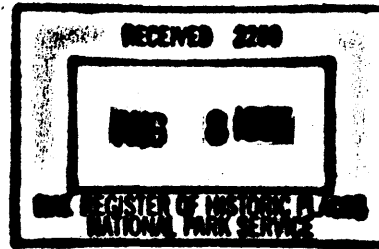


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Bethers, George W., House

other names/site number Wyatt, William, House

2. Location

street & number 225 N Eighth Street N/A not for publication

city or town Philomath N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Benton code 003 zip code 97370

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hannah July 30, 1997
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State of 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

8/12/97
Date of Action

Name of Property

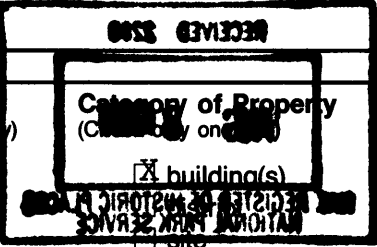
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one)



- building(s)
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
_____	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
_____	_____	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling (work in progress)

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic (vernacular version)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete block
walls wood: weatherboard

roof sheet metal

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 1

The George Bethers House is a two-story, box construction house with a cross gable roof. The foundation consists of wooden logs and hand-hewn beams, resting atop concrete a foundation. Its exterior is covered with horizontal drop siding, and the roof with corrugated aluminum. The house is currently under a process of restoration by its owner, Scott Ramsey, and will be returned to an earlier period when the house possessed a covered porch on its southern and eastern sides. The restoration will renew the building to its vernacular of the Gothic Revival Style, shown in pictures around 1900. Elements of the interior such as the finely crafted wooden mouldings and stair bannister, reveal the house's historic elegance. The structure occupies a small knoll in the western end of the town of Philomath. Situated on the corner of College Street and 8th Street, the house faces south over the Southern Pacific Railroad line. The lot is in need of some care but it is covered with large shade trees. A small shed, also constructed with early materials, stands in the northwest corner and is approached by a curving gravel driveway. The house underwent several renovations before the turn of the century, and has unfortunately been neglected by the previous owners. Photographs indicate that the house has seen very little additional renovation since the last remodeling period of 1900.

This house has undergone at least two separate construction periods with some minor remodelings. The original construction is dated to approximately 1873 when the property was owned by George W. Bethers, therefore the earliest building period is decided at 1873. The house built during this time was a side-gabled box construction of two stories. The lower frame was made of large hand-hewn logs, some of which remain today. The wall boards of mill lath were notched into the beams to create a frame. Vertical boards were placed within the notches, and no studs were used at all. The outside of this house was probably covered with drop siding nailed directly to the walls. This early method of house construction was prevalent in Oregon during the settlement period and differed from balloon frame construction in that no stud framing members were used and no insulating layer of air space created.

Roofing materials from this early period have survived to the present, revealing a side-gable frame of rough sawn timber using square nails. A 5' by 5' brick pad was found underneath the house, and splices in the wood joists through the floor and roof demonstrate the earlier existence of a large chimney on the north slope of the building. The two smaller four-panel fixed windows visible on the front of the house were made of lower quality glass that probably also date to this era, as is evidenced by their planned fit into the original wooden structure. The interior of this early building had a narrow staircase leading to the second floor in the northwest corner. A main support wall also ran through the house, south to north, through both floors and a bit off center. Examination of the wall paneling reveals the presence of early walls upstairs, delineating small rooms, and several batten doors installed with square nails.

Around 1885 a remodeling was undertaken of the house's north side. Again newspapers found within the walls as well as different building materials suggest that some small-scale improvements were made. Perhaps fire damage or a desire for better utility prompted the owners from this time period to remove the central fireplace and add a cellar below the back end of the structure. William and Mary Wyatt were the owners listed in the property's chain of title during this period, citizens who were to become prominent figures in the community.

The remodeling of 1900 is plainly evident in the present structure and marks the period to which the owner wishes to restore the building. This structure was designed as a vernacular of the Gothic Revival style, mixing classic architecture with a utilitarian renovation. On the whole, the house retains the same

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general shape and construction, but new elements were added to make it more attractive and fashionable with the times. Photographs of the town identified as dating to "around the turn of the century" by a local Philomath historian show this house plainly, suggesting that the house was fashionably updated in, or shortly before 1900.

The new elements added in the 1900 construction are laid out as follows. The main structural difference was the addition of a front gable to the standard steep-gabled roof, with a small diamond shape window, indicative of the Gothic style. At this time were added boxed eaves, drop siding, and a large front porch which extended around the south and east sides. Two single-pane double hung sash windows remained on the front facade from the earlier construction, and more windows were added at this time. On the second floor of the front facade a one-over-one sash window was placed in the center of the house. The eastern and western facades saw the addition of two one-over-one double hung sash windows as well as additional entryway on the northeastern exterior wall, accessible by a three paneled door with window. An interior wall was added, with spacing between the exterior siding. A new corbelled chimney was also added through the center of the house, on the ridge of the top roof gable. On the primary, south-facing facade, a wider, double-hung "picture" window with one-third-size upper sash was inserted in the center bay of the ground story. All windows are framed consistently with architrave molding.

In the 1900 remodeling, the interior gained a Queen Anne air. The front door was replaced with a three-paneled door with a large window. The staircase was moved from the northwest end to the front southwest corner, and widened to present a more grand entryway to the house, complete with a carved wooden bannister leading upstairs. The interior floor plan changed as well, with a door leading from the entryway to an inner sitting room on the house's southern face. Two hanging four-paneled doors framed by a decorative bulls-eye molding separated the sitting room from the rear parlor. The doors were hung using fine cast iron hardware from the period. Porcelain doorknobs can also be found on various interior doors. The upper floor plan changed as well. Although the main support wall remained, a room in the southwest corner was converted to a closet, and new doors were installed to rooms on the eastern side. However, two board and batten doors from the original construction were used in the new rooms. The inside walls upstairs were then covered with hand-stenciled wallpaper. Evidence of these changes remains throughout the floor plan, revealing the different periods through material types, design, and cuts in the original structure.

A small shed or carriage house was built on the back northwest corner of the property sometime around the last building period. Approximately 14' by 14' in size, this original structure was constructed with materials similar to that of the house, with windows on the north and west sides. These windows, though long ago broken, were originally of the four pane pattern similar to those used on the house. An extension has since been added to the building with a shed roof, but the overall structure is rotting.

Mr. Ramsey's restoration to this period of construction has been strictly in regard to maintaining historic integrity while upgrading the house to current standards and codes. For example, a new foundation was poured in the footprint of the original brick pillars to provide more long-term stability. Original walls have maintained their location in the house but they have been rebuilt utilizing the original material when possible.

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.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1873-1900

Significant Dates

1873

c.1900

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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:

Benton Co Hist Soc / L+C College

Bethers, George W., House

Benton County, Oregon

Name of Property

County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.52 acres

Corvallis, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

UTM grid for Zone 1, Easting 470310, Northing 4931900

UTM grid for Zone 3, Easting, Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title E. Benjamin Cornett, David Ruderman, Scott Stephenson, students

organization Lewis and Clark College date August 27, 1997; rev. July 30, 1997

street & number 1616 SE Nehalem Street telephone 503/235-4997

city or town Portland state OR zip code 97202

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Scott Ramsey

street & number 225 N Eighth Street telephone 541/929-2909

city or town Philomath state OR zip code 97370

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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National Park Service**

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BETHERS, GEORGE W., HOUSE (1873, c. 1900)

225 N Eighth Street
Philomath, Benton County, Oregon

COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

The house of box construction built in 1873 for George W. Bethers, pioneer settler in the Mary's River drainage westerly of Corvallis, in Benton County, Oregon, occupies an oak-shaded half acre parcel on a hillock at the northeast corner of Eighth and College Streets in Philomath. The property lies two blocks west of Philomath College, the historic focal point of the community that was platted by members of the United Brethren Church in support of their academic enterprise.

As remodeled in the vernacular Rural Gothic mode about 1900, the house is a brisk, two-story, side gabled rectangular volume of plank, or box construction rising from hewn sills, which originally rested on brick piers. The ground plan dimensions of the core volume are 24 x 26 feet. By the turn of the century, a ten-foot kitchen attachment was added to the northwest corner, and a porch extended across the balance of the rear face. Eventually, the porch was enclosed, and other lean-to attachments enlarged the footprint of the rear section. The building exterior is clad with horizontal drop siding. The historic front elevation, facing south toward College Street, is distinguished by a steeply-pitched central cross gable, or wall dormer, which is pierced by a diamond-shaped window with molded frame. The exterior is trimmed with classical cornice and unadorned frieze, plain corner boards, and window frames with architrave molding. The formal fenestration pattern has been modified with the addition of several later openings. Typically, window openings are fitted with one-over-one double hung sash. A brick chimney with corbelled cap, which by 1900 straddled the roof ridge slightly off center, was the replacement for an earlier central chimney.

In the remodeling of 1900, the house was encircled on south and east sides by an eight-foot wide, single-story veranda with turned posts, and a picture window was added to the south front. It was at this time also the front wall dormer and boxed cornice, drop siding and several windows were introduced, the chimney rebuilt, and the floor plan modified to create an entry stairhall. The stairs on the west wall were relocated to the front corner, where winder steps were added to the bottom landing. The turned newel post and bannister still are intact. Sliding parlor pocket doors with raised panels make up another noteworthy feature of the remodeling.

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By the turn of the century, as is documented in historic views, a carriage shed, or barn stood off the northwest corner of the house, and there were other small accessory buildings to the north. The shed still stands in the northwest corner. When originally constructed ca. 1900, the volume was 16 feet square. Subsequently, a shed addition was added to the east elevation which enlarged the footprint to 16 x 24 feet. The gable-roofed shed has a north-south longitudinal axis with the opening on the south end. It is clad with horizontal drop siding matching that of the house. The carriage shed contains two window assemblies from the house that antedate the 1900 remodeling. The sash, fitted with four lights over four, are in poor condition but constitute a record of the original house. Because the carriage shed has no foundation and is severely deteriorated, it is not expected to be standing in the long term. Nevertheless, it is contemporary with the property's final evolutionary development in the historic period and is counted a contributing feature.

The present owner, Scott Ramsey, who acquired the property in 1995 to prevent its being cleared for redevelopment, is embarked upon rehabilitating the house to the 1900 configuration, which, since it is documented by photograph, represents the earliest phase of modification for which restoration would not be speculative. In recent years, the shingle-covered roof was replaced with corrugated metal. This and a number of other later alterations will be reversed. Among the structural improvements completed is the addition of a rock-faced concrete perimeter foundation.

While the house was modified after the departure of the two principal historical figures with which it is associated, and conveys today its configuration of about 1900, it is nonetheless important as a tangible link to George W. Bethers and William Wyatt. Both figures were instrumental in the development of the Marys River settlement by members of the United Brethren Church. However, because the unaltered United Brethren college building of 1867 also is importantly associated with local organization of the United Brethren Church and its institution of higher learning, and because previous National Register review comments specifically advised limiting the premise of the nomination, the house is not now proposed for nomination under Criteria A or B in the areas of exploration/settlement and religion. The information relating to historical themes is retained, however, as a matter of documentation.

The house of George Bethers and William Wyatt does meet Criterion C in the area of architecture as a textbook example of early Oregon construction technique in which box construction is encapsulated in wall construction of a turn-of-the-century remodeling. Original exterior siding (half-inch thick, rough-sawn lap siding) was removed in 1900 and replaced with the existing drop siding. Some of the old material was reused on the interior. Inside, the perimeter walls were furred out with rough-sawn 2 x 4s to which were nailed a cover of

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horizontal shiplap. Partition walls of the interior were strengthened by a layer of horizontal 6 x 3/4-inch boards similar to shiplap. To obtain a smooth surface for wall treatment, interior walls will be finished with sheetrock in the current rehabilitation.

The turn-of-the-century wall reinforcement represents an interesting, practical technique for achieving shear strength and improved insulation. The early weatherization measure, a commonplace requirement of later occupants of box-constructed dwellings, went hand-in-hand with the fashionable, space-expanding amenities of veranda and wall dornor. The historic period of significance of the nominated property, thus, is drawn from the building's date of construction in 1873, continues through the successive periods of occupation by Bethers and Wyatt, and terminates in the historic adaptive remodeling of 1900.

George W. Bethers (1821-1878), a native of Ohio, was a member of the Oregon Conference of the United Brethren Church, an evangelical denomination, and an incorporator of the academy which the church sponsored at Philomath to provide Christian training for ministers and the liberal education of men and women from 1867 onward. Bethers was an overland pioneer of 1848 who with his wife, the former Kezia Newton, settled a donation land claim in the valley of the Mary's River near its confluence with the Willamette, westerly of present day Corvallis. It was Bethers' appeal to the United Brethren Church in his native state in 1849 that brought a missionary train of 95 settlers to the Willamette Valley in 1853 with the object of organizing a conference. The south district coalesced solidly around Bethers, and it was at this settlement that Philomath College was opened fourteen years later. While the United Brethren opened other schools, such as Sublimity College, they were short lived. By 1929, Philomath College closed permanently, no longer able to compete for enrollment with State schools such as the Agricultural College at Corvallis. Philomath College was the only United Brethren college on the West Coast. Bethers was a trustee of the college for several years before his death in 1878. His son, George Jr., was educated at Philomath College and subsequently taught at the school. At the end of the Second World War, in 1946, the United Brethren merged nationally with the Evangelical Church to form the Evangelical-United Brethren Church. Bethers' importance in Benton County and Willamette Valley history was as catalyst for United Brethren church organization in Oregon which, in turn, inspired the founding of a college and the platting of Philomath townsite.

The other noteworthy occupant of the house was William Wyatt, a contemporary of Bethers and a neighbor who acquired the property in 1880, after Bethers had died. Wyatt lived in the house to 1888. He was an overland pioneer of 1847 who staked his claim at the Mary's River

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settlement in 1850. From the time of his conversion at a revival meeting in 1858, Wyatt was a member of the United Brethren Church. A native of Birmingham, England, he settled in Illinois before coming overland to Oregon via the southern immigrant route, or Applegate Trail. Wyatt prospered in farming and real estate, and his financial support was key to firmly establishing the Christian college at Philomath.

Public comments

When the Bethers House was considered by the State Advisory Committee on Historic Preservation during its public meeting on February 14, 1997, May Dasch, a Philomath resident and Linn-Benton County historian, expressed her support for listing the Bethers House in the National Register. A copy of her statement is appended to this record. The gist of her remarks was that, thus far, Philomath Academy is the only nationally registered property in Philomath, and it is a central feature of the town. But the town, because of its proximity to Corvallis, is experiencing rapid development, and there is no historic preservation ordinance in place at present. Listing the house would draw public attention to the importance of the community's cultural heritage. Ms. Dasch observed that the Bethers House property, situated on its knoll within view of the historic college building, had been slated for redevelopment for multi-family housing before the current owner acted quickly to preserve it as his own single family residence.

Subsequent to the state review board's unanimous finding of National Register eligibility, the Philomath City Council considered the pending nomination and, during its meeting on April 28, 1997, moved unanimously to approve the nomination. The City's endorsement, written by City Manager Randy Kugler and dated April 29, also is appended to this record.

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Box Construction - a context for evaluation

Vertical plank wall construction, also known as box construction, was one of the three common types of timber framing employed in western Oregon during the early period of Euro-American settlement. The wooden-pegged post and beam frame, commonly used for barns, was used concurrently with nail-connected balloon frame and box construction techniques in the Willamette Valley in the 1850s. Timber resources were plentiful, and, after 1850, when overland migration accelerated with enactment of the Donation Land Law, saw mills operated widely throughout the settlements concentrated in the Willamette River drainage. Both balloon frame and box methods of wall construction were recommended to agriculturalists in contemporary publications and continued to be used in house building into the early 20th century.

The traditional timber post and beam framing system consisted of hewn vertical and horizontal members joined by mortise and tenon and secured by wooden pegs. Balloon framing was a faster and less expensive system developed in the East and Mid-West along with mass produced nails in the 1830s. In balloon framing, walls were constructed of closely-spaced studs, or vertical dimension lumber extending the full height of the building, being fastened to sill and top plate by nails. Box construction, called box and strip building in parts of the American South and Mid-West, required a minimum amount of milled lumber compared to the other framing methods. In this system, rough-sawn vertical boards were nailed to sill and top plate. The joints between boards might be covered by batten-like wooden strips. In western Oregon today, typical timber framing is the platform system prevalent since the middle of the 20th century, in which wall, floor and roof frames are built as independent units with 2" x 4" studs of wall frames extending no more than one story between top and bottom plates. Because the wall frame could be assembled on the ground and raised into place on the upper story, platform framing was even more efficient than balloon framing and as rigid as box construction.

In his essay entitled "Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley" in *Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America*, Philip Dole describes box construction as "a plank system with many antecedents on the East Coast of the United States" in which "the wall structure consists only of planks about two inches thick...set vertically, one beside the next. Each plank is nailed to the sill below and at top to the plate. There are no posts or studs; its total finished thickness is only about three inches."

The great advantage of box construction was economy. According to Professor Dole, it required

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one third less material than the two other systems concurrently used, and half as many nails as balloon framing. A local carpenter builder could accomplish the work of building a house relatively quickly with the help of the property owner and his neighbors. The system also afforded shear strength and durability. Unless there might be a failure of foundation or roof structure, plank walls are capable of holding rigid, straight alignment indefinitely. A variation of technique known as "feathering" ensured an especially sturdy wall system. In feathering, a 1 1/2" by 1/2" strip, or spline was driven down grooves between the rough-sawn 2" x 10" planks.

Whatever efficiency was gained in the box construction technique was offset somewhat by the thinness of the wall, which did not provide much insulation against storm-driven winds in a cold, rainy winter climate. Often, exterior elevations of box constructed houses were clad with weatherboards for a finished appearance and a measure of insulation. Box construction could be adapted to any house plan type, style or size. The George Bethers House in Philomath is significant under Criterion C precisely because it is a good example of the box construction adapted by later occupants. In the Bethers House, the interior elevations of perimeter plank walls were furred out, and horizontal boards and coverings were applied to the studs to gain insulating air space. Such practical adaptations helped to keep box-constructed houses viable.

Later alterations of the kind found in the Bethers House often make it difficult to recognize box construction from merely casual observation. Professor Dole estimates that nearly a third of the houses built in the Willamette Valley in the 19th century were of box construction. Yet, unless pointed inspection has been made, or unless construction technique has been exposed in the course of modification, few houses are documented as examples of box construction in the visual survey process. For this reason, it has not been possible to establish from the Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties precisely what proportion of 19th century houses in Benton County are of box construction. It is evident from the National Register listing record, however, that Benton County housing stock included buildings of box construction from the time the first saw mill was operating in Kings Valley, north of Philomath, about 1852, to at least 1889, which is the date of construction of the latest registered example.

The best of the handful of documented examples of box construction in Benton County are the James Watson House (c. 1852-1853) and the Isaac King House (c. 1855), which stand on neighboring claims in Kings Valley. Both of the houses were built by the master carpenter William Pitman and are fine examples of feathered box construction. The list of documented buildings of box construction also includes the following Rural Gothic houses: the Charles Gaylord House (c. 1857) and Elias Woodward House (1871), both in Corvallis, and the Edwin

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and Anna Starr House (c. 1889) in the vicinity of Monroe. The Benton County houses of plank wall construction represent a variety of plan types and styles. They range in size from a story and a half to two stories and include the double pen, or saddlebag type, both front and side-gabled rectangular volumes, and variations of the gabled ell configuration.

Box construction, as a variation of timber framing in which vertical planks initially were set on end in a notched sill, was introduced to colonial America from Europe, England especially, in the 17th century. In New England, this method of construction was prevalent from 1690 to 1860. But the dispersal of the building system was widespread and persisted in traditional rural buildings in such southern and middle Atlantic states as North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and eventually, as emigrants moved west, in the Oregon country. Authorities on vernacular architecture such as Philip Dole have observed that traditional structures are important because, in their various adaptations, they "recall characteristics found through thousands of years of medieval and pre-medieval building..." In "Farmhouse and Barn in Early Lane County" in *Lane County Historian*, Professor Dole stated, "In a number of ways, many of these pioneer structures in Oregon represent a cultural wealth and an antiquity that their own ages might not immediately suggest."

The Bethers House of 1873 can be characterized as a vernacular design executed in traditional box construction technique which, as the result of alterations between 1890 and 1910, incorporates a few late Gothic Revival features, such as the front cross gable, and a few Queen Anne style features such as the wrap-around veranda, diamond window, and sliding pocket doors. The historic alterations are valuable as part of the demonstration of adaptability. In a recent letter to the State Historic Preservation Office (July 20, 1997) Professor Dole pointed out the rarity of such resources. While houses of box construction were plentiful in the 19th century, and while they represent a durable and sturdy construction system, comparatively few have survived into the 20th century because of contemporary building codes and concerns about efficient heating. Within Oregon's data base, there is no better documented example of how a house that is descended from a very old building tradition could be adapted at the turn of the century through the introduction of stud furring to resolve energy conservation issues.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 8HISTORICAL ASSOCIATIONS

While many of the early white settlements in Oregon were transient in nature, the Mary's River and Philomath areas developed strong roots. Persevering settlers and the institutions they created provided the foundation on which these communities were built. The institutions of Philomath College and its affiliate the United Brethren Church did not create themselves. They demanded the commitment of farmers and businessmen who were willing to remain in the community and help with its growth. The community itself was planned around these institutions to create a long-lasting settlement of permanence. For this reason it is fitting to honor those community builders such as George W. Bethers and William Wyatt, without whom Willamette Valley history would show a different face.

George Bethers made significant contributions to the development of Philomath as a community. Evidence indicates that he served as a promoter, drawing people from his hometown in Ohio and helping to build the town's stability in its formative years. Bethers' influence was instrumental in the development of the United Brethren Church in Oregon, as well as in the incorporation of Philomath College. Later in life he built a house on the hill west of town, a prominent citizen and early pioneer. Though Bethers passed away, the house remained as a more permanent element of the community he helped to create.

Bethers was born in Ohio in 1821, and migrated to the western frontier in early manhood, crossing the plains with ox-teams. On the wagon train Bethers met his future wife, Kezia Newton, and together they arrived in Oregon in 1848. With time they settled on a Donation Land Claim just two and one half miles southwest of Corvallis. Together the Bethers family had many children, but George died in 1878 and left his widow behind to finish her life in the town of Philomath (Portrait 504).

Throughout his life, Bethers built many strengthening ties for Philomath. In 1849 Bethers wrote a letter to the Religious Telescope in Dayton, Ohio, the official periodical of the United Brethren Church. He requested a preacher for the Mary's River Settlements in Benton County, Oregon. The letter was published and the Indiana Conference meeting of the United Brethren decided to raise funds to send missionaries to the Oregon Territory (Springer 3). Four years later the feat was finally accomplished. Two preachers spent a journey of five months on the overland trail to Oregon in 1853, one of them leading a wagon train of 96 people and 16 wagons (Friedman 197). Bethers served as much more than letter-writer; his role was that of a first-class promoter, corresponding with the emigrants and assisting with their trip. When the company reached the Columbia River on September 17, Bethers was there to meet them. He butchered beef on their arrival and the company had a feast. From there the emigrants travelled through the Columbia River Gorge and on to Benton County, forming a foundation for the community of like-minded settlers from the same religious denomination of the United Brethren Church (Buzzard 63).

An Oregon Conference of the United Brethren was soon underway, and set about conducting church business. After more than a decade passed and the church had ample time to establish itself, a proposal was made to create a "first class Institution of Learning" which would later become Philomath College (Springer 6). The money was raised and the college opened in 1867 with an enrollment of 100. It remained the only college of the United Brethren Church on the west coast until 1929 (Buzzard 66).

Bethers' ties to the community he helped found were strong. He was a trustee of the United Brethren Church and his son George (jr.) graduated from, and later taught at, Philomath College (Portrait 504). Bethers was himself a trustee of the college for several years (Phinney). It is Bethers, then, that forms the nexus between Philomath and the United Brethren Church. His promoting influence formed the impetus for the members of the church to settle in Philomath and the Mary's River area, erect a college, and build a lasting community.

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The presence of Philomath College gives the little town of Philomath a substantial place in Oregon history. Benton County developed three such institutions of higher learning in its early years: Corvallis College founded in 1864 by the Methodist Episcopal Church, the State Agricultural College founded in 1868, and Philomath College in 1865. This region harbored a unique community marked by the support of higher education, hardly the norm for rural Oregon counties in the 1860's (Fagan 356-9).

Another significant member of the community to own this property was Donation Land Claimant William Wyatt. He purchased the house from Bethers' successor in 1880, selling it again eight years later for five-hundred dollars (Deed Records). Wyatt arrived in Benton in the autumn of 1847, a year prior to Bethers, and after staying with another farmer in what is now the town of Philomath made a near-by Donation Land Claim in 1850. Wyatt's industry made him an influential figure in the community. The American Dream of acquiring land and wealth in the West came true for Wyatt. By the time of his death Wyatt's good fortune made him the second wealthiest man in Benton county, a major contributor to Philomath College and the United Brethren Church (Fagan 531).

Wyatt was born in Birmingham, England on March 24, 1816 and later came to America with his family as a young man. Residing in both New York and Illinois, William Wyatt married and began to raise children and farm. But Wyatt was apparently discontented with Illinois farm life, and was reportedly the first in his neighborhood to make a start to the West. Selling his property in 1847, the family traveled the Oregon Trail by ox-team (Portrait 1287). The Wyatts arrived via the Applegate Trail, and settled permanently in what is now Benton County (Fagan 531).

His diligence and good fortune allowed him to expand his original 1850 Donation Land Claim to three thousand nine hundred acres by the time of his death. Upon his death Wyatt divided the land among his children (Portrait 1287). In addition to his real estate holdings, Wyatt invested in Philomath College. In 1866 Wyatt loaned the College a large sum of cash as it was beginning its construction (Philomath 8). He later made two donations to the College, of one-thousand five-hundred dollars and three-hundred dollars. His family also participated in the College's growth; his wife donated five hundred dollars of her own and his son held the post of general agent of the institution (Fagan 531).

Evidence suggests that William Wyatt and G.W. Bethers knew each other well. Early land records show them as neighbors; their Donation Claims are listed consecutively in the federal surveys (Chapman 1859). Census records from 1870 also list them as adjoining households with children of the same age (Bureau of the Census 1870). These men came to Oregon and settled in the same area to live out their lives. While Bethers encouraged the growth of the United Brethren Church, Wyatt was converted in a revival meeting of the Oregon Conference United Brethren in 1858. This led to involvement with Philomath College, where both men served as trustees, Wyatt serving for over thirty years (Portrait 1287). As some of the earliest settlers to Benton County and Philomath, Wyatt and Bethers were important if not essential to the development of the strong community built around the United Brethren Church and its institution of higher learning.

In light of this, it is important to consider that this building at 225 North 8th Street in Philomath is noteworthy in Oregon's early history. George Bethers and William Wyatt both made significant contributions to the formation and character of this township. That they both owned and made additions to the same building is no accident, and that building carries the influence of a tightly knit community. Besides the college, it remains the only building in the area linked to the lives of these important men.

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Correspondence: Philip H. Dole to Elisabeth Potter, July 20, 1997.

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Verbal Boundary Description:

The George Bethers House and property is situated on Lot 55, Block 12, CITY OF PHILOMATH, in the City of Philomath, County of Benton, State of Oregon. This is recorded in the Benton County assessor's office Tax Lot 3800. The boundary exists as such due to early urban planning on the part of the city to organize the streets into blocks. The entire block should be encompassed because the property has existed in this large parcel throughout the town's history. In addition, included in the block are vegetation and woodland areas that continue to support the historic integrity of this century-old residence site.

Boundary Justification

The nominated area of 0.52 acres is located in SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 11, T.2S., R.6W. of the Willamette Meridian in Philomath, Benton County, Oregon. It encompasses the entire tax lot (#3800) associated with the house built in 1873 and remodeled in successive episodes in the historic period. A detached carriage shed, or garage standing at the northwest corner of the property is contemporary with the last of the historic phases of development, about 1900. While the carriage shed is in poor condition, and it is questionable that it can be long maintained, it presently is a feature that contributes to the significance of the property and is counted as such.

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SE 1/4 NE 1/4 SEC. 11 T12S. R.6W.W.M.
BENTON COUNTY

17-04

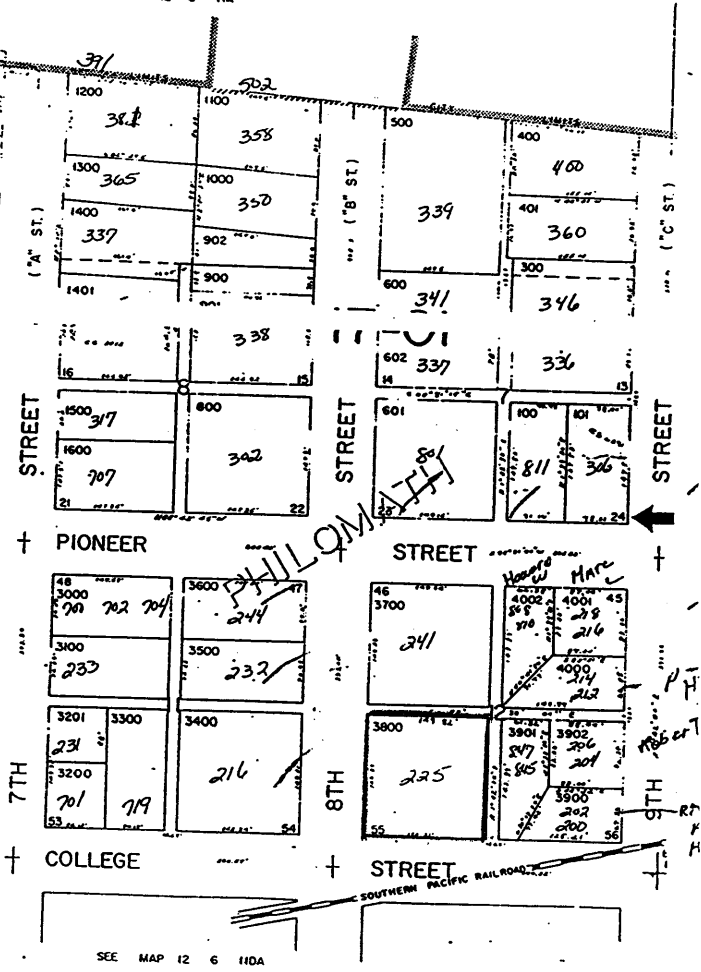
NW COR.
DAVID HENDERSON
DLC NO. 46

SEE MAP 12 6 11A

SEE MAP 12 6 11A

1/16 COR.

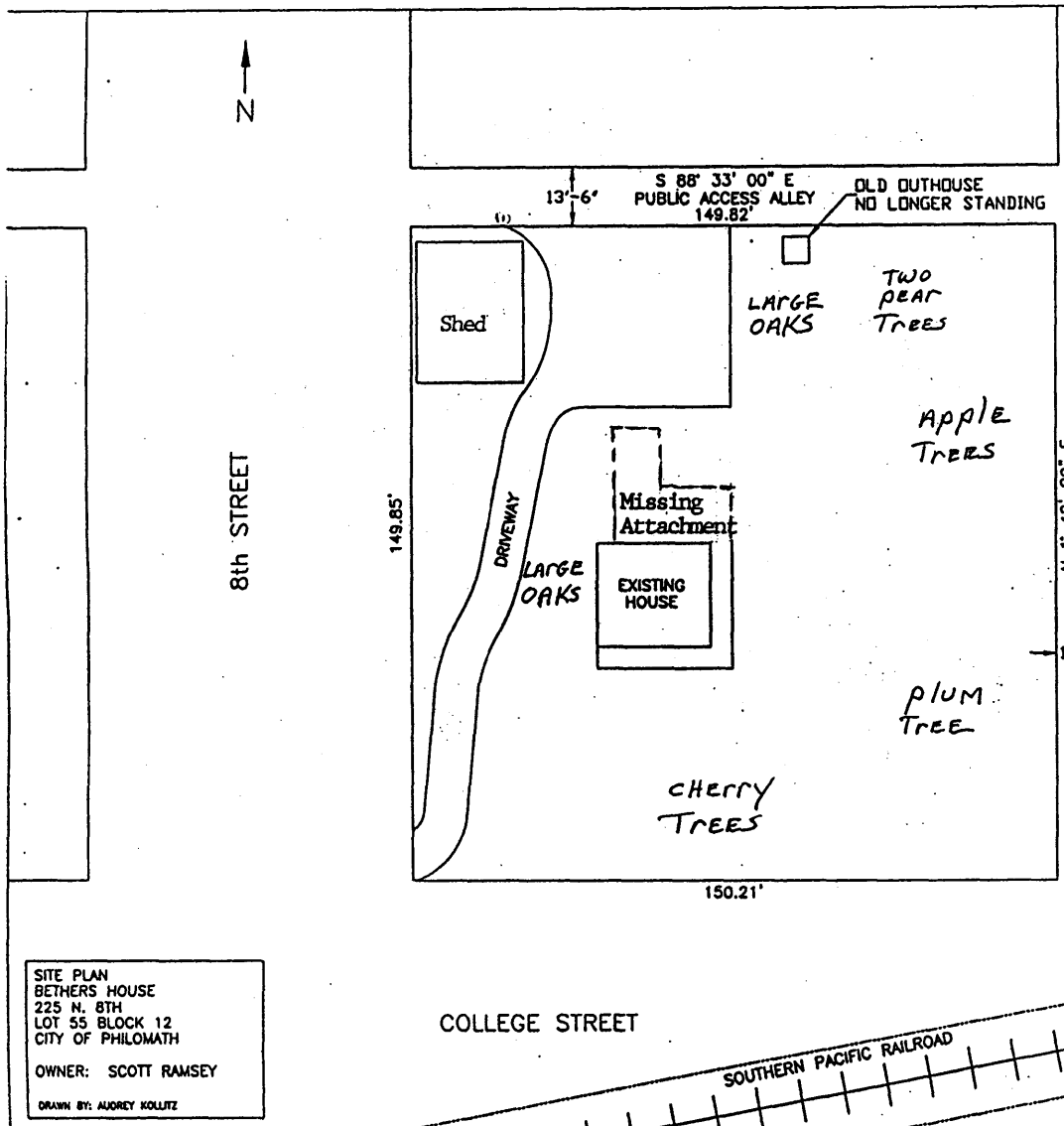
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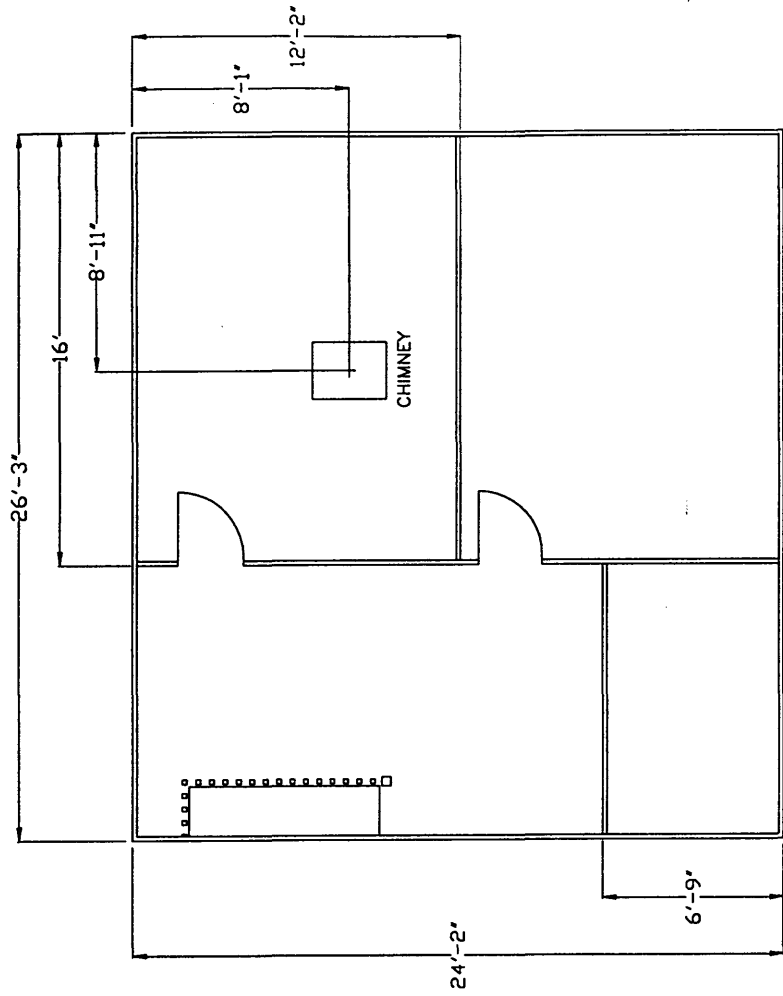
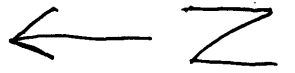


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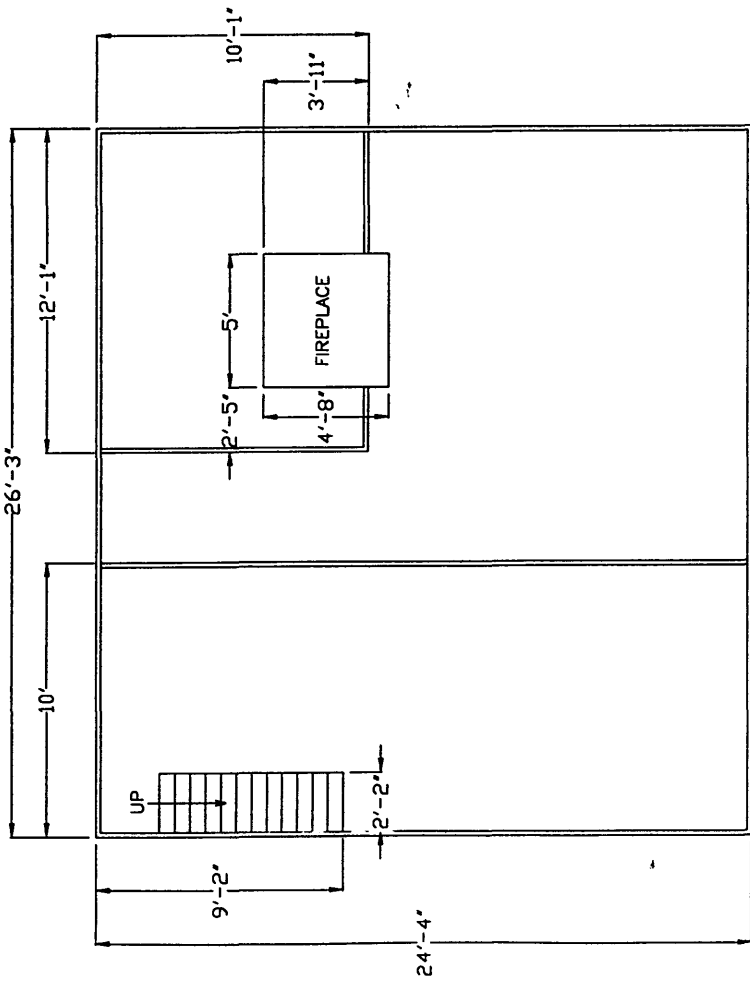
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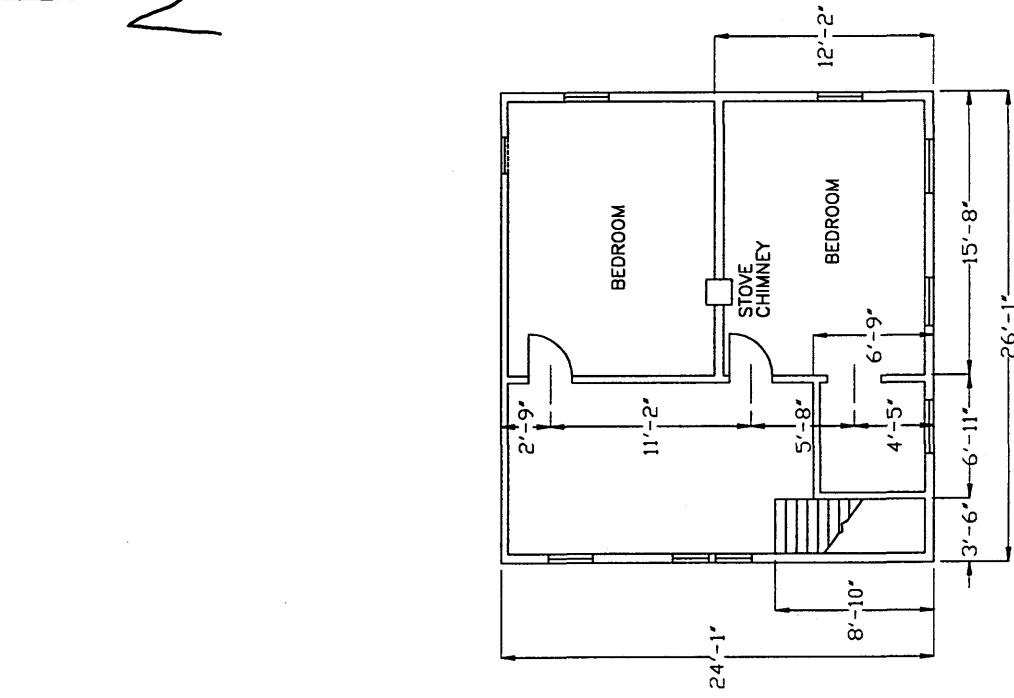
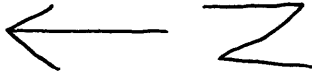


SECOND FLOOR

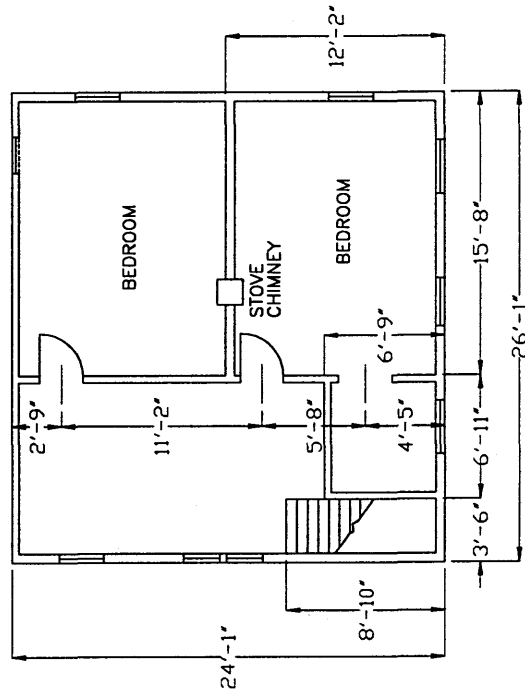


FIRST FLOOR

KNOWN ELEMENTS OF THE
BETHERS HOUSE, CIRCA 1880
OWNER: SCOTT RAMSEY
DRAWN BY: AUDREY KOLLITZ

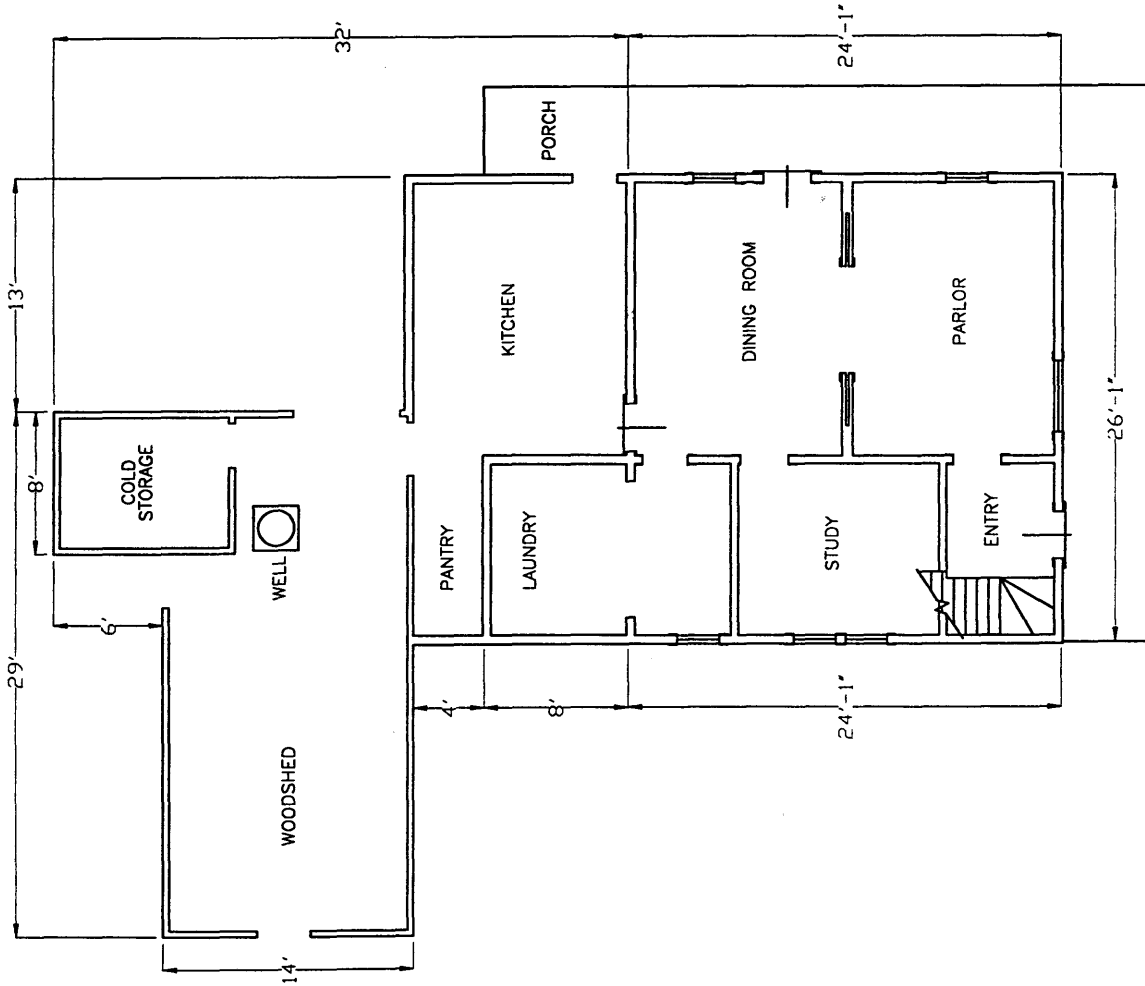


FIRST FLOOR

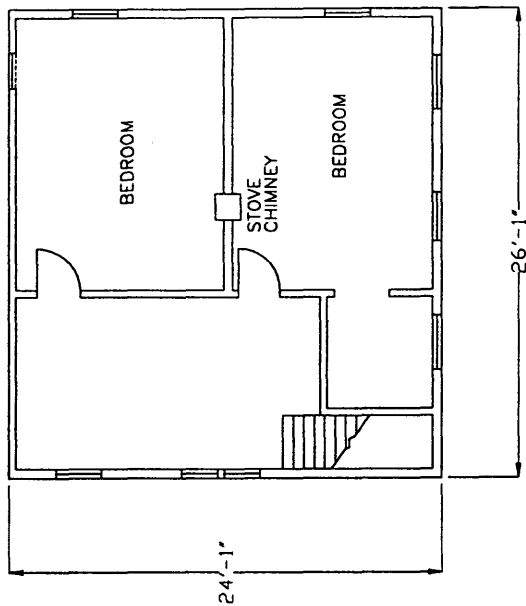


SECOND FLOOR

FLOOR PLAN CIRCA 1900
BETHERS HOUSE
OWNER: SCOTT RAMSEY
DRAWN BY: AUDREY KOLLITZ

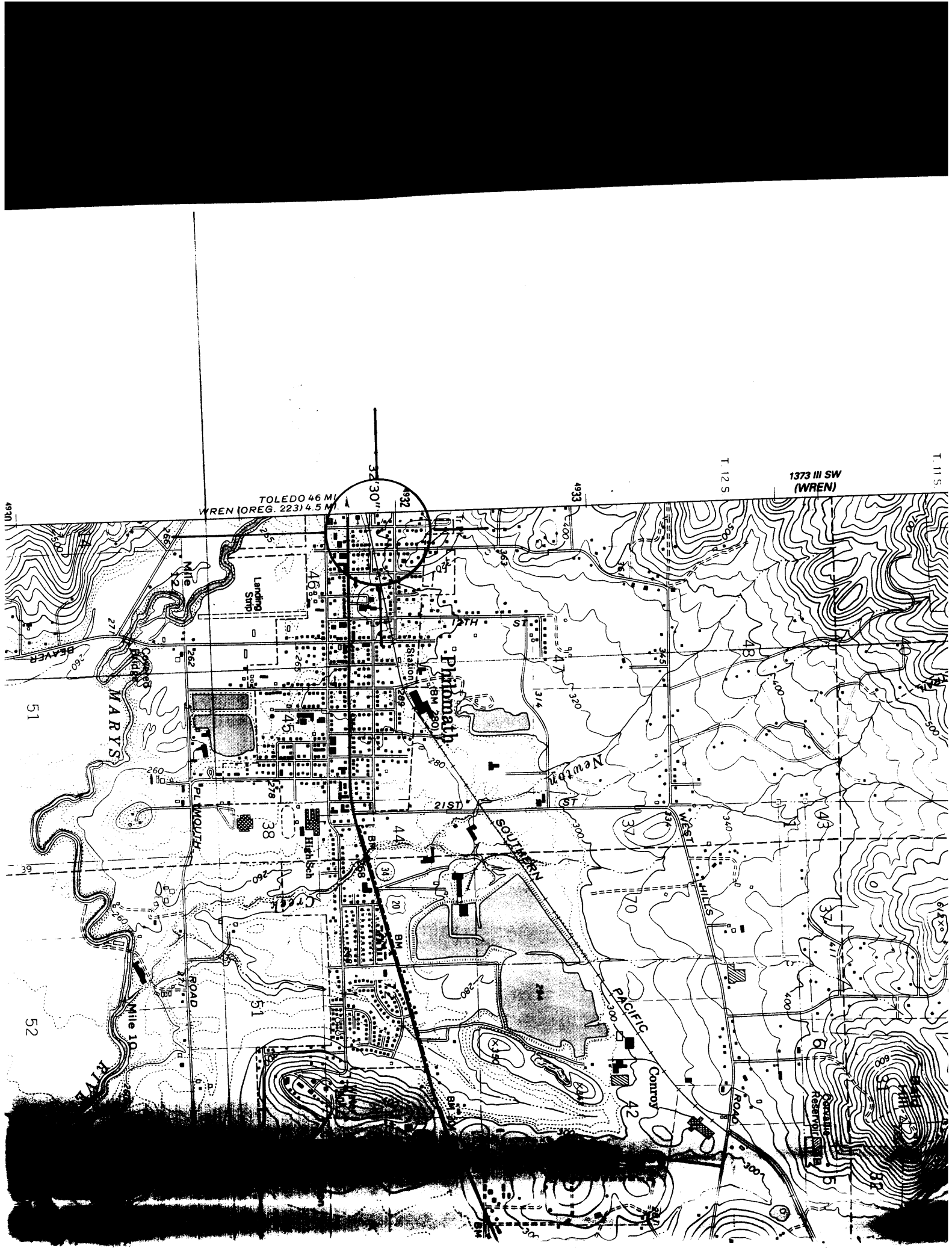


FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

FLOOR PLAN CIRCA 1950
 BETHERS HOUSE
 OWNER: SCOTT RAMSEY
 DRAWN BY: AUDREY KOLLITZ



30''

T. 12 S

1373 III SW (WREN)

T. 115 S

TOLEDO 46 M WREN (OREG. 223) 4.5 M

51

52

Phnomath

Station

BM 2201

Landing Strip

MARYS

SOUTHERN

NEWBY

PACIFIC CONROY

CANTON

RESERVATION

4932

4933

PL. W. MOUTH ROAD

ROAD

MILE 10

MILE 2

34

38

42

43

45

48

51

52

55

58

61

37

34

31

28

25

22

19

16

13

10

43

40

37

34

31

28

25

22

19

16

64X

61X

58X

55X

52X

49X

46X

43X

40X

37X