

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 91000920 Date Listed: 7/23/91

Robert Dollar House Marin CA
Property Name County State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for *Antoinette Lee*
Signature of the Keeper

7/24/91
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

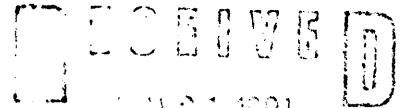
Classification: The Category of Property is changed from district to building. (This correction will not be counted in an audit.)

This information was confirmed with Marilyn Lortie of the California State Historic Preservation Office.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

MAR 27 1991

NATIONAL REGISTER

OHP

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dollar, Robert House

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 115 "J" Street

N/A not for publication

city, town San Rafael

N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Marin code 041 zip code 94901

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

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

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	1 structures
_____	_____ objects
1	1 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register None

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Katherine Swallen
Signature of certifying official
California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

6-17-91
Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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:)

Autawicci-Dee

7/23/91

for Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic, Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic, Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete

walls Wood, Weatherboard

roof Wood, Shingle

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Classic Queen Anne Victorian residence built by Robert Dollar in 1891 stands on its original corner lot located at Forbes and "J" Streets, San Rafael, California. The Queen Anne residence was designed by the Newsom Brothers of San Francisco. The two story, plus a third story loft, wood frame structure consists of 4,400 square feet of living area on three levels.

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The two story Queen Anne residence was built in 1891 by Robert Dollar as his first residence in Marin County. The original architectural integrity of the residence has been maintained with its charm and feeling of the true Victorian style.

The Classic Queen Anne Victorian residence as designed by the Newsom Brothers, the foremost Victorian architects in California, has a high hip roof with a two story gabled bay in front, flanked by a pedimented entrance porch. The cedar shingled roof is topped with two tall brick chimneys. The gables are trimmed with ample moldings, accented by a row of dentil blocks above a row of buttons that surround the roof line of the second level. Each corner is accented by two matching scroll brackets. Sunbursts accent each gable and front porch entrance. The wood frame structure exterior siding and all the interior trim were milled from heart of California Redwood which was cut and milled in western Marin County.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture _____

Transportation _____

Period of Significance

1891-1907 _____

Significant Dates

1891 _____

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Newsom Brothers, Architect

Bundy, J. E., Builder

Significant Person

Dollar, Robert

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Robert Dollar House is primarily significant for its architecture but is also associated with the early career of Robert Dollar, founder of the American President shipping lines. Dollar resided in two houses in San Rafael. This was his first residence and the only one he had built for himself. His other residence, listed in the National Register as the Robert Dollar estate, or Falkirk, was built in 1879 and had been completed for 28 years when he moved into it.

ROBERT DOLLAR, March 20, 1844 - May 16, 1932, as a community leader gained a world wide reputation as a shipping magnate with his Dollar Shipping Lines, now known as the American President Lines.

Robert Dollar was born in Falkirk, Scotland. At age fourteen his father immigrated to Canada. In September 1874 he married Margaret Proudfoot of Ottawa by whom he had three sons and one daughter. In 1882 Dollar moved his family to Marquette, Mich. where he purchased a large tract of timber land. He disliked the cold winters in Michigan, and in 1888 moved to California closing down his Michigan interests.

Marin Journal, October 25, 1888, reports: "Mr. Dollar and his two sons, of Michigan, are at the Hotel Rafael for the winter, and may possibly make San Rafael their place of permanent residence." In March 1889 Robert Dollar and his brother John purchased a 217' by 190' lot on "J" Street where each of them arranged to have independent residences designed and built. Marin Journal, January 29, 1891, reports: "Robert Dollar has let a contract for his house on "J" Street and Forbes Avenue to J. E. Bundy who is finishing J. M. Dollar's house on the next lot."

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .257 Acre

UTM References

A 10 540370 4203480
 Zone Easting Northing

B _____
 Zone Easting Northing

C _____
 Zone Easting Northing

D _____
 Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

City of San Rafael, County of Marin, California
 Assessors Map Book 10 Page 17 Parcel 05
 APN 10-17-05

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is all that remains of the historic property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert Voth, Owner
 organization Victorian Elegance of Marin, Inc. date 9-28-90
 street & number 115 "J" Street telephone (415) 453-8050
 city or town San Rafael state CA zip code 94901

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The second floor exterior covering is shingled with redwood trim at the corners and around the windows. The front bay window is arched while all other double hung windows are framed in small panes around the larger center in the upper frame. The lower level siding consists of V-rustic redwood which is trimmed at the corners with flat redwood molding. The double front entrance doors have been fitted with stained glass to match the three original stained glass windows which accent the front and north side of the structure. These restored pieces are original from the date of construction. The north side of the dining room is formed by bay windows with ornamentation above consisting of corner brackets, box car siding and moldings. Above the bay rises a second floor bedroom window, above which is a third story gable window, flanked by generous moldings and substantial scrolled brackets. The lower floor south side consists of a row of six windows which protrude from the main structure to provide a green house effect to the living room with ample light.

The only exterior alteration to the structure consist of the second floor sun porch over the front porch and the tack room added to the rear of the house. Both were early additions as evidenced by square forged nails.

The gazebo located on the south side of the property was added in 1986, as such is a non-contributing element.

The interior main floor living area features a living room and separate parlor, both with carved wood mantle fireplaces, a formal dining room, kitchen with pantry, and sun and utility porches. The second floor consists of five bedrooms off of a central hall that runs the length of the house, and a bath. One of the front bedrooms was converted from a second floor sun porch, located directly over the main entrance porch and now serves as a study. The third floor originally consisted of two additional bedrooms, a bath, and an open loft in the front gabled

*duplicate
page*

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The second floor exterior covering is shingled with redwood trim at the corners and around the windows. The front bay window is arched while all other double hung windows are framed in small panes around the larger center in the upper frame. The lower level siding consists of V-rustic redwood which is trimmed at the corners with flat redwood molding. The double front entrance doors have been fitted with stained glass to match the three original stained glass windows which accent the front and north side of the structure. These restored pieces are original from the date of construction. The north side of the dining room is formed by bay windows with ornamentation above consisting of corner brackets, box car siding and moldings. Above the bay rises a second floor bedroom window, above which is a third story gable window, flanked by generous moldings and substantial scrolled brackets. The lower floor south side consists of a row of six windows which protrude from the main structure to provide a green house effect to the living room with ample light.

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area. The third floor bedrooms were apparently added as the family grew. The small bedroom on the northwest corner of the third floor now serves as a library. All central room lighting fixtures have been restored or replaced with ceiling medallions and electrified gas lighting fixtures of the period.

The residence is situated on a corner lot facing "J" Street to the east, with Forbes Avenue running along the north side. The present parcel was split from the original 217 by 190 foot lot purchased by Robert Dollar and his brother John to build their two side by side residences. Originally there was a circular front drive that encompassed both houses and a common carriage house behind. The carriage house was subsequently moved to its present location behind the John Dollar house and is not part of this nomination.

The grounds contain many mature trees and shrubs, including a large Palm tree that marked the edge of the original circular drive. Many fruit trees line the perimeter of the property. The ample vegetation secludes the residence from the intrusion by nearby modern houses creating an overall picture that is truly and completely Victorian.

The following describes alterations to the property that have taken place over time.

The original 217 by 190 foot lot purchased by Robert Dollar and his brother John was eventually subdivided. Robert Dollar moved to Falkirk in 1907, however, he retained the property until 1912, renting it during that period to a Presbyterian minister. In approximately 1912 the property was subdivided into an 85 by 190 foot lot, then in circa 1960 the lot was further subdivided into its present approximately 85 by 140 foot lot, see plot plan.

The sun porch over the front entry was converted to a nursery in the late 1890's which was across from the master bedroom. It now

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serves as a study.

The harness room added to the rear of the house shortly after construction of the main house was converted to a sun room in 1985.

Indoor plumbing was added first as a "John Douglas" water closet at the rear of the first floor in the mid 1890's. The second floor bath was plumbed around the turn of the century.

The kitchen was updated several times through the years, 1920's, 1950's, and 1986.

The third floor was originally an open attic in which a first room was constructed in 1930's, now the library. A second bedroom and a bath were added in the 1950's during a time when a large family was raised in the house. In 1986 the entire third floor was renovated and turned into a loft area along with the library.

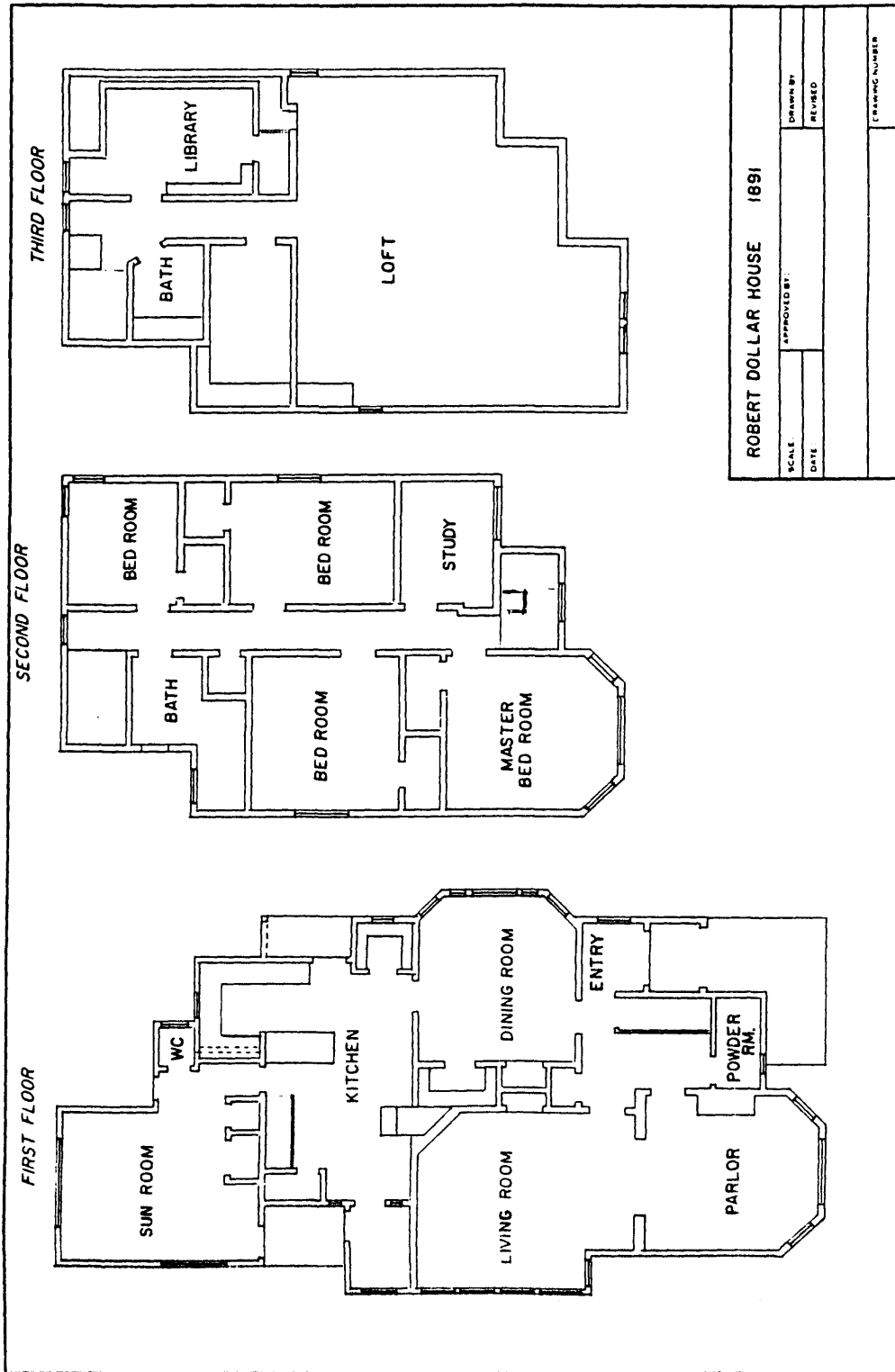
The residence was electrified at the turn of the century with knob and tube wiring. While much of the original wiring exists, a modern service and updated wiring was added during renovation in the late 1980's. Central mechanical and heating systems were also added during renovation in the late 1980's.

In summary, the complete renovation completed in 1988, restored the residence to its original Victorian splendor. Care was given to every detail in restoration or replacement of redwood moldings and wall coverings. The owners spent five years researching, collecting and replacing all the original hardware, lighting and stained glass to its original appearance.

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Robert Dollar launched his career as a major maritime figure while in this residence. Additionally his reputation for his diplomacy with Japan and China was launched while at the J Street property.

In 1893, Dollar bought his first schooner "Newsboy" when it became difficult to engage ships to move lumber from his Redwood logging and milling operation along the Marin coast.

Between 1895 and 1901, Dollar bought other schooners, then progressed to building cargo vessels.

In 1901 he began trading in China and Japan with a steamship of 6,500 tons. He became intimately acquainted with China and at the time of the fall of the Manchus acted as a peacemaker between the Republic and the United States. He became an influential counselor of the governments.

World War I, Dollar consummated a deal for the Chinese to build four cargo ships for the U. S. Government under his supervision for \$2,225,000 each. At the end of World War I, he bought them from the United States for \$300,000 each.

In 1923, Dollar bought seven big government passenger ships named after American Presidents, which cost the government \$29,000,000, were purchased from the government after the war by Dollar for \$3,850,000. Dollar began the first successful round-the-world passenger service. He owned 40 ships, 18 of them passenger ships. Robert Dollar's shipping interests survive today as the American President Lines (APL).

Robert Dollar died of pneumonia in San Rafael on May 16, 1932. Well known for his philanthropic activities, his death was mourned by more than 3000. Among them was the Governor of California and the Mayor of San Francisco. The Marin Journal,

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May 17, 1932, eulogized: "Captain Dollar's death ended one of the most notable careers in American business and removed one of the most picturesque figures in world commerce history. He was a successful businessman and benefactor to thousands."

While Dollars' second residence, Falkirk, is renowned, it is less well known that the "J" Street residence was his first and only home built by him in Marin County, California.

FALKIRK Cultural Center at 1408 Missison Avenue in San Rafael was purchased by the city from the Dollar family in 1974 and named it after Robert Dollars birth place, Falkirk, Scotland.

NEWSOM BROTHERS, ARCHITECT, Samuel and Joseph were born in Canada and raised in San Francisco, California. In 1878 the Newsom brothers formed a partnership in San Francisco to become one of the most productive sources of building design in 19th Century California. In 1886 the Newsom Brothers opened an office in Los Angeles, California. Their work extended from Eureka in the north to Los Angeles in the south. Several examples of their work currently in the National Register are as follows:

- o William Carson Mansion, Eureka, CA, 1886
- o Volner House, San Francisco, CA, 1885
- o J. Milton Carson House, Eureka, CA, 1887
- o Sessions House, Los Angeles, CA, 1888

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The only other structure in San Rafael known to have been designed by the Newsom Brothers is located in the next block at 230 Forbes, built in 1898.

The 1975 survey of historical structures conducted by Charles Hall Page and Associates for the city of San Rafael, identified 109 structures in the city representing excellent or exceptional quality. The structures are located in three districts, Dominican, Downtown and Forbes Addition. The Robert Dollar house is one of four Queen Anne's of the fourteen structures listed in the Forbes Addition. The four Queen Anne's were built between 1889 and 1992. Among them are the two known residences designed by the Newsom Brothers.

In the nomination for city landmark status in 1984, Historian Architect, Richard Lytle A.I.A, characterized the Robert Dollar house as "A Jewel of Architecture for San Rafael".

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Alvin F. Harlow, Dictionary of American Biography, Volume 8,
DOLLAR, ROBERT

Who's Who in America, 1930-1931

Robert Dollar, Memoirs, Vol 1-4, 1917-1928

One Hundred and Thirty Years of Steam Navigation, 1931

Private Diary of Robert Dollar on His Recent Visits to China,
1912

Ernest Poole, "Captain Dollar," Saturday Evening Post, May 25 to
June 22, 1929

San Francisco Chronicle, May 17, 1932

New York Times, May 17, 18, 1932

Marin Journal, October 25, 1888; January 29, 1891; May 17, 1932

Archives, American President Lines, Oakland, Ca

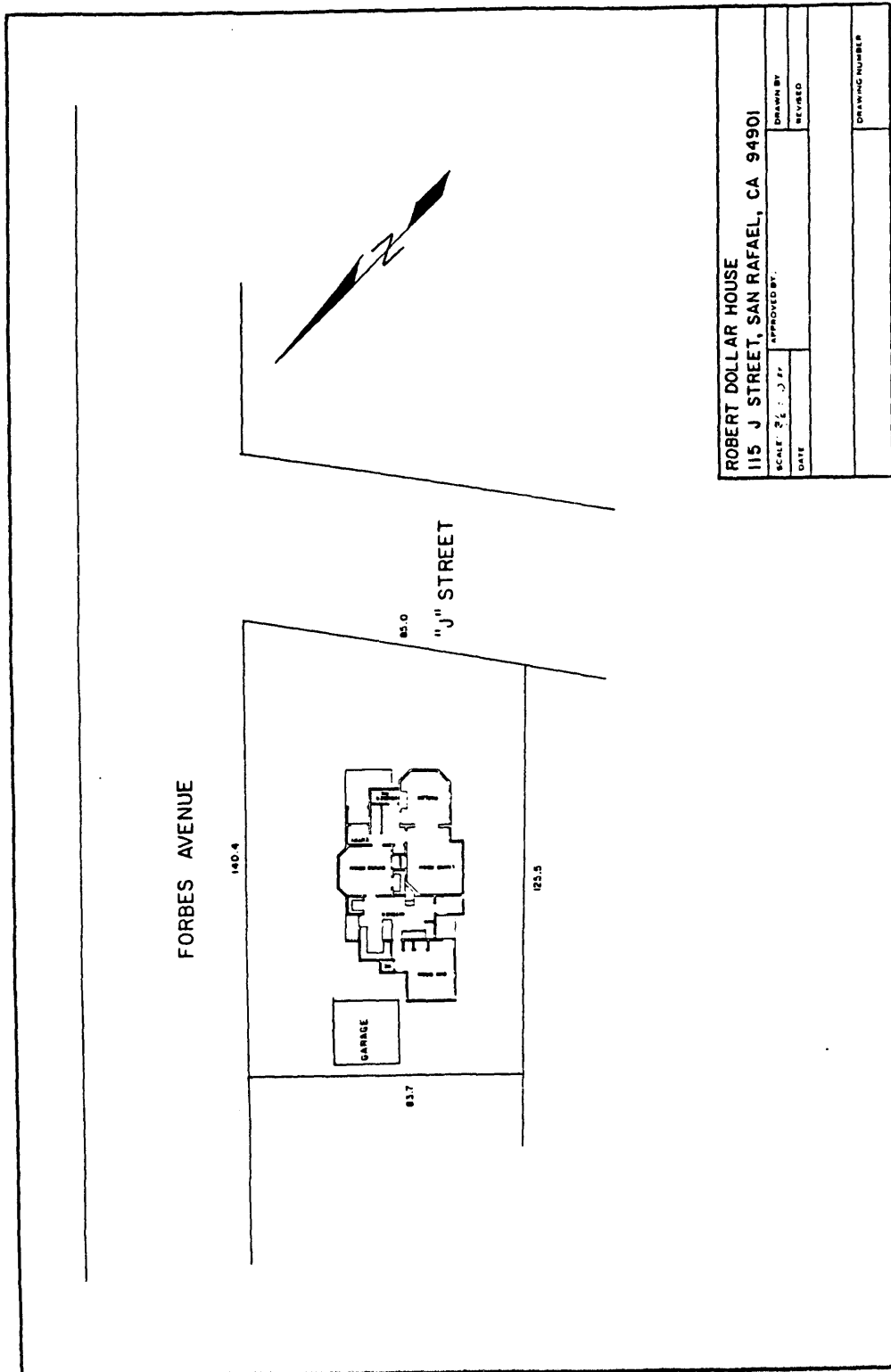
Wesley D. Vail, San Francisco Victorians, "San Francisco Domestic
Architecture 1870 - 1890"

Kenneth Naversen, West Coast Victorians, "A Nineteenth-Century
Legacy"

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115 J STREET, SAN RAFAEL, CA 94901

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DESCRIPTION

All that certain real property situated in the City of San Rafael, County of Marin, State of California, described as follows:

BEGINNING at a point formed by the intersection of the Southwesterly line of Forbes Avenue with the Westerly line of "J" Street and running thence Southerly along the Westerly line of said street, 85 feet to the Southerly corner of the parcel thence leaving said street line and running along the Southwesterly line of said parcel, 115.5 feet to the Westerly corner thereof, said point also being the Southeasterly corner of that certain parcel; thence along the Southwesterly line of the parcel secondly referred to, 10 feet to the Westerly corner thereof, thence along the Northwesterly line of said parcel, Northeasterly at a right angle 83.67 feet to the Northerly corner thereof, said point being on the Southerly line of Forbes Avenue, above referred to; thence along said Avenue line Southerly 140.4 feet to the point of beginning.

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All photos except No. 1 by Robert Voth, 115 J Street, San Rafael, California.
Negatives in his possession. Additional photo details on backs of photos.