Form No. 10-300 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK 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
Steilacoom Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
Between Nisqually St + Puget Sound   __NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN   CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Steilacoom   __ VICINITY OF

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Washington	53	Pierce	053

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
X_DISTRICT	_PUBLIC	X_OCCUPIED	_AGRICULTURE	_MUSEUM
_BUILDING(S)	_PRIVATE	_UNOCCUPIED	X_COMMERCIAL	_PARK
_STRUCTURE	X_BOTH	_WORK IN PROGRESS	_EDUCATIONAL	X_PRIVATE RESIDENCE
_SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	_ENTERTAINMENT	_RELIGIOUS
_OBJECT	_IN PROCESS	_YES: RESTRICTED	_GOVERNMENT	_SCIENTIFIC
	_BEING CONSIDERED	X_YES: UNRESTRICTED	_INDUSTRIAL	_TRANSPORTATION
		_NO	_MILITARY	_OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Multiple ownership

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN   STATE
__ VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEED'S, ETC.   Pierce County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN   STATE
Tacoma   Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE
X FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS   Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN   STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In many respects, the appearance of the town of Steilacoom and its historic district has changed little since its founding 123 years ago. The topography is basically undisturbed. Enough of the tall firs and cedars remain to provide a reminder of the forest which covered the townsite when it became the first incorporated town in Washington Territory. The water front is changed somewhat by construction of the Northern Pacific Railway (now part of the Burlington Northern) in the 1912-14 period. However, the railroad has not significantly altered the town's appearance within the boundaries of the historic district.

The streets which were originally platted and developed by Balch and Chapman still follow the same courses and still bear the same names. Here and there fill has replaced a bridge a swamp has been filled to make a playfield, a knoll leveled to provide a better building site--but few other changes have been made to the land. Balch and Chapman would have little difficulty today in finding their way about the town they founded.

The business district that once existed along aptly named Commercial Street has long since disappeared, the store buildings victims of their very early construction. They were buil of lumber from the surrounding forests rather than brick or stone. Years of rain and winter storms took their toll until these frame buildings deteriorated and were removed.

Expectations of future prosperity went unfulfilled in 1873 when the Northern Pacific passe over the town in choosing its western terminus, precluding replacement of the earliest business structures by newer ones built of more durable materials being used by then in the other towns and cities.

But this was not true of many of Steilacoom's earliest homes. They were constructed with greater care for they were built to be lived in, not just as sheltered places for making a quick profit. Succeeding generations of owners maintained them carefully to insure their liveability.

Steilacoom still possesses many of its early homes in a good state of preservation. A number of them date back to the decade in which the town was founded. Some are listed in the National Register of Historic Places. One of these is the Nathaniel Orr home, built in 1854, still occupied by the son of the builder, a pioneer orchardist and cabinet maker who came to the Northwest by covered wagon over the Oregon Trail. Another is the Philip Keach home, built in 1856, by a pioneer merchant. Two homes, those of Captain Bartlett and Captain Black, are recorded in the Historic American Buildings Survey undertaken in the 1930's. Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, the oldest active Catholic Church in the state, which stands on the perimeter of the historic district, is also in the H.A.B.S Survey.

Later homes, built between the 1860's and the early 1900's, reflect the vernacular archi tecture of their period.

One mercantile establishment is included in the list of primary buildings. It is the Bat Drug and Hardware Store, built in 1895. The store was recently deeded to the Steilacoom Historical Museum Association and is to be restored to its original appearance.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE   2

One of the newest of the primary historic buildings is the Burlington Northern passenger station, completed in 1914 when the Northern Pacific Railway constructed its new main line along the shores of Puget Sound. It is a fine example of a small town depot still in use along one of the busiest stretches of Burlington Northern track.

Unfortunately, all of the pioneer public buildings within the historic district have disappeared. But the sites of these structures include the original locations of the first Pierce County Courthouse, the first territorial jail, and the first Protestant church north of the Columbia River.

During the lowest spring tides on Puget Sound, the remains of Lafayette Balch's original wharf can be seen at the foot of the street which bears his name. Although leveled to the sand and gravel floor of the Sound, the piling is still visible, providing an outline of what was once one of the busiest shipping docks on Puget Sound.

Another survivor from the past is State Historical Road No. 1 which is now a paved thoroughfare, carrying cars and trucks instead of the wagons and stage coaches for which it was built. At the corner of Lafayette and Frederick Streets in the historic district is a road marker erected by the state. Its inscription reads:

> State Historical Road No. One (Byrd's Mill Road)
> Established by the Thurston County Oregon Territory
> Legislature in 1852 and re-established by the
> Washington State Legislature in 1941.
>
> This military road afforded the only route of escape
> from the Puyallup River to Fort Steilacoom during the
> Indian War of 1855 and to the pioneers was a highway
> of great importance.
>
> Along this route in 1864 there was built the
> American telegraph line which was proposed to extend
> to Europe by way of the Bering Strait and Asia.

PRIMARY SITE STRUCTURES

#1 - Barber Home - 102 Montgomery Street
     1889

> The Barber home is a plain but very pleasant 19th Century farmhouse. There are
> two gable roofed wings forming an "L" in plan with a one story porch filling out
> the inside corner and with a one story bay window on the end wall in front. This
> house has the same double hung windows divided by vertical mullions found on most
> of the houses in Steilacoom built in the 1880's.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE   3

#2 - Clausen Home - 410 First Street
     c.1880

The Clausen home was built by a young divinity student from Maine, the Reverend
Arthur T. Burnell. He became principal of the Steilacoom Normal Academy, which
was founded in 1881. His wife Mary was a teacher in the Academy, which was located
in the former county courthouse. Prior to the turn of the century it was purchased
by the Clausen family -- hence, it became known as the Clausen house.

The Clausen house is a simple one and a half story frame building with shiplap siding
and a gable roof. There is a shed roof addition along one side, roughly contemporary
to the original structure. The windows are double hung with the upper and lower
lights divided in half by vertical mullions.

#3 - Mc Cutcheon Home - 114 Second Street
     1905

The Charles McCutcheon home was built in 1905 by Glenn Orr, son of Nathaniel Orr,
Steilacoom pioneer. McCutcheon was superintendent of the Fannie C. Paddock hospital
(now the Tacoma General hospital) in Tacoma from 1887 to 1908. The hospital was
incorporated in 1887. It was McCutcheon who founded the nursing school connected
with the hospital. John McCutcheon, a nephew, moved into the home in 1927. John
McCutcheon had been a vice-counsul in Bordeaux, Bierut and Geneva between 1916 and
1920. He was made senator extra-ordinary in 1965 after serving the people since
1941. The late senator's daughter Katherine now lives in the home.

It is a one and a half story house, square in plan. There are two dormers facing
the water on the gable roof in front. The full width veranda has been recently
glassed in, although there are few other modifications on the exterior.

#4 - Frericks Home - 311 Martin
     c.1890

This small house is a classic example of the late Victorian cottage. A one story
building with shiplap siding, it has ornamental detailing typical of the period
including a full width bay window below a pedimented gable end, spoolwork porch dec-
orations, and fancy shingle patterns. It has been changed very little either on the
interior or on the exterior.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER 7	PAGE 4

#5 - Armbruster - 514 Martin
c.1870

Vine Cottage was built in the 1870's. It is a single story structure with a gable roof running parallel to the street in front. The roof changes pitch at the front overhang where it is extended into a full length shed roof porch. The original cedar shiplap is still unpainted on the interior walls and ceilings. It has mellowed to a warm luster over the years. Bricks from one of the two original brick plants in Steilacoom were used in the fireplace which still burns efficiently.

#6 - Bartlett Home - 602 Lafayette
c.1870

The Nehemiah Bartlett home was recorded in the Historic American Buildings Survey in 1937. On May 6, 1870, Nehemiah Bartlett married Laura Belle Downey, who had been a member in 1853 of the first emigrant train to come over the Nachez Pass. Bartlett was in the logging business and built the house in the late 1860's. He was drowned off Fox and McNeil Islands in 1875.

The two story Bartlett home has a low pedimented gable roof and several porches and additions on the sides and in back. The second story overhangs the first story in front, creating a porch that has been enclosed at one end. The roof has been raised and its pitch reduced to accomodate two additional bedrooms. After Dr. Charles McCutcheon bought the house he converted the dining room into an office and raised the roof first on the northwest corner and then on the south side so that two up-stairs bedrooms were created. The original fireplaces are still in use.

#7 - Captain Black Home - 702 Lafayette
c.1860

The Captain Black home was built in the mid 1860's for George Black, a native of Nova Scotia, and a bachelor sea captain. Black, in 1860, was master of the bark *D.M. Hall*; in 1864, of the *A. Phinney*; and in 1868, of the *Clara Light*.

The house is one and a half stories with a gable roof and a sizeable pedimented dormer. This dormer is directly above a portico sheltering the main entrance, al-though the portico is apparently a replacement for the original full width front porch. There are scroll sawn bargeboards at the rake and the eaves. The framing is box construction (without studs) similar to the single wall system used in the Baer drugstore.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

#8 - Henly Home - 1307 Starling Street
1886

In 1886 John Rigney gave this house as a wedding gift to his daughter Marcella and Neil Henly. John Rigney was a member of M Company, 1st Artillery who arrived at Fort Steilacoom August 28, 1849. His wife Elizabeth had accompanied him on the trip from New York. When his enlistment was up he took a donation land claim. Neil Henly was one of two survivors of the maritime disaster of November 4, 1875, when the Steamship *Pacific* was sunk after colliding with the Schooner *Orpheus*. More than 200 lost their lives in the disaster. Henly later settled in Steilacoom and was in charge of the McNeil Island transportation fleet for many years.

The house is an assembly of one and a half story gables and one story wings with clapboard siding. It is a moderate size home with no ornamentation.

#9 - Whyte House - 1302 Starling Street
1895

Colonel Whyte built four identical houses in 1895. This is the only one of the four that has remained basically unchanged in style. It is a fine one story Victorian cottage with a stepped hip and gable roof combination. The end of the gable in front is a full width bay window with decorative brackets and carpentry. The clapboard siding runs in a vertical direction in gable ends above the eaves level.

#10 - Packard Home - 1315 Nisqually
1909

Leonard Packard was an employee of Western State Hospital in 1909 when he hired William Bradley to enlarge the original two room cottage he had purchased. The date of the original cottage is thought to be early in the 1880's.

Packard's choice of Bradley to work on the enlargement of the house and addition of a second story was fortunate as Bradley was a master carpenter. Although interior modernization has been done, the exterior is basically unchanged. The one and a half story house has a rectangular plan with a hip roof and an unusual dormer set up almost on top of the ridge. The windows are double hung, some of which have been replaced by larger aluminum frame units.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER 7   PAGE 6

#11 - Railroad Station - 1411 Commercial Street
      1913

The Steilacoom railroad station is a good example of the architecturally designed small town depot. This station was designed by Arthur Potter Merrill who traveled across the United States from one project to another. Buildings he designed include the Pierce-Arrow factory in Buffalo, New York; the Tacoma Building and the Federal Courthouse in Tacoma; and the Dennison Tile Factory in Stockton, California.

The depot is of stucco, brick and wood construction. In plan, it is typical of stations built in small and medium sized communities throughout the Northwest shortly after the turn of the century. There is a gable roof running parallel to the tracks over the main part of the structure containing the passenger waiting room and ticket areas. Attached to this at either end just below the eaves are two smaller gable roofed wings, one enclosed for baggage and freight and the other open as a passenger concourse. A depot agent's bay window extends toward the tracks from the center portion of the main structure providing a view of approaching trains in both directions.

#12 - Rigney Home - 311 Martin
      c.1885

John Rigney, who came to Fort Steilacoom in 1849, had this house built for his son. It is a two story frame residence with clapboard siding. There are two gable roofed wings on an "L" shaped plan, where the gable end facing the street includes a single story bay window. Just below the apexes of the gable ends are small Gothic windows, identical to decorative features on the Hughes House in similar locations. The other windows are also the double hung type used on the Hughes house and elsewhere in the district with their sashes divided in half by vertical mullions.

#13 - Gardiner Home - 514 Lafayette
      C.1890

James Gardiner is listed in the 1850 census as a soldier from Pennsylvania. In the 1870's this home was built and Gardiner, a Negro, opened a barber shop. He was well-known for his outstanding vegetable and flower gardens. In the 1920's the house was purchased by the Oberlin Congregational Church as a parsonage.

The Gardiner Home is a simple two story gable roof house with a veranda extending along one side and across the front (now enclosed on the side). Extensive alterations have completely changed the appearance of what was once a board and batten cottage.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE 7

#14 - Oberlin Congregational Church - 1515 Lafayette
      1903

      The Oberlin Congregational Church was dedicated June 2 and 3, 1903. A few large
      timbers from the Methodist-Episcopal Church, lumber from the Presbyterian Church
      and new lumber as well, went into the construction of the building.

      It is a symmetrical two story frame structure with a gable roof and cornice returns
      flanked by two one story wings with flat roofs crowned by balustrades. Above the
      entrance portico is a balustrade and a Palladian window.

#15 - Bair's Drugstore - 1615 Lafayette
      1895

      W. L. Bair built this store in 1895, the first store building on Lafayette Street,
      and there he set up his pharmacy. His drugstore became one of the social centers
      of the town.

      The marble top fountain (still in the store) was installed in about 1906. An
      addition at the back of the building made room for the post office and hardware
      stock transferred from the old Rogers store. Bair's Drugstore is a small one story
      false front commercial structure built with box construction where no studs are
      used in the framing. The walls consist of two inch cedar planks stood on end and
      nailed edge to edge. Horizontal shiplap siding covers this as the outside finish
      material.

#16 - E. R. Rogers Home - 1702 Commercial
      1891

      This building is a 17-room mansion built in 1891 by E. R. Rogers, pioneer merchant.
      He opened the McCaw and Rogers store in 1859. He married the widow of William
      Webster and built this home for her. In the panic of 1893 Rogers lost the home. It
      was then purchased by Charles Herman who opened it up as a boarding house and named
      it Waverly Inn.

      The Rogers Home is an elaborate Victorian residence with a complex arrangement of
      gables around a central pryramidal roof form. There is a number of balconies, bay
      windows, fanlights, cornice brackets and other standard decorative features. There
      are numerous windows on all sides. Instead of clothes closets the house had large
      dressing rooms. When new it had two baths, one each on the first and second floors.
      There was a wood stove in every room, except the attic. One of the rooms across the
      front of the third floor was apparently a party room. All the interior doors have

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE   8

---

transoms. There is a double parlor. Between the hall and the front parlor was elaborate wooden grillwork. The interior trim was largely Douglas fir paneling finished in two tones. The house has many room-size bay windows and an unobstructed view of Puget Sound.

#17 - Webster Home - 1706 Commercial
c. 1855

The William Webster home was built in 1854 or 1855. Webster did not live long in the house for in the 1860 census his wife Catherine is listed as a widow. She and his two children lived in the house until she married E. R. Rogers of McCaw and Rogers, owners of the first brick building in Steilacoom. The building was converted to a store in the early 1900's. It is now a private residence.

The Webster home is a one and a half story frame house with clapboard siding and a gable roof. It has undergone several additions and alterations. The original fireplace is still intact and functioning.

#18 - Steilacoom Town Hall
1930

The Steilacoom Town Hall was designed in 1930 by E. J. Breseman, who had earlier designed the second addition to Pioneer school.

The design is strongly "Greek Revival", with a gabled pediment and such features as a Palladian window. Although the building is less than fifty years old, it is a good example of classical revival architecture that contributes significantly to the esthetic quality of the district.

#19 - Philip Keach Home - 1802 Commercial Street
1858

Rolling Hill was built by Philip Keach for his bride-to-be Antoinette Martin. It is a handsome two story gable roofed house with boxed cornices and returns. There is a full width porch and balcony on the long wall in front, and centered in back is a one story gabled wing. All fenestration is shuttered and strictly symmetrical, including five sets of French doors in the front facade, and six over six double hung windows in the end walls. The Keach Home is of box construction. It was entered in the National Register in 1973.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

#20 - Clendenin Home - 1810 Commercial
    c. 1860

Clendenin came from Connecticut in 1852 around the Horn to be a timber cruiser for the federal government. Before opening his general store in Steilacoom he had stores in Port Madison and on the Puyallup Indian Reservation. He died in 1870. The home has remained in family ownership, although it has been rented most of the time. The present owners are Clendenin's granddaughter and grandson.

#21 - Miles West Home
    c. 1853

When dormers were added to this house it was found that the building was constructed of hand-hewn cedar logs. The date of its actual construction is not known, but because of the logs, it is generally considered the oldest house in Steilacoom and was probably completed in 1852 or 1853. Originally owned by Miles West, it was purchased by Peter Runquist after a few years. Runquist had arrived with the troops from Ft. Vancouver when Ft. Steilacoom was established in 1849. He was a blacksmith and opened his shop a short distance from this house. In the yard are large eastern pine trees which were apparently planted about the time the house was built.

It is a one and a half story gabled house with a shed roof addition across the long wall in back and a full width shed roof porch in front. Above the porch there is a series of small dormers. There is now shiplap siding over the cedar logs.

#22 - Nathaniel Orr Home - 1811 Rainier Street
    1857

The Nathaniel Orr home was begun in 1853 and completed in 1857. Originally the lower floor of the house was the first woodworking shop in the town of Steilacoom.

It is a simple two story house with a gable roof and cornice returns. There is a single story shed roof addition along one side. The windows are double hung with six over six lights. They are few in number and symmetrically placed. The front door has transom and sidelights. The Orr home is also built with box construction. The house has been altered very little throughout the years except for the installation of electricity and plumbing. This home was placed on the National Register in 1971.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE   10

#23 - Hughes Home - 306 Main Street
      1885

This house was built in 1890 by Jim Hughes. The wing toward the east was added later
and contains a tall chimney with an arched cap. The main part of the house used to
have a porch across the front. It is a characteristic example of the starkly simple
utilitarian architecture typical of company owned mill and mining town houses. The
Hughes House is a one and a half story home with a gable roof and shiplap siding.
There is a single story east wing attached below the eaves on one side toward the
back. The double hung windows divided by vertical mullions used on the main struc-
ture are identical to the windows on the Clausen Home and several other homes in the
district.

#24 - Hughes House - 308 Main Street
      1885

Jim Hughes also built this house in the early 1890's when Puget Sound was in the
midst of a building boom. The Hughes House is a small one story frame residence with
two intersecting gables and shiplap siding. Two shed roof additions with plate
glass windows flank one gable, and a garage is attached to the addition in back.
The double hung windows in the gable portions are also of the same type as used on
the Clausen Home. Just below the apex of each gable end is a small pointed Gothic
window. This house now sits on an exposed concrete block foundation.

#25 - Balch Home - 1614 Rainier Street
      1857

The Albert Balch home dates from the late 1850's. Albert Balch was the brother of
Lafayette Balch, the town's founder, who built the residence for his brother.
Albert was a member of the jury who found Chief Leschi guilty of murder.

Formerly the siding was entirely clapboards. The fireplaces were damaged when the
house was moved back from the street and no longer exist. At present there are
decorative barge-boards, but these were added. The old house was a beautifully
simple one and a half story single gable with overhanging eaves and multipane
double hung windows almost from floor to ceiling in front. The original front door
with side and top lights is still in place.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE   11

SECONDARY SITE STRUCTURES

A.   Vaughan Home - 103 Montgomery
      c. 1880

      The history of this building is shrouded in unknown dates, but because Murty Fahy,
      an early settler in Steilacoom, died while he lived here, it is estimated that it was
      built in the late 1870's. So much alteration has been done that no hint of dates
      can be taken from the structure; however, the original two-story wooden frame farm
      house shape has not been lost.

B.   Morris Home - 305 Martin
      c. 1900

      Willis E. Morris was general manager of Pacific Lidgerwood Company, a heavy duty
      logging equipment company and president of Pacific Iron and Steel Company. He was
      mayor of Steilacoom for several nonconsecutive terms between 1924 and 1948.

      The basic design of the original house is still evident, despite much alteration.
      Details of the original construction such as the pediment and cornice have not been
      destroyed. The original veranda has been converted into an enclosed sun porch.

C.   Post Home - 307 Martin
      c. 1895

      A beach cottage of the 1890's, this building has not been moved from the original
      location as were so many of Steilacooms beach cottages. It is a story-and-a-half
      simple frame house with a porch extending around two sides.

D.   Merrill Home - 202 Sixth
      c. 1900

      Although Arthur Potter Merrill did not build this small bungalow beach cottage, it
      is known as the Merrill home because it was here that Mr. Merrill and his family
      lived when he designed the Tacoma area buildings and the Steilacoom Railroad Station.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

E.   Just-a-Mere Cottage - 602 Lafayette
        c. 1900

        This was one of many beach cottages built in Steilacoom when it was a flourishing
        summer resort for Tacoma. The front dormer door opens to a widow's walk which over-
        looks north Puget Sound. Extensive remodeling has been done; however, the basic
        T-shape of the original house has been kept. The many-paned small windows and the
        tongue and groove siding has also been retained.

F.   Barclay Home - 603 Martin
        c. 1898

        A beach cottage built in the era of Steilacoom's resort development building was
        moved up from close to the beach when the railroad was built in 1911. Decorative
        eave brackets were used, and the original double-hung windows and the tongue-and-
        groove siding have not been altered. Few changes have been made to the exterior of
        this building.

G.   Appleby Home - 706 Lafayette
        c. 1895

        This cottage was moved from the waterfront about 1915. It was built by Steven
        Appleby, president of the National Bank of Tacoma. Mrs. Appleby was the daughter of
        Nelson Bennett who built the Stampede Pass tunnel for the Northern Pacific Railroad.

        This beach cottage still has the original bay window and double sets of French doors
        leading to the porch. Modified cedar shakes have replaced asbestos shingles and
        restoration of the original siding is planned.

H.   Annis Home - 1214 Lafayette
        c. 1907

        Built by E. P. Annis, town treasurer for many years, this house is a classic bungalow
        that has had little or no alteration on the exterior. The stone foundation is
        unusual for buildings in Steilacoom. Decorative molding details surround the windows.
        Simple braces are used under the eaves and the structural rafters are used as archi-
        tectural features.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER 7   PAGE 13

I.   Henly Home - 1115 Starling
      c. 1910

      This is the home that Neil Henly moved to when he retired from his job as chief of
      the McNeil Island transportation fleet. Henly was one of the two survivors of the
      maritime tragedy of November 4, 1875, when the steamship *Pacific* was sunk after
      colliding with the schooner *Orpheus*.

      This building is similar to the Annis home in the type of architectural detailing;
      however, the exterior siding is cedar shingles rather than clapboards. Few exterior
      changes have been made. The house was built for Arthur Warren, a prominent Tacoma
      lawyer.

J.   Old Independent Church - 415 Union
      c. 1904

      Shortly after the Oberlin Congregational church was completed in 1903, Rev. James
      Boren broke from the church and had James Slayden build a small church for his
      followers. There is still one of the original stained glass windows on the interior.
      It has a round window on the east side which is unique among structures in
      Steilacoom.

K.   Bair Home - 1311 Starling
      c. 1890

      Built as a barn, this house was never used as such, but was converted into living
      quarters. W. L. Bair moved into the house about 1895. The original carriage house
      on the west side was incorporated into the residence. The front entry has classic
      columns and the second story sun-room overlooks Puget Sound. Cedar shingle siding
      is used.

L.   Jesse Barlow Home - 1302 Rainier
      1906

      Captain Barlow had this home built for his daughter shortly before his death. After
      he died Miss Barlow lived here with her mother. Mr. Hellyer is the third owner of
      the property, Captain Barlow having bought it from Balch. This story-and-a-half
      bungalow was originally named Bonnie Shelter. Its simple rustic character has been
      retained by the continued use of exterior cedar shingle siding.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Summer Cottage - 1306 Rainier
c. 1900

One of the several houses which were originally summer cottages for the wealthy
of Tacoma, but which have been converted into family sized homes. Much
alteration has been done; however, the front appearance is basically unchaged.
The door in the front shed dormer opens to a second story porch which has a
panoramic view of Puget Sound.

Shaeffer Home - 302 Pierce
c. 1880

Built in the 1880's by the owners of the Shaeffer Brewery, this home is typical
of the American Victorian style. Although it has been remodeled, the small
bay window, the oval framed front door and the fine moulding details have been
retained.

Gimel's Tavern - 1803 Lafayette

Although drastically altered in converting this into a home, the basic shape
of the old tavern is still revealed in this simple rectangular wood frame house.

INTRUSIONS

Steilacoom has been fortunate in that the contemporary buildings which have been
introduced into the Historic District have all been of wood frame construction.
There are three exceptions - a pseudo-half-timbered office building-apartment
complex, a 1940's cinder block-roman brick structure and the recently constructed
firehall.

The Town of Steilacoom includes in the Historic District a large number of
buildings constructed within the last fifty years. The majority of these are
relatively anonymous frame houses that, together with the older structures,
represent nearly every decade of building activity since the town was incor-
porated. They range from seaside vacation cottages to an occasional large
brick residence with a generous landscaped lot overlooking Puget Sound.

Most are modest homes with two to four bedrooms. They include examples of several
vernacular styles that were used for such houses -- builder versions of the
Bungaloid,"Cape Cod cottages" from the 1930's and 40's, and brick ramblers of
the 1950's. A few older homes built as early as 1870 have been unsympathetically

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   7   PAGE 15

remodeled with an interesting variety of additions, subtractions and assorted
improvements that obscure the original structure. In some cases these show
evidence of work which must have been done to update the house at a number
of different times over a period of many years. The diverse mixture of
materials and decorative details produces a unique compendium of architectural
styles. In other cases these are purely utilitarian additions intended simply
to increase the square footage of floor area or upstairs headroom.

Although roughly half the buildings in the historic district were constructed
after the First World War, they are not generally intrusive. Steilacoom has
developed gradually resulting in a streetscape without an identifiable dominant
style or period. The more recent structures blend into neighborhoods that are
characterized by this, and that include a significant concentration of some of
the oldest homes in the State of Washington.

In the residential areas the houses have a fairly uniform setback, and since
most are approximately the same scale, the blocks have a consistent rythym of
buildings that contribute to the sense of district. The setback and a screen
of trees in front make it difficult to photograph the neighborhoods on other
than a building by building basis.

Major intrusions are concentrated around the town's small commercial district.
Besides the shopping center, one gas station and the firehall there is a small
number of recently constructed, out of scale apartment buildings. These are
also found in a few isolated locations in the residential areas.

Steilacoom Center Apartments - Corner of Lafayette and Wilkes

Formerly a shopping center, this contemporary Tudoresque building is now
occupied by the Post Office, offices and apartments.

Westmere Apartments - 1715 Rainier

Anonymous, two-story building with 10" clapboard siding but out of scale in
comparison to the historic structures.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

| CONTINUATION SHEET | ITEM NUMBER | 7 | PAGE | 16 |

Apartments - 1614 Commercial
Apartments - 1516 Commercial
Apartments - 1413 Lafayette

Out of scale two-story frame buildings recently constructed.

Triplex - 312 Martin

Large, contemporary design frame building in a residential neighborhood.

Firestation - 1713 Lafayette

Utilitarian block masonry -- heavy timber structure near the center of the
business district.

Bank - 1609 Lafayette

Cinder block with brick veneer front.

Service Station -- Corner of Union and Rainier

Frame building with clapboard siding.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW		
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION
__1400-1499	__ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	__SCULPTURE
__1600-1699	X_ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
__1700-1799	__ART	__ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER
X_1800-1899	__COMMERCE	X_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	__TRANSPORTATION
X_1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)
		__INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES incorporated 1854   BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1851, Captain Lafayette Balch and the crews of the "George Emery" and the "Demaris Cove" dropped anchor in a sheltered location about twenty miles from the southern tip of Puget Sound. Balch was a Maine ship owner who had left New England for the Northwest to take advantage of timber resources and the expanding frontier market for lumber.

And so Balch established a donation land claim at Cheilacoom, about a mile south of Steilacoom River. One of his two vessels carried cut timbers from Maine. In January, 1851, he unloaded his cargo and began building the store and house which would be the first structures in the town he called Port Steilacoom.

Balch was truly a pioneer in a new world. Only ten years before the first Americans to explore Puget Sound had sailed the same waters--the 1841 Wilkes expedition. Only five years before had it been determined that this disputed territory was to be American, not British. The impetus given to Westward movement by the California gold rush was only two years old, and the tide of emigrants over the Oregon Trail was just reaching its peak.

Five miles to the south, the Hudson's Bay Company had founded Fort Nisqually in 1833, and the productive farms operated by a subsidiary, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, dotted the prairies a few miles to the south and southeast. Closer yet was Fort Steilacoom, established by the United States Army in 1849, to provide evidence of United States sovereignty in the area and serve as a warning to the native Indians that the scattered settlers in the Puget Sound basin were not to be molested.

Balch chose the site for his new settlement wisely. On one side he had an established fort which furnished not only protection but also a nucleus of customers for a new town. On the other side he had a branch of the giant Hudson's Bay Company which would provide an additional market. He was totally surrounded by timber, much of which could literally be felled into the ships which would transport it to the timber-hungry gold fields of California, the Orient and the Eastern seaboard. And his town was near the head of one of the best natural harbors in the world--Puget Sound.

As soon as possible Balch began to supply the San Francisco area with lumber. In 1852, in partnership with Levent F. Thompson, he began the operation of a sawmill. Thompson was to become the youngest member of the territorial legislature in 1853 and the oldest member of the first Washington State legislature in 1889.

Just south of Balch's Port Steilacoom, John B. Chapman, in October 1851, established a town which he called Steilacoom City. For a time rivalry stimulated both, but by 1854 the two towns consolidated and became the first incorporated city in Washington Territory.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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   Seattle

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM OK - WRN
12-22-75

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY __150__

UTM REFERENCES

	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
A	1,0	5,3,1,0,0,0	5,2,2,4,5,5,0
B	1,0	5,3,1,1,0,0,0	5,2,2,3,5,0,0
C	1,0	5,2,9,3,1,0	5,2,2,3,5,0,0
D	1,0	5,2,9,3,1,0	5,2,2,4,5,5,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Along Cedar Street from Puget Sound to its intersection with Starling, along
Starling to its intersection with Nisqually, along Nisqually to its intersection
with Union, along Union to its intersection with Champion, along Champion to its
intersection with Second Street, south along Second Street two blocks, and west
to Puget Sound.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Patricia J. Laughlin   Lynn D. Scholes   Jacob Thomas

ORGANIZATION	DATE
Steilacoom Historical Museum Association	March 1, 1974

STREET & NUMBER	TELEPHONE
P.O. Box 16	

CITY OR TOWN	STATE
Steilacoom	Washington

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL ___   STATE _X_   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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE *SHPO*   DATE *April 24, 1975*

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   8   PAGE 2

Chapman, an Indiana lawyer, was the first lawyer to be admitted to the bar north of the Columbia River, and his legal talents led him to play an important part in the forming of Washington Territory. At the Monticello Convention, which was called to order on August 28, 1851, by Thomas M. Chambers of Steilacoom, Chapman submitted the resolution which required the convention to memorialize Ccngress requesting a seperate territorial government north of the Columbia. This action culminated in the establishment of Washington in 1853.

A government grant was issued to Balch in 1852 to establish a post office. President Fillmore appointed James Hall the first postmaster, and John M. Chapman was hired to carry the mail from Steilacoom to Olympia once a week for a wage not to exceed $2.70.

Pierce County was organized by the territorial legislature of Oregon in December of 1852. Steilacoom was named the county seat. The first jail in newly created Washington territory was built in Steilacoom in 1858. It was said to be the first all brick building north of the Columbia.

In 1853, the Reverend John DeVore built the first Protestant church building in the territory. Among subscribers to the building fund was Lt. Philip Sheridan, who was to gain lasting fame in the Civil War. A bell for the church was ordered from the East, but, when it arrived, the transportation charges were greater than had been anticipated and could not be met. Contributions were made by the townspeople, and the bell became the property of the town,even though it hung in the church. This bell now hangs as a monument commemorating the building of the church.

The first school in the community was established in 1854 by Mrs. Sherwood Bonney who taught classes in her own home during the months of July, August and September, 1854. The second school session in Pierce County was taught in the Methodist church by Miss Evangeline Babb, sister-in-law of the Reverend Mr. DeVore. Steilacoom school district #1 has never been incorporated into another district and it still functions as a part of the educational system of Pierce County.

The first issue of the Puget Sound Courier, May 1855, carried the following inventory: "seventy dwellings, six stores, two blacksmith shops, one cabinet maker, one tailor and three hotels. Within a short distance of town are three sawmills, a grist mill, of first class, in process of erection. We have a church, a daily school, a public press and a billiard saloon, two bowling alleys and a wharf has just been completed that affords berths for large vessels at all stages of the tide."

In August, 1858, Martin Schmeig began work on a brewery, the first in Washington Territory.

Steilacoom in 1858-59 was the busiest port on Puget Sound. The Territorial Legislature on February 3, 1858, passed a special law enabling Steilacoom citizens to organize and incorporate the Steilacoom Library Association. This was to be the first public library in the

territory. The organizational meeting for the association was held on March 16, 1858, in Philip Keach's store. He was later elected the first librarian of the organization. In his "History of Pierce County, " W. P. Bonney says:

> "The Steilacoom Library Association was the pioneer civic association of the county, and it was the early organization through which movements of general interest and concern to Steilacoom and the county received encouragement and completion. Its officers and members did not confine themselves merely to the collection of books for the library; but acted much in the way of and along the lines of a modern commercial club or chamber of commerce."

On February 2, 1869, a regular stage line was started between Steilacoom and Cowlitz landing.

In 1864 the Catholic church which had been built at Fort Steilacoom in 1857 was moved to Steilacoom where it is still in use. In April, 1868, the fort was abandoned by the U.S. Government and in 1871 it became the Territorial Hospital for the Insane.

William M. Wallace, Steilacoom attorney and friend of Abraham Lincoln, was elected to the Territorial legislature in 1853. He was appointed first governor of the Territory of Idaho in 1863. He later returned to Steilacoom and was mayor in 1871. From 1876 to 1878 he was the probate judge for the area.

Steilacoom's prosperous beginning was not to endure. With the founding of more strategically located Port Townsend and Tacoma and Seattle with their more adequate harbors, the commercial decline began. Still fighting for supremacy, the final blow was delivered when it lost all hope for selection as terminus of the Northern Pacific Railway. The original line from Portland to Tacoma via Kalama did not even pass through Steilacoom. Instead of becoming the commercial center of the Puget Sound area, the town became a popular summer resort and gradually developed i nto the suburban community that it is today.

The Steilacoom Historic District includes several of Washingtons oldest residences, some dating from before the establishment of Washington Territory. Perhaps nowhere else in the state is there such a large concentration of early buildings from this period. Steilacoom is the oldest incorporated American community on Puget Sound.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET   ITEM NUMBER   9   PAGE   2

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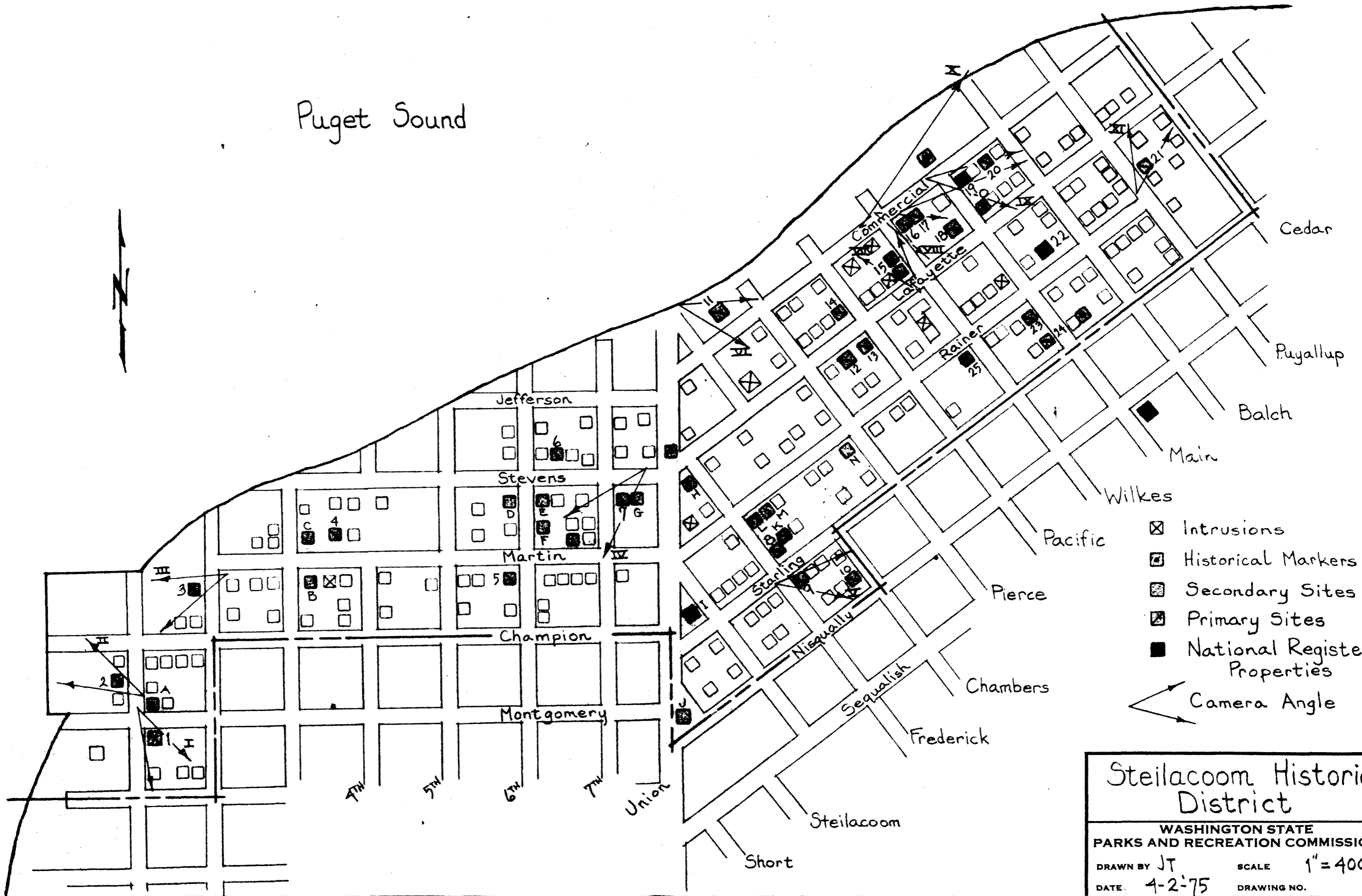
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Puget Sound

Cedar

Puyallup

Balch

Main

Wilkes

Pacific

Pierce

Chambers

Frederick

Steilacoom

Short

Jefferson

Stevens

Martin

Champion

Montgomery

Union

Commercial

Lafayette

Rainer

Starling

Nisqually

Sequalish

4TH 5TH 6TH 7TH

N

Intrusions

Historical Markers

Secondary Sites

Primary Sites

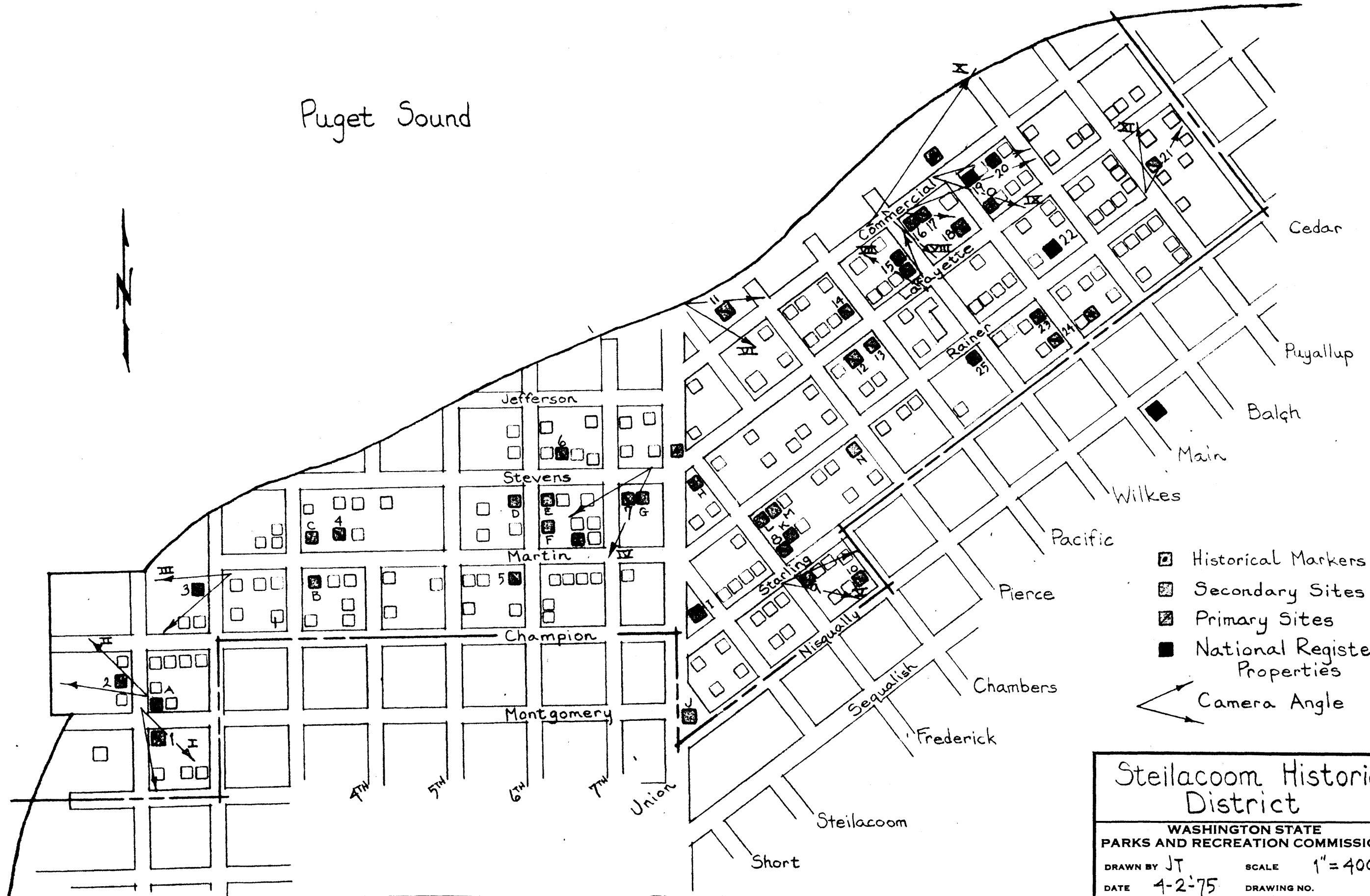National Register Properties

Camera Angle

Steilacoom Historic District

WASHINGTON STATE
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

DRAWN BY JT   SCALE   1" = 400'

DATE 4-2-'75   DRAWING NO.

Puget Sound

Cedar

Puyallup

Balch

Main

Wilkes

Pacific

Pierce

Chambers

Frederick

Steilacoom

Short

Jefferson

Stevens

Martin

Champion

Montgomery

Commercial

Lafayette

Rainer

Starling

Nisqually

Sequalish

4TH

5TH

6TH

7TH

Union

N

	Historical Markers
	Secondary Sites
	Primary Sites
	National Register Properties
	Camera Angle

Steilacoom Historic District