

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received OCT 9 1986

date entered NOV 6 1986

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

1. Name

historic Wheeler, J. A. House Number of contributing resources: 1

and/or common Same Number of non-contributing resources: 3

2. Location

street & number 386 Monmouth Street N/A not for publication

city, town Independence N/A vicinity of Fifth Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Polk code 053

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Morris and Mona Barker

street & number 386 Monmouth Street

city, town Independence N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97351

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Polk County Courthouse

street & number 850 Main Street

city, town Dallas state Oregon 97338

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title City of Independence Historic Resource Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records City of Independence, City Hall

city, town Independence state Oregon 97351

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The two-story vernacular farmhouse with Italianate features built for J.A. Wheeler about 1880 is presently used as a single-family residence, bed and breakfast inn and antique shop. It is in excellent condition and has been little altered since its completion over 100 years ago. A significant change on the exterior, however, is the loss of a large square tower on the southwest corner of the building which blew down in the Columbus Day Storm (hurricane) of 1962. Facing south from the northeast corner of the intersection of 4th and Monmouth Streets, it occupies Lots 5 and 6, Block 13, of Henry Hill's Town of Independence, Oregon. A fruit cellar, which appears to date to the early 20th Century, sits just east of the house. A compatible garage, constructed c. 1925, occupies the southwest corner of the lot. There is also an outdoor fireplace of stone and another of brick, c. 1950. A tool shed which was built in 1975 replaced an older one. It is located on the northeast corner of the lot. None of these ancillary features is counted as a contributing resource, though the fruit cellar, undescribed, may nearly relate to the historic period of significance.

Site

The J.A. Wheeler House is located two blocks from the city's historic commercial core in a residential neighborhood composed primarily of late 19th Century houses and early 20th Century bungalows. Adjacent to the house on the east is the former Methodist Church (1874) remodeled as St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in 1910; across 4th Street to the west is a contemporary building housing a mortuary; to the southwest across Monmouth Street is a Queen Anne style house; and immediately to the south is another late 19th Century vernacular house. The Wheeler House sits on a generous, landscaped double lot measuring 132 X 148.50 feet. Of particular note are the eight mature nut and fruit trees in the yard to the east, as well as a grape arbor and private hedge, all of which were pictured in an historic photograph taken prior to 1909.

Exterior

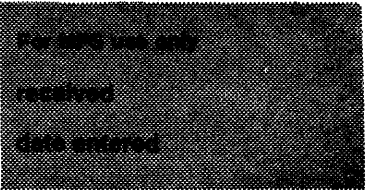
Asymmetrical in plan, this balloon frame house has a concrete block foundation which replaced the original brick foundation in 1980. The old bricks were sliced in two pieces and used to face the concrete. There is no basement. The intersecting gable roof with boxed cornice is covered with composition shingles. Three gable-end lightning rods with glass balls replace the originals which were documented in the historic view of the house.

There are two corner porches on either side of the front-facing gable, either of which has simple square supports and decorative bracing elements. Wrought iron cresting on the roof of the southwest corner porch is original, with the exception of a ten-foot section which the current owner ordered to fill in the area vacated by the tower. There is a side porch on the east elevation which has been partially enclosed to house a furnace and hot water heater.

The house is sheathed in lap siding and trimmed with corner boards with simple caps and wide, unadorned frieze boards. The only exception is a small portion on the north wing of the house, originally an attached woodshed, which is sheathed in board and batten.

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Continuation sheet J. A. WHEELER HOUSE

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Fenestration throughout the building consists of narrow two-over-two, double-hung sash with architrave molding. Some windows have weighted sash and others have pins. A salient feature of the facade is a prominent two-story polygonal window bay on the front-facing wing. Doors are paneled and have transoms, or top lights. The front door has octagonal molded panels. A screen door with wood spindles is in place also.

One of the noteworthy features of the house is its distinctive gable end ornament. The circle and pendant motif of the eaves bracing element is unlike any other ornament found in the city. It is repeated on the porches and was also present in the gable ends of the corner tower roof.

Interior

The basic plan of the house is L-shaped with a lower east wing and a single-story rear wing, or ell. The interior spatial arrangement is intact as built with the exception of removing a wall to expand the kitchen into a former pantry/wood-shed area, opening up what was originally an enclosed stairwell to the second floor, and enclosing a small portion of the second floor for use as a closet and bathroom. The stairwell which gave access to the tower is still in place. Walls are lath and plaster. The living and dining rooms are painted; other walls are wallpapered. The floors are 3-inch fir board throughout. The kitchen area has been covered with linoleum, however, and the dining room and a first floor bedroom have been carpeted.

Almost all interior finishes and woodwork remain intact and have been well preserved. Doors, all of which are original, are the 4-panel type common to the period of construction. Window and door trim is standard beaded millwork with corner blocks. Wainscoting of beaded fir is found in the kitchen, dining room, and first floor bath.

Alterations

The most apparent change in the house is the loss of the corner tower. Photographs indicate that it was square in shape with a cross gable roof. Each gable had a lightning rod, and the same ornament found in the main house was repeated in the gable ends. There was also a window in each elevation which was a shorter version of those in the main house. Two tall brick chimneys with corbelled caps also have been removed.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1880-1902 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The two-story, L-shaped and gable-roofed frame house having subordinate wings located at 386 Monmouth Street in Independence, Oregon, was built for J.A. Wheeler, manager of the Independence Sawmill, upon his arrival in the community in 1880. Within the context of Independence architecture of the late 19th Century, the Wheeler House meets National Register criterion "c" as the oldest, most distinguished and best-preserved example of the vernacular farmhouse type. Its two-story projecting window bay and delicately-framed front porches are essentially Italianate features, as was a Villa-like corner tower now missing due to storm damage. The remnant of original wrought iron deck railing, the millwork and distinctive, decorative circle and pendant bracing elements of gable ends and porches are thought to have been produced by the enterprising Wheeler himself in his mill and in the blacksmith shop which he operated on Main Street.

There are six examples of vernacular farmhouse architecture in Independence which are comparable in plan, mass and general character to the J.A. Wheeler House. These are the Hoffman House (475 E Street), Butler House (411 Monmouth), Collins House (1235 Monmouth), Hedges House (710 Monmouth), Presbyterian Parsonage (770 D Street), and the Baldwin House (461 Monmouth). Each of these is included in the City of Independence Historic Resource Inventory (1985). Each incorporates varied features having stylistic pretension, but, like the Wheeler House, each is basically a vernacular type. The Wheeler House is notable for being the best-preserved. Constructed c. 1880, it is also the oldest, predating the others by almost ten years. The others were built between 1890 and 1895. The Wheeler House is further distinguished by its landscaped double lot which remains much as it was around the turn of the century, including the old nut and fruit trees and encircling privet hedge. The nominated property was occupied by the Wheeler family until 1902.

The J.A. Wheeler House is, by its size, generous site on the main east-west street, and the quality of its finish work, a manifestation of the flourishing years which Independence enjoyed during the 1880s. The town's growing importance as a shipping point for agricultural produce from surrounding farms was augmented by the construction of two flour mills, large warehouses for grain and sawmills. Independence profited from her situation on the Willamette River. Lumber, flour, grain and produce was transshipped to more distant markets by steamboat and the newly-built westside railroad. During this decade the town was incorporated, a mayor-council form of government established; four churches and two banks were formed; and the world's shortest independent railway was constructed, running the two mile circuit between Independence and nearby Monmouth.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Monmouth, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

110	481521010	41961621610
Zone	Easting	Northing

B

Zone	Easting	Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification The nominated property occupies Lots 5 and 6, Block 13, Henry Hill's Town of Independence, Polk County, Oregon. It is otherwise described as Tax Lots 10300 and 10200, Polk County Assessor's Map Ref. No. 8-4-28BA.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Betty Lou Newberg and Julie M. Koler

organization N/A date March 14, 1986

street & number 887 Monmouth Street telephone (503) 838-3280

city or town Independence state Oregon 97351

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date October 2, 1986

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 11-6-86

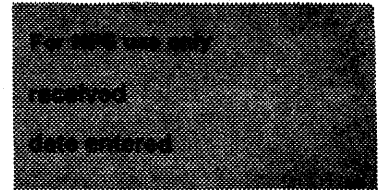

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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

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Continuation sheet J. A. WHEELER HOUSE

Item number 8

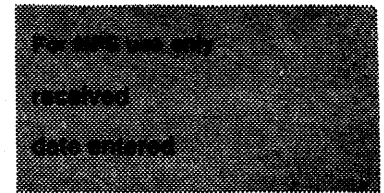
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John Wheeler prospered along with the town. His name first appears in area records in the 1880 census. Although it is not known precisely what year he arrived in Oregon, both he and his wife Lucy Ann were from New York State. Wheeler was a man of many skills. In addition to being manager of the local sawmill, he also established and operated for many years a blacksmith shop on Main Street. It is assumed the lumber for his house came from the Independence Sawmill he managed and the wrought iron porch deck balustrade was fabricated at his shop. In addition to his business interests, Wheeler took part in local government. In February 1885 a city charter was passed by the legislative assembly of the State and shortly afterward Wheeler was elected to the city council representing the First Ward. He served for several years.

The house remained in the Wheeler family until 1902. Since that time it has had three owners, including the current owners.

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Continuation sheet J. A. WHEELER HOUSE

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Page 1

Hines, Rev. H.K. History of Oregon. Chicago. Lewis Publishing Co., 1893.

Lang, H.O. History of the Willamette Valley. Portland: Himes & Lang. 1885.

Oregon Historical Society. Scrapbook #37, pg. 202; #41, pg. 183.

Oregon State Business Directory. Portland: J.K. Gill Co., 1881.

Record of the Willamette Valley, Oregon. 1903. Pg. 261, 262.

Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1892, 1902, 1913.

The Oregonian, February 13, 1892.

Ticor Title Company Records. Dallas, Oregon.

United States Census, 1880.

Wheeler, J.A. House. Historic photograph, n.d., and floor plan, private collection of Morris and Mona Barker.

Barker, Mona. Unrecorded interviews by Julie Koler and Betty Lou Newberg. February and March, 1986.

NE 1/4 NW 1/4 SEC.28T8SR4 WWM

POLK COUNTY

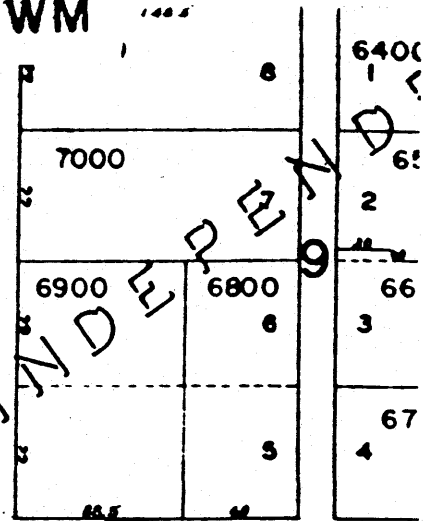
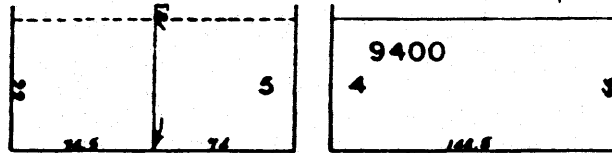
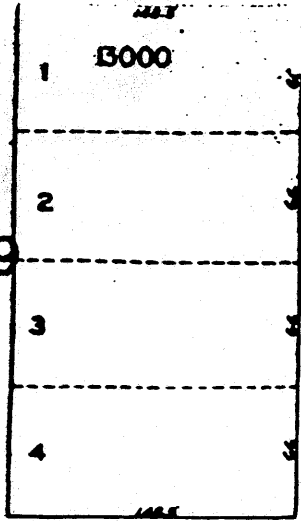
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8 4 28BA

STREET

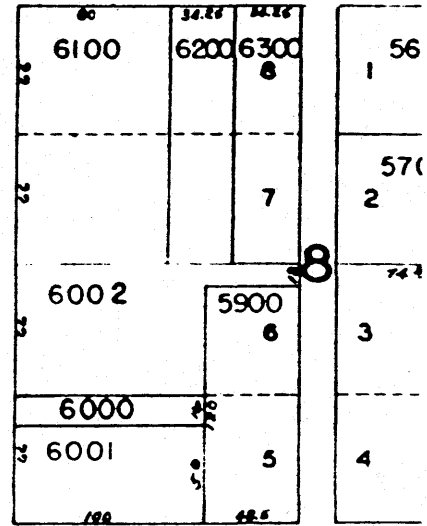
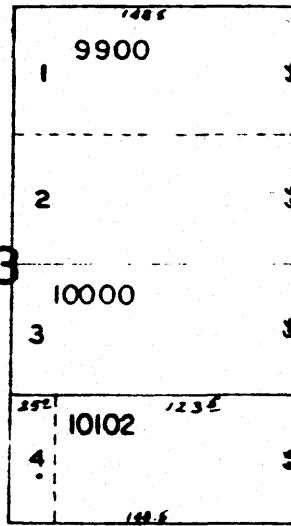
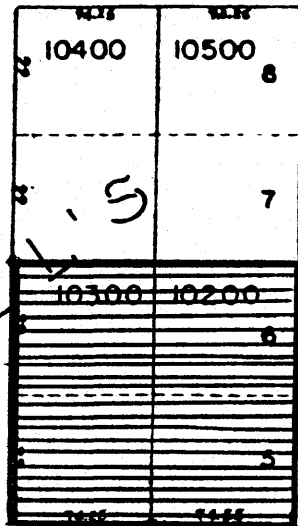
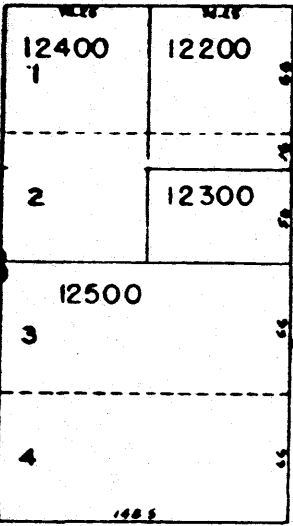
STREET

INDEXED



'C'

13-3 STREET

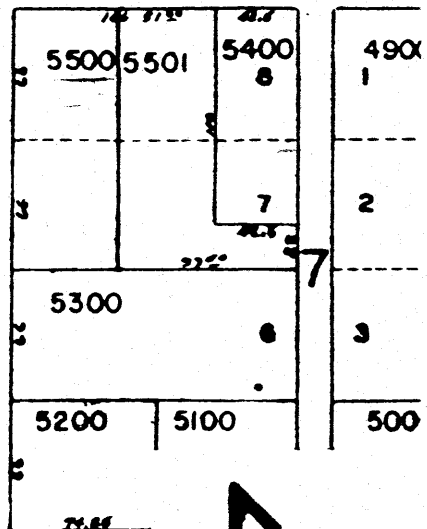
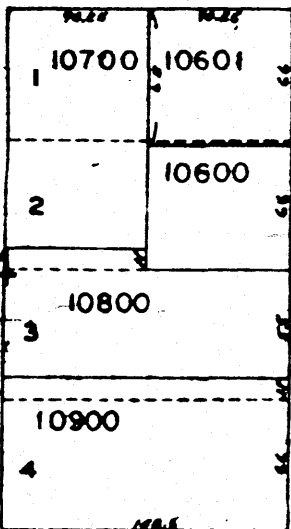
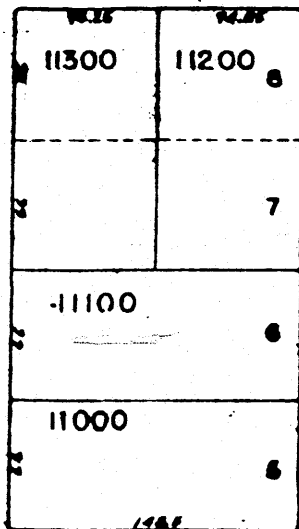
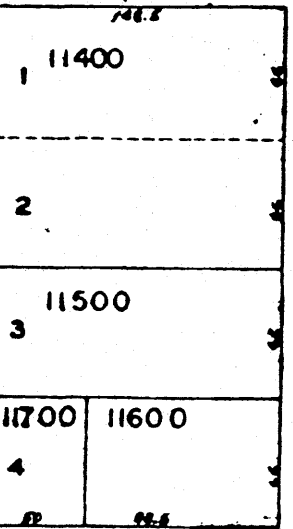


MONMOUTH

STREET

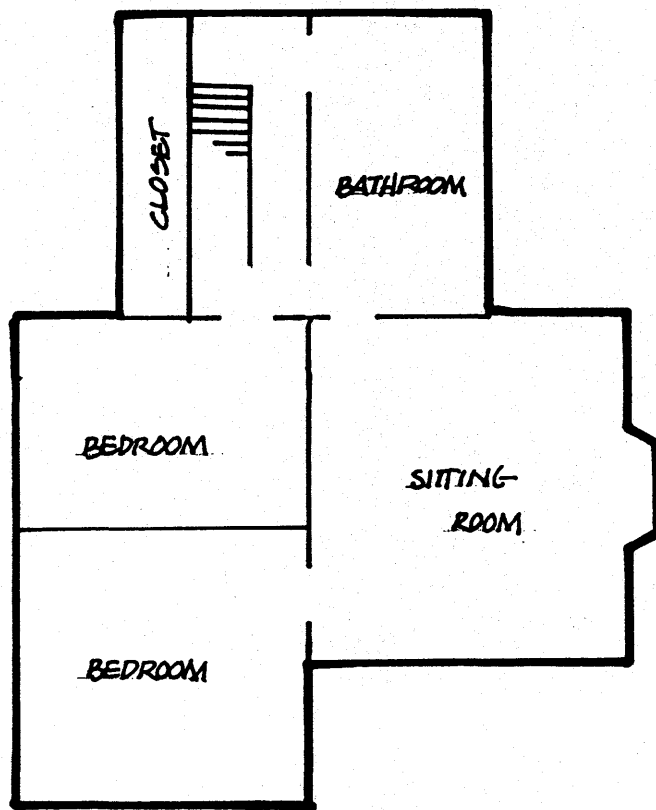
FOURTH

THIRD

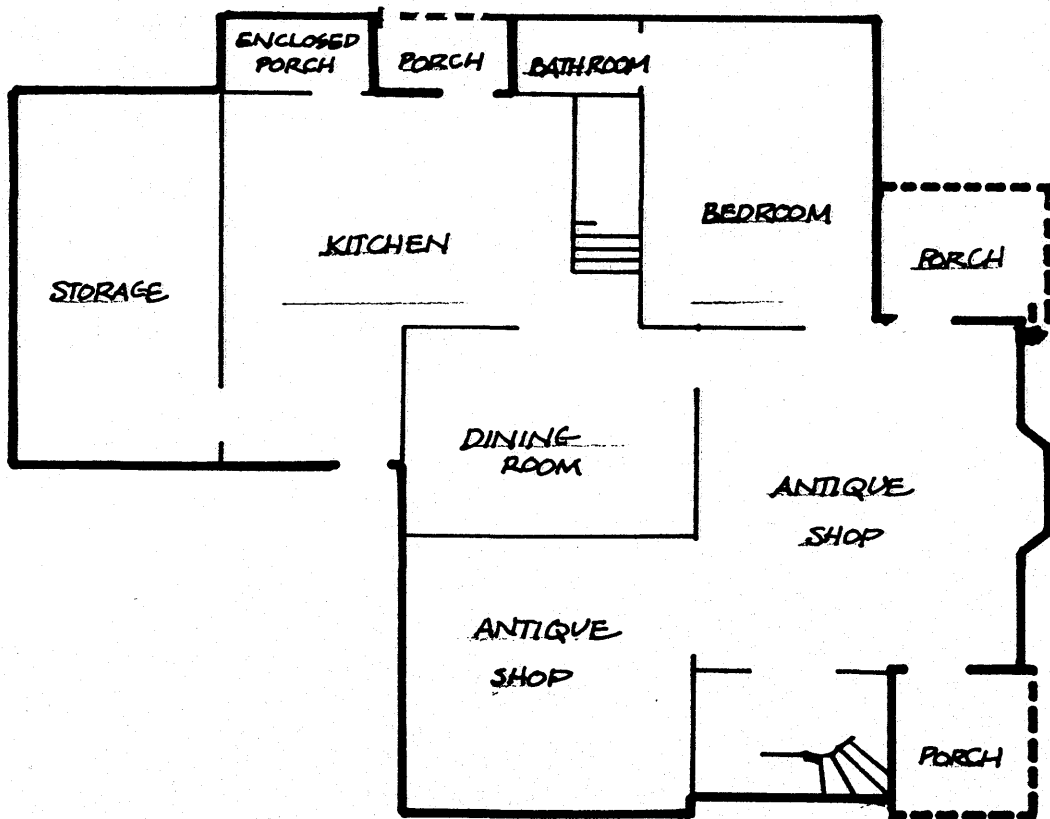


'D'





SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR

J.A. Wheeler House
Independence, Or

