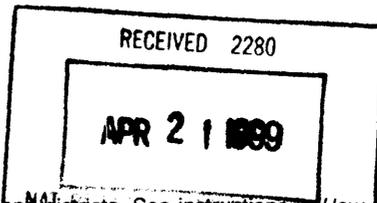


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



580

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions on how to complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Allen, Theophilus, House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 601 Melville Avenue not for publication N/A

city or town Palo Alto vicinity N/A

state California code CA county Santa Clara code 085 zip code 94301

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David Albright 4-16-99
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Acting, State Historic Preservation Officer
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Edson H. Beall 5/20/99
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structures

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: multiple dwelling

DOMESTIC: secondary structures

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD: Shingle

roof WOOD: Shake

other BRICK

WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1905

Significant Dates

1905

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Smith, Alfred W., Architect

Laumeister, Gustav, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: Palo Alto Library: City Archive
Oakland City Planning Department/
Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey

Allen, Theophilus, House
Name of Property

Santa Clara County, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .5 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	0
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5	7	5	4	6	0
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4	1	4	4	2	4	0
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3

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Judith Woodhams Collas, Ph.D.

organization Member of owners' family date December 22, 1998 (revised version

street & number 760 Swarthmore Ave. telephone (310) 573-0086

city or town Pacific Palisades state CA zip code 90272

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name C. H. Woodhams, Jr. and Gladys E. Woodhams

street & number 601 Melville Avenue telephone (650) 322-3881

city or town Palo Alto state CA zip code 94301

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Narrative Description

Summary

The Theophilus Allen house is a large two-story frame Craftsman style residence built in 1905. The house was designed by the prominent Oakland architect Alfred W. Smith and built by Gustav Laumeister, a leading builder of Craftsman houses in Palo Alto. A modified rectangle in plan, the house has an intersecting gable shake roof, naturally weathered dark wood shingle walls, cement foundations, clinker brick exterior chimneys, and brick steps and walkways. Nearly all the windows, including attic and basement, feature diamond paned leaded glass. Although the house is too large (8000+ square feet) to be considered a true bungalow, it exhibits the characteristic features of that style on a grander scale. The façade is strongly horizontal, its entire width spanned by a low-pitched chalet style front gable and a deep covered porch over which is a second story open porch. Both the exterior and interior show characteristic emphasis on fine wood craftsmanship and artistic use of structural elements with consistent design motifs. All gable roofs have overhanging open eaves, massive protruding beams, triangular braces, and extended shaped rafter ends. On all sides of the house, bands of double-hung windows with smaller upper diamond paned sashes emphasize horizontal lines. Inside, the house features red cedar paneling, beamed ceilings, and built-in furniture throughout the entry hall, stairways, living room, and dining room, with massive raised hearth fireplaces in each of the three public rooms. The Craftsman style is further exemplified in the floor plan that provides an organic flow between these rooms and connects the indoors and outdoors through ample windows and front and side porches. The Theophilus Allen house is located one block from Palo Alto's historic Professorville district, where many early Stanford professors, expressing the progressive thinking of the times, built homes in the Craftsman style. Situated on a large lot on the northeast corner of Melville Avenue and Webster Street, the Allen house is surrounded by mature trees and shrubbery, a front lawn, and a private side garden enclosed by the original fence and gate. Behind the house are a shingled garage and small cottage in the Craftsman style built along with the house in 1905. The exterior of the Allen house is well preserved in its original state, the only modifications being a glass and redwood "sunspace" added in 1986 to enclose the second story porch on the façade and, dating from the 1920s, additional entrances on the west and north sides and the enclosure of a screened back porch. The exteriors of the garage and cottage are also well preserved and unaltered from their original appearance. Although the east two fifths of the original property was subdivided in the 1950s, the landscaping maintains the style and many of the plantings of the original grounds.

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Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

Exterior

The consistent use of dark wood shingles and repeated structural and decorative motifs gives coherence to the house's exterior, which shows a successful integration of the Swiss chalet, Japanese timber, and English Tudor influences on the Craftsman style. Set back from the front porch, a staircase tower on the left front (SW) corner balances a two-story wing extending from the right rear (NE) corner of the main structure. The front and rear elevations have Swiss chalet single gable roofs above deep overhanging porch roofs; the west side has double and the east side triple gables. All gables are supported by Japanesque large protruding beams with pyramidal ends and triangular braces, and all roof edges have deep overhangs and extended shaped rafter tails. The tower has a hipped roof and the northeast wing has a gambrel roof with long dormers. The house gains a feeling of horizontality from the deep first story porch roofs that extend across the front and rear elevations and continue around both sides of the house, joining the gambrel roof of the wing. The stair tower has a sloped or battered shingled covered base, as do the six massive piers that support the front porch roof. A clinker brick chimney extends up the right side of the front gable and through the gable roof overhang. Cracked above the roofline in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the chimney top was rebuilt in 1997 using the original clinker bricks.

Nearly all windows are double hung, with smaller upper sashes of Tudor style diamond paned leaded glass. These windows are usually arranged in bands, adding a feeling of horizontality. The first story side windows are sheltered by the extension of the porch roofline. Within the rear gable a hipped roof over the wide second story window bay further emphasizes horizontality, repeating the lines of the porch roof below. A similar roof over the band of windows in the front gable was removed to accommodate the "sunspace" on the second story porch. On the west side first story, just behind the stair tower, a broad bay window is sheltered by its own open gable roof. Below this bay is a basement window of diamond paned leaded glass. The stair tower features on three sides tall triple casement windows under transoms entirely of diamond paned glass, emphasizing the tower's verticality. Each of these window groups is sheltered by a small hipped roof. At the top of the tower on three sides are broad double hung windows with diamond paned upper sashes.

The northeast wing of the house forms an L enclosing a private garden, onto which the house opens from a porch outside the dining room and from the covered front porch. The present side porch and deck are not original, but incorporate timbers from the original porch, which was removed in the 1960s because of dry rot. A pergola extending into the garden from the east steps of the porch was also removed in the 1960s because of dry rot. The only other exterior alterations

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CADescription (Continued)

date mainly from remodeling that occurred in the 1920s. These alterations include brick steps and an entrance on the west side of the house, the enclosure of a screened back porch, and the addition of an entrance to the main kitchen on the rear side of the house. The northeast entry porch roof and railings were added in the 1980s. These minor modifications are all consistent in style and materials with the 1905 construction and do not detract from the house's appearance.

Front Porch

Approaching the house from the front on Melville Avenue, a wide brick walkway and stairs lead to the large covered front porch. Fifty feet wide and fourteen feet deep, the porch is a true outdoor parlor. The mission style hanging porch swings at either end are original to the house, the swing nearest the door being remarkable for its massiveness. The four small hanging pagoda style lamps are also original. The porch's low shingle covered walls and the massive square wood columns supporting the roof create a sense of enclosure while offering vistas to the surroundings on three sides. Two (originally three) skylights provide light to the porch and the front rooms of the house. The windows across the house wall of the porch announce the design motif of diamond paned leaded glass.

The front porch shows an impressive aesthetic and functional use of rough sawn redwood. The porch ceiling of rough sawn redwood planks with 3 1/2-inch square redwood battens spaced 14 inches apart anticipates in rustic form the refined woodwork of the interior. The battens run crosswise to emphasize the porch's depth. The massive hanging swing is constructed from this same 3 1/2-inch square redwood lumber. Rough sawn redwood frames the windows and front door. The porch walls are capped with solid redwood 2 x 17-inch planks, and the six 14-inch square redwood box columns that support the porch roof are capped with solid 4 x 18-inch redwood blocks. Another functional material used aesthetically on the porch is brick. To the right of the front door is a broad clinker brick fireplace back, which anticipates the interior fireplaces as well as relating visually to the front path and steps and also to the brick steps that lead from the end of the porch to the garden and brick patio.

Front Entry Hall

Framed with rough sawn redwood, the front door of solid smooth redwood planks with inlaid butterfly joints opens into a large welcoming entry hall. Leading on the right to the living room, on the left to the main stairway, and at the rear to an interior hallway, the entry hall establishes the decorative and structural motifs that unify the house's main public rooms. Facing

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Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

the front door is a massive clinker brick fireplace nearly 8 feet wide with a raised hearth, a broad mantel, and several brick shelves across the chimney designed to display the Allen family's collection of Northwest Indian artifacts. The entire entry hall is paneled in naturally finished red cedar. The walls are paneled with boards and 3 1/2-inch square battens set about 12 inches apart, a pattern that recalls the porch ceiling. The entry hall paneled ceiling is supported by narrow, deep box beams, 4 3/8 inches wide by 7 1/2 inches deep set about 12 inches apart; unlike the porch ceiling battens, these beams run the width of the house. Supporting the narrow box beams is a large 12-inch square box beam running from front to rear of the entry hall. This crossbeam centers on the fireplace and is supported at both ends by large ogee curved corbels, an interesting variation from the otherwise rectilinear patterns of the woodwork. Similar curved corbels frame the entrance to the main stairway. Hanging from the large crossbeam is a handcrafted brass and stained glass lamp that is original to the house.

To the left of the fireplace, the upper flight of stairs is cantilevered over box beams to form the ceiling of a cozy alcove, an excellent example of the decorative use of a structural element. Below the staircase is a low door leading to the basement and to the right of the fireplace are double doors leading to the back hall. Each of these doors has a stained glass window covered by a handcrafted metal grid. Across the front of the entry hall is a built-in window seat with storage under the bench. The window seat ends are shaped in a pattern typical of Craftsman style inglenook bench ends. The bookshelves behind the window seat are not original. Above the window seat are casement windows with upper portions of diamond paned leaded glass. The entry hall windows relate to the diamond paned casement and transom windows on the stair tower landing. Light from the stair tower windows silhouettes the corbels at the stair entry and illuminates the wood surfaces of the entry hall. Opposite the stairway is the broad open door to the living room, across the entire far end of which is a window to the garden. The flow of space within the house is emphasized by the light that enters the hall on the left from the stairway and more distantly from the windows that surround the living room.

Living Room and Dining Room

The wide doorways between the entry hall and the living room and the living room and dining room are large enough to create a feeling of continuous space, yet they can be closed by pocket doors, those between the entry hall and the living room having diamond paned leaded glass windows. This continuous flow of space is emphasized by the continuity of the ceiling treatment, the line of the narrow box beams extending straight across the house from the entry hall into the living room. Two large box beams run across the living room ceiling adding a

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

feeling of width; the second large beam extends into the dining room, exactly bisecting the doorway into the dining room and the opposite doorway into the kitchen. In addition to the ceilings, the red cedar woodwork in the living room and dining room gives visual integration to the space. The living room woodwork includes built-in window seats that open to storage space, and built-in bookcases with drawers underneath. The door and window frames and unusually high 24 inch baseboards further enhance the visual impact of the woodwork, as does the deep crown molding above the doors and windows that extends on the same level around the room and also caps the built-in book cases. The focal point in the living room is the massive cast stone fireplace, with a raised hearth, similar in size and shape to the entry hall fireplace. On the right side of the fireplace is a window seat similar to that in the entryway. The living room is banded on the south and east sides by the characteristic double hung windows with smaller upper diamond paned sashes. In the east window onto the garden the center windows were replaced with a 12 foot wide plate glass window in the 1920s, reportedly to increase the light into the room. On both cross beams are copper finished rings fastened with pyramidal Arts and Crafts style nails. These rings originally supported hanging light fixtures that were removed in the 1950s by a previous owner, along with the original leaded glass doors of the built-in bookcases.

The dining room has board and batten wainscoting, topped with a plate rail of crown molding similar to that which tops the doorways and windows. The broad frieze area above the plate rails is undecorated plaster. On the inner wall of the dining room is centered another massive cast stone fireplace with a gas log. Extending to the ends of the room on either side of the fireplace are built-in china cabinets with diamond paned leaded glass doors. On the end wall opposite the living room is a built-in sideboard above which are additional china cabinets with leaded glass doors. On the exterior wall opposite the fireplace, double hung diamond paned upper sash windows and a broad windowed door offer a view to the side garden and access to the side porch. The smaller box beams in the dining room ceiling, extending across the room, add breadth, while the large supporting box beam running lengthwise through the middle of the room carries the eye back to the living room fireplace. The hanging light is a period reproduction, not original to the house. Next to the sideboard a swinging door with a window leads to space that was originally a butler's pantry, but has now been incorporated into the kitchen. The kitchen area of the house has been remodeled several times and is not of historic interest.

Main Stairway

Access to the private rooms of the house is gained through the front main stairway and the interior hall and stairway off the main entry hall. The main stairway has massive 9 1/2-inch

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Allen, Theophilus, House
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Description (Continued)

square box newel posts, with block tops 12 inches square and 3 3/4 inches thick. The banisters have large handrails 5 1/2 inches wide and 3 1/2 inches thick over 3-inch square spindles spaced 1 3/4 inches apart. (Smaller handrails, not original to the house, have been added for the safety of the current residents.) Featuring the same board and batten paneling and ceiling treatment as the entry hall, the stair landing is surrounded on three sides by tall diamond paned leaded glass triple casement windows over which are diamond paned transoms. The fourth side is open over the banister, providing light to the entry hall. The two handcrafted brass and opal glass light fixtures on the landing are original. The stairway appropriately provides a visual transition to the second floor; the upper banister ends in a massive newel post, and the first story wood paneling continues to the level of the landing ceiling, after which the style changes to the coved ceilings and picture rails characteristic of the second story rooms.

Second Story Front Hall and Front Bedrooms

Linking the first and second stories, the hall at the top of the front stairs features red cedar woodwork, including a built-in storage seat with inglenook bench ends and a bookcase with diamond paned leaded glass doors, as well as double doors with diamond paned leaded glass windows onto the second story front deck. A built-in linen locker occupies one wall of the interior hallway.

The second story front section of the house consists of the front master bedroom, the east bedroom, a small bedroom at the top of the stair tower, a hallway, and a large bathroom. Besides diamond paned upper sash windows in each room, the main unifying decorative motifs in the bedroom areas of the house are coved ceilings, picture rails, 13 -14 inch wood baseboards, and crown molding over the doors and windows. The woodwork has been painted in the east bedroom and the bathroom, but retains its original natural red cedar finish in the hallway (except for some picture rails), front bedroom (except for picture rails), and the tower room. A distinctive feature of the front master bedroom is the band of diamond paned upper sash windows looking onto the upper deck. The master bedroom also features a dressing room with access to the bathroom. The dressing room has a wall of built-in drawers and a built-in dressing table with its own skylight. The bathroom has been remodeled and is not of historic interest. The three front bedrooms (along with the cottage) all have alcoves that originally housed fold-up Murphy beds, a space-saving feature popular in bungalow design. These alcoves do not appear in the architect's drawings and were probably added in the 1920s remodeling process. Although Murphy beds were patented in 1900, the pivoting door model that was installed in the tower bedroom closet was not invented until 1918.

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Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

Apartments

The Theophilus Allen house was originally built to accommodate an extended family of several generations. From 1925 to 1930, family needs having changed, the Allens remodeled the first and second story northwest corner of the house and the northeast wing to form separate rental units. The remodeling within the main house entailed partitioning the second story interior hallway, removing a bathroom to create the entry on the west side of the house, enclosing the screened back porch, dividing existing space to create three separate kitchens, and adding an entrance to the new main kitchen. The woodwork in the remodeled areas is simpler than that of the original construction, but still carefully crafted in the 1920s bungalow style.

The northwest apartments can be entered from the interior hallway and stairs off the main entry hall. The interior stairway features large square newel posts with square caps like those of the main staircase but has a lighter banister with 1 3/4-inch square spindles capped by a 3 1/2-inch square handrail. A skylight from the attic provides light for the interior hallway and stairs. Originally the interior stairwell and landing were open to a back hallway on the first story and the front hallway on the second story, with only a banister between the stairwell and the front hallway. In the 1920s remodeling, the interior hallway and stairwell were walled off from the second story front hallway. Portions of the original banister are visible above the stairwell on what is now the upper south wall of the interior hallway. In 1959 a partition was built at the north end of the first story interior hallway to give the apartments further privacy.

The main rooms of both first and second story apartments feature the same use of red cedar woodwork and coved ceilings as in the front second story bedrooms. The first story apartment consists of two large rooms and a kitchen, joined by a small entry hall and interior hallway off which is a toilet room. The west room, which was the Allens' mother-in-law's sitting room, features a small gas fireplace of tan bricks framed in dark wood grooved columns with scrolled capitals and a mantel of crown molding. Presumably these classical motifs reflected the mother-in-law's more conservative tastes. Another striking feature in this room is the west wall broad window bay, with three large central windows and two smaller end windows, the whole bay being set off by the continuous band of the red cedar window frames and crown molding. This bay has two unique and somewhat contradictory features: dark wood double hung panels

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Allen, Theophilus, House
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Description (Continued)

above each window can be pulled down to cover the windows completely, yet the ceiling of the bay, open to its gable roof, consists of skylights. The west room has a large closet with built-in drawers and lockers. The wood paneling and grass cloth below the picture rails is not original. The corner room of this apartment is similar in style to the upstairs bedrooms. The closet contains a shower added in 1959. The west entry hall and kitchen date from the 1920s remodeling. The entry hall, originally a bathroom, has double glass doors and red cedar board and batten paneling to picture rail height. The hall continuing to the kitchen has red cedar paneling to chair rail height, with the doors framed in flat red cedar boards in the bungalow style. The kitchen, which was originally a screened back porch, retains the cabinets installed in the 1920s remodeling.

The second story northwest apartment consists of two large bedrooms both with access off the second story interior hallway. Between the rooms are a kitchenette and bathroom added in the 1920s. The bedroom woodwork retains the original red cedar finish, except for the picture rails in the rear room, which have been painted. The woodwork in the kitchenette and bathroom is painted. The west room has a large closet with built-in red cedar drawers and lockers, which was originally the main linen closet accessed from the second story front hallway. The west room has a door, presently kept locked, into the front hallway. The rear room of the second story apartment has a wide bay window with two large central windows and two smaller side windows, all with the characteristic diamond paned upper sashes. This rear bay window occupies the middle of the rear gable just as the band of windows in the front master bedroom crosses the front gable. The east wall of the rear room has built-in bookcases on either side of the closet door. The door to the rear room from the hallway has glass panels on either side, presumably to add light to the hallway. The present frosted glass panels are not original.

The largest of the three apartments occupies both stories of the northeast wing. This wing originally contained the main kitchen, service area, and servants' room on the first floor with stairs to a large open room on the second floor that served as a sewing room and children's play room. In the 1920s, the first floor was partitioned from the original butler's pantry and divided into a separate kitchen, dining room, and living room. The second story space was divided into three bedrooms and a bathroom. Although two doors to the northeast wing second story still exist in bedroom closets in the main house, the present access to the northeast wing apartment is through an original back door and a porch and door at the end of the wing. The porch roof and railings were added in the 1980s. The windows on the south side of this wing looking onto the garden all have the characteristic diamond paned upper sashes. The windows on the north or rear

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Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

side of the wing are plain double hung, perhaps modifications dating from the 1920s. The decorative features dating from the 1920s are simpler than the woodwork of the original house but well crafted and tasteful. The kitchen and dining room have painted tongue and groove wainscoting, and the dining room has a built-in china cabinet and sideboard with drawers. Throughout the apartment the doors and windows are framed with simple flat boards. The living room features a Spanish style stucco fireplace with embossed molded decorations that resemble tiles. The ceiling in the dining room and over the stair entry is arched, and the living room and bedrooms have crown molding at the juncture of the walls and ceiling. The second story northeast bedroom features a bay with sloped ceilings in line with the gambrel roof.

Garage and Cottage

Behind the house is a gravel driveway that extends across the entire lot and provides access to the garage and cottage. These secondary structures were built with the house in 1905 and are consistent in Craftsman style with the house. The double garage is a square structure with a low-pitched single gable roof. With its open front gable facing Webster Street, the garage repeats many of the Craftsman stylistic and structural features seen in the house -- naturally weathered wood shingle siding, protruding beams and triangle braces, and exposed rafter tails. The south wall of the garage features a window with a diamond paned upper sash like those in the house. Even such a functional feature as a garage door is treated with remarkable style and craftsmanship; the garage doors consist of vertical panels that open by folding together like a screen, each panel with its own upper mullioned window. Behind the garage is a small shingled cottage, rectangular in plan, with a low-pitched hipped roof and exposed beams and rafter tails. The cottage has mullioned windows rather than diamond paned leaded glass, but is otherwise consistent in style with the house. The interior of the cottage consists of one main room, with a bathroom, closet, and kitchenette. The main room has an alcove that once contained a fold-up Murphy bed. The southwest corner and west end of the room feature mullioned fixed and casement windows looking onto a small private garden. Originally the cottage was connected to a barn that was demolished by a previous owner in the 1950s. An edge of the barn roof remains attached to the east end of the cottage roof. Otherwise the exteriors of these secondary buildings have not been altered.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 10Allen, Theophilus, House
Santa Clara County, CA

Description (Continued)

Integration of exterior and interior space

The Theophilus Allen house shows the careful attention to the integration of interior and exterior space characteristic of the Arts and Crafts style and philosophy. A lawn extends across the front of the house, with brick walkways to the front entrance and to the garden. Furnished as an outdoor living room with hanging mission style porch swings, the long deep front porch offers vistas to the landscaping on three sides. Originally a pergola extended at ground level from the front porch side steps, leading the eye into the garden. The pergola was removed in the 1960s because of dry rot, but the pergola's brick floor remains as a patio, with the brick relating visually to the paths and porch steps and clinker brick fireplace and chimneys. The house opens onto the garden from the front porch, dining room side porch, and northeast wing entrance.

Although much of the original garden died during a period of neglect during the 1950s, the present landscaping retains the original basic structure and many of the original trees. The garden fence and gateway, with large square posts resembling the interior newel posts, are original to the house, as are the pair of palm trees that flank garden gateway. The pair of cypress trees flanking the front walkway are not original, nor is the small yellow trellis gate, which dates from the same period, but comes from another house. The present garden on the east side of the house contains many plantings that are consistent with the Japanese influenced architecture. The gnarled pepper tree and loquat tree by the front porch may be original. These along with the bamboo by the tower and the shrubbery and pine and oak trees that shelter the west side of the house from the street also create a somewhat Japanese atmosphere. The Craftsman style fence at the northwest corner of the house is new, but modeled after the original fence.

Before the eastern two fifths were subdivided by a previous owner in the 1950s, the property extended the full block east to Byron Street. Reportedly, when the house was first built, the eastern portion of the property accommodated a cow. A barn extended east from the cottage beyond the present property line. Between the cow pasture and the garden stood a huge oak tree, which shaded the entire side garden. Sadly, this tree blew over during the 1970s in a heavy winter storm. It is likely this oak was an important influence in the design of the house, with the tree's high broad crown balancing the front gable, and the northeast wing L enclosing the tree within the boundaries of the house. The two oak trees now growing in the garden are descendants of the original oak. Another original landscape feature of architectural importance was a stand of timber bamboo surrounding the tower, emphasizing its verticality and the Japanese elements of the architecture. Unfortunately, also in the 1970s the bamboo completed its life cycle and died, but it is now gradually regenerating from the original roots.

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Narrative Statement of Significance

Designed in 1905 by the prominent Oakland architect Alfred W. Smith (1864-1933) and built by Gustav Laumeister, the Theophilus Allen house is an excellent and unusually large example of the architecture created in California under the influence of the American Arts and Crafts movement. The Theophilus Allen house meets the National Register Criterion C on the basis of its outstanding expression of the Craftsman aesthetic in overall design, plan, and materials, particularly in its extensive decorative use of functional structural elements and finely crafted woodwork. Contextually the house relates to the importance of the Arts and Crafts movement in California history and in the development of Palo Alto. The Theophilus Allen house is located one block from Palo Alto's Professorville Historic District, where during the Arts and Crafts period many Stanford professors and other progressive-thinking citizens built their homes in the Craftsman style. The Allen house embodies the prevailing architectural style of the Professorville area, which includes three other houses designed by A. W. Smith. The house also exemplifies the master craftsmanship of one of the major builders of Professorville, Gustav Laumeister, who built 29 of the houses listed on Palo Alto's Inventory of Historic Buildings, 21 of these in the Professorville Historic District, including the A. W. Smith houses at 301 Addison and 430 Kingsley. The Theophilus Allen house is well preserved in its original setting, its original appearance unchanged in all essential features. The house was placed on the California State Historic Inventory in 1979 and has been designated as eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. As the architect A. W. Smith's importance is now gaining recognition, the Allen house will be a valuable resource for future study of his work.

The Arts and Crafts movement, from about 1895 to 1920, was a critical period in California history, during which thousands of idealistic families, like the Theophilus Allens, moved to this state seeking the physical and spiritual benefits of a simpler, more wholesome and artistic life in harmony with a beautiful and benign natural environment. The Craftsman homes created to express and accommodate this philosophy and lifestyle exerted a far-reaching influence on twentieth century American domestic architecture, inspiring on the one hand architecture as fine art in the work of Greene and Greene and on the other the modest pattern book bungalows that became America's most popular form of affordable housing through the 1920s. As an early example of Craftsman architecture, the Allen house can contribute to the historical understanding as well as aesthetic appreciation of this style.

As detailed in the Narrative Description, the Theophilus Allen house, reflecting A. W. Smith's versatile eclecticism, integrates various stylistic influences within the Craftsman idiom into a dynamic and unified whole: Swiss chalet style front and rear facing low pitched single gables, Japanesque exposed and protruding exterior beams, rafters, and braces, and English Tudor style diamond paned leaded glass windows and interior woodwork. The skilled, detailed work of

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Santa Clara County, CA

Statement of Significance (Continued)

the builder Gustav Laumeister illustrates the emphasis on fine craftsmanship that was a philosophical as well as an aesthetic value in the Arts and Crafts movement. Although the Theophilus Allen house is too large to be considered a true bungalow, it conveys the bungalow's characteristic feeling of horizontality through such design elements as low-pitched gable roofs, broad porches and decks, and bands of windows. The finely crafted red cedar woodwork that extends from the entry hall up the main staircase and throughout the living room and dining room gives a feeling of welcoming warmth and visually emphasizes the open organic flow of space between these rooms. This woodwork includes beamed and paneled ceilings, built-in furniture, paneled walls and wainscoting, high base boards, plate rails, and distinctive window and door framing and crown moldings. The massive fireplaces in the entry hall, living room, and dining room add to the feeling of warmth and spatial unity. The first and second story bedroom sections of the house are distinguished in feeling from the public rooms by coved ceilings throughout and gain further coherence from the consistent style of woodwork in door and window frames, crown moldings, picture rails, and baseboards. The bands of double hung windows with smaller upper sashes of diamond paned leaded glass, used both upstairs and down, unify the private and public portions of the house and connect the indoor and outdoor spaces. The deep front porch and side porch, both leading to the enclosed side garden, integrate the house with its natural setting. The garden was originally entirely sheltered by a huge oak, which unfortunately blew over in a storm in the 1970's. A pergola that originally extended from the front porch to the base of the oak succumbed to dry rot and was removed in the 1960s. Nevertheless, with a descendent of the original oak growing at its center, the garden retains its original feeling of tranquil shade and greenery.

Along with exemplifying the Arts and Crafts aesthetic, the house's design illustrates the Allens' adherence to the movement's philosophical emphasis on family life and community involvement. As a Christian Science practitioner and a founder of the Palo Alto Christian Science Church, Dr. Theophilus Allen (1858-1955) was a prominent community member, and the house's large living room, easily closed off from the rest of the house by pocket doors, was frequently used as a meeting place. The house was originally designed with semi-separate living areas to accommodate the Allen's multigenerational family. In the 1920's when the family's needs had changed, three of these areas were remodeled into the present separate apartments, with simpler bungalow style woodwork in the reconfigured spaces. The 1920's remodeling did not affect the main rooms of the house. Dr. Allen continued to live in the house until 1952. He died at the age of 97 in 1955.

Working between 1890 and about 1930, the architect A. W. Smith designed hundreds of homes and commercial buildings, mainly in the East Bay area. According to Oakland Heritage Alliance publications, Smith is known for his "mannered and exuberant Craftsman and Shingle

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Statement of Significance (Continued)

houses and decorative brick commercial buildings” and is considered to have worked “in the Greene and Greene tradition.” The Theophilus Allen house, in its style and integrity of design and its fine craftsmanship, does have many features that bear comparison to the work of Greene and Greene, though in less original and refined forms. It is worth noting, however, that the Allen house, while comparable in size (8000+ square feet) to the Greene and Greene “ultimate bungalows,” was designed in 1905, four years before the Thorsen house in Berkeley and two years before the Blacker house in Pasadena. Thus it appears that A. W. Smith solved many of the problems of expressing the Craftsman bungalow aesthetic in a large-scale residence, working independently of the Greens. Since Smith was adept in both the Shingle and Craftsman idioms, the Allen house may show elements of a transition or synthesis between these styles, suggesting that Craftsman architecture may owe more to the Shingle style than is commonly recognized, an interesting subject for further research. In any case, the Theophilus Allen house illustrates the originality of A. W. Smith’s vision as well as his early mastery of the Craftsman style.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1, 2, 3. Block 93. Manlius Subdivision. Parcel 122-05-061.

Boundary Justification

Boundaries include all historic features and follow original property lines, except for exclusion of eastern portion subdivided in 1950s.

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Allen, Theophilus, House
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List of Photographs

Note: Photographs were taken on August 30, 1998, by Ted Roberts, 1059 Keith St., Berkeley, CA 94708. Negatives are stored at 601 Melville Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301.

1. Façade on Melville Avenue, showing Swiss chalet style open gable roof, front porch and porch roof, second story porch with "sunspace" (not original), clinker brick chimney. View from southeast.
2. Stair tower, showing diamond paned windows, hipped roof. Views from south (A), north (B).
3. West elevation, showing first story bay window and gable roofs with protruding beams, triangular braces, and exposed shaped rafter ends. View from southwest.
4. Rear elevation, showing open gable roof, second story bay window, and overhanging first story porch roof. View from northwest.
5. Northeast wing from garden, showing gambrel roof, dormer, and diamond paned windows. View from southeast.
6. End northeast wing, showing gambrel roof. View from east.
7. East elevation, showing garden, triple gable roof, extended first story porch roof, windows onto garden. View from northeast.
8. Cottage, southwest corner, showing mullioned windows. View from south.
9. Garage, west façade, showing open gable roof and mullioned windows in door. View from northwest.
10. Front porch, showing hanging swing, ceiling, skylight. Views from northeast (A), west (B).
11. Front porch, showing diamond paned leaded glass window, clinker brick fireplace back, and access to garden. View from southwest.
12. Front door, showing ceiling treatment and original hanging lamp. View from east.
13. Close up of front door, showing original handle and butterfly inlay joinery.
14. Entry hall, showing fireplace, beam with corbel, cantilevered staircase and alcove, door to basement.
15. Entry hall, showing inside front door, wall paneling, ceiling beams and corbel.
16. Entry hall, showing window seat and casement windows.
17. Entry hall, showing main stairway entrance, corbels, newel posts and banisters, stair tower landing windows, paneling, and ceiling.
18. Entry hall, double doors to interior hallway, showing handcrafted metal grills over stained glass windows.
19. Entry hall looking into living room, showing direction of ceiling beams and light from living room window.
20. Entry hall, pocket doors to living room, showing leaded glass windows.
21. Living room, east end, showing beamed ceiling, crown molding, and high baseboards.

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List of Photographs (Continued)

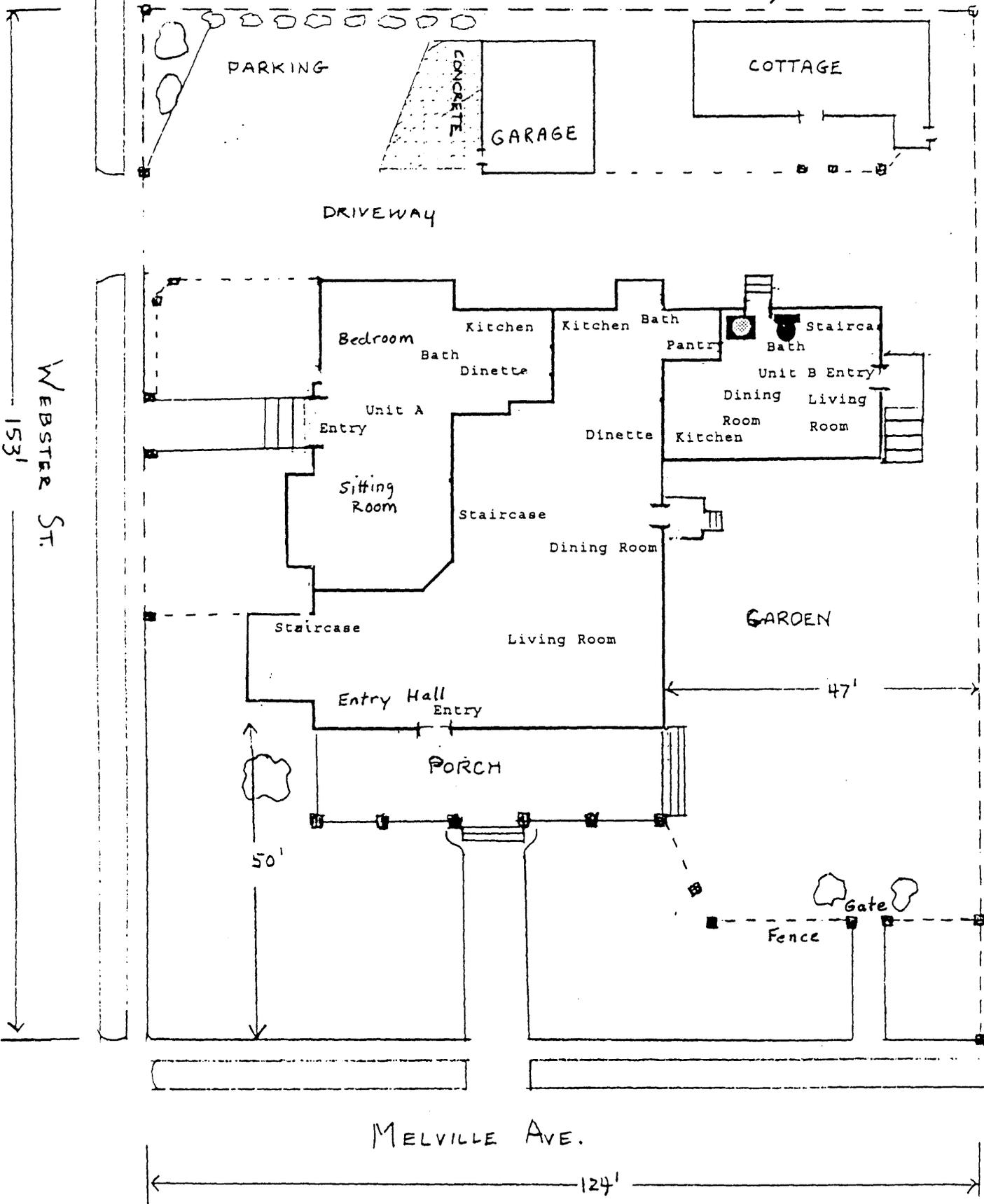
22. Living room fireplace.
23. Living room window seat.
24. Living room, built-in bookcases.
25. Door from living room to dining room, showing crown molding over door and around book case, large beam extending into dining room.
26. Dining room fireplace and built-in china cabinets with diamond paned leaded glass doors.
27. Dining room built-in sideboard below china cabinets with leaded glass doors, showing wainscoting, plate rails, and crown molding.
28. View from dining room into living room, showing large beam leading eye to fireplace.
29. View from top of main staircase, showing original light fixture and visual transition from first story woodwork on landing level.
30. Second story front hall, showing newel post and built-in bench, coved ceiling, and picture rails (now painted, but originally natural red cedar).
31. Second story front hall, showing built-in bookcase with leaded glass doors and double doors to porch with leaded glass windows.
32. Front bedroom, alcove that contained Murphy bed.
33. Front bedroom, windows.
34. First story apartment, west room window bay.
35. First story apartment, west room fireplace.
36. First story apartment, entry hall.
37. Second story apartment, woodwork in west bedroom.
38. Second story apartment, bay window in rear room.
39. Northeast wing, fireplace.
40. Northeast wing, exterior view of windows under gambrel roof end gable. View from east.
41. Original garden fence and gate with original palm trees. View from southeast.

Supplementary Slides (Taken by Gladys Woodhams, 601 Melville Ave., Palo Alto, on September 23, 1998. Negatives are stored at 601 Melville Ave., Palo Alto.)

1. Front view of house and garden. View from southeast.
2. Rear elevation of house, showing gable roof and beam details. View from west.
3. Tower showing diamond paned leaded glass windows and porch end. View from southwest.
4. Northeast wing, showing window details and landscaping. View from southeast.
5. Living room fireplace, showing beams and woodwork surrounding windows.
6. Dining room built-in sideboard and china cabinets with diamond paned leaded glass doors, showing wainscoting, window, and color of red cedar woodwork.

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601 Melville Avenue
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Sketch Map



WEBSTER ST.
153'

MELVILLE AVE.

124'

1" = 20'