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# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JUL 2 5 1988

NATIONAL

REGISTER
This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets

(Form 10-900a	). Type all entries	5.					
1. Name of	Property			· · ·			
historic name		Smith, Bernard	Pitzer,	House			
other names	site number						
2. Location	1						
street & num	ber	15892 Old High	way 99 S	outh		N/A_not	for publication
city, town		Myrtle Creek			_	x_ vicir	nity
state	Oregon	code OR	county	Douglas	code	019	zip code 97457
3. Classific	ation						
Ownership of	Property	Category	of Property		Number of F	Resources w	ithin Property
$\overline{\mathbf{X}}$ private		X buildi	ng(s)		Contributing	Nonce	ontributing
public-loc	al	distric	t		_1	1	buildings
public-Sta	ite	site					sites
public-Fe	deral	struct	ure				structures
		object	t				objects
					_1	1	Total
Name of rela	ted multiple pro	operty listing:			Number of c	ontributing r	esources previously
	N/A		_		listed in the	National Re	gister <u>N/A</u>
4 Chaha/Fa	dorel Agency	· Cortification					
. State/Fe	uerai Agency	/ Certification	<del>/</del>	$\rightarrow$			
State or Fe	deral agency and	Historic Prese		e National Regi	ster criteria.	Dai	
Signature o	f commenting or	other official				<u></u> Dat	ee
State or Fe	deral agency and	l bureau					·
5. National	Park Service	e Certification					
	tify that this pro						
entered in See co	n the National Fintinuation sheet. In the deligible for the See continuation	Register.	Selore	Byen	Entered in National R	the	8/25/88
determine National F	d not eligible fo Register.	or the				·	
removed of other, (ex	from the Nation plain:)	al Register.					
				Signature of th	e Keeper		Date of Action

Owner & Franchisco (anton antonomics from instructions)			
Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  Domestic/Single dwelling			
Materials (enter categories from instructions)			
foundation Concrete/weatherboard to grade level			
walls Wood/weatherboard			
roofWood/shingle (shake)			
other			

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Bernard Pitzer Smith House is located in Douglas County, approximately two and one-half miles north of Myrtle Creek, in the vicinity of Round Prairie. Sited on the south bank of the South Umpqua River, the house was originally oriented to the north toward the river. About 1923 it was turned 180 degrees to face Highway 99, which was constructed several hundred yards to the south in the same period. The house is in good condition and maintains a relatively high degree of physical integrity. The only major alterations are the replacement of the original interior chimneys—one in each gable end—with exterior chimneys (c. 1923), the replacement of a portion of the rear wing of the building (c. 1958), the addition of a small wing on the east elevation (1986), and the removal of a small sunporch on the west (side) elevation (sometime prior to 1942). The current owners are in the process of restoring the building. It has been solely in use as a single family residence since its construction in approximately 1875.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	7	Page	1
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The bilateral symmetry of the facade and overall detailing of the house--including pedimented window heads and central portico crowned with balustrade--are characteristic of the Classic Revival Style. Basically L-shape in plan, the main volume of the building is a two-story, rectangular form with a one and one-half story wing attached at the rear. The gable roof was recently reroofed with cedar shakes. The structural system is balloon frame. The building rests on a poured concrete foundation which was added when the house was turned on its axis c. 1923. Form characteristics and the exterior and interior detail, as well as deed records, suggest a construction date for the house in the middle 1870's.

The house is the nucleus of a farm complex which consists of eight standing buildings: three barns (c.1935, c.1945, c.1950), two guest houses (1945, 1948) a large four-car garage (c. 1912), one small children's playhouse (c. 1940), and a storage shed which was originally attached to the rear wing of the main house and used as a kitchen. It was removed in approximately 1958 to make way for a new addition. The former kitchen is a one-story, gable roofed structure sheathed in shiplap siding. It does not appear to be as old as the main house and was probably added around the turn-of-the-century. With the exception of the guest house located to the west of the house, none of the outbuildings are included in the nominated area because they were built at a much The above referenced guest house, constructed in later date. 1948, is a one-story, rectangular structure of frame construction It is classified as a non-contributing with a gabled roof. feature.

Several hundred yards on either side of the house are the collapsed remains of two buildings which were quite likely contemporary with the house if not older: to the northwest a one-story cabin, 18'X 17', constructed of hand-hewn logs; to the northeast, a large, vertical board blacksmith shop with peeled pole rafters and square nails. These features lie outside the nominated area of 1.03 acres.

#### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	7	Page	2
Section	HUHHDE		i ago	

The plan of the house places the foot of the "L" more or less parallel to the river. This two-story volume is 18'5" deep and 41'4" in width. The one-and-one-half story rear wing, or stem of the "L", is 12'8" in width and 22'in length. A one-story wing was added on the east elevation in 1986 by the current owner. It is approximately 15'x30' and constructed in such a way as to leave the original house intact should the addition ever be removed.

Most exterior wall surfaces are original and consist of horizontal weatherboarding which is exposed 4" to the weather. The only exception is a small portion of the west elevation which was replaced following the removal of the sunporch mentioned above and a small section of the north elevation which was damaged by fire. In both cases materials were in keeping with the original siding. The house has delicate pilaster corner boards and a narrow frieze board. It rests on a post and pier foundation. There is no basement.

Fenestration throughout the main volume of the house consists of four-over-four double-hung sash with extrememly narrow muntins. The facade windows are embellished with handsome pedimented and segmentally arched window heads with small brackets. Windows on the north (rear) elevation have a simple architrave headmold. A photograph of the house taken in the 1880's shows louvered wooden shutters on the windows. These were removed in 1959; however, the current owner has them in storage and plans to strip, repair, paint and reinstall them as part of the restoration.

The symmetrical facade is enhanced by a central portico with a balcony at the second floor level. The balcony is accessed by a single door. A simple balustrade encloses the balcony which is supported by two large columns. The existing balustrade replaced an older one which consisted of a much more decorative railing; the existing round columns replaced rectangular columns which had delicate scroll-cut brackets. The current owner plans to restore both the balustrade and columns as shown in an historic view of the house dating to the early 1880's.

The first floor entrance is fitted with a four-paneled door. The upper panels are elongated rectangles while the lower panels are smaller rectangles—all the panels have been angled so as to produce octagons. This design is typical of doors from the 1870's. The door is flanked by sidelights and has a transom with segmental arch above. The porch deck is of brick construction.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

<b>~</b>		7	D	2
Section	number		Page	<u></u>

The recent addition on the east elevation is sheathed in lap siding and has corner boards all in keeping with the spirit of the main house. The windows on this addition consist of four-over-four double-hung sash. The siding on the rear addition consists of a much wider--8"--horizontal lap siding. There are no corner boards and the fenestration consists primarily of sliding glass windows typical of the mid 20th century. A laundry room, attached via a short covered walkway, has the same finishes. The foundation under both additions is concrete slab and there is no basement.

#### Interior

The spatial characteristics of the building have survived virtually intact; however, some of the original finishes have been replaced due to damage from a recent fire. The main volume of the house consists of a central, open stairway and hall flanked on either side by a large room: a parlor and den on the first floor and two bedrooms on the second floor.

The stem of the "L" consists of a formal dining room on the first floor to which a bathroom has been added in the northeast corner. The second floor consists of a large, unfinished room which is currently used for storage. The addition on the rear of the stem houses a large kitchen.

Flooring throughout most of the original portion of the house consists of 3" to 4" fir boards some of which were replaced after the recent fire and some of which have been covered with linoleum. The original lathe and plaster walls have been sheet rocked. The original 12' ceiling height remains intact. Almost all original interior doors remain--they are the four-panel type common to the period. Original baseboards remain throughout the oldest portion of the house and consist of an 11" board with simple cap. Wainscoting on the first floor--in the den and formal dining room in the wing--consists of 4" beaded boards and is approximately 2'3" in height. The classically inspired window ornament -- or label molding -- at the first floor windows is particularly lovely. It consists of a simple molding which extends horizontally across the top of the opening and returns vertically downward for a short distance.

#### National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	7	Page	4
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The central stairway, open at the string, is perhaps the finest interior feature. All the elements are original and consist of beautifully turned maple and mahagony pieces. The delicately tapered balusters are balanced by a substantial newel post which is crowned with a flattened, oval cap. There are two chimneypieces in the original portion of the house: one on each endwall of the first floor rooms. They appear to be replacements. The originals were probably removed c. 1923, when the house was turned on its axis and the interior chimneys were moved to the exterior. The existing pieces are of brick construction with a simple wood mantel and small decorative brackets.

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in nationally state		
Applicable National Register Criteria A B X C D		
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	□E □F □G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Architecture	Period of Significance C. 1875–1878	Significant Dates C. 1875
	Cultural Affiliation N/A	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
N/A	Unknown	

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Bernard Pitzer Smith House is situated on the south bank of the South Umpqua River in Douglas County, Oregon, in the vicinity of Round Prairie, about two and a half miles north of Myrtle Creek. Built between 1875 and 1878, the house was originally oriented to the north, facing the river. About 1923 it was turned 180 degrees on its site and placed on a concrete foundation to face the newly constructed Highway 99 on the south. The two-story clapboarded, rectangular main volume is symmetrically organized on a central cross hall plan. Openings in the facade are arranged in five regular bays and have triangular pedimented lintels. The entrance is surrounded by side and top lights and is sheltered by a porch with upper deck and railing supported by round Tuscan columns. The porch columns and balustrade are 1923 replacements of original elements which were lacey in the rural Gothic tradition. The second story door which opens onto the upper porch deck is distinguished by a segmental pedimented frame. The house is a late vernacular version of Classical Revival architecture influenced in its proportions and detail by the Gothic Revival and Italianate styles.

The house is significant to Douglas County under Criterion C in the category of architecture. It represents the best design and is the best preserved of several remaining examples of a distinct vernacular type which appears to have been peculiar to the Myrtle Creek area. As do the Henry Jones House (c. 1875) on North Myrtle Creek Road and the Cornelius Sellars House (c. 1880) on South Myrtle Creek Road, the Smith House emulates a traditional high style Classical Revival farmhouse of the 1850s in formal rectangular plan and two-story mass, but it lacks the full entablature and pedimented gable ends which distinguish clear-cut Classical Revival buildings such as the Bybee-Howell House (1856) on Sauvie Island in Multnomah County. Common characteristics of the Myrtle Creek group of the 1870s are a narrow and attenuated main volume with a steep, double-pitched roof with boxed eaves and plain frieze board, narrow corner boards with diminutive caps--all characteristics and proportions normally associated with Gothic Revival farmhouses. Certain other exterior features, specifically the narrow elongated window openings fitted with four-over-four, double-hung sash and finished with variegated framements, are in the spirit of the High Victorian Italianate style.

	X See continuation sheet
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Z See Continuation Sheet
	Drimany location of additional data:
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:
has been requested	State historic preservation office
previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency
previously determined eligible by the National Register	Federal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings	University
Survey #	X Other
recorded by Historic American Engineering	Specify repository:
Record #	Douglas County Museum
	PO Box 1550, Roseburg OR 97470
10. Geographical Data	
	rg, Oregon 1:62500
no ougo of proporty	
UTM References	
	B
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	Con continuation chapt
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description	
Verbai Bouridary Description	
The nominated area is located in Section 12, To	ownship 29S, Range 6W, Willamette Meridian
in Douglas County, Oregon. It is comprised of	
location and is more particularly described as	
garage and the property of the	
	<b></b>
	X See continuation sheet
Boundary Justification	
The nominated area of approximately 1.03 acres	encompasses the house built for Bernard
P. Smith c. 1875 and the immediate setting which	ch it has occupied from the time of its
construction, notwithstanding the fact that the	
	quest house of 1948, which lies to the SW
of the nominated house. The latter is counted	
of the homelett house. The factor is counted	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Julie Koler	
organization Koler/Morrison Consultants	date December 15, 1987
street & number 1133 NW 25th	1-001 00- 010
city or town <u>Portland</u>	state <u>Oregon</u> zip code

9. Major Bibliographicai References

## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section nu	umber	8	Page	1
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Whether a common builder produced the Myrtle Creek group is unknown, as in no case has the builder been identified. Nevertheless, similarities between the three eclectic farmhouses are striking. The Jones and Sellars houses are clad with shiplap, it should be noted, as opposed to lapped weatherboards, and the Sellars Househas a compact three-bay front instead of the five-bay organization which is characteristic of the other two. Reportedly, a house very similar to the Smith House, if not "identical," was built for a settler named Stevenson at the Douglas County community of Ruckles. It was burned and is no longer standing.

The property is also noteworthy, but not nominated for its association with Bernard Pitzer Smith (1823-1888), a native of Virginia, a prosperous farmer and horse breeder. Smith is best known in Oregon history as a captain of the Smith-Beale party, an immigrant wagon train party which became lost in 1853 while trying a new Oregon Trail variation known as the Elliott Cutoff, which traversed the area between Vale and the Middle Fork of the Willamette in the Cascades.

Exploration of the Umpqua Valley was begun in the 1820s by trappers of the Northwest Fur Company. With the pioneering of the southern immigrant route, or Applegate Trail in 1846 and 1847, and the increased traffic on immigration routes generated by the Gold Rush in 1849 and 1850, the foundation for permanent settlement was laid. The Donation Land Act (1850-1855) also encouraged settlement. The oldest permanent houses in the Valley date from the early 1850s and are found along what became the main transportation routes. Typically, the farmhouses of the 1850s and 1860s reflected the Classical Revival style.

In the settlement period, the initial construction on a land claim was a rough log structure which served as a temporary shelter. Sometimes a more substantial log structure would be covered with siding and continue in use as the family residence. More often, the log shelter was abandoned when a finer, permanent house of sawn lumber could be constructed as time and availability of materials allowed. The Bernard Pitzer Smith property illustrates the traditional pattern. The ruin of the original habitation, a log cabin, is not included in the nominated area, however. The fashionable residence was built nearly twenty years after the property first was settled.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_8 Page \_\_2

#### Architectural Significance

There are approximately half a dozen houses in Douglas County, all of which date to the 1850's, which are clearly representative of the Classic Revival tradition. Among these are the Robert Smith House (1859); Ziba Dimmick House (c. 1854); Dorsey Baker House (c. 1852); Abraham McGee House (c. 1855); and, the Robert Hinkle House (1852). By the early 1860's, however, houses began to appear which, while maintaining many classically derived features, began to change somewhat in overall massing. The Smith House falls into this later category. Here there is much more emphasis on verticality which is expressed in the relatively steep pitch of the roof, the tall narrow form, and the elongated windows.

The Smith Residence is one of approximately nine houses in the county, all of which were constructed between 1860 and 1880, which exhibit these characteristics. These include the Solomon Perkins House (c. 1860); John Burch House (c. 1860); Jeptha Green House (c. 1860); Neuner House (c. 1870); Cyrus Smith House (c. 1875); Francis Strickland House (c. 1870); Henry Jones House (c. 1875); Cornelius Sellars House (c. 1880); and, the Emma Sherrette House (c. 1880).

Of these houses, only two are distinctly similar to the Smith House and each was built between 1875 and 1880. The other related exemplars are the Jones House and the Sellars House. Of the three, the Smith Residence is unique in the amount of decorative elements—particularly the window moldings, a relatively elaborate central entrance with sidelights and transom, and portico with second story porch and door. It is also the only one sheathed in weatherboard as opposed to shiplap siding. Overall, the Smith House is the best preserved, the others having sustained significant alterations to windows, siding, and/or the facade entrances.

### **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section	number	8	Page	3
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#### <u>Historical</u> Significance

By 1846, the Willamette Valley, which at that time was considered the most highly prized land in the Oregon Territory, was almost fully claimed. From then on, many immigrants began to overflow into other areas including the Umpqua River drainage. In that year, Jesse Applegate and Levi Scott began to explore possibilities of a southern route from the Willamette Valley to California, a route which by 1850 would allow for increased settlement of southern Oregon—including the South Umpqua region.

In addition to the Applegate Trail, impetus for settlement of this region was undoubtedly spurred by the California Gold Rush of 1849. There was also an increased recognition of the diverse economic activities which the Umpqua Valley offered. Although not as well suited for agriculture as the Willamette Valley, the soil was nonetheless rich and productive, and the climate quite favorable for production of foodstuffs. The mountains were heavily forested, providing readily accesible timber, and the rich grasslands offered excellent grazing opportunities for a wide variety of livestock.

## **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number	r8	Page	4
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Among the early immigrants to the Umpqua region was Michael Hanley. Hanley came west by ship via the Isthmus of Panama in the spring of 1849. He prospected for gold on the Yuba and Feather rivers in California for several years before coming to Oregon in 1851. The following year he took up a donation land claim (DLC) near Round Prairie—the same property upon which subject house is located. Hanley lived on his claim alone until his marriage in 1854 to Martha Burnett—the daughter of John S. Burnett who owned an adjoining DLC. The Hanleys did not stay on their claim long—moving to Jackson County and purchasing property outside of Jacksonville in 1857. Deed records indicate Hanley sold his Round Prairie property to B.P. Smith in 1866 for \$2,000.

It is not known whether any of the existing buildings--or ruins--date to the Hanley occupation of the property. However, both the collapsed log house and blacksmith shop appear to be quite early and could conceivably be associated with Hanley. The main house appears to be of 1870's vintage; however, an earlier construction date cannot be definitively ruled out. Of particular interest is the fact that Hanley's house near Jacksonville, constructed in approximatley 1872, is quite similar to the Smith House. It is possible that Smith was acquainted with the Hanley House--or vice versa--and constructed his own home in the same style.

Bernard Pitzer Smith was born in Virginia on November 4, 1823. The second-oldest of ten children, Smith came west in 1853 with his parents and siblings at the urging of his older brother Robert, who had come to Oregon in 1843 with the Applegates. Bernard was captain of the Smith-Beale Party, which traveled as part of a large group of immigrants which came to be known as the "Lost Wagon Train."

In 1852 settlers in Linn, Lane and Benton counties scouted a "cut-off" from the Oregon Trail. Called the Elliott Cut-off, it departed from the old trail near the present day town of Vale, Oregon and proceeded westward over the dry eastern Oregon desert, then up and over the Cascade Mountains and into Lane County in the southern Willamette Valley. The wagon train of 1853, of which Smith was a member, apparently became lost on the new route, somewhere along the Middle Fork of the Willamette River. They were rescued, however, by a pack train which guided them safely into Eugene.

Smith's whereabouts between the time he arrived in Eugene on April 6, 1853 and his marriage to Susan Dickerson in Oakland,

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	8	Page	5

California, on May 6, 1855, are unknown. However, the Smiths do appear in the 1860 Census for Umpqua County (roughly that area of present-day Douglas County north of Winchester--consolidated with Douglas County in 1862). At that time they had a four year old son named Henry who had been born in Oregon, indicating they had returned to Oregon shortly after their marriage. By 1870 the Smiths were living in the Round Prairie area; however, it is unclear when they moved to the subject site. Deed records indicate the property was purchased in 1866. It is possible they established residence on the site at that time, perhaps in the log house the remains of which still exist, or in some other temporary dwelling.

From all accounts, Smith was a prosperous farmer and horse breeder--actively plying his trade until his accidental death at the hands of a runaway team of horses in 1882. By 1870 he had purchased over 990 acres of land adjoining the original Hanley DLC. Over the next ten years he built a number of substantial buildings, including two very large barns--one of which still stands. It was not included in this nomination because it is no longer part of the property on which the house is located. It is also separated from the subject by a County Road. The barn is sited on a bench several hundred yards south and east of the house. It is approximately 80'x45'and has a low-pitched gable roof covered with corrugated metal. The walls consist of 1"x10" vertical boards. The hand-hewn post and beam structural system joined by mortise and tenon, and drive-through doors are located on the sides of the building. A second barn was located within a few hundred yards of the house. It collapsed under heavy snowfall in the 1960's. Photographs reveal that it was quite similar to the existing barn and undoubtedly dated to the time Smith owned the property.

The second owner of the house was George H. Pitts, who held title to the property from approximately 1889 to 1911. Relatively little is known about Pitts. He was born in New York and was of English descent. It is not known in what year he came to Oregon, although he leased the Smith property from Mrs. Smith in 1888 prior to purchasing it shortly afterward. Pitt's first wife, Sara, died around the turn-of-the-century. In 1904 he married Jean Burnett. The 1910 census lists Pitts as a fruitgrower. Interviews with longtime residents of the area corroborate this fact and indicate that Pitts raised a considerable quantity of prunes. Pitts was apparently responsible for planting a large orchard which survived well into the 20th Century but which no longer exists. An old prune dryer which once existed on the

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number	8	Page	6
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property has been moved to adjacent property and is currently in use as a wine cellar.

The third owners of the house were James Henry and Catherine Booth. The Booths bought the property in 1911 and lived in it intermittently over the next twenty years. Their primary residence was in Roseburg, while this property served as their country home and ranch. The Booths' Roseburg home is no longer extant.

The Booths' son Henry and his wife Margaret lived in subject house beginning in the early 30's through 1942, when the property was sold to the Helgeson family—in whose ownership it remains to the present. J.H. Booth was a prominent Roseburg businessman. He held many positions, including: Secretary—Treasurer of the Booth Kelly Lumber Co. 1897-1905; President of the Oregon State Fair 1909-1916; Director of the National Trotting Association for over 17 years; Director of the Oregon Land and Livestock Co.; Director of the Oregon Mutual Life Insurance Co.; and, that for which he is perhaps best known, President of Douglas County Bank.

During the time the Booths owned the property they continued to raise prunes as well as sheep and cattle. The prune orchards were removed in the early 40's and replaced with alfalfa. It was under their ownership that the house was turned on its axis away from the river to face Highway 99. The house was electrified in the late 20's. Booth also made a number of improvements to outbuildings—including construction of a third barn—but little was done to the house itself. It remains today an outstanding example of an early building type—one of the few of its type in all of Douglas County.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	9	Page	1
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Cultural and Historic Resources Inventory for Douglas County.

Douglas County Planning Department, 1982.

Douglas County Deed Records, Volume 3, Pg. 309.

Harbour, Terry (Douglas County Planner and Preservationist). Telephone interviews, 27 October 1987, 7 December 1987.

Helgeson, Edna (Mrs. Alvin) (long-time owner 1943-present). Interviews, 10 October 1987, 15 November 1987. Round Prairie, Douglas County, Oregon.

Lockley, Fred. "Impressions and Observations of The Journal Man." Oregon Daily Journal, 6 June 1932.

Oregon Historical Society. Biographical File, Portland, Oregon.

"Reminicences of Southern Oregon Pioneers." Interview, October 5, 1938, Oakland, Oregon. Douglas County Museum File, E-25.

Ronk, Kenneth (long-time resident of Round Prairie). Interview, 15 November 1987. Round Prairie, Douglas County, Oregon.

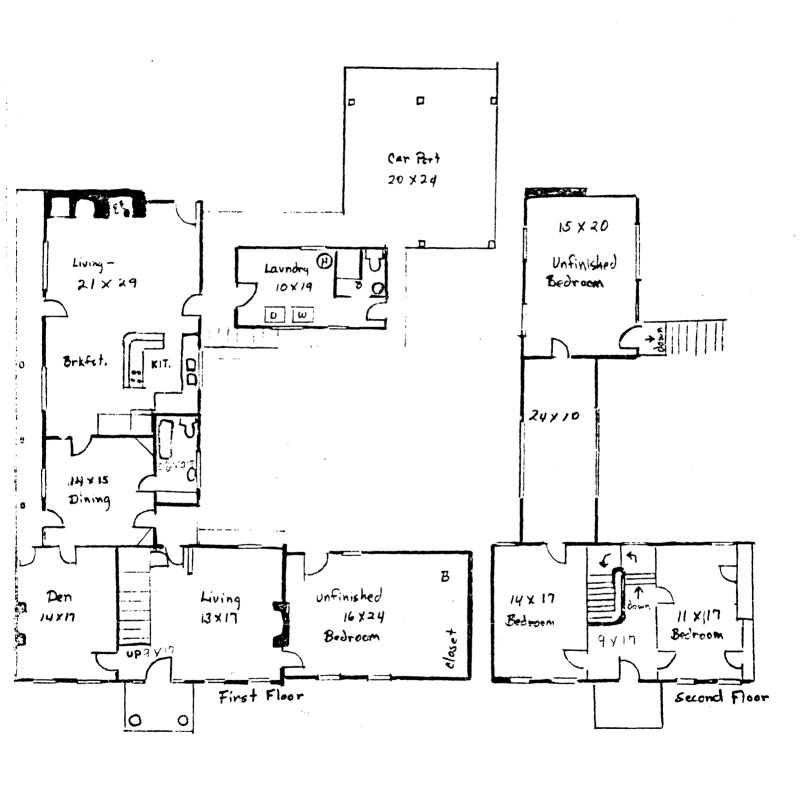
U.S. Census, 1870. Douglas County, Myrtle Creek Precinct.

U.S. Census, 1860, Umpqua County.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number	10	Page	1
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Beginning at a point on the principal access road to the nominated property, said road bearing N 33° 54' E, said point being approximately 661.74 feet NE of State Highway No. 99, thence southeasterly along a road which runs perpendicular to the principal access road approximately 300 feet, thence southwesterly in a line parallel with the principal access road, approximately 150 feet, thence northwesterly in a line perpendicular to the principal access road approximately 300 feet, thence northeasterly along the principal access road approximately 150 feet to the point of beginning, containing in all 1.03 acres, more or less.



Smith, Bernard Pitzer, House Myrtle Creek, Douglas County, Oragin \* Not to scale

177

