

7. DESCRIPTION

Condition: excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed
Circle one: unaltered altered
Circle one: original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance
attach photo

The J.W. Griffiths House is located at the northwestern edge of the Morgan Hill neighborhood. It is a two and one-half story, wood frame structure with a brick masonry foundation. The complex hipped and gabled roof forms are covered by wood shingles. The main elevation is asymmetrical and dominated by a projecting gabled wing incorporating bay windows on both floors. An open porch wraps around the northwest corner of the house. The porch post brackets, found on the premises, were recently added. The exterior is covered by drop siding with the exception of gable ends, which are covered by fish scale pattern wood shingles. Windows are generally tall, narrow, double-hung sash with one-over-one lights. Windows in two gable ends are not original. Other architectural elements include ornate bargeboards, milled brackets and decorated frieze panels, highly profiled window surrounds at the bay windows, and a corbelled chimney cap. Some scrollwork gingerbread trim located above a few of the windows and corner apron ornament do not appear to be original or appropriately applied.

(see continuation sheet)

Verbal boundary description: A.L. Pettygroves
Addition, Block 15, Lots 7-8

Acreage: Less than a acre.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

Specific dates	1890	Builder/Architect	Unknown
----------------	------	-------------------	---------

a. **History** James W. Griffiths was a seafaring entrepreneur and a partner in the Port Townsend firm of Griffiths, Bridges & Stetson. The firm served as broker to over 300 ships of both domestic and foreign registry and thus played a role in linking Port Townsend with world ports.

Born in England in 1861, Griffiths had immigrated to the U.S., settling first in Tacoma in 1885 during that city's energetic period of growth. He arrived in Port Townsend in 1888 and prospered during its boom period. His house in Mountain View was completed in 1890 at a cost of \$5,500. When the Port Townsend economy collapsed, Griffiths reportedly left the town "stone broke" to renew his fortune elsewhere.

b. **Evaluation of Significance** Like the neighboring Harper House, the Griffiths House is one of the finest intact Victorian residences outside the historic district. It was pictured in Port Townsend Illustrated (1890) as one of the city's noteworthy residences. Built by a young ships' broker, it represents the kind of substantial high-style home constructed by local entrepreneurs who acquired sudden wealth during Port Townsend's brief boom period.