

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

For NCRS use only  
received JUN 24 1983  
date entered

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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

**1. Name**

historic n/a  
and/or common Clifford House

**2. Location**

street & number 339 Ralston St. n/a not for publication  
city, town Reno n/a vicinity of congressional district 2  
state Nevada code 32 county Washoe code 031

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>n/a</u> 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 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 O. S. Clifford  
street & number 339 Ralston  
city, town Reno n/a vicinity of state Nevada 89503

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Washoe County Courthouse  
street & number  
city, town Reno state Nevada

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title not represented has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records  
city, town state

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The small Gothic Revival styled cottage is sited picturesquely among mature trees and shrubs, typical of its era of construction. It stands on Ralston Street, one of the City's older residential avenues, and among a grouping of small houses of similar age and type. The building is particularly notable for the integrity of its design and its strong 19th century image.

Constructed between 1885 and 1890, the small one and a half story Gothic Revival cottage is a wood frame structure, surfaced with shiplap siding. The building is formed essentially of a gabled rectangle lying parallel to the street, and a smaller gabled extension that projects from it to the south. Another gable intersects the center of its principal rectangle at right angles, and faces the street. The facade gable contains a window with a pointed arch, divided into four lights by slender muntins. A shed-roofed porch, centered beneath this gable, projects from the facade. The porch is supported by turned posts, and cut brackets hold the spindle frieze beneath the porch overhang. Turned balusters form a lacy balustrade. A similar porch with identical spindle panels and balustrade provides access to the southern extension. Windows are double hung, with two over two lights. Flat moldings with a cut shape surround the windows. A round swirl-louvered vent occurs in the end gables. The roofing material is composition shingles, and the foundation is partly brick and partly stone. A shed-roofed extension has been added along the rear of the building. It appears to have been a fairly early addition.

Mature trees, bushes, and a lawn landscape the good-sized yard. A small free standing garage stands at the rear of the property.

## 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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** between 1885-1890 **Builder/Architect** unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The small Gothic Revival cottage is a particularly fine example of its type and style of structure. The form, style, and detailing of the modest house are classic in their representation of a standard version of this style. The structure has retained its integrity and conveys a strong sense of the past. The residence also possess some important historic associations to an individual of local prominence.

This small vernacular residence, constructed between 1885 and 1890, is a classic example of a 19th century Gothic Revival cottage. The facade gable of the structure with its pointed arch window is a standard element of the style, as is the basic configuration of gable and rectangle that comprises its form. The centered porch with its spindle work and balustrade and even the extension on the south, reflect the adherence of the design to a standard version of the style of that day.

The form, proportions and detail could have been executed directly from one of the "pattern books" utilized widely during that period. Andrew Jackson Downing's, The Architecture of Country Houses, is an example of such publications that presented a number of versions of an architectural style to the public. These publications resulted in the reasonably rapid spread of a style from the east coast to the west, as communication and transportation modes improved. Thus, one could find virtually identical houses constructed in any geographic area of the country.

The style reached some geographic areas later than others due to the isolation of certain regions. This particular version of the Gothic Revival Cottage appears to have been popular during the third quarter of the 19th century in California and Nevada.

Detailing such as the spindle work and turned balusters became popular after the advent of the lathe, and the mass production of wood ornament.

The structure has retained its design, integrity, and 19th century image to a high degree, the major alterations being an addition to the rear of the house that is almost not visible from the street.

The structure once belonged to the John Orr family. Orr developed water irrigation ditches that conveyed the water, a particularly precious commodity in Nevada, to ranches between the Truckee River and the Spanish Springs area to the north of Reno. Ditches created by the Orr Ditch Co. that began in the 1860's are still in use today.

O.J. Clifford purchased the property in 1905. Originally from Austin, Nevada, the Clifford family settled here in Reno, and the house has remained in that family up until the present time, a period of 77 years.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview: O. S. Clifford, June, 1982; Mrs. F. Nystrom, June, 1982  
 Founder's Title Company of Nevada, Title and Deed Records  
 Sanborn Insurance Maps of Reno, 1890  
 Nevada Historic Society, Reno, Biographical files

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 71.66 X 100.00' (.3 acres)

Quadrangle name Reno

Quadrangle scale 7.5'

### UMT References

A 

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2	5	7	6	2	5
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4	3	7	8	9	9	0
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B 

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**Verbal boundary description and justification:** Washoe Co. Assessor's Parcel # 07-274-12  
 The parcel is 71.66' X 187'. The house stands on the South 71.66' of the original lots 8 & 9 of block 274, book 7. Parcels were subdivided to provide street frontage for houses along Ralston prior to the construction of this

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

state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a
state	n/a	code	n/a	county	n/a	code	n/a

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paula Boghosian

organization Historical Environment Consultants

date June, 1982

street & number 2306 J Street, Penthouse

telephone (916) 446-2447

city or town Sacramento,

state CA 95816

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature James M. Hamrick

title Deputy SHPO

date 1/14/83

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

*for* Keeper of the National Register Rosa McClelland

date 3/7/83

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

FOR HCRS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JAN 24 1983  
DATE ENTERED

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Clifford House

CONTINUATION SHEET 1 ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE One

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house. This house stands on its original parcel on its original location.



RECEIVED 2280

OMB No. 1024-0018 (Rev. 10-90)

MAY 28 2008

NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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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 How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. 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 entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Borland-Clifford House  
other names/site number: previously listed as Clifford House

2. Location

street & number 339 Ralston Avenue not for publication \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Reno vicinity \_\_\_\_\_  
state Nevada code NV county Washoe code 031 zip code 89503

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant \_\_\_\_\_ nationally \_\_\_\_\_ statewide X locally. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Harold M. James, SHPO 5/29/08  
Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

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

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

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

X entered in the National Register on March 7, 1983

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

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

\_\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

✓ other (explain): Additional Documentation Accepted

for Edison H. Beall  
Signature of Keeper

6-24-08  
Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 1

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

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**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: domestic Sub: residence

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: domestic Sub: residence

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**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Mid-Nineteenth Century: Gothic Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_  
roof \_\_\_\_\_  
walls \_\_\_\_\_  
other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) See continuation sheets.



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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 a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Community Planning and Development

Period of Significance 1875-1958

Significant Dates \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) \_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder James Borland

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.) **See continuation sheets.**

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 0.30 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	<u>11</u>	<u>257625</u>	<u>4378990</u>	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Tammy Buzick, highschool educator, and Terri McBride, Nat'l Register Coordinator  
organization NV State Historic Preservation Office date May 7, 2008  
street & number 100 N. Stewart Street telephone 775-684-3448  
city or town Carson City state NV zip code 89701

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Hong V. Nguyen  
street & number 2160 Platora Way telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
city or town Reno state NV zip code 89512-2124

**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. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 1

Borland-Clifford House  
Name of Property  
Washoe County, Nevada  
County and State

**Section 8: Significance**

The subject property was listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as the Clifford House on March 7, 1983. At that time the property was listed under Criterion C, for architecture at the local level of significance.

**This amendment is to add Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development, to modify the property's name to reflect the original owner's construction of the residence, and to change the period of significance to 1875-1958, also to reflect recent research on the property that shows an earlier construction date than that proposed in the original 1982 nomination (listed on March 7, 1983) of the Clifford House at 339 Ralston Street in Reno, Nevada. In addition, included here is updated historical information on the neighborhood in which the Borland-Clifford House is located, Reno's Western Addition.**

The Borland-Clifford house had important beginnings in the fall of 1875 since it was one of the first houses built in Reno's new Western Addition. Since that time, the neighborhood surrounding it has gone through several transformations. Early in the neighborhood's development, the Lincoln Highway transected the Western Addition beginning in 1913, leading the way for U.S. Highway 40 and the need for motels, restaurants, and auto stations. Located within the Western Addition, the Whitaker School (for girls) was the first school in 1876 to bring education to Reno's western edge, and many followed. A small Catholic hospital, established in 1907, has expanded through the years, and now covers much of the addition. The year 1931 forever changed Reno when the state legislature legalized gaming and reduced the legal residency requirements to file for divorce to six weeks. Many Reno neighborhood homes became boarding houses for "temporary residents," the divorce-seekers. Other original homes vanished making way for a more modern bungalow style homes. As gaming increased and moved west casino owners destroyed many homes in order to make room for large buildings and parking lots. Remarkably, through all these changes, the Borland-Clifford house has remained a private single-family home. It is significant at the local level in the areas of Architecture (Criterion C), and Community Planning and Development (Criterion A).

***Reno's Western Addition***

The Western Addition's history began even before Reno's birth. On July 1, 1862, President Lincoln signed the first Pacific Railroad Act, which stated, "That there be, every alternate section of public land, designated by odd numbers, to the amount of five alternate sections per mile on each side of said railroad, on the line thereof, and within the limits of ten miles on each side of said road, not sold, reserved, or otherwise disposed of by the United States." The future site of Reno lay right in the middle of odd numbered Section 11, Township 19N, Range 19E. The railroad acquired the entire section except one

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 2

Borland-Clifford House  
Name of Property  
Washoe County, Nevada  
County and State

**(Section 8 continued)**

small portion. The only inhabitant living within Section 11 (640 acres) was Myron C. Lake. A year earlier, Lake purchased a bridge and hotel on the main wagon road from California to Virginia City, Nevada.

By the spring of 1868, the Central Pacific Railroad approached the Truckee Meadows. Lake sold Charles Crocker 160 acres within Section 11 for \$200. Being on the road to Virginia City, Crocker decided this would be a good location for a depot and town. On May 8, 1868, Reno was born during a public auction when Crocker sold town lots to regain the money he spent purchasing the property.

As Reno's population grew, individuals purchased lots and subdivided them into additions. Some of Nevada's earliest businessmen, real estate magnate M.C. Lake, University of Nevada founder J.N. Evans, surveyor and Nevada-California-Oregon RR president A.J. Hatch, and banker H.G. Marsh, all bought large parcels for development that later became additions to Reno. On September 21, 1874, the Central Pacific Railroad deeded the northwest quarter (160 acres) of Section 11 to Contract and Finance, a financial company owned by the CPRR. This became the Western Addition, basically bound by Chestnut (now Arlington) to the east, Vine Street to the west, 9<sup>th</sup> Street along the north and the railroad tracks along #rd Street, to the south.

Two weeks after Contract and Finance subdivided the new Western Addition, John S. Shoemaker became the first landowner there when he purchased lots 6, 7, 8 and 9 of Block 2 for \$500 in October, 1874. He quickly subdivided lots 8 and 9 and changed them into eastward-facing properties oriented toward Ralston Street. Shoemaker built his south-facing house on lots 6 and 7. On July 28, 1875, James H. Borland purchased Shoemaker's lots 8 and 9 for \$600. Two days later, he sold one portion of those to A. C. Hobart for \$300. Hobart retained the property until January 4, 1876, when he sold it to Charles T. Bender for the same amount he paid. On July 29, 1875, H.W. Higgins purchased the third portion. Borland quickly began construction on the southern end of lots 8 and 9.

From the beginning, businesses shared land next to prominent houses. Brick and wood yards, an invalid's home, livery stables, and churches all found early homes in the Western Addition. The first large non-residential purchase went to Bishop O.M. Whitaker in April 1876. With the help of several influential Reno investors, the Bishop purchased Western Addition's Block 14 in its entirety. He soon began construction of his Episcopal school for girls. This elaborate structure was three stories high and cost \$27,000. That October, Principal Miss Kate Sill opened the school to forty-five young scholars. The Whitaker School may have been the first school in the Western Addition, but many followed.

Aside from Bishop Whitaker's School, the Western Addition housed one other parochial school. In 1877, three Dominican sisters arrived in Reno and built an elaborate academy on Lake Street near the Catholic Church, but by 1892, financial debt forced the church to close the school. That same year, Father Micheal

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National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 3

Borland-Clifford House  
Name of Property  
Washoe County, Nevada  
County and State

**(Section 8 continued)**

Kiely asked Sister Antoine and Sister Vincent to open a smaller, more practical school. With Bishop Manogue's blessing, they purchased Lots 11 and 12 in Block C of the Conner's Survey, in the northwest quadrant of the Western Addition, for \$900. Here they built a small two-room schoolhouse. Within two years, their needs grew and two more classrooms plus an upstairs living quarters for boarders was added.

In May 1894, Father Francis Reynolds began construction of a two-story brick building. As the school grew, so did the building. By the turn of the century, it was a three-story building with rooms for more than a dozen boarders. In 1903, Father Thomas Tubman became priest of the Reno Parish. He did not believe education was the concern of the church, and was opposed to the sisters' school. In early 1907, Sisters Vincent and Bertrand went to Ireland to recruit postulants for their convent. When they returned that September, they found Father Tubman had converted their school into a hospital.

By the turn of the century, Reno was in dire need of a hospital. There were twenty-one physicians in Reno, most of whom worked as general practitioners. Several attempts at establishing hospitals were made, including one at the old Whitaker School and another on Ralston Heights just north of the Western Addition. It was not until 1908 when Sisters Hospital began operation, that a medical facility was successful. In 1912, the hospital built a wing next to the old Convent School, and in 1931, St. Mary's Hospital expanded across the street to its present location. The hospital and other health care facilities soon encompassed most of Conner's Survey. The most relevant event to this amendment at St. Mary's Hospital occurred on December 30, 1963 with the birth of Tamera Buzick. If it were not for that, this amendment would not exist.

By 1879, Reno's population had outgrown the small frame schoolhouse at the northwest corner of Front and Sierra. When the trustees for Reno School District No. 10 began searching for a suitable location for their new school, they found the Western Addition to be a prime location. That March the trustees purchased an unnumbered block which lay just west of Reno's block A and on the eastern edge of the addition on West Street between Fourth and Fifth streets. Central School was a two-story high large brick building with mansard roof surmounted by a tower. Its eight classrooms housed grammar school students on the lower floor and high school students on the second floor. This building serviced Western Addition children's needs until 1911 when trustees deemed it unsafe. Students moved into the old Whitaker School while the district built two new schools. The magnificent Reno High School soon occupied the grounds of the old Central School. A new grammar school also found a home in the Western Addition. Despite the dangers of a creek crossing the property and its location near the largest livery in Reno, School District trustees began construction on Fifth Street between Bell and Washington. They named the school after a long-time Reno educator, Mary S. Doten.

From 1875 to 1907 when O.J. Clifford purchased the home at 339 Ralston, the Western Addition continued to grow as a residential neighborhood. Over two hundred homes were located in the

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 4

Borland-Clifford House  
Name of Property  
Washoe County, Nevada  
County and State

**(Section 8 continued)**

subdivision. The addition represented almost every imaginable frontier and urban occupation. According to city directories, professions included bartenders, stock raisers, shoemakers, a dress maker, several carpenters, two paving labors, a hotel keeper, a bank teller, a dentist, several teachers, a freight agent, a telegraph operator, two house painters, a railroad foreman, a horseshoer, a surveyor, a shepherd, two cops, teamsters, a blacksmith, several bookkeepers and clerks, and many day laborers comprised the notable mix of professions. The more memorable families included stock raiser and hotelier George Mapes, bank teller Charles Bender, Cattle Inspector Solomon Hilp, and bartender Spiro Francovich. It would take some of these families generations to become well-known in the Reno community, but at the turn of the twentieth century, they all lived productive lives in the Western Addition.

Like the Borland home, many nineteenth-century homes became rentals and boarding houses. The Western Addition was conveniently located near downtown Reno making it ideal for people working in the city. Borland's neighbor J. S. Shoemaker sold his home to Elda Orr, wife of early settler and developer of Reno's first irrigation ditch, John Orr, on October 23, 1897. Mrs. Orr apparently wanted to convert the home to an income-producing rental property. She subdivided Shoemaker's two remaining lots, rotated the original home so it faced Ralston Street, and built another home between that house and Borland's. Both Orr houses became rentals. On the other side of 339 Ralston, the Bender home also lost its status as a single residence. Charles Bender died June 28, 1915 and his widow sold the house to Luella Chessman on May 17, 1919, who in turn began taking in boarders. A year later on June 12, 1920, Luella sold the property to Mary Ramsey who then converted the home into the Ralston Apartments.

The Western Addition's transportation connection dates back to its birth along the Central Pacific Railroad. However, it took Henry Ford's mass production of the automobile to change the neighborhood. With America's newfound desire to travel, better roads became a necessity. In September 1913, the Lincoln Highway Association announced their transcontinental highway route. Renoites were delighted to find they were to be included. Lincoln Highway travelers entered Reno from either the east or the west by way of Fourth Street. Being at the base of the Sierra Nevada, Reno became a prime resting location. Once tourists entered town, they took several routes to reach desired hotels, motels, restaurants and auto station. Many travelers went directly through the Western Addition. By 1922, traffic increased along Fourth Street when the new Victory Highway divided the Western Addition. In 1926, Fourth Street became federal Highway US 40. Motels, restaurants and auto stations replaced many original homes. In 1938, the Higgins home at 361 Ralston fell to Manford JB Gas Co. and became 500 W. Fourth Street. This left only three original homes on Shoemaker's 1875 subdivision within the Western Addition.

In 1931, the Nevada Legislature reduced the residency period for divorce to six weeks. The Western Addition became a perfect waiting location for temporary residents in Reno. It was still a quaint neighborhood, and it conveniently located near restaurants, theaters, the library, gaming establishments,

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and most importantly the Washoe County courthouse. During the 1931-1934 period, six residences on the 300 block on Ralston Street were listed in divorce court documents as addresses for the temporary "residents" (Harmon 2000). Renters such as these helped the addition survive the trying times of the Depression. Shoemaker's old house, the Orrs' new house, as well as the Bender and Higgins homes all benefited from the divorce trade. The Borland-Clifford home does not appear to have been modified for boarders, and does not appear in newspaper ads of the day as a rental for divorce-seekers.

It took over thirty years for legalized casino gaming to make its appearance in the Western Addition, through changes in zoning laws. In 1965, Peter Cladianos Jr. purchased the 79-unit Sands Motel on Arlington Street, and began expanded the hotel immediately. By 1969, the Sands Motor Inn was large enough to qualify for an unlimited gambling license. In May 1978, the Cladianos family began construction of a thirteen-story tower directly across the street from the Clifford home. Today the Sands Regency occupies an entire block that was once home to a dozen nineteenth-century houses. For instance, the Francovich home at 328 Ralston was saved from demolition when it was moved to its present location at 557 Washington Street. The Sundowner, the Gold Dust West, and the Reef casinos followed the Sands in taking entire blocks to build casinos that forever altered a once vital residential neighborhood in the Reno downtown "core."

Reno is no longer a bustling nineteenth-century railroad town. The Western Addition's picturesque gardens and chestnut trees are all gone. The charismatic neighborhood where Guy Borland and Oscar Clifford once played as boys has vanished. The quiet carriage ride from the railroad to Whitaker's School is now a fast-paced drive from the now below-grade railroad trench through downtown to Interstate 80 (which now covers the northern section of the Western Addition). Growth and development may have changed Reno's environment, but under the shadow of the Sands Regency Hotel exists a small reminder of Reno's western heritage. Through it all, James Borland's little gothic house has remained a family home filled with children's laughter. Currently the property owner rents the house to single families.

In the entire 160 acres that originally made up the Western Addition, only a few pre-1900 homes remain intact. Even fewer have remained private residences. Urban growth in the areas of transportation, education, health care, the divorce trade, and gaming have changed the feeling of the once-elite neighborhood known as the Western Addition.

***J.H. Borland and Later Owners of 339 Ralston Street***

James Howatt Borland was born in Pennsylvania in 1849 to Scottish immigrants John and Jean Borland. In 1856, his family traveled by sea to California where they quickly settled in Placerville. Here James'

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father made the transition from coal miner to gold miner. James did not follow his father's career choice, however. James moved frequently and worked clerk type jobs for various companies. In 1871, he temporarily lived in Reno where he worked as a clerk for merchants Manning and Duck. He also spent time in Rye Patch, Nevada where his father ran a hotel on the Southern Pacific RR line with the help of his wife and his two sons Robert and Alexander. James then moved to San Francisco where he met and married Mary Ella Millett in October 1873. At the end of August 1874, Mary Ella gave birth to son Guy Howatt Borland in San Francisco. That October, they returned to Reno where James purchased lots 8 and 9 in the Western Addition on July 28, 1875. By early September, their new gothic home was ready for occupancy (the home appears on the first Sanborn Fire Insurance Map completed for the City of Reno, in 1885). They lived in the home less than five years, and in 1880, the Borland family returned to Rye Patch where they lived with James' parents and he worked as a telegraph operator. In 1897, James accepted a job with the Internal Revenue Service in San Francisco. In 1904, He became general manager of the San Francisco-based United States Fidelity and Guaranty Company of Baltimore, Maryland. He retained this position until his death on May 26, 1919.

From 1880 until the turn of the century, the Borland's little gothic home was rented to tenants. One renting family was Virginia & Truckee RR conductor P. F. Verrill, his wife Sarah, and their daughter Florence. Mary Jepson, a Danish housekeeper lived in the home with them. Another renter was Harold Clausen's family. Clausen was part owner of Block and Clausen's Washoe Saloon and Lunch Counter on Commercial Row in downtown Reno. On March 21, 1902, James Borland sold the house to Mrs. Augusta Rosenthal. She also used the home as a rental until she sold it to Mrs. O.J. Clifford on July 31, 1907. The Cliffords owned the home until 1991.

Oscar Jed Clifford was born in Holly, Michigan to Michiganders William and Sarah Clifford on October 16, 1860. When O.J. was fifteen years old, the family moved to Austin, Nevada where his father worked at the local grocery store during the gold rush days there. Oscar J. married Austin native Lucy Criscenzo on July 9, 1889. Lucy was the second of four children born to emigrants Sam and Eliza Criscenzo; her father was a barkeep in Austin. After marriage, O.J. edited and published the *Reese River Reveille* and established a pharmacy business in Austin. On June 26, 1896, Lucy gave birth to their only child Oscar S. Clifford. On March 28, 1901, O.J. received his license to practice pharmacy in Washoe County, Nevada. In 1903, the family moved to Sparks, and three years later, they moved to Reno where O.J. became a partner of the Dalton, Clifford and Wilson drug store on First and Virginia Streets. He worked there until his retirement in 1920. For a time, both Lucy's father and O.J.'s mother lived at the family home on Ralston Street. O.J. died of a stroke on April 31, 1932. Lucy lived in the home until August 28, 1945. Oscar S. graduated from University of Nevada in 1918. In 1955, he married a woman named Beth (maiden name unknown), and the two continued living at 339 Ralston. Oscar worked several jobs during his life including sales for the Sierra Pacific Power Company. He died February 15, 1945. Beth sold the house in 1991.



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**Integrity**

According to the Washoe County Assessor's Office, Mr. Hong V. Nguyen purchased the home at 339 Ralston Street in 1995, and currently owns it as a rental property. Recent modifications to the residence are minimal, at most, or undetectable. Although the surrounding streets continue to experience growth and change, this portion of Ralston Street, specifically the Borland-Clifford House at 339 Ralston, maintains integrity in terms of location, design, materials, workmanship and association.

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**Section 10: Geographical Data**

No changes to data included in the March 7, 1983 listing.