

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 11 1985  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Harmon-McNeil House

and/or common Cecil Warren Restoration

2. Location

street & number 322 E. Chestnut Street N/A not for publication

city, town Santa Ana N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county Orange code 059

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	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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
	N/A 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 Cecil Warren

street & number 322 E. Chestnut Street

city, town Santa Ana N/A vicinity of state California 92701

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Orange County Recorder's Office

street & number 630 N. Broadway

city, town Santa Ana state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Santa Ana Historic Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date June 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Heritage Orange County, Inc.

city, town 106 W. 4th St, Suite 503 Santa Ana state CA

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>    N/A    </u>

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Dating from the late Victorian period (1888), the Harmon-McNeil house is a medium-sized (3,200 sq. ft.) two-story residence with Eastlake influence that looms in a stately fashion over East Chestnut Street. As originally designed and built by J. W. Blee, the house had five bedrooms, parlor, sitting room, dining room, kitchen, bathroom, two pantries, washroom, and a finished cellar. Around 1910, a sixth bedroom was added to the southeast corner.

The most distinctive element of this Eastlake house is the two prominent gabled bays. One faces the street, and the other is set on a 45-degree angle. Each gable end is decorated with dentils and scalloped shingling. The exterior is finished with shiplap siding. A large veranda wraps around the northeast corner of the house and makes use of ornate turned columns, a delicately sawn balustrade, and brackets. A decorative panel with sawn ornamentation rests between the first and second floor windows on the east facade. A closed cornice, marked by a paneled frieze and dentils, conceals a built-in rain gutter. A large transom containing etched and beveled glass highlights the double-door entryway.

The two-story, ten-room house has an open floor plan with pocket doors, high ceilings, pine flooring, redwood millwork, and a rosewood staircase. The interior of the Harmon-McNeil house retains its original spatial configuration and architectural appointments. Fancy beveled and etched glass highlights and double-door entryway, and a rosewood staircase accents the entry hall. To the west of the entry hall is located a large parlor room, and to the east is a sitting room. Each of these rooms have double five-panel pocket doors of burl redwood. The most ornate millwork in the house is located in these rooms and the dining room. Included are redwood baseboards, corner blocks, base blocks, door and window molding with corner rosettes, window shutters and fireplace mantels. The fireplace mantels also have beveled mirrors and decorative hand-painted ceramic tiles set in front of and around the cast-iron fire boxes.

The dining room has built-up wainscotting of redwood and a built-in sideboard/cabinet with a pass-through to the pantry. Built-in dropfront desks with book shelves above were provided in two of the bedrooms. Unfinished pine was used for the flooring and still remains throughout.

The house is situated on a parcel that measures 92' x 155'; previous subdivisions have reduced the site from its original 130' x 250' dimensions.

The current owner is the third to have owned the house, which is presently being restored.

## 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 checked="" 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** 1888 **Builder/Architect** J. W. Blee

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harmon-McNeil House is significant as one of just two remaining examples of Eastlake Victorian architecture in Santa Ana. The other example is the Halladay house located a few blocks east of the Harmon-McNeil house. Additionally, this house is one of just a handful that predates 1890 in Santa Ana.

The house is also significant for its associations with pioneers in early Santa Ana. The house was designed and built by J. W. Blee, who came to Santa Ana from Petaluma, California. Blee designed the house to capture the flavor of his family home in England. Blee opened vast tracts in central and southeast Santa Ana and became a prominent real estate developer. He is responsible for building many of the city's first homes.

Jonathan Harmon, Blee's second wife's brother, also migrated from Petaluma and arrived in Santa Ana in 1888. Harmon's mother and father had operated a hotel in Sacramento in the 1850s and then moved to the gold mines in Sierra County where they were prosperous. Harmon then moved on his own to Petaluma where he became a dairyman. Harmon then came to Santa Ana. Blee sold the house to his brother-in-law for \$1 while it was still under construction. Harmon also bought 60 additional acres in southeast Santa Ana. With the help of his wife Martha and two sons, Edward Warren and John Warren, he established the Jersey Dairy which the family operated until the elder Harmon retired and sold his home in 1905.

John Wilson McNeil purchased the house in December of 1905 and occupied it along with his wife, Alma, and two daughters. The McNeil family relocated from Missouri where they were farmers. McNeil continued to farm in the Santa Ana area, but also operated a team of horses with a special rig for digging basements for houses under construction. McNeil prospered and expanded his land holdings, buying acreage in Riverside County where he planted an avocado grove.

The history of the Harmon and McNeil families typify the experiences of other Santa Ana pioneers who prospered upon arriving from other areas of the country. Both families certainly were exceptionally successful in their endeavors.

Members of the McNeil family continuously resided in the house until 1967 when it was rented out. In 1976, the city building department closed the house for electrical and plumbing code violations. Subsequently, Eva McNeil sold the property to Cecil Warren who restored the interior of the house.

The Harmon-McNeil house is significant as an intact example of Eastlake Victorian architecture in Orange County. Its history typifies that of other Santa Ana pioneers.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Santa Ana Historic Register, City of Santa Ana

Santa Ana Historic Survey, June 1980

Armor, Samuel, History of Orange County. Historic Record Company, Los Angeles, 1921

Interview with Cecil Warren - 9/84

## 10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property .327 ac

Quadrangle name Tustin

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	4	2	0	0	4	1	0	3	1	7	3	1	3	7	1	2	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing										

B 

Zone			Easting						Northing										

C 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county N/A code

state code county code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rob Richardson, Director

organization Heritage Orange County, Inc.

date 10-8-84

street & number 106 W. 4th Street, Suite 503

telephone (714) 835-7287

city or town Santa Ana

state California 92701

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Gualtieri Kathryn Gualtieri

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 9/30/85

### For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Allores Bay  
Keoper of the National Register

Entered in the  
National Register

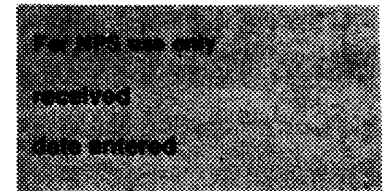
date 11-7-85

Attest:

Cl 1

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description:

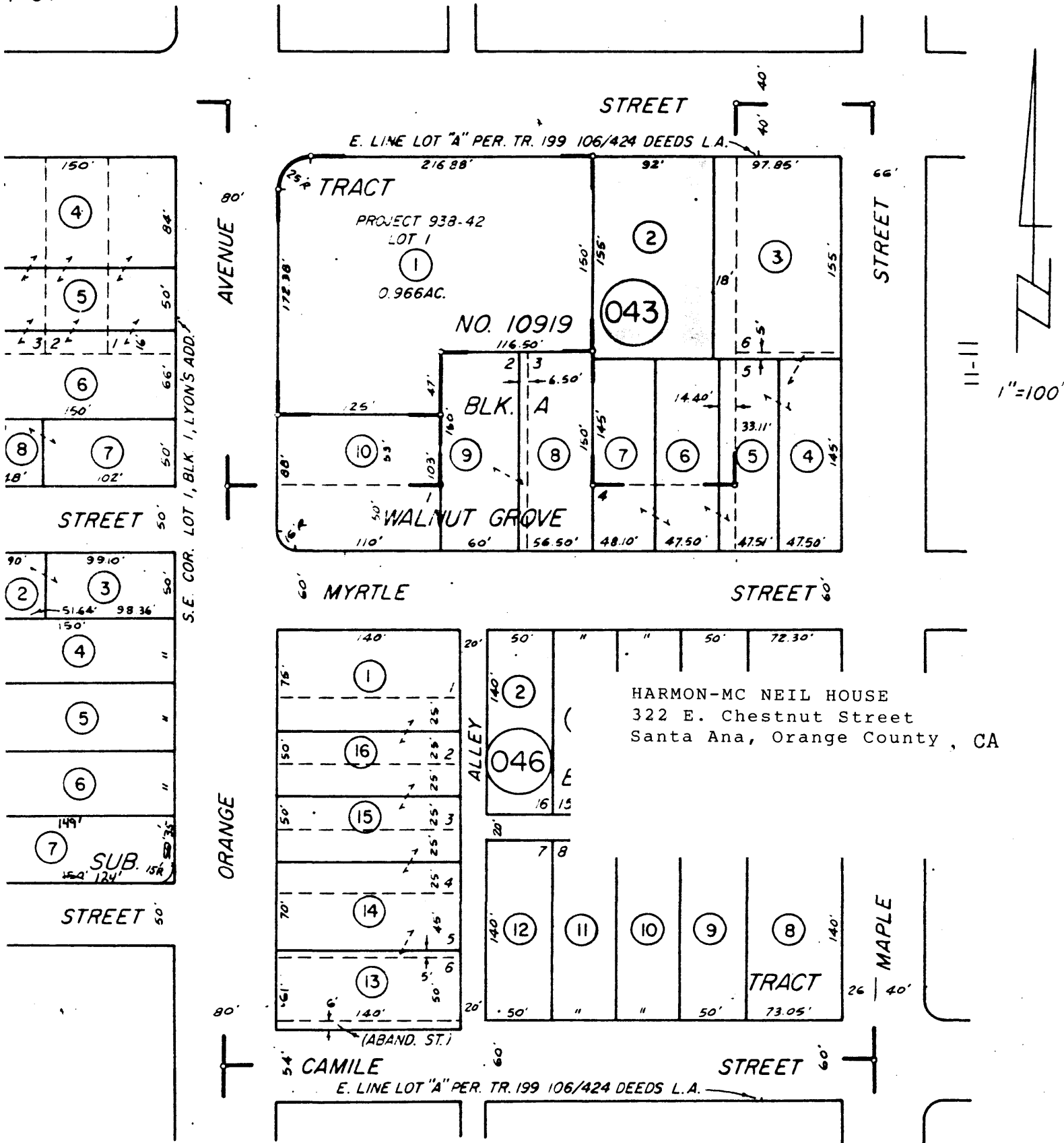
Property occupies the west 92' of Lot 6, Block A of the Walnut Grove Tract. Start at a point 97.85' west of the southwest corner of Maple and Chestnut Streets, proceed west along the north line of Chestnut Street a distance of 92', then south 155', then east 92', then north 155' to point of beginning.

Verbal Boundary Justification:

Nomination boundaries are drawn upon the current legal boundaries which encompass the house and grounds. The present parcel is the subdivided remnant of a once-larger lot.

G-3128H

1-01



NOTE ASSESSOR'S BLOCK &  
 PARCEL NUMBERS  
 SHOWN IN CIRCLES

ASSESSOR'S MAP  
 BOOK 404 PAGE 04  
 COUNTY OF ORANGE

11-03

