



607

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places 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 COBB, SAMUEL, HOUSE

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 1314 SE 55TH AVENUE N/A not for publication

city or town PORTLAND N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county MULTNOMAH code 067 zip code 97215

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 x meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (x See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James M. Hamrick Deputy SHPO April 14, 1999
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or 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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this 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): _____

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 1

Cobb, Samuel, House, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

COBB, SAMUEL AND FLORENCE, HOUSE (1911)

1314 SE 55th Avenue

Portland, Multnomah County, OR

COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE:

The Cobb House, built in 1911, is a grand two and one-half story wood frame Craftsman style house. It is located in the Mt. Tabor neighborhood, one of the oldest and attractive residential areas of Portland. The Mt. Tabor Park nearby is a 200-acre site that covers the slopes of Mt. Tabor, a 600' high hill and former volcano. The area, once a wilderness, was a rural community of farmers and orchardists before being developed for as a residential neighborhood.

HISTORY:

Samuel was a member of an old New England family, born in Maine in 1859. He moved to Illinois in 1869, and sold apples to survive. He decided to work his way west and at age 17 became a carpenter's apprentice. He came to Portland in 1882 to help railroad shops in Albina. Samuel Cobb partnered with Samuel Wren in a box making plant at the foot of Montgomery Street. In 1898 he organized the Standard Box & Lumber Company that took over a failing box factory on Portland's east side. By 1900 it had grown and was operating a sawmill five blocks north of Oak Street also.

Samuel Cobb and Florence Madden were married in 1888. Recognizing that the Mt. Tabor area was a good place to make an investment, Samuel Cobb bought this property in 1889. When the house was built in 1911, Samuel chose all the lumber carefully, probably produced from his mill. He traveled to San Francisco to pick out the furniture for the house. He was skilled as a carpenter, having had years of experience building houses. It is believed that he designed this house, using pattern and plan books to help.

The company built another sawmill in 1913. They capitalized on the development of railroad logging, the growth of new wood products, the efficiency of new logging technology, and the depletion of forests east of the Mississippi River. In 1915 the company focused on producing lumber rather than manufacturing boxes. The high demand during World War I continued to help the business prosper. The business was a success and in 1932 the *Oregon Voter* described the mill as "one of the central landmarks of Portland".

Samuel Cobb became a local philanthropist who gave significant gifts to his community, in particular the donation of land for Camp Mananu, the Camp Fire Girls' summer camp in Sandy, Oregon, in 1924.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 2

Cobb, Samuel, House, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

It was a major contribution to the organization and was noted in the local newspapers. This donation of land to the community from which he had received a great deal was an important contribution and significant to the Camp Fire Girls organization and the local area. His participation in the community also extended to politics. Cobb was a state representative in 1902 and 1914, ran for county commissioner in 1932, and was known for his interest in honest government, fighting against common political practices that allowed for the assault of people at the polls and buying votes.

Florence and Samuel had six children. After her death in 1920, Samuel continued to live here until 1951 when he died. The Western Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, located across the street, bought the house in 1952 and used it as the seminary president's residence and dormitory for five students. Earl Kalland, the present during 1947-55, lived in the house until 1955 and the dormitory was used until 1961. Shirley and Frank Traeger bought the house in 1961 and lived here until 1973 when Susan and Dennis Wiancko bought the house. Susan (Wiancko) Harrison and Patrick Harrison currently own the house.

ARCHITECTURE:

This wood frame house has a concrete with rock-faced ashlar stone foundation and is sheathed in clapboard siding and shingles. The entrance porch has a rock-faced ashlar stoop and balustrade, as does the sun porch on the south elevation. The use of modillion blocks, brackets, banding, varied materials, and the form of the Cobb house reflect the Craftsman style that was developed out of the Arts and Crafts movement in England. The movement advocated fine craftsmanship, structural honesty, and the use of natural materials. With this the Craftsman style incorporated low-pitched gable or hipped roofs with wide overhanging eaves and exposed rafters, purlins and decorative brackets. They also often used exterior chimneys of cobblestone or rough brick. The rectangular composition of Craftsman style houses with a horizontal quality, double hung windows with multi-lights in the upper sash, rustic surface materials, porches, verandas, sunrooms, and sleeping porches, used frequently throughout Oregon, are exhibited in the finely crafted and detailed Cobb house. Although a refined example of the Craftsman style, the Cobb house portrays the ideas in a manner that speaks to the station the Cobb family held in the community. Distinctive qualities of the house include an oriel, a massive first floor bay window with a shouldered architrave, a large triplet window, bands of casement windows, and an upper story balcony with an arched opening.

On the interior beautifully crafted woodwork and built-in cabinetry distinguishes the house further. The elegant staircase with carved newel posts and turned balusters, fireplace, inglenook, and built-in cabinets, are clearly detailed with the desire to display fine craftsmanship. Paneling, box beams,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section No. 3 Page 3

Cobb, Samuel, House, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

architrave molding, wainscotting, oak and fir flooring, and lath and plaster walls and ceilings remain from the original construction. The dining room light fixture with signed Steuben glass light shades is original, as are the dining table, hall table, side table, two chairs, a bed, and a dresser. There are seven fireplaces, some with original light fixtures. Changes to the property are minimal. The original garage no longer stands, but a garage carefully designed to replicate it was built in 1973.

Samuel Cobb was a prominent lumberman in the early 20th century in Portland. The Cobb house is one of the remaining large residences that reflect the prosperity that the growth of the timber industry brought to some self-made Portland businessmen. It also reflects the growth of the Mt. Tabor neighborhood as an area planned by real estate developers to be a sought-after location for newly prosperous families. It was developed to fulfill their desires for clean air, beautiful, rural-like surroundings, and social status. The Cobb house is architecturally significant as one of the best remaining examples of a sizable and distinctive Craftsman style house in the Mt. Tabor community. It is also historically significant for its association with Samuel Cobb, an important influence to the Portland area.

Cobb, Samuel, House
Name of Property

Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon
City, County, and State

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	Non-contributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	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
n/a

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)
DOMESTIC: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation CONCRETE w/Stone veneer
walls Weatherboard
roof ASPHALT
other WOOD Shingles

Narrative Description

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

X See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 8 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

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Narrative Description

The Cobb House is a grand two and one-half story wood frame Craftsman Style residence. It is located in the Mt. Tabor neighborhood, one of the oldest and most attractive residential areas in southeast Portland. This neighborhood is near Mt. Tabor Park, a 200-acre city park that covers the slopes of Mt. Tabor, a 600' hill and former volcano. Farmers and orchard growers lived here before developers began to turn the area into an exclusive residential neighborhood at the turn of the century; some trees from the early orchards still grow on suburban lots. Many of the houses on the north side of Mt. Tabor, along 61st and 62nd avenues below Stark Street, near Morrison Street at 54th Avenue and on Taylor, Salmon, and Main streets between SE 54th and 60th avenues, remain much as they were between 1890 and 1910 (Staehli 1975). Western Seminary, a Portland Historic Landmark, is located across the street from the Cobb House and many Arts and Crafts and Craftsman Style homes on Portland's Historic Resource Inventory are in this neighborhood.

The Cobb House has an irregular plan, a gabled wall dormer, a gabled pavilion, and a large three-bay main entrance porch. Facing west and occupying a lot that is 182' x 135', the house is on the corner of SE 55th Avenue and SE Madison Street. Samuel Bedlington Cobb, the original owner, designed the house. A plumbing plan accompanying the final plumbing permit issued by the City of Portland Bureau of Buildings documents the completion of the main section of the house by April 27, 1911; the sun porch and balcony above it were completed soon after that date.

Of platform-frame construction, the Cobb House rises as an asymmetrical gabled roof volume. The gabled wall dormer is above the main entrance and the gabled pavilion and sun porch are on the south side of the house. A two-story gabled roof bay is located on the south elevation; the roof of the bay intersects the roof of the gable end. The foundation is poured concrete with rock-faced ashlar, wall materials on the first and second stories are weatherboard, the half-story is shingled, and the roof covering is composite shingles. The house has a ground plan of 60' 6" x 52' 11".

The Cobb House is a fine example of a Craftsman Style residence. The Craftsman Style developed out of the Arts and Crafts Movement that originated in England in the 1880s. Led by writers, artists, designers, and social critics such as John Ruskin (1819-1900) and William Morris (1834-96), the Arts and Crafts Movement took its aesthetic inspiration from nature, local traditions, and the art of the Middle Ages. The goals of the movement were to revive traditional crafts, revitalize design by reuniting it with the crafts, and to base design on function and the appropriate use of native materials (Fletcher 1975).

Asymmetrical fenestration marks the Cobb House and large-scale windows add beauty and light. The residence has large triplet windows, paired windows, double-hung windows (some with eight lights over one light), and multi-paned casement windows. Distinctive windows include an oriel, a massive first floor bay window with a shouldered architrave, a large triplet window with a transom, and two bands of

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 9 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

casement windows. A triplet window with a blind light intersects the chimney on the north elevation and two small sash windows with leaded glass and art glass flank the chimney on the west elevation. Windows have plain trim with a cornice.

The pedimented gables with wide overhanging eaves, carved brackets, and massive beveled bargeboards are striking features of the Cobb House. The pavilion, with its oriel and balcony with a Tudor arch opening, is another distinctive feature. The recessed main entrance has a large oak door with a beveled glass panel and beveled glass sidelights; other exterior doors are two-panel wood doors with one light. There are two shed roof dormers on the east elevation and four rock-faced ashlar chimneys.

Beautifully crafted woodwork and built-in cabinetry distinguish the interior. The house has a central hall plan and the large and elegant staircase hall has a fireplace in the inglenook. The library and north parlor (music room) flank the hall on one side and the south parlor (living room), dining room, and kitchen are on the other side of the hall. The second floor has five bedrooms, a sitting room, a sleeping porch, and a beautiful gallery with arched openings and a vaulted ceiling. A large billiard room and servants' rooms are on the attic level.

Beautifully crafted of oak, the main staircase has paneled, carved newels, and turned balusters. The back staircase, made of fir, also is handsomely crafted in a rustic style. The staircase hall and dining room have wainscoting with three tiers of paneling, boxed beams, and architrave molding. The wainscoting in the staircase hall and dining room is oak; the wainscoting in the billiard room on the attic level is fir. Other wall materials are lath and plaster; the flooring is oak and fir. The beautiful built-in cabinetry in the library is made of mahogany; the built-in cabinetry in the dining room is made of oak. Unique interior features are the intersecting pilasters flanking the entrances to the north parlor.

The house is heated with steam radiators. It has a two-pipe, pumped return system that uses a gas-fired boiler. The Cobb House has seven fireplaces and some original lighting fixtures and furniture. The fireplace in the inglenook has a recessed, stepped pattern in the chimneybreast and the dining room fireplace has a handsome oak paneled overmantel. The dining room lighting fixture with signed Steuben glass light shades is original and a dining table, hall table, side table, straight back chair, rocking chair, bed, and dresser owned by the Cobb family remain in the house.

The large three-bay main entrance porch with its segmental arch and three massive, short columns provides a dramatic entry to the house; two large wood crosses are located on the columns flanking the main entrance. The main entrance porch has a rock-faced ashlar stoop and balustrade. The sun porch on the south elevation also has a rock-faced ashlar balustrade and two columns; above it is a balcony with a simple wood balustrade. The rear porch adjacent to the library has a concrete stoop and a pergola roof supported by two columns; the two service porches have concrete stoops.

No major changes disturb the integrity of the design, setting, or materials and the workmanship, feeling, and association of the house remain intact. The Western Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary (now

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 10 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

Western Seminary) changed the kitchen ca. 1952 and it was changed again when the Frank Traeger family bought the house in 1961. A wood deck was added in 1981; the original stoop is underneath.

A wall in the south parlor (living room) separating a small office from the rest of the room was removed and an exterior door to the office was replaced by a window ca. 1978. The wood shingle roof cover has been replaced with a composite shingle cover. The original garage no longer stands; a garage carefully designed to replicate it was built in 1973 and is a compatible, non-historic, non-contributing building. The property has been well maintained by its four owners.

The Cobb House is located in the middle of its large lot; the garage is on the southeast corner. A circular driveway with entrances on SE Madison and SE 55th provides access to the rear of the house. The lot slopes up from the street and is landscaped with vines, flowering plants, shrubs, and trees. Azaleas border the pathway from the street to the main entrance and ivy, rhododendrons, and other hardy plants create a pleasing setting. A giant cedar, yellowwood, and Japanese maple grow on the property and a tall row of cedars flanks the east side of the lot. All are old and beautiful trees; their exact age is unknown. Other historic landscape features include pathways edged with Belgian blocks and low, uncoursed rubble walls on the east and north edges of the property.

The completion of the Morrison Bridge in April 1887 sparked the growth of Portland's East Side residential subdivisions. The Willamette Bridge Railway Company began operating a train to the newly built subdivision of Sunnyside by September 1887. Service was extended to the Mt. Tabor area in 1888 and in 1889 the Mt. Tabor Railway Company opened a steam-powered line out Hawthorne Boulevard to 54th Avenue. Developers quickly turned the forests and dairy farms along the trolley car line and off of Base Line Road into residential neighborhoods (Staehli 1975).

Recognizing that the Mt. Tabor area was a good place to make an investment, Samuel Cobb bought land near Mt. Tabor in 1889. Twenty years later he built a large home there. In the first decade of the century the Hart Land Company began promoting the Mt. Tabor neighborhood as a place to build beautiful and expensive homes. The Cobb family moved from the house Samuel Cobb built at the corner of 17th Avenue and East Washington Street in 1901 to its new home on Mt. Tabor in 1911 (Cobb 1950). Marian Carlson, a granddaughter, remembers her mother talking about how involved her grandfather was in building the Mt. Tabor house. He chose all the lumber carefully and traveled to San Francisco to pick out furniture. Given his skill as a carpenter and years of experience building houses, it is likely that Samuel Cobb designed the new home, perhaps with the help of plan books (Carlson 1998).

After raising their younger children in the Mt. Tabor house, Mrs. Cobb died in 1920. Mr. Cobb continued to live there until his death in 1951. The Western Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary bought the house in 1952 to be used as the Seminary president's residence and dormitory for five students. Earl Kalland, the president of the Seminary from 1947 to 1955, lived in the house until 1955 and the house served as a dormitory until 1961. Shirley and Frank Traeger bought the house in 1961 and lived there until 1973 when Susan and Dennis Wiancko bought it. Susan (Wiancko) Harrison and Patrick Harrison currently own the house.

Cobb, Samuel, House
Name of Property

Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon
City, County, and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" on one or more lines 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" on all 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1911-1949

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Samuel Cobb

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Samuel Cobb

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

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:

Multnomah County Public Library

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 11 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

8. Narrative Statement of Significance

The Cobb House meets National Register Criterion C and National Register Criterion B.

The Cobb House meets Criterion C because it is a fine example of a Craftsman Style house. The workmanship and materials possess high artistic values and the house retains its historic integrity. In its craftsmanship, materials, and detailing the Cobb House is equal or superior to other Craftsman Style houses. The beautiful craftsmanship displayed in its planned décor of built-in furniture, stairways, walls, and floors is superior to many Craftsman Style houses. The natural materials of oak, mahogany, and fir used in the interior also are equal or superior in quality; they were carefully selected by a carpenter who became one of Portland's successful lumbermen in the early 20th century. The Cobb House also stands out in comparison to other Craftsman Style houses in the area because it displays so many Craftsman Style features. Especially noteworthy are its intersecting gables, the segmental or round-arched openings and its asymmetrical composition with many roof, window, and porch projections. The Cobb House's combination of grand scale, excellent use of many Craftsman Style features, and fine craftsmanship in its planned décor make it a superior representative of this popular style.

The Cobb House is one of the remaining large residences that reflect the prosperity that the growth of the timber industry brought to some self-made Portland businessmen. It also reflects the growth of the Mt. Tabor neighborhood as an area planned by real estate developers to be a sought after location for newly prosperous families. It was developed to fulfill their desires for clean air, beautiful, rural-like surroundings, and social status. Its period of significance is 1911.

The Cobb House exhibits many of the characteristics of the Craftsman Style that was popular in America from 1905 to 1930 (McAlester 1984). These include a medium-pitched gable roof, asymmetrical composition with roof, window, and porch projections, intersecting or double gable dormers, small-paned casement and sash windows, and segmental and round-arched openings. One of the characteristics of the Craftsman Style that the Cobb House beautifully displays is "planned decor" using built-in wood furniture. The emphasis on wood joinery and the use of native materials in a manner that brings out their inherent qualities are handsomely illustrated Craftsman Style features. The Cobb House reflects the restraint of pattern and ornament that was another characteristic of Craftsman Style residences (Clark 1983; Fletcher 1975).

Asymmetrical composition with roof, window, and porch projections stand out as a Craftsman Style characteristic in the Cobb House. Although the house is rectangular, its wall dormer, pavilion, and two-story bay illustrate the many projections of Craftsman Style residences. The intersecting gables on the south elevation and the use of segmental arches and Tudor arches are also important features of the style.

The porch is another common feature in Craftsman Style houses. The partial width porch has short upper columns resting upon the piers of a balustrade; the balustrade begins at ground level and extends above the porch floor. The grand staircase hall, three-tiered oak paneling, boxed beams, wood floors, and the beautifully made mahogany book cases and window seat in the library reflect the Craftsman Style's appreciation of crafts and the inherent qualities of native materials. These features display the carved and polished wood aesthetic of the Craftsman Style.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 12 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

The Cobb House is an example of one of the large residences that people who succeeded in the booming early twentieth century Northwest timber industry built; the house most likely was made out of lumber that Cobb's mills produced. The house also is associated with the desire of newly affluent families to move to suburban areas. These families wanted to build large homes in places that offered fresh air, a country-like setting, and an opportunity to display their new social standing. The Hart Land Company, an early real estate firm, appealed to buyers' desire for upward social mobility in a promotional brochure:

Almost every city has one location destined by nature to draw to itself the culture, wealth and taste that seeks expression in the form of beautiful homes. Portland has Mt. Tabor...Building sites are perfectly adapted to the wants of those who can afford to gratify a taste for elegant and picturesque homes. Many of the prominent citizens of Portland are among those owning choice lots here (Mt. Tabor Brochure 1992).

The Cobb House meets Criterion C because of its association with Samuel Cobb. Cobb designed the house and was a prominent Portland lumberman, local philanthropist, and politician. Samuel Cobb was a member of an old New England family; his great-grandfather participated in the Boston Tea Party. Cobb was born on a farm near Searsmont, Maine on December 6, 1859. Caroline Robinson Cobb and James Sylvanus Cobb, Jr. had seven children; Samuel was the second son and the second oldest child (Cobb 1950).

The Cobbs moved to Port Byron, Illinois in 1869. The family was poor and Samuel went to work at 10, selling apples to passengers on the riverboats and trains. Influenced by New York newspaper publisher Horace Greeley, Samuel Cobb decided to continue to work his way west when he was a young man. At the age of approximately 17 he became a carpenter's apprentice and built houses; Cobb built the first frame house in the little town of Dawes, Kansas (Portrait and Biographical Record 1903). Still heading west, he took a job as the post carpenter at Fort Hall, Idaho (Lockley Vol. III 1928).

Samuel Cobb came to Portland, Oregon in 1882 to help build railroad shops in Albina (Cobb 1950). A writer in the *Oregon Voter* later described him as arriving "in Portland in 1883 [sic] with Villard's railroad, a pair of blankets and \$1.50" (*Oregon Voter* 1932). Cobb worked as a carpenter in 1883 and then became a partner with Samuel E. Wren in a box making plant at the foot of Montgomery Street. He married his wife, Florence E. Madden, on May 3, 1888. In 1889 he sold his interest in the box-making plant and went into the brokerage and loan business briefly. Later he returned to the carpentry business and then bought land on the west slope of Mt. Tabor. Over the years he accumulated much experience building houses.

In 1898 Samuel Cobb took over a failing box factory and helped organize the Standard Box & Lumber Company on Washington Street on Portland's East Side. Isaac Gratton was the president of the new company, C.C. Woodcock, Cobb's boyhood friend from Searsmont, was the vice president, and Cobb was the secretary. By 1900 the Standard Box & Lumber Company had grown and was operating a sawmill five blocks north of Oak Street in addition to its box plant. When the first box plant burned in 1903, the company built a new one at East Oak and Burnside streets (Cobb 1950).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 13 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

Benefiting from the good years that followed the economic depression of the 1890s, Samuel Bedlington Cobb and the Standard Box and Lumber Company prospered. The company used six to eight million board feet a year for boxes in 1903 (Portrait and Biographical Record 1903). The *Oregon Voter* reported, "For many years this mill was one of the central landmarks of Portland" (*Oregon Voter* 1932). Cobb's financial success allowed him to build his beautiful Mt. Tabor residence.

The Standard Box and Lumber Company built another sawmill in 1913. This mill was on a large tract containing two hundred million board feet of timber near Scofield in Washington County. The mill was on the Tillamook Branch of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The railroad company bought much of the lumber and the company sold smooth piling to Florida where it became ship booms and masts. As the Standard Box and Lumber Company grew, so did the number of workers; they turned Scofield into a tight-knit logging community.

By 1914 the Standard Box and Lumber Company was one of the most successful businesses in Portland. That year a fire destroyed the company's Portland mill and factory and the Scofield mill burned in 1919. Still in the middle of an expansive logging era, the Standard Box and Lumber Company rebuilt the Scofield mill and operated it until the timber was depleted in December 1928. Cobb also had an interest in other businesses, including the Portland Sand and Gravel Company (*Oregon Voter* 1932).

The years following the national economic depression of the early and mid-1890s were ones of economic prosperity for many Americans. Northwest logging and lumbering became booming industries. These industries blossomed because of the development of railroad logging, the depletion of forests east of the Mississippi River, the efficiency of new logging technology, and the growth of new wood products. Samuel Cobb was a self-made businessman who capitalized on these opportunities. The reporter in the *Oregon Voter* said, "His carpenter trade and Yankee trading knack got him started as a small contractor. By 1896 he had enlarged his \$1.50 capital sufficiently to start a sawmill..." (*Oregon Voter* 1932). Cobb's early financial success in the box business was based on the new ability of planing mills and dry kilns to produce a box shook, the set of pieces needed to construct a box (Dodds 1986). After 1915 the Standard Box & Lumber Company stopped manufacturing boxes and devoted its attention to producing lumber (Lockley Vol. III 1928). The high demand for logs and lumber that World War I created and the prosperous years that followed kept the company successful through the end of the 1920s.

This later prosperity made it possible for Samuel Cobb to become a local philanthropist who gave a very significant gift to his community- -the first donation of land for Camp Namanu, the Camp Fire Girls' camp in Sandy, Oregon. Cobb's philanthropy has great local resonance; Camp Namanu is deeply loved by generations of Oregonians because of its historic role in the education and nurturing of youth.

Samuel Cobb donated approximately 160 acres of land for Camp Namanu in 1924; the final paper work giving the property to the Camp Fire Girls was not completed until 1939 (King 1998). Miss Eathel Moore, Portland's Executive Director of the Camp Fire Girls, and W. S. Raker, Chairman of the Camp Committee and a member of the Camp Fire Girls' Board of Directors, had been searching for a good

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 14 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

campsite in the area. Miss Moore remembered, "We stopped under that tree... and I said, 'There is our campsite!' Mr. Raker said, 'Do you really think so?' I said, 'Absolutely!'" (King 1998).

The Standard Box & Lumber Company bought the land from a pioneer family named Taylor. The company planned to build a power plant on this land one-half mile below the confluence of the Sandy and Bull Run rivers. That plan changed when the company learned a dam would submerge Dodge Park and Portland's Bull Run Water Department Headquarters. The land had not been used for fifteen years. Eathel Moore told Cobb that "he would immortalize himself to the women of tomorrow if he could give us this acreage for a permanent campsite for the Camp Fire Girls. And he gave it to us..." (King 1998). Samuel Cobb felt strongly that he should give something back to the community that contributed to his success. The Camp Fire Girls Director later remembered that when she asked him for the land, he knew that the gift would be an important one for the community (Milthaler 1998).

The *Oregon Voter* described Cobb as "a man of deep patriotism and a profound sense of duty, public obligation, and responsibility" (*Oregon Voter* 1932). After Cobb donated the land in 1924, Portland architect A.E. Doyle designed the main lodge and fourteen cottages in 1925 (King 1998). Samuel Cobb also contributed lumber for a tent fly that served as a dining area (King 1998). The *Oregonian* praised Samuel Cobb's gift: "A large party of Camp Fire Girls and counselors left Portland Thursday for their summer camp, Namanu, on the Sandy River near Dodge Park. The campsite was a gift from S.B. Cobb, who has given much time and labor in getting camp into shape" (*Oregonian* 1924).

Cobb supported the Camp Fire Girls throughout his life. The Camp Fire Girls thanked Cobb in a special tribute at the launching celebration for the S. S. Camp Namanu on April 25, 1944. The victory ship S. S. Camp Namanu was a 16,500-ton tanker built by the Kaiser Company on Swan Island during World War II. The Camp Fire Girls sang 'Cheer to Mr. Cobb,' a special song written to thank him for donating the land that allowed Camp Namanu to be built.

Near the end of his life Cobb discussed the personal meaning of his giving in *Memoirs of S.B. Cobb*: "Camp Namanu of the Camp Fire Girls organization, of which I am a member, is located on land given by me. It lies on the bank of the Sandy river near Bull Run. I enjoy in all its fullness the pleasure and friendship the gift has brought me" (Cobb 1950). Cobb continued his support for the Camp Fire Girls in later years because he believed that the organization set high standards of achievement for girls and taught them sound moral principles. Cobb wrote: "I am proud of their achievements and beneficent acts, which are most worthy and of high order (Cobb 1950). Loriann Thye, former Portland Area Council of Camp Fire Public Relations Director, wrote, "Not only did he donate the original plot of land, but in addition Samuel Cobb gave of his own time, energy and money for many years" (Thye 1998).

Samuel Cobb also devoted his free time to local politics. He was known as a conservative Republican who supported "protection of property and industry from the vagaries of enthusiasts and the destructive policies of radicals" (*Oregon Voter* 1932). He also supported the ideals of honest government during the Progressive Era and was a state representative in 1902 and in 1914. Cobb wrote in his memoirs that in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 15 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

the early decades of the century the two factions in the Republican Party were corrupt. According to Cobb they used "every means known in bad political action to win: brutal assaults at the polls, buying votes, corrupt judges were but a few of the many means used to secure control" (Cobb 1950). Cobb was one of five members of the Republican Party that formed a committee for good government during this era. Cobb was the chairman of a committee that selected a ticket known as the White Ticket and White Ticket candidates had great success at the polls. In 1915 Ben Selling, a good friend of Cobb's and the Speaker of the House in the State Legislature, appointed Cobb chairman of the Ways and Means committee. Selling was a leading Progressive reformer in Portland politics (MacColl 1988).

Cobb also ran for county commissioner in 1932 but did not win (*Oregon Voter* 1932). After playing an important role in securing the election of Fred Steiwer to the United States Senate in 1932, Samuel Cobb decided to retire from political life. When Senator Steiwer asked Cobb how he could repay him for his support, Cobb said, "There is nothing I want. Just go to Washington, do your best and that will please me as well as the people of Oregon" (Cobb 1950).

Samuel Cobb was a member of the International Order of Odd Fellows, the Portland Chamber of Commerce, the East Side Commercial Club, and the Manufacturers' Association (Portrait and Biographical Record 1903). He also was a member of the Unitarian Church. He and his wife Florence had six children: Leslie Orville, Samuel Earl, Edward Cecil, Everett W., Edna, and Grace. After retiring in 1928, Cobb devoted much of his time to supporting the Republican Party (Cobb 1950).

He lived in his home on Mt. Tabor for forty years. He always kept his Maine accent, his sense of social responsibility, and his humor. He also kept his pride in his home and his work ethic; he is said to have died at the age of 91 because he fell off a ladder while he was repairing his gutters (Traeger 1998). He was "a Maine man...born with...sand in his gizzard, rasp in his throat, thrust in his jib and [a] twinkle in his eye" (*Oregon Voter* 1932). Samuel Cobb died on February 18, 1951. He is buried in Riverview Cemetery in Portland, Oregon with his wife and other family members.

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 16 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 17 Cobb, Samuel and Florence, House
Multnomah County, Oregon

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10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated area is located in Section 06, Township 1 South, Range 2 East of the Willamette Meridian in Multnomah County, Oregon; it is otherwise identified as Tax Lot 14700, Lots 4-6 in Block 2 of Buehners Addition.

Boundary Justification

The nominated area encompasses the urban tax lots (182' x 135') occupied by the Samuel Cobb House from 1911 onward.

Cobb, Samuel, House
Name of Property

Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon
City, County, and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 0.52 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A 110 530920 5039820
Zone Easting Northing

B / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

C / / / / / /

D / / / / / /

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann Fulton, President
organization Cultural Resources Management date November 1998
street & number 1540 SW Davenport St telephone 503-274-2106
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97201-2230

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

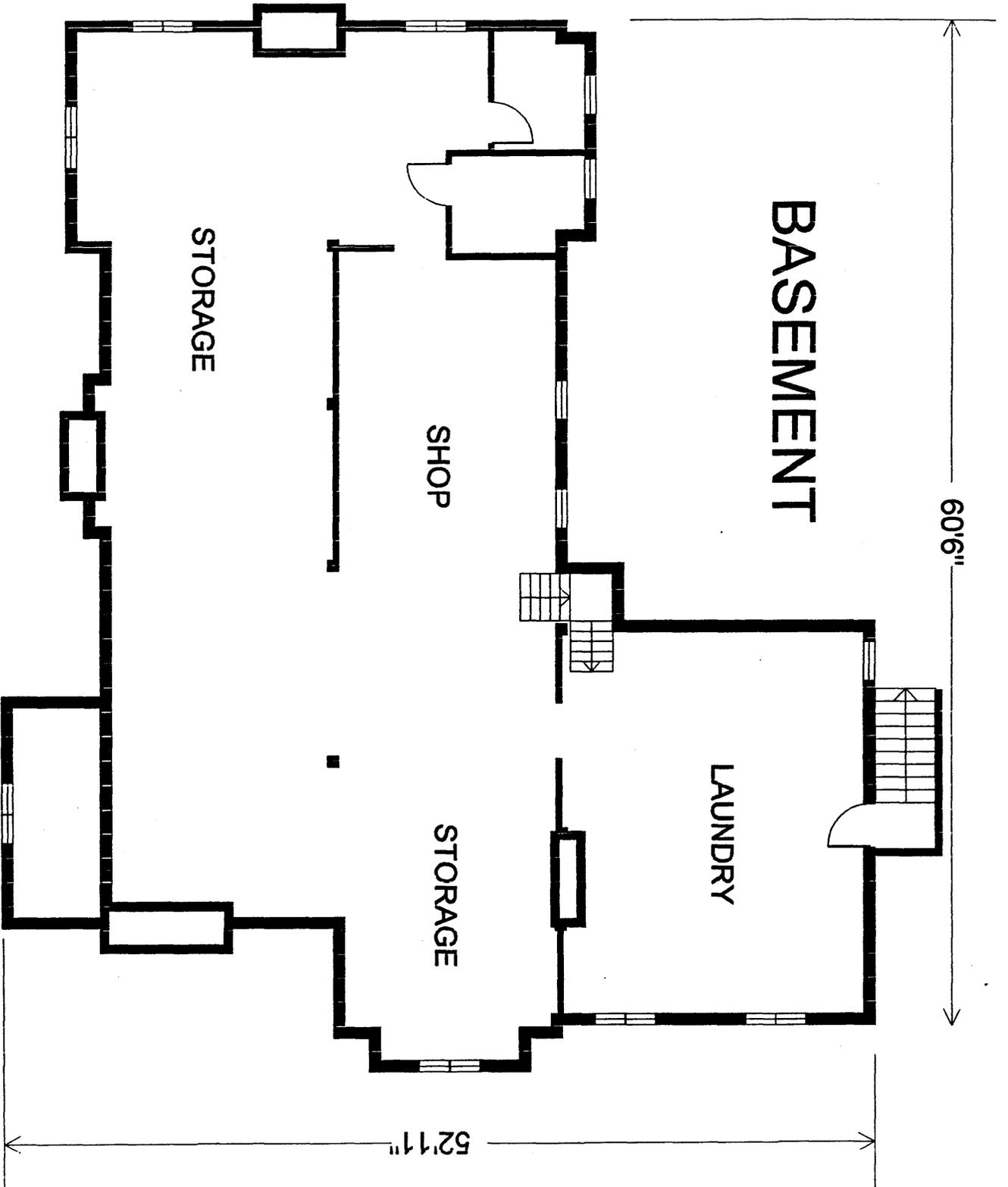
- Continuation Sheets
- Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and/or properties having large acreage or numerous resources.
- Photographs: Representative black and white photographs of the property.
- Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Property Owner

name Susan and Patrick Harrison
street & number 1314 SE 55th Avenue telephone 503-239-8090
city or town Portland state OR zip code 97215

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.





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