

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

For NPS use only

received MAY 6 1987

date entered

JUN 17 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic Kirk, John W., and Thomas F., House Number of contributing features: 1

and/or common Kirk House Number of non-contributing features: 1

2. Locationstreet & number 4686 St. Paul Hwy. NE N/A not for publicationcity, town St. Paul vicinity of Fifth Congressional District

state Oregon code 41 county Marion code 047

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input 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 Terrence and Joyce Kirk

street & number 4686 St. Paul Hwy. NE

city, town St. Paul vicinity of state Oregon 97137**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County Courthouse

street & number 100 High Street

city, town Salem state Oregon 97301

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle Statewide Inventory of
Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes nodate 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office, 525 Trade Street SE

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

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 _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Kirk House represents a type of rural farmstead which began to gain popularity in Oregon about 1875: the Vernacular Gothic or "Western Farmhouse."¹ It is located on its original site at the eastern outskirts of St. Paul, Marion County, Oregon. The house was built by Thomas and John Kirk, who bought 237 acres from their father in October, 1878 to continue the family occupation of farming. The evolution of the house is evident in the organization of the building form, composed of several attached volumes. New farming techniques and equipment, and increases in productivity and family led to the building's development. The house embodies many characteristics of the "Western Farmhouse" including the T-shape plan with attached volumes, high ceilings, relatively tall and narrow wings, simple trim detail and multiple porches.² But it also displays the persistence of traditional forms in its central hall plan, bilateral symmetry, boxed eaves and transom and sidelights. The house is one of the few remaining examples in the St. Paul area which represent the rapid agricultural growth of the railroad era and the utilitarian farmhouse which once dotted the rural landscape.

Located in Section 20, Township 4 South, Range 2 West of the Willamette Meridian, the Kirk House is situated on Dr. James Scheil's 418.12 acre donation land claim of 1850. Peter Kirk bought 237 acres of the original claim in October, 1873, expanding his farming operations to just over 1,000 acres. The house sits on a knoll overlooking the flat Willamette River valley. The property is located on Highway 219, the eastern gateway to St. Paul, and is topographically separated from the town by Mission Creek.

The Kirk House was built in several stages during the period 1878-1890. The following description will first discuss the main dwelling (the T-shape plan) and then the attached outbuildings (the woodshed/garage and windmill tower). The main dwelling was built in two major phases: the back "ell," described hereafter as the original portion of the structure, was built around 1877 or 1878, and the front (east/west) volume, referred to as the addition, was built in 1880. Because all units are contiguous and interconnected, the farmhouse is counted as a single contributing feature. The stable, a balloon frame structure clad with horizontal siding, is located on the westerly side of the driveway and is visually separated from the farmhouse by a break of evergreen trees. Built in 1984, is a non-historic, non-contributing feature.

Exterior - The Dwelling

The main dwelling has a two-story T-shape plan, a distinguishing feature of the "Western Farmhouse." It measures 34'8" wide on the north end, 16' wide on the south end and is approximately 58' in length. A log pier foundation system originally

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supported the structure. Log sections approximately 24" in diameter and 14" to 24" high are still located under portions of the house. Due to deterioration through the years, the logs have been replaced by small rock aggregate concrete piers and concrete blocks. Under the addition 2" by 8" floor joists running north/south are held up by 6" by 8" beams which run east/west. The joists and beams on the original portion of the house are the same but run the opposite directions. A 5½" by 8" milled sill rests on the foundation perimeter raising the addition approximately 2' above the ground level. It is covered by cement asbestos boards. The balloon framed walls are made with full 2" by 4" studs, spaced approximately 22" apart. This method of construction grew in popularity in the mid to late 19th century with the proliferation of saw and planing mills.

The main dwelling has two moderately pitched gable roofs which are perpendicular to each other, with the back "ell" slightly lower than the front addition roof. Both are covered with wood shakes. Two original brick chimneys are located at each of the gable ridges while a newer brick chimney is attached to the west elevation. The rear chimney displays a more ornate corbelled chimney cap characteristic of the Victorian era. 12" projecting boxed eaves and 12" wide frieze boards with bed moldings extend around the perimeter of the house. Eave returns can be seen on the gable ends. 1" by 7" shiplap siding, secured with square cut nails, covers the majority of the house. 5" shiplap siding was used on the back shed attachment and parts of the kitchen/bathroom. The corners are covered by vertical corner boards topped with horizontal boards which create the effect of a capital. The corner boards and caps together produce a pilaster-like effect reflecting a popular 19th century classical detail. The bottom perimeter of the house is finished by an 8" baseboard.

The majority of the windows have original one/one or four/four double hung sash. Projecting cap moldings or drip caps decorate the tops of the windows on the 1880 addition, while on the original portion of the house, the windows have simple trim boards without caps, and thinner glass and muntin bars.

The north or front facade of the house displays more ornate detailing than the rest of the building. Symmetrical stacked double hung bay windows, measuring 24' to the eaves, flank central front and balcony doors. One/one double hung

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sash windows in the bays measure 6'6" by 2'3". The bottom of the top sash stiles are finished with a small curved extension. The Italianate style bays are decorated with recessed 1' by 2'10" panels below and 9" by 2'10" panels above each window on the first story and 8" panels below the windows on the second story. The corners are detailed with small circular attached colonettes with projecting caps and the second story frieze boards are embellished with scallops. The bays are topped off by faceted roofs which come to a point, giving the impression of twin towers. Shutters recently have been added flanking each bay. The original 2'9" by 6'8" four panel Victorian door, with pull-type doorbell and enclosed with bull-nose trim, is surrounded by two, three-light sidelights and a three-light transom. A semi-circular porch with four fluted columns replaced an earlier shed roof. Originally a small, two-story balcony with ornamental railing on the second story decorated the front of the house. The balcony door is embellished with a projecting moulded cap and dentils.

The east elevation is made up of the two main building volumes, a back porch, and an attached kitchen (originally the pantry). 4/4 double hung windows cover the majority of the elevation. Sometime before the turn of the century the first story window was made into a door. Smaller windows replaced original windows in the pantry/kitchen and south of the east side door. The windows on the 1880 addition measure 2'3" by 6'5" and are surrounded by simple 4 3/4" board trim and angled sills. The second story windows are topped with an approximately 8" projecting moulded window cap while the lower story windows have drip caps. Smaller windows, measuring 2'3" by 5'9" with simple board trim and no caps are located on the original portion of the house. A 4'10" by 3'2" closet projection was built in the elbow of the two building volumes ca. 1915. Three turned posts support a shed roof covering the back porch.

The south elevation of the main house consists of a kitchen and bathroom, measuring 20' in length and a small mudroom measuring 10' in length. The window in the bathroom has been altered to a smaller window measuring 2'4" by 4'0". The mudroom is sided with a combination of 5" and 7" shiplap siding while the kitchen and bathroom walls have 7" shiplap. Corner boards with small horizontal board caps and eave returns can be seen on the gable end.

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The west elevation is made up of a small attached shed roof structure, originally a wash and pumproom, and the two major building volumes. 4/4 double hung windows with drip caps cover the majority of the elevation, measuring 2'3" by 6'5" on the front addition and 2'3" by 5'9" on the original rear section. A new 16 light window replaced two 2'3" by 6'5" windows on the addition. The 12' by 10' shed attachment, once a lattice porch, is now enclosed with 9 light window panels. At the second story, the original lattice porch enclosed a balcony with an upper level entrance door and window. The porch's ceiling is made up of 3½" beaded boards; 4 braced posts support the shed roof. Enclosed stairs, originally located at the southern end of the porch, now removed, descended on the exterior of the house to an attached woodshed.

Interior

The interior of the Kirk house retains much of its original character. The room layout is largely unchanged, and the majority of the hardware, doors, windows and mouldings are intact. The formal entrance to the house is located on the north elevation which opens to a central hall. The long, rectangular hall is flanked by two 9'4" by 21'6" living areas. Originally these rooms were divided into two separate rooms, each having its own entrance door. These rooms feature the Italianate style bay windows. A door, located at the end of the hall, currently blocked off, led to the study (originally the dining room). This door may have been the formal entrance to the original dwelling. The study is a small rectangular room containing the fireplace (rebricked ca. 1935), two windows and three doors which access the two living areas and the dining room (originally the kitchen). A 9' wide opening was added ca. 1935 to the northwest wall of the study which provides a direct access to the living room. A 4' wide section on the west end of the study was a porch at one time, perhaps similar to the present porch directly above. It was probably enclosed sometime before the turn of the century. The room directly south of the study is currently being used as a side entry area (originally the kitchen). A wall was recently removed which separated the entry area from a side porch (originally the pumproom and washroom). This area has been remodeled to make a dining room. A door which led out to the west side of the building was also removed during remodeling. The pantry, measuring 11'7" by 8', was probably attached to the original portion of the structure in conjunction with the 1880

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addition. A door, on the west wall of the pantry, opens to a bathroom. Drawers on the south wall were put in ca. 1940 and came from the Van De Wiele Store, an old-time merchandise store located in St. Paul.³ A door has been removed on the west side of the bath to incorporate a shower and washing area. The mudroom, west of the bathroom, has been reduced in size to accommodate the water heater.

The original stairway displays a finely turned oak newel post and balustrades, and a curved banister which leads to the second floor. The upper story layout duplicates the original downstairs 4 room configuration in the 1880 addition: 4 bedrooms are located on this floor with the front two featuring the bay windows. A door at the north end of the central hall opens onto a balcony and the door at the south end of the hall accessed the original upstairs portion of the house consisting of a bathroom and storage area. Originally these rooms were used as bedrooms. Two new doors were added when one of the rooms was made into a bathroom; one accessing the bathroom and the other leading to the storage area. The original clawfoot bathtub is installed in the bathroom. The current storage area, L-shaped in plan, was divided into a small entryway opening to the side porch and a bedroom. A wall which once divided the two was taken out on an unknown date. 1" by 7" horizontal boards cover all the walls and ceilings in the storage room except the north wall which is covered with 3½" horizontal beaded tongue and groove boards, like the side porch's ceiling boards. An old stove pipe opening is still located on this wall. A pull-down trap door in the storage area accesses the attic. 2" by 6" ceiling joists and a 1" by 7" ridge board support full 2" by 4" rafters in the original portion of the house. The brick chimney measures 1'4" by 2'6" and is jointed with soft, coarse mortar. The 1880 addition has rough sawn rafters measuring a full 2" by 5" and 2" by 6" ceiling joists. Square nails were used in both the house sections.

3½" tongue and groove floor boards, finished with 9" baseboards, cover the majority of the 1880 addition although some of the rooms have been carpeted. 9' ceilings are located in all the addition's rooms except the two downstairs living areas and study which have had drop ceilings installed. Four panel doors with recessed panels are surrounded by wide moulded trim on both floors. A more ornate four panel door with raised panels is located at the end of the first floor hall. Porcelain knobs with black metal lock boxes are still intact in the 1880 addition. The front door's hardware is more ornate,

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consisting of a pressed metal plate and doorknob adjacent to a pull-type door bell. Hardware was never installed on any of the windows. Hardware and doors in the original portion of the house are a mixture of old and new. An original door made up of five horizontal panels is located between the kitchen and bathroom. This door has similar hardware to the front door: a decorative pressed metal plate with a porcelain knob. A light fixture which came from the historic period still hangs in the side entry area.

Garage

The garage (originally the woodshed) measures approximately 16' by 23' and 17' high. The full 2" by 4" studs in the balloon frame construction are spaced 13" apart and are covered with new 7" shiplap siding on the exterior. Care was taken to duplicate the original siding. The original 10'6" shed opening on the north wall has been replaced by a window and a garage door replaced two swinging barn-like doors on the south side. The back of the building has been enlarged by 4' to provide adequate space for a garage and the slope of the roof modified to compensate for the enlargement. Originally the shed roof was supported by peeled log rafters which were replaced when the slope of the roof was changed. A back stairway once descended from the side porch to the interior of the original shed but was taken out due to deterioration. Two doors are located in the garage: one accesses the main dwelling and the other the windmill tower. A new 20" poured concrete foundation has been added to the perimeter of the building.

Windmill Tower

The windmill tower is a two story structure with an attic space which once led to the windmill and small observatory deck. Both were taken down in the 1940s. The tower measures 20' by 24' and its balloon construction is made up of full 2" by 8" studs spaced 24" apart, and sits on a 7" by 7" sill. 5" shiplap siding covers the structure. The front elevation consists of two 2'3" by 5'10" windows and an entrance door. The west facade is decorated by two stacked 2'3" by 5'10" windows located slightly off center. All the windows are detailed by 5½" trim boards and drip caps and retain their original 4/4 double hung sash. The first floor of the tower is used for a workshop and storage area. Stairs, located on the

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east wall, lead to the second floor which has been converted into a recreation room. 2" by 9 3/4" ceiling beams decorate the room's interior and steep stairs on the south wall lead to a trap door accessing the attic space. The original well is located on the south exterior of the structure and has been covered by a concrete block enclosure.

Outbuildings

The only outbuilding directly associated with the site is a stable on the west side of the house. All other outbuildings located in back of the house belong to Richard Kirk, brother of the current owner, and are not included in the nomination area. A barn, pig pen, chicken coop, cellar, outhouse and smoke house once stood west of the house but none survive.

Site

Cultivated fields surround the prominent hill location of the Kirk house as they did over 100 years ago. The land and natural boundaries encompassing the property have basically maintained the same configuration since the house's construction. Mission Creek forms the natural boundary on the west and Highway 219 forms the northern edge. Flat prairie lands spread to the east and south. A long, tree-lined gravel driveway, to the east, introduces the house. At various times in the past, a semicircular driveway enclosed the house but only the western portion has been maintained as a drive. A picket fence once rounded the house, with a long central rose-lined path leading to the front door, and a tennis court once stood north of the house. Apple, walnut and cherry trees from the original orchard still remain east of the house and two pear trees are located to the west. A wooden rail fence defines the property lines.

Alterations/Additions

Picture window added to livingroom (ca. 1935)
New opening between livingroom and study (ca. 1935)
Chimney added to west elevation (ca. 1940)
Windmill removed (ca. 1940)
Re-roofed (1969)

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Front porch added (1971)
Garage enlarged (1974)
Exterior shutters and cupola added (1980)
Mudroom/bathroom and side porch remodeled (1983)

Condition

The Kirk house is in excellent condition and is well maintained by its present owners who are aware of its historical significance. The house was deteriorating badly before Joyce and Terrence Kirk bought the property in the fall of 1968. They have repaired and upgraded the exterior as well as the interior, including installation of new wiring and heating system, new foundation work and painting. Future plans for interior restoration include removing the drop ceilings in the downstairs rooms, exposing the original ceilings.

Integrity

Although some of the alterations/additions are not in keeping with the Vernacular Gothic style they are yet another evolution of the building form. The front porch addition, the major addition to the building, has been attached in such a manner that the original building fabric has not been damaged. The house's configuration remains virtually intact and neither the integrity of the original structure nor the significance of the Kirk family has been lost.

End Notes

¹Clark, Rosalind, et al, Architecture Oregon Style. (Portland: Professional Book Center, Inc., 1983) p. 45.

²Ibid., p. 46.

³Interview with Mrs. Loretta Kirk, July 1986.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1877/1878–1927 **Builder/Architect** Anonymous

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John W. Kirk House occupies a highly visible half-acre site on the south side of Highway 219 on the eastern outskirts of St. Paul. Its nucleus is a vernacular Gothic farmhouse of about 1878 which grew by accretion over the period 1880 to 1890. Each component is structurally connected, thus making of the whole a T-shaped configuration with utility wing offset at a right angle to the rear elevation.

The main block, added in 1880, is a two-story, gable-roofed volume clad with drop siding. Its formally organized facade is distinguished by a pair of symmetrically-placed, two-story polygonal bays having conical roofs. The original front porch with its delicate framework and upper deck railing was replaced by a bowed, or semi-circular porch with upper deck supported by four large fluted Ionic columns. This now-dominant feature was added in 1971. The shingle roof was replaced with shakes in 1969. Other modifications to the main volume are comparatively minor.

In addition to the main block, the farmhouse is composed of the original volume, now the ell, which has a double piazza on the west elevation and a lean-to addition on the south; a washroom/pumproom addition of 1890 and a woodshed/garage dating from about 1880, both substantially modified; and, finally, a square windmill tower of 1890 from which the windmill was removed over forty years ago.

The nominated property is locally significant under National Register Criterion A as the administrative center of an outstanding historic farmstead in the St. Paul area. The 19th Century vernacular farmhouse, despite its modification, manages still to convey the specialized functions required for maintaining a prosperous farm of the turn-of-the-century. It is significant also under Criterion B for its association with John W. and Thomas F. Kirk, whose connection with the property commenced in 1878 when a portion of their father's farm holdings was acquired and the brothers built the house they occupied with other family members. The Kirk brothers expanded and developed their farming operations, first jointly-held, in response to new markets which opened up. They were among the first in Western Oregon to plant hops and thereby established a base crop for the St. Paul area. In 1906, the brothers divided their holdings but continued to jointly occupy the house. John and his wife raised seven children to adulthood in the house. These two oldest sons of the numerous Kirk clan played vital roles in developing the agricultural base of St. Paul economy. Because the hops pioneers, John and Thomas Kirk, left the nominated property in 1927, the historic period of significance is considered closed at that date. However, as early as 1916, Urban J. Kirk, one of John's sons, was given 25 acres of his father's share of the holdings on which he commenced to develop the Kirk White Leghorn strain.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.49 acres

Quadrangle name St. Paul, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0
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 Zone

5	0	2	7	2	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

 Easting

5	0	0	5	8	8	0
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 Northing

B

--	--

 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Northing

C

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 Zone

--	--	--	--	--	--

 Easting

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 Northing

D

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

E

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

F

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 Zone

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 Easting

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G

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

H

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 Zone

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 Easting

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 Northing

Verbal boundary description and justification The John and Thomas Kirk House is located in NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 20, Township 4 South, Range 2 West, Willamette Meridian, in the vicinity of St. Paul in Marion County, Oregon. It is legally described as Tax Lot 41794-000 at said location and is more particularly described as follows: (Continued)

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 Sally Donovan

organization N/A date August 15, 1986

street & number 1342 Alder Street, #3 telephone (503) 345-1933

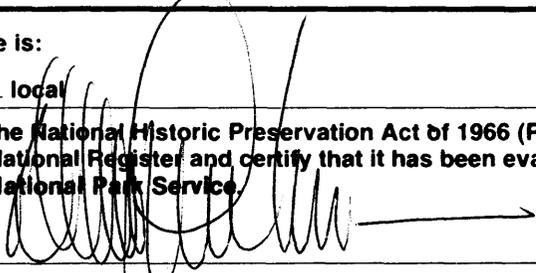
city or town Eugene state Oregon 97401

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 April 28, 1987

For NPS use only

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

for William B. Bushong date 6/17/87
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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His Twin Oaks Poultry operation came to be nationally recognized. Thus, the Kirk family's connection with the land was solidly bridged over four generations to the present day.

When the farmhouse and remainder of the farm were sold to Lester Kirk, another of John's sons, in 1927, John moved to Portland and Thomas moved into St. Paul. Of three houses still standing in the St. Paul area which are associated with the Kirk family, the farmhouse of John and Thomas Kirk is distinctive, not only because it is the largest and most prominently sited, but also because it is the only one of the three on its original foundation and remaining in an agricultural context. The other two (the Emmett Kirk House and the James and Elizabeth Kirk Murphy House) are relocated and maintained as house museums in St. Paul.

(Continued)

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The Kirk family arrived in Oregon 116 years ago and began their occupation as farmers. The family has been instrumental in the area in developing the agricultural base of the community of St. Paul. Five generations of Kirks have farmed the land around the house; the original 237 acres are currently being farmed by a brother of the property owner. Four generations of Kirks have lived in the house.

Peter Kirk arrived in the United States in 1850 at the age of 20 and Margaret Lyons Kirk arrived in 1848, both from their native land of Ireland. They were married in Boston in 1854 and after three years decided to move to Minnesota to pursue farming. The farm proved to be unsuccessful, so Peter left his wife and children in Minnesota and moved to Montana where he accumulated a small fortune after three years in the shoe-making business.¹ He then moved back to Minnesota and the couple decided to move to Oregon. Upon their arrival in 1870 in St. Paul, Oregon, they purchased 345 acres, 1/2 miles north of town, originally part of Father Blanchet's Donation Land Claim of 1839. Margaret Kirk died in 1873 leaving behind nine children. Peter remarried Margaret Gargan two years later, and after her death a few years later married Matilda Dixon; each bore one child. Peter Kirk lived until 1897 and was remembered as a successful farmer. He was also a land speculator and by 1879 he was among the largest land owners in the St. Paul area.² He built one of the larger houses in the area, with three fireplaces downstairs and a large room upstairs, the scene of many social activities. He also built a large warehouse in 1878 for buying and storage of grain which was later the site of the St. Paul Railroad Station.³ Peter was very active in the local Catholic Church. Emmett Kirk, son of Peter and Margaret, became a very prominent figure in St. Paul. Emmett built a very successful general merchandise store north-east of the St. Paul Catholic Church which was in business for almost 50 years. He was also appointed the first St. Paul agent for the railroad.⁴ In September 1890, Emmett married Agatha McDonald and they lived in a small Queen Anne style house built by Frank Durant. It is beautifully decorated with colored glass, detailed wood trim and fishscale shingle siding. It now serves as the St. Paul Mission Museum.

Thomas and John Kirk were the oldest sons of Peter and Margaret, and in October 1878 they purchased 237 acres of their father's property for \$2,000 to continue the family occupation

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of farming.⁵ The property was a portion of Dr. James Scheil's original Donation Land Claim of 1850 and was acquired by Peter Kirk in 1873. The Kirk brothers were very successful at their farming ventures and added to their original two story structure in 1880. At that time the brothers' older sister lived with them probably until her marriage in February 1881 to James Murphy. The two brothers were both unmarried and they built the front portion of the house as two separate living areas, using the back area for cooking. An understanding was made that when and if they married both families would live in the house. Thomas never married but lived there until later in life, then moved to St. Paul.

John married Cecelia McKay on January 21, 1884. Cecelia, a native of St. Paul, was the child of James and Cecelia McKay, some of the first settlers to come to the state in 1847. James McKay was a prominent business person who bought the Old Mission saw and grist mill from the Hudson Bay Company and operated it for 35 years. Later in life he moved to Portland and erected the McKay Building, a cast-iron "skyscraper."⁶

Cecelia and John had eight children, one dying at age two. They were very active and supportive of the St. Paul Catholic Church. From 1900-1908 under the pastorate of Rev. James Raun the church was renovated; a new altar, pews, and stained glass windows were installed. Three stained glass windows, with the inscriptions "In Memory of her husband, P.P. Kirk," "Gift of Mr. and Mrs. John and Cecelia Kirk" and "In Memory of Mr. and Mrs. Margaret Kirk," commemorate the efforts of the Kirk family. Six windows were donated by Cecelia Kirk's family, the McKays. Cecelia and John left the St. Paul area in 1927 and moved to Portland, selling the farm to their son Lester, living in the Morris-Marks Mansion which they owned.

Others of Peter Kirk's descendants stayed in the farming community of St. Paul. The family has contributed substantially to the agricultural development and commerce of the area and are still continuing the farming occupation Peter Kirk started over a century ago. The house is occupied by direct descendants of the family patriarch and John W. Kirk.

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St. Paul Historic District

St. Paul is in the core area of French Prairie, second only to Astoria in the order of white settlement in Oregon.⁷ It has long been recognized for its fertile soil, mild climate, and open prairies which are ideal for agriculture. The prairie was settled by French-Canadians from the Hudson Bay Company as early as 1828 and was the first area cultivated by settlers in the Oregon country. An early Catholic mission site, it was also a center for early Catholic schools. A brick church, built in 1846, still stands in a prominent location in St. Paul. The town grew with the influx of Dutch, Irish, and Scottish immigrants beginning in the 1840s. The economy of the town was based on agriculture as well as river commerce and logging.⁸ The introduction of the narrow gauge railroad in 1880 further stimulated the valley community, providing an east-west shipping route along with the north-south Willamette River route. The community's population has fluctuated little over the past 100 years and the town still revolves around agriculture and the Catholic Church.

In 1981 St. Paul was accepted on the National Register of Historic Places as a National Historic District. Ninety-two properties are located in the district, 18 of which are primary (pre-1900) resources. Ten of these are residential. Originally the Kirk house was proposed for the district as a primary structure. As a result of the rescission of the satellite option, no building unconnected to the main body, that is outside the boundary, can be included in a district. For this reason, the Kirk house was pulled from the district proposal. The house lies 200 yards east of the city limits. None of the other "American Vernacular" style houses recognized in the District as primary resources compare to the prominent and unusual features of the Kirk house.

Architecture

The Kirk house is an unusual example of a vernacular Gothic Farmhouse, also known as a Western Farmhouse, which embodies many characteristics of rural farmhouses of the 1880s in addition to displaying many traditional classic elements. Its T-shape plan with added perpendicular volumes, Italianate bay windows, height, shiplapping and pilaster-like corner boards reflect common features of the Western Farmhouse.⁹ An evolution of the classically derived farmhouses started to

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occur in the 1860s in Oregon with advancement in agricultural technologies and by 1875 the rural farmstead took on an appearance that reflected the changing needs of the farmer.¹⁰ A series of building forms were added to each other according to functional requirements. The Kirk house is an unusual example of an 1880 farmstead as it includes many details from "high style" architecture of the cities as well as traditional features. The stacked Italianate bays with their pointed faceted roofs are a unique feature not found in the rural farmstead of that time. Bilateral symmetry, projecting window and door moulding, side-lights and transom surrounds, boxed eaves, and central hall type plan are all inherent to more classical or traditional style houses. Two-story central hall houses were prevalent, especially in Marion County, in the 1860s and early 1870s; the Kirk house reflects the persistence of this traditional regional form into the 1880s.¹¹

The building's development coincides with technological advancements in farming, the introduction of the railroad, increases in the farm's productivity and family growth. The original portion of the house consisted of a simple two-story rectangular building. The majority of the house's interior room configuration and its hardware are still intact which also give a good sense of the building's development. Simple detailing finished the exterior and interior of the house. The front addition, pantry and woodshed built in the early 1880s are evidence of the Kirk brothers' successful farming ventures. The front addition detailing is much more ornate than the original portion showing increase in wealth and the availability of finish detail materials. The dining room (now the study) originally contained a long table which accommodated the threshing crews. The upper bedrooms in the original portion of the house became the residence of the hired man and his family. The windmill, probably built in the late 1880s or early 1900s, marks another step in comfort and technological advancement. The Kirk house was one of the first houses in the area to have indoor plumbing.¹²

The only other buildings in the area that compare to the Kirk house in style and age are the Zorn house, located near Champoeg (5 miles), the Gearin house, two miles north of St. Paul, and the Coleman house, three miles northeast of the

town. The Zorn house probably compares most to the Kirk house in its complexity and scale; both houses have similar stair details, central hall type plan and shiplap siding. The Kirk

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house represents the prominence and agricultural success of the Kirk family and is one of the few remaining houses in the St. Paul area which display features of a more ornate farmhouse. This kind of farmhouse is slowly disappearing in the rural landscape of the Willamette Valley.

Agriculture

Agriculture has played an important role in the development of the small valley community of St. Paul. It has been a major income producing industry in the area for over 150 years and continues to support the town's economy. The area surrounding St. Paul was recognized very early (mid-1820s) by French Canadians from the Hudson Bay Company as rich and fertile prairie lands well suited for farming. Dutch, Scottish, and Irish emigrants, lured by parcels of free land, crossed the United States in the late 1840s and started settling on their claims. The location of St. Paul was also advantageous due to its proximity to the Willamette River, which provided a shipping link to a major north-south transportation route.

Peter Kirk arrived in St. Paul in 1870 crossing the plains on the newly completed transcontinental railroad. In a short time he became one of the major land owners in the area and became a very successful farmer. He also became involved in the grain handling business, building a large warehouse in 1878. Peter bought grain locally, stored and resold it to various markets.

The Kirk brothers, Thomas and John, continued to expand their family's farming occupation by buying a parcel of their father's land located east of town. Now the Kirks operated two farms, one on the eastern entrance to St. Paul and one on the north. The brothers became very successful farmers. They began farming in the railroad era which stimulated St. Paul's growth and economy by providing an east-west transportation route. New market areas were opened up and the railroad brought in new equipment and materials that further stimulated the area. The Kirk brothers grew a wide variety of crops including oats, wheat, potatoes and clover. They were early hops growers in the area and by 1895 were producing 18,000 lbs of hops annually. St. Paul at that time had two breweries. John Kirk bought 218 acres in 1889 further expanding the farming operations. Both John and Thomas ran the farm until

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1906 when it was divided, John taking the larger portion and Thomas the smaller. Gaston reports in the Centennial History of Oregon that John Kirk "holds 200 acres of land under a high state of cultivation and carries on various lines of farming, and raises cattle, horses, sheep and hogs. Thirty acres of the farm are planted to hops and yield yearly a profitable crop."¹³ Hops picking and curing on the Kirk farm was done by Chinese laborers who stayed in dwellings north of the Kirk property called "Chinamen Lane."¹⁴ In 1901 the Oregon Statesman Illustrated Annual stated that Marion County's "hops industry is probably the principle industry, fruit second, grain third." The Kirk brothers contributed significantly to the hops industry in the St. Paul area and three generations later members of the family are still growing hops on the original parcel of land.

The Kirk farm was surrounded by a large garden and orchard. The orchard contained plums, pears, walnuts, peaches and three varieties of apple trees.¹⁵ Excess food from the garden and orchard was shipped by river to an orphanage in Lake Oswego. They also produced large quantities of butter, with 150 lbs reported in 1895.

John and Cecelia Kirk gave 25 acres of their property to their son Urban J. and his wife Zeta in 1916 as a wedding present. Urban built his house directly east of his parents' house and immediately started a poultry farm. He was one of the first ones in the area to trapnest chickens, developing the Kirk White Leghorn Strain of poultry. By 1935 U.J. and Zeta had built "one of the finest poultry plants in the state" becoming "one of only four poultry breeders in Oregon who have U.S. certified flocks."¹⁶ Kirk's Twin Oaks Poultry Farm was known throughout the country and continued until 1953. Urban was also very active in the educational system in St. Paul, and was a member of the school board. He received the bid to build the new St. Paul High School in 1954, helping build and maintain the strong educational roots of St. Paul.

The Kirks are a very old and prominent farm family in Marion County. The descendents of Peter, Thomas and John Kirk still farm the land that surrounds the house. They have helped support and maintain the economic base of St. Paul and will continue to farm the land that Peter Kirk bought in 1873.

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End Notes

¹Joseph Gaston, The Centennial History of Oregon, 1811-1911. (Chicago: S.J. Clark Publishing Co., 1912), p. 573.

²Harvey J. McKay, St. Paul, Oregon, 1830-1890. (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1980), p. 71.

³Ibid., p. 68.

⁴Ibid., p. 146.

⁵Registry of Deed, Marion County Courthouse, Salem, Oregon, vol. 23, p. 505.

⁶Gaston, The Centennial History of Oregon, p. 990.

⁷James Hamrick, "St. Paul Historic District Nomination," State Historic Preservation Office, Salem, Oregon, September 1, 1980.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Clark, Rosalind, et al, Architecture Oregon Style. (Portland: Professional Book Center, Inc., 1983), p. 46.

¹⁰Thomas Vaughn, ed., Space, Style, and Structure: Building in Northwest America, Vol. 1. (Portland: Oregon Historical Society; 1974), p. 127.

¹¹Ibid., p. 104.

¹²Interview Eleanor Kirk Davidson, St. Paul, Oregon, July 1986.

¹³Gaston, The Centennial History of Oregon, p. 573.

¹⁴Interview John Kirk, St. Paul, Oregon, August 1986.

¹⁵Oregon State Archives, "Enumeration of Inhabitants and Industrial Products of the County of Marion, State of Oregon, for 1895," Salem, Oregon, p. 86.

¹⁶Woodburn Independent, date unknown, ca. 1935.

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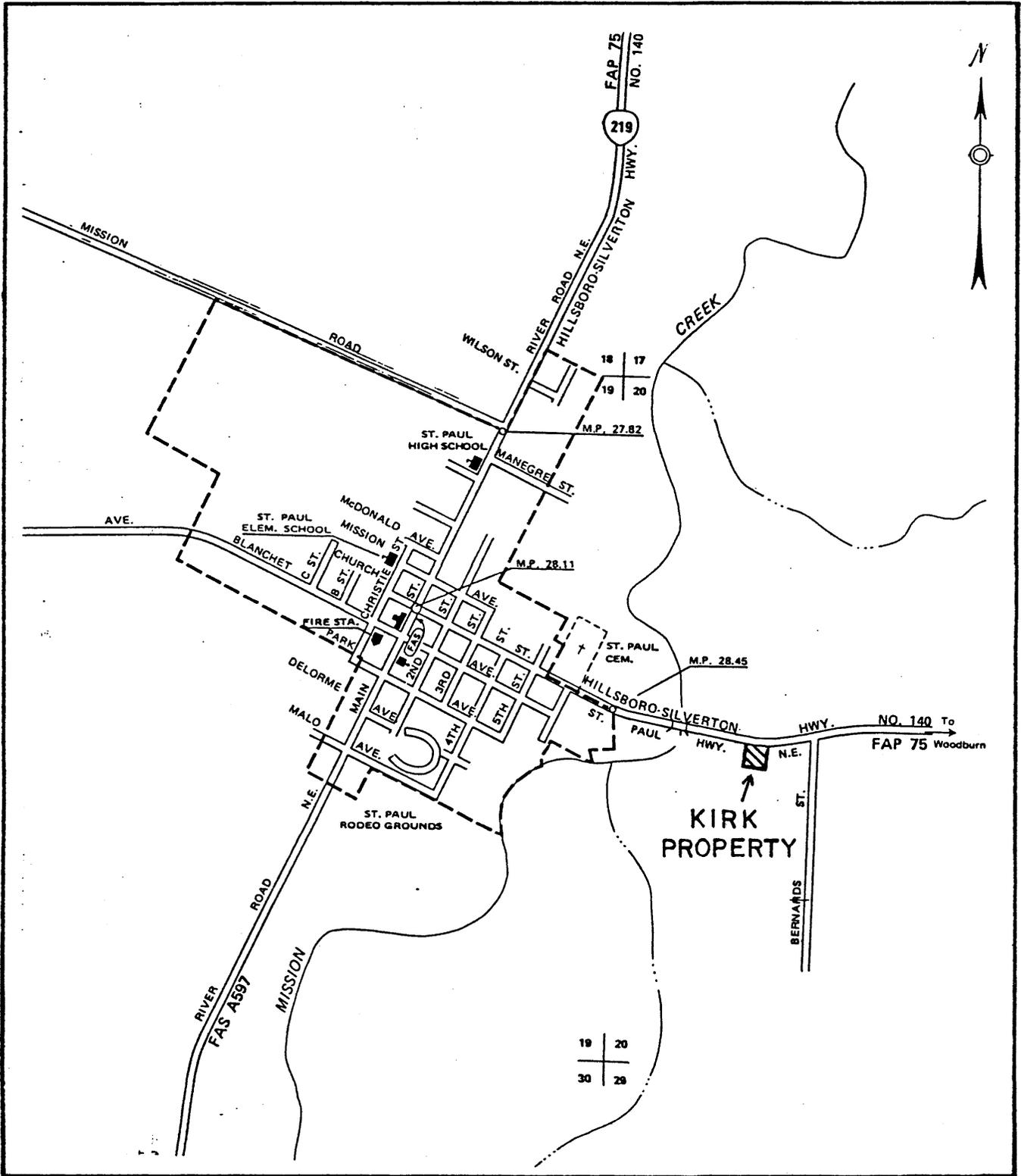
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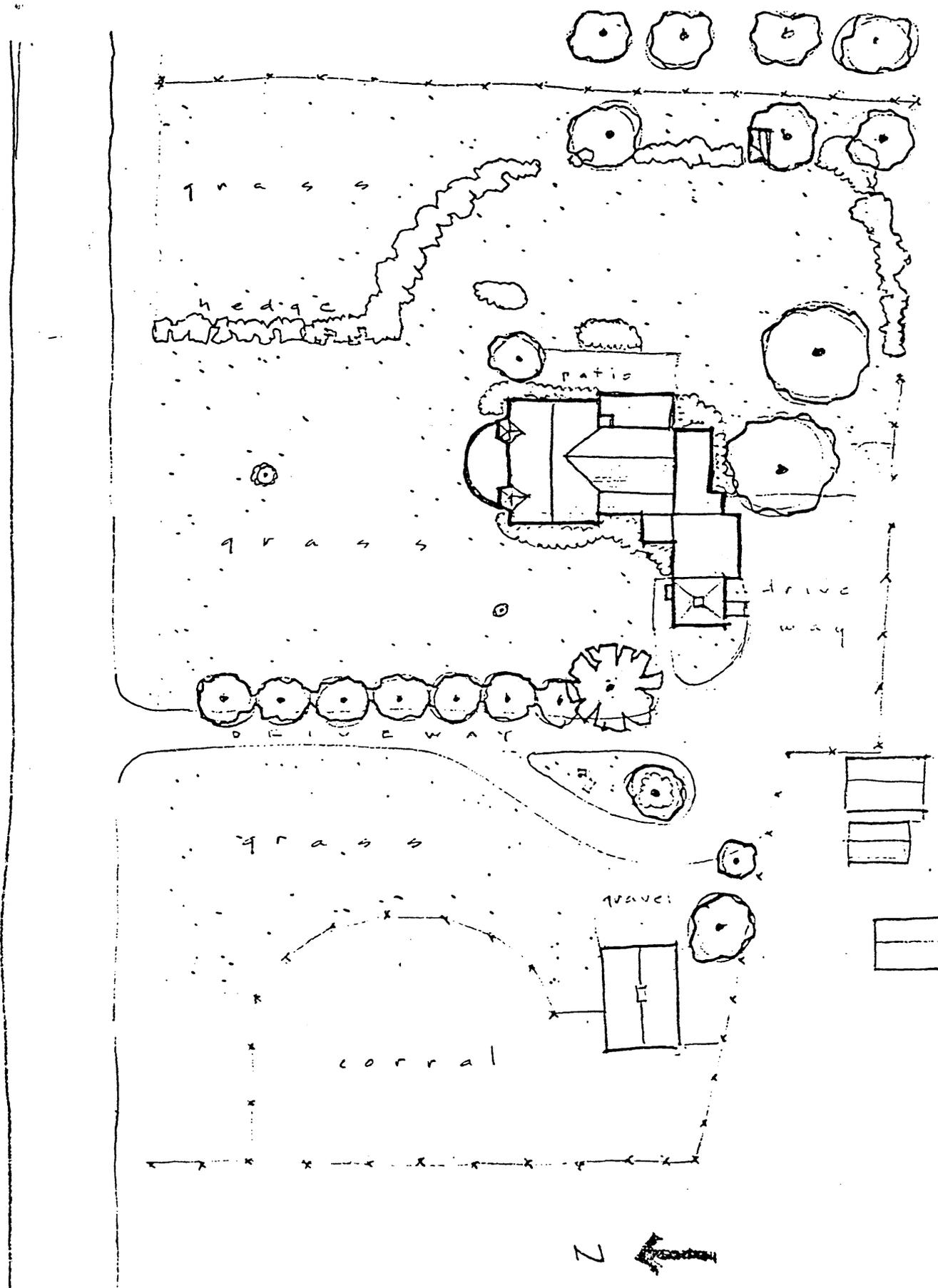
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The nominated parcel consists of Tax Lot 41794-000, located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$, Section 20, Township 4 South, Range 2 West, of the Willamette Meridian, Marion County, Oregon. It is further described as follows:

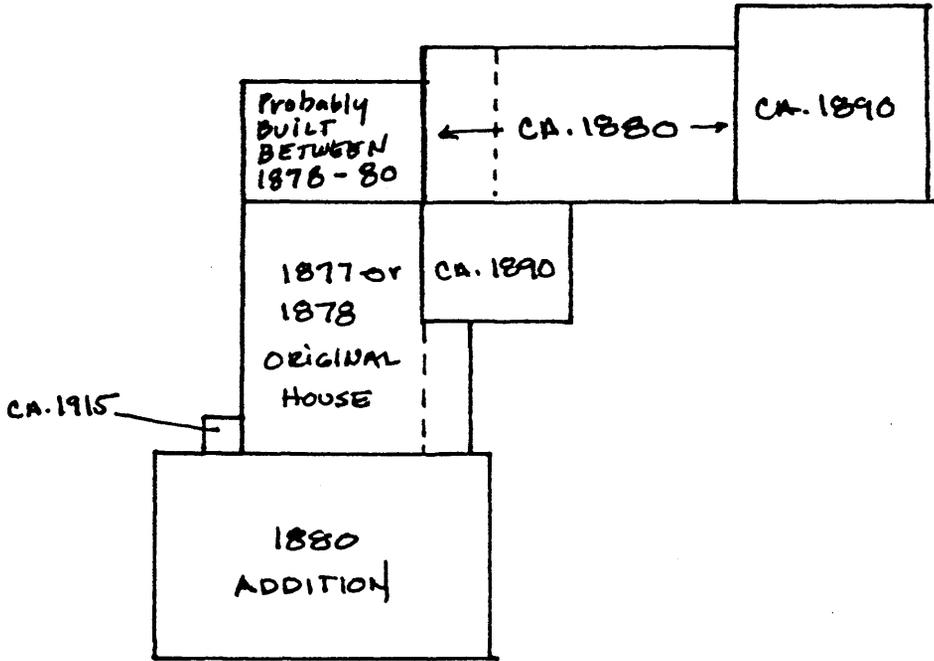
Beginning at the northwest corner of said Tax Lot; thence easterly approximately 120 feet to the northeast corner of said Tax Lot; thence southerly approximately 210 feet to the southeast corner of said Tax Lot; thence westerly approximately 120 feet to the southwest corner of said Tax Lot; thence northerly approximately 210 feet to the point of beginning, the whole containing 0.49 acres, more or less.



St. Paul City Limits-Oregon State Highway Map, 1980



Site Plan

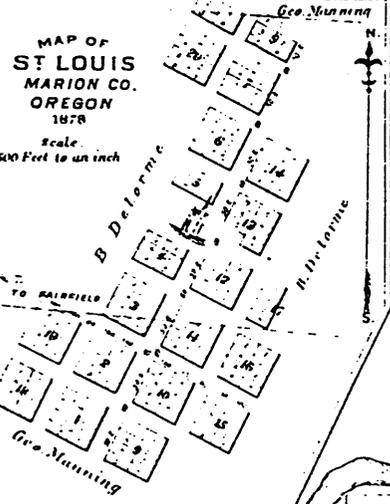


Building Evolution Schematic

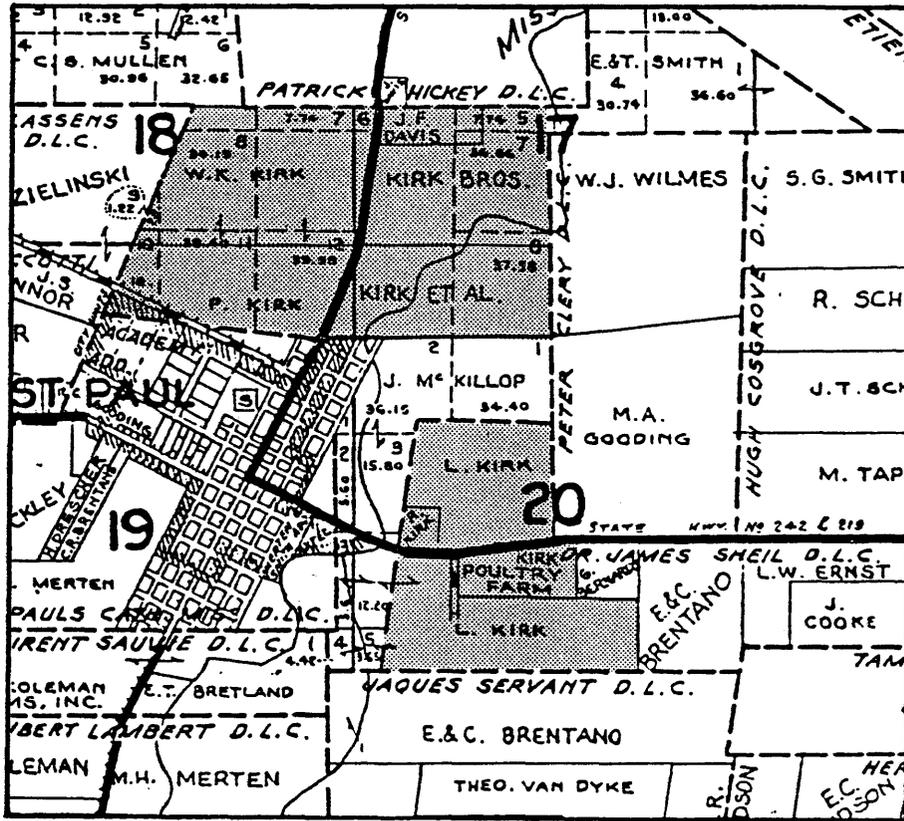


SCALE
500 FEET TO AN INCH.

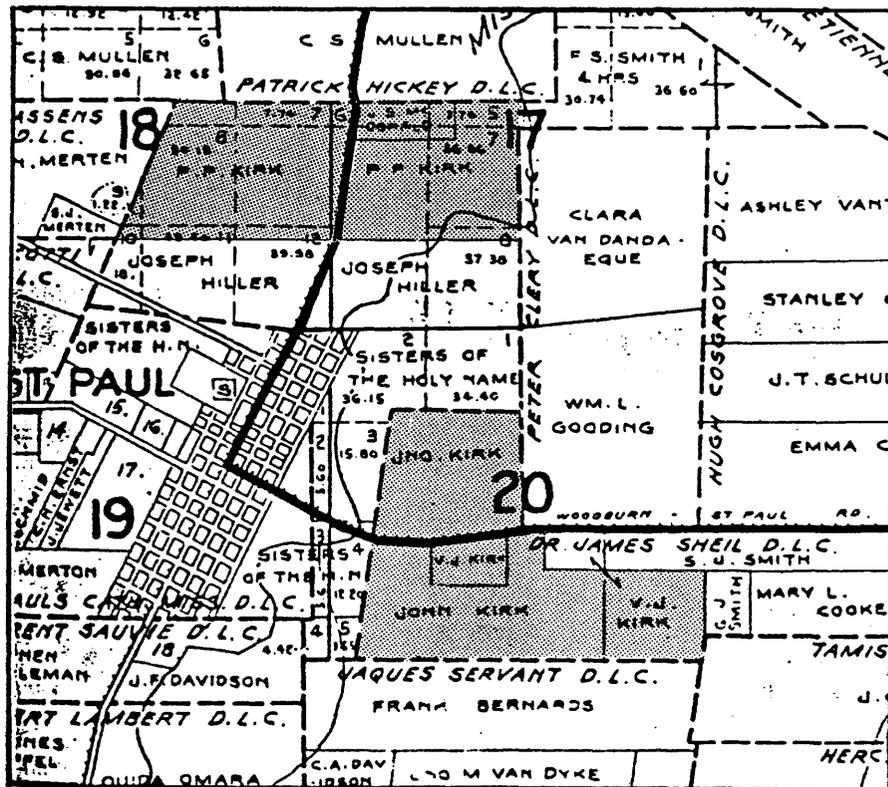
- REFERENCES
- 1 Episcopal Church
 - 2 Public School
 - 3 Masonic Hall / Odd Fellows Hall
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 - 5 Orange Hall
 - 6 Vinegar Factory
 - 7 La Roche Warehouse



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1971 Metsker Atlas-Marion Co.