

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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 Gushaw-Mudgett House

and/or common Mudgett House

2. Location

street & number 820 Ninth Street not for publication

city, town Fortuna vicinity of Second congressional district

state Calif. code 06 county Humboldt code 023

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Janet Ostridge

street & number 820 Ninth Street

city, town Fortuna vicinity of Calif. 95540 state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Humboldt County Courthouse

street & number 825 Fifth Street

city, town Eureka vicinity of Calif. 95501 state

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title None has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town vicinity of state

7. Description

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in the Eel River Valley community of Fortuna, the Gushaw-Mudgett House occupies the northern 106 feet of the original lot, now divided into two parcels. The house faces south onto the vacant front parcel which is planted with a variety of fruit trees and a vegetable garden. Although the house fronts on "N" Street, its yard entrance and address are on Ninth Street. Flowers and a large, spreading walnut tree mark the boundary between the two parcels, but lot eight of the 1894 Rachel Gushaw Addition is still delineated by the old-time wire and post fence along portions of the lot with a newer solid board fence completing the enclosure. Flower and vegetable gardens and shrubs and trees provide a casual surroundings for the house.

The Gushaw-Mudgett House is a two-story, redwood house built in the mid-1880's when Italianate architecture was popular in the Humboldt Bay region. Typical of local Italianate architecture are the stacked bays decorated with colonnettes, panels and bracketed hoods; low, hipped roofline; and the wide frieze with large, scroll-shaped brackets. East-lake detail is evident in the robust, turned porch posts, fan brackets, and porch and balcony balustrades.

On the west corner of the front facade are stacked three-window slant bays topped by a peaked roof. Both the slant hoods of the lower windows and the straight hoods of the upper windows are decorated with small brackets; colonnettes adorn the spaces between the windows; and panels occupy the spaces below the windows. There is an identical bay on the east side of the house near the south corner. A third bay, located on the east side in the rear section, has the same decorative detail, but contains four windows in a squared arrangement instead of the slanted three windows. Other house windows repeat the hood and bracket detail of the bays and are arranged in pairs--upper story over lower story.

Wide steps with a handsome balustrade lead onto the porch which is supported by three, free-standing turned posts and two posts against the house wall, all decorated with fan brackets. Atop the posts is a bracketed cornice below the low balustrade of the balcony. Above the large front door and opening onto the balcony is a hooded door. The main entrance has a large single pane of glass with a transom above, but the narrow sidelights appear to have been boarded in at some time.

On the west side, nestled into the "L" created by the front and rear sections, is an enclosed porch. The only other apparent alteration is the replacement of the original windows in the kitchen with two, small windows on the east and a single window on the north.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

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There are three red-brick roof chimneys and the truncated roof of the front section may well have sported cresting in its early days. At the rear of the property is a gable-roofed garage, built some years after the house. The house is presently undergoing repair and painting, the shiplap siding being covered with a light tan paint with a darker brown highlighting the trim and detail.

The surrounding neighborhood includes a mixture of housing styles and periods, including other Victorians on "O" Street, turn-of-the-century cottages and bungalow styles. Directly across "O" Street from the rear of the house is the Christian Church, built in 1890. Located just one block north of Main Street, the Gushaw-Mudgett House was the first built on the block which was part of the original Gushaw property covering almost 300 acres.

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 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 c. 1884 **Builder/Architect** *Unknown*

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Gushaw-Mudgett House is nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a locally-significant example of Italianate architecture with Eastlake detail. Its low hipped roofline, bracketed frieze, and decorated stacked bays are typical of the stately Italianate houses built in this area during the 1880's. The Eastlake porch provides additional "gingerbread" touches to this handsome architecture. Surviving almost one hundred years without intruding alteration, the house is important to Fortuna's architectural and historical heritage and a valuable component of the community's character.

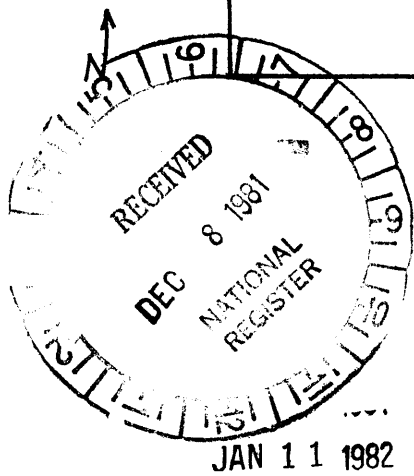
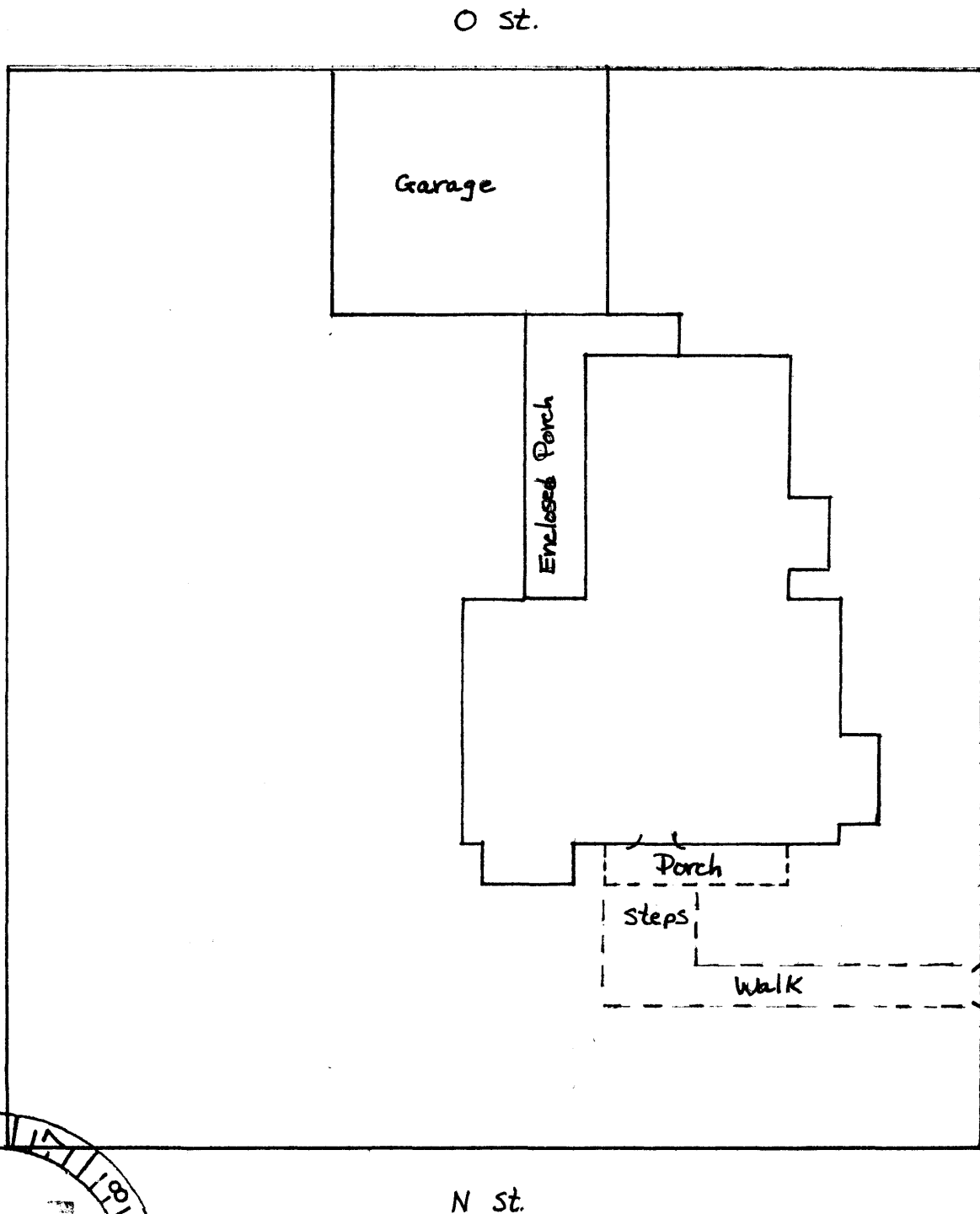
The land on which the house stands was part of a large holding purchased by George Francis Gushaw from John Skinner in 1870. Gushaw, a native of Pennsylvania, was among the early wave of argonauts who crossed the plains from the mid-west to California in 1849. Returning to Ohio in 1853, he married Rachel T. Watkins who then accompanied him back to California; eventually they settled along the Eel River at what was known as Slide, later to become Springville and in 1889, Fortuna. The Gushaws had two sons and five daughters, one of whom, Eda, married Decatur Mudgett, a native of Maine who arrived in Humboldt County in 1875.

In 1874 George Gushaw and three other men, including Henry Rohner, who along with Gushaw is recalled as the Father of Fortuna, incorporated the Springville Mill and built on a site near the community which was to take the Springville name the following year. Future Gushaw sons-in-law William Swortzel and Decatur Mudgett started out in the Springville Mill before developing other business interests.

Architecture and assessment records indicate c. 1884 as a reasonable construction date for the Gushaw House. It was at this time that a prosperous lumber industry prompted construction of many fine Humboldt Bay Victorians. The year 1884 also marked the expansion of the railroad into the Eel River Valley providing the impetus for Springville to take its position ahead of Rohnerville as the leading town in the Valley.

Following Gushaw's death in 1894, his widow sold the house to her daughter, Eda Mudgett. Decatur and Eda raised eight children in the old home which remained in family ownership until 1973 when it was sold to the present owner following the death of the last Mudgett daughter, Jessie M. Mudgett.

Listed in David Gebhard's book, A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco and Northern California, the Gushaw-Mudgett House is identified as a significant piece of Italianate and Eastlake architecture. It is nominated to the National Register so that it may receive the recognition it deserves and the protection National Register status provides.



Gushaw-Mudgett House, AP# 40-085-12
 Fortuna, Humboldt Co., California

1 sq. = 2 ft.