswood Hall to Mr. and Mrs. William R. Dawson, III. The present owners acquired the house in 1992, by which time the house had been renumbered 555 Argonne. Under their ownership, the old rear driveway to Arden at Argonne was closed and a garage constructed in its place.

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<sup>9</sup>Fulton County Deed Book 4933, p. 367; Plat Book 90, p. 47.

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## 9. Major Bibliographic References

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Cooper, Walter G. Official History of Fulton County. Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Publishers, 1978 reprint of 1934 edition.

Coleman and Gurr. "Lucian Lamar Knight," Dictionary of Georgia Biography. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1983.

Dowling, Elizabeth Meredith. American Classicist: The Architecture of Philip Trammell Shutze. Rizzoli, 1989.

Garrett, Franklin M. Atlanta and Environs: A Chronicle of its People and Events. 2 vols. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1969 reprint of 1954 edition.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation Division. Georgia's Living Places: Historic Houses in Their Landscaped Settings. 1991.

Jones, Tommy H. "Spotswood Hall," Historic Property Information Form, August 18, 1999. On file at the Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Atlanta, Georgia.

### Newspaper articles

"Spottswood [sic] Hall Home of Georgia Historian, Is Sold," Atlanta Constitution, 1930.

"Walter C. Hill, Sr. Dies; Retail Credit President," Atlanta Constitution, 19 October 1962.

"Spotswood Hall takes Marjorie Bell on a trip down memory lane," Northside Neighbor, 1989.

"Sitting Room Kitchens," Kitchen and Bath, July 1990, p. 28-31.

Broyles, Norris. "Atlanta's Monticello' Graces Argonne Drive," Atlanta 30305, January 1997.

### Previous documentation on file (NPS): (X) N/A

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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

**Section 9--Major Bibliographic References**

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**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office**
- Other State Agency**
- Federal agency**
- Local government**
- University**
- Other, Specify Repository:**

**Georgia Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A**

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**10. Geographical Data**

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**Acreage of Property** 2.07 acres

**UTM References**

A) Zone 16 Easting 740115 Northing 3746918

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The National Register boundary is indicated on the attached plat map with a heavy, black line, drawn to scale.

**Boundary Justification**

The proposed National Register boundary is the current legal boundary and is the remaining historic acreage associated with Spotswood Hall.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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**State Historic Preservation Office**

**name/title** Gretchen B. Kinnard/National Register Coordinator  
**organization** Historic Preservation Division, Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
**street & number** 156 Trinity Avenue, SW, Suite 101  
**city or town** Atlanta **state** Georgia **zip code** 30303  
**telephone** (404) 656-2840 **date** December 18, 2001

**Consulting Services/Technical Assistance (if applicable)** ( ) not applicable

**name/title** Tommy Jones/Historic Preservation Consultant  
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(X) **consultant**  
( ) **regional development center preservation planner**  
( ) **other:**

(HPD form version 02-24-97)