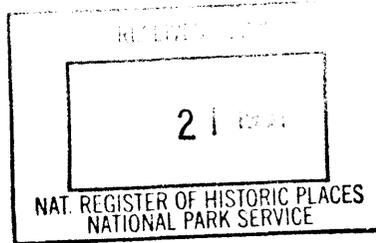


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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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

1. Name of Property

historic name Stephens, James B., House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 1825 SE 12th Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Portland N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah 051 code \_\_\_\_\_ zip code 97214

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

James Hank January 14, 1997

Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date  
Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

State of Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of certifying official/Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
  - See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action  
2/21/97

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Continuation Sheet**

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**STEPHENS, JAMES B., HOUSE (1864, 1902)**

1825 SE Twelfth Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

**COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**

The fine, two-story Italianate house which Portland area pioneer James B. Stephens built on his land claim on the east bank of the Willamette River in 1864 was moved to its present location to make way for railway development in 1902. The brisk box of a house, 36 feet square and surmounted by its rooftop outlook, was a prominent landmark on the riverfront for 38 years before it was relocated 12 blocks inland on Stephens' historic holding, where it borders the distinctive planned community of Ladd's Addition.

Originally oriented to the west to command a view of traffic on the Willamette, the house has been facing east the greater part of its history. It fronts on SE Twelfth Avenue near its intersection with Stephens Street. The site is now reduced to a standard 50x100-foot lot and is crowded by a fourplex on the street corner to the south, but a sense of discrete setting is upheld to a degree by mature street trees in the parking strip.

As originally configured, the house of balloon frame construction was a hip-roofed square volume with a kitchen ell. It rose from a high basement on a site that sloped west to the river's edge. It was encircled on the front and two sides by a balustraded ground story deck, and it was clad with lapped weatherboards. On the facade, a central entry with transom and sidelights and regular window bays on either side reveal an interior organization based on a central through hall plan. Access to the front entry was gained by a wide staircase centered on the front door, which in turn was sheltered by a single-bay porch with upper deck and railing. Windows typically were six-over-six double-hung sash with hooded lintels. Corner boards were detailed with inset panels and the building cap consisted of a low hip roof, bracketed cornice and plain frieze. A pair of brick chimneys rose on either side of the hip-roofed belvedere to vent double fireplaces in rooms on either side of the hall.

The core volume with its exterior cladding and most of its trim elements survived the relocation of 1902, as did the belvedere and open platform porch on the front and one side. But by 1923, the outlook was missing, and the front porch was replaced with a full width veranda with hip roof supported by round Tuscan columns. Eventually, the belvedere was lost, and the side deck

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removed. A single story hip-roofed attachment was added to the rear in the conversion to apartment units, and onto it was superimposed a solarium. Interior features remaining from the original construction include the staircase with spool-turned balusters, window and door trim.

The Stephens House is locally significant under Criterion B in the areas of settlement and community planning and development as the only remaining building that bears direct relationship to the founder of East Portland. Because of its exceptional status as one of the oldest houses in Portland, and in consideration of the fact that the house was moved in straight alignment from the foot of Stephens Street 12 blocks to a position within the bounds of the platter's original claim, the normal exclusion of relocated properties [Criteria Consideration B] is overcome. The historic period of significance extends from the date of construction to 1889, when Stephens, predeceased by his wife, Elizabeth Walter Stephens ended his days in the house.

James Bowles Stephens (1806-1889), a farmer and cooper who, having been born in Virginia, pushed west to Illinois, was among the early overland immigrants to Oregon. He arrived with his family in Oregon City in 1844, and the following year purchased squatter's rights on a tract of land on the east bank of the Willamette. He quickly established in 1846 what became the first commercial ferry between settlements on east and west sides of the river. In 1850, after a misadventure in the California gold fields, he platted East Portland and started a new ferry crossing under an exclusive charter. Though controversial, Stephens' monopoly on cross-river ferrying held for a decade. He was an organizer of the Pacific Telegraph Company in 1855, and from 1861 to 1873, he managed the East Portland Savings and Loan Bank. Development of East Portland was spurred by construction of the Oregon & California Railroad from 1868 onward. The Town of East Portland was enlarged by a major new addition in 1870. In the panic of 1873, Stephens suffered losses in the banking venture which he had entered into with his son-in-law, Dr. A. M. Loryea. Even so, he managed to retain a portion of his original estate, where he planted orchards and berries. Stephens was charter president of the first Oregon agricultural society. He donated land for school purposes as well as seven-acres for the Insane Asylum which, beginning in 1862, was operated under State contract by Dr. J. C. Hawthorne and Stephens' son-in-law. Presumably, it was after the institution was moved to the capital city in 1883 that East Portland's Asylum Street was renamed for Hawthorne.

When Elizabeth Walker Stephens died in 1887, Stephens provided for a stele-like sculptural relief effigy to mark their joint lot in East Portland's Lone Fir Cemetery. Lone Fir started as a community burial ground in 1855 around the grave of Stephens' father, Emmor, who had been buried there in 1846. The gravemarker is unusual in Oregon funerary monumentation, one of many noteworthy monuments in the cemetery landscape. As compelling as its association is,

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however, the grave does not outrank the Stephens House as a tangible link to the pioneer couple.

Only one of the Stephenses' seven children survived their father in 1889. The house and two acres were left to granddaughter Rosetta Jones Wallace, who, to prevent its destruction when she leased the homestead tract to Portland City & Oregon Railway Company for a terminal grounds, arranged for its relocation to SE Twelfth Avenue in 1902.

This application is accompanied by the endorsement of the City of Portland through Portland Historic Landmarks Commission chairman Deborah Gruenfeld. Portland recently entered the list of local governments in Oregon certified for expanded participation in the National Register program.

Name of Property

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	Noncontributing	
1		_____ buildings
		_____ sites
		_____ structures
		_____ objects
		_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Italian Villa

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Wood frame

roof Asphalt: composition shingles

other \_\_\_\_\_

Narrative Description

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

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### SUMMARY

The Stephens Residence was constructed ca. 1864 with elements of the Italianate style. The house was moved approximately twelve blocks to the east in 1902 from the west end of Stephens Street to the northwest corner of SE Twelfth Avenue and SE Stephens Street in Stephens Addition. The house is an example of an early vernacular Italianate style residence, one of the earliest in the state. The house displays characteristics of the style in its vertical form, hip roof with overhanging bracketed eaves, tall windows, lap siding finished with cornerboards, and a brick foundation. The original cupola, multi-pane window muntins, and entrance porch were removed prior to 1923. The building is currently used as apartments and is in good condition.

### SETTING

The Stephens Residence is located on Lot 6 of Block 124 of Stephens Addition to East Portland. The building is situated on a flat lot in what is now Southeast Portland on the corner of SE Stephens Street and SE Twelfth Avenue. The house is located in a mixed use area of single and multi-family dwellings and commercial buildings. A commercial building is west of the house and multi-family dwellings are directly north, south, and east of the Stephens Residence. Wood fences define the property lines on the north and south, and a concrete wall defines the west property line.

Deciduous street trees line the parking strip of SE Twelfth Avenue. A mature fruit tree is located in the northwest corner of the lot, and a holly tree are in the northeast corner of the lot. A lilac is adjacent to the northeast corner of the porch and other small shrubs are planted around the perimeter of the house. Roses are planted against the house on the west elevation.

The main sidewalk extends across the front of the lot and was built in 1907 by J. Stronach (inscribed in the concrete). The central concrete stairs that lead to the house curve at the base into a low cast concrete retaining wall at the sidewalk level. The retaining wall is capped with rounded coping. Concrete stairs lead up to the elevated porch. The stairs are flanked by a concrete stepped side wall.

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A concrete walkway extends across the south side of the front yard. This sidewalk originally extended around the south and west sides of the house, however, when the apartment building was constructed on the adjacent lot to the south (Lot 5), the sidewalk on the south side was removed. The original sidewalk still exists on the west side of the house. This sidewalk leads to the basement stair well. A simple wooden fence now separates the two lots. The garage associated with the Stephens Residence was demolished in 1995 when the apartment house was constructed. The cast concrete wall at the sidewalk level was retained during the apartment house construction, extending along the east and south property line (Lot 5) of the new apartment complex.

PLAN

The two-story balloon frame building, measuring 36 ft. x 36 ft., is square in plan with a 21 ft. x 36 ft. rear extension. The residence originally had four rooms downstairs and four rooms upstairs with a central hall. The back ell was most likely used as a kitchen wing. In the 1940s, the house was divided into five apartments. The house retains the central hall plan with two apartments on each floor in the main body of the house and one apartment in the back ell. Other rooms (kitchens, closets, and bathrooms) have been added to accommodate its use as apartments. A stairway, now blocked off, leads to the attic and originally accessed the cupola. The house has a partial basement.

EXTERIOR

*Main Body*

The main body of the Stephens Residence is square in plan and is covered with a hip roof sheathed with asphalt shingles. A brick chimney is on the south side of the roof. Another chimney is along the west side of the main body of the house. The wide overhanging boxed eaves are supported with large paired brackets. The soffit and friezeboard are composed of flush horizontal boards. The bottom of the frieze is finished with a molded trim board. Lap siding, finished with cut-out cornerboards and secured with square nails, sheaths the house. The one over one double-hung windows are capped with a deep, projecting cornice and are surrounded by simple board trim. A wide watertable with cap

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extends around the building above the foundation. The brick foundation is covered with stucco. Windows for the daylight basement punctuate the foundation.

The front porch extends across the east facade and is composed of a hip roof supported by Tuscan porch posts. Lattice skirting covered the foundation of the porch and a simple wood balustrade extends around the perimeter of the porch.

The symmetrical front facade is composed of three windows above and two windows below flanking the central entrance door. The entrance is vertical in its proportions with a door surrounded by sidelights and transoms, and capped with a projecting cornice. A molded trim piece and dentils decorate the top of the door. The bottom of the door is composed of three horizontal recessed panels. Classically inspired square pilasters flank the doorway. The deck of the porch is composed of tongue and groove boarding which extends east-west. Stairs leading up to the porch are concrete.

### *Rear Extension*

The one story extension on the back (west) of the house has a truncated hip roof. A partially enclosed sun room is built on top of the back extension. The extension has boxed eaves and a moderately wide friezeboard finished with a molded trim piece. The windows in the extension are one over one double-hung wood sash with simple wood trim. A tripartite window is located on the north side of the extension.

A recessed porch is built into the southwest corner of the rear extension. The small porch is indicated on both the 1908 and 1923 Sanborn Maps. The porch is supported by square chamfered posts and a simple balustrade encloses the small porch. The door on the northern part of the porch is capped with a transom and surrounded by simple trim. A door to the basement is located on the south end of the porch. Another basement door is located below ground level and is accessed by a stairwell that extends along a portion of the south elevation of the house.

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Another smaller porch is located in the north side of the back extension. This small porch is supported by a Tuscan style post and enclosed with a wood balustrade. The door at the east end of the porch has a transom window above.

The small sunroom (above the back extension) has a shed roof covered with asphalt shingles. The sun room has projecting eaves supported by modillions. The majority of the windows are single pane with the exception of a multi-pane window on the north elevation. The lower part of the sunroom is covered with lap siding finished with cornerboards.

### INTERIOR

The interior of the Stephens Residence is symmetrical in plan with a central hall. Doorways in the first and second floor hall open into the apartments. A door at the west end of the first floor hall leads to the back apartment and a door at the west end of the second floor hall leads to the sunroom. A door (now blocked off) to the original cupola (removed) is also at the west end of the second floor hall.

### First and Second Floor Halls

The first floor is divided into three apartments and a central hall. The entrance door opens into a long hall with 12 ft. high ceilings and wide fir floor boards. A beautiful, wide crown molding extends around the perimeter of the hall. Along the northern wall of the hall (towards the west end) the crown molding stops and turns to the north. This indicates that the hall once had a slightly different configuration. Other indications of the original hall configuration is the change in the floor board widths in the hall and cut marks in the flooring. The current owners also have found evidence of an interior door near the middle of the north wall of the second floor. This would also suggest a different hall configuration. The main staircase may have been on the south side of the hall at one time.

Currently, the stairs ascend from the back (west) end of the hall. A closet is under the steps. Original wallpaper samples, molding profiles, and pieces of linoleum can be seen in the closet. There were at least three layers of wallpaper in the closet. The top

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layer exposed is an off-white Lincrusta type of paper designed in a wreath pattern and the wallpaper layer beneath the Lincrusta has a dark geometric pattern. The hallway also retains the original high baseboards.

### *Second Floor Hall*

The stair balustrade (on the second floor) is composed of simple square newel posts with chamfered corners, a rounded cap, and turned balusters. Simplified fleur-de-lys cut-outs decorate the outside of the stair carriage. The original handrail is intact on the second floor railing; a new handrail cap has been added to the handrails that extends from the first floor to the second floor. The original staircase and balustrade that lead to the third floor cupola are intact, however, the staircase has been blocked off. A short flight of stairs are located at the west end of the second floor hall that lead to the sunroom.

### *Apartments and Sunroom*

There are three apartments on the first floor (two flank the main hall and one is at the west end of the hall) and two apartments on the second floor. A sunroom is located at the west end of the second floor hall. The apartments retain the majority of the original flooring, 12" high baseboards, wide crown molding, picture rails, window and door trim, door and window molding, and 12 ft. high ceilings (none of the original baseboards, crown molding, or picture rails remain in Apt. #3). Bathrooms and small open plan kitchens have been added to each apartment.

The sunroom was added between 1935 and 1955 according to the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps. The room was most likely added when the house was changed into apartments in the 1940s. Windows line north, west, and south elevations of the room. All the windows have been changed into single pane windows except a multi-pane window on the north elevation. The brick chimney is on the east elevation of the room.

Some of the original interior doors and hardware are intact. Various periods are represented in the door hardware. Simple metal knobs and lock-boxes are on some doors and more ornate Victorian style pressed door knobs and plates can also be seen. The bedroom door in apartment #3 has glass knobs commonly used in the 1930s and 1940s.

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### Basement

A full height basement is under the western portion of the house and a dirt crawl space is under the eastern portion. There are two doors that lead to the basement: one from the back porch and the other is an exterior stair well descending along the south elevation of the house. Windows light the interior of the basement. The basement has a concrete floor. Storage units have been built along the north wall of the western portion of the basement. A door in the brick wall that defines the west wall of the main body of the house leads to a furnace room and a storage room. A large octopus-type furnace is still housed in the basement, however, it is not in use. Each apartment is currently heated by a gas furnace located in the units. The house was originally heated by fireplaces.

### MAJOR ALTERATIONS

Major alterations to the Stephens House include: removal of the cupola and surrounding low balustrade (between 1908 and 1923); removal of the original front and side porch deck and balustrade (between 1908 and 1923); windows changed from six over six double-hung wood sash windows to one over one double-hung wood sash windows (date unknown); changed interior into five apartments (add kitchens, bathrooms, and auxiliary rooms); sunroom added (between 1935 and 1955); removal of original chimneys and fireplaces (date unknown, post-1902); and the removal of the multi-pane windows in the entrance door transom (date unknown).

### MOVE

The Stephens Residence was moved in 1902 by the Stephens' granddaughter. The house was moved 12 blocks east from its river front location on Stephens Street to a residential lot on the corner of SE Twelfth and SE Stephens Steet. The building retains its association with Stephens original donation land claim and is located in Stephens Addition to the town of Portland (historically East Portland).

James B. Stephens Residence  
Name of Property

Multnomah Co.  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Settlement

Community Planning and Development

#### Period of Significance

1864-1889

#### Significant Dates

1864

1870

1889

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

James B. Stephens

#### Cultural Affiliation

NA

#### Architect/Builder

Unknown

#### Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

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

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

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

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering  
Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Multnomah County

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### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The James B. Stephens Residence, constructed in ca. 1864, is significant under Criteria B, for its association with James Bowles Stephens. Stephens was one of the earliest pioneers in the Portland area, settling on land on the east bank of the Willamette River. Known for his many business ventures, Stephens is credited with starting the first commercial ferry system across the Willamette, incorporating the town of East Portland in 1870, donating land for an insane asylum and a school, and incorporating the Pacific Telegraph Company (one of incorporators). He also served on the East Portland City Council for several terms. The themes of Settlement, and Commerce and Urban Development are represented in the nomination. The Stephens Residence is a Portland City Landmark.

The Stephens Residence is also reputed to be the oldest house in Portland, representing the Settlement, Statehood, and Steampower chronological periods (1847-1865) in Oregon's history and represents one of the earliest examples of an Italianate Style residence in Oregon. The period of significance, 1864 to 1889, represents the period of occupancy of James and Elizabeth Stephens.

Although the Stephens Residence has been moved from its original location, the house meets Criteria Consideration Exception B. The criteria exception states that a resource is eligible if it is the surviving resource most importantly associated with a historic person or event. The Stephens Residence is the most important surviving resource associated with James B. Stephens and was the family home for more than 25 years. The house still remains in the boundaries of Stephens donation land claim and in Stephens Addition to Portland (originally East Portland).

### *James B. and Elizabeth Stephens and East Portland*

James and Elizabeth Stephens arrived in the Oregon Territory in 1844, settling in Oregon City. James Stephens, of English descent, was born on a farm on the state line between West Virginia, and Pennsylvania on November 19, 1806. James and his parents remained on the farm for eight years until they moved to a farm in Indiana. In Indiana, James learned the cooperage trade,

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making a living at it for many years. In 1829, James moved to Cincinnati, Ohio where he continued to work as a cooper.

In 1830, Stephens met and married Elizabeth Walker (born near Flemingsburg, Kentucky, December 6, 1805) in Cincinnati, and in 1832, the couple moved to Hancock County, Illinois (near town of Carthage). He continued his work as a cooper and also opened a grocery store on their farm.

In 1844, Elizabeth and James Stephens, their children, James' father Emmor, James' brother Thomas, and 800 other pioneers crossed the plains to the Oregon Territory (Scott: p. 352). The Stephens family arrived in Oregon City on December 24, 1844 where they stayed for a year (only three of their seven children arrived in Oregon, other died in mid-west or possibly on the trail west) (Fisher, p. 37).

Stephens quickly began work as a cooper in Oregon City, making 1,000 flour and 400 salmon barrels for the Hudson's Bay Company (Hines: p. 400). In 1847, he also made 400 barrels for the transport of beef to the Sandwich (Hawaiian) Islands (Hodgkin: p. 121).

In 1845, Stephens purchased squatter's rights to acreage on the east side of the Willamette River in present-day Southeast Portland from Doctor John McLaughlin of Oregon City. McLaughlin was the administrator of an estate (the land Stephens purchased) held in trust for a deceased French-Canadian Hudson's Bay Company employee named Porier. The heavily timbered acreage was sold to Stephens for \$200 who promptly constructed a log house on the property (Scott: p. 351).

He later secured a 641.92 acre claim through the provisions of the Donation Land Claim Act (DLC) of 1850. Stephens' DLC extended from SE Stark to Division streets and from SE 20th Avenue to the Willamette River (this included his original acreage). This land would later become known as "East Portland". James' brother, Thomas, also settled on a DLC approximately three miles upstream on the Willamette River. Thomas's property became known as Southwest Portland (North and South Burlingame districts).

James Stephens is credited with starting Portland's first ferry across the Willamette River in 1846, connecting the settlements on

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the east and west sides of the Willamette River (Scott: p. 353). The first ferry was known as the Jefferson Street Ferry which was south of the present-day Hawthorne Bridge. Stephens ferried settlers and trappers across the river on a flatbed boat propelled by oars for a fee based on the type of load. In 1855, Stephens paid the first license fee to Multnomah County (\$10) to operate the ferry (Snyder: 240).

In 1848, Stephens followed hundreds of other Northwesterners to the gold fields of California. He purchased a site for a bridge in California that would span the American River and proceeded to build a hand-hewn timber bridge. Some of the bridge members were 95 feet long and were set on heavy buttresses. This business venture prospered for only a short period. The following year, a flood destroyed the bridge at a loss of \$20,000. Stephens sold the bridge site for \$5,000 (Evans: p. 579).

In 1850, in partnership with Portlander James Terwilliger, Stephens cut a large number of trees and hewed them into large square timbers for the California market. Stephens transported the lumber to California only to lose the load to an agent, who "through a series of misfortunes, lost control of his own affairs leaving Stephens the loser to the tune of \$16,000" (*Oregonian*, Nov. 28, 1971). Stephens returned to Oregon, vowing to stay away from business ventures in California. He put his energy and money into building his ferry business and purchasing more land.

Stephens started a second ferry in 1850 which was reportedly a more popular ferry than the Jefferson Street ferry. This ferry was known as the Stark Street Ferry and extended between West Stark and East Oak Street (Fisher, p. 39). On January 17, 1853, the Oregon Territorial Government awarded Stephens a charter which granted him exclusive rights (with some limitations) of all the ferrying between West Portland and the entire east bank of the Willamette River (in Portland area) for a period of ten years (Fisher, p. 40). This charter and Stephens' rights to the ferry business caused animosity with other Portland settlers and many neighbors "believed that James was involved in unethical and unfair business practices, including ruthless tactics in opposing competition" (Fisher, p. 40). The legality of the charter was challenged and many court battles ensued.

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Stephens platted "East Portland" in 1850-51 and officially filed the "East Portland" plat in 1861 (Scott: 351). The townsite extended from present-day NE Glisan Street (originally A Street) to SE Hawthorne Blvd., from the Willamette River to SE First Avenue (Scott: 351). He later expanded the plat to SE Twelfth Avenue. Lots were offered to settlers on their own terms and people who would start businesses in the new townsite were given lots. Because of his generosity, Stephens became known as "Uncle Jimmy" by people who knew him. Stephens gradually expanded his land holdings to the north (buying part of the adjacent Wheeler DCL), owning about 1920 acres. Despite Stephens' efforts at promoting the growth of East Portland, the town of Portland on the west side of the Willamette River grew more rapidly.

In 1854, Stephens sold a parcel of land to Colburn Barrell. Within the parcel sold to Barrell was the grave of Emmor Stephens, James' father who died in 1846. As part of the sale Barrell promised to take care of the grave on the property. Later that year, a steamship (the Gazelle) exploded killing several people. Two of the people killed were buried next to Emmor Stephens. At that time, Barrell set aside 10 acres of land as a cemetery. In 1855, the cemetery was officially surveyed and named Mt. Crawford Cemetery. The name was later changed to the "Lone Fir Cemetery".

During the Indian Wars of 1855-56 when all of Eastern Oregon and Washington were closed to settlement, Stephens transported soldiers and munitions, and furnished feed for the army transports. As payment for his services, Stephens received government script for his services. Stephens again took a business blow as the script was not honored by the government until after the Civil War. When payment for his work was finally received, it was estimated that Stephens lost about \$15,000 (Evans: p. 579).

In 1857, planted orchards and berries around his home along the banks of the Willamette River. James was the charter president of the Oregon's first agricultural society, based in East Portland (Fisher, p. 42). His field produced some of the finest berries in the area and was known for his successful orchards.

Stephens sold his ferry in the early 1860s to A. Joseph Knott for \$18,000 who continued to operate the ferry. In 1861, Stephens started the East Portland Savings and Loan Bank (East First and

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Section number 8 Page 5

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East Oak streets) with his son-in-law Doctor A.M. Loryea. Problems with financing the bank arose and Stephens lost much of his land due to failure to meet the mortgage. He stayed in the banking business until 1873. After losing much of his land, Stephens retained his original estate where he built (ca. 1864) the house that now stands on SE 12th Avenue (the nominated property).

Continuing to serve the needs of East Portland, Stephens supplied lots and lumber for houses without money down and on a three year contract (*Democratic Era*: July-August 1871). This interest in development was spurred on by the construction of Ben Holladay's railroad to Roseburg in 1868; East Portland was the terminus for the railroad. Land values in East Portland escalated for several years as a result of the eastside railroad project.

In the early 1860s, Stephens donated land for school purposes and in 1862 donated seven acres for the state's first insane asylum (supervised by his son-in-law, Dr. Loryea). The present-day Hawthorne Street was known originally as Asylum Street because of the proximity to the state asylum. He also laid out "Stephens Addition" in 1869 (Stephens Street named at that time), officially incorporated the town of "East Portland" in 1870, and was one of the incorporators of the Pacific Telegraph Company (1855). Stephens was elected to the first East Portland City Council which he served on for several terms (Hines: p. 400).

The Stephenses had seven children; only one child, Elizabeth McCalla (died in 1894), outlived James and Elizabeth Stephens. One son, James, drowned in the Willamette River on August 11, 1869 and another daughter died in 1878. Elizabeth Stephens died on April 26, 1887 and James died March 22, 1889. Both died in their family home and were buried in Portland's Lone Fir Cemetery (Lot 10 Block 1) where a life-like statue (holding hands) of the couple marks their graves. The epitaph on the back of the monument (west face) reads:

*Here we lie by consent, after fifty-seven  
years'...sojourning through life, awaiting nature's  
immutable laws to return us back to the elements of the  
universe of which we were first composed.*

The family house and associated two acres were left to the Stephenses' granddaughter, Rosetta Jones Wallace. Portions of the

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

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estate, after a lengthy law suit, were also given to a Franklin Stephens (a nephew) and to the Raferty brothers, friends of the Stephens in East Portland.

### *Stephens Residence*

The Stephens House, built ca. 1864, is reputedly the oldest house in Portland. Built with stylistic elements of the Italianate Style, the house displays characteristics of the style in its low pitched hip roof, overhanging eaves supported with decorative brackets, cupola (removed), wood frame construction, and tall windows with projecting cornices. Although the exact date of the house construction is unknown, secondary sources date the house in the "early 1860s" and "1864" (*Oregonian*, September 19, 1898; March 31, 1902).

The Stephens family first built a double log house that was constructed in October, 1845 on their acreage. The log house stood at the foot (west end) of what is now called SE Stephens Street, on the bank of the Willamette River. The 1852 General Land Office Survey map indicates the Stephens' log home was south of the ferry boat landing (see supplemental maps). The road extending east-west on the 1852 map directly south of the Stephens' home would later be named Stephens Street. This road intersected with "Road to Sandy River". The plat of what is now downtown Portland is also shown on this early map.

The Stephens built a second house ca. 1864 near their original log home (on slightly higher ground). The house became a landmark along the eastern bank of the Willamette Valley and was known as one of the finest houses in the region. It was as prominent architecturally as other early Oregon residences including the Ainsworth House in Mt. Pleasant, the McLoughlin House in Oregon City, and the Bybee Howell House on Sauvie Island. Some of the balustrade details, door transoms and sidelights, and interior stair details are similar to these early Oregon houses. The original front porch of the Stephens house and entrance door surrounds are similar to the entrance details of the Bybee Howell House (1856) on Sauvie Island.

The two-story house was square in plan, measuring 36 ft. by 36 ft., with a back one-story extension. The hip roof was capped with a cupola surrounded with a low balustrade. Large corbelled

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Section number 8 Page 7

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brick chimneys flanked the cupola. Italianate paired brackets supported the overhanging eaves. The six over six double-hung wood sash windows were capped with a prominent, projecting window cornice. Operable shutters flanked the windows. Long steps led up to the front deck which was enclosed with a balustrade. A small central porch with balcony covered the entrance door. The door had multi-pane sidelights and transom.

A conjectural drawing of the original interior plan of the Stephens house prepared by William Hawkins, AIA, indicates that the house had a central hall with four rooms downstairs and four rooms upstairs. The one story extension in the back (west) of the house was probably a kitchen wing (Hawkins drawing in supplemental material). The interior stair balusters and trim details in the house are similar to the McLaughlin House in Oregon City (Hawkins, June 1996). The house was reported to have cost \$6,000 to construct (*Oregonian*, March 31, 1902).

Several early photographs of downtown Portland and the Willamette River show the Stephens Residence in the background. The house was easily recognizable because of its size and prominent location along the banks of the Willamette River.

The Stephens house was moved in 1902 by Rosetta Wallace, (granddaughter of the Stephenses) from its river front lot on the west end of Stephens Street to a lot at the corner of SE Stephens Street and SE Twelfth Avenues. A newspaper article of the time states that the house was moved for a cost of \$750 (*Oregonian*, March 31, 1902).

According to the 1908 (corrected from 1901) Sanborn Fire Insurance map, the house retained the south and east porch platform that originally extended around three sides of the house, and the cupola after the 1902 move. By 1923, however, the Sanborn Map indicates that the cupola had been removed and a one-story full porch (not the originally open platform) was built around the front and south side of the building. Between 1932 and 1955, the south side porch was removed leaving the present porch configuration. A garage is shown in the southwest corner of the lot on the 1923 Sanborn map (1908 indicates a barn at the same location).

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Section number 8 Page 8

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The house has been altered throughout the years. Major exterior alterations include the removal of the cupola and original front porch and balcony, changing the original six over six double-hung sash windows to one over one double-hung windows, and removal of the original chimneys. The residence was divided into five apartments in the 1940s. The fireplaces were removed and kitchens, closets, and bathrooms added to each unit. The original stair balusters remain and some of the crown moldings and baseboards in the interior of the halls and apartments are intact. Although the house has been altered over the years, the Stephens Residence is still an excellent example of early Oregon architecture representing the early settlement of Portland.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

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Conte, Alba and Jay Gilberty. Interview with current owners by S. Donovan, July, 1996.

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General Land Surveyors Map, 1852. W 1/2 of T1S, R3E.

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*Oregon Journal*. 21 August 1869.

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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

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### BIBLIOGRPAHY (CONTINUED)

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Scott, Leslie M. "Beginnings of East Portland". *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 31. Oregon Historical Society, 1930.

Snyder, Eugene E. *We Claimed This Land*. Portland: Binford and Mort Publishing, 1989.

James B. Stephens  
Name of Property

Multnomah County  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre (0.11 acres) Portland, Oregon 1:24000

**UTM References**  
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	0
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5	2	7	1	4	0
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5	0	3	9	4	1	0
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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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Zone Easting Northing

4 

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 See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**  
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

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

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Sally Donovan  
organization Donovan & Associates date July 1996  
street & number 1615 Taylor Ave. telephone 541-386-6461  
city or town Hood River state OR zip code 97031

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

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

**Property Owner**

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

name Alba Conte and Jay Gilberty  
street & number 1635 SE 36th Ave. telephone 503-238-3914  
city or town Hood River Portland state OR zip code 97214

**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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National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

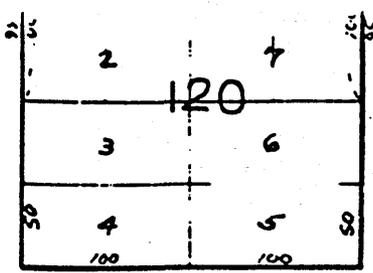
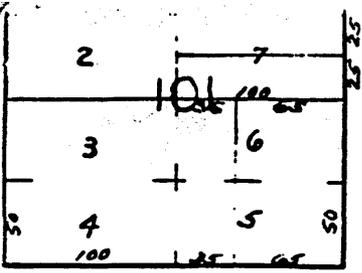
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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

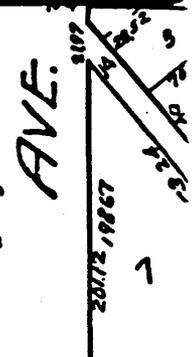
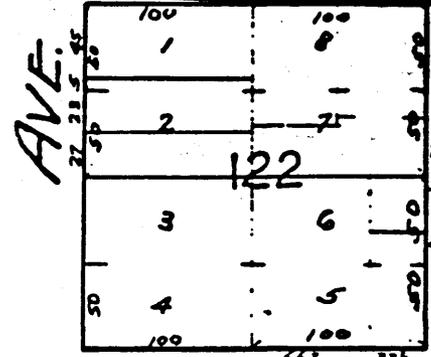
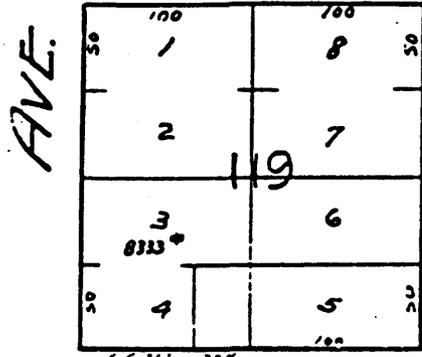
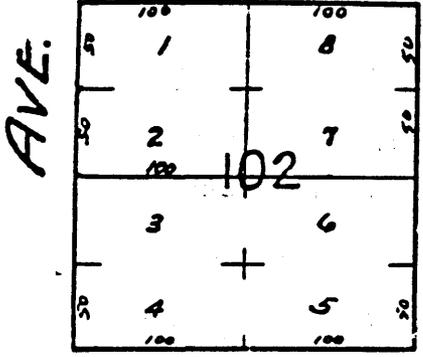
The nominated area is in Section 2, T1S, R3E, Willamette Meridian and is legally described as Lot 6 of Block 124, the Stephens Addition to Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

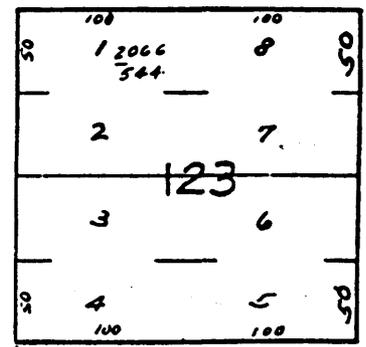
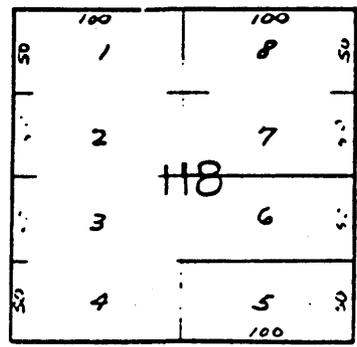
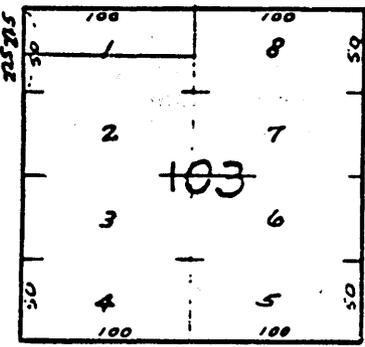
This lot defines the current property boundary, a 50 ft. by 100 ft. lot. The adjacent lot to the south, Lot 5, was originally part of the Stephens Residence, however, in 1986 the lot was subdivided. Lot 5 was sold separately from the Lot 6 in 1994 and in 1995 a new apartment complex was built on the Lot 5. The new apartment complex is not included in the nominated area.



W ↑ E 3231  
 Stephens - S Lot 6 BL 100  
 THIS MAP IS FURNISHED AS A  
 CONVENIENCE BY:  
**STEWART TITLE**  
 THIS MAP IS NOT A SURVEY AND DOES NOT  
 SHOW THE LOCATION OF ANY IMPROVE-  
 MENTS. THE COMPANY ASSUMES NO LIA-  
 BILITY FOR ANY ERRORS THEREIN.

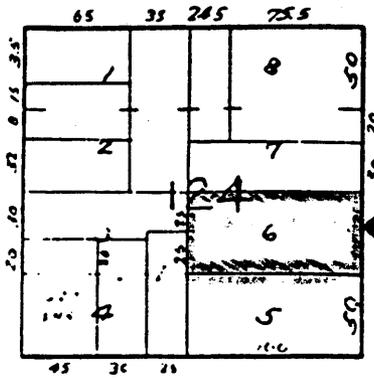
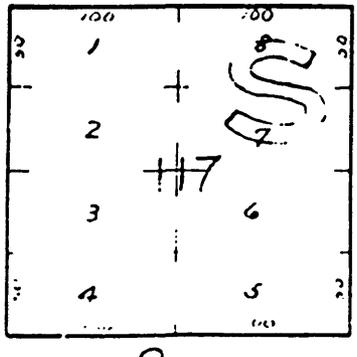
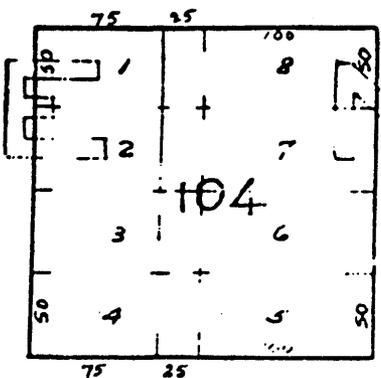


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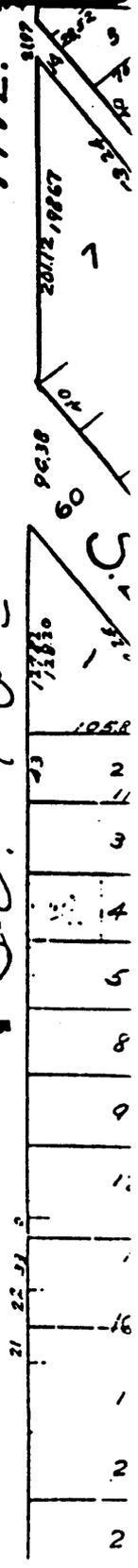
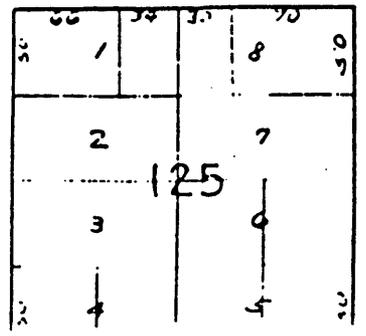
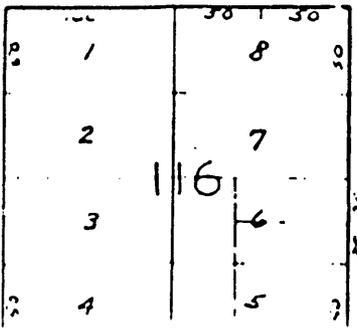
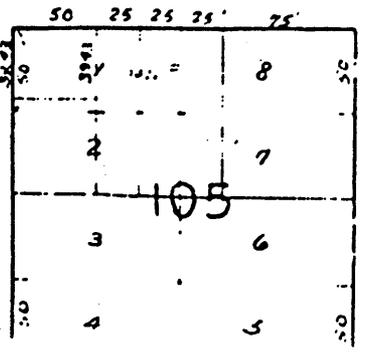
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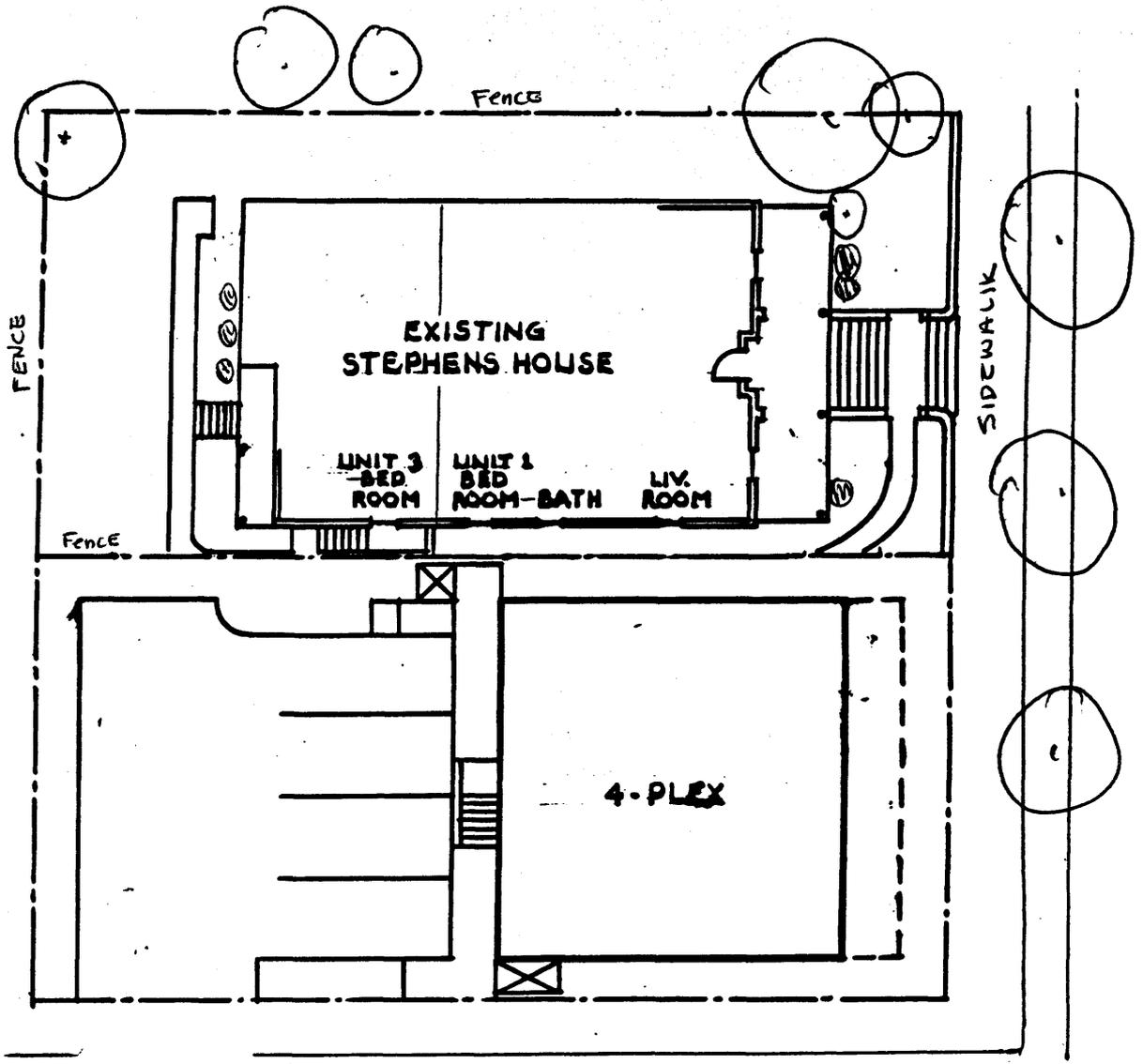
S. E. 11th



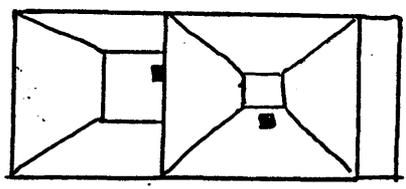
S. E. 12th  
 ↑ S. E.

S. E. STEPHENS ST



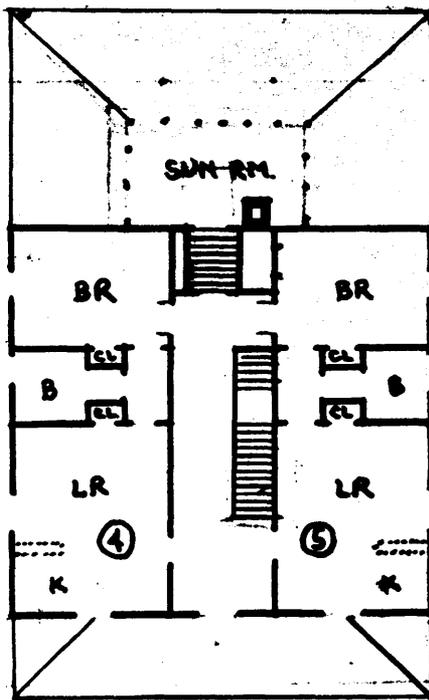


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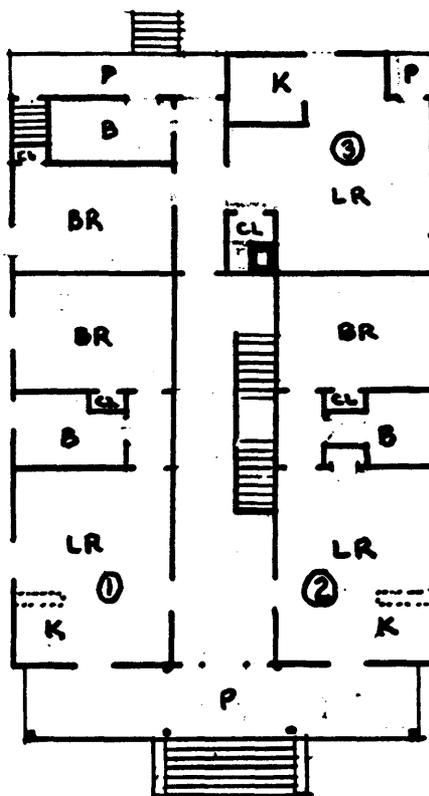


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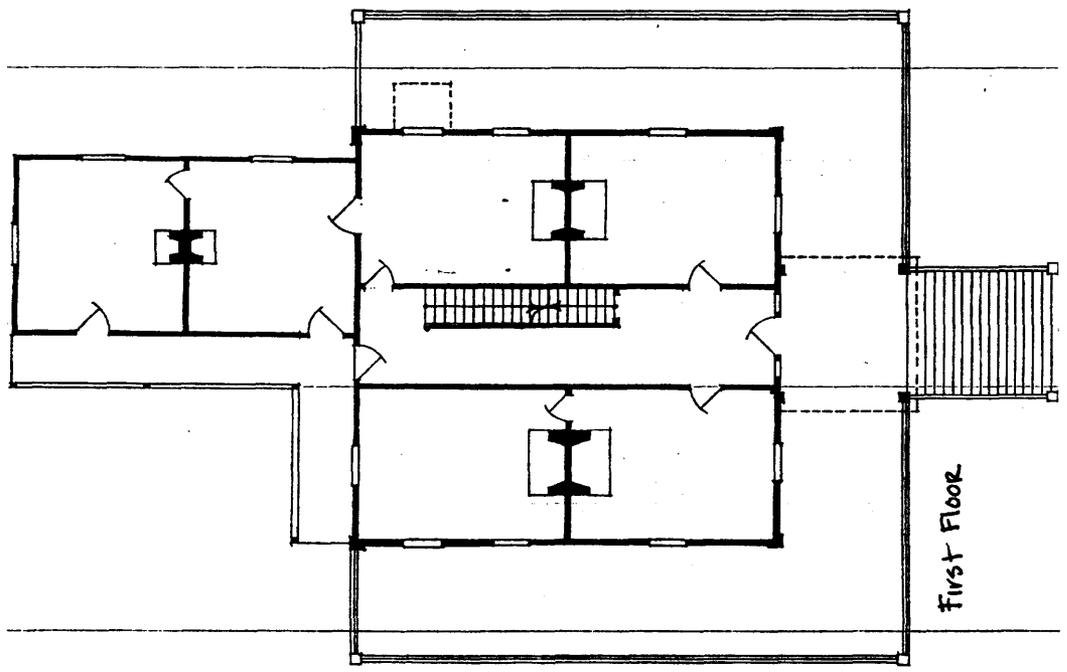
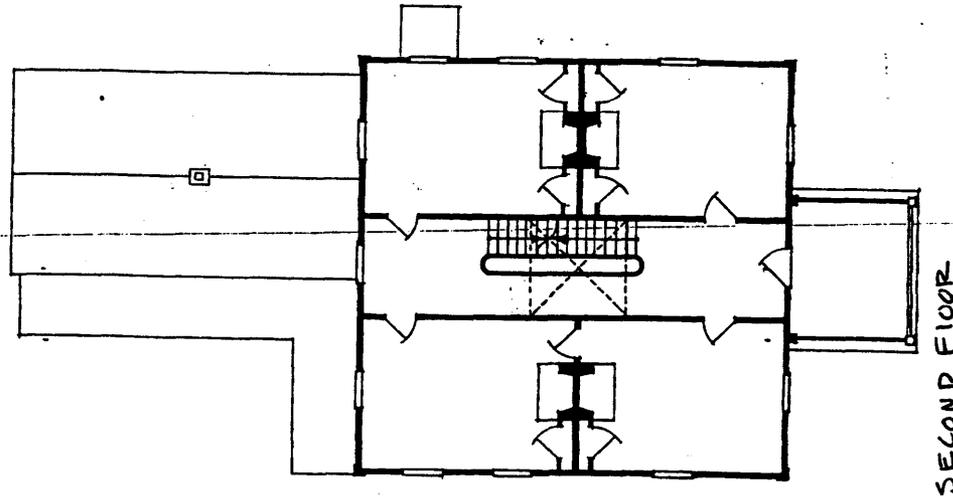
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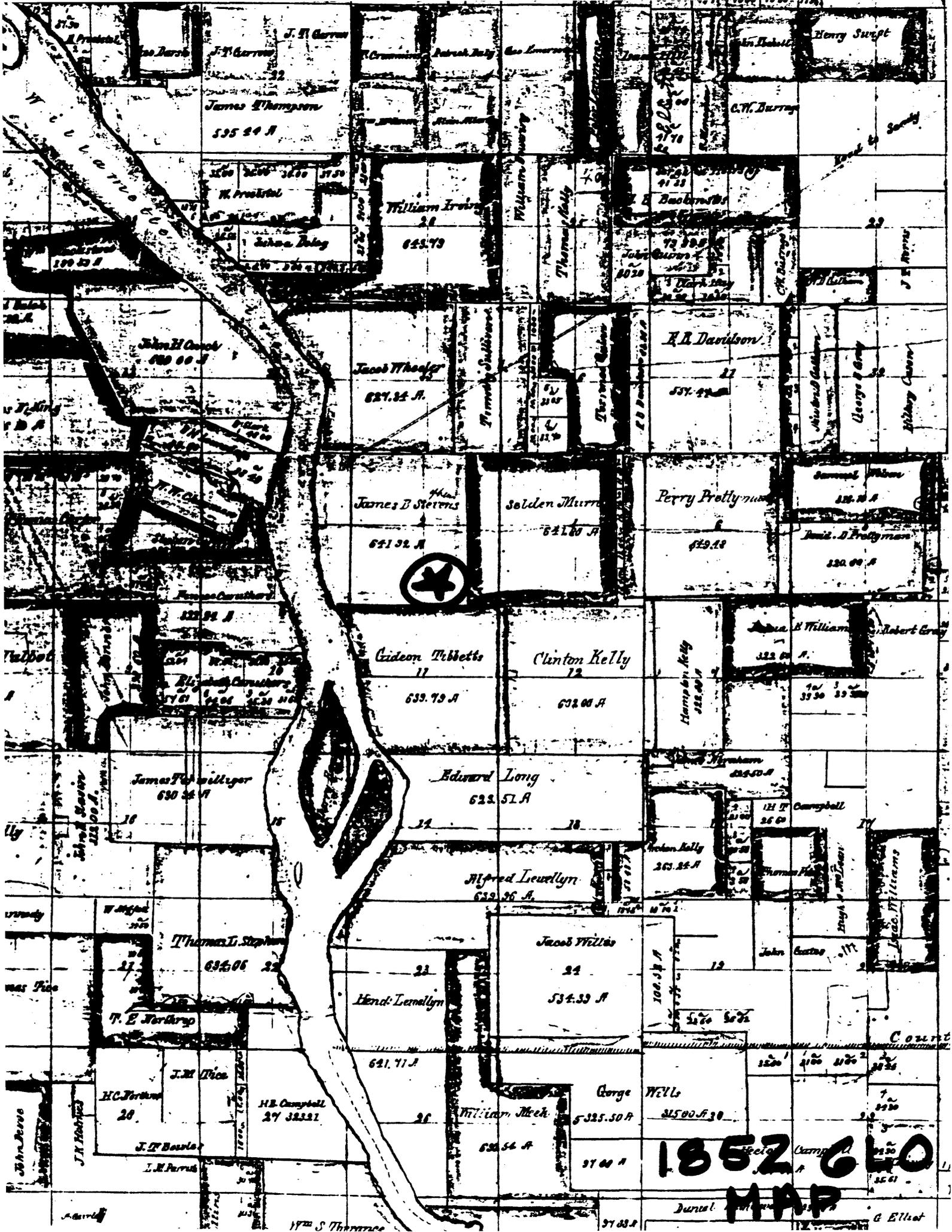
SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



CONJECTURAL DRAWING OF STEPHENS HOUSE IN ORIGINAL CONFIGURATION  
 BY WILLIAM HAWKINS, AIA, PORTLAND, OR.



J. H. Curran  
James Thompson  
535 24 A

William Irwin  
645 73

H. R. Davidson  
537 22 A

Henry Swift

John H. Church  
580 00 A

Jacob Wheeler  
627 25 A

Perry Profflyman  
629 18

Samuel Wilson  
520 00 A

James B. Stevens  
621 32 A

Selden Murray  
641 80 A

Clinton Kelly  
602 00 A

Robert Gray  
322 00 A

Gideon Tibbetts  
639 75 A

Edward Long  
623 51 A

James B. Williams  
322 00 A

Robert Gray  
339 50 33 50

James P. Williger  
630 24 A

Alfred Jewell  
632 26 A

John Kelly  
363 25 A

John Campbell  
121 11 26 00

Thomas L. Stephens  
636 06 A

Jacob Wells  
534 33 A

John Kelly  
100 34 A

John Castro  
117

T. E. Northrup  
621 71 A

Henry Lemalyn  
621 71 A

George Wells  
31500 5 30

John Castro  
117

H.C. Fortson  
20

William Meek  
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George Wells  
31500 5 30

John Castro  
117

J. H. Beale  
L. H. Parrish

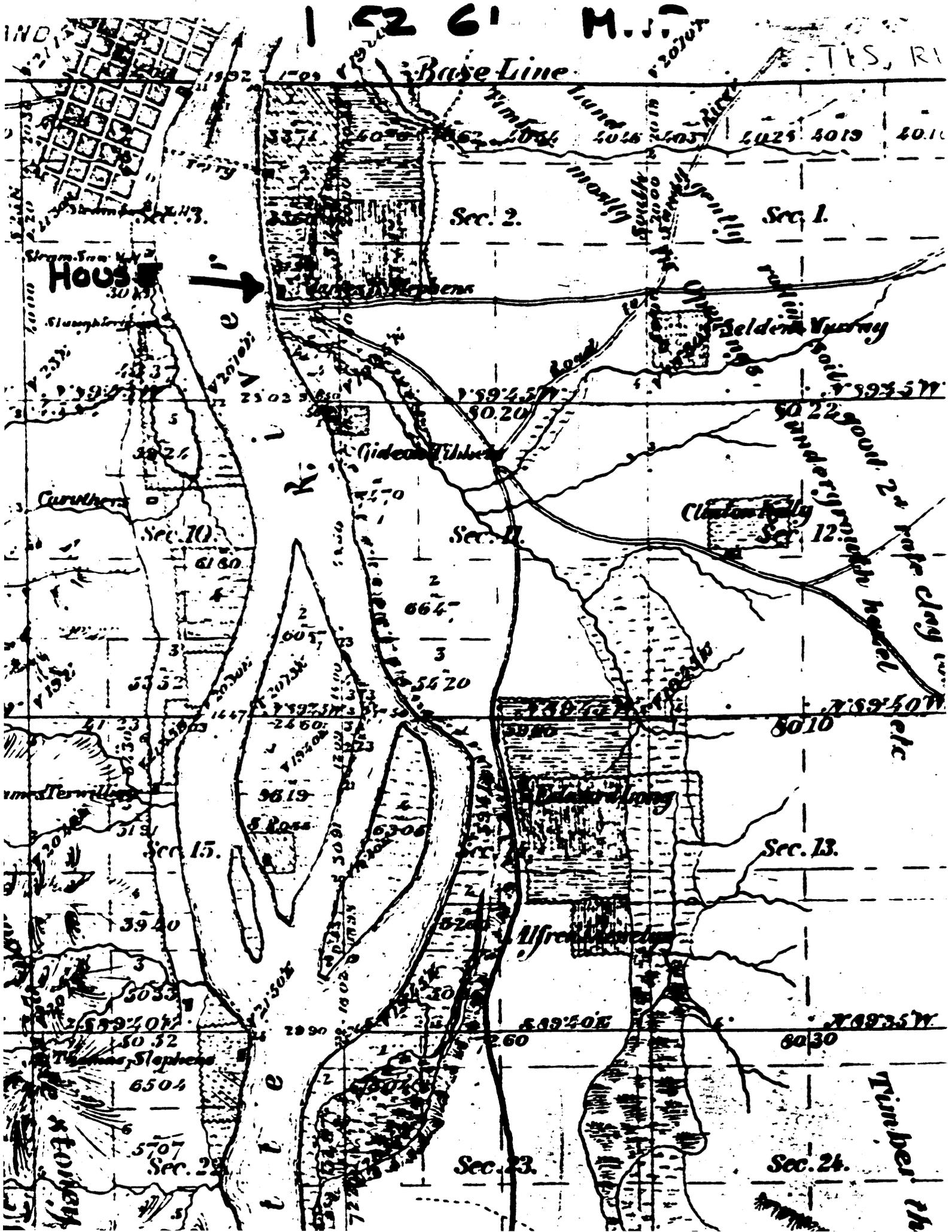
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George Wells  
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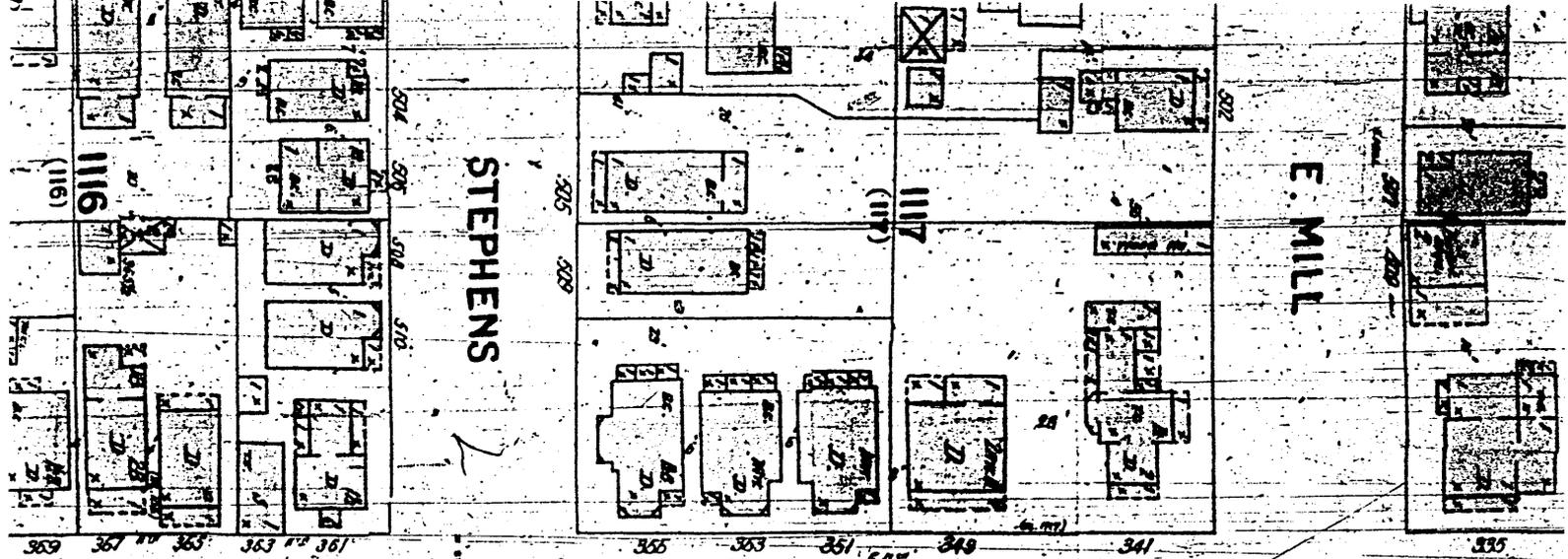
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1852  
MAP

15261 M.S.



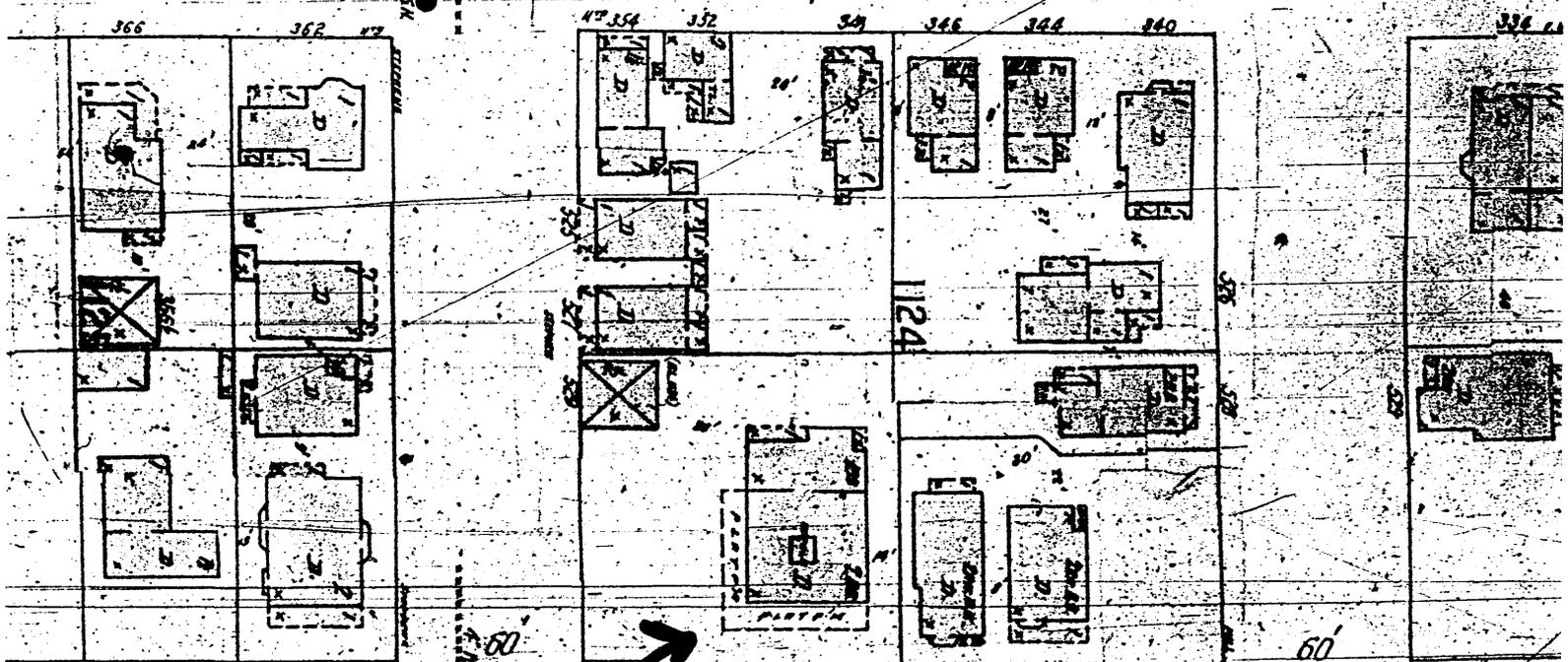




STEPHENS

E. MILL

ST.

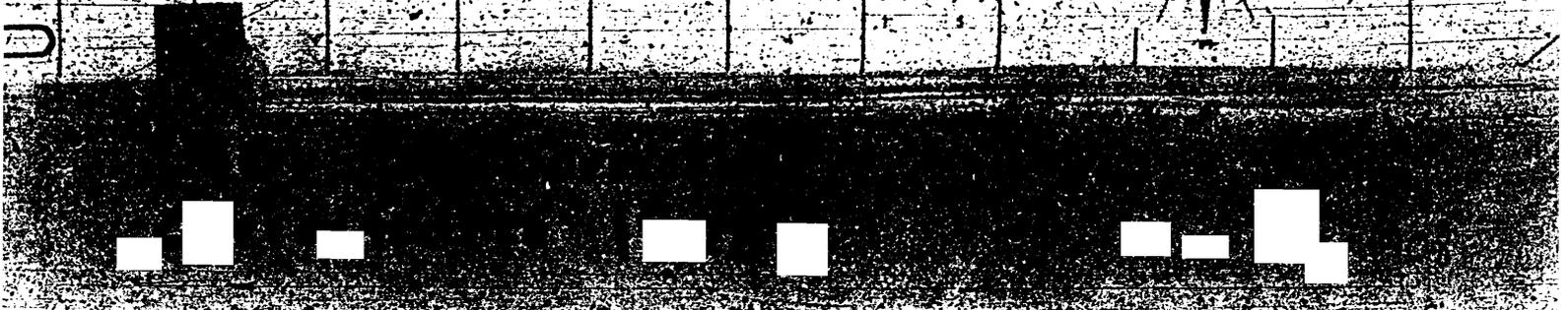
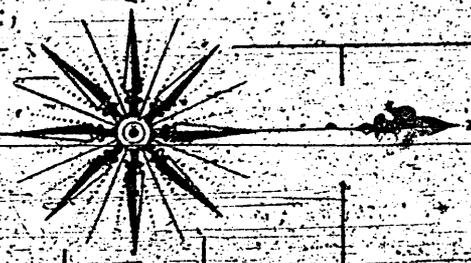


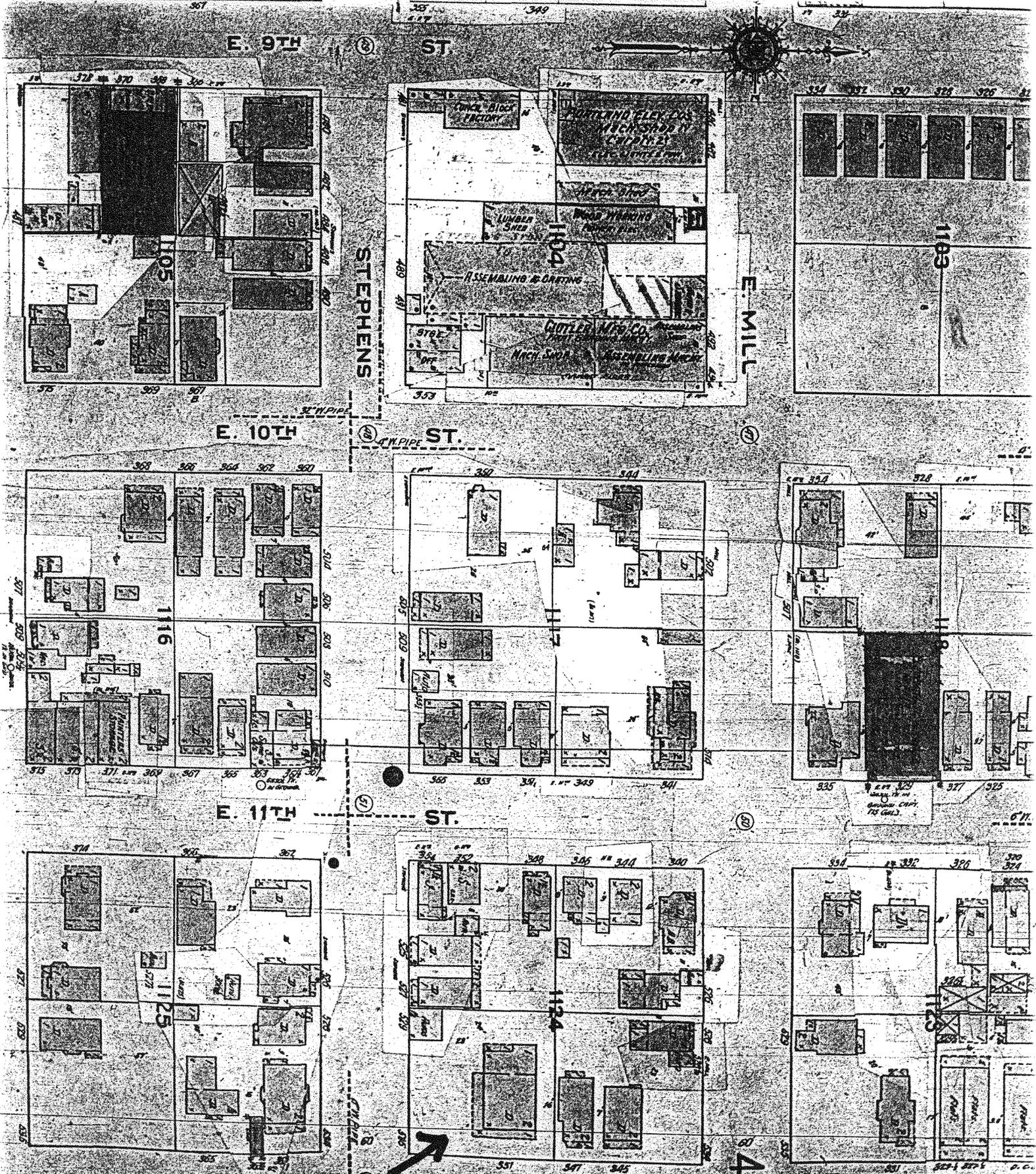
HOUSE



12th Street

ST.

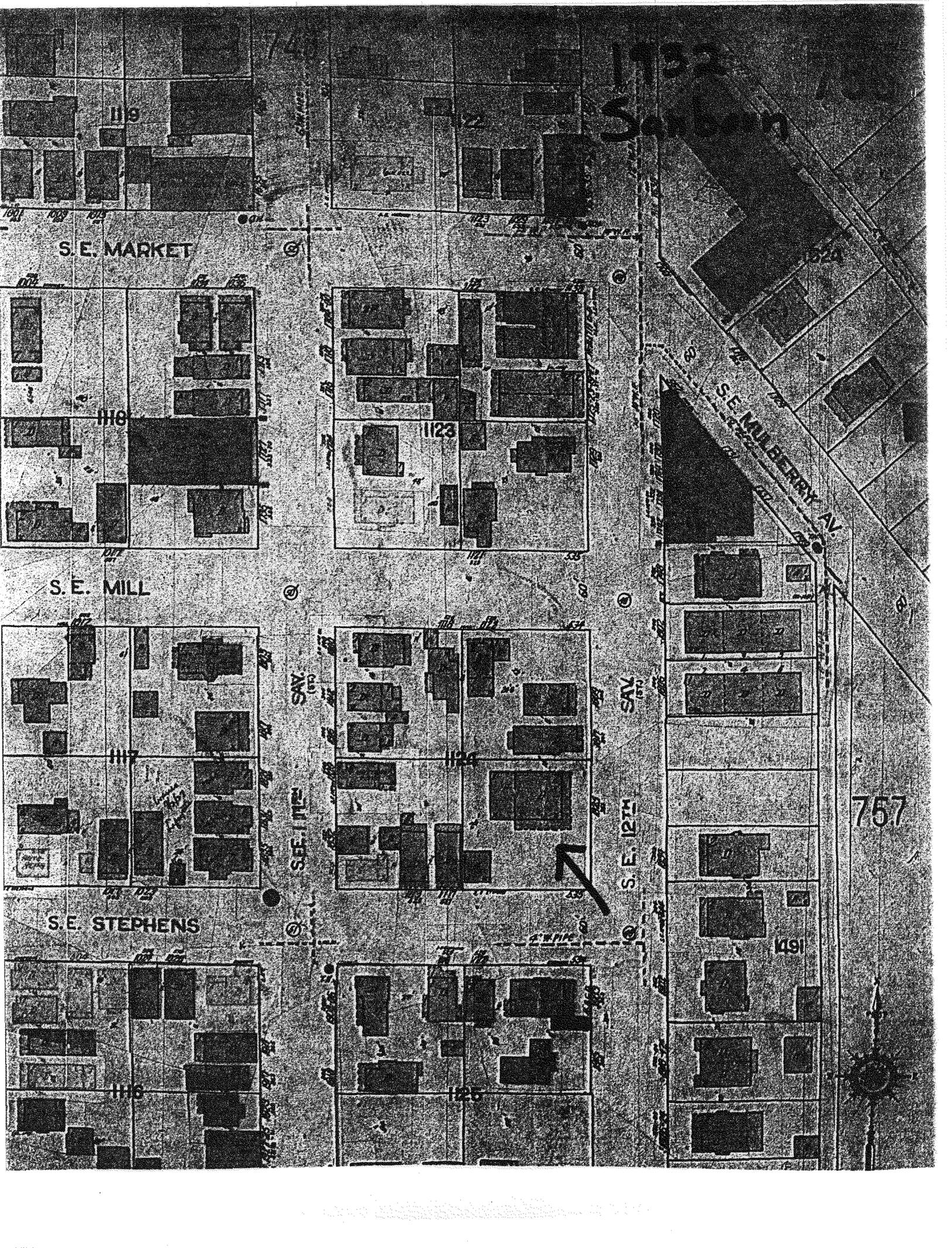




HOUSE

472

1123 S. ...



119

1122

S.E. MARKET

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1123

S.E. MULBERRY AV.

S.E. MILL

117

1124

757

S.E. STEPHENS

116

1125

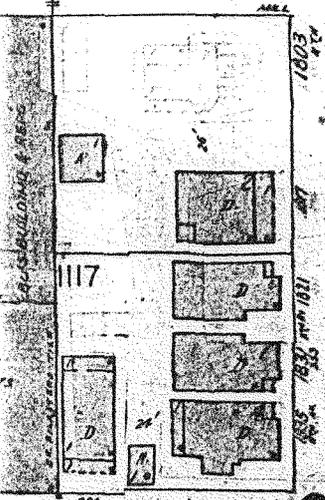
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S.E. 12TH

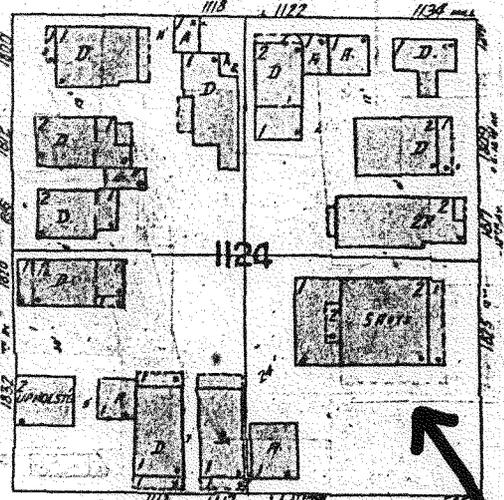


# 1955 Sanborn

MILL

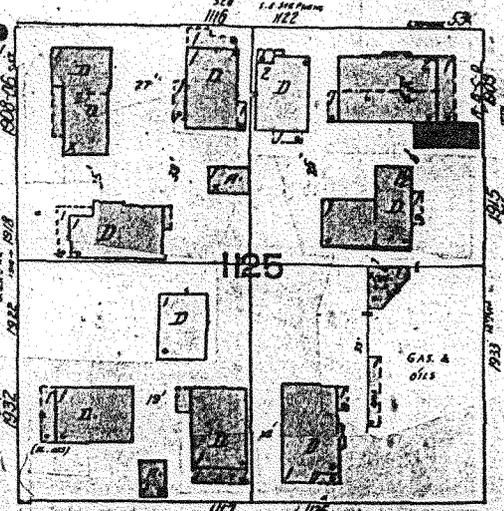
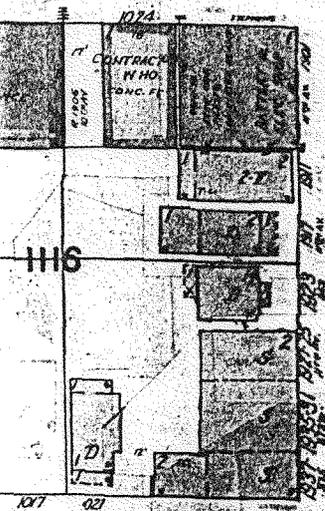


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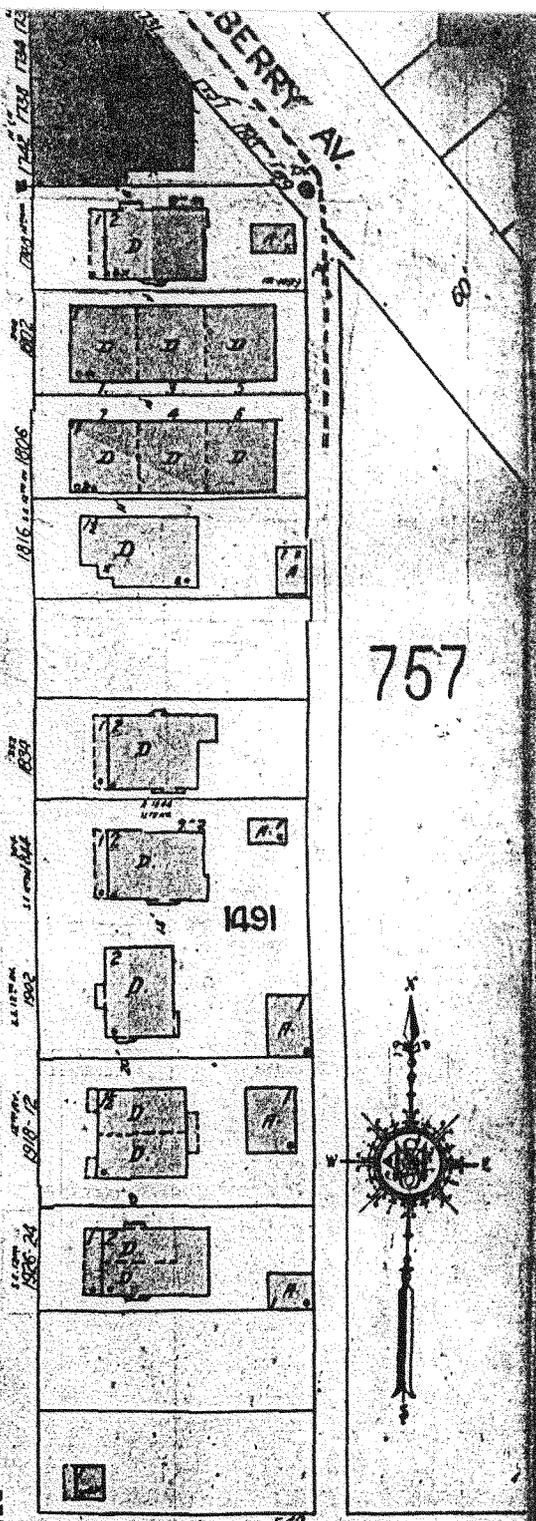
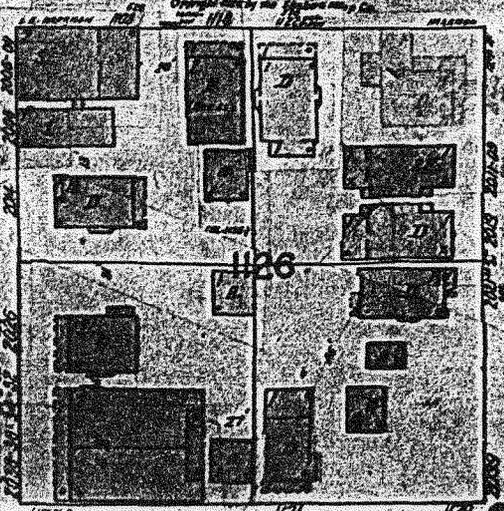
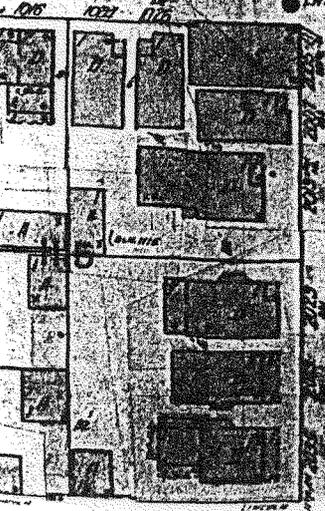
S.E. 12TH

STEPHENS



Scale of Feet

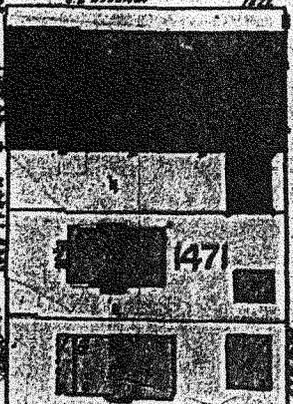
S.E. HARRISON



757



S.E. HARRISON



74-764

Historic  
Resource  
Inventory  
CITY OF PORTLAND, OREGON



9-012-01825

1825 S.E. Twelfth Avenue

Stephens, Block 124, Lots 5, 6

QUARTER SECTION MAP #: 3231

Hosford-Abernethy

PREVIOUS LOCATION: East bank of Willamette River now east end of Marquam Bridge; moved 1902

ORIGINAL FUNCTION: Residence

OTHER FUNCTIONS: Apartment House

DATE BUILT: ca. 1862

STYLE: Italianate

ORIGINAL OWNER: Stephens, James B. and Elizabeth

TAX ASSESSOR'S ACCOUNT #: R-79401-5360

ZONING: R1

DESIGNATION: Landmark

SPECIAL FEATURES AND MATERIALS:

Low-pitched hip roof with wide overhanging eaves, paired brackets and deep plain frieze board. Tall one-over-one, double-hung windows with pronounced cornices. Bevel siding, corner boards and water table.

SPECIAL F/M - ORIGINAL REMOVED:

Belvedere. Porches.

SPECIAL F/M- SIGNIFICANT ALTERATION:

Front porch replaced.

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture, Development, Commerce in association with James B. Stephens

Development, Commerce, in association with James B. Stephens: Stephens (1806-1889) was born in Brook County, Virginia. He came to Oregon in 1844 and took a 640 acre land claim on the east bank of the Willamette River opposite the Portland town site in 1845. At that location he operated the first ferry in Multnomah County. After returning from the California gold fields, he developed his property. In 1850-51 Stephens laid out East Portland from Glisan to Hawthorne Streets, and from the river to East First Street. He was one of the organizers of the Pacific Telegraph Company in 1855 and managed the East Portland Savings and Loan Bank from 1861 to 1873.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Portland Historical Landmarks Commission, inventory form.

Corning, Howard M., *DICTIONARY OF OREGON HISTORY* (Portland, 1956).

Snyder, Eugene, *EARLY PORTLAND: STUMP TOWN TRIUMPHANT* (Portland, 1970).

Present owner as of May 1981: LeRoy E. and Hilda E. Boland

MAILING ADDRESS: c/o H.H. Arnold, P.O. Box 15187, Portland 97215

No Preservation Funding

Negative: 114-16, 112-5