

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



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

1. Name

historic John T. Greene Residence <sup>House</sup>  
and/or common Maria Nicholas Residence

2. Location

street & number 3200 H Street not for publication  
city, town Sacramento vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 3  
state California code 06 county Sacramento code 067

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> 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 Maria John Nicholas  
street & number 3200 H Street  
city, town Sacramento vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state California 95816

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sacramento County Recorder's Office  
street & number 701 J Street  
city, town Sacramento state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title A Guide to the Work of Greene and Greene has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
Published by Peregrine Smith, Inc.  statewide  
date 1974 Salt Lake City and Santa Barbara  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records The Gamble House, 4 Westmoreland Place  
city, town Pasadena state California

①

# 7. Description

**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The structure at 3200 H Street in Sacramento was built in 1915 at a cost of \$9,000 for John T. Greene, and was designed by the architectural firm of Greene and Greene of Pasadena, California.

Essentially symmetrical in form, the two story building (with one story wings) constructed of redwood is rectangular and shingled, with a full basement floor partially above grade. From the rear view, the three levels are more evident. A two story central portion with an overhang forms the principal mass, and one story wings project on the east and west elevations, the western one being deeper.

The two story portion has a shallow gabled roof while the one story wings have flat roofs that serve as balconied decks, with access to the upstairs bedrooms on either end. Rounded beam ends extend from beneath the eaves and the second floor and deck overhangs. The entrance is centrally placed, and sheltered beneath a gabled roof supported by projecting beams and elbow braces. Two large windows, divided into thirds with a large central portion, flank the double entry doors on the first floor. The second floor contains smaller windows, some grouped into strips above window boxes. The one story west and east wings are windowed on two and three sides respectively. Balcony railings carry a distinctive design similar to interior design themes. Rustic materials employed in the building include shingles, redwood beams, river rock and clinker brick.

The structure has a pronounced oriental character, expressed in the roof line and overhangs, the wood joinery, shoji screens, rock lantern at the entry, and in the varied utilization of the oriental "cloud lift" motif in doors, ceilings, balustrades and balcony railing.

The house sits high on the site, being raised gradually and subtly through a series of levels including a front terrace. Brick paves this terrace which is defined by a low wall ending with a pillar of river rock and clinker brick, portions of which are laid in informal "cascading" forms. The double-doored and canopied entrance contains a hanging cast metal lantern, and the screen doors repeat the oriental "cloud lift" design of the inner entry doors. Other exterior details include angled and pegged string course joints, and window boxes with wood joinery supported by angled braces. Lattice patterns in wood occur in the second floor gable ends. The repetitive beams with rounded ends, wood joinery, and shingled surface lend the structure a distinctly oriental character.

A central hall divides two almost symmetrical wings on both floors, with kitchen, pantry, breakfast room and dining rooms on the west, and solarium and living room on the east. The five finite spaces across the front of the house (solarium, living room, entrance hall, dining room, breakfast room) can either be five separate and intimate spaces or can open into a single sixty foot expanse, providing an extensive view of the park across the street.

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The interior contains several noteworthy elements. The fireplace in the living room is faced with handsome terra cotta tiles produced by Ernest Batchelder, a noted Southern California Arts and Crafts era designer. A linear geometric design theme executed in wood is repeated throughout the house. This theme occurs in the recessed sliding glass doors, on cabinet fronts, in wood members applied to the ceiling in a pattern, and in indoor and outdoor stair and balcony railings. Windows in the one story east and west wings contain shoji screens. The sunroom and breakfast room ceilings are paneled and beamed. Woodwork is both Port Orford cedar and redwood, originally hand rubbed and oiled. The chimney in the center of the house conceals a solar water heating unit, no longer functional. The basement billiards room on the east also has a fireplace and was designed to open pleasantly onto the rear garden.

The exterior of the house is essentially unaltered. A bathroom has been added on the deck of the west end of the structure, but it is small, shingled and unobtrusive. The shingles and wood, originally finished with a stain, have been painted a dark grey.

On the interior, only the kitchen and basement rooms have been altered. The wood pattern on the first floor ceilings, as well as the woodwork upstairs has been painted. The shoji screens in the breakfast room are not original. The entrance hall, living room, dining room and bedrooms, as well as the stair well, may have originally held a picture rail molding that joined the top of the door frames.

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1915 **Builder/Architect** Greene and Greene

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Constructed in 1915, the John T. Greene House is a handsome architectural work and a rare Northern California representative of the notable early 20th century California architectural firm of Charles and Henry Greene.

This Craftsman house, the only Greene and Greene representative in Sacramento, reflects the outstanding wooden construction tradition developed by the Greene brothers, and the totality of design treatment and integration of detail that characterize their work. Its Craftsman image is enhanced by both the use of rustic materials and the integration of the structure into a landscaped setting with a large expanse of front lawn that relates the structure to the large park it faces.

It is also important as a relatively modestly scaled representative of the Greene brothers' refined and sensitive philosophy, generally expressed in more expensive and larger residences. As such, the building serves as an example that moderately-sized residences can possess the elegance and design quality of larger and more costly structures.

Attorney John T. Greene (no relation to the architects), who commissioned the construction of the house, worked primarily in real estate as a land developer. He intended that his house serve as a prototype for the development of quality residential construction in the development of his seven acre tract facing McKinley Park. Mrs. Greene wished the design of the house to bear strong Japanese architectural influences and she was largely responsible for the choosing of the Greene brothers as the building's architects.

Brothers Charles Sumner and Henry Mather Greene were distinguished architects and designers of the early 1900's whose principle body of work lies in Southern California. Their architecture and design philosophy constituted a major impact upon California design of that era. They were heralded as "formulators of a new and native architecture,"<sup>1</sup> and indeed they created an architectural expression unique to California, and reflective of its geography, climate, and life style. This tradition remains today an integral aspect of California's heritage and contemporary environment.

Rather than utilizing prevailing architectural traditions, the Greens borrowed from the "bungalow" building form which had originated in India as English workers' housing geared to meet climatic needs. The Greens' adaptations utilized deep overhangs for protection from the sun, and sited structures to capture prevailing breezes.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

# 10. Geographical Data

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**

Acreege of nominated property .274

Quadrangle name Sacramento East

**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	0	6	3	3	9	6	0	4	2	7	0	5	6	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

### Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 7 as shown on the "Plat of McKinley Park Tract" (88' by 135' by 88' by 136) recorded in the Office of the Country Recorder of Sacramento County, April 25, 1922, Book 16, Map Number 48. (See attached map.)

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paula Boghosian

organization Historic Environment Consultants date November 4, 1981

street & number 2306 J Street telephone (916) 446-2447

city or town Sacramento state California

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 2-26-82

For HCERS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date

4/15/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Their work popularized the California bungalow as a building form that could range in expression from a very affluent scale to a modest working man's dwelling. This building type was proliferated in a variety of forms throughout the state, becoming identified as a major California image, and reflecting the particular philosophical, physical, cultural and social character of the state.

The Greene brothers' work was particularly expressive of the Arts and Crafts/Craftsman era, not only in the skillful and extensive use of natural and rustic materials, and the integration of a design with its setting, but also in its enormous concern with the craftsmanship and detailing of the work itself.

The background of the brothers was particularly suited to the tasks they undertook. Influenced by the philosophy of John Ruskin and William Morris, the Greene brothers learned to work manually with tools and natural materials. Their attendance at both the Calvin Woodward Manual Training High School in St. Louis, with its focus upon the skills of the craftsman, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology were key to their technological and aesthetic development. Their physician father, Dr. Thomas Greene, gave them a sense of the healthful qualities of air, light, and space, contributing to the philosophy that became significant to the development of their particular design approach as evidenced in their use of fenestration, indoor/outdoor relationships, and space. The influence upon their work of oriental design simplicity and its love of woodworking and joinery was strong, as were other ethnic forms, i.e. Scandinavian, Sikkim, Bhutan, and Tibetan cultures. Originally from the Midwest, the Greene brothers also were particularly impressed by California's special lifestyle and environment, its early Mission architecture, and its cultural and intellectual freedom.

The Greenes' early practical training both helped them design later work with an understanding of what was needed to produce it, and facilitated their training of others to interpret their creations. Frank Lloyd Wright, a contemporary and an acquaintance of the Greenes, acknowledged and admired their unique ability to transform creative images into reality. "Wright goes beyond the Greenes in form and flowing space and the Greenes go beyond Wright in continuity, craftsmanship, and detail." (Makinson)

The John T. Greene House represents well all of the principal themes and techniques of the Greene brothers' work.

The Greene brothers' philosophy of functionalism is evident in the simple but flexible floor plan, the straightforward use of materials, and the integration of storage into the overall design.

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The structure possesses a strong oriental influence in its design qualities, an element prevalent in the architects' work, but perhaps present to a greater degree in this house than most of their other representatives.

The John T. Greene house was probably designed by Henry Greene, as Charles had moved from Pasadena to Carmel in 1914, the year before the house was completed. Further, the lines of the house, the change in levels both inside and outside, and the oriental qualities reflect Henry's appreciation for simplicity and understatement. "We see both his discipline and his imagination... we see restraint, order, system, but overall an ability to allow space to transcend mere rooms." (Makinson)

The large plate glass windows of the facade were unusual to the Greene brothers' work however. They are the largest single windows used in any of the Greenes' houses, and were also apparently unmatched by other houses in Sacramento at that time.

These large windows, and numerous others including the bands of smaller windows standard to their designs, provide both good ventilation and extensive visual access to the outdoors, the landscaped garden, and the park across the street. This integration of indoor living space and outdoor environment was a prime philosophical and design thrust of the Greenes' work. The integration of the building with its environment is further enhanced by the overhanging eaves, the retention of natural materials in the exterior of the house, and ready access to the outdoors provided by the porches and decks.

The house has an open and airy character, imparted by the proportions, arrangement and flow of the interior spaces, and the generous amount of glassed area. An intimacy of scale within the larger open spaces is achieved through the use of repeated design elements in wood, the relative proportions of built-in furniture, and the room proportions.

A repeated geometric design theme, different in each of their houses, is a trademark of the Greenes' work and is carried throughout this house as a linear interpretation of the "cloud lift" motif, appearing on cabinet fronts, in sliding glass doors, and the patterned application of wood members to ceilings.

The John T. Greene House, which cost \$9,000 to build, is also important as a modestly scaled but still elegant representative of the Greene brothers' work, which often dealt with larger residences (i.e. the Gamble House which cost \$50,400 in 1908 and the Blacker House which cost over \$100,000 in 1907).

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The large residences for which the Greens became known, however, were not the ones which influenced the public. "It was the scale of bungalow building that this house, the John T. Greene house, and the modest scaled shingled bungalows Greene and Greene did around Pasadena between 1903 and 1906 which really had the greater influence that changed American residential building. . . . Greene and Greene transcended the normal concepts of the bungalow. They had a particular kind of genius which gave it something special that made it possible for the person of modest means to recognize that his small dwelling could have dignity and style and quality which heretofore had been left to the rich who could afford 'an architect'." (Makinson)

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<sup>1</sup>American Institute of Architects citation, 1952.



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Cram, Ralph Adams, Preface to American Country Houses of Today, New York: Architectural Book Publishing Company, 1913.

Current, William and Karen, Architects in the Residential Style, Fort Worth, Texas: Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1974.

Greene, Preston (son of John T. Greene), interview, Sacramento, CA, February 28, 1980.

Makinson, Randell, Greene and Greene, Architecture as a Fine Art, Salt Lake City and Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977.

Makinson, Randell, Greene and Greene, The Architecture and Related Designs of Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene; 1894-1934; Los Angeles Municipal Gallery, January 27-March 6, 1977, printed by Cunningham Press, Alhambra, CA.

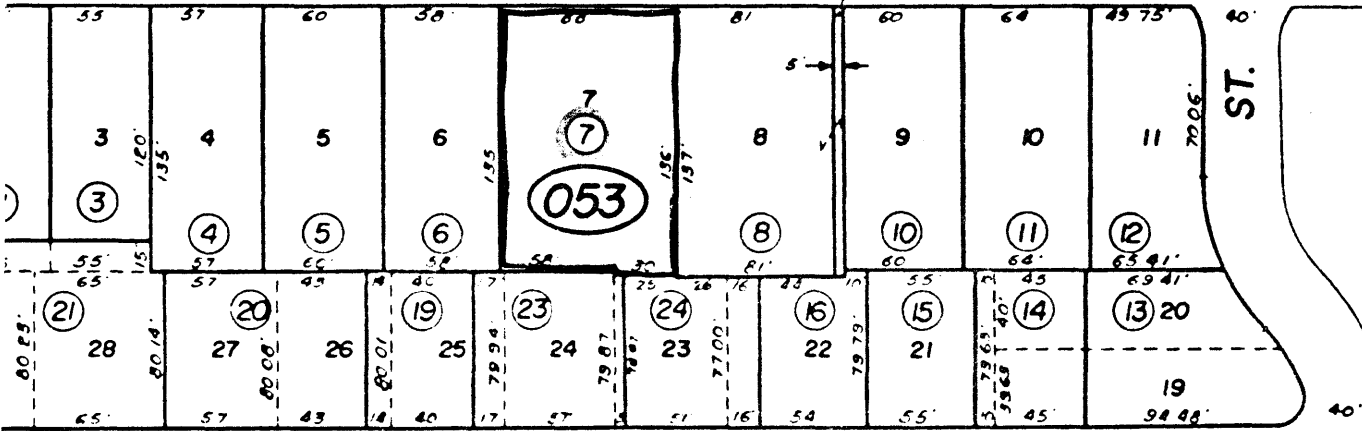
Makinson, Randell, interview, Sacramento, CA, February 28, 1980.

Bk. 3

H STREET

ST.

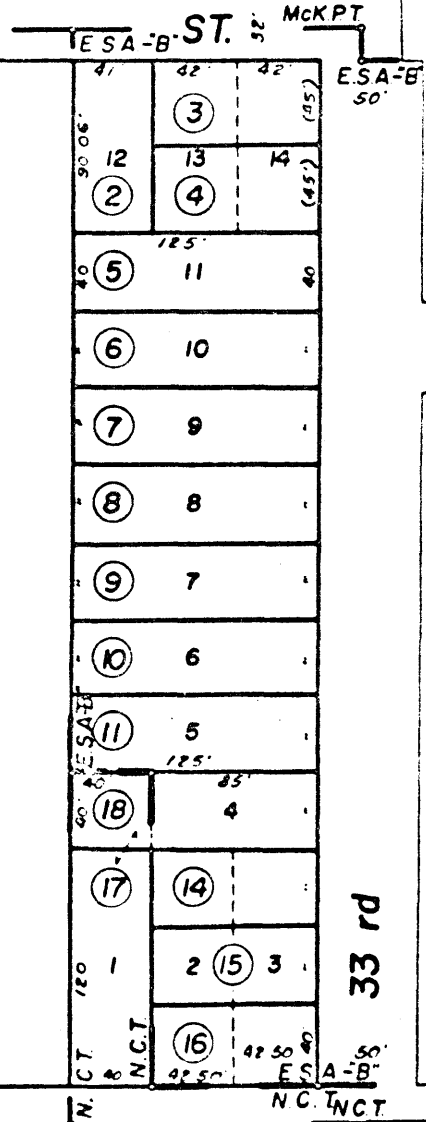
MCK PT.



John T. Greene Residence  
 3200 H Street  
 Sacramento, Sacramento County  
 California

SUTTER JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

① (054)  
 7.55± Ac.



ST.

CITY OF SACRAMENTO

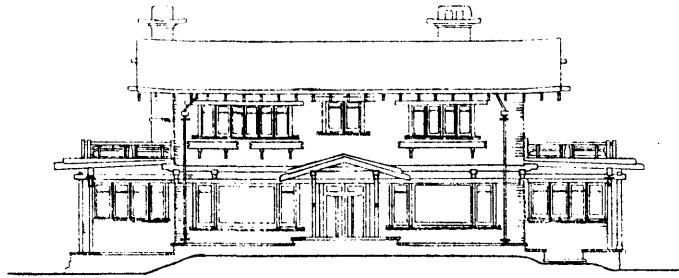
Assessor's Map Bk. 7 -Pg. 05

County of Sacramento, Calif.

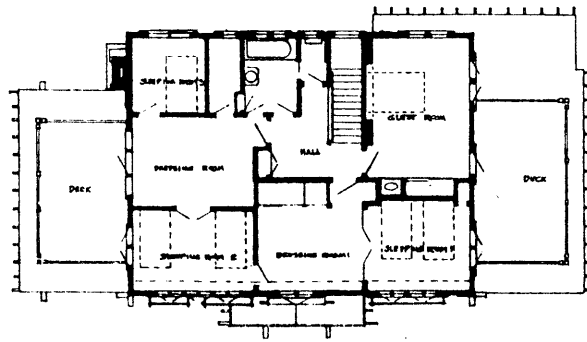
12

NOTE—Assessor's Block Numbers Shown in Ellipses.  
 Assessor's Parcel Numbers Shown in Circles.

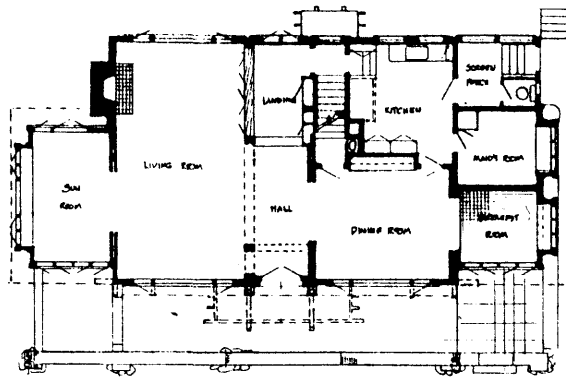




FRONT ELEVATION



SECOND FLOOR PLAN



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

John T. Greene house, 3200 H. Street, Sacramento, 1915.

From: Greene & Greene  
Architecture as a Fine Art  
Randell L. Makinson  
Peregrine Smith, Inc.