

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

For NPS use only

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

received SEP 27 1984

date entered OCT 25 1984

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

1. Name

historic Griffin, John N., House

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number 1643 Grand Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Astoria N/A vicinity of First Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Clatsop code 007

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input 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 Dr. and Mrs. Gary Boelling

street & number 1643 Grand Avenue

city, town Astoria N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97103

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Clatsop County Courthouse

street & number 749 Commercial Street

city, town Astoria state Oregon 97103

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1976 federal state county local

depository for survey records Oregon State Historic Preservation Office, 525 Trade Street SE

city, town Slaem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The one and one-half story John N. Griffin House was built in 1892 by noted local carpenter-builder and architect James Ernest Ferguson in the Queen Anne/Eastlake style. It adjoins the lot on which the nominated A. W. Ferguson House stands and is the third Ferguson-built house on the block. It has sustained only minor alterations and retains a high degree of integrity.

Facing north on Grand Avenue between 16th and 17th Street, the nominated property occupies Lot 4 of Block 22, of Shively's Addition to Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon. It is further described as Tax Lot 7000, a parcel approximately 50 x 150 feet in dimension, located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8, Township 8 North, Range 9 West of the Willamette Meridian. The house is sited on a sloping lot oriented to the north and facing the Columbia River. Access is gained through steps surrounded by a retaining wall set with rough cut, randomly placed stones.

The basically rectangular mass terminates in a shingled hipped roof from which projects gables on the north and west and east elevations. In typical fashion to the Queen Anne style, a projecting gable with lower level slanted bay dominates the north facade. This feature is primarily duplicated on the west elevation.

Two small gables provide light to the attic on the northeast and southeastern sections of the roof. An extension of the roof on the north elevation shelters the porch and connects to the bay projection on the east. Porch posts and railings are plain and non-original trellis work is used for decorative relief.

Walls are primarily sheathed in horizontal channel siding, although narrow, vertical, board and batten is found at the cornice level and in panels below most windows. Additionally, shingling and diagonal boards are evident in the projecting bays.

Windows are generally one-over-one, double-hung sash of varying sizes and widths, and are set into simple board frames. An enclosed porch on the east elevation is a later alteration as are changes to south elevation windows and door. A narrow north/south oriented outbuilding is attached to the hipped roof kitchen wing and was erected at a later date.

Decorative interest is provided by paired curved brackets under the eaves, modified Palladian-style windows in the larger northern and western gables, and turned posts which appears at the gable chamfers.

There is a basement under the house which was probably dirt-floored when the house was first built. A concrete floor and half-wall has been put in, with vertical wooden siding above that. Again, these are trimmed with horizontal boards and simple surrounds for the small three-pane windows.

The interior of the John N. Griffin House has the typical plastered walls of other Ferguson houses. Turned and fluted molding and decorations surround the doors and windows, and have been carefully restored.

The stairway up from the first to the second floor is rather steep and narrow, but the rooms upstairs are roomy and comfortable although with limited headroom because of the sloping ceilings.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1892 **Builder/Architect** James Ernest Ferguson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John N. Griffin House, located at 1643 Grand Avenue in Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon, was erected in 1892. It is locally significant under Criterion "c" for its associations with local carpenter-builder and architect James Ernest Ferguson, who was responsible for the construction of many significant Astoria buildings. Additionally, the association of the house with John N. Griffin, who settled in the area in 1883 and was instrumental in establishing the weather station and telegraph service - among other accomplishments - meets Criterion "b." It was erected in the Queen Anne/Eastlake style.

John N. Griffin was born in Alexandria, Virginia in 1859 and spent his boyhood in Washington, D.C. He joined the U. S. Army Signal Corps in 1880 and was sent to the Astoria area in 1883 to help set up a weather bureau at the mouth of the Columbia River. Additionally, he served as a telegraph operator and was instrumental in installing the cable running under the Columbia from Fort Stevens, Oregon, to Fort Canby, Washington.

He resigned from the military service and shortly thereafter became co-owner of Griffin and Reed, a stationery and book store in Astoria, Oregon. This business was located on the northeast corner of 11th and Commercial Streets. The partnership dissolved in November, 1902 and John N. Griffin continued the business alone.

By 1905, he constructed his own building in which he reopened his bookstore in October of 1905. However, he sold the business a month later and moved his family to California where they remained for only six months before returning to Astoria.

In that same year, John N. Griffin established the Astoria Abstract Co. in partnership with his brother-in-law Edward Z. Ferguson. He sold out his interest in this firm in 1920.

In 1888, John N. Griffin married Ada Ferguson, daughter of Albert W. Ferguson, architect and builder of Astoria, and sister to Edward Z. Ferguson of the Astoria Abstract Co., and to James Ernest Ferguson, builder of the Old Astoria City Hall, the Elks Temple, Grace Episcopal Church, and many other historic residences in building in Astoria. It is a family legend that the newly-wedded couple were given the small house at 1643 Grand Avenue as a wedding gift from the Ferguson family. It is located next door to the large Albert W. Ferguson residence and was built in 1892. Certainly, the house was built by James Ernest Ferguson and shows the same kind of skill and craftsmanship that is so apparent in other Ferguson-built houses and buildings in Astoria.

John N. Griffin was interested in civic affairs and served as an Astoria city councilman, in 1892, as a member of the Astoria school board in 1908, and as a member of the Astoria Cemetery Commission in 1921.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Green, Margaret Griffin. "The Ferguson Family" Cumtux, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Fall, 1981), 2-9.

Daily Astorian April 6, 1883
December 12, 1884

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Astoria, Oregon-Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	4	3	6	3	2	0	5	1	1	4	8	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The John N. Griffin House occupies Lot 4 of Block 22 of Shively's Addition to Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon and is located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 8, Township 8 North, Range 9 West of the Willamette Meridian, a parcel measuring 50 x 150 feet in dimension.

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

state None code county code

state None code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Roger T. Tetlow - Historian and Writer

organization Clatsop County Historical Society date March 3, 1984

street & number 1832 Exchange Street telephone (503) 325-4083

city or town Astoria state Oregon

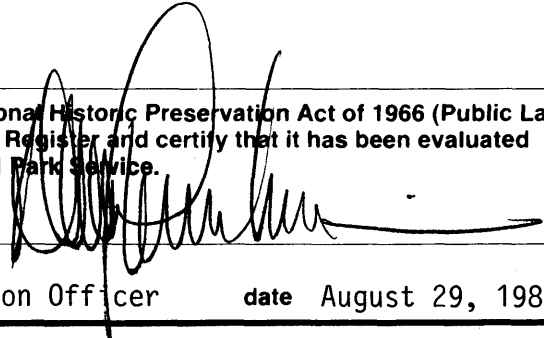
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 August 29, 1984

For NPS use only

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

entered in the
National Register.

date 10/25/84


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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Continuation sheet GRIFFIN, JOHN N., HOUSE **Item number** 8 **Page** 2

He was also one of the first Clatsop County residents to appreciate the beauties of the Oregon coast. He purchased a 160 acre homestead in 1892 Cannon Beach, a small ocean-side community, and built a summer home there in 1897 which still stands. For almost eighty years, the Griffins enjoyed using this place for summers and for other vacations.

John N. Griffin still occupied the nominated property when he died in Astoria on June 30, 1928. His wife, Ada Ferguson Griffin, continued to occupy the house with other family members until her death in 1937. The current owners, Dr. and Mrs. Gary Boelling, have restored the house to its original elegance and maintain its fine condition .

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Continuation sheet GRIFFIN, JOHN N., HOUSE Item number 9 Page 1

Daily Morning Astorian January 6, 1885
October 5, 1892
November 29, 1902
May 3, 1903

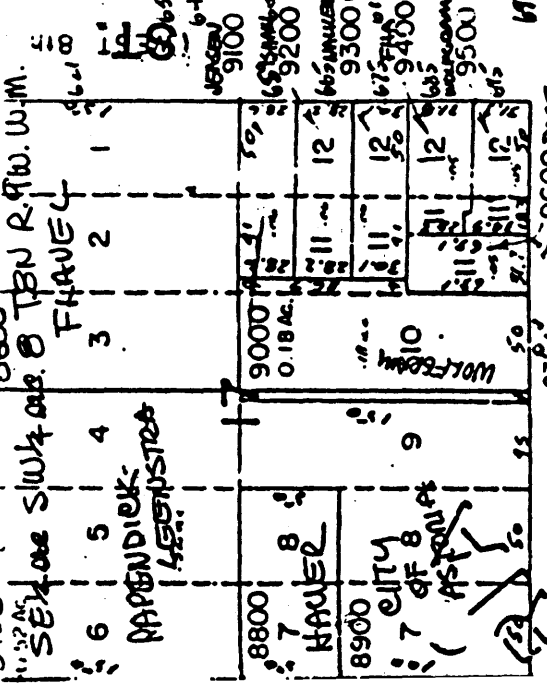
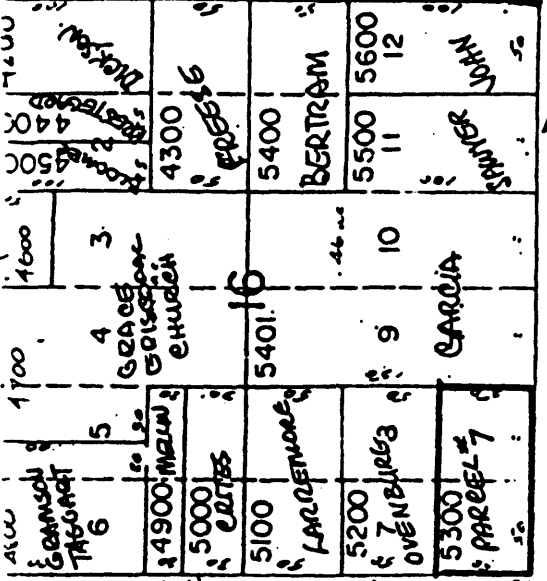
Astoria Daily Budget December 17, 1900
May 15, 1905
November 17, 1906
February 4, June 24, June 25, 1907
June 16, 1908
February 1, 1909

Weekly Astorian April 28, 1888

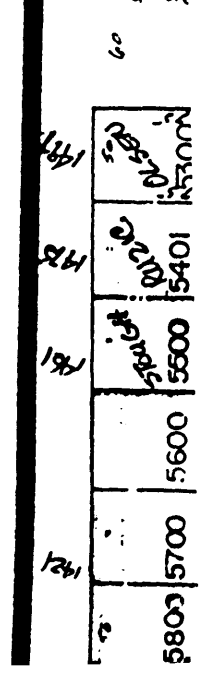
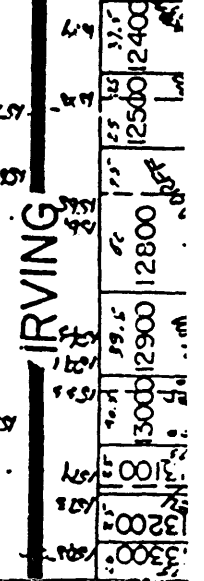
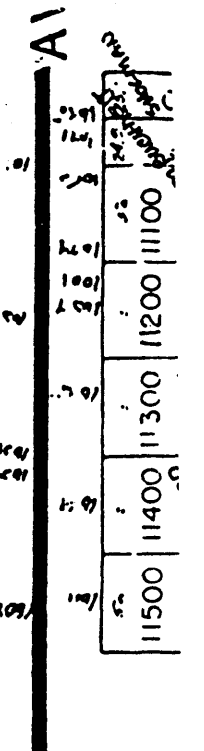
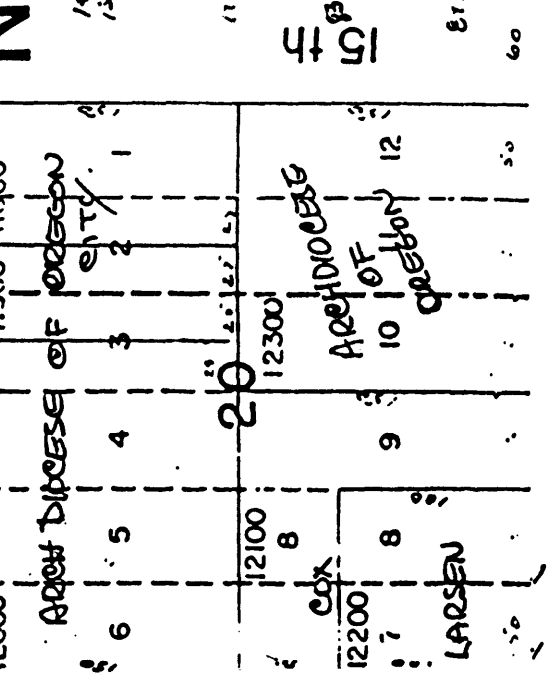
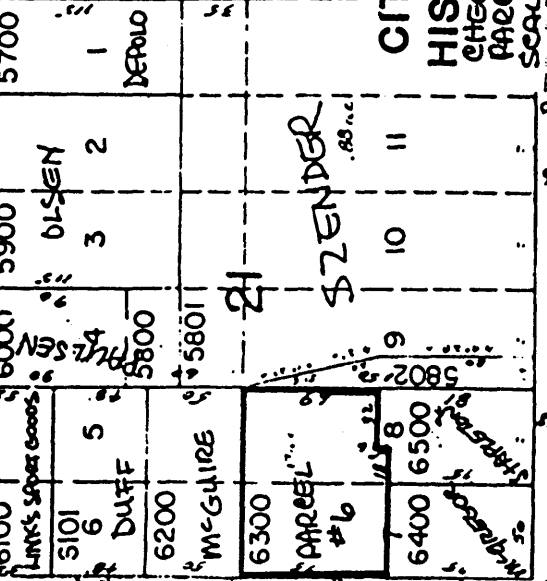
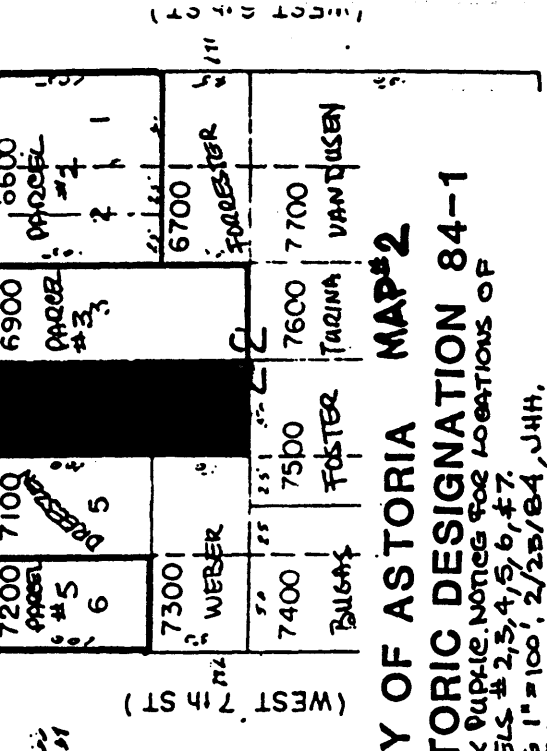
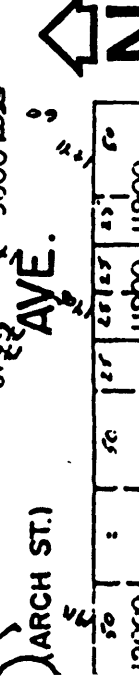
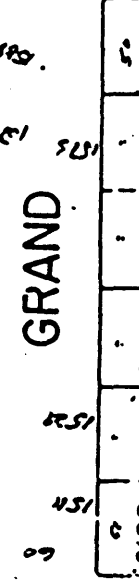
Morning Astorian August 15, 1928

CLATSOP COUNTY ASSESSORS MAP 84-8DC SW 1/4 SEC. 8 T 15

Griffin, John N., House
1643 Grand Avenue
Astoria, Clatsop County, Oregon



CLATSOP COUNTY ASSESSORS MAP 84-8DC SW 1/4 SEC. 8 T 15



CITY OF ASTORIA MAP#2
HISTORIC DESIGNATION 84-1
CHECK PUPILS. NOTES FOR LOCATIONS OF
PARCELS # 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, #7
SCALE 1"=100', 2/25/84, J.H.H.

GRAND

AVE.

ARCH ST.

IRVING

ARCH ST.

ARCH ST.

