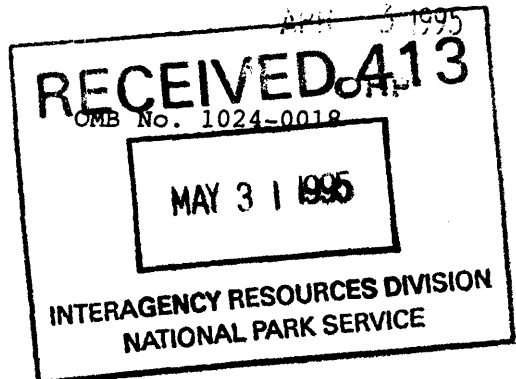


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MAY 3 1995



NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property: Smith, Williams, House
Historic name: Smith, Williams, House
Other names/site number: N/A

2. Location
Street & number: 1929 First Street not for publication: N/A
City or town: Napa vicinity: N/A
State: CA county: Napa code: 055
Zip code: 94559

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.)

[Signature] Date May 17, 1995
Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer

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:

- entered in the National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the
National Register
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the
National Register
- removed from the National Register

Edson H. Beall 6/30/95

other (explain): _____

Entered in the
National Register

Beall

Signature of Keeper

Date
of Action

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

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u> buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
<u> 2 </u>	<u> 1 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Cat: Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

Cat: Domestic

Sub: Single Dwelling

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification:

Cat: Late Victorian

Sub: Second Empire

Other Description: Mansard

Materials:

foundation: Stone

roof: Tar and gravel; copper

walls: Wood

other: Chimney -- brick

=====
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.)

- 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: Architecture

Period of Significance: Circa 1875, 1880

Significant Dates: Circa 1875, 1880

Significant Person: N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: Rebecca A. Yerger, Consultant, 1705 Rainier Ave., Napa, CA 94558

Published

Gregory, T.L., History of Solano and Napa Counties. Los Angeles: Historic Records Co., 1912, pp 937 & 938.

Poppeliers, John & Chambers, S. Allen, What Style is It?. Washington, DC: Preservation Press, 1983, pp 22-24.

McAlester, Virginia & Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984, pp 240-244.

Maps: Sanborn Maps City of Napa: 1901 and 1910, 1924.

Newspapers:

Napa County Reporter - May 11, 1867 - 3:3; May 18, 1867 - 1:3; March 11, 1870 - 2:5; January 18, 1878 - 3:3; September 5, 1879 - 3:3 and June 17, 1887 - 1:4.

Napa Daily Reporter - April 24, 1867 - 2:2 and May 10, 1867 - 3:1.

Napa Register - July 20, 1883 - 3:3; May 14, 1886 - 1:4; May 30, 1890 - 1:6; June 20, 1890 - 1:5; May 11, 1894 - 3:3; January 11, 1895 - 3:3; January 18, 1895 - 3:6; April 5, 1895 - 3:1; April 12, 1895 - 1:8 and June 14, 1895 - 3:6.

Napa Daily Journal - September 5, 1890 - 3:2; October 1, 1891 - 3:3; June 5, 1892 - 3:2; August 13, 1897 - 3:3, September 20, 1900 - 2:3; December 10, 1901 - 3:3; December 11, 1901 - 3:1 and December 13, 1901 - 3:2.

Interviews

Conversations with Juliana Inman September and December 1994.

Conversations with Doris Dawson September-December 1994.

Conversation with Jerry St. Clair May 3, 1995.

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Additional Documentation
=====

Photographs

3. Photographer: Rebecca Yerger

4. Dates of Photographs: Photographs #2 & 6 - March 28, 1995;
Photographs #3, 4, 7-30 - December 2, 1994; Photographs #1 & 5 - December 20,
1994; Photograph #31 - April 8, 1995

5. Location of negatives: Rebecca Yerger, 1705 Rainier Ave., Napa, CA 94558

6. View of Photographs:

#1	North or front elevation	#16	Kitchen, south & west
#2	Circa 1875 hitching post	#17	Kitchen, north & east
#3	North facade	#18	Kitchen, east
#4	West facade	#19	Sunporch bathroom, south
#5	South facade	#20	Sunporch, east & south
#6	East facade	#21	Upstairs foyer, south
#7	Interior: Main entrance	#22	Upstairs foyer, north
#8	Main stairs and foyer	#23	East circa 1875 bedroom, north
#9	East parlor, north	#24	East circa 1875 bedroom, south
#10	East parlor, south	#25	Northwest 1870s bedroom, north
#11	East parlor, east	#26	Northwest 1870s bedroom, south
#12	Sitting room, west & north	#27	Northwest 1870s bedroom, west
#13	Sitting room, south	#28	Southwest 1870s bedroom, west
#14	Dining room, west	#29	1880 upstairs bathroom, south
#15	Kitchen, west	#30	1880 backstairs, south
		#31	1980 garage/workshop, north & west

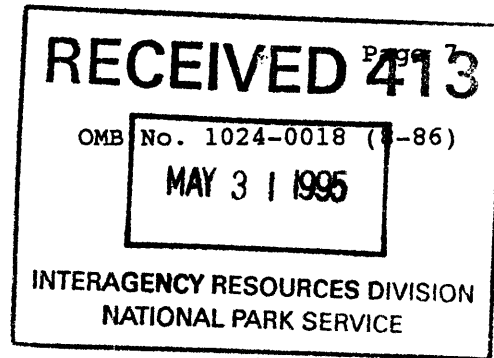
USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form
Smith, Williams, House
Napa County, California

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1



Williams Smith House
Napa County, California

The Williams Smith House is a two-and-one-half story, Second Empire private residence with a flared straight mansard, arched dormer windows and ornate entablature. The circa 1875 frame building is generally rectangular in plan with a vertical orientation which is emphasized by the front portico and two bays as well as the centered wing and gable of the west elevation. The walls are finished with channel siding and the mansard with octagonal shingles. The house rests upon the stone block walls of the raised full basement. The interior maintains its original floor plan, detailing and materials. Behind the house is a one-story, noncontributing 1980 garage/workshop with a shingled mansard roof and channel siding. The setting contains the original cast-iron hitching post (contributing object) and four, 100-year-old palms at the curbside, a 1990 wrought-iron fence and gates (uncounted), the original concrete front walk, two 100+-year-old magnolias and a generous setback of cultivated lawn. Being in excellent condition, the property fronts onto First Street, as in the 1870s, is prominently located within the Boggs Addition of downtown Napa and has had very little alteration since its construction.

Landscaping and Setting

The Williams Smith House is situated within the southeast quarter of the property. The setback from the street is fifty-four and one-half (54-1/2) feet.

The curbside planting strip contains four California fan palms (*Washingtonia filifera*), planted in 1895, cultivated lawn and the original cast-iron hitching post. Located within the western half of this area, the post stands about four feet tall, topped with a clenched hand holding two rings. The planting strip is divided in half by the original concrete walkway which intersects the sidewalk and passes through the wrought-iron gate. The gate is a part of a new fence, 1990, which sits upon the original one-foot-high cement curb.

The central walk bisects the front lawn as it proceeds to the front entrance. Two 100-plus-year-old magnolias (*Magnolia grandiflora*) are located within the yard. The eastern tree trunk is four feet in diameter and about fifteen (15) feet north of the house and the western tree trunk is four and one-half feet in diameter and approximately fifteen feet north and west of the house. The central walk forks to the east and west at the foot of the stairway. A small boxwood (*Buxus m. japonica*) hedge edges a portion of the smaller walkways. The west walk passes a cultivating bed as it ends behind the south end of the house. The east branch of the walk stops at the driveway.

The drive, located along the eastern property line, is covered with gravel for the first fifty and one-half (50-1/2) feet. The rest is concrete, ending in front of the garage. Located along the south and east property lines, the two-car garage and workshop measures 20 x 37 feet. This noncontributing building was built in 1980 to replace the circa 1920 termite-infested garage. The 1980 garage compliments the house in style and form. This one-story building has a straight mansard roof, finished with octagonal shingles and channel siding. The north elevation is comprised primarily of two metal, automatic garage doors and the paneled wood door

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Williams Smith House
Napa County, California

near the northwest corner provides access to the workshop area. The short west wall faces onto the backyard and contains a large, 5 x 6 feet, aluminum-framed sliding window located in the southern half of this elevation. The east and south walls are solid and located next to the property lines. The doors, window and lower edge of the roof are trimmed with a plain molding. The interior is purely functional with spaces allocated for vehicles, tool storage and workspace.

The setting and landscaping appear almost as they did in the 1870s, having sustained only minor changes. The new wrought-iron fence and gates echo the original fence and the garage's low profile and location, standing where the old garage once did, offer no challenge to the historic integrity of the setting and its strong sense of time, place and association.

Exterior

The straight with a flare mansard is finished with octagonal cedar shingles, including the straight mansard roof of the 1880 addition. Two brick chimneys, one centered near the west facade and the second positioned close to the southeast corner of the house, penetrate the tar-and-gravel surface of the flat rooftop. Both the circa 1875 and 1880 mansards are bounded with identical cornices, located above and below the lower roof slope. The 1870s cornice is detailed with horizontal rectangular panels within the frieze and large pierced brackets separated by smaller brackets. This 1870s entablature wraps around the north, west and east facades and continues approximately eleven (11) feet onto the eastern portion of the south facade. A plain frieze wraps around the south elevation addition. A banded coursework wraps around the building at both the ground and first-floor levels. This molding visually separates the house from the painted stone walls of the raised basement.

The north elevation has a formal, symmetrical composition. Three dormers with paired, arched and double-hung windows are set into the roof. A keystone is located above each arch. Each dormer has a flat lintel supported by brackets and detailed with a paneled frieze. The staircase, with turned balusters and square paneled newel, leads to the portico and main entrance. Four open square posts rise from the portico railing to support the cornice. Dentil work ornaments the porch cornice. The frieze panels are decorated with pierced scroll work. The arched entryway is recessed and paneled. The arch above the door once contained art glass, removed in the mid-1940s. Currently a wooden panel fills the space. The front entrance consists of a paneled double door. Each side has a lower wooden panel ornamented with molding, and a medallion at each corner and the center. The large upper panels are glazed. The ornate brass hardware is original. The portico is flanked by two, five-sided slanted bays.

The cornice and frieze above each bay are identical to the portico entablature. Each bay contains three long double-hung windows. Directly below the continuous sill, the paneling is repeated although it is plain in design. The plain mullions and lintels

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form a continuous line which delineates the five sides. Centered beneath the middle windows, at the basement level, are small arched vents with wooden exterior louvers.

The western elevation is comprised primarily of the original 1870s building. Although the southern third of the second story consists of the 1880 addition. The dormers on the west-side roof contain a single arched double-hung window. The northern and central windows are detailed exactly like the north elevation. The southern-most dormer has a rectangular window and the frieze panel has a raised ring in the center. At the first-floor level near the northwest corner is a horizontal long-but-narrow window. It has a hooded lintel with dentilwork and a raised ring in the center of the panel. The five-sided bay at the center of the first floor is almost identical to the north-facade bays. The western bay is larger and the center window is large and fixed with an art-glass transom. In the Art Nouveau style, the art glass is original to the 1870s house. Near the southwest corner, at the first-floor level, is a double-hung window detailed almost like the northwest window although it has no panel or raised ring. Even closer to the corner at the basement level is a square, multi-glazed hinged window.

The southern elevation contains the most alterations made to the house. The second-floor, 1880 addition, starting at the southwest corner of the original south wall, runs approximately twenty-five (25) feet east and fifteen (15) feet south. The mansard roof of the addition matches the height and line of the 1870s roof although the styling is different, the 1880 roof is straight and without a flare. The 1880 mansard is also approximately three feet longer than the 1870s roof, so the cornices of the two roofs do not meet. The 1880 entablature is plain, containing no decorative detailing and its frieze is comprised of a continuous panel.

The three south-facing 1880 dormers are identical to the west-facing second-story rectangular window and dormer. Centered beneath the middle dormer, at the first-floor level, is a double-hung window. It is identical in detailing to the west-facing first-floor window situated close to the southwest corner. Directly below this window is the basement door flanked by two square multi-glazed and hinged windows.

A small wall, about six and one-half feet in length, connects the western portion to the narrower eastern section of the south elevation. This small east-facing elevation contains a double-hung window, at the first-floor level, which is identical to the other south-side, double-hung window.

The eastern fifteen (15) feet of the south elevation maintains the 1870s roof line, style, cornice and frieze detailing. Near the southeast corner of the 1870s mansard roof is a small arched double-hung window with no decorative detailing. Approximately five feet below the paneled 1870s frieze is the low-pitched hip sunporch roof with a plain cornice. The sunporch, measuring 9 x 15 feet, was enclosed in 1880. A simple staircase with two landings, square posts and balusters leads from the ground level to the door. A four-paneled door, with glazing in the upper two panels, is the back entrance to the house. To the east of the door are two

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Williams Smith House
Napa County, California

sets of paired, hinged and multi-glazed windows. Two more paired sets of these windows continue around the east side. The newest change, December 2, 1994, is an awning attached to the porch fascia.

The east elevation contains two dormers and windows identical to the northern two west-side dormers. The bay window, located at the first-floor level, is different from all the rest. The 1880 bay is three-sided with the two sides being rounded and double hung. The center window is fixed and larger like the west elevation. The eastern bay also has an art-glass transom. Its cornice is rounded and decorated with dentil work. Above the cornice is the small-but-tall copper-clad hip roof. Its lines mimic the flared lines of the 1870s mansard roof. The top of the bay window roof reaches the bottom of the frieze. Underneath the bay is a rounded cantilever detailed with graduated coursework.

The exterior of the Williams Smith House possesses its historic form, mass, fenestration and door shape and size as well as a great majority of its original materials. The exterior is in excellent condition and has received few alterations since its circa 1875 construction and especially since 1880. The historic integrity and appearance of the exterior of the Williams Smith House are exemplary.

Interior

The interior maintains both its 1870s and 1880 floor plan and detailing. Throughout the house the following elements are found in each room, unless otherwise noted: oak-plank floor with two walnut inlaid strips; brass hardware; painted redwood window, door and baseboard molding; painted paneled wood doors; original glazing; painted wood picture-rail molding approximately two feet below the ceiling line and cast-iron heater-vent grills. The first-floor ceiling height is twelve (12) feet and the second floor measures ten (10) feet, unless otherwise noted.

The first-floor main entrance and foyer measures about 8 x 24 feet. Along the east wall of the foyer is the curved main staircase which leads to the second floor. The original newel, balusters and banister are mahogany. The turned balusters are plain until the bottom third which is spindled. The banister is also simple, resembling the door-jam moldings. The newel has an octagonal base rising about two feet. An eighteen (18) inch urn-shaped piece which is finished with two large disks sits upon the base. The staircase is flanked, to the north and south, by two doors leading into the main parlor.

This parlor is long and narrow, measuring 12 x 27 feet. The ceiling is decorated with new 1990 plaster cornice, channel and crown moldings as are the two ceiling medallions. The bay is centered within the north wall. On the opposite end of the room is the fireplace, flanked by two built-in bookcases. These three pieces are three and one-half feet tall. The fireplace mantel, front and hearth are white, statue-quality marble. The front consists of a decorative keystone, raised "molding" and recessed panels. The mantel pattern is a curvilinear line marked at regular

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Williams Smith House
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intervals with points. The hearth is level with the floor. A cast-iron grill covers the fireplace opening. The chimney is enclosed. The bookcase tops and shelves have a decorative curvilinear line which rounds out at the center. Approximately six feet from its southeast corner the east wall contains a rounded bay with a windowseat. The center window has a transom composed of art glass. The 1880 design uses lines to create rounded and angular geometric shapes in the background. At the center is a floral pattern with leaves that intertwine with the geometric forms. The colors are shades of yellow and green with accents of purple. The glasses are both clear and opaque. On either side of the center panel are two narrow and curved double-hung windows.

Across the foyer to the west are two smaller rooms. To the north is a smaller parlor or sitting room approximately 12 x 15 feet. The ceiling is plain in detail. The north wall contains the matching front bay. A five-foot wide and two-and-one-half-foot high fixed window is situated five feet above the floor in the center of the west wall. The south wall contains a marble fireplace similar to the east parlor, although the mantel is a simple curvilinear line. To the east of the fireplace is a built-in bookcase set into an arched setback. To the west of the fireplace is an archway with plaster brackets. At about the five-foot level on each side of the archway are ornate one-foot-long brackets. Passing through the archway leads into the dining room.

This room measures 12 x 16 feet. The ceiling light is the only original lighting fixture. It still has its old thick brass gas line leading from the ceiling to the fixture. Three of the four gold-hued opaque shades still exist. The east wall contains the doorway to the foyer near the northeast corner. The north wall contains the archway to the sitting room. The west wall is comprised of a large bay and angled windowseat. The central window is fixed with a hinged art-glass transom. The artwork is composed of opaque glass. Iridescent ice-blue panels create the background and at each side a large embellished S-scroll in yellow anchors a green garland punctuated by pink blossoms. The center is drawn up by a green fleur-de-lis which suspends a yellow rose. The south wall contains two doors. The door closest to the bay opens to a linen closet. The second door, near the southeast corner, leads to the kitchen.

The kitchen, measuring 11 x 15-1/2 feet, was updated in 1981 but the original layout remains about the same. The redwood cabinets, flooring and crown molding are new (1981). The original redwood detailing, door and window moldings and wainscoting, is intact and in place. The north wall contains the centered dining room doorway with cabinets and counter to the east of the door. The west wall is comprised of a small section of cabinets to the north, a doorway leading to a pantry, a built-in refrigerator and the doorway to the backstairs. The pantry measures 5 x 6 feet and is located underneath the back staircase. The walls are paneled with five-foot-high wainscoting. The north wall contains a shelf and an old dining room pass through, the west has a double-hung window and the south has a door which leads to a small storage closet. The south kitchen wall contains wainscoting and a double-hung

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window. The east wall contains the primary work space with the sunroom doorway near the northeast corner.

Just inside the sunroom, at its southwest corner, is a small bathroom measuring 5-1/2 x 6-1/2 feet. The walls are finished with redwood tongue-and-groove. The bathroom contains a wall-mounted lavatory to the west, a stall shower and water closet to the south and a double-hung window facing east. These fixtures are circa 1946. The bathroom was originally added as a washroom in 1880. Its conversion to a full bathroom was not documented.

The dimensions of the sunporch are 9 x 15-3/4 feet. The room is simple in detail. The west wall is small with the kitchen entry. The south elevation has two doors - the bathroom door near the west wall and the back door near the center of the room. The southern wall is completed with two paired sets of multi-glazed, side-hinged windows. Two more paired sets of these windows comprise the majority of the east wall. The top of the window moldings is level with the back door jam creating a continuous line. The window sills are about four feet from the floor. The north wall is solid except for the doorway near the west corner leading into the foyer. The woodwork in the sunroom is smaller and plainer than the other rooms.

Near the top of the main staircase is an arched alcove, 2 x 5 feet, set back about one foot into the curving southeast wall. At the top of the stairs is an upstairs foyer measuring 8-1/2 x 24 feet. Located in the center of the north foyer wall is a double-window dormer. All three of the 1870s bedrooms come off this area. All of the bedrooms on the second floor have a glazed and hinged transom. All the rooms have slanted outside walls due to the shapes of the mansard roofs.

The largest of the three 1870s bedrooms is to the east of the hallway. Its approximate dimensions are 12 x 24 feet. The north wall has the double-window dormer slightly extending past the wall. The east wall has two single-window dormers spaced about ten (10) feet apart. The south wall contains a doorway near the east corner which leads to a dressing area, 5 x 7 feet, with built-in shelves, drawers and closet. The south-facing wall of this wardrobe contains a small arched double-hung window. The west bedroom wall is solid except for the hallway door. The picture railing in this room is more ornate than in the other rooms throughout the house. It is original and carved with a leaf motif.

Across the hall to the northwest is a smaller room, 12 x 12 feet. Centered on the north wall is a double-window dormer. The west wall has a single dormer about three feet from the northwest corner. Near the southeast corner of the south wall is a closet door. Near the northeast corner of the east wall is the hallway door.

About twelve (12) feet from the north wall, the west wall of the foyer curves one foot toward the west. The third bedroom measures approximately 11 x 13 feet. The north wall contains a closet door near the northwest corner. The west wall holds a single-window dormer near its center. The south wall is solid. The foyer door is located near the southeast corner of the east wall. This room's flooring is pine.

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Williams Smith House
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Directly south of the top of the stairs and third-bedroom door is the doorway to the 1880 addition. The second-floor addition is two steps lower than the 1870s floor level.

A hallway, 3-1/4 x 17-3/4 feet, runs east and west along the north wall of the addition. The wood floor is covered with carpeting. At the east end of the hallway is the doorway leading to the bathroom. The room is long and narrow, 5-1/2 x 15 feet. The walls and ceiling are finished with redwood tongue-and-groove. The flooring is black and white harlequin-style linoleum. Near the north end of the ceiling is a roof access door, 1-1/2 x 1-1/2 feet. The north wall is comprised mostly of a built-in unit of drawers and an upper closet. The double-door closet and set of four drawers measure 3 x 8 feet. The solid west wall holds the lavatory, water closet and claw foot tub fitted with a free-standing showerhead and curtain ring. The small south wall has a single-window dormer. The long west wall is continuous except for the doorway next to the northwest corner.

One other door leads off from the hallway on its south wall near the bathroom. It opens into a bedroom measuring 12 x 15 feet. In 1946, this room was converted into a kitchen for the second-floor flat. In 1979, all the appliances and services were removed. The north wall contains the door and cabinets. The west wall has an 1880 closet door located near the southwest corner of the room. The south wall has two dormer windows which are about ten (10) feet apart. The east wall held the primary workspace where the stove, sink and refrigerator were once located.

Located at the west end of the hall is a single-window dormer. Leading from the hallway, the back stairs have a landing near the bottom to allow for an easterly turn to exit into the kitchen through a doorway.

The interior demonstrates a strong association with its late 19th-century origins through the excellent condition and quality of its materials, design and floor plan. The 20th-century modifications, primarily the bathroom and kitchen fixtures, provide conveniences deemed necessary for today's lifestyle but do not distract from the historic appearance, feeling and integrity of the interior.

The Williams Smith House and its setting collectively are in excellent condition. Although they have received some alterations since construction in circa 1875, they retain a high level of all seven aspects of architectural integrity.

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Section 8 Page 1

Williams Smith House
Napa County, California

Narrative Statement of Significance:

The Williams Smith House is one of Napa's most prominent examples of residential architecture from the late 19th century. It is a product of the dissemination of the Second Empire philosophy and aesthetics and illustrates the rare use of the Second Empire style in Napa. Coupled with its setting of century-old trees, original hitching post and generous lot and setback, the residence looks much as it did when constructed circa 1875. The house meets National Register Criterion C in the area of Architecture as one of the best residential examples of the Second Empire style in Napa.

The Second Empire style was considered very modern during the late 19th century for it imitated the latest French building fashions. The Second Empire style was a dominant and popular style in America between 1860 and 1880, especially in the northeastern and midwestern states. It was less common on the west coast.

Napa architects and builders began designing and constructing buildings in the Second Empire style in 1870. The last local example was built in 1889. Within this time frame five Second Empire buildings were constructed, four residential and one commercial. The Collegiate Institute, circa 1873, the one commercial example of Second Empire, was demolished in the 1920s. The McClelland-Priest House was the first Second Empire residence built in 1870. The Goodman Mansion was constructed in 1880, placed on the National Register in 1974 and in 1993 about 60% burned. Churchill Manor, National Register listing 1977, was the last Second Empire home built in 1889 and in 1903 it was modified to a Colonial Revival style. The Williams Smith House was designed and constructed by an unknown architect and contractor circa 1875.

Considering the hundreds of buildings constructed during this time frame, 1870 to 1889, the incidence of Second Empire style was relatively rare. This pattern is also evident during the Smith House dates of significance, circa 1875 and 1880.

The Second Empire style is characterized principally by its distinctive roof. Decorative patterns of color or texture are common in the roofing material. Other classic features of this style are dormers and dormer windows on the steep lower roof slope. Molded cornices bound both above and below the lower roof slope. The eave overhangs are normally smaller than in Italianate styles. But the decorative detailing - cornice brackets, moldings and trims - as well as the general symmetrical form and patterns of the Second Empire style are Italianate in origin. The interiors too are generally elaborations of the Italianate, with bold plaster cornices and medallions and marble fireplaces with arched openings. The general effect of the Second Empire features and elements is monumental and ornate.

The Williams Smith House definitely illustrates the local trend and patterns regarding the occurrence and application of the Second Empire philosophy and aesthetics.

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Williams Smith House
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The two-and-one-half-story house itself embodies all the classic features and application of the Second Empire style. These elements are the mansard roof with dormers and decorative patterns, small overhang, decorative brackets, and a symmetrical form. The brackets within the cornice and dormers are intricately decorated with pierced scrollwork as are the panels within the frieze. The various moldings and dentilwork comprising the cornice and frieze create a layering of textures and patterns. The mansard is finished with octagonal shingles which develop changing patterns and visual textures as the sunlight changes angles. The flared base of the mansard as well as the cornice and frieze soften the formality of the generally symmetrical and rectangular body of the building.

The front or north elevation of the house possesses three very visually strong components which stand well individually and collectively. The portico with its ornate cornice and frieze rises from four unique posts. These open posts have the illusion of being created from four smaller posts held together at the bottom, center and top with bands of coursework. The two bays have a strong presence due to their ornate cornice and frieze, as well as mass and form. These three strong components are unified by similar heights and lines and particularly the repetition of the cornice and frieze ornamentation.

The west elevation has a center wing and gable which create the dining room bay. Although larger than the front bays, the west bay detailing – the cornice, frieze and molding – is identical to and unifies with the front bays and portico.

In 1880, additions were made to the house to accommodate the changing needs of the Williams Smith family. The second-story addition above the kitchen on the south or back elevation of the building was constructed with great sensitivity to the existing structure. Although not as ornate in detail, the addition blends well with but does not mimic the 1870s detailing. The mansard is straight without a flare. The dormers have no brackets and the windows are rectangular versus arched. The entablature is plain and contains no brackets. A second 1880 alteration was enclosing the back porch. The resulting sunporch is situated within the eastern portion of the south elevation. Although the fenestration shape and pattern – paired, multi-glazed and hinged – are different from the rest of the building, this change created little to no impact on the visual integrity of the building.

The final 1880 exterior alteration was the addition of the Queen Anne-style bay on the east facade. Although different in form, rounded with three sides, it complements the building. This bay is as wide as the west bay but it is narrower in depth creating an unobtrusive silhouette. The art-glass transom, like the west bay, and cornice detailing in concert with the rest of the house allows this alteration to not only blend with but enhance the architectural value of this property. The exterior characteristics and detailing of the Williams Smith House significantly demonstrate the Second Empire style. On December 2, 1994 an awning was installed above the backstairs leading to the enclosed porch. The purpose of this unobtrusive alteration is to provide protection from the ultraviolet damage and the elements.

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Williams Smith House
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The interior of this property also possesses a high level of significance and integrity. These elements can stand alone on their own merit and worth, but combined they create a strong sense of time, place and association. The interior maintains its 1870s and 1880 floor plans, although for a time, 1948 to 1978, the house was converted into two apartments. The only remnants of this alteration are the outline of a divider on the foyer floor and the kitchen cabinets in the 1880 second-story bedroom. The 1880 alterations added a bedroom, bathroom and backstairs above the kitchen and a sunroom was created by enclosing the porch.

The flooring is a high-grade oak, accented with two strips of inlaid walnut. These strips intersect and intertwine at the room corners to form an interlocking pattern of squares. The fireplaces are of high-quality Italian statuary marble. Their designs as well as their mantels create a visual centerpiece in the east parlor and west sitting room.

Located within the transom of the bay window, the dining room art glass is original to the 1870s house. Jerry St. Clair, artisan and proprietor of Gothic Glass, examined the craftsmanship, materials and design and determined it to be original due to the use of the opaque and iridescent glass.¹ Both are typical to 1870s art glass. The dining room art glass provides a strong focal point due to its unique qualities.

The art glass within the parlor transom is original to the 1880 bay. Its design, colors and pattern are more subdued than the dining room piece, but it too creates a focal point within the parlor due to its qualities.

The main staircase in the foyer curves along the wall to the second floor. The newel, balusters and banister are impeccably finished mahogany. The newel with its octagonal base, urn-shaped center and twin disk top creates a visual surprise to an otherwise understated stairway. The decorative spindles at the bottom of the balusters also create an interesting use of patterns.

The Williams Smith House is located within one of the first westward expansions of the City of Napa, the Boggs Addition recorded June 7, 1872. Williams Smith had this residence constructed in about 1875. This estimate is based on the Second Empire-era time frame, 1870 to 1889, and local newspaper articles establishing Williams Smith's residency at the property. The property is situated within a neighborhood of residences built between the 1870s and 1940s. The greatest majority being constructed from 1880 to 1910. The 1895 palms and circa 1880 magnolias on the Smith property create a distinctive setting for the building. This value is further enhanced by the generous setback of the house and the large expanse of lawn. The cast-iron hitching post near the street and 1990 reproduction of the original wrought-iron fence finish the setting. The 1980 garage replaced a termite-infested

1. Summary of the 1981 conversation between Jerry St. Clair and property owner Doris Dawson discussing the characteristics of and criterion for determining the era and age of the west-bay art glass transom.

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Williams Smith House
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1920s garage. It is situated along the back or southern property line and offers no distraction to the integrity or feeling of the setting.

The Williams Smith House is an impressive local example of the Second Empire style. In comparison to the other two qualifying local examples, the Goodman Mansion and the McClelland-Priest House, the Williams Smith House embodies the classic applications of features associated with this style.

Although the Goodman Mansion suffered considerable fire damage, it still conveys the feeling of a Second Empire residence. But even before the fire, the Goodman Mansion's sense of time and place had been seriously altered with the construction of a late-1970s apartment complex directly in front of the 1880 residence. This inappropriate addition substantially jeopardizes the integrity of the Goodman Mansion's setting and historic association. Both the Goodman and Smith residences can be considered equal in their application and demonstration of true Second Empire philosophy and aesthetics.

The setting of the Williams Smith House, coupled with the building's architectural features, makes the Smith House a better example of Second Empire styling, as well as creating a greater level of historic integrity and association. In addition to the setting, the interior of the Williams Smith House has always possessed more ornate detailing - floor inlay, art glass, fireplace designs and grill- and woodwork patterns - traditionally associated with Second Empire.

The McClelland-Priest House is a unique and nontraditional example of the Second Empire styling. The convex mansard is short and contains no dormers. The general form of the building is asymmetrical. Although prominently located on a historically significant corner, its setting is not as impressive as the Williams Smith House. The McClelland-Priest House also possesses ornate interior features, primarily the parlor ceiling.

In contrast, the Smith House possesses the traditional Second Empire exterior architectural features: a long, steeply sloped lower roof with dormer windows and shingles, ornate entablature, and symmetric form and mass. The interior of the Williams Smith House is moderately ornate in comparison to the McClelland-Priest House. But combined with its other attributes, exterior design and setting, the Williams Smith House is a better local example of the Second Empire philosophy and aesthetics.

The Williams Smith House retains its architectural integrity. The intent of its design remains clear and its original elements and features are still in place. The 1880 addition and modifications offer no challenge to the classic Second Empire form, style, design and appearance of the residence; neither do the 1980 garage and 1994 awning. These changes are relatively minor. They are offset by the setting, with its large lot and mature trees, which remains much as it did circa 1875. The Williams Smith House retains its important historical associations and ranks as one of Napa's most architecturally significant residences.

SKETCH MAP

APPROXIMATE SCALE: 1/2" = 10 FEET

WILLIAMS SMITH HOUSE
1929 FIRST STREET
NAPA, NAPA COUNTY, CA 94559

