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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

JUN 13 1988

NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Cornelius, Benjamin, Jr., House other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 2314 19th Avenue city, town Forest Grove state Oregon code OR county Washington code 067 zip code 97116

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked), public-local, public-State, public-Federal. Category of Property: building(s) (checked), district, site, structure, object. Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 2, Noncontributing 1 buildings, 1 sites, 1 structures, 1 objects, Total 2.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer, State or Federal agency and bureau. Date: June 9, 1988.

In my opinion, the property meets (checked) 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. (checked) 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):

Entered in the National Register 7-14-88 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)

Late Victorian/Italianate/Gothic

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls wood trim elements

aluminum siding over original weatherboards

roof asphalt (composition shingle)

other chimneys/brick

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Classically-detailed Italianate house with Gothic overtones constructed for Benjamin Cornelius, Jr. in Forest Grove about 1873 has been in continuous use as a private residence. Sited on a slight rise on a large, well landscaped city lot, it presents an imposing appearance, in contrast to the more modest houses that characterize the community.

The Cornelius House was set back thirty feet south on its original lot when the root systems of two Sequoia trees threatened the building. The set-back is documented by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Rating Maps of Forest Grove at the turn of the century. When the house was shifted in its historic location it was placed on a concrete foundation.

The elongated window openings, door and window trim with hooded lintels, the wide frieze boards and the boxed cornice are characteristics of the Italianate style. The veranda with its square columns having inset panels, full entablature and upper deck balustrade of grille work is a stylistically compatible addition of the Colonial Revival period around 1900. The relatively steep pitch of the gable roof, the patterned cut-out ogee arches over square headed four-over-four, double-hung wood windows in the ploygonal bay, and attenuated corner boards with molding caps show the influence of the Gothic Revival. The pleasing proportions and all character-defining decorative features and trim are fully evident notwithstanding application of aluminum siding over the original eight-inch drop siding in the 1950s. Typical windows are four-over-four, double-hung wood sash. In the facade of the main volume, at both upper and lower stories, window openings are fitted with eight-light "pocket" casements and toplights.

The floor plan of the main volume is essentially a rectangle with a central stair hall, front to rear. A one-story appendage to the east and another to the south (probably originally for wood storage) form an L-shaped plan that has existed since the initial construction. The wood storage room was joined to the two-story volume by a continuous gable roof extending over an open summer kitchen located between. This area has been enclosed to contain

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a small bath and utility equipment. An 8 x 10 foot smoke house with gable roof constructed at the same time as the house is located at the rear (south) property line; and a double garage, freestanding to the west, was constructed in 1926. The siding and finish details of the garage are compatible with the house, but the garage is not counted as a contributing feature.

Around the turn of the century, the house was moved southward when root systems of two Sequoia trees, planted by Cornelius, threatened the structure. It was placed on a concrete foundation and basement with the front porches supported by brick piers. At that time, the wood stoves were replaced by a sawdust burning boiler (since converted to oil) and hot water radiators were installed in most rooms. A second floor bathroom also was added by partitioning off a portion of a large bedroom. The original tub, pedestal lavatory, and most of the accessories remain. The only other modification occurred when the kitchen was modernized during the 1950s.

Interior finishes are essentially as originally constructed and have been exceptionally well-maintained. Ceilings, 10 feet in height, are of wood lath and plaster with elaborate, precast cornice moldings in the double parlor area. These rooms also feature precast floral medallions from which central light fixtures are suspended. Walls also are of wood lath and plaster, painted, with wooden picture molds and 10-inch high milled wood bases. Flooring throughout is painted or varnished 1 x 4 inch vertical grain Douglas fir. All doors are four panel wood with operating glass transoms. Doors and windows are finished with wide architrave casings.

Notable exceptions to the uniform finishes are to be found in the stairhall and private sitting room. The open-string staircase has painted vertical grain fir treads and risers with turned, imported mahogany balusters and newels. The broad handrail, with its curves and saddle sweeps, was milled from maple. The sitting room has painted plaster ceiling and plaster walls with mahogany wainscot. Its doors are panelled mahogany, as are the architrave casings for doors and windows. The fireplace opening is flanked by half-round, fluted Doric columns supporting a simple Classical mantle shelf.

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The structural system of the house is balloon framing with rough sawn floor joists, studs, and rafters. The rafters are of an uncommon size, measuring 2 1/8 x 4 1/2 inches. The exterior drop siding was applied directly to the studs without sheathing and the 1 x 4-inch fir flooring was applied directly to the floor joists, without subflooring.

The Cornelius House, located on the principal eastbound street through Forest Grove, is passed by 8,000 cars each week day. Its generous siting, well kept grounds, and quiet dignity offer a sharp contrast to the unsettled character of the surrounding neighborhood presently evolving from residential to commercial use. As such, this house is among the most visible of historic landmarks in Forest Grove.

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

Period of Significance
c. 1873

Significant Dates
1873

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Benjamin Cornelius, Jr.

Architect/Builder
Harley McDonald

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

The Classically-detailed, two-story frame house of Benjamin Cornelius, Jr., located near the center of Forest Grove, Oregon, was built about 1873 and, in the pitch of its intersecting gables, its hooded lintels and conical-roofed, bracketed polygonal window bay having ogee-arched frieze boards, it shows the influence of both the Italianate and Gothic Revival styles. The Tuscan-columned Colonial Revival veranda with its grille-and-pedestal upper deck balustrade is an addition of the turn of the century which occurred after the house was placed on a new concrete foundation. The house allegedly was set back on its lot 30 feet to clear root systems of two mature Sequoias planted at the street front by the original owner. In later years, the redwood trees were removed.

The building is locally significant as a distinctive example of Italianate/Gothic architecture and one of the two remaining houses in Forest Grove confidently attributed to the carpenter-builder Harley McDonald, who was among the first "architects" to work in Oregon. It is also noteworthy, though not nominated, for its association with Benjamin Cornelius, Jr., well-known in Washington County history as a southern immigrant route pioneer of 1852 and brother of Colonel Thomas Cornelius, founder of the community of Cornelius. Benjamin's wife, the former Rachel McKinney, was the daughter of one of the founders of Hillsboro. The Cornelius children were enrolled in Tualatin Academy at the heart of Forest Grove. The Cornelius family occupied the house to the time of Benjamin's untimely death in 1881.

Another noteworthy figure, Judge Granville H. Baber, lived in the house from 1883 to his death in 1898. The Babers were succeeded in ownership of the house by their daughter and son-in-law, the Duncan Macleods. The Baber-Macleod family were responsible for siting the house on a new foundation and adding the front porch around the turn of the century.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Washington County Deed Records. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

City of Forest Grove Cultural Resource Inventory.

Tualatin Valley Heritage Association Site Marking Program records.

[Hawkins, William J., III] "Absolom B. Hallock, Architect, Engineer, Surveyor (1826-1892," Portland Friends of Cast-Iron Architecture Newsletter, Number 18 (Fall 1981), page 2, reference to Harley McDonald.

Corning, Howard McKinley, ed., Dictionary of Oregon History (Portland: Bindofords and Mort, 1956).

Wojcik, Donna M., "The Brazen Overlanders of 1845," 1976.

Sullivan, Maxine, "Historic Cornelius House Opens a Doorway to the Past," Hillsboro Argus (July 14, 1987), Section C, Page 1.

See continuation sheet

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository:

Forest Grove Planning Department

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one Forest Grove, Oregon 1:24000

UTM References

A

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Zone		Easting				Northing	

C

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B

Zone		Easting				Northing	

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description The nominated property is located in Section 6, Township 1S, Range 3W, Willamette Meridian, in Forest Grove, Washington County, Oregon. It is identified as Tax Lot 9900 of Block 20 of the Town of Forest Grove and is more particularly described as follows: Beginning at a point East 59.1' from the NW corner of said Block 20, thence East 148.5', thence South 201.3', thence West 116.6', thence North 65', thence West 31.9', thence North 136.3', to the point of beginning.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The nominated property, measuring 148.5 x 201.3 feet in its general outline, encompasses the parcel historically developed and occupied by Benjamin Cornelius, Jr., from about 1873 to 1881 and subsequently improved and occupied by Granville H. Baber and his descendents into the 20th Century. The smokehouse at the rear of the property is counted as a separately contributing feature of the property. The compatibly-styled automobile garage of 1926 is not.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mrs. Eric Waldorf, with assistance of Kathleen Pearson

organization Historic Landmarks Board of Forest Grove date August 1987

street & number 2314 19th Avenue telephone (503) 357-2779

city or town Forest Grove state Oregon zip code 97116

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A smoke house at the rear of the property is part of the earliest development and therefore contributes to the significance of the nominated area. A 1926 garage, while compatibly finished and detailed, is too late in date to be counted a separately contributing feature.

The Benjamin Cornelius, Jr., House occupies land that was part of the Reverend Harvey Clarke's Donation Land Claim, land which the Congregational clergyman deeded to Tualatin Academy in the 1840s. The land was sold to A. L. Johnson in April of 1872. In June of the same year Lots 2 and 3 in Block 20 of the town plat were sold to Benjamin Cornelius, Jr. The house built for Cornelius is one of three in the Forest Grove environs attributed to early-day architect Harley McDonald. McDonald was one of the first architects to appear in Portland. He arrived about 1850 and worked there for Absolom Hallock in 1853 before moving on. McDonald had settled in Forest Grove by 1870, and his own house of c. 1872 exhibits many of the same architectural features. The McDonald House was moved from Forest Grove to a new location near North Plains two years ago to make way for Times-Litho plant expansion. It is undergoing restoration.

There are several buildings in Forest Grove dating from the 1870s, but only one other, the James D. Robb House, is comparable as an example of Italianate/Gothic residential architecture. The Cornelius and Robb houses have design and construction features common to the builder's own house. They were built in 1873 and 1874, respectively.

Ben Cornelius, Jr., and his wife, Rachel McKinney Cornelius, came to Oregon as youngsters in the 1845 migration. Their parents had taken land claims northwest of Hillsboro. Her father was the James McKinney who helped found Hillsboro, the Washington County seat. They were among the families which followed Stephen Meek on the tragic Meek cut-off through central Oregon in 1845. Ben and Rachel Cornelius, who married in 1852, also took a Donation Land Claim just north of present day Cornelius. Colonel Thomas Cornelius, who founded Cornelius, was Ben's brother. Ben and Rachel Cornelius moved to Forest Grove about the time the railroad was completed south of Forest Grove. Ben, his brother, and others were involved in land transactions along the railroad right-of-way. Ben Cornelius enrolled his

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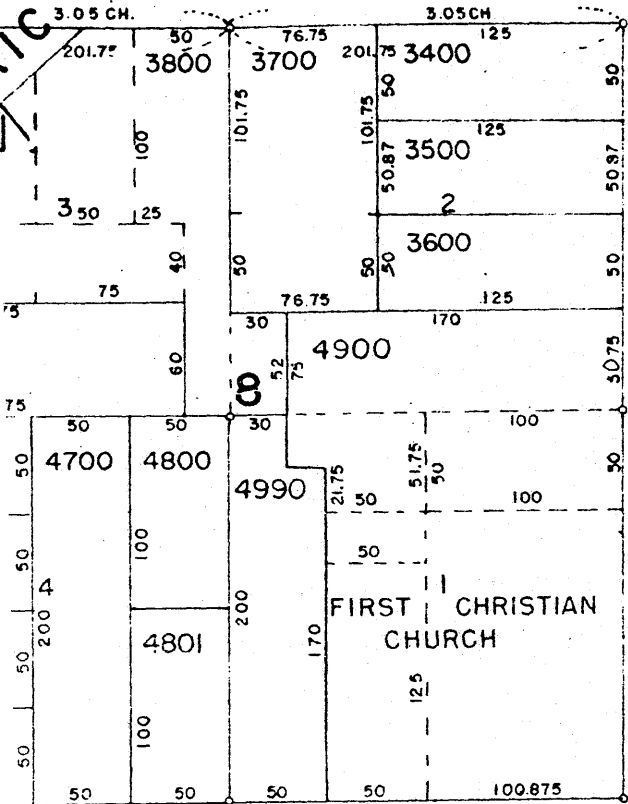
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children in Tualatin Academy in the 1870s. The children's education was probably a main reason for the move into Forest Grove in 1872.

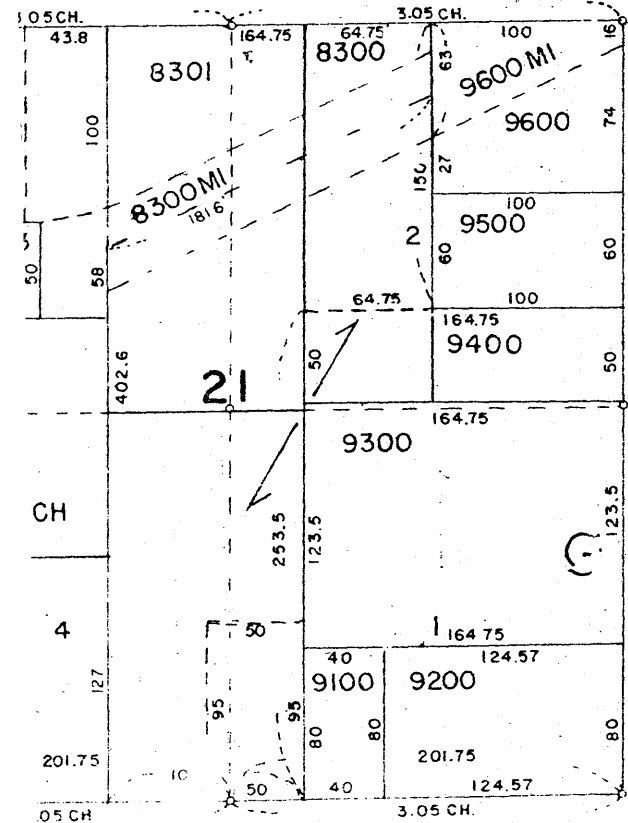
Judge Granville Baber was the second owner. He, too, had been a member of the 1845 overland migration. However, he settled in Oregon City and became prominent there. He moved to Forest Grove in 1883 with his second wife after Ben Cornelius was murdered by his son-in-law in 1881. The Babers paid \$3,599 for the property which was a goodly sum at that time. The Babers had two daughters, one of whom became Mrs. Duncan Macleod, the third owner. Judge Baber served on the Forest Grove City Council in the 1890s. It is thought he was the one who moved the house to the south and placed it on its present foundation and installed the steam heat, although he died in 1898. Mrs. Macleod lived in the house until she sold it to Eric and Gladys Waldorf in 1953.

Judge Baber was born in 1817. His first wife died in 1874 and his second wife was Wilhelmina Drause. He served as county judge in Oregon City for three years. Baber died in 1898. His daughter, Josephine, graduated from Pacific University in 1907. She married Duncan Macleod and they had one son, Duncan, Jr. Mrs. Macleod sold the house to the fourth owner, the Waldorfs, and was insistent that whoever bought the house keep it "as it was." The present owner has fulfilled that trust.

The builder, Harley McDonald, was a trained architect who went first to California during the 1849 Gold Rush. He arrived in Portland in 1850. He bought land and built houses there during the 1850s. He designed and built the original Congregational Church (1857) on the historic church square in Forest Grove. The church paid him with land in the newly developing town. However, he moved away and did not return to live in Forest Grove until about 1870, when he enrolled his children in Tualatin Academy. Among the common features shared by the Cornelius and McDonald houses are the room proportions and, high ceilings, distinctive stair railings, and polygonal bay windows with Gothic and Italianate decoration. McDonald died in Forest Grove in 1903.

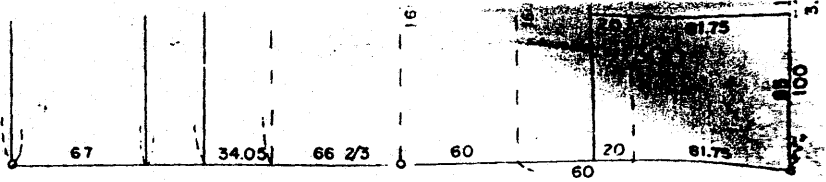


(1st Avenue) **15-19**

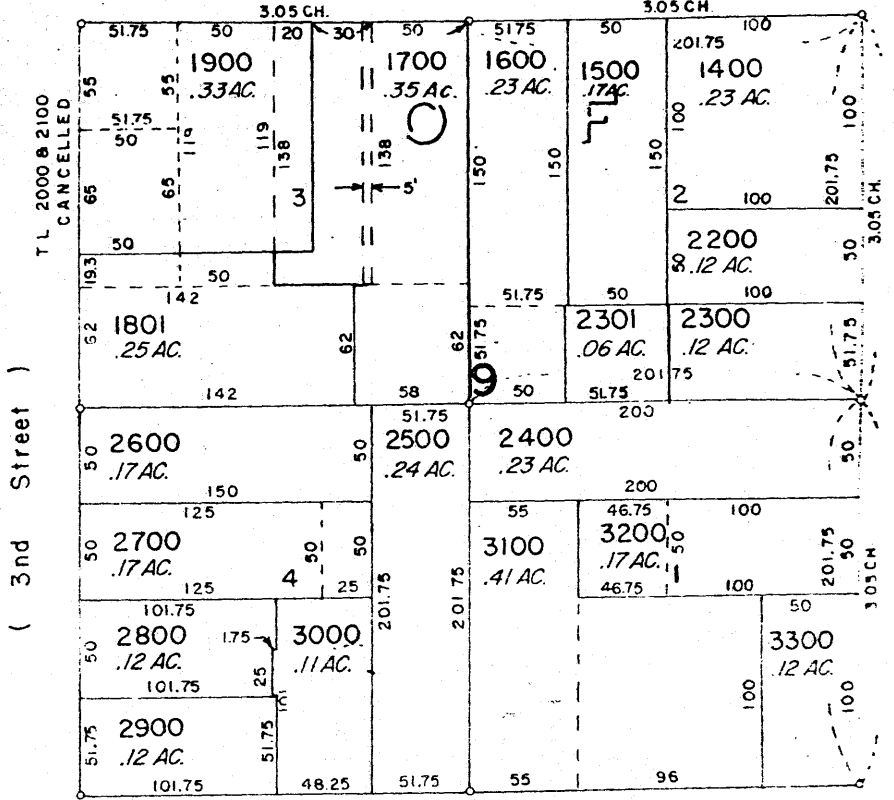


2nd Avenue)

STRI

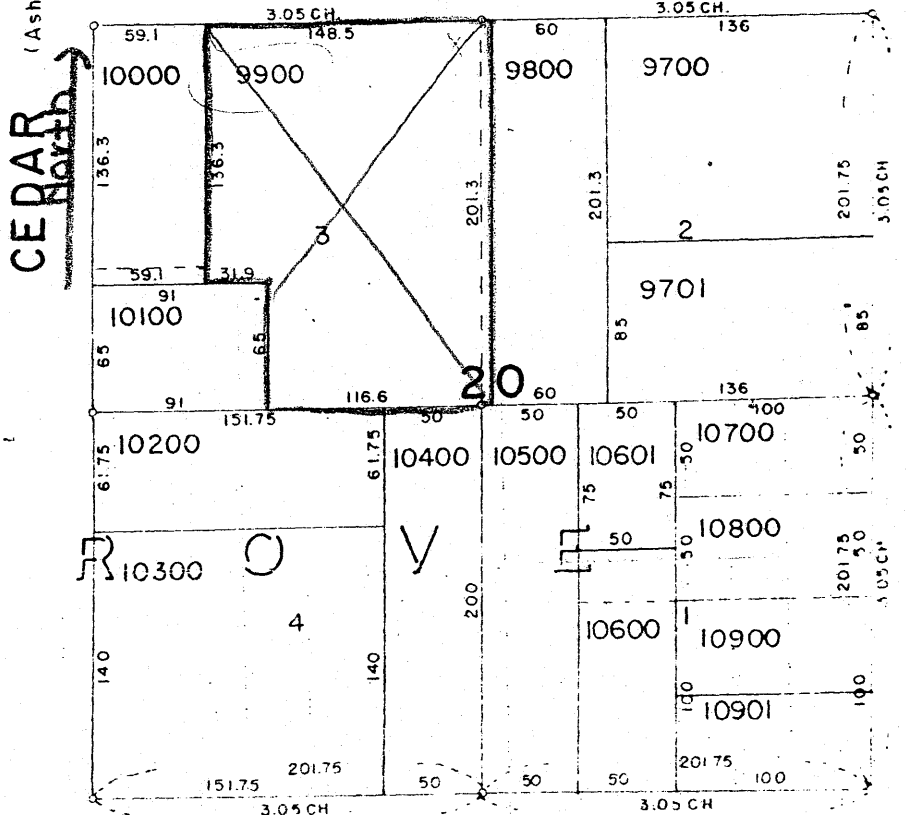


AVENUE



(3rd Street)

AVENUE



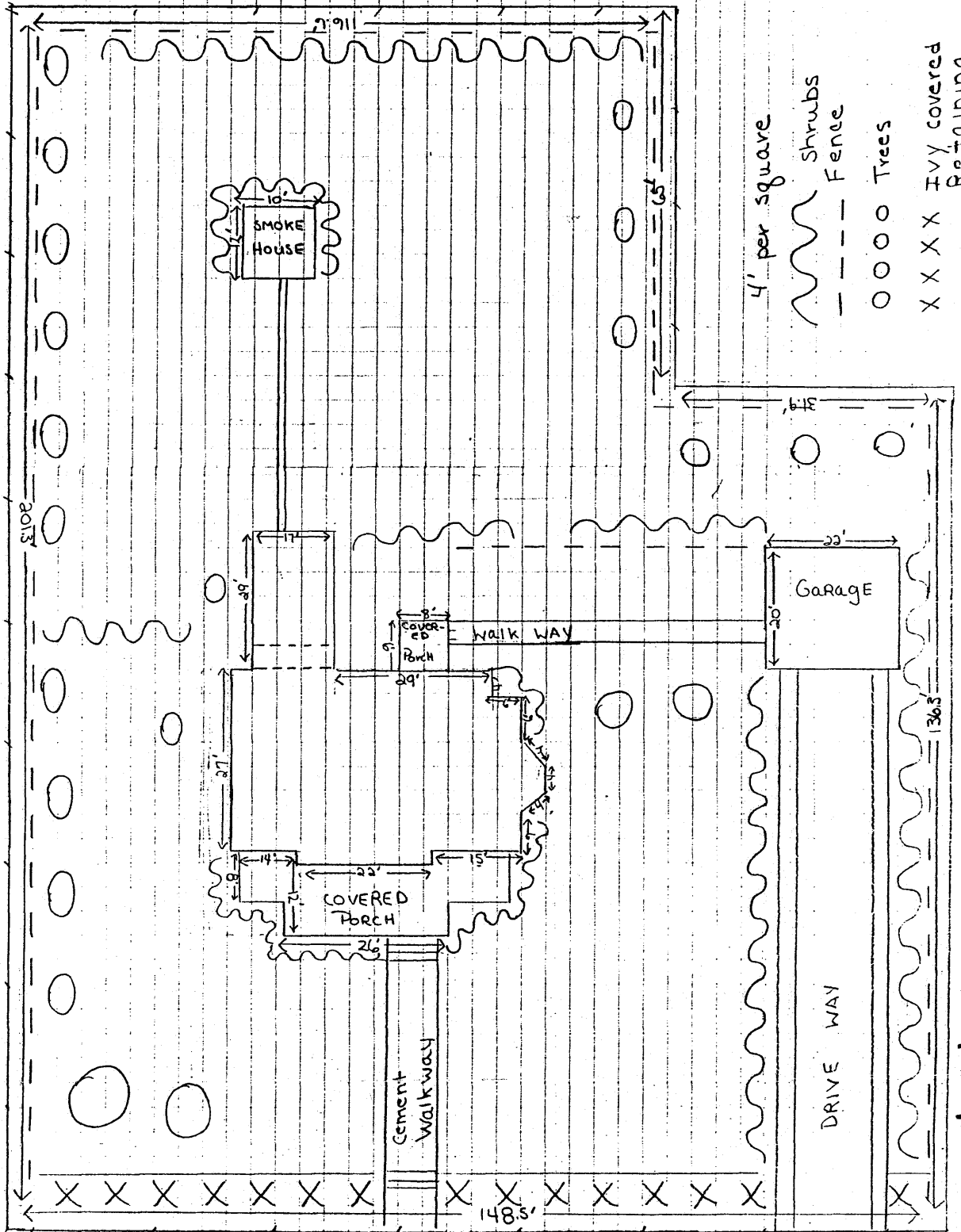
AVENUE

CEDAR North

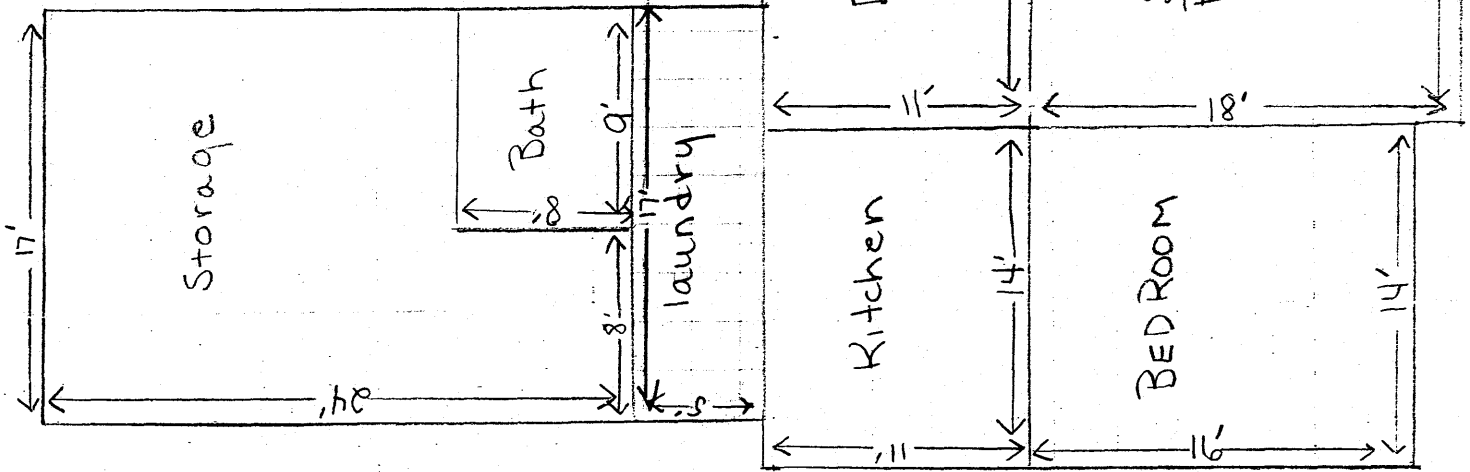
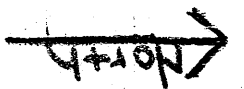
(4th Street) (Locust Street)

DOUGLAS

8

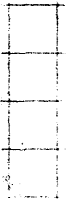


19th AVENUE



Main Floor
2' per square

Ben Cornelius House
2314 19th Avenue
Forest Grove
Oregon



additions
to original
Structure

Ben Cornelius House
2314
Forest Avenue,
Grove,
Oregon

Second floor
2' per square

