

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received **MAY 7 1986**
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Bartlett, Robert Rensselaer, House Number of Contributing Resources 2
and/or common Same Number of Non-contributing Resources 0

2. Location

street & number 1215 15th Street N/Anot for publication
city, town Astoria N/Avicinity of First Congressional District
state Oregon code 41 county Clatsop code 007

3. Classification

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input type="checkbox"/> commercial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> structure | <input type="checkbox"/> both | <input type="checkbox"/> work in progress | <input type="checkbox"/> educational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> site | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> object | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> in process | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted | <input type="checkbox"/> religious |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> being considered | <input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted | <input type="checkbox"/> scientific |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| | | | <input type="checkbox"/> other: |

4. Owner of Property

name Sven and Maureen Sundstrom
street & number 1215 15th Street
city, town Astoria N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97103

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clatsop County Courthouse
street & number 749 Commercial Street
city, town Astoria state Oregon 97103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1984 federal state county local
depository for survey records Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 525 Trade St. SE
city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>n/a</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Robert Rensselaer Bartlett House is a balloon-frame, one and one-half story Bungalow style residence with extensive Colonial Revival decorative features. Completed in April, 1921, it retains a high degree of interior and exterior integrity. Two additions, one a garage extension on the north elevation basement level, and the other a gabled extension of the southwest corner, are compatible to the style of the building.

Nestled on a 100 x 50-foot corner lot which slopes steeply to the north and the west, the east-facing Bartlett House is situated on Lot 1 of Block 90, Shively's Addition to the City of Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon. The house is located in a well-to-do neighborhood is in close proximity to the old Astoria High School (now Clatsop Community College). Although it is narrow and steep, 15th Street is one of the oldest streets on the south hill and the first one graded all the way through to the top of the hill. In the late 1800s, this was the route used by travelers going out to the Walluski, and to the old Pioneer cemetery situated only three blocks above the Bartlett House. The street was greatly improved in 1895 at the time the City of Astoria built the municipal water works and city park on top of the hill. And today, 15th Street is the main route used by tourists going to view the Astoria Column on top of Coxcomb Hill.

The Bartlett House is basically a 28' x 56' rectangle. Originally, the south, east (front), and north elevations were symmetrically composed in keeping with the predominant Colonial Revival decorative character. Bungalow characteristics include the horizontal emphasis, jerkin-head gables, narrow lap siding, east elevation shed dormer, and large windows with sash of unequal dimension.

Colonial Revival elements are centered around the imposing gabled porch pavilion; designed in the Doric vein. Coupled, fluted Doric-style columns support a classical entablature and broken pediment decorated with over-scaled mutules or dentil projections. An elliptically-arched porch soffit leads to the single entrance door composed of fifteen stained-glass panes. Flanking sidelights contain five lights each, also in stained-glass. The elevation on either side of the porch is identical. Closest to the porch are short windows composed of two six light casements. Moving further from the porch, narrow "colonial" trellises are found, after which is located a large double-hung sash window in a simple frame, comprised of a narrower twelve light upper sash over a single pane lower sash.

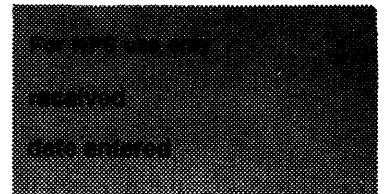
Both of these window frames, as well as those on the west elevation, are set partially into the blank frieze board which returns on the north and possibly the south elevation. Windows set into the north and south gable ends, and into the western elevation dormer, are Chicago-style in derivation.

Two brick chimneys are present: a new one added when a small family room was built onto the south end of the house, and the original chimney which bisects the peak of the roof near the north end.

The original garage, still in use, is a separate building having siding and clipped gable roof in the style of the house and located on the south end of the

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Continuation sheet Robert R. Bartlett House Item number 7 Page 2

lot. Double doors with small-paned windows and strap hinges open out to a concrete drive leading to 15th Street. It is counted as a contributing feature of the property. A second basement garage was added later by opening up the basement wall on the Lexington Avenue side and adding the same type of doors and a concrete drive out to the street.

The interior of the Bartlett House is particularly elegant and fine for its type. The east elevation entrance leads to a large entrance hall. A window seat is built in on the east wall and faces the staircase to the second floor. Access to the large living room which occupies the northern half of the house is gained through an impressive set of ogee-arched glass paneled doors, whose panes and muntins conform to the curve of the arch. An identical set of these doors leads south from the living room to the west-facing dining room.

Painted wood decorative features in the living room are elegant and classically inspired. There is a highly textured cornice molding above a frieze marked by the intermittent appearance of triglyphs. A narrow, dentiled cornice molding serves as the mantle for the now-enclosed fireplace, whose surround and hearth are tiled. Paired, fluted pilasters flank the fireplace, which is further decorated with inset panels and other applied moldings. Built-in bookcases with eighteen pane doors are found on either side of the fireplace. They are framed with identical fluted pilasters.

Also on the west side of the house is the kitchen and beyond it a newer den with fireplace. Apparently, there was once a breakfast nook here but this was taken out and enlarged to become the small family room.

On the southeast corner of the first floor is a large bedroom which once may have been used as a combination den-office by Robert Bartlett. It is a large room with double, glass French doors leading out to a secluded brick patio. There is also a bath and a staircase down to the basement on this floor.

All of the rooms on the second floor have low-sloping papered ceilings. There are three bedrooms and a bath, and at the top of the stairs is a large hallway area, well-lighted by the long, shallow east facing dormer windows. This is used as an office now.

The house originally had a half concrete basement but this was expanded later, probably at the time the basement garage was built in the 1940s. The original wood furnace has been replaced by a more efficient oil furnace. And, because of the sloping lot, the basement area is well-lighted by windows facing north and west.

Basically, the house today must look much as it did when it was first built. The small addition built on the south is in the same style and fits in with the rest of the house. The added basement garage to the north is not visible from the front.

8. Significance

| Period | Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> community planning | <input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499 | <input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic | <input type="checkbox"/> conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> law | <input type="checkbox"/> science |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599 | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> economics | <input type="checkbox"/> literature | <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> education | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> art | <input type="checkbox"/> engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> music | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> transportation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900– | <input type="checkbox"/> communications | <input type="checkbox"/> industry | <input type="checkbox"/> politics/government | <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> invention | | |

Specific dates 1921–1935 **Builder/Architect** Robert Rensselaer Bartlett, designer

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The R. R. Bartlett House in Astoria, Oregon was designed and occupied by Robert Rensselaer Bartlett, engineer and general manager of the Port of Astoria from 1914 to 1947. Trained in engineering and industrial design, Bartlett designed his own house, which was completed in 1921. The property is significant under National Register criterion "c" as a locally distinctive example of Bungalow architecture in the Colonial vein. Among exterior features exhibiting the Colonial style, the temple-front Doric portico is noteworthy for its fine detail. Interior woodwork is exceptional for its period in Astoria, both in terms of quality and scope. It reflects well the academic background of the designer. The livingroom is distinguished by a full entablature in the Doric order and by a chimney piece, overmantel and built-in cabinetry in the Federal style. Because of Bartlett's long and outstanding service over a period of 33 years to the Port of Astoria, whose facilities he designed in 1914, the well-preserved house on 15th Street is significant secondarily under criterion "b" for its association with Bartlett. Bartlett occupied the house 25 years before his retirement. His original plans and drawings for the house are on the premises.

Completed in April, 1921, the Bartlett House was built near the top of the hill of Astoria in an area then developing into a prime residential neighborhood, primarily because of its proximity to Astoria High School. And certainly, R. R. Bartlett considered the superb view of the Columbia River below when he designed this home specifically for his family's needs and wants.

Robert Rensselaer Bartlett was born in Carbondale, Pennsylvania, in March, 1876, but he then moved with his family a few years later to Fontana, Kansas, where his father set up a mercantile business. When his health began to fail, the elder Bartlett traded his business for a ranch near McLeansboro, Illinois, where the family settled down in a more healthful environment.

Robert Bartlett attended schools in Kansas and Illinois and was graduated from Franklin Institute of Education in New York where he studied engineering and industrial design.

After graduation, Bartlett was employed by the Carbondale Machine Company in Pennsylvania as an industrial engineer. During this time, he designed the first oxalic acid plant in the United States on a site in Bradford, Pennsylvania.

After eight years with the Carbondale Machine Company, Bartlett left and came west in 1909 to establish his own architectural firm in Hood River, Oregon. Here, in addition to his residential contracts, Bartlett continued his studies of industrial engineering and became interested in traffic management and design.

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Who's Who and What's What at the Port of Astoria," a pamphlet published by A. S. Gregory and Lem A. Dever. 1922

Astoria Daily Budget - 3/2/1915; 1/29/1919; 11/1/1920; 4/12/1921; 7/24/1923; 10/13/1925; 1/12/1926; 7/14/1926; 9/18/1926; 9/26/1950; 9/4/1952.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Astoria, Oregon - Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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| Zone | | | | Easting | | | | Northing | | | | | | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Robert Rensselaer Bartlett House occupies a 100 x 50 foot parcel known as Lot 1 of Block 90, Shively's Addition to Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon.

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

state None code county code

state None code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger T. Tetlow

organization Contractor for City of Astoria

date June 1, 1985

street & number Box 223

telephone (206) 642-3860

city or town Seaview

state Washington 98644

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date April 22, 1986

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date

6/5/86

Keeper of the National Register

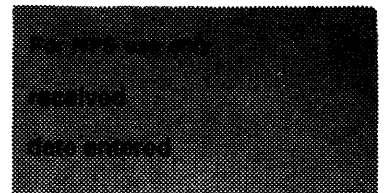
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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In 1914, he was asked by F. J. Walsh of the firm of Newell, Gossett and Walsh of Portland to accompany him to Astoria to help with the designing and construction of facilities for the proposed Port of Astoria. The two men arrived in Astoria to work with the Port of Astoria Commission. The first piles were driven in June, 1914.

At that time, Astorians were just beginning to look at the possibilities of creating a major seaport docking and storage facility on the west side of town and had passed a massive bond issue to finance to project. Before this port was built, most of the area shipping had been handled by private firms using their own docking facilities all along the town's waterfront. But the haphazardness of such facilities and the emergence of the Far Eastern trade made a more efficient and compact shipping center vital to the growth of the seaport.

Under the direction of Robert Bartlett, working with the Port of Astoria Commission, the new Port of Astoria rapidly took shape. Piers 1 and 2 were dedicated in September, 1915, and Pier 3 was completed 4 years later in 1921. At that time, this pier was the second largest in the United States. A grain elevator was built near Pier 1 in 1916 and a new flouring mill adjacent to the grain elevator in 1919. All of these projects were designed, and the construction supervised, by Robert Bartlett.

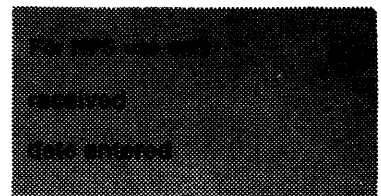
One of Bartlett's proudest achievements was a belt line railroad which he designed to run along the west waterfront, connecting all of the local industries there with the Port of Astoria as well as with the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad which ran from Portland, through Astoria and on the Seaside.

R. R. Bartlett was asked to become the first general manager of the Port of Astoria and accepted that offer in 1916. He held this position until his retirement in February, 1947. During these years, the Port of Astoria had its ups and downs, prospering during World War I and during the 1920s, but then running into financial difficulties during the Depression days of the 1930s. The U. S. Navy leased Pier 2 during World War II, which helped the overall operation. Today, the Port of Astoria is expanding again, adding new wharfing facilities to Pier 1.

It is not known where Bartlett lived during his first years in Astoria, but he bought the lot at 15th and Lexington Streets in 1920 and completed construction of his residence there in April, 1921. He and his family lived there until shortly before his retirement in 1947. Family members included his wife Katherine, a son Robert R. Jr., and two daughters, Philena and Louise.

In addition to his official duties at the Port of Astoria, Bartlett participated in many other local activities. He was a member of the Presbyterian church, and a charter member of the Astoria Rotary Club. He was also a charter member and one of the incorporators of the Astoria Golf and Country Club, and designed the club

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building for them in 1924. He was also a member of the Oregon State Board of Engineering Examiners for 12 years. Another of Bartlett's architectural designs was that for the Masonic Temple in Astoria (1923), which stands at 16th and Franklin.

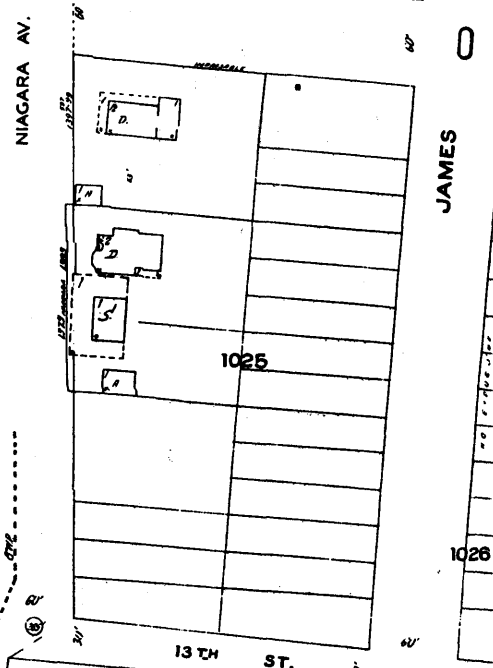
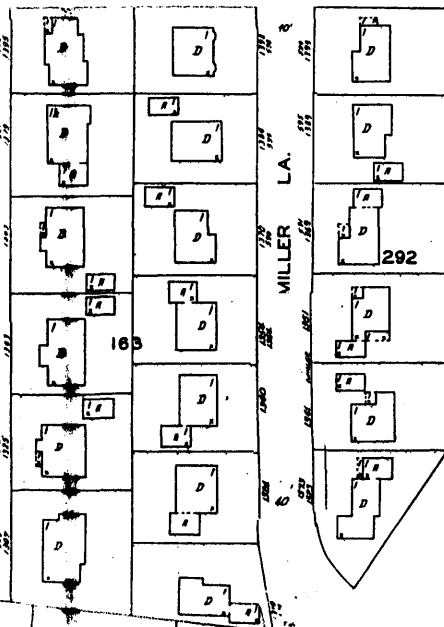
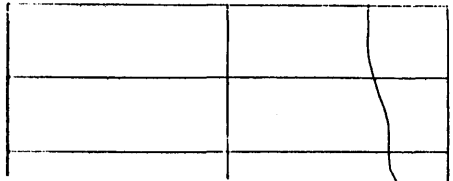
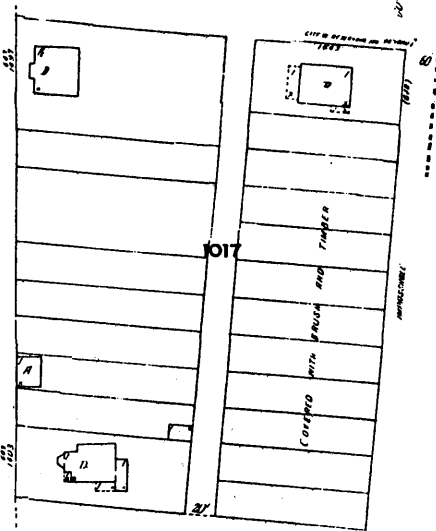
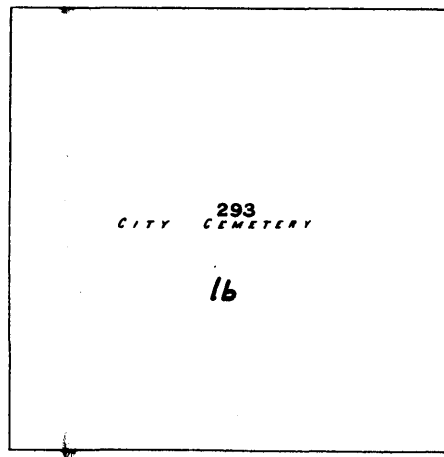
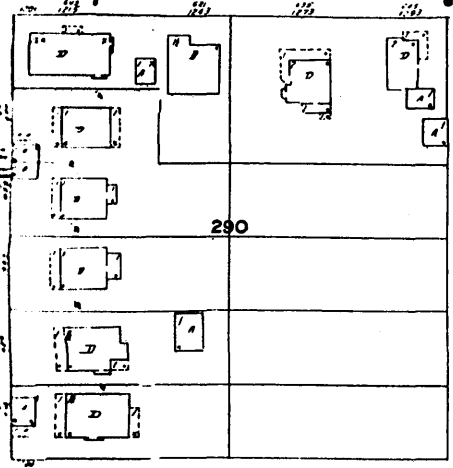
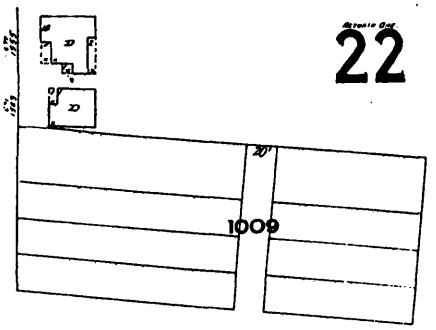
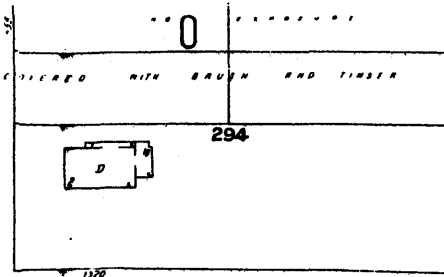
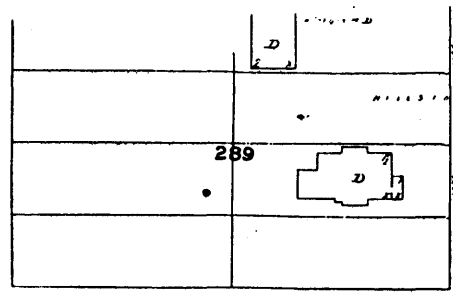
Robert Bartlett was a perfectionist and with his keen engineering mind was capable of setting up and following through on the most minute details on any job. As an example of this, in 1926 he drew to scale and designed a perfect miniature model of Captain Robert Gray's ship, Columbia, in which the Columbia River was discovered in 1792. Bartlett spent months researching the project, and obtained much of his information from the Library of Congress before making drawings to scale. He had the Wales Lithograph Company of Boston make drawings and charts of the original ship and obtained additional details from the Marine Research Society of Salem, Massachusetts.

Carl Laine, a local tailor, was commissioned to make the sails and the actual construction of the model was done at a real shipbuilding plant, the Wilson Shipbuilding Company of Astoria. The shipwrights fashioned the hull of ironwood, handcarved tiny pegs and rails, and made the graceful masts and twine rigging.

This model, one of the finest and most authentic reproductions of the famous ship, was first displayed at the Port of Astoria offices, but later was given to the Clatsop County Historical Society.

Robert R. Bartlett sold the house before retiring and moving to nearby Warrenton, where he lived until his death in September, 1950 at the age of 74.

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- 1. R.R. Bartlett House, 1921
- 1 a. Road to Astoria Column (NRHP)
- 1 b. Pioneer Cemetery, Local Historic Landmark
- 1956 Sanborn Atlas

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