

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92000087 Date Listed: 3/9/92

Roome-Stearns House  
Property Name

Multnomah            OR  
County                    State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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

*Antoinette J. Lee*  
Signature of the Keeper

3/10/92  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: The Applicable National Register Criteria is amended to include Criterion A.

This information was confirmed with Elisabeth Potter of the Oregon State historic preservation office.

DISTRIBUTION:  
National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Roome-Stearns House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number 2146 NE Twelfth Avenue N/A not for publication  
city, town Portland N/A vicinity  
state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97212

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

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  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
James Harvath January 3, 1992  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
 entered in the National Register. Autawilla Lee 3/9/92  
 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): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Queen Anne

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, concrete

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walls wood: weatherboards  
shingles

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roof asphalt: composition shingles

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other

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

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## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

The Roome/ Stearns house is a late Victorian cottage of 1893 in generally good condition with most of the original features remaining. This Queen Anne home is a 2 bedroom 1 bath single story wood frame dwelling with a large walk-in attic. The construction materials and design are of timbers and beam with a brick foundation (typical of older homes) with a steep-pitched, shingled gable roof. This cottage has 2 bays with ornate designs around the windows and fish scale shingle facing above, a characteristic design of Queen Anne architecture. The front porch design, front door, tall windows, corbeled chimneys, and roof shape also add to the Queen Anne style.

The interior has 10-foot-high ceilings in the main rooms and original features that are quite unique. Natural varnished wood mouldings exist in all the main rooms and the main bedroom. These mouldings have true Queen Anne characteristics with several different patterns. Even the original set of sliding pocket doors are intact and functional.

The layout of the house has an entry hall, parlor, dining room, sitting room, kitchen, main bedroom, rear bedroom, and bathroom on the main floor. (see floor plan sketch) The sublevel is composed of a 60% daylight basement and single auto garage. There is a main porch in the front and a rear porch. From the rear porch, there is a stairway leading to a large walk-in attic above. The house sits on a raised bank about 6 feet above street elevation at ground level and the main floor is almost 10 feet above the street level.

## THE EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

This Queen Anne cottage is 59 feet long and 22 feet wide at the main floor level. There is a stately American elm in front on the city parking strip which may be almost as old as the house. There is original shiplap weatherboard siding around most of the home exterior. The roof is steeply pitched with a lower section at the added on section in the rear. According to the Sanborn fire insurance maps of Portland, 4 feet was added unto the house at the rear, possibly enclosing a porch. The roof line break,

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joint lines in the siding, and an old brick foundation line in the basement provide evidence for this early addition.(photo 5) Older shingles underly the composition asphalt on the roof surface. (photo 3) Two fluted end chimneys protrude out at the roof apex with odd chimney bends visible in the large attic, which were intentionally tilted to match the outside roofline evenly.

Two prominent bays which give distinctive Queen Anne architecture, exist on both the west (front) and south walls. Both 'cut away' type bays have highlighted trim around the windows, square patterns in the wall that match the front door pattern, and decorative cornices above. Ornaments extend down on the cornice at the opposite end of the porch roof overhang to give a more balanced appearance. Both gable areas above the bays have intricate patterns of fish scale shingles that add elegance to the exterior.(Photo 1) The gable in the front has a rectangular attic window and the one on the south side has a double hung sash window with a round top.(Photo 4) This window will be restored to functional use. Decorative brackets are believed to have existed at the apex of both gables. The owner plans to replace these brackets with those like a few existing on a few other Queen Anne homes in the neighborhood.

The front porch still has the original main overhang with fish scale shingles on the sides.(Photo 2) The original post pillars, hand railing, and upper railing are long gone. The rails and posts were torn out around the 1940s and replaced with square pattern posts and plain rails. Arbor beams were extended further south from the porch overhang. Due to later rot and ants, the posts and bottom rails were replaced in 1984 with new ones compatible with Victorian style and probably close to the original ones. A new porch flooring was put on with decking material and surrounded by planter boxes at the perimeter of the arbor. A newer deck was later expanded at a lower level further south and towards the dining room bay. A rear porch extends from the north outer kitchen door around eastward to the east side (rear) of the house. This porch was probably added on since initial construction, but the owner is uncertain due to the 1905 add-on at the rear. The west end of the porch has a gate leading to a sidewalk along the north side of the house to the front. (photo 1) A second porch gate on the south end leads to the backyard.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3INTERIOR DESCRIPTIONWoodwork and Hardware

All of the original features remain in the entryhall, front parlor, dining room, sitting room, and main bedroom. Natural varnished Douglas-fir wood mouldings are present around the doors and windows with ornate bullseyes at each of the upper corners. The bullseyes in the 3 main rooms have 3 ornate 'castle shaped' fingerlike protrusions above each target.(photo 8) Picture frame trim exists around each room below the ceiling line connecting window mouldings. 9 inch fine milled baseboard mouldings exist in these rooms. Most of the original brass doorknobs, doorplates, and hinges remain inside with pressed patterns.

The main floor is 1260 square feet by exterior dimensions and 1170 by interior room dimensions. The interior rooms all have a lath and plaster matrix on walls and ceilings which have been covered over numerous times by wallpaper and later painted. Light fixtures hang from old plaster medallians. During minor restoration, the owner plans to replace the wallpaper. Fine oak floors exist in the entry, parlor, dining, and sitting rooms and may be original.

Entrance hall

The front door leads directly into a small entry room which has open doorways straight (east) to the dining room or left (north) to the parlor.(photo 6) The moulding around the 3 doorways has more details. A rose flower pattern exists in place of the bullseye at each of the moulding corners.(see Photo 7) A double light brass fixture hangs from the high ceiling above and is believed to be original to when the house was wired around 1915.

Parlor

The parlor room includes the front bay at the west end of the house. 3 windows look out from the bay with ornate wood moulding surrounding and connecting them together.(photo 8) The top sash portion of the larger centerwindow has etched glass. A more recent casablanca fan has been installed from the ceiling medallian. The east end of the parlor is separated from the sitting room by a finely crafted pair of 8 foot high pocket doors.(Photo 9) They are original with ornate pressed brass fittings with even the key.

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4Sitting room

Through the pocket doors is the sitting room which has 3 joined windows on the north side at the square bay overhang with a bench storage compartment at the base. This outward protrusion was probably put in in 1909. It is not shown on the 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance map and shown on the 1909. There is a chance that the Sanborne people missed it earlier because the windows are similar to the others on the house. The interior moulding around them and the bullseyes are a little bit different. Bullseyes were pretty much out of stlye by 1909 (Craftsman period). On the south side of the sitting room a double set of doors (apparently added later) lead to the dining room.

Dining room

The dining area is in a larger sunny room with 3 windows on the bay to the south. A brass chandelier with pattern designs hangs from the ceiling medallian and is believed to be from the original wiring of about 1915. A decorative fireplace sits at an angle at the northwest corner with ornate wood trim and mantle designs surrounded by fine tile work. The inner firepit is original but the outer portion including the tilework has been restored in 1985.(Photo 10)

Bedrooms

The main or front bedroom is entered from the east side of the dining room. It has natural wood mouldings and some old non-painted wallpaper on the walls and a single tall window on the south side. The floor is natural Douglas-fir. The rear bedroom is smaller and entered from the kitchen. The east 4 feet of it was added on in 1905 . Perhaps this room was not a bedroom when the house was built.

Kitchen/ bathroom

The kitchen probably is the original size but has been updated several times. Paneling is visible on the south and east walls. The ceiling is vaulted and the cabinets appear to be from the 1940s. Fine tilework was added unto the counter and backwall in 1985-86. The oak floor is not original by evidence of double sets of puttied nail holes and is a higher level than the other floors. The east end has 3 doors where the left goes to the bathroom. The bathroom may not have been used as that until after the rear addition. An outhouse probably existed in the backyard but no evidence exists. Oddly, the

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floor is natural varnished alder. Part of the add-on section is included. A separate partial wall partition between the clawfoot bathtub and the toilet is probable evidence of the original house wall line.

Lower level Basement and Garage

The daylight basement can either be entered from the kitchen or garage in front. According to the Sanborne firemaps, the garage was dug out during the mid to late 1910s. The basement was probably dug when the home was built. It has 3 sunken windows and a 3rd door on the north side. A room inside was put in later. Unused crawl space exists under the front parlor.

**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  
Community Planning and Development  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1893  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1893  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Portland Cottage Building Association  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Barber, George F., The Cottage Souvenir, Dekalb, Illinois, 1888.

Clark, Rosalind, Architecture Oregon Style, Portland, Professional Book Center, Inc., 1983.

Drewfs, Marjorie L., Lake Oswego, Oregon, telephone interview May 21, 1991. Stearns relation.

Late Victorian Arachitectural Details, 1978, American Life Foundation reprint of catalogues available to tradesmen from 1871-1898.

Portland Oregonian, February 24, 1966, Obituary section. Streans relation.

Polk's Directory, Portland, Oregon, 1889-1920.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas maps of 1901, 1908, 1909, 1911, 1914 and 1917.  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: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property 0.11 acres Portland, Oregon-Washington 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	10
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5	2	7	1	1	8	10
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5	10	4	2	5	9	10
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Zone      Easting      Northing

B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The nominated property is located in SE¼ Section 26, Township 1N, Range 1E, Willamette Meridian in Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon and is legally described as Lot 15, Block 78, West Irvington Addition to the City of Portland.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The bounds of the nominated area correspond with the legally recorded lot lines historically associated with the house built at this location by the Portland Cottage Building Association in 1893.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Roy Roos  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date July 1, 1991  
street & number 2146 NE 12th Avenue telephone (503) 282-9436  
city or town Portland state Oregon zip code 97212

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The one-and-a-half-story Queen Anne Cottage that occupies a standard city lot on the east side of NE 12th Avenue, near Tillamook Street, in the Irvington district of northeast Portland, Oregon was built in 1893 by the Portland Cottage Building Association. It is believed to have been something of a demonstration model for the builders, who appear to have erected cottages scattered throughout the neighborhood from the time the West Irvington plat was filed in 1892 to 1895. The subject house was among the first built on NE 12th Avenue. It was acquired from the Association in the year of its construction by Samuel Roome, a Wells Fargo and Company cashier. Fourteen years later, the cottage was acquired by Wesley Stearns, a street railway conductor. From these early occupants, the property derives its double title. The sustained period of Stearns family ownership, extending to as late as 1975, accounts for the building's unusually complete state of preservation. Most of the cottages in the neighborhood of a comparable period were rented during the Second World War as affordable housing for shipyard workers and over time have been modified substantially.

The Roome-Stearns House is locally significant under National Register Criterion C as one of the best preserved examples of the Victorian cottages once prevalent in northeast Portland; one which is distinguished by the quality of its interior finish work. Representing a common longitudinal plan type, the cottage is a rectangular volume of one and a half stories on a high basement. From the hip roofed core are projected gabled sections for a front parlor and south dining room. The exterior exhibits the characteristic features of Queen Anne architecture, most notably variegated siding (shiplap for the main floor and imbricated shingles with fancy scalloped butts in gable ends) and polygonal parlor bay with jettied pedimented gable corners offset by a corner veranda. At a relatively early date, most likely around the time of the First World War, a driveway and a single-bay automobile garage area were excavated on the south side of the house, and a pergola was built over the garage roof, which, in effect, enlarged the porch area. The house interior is well preserved with original fixtures and good-quality standard millwork in the Eastlake tradition. The wood trim includes picture moldings, high baseboards with crown molding, fluted window and door frames having corner blocks embellished with rosette medallions, castellated cresting and a bosse-studded frieze. Parlor and sitting room passages have sliding pocket doors with their original chased brass

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hardware. A noteworthy feature of the dining room is a diagonal corner chimneypiece with framed overmantel.

The distinction of the Roome-Stearns House among comparable examples of Queen anne cottage architecture in northeast Portland today is demonstrated by comparative analysis within a field of some 16 remaining examples. The subject house emerged as one of the half dozen most complete exemplars of the story-and-a-half type and the best preserved of those in the West Irvington subdivision. Several cottages were based on the same design, or pattern. Those showing obvious kinship to the Roome-Stearns House are the Brady House (1892), located at 1237 NE Tillamook, and the house neighboring the Roome-Stearns House at 2126 NE 15th Avenue. The interior of the former has been substantially altered, and the latter, the Robbins House (1893), has been remodeled and enlarged by an addition to the front porch.

Attempts to provide a picture of the operations of the Portland Cottage Building Association were frustrated by lack of information in directories or local trade journals of the day. However, it is clear that the Cottage Building Association had a brief but important role in the upbuilding of newly-platted residential areas of northeast Portland, the West Irvington subdivision in particular.

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ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Roome/Stearns house was built in 1893 and is a fine pattern-book example of a Late Victorian Queen Anne cottage. The home meets the nomination guidelines under Criteria C as a clear-cut, well preserved example in the Irvington community of NE Portland. The interior is unusually elegant for a modest cottage of the time. Many of the Queen Anne cottages in the general close-in NE Portland area have been lost to development. The large majority of the surviving Victorian cottages have undergone major alterations, especially during the 1940s. During and after World War II, there was a major housing shortage in Portland due to the war effort and a shipping related economic boom. These smaller homes were older and cheaper and became popular rentals. Many have fallen into disrepair encouraging cheaper and quicker alterations.

Architectural Background

The Queen Anne style was started by an English architect Richard Norman Shaw (1831-1912). The Queen Anne was pieced together from elements borrowed from the Tudor, Jacobean, and Elizabethan periods and also absorbed elements of Japanese architecture and Eastlake/stick design. Popularity in England in the 1850s and 60s was inspired by manor houses Mr. Shaw designed. The style caught on fast in the United States after it was introduced by the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition of 1876. The public wanted a breakaway from restrictive Renaissance designs but to keep reminders of the past with a fresh and 'modern' design. In Oregon, the Queen Anne influence came on strong during the late 1880s lasting to the early 1900s. Many pattern books and catalogues became available. Some of the earlier homes built were mixed with the earlier Eastlake/stick style. A strong demand grew for the Queen Anne style in smaller homes. During the late 1800s, a large population

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increase in Portland along with available land to build on east of the Willamette River fueled the demand for cottages to be built for smaller families. The Irvington area was platted in the 1880s and the town of Albina to the west was annexed to Portland in 1891. The City of Portland currently has a proposal of a Historical District covering most of the Irvington and Albina districts. Many Queen Anne cottages were built all around these close-in NE Portland communities for working class citizens.

Significance by Comparative Analysis

The Roome/Stearns house holds much significance in its architecture by its well preserved interior features of elegance, original floor pattern, and decorative exterior elements. The interior mouldings are more detailed than all others observed in other cottages with remaining original moulding. This ornate woodwork was possibly handcrafted on the site.

In the Irvington community, a number of fine examples of Queen Anne Victorians exist. One striking example of the architecture is the John E. Povey house (1891) at 1312 NE Tillamook, only 2 blocks from the subject property. This full sized Victorian house is a 2 story with ornate interior woodwork, beautiful stained glass patterns on most of the upper window sashes, and elaborate front porch spindle designs. (see photo 11a) In the Albina area, an elaborate example of a Queen Anne mansion at 202 NE Graham is present and listed on the National Register (see photo 11b). Since the emphasis is on 1 to 1½ story cottages, 13 fine examples of Queen Anne cottages have been selected throughout the Irvington district and further into parts of the Albina district.

The Queen Anne cottage next door at 2136 NE 12th (1893) (Robbins) was nearly a twin of the subject house and built probably only months after by the same builders. Most of the exterior style remains with a very similar pattern of fish scale shingles. In the 1940s, the home was gutted out and completely remodeled being converted to a duplex. No original interior features remain today and the ceilings were lowered in order to get larger rooms in the finished off attic. The house has also been added on to at the rear. (see photos 12 & 13)

The Brady house (1892), a residence of a river boat captain, is a good example of a smaller cottage with many decorative features on the exterior. (photo 14) This cottage at 1137 NE Tillamook is currently run down with some of outside parts needing replacement. Most of the interior has been remodeled with a newer style of wall paneling added. The original moulding is still present but painted odd colors. The bullseyes have flat protrusions above them. The subject property has natural wood bullseyes with decorative 3 finger protrusions above. With a recorded mortgage in May 1892, the Brady House is thought to be the oldest house in Irvington. Its builder is unknown.

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A small decorative cottage at 1016 NE Tillamook (1894) has all of the original exterior features present including a sunset pediment above the front bay window. (photo 15) This run-down rental is intentionally in a state of disrepair by a landlord with other future plans. Some rot, rusted out gutters, and peeling paint are visible. The interior has a few original features but the ceilings have been lowered.

A well maintained example of a Queen Anne cottage was viewed at 2126 NE 15th Ave (1894). (photos 16 & 17) This one may have been built by the same company as the subject property. The layout and design is very similar. The interior floor plan is close too but some alterations have been made. Shingle type siding was added on the exterior and earlier decorative materials have been removed including gable cornices. The interior moulding is less decorative and painted over. The bullseyes exist but are plain squares around the targets.

Another similar example is at 1926 NE 14th Ave (1893) The owner has remodeled it in the 1940s and 50s. (photo 18) The entry stairway was been rerouted. Dark shingle-like siding was put on the outside. The moulding has been replaced with plain and the ceilings have been lowered in the main rooms.

A small cottage (1894) at 2003 NE 13th has a well preserved (photo 19) exterior but some interior alterations. It lacks the classic Queen Anne bay windows. Another cottage at 2164 NE 7th (1895) has only a few gable ornaments remaining. (photo 20) This is an example of a run down rental with a stripped out interior.

In the Albina district, many fine cottage comparisons exist including this vintage example at 600 NE Thompson built in 1890. (photo 21) This one has a preserved exterior in the front and many interior features are mostly original. The bullseyes are plain and all the moulding is painted over. A pair of pocket doors have been removed and the openings covered.

A cottage at 236 NE Thompson (1895) has an exterior in the original state, and maintained to a fair state. The interior is in need of cosmetic improvement but has all original wall surfaces and moulding. The moulding lacks bullseyes and is not traditional Queen Anne style. (Ph#2)

A restored example of a unique Queen Anne cottage (c.1890) is at 622 NE Tillamook. (photo 23) This house has been brought back a few years ago and remains intact with all the original exterior and interior designs. Unusual wood deco patterns have been put on the gable areas, not common for Queen Anne, and lacks the shingles, which are more typical. The interior has all the original floor plans and pressed pattern moulding exists along with pocket doors. (photos 24 & 25) The interior woodwork has been all painted over and the house was moved from another unknown location according to the owner.

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A very fine example of an 1889 Queen Anne cottage is located at 77 NE Graham.(photo 26) This home is the closest comparable example to the subject property. It is undergoing minor restoration but all exterior original features are intact. It stands as a classic example and the interior is very elegant. Most of the mouldings, except in the parlor and sitting rooms, are natural varnished fir including a single large pocket door that slides from one side.(photo 27) The bullseyes are in the standard square blocks but exist throughout the entire house, even around some cabinets. The ceilings have been resurfaced and no traces of fixture medallians are left. A cottage with very similar style and layout is at 111 NE Graham.(photo 28) The exterior is original but the interior has been recently remodeled but some painted over bullseyes and pocket doors remain.

A good example of a smaller cottage (c.1890) with 2 bays at 206 NE Sacramento St has most of the original exterior features preserved. Interior alterations are only minor and original painted over mouldings and glass pocket doors are present. No bullseyes are at the moulding corners and instead are odd looking square protrusions not typical of Queen Anne style. There is a decorative sunset design on the porch brackets and front door.(photo 29)

History

The Roome/Stearns House was built in 1893 by Portland Cottage Building Association and under the direction of Anthony G. and Elizabeth Ryan. The Ryans owned and platted much of the Irvington neighborhood and started early residential development. Elizabeth Ryan was the former wife of Captain William Irving who died in British Columbia in 1872. The Ryans along with three partners (David P. Thompson, John W. Brazee, and Ellis Hughes) formed a syndicate to build an exclusive neighborhood. The developers emphasized quality with a minimum value of \$2500 for a house and lot, 50 x 100 feet lots, and 25 foot setbacks. D.Thompson had the Irvington plat all surveyed and filed in October 1887 and in October 1890, A.G. Ryan had filed the Tillamook street strip of the West Irvington plat and the remaining blocks to the north in February 1892.

In research, the owner found the earliest deed recording dated September 7, 1893 where the lot was transferred from the Ryans to Catherine Ryan. Miss Ryan was only 22 and probably the daughter of Captain W. Irving. A subsequent deed recording dated September 9, 1893 states the transfer of title of both this home and the near twin next door (2136 NE 12th) to Portland Cottage Building Association for \$6000. Some sort of arrangement had been set up between the Ryans and the proprietor of the building contractor

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company. The two homes constructed were probably designed for demonstration models of cottages from this company for development in the area. Other Victorian cottages of similar design in Irvington were found to be built soon after. The original floor plans are almost identical.

From further research, the owner has been able to only find some information about Portland Cottage Building Association. Between late 1892 and early 1894, they built decorative cottages and were in the 1893 Portland Polk directory as building contractors. The listing has Henry M. Lambert as president, Edward Drake as secretary, and Portland Trust Company as treasurer and the office was located on 246 Stark. Henry Lambert also was a proprietor for East Portland Mill and Fixture Company during most of the 1890s. This may explain the elegant moulding and fittings. The secretary, Edward Drake, worked also as a clerk for Frank Brothers & Co before and after. It is believed that he temporarily lived in the twin house next door (now 2136 NE 12th) because the directory lists him at "res E 12th N n cor Tillamook" for 1893. Deed records also show he purchased a lot across the street and owning then later selling a house (now 2207 NE 12th) in 1894. This home was also built by the company. Unfortunately, it was totally remodeled and changed into an 'English' style in the 1920s. In late 1893, the twin house next door at 2136 NE 12th was sold from the company to Edward Robbins, a stenographer who lived there almost until World War II. According to deed recordings, the company owned only several other properties. Unfortunately, many existed around the north and east perimeters of the Lloyd Center and are long lost to development. Sanborn fire insurance maps show sketches indicating cottages in those locations taken from legal descriptions. The company built most cottages from a contract with the landowner and did not take title to the land. Portland Trust Company did carry many mortgages.

There was a depression in 1893, and most likely, Portland Cottage Building Association dissolved in 1894. Henry Lambert had a residence listing in 1892 but by 1894 was listed rooming in a building. Portland Trust Company probably took over the remaining company assets that were not sold before.

Samuel Roome purchased the home from Portland Cottage Building Association in September 1893. The owner found a deed recording dated September 26, 1893 with a stated price of \$2800. Mr Roome was a cashier at Wells Fargo and Company. From 1900 census data, Mr Roome had a wife and 2 sons. The family moved to Portland in 1890 from New York and his father immigrated from England.

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Apparently, the family moved out of Portland by the end of 1906 except for the older son, Sam H. Roome. During insulation installation by the owner, a birdhouse wood craft item with an inscription "Lewis and Clark Exposition 1905 Portland Ore" was found and probably from a Roome family member.

In January 1907, Wesley R. Stearns bought the home from the Roomes. Mr. Stearns was a manager for Portland and Suburban Express Co., a streetcar company. He had a wife Margery, and one son, Clayton. The Stearns were known to be very nice but meticulous in their living standards according to Mrs. Marjorie Drewfs, the only surviving relative and a neice of Mrs. Stearns. She had many memories of them and the property by frequent visits as a young girl. Clayton Stearns, who became a manager of the Bethlehem Steel Company, took over the property after the death of Wesley. His wife Helen had no children. His mother Margery continued to live at the residence until her death at 93. The house was in the Stearns family until 1975, after the death of Helen Stearns. The well preserved and non-altered state of this home is accountable to the orderliness of the Stearns family.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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Continuation Sheet**

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Roome/Stearns House (1893)  
2146 NE 12th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

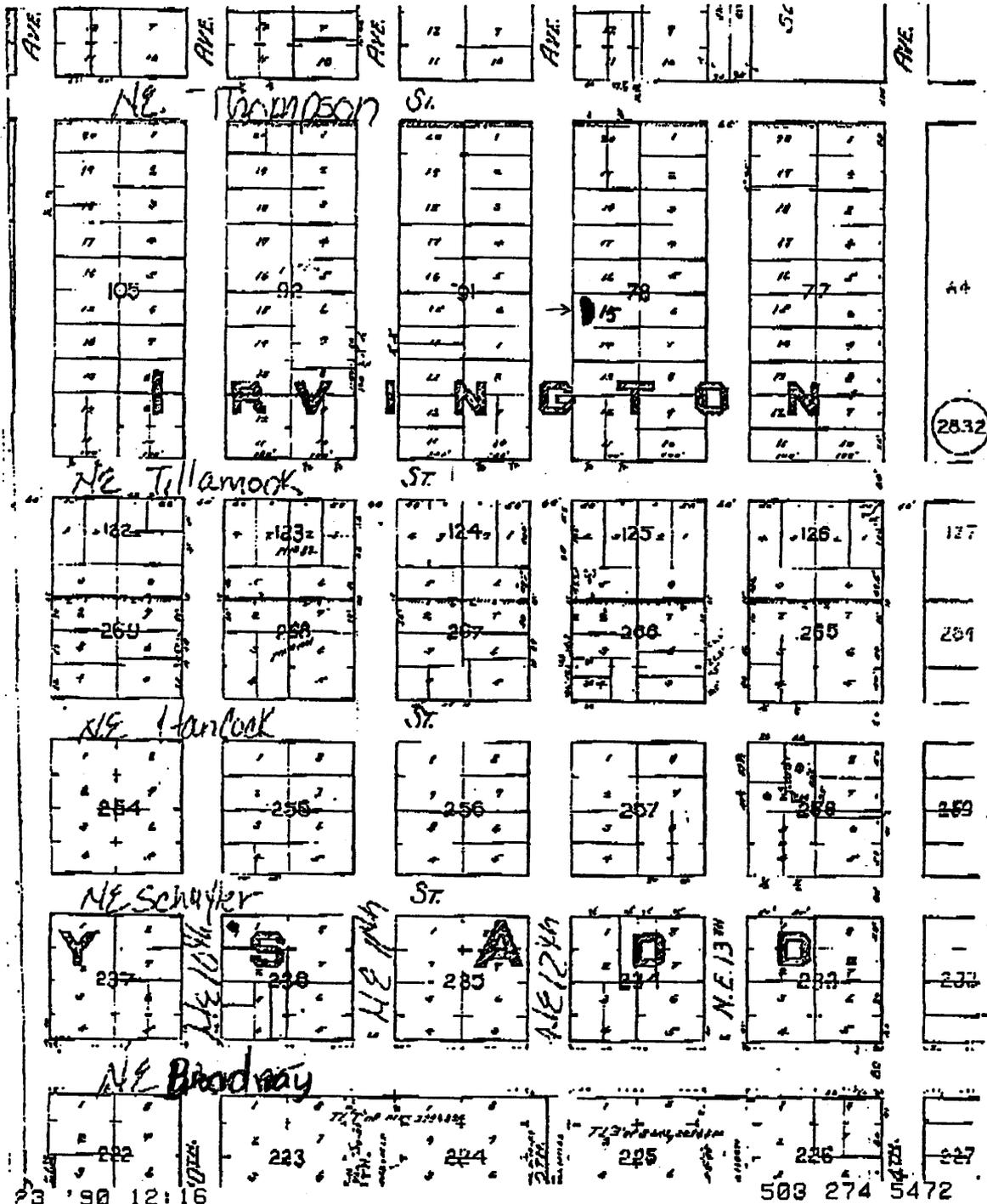
Roy Roos Photos, July 1991  
Negatives held at above address

- 1 of 10 West (front) elevation.
- 2 of 10 West (front) elevation showing early 20th Century garage and pergola additions adjacent to front porch.
- 3 of 10 West and south elevations.
- 4 of 10 Dining room window bay, south elevation.
- 5 of 10 East (rear) elevation.
- 6 of 10 Interior view from entry stairhall, looking east.
- 7 of 10 Detail of corner block in entry/stairhall doorway surround.
- 8 of 10 Interior view of front parlor bay, looking east.
- 9 of 10 Pocket doors dividing sitting room and front parlor, looking west.
- 10 of 10 Dining room chimneypiece.



# Fidelity National Title Co. of Oregon

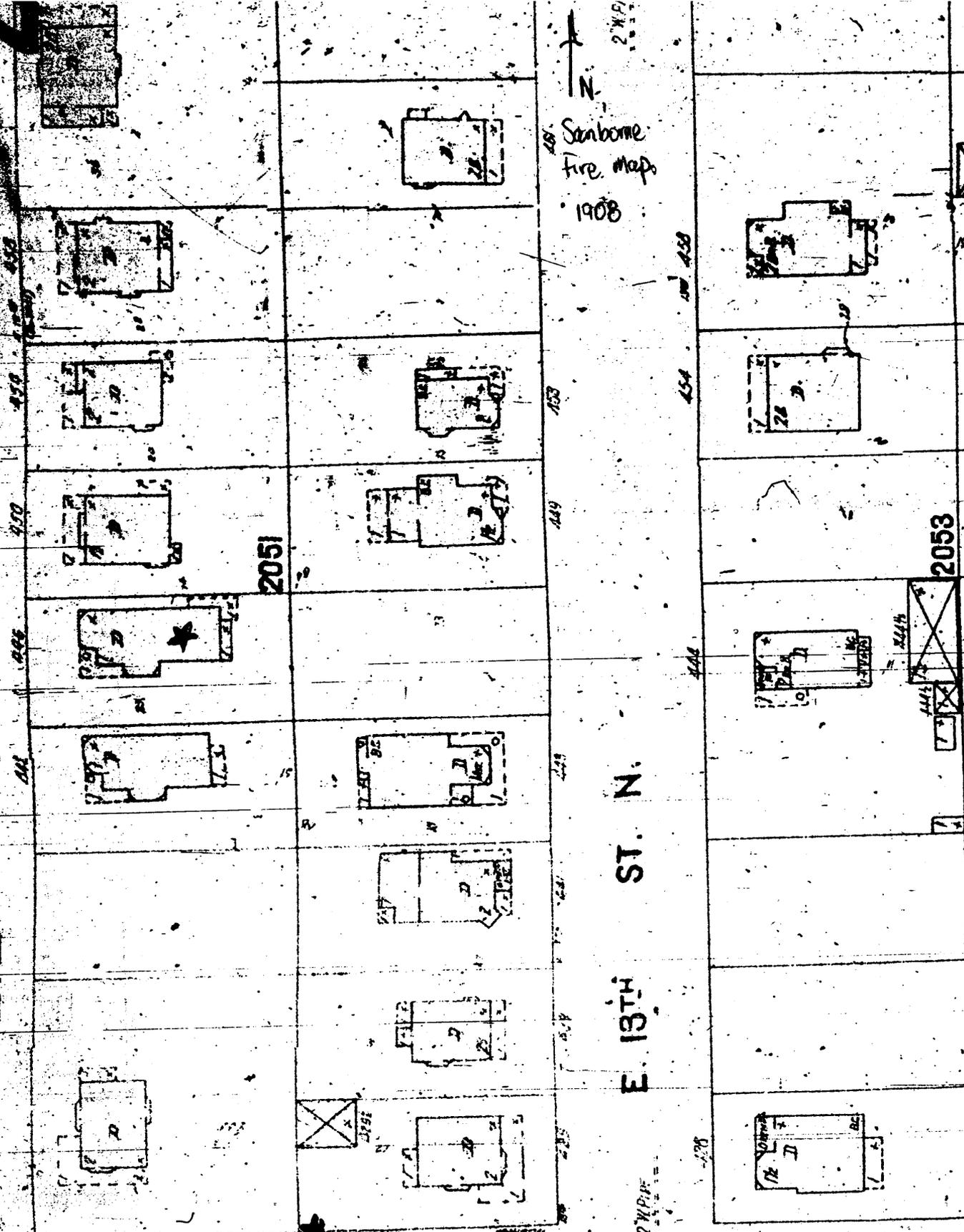
The sketch below is made solely for the purpose of assisting in locating said premises and the Company assumes no liability for variations, if any, in dimensions and location ascertained by actual survey.



717 ST. N.

2

2 W.P.  
N.  
Seabone  
Fire Map  
1908



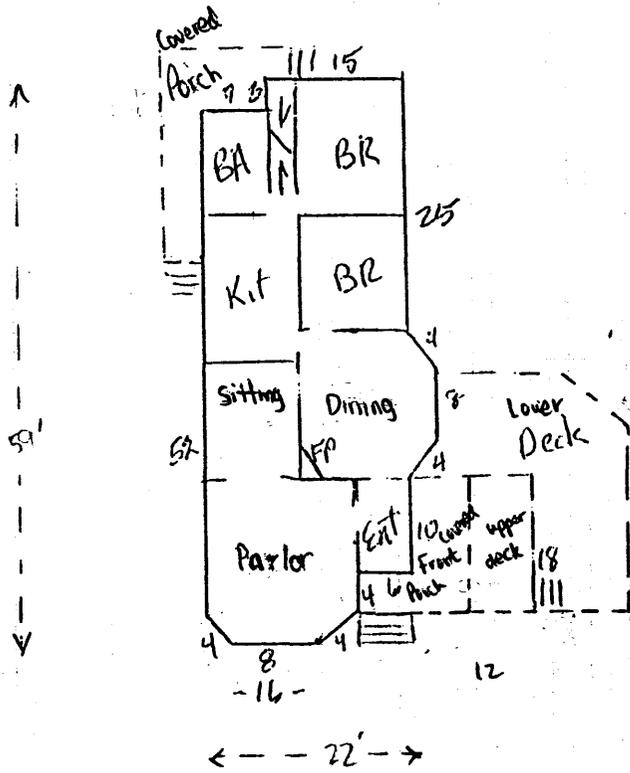
2051

2053

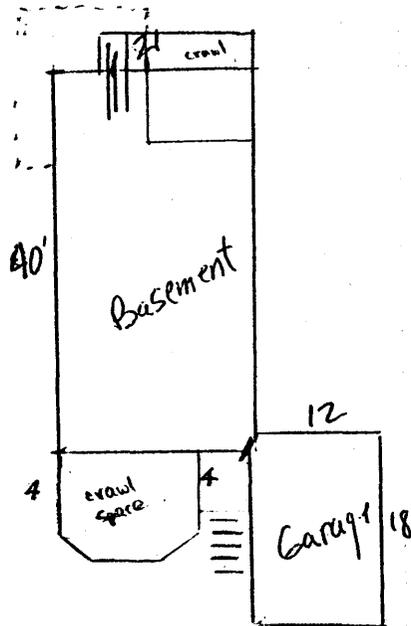
E. 13TH ST. N.

2 W.P.  
140





Main Floor



Sub level