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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

NHP

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Sweed, Philip, House  
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 301 Keokuk Street N/A  not for publication  
city, town Petaluma N/A  vicinity  
state California code CA county Sonoma code 097 zip code 94952

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	1	0 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0 structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	0	0 objects
		1	0 Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official *Shade R. Craig*  
California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date *May 12, 1992*

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official  
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

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

*Albion Szymanski*

Entered in the National Register

*6/18/92*

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

foundation CONCRETE  
walls WOOD/weatherboard and shingle  
roof WOOD/shingle  
other glazing-clear and colored glass,  
porch-wood with shingle roof.

**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

This fine and basically unaltered example of Queen Anne - Eastlake residential architecture was built in 1892 of local coastal redwood by Petaluma master builder, Samuel Rodd. Imposingly sited on a double city lot at the corner of Keokuk and Prospect Streets, it lies within central Petaluma's Oak Hill historic residential district which is adjacent to the Brewster merchantile historic district. Two storeys with a half basement (now a rental apartment), the house was constructed in the epitome of taste as a document of the success of a prominent merchant at a peak of Petaluma's prosperity. The property has survived with very little change or deterioration in its original fabric and this integrity strengthens its architectural and historical significance.

\* \* \* \* \*

The house is sited in the center of an approximately 100' x 120' corner lot and is oriented to the east facing Keokuk Street. It is structurally very sound, resting on a massive concrete and stone foundation and constructed of heavy heart redwood milled in Petaluma. The first storey is clad in tongue and groove 1 x 7 board, and the second storey in five alternating bands of square and fishscale shingle. A dentilated belt course divides the storeys. Three cross gables, which rise from bracketed cornices, are faced with three alternating bands of like shingles and feature elaborate spindlework, cutwork and sunbursts on gable pediments, an arrangement apparently unique in the city. All eaves of the house are distinguished by a cornice of wide bargeboards formed, in part, by still efficient redwood ogee gutters and a margin course of rosettes.

The steeply pitched hip roof is covered with original sawn redwood shingles. Badly deteriorated sections of the roof have recently been restored with like shingles, making it one of the half dozen or fewer redwood shingle roofs in Petaluma still so maintained.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Education,  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1893 - 1925  
1892

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

SWEED, Philip

Architect/Builder

RODD, Samuel

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

This residence was constructed in 1892 by Petaluma master builder Samuel Rodd for Philip Sweed in a dignified Queen Anne/Eastlake style and constitutes a personal and community testament to prosperity and the westward course of empire. On raw land, in a raw city, from local raw material an edifice of the most current (Eastern) style was erected reflecting the City's collective pride in its skill, resources, new wealth and refinement and the owner's own commercial success and social integration. Philip Sweed, a German Jewish immigrant, was to serve 32 years on the City School Board, have a school named for him in his lifetime and die as a revered pioneer and pillar of Petaluma. The house in which he lived and died survives intact as a monument to his expansive era and a graceful treasure for our own and future generations. The Philip Sweed house meets Criterion C in the area of Architecture as one of the best residential examples of Queen Anne style in Petaluma, and Criterion B in the area of Education for its association with Philip Sweed.

\* \* \* \* \*

**CRITERION B**

Philip Sweed was born a subject of the King of Bavaria in 1855 and immigrated to San Francisco via the Isthmus of Panama at age 15. Six years later he came to Petaluma, then a rough, new, self-nominated City of approximately 3000 people. He opened a small dry-goods store and prospered. In 1880, he married and was to have three children, two of whom survived him and were to live out their lives at the new home on Keokuk Street.

Sweed's involvement in the civic life of his community expanded as did his commercial success. He was an honored member of congregation B'nai Israel, a largely German Jewish community organized in 1864,

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acresage of property Less than one acre (.28 acre)

UTM References

A 

1	0	5	3	1	0	6	0	4	2	3	1	9	0	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The property is described as Lots 468 and 469 of Stratton's Map of the City of Petaluma, fronting 119.9 feet on Keokuk Street and 94.3 feet on Prospect Street, as recorded in Sonoma County, California.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire two city lot parcel historically associated with the subject residence.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title M.D. Dennis date March 31, 1992  
organization N/A telephone (707) 778-0888  
street & number 124 Howard Street state CA zip code 94952  
city or town Petaluma

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The south elevation is distinguished by a full two storey, gabled, square oriel window bay featuring a panel frieze below the sashes and the upper sash of the center of each storey's three joined windows divided into a grid of flashed glass. Geometric flashed glass panels also appear over the large central bay window of the east elevation, in the upper sash of the dining room windows, broad transom over the half glazed front doors, and the staircase windows of the north face. Aside from two small windows in the second storey bath rooms and a round window lighting the back staircase the remaining windows are tall, one over one light, double-hung, sliding sash windows, all in good order and with the original glazing.

An elaborately ornamented and arcaded porch wraps the first storey on the east and north of the house. Its roof is of sawn redwood shingle in good condition and is supported by eight turned pillars spanned by wide arches the corners of which are infilled with grilles of beaded fretwork in an offset grid pattern above with balustrades of the same woodwork below. The main entry, approached by two low broad steps, is notable for a bracketed porch pediment unique in Petaluma, the gable of which is faced with an overlay of beaded grid fretwork. The north-east corner of the porch has been enclosed with multipaned glazing and two light doors to form a small conservatory. The interior faces of the three turned porch pillars within which the conservatory was framed still display their original paint in blue-green, dull red, cream, light terracotta and green.

The floorplan features a conventional wide central hall, library to the right and two parlors in line to the left. A beautifully detailed Eastlake style walnut staircase climbs off to the right beyond the library. The hall opens into the dining room then continues at a right angle off to the right, past the kitchen, under the ascending stair case and out to the north porch. The second floor has five bedrooms opening off a skylighted open stair landing, linen closet, original water closet and a bath room remodeled in the 1950's. Two of the bedrooms feature small lavatories, and all have built in closets. The only discernable alteration to the original plan is the early addition of an 8'x 10' sun room off the south side of the dining room. This was apparently added 60 or 70 years ago and is finished inside and out to blend with the original structure. In 1974 the basement was remodeled into a self contained one bedroom apartment, but no exterior alterations were required or made.

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The interior retains a high degree of integrity and is a fine example of the aesthetic or Eastlake taste. Interior walls are lath and plaster throughout, papered everywhere but the kitchen, pantry and back staircase. This staircase displays its original green distemper wall paint. The bedrooms, library, entry hall and the two-storey staircase walls are hung in their original floriated and foliated papers in good condition. The parlors and dining room have been sensitively repapered in appropriate patterns. The public rooms and hall feature gilded picture rails and have plaster center medallions on the eleven foot ceilings. Four pairs of plaster brackets highlight the passages.

The interior woodwork is all original, well preserved, and handsome. Deep baseboards, high Eastlake casing and architraves on doors and windows, and raised panels below the windows are of varnished clear heart redwood. The doors off the hall to the library, parlors and dining room and the double sliding pocket doors between the parlors and the wide single one to the dining room are eight feet tall and of redwood chamfered and beaded in the Eastlake style. The redwood woodwork on the second floor is varnished on the "hall side" and painted within the rooms. The second storey doors, probably fir, are handsomely grained in imitation of the redwood which forms their casings and baseboards in the hall and are painted solid colors on the reverse. The kitchen and pantry woodwork is likewise painted in solid color.

Of especial note is the pristine original dining room wainscot and woodwork which is composed of raised-field rail and stile paneling painted and masterfully grained throughout in imitation of oak. The inner faces of the dining room doors are likewise grained.

The ground floors are wood plank cut and finished to frame central carpets. The front parlor retains its original hexagonal axminster carpet. The upper floors are plank, carpeted over in the bedrooms and covered with linoleum in the bath and w.c.

The house was wired for both gas and electric lighting when constructed, and many of the original fixtures remain in place though the wiring has recently been replaced. Hand-wrought copper ceiling fixtures in the public rooms are of a curious Arts and Craft style with zoomorphic Celtic or Saxon motif and may be a 1920's addition.

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Central heating was built into the structure in what is believed to be one of the earliest instances of this in Petaluma. Registers are framed into baseboards and are fully functional. The furnace has been adapted from wood burning to gas. Wood stoves were found in the dining room and the bedroom over it serviced by a common chimney.

The second parlor features in one corner an Eastlake rosewood overmantle with shelves and shallow scroll carving over a cast iron, tile framed, coal fireplace with a worn encaustic tile hearth. There is no flue, however, and the entire arrangement is for decorative effect. Less convincing is an elaborate gilt and white chimney piece imported "round the horn" from Germany and quite inconsistent with the interior style. It is fitted not only with an integral over-mirror but also one at floor level where the fire box should be. These vestigial fireplaces give every indication of being original installations.

Elaborate cast brass hinges, door handles and push button light switch plates are intact and original throughout.

Two simple single-car garage/sheds of unsubstantial size and scale are sited to the north and west behind the main structure. Their dates of construction are undetermined. There are no other structures on the property, which also consists of an otherwise unremarkable yard but for a single 50 foot tall deodar cedar tree at the northeast corner of the house.

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and a charter subscriber for the Jewish Community Center in 1925. A founding member of the Chamber of Commerce (1906), he was also director of the Petaluma Red Cross Chapter, an organizer of the Petaluma Golf and Country Club, a member of Arcturus Lodge, Free and Accepted Masons (1882) and a charter member of the Petaluma Lodge of the F. & A.M. on its post-civil War reamalgamation (1898), a member of the Petaluma chapter Royal Arch Masons, and a founding member and trustee of the Elks Lodge of Petaluma, B.P.O.E.A. (1904). During the First World War he served as chairman of the Sonoma County committee in charge of war savings stamps.

His greatest contribution, however, was his devoted service as a member of the City's Board of Education over nearly a third of a century (1893-1925). Sweed was himself a man of limited formal education but became its unstinting champion. He appears to have recognized not only the value of an education to the pupil but the dual benefits a sound educational system returns to the community: the first being an educated work force and citizenry, the second being the increased draw to new families of a community with good schools. Sweed brought both the shrewd acumen of a businessman and a genuine public spirit to bear on a disorganized, ad hoc pastiche of a school system and left a well grounded and well directed one.

The Petaluma School Law of 1870, enacted by the legislature abolished the prior trustee system and instituted a Board of Education. At that time Petaluma had five private schools, only four public schools and no high school. The next year there was only funding for eight months in the public schools, and the new Board permitted the teachers to run the schools to their own profit for the remaining two months. There appears to have been little direction and less money.

Sweed was elected to this Board on April 10, 1893 and was President by 1895. He led the Board for the next thirty years.

Shortly before his death at age 72 the Board of Education, from which declining health had finally forced him to retire, resolved to build a new school and to name it for him. He never saw it completed. Though decommissioned, the large Beaux Arts school still stands with a stone owl perched perpetually over Philip Sweed's name. The school, however, is commemorative in nature; the Sweed House is the one building remaining in Petaluma which best illustrates Philip Sweed's important achievements within the community.

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On March 26, 1927 Philip Sweed died at his home attended by his family. The city flags were flown at half staff, and the front page obituaries of the local newspapers sincerely mourned the passing of this "pioneer and prominent resident". On the afternoon of his enormous funeral service the flags were again lowered, city businesses closed, a minute of silence was observed in the schools he had faithfully served and the citizens honored one "prominent for half a century with the city, prominent in its progress and advancement" and evidently prominent, also, in its heart.

He is remembered yet by Petaluma's oldest citizens as a "very dignified" and "always dapper, always very well dressed" old man who would visit classrooms unannounced to audit and inspect the proceedings. For thirty years he personally presented the school diplomas and exhorted the students to productive lives. He was personally and justly proud of the school expansion and new buildings he had solicited and realized.

\* \* \* \* \*

CRITERION C

Independent of its owner's associations within the City of Petaluma, the house stands on its own as a fine example of the highest taste of the time of its construction. Substantial and elegant as it is, it does not display extraneous extravagance in decoration or design, but rather clearly states the Queen Anne architectural aims of contrasting volumes, a rhythmic play of shapes and textural decoration. The house is large enough to allow simple and graceful expression of these tenets without the overdecorated impression smaller structures incorporating a plethora of Queen Anne elements often convey. Stately, the structure is not so large as to be overbearing; it is beautiful rather than baronial, impressive rather than imposing.

The house was built by Samuel Rodd who arrived in Petaluma in 1889 and went into partnership in a planing mill. It is possible the Sweed House was Rodd's first major commission. He had built an elegantly ornamented one storey cottage for himself about 1890 at 233 Keokuk Street. He sold his interest in the mill and went on to build the Fairbanks House (323 Post Street; ca. 1895), the

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Canepa House (223 Kentucky Street), Hill House (105 Seventh Street), Brown House, (901 D Street, ca. 1902) and other properties in Petaluma. All evidence the highest degree of skill and conscientiousness in construction.

The house stands squarely in the Oak Hill-Brewster Historic District recently created by a City of Petaluma ordinance. This area occupies a gentle hill slope immediately north of the city's commercial heart and was the favored site for both grand and modest home building in the last quarter of the 19th century, when Petaluma experienced a commercial "heyday" as the largest and wealthiest coastal city from San Francisco to Eureka. The homes display a broad range of styles reflecting their date of construction including Italianate, Queen Anne, Stick, Foursquare, Colonial Revival and Transitional in both cottages and villas as well as Craftsman bungalows.

Some of these houses have survived the intervening century relatively intact. Others have suffered badly. The subject property has had a fortunate history and is perhaps one of a half dozen homes in the city being all but unchanged and in good condition.

On February 2, 1892, Philip Sweed recorded a deed reciting that he had paid D.H. and C. Parks ten dollars in gold for lots 468 and 469 of Stratton's map drawn in 1865 and the first official map of Petaluma. The contractors set to work and the The Weekly Courier of October 30, 1892 was able to report:

The painters will take possession of P. Sweed's palatial new residence tomorrow, and the owner hopes to move into his beautiful home in about two weeks.

Sweed's widow, one of his two daughters and a son survived him. Neither of these two married, and they continued to live in the family home. As there was quite substantial wealth involved, the house and grounds were well tended, and the bath was remodeled in the early 1950's. However, upon the death of his sister Herbert Sweed became something of a recluse and did nothing to care for the property. In 1973, Herbert and Carolyn Duerr were able to buy the property from the estate of Herbert Sweed and had the exterior professionally restored to its original condition in 1982.

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The particular features preserved in the house have been itemized in Item 7 and it suffices to say collectively they clearly illustrate the distinctive characteristics which make up the qualities of the Queen Anne style.

It is also clear even during Sweed's lifetime his residence was regarded as remarkably successful architecturally. Even before it was completed the house was depicted in a special edition of the Petaluma Weekly Courier promoting the city and celebrating its first forty years of growth. At his death, thirty years and more after its construction and when the Queen Anne vernacular was generally derided, the obituaries in both local newspapers make special and specific reference to "the beautiful residence on Keokuk Street" and "his beautiful home". And forty-five years after his death a memoir of early Petaluma refers to it as the "Phillip [sic] Sweed Mansion" and features a photograph of it as one of two representing Petaluma's stately residences. It was and is, in its substantial but unpretentious way, worthy of the notice.

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ONE

Section number Photo- graphs Page 1

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The following information is the same for all photographs herewith submitted:

1. The Sweed House, 301 Keokuk Street
2. City of Petaluma, State of California
3. Robert E. Nixon
4. March 25, 1991 (ONE-FOUR); March 24, 1992 (FIVE-TEN)
5. Studio and collection of Robert E. Nixon:  
2759 Bennett Ridge Road  
Santa Rosa, California 95404

The following information describing the camera view is provided for each photograph individually as follows:

- Photograph ONE - front view of house from the corner of Prospect and Keokuk Streets facing approximately north-west. Note the porch posts decorated with flag and yellow ribbons for the War in the Persian Gulf.
- Photograph TWO - side view of house from Prospect Street facing approximately north, north-west.
- Photograph THREE - rear view of house from Prospect Street facing approximately due north.
- Photograph FOUR - north side of the house from the garden and facing approximately south-east.
- Photograph FIVE - interior view from front parlor looking through double pocket doors to second parlor and dining room beyond.
- Photograph SIX - interior view of second parlor's false "fireplace" and mantelpiece.

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Photograph SEVEN - interior view of front parlor's false mantelpiece; the settee and carpet are original but the wall paper of the parlors is not.

Photograph EIGHT - interior view of library wall, door and wood work. All wood is varnished redwood except the fir floor boards. The original central heating grate is at lower right. The paper is original as is the gold leafed picture rail.

Photograph NINE & TEN - two views of the staircase showing the apparently original wall paper, and in NINE the under stairs lavatory and original screen door.