

Merle Thorpe Architects

presents

REGENCY RENEWED

A Private Residence Transformed

in Potomac, Maryland

Regency Renewed

and a number of our other projects

can be seen on our website:

MerleThorpeArchitects.com

Merle Thorpe brings over 25 years' experience as a practicing architect to his diverse projects. Recognized for excellence in custom residential design, his work has received numerous awards for distinctive residential architecture, including an Award for Excellence from the DC Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

PLEASE CONTACT: MERLE@MERLETHORPEARCHITECTS.COM

3235 P STREET, NW · WASHINGTON, DC 20007

TEL 202·298·7771 · FAX 202·298·7776



REGENCY RENEWED

A Private Residence Transformed in Potomac, Maryland

For this project, we executed a complete transformation of a suburban, design-build house from the early 1980s. While the original house held obvious attachment as the place where the owners raised their three daughters, the owners felt that they had outgrown its original style and furnishings. They hired Merle and legendary interior designer Sam Morrow to help them incorporate the taste and details that they had come to appreciate during their trips abroad, while still retaining the scale and intimacy of a family home.

The design was animated by a collaborative, deliberate and methodical exploration of every feature of the owners' lives, and of how their house could be renovated to fit their aesthetic and functional sensibilities. This project was successful because we were able to interpret the owners' desire to structure their lives within a specific sensibility of form and order – in this case, the restrained, elegant simplicity of the English Regency style. The project showcases the quality attainable in residential projects when the owners, design team and general contractor achieve a successful collaboration, and share a commitment and capacity for flawless design and execution.



Before – 1980s-era Design-Build House – THE UNDERLYING STRUCTURE OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSE REMAINS, BUT THE OVERSIZED FRENCH LORRAINE BRICK VENEER, STEEPLY PITCHED GABLED DORMER AND WOOD SHAKE ROOF WERE REMOVED AS PART OF THE PHASE 01 RENOVATION.



FRONT – WEST ELEVATION FOR PHASE 01



SMOOTH STUCCO WALLS, A PEDIMENTED CORNICE, A NEO-CLASSICAL PORTICO AND A STANDING SEAM METAL ROOF DEFINE THE RENOVATED FRONT FAÇADE AFTER THE COMPLETION OF PHASE 01 OF THE PROJECT.



TOWER ADDITION

THE TOWER ADDITION WAS COMPLETED IN 2005, AS PART OF A SECOND PHASE OF WORK.

THE ASYMMETRY OF THE TOWER ADDITION ACTS AS A PLAYFUL COUNTERPOINT TO THE FORMALITY OF THE MAIN CENTER BLOCK OF THE HOUSE.

IT IS DOMINATED BY A FANCIFUL, PAGODA-SHAPED ROOF AND COPPER PENNANT ORNAMENT.

THE TOWER RESEMBLES THE LANDSCAPE FOLLIES OF THE ENGLISH REGENCY ERA, WHICH JUXTAPOSED EXOTIC ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES AGAINST FORMAL GRAECO-ROMAN ELEMENTS. THIS ASYMMETRY AND JUXTAPOSITION OF STYLES ESTABLISHES A FITTINGLY PLAYFUL MOTIF BY AN ADDITION INTENDED FOR THE GRANDCHILDREN'S USE.



Above left. THE PLAYROOM TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE PAGODA-LIKE SHAPE OF THE ROOF, WITH AN INTERIOR REMINISCENT OF A MEDIEVAL CAMPAIGN TENT. THE DRUM-LIKE CASEWORK IN THE CORNERS WAS CUSTOM-DESIGNED, AS WAS THE HAND-PAINTED CHECKERBOARD ON THE FLOOR.

Top right. THE ORDER OF THE REAR TERRACES ARE HELD BY AN ASSORTMENT OF SURROUNDING PLANTED AND LAWN TERRACES, BEFORE RELEASING THAT ORDER TO THE SURROUNDING WOODLAND FOREST.

Bottom right: FRENCH DOORS ALLOW ACCESS TO THE REAR TERRACE THROUGH A STEEL-FRAMED METAL BAY.



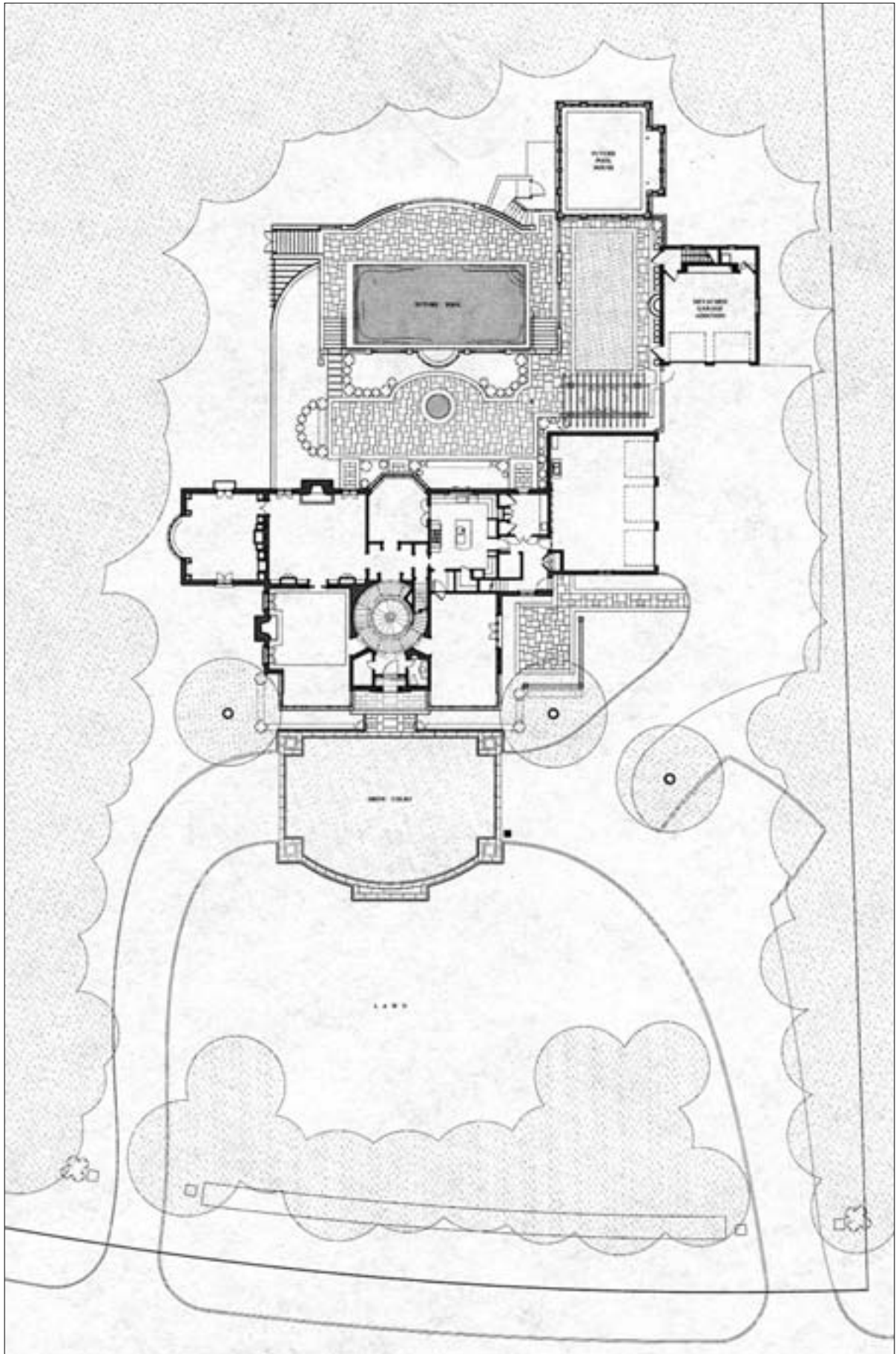


STEEL-FRAMED METAL BAYS AND CUSTOM FRENCH DOORS LIGHTEN THE EXTERIOR'S MASONRY MASS. THE ORNAMENTAL METALWORK OF THE BALCONIES PLAYS WITH NATURAL LIGHT TO ANIMATE THE EXTERIOR'S PLANAR SURFACES. THESE SUBTLE, MODERN DESIGN ELEMENTS WORK TOGETHER TO INVIGORATE THE ENGLISH REGENCY STYLE OF THE HOUSE.

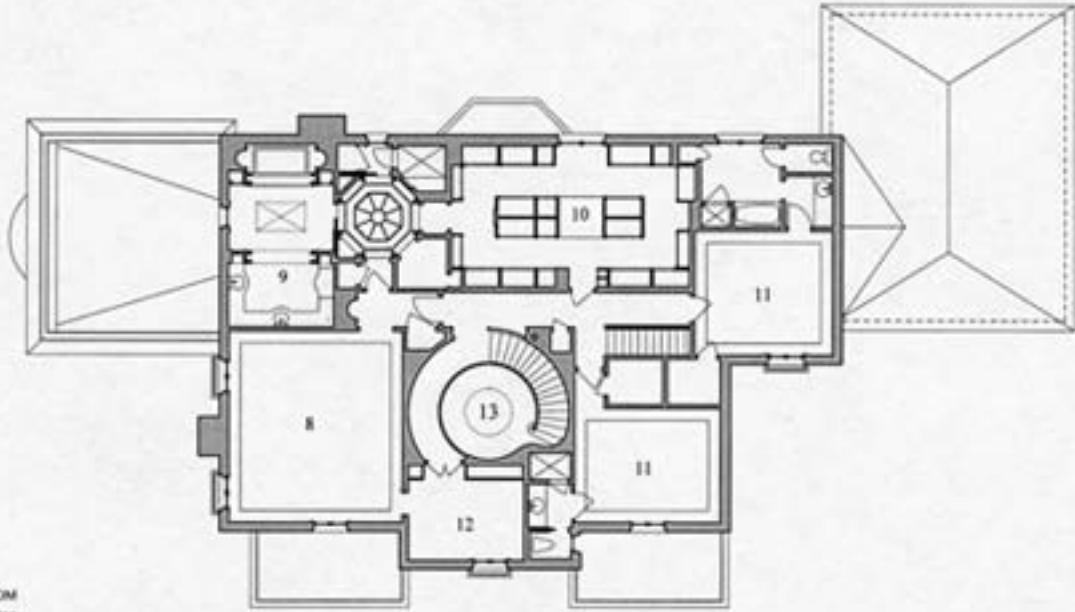


LIVING ROOM

THE STEEL-FRAMED BAYS SEAMLESSLY EXPAND THE LIVING AREAS, AND BRING ABUNDANT LIGHT INDOORS.

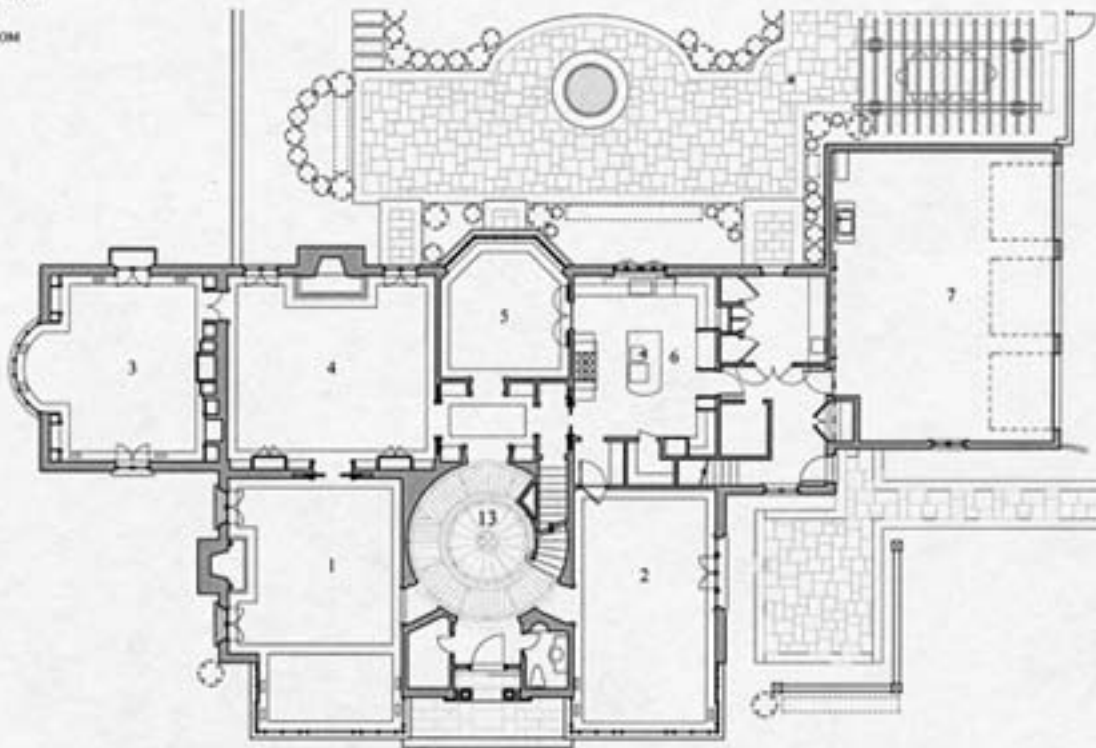


SITE PLAN FOR PHASE 01, BEFORE TOWER ADDITION



- 1. LIVING ROOM
- 2. DINING ROOM
- 3. PRIVATE STUDY
- 4. LIBRARY
- 5. BREAKFAST ROOM
- 6. KITCHEN
- 7. GARAGE
- 8. MASTER BEDROOM
- 9. MASTER BATH
- 10. DRESSING ROOM
- 11. BEDROOM
- 12. SITTING ROOM

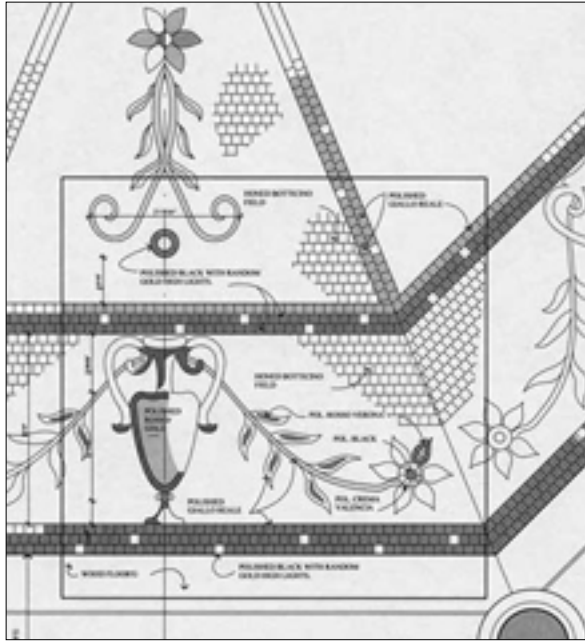
SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



FLOORPLAN FOR PHASE 01, BEFORE TOWER ADDITION



THE OCTAGON VESTIBULE AND MASTER BATH ARE DETAILED WITH FAUX-PAINTED TRIMS AND CASEWORK. THE OCTAGON'S STONE MOSAIC FLOOR IS CUSTOM-DESIGNED, AND WAS HAND-SET IN TESSERAЕ OF STONE AND GLASS.



CUSTOM CASEWORK—MASTER BATH



(above) GUEST BEDROOM

(left) THE WALK-IN CLOSET OF THE MASTER SUITE



MASTER BEDROOM. WE RAISED THE CEILING AND REPLACED THE WINDOW CASEMENTS WITH FRENCH DOORS IN THE MASTER BEDROOM, MAKING THE ROOM FEEL MORE SPACIOUS WITHOUT EXPANDING ITS FOOTPRINT.



STUDY ADDITION WITH LOWER LEVEL LOGGIA



STUDY ADDITION.

THE STUDY WAS ADDED DURING THE PHASE OF RENOVATION. THE STEEL-FRAMED ORIEL (ON PREVIOUS PAGE) PUNCTUATES THE INSCRIBED EXTERIOR SURFACES. THE PIERS SUPPORTING THE NEW STRUCTURE ALSO DEFINE A NEW, COVERED LOGGIA ON THE LOWER LEVEL.

THE CLIENTS REQUESTED CONVENIENT, ACCESSIBLE STORAGE AS AN INTEGRAL ASPECT OF THEIR PROJECT'S ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN. WE ACCOMPLISHED THIS TO A HIGH DEGREE IN THE NEW STUDY. IN ADDITION TO THE BUILT-IN CASEWORK (BELOW), MANY FELT-COVERED WALLS INCLUDE FLUSH DOORS TO CONCEAL ADDITIONAL STORAGE.



LIBRARY

THE AUSTERITY OF EXTERIOR FORMS AND SURFACES PROVIDES A SUBTLE FOIL FOR THE SUMPTUOUSLY DETAILED INTERIORS.

INTERIORS THROUGHOUT THE HOUSE ARE DETAILED WITH PAINTED TRIMS AND CASEWORK MADE OF COMMON NORTH AMERICAN WOOD SPECIES. THE EXPERTLY EXECUTED FAUX PAINTING IN THE LIBRARY MAKES THE TRIMS AND CASEWORK APPEAR LIKE MAHOGANY.



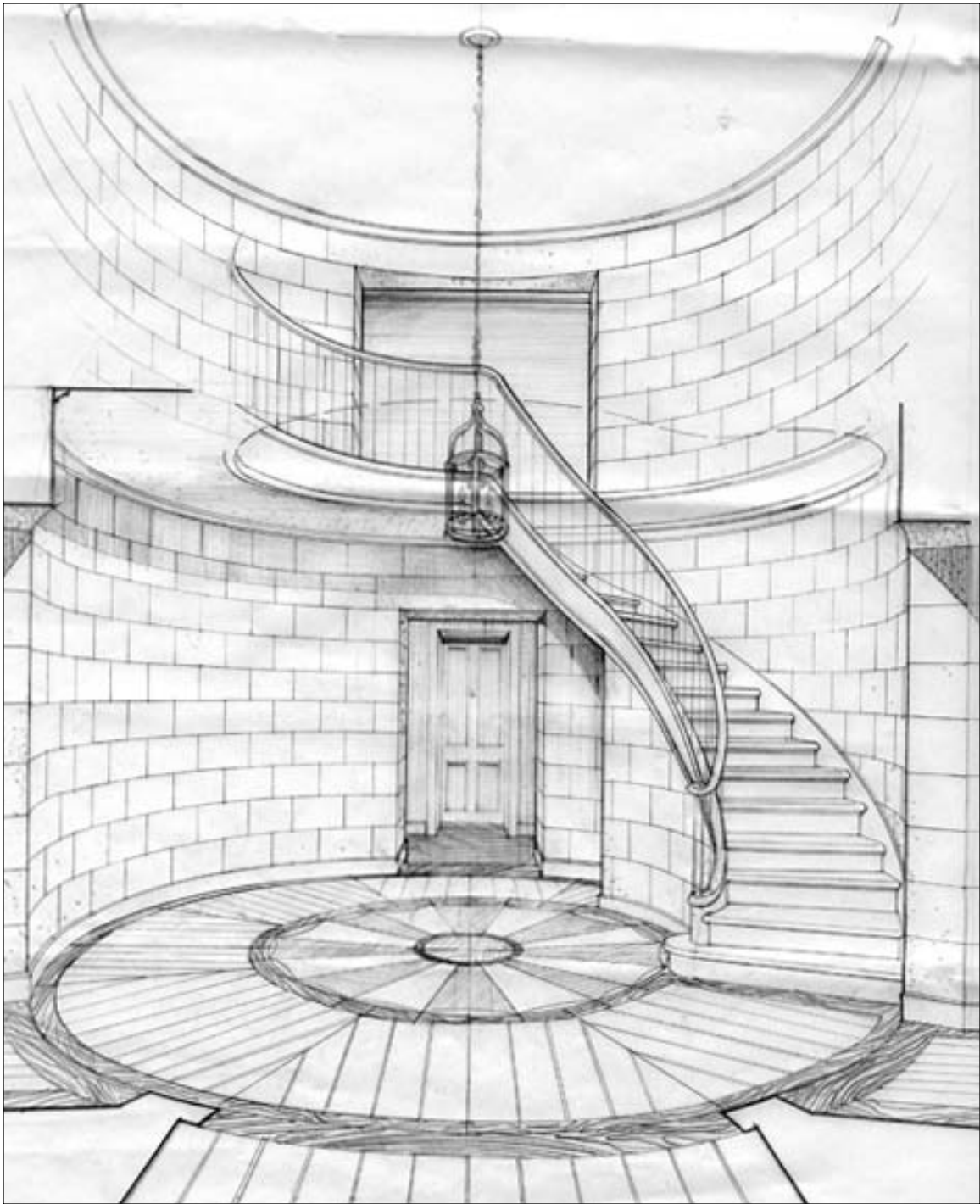


FAMILY ROOM

THE SPACIOUS FAMILY ROOM WAS RENOVATED OUT OF AN UNFINISHED BASEMENT, AND EXTENDS THE WIDTH OF THE HOUSE. A COMBINATION OF SOFFITS AND CASEWORK PIERS DIVIDE THE SPACE INTO THREE MAIN AREAS: FOR BILLIARDS, A BAR AREA, AND SEATING ARRANGEMENT AROUND THE FIREPLACE.

THE LARGE FRENCH DOOR ASSEMBLIES AND SIDELIGHTS (AT LEFT) ALLOW A SEAMLESS INTEGRATION AND EXTENSION OF THE FAMILY ROOM TO THE COVERED LOGGIA AND GARDEN BEYOND.





STUDY FOR ENTRY STAIR HALL

THE OWNERS FOUND IN THE ENGLISH REGENCY STYLE A SYMMETRY AND CLEAR SENSE OF ORDER THAT APPEALED TO THEIR OWN TASTES AND VALUES FOR ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTIONAL DESIGN. BEFORE THE RENOVATION, THE ORIGINAL FRONT ENTRY WAS DARK AND CHAOTIC, WITH AN OVERHANG AT THE HEAD OF THE STAIRS, AND ROOMS RADIATING OFF OF IT LIKE SPOKES IN A WHEEL. FOR THE REDESIGNED ENTRY STAIR HALL, THE LINES OF SIGHT ARE SQUARED OFF AND CLEAN. ILLUMINATION COMES FROM A PENDANT LANTERN AND LAYLIGHT FROM THE SECOND FLOOR.

THE CUSTOM-INLAID FLOORS AND IRON BALUSTERS DRESSED WITH HAND-FORGED BRASS RINGS ILLUSTRATE THE DEGREE OF DETAILING AND SKILL IN EXECUTION ACHIEVED THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT.



FOR ALL THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROGRAM, THE PROJECT COULD HAVE TRANSFORMED THE HOUSE INTO SOMETHING CONSIDERABLY LARGER AND GRANDIOSE. HOWEVER, BY A COMBINATION OF CONNOISSEURSHIP, DISCRETION AND ADHERENCE TO THE ESSENTIAL FOOTPRINT OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSE, THE HOUSE RETAINS ITS INTIMACY; ITS SCALE AS A FAMILY-SIZED HOUSE.

