

SG-1772

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name REED-COBB-BOWSER HOUSE AND BARN

other names/site number Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Reed-Cobb House

Name of Multiple Property Listing _____

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1700 Merlin Road not for publication

city or town Merlin vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Josephine code 033 zip code 97532

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility 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 ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: A ___ B C ___ D

Christina Cuna 8.28.17
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. 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) _____

for Edson H. Beall 10.30.17
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	4	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
2	4	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

_____ N/A _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic: Single Family Residential

Domestic: Single Family Residential

Commerce/Trade; Business (Clubhouse/Office)

Agriculture: Agriculture Outbuilding (Barn)

Agriculture: Agriculture Outbuilding (Barn)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American

foundation: Concrete; Poured Concrete

Movements; Craftsman

walls: Wood; Wood Frame

roof: Asphalt (Asphalt Shingle)

other: Wood: Wood Shingle

Stone; Cobblestone

Narrative Description

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(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn are located east of the unincorporated community of Merlin, in Josephine County, Oregon. The property occupies a generally flat 3.5-acre parcel between Merlin Road on the southwest and Louse Creek on the northeast. The property is identified as Tax Lot 1400, in the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of Section 22, Township 35S, Range 6 West. Occupying land at the NW corner of Merlin Road and Orchard Lane, a non-dedicated right-of-way, the two-and one-half story Craftsman-style dwelling, significant under both Criterion A and C, is deeply setback from the roadway. The large gambrel-roof barn with extended wings, built later but considered significant under Criterion C, is located to the east, along Louse Creek. Four small non-historic outbuildings are scattered to the rear and along the SE property line.

Narrative Description

The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn are located at 1700 Merlin Road, on a 3.5-acre rural residential parcel in an unincorporated area of Josephine County, east of Merlin, Oregon.

SETTING

The house is located in an area of mixed rural residential development lining Merlin Road and the small, generally dead-end side streets that run between it and Louse Creek. Widely scattered pre-World War Two-era development remains, at least some of it assumed to have been developed as part of the Country Club Orchard plan. However, the majority of nearby resources are single-story post-World War Two ranch houses and later development. The rail line parallels Merlin Road, southeast of the subject property. There is a mixture of small-scale rural residential and commercial development to the southeast, extending toward the Interstate 5 corridor. A small regional airport, the Grants Pass Airport, is located on a broad flat plain approximately one-half mile northeast of the property. The community center and core business district of the unincorporated town of Merlin, one and one-half miles to the northwest, includes small commercial and industrial uses. Existing inventories of historic resources in the Merlin area document several commercial properties in Merlin, an industrial resource (a wigwam burner), and one other residential property, the Charles Kayser House and Barn, in addition to the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn.¹

The subject 3.5-acre parcel is generally flat, bounded by Merlin Road on the southwest, an unimproved public right-of-way (Orchard Lane)² on the southwest, Louse Creek runs parallel to the rear property line, at the northeast. Adjacent private residential property of mixed construction, accessed via Carton Way, is located to the northwest. The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn and the related small agricultural and storage structures on the property are all deeply set back from

¹ The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn (identified as the Everett Cobb House, c1910) was evaluated as "Eligible Significant." The Kayser House and Barn, at 818 Merlin Sanitarium Road, built in 1920, were evaluated as Undetermined and Eligible Contributing, respectively. The only NR-listed properties in the Merlin vicinity are two sites further to west, on Galice Road, related to the historic recreation uses along the Rogue River (Oregon Historic Sites Database, www.heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/, visited 16-November-2016).

² "Orchard Lane," platted as part of the original Rogue River Orchard subdivision, is shown on the county tax plat and appears to be an extension/portion of Dellwood Drive in aerial views, but does not appear to have ever been constructed, possibly due the lack of a bridge over Louse Creek.

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Merlin Road, within a mature landscape of trees and shrubs set behind a small pasture area. A non-historic vine-covered arbor is located east of the house, with the large gambrel-roof and wing barn (built c1936) at the rear. Small outbuildings of indeterminate, non-historic, vintage are scattered about the periphery of the property, all behind or to the east of the main house.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House is a two and one-half story wood-framed structure in the Craftsman style, with a full concrete basement and poured-in-place foundation under the main volume. A shed and gable full-width front porch lines the entire primary elevation, facing Merlin Road. The porch railing is of small random-coursed "river rock," assumed to be a non-bearing veneer over the poured-in-place concrete foundation. Three wood-framed porch columns are clad in horizontal wood drop-siding matched to the first floor exterior. The porch gable features extended eaves, heavy wooden brackets and a dentil band, consistent with the architectural style. Roofing, non-original, is of asphalt shingle. A shed dormer is located face-forward at the SE corner of the main volume.

Siding on the main floor is of six-inch horizontal drop wood siding with the upper floor clad in random-width wood shingle, all with six-inch reveal. Expressed stringcourse bands divide the exterior into layers that reflect the floor levels. The occupied half-story of the attic is highlighted by a flared shingle exterior that rises from a projecting dentil band on the west- and east-facing (side) elevations of the volume. Heavy wooden brackets support the large over-hanging eaves. A gable dormer is centered on the rear elevation, facing north. A large coursed interior chimney of brick with a cast concrete cap is located near the SW corner of the main volume.

Original wood sash six-over-six (6/6) double hung windows remain in most of the main volume locations, with a "cottage" type grouping in the projecting gabled wall-dormer at the SW corner. Matching casement windows are located at various locations and all windows are trimmed with plain 6" wide side casings highlighted by extended head casings that have a distinctive flared/angled end. Other windows, all assumed original, include 7/7 double hung wood.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The interior of the main volume of the Reed-Cobb House is almost entirely intact from its assumed original design. The large, over-sized entry door leads directly to a double-dog-leg stairwell located at the east side of the large, full-width, living room, currently carpeted. The west side of the living room is filled with a framed fireplace and painted mantel with seating niches on either side of the firebox. Tall painted board-and-batten wainscot with a projecting chair-rail remains on the walls, highlighted by small projecting dentil-like details reminiscent of the exterior detailing. Painted wood boxed beams and coffers divide the lath and plaster ceiling lengthwise into bands. Baseboard, door and window trim, and all other detail appear original, while lighting and floor surface (carpet, above the original narrow plank fir) represent minor changes. Windows retain the projecting crown molding, parting bead and extended sills with plain six-inch-wide side casing and apron. Baseboard is painted six-inch boards with a quarter round shoe.

Large wood and glass French pocket doors divide the living and dining room areas. This area too has original lath and plaster walls, painted wainscot, and a painted box beam and coffer ceiling. Flooring in the dining area is of exposed narrow-width tongue-and-groove Douglas fir.

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Rear areas of the main floor, including the kitchen, service/utility room and other spaces are modest, including non-historic cabinets and detailing. A large non-historic den/multi-purpose space is located in the added rear wing, described below.

Painted wood treads on the dog-leg stairway at the NE corner of the living area retain the original eight-by-eight inch wood newel post with an octagonal cap and shaft. Painted wood balusters (two per tread) and railing cap all appear original. At the landing leading to the upper floor, a second stair flight provides access to the kitchen area. The landing is highlighted by the projecting two-side oriel balcony window, with original casement windows and trim.

The upper level consists of five bedrooms of generally modest dimension as shown in plan, accessed off the central hall. In general, original doors and trim, all painted, remain. A built-in linen cabinet at the head of the stairs appears to have been added or relocated, based on construction detail. The Master Bedroom is located at the SW corner of the floorplan and boasts an original fireplace and mantle, served by the previously described interior chimney. A single bathroom is centered on the northern, rear, wall. Some modification at the NE corner bedroom is probable, where what was originally a window appears to have been replaced with a compatible wood and glass door to provide access to an upper story outdoor deck.

Parallel to the first-floor stair, a second, less detailed, stairway, leads to the third floor in a single straight flight. The original balustrade remains on the upper level, providing access to a large space under the main ridge that occupies the bulk of this level. Attic space and a large closet are located under the roof at the south while the rear facing gable dormer at the north houses another bedroom, flanked by attic and two closets.

The full poured concrete basement is accessed via a stairwell on the east, which leads from the kitchen and also directly from the exterior. This is a simple space, with open floor joisting for the ceiling, unfinished flooring and foundation stem walls. Added ductwork for the central forced-air heating unit replaced an earlier sawdust-fired burner according to the owners. Exposed systems (plumbing, electrical, etc.) are mounted to the joists. The basement was likely originally dirt and the concrete was poured by the second owner. A small inscription is scratched into surface at the base of the stairway, reading "H.E. Bowser, Oct. 1936" assumed to refer to Heber Eugene Bowser, the husband of Clementine Lewis Bowser, who purchased the Reed-Cobb property in June of that year.

CONTRUCTION AND KNOWN MODIFICATIONS

Construction of the Reed-Cobb House was begun in 1910, as part of the initial development of the Merlin project and was largely completed by April 1911.

Arriving at the headquarters of the Rogue River Orchard company, one finds a handsome new bungalow of ten or more rooms, modern throughout, with good outbuildings and grounds planned by one of the best landscape gardeners in state from

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the Oregon Agricultural College, which although not yet complete, give promise of a handsome effect.”³

Early photographs document that the building was originally clad in stained siding and shingles, typical of “Craftsman” or bungalow design, with the natural stone of the front porch and the exposed, parged, concrete foundation at the base. It is not known when the exterior was painted, but certainly it has been so for more than four decades, based on available information. As noted above, the building was built with a sawdust-fired heat source, later removed and replaced with the present natural gas-fired heating system (n.d.). According to the memoir of Everett “Bud” Cobb, the house was not electrified until after 1930, possibly not until the ownership of Clementine Lewis Bowser.

The major alteration to the main house consists of the construction of the rear wing, added c1970, during the ownership of Katherine Brown. The addition certainly pre-dates 1992, when the current owners purchased the property. Other modifications include exterior painting of the originally stained siding and river rock, both occurring prior to the current ownership and dated circa 1970.

GROUND AND OUTBUILDINGS

Both historic images and period accounts document that the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House was originally the “headquarters” or main building within a complex of barns and storage facilities built concurrently to support the Country Club Orchard development project. Figures 10 and 11 show at least two large gable structures located to the northeast of the house and built with compatible, if not matching, detail. A series of images from 1924, taken during a snow storm, show what appears to be several related structures on the site, possibly including an earlier vernacular farm house and at least two small gable volumes, perhaps worker housing.

The construction history of the Bowser Barn is undocumented however likely occurred c1936, following purchase of the property by Clementine Lewis Bowser. While otherwise undocumented, there are some reports that the original barn(s) shown in historic photographs were destroyed in a fire.⁴ Alternatively, Mrs. Bowser, a notable equestrian, may have removed the original agricultural barn in order to build the current Gambrel-roofed horse barn (see Section 8 for additional discussion).

The functions and fates of the other small structures shown in historic photos to the northwest of the main house are unknown but none remain associated with the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House today.⁵ Three attached storage structures are located at the eastern property line, most of which pre-date 1990 when the current owners acquired the property and none of which are considered historic or significant in any way. There are also three minor storage sheds and a pump house, located to the north and east of the house. With the exception of the large gambrel-roofed horse barn, all the outbuildings located on the property are of modest scale and construction. None can be specifically dated but are assumed to post-date the original period of development and have no architectural or historic merit.

³ *Rogue River Courier*, 14-April-1911, 6:5.

⁴ Building permit data for Josephine County does not exist during the 1930-1950 period. Due to the lack of local library funding, the ability to access newspaper accounts of any fire were not possible during this project.

⁵ There are several small outbuildings associated with the dwelling at 1714 Carton Way that may have some connection to these early Country Club Orchard structures but that has not been definitively determined.

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The large gambrel-roof horse barn located at the rear of the site was built following the loss of the earlier barns during the ownership of Clementine Lewis Bowser, likely in 1936 and certainly prior to 1946. Accordingly dated c1936, this wood frame structure consists of a two-story main central volume about 36-feet wide and 50-feet deep with a poured concrete slab floor. Large sliding doors on either side of the main volume allow easy access through the central aisle.

The central, gambrel, volume of the barn is a transverse crib, defined as the most popular type in the western United States, flanked by two wings of attached horse stalls.⁶ The lower, ground, level of the central volume is characterized by a center aisle, flanked by smaller spaces on either side, accessed by wooden sliding doors (some with windows), that include several stalls and a storage or tack room. A simple open-tread wood stairwell leads to the large, open, upper floor, loft space at the southwest. Exterior siding is of original 6" cove-type wood, currently painted barn red, with simple board trim, painted white. Roofing is of natural wood shakes with two gable ventilator/cupolas at the ridge. The main gambrel volume is flanked on both the east and west by large gable-roofed wings, each divided into 12-foot wide stalls or paddocks. A covered area supported by free-standing posts creates a gallery along the entire front elevation. The individual horse stalls are predominantly dirt-floored areas behind a poured concrete perimeter foundation that supports the wood-framed stall dividers. The two westernmost stalls are combined to create a 24-foot wide unified space (shop) with a concrete floor, assumed to be a later modification. Both barn wings are approximately 21 feet wide and 60 feet long, creating an overall barn footprint of approximately 156 feet in length. Although no plans are known and the date of construction is uncertain, the horse barn at the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House appears to be largely as-built, with limited modification.

SUMMARY

The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House, known historically as the Country Club Orchard Clubhouse or headquarters building, was completed in 1911. The building is prominently sited on a large semi-rural lot, with a deep setback from Merlin Road that is considered an important element in maintaining the property's rural character. Surrounding outbuildings include the large c1936 Gambrel-roofed wood-frame horse barn that is both architecturally significant for its type and supports the character of the house by accurately reflecting its historic associations with agriculture. The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn retains high integrity to their original design in all seven aspects and effectively and accurately relates the associations for which they are significant.

⁶ Vlatch, John Michael. *Barns - Library of Congress Visual Source Book*. New York, NY, W. W. Norton & Company, 2003.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture
Community Planning & Development

Period of Significance

1910-1946 (A & C)

Significant Dates

1910-1911 (Initial Construction)
1910-1936 (Reed-Cobb Ownership)
1936-1946 (Bowser Ownership)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Period of Significance (justification)

The 1910-1911 construction of the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House as the main building of the Country Club Orchard development project in Merlin, Oregon marks the beginning of the Period of Significance which continues through the end of the significant ownership of Clementine Lewis Bowser through 1946 and the construction of the architecturally significant gambrel-roof horse barn built c1936.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Reed-Cobb House was constructed in 1910-1911 as the headquarters, or “Clubhouse” of a major residential-agricultural development, the Country Club Orchard, that was promoted by a group of wealthy out-of-area investors in Merlin, Oregon. The house served as the office and reception center for that project until 1915, when it was transformed into a family home after Grace Reed Cobb and her husband, Everett, took over management of the orchards. The Reed-Cobb House is locally significant under Criterion A, for its association with the Country Club Orchard and the development of the Merlin area, and under Criterion C, as one of the best-identified examples of Craftsman residential architecture in northern Josephine County and a significant example of barn architecture, being the c1936 Gambrel-roofed horse barn built by second owners, Clementine Lewis and H. E. Bowser. The period of significance is established at 1910-1946 under criterion A and C, marking the construction during the original Reed-Cobb ownership and the subsequent ownership responsible for construction of the Gambrel-roofed horse barn.

Narrative Description

INTRODUCTION

During southern Oregon’s 19th century period of Euro-American settlement, northern Josephine County, though including portions of the Rogue River at the west, was less desirable for settlers than the remainder of the county and saw limited development outside of the wagon route. The areas around Wolf Creek and Grave Creek were a focus of mining, but the area that would become Merlin saw little activity or town-building. “[The northern section] falls short in the matter of natural advantages, nor has it the means of supporting as numerous a population as the Illinois Valley.”⁷

In 1883, as the Oregon and California Railroad tracks moved through Josephine County heading south, a station was established at the confluence of Jump-Off Joe and Louse creeks.⁸ First called “Jump Off Joe Station” after the stream, the station was renamed “Merlin” in October 1886. David Loring, the railroad engineer responsible for siting the railroad, reported that the name came from birds that he saw in the area. A post office in Merlin was established in 1891.⁹ In 1893 land for a depot (the station was just a dock, adjacent to the track) was donated by John and Sarah Lanterman. The original Grants Pass railroad depot was loaded onto a rail car and moved north to Merlin.¹⁰

While some mining activity continued, especially in Galice along the Rogue River to the west, Merlin’s proximity to the railroad made agriculture, especially tree-fruits, the major economic activity by the last decade of the 19th century. “A new bonanza was taking place, not gold this time.... Many

⁷ Walling, A.G. *History of Jackson, Josephine, Douglas, Coos and Curry Counties, Oregon*. (Portland, OR: A. G. Walling, 1884), 445.

⁸ Pruitt, Claudette Morning. *Come Take a Historic Journey Along the Galice Trail*. (Grants Pass, OR: Morning Creek Enterprises, 2004), 6.

⁹ McArthur & McArthur. *Oregon Geographic Names*, 7th Ed. (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2003), 637.

¹⁰ Pruitt, op cit., 9. Relocation of original railroad stations larger southern Oregon towns to smaller communities also characterized the Talent, Oregon depot, which was relocated from Medford.

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orchards had sprung up on the hills and benches surrounding Merlin.”¹¹ By 1905 the Merlin townsite boasted a hotel, a school, a church, a butcher shop, and several small stores, including the Merlin Mercantile Company.¹² In 1906 an article in the *Rogue River Courier* considered Merlin, “...the fastest growing town in Southern Oregon...” and a potential rival to Grants Pass, the county seat.¹³ The Merlin Townsite and Development Company, founded by A. B. Cousins and Charles Short, promised that the population of 400 persons in the community would double in six months, and treble within the year.

Why? Because we have a Big Colonization, Railroad, Irrigation, Lumbering and Manufacturing Scheme on foot [sic] and the natural resources of this section will of itself guarantee the prediction.¹⁴

While not entirely clear, the “scheme” that Cousins and Short were referring to may be the first mention of what would eventually come to fruition as the Country Club Orchard project.

ROGUE RIVER AND COUNTRY CLUB ORCHARD PROJECTS (REED-COBB PERIOD)

Interest in Merlin, along with the rest of southern Oregon, began to reach fever pitch near the end of the first decade of the 20th century. In 1908, papers as far away as Pendleton, Oregon, reported that “four millionaires” had recently bought fruit lands near Merlin. “While there is an apparent stampede to grapes, other fruits for which the Rogue River valley is famous are not being neglected and a few years will see one vast stretch of orchards and vineyards from Merlin to Medford.”¹⁵

In late 1909 a group of well-funded investors went into partnership with a Grants Pass realtor and began to acquire land along the Merlin Road, east of the Merlin townsite. Their plan was to develop a rural residential-farm community; initially called the Rogue River Orchard Company. Soon they were in control of more than 3000 acres of land, described as “the entire Grouse Creek valley.”¹⁶ The four were brothers William T. and Franklin E. Reed, both attorneys from Kansas City, Missouri, their brother-in-law, S. Dwight Williams, a lumberman from Portland, Oregon, and Williams’ brother, also a Portland lumberman, Frederick F. Williams. The local realtor was W. B. Sherman. “The tract is being subdivided into five-acre tracts and is to be planted to apples, pears and peaches as rapidly as men and teams can prepare the ground.”¹⁷ The company hired a F. D. Eismann, a local horticultural expert, and planned to develop the orchard and manage it for the first five years. Prospective buyers essentially purchased the future rights to the property and its production.¹⁸ By mid-January 1910

¹¹ Pruitt, op cit, 10.

¹² Inventoried as the Merlin General Store, at 330 Merlin Road, the mercantile still stands (Oregon Historic Sites Database, visited 15-November-2016).

¹³ *Rogue River Courier*, 2-March-1906, 8:1.

¹⁴ *Rogue River Courier*, 2-March-1906, 12:3-6 (capitalization as in the original).

¹⁵ *East Oregonian*, 5-June-1908, 2:4.

¹⁶ *Rogue River Courier*, 4-March-1910, 1:3-4. In an effort to shed a perceived deleterious connotation, several attempts have been made to rename the creek that runs parallel to Merlin Road. At the turn of the century a concerted effort to recast the stream as Grouse Creek failed and it remains Louse Creek today (see McArthur and McArthur, 2003:595, see also *Oregonian*, 7-February-1921, 6:7).

¹⁷ *Oregon Daily Journal*, 31-December-1909, 4:5.

¹⁸ *Oregonian*, 2-January-1910, 12:3. See also *Rogue River Courier*, 20-July-1906, 4:1. Eismann, of Grants Pass, was one of the owners and president of the Grants Pass Fruit Growers Union and with a brother operated the Eismann Orchard, described as “...one of the very finest and largest orchards in the Rogue River Valley.”

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work was already underway clearing the land, the intention of having more than 400 acres ready for spring planting. "The company has an office in Kansas City, also one at Portland and still another will be maintained at Grants Pass."¹⁹

This creative approach to the development in Merlin was heralded as the "Dawn of a New Era in Realty" in southern Oregon. Sherman, a local go-getter, made contact with "Kansas City people" and, as a result, the huge tract was purchased and the concept of the small fruit orchard and residential development began.²⁰ The "Kansas City people," W. T. and F. E. Reed, were quite familiar with the latest methods of real estate development, having been previously associated with J. C. Nichols and the landmark development of the Country Club District in Kansas City, Kansas.

William T. Reed was born in 1864 and his brother Franklin Everett was born three years later. The family moved from Pennsylvania to Kansas in 1869, finally settling in Newton. The brothers both attended Kansas State University, establishing the successful law firm of Reed and Reed in 1890.²¹ While in college both Reeds joined the Beta Theta Pi fraternity and through that connection met and befriended Jesse Clyde Nichols. "J. C. Nichols started building houses in Kansas City, Kansas in 1903."²²

Nichols (1880-1950), who founded the influential Urban Land Institute among other things, is often cited as a key figure in the history of urban and suburban development in the United States. He gained international notoriety for his approach to restrictions that controlled residential development. At the beginning of his career, after pursuing small projects, Nichols determined that large-scale development offered greater opportunity. "This decision, in 1903, brought him into partnership with two former Beta Theta Pi fraternity brothers, W. T. and Frank Reed, in land building and house development in Kansas City, Kansas."²³

The first project of the new firm, called Reed, Nichols and Company, was the Country Club District. Country Club was one of the first "planned community" projects that relied upon a master plan, controlled by a single developer, and intended to create a high quality of life for residents, rather than just selling property or building structures. It was almost immediately successful, attracting new residents and setting a tone for similar development. Even today the Country Club District is a highly regarded example of urban planning, and it and Nichols are the subjects of several books.²⁴ Noted urban historian Kenneth T. Jackson, writing in *Crabgrass Frontier*, wrote that the "Country Club District attracted planners and builders from around the world" looking to investigate its successful approach to land development.²⁵

¹⁹ Rogue River Courier, 14-January-1910, 3:5.

²⁰ Rogue River Courier, 21-January-1910, 1:7-8.

²¹ Creel, George and John Slavens. *Men Who Are Making Kansas City: A Biographical Dictionary*. (Kansas City, MO: Hudson-Kimberly Comp, 1902), 127.

²² Worley, William S. *J.C. Nichols and the Shaping of Kansas City: Innovation in Planned Residential Communities*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1990), 63.

²³ *Ibid.*, 65.

²⁴ See, in addition to Worley, *The Country Club District of Kansas City*, by LaDene Morton (Arcadia Publishing, 2015), *The J. C. Nichols Chronicle: The Authorized Story of the Man and His Company, 1880-1994*, by Robert Pearson (Lawrence, KS: The Country Club Press, 1994).

²⁵ Jackson, Kenneth T. *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States*. (New York, NY: The Oxford University

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The Reeds' involvement in the Reed and Nichols firm is uncertain, with some sources claiming it was strictly a financial arrangement with an old college friend and others implying a more direct, hands-on role. In either case, by late 1908 the firm had amicably dissolved. Nichols had large ideas and no longer needed his former fraternity brothers. The Reeds obviously saw a model in the Country Club project that was worthy of pursuit. As William Worley, one of Nichols' biographers, notes, "The Reeds were lawyers, who continued to dabble in mail-order real estate on their own account."²⁶

How the Reed brothers became interested in developing a large project in Merlin, Oregon, is uncertain but it may have been through S. D. and F. E. Williams, two brothers who were active in the lumber industry, with offices in Portland and, at least in the case of F.E. Williams, a mill in Glendale, about twenty miles north of Merlin. Formerly of Kansas, S. Dwight Williams was married to Elizabeth "Lizzie" Reed, in Newton, Kansas, in December 1878.²⁷ Lizzie Reed was the sister of W. T. and F. E. Reed. In the mid-1880s, still living in Kansas, S. D. was the senior partner in the firm of Williams & White, offering realtor and insurance services.²⁸ At some unknown time S. D. and Lizzie Williams relocated to Portland and became involved in the lumber industry. Fred E. Williams, S.D.'s brother, was the owner of the Pine-Fir Lumber Company, in Glendale, Oregon, in southern Douglas County.²⁹ After William T. Reed's wife died, the couple's two daughters, Grace and Marian, were sent to Portland, where they grew up with their aunt and uncle, S. D. and Lizzie Williams. W. T. Williams was likely a frequent visitor to Oregon as a result.

In late 1909 W. B. Sherman, the Grants Pass realtor, announced that he had succeeded in attracting a "colony of Kansas people" to invest in the Merlin area, with the goal of developing orchards and ranching uses as part of a residential development scheme.³⁰ By the following March, S. D. Williams, and his family were living on-site and overseeing the operation of the orchard project, with a large force of men clearing land and planting young trees in mixed pears, apples and peaches, as well as grapes and other plants. Civil engineer Oscar Edwards, of Portland, had been hired and was placed in charge of laying out the holdings, including a "boulevard" to be built on the east side of Louse Creek, an irrigation project, and clearing fire trails. "This is the biggest fruit proposition in Oregon and the businesslike manner in which the Rogue River Orchard company is handling its affairs will give great impetus to the fruit industry of the entire Rogue Valley."³¹

By the end of March 1910, at least some portion of the project had been renamed the "Country Club Orchards" and advertisements were placed in the *Kansas City Times*, as well as in other newspapers on the west coast, offering discounted rail fair to anyone interested in "joining the Kansas City Colony" on the Pacific Coast of Oregon.³² By summer 1910, though the orchard progress was slowed by drought, the company began to sell and construct housing within the tract. By the end of the year

Press, 1985), 178.

²⁶ Worley, 1990:76.

²⁷ *Newton Kansan*, 26-December-1878, 3:2.

²⁸ *Newton Kansan*, 10-Sept-1885, 3:4.

²⁹ *Oregonian*, 23-December-1921, 1:7.

³⁰ *Rogue River Courier*, 5-November-1909, 1:8.

³¹ *Rogue River Courier*, 4-March-1910, 1:4-5.

³² *Kansas City Times*, 31-March-1910, 11:7-8.

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construction of the "Headquarters House" was well underway.³³ In April 1911, the *Rogue River Courier* reported:

Arriving at the headquarters of the Rogue River Orchard Company, one finds a handsome new bungalow of ten or more rooms, modern throughout, with good outbuildings and grounds planned by one of the best landscape gardeners in the state from the Oregon Agricultural College, which although not yet complete give promise of great effect.³⁴

In August 1912, a "special tour" of the Country Club project was arranged with bankers, Southern Pacific Railroad officials, and others. The group arrived in Grants Pass on a private railroad car and then was taken by automobile to the project site. The entourage included Amos Voorhies, publisher of the *Grants Pass Courier*, county officials and W. T. Reed, who hosted the event. The group toured some of the project developments, including the "magnificent" Merlin estate of Chas. E. White, from St. Louis, and the more than 18,000 "specially selected" fruit trees that had been planted by the orchard company. They next headed to Orchard Lane and the Club House.

Those who have visited the headquarters house should go again. This season has added to the artistic thirteen room bungalow, which answers for a temporary club house, a wealth of beauty in flowers and lawns that cause one to linger before entering.... This spreading enterprise has within a space of little more than two years already reached the stage from which it is plain that success beyond the hopes of its projections is to be achieved.³⁵

The Country Club project continued to expand in fall 1912, when it was reported that the company had purchased 20,000 Bartlett and D'Anjou pear trees, expanding the orchard to more than 700 acres.³⁶ Even into 1913 new investors from Kansas City continued to arrive in southern Oregon, as more than 1400 acres were sold to J. H. Burney, who proposed to develop small-scale poultry farms on the "Petaluma Plan" in tandem with the orchard project.³⁷

Despite its initial success in attracting out-of-area investors, many from Kansas, the Country Club project, like much of the super-heated orchard investment in southern Oregon during this period, foundered, a result of both over-promotion and a regional drought. In 1915 the company petitioned the State of Oregon for dissolution of the corporation. "The [company] was incorporated during the boom times in real estate in southern Oregon and since the real estate business is a little dull at present, a number of realty companies have suspended business and dissolved."³⁸

In 1917, W. T. Reed, "one of the moving spirits behind the Rogue River Orchards company," was in Grants Pass encouraging the local business community to work together to promote development. In

³³ *Rogue River Courier*, 30-December-1910, 6-7.

³⁴ *Rogue River Courier*, 14-April-1911, 6:5.

³⁵ *Rogue River Courier*, 30-August-1912, 3:1-4.

³⁶ *Roseburg Review*, 26-September-1912, 4:3.

³⁷ *Rogue River Courier*, 15-May-1913, 1:6. Petaluma, in Sonoma County, California, experienced what might be termed a "Chicken Boom" of development that brought new rural development to that area in the early 20th century.

³⁸ *Daily Capitol Journal*, 23-September-1915, 10:3.

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1924, having permanently relocated from Kansas City to Oregon, W. T. Reed died during surgery at age 59. The *Oregonian* described him as “a prominent orchardist, of Grants Pass.”³⁹ In 1921, Fred F. Williams, another of the original project investors, had died in an automobile accident while travelling between his Glendale, Oregon, lumber mill and his home in Portland.⁴⁰ Fred’s brother, S. Dwight Williams, who served as the on-site superintendent of the orchard, apparently returned to Portland but no other information on him or his wife, Lizzie Reed Williams, was located. Franklin Everett Reed remained in Kansas. Frank Reed eventually gave up his law practice and became an investment banker, starting a securities firm in 1923.⁴¹ Frank Reed died 24-August-1951.⁴² Reed’s son, Cameron, was a World War I flying ace. He later joined with another Kansas City flyer, Chauncey Waddell, to found a securities firm, generally regarded one of the first in the nation to offer mutual funds to the public.⁴³

Between 1918 and 1921, the organization of the Country Club Orchard and Rogue River Orchard companies went through a series of law suits, tax liens, and adjustments that largely seem to have involved W. T. and F.E. Reed, along with W. T.’s daughters, Grace and Marian. As early as 1911 Grace and Marian were living in Merlin, on the “ranch,” with their uncle S. D. Williams.⁴⁴ With the end of the original development project, the remaining acreage was converted almost entirely to orchard and other crops, with the former “clubhouse” and its surrounding barns serving as the main orchard headquarters. In 1919, Grace Reed married Everett E. Cobb. “My grandfather, Wm. Reed, died in 1924 and it was about that time, probably through inheritance along with Marian Reed, my aunt, that Grace and Everett moved to Merlin to assume the house and operation of the ranch.”⁴⁵

Everett Elliot Cobb was born in Portland on 3-September-1896 and grew up in a house across the street from that of the S. D. and Lizzie Williams family and their two young nieces, Grace and Marian Reed.⁴⁶ Educated at Princeton, Cobb left college to join the military in 1918. In 1919, following the armistice, he and Grace Reed were married. Their first child, Everett Elliot Cobb Jr., was born in 1922. Everett Jr. later published a private memoir of his life.

In 1924 we moved...to a ranch in Southern Oregon where a young boy spent eight years building many fond memories. During these same years, his parents were learning

³⁹ *Oregonian*, 17-March-1924, 18:3

⁴⁰ *Oregonian*, 23-December-1921, 1:7.

⁴¹ <http://hydeparkkansascity.retrosites.com>, visited 11-November-2016.

⁴² <http://www.findagrave.com>, visited 11-November-2016.

⁴³ <http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/waddell-blue-inc-history/>, visited 18-November-2016. One of the first offerings of the Waddell & Reed firm was a mutual fund called “United Funds,” which was the same name of the company that was operated by Cameron Reed’s father, Frank.

⁴⁴ W. T. Reed’s wife had died when the girls were very young and they moved to Portland to live with their aunt and uncle, S. Dwight and Lizzie (Elizabeth) Williams, living in the subject house when S. D. served as the project superintendent.

⁴⁵ Everett E. “Bud” Cobb Jr., *Handwritten notes sent to Carol Milne*, c1999.

⁴⁶ Cobb’s father, Samuel B. Cobb, was a successful lumberman and community leader. With C. C. Woodcock he had organized the Standard Box and Lumber Company in the late 19th century, and he served several terms in the Oregon House of Representatives (see *Oregonian*, 20-February-1951, 15:3).

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how to run a pear ranch, something they knew nothing about. This inexperience, but the early years of the depression, meant hard economic times for my parents.⁴⁷

“Mr. Cobb, a Portland native, took responsibility for all hiring and supervision of the orchard business.”⁴⁸ In 1932 tragedy struck the family when Kenneth, their youngest son, was stuck by a car and killed while walking home from school.⁴⁹ After struggling to make a go of the orchard with limited success, the family left the ranch a few days later and never returned.⁵⁰

Along with some other 60+ scattered parcels in the original Rogue River Orchard subdivision, the subject property remained in the original ownership from the Rogue River Orchard Company from 1909 through the inherited ownership of Grace Reed Cobb and her sister Marian Rogers in 1924, until June 1936. At that point W. T. Reed’s two daughters and their husbands sold the property as part of a larger land transfer that included most, if not all, of the Reed-Cobb holdings in Merlin, to Clementine Lewis Bowser.⁵¹

THE CRAFTSMAN STYLE

Early 20th century residential architecture, by intent, reflected a movement away from the more elaborate and decorative Victorian styles of the late 19th century. Two styles, “Craftsman” and “bungalow,” share many essential qualities and the terms are often used interchangeably. McAlester’s *A Field Guide to American Houses*, the self-proclaimed “definitive guide” to style identification, notes the relationship between Craftsman and bungalow, but generally treats the latter as “vernacular examples” of the former, which can also be found in other, more derivative, styles such as Spanish Colonial, or Tudor.⁵²

The term “Craftsman” comes from the heavy oak furniture of that name that was first designed and built by Gustav Stickley (1858-1942). Generically, and by his many imitators, furniture that relied on Stickley’s aesthetic was termed “Mission Style” but Stickley called it “Craftsman,” after the name of his manufacturing firm. In October 1901 Stickley launched *The Craftsman Magazine* to celebrate the arts and crafts, promote Stickley’s ideas, and create a larger audience for his work while promoting sympathetic artists working in metal, tile, fabric and other mediums. As the popularity of the style grew, the incompatibility of the new designs in traditional Victorian-influenced settings became apparent. Stickley launched The Craftsman Home Service, which over the next decade and a half would publish more than 200 house plans for the public. “These houses were a reaction to the much more elaborate and expensive Queen Anne Victorian and Colonial Revival blueprints available from the many plan book services at the turn of the century.”⁵³ Stickley eventually collected the plans as

⁴⁷ Cobb, Everett Eliot, Jr. *Memoirs of Everett Eliot Cobb Jr.*, privately printed manuscript, 1991, 2.

⁴⁸ Atwood, Kay. *Josephine County Cultural and Historical Survey*, 1984, Form #229. This information was confirmed by Marian Cobb Carlson, Everett Cobb’s daughter, via personal communication with the author.

⁴⁹ *Oregonian*, 16-December-1932, 1:7.

⁵⁰ Cobb, *Memoirs*, 1991:7.

⁵¹ Josephine County Deed Record, Vol. 81, Page 334, dated 8-June-1936. Mrs. Bowser purchased more than twenty individual lots in the Rogue River Orchard Subdivision, including Tract 100, the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn site.

⁵² McAlester, Virginia Savage. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013:578.

⁵³ The Arts & Crafts Society, “Craftsman Homes,” (found at <http://www.arts-crafts.com/archive/craftsman/>, visited 16-December-2016).

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published in his magazine and published two popular books; *Craftsman Homes* (1909) and *More Craftsman Homes* (1912).⁵⁴

Independent from Stickley's work, another response to the elaborate designs of the Victorian era led to the development of simple, generally one- or one-and-one-half story residential designs that came to be called "bungalows." The term, historically derived from the Hindi *bangla*, has come to mean "a low house with a broad front porch" and in the western United States traces its development to the Stick and Shingle styles, Arts and Crafts, and Japan. Many credit the influential architectural firm of Greene & Greene, based in Pasadena, California, as having invented the bungalow style, with their best examples known as "ultimate bungalows."⁵⁵ The term "bungalow" was widely used during the pre-World War I era to the point where it became nearly interchangeable with small house or cottage.

By 1910-1911, when the Country Club Orchard clubhouse was constructed, the Craftsman influence played a major role in residential construction, especially in the western United States. Numerous period references to new construction related to the Country Club project in Merlin refer to "bungalow" design. In August 1910, J. L. Geller, of Los Angeles, purchased a lot from the company. "The land has a neat bungalow, recently built."⁵⁶ A 1911 description of the Merlin area notes there has been considerable building activity. "[M]any new bungalows and farm buildings, with their fresh paint and attractive home-like appearance on newly-cleared ranches, tell an eloquent story of an infusion of new blood and well-directed development."⁵⁷

The designer or architect of the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House is unknown and while the house is similar to several designs published in *The Craftsman*, there is no reason to believe that it actually represents an example of one of the magazine's plans. "Craftsman" design, while related to the larger bungalow style, is generally distinguished by a larger, two-story plan, with full-width porches, shingle or mixed siding, and higher, often more sophisticated, level of exterior detailing. In general "Craftsman" designs are larger and more substantial than bungalows but the terms are in many ways interchangeable in practice.

The Reed-Cobb House represents the single best identified example of the Craftsman or bungalow style in northern Josephine County. A few scattered bungalow designs, all single or one-and-one-half story with varied integrity, remain within a one mile radius of the Reed-Cobb House. For example, the one-story gable bungalow at 1560 Merlin Road is notable for its stacked river-rock porch detail and exposed rock chimney.⁵⁸ While not specifically documented, these early dwellings are almost certainly related to the original Country Club development period. None of these smaller bungalows

⁵⁴ Both Stickley books, as well as numerous articles from the magazine, have been rebound and reprinted over the past forty years. The complete text of *The Craftsman Magazine* is available online, at the Digital Library for the Decorative Arts and Material Culture (see <https://www.library.wisc.edu/decorativearts/>, visited 16-December-2016).

⁵⁵ Charles and Henry Greene, near the end of their lives, received the prestigious AIA citation for their "creation of a new and native architecture" (Makinson, Randell L. *Greene & Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art*. (Salt Lake City & Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977:264.

⁵⁶ *Rogue River Courier*, 19-August-1910, 2:3.

⁵⁷ *Rogue River Courier*, 14-April-1911, 6:5.

⁵⁸ Other seemingly pre-WWI bungalow-style residential development in the area includes a single-story shallow-hipped residence at 1206 Merlin Road and a small gable bungalow at 1150 Merlin Road.

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exhibit the level of design, association, or integrity remaining in the Reed-Cobb House, the original project headquarters.⁵⁹

CLEMENTINE LEWIS AND HEBER E. BOWSER PERIOD

In June 1936, Marian and Grace, W.T. Reed's daughters, and their husbands, sold the house to Clementine Lewis Bowser. Clementine Lewis, born in 1906, was the only child of Lucius Allen and Anna K. Lewis, heirs to pioneer Flanders, Couch and Lewis fortunes. Lucius Allen Lewis and his brother David, two of the sons of C. H. Lewis, founder of Allen & Lewis Grocery, an important pioneer firm, and Clementine Freeman Couch Lewis, daughter of early Portland river boat captain and investor John C. Couch, established the Lewis Investment Company, which grew to own significant Portland, Oregon real estate, Josephine County mines, and other properties. By 1931 Clementine Lewis was in southern Oregon, overseeing the operation of the Alameda Mine and exploring the potential re-opening the Benton Mine, both Lewis' properties.

The Benton Mine, located at the junction of Drain and Whiskey creeks, about 21 miles SW of Glendale, Oregon, was discovered by Joe Ramsey in 1892 and purchased by the Lewis family in 1894. Closed in 1905, Clementine reopened the mine in 1934, following an increase in gold prices, and operated until it was closed due to WWII restrictions. During that eight-year period the Benton Mine produced more than 64,000 tons of ore with a gross value estimated at \$549,414.⁶⁰ "The Benton mine, in Josephine county, operated by the Lewis Investment Company, was the leading gold producer in western Oregon."⁶¹ At its closure in 1942 the Benton Mine was reportedly the largest single employer in Josephine County.

Clementine Lewis Bowser (1906-1965) was born in Portland and educated in Maryland and raised among wealth and privilege as a member of one of that city's most prominent pioneer families. A member of the Portland Hunt Club, she was an accomplished equestrian, competing in bareback riding, standing race, jumping and Roman riding, winning trophies for her skill.⁶² In 1926 Lewis married Theodore Tuttle Smart, of Seattle, in a "brilliant ceremony" at the Lewis' home on Park Avenue, followed by a honeymoon in Honolulu.⁶³ That marriage ended in divorce in 1930, with Clementine gaining custody of the couple's child, Allen Lewis Smart. The following year, while living in southern Oregon, Clementine met Heber E. Bowser (1894-1963), a self-described miner. The couple were married in Gold Beach in January 1931. The event was reported on the front page of the *Oregonian* under the headline "Gold Field Romance Blossoms in Oregon."⁶⁴ The Bowsers appear to have initially made their home at the mine.

⁵⁹ There is, for example, a fairly intact single-story bungalow residence at 1570 Merlin Road, that retains its unpainted cobblestone porch railing and chimney. A hipped-roof modest bungalow remains at 1204 Merlin Road, with a one-and-one-half story example immediately to the east, at 1212 Merlin. A comprehensive study of c1910-1915 residential construction remaining from the Country Club Orchard development period would be of value but is outside the scope of this document.

⁶⁰ Brooks, Howard C. and Len Ramp. *Gold and Silver in Oregon (Bulletin No. 61)*. (Portland, OR: State of Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries), 1968:204.

⁶¹ *Oregonian*, 16-January-1940, 3:3.

⁶² *Oregonian*, 17-June-1921, 14:5-6. See also *Oregonian* 16-May-1920 and *Oregon Daily Journal*, 25-April-1920.

⁶³ *Oregonian*, 26-September-1926, 16:4-5.

⁶⁴ *Oregonian*, 30-January-1931, 1:4.

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With her father's death in 1935, Clementine Lewis Bowser inherited an interest in the Lewis Investment Company and she and Heber permanently relocated to southern Oregon to oversee the operation of the Benton Mine, which had reopened in 1934. It was at this time that she purchased the Reed-Cobb-Bowser property and, flush with profits from the mining operation, undertook improvements, the most significant of which was the construction of the large Gambrel-roofed horse barn. This structure replaced an earlier structure in the same location, as shown in historic photographs. Although some reports indicate the earlier barn burned, it may have simply been removed to allow construction of a specialized horse barn, a building better suited to Mrs. Bowser's personal interests and needs. While unconfirmed, there are also reports that Clementine built a horse track or exercise yard nearby, on other land purchased from the Reed-Cobb family along with the house.⁶⁵

BARNs IN NORTHERN JOSEPHINE COUNTY:

The large gambrel-roofed horse barn and stable at on the nominated property has been described as typical of the sort of horse barns built by well-heeled equestrians such as Mrs. Bowser. The barn, with multiple stalls for the animals, a tack room, and other amenities typical of the type, was designed and built specifically for the care of horses.

Farm buildings serve their purpose best when especially adapted to the specific use required of them. Horse barns should be different from any other building on the farm. The health and comfort of the horses should be the first consideration, but convenience in attending their wants and requirements, makes a close second.⁶⁶

Barn architecture has changed over time, in response to access to materials, transportation and changed in farm practice. Pioneer-era and late 19th/early 20th century barns in the West reflect the growth of larger scale farm operations. Mechanization, and the widespread adoption of tractors changed farm operations and impacted barn design as well.⁶⁷

The Oregon Historic Sites Database lists a total of 66 resources in Josephine County with "barn" in the property name. The majority of these are located near Grants Pass or in the Illinois Valley area, both areas more suited to agriculture than the often-mountainous mining regions of the northern portion of the county. Data on barns near Merlin is based on information in the Josephine County Cultural and Historical Resources Inventory, reliant upon on fieldwork done in the early 1980s.⁶⁸ At that time two barns were identified in Merlin, not including the Reed-Cobb-Bowser property (which was inventoried and included as an element of what was then identified as the Everett Cobb House). The inventory additionally includes four barns in Hugo and five in Wolf Creek. The vast majority of these barns date from the early 20th century, with Year Built dates between 1900 and 1915. A random sampling of the inventoried barns in the Merlin area finds them to be typical crib type Hay or multi-

⁶⁵ Inquiries with two life-long Merlin-area residents, including a 90-year old former equestrian, failed to document any formal horse track in this area, although did support the possibility of some sort of training loop or exercise area.

⁶⁶ Radford, William (David & Joan Loveless). *Practical Barn Plans*, reprint ed. (Stockbridge, MA, The Berkshire Traveller Press, 1978:52).

⁶⁷ Gallagher, Mary K. *Historic Context Statement – The Barns of Linn County Oregon, 1845-1945*. (Corvallis, OR: Linn County Planning Department), 1997.

⁶⁸ Atwood, Kay. *Josephine County Cultural and Historical Resources Inventory*. Prepared for the Josephine County Planning Department, 1983.

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purpose/general purpose barns as would be expected with the small scale subsistence farming found in northern Josephine County region, where there was never considerable commercial scale agricultural development. Only five of Josephine County's inventoried barns, i.e. less than 10%, are dated 1930 or later. Given the age of the survey, from 1983, many of these examples are likely to have been removed.

The barn at the Reed-Cobb-Bowser property is significant as a large, well-designed, example of a specialized horse barn, built for Clementine Lewis Bowser, a dedicated equestrian. Designed with considerable architectural detail including trimmed windows, large cupola vents, and other features, that are not typical of northern Josephine County, the barn is a significant example of its type in northern Josephine County. It adds to the agricultural character of the house and property and effectively relates the latter portion of its development during the Bowser ownership period.

SUBSEQUENT OWNERSHIP

Clementine and Heber Bowser retained ownership of the nominated property until 1946, when they sold their Merlin holdings to Alvera and Carl Wood, Grants Pass property investors, and left the area.⁶⁹ The Woods sold the multiple lots originally platted during the Country Club period to create the what has since become the surrounding residential development pattern. Subsequent owners of the Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn include W. Dale and Katherine Fallow, who purchased the property from John E. and Cleone K. Carton in 1958.⁷⁰ In 1970 Katherine Fallow sold one acre of the original 4.5 acre parcel surrounding the house to Josephine County, for use as right-of-way expansion for the "Merlin-Galice Road," creating the current, nominated, 3.5 acre parcel.⁷¹ In 1968 Carle and Katherine Brown purchased the property and were apparently responsible for the construction of the rear addition to the house, perhaps to display her large antique doll collection.⁷² Brown also was responsible for painting the exterior shingles and the river rock front porch. Following Brown's death, her executor, James David Brown, sold the property to the current owners, James and Carol Milne, who took possession in 1990.⁷³

SUMMARY

The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House is strongly associated with the development of the Rogue River Orchards and served as the headquarters/clubhouse of the related Country Club Orchard development that played an important role in the development of the Merlin area of northern Josephine County between 1909 and 1915. Completed by 1911, the house is considered among the best-known examples of the Craftsman style in the Merlin area and retains sufficient integrity to its original appearance, design and use of materials to effectively relate the associations for which it is significant. The related gambrel-roofed barn, built by the second owners, Clementine Lewis and H. E. Bowser, in replacement of an earlier structure on the site, is architecturally significant on its own as an example of its type and contributes to the overall integrity of the property by successfully relating the agricultural uses associated with the property's past.

⁶⁹ Josephine County Deed Record 122:47-48, dated 5-September-1946.

⁷⁰ Josephine County Deed Record, JV-14088 (196:616), see also 257:323 and 333:1034.

⁷¹ Josephine County Commissioner's Journal 22:913-14, see also JV-23035, dated 4-March-1970.

⁷² Jackson County Deed Record JV-15154 (257:323), see also 333:1034.

⁷³ Jackson County Deed Record 120:1348.

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The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn are locally significant under Criterion A for association with the development of the Country Club Orchard project in Merlin, Oregon, and under Criterion C, as both one of the best known examples of the Craftsman style within the northern Josephine County area and as an unusual and independently significant example of a gambrel-roofed horse barn, one of the best identified examples of its type in the Merlin area. The Reed-Cobb-Bowser House and Barn as documented here meets the eligibility requirements for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
- 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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: City of Portland

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

Reed-Cobb-Bowser House & Barn
Name of Property

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.5 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>42° 30' 18.66" N</u> Latitude	<u>123° 23' 55.95" W</u> Longitude	3	<u>42° 30' 18.11" N</u> Latitude	<u>123° 23' 49.50" W</u> Longitude
2	<u>42° 30' 20.80" N</u> Latitude	<u>123° 23' 52.93" W</u> Longitude	4	<u>42° 30' 16.09" N</u> Latitude	<u>123° 23' 51.72" W</u> Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The nominated area is identified as tax lot 1400, a 3.5 acre parcel in the Rogue River Orchard Company's First Subdivision, as shown on Josephine County Assessor's Map 350622C, and consists of an irregularly rectangular shaped tract of land between the right-of-way of the Merlin-Galice and continuing northeasterly to the channel of Louse Creek, between the undedicated Orchard Lane in the SE and the adjacent tax lot on the NW. The nominated area includes the house, barn and the landscaped areas surrounding them, all within the lot as identified by Josephine County as tax lot 1400.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The nominated area is the entire parcel directly related to the house and surrounding buildings, as associated with the Country Club Orchard development and owned by the Reed-Cobb and Bowser families, less a one acre portion sold for expansion of the public right-of-way along Merlin Road in 1970.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George Kramer, M.S., HP date 10-April-2017
organization Kramer & Company telephone 541-482-9504
street & number 386 North Laurel email george@preserveoregon.com
city or town Ashland state OR zip code 97520

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **General Location Map**
- **Specific Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Reed-Cobb-Bowser House & Barn

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Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Reed-Cobb-Bowser House
City or Vicinity: Merlin
County: Josephine **State:** OR
George Kramer, Kramer & Company, Ashland
Photographer: Jean Schweitzer, Merlin
Date Photographed: November 2016

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_001)
South-facing (Front) elevation, camera facing NW from front lawn
- Photo 2. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_002)
South- and West-facing elevations, camera facing SW, from driveway
- Photo 3. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_003)
South- and West-facing elevations, camera facing SW, from driveway
- Photo 4. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_004)
West- and North-facing (rear) elevations, camera facing SE from driveway
- Photo 5. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_005)
East- and South-facing elevations, camera looking west.
- Photo 6. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbHse 006)
INTERIOR: Living Room, camera facing west from stairwell
- Photo 7. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_007)
INTERIOR: Stairwell and Entry, camera facing SE from Living Room
- Photo 8. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_008)
INTERIOR: Stairwell, camera facing east, toward landing and projecting window
- Photo 9. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_009)
INTERIOR: Upper Floor Hall, camera facing N from stairwell
- Photo 10. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_0010)
INTERIOR: Master Bedroom, camera facing NW
- Photo 11. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_011)
BARN, South-facing (Front) elevation, camera facing NE
- Photo 12. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_012)
BARN, East- and South-facing elevations, camera looking NW

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- Photo 13. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_013)
BARN, East Stable Wing, camera facing NE
- Photo 14. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_014)
BARN INTERIOR, central aisle, camera looking N
- Photo 15. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_015)
BARN INTERIOR, central aisle stalls & doors, camera looking N
- Photo 16. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_016)
BARN INTERIOR: Stable Stall, TYPICAL
- Photo 17. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_017)
BARN INTERIOR: Upper Level, camera looking N
- Photo 18. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_018)
BARN INTERIOR: Upper Level, camera looking S
- Photo 19. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_019)
OUTBUILDINGS, camera looking NE
- Photo 20. of 20: (OR_Josephine_ReedCobbBowser_020)
OUTBUILDINGS, camera looking E

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

1. General Location Map
2. Tax Lot 350622C-1440, Rogue River Orchard Company First Subdivision
3. REED-COBB HOUSE- Site Plan (Not to Scale)
4. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan, Basement Level
5. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan, First Floor (Main) Level
6. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan Second Floor Level
7. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan Third Floor Level
8. REED-COBB HOUSE BARN - Floorplan Main Floor Level
9. REED-COBB HOUSE BARN - Floorplan Upper Floor Level
10. HISTORIC PHOTO: Rogue River Orchard Company Headquarters Building and Barn, looking NE from Merlin Road, c1911 (Oregon Historical Society Image #52881)
11. HISTORIC PHOTO: Reed-Cobb House, Barns and Outbuildings, looking NE, c1912
12. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking NW, c1915
13. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking North, (inset of Country Club Orchard sign, looking NE), c1913
14. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking West, c1913
15. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking NW, c1920
16. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking NE, showing original barns and outbuildings, 1924
17. PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Exterior Views and Barn
18. PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Reed-Cobb House Interiors, Main Floor
19. PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Reed-Cobb House Interiors, Upper Floor

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FIGURE 1. General Location Map, 1700 Merlin Road, Josephine County (Oregon Department of Transportation Map)



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FIGURE 2. Tax Lot 350622C-1400, Merlin, Orchard Company First Sub (Josephine County Assessor, 2016)



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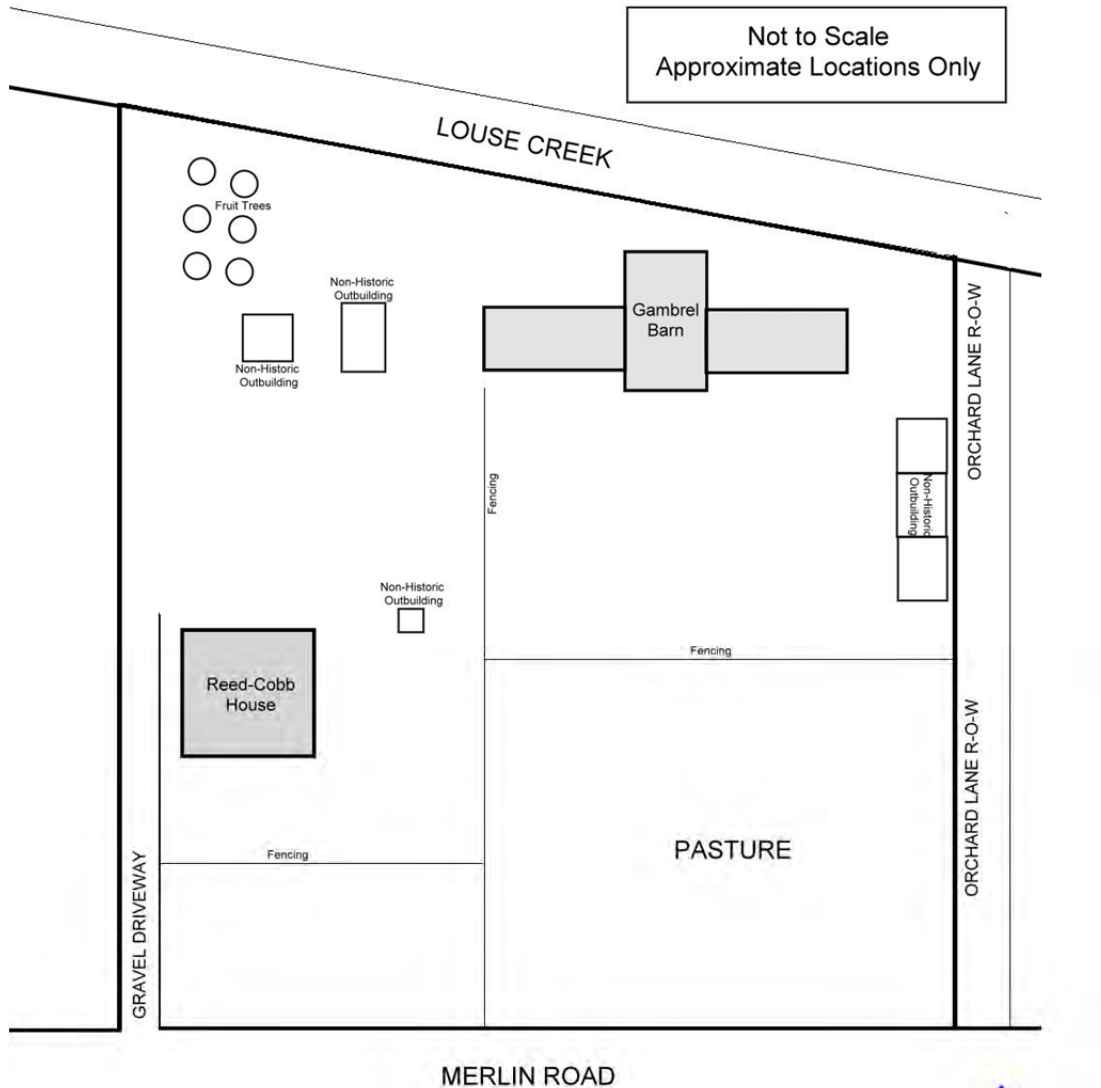
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FIGURE 3. REED-COBB HOUSE- Site Plan (Not to Scale)



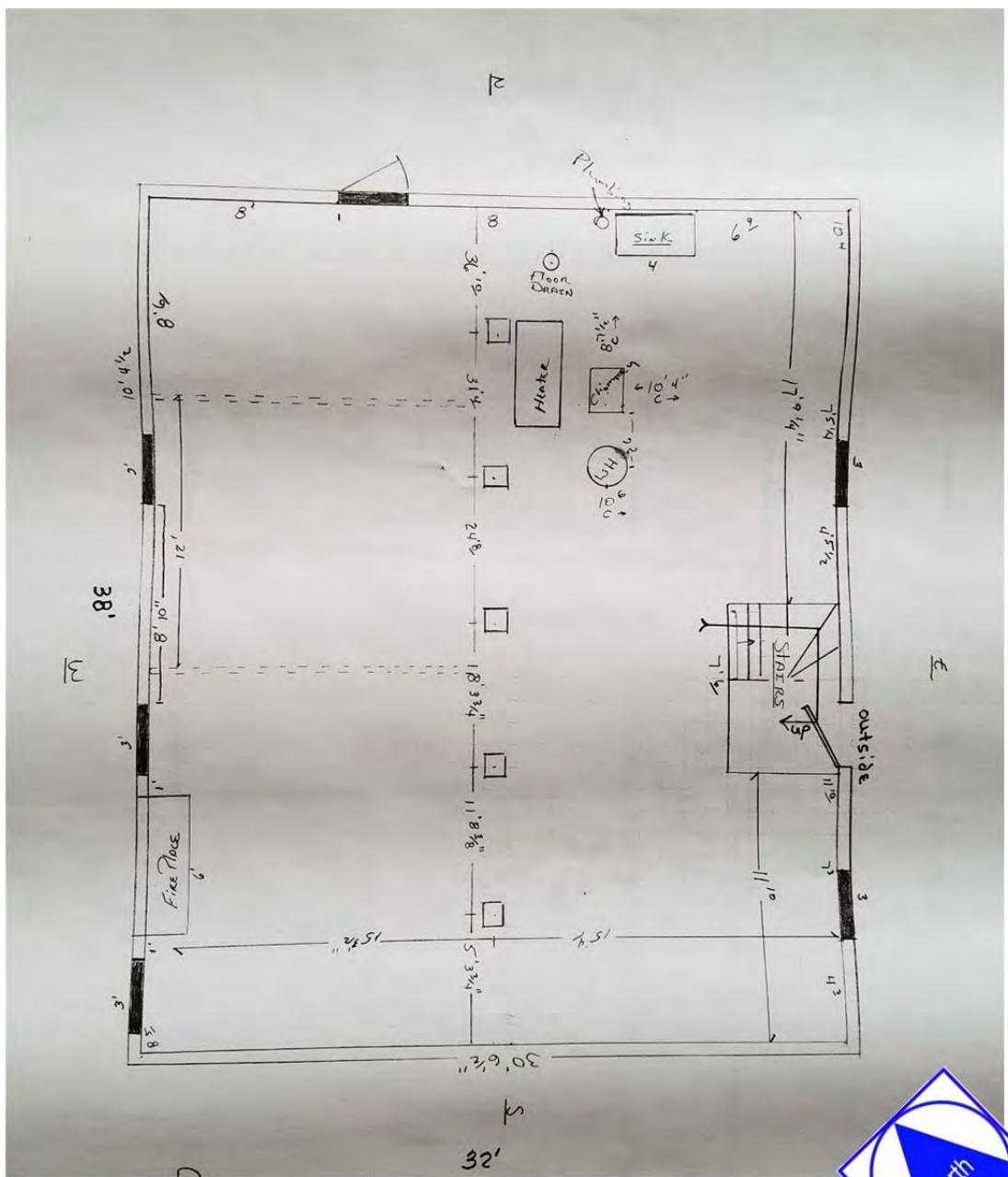
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FIGURE 4. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan, Basement Level (Source, Carol Milne)



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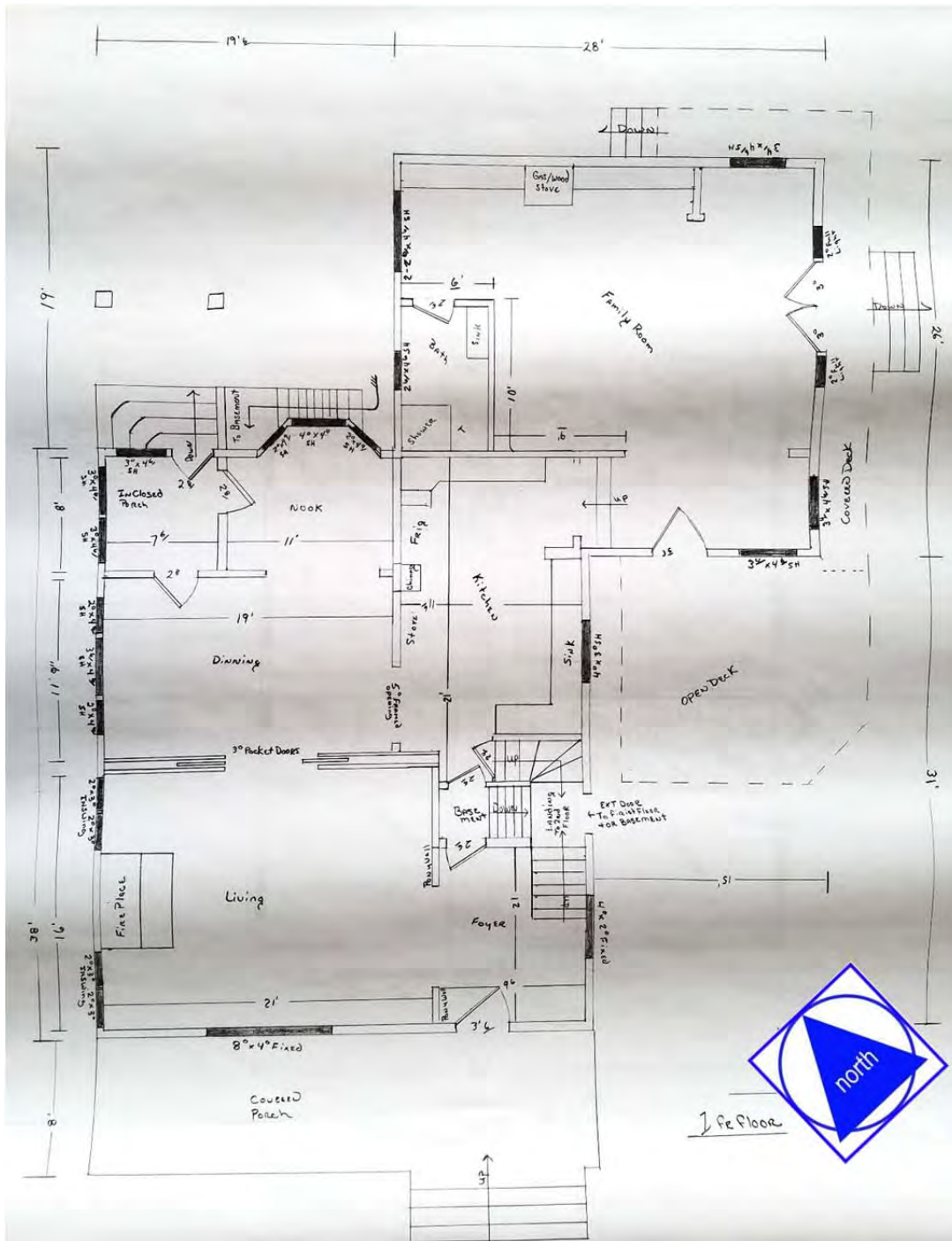
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FIGURE 5. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan, First Floor (Main) Level (Source, Carol Milne)



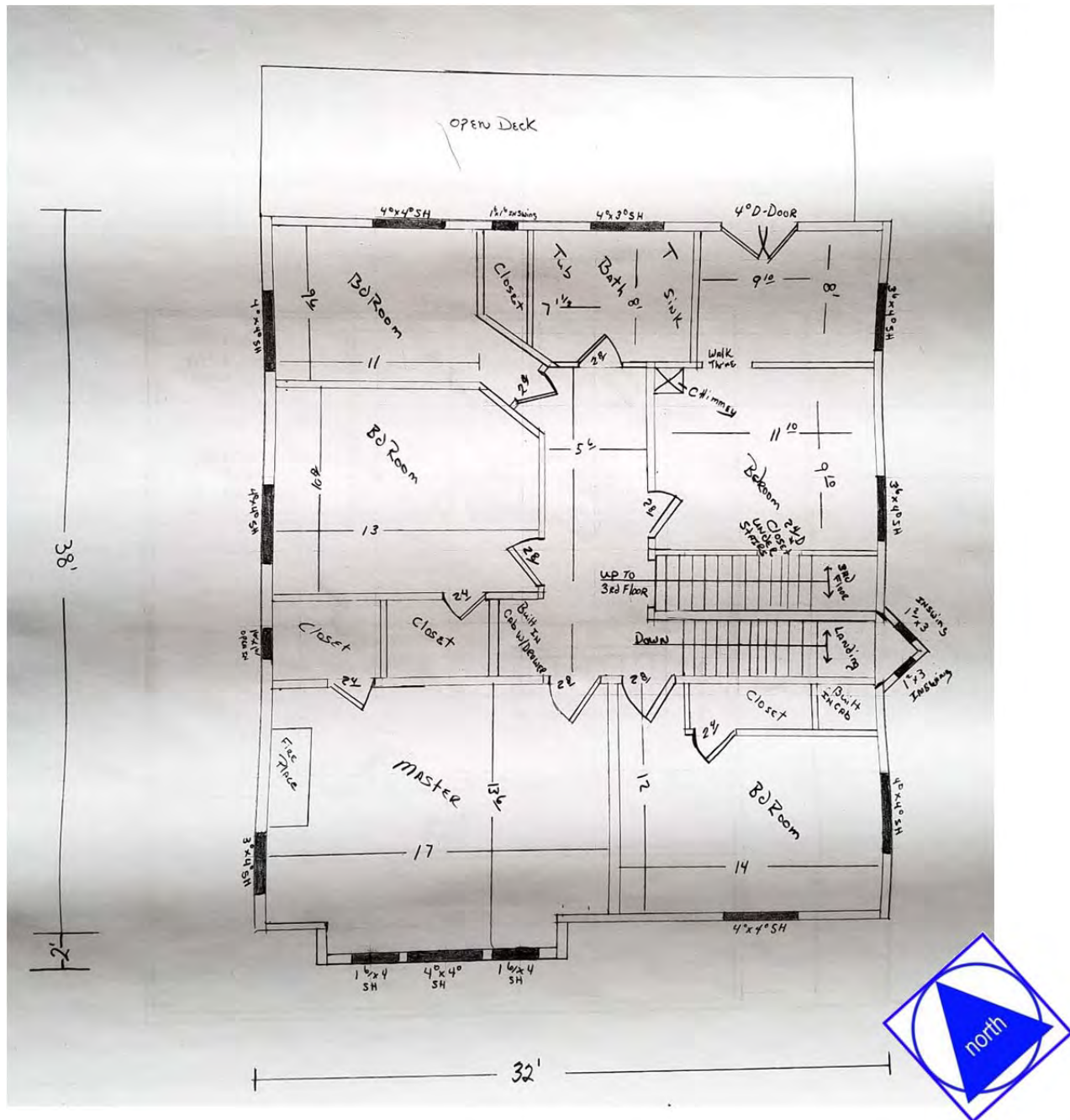
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FIGURE 6. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan Second Floor Level (Source, Carol Milne)



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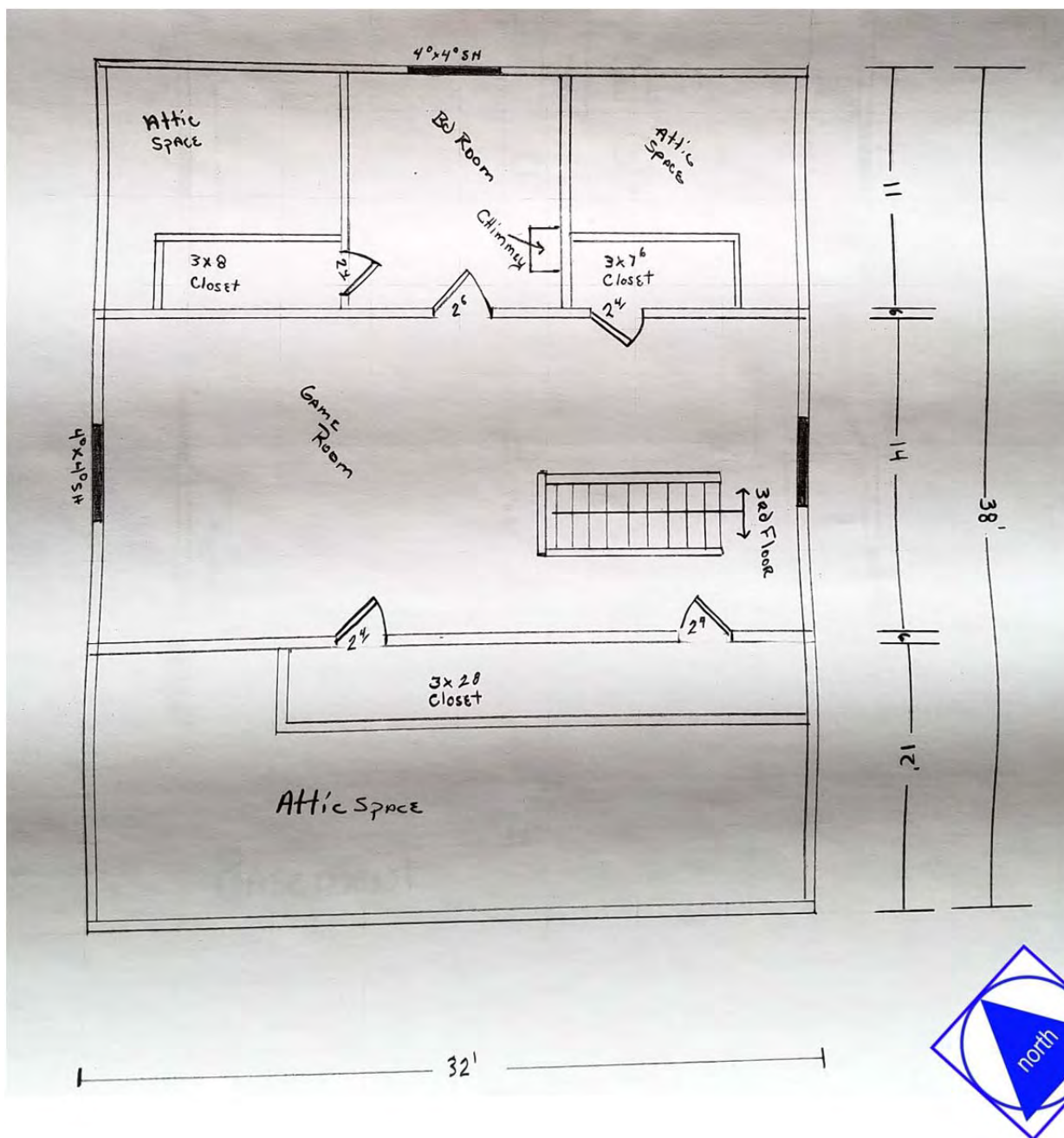
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FIGURE 7. REED-COBB HOUSE - Floorplan Third Floor Level (Source, Carol Milne)



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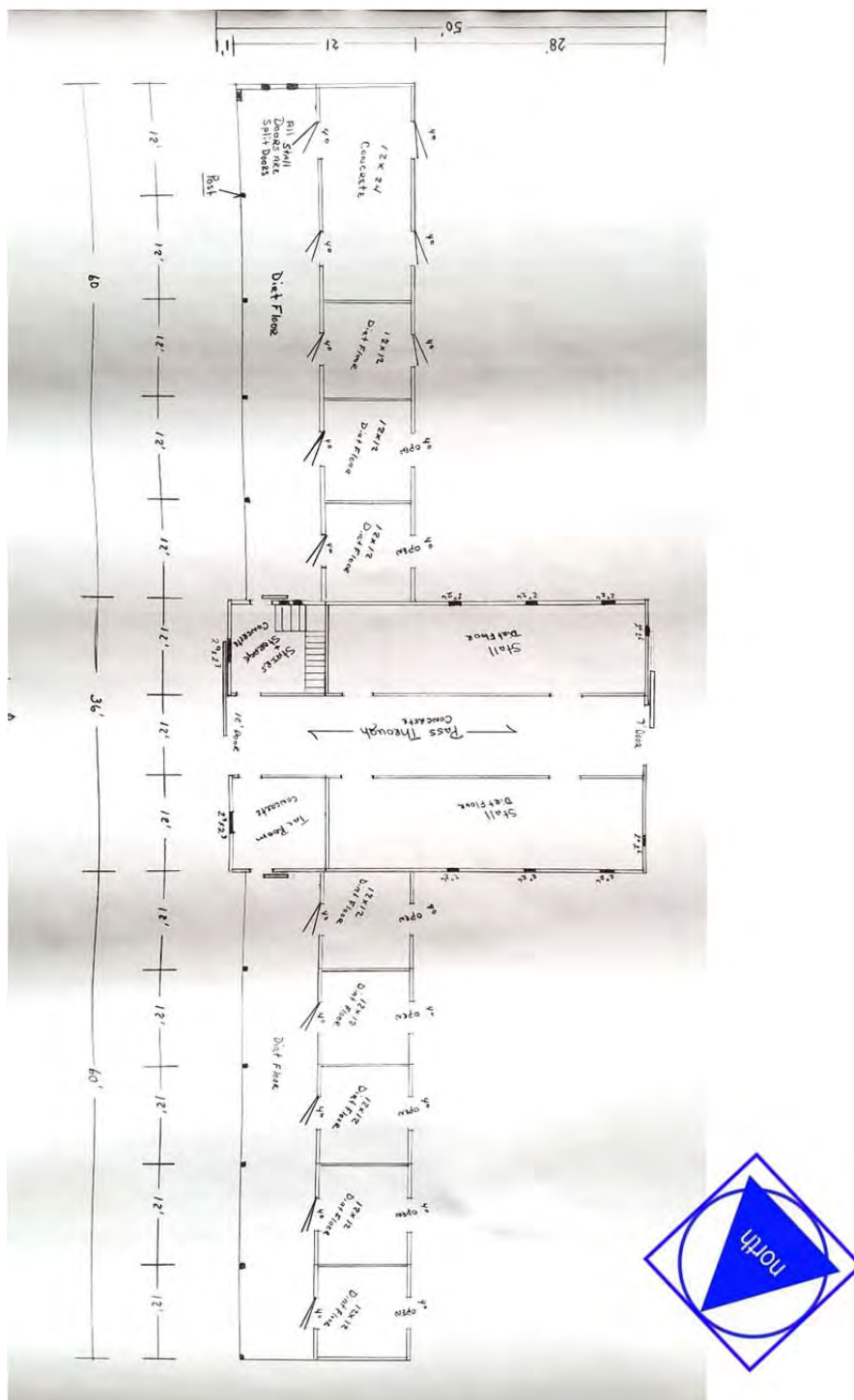
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FIGURE 8. REED-COBB HOUSE BARN - Floorplan Main Floor Level (Source, Carol Milne)



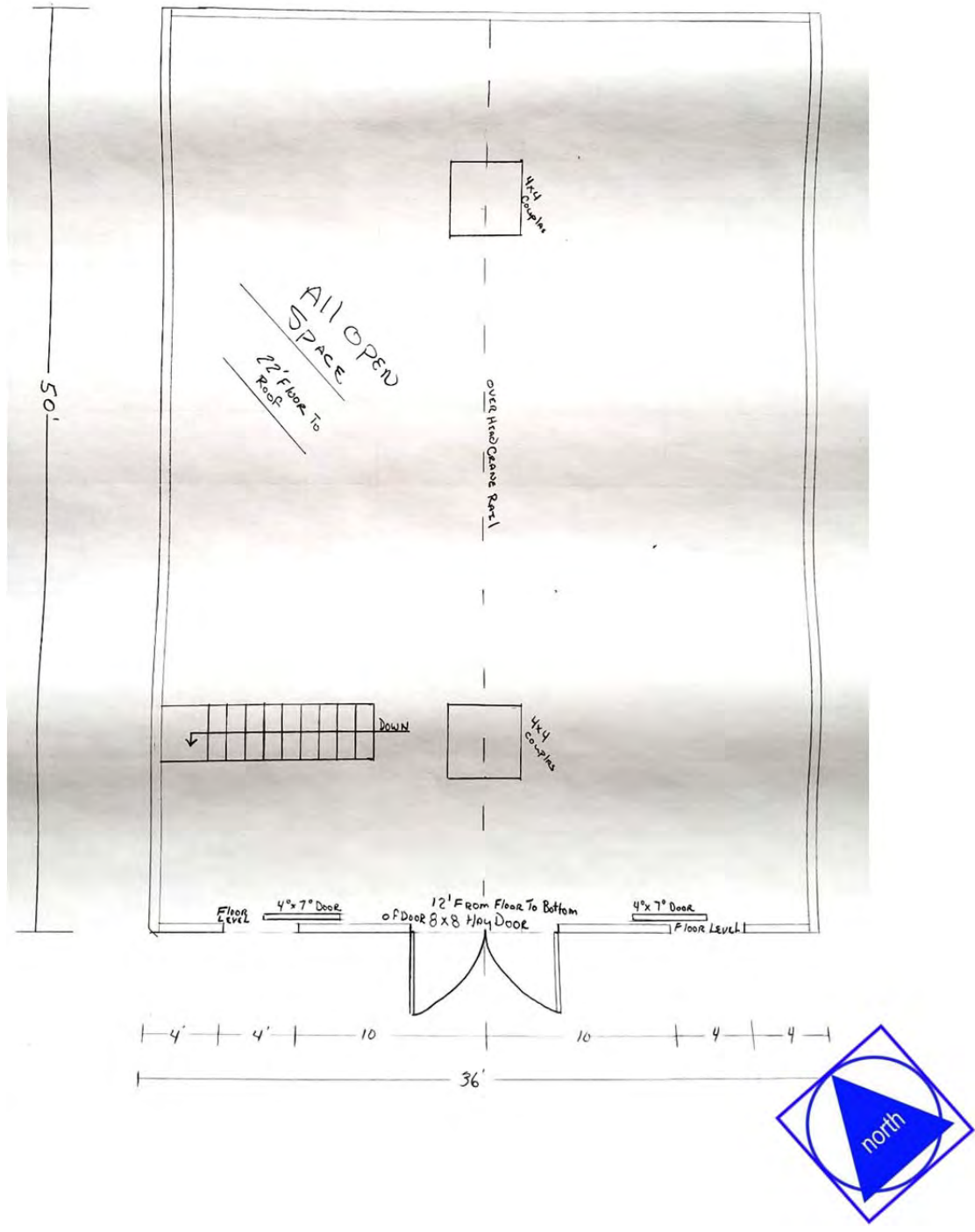
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FIGURE 9. REED-COBB HOUSE BARN - Floorplan Upper Floor Level (Source, Carol Milne)



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FIGURE 10. HISTORIC PHOTO: Rogue River Orchard Company Headquarters Building and Original Barn and outbuildings, looking east from Merlin Road, c1911 (Oregon Historical Society Image #52881)



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FIGURE 11. HISTORIC PHOTO: Reed-Cobb House, Barns and Original Barn and Outbuildings, looking east, c1912
(Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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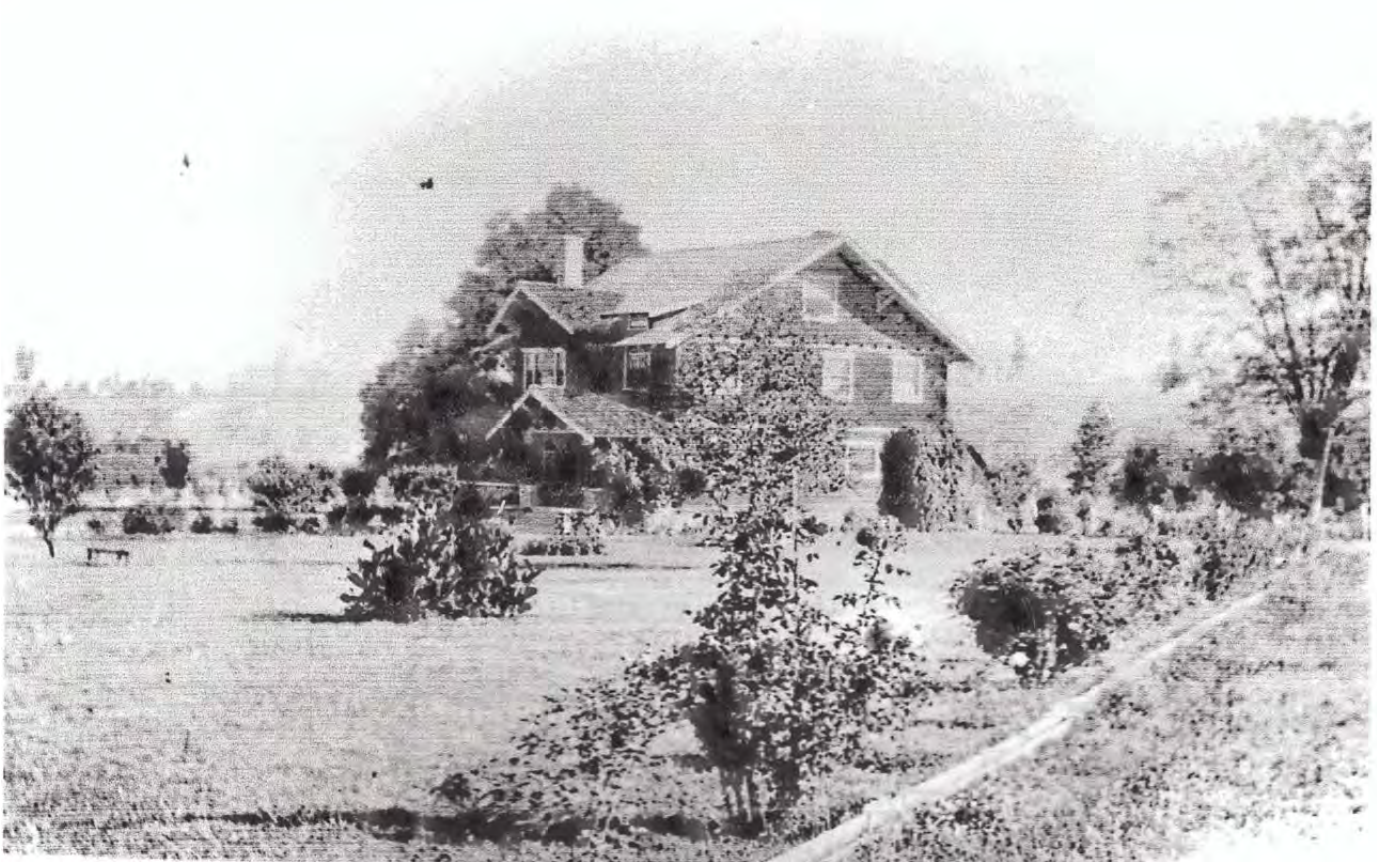
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FIGURE 12 HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking North, c1915
(Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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FIGURE 13: HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking East, (inset of Country Club Orchard sign, looking NE), c1913 (Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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FIGURE 14. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking Northwest, c1913
(Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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FIGURE 15: HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking north, c1920
(Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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FIGURE 16. HISTORIC PHOTO: Country Club Orchard Clubhouse, Looking easterly, showing original barns and outbuildings, 1924, (Source, Carol Milne/Cobb Family Photo)



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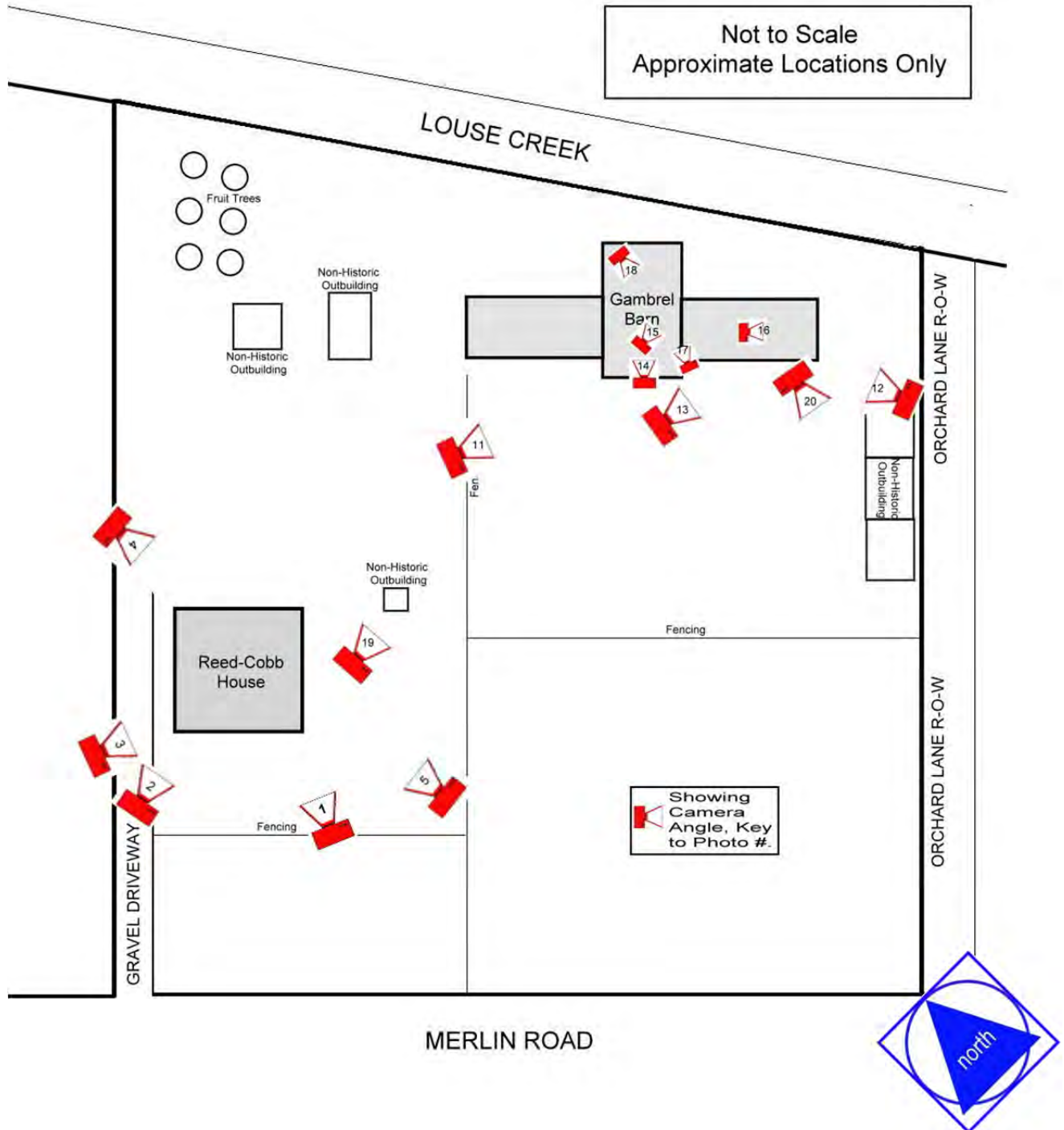
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FIGURE 17: PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Exterior Views and Barn



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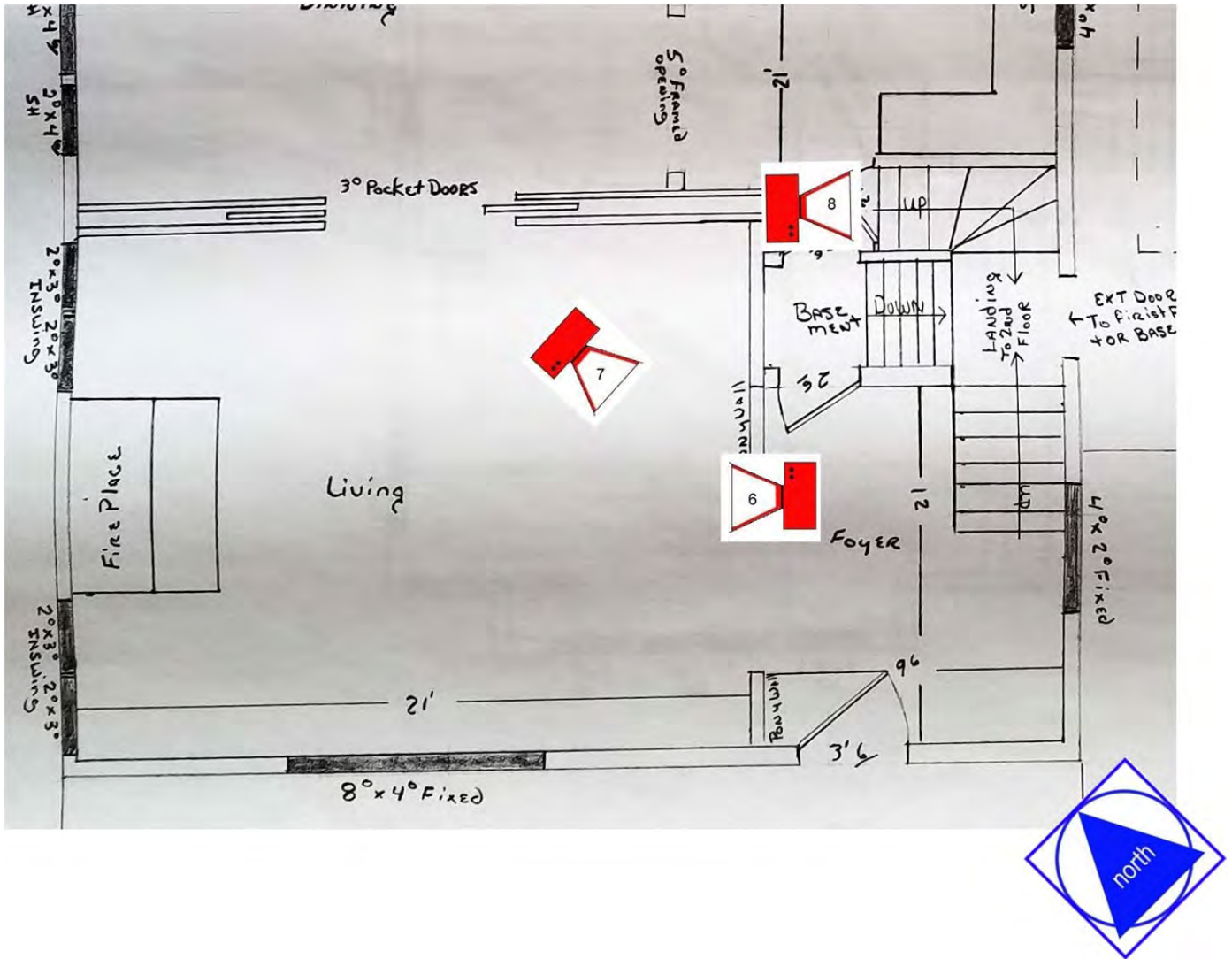
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FIGURE 18: PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Interiors, Main Floor



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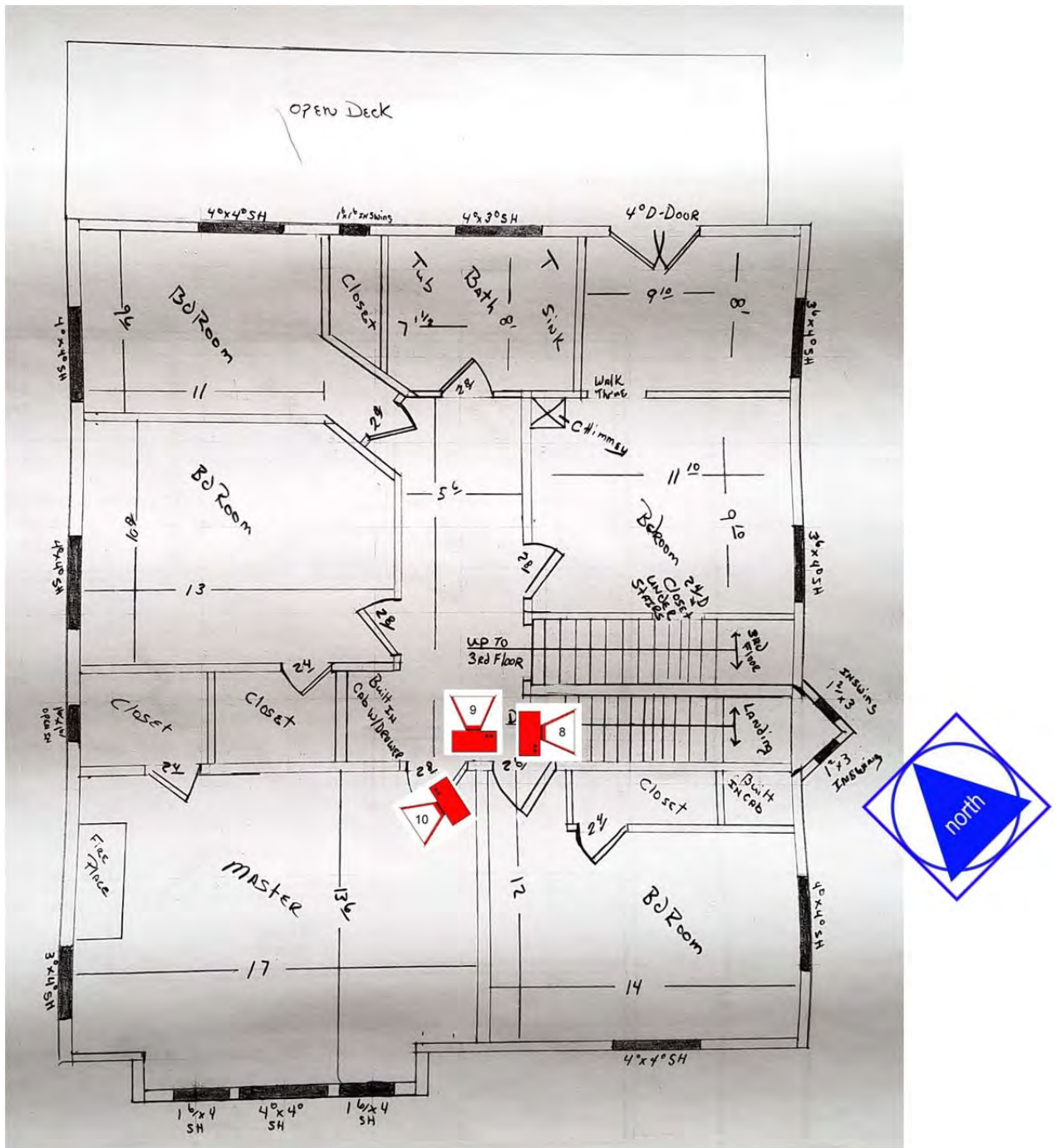
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FIGURE 19: PHOTO LOCATION MAP, Interiors, Upper Floor





































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action:

Property Name:

Multiple Name:

State & County:

Date Received: 9/14/2017 Date of Pending List: 10/11/2017 Date of 16th Day: 10/26/2017 Date of 45th Day: 10/30/2017 Date of Weekly List: 11/3/2017

Reference number:

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept Return Reject 10/30/2017 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments:

Recommendation/ Criteria

Reviewer Edson Beall Discipline Historian

Telephone _____ Date _____

DOCUMENTATION: see attached comments : No see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Parks and Recreation Department

State Historic Preservation Office

725 Summer St NE Ste C

Salem, OR 97301-1266

Phone (503) 986-0690

Fax (503) 986-0793

www.oregonheritage.org

September 12, 2017

J. Paul Loether, Keeper
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
1849 C St. NW, Mail Stop 7228
Washington, D.C. 20240



Re: National Register Nomination

Dear Mr. Loether:

At the recommendation of the Oregon State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation, I hereby nominate the following historic property to the National Register of Historic Places:

REED-COBB-BOWSER HOUSE
1700 MERLIN RD
MERLIN, JOSEPHINE COUNTY

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination listed above to the National Register of Historic Places.

We appreciate your consideration of this nomination. If questions arise, please contact Jason Allen, Survey Program Coordinator, at (503)986-0579.

Sincerely,

Christine Curran
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Encl.

