

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only  
received APR - 6 1983  
date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Cooley, George C., House

and/or common N/A

**2. Location**

street & number 220 Blakely Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Brownsville N/A vicinity of Fourth Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Linn code 043

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Architectural Restoration Society

street & number Box 184

city, town Brownsville N/A vicinity of Oregon state 97327

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Linn County Courthouse

street & number PO Box 100

city, town Albany state Oregon 97321

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u>1857</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The George C. Cooley House is a one-and-a-half-story, gable-roofed house of box, or vertical plank construction, as opposed to balloon frame construction. Its ground plan measures 20x42 feet, not including an 8x9-foot bathroom added to the southwest corner of the ell about 1920. The main axis of the house is oriented north to south, and the facade, or north end fronts Blakely Avenue. The main 20x22-foot volume was moved to its primary location for Cooley in 1857 and subsequently enlarged by a 14x20-foot kitchen ell. Originally, the yard was enclosed by a fence of wood palings and boxed posts. What sort of front porch the house may have had originally is not known, but it appears that the full-length porch with hipped roof and chamfered posts which is shown in the oldest known view of the house (1908?) was added about 1890. The surrounding neighborhood is noteworthy for the integrity of its scale and historic character. On Blakely Avenue are Reverend Edward R. Geary's house (1858), the Hugh L. Brown residence (c. 1870), and Gid Faust's house (c. 1860); and at least a dozen other houses constructed prior to 1920 are within a two block radius. The Cooley House occupies a double lot which measures approximately 130x132 feet and includes quince, filbert, peach, cherry, and English walnut trees. The quince is understood to be among the original plantings, having been planted by Cooley's wife, Harriet. The house was badly overgrown by ivy and blackberry vines until recent site clean-up work by the local, non-profit organization undertaking restoration of the property was completed.

As relocated and improved for George Cooley in 1857-1858, the house has a side hall plan. Originally, the main volume was symmetrically organized with central entrance and staircase. The change was affected by eliminating the central opening and enlarging the east front window as a door. The west ground story window in the front end elevation was moved nine inches with original framement. The foundation beams are set on rocks. Exterior siding of horizontal weatherboards evidently is material patched or applied after the remodeling. The wood shingle gable roof is badly deteriorated. The house was extended 20 feet by a kitchen ell, probably in 1858. The bathroom, added about 1920, is attached to the southwest corner of the kitchen wing.\* On the east side, at a right angle to the main axis of the house, is a 20x25-foot latticed shed. Its supporting posts and beams are joined by pegged mortices and tenons. The roof members are nailed. A 10x14-foot brick milk and fruit storage house is behind the shed. This is composed of a double course of bricks with evidence of plaster on the interior. It is subdivided into two "rooms" with a door and a small screened window in each. The ceiling, insulated with six inches of sawdust, is badly rotted. The gable roofs of shed and milk house were tied into each other and to the kitchen gable to form a large sheltered area way which was used by the Cooleys as a summer kitchen and living room, and by the Baileys for wood storage in the winter and a children's sleeping area in summertime. The original well is under the kitchen porch.

The outstanding architectural feature of the Cooley House is the classically proportioned entablature including boxed cornice, frieze, and architrave molding. At either gable end there are cornice returns with pilaster corner boards. Windows are six-over-six, or one-over-one vertical sash. Windows and doors have kneed, or eared architraves. Two hung stove chimneys on the main volume and single-story kitchen addition, respectively, straddle the respective roof ridges.

(continued)

\*Having separated from the ell, the 1920 bathroom addition is dilapidated beyond recall.

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The front entry has a screen door with wooden spindles, and a main door with etched glass and decorative wood trim which appear to have been added later in the 19th century. Inside, there is an entry hall with an open staircase with turned newell post and rectangular balusters. The first part of the flight is parallel to the east outside wall, with a 90° right angle at the landing. To the west is a 12x12-foot parlor. Behind the parlor are the living room (which had been extended at the time the ell was added) and the kitchen and bathroom additions. Behind the stairhall is a small downstairs bedchamber measuring 7x11 feet. Upstairs are two bedchambers. The stairway opens into the front one. Interior walls are covered either with fabric-backed wallpaper over the rough vertical planks, or with painted horizontal tongue and groove or flushboard. There is an unfinished attic space over the kitchen, with access through the rear bedroom in the main volume. Original window and door frames downstairs have decorative molding. Frames related to the changes made when the kitchen was added are undecorated. The woodwork is now painted but may have originally been varnished or painted in imitation of a wood grain. Of interest in the kitchen are a simulated wood grain wardrobe and a cupboard that were apparently incorporated into the design of the addition when it was made, and are now partially built-in. Original wallpapers and paint are easily seen beneath subsequent layers. Their condition reflects years of neglect, smoke, and dampness. In general, the hardware--rimlocks with porcelain doorknobs--is original throughout. The earliest date appearing on newspapers on the walls is 1859; the latest 19th century date is 1864.

According to Ruth Bailey Ramstead's descriptions of the house when she was a child, other than the bathroom addition of 1920, the house was not appreciably altered after the time she moved into the house in 1902 at the age of 4. She lived there through her childhood and adolescence. She testified that the kitchen ell was built by her grandfather, George Cooley. Photographs indicate that the six-over-six sashes were replaced by one-over-one in the parlor and living room sometime between 1908 and 1932. The house was never supplied with utilities or central heating, except for some very early knob-and-tube electrical wiring which may antedate the turn of the century.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input 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)

Constructed prior to \_\_\_\_\_

**Specific dates** December 1857, relocated and enlarged 1857–1858. **Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The one-and-a-half-story Classic Revival house of box construction with weatherboard siding at 220 Blakely Avenue in Brownsville, Oregon dates from the 1850s. It was acquired by its primary occupant, George C. Cooley, and moved to its present site in December 1857. Notations in Cooley's day book show that when the compact original volume measuring 20x22 feet was moved to South Brownsville from a site in the general vicinity, earlier known as Calapooya, it was remodeled to a degree. The entrance centered in the gable end and the central staircase were relocated to one side by cutting down a front window as a doorway. Some or all of the existing clapboards were then applied, and, perhaps as early as the following year, the house was enlarged by a kitchen ell measuring about 14x20 feet. Notwithstanding the changes made by the primary occupant at an early date, the house is locally significant under National Register criterion "c" as a distinctive example of the small, one-and-a-half-story gable-roofed houses in which Brownsville carpenter-builders specialized in the 1850s and 1860s. With its classically proportioned and finely detailed entablature, including boxed cornice and cornice returns, frieze and architrave moldings, and with its wide cornerboards and kneed door and window framements, the Cooley House embodies the traditional characteristics of the Classic Revival style. Few better preserved examples of the carpentry of the 1850s are found in Brownsville today. The architect, or carpenter-builder is unknown.

The Cooley property lies in South Brownsville, a distinct section of the town plat laid out by James Blakely in 1853 and filed in 1864. The present holding of two lots includes the house and two outbuildings which illustrate the historic function of the property in addition to varied methods of construction. East of the ell, at a right angle to the main axis of the house, lies an open, latticed shed measuring 20x25 feet which has a pegged mortise-and-tenon framing system. Immediately south of the shed is a two-room milk and fruit storage building of brick which measures 10x14 feet. The yard contains numerous period plantings, including filbert, walnut, quince, peach, and cherry trees. The surrounding neighborhood still conveys the scale and residential character of its historic period of development.

The property is locally significant, also, under National Register criterion "b" for its association with pioneer merchant George C. Cooley, who arrived in Oregon in 1853 and began his career in Brownsville as clerk in the general store of Hugh L. Brown and his nephew, James Blakely, proprietors of the townsite. In 1857 Cooley married Blakely's daughter, Harriet, a step which prompted the acquisition of the house and its subsequent relocation and improvement. In time, Cooley purchased Brown and Blakely's store from his father-in-law and operated it as G. C. Cooley and Company until 1905. The Cooleys reared six children in their house on Blakely Avenue in South Brownsville. About 1900 they moved to a larger and more fashionable house in the Queen Anne style which still stands on the block to the south of the nominated property. Consequently, the Classic Revival house was deeded to the Cooleys' daughter, Kitty Cooley Bailey, as a wedding present. The house was occupied by Bailey relations until its acquisition by the Architectural Restoration Society in 1982.

Brownsville, one of the earliest settlements in the upper Willamette Valley, was settled as early as 1846. As has been disclosed, the town was laid out by Hugh Brown and his

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Interviews with Ruth Bailey Ramstead, granddaughter of George C. Cooley, 1981 and 1982.  
Interview with Elizabeth Fox Foster, daughter of William Walter Bailey's second wife, Edna Fox, by the latter's previous marriage. Bailey was heir to the Cooley House.  
The Brownsville Times, June 26, 1980 and March 24, 1977, "Past Times". (continued)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Brownsville, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

### UTM References

A	<u>10</u>	<u>501475</u>	<u>4914425</u>	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The George C. Cooley House occupies Lots 7 and 8, Block 10, Plat of Brownsville, Linn County, Oregon, and that portion of vacated Ash Street (33 by 130 feet) inuring to the above described property, located at 220 Blakely Avenue. Linn County Assessor's Map reference 14 2W 6CB. The property, measuring 130 by 132 feet

**List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries overall,** is otherwise described as Tax Lot 1600.

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Cheryl Haworth and Joni Nelson

organization Architectural Restoration Society date October 6, 1982

street & number c/o Cheryl Haworth, PO Box 184 telephone (503) 466-5844

city or town Brownsville state Oregon 97327

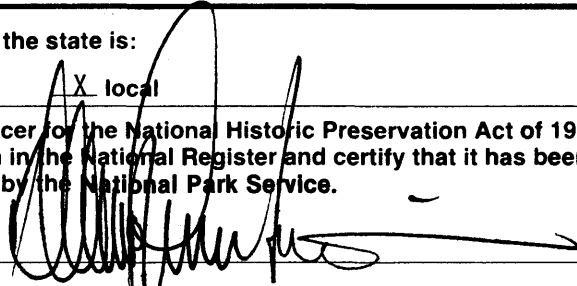
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 March 30, 1983

### For NPS use only

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

*J. Allores Byers*  
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

date 5/9/83

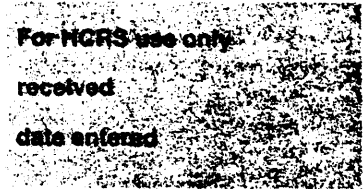
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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nephew, James Blakely, in 1853. The small agricultural community prospered upon the development of woolen manufacturing on the Calapooya River, tributary to the Willamette, beginning in 1863. Brownsville was distinguished by the quality of its small scale buildings in the Classic Revival style.

Brownsville, Linn County, in the 1850s and 1860s specialized in one-and-a-half-story houses. Until recently, extraordinary woodwork could be seen on several of the first houses and it gave the city's architecture a particular elegance which no other locality could match.<sup>1</sup>

As has been recounted, George C. Cooley came to Oregon in 1853 and found work in Brown and Blakely's general merchandise store, which was the first business in Brownsville, having been established by the town's two founders. In 1857 he married Harriet, James Blakely's daughter, and over a period of a few years purchased the business which he ran as G. C. Cooley and Company until illness forced his retirement in 1905. Cooley also was associated with the Brownsville Woolen Mill. He was one of the first stockholders of the manufacturing company organized in 1861.

Over a period of years, George Cooley purchased various lots in South Brownsville.\* While the date and terms of acquisition of the property on Blakely Avenue are not fully known as yet, Cooley's day book, which he carefully noted had been purchased in Portland on May 18, 1857, holds the key to how the property was developed. In it, Cooley's sketch of a symmetrical facade elevation and a ground plan matching that of the original, central hall plan of the 20x22 Classic Revival house, appear to be related to the following notations for December, 1857 entitled "Expenses in Building & c & c at Calapooya."<sup>2</sup>

Paid R. Benjamin for Hous.	50.00
Paid W___ for 4500 shingles	20.00
Paid McDowell for lumber	13.90
Carpenter work. Bord & c	19.00
Canvassing	12.00
Moveing Hous	15.00
	\$129.90
Fencing yard & c	32.00
	\$161.90

On August 21, 1858, Cooley noted a total of \$504 in payment for various kinds of work on the house, including lumber, shingles, carpentry, paint and painting, and construction of chimneys. The Cooleys raised six children in their house. Around 1900 the Cooleys moved to a larger Queen Anne style house in the neighboring block to the south and deeded the house on Blakely Avenue to their daughter, Kitty (Chrischiana), as a wedding present. Kitty and her husband, William Walter Bailey, a Brownsville lawyer, raised their children there. When Kitty died, Bailey married Edna Fox, whose son by a previous marriage, Byron Fox, an employee of the Brownsville and Jefferson Woolen Mills, lived in the house until his death in 1982.

\*Records show that in 1867, for a sum of \$40, Cooley purchased four lots "with appurtenances from James Blakely, his father-in-law.

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Dole, "Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley", Space Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), Vol. 1, page 112.

<sup>2</sup> Frank Fiori, telephone report to SHPO of findings of records search through Cooley collection of ledgers and day books, mostly associated with the Brown and Blakely store in Brownsville, 1851-1864, March 28, 1983. Mr. Fiori, a Master's degree candidate in the historic preservation curriculum, University of Oregon School of Architecture and Allied Arts, is preparing an historic structure report on the George C. Cooley House as his terminal project.

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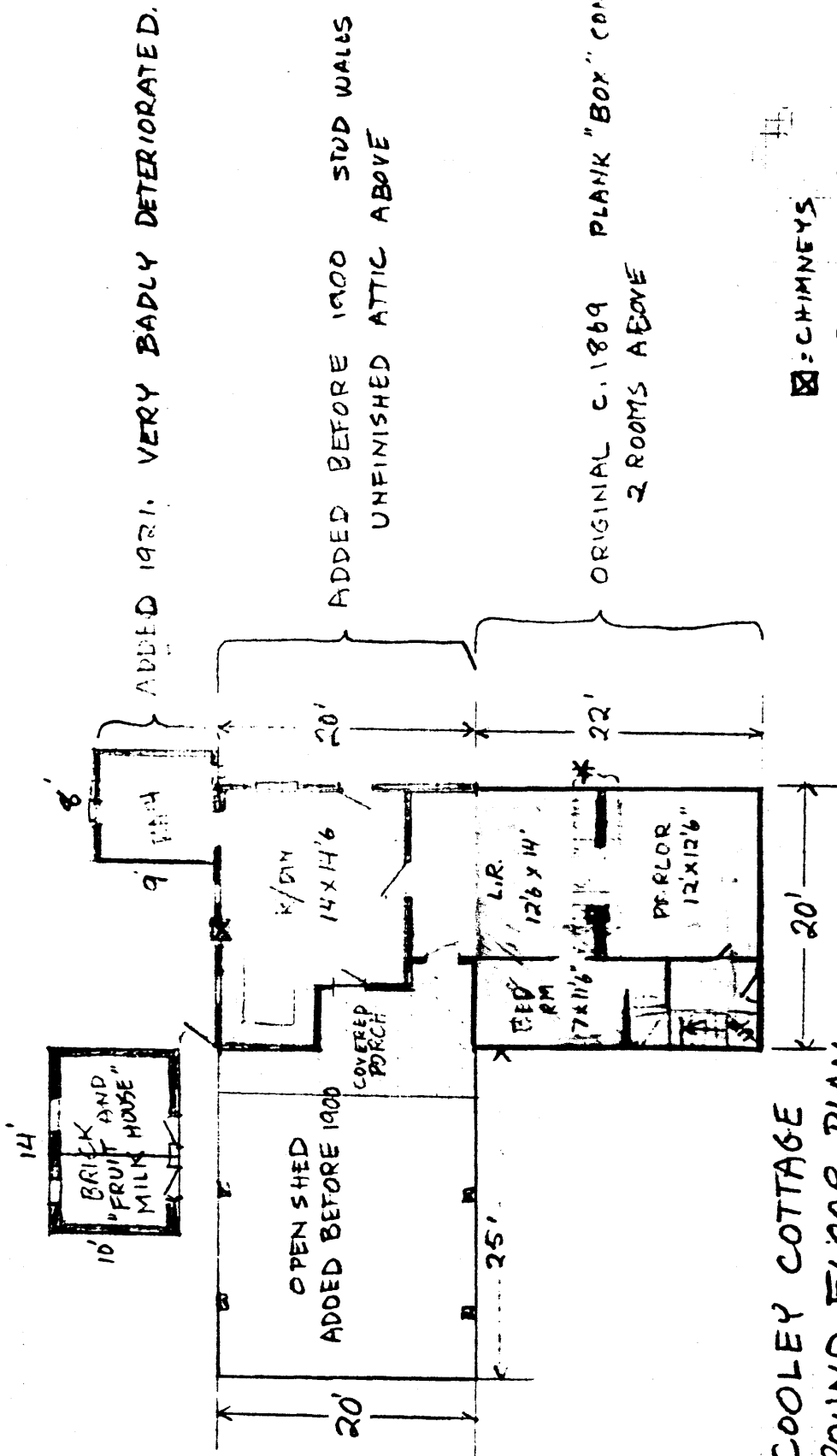
Cooley, George C., daybook, commenced May, 1857, Cooley collection of ledgers and daybooks of the Brown and Blakely Store, Brownsville, Oregon, covering the period 1851-1864. Special Collections, University of Oregon Library. Information provided by Frank Fiori, University of Oregon graduate student, School of Architecture and Allied Arts. The Cooley collection also includes account books and ledgers of the successor firm, Cooley and Company, which post date Cooley's retirement in 1905. The period covered by the latter account books is 1909-1934.

Haskins, Leslie, interviews of local residents for the Federal Writers' Project, c. 1934-1942. Copies in history room, community library, Brownsville.

Dole, Philip, "Farmhouses and Barns of the Willamette Valley," Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974), Vol. 1, p. 112.



ROBE (ASH) ST.



ADDED 1921. VERY BADLY DETERIORATED.

ADDED BEFORE 1900 UNFINISHED ATTIC ABOVE

ORIGINAL C. 1869 PLANK "BOX" CONST. 2 ROOMS ABOVE

COOLEY COTTAGE  
GROUND FLOOR PLAN

1982

Joni Nelson

- ☒ CHIMNEYS
- STUD WALLS
- VERTICAL PLANK WALLS

\* ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ EVIDENCE OF A FIREPLACE WALL WAS FOUND BETWEEN PARLOR AND LIVING ROOM.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18