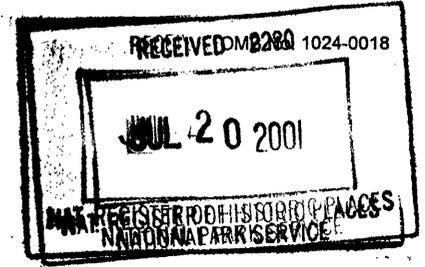


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

*Cover*



This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission  Amended Submission

**A. Name of Multiple Property Listing**

Historic and Architectural Properties in the early Kenton neighborhood of Portland, Oregon

**B. Associated Historic Contexts**

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Development in the early Kenton neighborhood in Portland, Oregon, 1909-1950

**C. Form Prepared by**

name/title Cielo Lutino, Robin Green, Emily Hughes, Liza Mickle, Katelin Brewer

organization City of Portland Bureau of Planning

date January 31, 2001

street & number 1900 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Ste. 4100

telephone (503) 823-7700

city or town Portland state OR

zip code 97201

\*This nomination is sponsored by the Kenton Neighborhood Association (see attachment).

**D. Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation.  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jana Hamrick  
Signature and title of certifying official/Deputy SHPO

July 6, 2001  
Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

**ENTERED AUG 30 2001**

Signature of the Keeper

Date

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## Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	<b>Page Numbers</b>
<b>E. Statement of Historic Contexts</b> (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	E: 1 - 13
<b>F. Associated Property Types</b> (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	F: 1 - 14
<b>G. Geographical Data</b>	G/H: 1 - 3
<b>H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods</b> (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	G/H: 1 - 3
<b>I. Major Bibliographical References</b> (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	I: 1 - 2

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Oregon Historical Society / 1230 SW Park Avenue /  
Portland, OR 97205

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   1  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## E. STATEMENT OF HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The early Kenton neighborhood, located in north Portland, Oregon, is locally significant for being the residential area for one of the city's earliest factory districts. Swift & Co., one of the largest firms in the nation's livestock and meat industry, developed it as an industrial community from approximately 1909 to 1917. The Kenton neighborhood is additionally significant for its association with Gustavus F. Swift, who, among others, revolutionized the meat industry and trade by commercializing the use of refrigerator cars to ship dressed beef.

This listing is limited to buildings located within the corporate limits of the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, and restricted to the Kenton neighborhood's earliest commercial and residential development. As such, the nominated area follows the boundaries of the Graybrook Addition, the Kenton Addition, and a portion of the John Rankin Donation Land Claim.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, the nominated area is roughly bounded to the north by N. Argyle Street, to the east by N. Interstate Avenue, to the south by N. Lombard Street, and to the west by N. Delaware Avenue. The boundary includes one tax lot to the north of the Kenton Addition, because the property once housed the Nicolai Door Co., a company significant to the neighborhood's development.

This Multiple Property Submission is intended to provide a context for evaluating the historic and architectural resources remaining in the neighborhood that are representative of Kenton's early developmental history from 1909 to 1950. The period of significance is justified by the oldest remaining resources within the nominated area and ends in 1950 to meet the 50-year deadline set forth by the National Register guidelines.

### *Gustavus F. Swift and the American Livestock and Meat Industry (1839 – 1905)*

Gustavus Franklin Swift was born on June 24, 1839, in Sandwich, Massachusetts on Cape Cod. He began his career in the meat industry at the age of fourteen when he went to work for his brother, the village butcher. Two years later, Swift struck out on his own. Purchasing and slaughtering a heifer himself, he then peddled the dressed meat door to door. Before the age of 20, Swift was conducting weekly visits to the cattle market in the nearby town of Brighton. He bought and killed a steer each time, returning to Cape Cod to peddle the meat before the next market day. By 1861, Swift had married and opened his first butcher shop in Eastham, Massachusetts. Soon he had shops in Barnstable, Clinton, and Freetown. From these centers, Swift's meat wagons traveled daily routes, covering a large service area.

Swift's abilities earned him a reputation as a sharp judge of beef cattle, a skill that led to his success as a cattle dealer. His accomplishments attracted the attention of James A. Hathaway, a Boston meat dealer, who entered into partnership with Swift in 1872. Swift, responsible for the buying end of the business, followed the cattle market westward towards the source of supply, establishing offices in Albany and Buffalo. Noting that the hub of the livestock market was located in Chicago, however, he proposed to Hathaway that they transfer the cattle buying to that city. Swift's proposal met with a cool reception from his partner; nevertheless, in 1875 Swift traveled to Chicago as a cattle buyer in the Union Stockyards.

<sup>1</sup> The Donation Land Act of 1850 granted free land to qualifying early settlers of the Oregon Territory, with the agreement that they live on and cultivate the land for four consecutive years. Paul W. Gates, *History of Public Land Law Development* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1968) 118.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number E Page 2

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

Hathaway's unenthusiastic response to his partner's proposal was understandable. At the time, beef consumption in the East was dependent upon the shipment of live cattle, which was then slaughtered in local markets. It was an expensive process, what with the cost of feeding stock during transit and the loss of conditioning from overcrowding. Additional expenses accrued, since freight charges were applied to the entire animal although some parts were considered unsaleable. Buying cattle in Chicago would increase their firm's expenses, so Swift determined to cut costs by shipping dressed beef. That goal was certainly laudable, but previous attempts at refrigeration for warm weather shipment had not gone well. Though Swift's first shipment of dressed beef to Boston in the fall of 1877 had been successful, Hathaway balked at his partner's insistence at trying the new method again.<sup>2</sup> Swift's persistence was particularly remarkable, given a formidable obstacle facing him at the time: George H. Hammond, inventor of the refrigerated freight car, had filed a lawsuit against Swift, claiming patent infringement.<sup>3</sup> The combination of challenges posed by his partner's pursuits persuaded Hathaway to dissolve the firm.

Swift now faced his career change from buyer to packer alone.<sup>4</sup> Although the court eventually found him not guilty of infringement, his dream of shipping dressed beef in refrigerator cars encountered more obstacles before being realized.<sup>5</sup> First, the railroads refused to cooperate with Swift and like-minded packers. As the railroads saw it, there was no guarantee that refrigerator cars would be able to transport dressed beef year-round. In addition, the railroads lacked assurance that the product they carried would be in sufficient demand to offset the costs of manufacturing the cars. Refrigerator cars were costly to construct, and the railroads already received reliable revenue from carrying livestock. Unable to identify the shipment of dressed beef as a lucrative venture, the railroads charged excessive rates on the freight to make it unprofitable for packers.

Swift countered by approaching a rail line that would be little affected by the dressed beef shipments. Because of its roundabout route, the Grand Trunk Railroad maintained no stockyards along its line and therefore carried few cattle. Consequently, the line saw no reason to oppose the development of the dressed beef traffic and agreed to work with Swift with one significant caveat: the packer would have to furnish the refrigerator cars himself.

Pooling the little working capital he had from starting his own business, Swift hired a Boston engineer by the name of Chase to design a refrigerator car that would at least assure the successful transport of dressed beef year-round.<sup>6</sup> Chase capably achieved his assignment, designing a car that allowed for the circulation of fresh air, cooled by passing over ice. Chase's design and Swift's application of it to the dressed beef trade heralded the radical transformation of the livestock and meat industry.

The transformation did not occur overnight, however. Although Swift could now ship dressed beef back East, he had to battle for its acceptance in the marketplace. Eastern consumers were leery of the quality of Chicago or Western beef.<sup>7</sup> Surely, only beef laced with chemicals could survive the lengthy transport from the West. Eastern butchers, resentful of the additional competition, fed consumer anxiety through press propaganda, as well as employing other tactics such as

<sup>2</sup> Dumas Malone, ed., Vol. XVII of *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946) 245.

<sup>3</sup> John Drury, *Rare and Well Done: Some Historical Notes on Meats and Meatmen* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1966) 145-6.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>6</sup> Rudolf Alexander Clemen, *The American Livestock and Meat Industry* (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1923) 221-2, 237-8.

<sup>7</sup> Malone, 245.

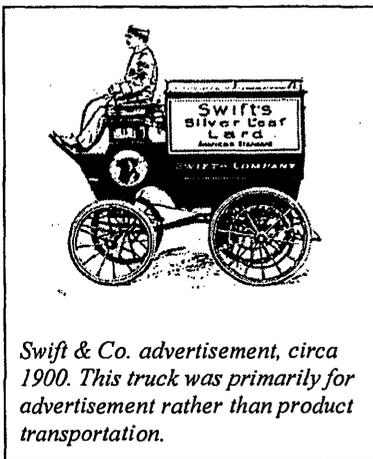
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   3  

                  N/A                    
Name of Property

                  Multnomah, OR                    
County and State

                  Kenton MPS                    
Name of Multiple Property Listing



*Swift & Co. advertisement, circa 1900. This truck was primarily for advertisement rather than product transportation.*

state legislation and federal government investigations against the dressed beef trade. Swift used his previous experience as an Eastern butcher to combat the antagonism of Eastern consumers and butchers. Well known in his native New England, Swift formed a series of partnerships with local butchers who agreed to give Western dressed beef a chance. Those partnerships laid the groundwork for Swift's future success when Western dressed beef was eventually accepted into the mass marketplace by the mid-1890s.<sup>8</sup>

Swift's success was not without its challengers. Chicago-based packers, such as Phillip D. Armour and Nelson Morris, were equally invested in the shipment and marketplace acceptance of dressed beef. To compete further, Swift identified a new way to cut costs and increase his firm's profit margin. By instituting rigorous sanitary practices at all his plants, Swift aimed to reduce loss through spoilage. That goal translated into the reduction of waste whenever possible. That policy led to Swift's pioneer development of saleable by-products such as oleomargarine, soap, and pharmaceutical preparations

from animal parts formerly discarded as offal. Along with Armour, Swift also introduced the "disassembly line," a precursor of the automobile industry's "assembly line." In the disassembly line, an overhead trolley or conveyor moves hanging carcasses past rows of workers.<sup>9</sup> Each worker disassembles a particular part of the carcass, saving the company time.

By the turn of the century, Swift's ingenuity and drive placed his firm among the top leaders of the American livestock and meat industry. Incorporated as Swift & Co. in 1885, his business began with capital amounting \$300,000. A mere two years later, the firm's capital stood at \$3,000,000, which rose to \$150,000,000 by the early 1920s.<sup>10</sup> A Swift worker remarked, "Swift & Co. is one of the greatest industrials in the world. It has grown up from just a little red wagon."<sup>11</sup> Until his death in 1903, Gustavus F. Swift worked diligently to uplift his company and transformed the American livestock and meat industry in the process.

### *Swift & Co. Expands: The Portland Plant (1906 – 1940)*

Before 1906, the livestock and meat industry in Portland operated independently. Neighborhood butchers predominated. Only occasionally did several butchers establish themselves as a company.<sup>12</sup> Local butcher Adolph Burckhardt had his downtown shop at 1<sup>st</sup> and Ash streets before joining with Thomas Papworth and Morton M. Spaulding to form the American Dressed Meat Company. James and John O'Shea founded the O'Shea Brothers, adding another competitor to the local meat packing industry.<sup>13</sup> Burckhardt, Papworth, Spaulding, and the O'Sheas all came together, though, on

<sup>8</sup> *Op. cit.*, 235, 237, 251.

<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Theodore V. Purcell, S. J. *The Worker Speaks His Mind On Company and Union* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1954) 78.

<sup>12</sup> City of Portland Bureau of Planning, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts* (Portland, OR: Bureau of Planning, 1978) 83.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Gaston, *Portland, Oregon: Its History and Builders*, vol. 2 (Portland, OR: S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1911) 43; "John F. O'Shea, meat packer, taken by death," *Oregon Journal* 29 Oct. 1943: 4.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   4  

                  N/A                    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR                    
County and State

  Kenton MPS                    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

November 4, 1892, to organize Union Meat Co.<sup>14</sup> At incorporation, Union Meat Co. maintained processing operations at the Fourth Street Market in downtown Portland while slaughtering took place at a plant in Troutdale, east of the city.

By the turn of the century, small Western slaughtering operations like Union Meat Co. had caught the eye of larger firms looking to discover new supply sources.<sup>15</sup> Portland was particularly attractive because it contained the area along the Columbia Slough or North Portland Harbor, as it was then called. With the completion of the North Bank Railroad Bridge across the Columbia River assured by 1907, the location would be served by both rail and ship transit.<sup>16</sup> The ranges of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho would be thus easily accessible to the livestock and meat industry. North Portland Harbor was also inviting to industries because it presented large expanses of land for factories or related uses, such as stockyards. The area's isolation was another bonus. Since stockyards were basically huge barnyards, the livestock and meat industry usually preferred to locate in areas far from dense population centers. Finally, North Portland Harbor offered a ready supply of fresh water for the disposal of industrial sewage.<sup>17</sup>



A company advertisement listed in the 1893 city directory.

In 1906, Swift & Co. purchased Union Meat Co. but continued to operate the business under the name given it by its local organizers.<sup>18</sup> Swift & Co. was not long in sending a company representative to oversee operations, though. In the spring of 1907, Cornelius Chapman Colt took over as president of Union Meat Co. Colt, a Chicago native, had already been working for Swift for over a decade when he began directing the company's relocation of the Troutdale plant to the North Portland Harbor area.

In March 1908, Colt and Louis F. Swift, son of Gustavus Swift, along with local entrepreneurs George F. Heusner and Charles H. Carey, organized the Kenwood Land Company and purchased approximately 3,400 acres of land along the Columbia Slough. The land included the nearly vacant Graybrook Addition and a portion of John Rankin's Donation Land Claim, both of which were to serve as a residential area for workers of the proposed packing plant. Contemporaries concerned about the adverse effects of living only two miles from such a plant reviewed the site favorably:

As [the plant] is situated, prevailing winds tend to blow down the river away from the home section, thus dispelling and dissipating disagreeable odors attendant with its operation. This fact, combined with modern improved facilities for eliminating the disagreeable features by observing the details of sanitation, removing all lingering prejudices that might otherwise be engendered from thought of residing in its immediate vicinity.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> *Op. cit.*; Rod Paulson, "Kenton—Was Almost Named Kenwood," ch. in *Neighborhood Histories* (Portland, OR: The Community Press, 1974-80) 3.  
<sup>15</sup> Harry Dutton, "Northwest Meat Packing Center," *Oregon Journal* 3 Apr. 1955: 15M.  
<sup>16</sup> City of Portland, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts*, 84.  
<sup>17</sup> Paulson, 3-4.  
<sup>18</sup> Dutton, 15; "Swift & Co. To Take Name," *Oregonian* 2 May 1919: 5.  
<sup>19</sup> Gaston, 229-231; John Tess and Richard E. Ritz, *Kenton Hotel National Register Nomination*, 1990: Sec. 8, 2; Edgar L. Merritt, "The Peninsula," *The Peninsula: A Special Publication Giving a Glimpse of Greater Portland and St. Johns* (Portland, OR: Peninsula

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   5  

                  N/A                    
Name of Property

                  Multnomah, OR                    
County and State

                  Kenton MPS                    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

Colt and his business partners had hoped to name the subdivision "Kenwood," but the name was already in use elsewhere in Oregon. Settling for "Kenton," the company marked off six blocks for the original plat in April of the same year. They added 25 blocks to that plat later in November.<sup>20</sup>

Area development gained momentum after the Kenton Addition was platted. In 1909, Colt formed the Kenton Traction Company to connect the plant with the emerging industrial community. He operated as the company's president, with Carey as vice president. Heusner was appointed general manager, while George F. Anderson acted as secretary and treasurer for the company. The company constructed a line to connect to Portland's main streetcar system, though the Kenton line would never be absorbed by the larger system. Using equipment leased from the Portland Railway Light & Power Co. (PRL&P Co.), the company constructed an extension of the established Mississippi line. It traveled along Denver Avenue (then known as Derby Street), crossed a trestle built by Swift, and brought its commuters "right to the doorsteps of the packing plant."<sup>21</sup> The streetcar allowed workers easy access to their place of employment, but, as residents' only transportation link to the central city, the area remained fairly isolated.

Swift & Co. continued to establish additional subsidiaries that guided Kenton's early development. B. S. Josselyn, president of the PRL&P Co., also presided over the Kenton Construction Company. The Kenton Bank was established, with Heusner as head of operations. Through its subsidiaries, Swift & Co. controlled Kenton's land holdings, transit system, building construction, and finances.<sup>22</sup> However, that fact was soon to change. Kenton came to model itself after those company towns defined as "communities with one or more industries that may have owned all the land at one time but gradually sold off the land to other businesses and homeowner employees."<sup>23</sup>

In 1910, Colt organized the Peninsula Industrial Company, another Swift & Co. subsidiary. The company managed the land owned by Swift between the Columbia Slough and east of the Spokane, Portland, and Seattle Railroad Bridge. It planned to cultivate the area as Portland's "Manufacturing District" and platted the property into 500 x 800-foot blocks, a size meant to accommodate most factories. D. O. Lively, vice president and general manager of the company, stated that,

...a campaign to bring in the great factories...will be undertaken and that the ideal location, with terminal facilities, both rail and deep water transportation and plenty of area, in connection with the large market afforded in the Pacific Northwest, will be urged as the allurements to induce big corporations to install branch factories or warehouses.<sup>24</sup>

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Publishing Co., 1909) 28; City of Portland Bureau of Planning, *Albina Community Proposed Historic Districts* (Portland, OR: Bureau of Planning, 1992) 67.

<sup>20</sup> Alta Mitchoff, *History of the Kenton Neighborhood* (Portland, OR: Kenton Neighborhood Association, 1997) 21; Multnomah County Tax Assessor records.

<sup>21</sup> John T. Labbe, *Fares, Please!: Those Portland Trolley Years* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1982) 157; City of Portland, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts*, 85.

<sup>22</sup> E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Shaping of a City: Business and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1885 to 1915* (Portland, OR: Georgian Press Co., 1976) 466; City of Portland, 86.

<sup>23</sup> Leland Roth, "Company Towns in the Western United States," in *The Company Town: Architecture and Society in the Early Industrial Age*, edited by John S. Garner (New York: Oxford UP, 1992) 176.

<sup>24</sup> Gaston. 231; "New factory district," *St. Johns Review* 8 Jul. 1910: 1.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number  E  Page  6

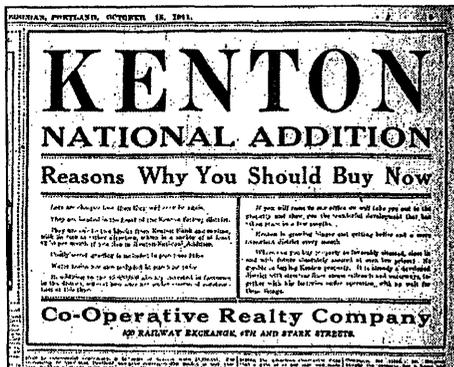
N/A   
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR   
County and State

Kenton MPS   
Name of Multiple Property Listing

Kenton's subsequent development made good on Lively's proclamation. Companies such as Coast Culvert & Flume Co. joined Nicolai Door Co. and Monarch Lumber, already established industries in the area. On Swift's end, the Troutdale plant originally used by Union Meat Co. was closed and its stockyards and plant relocated in the Kenton area.<sup>25</sup>

Swift & Co. also sold land to its employees and to the employees of the growing industries settling in the area. Like the company towns at the beginning of the twentieth century that Kenton resembled, Swift & Co. preferred not to build housing for its employees. Company housing provided little financial incentive: "the return on investment was low, it required periodic maintenance, and it could involve the company in domestic and ethnic disputes."<sup>26</sup> Dyer & Co., an in-house architecture and design firm for Swift & Co., did build some company housing in the area, but those properties were sold to private individuals, absolving the company of any liabilities.



The local paper advertised lots for sale in the Kenton Addition.

As Swift & Co. sold more of its land holdings to different corporations and individual employees, Kenton gradually lost its primary affiliation with the meatpacking company. Instead, it realized Lively's prophecy and became Portland's premier factory district. By 1917, approximately twelve industrial firms had located in the area. Seven years later, approximately twelve more had settled nearby. Almost a decade later in 1933, five more firms added to the total, so that by the mid-1930s, almost thirty industries were located in or near Kenton.

Not surprisingly, two industries that located in the area were the livestock and meat industry and lumber milling companies. Swift's presence in the Pacific Northwest was expected to attract other slaughtering operations: "[Swift needs] the assistance of others to help build up a market, and it is highly probable flattering inducements will be given the other concerns to locate here."<sup>27</sup>

Edward Schlessler, whose father and uncle started Schlessler Bros., a local meatpacking company, attested to the benefits of concentrating similar industries in one location: "It was convenient for the purchasing people and butchers to come out [to Kenton] and go to different plants."<sup>28</sup>

The lumber industry also had significant representation in the area. Logging along the Columbia Slough had a long history, with a number of early pioneers clearing land in the area and using the Columbia Slough to transport their logs to nearby sawmills. It was no surprise, then, when lumber mills and "ready-made" house companies began locating in the factory district near Kenton. The 1930s and 1940s found no less than eleven lumber and shingle mills along the Columbia Slough.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Paulson, 5; Eugene Rashad. "Group will discuss fate of stockyards," *Oregonian* 8 Jun. 1995, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.: 4M1, MP-NE.

<sup>26</sup> Garner, 9.

<sup>27</sup> *The Peninsula*, 65.

<sup>28</sup> Mitchoff, 137.

<sup>29</sup> Lawrence Barber, *Columbia Slough* (Portland, OR: Columbia Slough Development Corp., 1977) 2-3, 11.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   7  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## *Life alongside Portland's Factory District (1906 – 1940)*

Although Kenton was a suburb of Portland, in many ways it functioned as an independent community distinct from the rest of the city. Its isolated location and relatively weak transportation linkages to the hub of downtown Portland cultivated that independence. It was commented that “in those days...not one Portlander in a hundred had ever seen Kenton.” Remembering the neighborhood’s early days, resident Earl Jones stressed, “You must remember that Kenton was out in the ‘sticks.’”<sup>30</sup>

Kenton residents benefited from capital improvement projects despite being “in the ‘sticks.’” In fact, Kenton was considered one of the best-served suburbs in North Portland. In 1909, it was predicted that the area’s population would hit 30,000 by 1915. To accommodate the projected growth, a series of public improvement projects were dedicated to the neighborhood in the early stages of its development. In 1911, Kenton received electricity.<sup>31</sup> By 1913, it had the only sewage system north of Killingsworth Street and displayed an extensive system of hard-surface pavements. Contemporaries remarked, “Few districts are better built than Kenton.”<sup>32</sup>

The establishment of services infrastructure in the area facilitated residential and commercial construction. In 1909, Kenton boasted five buildings. A decade later, almost 200 buildings stood in the area, the majority of which was devoted to housing.<sup>33</sup>

Residential development followed a distinct pattern based on the siting of employee housing and choice of building materials. The southern portion of Denver Avenue, the community’s “main street,” showcased the neighborhood’s executive housing. Officers and managers for Swift & Co. and other professionals located their homes on and to the east of the avenue, while worker housing tended to locate to the west of Denver Avenue. Rows of smaller, nearly identical “workers’ bungalows” line side streets like N. Winchell Street, while larger homes front onto Denver Avenue.<sup>34</sup> Class status was further defined by the use of certain building materials. Executive housing tended to incorporate ornamental concrete block in its design, while worker housing displayed minimal design with few decorative elements. In keeping with housing development patterns nationwide, many of these residences were inspired by house plans of companies such as the nearby Aladdin Co. Some may have been constructed as “kit houses,” available through widely circulated catalogs by Aladdin and other companies.



*This ornamental concrete block residence at 7807 N. Denver Avenue was originally occupied by a banker for the Bank of California.*

<sup>30</sup> *Op. cit.*, 29, 143.

<sup>31</sup> City of Portland, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts*, 86.

<sup>32</sup> “Kenton Center of Growing District,” *Oregonian* 6 Apr. 1913: Sec. 4, 10; “Kenton District Makes Progress,” *Oregonian* 21 Dec. 1913: Sec. 4, 10.

<sup>33</sup> Multnomah County Tax Assessor records.

<sup>34</sup> Mitchoff, 26.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   8  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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Despite its infrastructure preparations and residential growth, the expected population boom did not occur for Kenton. By 1920, Kenton claimed a population of approximately 1,100, well under the forecast of 30,000. That total still represented a significant increase, however, as the area only counted about 150 residents in the 1910 census.<sup>35</sup>

Kenton exhibited marked growth in the following two decades, with approximately 185 buildings constructed between 1910 and 1919 and approximately 315 buildings built between 1920 and 1929. Kenton's growth occurred during Portland's two great building periods: 1905-1913 and 1922-1928. In 1910, at the height of the first building boom, 3,000 structures were constructed on the city's east side. The second building boom in the 1920s produced 25,000 new homes in the city. The majority of single-family homes were constructed in newer neighborhoods that had been platted at the time of the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition but which had not been filled. Vacant lots in east side neighborhoods such as Piedmont, Concordia, and Kenton were filled in with block after block of Bungalow style homes.<sup>36</sup>

Despite Kenton's pace of growth, the area maintained a small town feel. Old-timer Raymond Guimary elaborates, "I don't recall much concern about locking doors or cars. Everyone seemed to know everyone else. You knew all the local business owners and, quite often, their families."<sup>37</sup> To many long-time neighborhood residents, Kenton was just like "a real town once." In keeping with development patterns around town, the streetcar line determined the neighborhood's commercial growth, so the northern end of Denver Avenue became home to Kenton's business community, with construction during the 1920s outpacing that of the previous decade.<sup>38</sup>

It has been said that Kenton's commercial corridor was designed to look and feel like an eastern Oregon ranching town. Many of its buildings are low in height and incorporate ornamental concrete block in their design, as would be found in small towns in the eastern half of the state. After supervising the cattle drives that used to proceed north on Denver Avenue to the holding yards, visiting cattlemen were encouraged to rest at the nearby Kenton Hotel, where the architecture would hopefully make its primary visitors feel at home.<sup>39</sup>

Visitors could stay at accommodations like the Kenton Hotel, McArthur Hotel, and Rowley Hotel located on or near Denver, or enjoy entertainment spots like the Chaldean Theater, later the Kenton Theater. Residents certainly took advantage of the neighborhood's offerings. Guimary remembers the thrill of visiting the movie theater: "As soon as we were old enough to go on our own we used to walk down to the Kenton Theater on Denver Avenue... The movie was filled with what seemed like hundreds of hollering kids, all with hands full of candy."<sup>40</sup> Beyond the hotels and theaters,

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<sup>35</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *13<sup>th</sup> Decennial Census*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Supervisor's District of Oregon, Enumeration District 110 (Washington, D.C., 1910); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *14<sup>th</sup> Decennial Census*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisor's District of Oregon, Enumeration District 178 (Washington, D.C., 1920). Tallies reflect population counts derived by street name and address but do not represent the entire enumeration district. Instead, they address the area included within the boundaries of this Multiple Property Submission.

<sup>36</sup> City of Portland Bureau of Planning, Northwest Electric Company Alberta Substation National Register Nomination, 1998: Sec. 8, 5.

<sup>37</sup> Mitchoff, 163.

<sup>38</sup> City of Portland, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts*, 85.

<sup>39</sup> Tess. Sec. 8, 3; Alfred Staehli, *Preservation Options for Portland Neighborhoods: A Report on the History of Portland's Neighborhoods and Their Historic Centers* (Portland, OR: A. Staehli, 1975) 26-7.

<sup>40</sup> *Op. cit.*, 162.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   9  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

the neighborhood boasted “a bakery, a drugstore with a fountain, two dentists, and three doctors.”<sup>41</sup> Five churches and two schools located nearby completed the range of social and cultural services available to the area.

Kenton also offered natural amenities like the Columbia Slough. Born in 1910, local North Portland resident John Bonebrake described how cottonwood trees lined the banks of the slough and how a number of other sloughs and marshes connected to it. He reminisced about hunting owls and arrowheads and of fishing and swimming only a short walk from his childhood home. “I remember it in my mind as a nice, little wavy slough,” Bonebrake says.<sup>42</sup> Another longtime Kenton resident recalled, “We used to fish for catfish in the slough. They were the best! We would carry home strings of catfish we caught out of the slough.” For many, the slough was an integral component of Kenton’s community life. Remembering his early life in Kenton, Bernie Canepa offered, “I almost ‘lived’ on the slough. That slough was important to us. It provided water for our families’ business and was entertainment for our friends.”<sup>43</sup>

Community life in Kenton was not just play, though. The neighborhood was adjacent to many factories and industries, which some residents owned or supervised. In most cases, however, residents worked as laborers in the factories or industrial plants. In 1919, Swift & Co. alone employed 800 people, a figure that grew to 1,800 in the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>44</sup> Not all of those employees lived in Kenton, but the neighborhood certainly housed a number of Swift workers. The company was known as a good employer and retained many of its workers. Swift appreciated those who stuck with the company, as demonstrated by a company policy announced in 1937:

...women on hourly pay who have been with the company fifteen years will hereafter receive a three-week vacation, while their salaries continued. Men are to have vacation of the same length after twenty years of service. Those who have been with the company five years are to have two-week vacations with pay and those who have two years of continuous service to have a week’s vacation.

Swift also offered “an outstanding noncontributory pension program for its plant workers,” a benefit “rare in the entire industry.”<sup>45</sup> Gustavus Swift, founder of the company, once claimed, “I can raise better men than I can hire.” In Swift’s view, a worker’s length of service was tied directly to his proficiency. By rewarding years of ambitious and loyal service, Swift retained good workers.<sup>46</sup>

Additional companies in the area employed a number of Kenton residents. The Aladdin House Co. settled in the area in 1919 and expected to hire 200 employees. Nearby industries like Nicolai Door Co. also employed Kenton residents. The neighborhood was predominantly blue-collar; census notes indicate many residents’ occupations as “laborer,” “electrical engineer,” “macaroni maker,” or, often, “machinist.”<sup>47</sup> Through the 1930s, the neighborhood maintained a “respectable working-class reputation,” and its residents enjoyed the self-sufficient environment of their town within a town.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Tom Fluharty, “Cattle country nook remains in bustling Portland district,” *Oregonian* 9 Aug. 1976: D20, 2M.

<sup>42</sup> Ellen Stroud, “Troubled Waters in Ecotopia: Environmental Racism in Portland, Oregon,” *Radical History Review* 74 (1999): 67.

<sup>43</sup> Mitchoff, 138, 44.

<sup>44</sup> Paulson, 5; Joe Fitzgibbon, “Searching for splendor,” *Oregonian* 4 Jul. 1991, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.: 1.

<sup>45</sup> Purcell, 90.

<sup>46</sup> “Their Reward for Service,” editorial, *Oregon Journal* 17 Feb. 1937: 4, c2.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census 1920.

<sup>48</sup> “Portland Selected for House-Factory,” *Oregonian* 24 Oct. 1919, morn. ed.: 16; Mitchoff, 133, 154; Stroud, 70.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   10  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

### *A Slow Decline: World War II, Vanport, and the Minnesota Freeway (1941 – 1975)*

The advent of World War II changed the sociocultural and physical landscape of Kenton, as it did the whole of the city. Still recovering from the Depression, Portland's economy continued to languish at the end of the 1930s. The combined value of residential and commercial building permits in the city fell to a precipitous low in 1934 before beginning a slow recovery. In Kenton, only 25 buildings were constructed between 1930 and 1939.<sup>49</sup> New industries appeared in the city with the coming of World War II, thereby beginning its economic revitalization.

The shipbuilding industry contributed heavily to that revitalization and affected Kenton's development during the 1940s.<sup>50</sup> Of significance was the industry's location: it was planted in Kenton's backyard. Henry Kaiser, prominent industrialist, purchased approximately 650 acres of slough, pasture, and truck farm land on the floodplain of the Oregon side of the Columbia River.<sup>51</sup> That land would be used to house the thousands of workers who migrated to the Portland area to work in three of Kaiser's major shipbuilding yards.

Kaiser began the housing project privately, but the federal government later subsidized the project. The result was Vanport, named for its location between Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington. Built in a one-year period, Vanport was the largest wartime housing project in America during World War II. It looked like a housing project but functioned like a city. The Housing Authority of Portland ran the project and provided public services such as schools, libraries, and hospitals.<sup>52</sup> At one point, 40,000 people lived in Vanport.<sup>53</sup>

The Kenton business community hoped to profit from the considerable population influx occurring just north of their informal borough. They did so by supplying a commercial product difficult to come by in Vanport: liquor. Vanport had only one liquor outlet, while Vancouver enforced a "blue law" that prohibited the sale of alcohol on Sundays. As the closest commercial center to Vanport and Vancouver, the Kenton business community flourished by dealing in liquor traffic. The origin of their success lay with Alex Berry, proprietor of a neighborhood confectionery store and former member of the liquor commission. His friends persuaded him to use his influence to grant them liquor licenses. As a participant of the Kenton business community, Berry stood to gain from the extra traffic that would be generated by outside visitors to the area. Soon, numerous taverns lined Denver Avenue. According to one neighborhood resident, it was the beginning of the end for Kenton.<sup>54</sup>

In 1948, a disastrous flood reclaimed Vanport as quickly as it had been constructed. The flood literally washed away the housing project's buildings—its school, apartments, and most of its residents' belongings. The housing project was never reconstructed. Eventually, a golf course, racetrack, and retail shops were erected where the bustling community of

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<sup>49</sup> Northwest District Association, 22.

<sup>50</sup> Manly Maben, *Vanport* (Portland, OR: Oregon Historical Society, 1987) xi.

<sup>51</sup> *The National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, current ed., s.v. "Kaiser, Henry John."

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, 6, xi, xii, 1, 33

<sup>53</sup> "Vanport New and Different Type of City," *Oregonian* 21 Nov. 1943: 18.

<sup>54</sup> Mitchoff, 81.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   11  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

Vanport once stood.<sup>55</sup> In the interim before those entertainment options were put in place, Kenton was left with a business district saturated with taverns.

The effect of the taverns did not register for some time, though. In the early 1940s, Interstate Avenue (Highway 99W) had replaced Union Avenue (known today as Martin Luther King Boulevard) as the city's main north-south thoroughfare to Vancouver. The traffic that had previously traveled Union Avenue to and from Vancouver now moved along Interstate Avenue.<sup>56</sup> The increased traffic benefited Kenton's business district because Interstate Avenue ran directly through the neighborhood, parallel to Denver Avenue.

The construction of Interstate Avenue helped keep the Kenton business community viable, but other developments worked to counter that effect. Refrigeration was introduced on a mass scale, affecting the livestock and meatpacking industry. At the same time, railroads as a means for meat distribution were used less and less.<sup>57</sup> The changes were felt locally. When Les Jorge began working for Swift in 1947, its employees numbered at 900, half the number of employees working for the company in the 1920s.<sup>58</sup>

Recognizing the neighborhood's gradual downturn, Kenton's business community rallied to revive interest in the area. In 1959, with the Oregon Centennial Celebration held at the nearby Pacific International Exposition Center, the Kenton Businessmen's Association erected a 35-foot statue of Paul Bunyan at the intersection of Interstate and Denver streets. The statue commemorated the state's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and distinctively marked the gateway to Kenton's commercial corridors.<sup>59</sup>

The neighborhood's decline continued despite the local business community's efforts. The automobile, which had grown to be an integral component of the way Americans shopped, negatively impacted neighborhood businesses located along the old streetcar lines like Denver Avenue. Consumers could and did travel to regional shopping centers instead of doing business at the shops in their neighborhood. Those changes had been kept at bay in Kenton when the north-south traffic to Vancouver was redirected from Union to Interstate Avenue, supplying the neighborhood's business community with extra traffic. The opening of the Minnesota Freeway (I-5) east of the neighborhood in 1964 sapped that extra traffic and, with it, Kenton's business health. The tourist and trucking businesses that had previously existed on Interstate Avenue moved to be closer to freeway exchanges.<sup>60</sup> Kenton's primary business lures thus became its taverns and the "shady operations" they attracted along Denver Avenue, the neighborhood's other commercial corridor.<sup>61</sup>

Kenton's economy received another blow when the Swift plant closed in 1966. The ten other slaughterhouses along the Slough followed suit, closing one by one over the years.<sup>62</sup> The neighborhood deteriorated as card rooms and prostitution

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<sup>55</sup> Maben, 113-4, 131.

<sup>56</sup> Portland State University Comprehensive Planning Workshop (Department of Urban Studies and Planning), *History of the Albina Plan Area* (Portland, OR: Bureau of Planning, 1990) 18.

<sup>57</sup> City of Portland, *Potential Historic Conservation Districts*, 87.

<sup>58</sup> Fitzgibbon, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Eugene Rashad, "Kenton: Taking Stock," *Oregonian* 8 Jun 1995, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.: Portland zone, 1.

<sup>60</sup> Portland State University, 18.

<sup>61</sup> "Revolution Spirit Grips 'Kentonese,'" *Oregon Journal* 9 Aug. 1976: 17.

<sup>62</sup> Fred Leeson, "Armour's Portland Plant Will Close," *Oregonian* 16 May 1996, Sunrise ed.: C01.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   12  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

replaced the mom-and-pop shops along Denver Avenue. By the mid-1970s, neighbors were hotly accusing one of their own of literally bringing an alarming number of transients to the area. Henry Wong, owner of the Kenton Hotel, was purportedly spied “driving a pick-up truckfull [sic] of transients in the area.” He reportedly brought them from the downtown Burnside area of Old Town “to populate his 50-room hotel.” Cooler heads believed that the city’s recent vice crackdowns in the downtown area had simply pushed its “seamier elements” to Kenton.<sup>63</sup> Arguing about their origin did nothing to disperse the transient population, however. Transients continued to loiter in front of the nearby taverns, tarnishing Kenton’s formerly respectable reputation.

### *Kenton’s Recovery (1976 – 2000)*

Neighborhood residents fought back to restore Kenton’s pride. Their rallying flag became the Kenton Firehouse. Abandoned by the fire department in 1959 and later adopted by the police department, the facility was reused as a warehouse for unmarked cars and stolen property. It became a neighborhood eyesore, with its absentee owners putting little effort into maintaining the property’s appearance.

Local residents decided to ask the city to lease the firehouse to them for use as a community center. The city agreed. In an early display of interest in historic preservation, the community decided to pursue local historic designation for the firehouse to qualify for renovation funding at the federal level. The firehouse was successfully listed in 1976. It opened three years later as a community center, which it remains today.<sup>64</sup>

Flush with success from the Kenton Firehouse project, neighborhood residents fed up with the commercial stagnation of the area turned to municipal agencies for help in revitalizing their business district. In 1982, the Portland Development Commission and the city’s Bureau of Community Development responded by commissioning a study to investigate retail development options for the neighborhood. Residents wanted to bring back the supermarkets and drugstores once available along Denver Avenue, but the study found insufficient figures to justify that demand. Instead, consultants recommended exploring other avenues for commercial development—possibly wholesale trade or expanding the building and woodworking industries already located in the area. The lumber and wood products industries had experienced a statewide boom in late 1970s; as industries historically associated with Kenton, the neighborhood might do well to focus its revitalization efforts in that direction. City agencies urged Kenton to reestablish their business association to work towards revitalization.<sup>65</sup>



*The Kenton Firehouse in the early 1970s.*



*The Kenton Firehouse today.*

<sup>63</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>64</sup> Steve Sinovic, “Kenton neighborhood restores old firehouse,” *Oregonian* 8 Feb. 1979: B2.

<sup>65</sup> Pat Jeffries, “Study says Kenton prospects bleak but not hopeless,” *Oregonian* 18 Jan. 1983: 4M-MW, B2; Eric Moore, 2000 *Regional Economic Profile: Portland PMSA* (Salem: Oregon Employment Department, 2000) 11.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   E   Page   13  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

More substantial outside assistance arose in the early 1990s during a community planning project spearheaded by the city's Bureau of Planning. Working with bureau staff, Kenton residents developed a neighborhood plan officially adopted by the city council in 1993. The plan identified historic preservation as one tool for the area's revitalization. Neighborhood residents and business owners had watched approvingly as the newly restored Kenton Hotel, listed in the National Register in 1990, brought fresh life to the district's commercial corridor. The success of both the firehouse and hotel projects attested to the benefits of historic preservation, so residents and business owners lobbied for the local designation of a portion of the neighborhood as a conservation district. Their efforts were rewarded when the designation was approved with the plan's adoption. A business district revitalization plan developed for Kenton in 1998 echoed the historic preservation ethic and called for the upgrade of the conservation district designation to National Register status.

Today, Kenton is poised to become "Portland's next hot neighborhood."<sup>66</sup> A portion of the neighborhood has been included within an urban renewal area. The urban renewal project will dedicate future tax revenues for revitalization efforts. Approximately \$30 million of that revenue will be used to fund the proposed Interstate Avenue light rail line. The light rail project identifies a station near N. Denver and Interstate Avenues, which could stimulate high density housing nearby and help support the neighborhood's business district.

## *Conclusion*

The Kenton neighborhood at the turn of the century was significant for its association with Gustavus F. Swift, one of the leading figures of the early livestock and meat industry. By commercializing the use of refrigerator cars to ship dressed beef and developing saleable by-products from animal parts previously regarded as waste, Swift established one of the industry's premier firms. Swift & Co., based in Chicago, founded the early Kenton neighborhood as an industrial community for its employees when it established an expansion plant in Portland. Invested in developing the city as a meat processing center, the Swift & Co. plant made Portland "the first regularly established open livestock market on the Pacific coast."<sup>67</sup> Cornelius Chapman Colt, the plant's local director, exalted the industry's output: "It may be of interest to know that, from the volume of business done and the number of people directly and indirectly interested, the livestock and packing-house industry stands first in the United States. It is greater than the steel industry, which is the next largest."<sup>68</sup> The livestock and meat industry was a significant contributor to the local economy, bringing in more than \$15 million in annual disbursements.<sup>69</sup>

The early Kenton neighborhood gradually shed its sole affiliation with Swift & Co. as more and more industries joined the meatpacking company in the North Portland area. The area became known as Portland's "factory district," with Kenton as the residential sector for its workers. The neighborhood's development as an industrial community, isolated location, and weak transit system created a self-sufficient, working-class community unique in the city of Portland. Older residents recall the neighborhood's early history fondly. Muriel Kirker Schelb mused, "My memories of Kenton and the neighborhood are good ones. I won't forget Kenton." Many share her sentiments and believe that the neighborhood's sociocultural and physical history should be preserved.

<sup>66</sup> Byron Beck, "Bargains, Bites: Kenton," *Oregonian* 18 Jun. 1999, Sunrise ed.: 8.

<sup>67</sup> Dutton; "Cattle, Hog and Sheep Market In Portland Yards This Year Goes Big In Figures," *Oregon Journal* 26 Dec. 1915, Sec. 5: 11.

<sup>68</sup> C. C. Colt, "Meat Packing Industry Growth Noted," *Oregonian* 1 Jan. 1917, Sec. 4: 4.

<sup>69</sup> "Swift to Drop Cattle Dressing, Beef Other Packing Operations," *Oregon Journal* 28 Nov. 1963: 5M.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   1  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## F. ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

### INTRODUCTION

The Associated Property Types for this Multiple Property Submission share common attributes. Physical attributes such as scale, size, and plan type vary depending on the purpose and style of the resource. Shared traits may be reflected in standard construction practices of certain time periods, the use of certain materials with specific architectural styles or building types, and an adaptation of regional styles.

In addition to common physical attributes, the Associated Property Types share general registration requirements (see below).<sup>1</sup> Specific information for each property type and subtype can be found on the following pages.<sup>2</sup>

### *General Registration Requirements*

The general requirements listed below must be met to nominate any of the following Associated Property Types within the context of this Multiple Property Submission:

1. Construction should have been completed by the end of 1950.
2. The resource should be considered locally significant, unless it represents the only example in the state of a particular resource type or is associated with a person or persons significant to the history of the state or nation. In such cases, the resource may be considered significant on a statewide or national level.
3. The resource should possess sufficient integrity to convey its significance. Generally, a resource will possess several and usually most of the following aspects of integrity:
  - a. Location – Because the relationship between a resource and its historic associations is usually destroyed if the resource is moved, the resource should be located on its original site. Buildings moved from their original locations must meet Criterion Consideration B as found in the National Register guidelines for relocated properties.
  - b. Design – A resource should retain a combination of elements that conveys its original design. These elements may include the form, plan, spatial organization, structural systems, technology, materials, and style. Generally, a resource should retain its original overall form and massing. Subsequent additions to resources should be either set back to avoid obstruction of the original form, be of a compatible scale, and be on the primary building façade. Window replacement in resources may be acceptable if fenestration patterns remain intact. Enlargement of window and door openings may render a building ineligible for listing if the alterations significantly change the wall-to-opening ratio. If the original

<sup>1</sup> The general and specific Registration Requirements used for the Associated Property Types respectfully borrow from Michelle Dennis's valuable work on residential architecture in Eugene, Oregon (see bibliography, Section I).

<sup>2</sup> The following is based on information discovered in existing records and survey data. As further research and survey work is conducted, information related to the property types may need to be modified.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   2  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

openings are still readable, the filling in of openings may be considered on secondary facades only. Original plans and spatial organization should be evident, even if the use of the space has changed over time. Textures of original surface materials should remain intact. Finally, the type, amount, and style of ornamentation must reflect the original design.

The Associated Property Types listed below note, as appropriate, the design elements related to each property type.

- c. Setting – The physical environment in which the resource exists should reflect its historic features, including topography, vegetation, simple constructed features (e.g., paths or fences), and the relationships between the resource and its surroundings. Natural and created landscape features should be evaluated for significance in relation to the resource.
  - d. Materials – A resource must retain the key exterior materials dating from the period of its historic significance. If a resource has been rehabilitated, historic materials and significant features must be preserved. A resource whose historic materials have been lost and then reconstructed may be eligible if it meets Criterion Consideration E as found in the National Register guidelines for reconstructed properties.
  - e. Workmanship – Resources must retain the physical evidence of workmanship. This workmanship should illustrate the aesthetic principles and technological practices associated with residential, commercial, and industrial construction in the Portland area until 1950.
  - f. Feeling – A resource should retain sufficient original physical features that, when taken together, convey the resource’s historic character. This is generally achieved through a combination of original design, materials, workmanship, and setting. Because feeling depends on individual perceptions, its retention alone does not qualify a property for listing in the National Register.
  - g. Association – To retain association, the direct link between the resource and its association with an important historic event or person must be sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Association, like feeling, requires the presence of original physical features that convey the resource’s historic character. Because association depends on individual perceptions, its alone does not qualify a property for listing in the National Register.
4. A resource does not need to retain its original use if its historic physical integrity is intact.
  5. Additions to or renovations of resources constructed before 1950 must be considered in the context of the entire property and its history.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 3

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## OUTLINE OF PROPERTY TYPES

### 1. RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

#### A. Bungalow style

- Craftsman
- Prairie

#### B. Historic Period styles

- Norman Farmhouse
- Colonial Revival / Dutch Colonial Revival / Cape Cod Colonial
- Mission Revival
- Tudor
- Egyptian Revival

### 2. PUBLIC and SOCIAL BUILDINGS

### 3. COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

### 4. HISTORIC DISTRICTS

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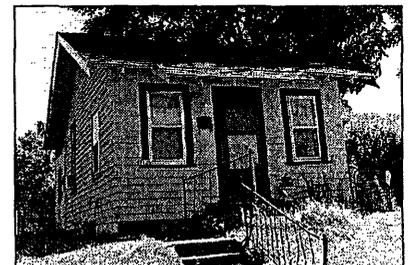
### 1. RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

As a primarily residential community for the many industries that located to the north of Kenton, the majority of the building stock in the neighborhood is residential. The residences are designed in either the Bungalow or Historic Period style, or subtypes of those two styles. The following provides a complete treatment of the styles and their subtypes, including their description and significance. Because both styles share the same registration requirements, only one set of requirements has been provided at the end of the discussion of significance for the Historic Period styles.

#### A. Bungalow style

##### *Description*

The majority of residences in the early Kenton neighborhood were constructed in the Bungalow style. Shared characteristics of this Associated Property Type include a wide, low-pitched roof with overhanging eaves; porches or verandas; and exterior chimneys often of rough brick or cobblestone. This typically one to one and one-half story, wood-frame construction is usually sheathed in rustic surface materials, such as shingles or rough brick.<sup>3</sup> In the early Kenton neighborhood, shingles or clapboard siding are the most popular exterior coverings.



"Worker's bungalow" at 2126 N. Farragut Street.

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<sup>3</sup> Rosalind Clark. *Oregon Style: Architecture from 1840 to the 1950s* (Portland, OR: Professional Book Center, Inc., 1983) 145.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   4  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

As a primarily residential area for workers in the nearby factory district, many of the Bungalows in the early Kenton neighborhood are more modest examples of the style than would be found in higher income, early suburban neighborhoods such as Laurelhurst or Alameda in east Portland. Still identifiable as Bungalows, they exhibit the most rudimentary features of the style proper with none of the character-defining elements of the Craftsman or Prairie subtypes. These “worker’s bungalows” are found primarily to the west of N. Denver Avenue.

The following subtypes are called out because they display defining elements or influences that embellish the basic form of the Bungalow. These enhanced Bungalows tend to be larger than the “worker’s bungalows” and, unlike the basic Bungalow, can be found throughout the Kenton neighborhood.

Craftsman – This style underscores structural elements as an important decorative component of its design to suggest strength and substance. For example, in this style, the deep eaves of the Bungalow rhythmically display rafter ends or “rafter tails,” often cut into curved or pointed profiles for exaggerated effect. Substantial knee braces or brackets may also appear at triangular gable ends. Massive beams without brackets are occasionally employed, as are decorative bargeboards.



*Craftsman Bungalow style  
residence at 7553 N. Elmore Ave.*

Prairie – Introduced in the American Midwest during the early twentieth century, this style emphasizes the relationship between residential design and the broad horizon of the Midwestern landscape. Midwestern examples of this style are usually brick, though stucco versions (which predominate in Oregon) also exist. Accentuating the horizontal line, Prairie style roofs tend to be hipped with a very shallow pitch. Unlike the Craftsman subtype, the eaves on the Prairie Bungalow tend to conceal potential rafter tails behind squared fascia boards. Massive, squared columns of simple design support the porches of this style.<sup>4</sup> Unlike the Craftsman, this subtype is rare in the early Kenton neighborhood (indeed, few examples of this style are found in the state), finding expression in only one residence at 1606 N. Farragut Street.

## *Significance*

The residences included within this Associated Property Type represent the best examples typifying each style group and the earliest remaining examples of each style group retaining their integrity. They are historically significant under Criterion A for their association with the lives of the working class residents of the early Kenton neighborhood. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, and methods of construction of the early twentieth century in the Pacific Northwest.

The following discussion provides a more expansive treatment of this style’s significance because of its strong presence in the early Kenton neighborhood. The styles within the other Associated Property Types are not as well represented in the neighborhood.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*; Paul Duchscherer, *The Bungalow: America’s Arts and Crafts Home* (New York: Penguin Studio, 1995) 39-40, 71.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   5  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

The term “bungalow” is an anglicized combination of the Bengali noun *bānglā*, referring to a low house with surrounding porches or galleries, and the Hindustani adjective *bānglā*, meaning “belonging to Bengal.” In the nineteenth century, the Indian government constructed such buildings—known as *dāk bungalows*—as resthouses for those traveling along the main roads. They were meant to be temporary or seasonal dwellings.

That intention remained with the Bungalow as it became a popular form in vacation architecture, initially seen in seaside or seasonal cottages or emerging as a “second home” in late nineteenth century England and America.<sup>5</sup> Its origins as a “summer cottage” linked the bungalow to ideas of leisure, informality, and natural settings. Its connection to such concepts helped popularize the style in the early twentieth century when America experienced a sociocultural shift from Victorian to Progressive values.

A number of factors influenced that transition. Changes in the production and distribution of goods dramatically altered the experience of daily life—what was produced and how it was distributed was significant. For example, baked goods could be purchased from the local baker or bought from the National Biscuit Company, thus eliminating or reducing home baking, often an entire day’s task. Technological advances such as sewing and washing machines further simplified everyday life. That simplification led to the advent of leisure time, fostering support of a more relaxed and easy-going lifestyle. It was the age of Teddy Roosevelt, so active, outdoor recreational activities such as bicycling were seen as healthful pursuits. Physical relaxation went hand in hand with loosened emotions, as advice books of the time urged readers to be more direct about their feelings. Where Victorian values placed formalistic stress on decorum and display, Progressivism aimed to alter housing standards and family ideals by emphasizing naturalness, openness, and informality.

The Bungalow seemed well matched to those attributes. The style’s open floor plan and lack of ornamentation made it easier to care for and, more importantly, suggested that less time need be devoted to formal visits and entertaining.<sup>6</sup> The verandas and sleeping porches often associated with the style demonstrated an interpenetration of inner and outer spaces, emphasizing openness.<sup>7</sup> The style’s sloping silhouette—found in the broad, low roof; overhanging eaves; and occasionally flared walls—affected a low center of gravity, while its exterior sheathing materials (often left unpainted) intimated that the house literally grew out of its site.<sup>8</sup> The ideal Bungalow was the physical embodiment of a relaxed lifestyle in harmonious attunement with nature—or so marketers would opine when attempting to sell the style to the American public.

The Bungalow’s introduction to popular consciousness was, indeed, its sale. Inexpensive pattern books and advancements in construction technology had modernized residential construction during the late nineteenth century, allowing potential homeowners to phase the purchase and construction of their residence. That ability was key because financing systems for modern residential construction had not developed in step with industrial production and availability, so would-be home buyers could not rely on long-term, insured mortgages to purchase their homes. Instead, future homeowners first bought land, so the owner could excavate the basement and lay the foundation at his or her leisure. When it came time to build a home on the site, mail-order house catalogues were consulted because they offered

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<sup>5</sup> Clay Lancaster, *The American Bungalow 1880-1930* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985) 19, 35, 70.

<sup>6</sup> Clifford Edward Clark, Jr. “Modernizing the House and Family” and “The Bungalow Craze,” in *The American Family Home, 1800-1960* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Robert Schweitzer and Michael W. R. Davis, *America’s Favorite Homes: Mail-order Catalogues as a Guide to Popular 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Houses* (Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1990) 152.

<sup>8</sup> Duchsherer, 40; Lancaster, 13.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 6

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

reasonably priced materials. Family members who agreed to pitch in and build the house once the parts arrived represented free labor. The Bungalow became a part of that process when it was introduced as an architectural style in the pattern books and mail-order plans that future homebuyers reviewed before constructing their residence.

An opportune balance of supply and demand contributed to the Bungalow's popularity. Its introduction coincided with a tremendous population boom; America's population increased almost 50% between 1890 and 1910, so affordable housing that could be constructed at a fast rate was in high demand. Diverse periodicals like the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Architectural Record* fueled that demand by featuring the Bungalow and extolling its virtues. Women's magazines endorsed the Bungalow because it promised to improve domestic life, while the style appealed to architects and designers because it personified the new aesthetic ideals of simplicity and informality. Mail-order house catalogues increased Bungalow fever by including enticing illustrations and glowing testimonials within their pages. Builders and plan book designers were happy to fill the demand. Bungalows were easy to design and standardize, their components reducible to a number of interchangeable, similarly sized spaces and materials.<sup>9</sup>

Such conditions led to the steady proliferation of Bungalows across the American landscape, many of which were mass-produced, mail-order, ready-made homes.<sup>10</sup> Before the end of World War I, architect-designed Bungalows were usually completed for wealthy clients, resulting in large, sometimes lavish residences. Trade magazines offered smaller, less expensive versions of the style to lower- and middle-income families. One dollar could purchase a catalogue displaying as many as 1,000 Bungalows. For a 25% down payment, some mail-order firms offered the potential homebuyer a precut house sent by rail to be constructed on arrival.<sup>11</sup>

Indeed, many of the homes in the early Kenton neighborhood, itself largely composed of lower- and middle-income families, may be traced to mail-order house catalogues. Local businesses such as the J. H. Fenner Manufacturing Company and the Redimade Home Company offered mail-order housing. These firms in turn competed with larger companies like Sears Roebuck and the Aladdin Company (with contract lumber mills in Portland and elsewhere) also offering a wide range of mail-order housing.<sup>12</sup>

The Bungalow's popularity continued into the late 1920s but began flagging by 1920; at one point, Woodrow Wilson accused Warren G. Harding of having "a bungalow mind."<sup>13</sup> The term had become pejorative, implying provinciality. By the 1930s, the Bungalow's national dominance had waned and been replaced by the Cape Cod Colonial.

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<sup>9</sup> *Op. cit.*, 62-3; Clark, 171; Scott Erbes, "Manufacturing and Marketing the American Bungalow: The Aladdin Company, 1906-1920," in *The American Home: Material Culture, Domestic Space, and Family Life*, edited by Eleanor McD. Thompson (USA: Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum, Inc., 1998) 45-46, 57.

<sup>10</sup> Unlike earlier housing fads, the West Coast first felt the touch of Bungalow fever, which gradually spread to the East Coast. Promoters and marketers often linked the Bungalow to the perceived easygoing lifestyle of the West and, more specifically, California, seen at the turn of the century as "a romantic frontier of perfect weather, warm seas, and limitless opportunity." See Erbes, 160; Clifford Edward Clark, Jr., 182-4; and *The Craftsman Book of Bungalows Modern Homes and Flats* (Portland, OR: H. M. Fancher Co., Inc., 1910) 8.

<sup>11</sup> Rosalind Clark, 145-6.

<sup>12</sup> Definitively classifying a residence as a mail-order or catalogue house can be a difficult, if not impossible, task. For further assistance, see Daniel D. Reiff, "Identifying Mail-Order & Catalog Houses," *Old-House Journal* Sept./Oct. 1995: 30-7.

<sup>13</sup> Alex Gowans, *The Comfortable House: North American Suburban Architecture 1890-1930* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1986) 74.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 7

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## 2. HISTORIC PERIOD STYLES

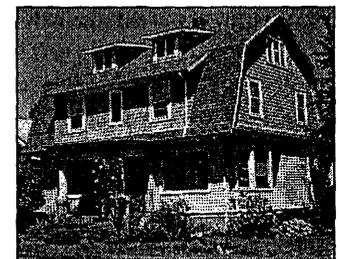
### *Description*

Norman Farmhouse – This style often exhibits a steeply pitched gable roof, a roof treatment sometimes echoed in the porch roof where one slope may reach close to the ground. Some examples may also display a hipped gable roof. Norman Farmhouse style residences tend to be one and one-half story, wood-frame structures with an asymmetrical organization. Various cladding materials such as wood shingles or bevel siding can sheathe the exterior. Characteristic fenestration includes round- or segmental-arched windows and door openings, as well as multi-pane glazing.<sup>14</sup>



*Norman Farmhouse style residence at 1830 N. Winchell St.*

Colonial Revival / Dutch Colonial Revival / Cape Cod Colonial – Colonial Revival style residences are distinguished by formal façade organization and applied classical details. They are further defined as wood frame constructions with symmetrical organization and square or rectangular plan shapes. Other characteristics of the style include low-pitched hip or gable roofs; fanlights or sidelights framing the doors; clapboard siding; and columns in classical orders. Buildings of the Colonial Revival style also tend to be larger and broader than their earlier, eighteenth century counterparts. Their windows continue in this trend, with overall size and individual panes generally larger than their colonial brethren. Examples with gambrel roofs are classified as Dutch Colonial Revival styles. Cape Cod Colonial houses are also represented in the Kenton neighborhood. These homes are generally smaller than either the Colonial Revival or Dutch Colonial Revival styles, tending to be one and one-half story structures with a medium-pitch gable roof.<sup>15</sup>



*Dutch Colonial Revival style residence at 1835 N. Russet St.*

Mission Revival – Frameless, round-arched openings and tile roofs often define this style. The roofs are of low pitch and can be hidden altogether by parapets. A stucco exterior usually sheathes this brick or wood-frame construction. Sculptural ornamentation is often absent from the design.<sup>16</sup>

While categorized under the Historic Period Styles, the Mission Revival style as expressed in the early Kenton neighborhood shares some design principles of the Bungalow. A hybrid of the Mission Revival and Bungalow styles, it exhibits snug plans, low forms, and porches supported by massive columns suggesting strength and substance.<sup>17</sup> Finally, unlike the Colonial Revival and Norman Farmhouse styles, this style is rare in the early Kenton neighborhood. Examples include 1848 N. Kilpatrick Street and 7626 N. Denver Avenue.

Tudor – This style is often defined by a steeply pitched gable roof and false or decorative half-timbering. Brick, stucco, or a combination of both usually sheathes the exterior of this style. Buildings of this style tend to have a rectangular shape with vertical projections. There may be a display of castellated parapets. Tudor- or round-arched openings are common, particularly around the main entrance. Multi-pane glazing also characterizes this style, though more traditional,

<sup>14</sup> Rosalind Clark, 172.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, 158; City of Portland Bureau of Planning, Sec. F, p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969) 213.

<sup>17</sup> Duchscherer, 70.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   8  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

double-hung windows are not uncommon. Windows are often grouped into strings of three or more, usually sited below the main gable.<sup>18</sup>

Egyptian Revival – This style usually exhibits a flat roof and brick or masonry facing. The main façade is often a bilaterally symmetrical elevation. Decorative elements are of an Egyptian motif, e.g., cavetto cornice; sunken or low relief walls with Egyptian symbols; or palmate and lotus flower ornamentation.<sup>19</sup>

### *Significance*

The buildings included within this Associated Property Type represent the best examples that typify the style. They are historically significant under Criterion A for their association with the lives of the working class residents of the early Kenton neighborhood. They are also architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, and methods of construction of the early twentieth century in the Pacific Northwest.

Architects trained in the Beaux Arts academic tradition introduced Historic Period Styles in the late nineteenth century. American architects trained in this rigorous tradition were able to design an assortment of Historic Period Styles. As these architects were commissioned to design high-style houses for wealthy clients, they were interested in demonstrating their ability to apply correct historic detailing to new buildings in a variety of styles. Their work initiated popular interest in traditional styles. Locally, Portland's 1905 Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition promoted interest in Beaux Arts principles. In concert with the Pacific Coast Architectural League, an organization that survived until 1915, Portland architects created a taste for styles that were inspired by various historic periods.<sup>20</sup>

In the early Kenton neighborhood, Historic Period Styles are noted in the collection of Norman Farmhouse, Colonial Revival, and Mission Revival style residences primarily located to the east of N. Denver Avenue. The Norman Farmhouse style recalls peasant architecture of tenth-century France, specifically the northern province of Normandy. Exposed to its prototypes during World War I, returning servicemen helped popularize the style in America. It quickly became one of the most prevalent of the historic period styles in vogue in the early twentieth century.<sup>21</sup>

The Beaux Arts movement also revived an interest in the early English and Dutch homes of America's colonial history, birthing the Colonial Revival style. With its clean lines and simple shapes, the Colonial Revival style, like the Bungalow and Prairie styles, emphatically rejected the ornate form of the Queen Anne residence popular during the late nineteenth century. During the 1930s, the Cape Cod Colonial, a later incarnation, eclipsed the popularity of the Bungalow. Its prototype was the shingled or clapboarded cottage constructed in the fishing villages of Massachusetts from the mid-seventeenth to the early nineteenth century. When roof dormers were added, the style borrowed elements from the residential architecture of colonial Virginia.<sup>22</sup>

Like the previous style, the Mission Revival style rejected the decorative and fanciful architecture of the late nineteenth century. Moreover, it rebelled against the East Coast styles that had dominated the country since the mid-nineteenth

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<sup>18</sup> Rosalind Clark, 156; Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1995) 357-8.

<sup>19</sup> Rosalind Clark, 179.

<sup>20</sup> City of Portland Bureau of Planning, Sec. F, p. 4-5.

<sup>21</sup> Rosalind Clark, 172.

<sup>22</sup> Clifford Edward Clark, Jr., 139; Schweitzer, 196.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   9  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

century. Instead, it drew inspiration from the missions built in California and the Southwest during the eighteenth century. Gaining ground as early as the 1890s, the style was first applied to public buildings such as train stations and churches. It was a popular residential style by the 1910s.<sup>23</sup>

Historic Period Styles in the early Kenton neighborhood are also found in the Tudor and Egyptian Revival styles. They are distinguished from other Historic Period Styles in the neighborhood by their rarity and application to public and social buildings versus residential construction.<sup>24</sup> The Tudor style, inspired by English buildings of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, became one of the most popular of the Historic Period Styles after World War I. The false half-timbering often associated with this style was based on the medieval tradition of framing heavy timber with wattle and daub (a mud and straw or twig mixture) or brick infilling between the timbers. The style was first popularized by upper-crust Americans who, wanting to affect the appearance of an English country manor, applied the style to their suburban homes. The Kenton United Presbyterian Church is designed in the Tudor style.

Unlike the Historic Period Styles described above, the Egyptian Revival style was less popular, enjoying greater exposure in the eastern United States than in the West. Few examples of the style, based on Egyptian architecture between the third millennium BC and the Roman period, are found in Oregon. Extant examples find the style applied to mortuary structures, lodge halls, cinemas, and apartment and commercial buildings. There are no known examples of the style applied to single-family construction. The Kenton Lodge is designed in the Egyptian Revival style.<sup>25</sup>

## *Registration Requirements*

In addition to the General Registration Requirements identified earlier, the following requirements must be met to nominate Historic Period style properties within the context of this Multiple Property Submission:

1. The residence must have been constructed between 1909 and 1950.
2. The residence must meet one or more of the Criteria listed above.
3. Character-defining features should be intact and sufficient integrity retained. Regardless of current use, the building should retain key features, including design, materials, workmanship, plan, and spatial organization. Ideally, the residence will be in its original location. If it has been moved, the residence must meet Criterion Consideration B as found in the National Register guidelines for relocated properties.

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<sup>23</sup> Whiffen, 213-4; Rosalind Clark, 165.

<sup>24</sup> The Mission Revival style is applied almost wholly to residential construction. The northwest corner of the Nicolai Door Co. Building, an industrial structure, is expressed in the Mission Revival style with the remainder of the building designed in the Utilitarian/Industrial style. For further discussion, see page 25 of this document.

<sup>25</sup> Rosalind Clark, 156, 179.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   10  

  N/A    
Name of Property

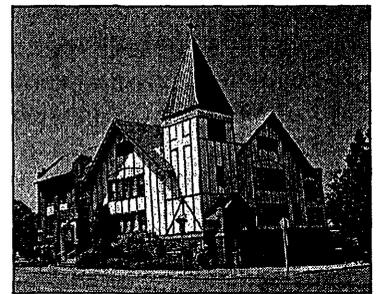
  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

## 3. PUBLIC and SOCIAL BUILDINGS

### *Description*

Public and social buildings in Kenton are not numerous due to the neighborhood's relative isolation and small population base in its early history. Historic examples include the Kenton School, the Kenton United Presbyterian Church, the Kenton Firehouse, the Kenton Lodge, and a handful of taverns and theaters. A wide range of styles was applied to this Associated Property Type from Second Renaissance Revival to Mission Revival to Streetcar Era Commercial. The variety stems from the singularity of each style due, as mentioned, to the relatively small number of public and social buildings in the early Kenton neighborhood. The variety of architectural styles applied to this building function also precludes a discussion of characteristic building materials. Instead, a discussion of the styles applied to this building function will be limited to those not mentioned elsewhere in Section F of this document.



*The Kenton United Presbyterian Church, a Tudor style building, at 7501 N. Chatham Ave.*

A style not previously discussed is the Second Renaissance Revival, also known as the Neoclassical style. Characteristic elements of this style include a flat roof, bilateral symmetry of the primary elevation, and rectangular windows with lintels or keystones of different material. Buildings of this style may also be archaeological imitations of Greek and Roman architecture or French, Italian, and English Renaissance structures. The Kenton School is designed in the Second Renaissance Revival style.

### *Significance*

Public and social buildings are associated with broad patterns of community development in the early Kenton neighborhood and therefore significant under Criterion A. They depict the lifestyles of the primarily working class inhabitants of the early Kenton neighborhood. Some properties will also be significant under Criterion C for embodying the styles, forms, and methods of construction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Second Renaissance Revival or Neoclassical style was part of a conscious reaction against the picturesque movement, stressing instead a need for disciplined order, proportion, and scale as found in classical, Greco-Roman or Renaissance architecture. That reaction coincided with the advent of America's Gilded Age when the country was experiencing a period of relative prosperity and rapid change. Many architects and artists looking to announce America's supremacy as an industrial power and debunk its image as a developing frontier society turned to Europe for models of the highest cultural developments of Western civilization. In 1893, those models were reinterpreted for the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago to commemorate Columbus' discovery of America. Over 27 million visitors attended the Exposition, also known as the "White City" for the stunning white, monumental, lath and plaster imitations of Roman and Renaissance architecture that lined the site. The Exposition's success underscored America's arrival as a global power.

Its success can also be read in the large number of Neoclassical style civic buildings designed after 1893. The "White City" was so impressive that its Neoclassical style buildings were replicated in various municipalities—both large and

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 11

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

small—throughout the country.<sup>26</sup> In Kenton, the Kenton School and the Kenton Firehouse were both designed in the tradition of the Second Renaissance Revival.

### *Registration requirements*

In addition to the General Registration Requirements identified earlier, the following requirements must be met to nominate Public and Social Buildings within the context of this Multiple Property Submission:

1. The building must have been constructed between 1909 and 1950.
2. The building must meet one or more of the Criteria listed above.
3. Character-defining features should be intact and sufficient integrity retained. Regardless of current use, the building should retain key features, including design, materials, workmanship, plan, and spatial organization. Ideally, the residence will be in its original location. If it has been moved, the residence must meet Criterion Consideration B as found in the National Register guidelines for relocated properties.

### 4. COMMERCIAL and INDUSTRIAL BUILDINGS

#### *Description*

This Associated Property Type addresses buildings associated with the storage, processing, shipment, and sale of a variety of goods. In general, these buildings do not exhibit any particular stylistic features because of their primarily utilitarian nature. Most properties of this Associated Property Type are located along the old streetcar route that previously ran along N. Denver Avenue.

Most of the commercial properties in the early Kenton neighborhood generally exhibit characteristics of the Streetcar Era Commercial style, a style that originated during the Progressive Era (1884-1913) and which held sway until the 1930s. The most common Streetcar Era Commercial structure is composed of two stories, with ground floor retail and office space or housing units above; most examples of this style in the early Kenton neighborhood are one story in height, however. They are wood or masonry structures often surfaced with ornamental concrete block, though some are sheathed in brick or stucco. Typical features include a rectilinear plan, flat roof, and coping or a modest metal or brick cornice. Decorative features may include embellishments on the frieze, belt courses, and ornamental brickwork around the windows, cornice, or parapet. Some buildings have a tiled, shed roof at the parapet. Building facades may be divided into bays and entrances recessed from the sidewalk. Large, fixed storefront windows predominate at the street elevation. The fenestration on the upper stories tends to be smaller double-hung or tri-



*The Dupey Block at 8202-8208 N. Denver Ave. is a Streetcar Era Commercial style building surfaced with ornamental concrete block.*

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, 125-6.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   12  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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partite windows. An example of this Associated Property Type is found in the Dupey Block, an ornamental concrete block structure at 8202-8208 N. Denver Avenue.

Modernistic style buildings also appear with this Associated Property Type, though they tend to be singular examples. For instance, the Morris and Lizzie Goldstein Building is one of two structures in the Kenton neighborhood designed in the Art Deco style. This building generally meets descriptions of most Art Deco style buildings. A flat or stepped roof; stuccoed exterior wall; and soft or rounded corners with curved window glass characterize Art Deco style buildings. Typical fenestration includes large windows with metal sashes or rounded, curved windows. Art Deco style buildings also often display geometric ornament in low relief; examples include chevrons, sunbursts, and vertical and horizontal banding. The Morris and Lizzie Goldstein Building has a flat roof embellished with a stepped parapet; stuccoed exterior walls; large windows with aluminum sash; and geometric ornament in low relief.

Examples of industrial buildings in the early Kenton neighborhood are rare since factories and industrial complexes tended to settle to the north of the neighborhood to be closer to the Columbia Slough and rail transit. The Nicolai Door Co. Building at 1935 N. Argyle Street is the sole example of an industrial building located within the boundaries of this Multiple Property Submission. Its northwest corner at the junction of N. Denver Avenue, N. Interstate Avenue, and N. Argyle Street is expressed in the Mission Revival style with the remainder of the building designed in the Utilitarian/Industrial style. A rectangular plan and a flat or moderate pitch gable roof distinguished the Utilitarian/Industrial style. Exterior walls are usually brick or stucco but can be horizontal or vertical wood siding. Building facades that are divided into bays generally feature segmental, arched openings. Embellishments may include ornamental brickwork at the parapet or belt course.

## *Significance*

These buildings are historically significant under Criterion A for their association with the commercial and industrial development of the early Kenton neighborhood. However, these buildings are important not only to the history of Kenton but also to the growth of the city of Portland as a whole. At the turn of the twentieth century, business moguls used the open space along the east banks of the Willamette River to build their industrial complexes. Areas like the original city of Albina and North Portland Harbor were particularly attractive for their potential as a transportation linking point for Oregon, Washington, and beyond. Industries could ship by both sea and rail. In addition to creating Portland's industrial base, these companies offered substantial employment opportunities. Workers, in turn, demanded housing close to their place of employment, creating the Kenton neighborhood of today.

Some of these properties will also be architecturally significant under Criterion C for embodying the forms, methods of construction, and styles popular during their period of significance.

## *Registration requirements*

In addition to the General Registration Requirements identified earlier, the following requirements must be met to nominate Commercial and Industrial Buildings within the context of this Multiple Property Submission:

1. The building must have been constructed between 1909 and 1950.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   13  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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2. The building must meet one or more of the Criteria listed above.
  3. Character-defining features should be intact and sufficient integrity retained. Regardless of current use, the building should retain key features, including design, materials, workmanship, plan, and spatial organization. Ideally, the residence will be in its original location. If it has been moved, the residence must meet Criterion Consideration B as found in the National Register guidelines for relocated properties.

## 5. HISTORIC DISTRICTS

### *Description*

In general, historic districts will be defined by a collection of properties assembled in contiguous physical relationship to one another and which are united by a common theme, be it historical or architectural. The districts will include all manner of building styles and encompass structures of differing functional uses. Architectural styles in the district will be limited to those listed in Section F of this document, except for those buildings which may be classified as Noncontributing. Noncontributing properties are properties within the nominated district that were constructed after the nominated area's period of significance. They may also be properties constructed during the nominated district's period of significance but which have been so altered that rehabilitation or renovation could not feasibly return them to their original state.

In terms of function, however, buildings in a nominated district will be defined by a particular land use pattern. In the early Kenton neighborhood, for example, the commercial corridor along N. Denver Avenue is a likely candidate for nomination as a historic district.

### *Significance*

Historic districts will be historically significant under Criterion A for their association with broad patterns of community development in the early Kenton neighborhood. They will represent the lifestyles of the primarily working class residents of the Kenton area. Historic districts may also be architecturally significant under Criterion C for representing a distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.

### *Registration Requirements*

In addition to the General Registration Requirements identified earlier, the following requirements must be met to nominate a historic district within the context of this Multiple Property Submission:

1. A significant majority of the resources must have been constructed between 1909 and 1950.
2. A district must meet one or more of the criteria listed above.
3. A district must be an identifiable entity that conveys a visual sense of the overall historic environment or be an arrangement of historically or functionally related resources.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   F   Page   14  

  N/A    
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

- 
4. The majority of the components that contribute to the district's historic character, even if they are individually undistinguished, must possess integrity, as must the district as a whole.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number G & H Page 1

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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## G. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

### *Area Description*

The city of Portland, Oregon is located at the northwest portion of the state at the mouth of the Willamette Valley where the Willamette and Columbia Rivers meet. The latter creates a natural topographic boundary between Oregon and Washington and connects the city of Portland with the Pacific Ocean. The Willamette River divides the city, separating it into eastern and western halves. Burnside Street, a major arterial, quarters the halves into northeast, northwest, southeast, and southwest sectors. The merging of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers forms a peninsula that creates the city's fifth sector: north Portland. The Kenton neighborhood, which includes the nominated property, is located in that sector.

Portland first developed along the western banks of the Willamette River in 1843. Euro-American trappers and Native Americans had cleared the land to serve as a stopping point between Fort Vancouver to the north and Oregon City to the south. In time, Portland's deep harbor and location at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers became the city's selling point, as it provided ideal conditions for river transport.

The Kenton neighborhood developed when the city's river transit was complemented by rail transit. With the completion of the North Bank Railroad Bridge across the Columbia River in 1907, north Portland was served by both rail and ship transportation. North Portland also offered large, isolated expanses of land attractive to industries looking to construct factories or related uses, such as stockyards. Finally, the area included the Columbia Slough, providing a ready supply of fresh water for the disposal of industrial sewage.

Before Euro-American settlement at the turn of the eighteenth century, the Wa-kan-is-sis-se Indian tribe, one of the many bands of the Multnomahs who occupied the Willamette River Valley, inhabited the area surrounding the Columbia Slough. They located on the bottomlands along the south of the Columbia River, which would generally fill the flatlands when spring thaws would send the melted snowpack from the mountains. In time, these flatlands created a series of side channels or sloughs to drain off the surplus water, resulting in the Columbia Slough of today.<sup>1</sup>

### *Summary*

This listing is limited to buildings located within the corporate limits of the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, and restricted to the Kenton neighborhood's earliest commercial and residential development. As such, the nominated area follows the boundaries of the Graybrook Addition, the Kenton Addition, and a portion of the John Rankin Donation Land Claim. Specifically, the nominated area is roughly bounded to the north by N. Argyle Street, to the east by N. Interstate Avenue, to the south by N. Lombard Street, and to the west by N. Delaware Avenue. The boundary also includes one tax lot to the north of the Kenton Addition.

The study area slopes gradually (approximately 2.5%) downward in a northeasterly direction towards the Columbia River. The elevation measures at 140' above sea level in the southwestern corner of the study area and 50' at the northeastern corner. The elevation drops more rapidly in the northern portion of the study area: an approximate 5% slope

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<sup>1</sup> Lawrence Barber, *Columbia Slough* (Portland, OR: Columbia Slough Development Corp., 1977) 1.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number G & H Page 2

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

at the north end of Kenton Park and an approximate slope of 7% north of N. Interstate Avenue. Immediately north of the study area, past N. Argyle Street, the elevation drops dramatically with an average of approximately 9% slope.

Including right-of-way, this listing encompasses 160.55 acres composed of 738 tax lots. The average tax lot measures at 6,407 square feet. The typical block measures 200 (north-south) x 480 (east-west) feet. Slightly larger blocks measuring 200 (north-south) x 600 (east-west) feet are found to the east of N. Fenwick Avenue. Three blocks to the west of N. Brandon Avenue and to the north of N. Terry Street measure 200 (north-south) x 800 (east-west) feet.

The Arterial Streets Classification Policy of Portland designated N. Interstate Avenue as a Major City Traffic Street and a Major City Transit Street. The same policy classifies N. Denver Avenue as a Minor Transit Street, City Walkway, and City Bikeway. N. Kilpatrick Street is also classified as a City Bikeway. The area bounded by N. Argyle Street to the north, N. Interstate Avenue to the west, N. Schofield Street to the south, and N. Delaware Avenue to the west is classified as a Pedestrian District.

The area proposed for listing is generally composed of two land uses. Contiguous commercial development characterizes N. Denver Avenue from N. Watts Street to the south and N. Argyle Street to the north. Residential uses characterize the area to the south of N. Watts Street and to the east and west of N. Denver Avenue. Light industrial uses characterize the area to the north of N. Argyle Street outside of the proposed listing.

## H. SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The Multiple Property Submission of Historic and Architectural Resources of the early Kenton neighborhood in Portland, Oregon, is based upon an update of the City of Portland's 1984 *Citywide Historic Resources Inventory (CHRI)*. This nomination is the culmination of three Oregon State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) grants to update the historic resources inventory in the *Albina Community Plan* area, which includes the Kenton neighborhood. This nomination focuses on the earliest commercial and residential development in the Kenton neighborhood and includes the Kenton Conservation district, a locally designated historic conservation district.

From 1982 to 1984, a group of historic preservation professionals joined staff of the City of Portland Bureau of Planning to conduct a windshield survey of historic resources citywide. Over 5,200 resources were identified. The resources were ranked, forming the basis for an update of the historic resources inventory in the *Albina Community Plan* area.

The update of the *CHRI* in the Albina area was conducted by Michael Harrison and Julia Gisler, Bureau of Planning staff, who worked with neighborhood volunteers and interns under the auspices of three SHPO grants from 1991 to 1994. Michael Harrison, FAICP, Chief Planner, has a Bachelor's and Master's degree of Architecture from the University of Oregon. Julia Gisler, City Planner, has a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture from the University of Oregon and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Portland State University.

This listing is funded through Historic Preservation Fund #9919 (FY 1999-2000) and supervised by Michael Harrison. Other Bureau of Planning staff who have contributed to this listing include Cielo Lutino, Liza Mickle, Robin Green, and Emily Hughes. Cielo Lutino, City Planner, has a Bachelor of Arts from Reed College. Liza Mickle, Community Service Aide, has a Bachelor of Arts from Drew University. She is currently a graduate student in the Historic Preservation Program at the University of Oregon. Robin Green, Community Service Aide, has a Bachelor of Arts from Lewis and

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number G & H Page 3

N/A  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

Kenton MPS  
Name of Multiple Property Listing

---

Clark College. Emily Hughes, Intern, has a Bachelor of Arts from the College of Saint Benedict. She is currently a graduate student in the Urban and Regional Planning Program at Portland State University.

The Albina inventory, which included the Kenton neighborhood, updated the resources included in the *CHRI*. Neighborhood associations, historic preservation professionals, and historians combined efforts to identify additional resources by conducting a street-by-street visual survey. Supplementary research was conducted for the more promising resources. Initial results of the update added 665 individual resources to the CHRI, as well as 11 ensembles or groupings of resources. The Bureau of Planning took the results to an evaluation committee comprised of an architectural historian, architects, neighborhood representatives, a historian, and a preservation consultant. The committee looked at all the identified historic resources and reviewed them using criteria approved by the SHPO. The criteria were history, integrity, architecture, and environment. The evaluation committee ranked the resources and mapped the concentration of resources throughout the *Albina Community Plan* area.

The update resulted in the designation of seven historic conservation districts: Eliot, Irvington, Russell Street, Piedmont, Mississippi, Kenton, and Woodlawn. This listing includes the majority of the Kenton Conservation District, designated in 1993. It addresses one historic development period: 1909 to 1950.

This nomination has been drafted to cover the identified property types within the boundary of Kenton's earliest residential and commercial development. It is intended to facilitate the future listing of individual properties in the National Register. In Oregon, current state law allows local designations to be withdrawn by property owners whenever they wish, necessitating listing in the National Register of Historic Places if the resource is to receive maximum protection.

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   1   Page   1  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   I   Page   2  

          N/A            
Name of Property

  Multnomah, OR    
County and State

  Kenton MPS    
Name of Multiple Property Listing

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