



## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>ca. 1918</u>

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

The ensemble of three houses occupied by succeeding generations of the Minto family is located on a bluff above Willamette Slough, and access to the family's sheep and hop ranch on Minto Island in the flood plain nearby to the west was provided by a private pull ferry across the slough. To the north was a brewery, and to the south were lumber yards and modest residential districts. The area to the north was replaced by fashionable houses, which were in turn displaced by the new Civic Center and developments along Commercial Street, a major arterial. The ensemble is situated at the head of Mission and Saginaw Streets, a block west of Commercial Street. On Saginaw, older homes still stand, south of the site, but the lumber yards have been replaced by two story apartments. The district is now business zoned. After the turn of the century, Burlington Northern Railroad tracks below the bluff impeded access to the slough, and eventually the island ranch was sold to the Oregon Pulp and Paper Company after World War II for settling ponds. The rest of the island is now a part of the Willamette Greenway combining agricultural and recreational uses.

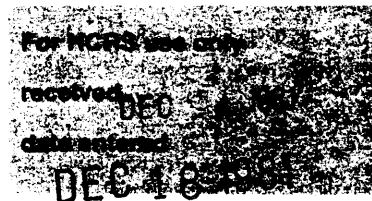
The John Minto house at 841 Saginaw is a two-story, frame vernacular farmhouse. The southern-most of the houses, it was built 1869 and originally stood 100 feet to the north of its present site, roughly between the two later houses as they now stand. Its well is now covered by the patio of the second Douglas Minto house. When it was relocated, about 1918, it was placed on a full concrete basement and was given a new front porch, fireplace chimney, staircase, and dining room cabinetry in the Craftsman mode.

L-Shaped in plan, the gable-roofed house is oriented with the inner angle facing the street. It is in this angle that a hip-roofed front porch with square posts and solid railing was added. Exterior walls are clad with lapped weatherboards; the basement is covered with drop siding. Plain frieze boards are used under boxed cornices. Tall window openings are fitted with double-hung sash and one-over-one lights and are trimmed with molded architraves. The four-panel front door in beaded frame with corner blocks has two rectangular top lights. Rectangular window openings with many small panes were added in the south living room wall in 1918 on either side of the chimney piece added at the same time. Paired window openings were made in the north wall of the dining room and framed on the inside wall by built-in cabinetry and sideboard in 1918 also. A single story kitchen ell with north side porch is centered in the rear elevation.

The Colonial Bungalow at 835 Saginaw, completed in 1922, was the first of two houses built for the distinguished pioneer's son, Douglas Minto. Rectangular in plan, it is oriented longitudinally on its lot and is covered by a hipped roof with a pair of transverse jerkin-headed gables at either side. Boxed cornices have returns at the gable ends. The central gable-roofed front porch with full classical entablature, vaulted pediment with raking, denticulated frieze, is carried by a pair of Doric columns on a concrete deck with bowed steps. A large dormer with jerkin-headed gable roof is on the rear roof slope. Exterior walls are clad with wide lapped weatherboards. Fenestration is typical of the Bungalow Style, with picture windows in the facade, one on either side of the entrance, having many small panes at the top most part of the opening. Bilateral symmetry of facade organization is consistent, each elevation. Interior finish, too, is typical of the period and style, featuring a ceramic tile fireplace in the north wall of the living room flanked by book shelves and crowned with a continuous wood mantel piece extending the width of the wall, and, setting off the dining room, a column screen in which truncated obelisks with necking and capitals are used instead of classical columns. Plans and specifications for the Colonial Bungalow of 1922 were recently discovered in possession of the current owner. The house was designed by Fred A. Legg of Salem, and the contractors were Larson, Madill and Bruce. Construction started at the end

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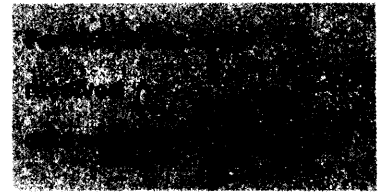
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of January, 1922, and the project was scheduled for completion May 1 of the same year. Specifications show that the interior trim, cabinetry and book cases were of yellow fir to be painted white and ivory enamel. Livingroom, diningroom and bedroom floors were oak finished with golden oak stain and two coats of varnish.

Fred A. Legg (1869-1941), the architect of the Colonial Bungalow of 1922, was a native of Portland, Oregon, attended Willamette University in Salem, and studied architecture in Philadelphia. He began his practice in Salem in the office of Walter D. Pugh in 1904, and in 1906 established his own offices in Salem and Portland. The Portland office was discontinued in 1916 and reopened in 1922 with his son, Kenneth Legge (who changed the style of the family name), in charge. The elder Legg is better known for commercial buildings, such as the R. P. Boise Building of 1913, which has been nominated to the National Register, and for public schools in Oregon and Washington as well as numerous buildings for Oregon State institutions and the fairgrounds.

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A more sophisticated building, stylistically, is the second house of Douglas Minto, completed in 1926 in the English Cottage Style, a continuation of stylistic traditions of English Arts and Crafts architecture. Owing to its prominent location at the head of Mission Street, distinctive features such as segmental-arched tripartite window openings, unadorned stucco finish and rolled eaves in imitation of thatched roofs, it is the preeminent example of its style in the city. Of the three houses, it has undergone more adaptive-use modification since 1970, when it was converted to office use. Rectangular in plan, the 2½ story house has a gable roof with rolled overhanging eaves with gutters and downspouts. The facade, in keeping with the English Cottage tradition, has a picturesque, or irregular composition in which a gable-roofed section at the north end of the facade dominates but is offset by two varied dormers at the center and south end. The central dormer above a gable-roofed porch with round arched portals in each wall is a swept, or eye-brow dormer. Fenestration originally consisted of paired and tripartite openings fitted with double-hung window sash with border-type membering. Window glazing in upstairs windows of the facade has been changed to sliding aluminum sash. Several of the window openings have segmental arch heads, a hallmark of the Arts and Crafts Style. The exterior walls are finished with unrelieved stucco. Massing of other volumes, bays and projections of the house is also picturesque, or irregular. The south gable end is jerkin-headed.

The front door is glazed with border membering and is flanked by two elongated sidelights with round-arched heads. The entrance hall has arched closet doors, and on the north, a wide archway to the living room on the north extending the depth of the house. A fireplace with ceramic tile surround and classical mantel piece occupies the center of the north wall, and double doors to an enclosed porch flank either side. On the south wall of the living room is what was a column screened entrance to the dining room. It consisted of four turned posts above a low wall on each side of the passageway. Despite the added backing, the original effect has been retained in part. In the dining room are two glass-fronted built-in corner cabinets like the one in the living room. To the south of the entrance hall is a former bedroom with arched windows, and, on the south, two closets on either side of a window with built-in drawers underneath. Back of the entrance hall, to the west, is a hall with staircase, and doors to the dining room, kitchen in the south west corner and a downstairs bath on the south. Upstairs are three bedrooms off a center hall, a bath in the south east corner, and a dressing room in the north west.

In 1949 the Mintos added the bedroom in the southwest corner of the upstairs, and created what was an office for Douglas by enclosing the porch on the north. In 1952, a recreation room was created in the basement, complete with fireplace. In 1970, the second owners, both physicians, changed the upstairs windows across the front, redesigned the kitchen and dining room windows, and the kitchen cabinets. The third owners, a firm of lawyers, used the house solely for an office, and are responsible for the current decor. They added the doorway to the dining room and built the wall behind the screen, and they replaced glazed doors to the porch office on the north.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)		

**Specific dates** ca. 1869, 1922, 1926 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The three increasingly substantial houses forming a contiguous ensemble at 841, 835, and 821 Saginaw Street in Salem, Oregon represent the rising fortunes of a pioneer stock and hop-raising family headed by John C. Minto (1822-1915), who immigrated to the United States from England in 1840 and arrived in Oregon in 1844 by the overland route. John Minto is best remembered in Oregon history for his initiating the raising of sheep in the Willamette Valley, beginning in 1846, and for his writings on Oregon farm life. He served eight years in the State House of Representatives. The houses are significant to Salem for their association with John Minto and his heirs and because they include the city's outstanding example of English Cottage Style architecture, popular in this country between the First and Second World Wars. The other two are a Colonial Bungalow and a vernacular farmhouse of ca. 1869. Each of the three houses embodies the distinctive characteristics of its style. Collectively, they possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with an important pioneer family. The second Douglas Minto House commands from the rear, as it was intended to, a view of the historic ranch on Minto Island in Willamette Slough to the west. Today, the historic farm holdings are in a combination of wild fowl refuge, farming and recreational uses. Each of the houses is presently owned by the Oregon School Employees Association, which occupies the second Douglas Minto house and leases the other two as a dwelling place and a philanthropic clothing resale outlet, respectively.

Agriculture: John Minto was one of the important figures in the early development of agriculture in Oregon, and some members of his family, particularly his son, Douglas (1862-1942), carried on his interests. John Minto farmed first at Clatsop Plains, then Mission Bottom, and finally selected a donation land claim four miles south of Salem. He was first interested in orchards, and his first fruit was shipped to the gold fields of California. His interest then changed to the raising and study of Merino sheep and the wool industry. He acquired the beginnings of his flock from the Puget Sound Agricultural Society and from men like Joseph Holman. In 1856, John became one of the first stockholders in the Willamette Woolen Manufacturing Company of Salem, the first such manufactory on the Pacific Coast. As secretary of the State Agricultural Society, he helped organize the first State Fair, held in 1861 on the present site of Gladstone. During the years, he received more than 400 awards for his displays of sheep and their fleeces. He served as secretary of the Board of Horticulture 1887 to 1890, and he later was appointed a member by Governor Wm. P. Lord. In 1892 he was commissioned to report on the sheep industry in California, Oregon and Washington by the U. S. Secretary of Agriculture. His report is a major source of historical data on sheep growing in the West. In 1869, John Minto acquired the north end of what is now known as Minto Island. It had been cleared of marketable timber for the wood piles of Salem, and was, by that time, brush and wild land which Minto was able to develop into a productive hop and sheep ranch.

John Minto was the editor of an important agricultural newspaper published in Salem, the Willamette Farmer, 1869-70, and he was a frequent contributor in later volumes. He also contributed articles on agriculture topics to other publications.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

UTM NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property slightly less than one

Quadrangle name Salem West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 10 496520 4975320  
 Zone Easting Northing

B              
 Zone Easting Northing

C            

D            

E            

F            

G            

H            

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The Minto Houses are located in NW $\frac{1}{4}$  SW $\frac{1}{4}$  Sec. 27, T. 7S., R. 3W., W.M., and are situated on the northerly portion of Block 1 of Minto's Addition to the Plat of Salem, Marion County, Oregon. The parcels they occupy are identified as Tax Lots 83470-000, 83470-010, 83470-020, and 83470-050. A more detailed description of each contiguous parcel is attached.

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

state	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title David Duniway

organization   date November 17, 1980

street & number 1365 John Street S. telephone (503) 581-2338

city or town Salem state Oregon 97302

# 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 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date July 6, 1981

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u></u>	date <u>12-17-81</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u></u>	date <u>12-17-81</u>
Chief of Registration	

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Under the direction of Minto's son, Douglas, the ranch was to become one of the finest hop ranches in the Willamette Valley, where 110 acres of hops could gross as much as \$43,000 in one year. John Minto's house, and the houses which Douglas built in 1922 and 1926 were situated on a bluff above the slough. As early as 1870, a private pull ferry had been installed to the Island. The 1926 house was specially designed with picture windows to the west from which Douglas Minto could watch his island property and quickly spot trouble. If the island commenced to be flooded by the Willamette River he knew it would soon be necessary to move all his sheep and horses to the second story of the barn built on the highest spot on the island.

Architecture: The styles of the three houses represent two distinct periods and successive styles, from the simple vernacular farmhouse of John Minto to the Colonial Bungalow farmhouse and English cottage houses built by Douglas Minto. The date of the is based on evidence that John and Martha Minto took a mortgage in May, 1869 on the site. The architect, or the origin of the plans for Douglas Minto's second house is as yet unknown. Family tradition has it that the initial architect hired to design the 1926 English Cottage was not able to reconcile the desires of the Mintos with his own concept, thereby forcing the clients to hire a second architect. Only two other houses of this style are known to have been built in Salem; and one of them built in 1926 also, for Mrs. Estelle Bush Thayer, was demolished with the expansion of the Capitol Mall in recent years.

Commerce: As a young man, Douglas Minto was a member of the firm of Minto and Waters, tobacco dealers in Salem. His brother Jasper ("Jap") was engaged in the truck and dray business and for many years had the "Fashion Stables" on the southwest corner of Court and High.

Exploration/Settlement: John Minto was born in Wylam, Northumberland, England, the son of a coal miner. The family came to America in 1840, and the young John worked in coal mines in New England and Pennsylvania. He was a member of the second family migration to Oregon in 1844, and was one of a number of pioneer Englishmen who settled in the Salem vicinity. His farm on Minto Island and his home represented the culmination of his agrarian career. He also wrote extensively about the pioneer experience and farm life. He was the author of Rhymes on Life in Oregon, 1904 (poetry) and Rhymes of Early Life in Oregon and Historical and Biographical Facts, 1915 (prose). He explored and surveyed Minto and Santiam passes in Oregon's Cascade Range.

Law: Two sons of John Minto were associated with the law. John Wilson Minto was Salem Marshall, 1877-1881, Sheriff of Marion County, Chief of Police of Portland, Oregon 1894-97, and Warden of the State Penitentiary. His brother, Harry Percy Minto, was also Sheriff of Marion County, and Warden of the State Penitentiary and was killed by an escaped convict in 1915. A grandson, Frank A. Minto, also went into law enforcement and was Salem City Marshall and then Chief of Police, 1926-1947.

Military: John Minto saw service in the Cayuse War following the Whitman massacre in 1847.

Politics/Government: John Minto was a staunch Republican and served four terms as State Representative from Marion County in the Oregon State Legislature, 1862, 1868, 1880, and 1890. With Asahel Bush, Democratic leader, and William P. Lord, Republican leader, both neighbors, he was part of a triumvirate which exercised great political influence in the city, county and state, well into this century. As an observer, he even attended the 1915 Legislature in the last months of his life.

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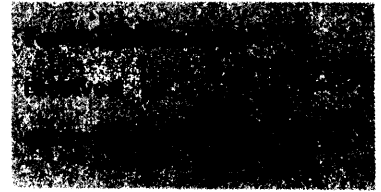
Social/Humanitarian: John Minto was an active member of the Oregon Pioneer Association, a Mason and charter member of the Salem Elks Club. His son, Douglas, was an active member of the Capital Volunteer Fire Engine Company when it won the tournament at Astoria in 1886, and another son, John W. Minto, was a member of the Board of Fire Directors which coordinated the activities of the Volunteer Fire Companies. Douglas Minto and George Waters organized and played in the Salem Baseball team which led to the building of Waters field, for years the home of the Salem Senators. John Minto organized and was long a leader in the Burns Club of Salem, devoted to the poetry of the bard.

Note on occupancy: Various members of the Minto family occupied the three houses from time to time, and there were at least two other Minto houses in the area which are no longer standing or which are not contiguous with the ensemble. Douglas built one of them across Mission Street to the north and occupied it 1911-1913. Harry Minto occupied a house at 895 Saginaw by 1913, at which time John was boarding with him.



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Interviews with Mary Minto and Evelyn Scott Ferris, September 1980.

Willamette Farmer, Vols. 1-3 (1869-1873), Salem Public Library.

Oregon Statesman, Feb. 26, 1915, p. 1 & 3, "John C. Minto . . . Called Beyond"  
Jan. 1, 1927, p. 6. "Building Activity in Salem Increases . . . D. C. Minto dwelling  
at 825 Saginaw, \$12,000 . . ." April 14, 1942, p. 1-2, "Two Pioneers Die . . ." (Douglas  
C. Minto).

Corning, Howard McKinley. Dictionary of Oregon History . . . Binford & Mort, Portland,  
1956. p. 167. John Minto.

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October 5, 1980.

Hines, H. K. An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon . . . Lewis Publishing Co.,  
Chicago, IL, 1893, p. 875-878. John Minto.

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Section 4, page 9.

Ladd and Bush Quarterly, vol. 3, no. 1, April 1915, p. 18-21. "Mr. John Minto's  
Autobiography."

Lomax, Alfred L. Pioneer Woolen Mills in Oregon: History of Wool and Woolen Textile  
Industry . . . 1811-1875. Binford & Mort, Portland, 1941. Many references to John Minto.

Lowe, Beverly Elizabeth, A Biography of an Oregon Pioneer, John Minto, Man of Courage,  
1822-1915. Kingston Price and Company, Salem, Oregon, 1980. Includes further biblio-  
graphy and some of John Minto's writings.

Minto, John, Rhymes of Early Life in Oregon and Historical and Biographical Facts, Oregon  
Statesman Publishing Company, Salem, 1915.

Minto, Mary C., Untitled manuscript of brief history of the houses and ranch furnished  
the Oregon School Employees Association with historical pictures of 821 Saginaw,  
including its construction.

Oregon School Employees Association, Brochure, "Welcome to the State Office Building of  
the Oregon School Employees Association, Salem, Oregon [1980]."

Polk, R. L. & Company and predecessors.  
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Official records of Marion County: deeds, mortgages, plats and probate records.

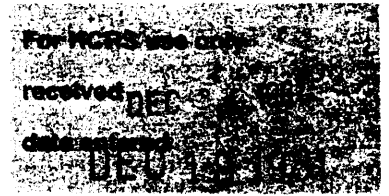
Official records of City of Salem: building permit records

Union Title Company Property Index

Sanborn Insurance Atlas Maps, 1895 (1915), 1926.

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Fred A. Legg, Architect of Douglas Minto House of 1922

Oregon State Board of Architect Examiners. Application No. 56, dated July 22, 1919,  
Fred A. Legg.

Obituary, Oregon Statesman, November 4, 1941.

Oregon Statesman

January 1, 1914, page 26.

January 1, 1916, Sec. 4, page 4.

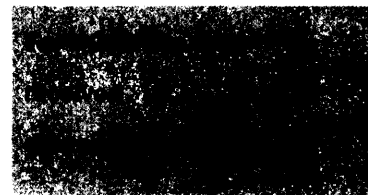
Plans for Douglas C. Minto House in possession of Oregon Scholl Employees Association, Salem.

R. L. Polk Directories for the City of Salem, 1905 and 1907.

State Plan files, Oregon State Archives.

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Parcel 1: (821 Saginaw S.)

Beginning at the Northeast corner of Block 1 of Minto's Addition to Salem, in Marion County, Oregon; thence Westerly 123.5 feet, along the South line of Mission Street, to the East line of the right of way of the Oregon Electric Railway; thence Southerly 155.22 feet along the East line of said Railway; thence Easterly 211.9 feet, parallel with the South line of Mission Street, to the West line of Saginaw Street; thence Northerly 129.14 feet to the place of beginning.

Parcel 2: (835 Saginaw S.)

Beginning at a point on the West line of Saginaw Street, said point of being 178 feet and 6 inches North and 29 feet South, 89° West from Monument Number Two (2) in Minto's Addition to the City of Salem, Marion County, Oregon and running thence South 89° West 150 feet; thence North parallel with the West line of Saginaw Street 50 feet; thence North 89° East 150 feet to the West line of Saginaw Street; thence Southerly along the West line of Saginaw Street 50 feet to the place of beginning, and lying and being situated in the County of Marion and State of Oregon.

Parcel 3: (841 Saginaw S.)

Beginning on the West line of Saginaw Street at a point 128 feet and 6 inches North and 29 feet South 89° West from Monument No. 2 in the plat of Minto's Addition to the City of Salem, Marion County, Oregon; thence South 89° West, a distance of 150 feet; thence North 50 feet, parallel with the West line of Saginaw Street; thence North 89° East, a distance of 150 feet to the West line of Saginaw Street; thence South 50 feet to the place of beginning, said land being situated in Block 1 of Minto's Addition to Salem, in Marion County, Oregon.