

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received **DEC 15 1987**  
date entered JAN 14 1988

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

**1. Name**

RECEIVED

historic Sweet House

AUG 21 1986

and/or common Sweet House

OHP

**2. Location**

street & number 607 Cherry Street

NA not for publication

city, town Santa Rosa NA vicinity of

state California code 06 county Sonoma code 097

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Carla Nicole DePetris

street & number 386 Chase Street

city, town Sonoma NA vicinity of state California 95476

**5. Location of Legal Description**

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

street & number 585 Fiscal Drive

city, town Santa Rosa state California 95401

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Santa Rosa Historic Resource Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date January 1977  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Department of Community Development, City of Santa Rosa

city, town Santa Rosa state California 95401

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

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

Located in the 1872 Sacry Addition to Santa Rosa, The Sweet House is a Queen Anne house with Period Revival details which were added when the house was remodeled following the Santa Rosa earthquake of 1906. The medium hip-roofed building, with a two-storey front and one-storey rear portion, was completed in June of 1886. The exterior was altered in 1907 for James and Julia Sweet, the historic figures with whom the house is associated. The remodeling repaired damages caused by the so-called San Francisco earthquake of 1906, which had its epicenter in Santa Rosa. The house has not been altered since then, has been well maintained, and fully retains its association with the Sweets.

The Sweet House consists of four volumes. The front, two-storey volume was originally a 14' by 14' square with an adjacent 6' x 8' one-storey east extension, set back from the front, which served as the foyer for the main entrance to the house. In 1907, a two-storey east extension replaced the original foyer. This is set back two feet and is 11' by 12'. [see floor plan]

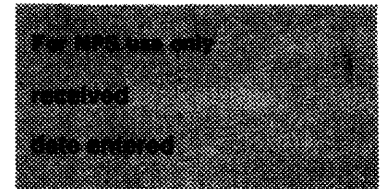
Nothing is known of the original window placement of this front volume. A two-sash fixed window, 6'8" wide, is centered in the front of the 14' volume; the large lower pane is clear, the smaller upper pane is lattice leaded glass. The main doorway has a rectangular transom with lattice leaded and patterned colored glass above the two-panel (upper glass) door. A small, square lattice leaded glass fixed window is located offset from the SE corner of the 1907 addition. Window and door openings have plain surrounds and molded lintels. On the east side, a small, rectangular lattice colored glass fixed window with plain surrounds provides light for the staircase.

The original front porch extended from the SW corner of the square volume to the main doorway. In 1907 this was replaced with a wrap-around porch, six feet wide, which extends from the SW entrance of the second volume to the SE corner of the 1907 addition. The flat roof protecting the porch has exposed beams, dentil detailing, and is supported by large Ionic columns on massive rough "Murphy block" cement pillars and the rough block, five-course raised foundation. The triangular pedimented front entrance, with a centered medallion ornament, is reached by straight steps with a solid cement block railing and pipe hand rails along side.

The second floor has a narrow rectangular bay with centered, paired, two-sash, double-hung windows on the south facade of the original rectangular section. A triangular pedimented dormer extends the width of the 14' portion. The dormer end has shingle siding and a centered column decorative detail. The roofline, exposed beams and metal finials in the dormer and pediment reflect the 1907 remodeling and are not part of the original 1886 construction.

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

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



Continuation sheet

1

Item number

7

Page

2

The second volume is 33' wide and 14' deep. Two stories high, it has centered, paired, two-sash double hung windows on the first and second stories of the East and West facades. Triangular pedimented dormers at the East and West ends give the volume a gable-roof appearance. The dormer ends have the same shingle siding and decorative detail used in the south or front dormer, including the metal finials. On the South facade of the second storey, there is an East offset two-sash window, where the second volume extends six feet West of the first volume. On the first floor, a doorway with a rectangular lattice glass transom and two-panel door (upper panel glass) is similarly placed. Interior 5' wide fireplaces were added in 1907, offset from the NW and NE corners on the North side of this volume. This volume is also supported by the rough cement Murphy block foundation.

The third volume was originally one storey in height; a second storey was added in 1907. In addition, the West, first-floor facade was extended 4' at that time or shortly thereafter. Originally 12' deep and 28' wide, it - like the first two volumes - was centered on the North-South axis of the building. That symmetry was lost with the West addition.

On the West facade, the first floor extends four feet beyond the rough cement block foundation, giving the appearance of a rectangular bay when viewed from the South. This one-storey "bay" is supported by 4" square posts. On the South facade, there is a narrow two-sash, double hung window; the upper panel is lattice leaded glass, and the lower is clear. The West facade has three small fixed-pane windows. All windows have plain surrounds. The roof to this "bay" is a low shed. The lack of lintels and the post foundation suggest that this "bay" was added after the remodeling of 1907.

The West facade of the 1907 second storey has a two-sash, double-hung window with plain surrounds which appears centered from the interior but North-offset when viewed from the outside. On the East side of the second storey there are three small fixed windows with plain surrounds, again appearing centered from the interior but North-offset from the outside.

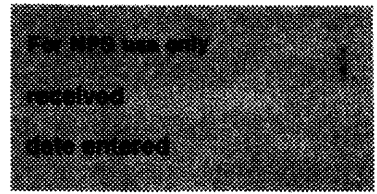
The South, or rear facade of the second storey to this third volume has a North-East offset, single sash casement window and a centered doorway with a two-panel (upper of glass) door. The roof to this third volume completes the hip, but has a low triangular pediment ventilator. The roof trim and window treatment is identical to that for the other two volumes except in the rear, where the beams are not exposed and there is no dentil detailing.

With the exception of the North facade, the siding is a uniform narrow clapboard on the second storey; in the rear it is the same wide shiplap that was used on the first storey. With the exception of the West facade, the foundation is smooth Murphy cement block.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 2

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

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



Continuation sheet

2

Item number

7

Page

3

The Northern or rear volume is original to the 1886 house but has been altered. Originally it consisted of two 11' deep sections separated by a slightly East-offset 7' wide opening. The East section is 14' wide, and the West section is 11' wide. The off-center opening was partially enclosed in 1907. The East facade is solid; the West has a single, two-sash, double-hung window which is South-offset. The North facade has a West-offset single opening with double-hung two-panel windows and plain surrounds in the East section. A small one-panel window to the West of the opening has a similar treatment. There is a West-offset doorway which leads to a 3' deep extension. This has a West-offset single panel window of similar treatment. The enclosed center section has a single-sash, fixed window which is divided vertically. The West extension was not original in 1886. Also added in 1907 were the straight steps which approach the back porch from the side, the rear porch, the turned posts and the stick-work balustrade.

The Sweet House is set back 20' from its Cherry Street frontage. The rear 55' presently contains no outbuildings. The Sanborn map for 1888 shows a 10' wide and 12' deep detached one-storey structure immediately behind the original West section of the fourth volume. Both the 1893 and the 1904 Sanborn maps reveal that the detached structure had been moved back on the lot and an attached 14' square extension added to the West section. The Sanborn maps after 1907 indicate that the 14' square extension was moved to the North-East corner of the property, where it was used as an apartment, and the earlier, smaller structure was removed from the lot.

The 1907 remodelling was clearly done for aesthetic and not practical considerations. Less than 700 square feet was added to a building which already provided over 2,260 square feet of living space. The aesthetic purposes of the remodeling necessitated by the 1906 earthquake is evident from the extensive exterior modifications: the massive raised foundation and pillars which support the front porch; the dentil detailing and decorative work in the dormer and pediment ends; the use of colored and leaded glass; and the fenials at the roof peaks.

It is also evident inside, where the first floor was remodeled. The large fluted Ionic columns separating the foyer from the front room and the East room of the second volume, the extensive use of natural wood, the built-in bookcases and shelving, and the two 5' long brick fireplaces added architectural details not available in the original Queen Anne building. Despite its commercial use since 1974 and zoning which threatens a residential building only 60' from one of Santa Rosa's major business streets, the Sweet House is in excellent condition. Architecturally, it is a significant contributor to the proposed Cherry Street Historic District (Santa Rosa Historic Resource Survey district #9).

RESOURCE COUNT

1 Contributing Building

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1894 - 1937 **Builder/Architect** unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The Sweet House was home to James S. Sweet, the founder of Santa Rosa's oldest successful business college, an educator whose business textbooks were widely used in the mid- and far-west and whose graduates made significant contributions to the economic development of Sonoma county. Sweet was also a two-term mayor of the city of Santa Rosa; his mayoralty marked the city's transition from nineteenth century ward politics to progressive municipal reform; Sweet also became an early leader in the League California Municipalities. His wife, Julia Goodyear Sweet, was significant in her own right as a leader of a variety of religious, social and political activities in the city, the county, and the state. Although built in 1886, eight years before Sweet came to Santa Rosa, the Sweet House was their home from 1894 until Julia's death in 1954. It has architectural significance as a contributor to the Cherry Street Historic District, but it is far more significant through its association with two of Santa Rosa's late nineteenth and early twentieth century leaders.

Original Construction of 607 Cherry Street

Construction of the house which would become historically identified with the Sweets was completed in June of 1886. (1) It was built on a lot in the Susan Sacry Addition to the City of Santa Rosa. Mrs. Caroline Goss, widow of Alfred J. Goss, purchased this lot in 1875 for \$400, but it remained undeveloped for the next eleven years. (2) Although no photographic or other documentation has been located regarding its original appearance or architect, it seems likely that the house was constructed by Thomas J. Ludwig, who was Santa Rosa's leading contractor between 1877 and his death in 1894; Ludwig is credited with building 430 structures in the city. (3) Mrs. Goss lived in the house until her death four years later, at age 75. The Sanborn maps for 1888 through 1904, as well as consistent assessments for improvements on the property of \$1,000 between 1887 and 1905, establish that no alterations were made to the house between 1886 and 1906. (4)

Although Caroline Goss was financially well off, neither she nor her husband appear to have made any significant contribution to Santa Rosa's history. Her death, in November of 1890, was briefly noted in the local paper. (5) Her estate, which included the 607 Cherry Street residence, the commercial building at the corner of Cherry and Mendocino which she purchased in 1886, a house in the Davis Addition bought in 1887, and the small house at 603 Cherry purchased in 1888, totaled over \$24,000. Her heirs lived in Wisconsin and sold off her holdings over the next four years. In 1894, the Goss residence passed into the hands of the Sweets, where it would remain for the next 60 years. (6)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Sonoma County, Recorder's Office, Deeds, Mortgages; City of Santa Rosa, Assessment Rolls; Sanborn Insurance Company, Maps; Sonoma Democrat (Santa Rosa); Press Democrat (Santa Rosa); Sonoma County Directory, 1899 - 1926; LeBaron, Santa Rosa: a 19th Century Town (1985); Finley, Hist. of Sonoma County (1937); Tuomey, Hist. of Sonoma County (1926).

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .13

Quadrangle name Santa Rosa

Quadrangle scale 7.5

### UTM References

Center  
A 

1	0	5	2	4	8	3	0	4	2	5	5	0	1	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

### Verbal boundary description and justification

A lot (AP# 09-031-26) beginning 60 feet East of the North-East intersection of Cherry Street and Mendocino Avenue, thence East 40 feet; thence North 140 feet to an alley; thence West 40 feet; thence South 140 feet. Sonoma County OR # 84-085491.

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

state California code 06 county Sonoma code 097

state \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ code \_\_\_\_\_

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dennis E. Harris, Ph.D., Consulting Historian

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date August 6, 1986

street & number 1879 Toyon Drive telephone (707) 433-7464

city or town Healdsburg state California 95448

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

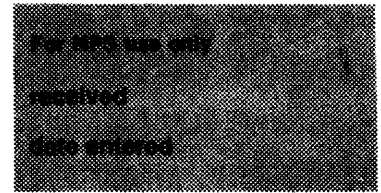
State Historic Preservation Officer signature Kathryn Swallen

title \_\_\_\_\_ date 11/30/87

For NPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is \_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature]  
Keeper of the National Register  
Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

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

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



Continuation sheet

3

Item number

8

Page

2

James S. Sweet, Public Education Administrator, 1853 - 1891

Sweet moved to Santa Rosa only months before Mrs. Goss' death, to begin what was to be the last year of a distinguished first career as a public school educator and administrator. By 1894, the year the Sweets purchased the Goss residence, Sweet had established the Santa Rosa Business College as the city's first successful business school. The school would train the city and county's clerical, accounting and business leadership for forty-four years before it fell victim to the combined forces of California's progressive community college system, the reorientation of public education toward practical learning, and the Great Depression.

James Sylvester Perry Sweet was born on April 30, 1853 in rural Fond du Lac County, in southeastern Wisconsin. His childhood home was the proverbial log cabin, located ironically on the school section (Section 16) of Waupun Township. His family had roots deep in colonial America, a fact which explains his later interest in genealogy. John Sweet, a paternal ancestor, was a member of the party Governor Winthrop led to Salem, Massachusetts in 1630. On his mother's side, Jonathan Fairbank was one of the original settlers of Dedham, Massachusetts in 1636. Through his grandmother he was also related to Oliver Perry, hero of the Battle of Lake Erie in the War of 1812.

At the age of twelve, Sweet and his family moved to "the rapidly growing village" of Ripon, Wisconsin, where he completed high school in 1870. At the age of 17, Sweet received his teaching license. During the winters, he taught in the Towne School, where he had begun his own education, and did farm labor during the summers to work his way through Ripon College, the Wisconsin State Normal School at Oshkosh, and the National University of Illinois, from which he received both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

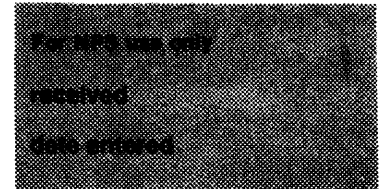
In 1875, at the age of 22, he came to California for a five-month visit. Instead of returning to Wisconsin, he accepted an appointment as principal of the public schools of Unionville, Nevada. In 1877, Sweet was appointed principal of the Winnemucca, Nevada, public schools. In 1879, Sweet, his first wife, and their son, Julian Sylvester, moved to Oregon, where Sweet served as principal of the Independence public schools for three years. In 1883, he was appointed principal of the Ashland, Oregon, school system.

The Board of Trustees of the Oregon State Normal School (now Southern Oregon State University), also located in Ashland, chose Sweet as President of the teacher's college in 1887. So successful was his presidency, that "in three years, the old building was filled to its capacity, and President Sweet asked the state legislature to make an appropriation sufficient to put up a new and modern building." The Oregon legislature denied his request, and Sweet "very properly, in deference to his self-respect, resigned his position . . . ."

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 4

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

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



Continuation sheet

4

Item number

8

Page 3

In the fall of 1890, Sweet moved to Santa Rosa to teach literature and the sciences at Santa Rosa High School, then housed at the old Fourth Street School. Sweet's career in public education ended with the 1890-91 term. As principal of four municipal public school systems and as president of a state normal school, Sweet's educational career had paralleled the transformation of American public education from the part-time vocation of the mid-nineteenth century to the increasing professionalism of late-Victorian America. (7)

Santa Rosa Business College, 1891 - 1935

At the end of the school term, Sweet returned to Oregon. On July 1, 1891, He was married a second time, to Miss Julia Melvina Goodyear, vice-principal of an elementary school in Portland and a graduate of the state normal school at Ashland. Within a month, the couple left Ashland to return to Santa Rosa and Mr. Sweet began his second career.

Santa Rosa had seen several business colleges come - and go - by 1891. The earliest of these, the Santa Rosa Commercial College and Phonographic Institute, opened in July of 1886 at the Atheneum Building. Although Principal E. P. Daniels advertised that his "students become amanuenses [those employed to take dictation] in five months and court reporters in ten," few students took advantage of the \$55 course and the school soon closed. The 1890 California state business directory listed a Santa Rosa Business College run by Milo E. Rigby and Stephen B. Wilson, but it too disappeared before Sweet opened his school. In 1892, a year after Sweet's college opened, J. R. Morrison, former manager of the Pacific Business College in San Francisco, established a school in Santa Rosa. However, Morrison met the same fate as Daniels. In 1898, the local paper noted that "several business colleges had failed here." It attributed the success of the then seven-year-old institution to the faith Sweet had "in his ability to establish a successful school here and ... the grit and determination to stand by his convictions." (8)

The beginning of Sweet's college was not auspicious. Only one student, responding to Sweet's ads in the local paper, was present when school began on August 3, 1891. The new college, housed in the "elegant rooms" at 510 Fourth Street, offered "every facility for teaching a thorough business course, including shorthand, typewriting, and telegraphy ... as complete as any business college in San Francisco." In addition to the school facilities, Sweet also operated a printing office which published both the college's materials and commercial material.

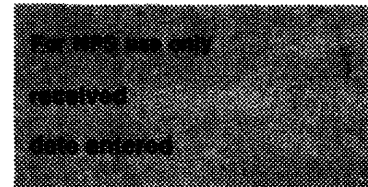
Despite its inauspicious beginnings, by the end of the third school year, the college had been firmly established, its competitors disappeared, and the Sweets were in a financial position to afford the purchase of their home at 607 Cherry Street and the \$1,500, three-year mortgage that came

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 5



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

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



Continuation sheet

5

Item number

8

Page

4

with it. (However, the Sweets would not own the house free and clear until 1902). In 1895, Sweet's name became associated with the cultural life of the city for the first time when he offered "a new theory of character" at a meeting of Santa Rosa's Human Nature Club. An incipient behavioralist, Sweet rejected phrenology (still popular at the time) and "faceology" in favor of the assertion that "any desired character may be acquired by constantly assuming it," leading to a change both in the individual's character itself and "a corresponding change in the expression of the face." (9)

In 1899 the business college moved to new quarters at 555 Ross Street, between Mendocino Avenue and B Street. The multi-talented Sweet developed the plans for the new three-storey, 60' x 80' wood-frame building and supervised its construction. Sweet borrowed \$900 to buy the lot and an additional \$2,000 to finance construction of the \$10,000 building.

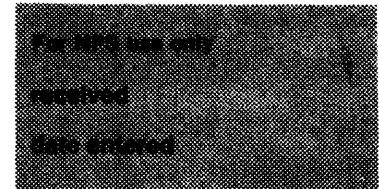
The new facilities contained fourteen rooms: two 40' x 60' business rooms; rooms for shorthand, "typewriting," recitation, and reading; offices; and space for the simulated businesses which were at the heart of Sweet's teaching methods - four banks, a counting house and a clearing house. The J. S. Sweet Publishing Company and its presses were also housed in the new building. In addition to its commercial operations, the publishing company printed the Drummer, an annual brochure on the college and its graduates' activities; the college's Songs and Hymns book, the Journal; and music composed and written by Professor Sweet.

Outside the San Francisco Bay area, Sweet was best known for his business textbooks. These included Sweet's System of Bookkeeping by Actual Business Practice, Public School Edition (1896); Bookkeeping by Actual Business Practice, a Thorough Treatise on Modern and Practical Methods of Accounting (1897); Teacher's Guide to Bookkeeping by Actual Business Practice (1901); Sweet's Modern Business Arithmetic (1907); Teacher's Guide and Record Book, Accompanying Sweet's Modern Business Arithmetic (1908); Business Practice Bookkeeping (1913); Business Practice Speller, Business Practice Correspondence, and New Outlines of Commercial Law (no copyright or publication dates available for the last three).

As early as 1900, over 200 different business schools used Sweet's texts in their own instructional programs. By 1913, over 400 commercial schools were using the arithmetic text alone. The probate of his estate lists unpaid bills for his texts from the Holman, Lewiston, Pomona, Santa Cruz and Standard business schools. The best indication of the quality of these texts and the instructional methods developed by Sweet was the award, in 1922, of an honorary Doctor of Philosophy degree by Oskaloosa College to Professor Sweet "in recognition of his long and efficient service as an educator and for the thorough, accurate, and practical methods exemplified in the series of textbooks" he had authored. (10)

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

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



Continuation sheet    6    Item number    8    Page    5

Sweet's greatest contribution to the history of Sonoma County was the influence his graduates made on the county. There were over 4,000 graduates of Sweet's college by the time of his death in 1930, including "scores who are now holding prominent positions in the business and professional world." Probably an additional 500 or so graduated before the college closed in 1935. The college offered five courses of study - commercial, stenographic, secretarial, combined (business and secretarial), and a "normal or teacher's course," varying in length from six to ten months. In the late 20's, reflecting the increasing sophistication of the business world, the teacher's course was dropped and a "post-graduate" course in Business Administration was added. One of the hallmarks of "a Sweet's graduate" was superb penmanship, which was stressed in all programs. (11)

Most of Sweet's students came from Sonoma, Mendocino, and Lake counties, although some came from as far as Oregon, Nevada, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Those living in Petaluma, Healdsburg, and Sebastopol could commute on the interurban railroad. Others boarded at the Sweet home, with public school superintendent Minnie Coulter, or at Mrs. Ward's boarding house.

A large majority were women. The massive expansion of business in Victorian America created new opportunities for women and led to the "feminization of clerical work." New business techniques and new technology, especially the typewriter, required more skilled workers. It is estimated that half the nation's women high school graduates received training in business programs. Local high schools only offered a college preparatory course. Given the alternative of unskilled work or a costly commercial education in San Francisco, many chose Sweet's business college.

About half the students were the sons and daughters of immigrants. Their parents came from northern Italy, Switzerland, Germany, and the Azores. Local historian Gaye LeBaron noted that "for this second generation, a Sweet's certificate was a passport out of the cannery."

No complete study exists of Sweet alumni, but questionnaires submitted by most of the 130 participants in a 1983 reunion sponsored by the county historical society provide some indication of the impact of the business college on the community. Many women became the bookkeepers for their husbands' or families' small businesses or farms. Others included a Forestville postmistress, a Petaluma banker, a Santa Rosa City Clerk, a Santa Rosa stock broker, presidents of the county taxpayers association and farm bureau, numerous medical and legal secretaries, as well as the owners of major dairy, cattle and retail businesses.

Clyde R. Sweet was James Sweet's nephew and head of the Commercial Department at the college from 1912 until his uncle's death in 1930. Clyde Sweet ran the college from 1930 until 1935. Although the school closed in the

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

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



Continuation sheet

7

Item number

8

Page

6

midst of the Great Depression, that national economic tragedy appears to have been only one factor in the school's demise. Certainly the monthly tuition of \$20 became increasingly difficult for students. But changes in public education appear to have been a major factor. The local high schools, reflecting the national trend toward progressive education, offered "comprehensive" programs which included many of the business courses available at Sweet's. Santa Rosa Junior College also broadened its offerings to compete directly with the private business school. The combination of economic depression and free public education was too much for Sweet's private college. The college's doors were closed in 1935, and two years later the building on Ross Street was torn down. (12)

James S. Sweet, Mayor of Santa Rosa, 1898 - 1902

When James Sweet first came to Santa Rosa, the population of the county seat was 5,200. During the next decade it increased twenty-five percent, to 6,500. The phenomenal growth of the '80's and '90's offered opportunities for entrepreneurs like Sweet, but it also put tremendous strains on the city's resources and the traditional politics of this "Southern town."

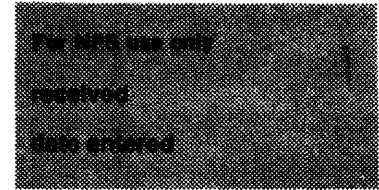
Operating under its 1876 charter, the city's Democratic mayors and "businessmen's council" engaged in typical Gilded Age politics: bitterly partisan campaigns, exclusive franchises, and fusion of the "Best Men" in the face of such threats as the Workingman's Party ticket of 1878. Municipal water was supplied by Col. Mark McDonald's Santa Rosa Water Works Company. The majority of Santa Rosa's residences in the 1890's were supplied with gas lighting from the Santa Rosa Gas Lighting Company. The company held an exclusive 50-year franchise. Two electric companies bid against each other and sued the city for the right to provide service. Until 1894, fire protection was provided by volunteer companies. Garbage service was sporadic, control of stray animals non-existent, and telephone service chaotic.

Although there had been signs of change throughout the prosperous '80's, the first major break came in 1896, when a physician and hospital owner became Santa Rosa's first non-merchant mayor. The Democrats also won all but one of the ward councilman positions; the Republicans, divided into Silver and Gold factions and seriously hurt by the Populists, could not elect a single city-wide official.

In 1898, Allen B. Lemmon, Santa Rosa's Postmaster, the Republican "boss" in the town, and a protege of Ohio kingmaker Mark Hanna, tried to prevent a repeat of the '96 debacle. Lemmon proposed a fusion ticket which would include his own Democratic nominee for mayor, one democratic councilmen and two Republicans on the council. Unfortunately, the Silver Republican could not convince his own city convention. The Democrats again went beyond the ranks of the city's merchants, drafting James Sweet, the popular President of Santa Rosa Business College, as their nominee for mayor.

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

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



Continuation sheet

8

Item number

8

Page

7

Sweet was a dedicated Democrat, but his politics were those of Wisconsin's progressives and not of the Southern Democracy which had run both the city and the county since their founding. He pledged himself to use his "best efforts to secure a clean, honest, and economical administration," promised to be a "staunch supporter" of the new municipal waterworks begun in 1897, backed efforts to write a new charter for the town, urged the city to adopt competitive bidding procedures, and called for an expansion of city services - sewers, paved streets, concrete sidewalks, and a public park. On April 6, 1898, Sweet was elected Santa Rosa's tenth mayor. (13)

During his first term, Mayor Sweet urged the council to purchase a rock quarry and crusher for the city, thereby eliminating the dependence on private suppliers. The council responded by purchasing 3.17 acres north-east of the cemetery. He also favored a municipally owned and operated crematory to dispose of the city's rubbish, which the council purchased. By 1900, Santa Rosa's sewage costs were "less than any other similarly situated city in California." He called for a reform of the property tax, one which would increase the rate on undeveloped parcels and lower the rate for residences. The tax rates were reformed and, simultaneously, the city deficit of \$5,000 in 1898 was converted into a "generous balance." City fire services were expanded, leading to a 25% reduction in insurance rates.

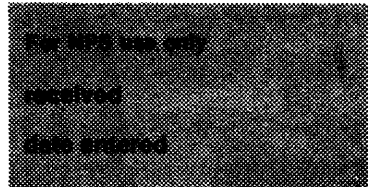
Most importantly, Sweet vigorously supported the municipal water system by fighting a federal court injunction and obtaining "the best legal talent available" to void McDonald's contract. He also gained the support of the League of California Municipalities in the precedent-making Mock case. In October 1899, Sweet told the councilmen "the time has arrived when it shall be demonstrated whether this city is going to be run by the few or the many; whether the city has a right to free water, or to any water." By the following March the city had won. McDonald's attacks against the city for unfair competition with his own water, streetcar, and electrical businesses had been thrown out. The legal precedent set by Wesley Mock vs Santa Rosa gave all California municipalities the legal base for their city water systems.

Indicative of his progressive approach, Sweet urged the city to expand its program of municipal socialism. "The time is ripe for the city to own and maintain its own electric lighting system," he told the council. Although Sweet calculated that the city could pay for such a system in two years by investing its \$300 per month bill for municipal street lighting into a city electric works, Santa Rosa would never join such advanced progressive cities as San Francisco to the south or Healdsburg and Ukiah to the north.

Sweet was also ahead of his time in his support of city parks. He first proposed a municipal park in his April 1898 inauguration speech. In January of 1900, he expanded the concept, calling upon the council to "estab-

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

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



Continuation sheet

9

Item number

8

Page

8

lish a public park or parks, with public baths and if possible a sufficient body of water for boating." Parks, he told the body, were just as much "such necessities" as were bitmunized roads or sidewalks.

In April 1900, Sweet was overwhelmingly reelected. The first time, he won with 59.4% of the vote; in 1900, Sweet was chosen by 67.1% of the voters. In his second term, he again called for and received a reduction in the rate of taxation on improved property, unsuccessfully urged the council to fund a city park, and repeated his call for municipal lighting. He succeeded in reforming city budget and accounting procedures, urging a change to departmental allocation and budgeting of funds.

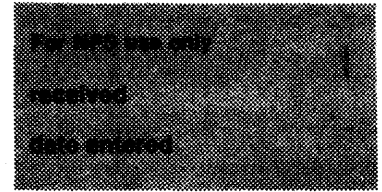
Sweet also called for "rigid enforcement of the liquor laws" and authority to "order the police force to suppress all gambling devices." Sweet followed up the latter with an action reminiscent of Teddy Roosevelt's actions as a New York City Police Commissioner. At 9 a.m. the day after he made the request, Sweet and a city policeman "made the rounds of the different saloons and cigar stands in which slot machines have been operated and formally notified the proprietors that their use would have to be discontinued by 12 o'clock." Although all but one of the businessmen complied, "the move did not endear him to the gambling society of the town. Saloon and cigar stores formed a mutual protective association," and the next mayor was a cigar shop owner and cigarmaker.

Although the task of reforming the city's antiquated charter would not be completed until 1905, Sweet was a major supporter of the charter movement. He endorsed it in 1898, when the first Board of Freeholders was appointed to draft a new charter. In 1901, he recommended that the city be expanded from four to six wards, with nominations for the council by ward but election at large. Sweet argued for a separate Police Commission, a new Board of Public Works, a Board of Health "with power to prevent the sale of impure food and drinks," a twenty-year limit on franchises, a paid mayor and council, an appointive city attorney, and provisions for a decennial census of the city's inhabitants. Although a charter with most of these provisions included was passed in the April 1902 city election, it failed to gain an absolute majority of all votes cast. In the 1904 election for a new freeholders' board, Sweet was one of three former mayors chosen to draft the charter which in 1905 finally supplanted the 1876 document.

"The closing and perhaps the crowning achievement" of Sweet's political career came on April 15, 1902, when outgoing Mayor Sweet presented the library Board of Trustees with official notification that Andrew Carnegie would grant the city \$20,000 for the construction of a new free public library. Sweet began work on the Carnegie grant in the summer of 1900, when he was in Kansas City as a Sonoma County delegate to the Democratic National Convention. After his return to Santa Rosa, the city council

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

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



Continuation sheet 10 Item number 8 Page 9

adopted a resolution in favor of the grant, committing \$35,000 (10% of a hoped-for \$350,000 award). On March 21st, word leaked that Santa Rosa was one of two California cities (and 44 in the nation) to receive the grant. Although many were involved in the struggle to obtain the grant, according to the Press Democrat "to the energy, foresight and executive ability of Major J. S. Sweet will rightfully be due the principal credit for victory." (14)

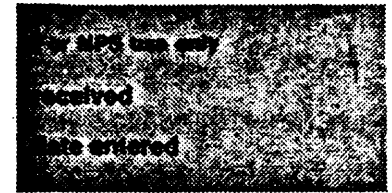
In 1899, at his urging, Santa Rosa joined the new League of California Municipalities, an association of progressive cities in the state. At their second annual convention, Mayor Sweet gave the opening address to a session on the "Experiences of Cities with Municipal Water Works." At the end of the conference, Sweet was elected first state vice-president of the league. He was also appointed to a crucial committee assignment. This committee was charged with drafting a proposed street law which would replace the Vrooman Act (declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court) and make it possible for cities to successfully provide municipal services.

The mayor also found time for his other interests. An avid sports fan, Sweet organized and was elected first president of the Sonoma-Mendocino Athletic League. Organized in 1899, the league encouraged track meets among the towns and schools in the two counties. In 1901, Sweet became president of the Sonoma County Board of Trade. Exactly one year after leaving office, Sweet was back in the news. This time he was heralded as the director of a "splendid performance" of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera "Mikado" which played to an "immense audience" at the Antheneum Theater. In February 1906, when proper Santa Rosans organized the Good Government League for the purpose of "securing and enforcing law and order," Sweet was elected president and Luther Burbank vice-president of the 200 -member organization. When the earthquake destroyed Santa Rosa's downtown, two months later, Sweet opened the college facilities for the relief work of several local fraternal societies. In the reconstruction which followed, businessmen were offered the stenographic and typewriting services of Sweet's college at half-rates. (15)

When Professor Sweet died at his Cherry Street home in 1930, the Press Democrat hailed him as the city's "pioneer educator," "one who had a pre-eminent part in establishing Santa Rosa as an educational center, known for the excellence of its schools and instruction methods." One of the county's foremost judges, Herbert W. Slater, wrote the obituary which extolled the "much honored citizen, educator, civic leader, composer of songs and instrumental music, author, publisher, printer, actor, athlete, and all-around man." Mayors, former mayors, the elite and "others of the simpler ways," including "scores of Professor Sweet's old scholars, paid tribute to the college president. The flags on public buildings were flown at half staff in appreciation of the long-term public service of Santa Rosa's first 20th-century mayor. (16)

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

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



Continuation sheet

11

Item number

8

Page

10

Mrs. Julia Sweet, Community Leader

Less than a month before her husband died, Mrs. Julia Sweet completed one of a number of civic projects in which she was active. For the diamond jubilee of Snata Rosa's First Presbyterian Church, Mrs. Sweet compiled a special commemorative history, 75 Years of Presbyterianism, documenting the story of one of Santa Rosa's most influential congregations. She played an important part in that history. When the church acquired its first pipe organ, in 1899, Mrs. Sweet served as its first organist until 1914. From 1915 until 1924, she was president of the Presbyterian Women's Guild. From 1925 until 1928, Mrs. Sweet was president of the National and Foreign Missionary Society for the local church. In the 1930's, she was chosen as an honorary member of the Presbyterian church's national Board of Missions. Most of these were positions traditionally held by women, as was her presidency of the Ladies' Aid Society in 1916. However, Julia Sweet was also one of only forty trustees to have been elected between 1864 and 1930; of these, only three were women and Mrs. Sweet was the second to be so honored.

In addition to her church leadership, Mrs. Sweet was a leader in civic affairs. She was one of the founding members of the Women's Improvement Club of Santa Rosa, organized in 1902. When the Santa Rosa Chamber of Commerce created the first women's auxiliary in the state, Mrs. Sweet became the auxiliary's first president and "built the organization into a powerful unit composed of several hundred women." She was president of the city's Saturday Afternoon Club for two terms, during which its clubhouse was built. Her leadership as club president resulted in her election to two terms, 1913 through 1917, as vice-president of the San Francisco district of the California Federation of Women's Clubs. In 1914, she was appointed Sonoma County's representative on the Women's Auxiliary Board of the Panama-Pacific Exposition.

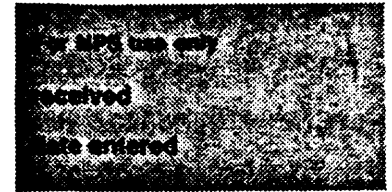
During the 1916 presidential campaign, Mrs. Sweet was placed in charge of the county Democratic Central Committee's efforts to secure women's votes for the reelection of Woodrow Wilson. During the "Great War," she was chosen chairman first of of the Sonoma County Committee for Belgian War Relief and then of the Sonoma County Defense Council. From 1932 until 1936 she held the position of regent in the Santa Rosa chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Again, the local activity resulted in her selection to a statewide position, this time as chairman of the California state D.A.R.'s conservation efforts. (17)

When she died, at the age of 88, in 1954, the Sweet House was given to her sister. Mrs. Eubanks sold the property to Walter Eggen, owner of Eggen and Lance Mortuary in Santa Rosa that same year. Fortunately, Eggen held on to the house until 1974, and the Sweet House escaped the multiple ownship and all too frequent deterioration of that period. As a result, it was in

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET 12

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet 12 Item number 8 Page 11

excellent condition when it was evaluated on its architectural merits alone by architect Dan Peterson as a contributing building for the proposed Cherry Street Historic District as part of Santa Rosa's 1977 Historic Resource Inventory. There has been no deterioration in the building since that time, and the Sweet House remains as it was between 1908 and 1954 when it was the residence of James and Julia Sweet.

ENDNOTES

(1) Saanta Rosa Water Works Company, Hookup Ledger, 164-B; ibid., Collection Ledger, 13, 35, and 58.

(2) Sonoma County, Recorder's Office, (hereafter cited as SC, RO) Deeds, 53-136; ibid., Court House School District, Assessment Book, 1878, 79; 1879, 60; 1880, 93; 1881, 82; 1882, 64; 1883, 28; 1884, 39; 1885, 50; 1886, 46.

(3) Gaye LeBaron, et. al. Santa Rosa: a Nineteenth Century Town (Santa Rosa: Historia, 1985), 96. Hereafter cited as LeBaron, Santa Rosa.

(4) SC, Court House School District, Assessment Roll, 1887, 42; 1888, 80; 1889, 54; 1890, 51. City of Santa Rosa, Assessor, Assessment Roll, 1890, 51; 1891, 68; 1892, 68; 1893, 68; 1894, 108; 1895, 107; 1896, 105; 1897, 107; 1898, 107; 1899, 127; 1900, 127; 1901, 129; 1902, 169; 1903, 169; 1904, 172; 1905, 174; 1906, 174. Sanborn Insurance Company, Sonoma County Maps, Santa Rosa, September 1888, 11; June 1893, 17; December 1904, 13.

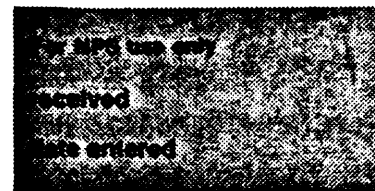
(5) SC, RO, Register of Deaths, 40-43; Sonoma Democrat (Santa Rosa), 15 November 1890, 3:3.

(6) See assessments for 1887 through 1891, footnote 4, for the value of other Goss properties. SC, RO, Deeds, 110-11, 112-324, 113-382, 144-568, 147-53, and 389-215; ibid., Mortgages, 58-134, 58-621, 61-381.

(7) J. M. Guinn, History of the State of California and Biographical Record of Coast Counties, California (Chicago: Chapman, 1904), 552-4; Honoria Rosa Tuomey, History of Sonoma County (Chicago: S. J. Clarke, 1926), II, 101-2; Ernest Latimer Finley, History of Sonoma County, California: its People and Its Resources (Santa Rosa: Press Democrat, 1937), II, 274.

(8) Sonoma Democrat 26 June 1886, 2:3, and 10 July 1886, 1:8; The Resources of California (San Francisco), March 1892, 6; Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 12 March 1898, 2:2; LeBaron, Santa Rosa, 172-3, which has a full discussion of higher education in the nineteenth century town.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Continuation sheet 13 Item number 8 Page 12

(9) Sonoma Democrat, 18 July 1891, 3:6; Guinn, Coast Counties, 552; SC, RO, Deeds, 149-447; ibid., Mortgages, 94-585; Santa Rosa, Assessment Roll, 1894, 108; 1895, 107; 1896, 105; 1897, 107; 1898, 107; 1899, 127; 1900, 127; 1901, 129; 1902, 169; Sonoma Democrat, 20 April 1895, 1:7.

(10) Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 3 May 1899, 4:4; Santa Rosa, Assessment Roll, 1899, 127; 1900, 127; 1901, 129; 1902, 169; 1903, 169; 1904, 172; and 1905, 174; Resources of California (San Francisco), April 1900), 13; ibid., April 1902, 6; Guinn, Coastal Counties, 553. Surviving examples of Sweet publications in the possession of the Sonoma County Historical Society include Our Drummer (1911); Sweet's Santa Rosa Business College Drummer (1925, 1929, 1931 and 1932); Santa Rosa Business College Songs and Hymns (1917); the Santa Rosa Business College Journal for January 1924; and two songs, "The Land of Love" and "For No One Else Will Do," both copyrighted in 1916. Copyright information for Sweet's texts is contained in "Decree of Settlement" of Sweet's estate, 26 June 1931, SC, RO, Official Records, 300-28. The remaining titles are from Santa Rosa Business College Journal, January 1924, 8. Publication data is derived from Resources of California (1900), 13; Sonoma County Directory, 1913-14 (San Francisco: Polk, 1913), 141; SC, RO, Official Records, 300-32 & 33. See Tuomey, History, II, 101, for the honorary doctorate.

(11) Press Democrat (Santa Rosa), 13 November 1930, 8:6-7; ibid., 11 November 1930, 2:1; Sweet's College Drummer (1925), 14.

(12), Press Democrat, 20 November 1983, 24E; Wollock, Women at Work, 245-6; Sonoma County Historical Society, "Sweet's Reunion" file; Sonoma County Directory, 1913-14 (San Francisco: Polk, 1913), 141; Finley, History of Sonoma County, II, 274.

(13) LeBaron, Santa Rosa, 100-133. For the city election of 1898, see Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 9 March 1898, 3:2 & 5; 12 March 1898, 2:2; 26 March 1898, 2:2; 2 April 1898, 2:2; 6 April 1898, 2:1-2; 9 April 1898, 2:1 and 3:1; 13 April 1898, 2:1 & 2; and 16 April 1898, 3:1.

(14) For Sweet's first term, see Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 19 April 1899, 4:1; 11 October 1899, 4:1; 3 January 1900, 4:1; 28 March 1900, 2:1. His second term is reported in ibid., 7 April 1900, 1:1-8; 8 May 1901, 4:3; and 10 May 1901, 4:3. On the charter, see ibid., 17 December 1901, 4:1; 4 April 1902, 4:2; 18 March 1904, 8:1; and LeBaron, Santa Rosa, 98-101, 121. For the Carnegie library, see Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 21 March 1902, 4:4; 22 March 1902, 1:1-8; 23 March 1902, 4:1-2; 9 April 1902, 4:1; and 17 April 1902, 2:1 as well as LeBaron Santa Rosa, 127-8.

(15) For Sweet's role in the League, see "Experiences of Cities with Municipal Water Works," California Municipalities: a Journal for Progressive Cities, v. I, #7 (February 1900), 211-14, 218; Santa Rosa Press

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet

14

Item number

8

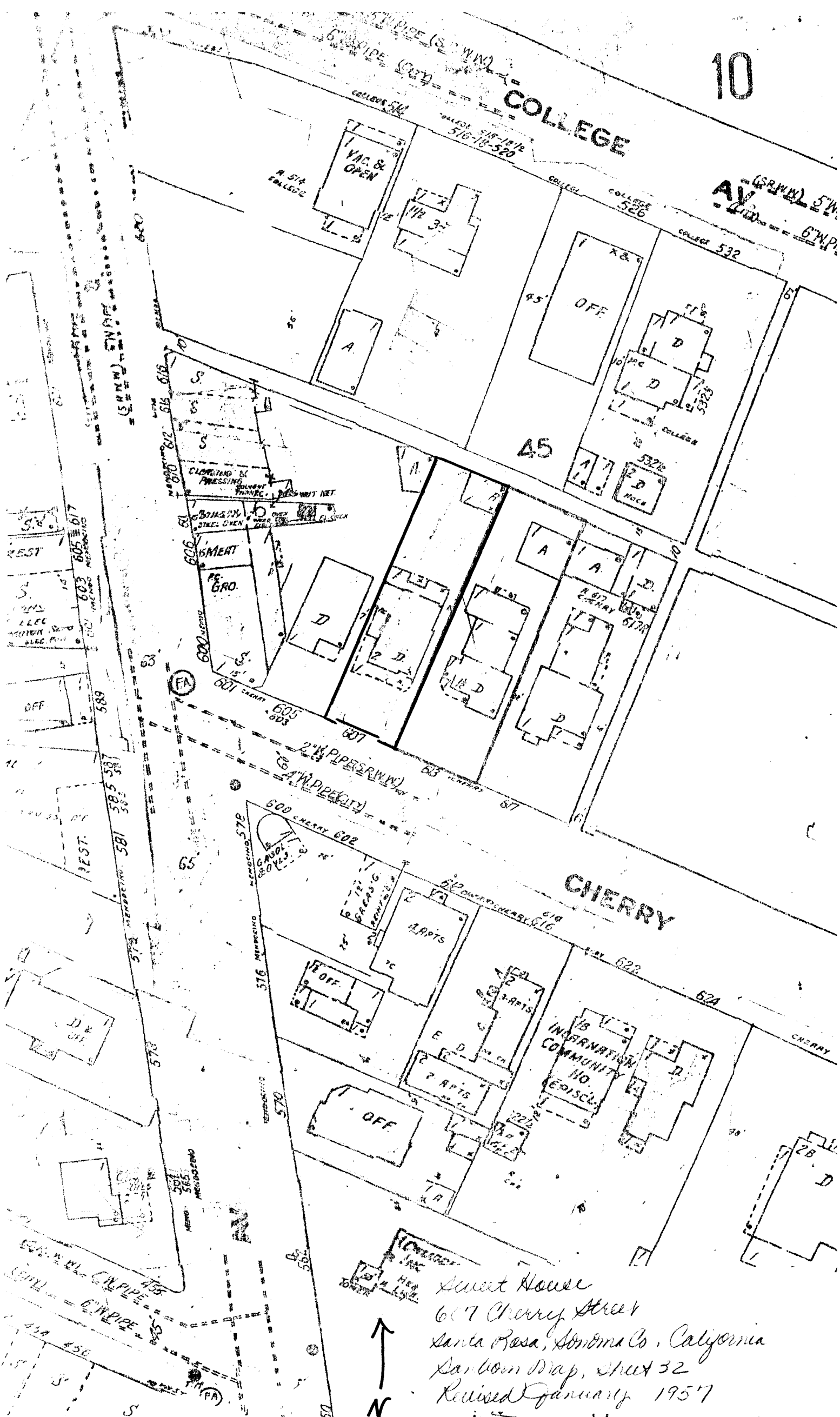
Page 13

Democrat, 16 December 1899, 4:3. The athletic league is reported in ibid., 8 March 1899, 3:6, and LeBaron, Santa Rosa, 189. His election to the Board of Trade presidency is covered in the Press Democrat for 15 February 1901, 4:1. The "Mikado" was reviewed in ibid., 17 April 1903, 8:1, and 18 April 1903, 8:1. For the Good Government League, see ibid., 28 February 1906, 4:1. Sweet's role in the '06 earthquake appears in ibid., 25 April 1906, 2:1 and ads for the college which appeared for the month following.

(16) Press Democrat, 11 November 1930, 1:1-7 and 2:1; ibid., 13 November 1930, 8:6-7.

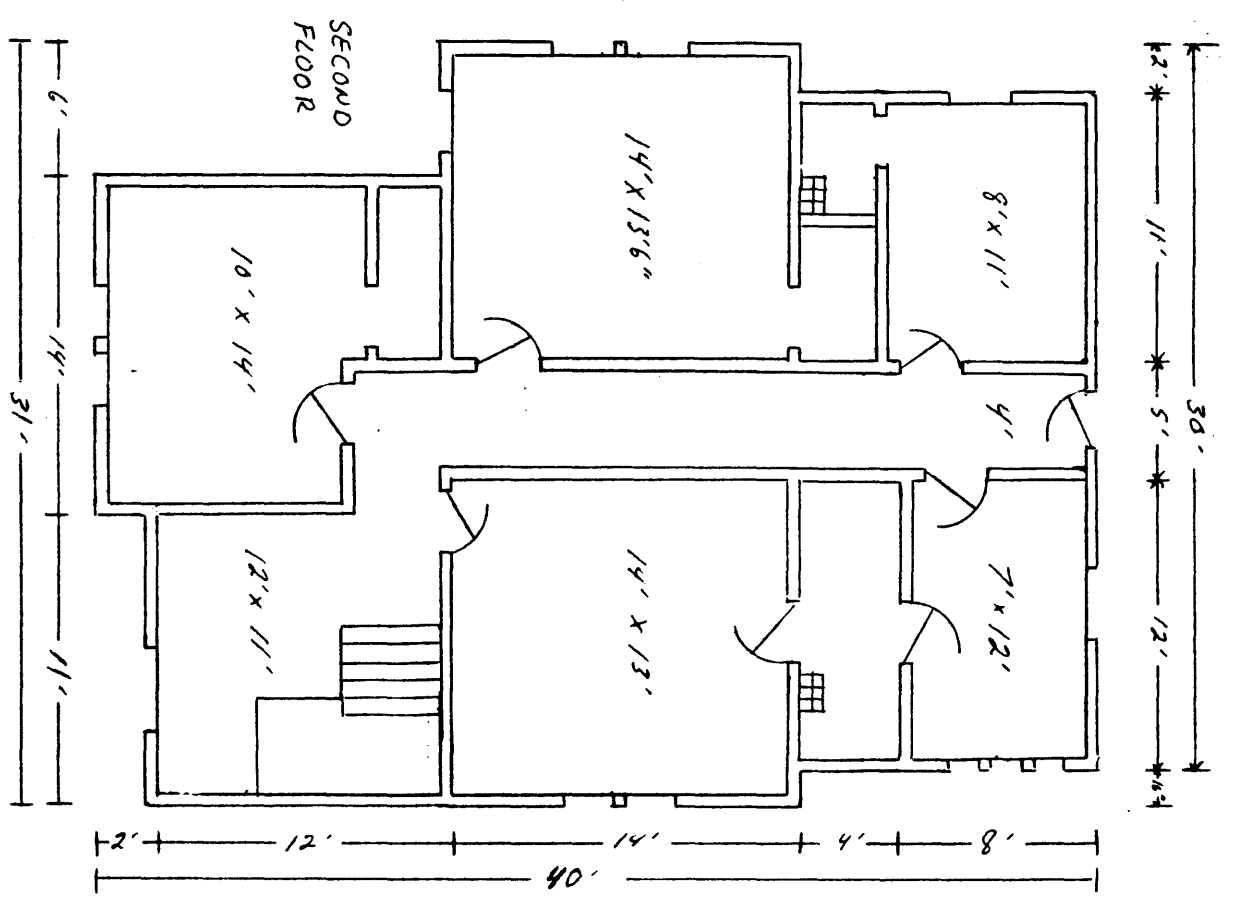
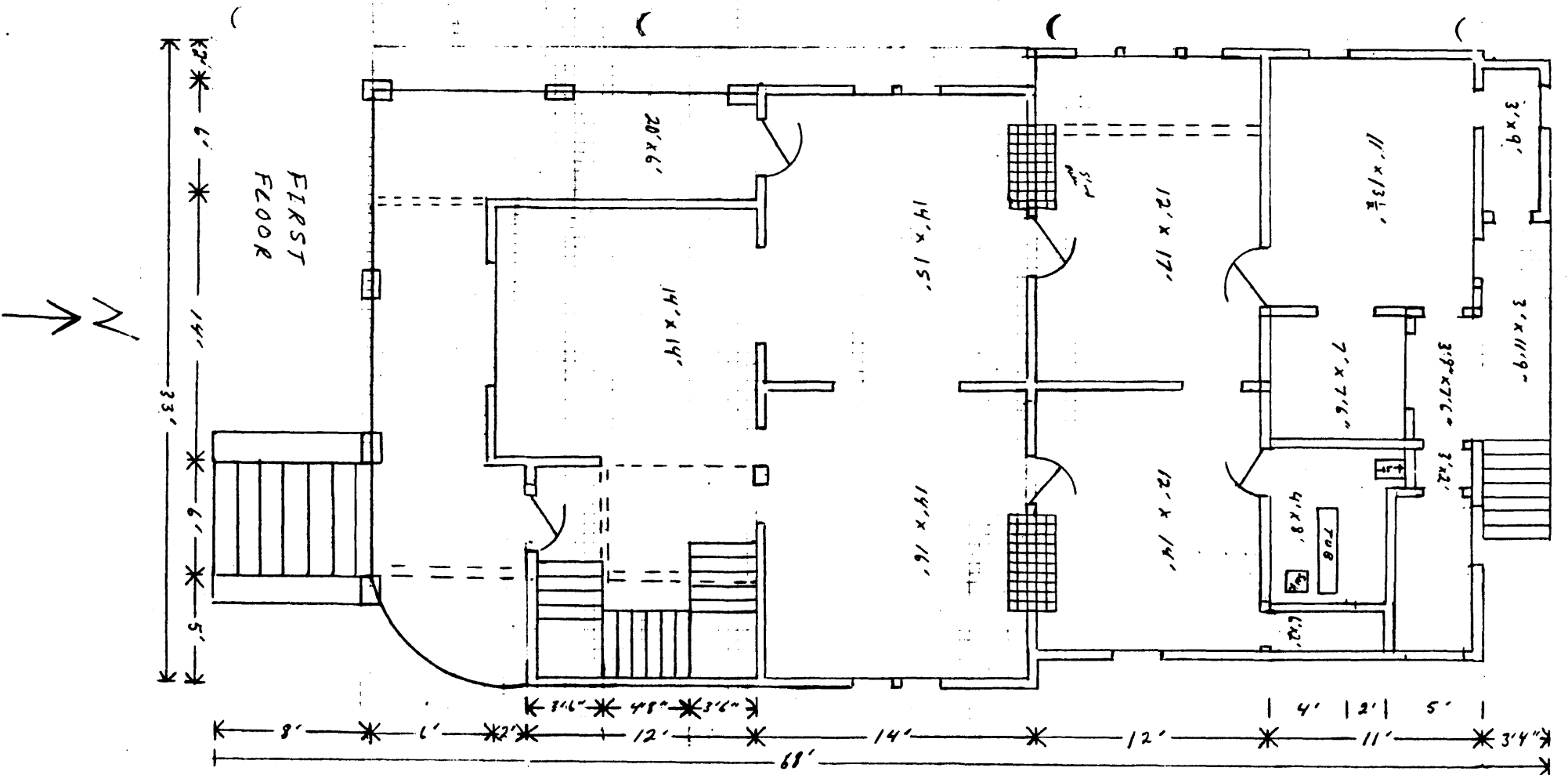
(17) Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 9 March 1902, 5:1-2; ibid., 22 March 1954; Finley, History of Sonoma County, II, 273-4; Julia Goodyear Sweet, editor, 75 Years of Presbyterianism (Santa Rosa: Press Democrat, 1930), 34, 45, 59, 61, 69, and 80.

Mrs. Julia Sweet continued to live and be associated with the residence until her death in 1954. Nothing of exceptional significance occurred between 1937 and 1954; therefore, the period of significance is terminated in 1937.



Sweet House  
 607 Cherry Street  
 Santa Rosa, Sonoma Co., California  
 Rainbow Drap, Street 32  
 Revised January 1957





Secret House  
 607 Cherry St.  
 Santa Rosa, CA  
 Ardmore Co.  
 10-524830-4255010