

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received JUN 19 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Harmon Neils House

and/or common Neils House

2. Location

street & number 2642 N.W. Lovejoy Street n/a not for publication

city, town Portland n/a vicinity of

state Oregon code 41 county Multnomah code 051

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. and Mrs. John L. Wentland

street & number 2642 N.W. Lovejoy Street

city, town Portland n/a vicinity of state Oregon 97210

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Multnomah County Courthouse

street & number 1021 S.W. Fourth Avenue

city, town Portland state Oregon 97205

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Portland Historic Resources Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981-83 federal state county local

depository for survey records Bureau of Planning

city, town Portland state Oregon

7. Description

Condition excellent good fair deteriorated ruins unexposed**Check one** unaltered altered**Check one** original site moved

date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Harmon/Neils House, built in 1908, was an early Craftsman/Colonial Revival design of prominent Portland architect, Albert E. Doyle. It is situated on a sloping triangular lot in Nob Hill Terrace with a view of the city to the north and east. Nob Hill was developed in Portland's northwest hills after the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition which was located in the nearby flatlands. The area, graced with large, early 20th century houses and landscaping, is well maintained and continues today as one of the City's desirable residential districts.

Other historic houses nearby include A.E. Doyle's Burke/Wilson House (1909) across Lovejoy St. to the north, and next door to the west, the F.E. Dooly House also built in 1909. Both houses are listed on the National Register. (See site map.)

STRUCTURE AND PLAN

The 2½ story house with full basement has concrete footings and solid 13" thick brick bearing walls that extend to the roof. Interior structure is wood with posts and beams in the basement, 2x4 wood stud bearing walls on upper floors, 2x10 floor joists and 2x6 roof rafters.

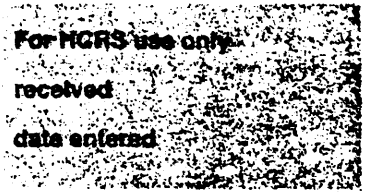
The basic floor plan is a modified rectangle, 27'x56' with the long dimension running east/west (see plans). Ceiling heights are 10' 8" on the first floor and 8' 8" on the second.

Centered on the north is the main entrance which leads to a small vestibule with a glazed door and sidelights which enters into the main entry hall. Continuing to the rear (south) through a wide archway is the main stair. East of the entry hall through a cased opening is the large living room (26'x17') that occupies the full width of the house. Central glazed doors at the south end originally

(See Continuation Sheets)

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led to a "Covered Piazza" which overlooked the rearyard. This space was enclosed with windows and glass paned doors in 1910. To the east along the full length of the living room is the "Open Piazza" with continuous flower boxes at the perimeter. Under the "Piazza" at the southeast corner is the garage which was added in 1912.

West of the entrance hall through sliding pocket doors is the dining room which has a small fireplace centered on the west wall. A double-acting door adjacent to the fireplace leads to the china closet, kitchen, pantry, and backporch to the southwest corner. Between the kitchen and the main stair is a half bath and the back stairway which runs to the attic.

At the second floor the central hall leads to a linen closet, a bathroom, and four bedrooms located in each of the corners. The master bedroom suite at the northwest corner has its own bathroom and four closets. Adjacent to the southwest bedroom over the "Closed Piazza" is a sleeping porch that was added during the 1910 alterations or soon thereafter.

The attic, also with a central hall has two bedrooms, a bathroom, storage room and "Studio".

INTERIOR FINISHES

Except for some wallpaper and kitchen cabinetry, interior materials and finishes are original and in excellent condition. Most walls are faced with wallpaper

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over plaster on wood lath. Exterior brick walls have wood furring to receive lath and plaster. Ceilings throughout are painted plaster.

Flooring on the first floor, except in the kitchen and utility areas, is tongue and groove white oak with a 3/4" wide Honduras Mahogany border strip in each room. Finish flooring on the second floor is also oak with mahogany border strip. Attic flooring is tongue and groove fir.

Baseboards on the first and second floors are 9" high with cap and shoe moldings. Baseboard materials and finishes vary to match overall room finishes.

With some notable exceptions trim and detail work throughout are based on classical designs. Typical doors are paneled, 3x3, and have a 5" molded jamb and head casing. Window trim is similar.

Wood millwork in the vestibule and hall is painted in the original white color. Side walls above the panelled wainscot in the vestibule are finished with the original wall covering -- an embossed floral pattern in subtle blues, greens, and oranges with a faint metallic overlay.

Woodwork in the living room -- sash, casings, baseboard, built-in bookcases, ceiling beams and fireplace surround -- is varnished oak. The fireplace and hearth is of buff colored brick with the opening spanned by a flat arch. The enclosed "Covered Piazza" adjacent to the south has painted wood trim and retains the original brick columns and the red "Welch Quarry Tile" flooring.

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Honduras Mahogany decorates the dining room -- doors, windows, baseboard, ceiling beams, fireplace trim, and the panelled wainscot that extends to the door and window head trim. The frieze above has the original silk "frizze" wall covering in a pattern of exotic birds and plants. Facing on the fireplace is a Nile green ceramic tile with a cast-in raised design of cat-tail reeds. Rectangular hearth tiles are dark green.

Original finish work has been maintained in the adjacent "China Closet" including counters, cabinetwork and trim of Port Orford Cedar, and the oval metal sink and plumbing trim. The kitchen and pantry retain their original configurations, and door and window trim, but the cabinets, appliances, and floor covering are of more recent vintage.

The main stairway, three-quarter turn with corner landings, has a formed handrail, treads, and panelled newel posts of varnished oak. Turned balusters, risers, and panelled fascias are painted. A large stained glass window by the Povey Bros. adorns the south stair wall. Divided into six panels with a segmental arch head the Craftsman influence can be seen in the strong rectilinear pattern featuring abstract plant forms. Field areas are of Pilkington glass and accents are amber and white translucent glass.

Wookwork on the second floor -- doors, sash, casings, baseboard and picture mold -- is all painted. The linen closet retains the original Port Orford Cedar cabinetwork.

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The fireplace in the master bedroom has a facing and hearth of yellow ceramic tile with painted wood mantle and flanking pilasters.

All original finishes and fixtures are extant in the southeast bathroom -- tub, flush-valve toilet, pedestal sink, white hex-tile flooring and white ceramic tile wainscot set in common bond brick pattern.

All original brass hardware is intact as are the light fixtures in main rooms, including: brass chandeliers and wall sconces in the living room, entrance hall and stairway, and nickel plated sconces and chandelier in the dining room.

EXTERIOR

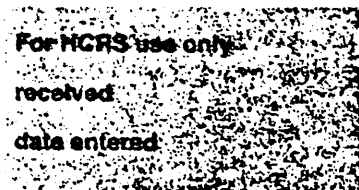
Exterior walls are of red brick up to the eave line. The unusual bricks -- 2½" x 4" x 8¼" with rounded edges -- are laid in common bond with 3/8" concave tooled joints. A plain concrete belt course identifies the first floor line. Brick quoins articulate the corners.

Porch and roof structures, sash and other trim is wood, painted in the original cream color.

Projecting eaves have exposed rafters with shaped soffits. Above, the gabled roof is surfaced with original slate shingles as are the gable ends. Shed roof dormers have slate shingled walls and 12 light casement windows that provide light to attic rooms. Brick chimneys are located at the east and west ends. The east chimney is centered on the wall and features decorations of raised brick in a diamond pattern.

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The principal facade (north) facing Lovejoy St. is symmetrical and has a central entrance. Entry approach is through a stepped brick retaining wall at the property line to concrete stairs that arrive at the entry porch. The porch displays the characteristic combination of Classical and Craftsman forms -- Tuscan columns support paired beams with formed soffits in each direction, similar formed rafters support a flat roof with a copper coping that features simplified acroterium at the center and corners. The panelled entrance door and sidelights are in a segmental arch opening as are most other openings on the ground floor. Windows flanking the entrance have a large fixed light of plate glass with a narrower transom light above. Window arches have brick keystones. Second story windows, aligned above those on the first story, are double-hung, ten lights over one.

The main part of the other street facade (east) is also symmetrical except for the chimney offset. Ground floor windows are double-hung, one light over one. Second floor windows match those on the north. Rear and side walls (south and west) are asymmetrical in composition, but have windows and other details similar to those on the principal facades.

Much of the early, if not original, landscaping is intact, including the two large maple trees flanking the entrance way, the large oak tree in the rear yard, and several rhododendrons.

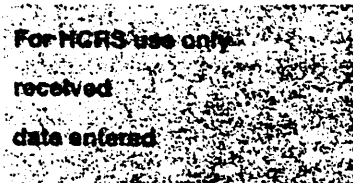
ALTERATION SUMMARY

- Enclosure of "Covered Piazza" in 1910.
- Construction of the sleeping porch above the "Covered Piazza", 1910 or soon

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ALTERATION SUMMARY continued

thereafter -- design details match original and 1910 work.

•Construction of the garage under the "Open Piazza" in 1912.

•Wallpaper changes, kitchen cabinet alterations, and a modern sink and counter in the master bathroom.

####

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1908 **Builder/Architect** Doyle & Patterson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Harmon/Neils House, designed by prominent Portland architect Albert E. Doyle embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Craftsman/Colonial Revival style that was the predominant mode of Doyle's earliest residential work. His skillful integration of the two styles became a trademark and resulted in houses that displayed the informal and practical aspects of Craftsman design along with the refined classical detailing of the Colonial Revival. In general these houses had several common characteristics: primary street facades that were symmetrical; central entry porches that combined Craftsman and Colonial Revival elements; exposed rafters and beams with shaped soffits; informal floor plans; and interior detailing that was primarily classical. During the first two years of Doyle's practice (1907-09) he designed 10 Portland houses, seven of which were done in the Craftsman/Colonial Revival style (see attached list). Of these the Harmon/Neils House is in the best state of preservation. All original exterior fabric is intact and virtually all of the original interior remains. Some changes in wallcoverings, modern kitchen cabinets and flooring, and partial modernization of one bathroom are the only alterations. (See 7. Description).

The house also achieves significance for its association with the Julius Neils family who were prominent in the regional lumber industry. The Klickitat, Washington facility of the J. Neils Lumber Company pioneered in the development of "sustained yield" operations, where cutting and milling was coordinated with

(See Continuation Sheets)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acres of nominated property .22 Acre

Quadrangle name Portland, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 1, Block 2, Nob Hill Terrace, Plat of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

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

state none code county code

state none code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George A. McMath, FAIA

organization Allen-McMath-Hawkins Architects

date August 3, 1983

street & number 213 S.W. Ash Street

telephone 503/228-5154

city or town Portland

state Oregon 97201

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Deputy SHPO

date Jan 12 '84

For NPS use only

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

Justelous Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date 2/16/84

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date

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the maturing cycles of their timber holdings.

ALBERT E. DOYLE

A.E. Doyle was born in California but moved to Portland at an early age where his father was a building contractor. Upon completion of the eighth grade in 1891 he apprenticed with Whidden & Lewis, Portland's most prominent architectural firm of the era. After 12 years Doyle went to New York where he pursued design and engineering studies at Columbia and worked in the office of Henry Bacon. In 1906 he received a travelling scholarship and spent most of the year on a "grand Tour" in Europe.

Early in 1907 after his return to Portland, Doyle opened his office with a partner, construction supervisor William B. Patterson. As with most young architects his first commissions were houses and to these he gave his close personal attention. By 1910 Doyle had several large projects underway -- the Meier & Frank Store, the Selling Building, and an addition to St. Vincent's Hospital -- and the office had become the largest and most prestigious architectural firm in the city. Clients included Portland's leading families and developers, many of whom had previously employed Whidden & Lewis. Doyle's time was mainly devoted to the major commercial and institutional projects while draftsmen in the office had increasing responsibility for residential and small commercial work. Exceptions were the beach cottages on the Oregon and Washington coast, including Doyle's own, that were personally designed by Doyle; usually for close personal friends. These simple wood vacation homes, particularly the Wentz "Studio" at Neahkahnie, became the inspiration for

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for the regional style developed by Pietro Belluschi, John Yeon and others in the mid-1930s.

James A. Beach, a structural and mechanical engineer, became a partner in 1911. The office was reorganized again in 1915 when Patterson retired and Beach moved to California. Doyle died in 1928 at age 50. In addition to the projects previously cited the Doyle office designed many of Portland's major buildings: Central Library, Benson Hotel, U.S. National Bank, Reed College, Northwest Bank Building, Pacific Building, Bank of California and the Public Service Building, Oregon's largest office building and tallest structure until the 1960s.

Following Doyle's death the firm was continued by senior staff members led by Pietro Belluschi who eventually acquired control and practiced under his own name in 1942.

HARMON FAMILY

Edward Lansing Harmon, a native of Michigan, moved to Portland in 1894 with his wife Elizabeth H. and daughter Helen, then 7 years of age. Harmon was posted to Portland by the Penn Mutual Life Insurance Co. where he became General Agent for the Pacific Northwest, a position he held until his death 28 years later.

The family lived in northeast Portland until 1908 when they occupied their new brick home on N.W. Lovejoy. Tragedy struck in March of 1922 when the entire family was stricken with "septic sore throat" an epidemic that covered a large portion

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of Portland's west hills. The deadly infection (streptococcus) was attributed to tainted milk that had been delivered by the Pleasant View Dairy. Over 200 cases and an estimated 18 deaths were recorded, including E.L. Harmon who died on March 31st at age 66, and his daughter Helen who died a week later.

The widow, Elizabeth Harmon stayed in the house until 1923 when she sold it to Julius Neils.

NEILS FAMILY

Julius Neils was born in 1855 near Treptow at Tribus, Pomerania, now a part of East Germany. In 1872, Julius, his parents and four brothers emigrated to the United States and settled in Milwaukee where they joined relatives who had arrived a few years earlier. Four years later after graduation from Teachers College in Addison, Illinois, he took a position at a parochial school in Reedsburg, Illinois. There he met Mary Geiger whom he married in 1878.

Julius continued teaching until 1881 when he joined his brother August in a hardware business located in Spencer, Wisconsin. It was here that the Neils' had their first contact with the lumber business when they took in logs as payment from farmers and became involved with milling and marketing of the lumber. A fire in 1886 destroyed most of Spencer including the Neils store, home, and some timber, so they relocated to nearby Sauk Rapids where they opened a new hardware store. A short time later Julius left to form a lumber business with a Mr. Buckman. The firm was reorganized as the J. Neils Lumber Company in 1895 and within three years they were cutting 20 million board feet a year. Another mill was opened

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in Cass Lake, Minnesota in 1898. Two years later the family, Julius, Mary and 11 children moved to Cass Lake. Two more sons were born both of whom died at an early age.

In 1906 the company acquired timber lands in Montana and in 1910 a mill was opened in Libby. At the close of WWI four sons and one son-in-law were employed in the family business.

With depletion of the timber resource in the Minnesota region many of the lumber companies looked to the Pacific Northwest to maintain their operations. The J. Neils Lumber Company was no exception and in 1922 they acquired the Western Pine Co. in Klickitat, Washington. Son Hugo became General Manager and Gerhard was Sales Manager. A year later the company headquarters was moved to Portland with Julius as President and the eldest son Paul as Vice-President. The Minnesota operations were liquidated within a few years.

Also in 1923 Julius bought the E.L. Harmon House and moved in with his wife Mary and daughters Anna and Ida. Paul bought a house for his family, also on Lovejoy Street one block to the east. Julius died in 1933 and Paul succeeded him as president of the company. The widow Mary and the two daughters continued to live in the family home.

As previously noted the Neils family were pioneers in the development of sustained yield operations. They were all too familiar with the "cut and run" experience in Minnesota that devastated the forests of that region. The Neils were determined

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to develop a more stable process that would provide continuity for future generations. One of Paul Neils' earliest projects as president of the company was to pursue the development of such a process. To that end he worked with the U.S. Forest Service and the Forestry Department of the University of Washington and in 1936 a forestry management plan was submitted to the company for their consideration. The plan which was adopted in 1939 included limitations on the volume of cutting and selective tree cutting, cutting in a checkerboard pattern to facilitate natural reseeding, and measures to protect the forests from fire, insects, and disease.

In 1957 the J. Neils Lumber Company was merged with the St. Regis Paper Co. Paul Neils became a director of the parent company. At that time the J. Neils Lumber Co. was the seventh largest lumber company in the United States with sales of \$20 million per year, one fourth from the Klickitat operation and the remainder from the Montana mills. It also was the world's largest sustained yield operation devoted exclusively to Ponderosa Pine.¹

Daughter Ida died in 1936 and her mother Mary in 1949 leaving Anna alone in the house until her death in 1980 at age 95. Anna willed the house to her brother Gerhard who in turn donated it to Concordia College. The present owner, John Wentland bought the house from the College in 1981.

1. The rankings of the J.R. Neils Lumber in the lumber industry are taken from "So This Is Klickitat", by Selma M. Neils.

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Bibliography

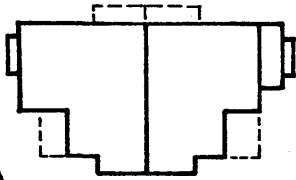
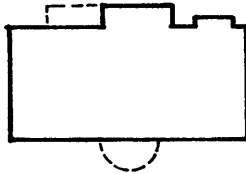
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Page 1

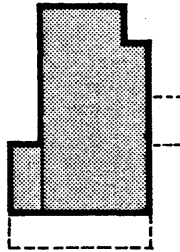
- A.E. Doyle Project Records - George A. McMath personal files
- Original blueprints in possession of present owner. (Original tracings and related documents are located in the Belluschi/Doyle Collection, George Arents Library, Syracuse University.)
- Catalog, Portland Architectural Club, 1909.
- Oregonian, April 3, 1910.
- Placzek, Adolf K., ed., Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects, New York, 1982, VI, p. 597.
- Oregonian, April 1, 1922, p. 8 (obit on Edw. L. Harmon)
- Oregonian, April 8, 1922, p. 11 (obit on Helen Harmon)
- Oregon Journal, October 1, 1927, p. 1 (obit on Eliz. H. Harmon)
- Oregonian, March 2, 1977 (obit on Paul Neils)
- Neils, Selma M., So This Is Klickitat, Portland, 1967. (Neils family and J. Neils Lumber Co.)

N. W. SUMMIT AVE.

F. E. DOOLY RES.
1909
(National Register)

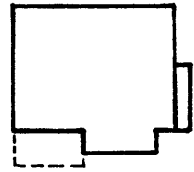
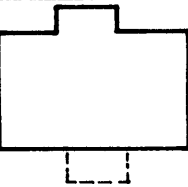


E. L. HARMON RES.
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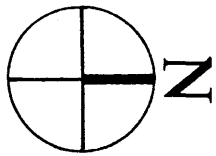
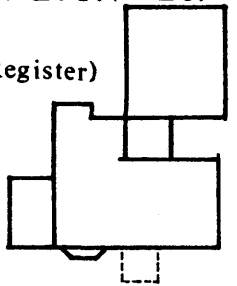


N. W. MARCIA ST.

N. W. LOVEJOY ST.



BURKE - WILSON RES.
1909
(National Register)

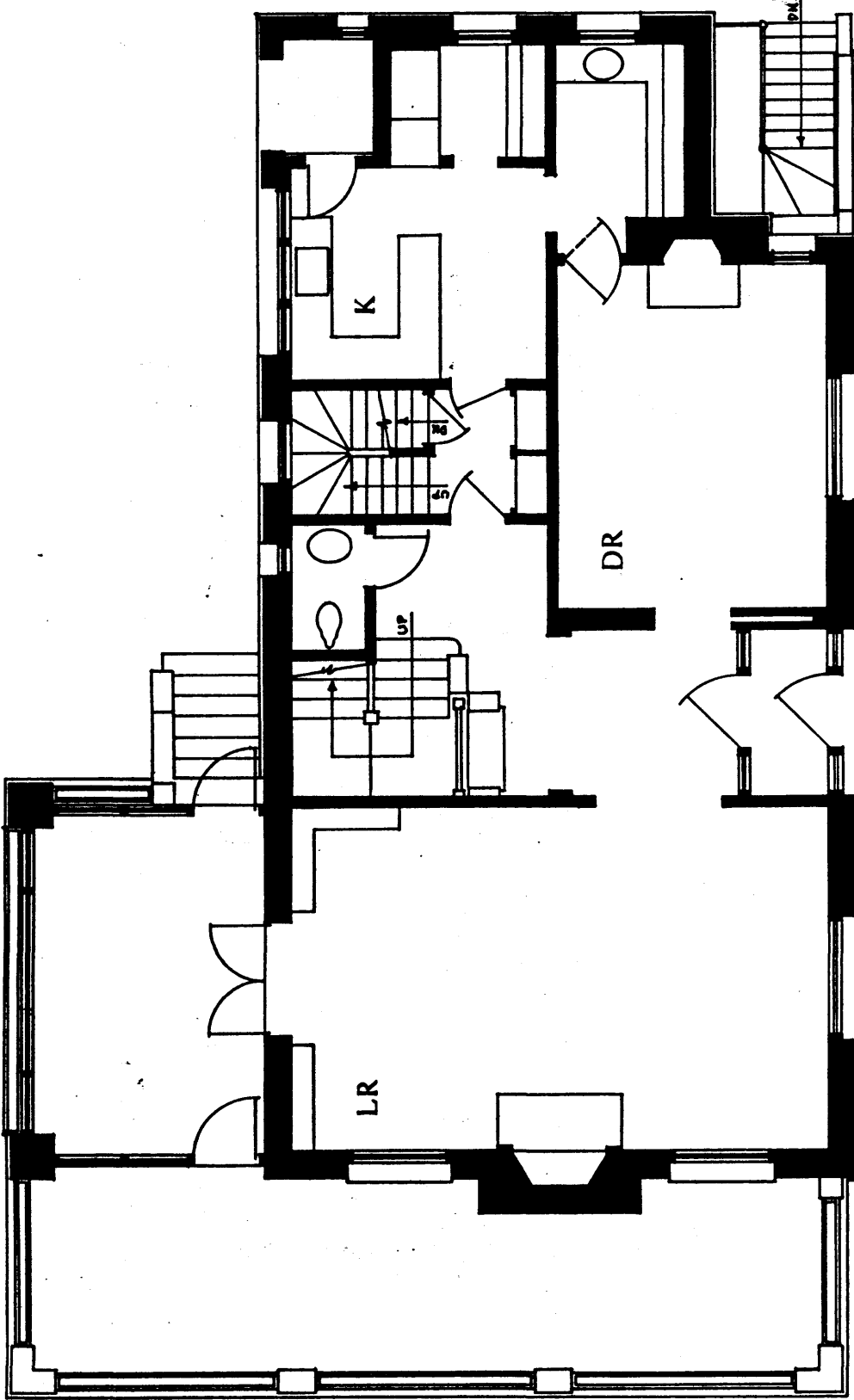


SANBORN MAP

1908 - 1926

HARMON NEILS HOUSE
2642 NW Lovejoy St.
Portland, Multnomah Co., Oregon

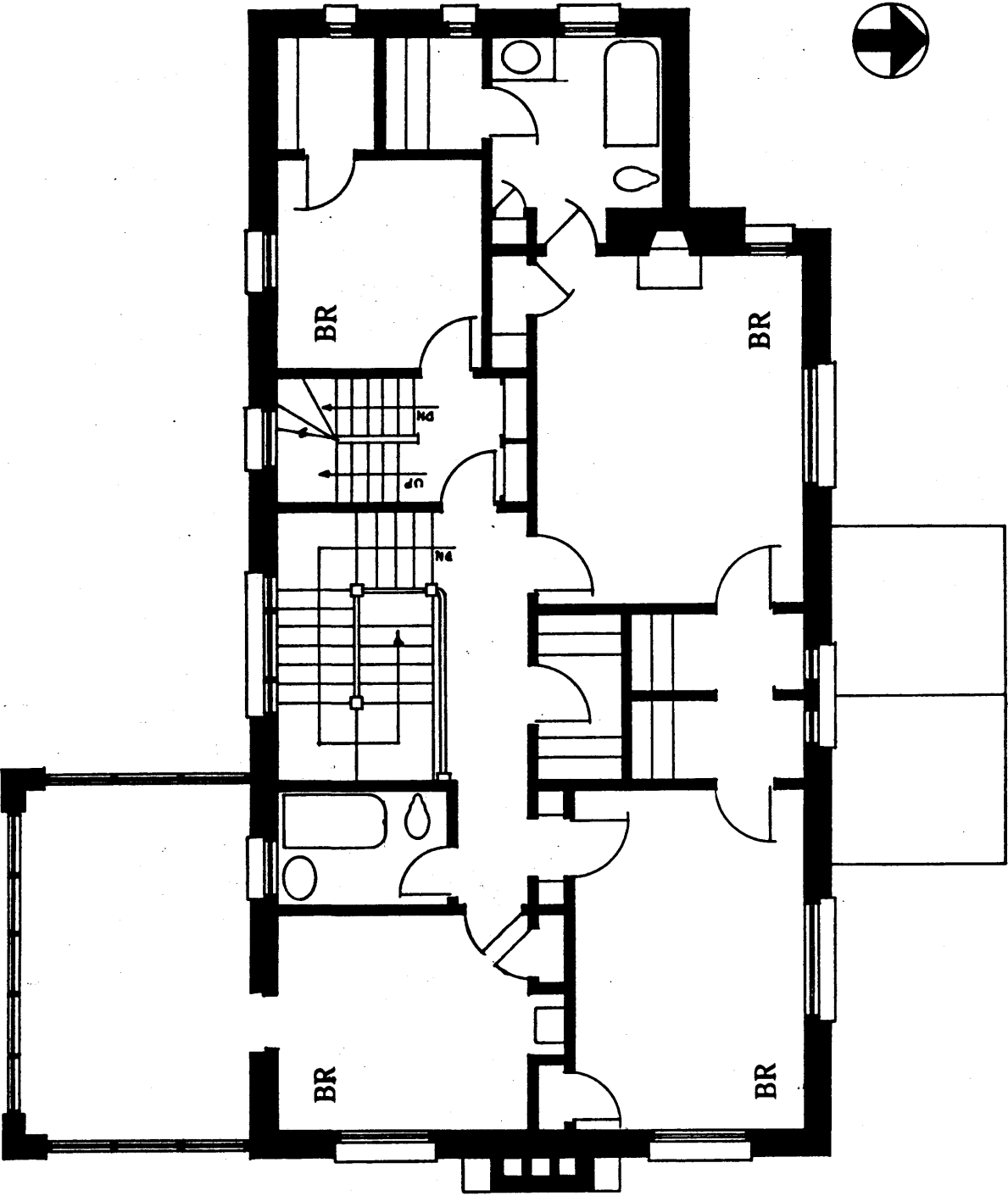
HARMON-NEILS HOUSE
2642 NW Lovejoy St.
Portland, Multnomah Co., Oregon



FIRST FLOOR PLAN



HARMON-NEILS HOUSE
2642 NW Lovejoy St.
Portland, Multnomah Co., Oregon



SECOND FLOOR PLAN