

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received DEC 23 1985

date entered NOV 23 1985

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

1. Name

RECEIVED

historic Alford-Nielson House

APR 11 1985

and/or common same

OHP

2. Location

street & number 1299 Main Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Ferndale

N/A vicinity of

state California

code 06

county Humboldt

code 023

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Thomas B. and Maura-Anne Eastman

street & number 1299 Main Street

city, town Ferndale

N/A vicinity of

state Calif. 95536

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Humboldt County Courthouse

street & number 825 Fifth Street

city, town Eureka

state CA 95501

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town

state

7. Description

Condition: excellent deteriorated unaltered original site
 good ruins altered moved date June 1893
 fair unexposed

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in Victorian Ferndale, the Alford-Nielson House is a simple yet stylish Mansard cottage. Paired dormers in the steep lower slope of the roof and molded cornices at the top and bottom of the slope identify this architecture, popular in this country between 1860 and 1880, but uncommon on the west coast. Dentils, window hoods, open-work corner boards, and a delightful entrance stoop of brackets, cutouts, and a turned balustrade provide the decorative detail. To the rear is an earlier one-story settlement house whose side porch was enclosed many years ago. Interior restoration, completed in the late 1970's, tastefully recaptures the style and beauty of this little house. The wood-and-wire fence and wooden sidewalk across the front and the picket fence along the unpaved driveway

add to the charm of the old place which so easily calls to mind another time in this beautiful

Eel River valley. A woodshed/garage at the rear of the house is a later addition; it does not detract from the historic character * of the property. * * * * *

The house is of wood construction and contains 1,339 square feet in the downstairs and 440 square feet upstairs with a back corner porch of 36 square feet. Covered with wide-groove shiplap, the house is painted a barn red with cream trim. The doors are dark green and window trim and the front steps are gray. It sits high off the ground and well back from Main Street with yard on three sides and a picket fence and driveway on the other. The surrounding neighborhood includes the Ferndale High School to the south and mixed residential styles and periods to the north and across the street. Valley farmland is just beyond this row of houses and the coastal mountains are in the distance. Francis Creek, which runs the length of town, is beneath the boardwalk in front of the house.

The Mansard portion of the house is very small, 20' x 22', and contains the front parlor, entrance hall, and stairway downstairs and two bedrooms upstairs. The rear one-story section has a sitting room, added bedroom on the southerly side along with a bath, a dining room, modern kitchen, and living area within the enclosed porch. At the very rear is a long-ago added section containing a bath and washroom. Interior finishing is lovely. Woodwork, windows, the little fireplace and mantel in the sitting room, and china cabinet and "cracker crisper" in the dining room have been retained. Wooden louvers at the parlor windows and

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8. Significance

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

Specific dates c. 1874; c. 1877 Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Alford-Nielson House is nominated to the National Register for its handsome Mansard architecture which, although popular in the northeastern and midwestern states, was uncommon on the West Coast. In fact, this house is the only Mansard in Ferndale and as far as can be determined is one of only two such houses in Humboldt County, the other being in Eureka. It is noteworthy as a very "modern" style for this rural northcoast area where settlement house-types were inspired by the past and usually had gabled roofs and classic lines. Moved to its present site in 1893, the house was originally located next to the Alford Brothers' drug store in downtown Ferndale. A lithograph of the drug store, with this little cottage partially visible to one side, appears in Elliott's 1882 History of Humboldt County California. The house retains a high degree of architectural and historic integrity and is significant to both the community and Humboldt County for its rare Mansard architecture, which deserves recognition on the National Register of Historic Places.

* * * * *

The house is named for the Dr. Frank A. and William B. Alford families which owned it from 1877 until 1893 and for the Maurice Nielson family, owners from 1912 until 1977. Despite extensive research of the Alford family, deed records, tax assessments, and local newspapers, a definite date of construction could not be determined. It appears, however, that the rear, one-story section was built about 1874 by a blacksmith named James E. Brown and that the Mansard portion was built about 1877 when the lot was owned by Hannah Lewis, Dr. Frank A. Alford's mother-in-law. Hannah Lewis purchased the 60' x 100' lot from Brown in March 1877 and sold the southerly 21 feet fronting Main Street to the Alford brothers in September 1877. However, a West Coast Signal article of April 18, 1877 indicates that Dr. Alford was "manifesting his public spirit in the shape of a commodious drug store," before he actually owned the land. At the same time ~~he was~~ having the drug store built, Dr. Alford may have also had the Mansard cottage added to the front of Brown's little

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Deed Records, Humboldt County Courthouse, Eureka, CA.
Elliott, W.W. 1882. History of Humboldt County California, San Francisco.
Ferndale Enterprise, 5 Sept. 1879; 22 Nov. 1884; 5 Dec. 1884; 30 June 1893;
13 Jan. 1893. Tax Assessments, HSU Library, Arcata, CA.
West Coast Signal, 18 April 1877; 30 April 1877.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .25 acres

Quadrangle name Ferndale

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

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Verbal boundary description and justification Beginning at NE corner of Lot 1, Survey 46(Book 1B Surveys, pg. 74), thence N60° W 233 Ft.; thence S 1° E 76.15 Ft.; thence S 54° 02' 13" E 138.17 ft.; thence E 50± Ft.; thence NE 49.5 Ft.to beginning. Boundaries encompass the house on the lot it has occupied since its relocation in 1893.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susie Van Kirk

organization N/A

date 7 April 1985

street & number 1162 C Street

telephone (707) 822-6066

city or town Arcata

state California 95521

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

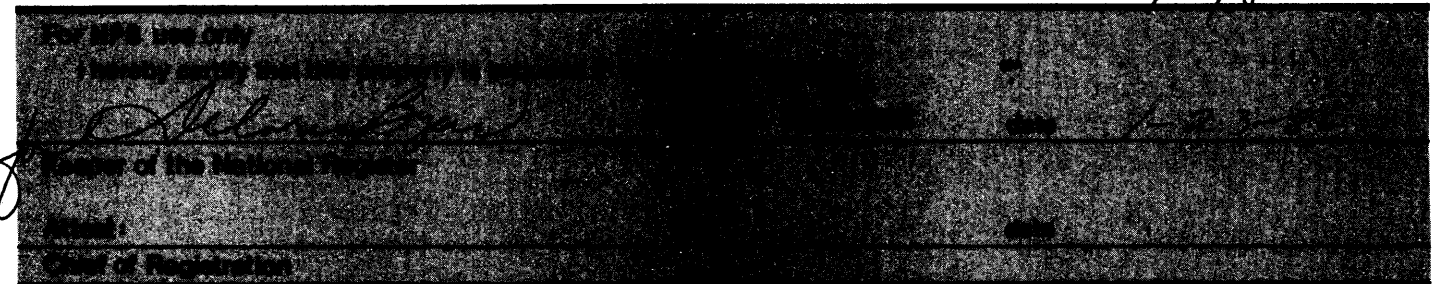
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Kathryn Guattieri

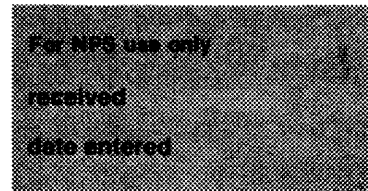
title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 12/11/85



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Continuation sheet 1

Item number 7

Page 1

carefully-chosen wallpaper enhance the beauty and historic character of the interior. The kitchen is modern and opens to the living area which has a southerly wall of glass whose wavy panes indicate that the porch enclosure was done many years ago. The washroom and bath area has not been renovated; exterior siding is visible where this addition was made, the old wainscot is still along the walls, and there is a clawed-foot bathrub.

The Mansard portion has two dormer windows in the slope of the roof. Each has four panes and is covered by a gabled roof. Molded cornices border the upper and lower edges of the sloped roof; the house cornice is decorated with a row of dentils. The front facade has an off-centered door with two, four-pane windows to the side. The windows have hoods with dentils and tiny molded brackets beneath the corners of the windows. The front door is bordered by divided sidelights and a transom and is sheltered by a lovely flat-roof stoop supported by solid brackets and edged with a cutout decoration. Handsome newel posts and turned balusters line the steps. Open-work corner boards and a wide watertable accentuate the squared form of the front portion. The northerly wall which is along the interior stairway is without windows; the southerly wall contains two windows like those on the front. A little addition (bedroom) on the southerly side has been decorated to match the Mansard portion, including a molded cornice with dentils, corner boards, and a four-pane window with hood, dentils, and tiny brackets beneath the sill.

The northerly wall of the rear section contains a set of double windows, each with four panes, a single 12-pane window, and an added small horizontal window in the kitchen. Mouldings on these windows are plain. A vertical board to the westerly side of the kitchen window marks the point where the washroom/bath addition was made. The rear wall of the house has three small windows with multiple panes.

The southerly wall of the rear section contains 72 small panes of glass which enclosed this side porch many years ago, perhaps at the time the house was moved. At the rear corner is a small back porch with steps leading to the backdoor. A small window has replaced a larger one in the solid part of the southerly wall where the modern bathroom is located.

Alterations obvious from comparing the present house with an early photograph (c. early 1900's) include the following: originally the house had diamond and fish-scale shingles on the Mansard roof; tiny scroll brackets decorated each side of the dormer windows; the front door had two long narrow panes of glass; and the roof and ridge of the dormer roofs were outlined with a kind of miniature balustrade with finials which appear to have been wooden. The old photograph showed solid board fences at the rear of the property and separating the front and back yards and lots of rose bushes against the house; a climbing rose adorned the side of the entrance stoop.

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Continuation sheet 2

Item number 7

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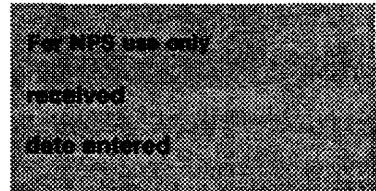
As always it is difficult to know just what went on in terms of construction and alterations. It appears, however, that the rear settlement-period house was built about 1874 and that the Mansard portion was added about 1877. The house was originally located downtown where the Golden Gate Mercantile store is now and was moved to the present site in 1893. It may have been at this time that the side porch was enclosed but then again this may have occurred later. The bath/washroom addition was probably made in the 1910's. It is guessed that the southerly addition (bedroom) which was decorated to match the Mansard portion was added after the house was moved.

The house retains its architectural and historic integrity, enhanced by its immediate setting and a surrounding environment of Eel River valley dairy farms and Victorian Ferndale. Its Mansard architecture is noteworthy and deserving of recognition through National Register designation.

An old wood frame garage is located behind the house; although it was built later than the house, it does not detract from the historic character of the property.

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Continuation sheet 3 Item number 8 Page 1

house. Perhaps Hannah Lewis lived with her daughter, Mary, and her son-in-law and their new baby daughter, Bertha, who was born in April 1877.

Frank A. Alford, M.D. and his brother William B. Alford were partners in the drug store, which still stands in Ferndale looking much as it did in the 1882 lithograph. The Alfords were natives of Ohio, Dr. Alford having received his medical education from Bellevue Medical College in New York in 1870. He came to California in 1872, married Mary Lewis in 1876 and practiced medicine and dentistry until ill health forced him to retire in 1892. For three years, 1880 to 1883, he owned and published the Ferndale Enterprise newspaper. He died in January 1893 a few days short of his 43rd birthday.

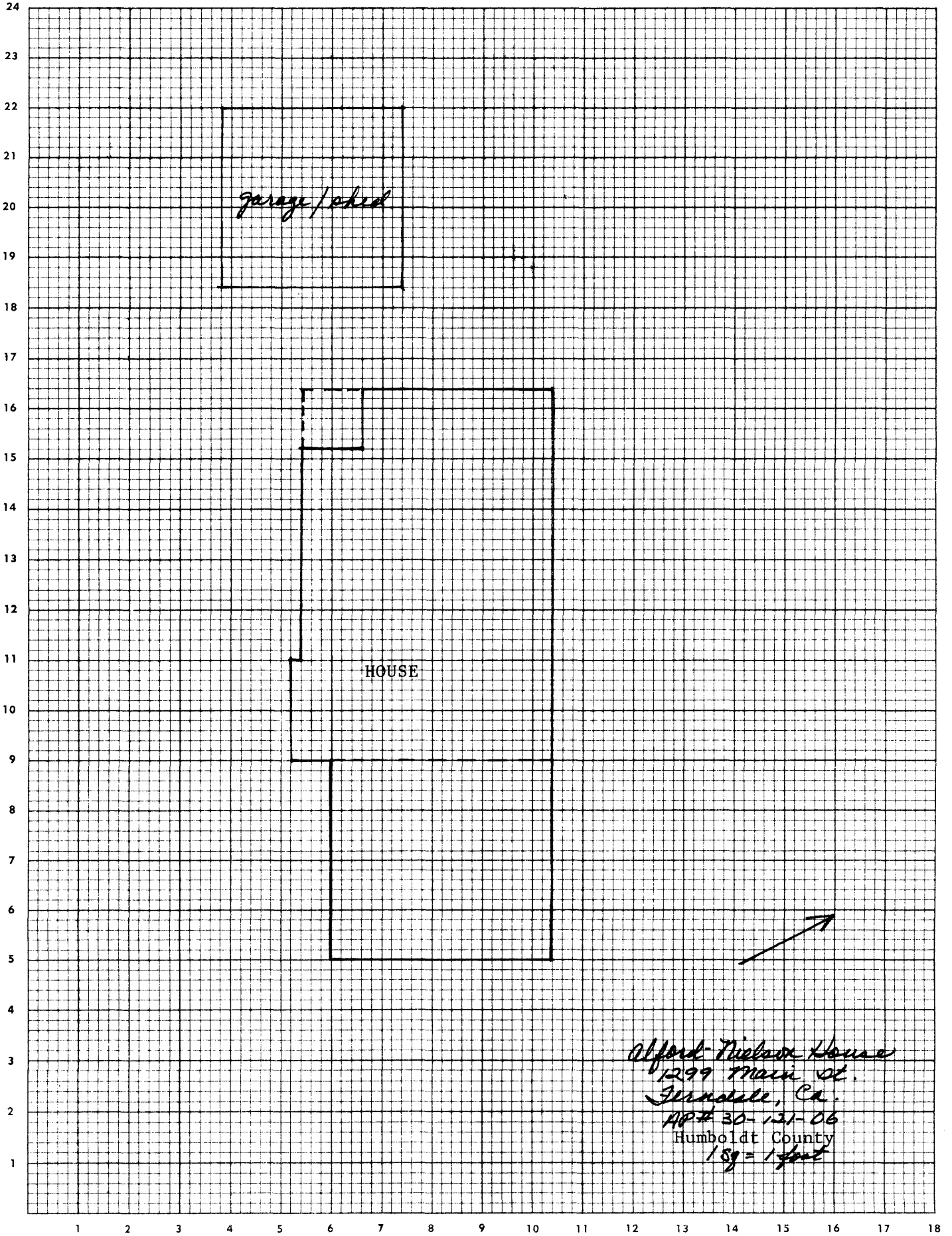
The partnership in the drug store between Dr. Alford and his brother William was dissolved in the fall of 1879 and William continued the business alone until bankruptcy forced him to sell it to his uncle H.S. Case in December 1884, with Dr. Alford providing the "immediate supervision" for the business.

In 1883 Hannah Lewis Roberts sold the house lot to William Alford and soon after that Dr. Alford moved into a newly-constructed house. In 1892 William sold the property to Mary Alford, Dr. Alford's wife, but continued to live in the house. The following year, Mary sold it to Herman J. Mueller who then had the house moved, with the Alford family inside, down Main Street to its present location. A June 30, 1893 article in the Ferndale Enterprise noted that the "W.B. Alford dwelling, lately purchased by H.J. Mueller, has arrived at its destiny on the lot adjoining the residence of Judge Smith." Mueller then set about building a new furniture store on the property, the building now occupied by Golden Gate Mercantile and adjoining the little drug store now Becker's Pool Hall.

In October 1893, the William Alford family moved out of the house and H.J. Mueller and family moved in. Serena and H.J. Mueller of Tulare County sold the house to Maurice Neilson in March 1912 and the house remained in the Neilson family until October 1977 when it was purchased by James and Mary Daly. Present owners, Tom and Maura Eastman, purchased it in March 1984.

Maurice Nielson was a leader in developing modern creamery operations in Humboldt County. His wife, Laura, was a member of the pioneer Samuel Fulmore family of the Eel River valley. Their son, Sidney Maurice Nielson, followed his father's interest and managed the Golden State Creamery, later consolidated with Foremost, for many years. The house passed from Maurice Nielson to his wife and then to their sons in 1936. In time it became the property of Sidney Nielson's daughters, who sold it to the Dalys in 1977. It was during their ownership that the house was restored after years of neglect when it was occupied as a rental. Recognizing the architectural and historic significance of the Alford-Nielson House, the present owners have initiated nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

1/30/06 8:10 AM

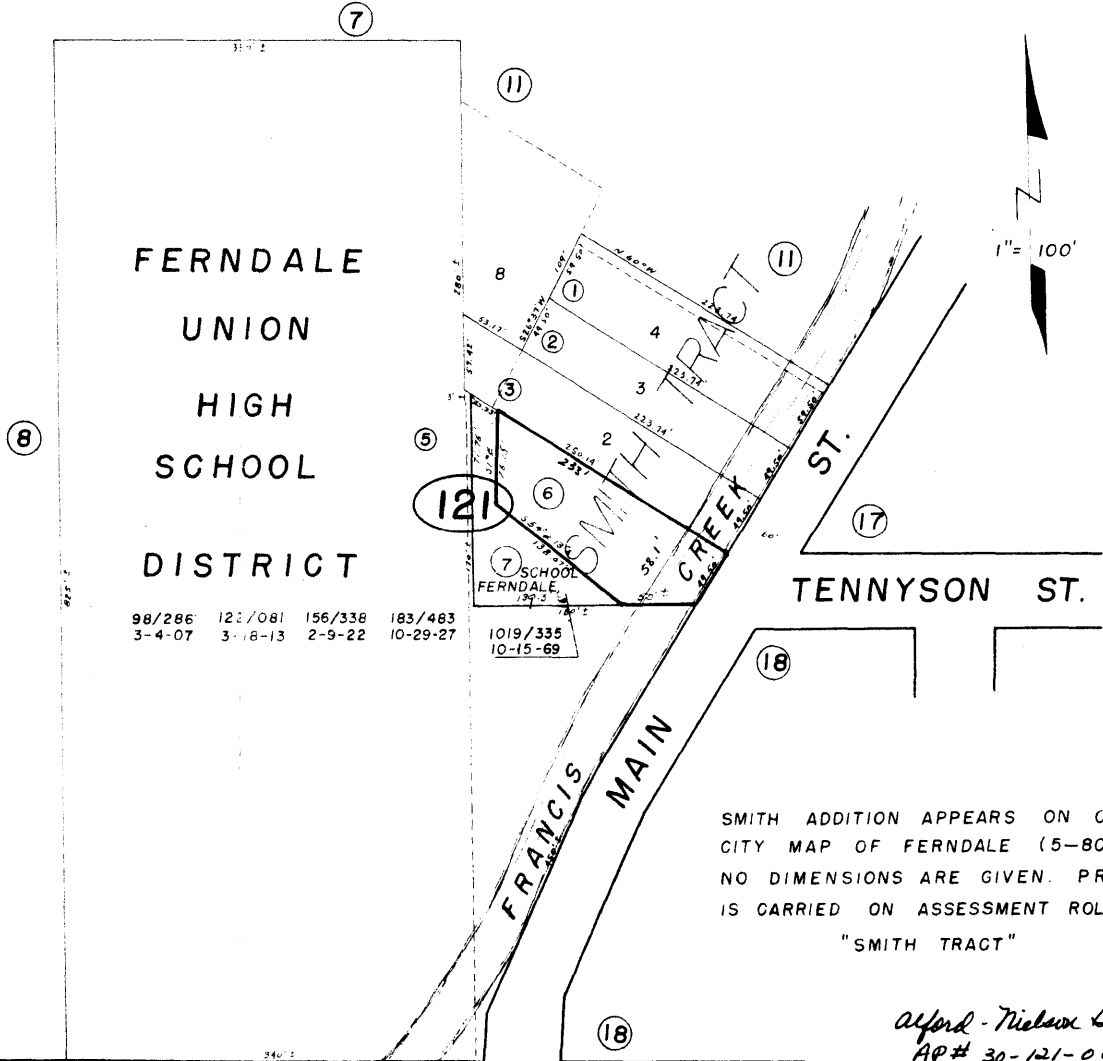


Alford-Nielson House
1299 Main St.
Ferndale, Ca.
AP# 30-131-06
Humboldt County
1 sq = 1 foot

Alford-Nielson House
1299 Main Street
Ferndale, Humboldt County, California

30-12

CITY OF FERNDALE



98/286	123/081	156/338	183/483
3-4-07	3-18-13	2-9-22	10-29-27

1019/335
10-15-69

THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD
FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY
HUMBOLDT COUNTY ASSESSOR

SMITH ADDITION APPEARS ON OFFICIAL
CITY MAP OF FERNDALE (5-80).
NO DIMENSIONS ARE GIVEN. PROPERTY
IS CARRIED ON ASSESSMENT ROLLS AS
"SMITH TRACT"

Alford-Nielson House
AP# 30-121-06