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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hard, Roswell Butler House

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 815 West First Street not for publication

city or town Antioch vicinity

state California code CA county Contra Costa code 013 zip code 94509

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Stade R. Craiger August 24, 1993
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 - determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
 - determined not eligible for the National Register.
 - removed from the National Register.
 - other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Delores Byers **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 9/30/93

Hard House
Name of Property

Contra Costa California
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| 2 | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 3 | | Total |

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

NA

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling
Social: Meeting Hall

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant: Not in Use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Politics/Government

Period of Significance

1869-1888

Significant Dates

1869

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Hard, Roswell Butler

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Hard, Roswell Butler, Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Hard House
Name of Property

Contra Costa, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | |
|---|------|-------------|---------------|
| 1 | 1 0 | 6 0 3 9 6 0 | 4 2 0 8 1 8 0 |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 4 | | | |

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Chet Michaels (with OHP revisions), Board of Directors

organization The Antioch Historical Society date March, 1993

street & number 4644 Country Hills Drive telephone (510) 779-9637

city or town Antioch state CA zip code 94509

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

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 18.1 hours per response including 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Hard House, Contra Costa Co., CA

Section 7, Description

The Roswell Butler Hard House is a large, two-story Italianate building, tee-shaped in plan, and constructed of red brick produced locally. The building, with low-pitched hip roof, is sited on an impressively landscaped lot in the town of Antioch, near the San Joaquin River. While there have been some alterations since the house was completed in 1869, overall the appearance is very close to the original.

Construction on the Hard House began in 1867. At the time it was the only dwelling made of the local hard red brick. The brick walls are load bearing. The brick itself is laid in common bond with a header course every six courses. The gray-white mortar appears to have been re-painted in the past.

The main elevation of the house features a three-bay wide main portion and a narrower two-bay wide side portion. Windows are tall, and double-hung, with two panes in the top sash and four panes in the lower. The small railings installed over the bottom half of the second story windows are original and match the ornamental iron fence and gate. The main entrance is off-center, topped with a small, modern overhang. Originally the house had an elaborate verandah supported with slender columns running across the full facade. It was removed in the 1920s. Ornament on the building is very spare, with lintels over the windows, and a bracketed wood cornice. The hipped roof is covered with diamond-shaped composition shingles. Sheet metal was used for the flashing, gutters, downspout and rainwater leaders. Two brick chimneys are found, one is in the main portion and one in the side portion.

At the rear is an addition, probably constructed in the 1920s. The addition is topped with a shed roof, surfaced with asphalt composition roll roofing. Also on the property is a cistern, dating to the early years of occupation. The cistern, which is in the back yard, provided a water source for the residents. The cistern is covered with a shallow dome of mortar. It was one of Antioch's few at that time and is now the only one known to exist.

The surrounding grounds show signs of some consideration and concern as to time and placement of the garden and flowers to benefit all the seasons. Ponderosa lemons, cedar trees, pepper

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7,8 Page 2

Hard House, Contra Costa Co., CA

trees, a century plant and a variety of evergreens and plants still exist. A botanist from the University of California, Berkeley, inspected the yard and determined that many of the plantings date to the nineteenth century.

The interior of the house appears to be historic and intact and relatively unchanged from its original condition. The interior plaster surfaces of the building are typically flat and unornamental. This is not true for the central hall and two eastern rooms on the first floor. These areas have decorative plaster ceiling cornices and decorative cast plaster ceiling medallions. The floor and window casings are heavy moldings. Simple panels are located below the side and rear windows. The front windows, which extend to the floor, have the same heavy moldings and frames and are shuttered. The original wood trim is redwood, except for the oak stairs, ornamental oak newel and balusters, and the three oak fireplaces.

The ceilings are unusually high. The walls are thick, even the interior ones. All the lighting fixtures are original and were converted from gas in the 1920s. Wallpaper appropriate to the period covers most of the walls. On one wall of the southeast second story room there is a good view of the historic wallpaper underneath.

The contributing elements on the property are the house, historic fence and cistern.

Section 8, Significance

The Hard House is one of the most historic structures in the city of Antioch, as well as one of the few remaining links to Antioch's heritage. The building was the home of the first mayor of Antioch, Roswell Butler Hard, and also the first meeting place of the Board of Trustees in 1872. Begun in 1867, the Hard House is a fine example of graceful Italianate simplicity. It was found to be National Register eligible in the city's historic resources inventory conducted in 1988.

Roswell B. Hard was one of the early pioneers in Antioch. He carved out a place in history for his contributions to the growth

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Section number 8 Page 3

Hard House, Contra Costa Co., CA

of Antioch with his civic and public life. Few elected officials have had that much responsibility in their position. Mr. Hard showed the caring, nurturing and dedication that marked his public life and growth of Antioch's early government.

Mr. Hard was born at Jericho, Vermont on August 29, 1829. He married Leonora Humphrey and they moved to California in 1852. An active Mason, Mr. Hard was a butcher and later a builder by trade, also a businessman and rancher. He was very active in the affairs of the area and was vice president of the Contra Costa Farmers' Club in 1870. He was influential in county politics and served as Contra Costa County Supervisor from 1866 to 1868. He was elected Sheriff in 1867. In 1868 the county courthouse and jail in Martinez was severely damaged by an earthquake. The County Board of Supervisors authorized Sheriff Hard to build a jail in Antioch and set aside funds for its construction. Mr. Hard appointed his brother David as Deputy Sheriff and together they built the jail. At about this same time, Sheriff Hard was building his own residence, and was also building another two story brick building as well.

By 1871 Antioch was about to become incorporated. A petition was circulated and signed by 102 voters. Mr. Hard was elected mayor by the Board of Trustees after Antioch was approved for incorporation in 1872 by the state legislature. The first and subsequent meetings of the Board of Trustees took place in the front parlor of the Hard House, around the fireplace. Although primarily used as the family residence, the house was also a constant site for meetings of the early government of Antioch and many civic, social and fraternal weekly and monthly meetings. The local chapter of the Masonic order used one of the rooms upstairs for their monthly fraternal meetings.

Mr. Hard was re-elected as mayor and served until 1874. He continued to be active in community life until his death in 1888. The period of significance for the building has been ended at that date.

In its graceful simplicity, the Hard House is a good example of Italianate architecture, and the town's only example in that style. It is also one the oldest buildings in the county.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Hard House, Contra Costa Co., CA

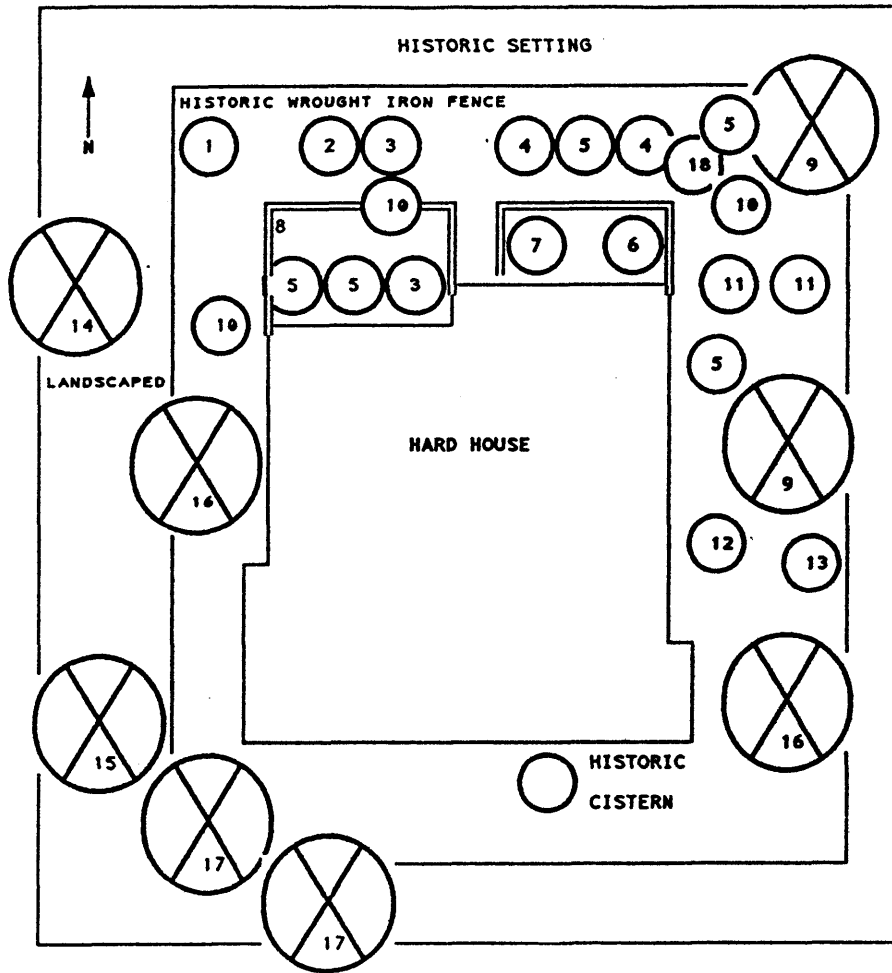
Boundary Description: Assessor's Parcel No. 066-091-007, Contra Costa County

Justification: This is all that remains of the historic property.

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National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____



Legend

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. MYRTLE | 10. EUONYMUS |
| 2. WESTERN RED CEDAR | 11. FLOWERING QUINCE |
| 3. LAUREL | 12. CAMELIA (RED) |
| 4. UNIDENTIFIED | 13. PITTOSPORUM |
| 5. UNIDENTIFIED | 14. PALM |
| 6. CAMELIA (PINK/WHITE) | 15. EUCALYPTUS |
| 7. JUNIPER (SEA GREEN) | 16. FIR |
| 8. COMMON BOXWOOD HEDGE | 17. PEPPERTREE |
| 9. CITRUS (ORANGE) | 18. WILD DWARF IRIS (BLUE) |

NOT TO SCALE

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number Photos Page _____

Hard House, Contra Costa Co., Calif.

For all photos except #5 taken by Dr. Chet Michaels
July, 1993
Negative at 4644 Country Hills Drive
Antioch, California

- #1 Facing south
- #2 Facing south
- #3 Facing east
- #4 Facing north
- #5 Historic photo, 1907-1910, facing south.