

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Date Listed** 2-28-2020  
**NRIS No.** MP100005017  
**Oregon SHPO**

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House  
other names/site number Miller, Elmer E., House  
Name of Multiple Property Listing Historic and Architectural Properties in the Eliot Neighborhood of Portland, Oregon MPD  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

## 2. Location

street & number 89 NE Thompson Street  not for publication  
city or town Portland  vicinity  
state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97212

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 at the following level(s) of significance: \_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria: \_\_\_ A \_\_\_ B X C \_\_\_ D

Christine Curran 1.16.2020  
Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register \_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**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
		site
		structure
		object
1	0	<b>Total</b>

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Materials**  
 (Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK  
 walls: WOOD  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 roof: ASPHALT  
 other: BRICK - Chimney  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

#### Summary Paragraph

The Elmer and Linnie Miller house is a 2 and 1/2 story Queen Anne style residence, located at 89 NE Thompson Street in the Eliot neighborhood of Portland, Oregon. The 1896 house occupies a footprint of approximately 3,403 square feet (not including basement or attic) on its 7,000 square foot corner lot.<sup>1</sup> The house has a brick foundation and is wood-framed. It features a steeply pitched hipped roof with multiple dormers and an exuberant corner turret, and occupies a slightly larger lot than most of its neighbors on the block. The house exhibits the character-defining features of the Queen Anne style including an asymmetrical plan with multiple bays and extensions; an octagonal turret with steeply pitched roof; tall, gabled dormers at front and sides over protruding polygonal bays; double-hung one-over-one wood windows; brick chimney with corbeled top; and an elaborately asymmetrical wrap-around porch featuring a circular end around the tower and an angled extension at the other front corner, with single and paired Doric columns on square bases. Also indicative of the Queen Anne style are a bracketed polygonal bay, paired main entrance doors with an art glass transom, and the use of drop siding and fishscale shingles at the exterior. At the interior, original features include dark-stained wood stair paneling and highly decorative spindlework stair railing, pocket and five-panel doors with ornate hardware, coved plaster ceilings, a tile-front fireplace with decorative wood surround, highly detailed door and window casings and other wood trim and built-in cabinetry. Overall, the house retains a high level of integrity. The rear of the house (north side) has been extended slightly and expanded from one story to two in several successive steps, the first of which occurred sometime before 1909. No other significant alterations have been made to the exterior of the house, and interior changes have been minimal, and so, despite these few changes, the Miller house retains its historic integrity.

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### Narrative Description

The Elmer and Linnie Miller House is a two and one-half-story house located at 89 NE Thompson Street on the NW corner of NE Thompson and Rodney Streets in Portland, Oregon. The general location is in the close-in east side of Portland in what was originally the town of Albina, now the Eliot neighborhood in northeast Portland. The specific site is a few blocks south of the NE Russell Street corridor, one of the main commercial connectors running east-west dating from its development as part of the town of Albina. The nominated property is located in the heart of the older residential area, with its primary entry facing south towards NE Thompson and its east wall fronting NE Rodney Street.

#### Setting

The house faces south, and sits about four feet above the street level, surrounded by a retaining wall, mature trees, and other landscaping. The west side of the house has an asphalt driveway extending approximately half the length of the property. The backside/north side of the house is surrounded by a wood plank deck, with a cedar fence that encloses the backyard. Like most close-in Portland neighborhoods, NE Thompson and NE Rodney Streets have sidewalks and planting strips with street trees, many of which are very mature. The thick vegetation tends to partially hide the house especially during the summer months. Adjacent buildings are single-family residences and are generally smaller or of a similar scale while representing a variety of architectural styles. The front and east side yards, along the street frontages, are landscaped with

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<sup>1</sup> Lot size from PortlandMaps database, using Multnomah County Tax Assessor information. House date from R. L. Polk & Co's *City Directory*, 1896; from Roy Roos, *The History of Albina, Including Eliot, Boise, King, Humboldt, and Piedmont Neighborhoods*. (Self-published, 2009), 190; and from City of Portland *Historic Resource Inventory* (survey project 1980-1984).

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contemporary shrubs, walking paths and trees. In c. 1981, a retaining wall faced with fieldstone was erected to curtail erosion as well as to ensure some security of the premises (see Photos 0001, 0004).<sup>2</sup>

## Exterior

The Queen Anne style of the house is reflected in its form and in a variety of decorative elements on the building's exterior. The house is a wood-framed structure with a hipped roof and sits on a tall brick foundation, with a one-story addition at north having a concrete foundation. The polygonal spire of the slightly flared turret roof at the southeast corner, combined with gabled dormers on the south (front), east, and west sides of the house, create a rich profusion of vertical, asymmetrical shapes. There is also an eyebrow dormer on the front side of the roof and a bracketed polygonal bay window under a projecting attic story. The main body of the house is clad with drop (novelty) siding, while fish-scale shingles side the gabled dormers. Windows are primarily one-over-one double hung wood. The roof of the house is finished with brown composition shingles. The front gable window is trimmed with an arched pediment, head blocks with rosettes and finials, and a scalloped apron. Similar trim can be found on a first-floor art glass window on the building's east side. The covered front porch wraps around both the west and east corners of the house, forming a semicircle around the octagonal corner tower (see photo 0001). The porch has tapered Doric columns sitting on square paneled bases the height of the railings, and at either side of the entry steps the columns are paired. These more Classically-influenced columns are a hallmark of what Virginia Savage McAlester terms the "free classic" Queen Anne style.<sup>3</sup> An eyebrow dormer is another stylistic element of the house that may be considered more classical in inspiration. As discussed in the Eliot Neighborhood MPS, Queen Anne houses that date from the late 1800s and early 1900s in the vicinity are typically not "constructed in a 'pure,' high style form," but may have a combination of stylistic influences, "differentiated by the amount and type of decorative ornament they exhibit."<sup>4</sup>

The primary south elevation has cement/brick steps leading up from the street, seven from the street up to a landing and then another seven that leads to a front porch that is recessed under the mass of the second story (see photo 0002). The porch stairs are flanked by a pair of slender Doric columns on either side. The porch floor is wood and leads to a double-leaf, half-glass front door with stained glass (doors were re-built to match the damaged historic doors that had had stained glass removed), and a stained glass transom window above. The transom features a floral motif with pastel colors and the address of the house, "89."<sup>5</sup> Aligned with the front door is an inset bay at the second floor, with small balcony reaching out about half the width of the porch roof. At the roof level is a gabled dormer finished with fishscale shingles, completing the vertical emphasis above the entry.

Turning the corner to the east side of the house, the eight-sided turret extending through the roof level sits on a 45-degree diagonal bay at the ground level. The turret has a very steep 8-sided roof with slight flare at the bottom. The porch roof, which wraps the front of the house and extends slightly into the east and west sides, becomes a circle around the turret form. Each side of the tower has a one-over-one wood double hung window (see photo 0003).

The east façade of the house, fronting NE Rodney, features a central projecting gabled roof dormer capping a projecting polygonal bay extending from basement to roof. The ground floor area between the porch and the bay is enclosed to align with the centermost projection of the bay, but at second floor it is inset allowing for the three sides of the bay to be seen. Below the bay at the foundation level is a direct entry to the basement (see photo 0005). Windows at this side are also a series of one-over-one vertically proportioned windows, taller at the ground floor. Immediately north of the projecting bay the second-floor wall insets, creating another small

<sup>2</sup> Recollections of current owner, Walter Cole/ Darcelle.

<sup>3</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013, 344-350.

<sup>4</sup> Thayer Donham, et al., F:1

<sup>5</sup> The stained glass in the front entry was custom-made for the house by Jerry Bosco and Ben Milligan, according to the current owner Walter Cole/ Darcelle.

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balcony. At the corner of the house, at ground floor, a secondary entry with inset stoop is delineated with matching Doric columns on square bases.

The north side of the house has a second level with contemporary windows as well as a one-story addition to the north (see photos 0006 and 0007).

The west side of the house is similar to the east, with a single predominant projecting bay and gabled roof dormer (see photo 0008).

A painted wood water table and cap wraps the entirety of the structure at the foundation line. The exterior of the house is covered in drop (also termed "novelty") horizontal wood siding. This same siding is very typical in the Queen Anne structures in the immediate vicinity. The trim around various features or openings is extended past the opening, creating a series of panels. Fishscale shingles are used in the gabled dormer faces.

### **Interior**

The Miller House retains the key spaces of its historic floor plan and many original finishes. It features fir floors throughout (covered with carpeting), as well as plaster walls and ceilings. Most of the doors and trim in the house feature original hardware, though most of the woodwork has been painted throughout the years. The interior of the house includes two full floors plus an attic and full basement.

On the first floor, there are eight primary rooms which include a front parlor, a piano room (labeled "parlor" on the floor plan), formal living room, bedroom (shown as library on plan, see Figure 5a), one main bath, and a kitchen. Upon entering the house, a decorative grand stair ascends to the left, and to the right is a large parlor. There is a small closet underneath the grand staircase. There are pocket doors that separate the parlor from the front vestibule as well as from the formal living room, which adjoins the parlor to the north. The decorative metal finger recesses on the sliding pocket doors are especially fine. The living room has a large fireplace at its north wall, with original green inlaid tile (see Photo 0011 as well as Figure 14). A mirror is mounted above the fireplace, all within an original decorative wood surround. Off the living room, an angled wall with a door leads to a small room currently used as an office. A hallway that leads to the back of the house and to the left of the living room is a piano/library room and north of that is the master bedroom. There are two entrances to the bedroom; one through the door from the living room; the other via the bathroom from the kitchen. The sink has its own little room right off the bedroom, and the shower and toilet share a separate room. North of the living room is the formal grand dining room that seats up to 10 people (see photo 0012). There are two built-in linen/china cupboards in this room – one is also a pass through. Two swinging doors lead to a large kitchen and pantry, and a staircase to the basement extends down to the left as well as a back (secondary) staircase to the upstairs. A washer and dryer are located next to the stair. The kitchen cupboards appear to be original. One (of two original) dumbwaiters is still intact and is accessible between the main level and the second story. The kitchen includes a large one-story volume which extends out to the north, with contemporary windows and finishes and a gas fireplace. The present owner has retained one of the original light fixtures with gas fittings (now electric) used in the kitchen pantry area.

The second floor has five bedrooms and one full bath (see Figure 5b). As you climb the grand staircase in the front of the house (see photos 0009 and 0014), there is a large landing/sitting area with a door that leads to the first of five bedrooms. There is also a door that leads out to a small balcony at the front of the house with spindle railing, facing south. The first door encountered from the hallway leads to a room with the octagonal turret in one corner. It has a small closet and is presently used as a library/study with television. Looking up into the turret, a series of matching stained-glass windows have been affixed behind (inside) the one-over-one wood windows, and the stained glass windows are larger than the openings. At the second floor level within the open turret space, the large windows have wood shutters at the interior. Moving north within the hallway, the second door to the right leads to a large bedroom which connects to the only bathroom on this floor. The bedroom has one closet. The bathroom does have its original claw-foot tub, though it is enclosed in a surround. There are two bedrooms on the west side of the hallway; one of these may have not originally used as a bedroom because one has to pass through it to reach the attic stairway. However, the rooms do appear to

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be their original sizes and configurations. The exception is the room at the north end of the hall, which at one time was likely a screened-in sleeping porch and has been enclosed to create a bedroom and sitting area.

### Unfinished Spaces

The attic is one full, undivided room that has not been updated or finished and is used for storage. It is a lath and plaster surface at the underside of the roof. It is very spacious, with the steep roof extending up to at least 12 feet tall at its peak. A stained-glass window, probably original, lets in light through the front eyebrow dormer.

The basement follows the footprint of the main house and is used for storage and for utilities as well as for sewing and costume fitting. The basement is unfinished with exposed concrete floors and exposed brick foundation walls at the perimeters. Two adjoining rooms at the south end are currently used for sewing and costume fitting and storage (see Figure 5c). At the north end is a small bathroom, likely dating from the 1950s. Access to the basement is either through the door in the kitchen and down an open stair or via the exterior access door, located on the Rodney Street side of the building, facing east. This entrance appears to have been used at one time for public access to a gambling operation. A 1959 newspaper article read, "27 slot machines were taken by police Wednesday – vice officers found the machines in the basement of the house."<sup>6</sup>

### Alterations

The earliest known alteration to the house occurred in 1900 after a rooftop fire.<sup>7</sup> It is not clear whether the roof was simply replaced, or whether any other changes occurred at this time. Later this same year, the roads and sidewalks were improved in the immediate area.<sup>8</sup>

Comparing the Sanborn map of 1901 with the Sanborn map of 1909, the rear (north side) of the house was expanded slightly to the north and a second level added above what had originally been a one-story kitchen volume (see Figures 6a and 6b).

Some of the original ornamentation on the house was removed before the late 1970s. A family photograph dating from before 1920 shows the east side of the house with a pronounced finial ornamentation atop the turret roof, and also with a gable-end ornamentation characteristic of the Queen Anne/ Eastlake style. See Figure 12. Neither of these small decorative flourishes is extant. Unfortunately, other decorative elements were removed before the 1970s as well, including all or most of the original stained glass throughout the house. (For example, see Figure 13, an undated historic entry hall photo, with stained glass in the door and in a front transom.) The existing stained glass within 89 NE Thompson was added by Walter Cole/ Darcelle in 1980 to 1982.<sup>9</sup>

The porch balustrade and railings at the ground-level wrap-around porch were replaced sometime in the period 1981 to 1991. The original, historic Doric columns on round pedestals have square bases and are relatively simple and Classically-inspired. The porch balustrade between these columns in photographs prior to 1981 is a simple "x" design, rather than the turned vertical balustrade now in place. The upper balcony balustrade matches the porch, so it may have been replaced at the same time.

The north kitchen wall was removed in the early 1980s and the room was extended, expanding to add an atrium. However, around 2014 the kitchen foundation had to be re-built due to structural problems. A portion of the kitchen foundation was wood instead of the brick as used at the rest of the house, and this caused the room to begin to detach itself from the main structure. An extension concrete foundation was installed and

<sup>6</sup> "Slots Case Arrest Made," *Oregonian*, May 8, 1959.

<sup>7</sup> "Two Small Fires," *The Morning Oregonian*, March 15, 1900, 7. "Fire in the dwelling of E.E. Miller, 321 Eugene St. The fire had a good start and was rapidly enveloping the entire roof when the fireman reached the building, but quickly extinguished by water and Babcock extinguishers (damage - \$75.00/paid for by insurance)."

<sup>8</sup> "Stops Street Work," *Oregonian*, October 31, 1900, p 1f.

<sup>9</sup> Personal recollections of the owner, Walter Cole/ Darcelle.

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approximately 300 square feet of additional space at the north was built at that time.<sup>10</sup> The washer and dryer next to the stair is the location where one dumbwaiter (of two original to the house) was removed, also in approximately 2014.

Chandeliers and wall sconces were added throughout the house in 1980 and forward. The vast majority of these were obtained from another historic house.<sup>11</sup> Both bathrooms – one on the main level and the other on the second -had new toilets installed as well as the claw foot tub in the ground floor bathroom replaced by a shower. These changes took place in the mid-1980s.<sup>12</sup>

Changes to the site over time (all from early 1980s) include the addition of the fieldstone-faced retaining wall around the property on Thompson and Rodney, and a wood deck on the north side of the property.

### **Integrity**

The Elmer and Linnie Miller house retains a high level of architectural integrity. The woodwork and window and door hardware at the interior appear to be original, and although all the floors have been covered with carpeting, it is likely they are still the original fir underneath. The biggest change to the house is that of the north end of the house. The back side of the house was slightly expanded northwards even before 1909, as well as the second-story addition over it which occurred in the same time period. The upper level sleeping porch was enclosed and the kitchen expanded and partially rebuilt in the early 1980s, and then in 2014. Despite this addition, the house retains good to excellent integrity. The kitchen addition is only one level, is set back from the street-fronting east wall of the house, and is located at the rear of the house. All of these factors reduce the alteration's impact to the historic form and fabric of the house.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> According to Walter Cole/ Darcelle, the house with the chandeliers had been owned by "Portland's millionaire madam," Gloria Lasorda, who had a house on Broadway Drive. Darcelle was able to purchase dozens of crystal chandeliers for \$1,000. Another item from that house was the wool carpet that now extends up the main stairway at 89 NE Thompson.

<sup>12</sup> Personal recollections of the owner, Walter Cole/ Darcelle.

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**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1896

**Significant Dates**

1896 – Date of Construction

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation** (if applicable)

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown

**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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The date of significance is 1896, the date construction was completed.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Elmer and Linnie Miller House is nominated under the “Historic and Architectural Properties in the Eliot Neighborhood of Portland, Oregon” Multiple Property Document (MPD).<sup>13</sup> The Elmer and Linnie Miller House meets the general and specific registration requirements of the MPD and is historically significant at the local level under Criterion C, for its Architecture, as a notable example of a Queen Anne style house constructed before 1900 and exhibiting unique and artistic architectural features. The house’s builder and/or architect are unknown, but it is clear the house was completed in 1896. Residential buildings constructed before 1900 are becoming rarer in the Eliot neighborhood, and the Elmer and Linnie Miller House is one of only a handful of similarly large, stately, Queen Anne properties that have high integrity. The house strongly reflects the adaptability that was afforded through the Queen Anne style’s picturesque asymmetry and the increasing availability of numerous building components and decorative millwork via building suppliers. The builder’s workmanship and craft to pull together these components, whether or not some of them were obtained elsewhere, illustrates high artistic values in the house’s form and its assemblage of multiple decorative features.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

The Elmer and Linnie Miller house meets all of the General Registration Requirements provided in the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form “Historic and Architectural Properties in the Eliot Neighborhood of Portland, Oregon.” The nominated property retains its significant association for its architecture, through Criterion C, as the house embodies the styles, forms, and methods of construction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Pacific Northwest.<sup>14</sup> The nominated property is a wood-framed building of two to two and one-half stories, has various roof shapes, a partial or wrapping verandah, varying windows including some with stained glass, varied wall materials, and an overall vertical emphasis. These traits all must be present for the structure to qualify under the MPD.<sup>15</sup> While the MPD allows for properties built before 1900 to have a few alterations, the Elmer and Linnie Miller House is highly intact, especially at the exterior where the only additions have been at the rear of the house and alterations have been very minor. The house has retained its original design, except for the expansion/ alteration of the kitchen and north side of the house, a new roof, replaced porch railing, and minor alterations at the interior to modernize fixtures, add light fixtures, and re-finish rooms. Despite these alterations, the integrity of the house overall is good to excellent. As described by the National Park Service, historic integrity is the composite of seven qualities; location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The Miller House retains its original location, setting, materials (with the exception of its replaced stained-glass windows), feeling, and workmanship. It resembles its historic appearance and retains its association with a larger area of development (the two cottages facing Rodney Street and the house next door on Thompson). Its design is not affected by the north-side addition to the house, since the addition is set back from the street and is one story, and the overall sense of past time and place is evident. Per the MPD requirements, the house must be within the geographic boundaries of the Eliot neighborhood, which the Miller House is and the house remains in its original location.<sup>16</sup> Lastly, the MPD defines the general period of significance as 1880 to 1947 and further refines the period of significance for eligible Queen Anne Style Residences as 1880 to 1905 and that “moreover, they should retain sufficient stylistic and structural features to evoke their period of construction.”<sup>17</sup> The date of significance for the Miller House is 1896, when the house was completed and Elmer E Miller and his wife Linnie A. (Shipley) Miller moved in, therefore placing the Miller House within the appropriate period of

<sup>13</sup> Thayer Donham, Michelle Lutino, and Liza Mickle, “Historic and Architectural Properties in the Eliot neighborhood of Portland, Oregon,” 1998, NRIS# 64500504.

<sup>14</sup> Thayer Donham, et al, F:2.

<sup>15</sup> Thayer Donham, et al, F:1.

<sup>16</sup> Thayer Donham, et al, G:1-2

<sup>17</sup> Thayer Donham, et al, E:1 and F:3.

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significance, and as demonstrated above, the house's retention of its character defining features reflective of the Queen Anne style, demonstrate the Miller House's retention of features that evoke its period of construction.

The Miller House is locally significant under Criterion C, for architecture, as an outstanding example of a Queen Anne style house remaining in the Eliot neighborhood. The builder is unknown, and possibly the design was a "pattern book" design as were many west coast homes in middle-class turn-of-the-century neighborhoods, as suggested by "Historic and Architectural Properties in the Eliot Neighborhood of Portland, Oregon."<sup>18</sup> The Queen Anne style with its extensive applied ornament allowed for an eclectic approach to home improvement and architectural ornamentation. It is also possible that the builder was a talented immigrant from Germany, Scandinavia, Russia, or Ireland, many of whom gravitated to Albina to work as ship carpenters or other construction industry.<sup>19</sup> Elmer, in his years working in the real estate industry, was probably familiar with the construction process and may have been heavily involved in the design and even the construction of his own house. The Elmer and Linnie Miller House exhibits characteristic elements of the Queen Anne style as found in Eliot. While the MPD discusses local stylistic subtypes of the Queen Anne style, including "Queen Anne/ Vernacular; Queen Anne/ Stick; Queen Anne/ Eastlake; and Queen Anne/ Shingle," the Elmer and Linnie Miller House is perhaps best described as a "high style" Queen Anne with a few classically-inspired details such as the porch columns. The Miller House exhibits high artistic values in its composition overall, especially its character-defining octagonal turret and wrapping front porch. Its craftsmanship is readily apparent as well, specifically seen at elaborate cornice details, multiple dormers, cutaway polygonal bays with decorative jigsaw trim, and at interior features such as the primary stair with turned railings and the built-in cabinetry.

### **Eliot Neighborhood**

The Miller House is located in the Eliot neighborhood, in northeast Portland, Oregon. The Eliot neighborhood, as well as the adjacent Russell Street Conservation District, encompasses much of what was the original town-site of the City of Albina.<sup>20</sup> "Of the many communities that ultimately merged to form the present City of Portland, the City of Albina occupies a distinct niche in the city's history. No other township contributed as greatly as did Albina to defining Portland's present-day boundaries. The union of the City of Albina and the City of Portland in 1891 also added to the City of Portland's sociocultural history by later fostering a diverse working class, immigrant, and minority community."<sup>21</sup>

Platted in 1872, the City of Albina grew in prominence when a twenty-two block area of downtown Portland was heavily damaged in the Fire of 1873. A large section of Portland sustained damage, including mansions, tenements, and commercial property. Many businesses were not insured, or underinsured, and the net losses exceeded \$925,000. Albina benefitted from Portland's losses in fires and several subsequent floods, leading investors to seek 'higher and safer ground' in Albina. It grew from a town of 143 persons in 1880 to one with a population of nearly 3,000 by the time of its incorporation in 1887. Few, if any, towns in the state could match the growth rate that Albina exhibited from 1880 to 1887.<sup>22</sup>

During this period, Albina was propelled largely by corporate business interests, including both rail and river transportation industries, and several large mills on the riverfront. Rapid annexations created more opportunities for land speculators, and although streetcars were laid into Albina in 1889, generally the dominant private economic interests meant that Albina did not allocate money for municipal services.

<sup>18</sup> Thayer Donham, et al. F:2.

<sup>19</sup> Roos, 26.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. G/H:3.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. E:1.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, E:2, and also Trudy Flores and Sarah Griffith, "Fire Area, 1873," *The Oregon History Project*. (The Oregon Historical Society online database, accessed at <https://oregonhistoryproject.org/articles/historical-records/fire-area-portland-1873/#.XT3i5IB7mt9>, 2002)

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Ultimately, in 1891, Albina was consolidated with Portland. The Russell street corridor became the major arterial east-west thoroughfare, connecting the river and rail yards to the west with the residential area to the east. By 1892, the area of Lower Albina included commercial and industry uses on Russell along its length but especially at the nodes around Kerby, Union, Williams, and Mississippi Avenue.<sup>23</sup> Its residential areas, by at least 1900, were primarily “[m]odest, but ornate, Queen Anne style worker’s cottages.”<sup>24</sup>

Portland experienced an explosion in growth in the period starting with the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905, and the east side of Portland in particular gained huge new areas of suburban-style development, enabled by streetcar lines stretching from the center city. Portland’s population almost doubled in the single five-year period from 1905-1910, from 110,929 to 207,214 residents.<sup>25</sup> World War I, however, “brought a new sort of ethnic intolerance.”<sup>26</sup> Not only were many of these new suburban developments built with deed restrictions specifically excluding people of color, but a general suspicion against many immigrants and non-white people took hold.<sup>27</sup> In a practice known as red-lining, bankers and realtors by the late 1910s were commonly shunting families of color away from most areas of Portland, with the exception of the inner east side and Albina, and the crowded “Old Town” area of NW Portland. “By the end of the 1930s, more than half of the City’s 2000 African Americans lived in Albina, where inexpensive older housing allowed widespread home ownership among stable working-class families and a few business and professional families.”<sup>28</sup> Yet, despite the perception of the time that Albina was a “black neighborhood,” the 1940 U. S. census showed that whites still made up 93% of Albina’s population.<sup>29</sup> World War II brought many new African Americans to Portland, most fleeing the Jim Crow south in search of better opportunities. Albina could not contain all of the newcomers, and although white flight to the suburbs freed up some housing, the situation by 1960 in Albina was overcrowded with people who had little money and little opportunity to move.<sup>30</sup>

Elected officials in Portland then embarked on a “solution” which was multiple redevelopment and clearance projects. The first of these was the Memorial Coliseum and its surrounding parking lots, which were developed in southern Albina in the late 1950s. “More than 450 homes and dozens of businesses were razed [for the project]... in large part because the residents were primarily African-American.”<sup>31</sup> Second was the development of Interstate 5 in 1964, demolishing over 300 homes along what had been Minnesota Street and creating a massive freeway through the neighborhood. The Emanuel Hospital Renewal Project, initiated in 1967, destroyed much of central Albina, “by razing the buildings along Russell Street between Vancouver and Williams that represented the early development of Albina.”<sup>32</sup> The Eliot neighborhood has experienced both revitalization and gentrification in the most recent decades.

### **Development of the House and Associated Miller Family Property**

Lots 14 and 15, Block 24, were purchased by Linnie A. Miller from H. E. Pattee for \$2,050 on September 13, 1889.<sup>33</sup> By the spring of 1890, the extended Miller family had acquired a large 150’ by 125’ property at the northwest corner of Rodney and Eugene Streets in Albina, and by 1901 there were four separate residences on the property. The addresses of the houses were 491 and 493 Rodney Avenue (later 2225 and 2223

<sup>23</sup> Thayer Donham, et al. E:4-E:5.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. E:7.

<sup>25</sup> Karen Zisman et al, *Portland Oregon’s Eastside Historic and Architectural Resources, 1850-1938* (United States Department of the Interior, 1988, as amended 2012, edited by Timothy Askin and Ernestina Fuenmayor), E:10.

<sup>26</sup> Cathy Galbraith, Darrell Millnew, and Carl Abbott, “Cornerstones of Community: Buildings of Portland’s African American History.” (Bosco-Milligan Foundation, 1995), 23.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, 23-24.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 24.

<sup>29</sup> Thayer Donham, et al. E:8.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, E:8-E:9.

<sup>31</sup> Kristen Minor, *Memorial Coliseum*, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, United States Department of the Interior, 2009, 8:5.

<sup>32</sup> Thayer Donham et al, E:9.

<sup>33</sup> Multnomah County deeds 288/ 170 and 278/ 138.

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Rodney, respectively) on Lot 16, Block 24; and 321 and 317 Eugene Street (later 89 and 77 NE Thompson, respectively) on Lots 14 and 15, Block 24.

In 1890, Elmer E. Miller and Linnie A. Miller moved into a new house in Albina at 456 Rodney Avenue (later 2122 NE Rodney), south of the Miller property and across the street to the east. This Queen Anne cottage later earned significance in African-American history in Portland for being the home of Benjamin and Annie Robinson in the 1910s and 1920s.<sup>34</sup> In the same year, Elmer's brother and law partner Charles W. Miller moved into the house next door to the north at 458 Rodney Ave (later 2134 NE Rodney).<sup>35</sup> By 1892, a house at 317 Eugene Street (later 77 NE Thompson) on the larger property was built for the Miller's parents, Dewit C. and Sarah E. Miller.

The subject house, at 321 Eugene Street (now 89 NE Thompson), was completed by 1896, as were the two "small decorative Queen Anne cottages... built behind it that also faced Rodney."<sup>36</sup> Reportedly, the cottages were initially for orchard workers who worked the 20-acre fruit orchard that was on the property.<sup>37</sup> The cottage at 2225 NE Rodney remains in association with the ownership of 89 NE Thompson, the Elmer and Linnie Miller House.<sup>38</sup> The cottage at 2223 NE Rodney is also in association with 89 NE Thompson, though it is not clear whether 2225 NE Rodney was always maintained as a property in ownership with 89 NE Thompson.<sup>39</sup> All four houses, developed between 1892 and 1896 on Block 24 in Albina township, remain in their original configuration and three of the four houses remain associated together, though no longer with the Miller family. Addresses for all of the properties in Albina referred to above had shifted to their modern (current) street names and numbers by 1940; this document will refer to them using their current addresses from this point forward.

Even in the years following the 1893 Bank Panic, the population of the City of Albina increased at a steady pace; landowners like the Millers built cottages for new immigrants knowing that there was a strong demand for housing.<sup>40</sup> As early as 1899, the Millers were advertising in the newspaper with rooms to let.<sup>41</sup> They did, by this time, have at least six houses in the immediate vicinity and it is not clear which rooms or houses were being rented. There was a demand for places to live for various workers who wanted to live near their jobs in Albina, both due to an influx of immigrants from Europe who worked at the Union Pacific Railroad terminal or on the docks, and also due to the numbers of African Americans who rented homes or apartments on the east side of the Willamette River.

### Owner History

#### **Elmer Ellsworth Miller and Celinda Shipley Miller**

The first owners and residents of the house were Elmer Ellsworth Miller and his wife Celinda "Linnie" Miller (see Figure 8 for undated photographs). Elmer was born in Carthage, Illinois in 1861. By the time of the 1880 census when he was 19 years old, Elmer resided in Washington County, Oregon on a farm with his parents Dewit C. Miller and Sarah Miller, his older brother Charles, and a younger sister Mary.

Elmer E. Miller received his law degree from the University of Oregon in 1890.<sup>42</sup> Prior to his law degree, Miller worked in real estate for a time, according to the City Directory of 1889.<sup>43</sup> Charles Miller, Elmer's brother,

<sup>34</sup> Roos, 153.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Roos, 190. Elmer Miller's parents owned Lot 16, the location of the two cottages, at least initially; in 1890, Lot 16 of Block 24 was sold to Dewit C. Miller for \$1,150. (Multnomah County deed 278/ 138).

<sup>37</sup> HPLO "Victorian Home Tour: 1991 Lecture Series," brochure, 1991.

<sup>38</sup> Currently, 2225 NE Rodney is owned by Walter Cole, who resides at 89 NE Thompson. A 1936 plumbing permit for 2225 shows the owner at that time as "Miller Estate".

<sup>39</sup> 2223 NE Rodney is also currently owned by Walter Cole, residing at 89 NE Thompson.

<sup>40</sup> Roos, 27.

<sup>41</sup> "For Rent – 6 room cottage – full lot, Inquire 321 Eugene St corner Rodney Ave." *The Oregonian* February 10, 1899

<sup>42</sup> LL. B. *General Register of the Officers and Alumni 1873-1907*, University of Oregon, March 1908

<sup>43</sup> Polk 1889.

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received a law degree from the University of Michigan, and the brothers set up a firm "Miller & Miller" in Portland circa 1887. The firm first practiced law out of an office at 167 1<sup>st</sup>, later moving to 612 Commercial Block due to the flood of 1894.<sup>44</sup>

Celinda Addie "Linnie" Shipley was born in 1865, one of 6 surviving children to Adam Randolph Shipley and Celinda Shipley. Adam Shipley was a pioneer, an early merchant in Portland as well as Portland's U. S. Postmaster starting in 1854, and a well-known horticulturalist in the Hazelia (Lake Oswego, Oregon) area.<sup>45</sup> In 1885 Elmer Ellsworth Miller and Linnie A. (Shipley) Miller were married.

Linnie died at the young age of 38 on June 15, 1902. This was apparently from complications from childbirth, as she died four days after the birth of a boy. The Health Officer listed the cause of death as heart failure and anemia. A newspaper report on Linnie's will indicated that the family held quite a bit of property, and that the property was held in Linnie's name. Linnie was the owner of the house and property at the corner of Eugene Street (later Thompson) and Rodney, but also owned a number of other properties in Albina and elsewhere. This was not unusual for *fin-de-siècle* Portland.<sup>46</sup> Other properties in Linnie's ownership included "2 ¼ lots in Albina Homestead, an undivided one-half interest of five acres of land on the Peninsula, and 50 acres of land in Clackamas County." She stipulated in her will that prior to any second marriage her husband he must set aside an amount of property for the exclusive use of their children "as he should conscientiously deem right."<sup>47</sup> Despite the property the Miller family owned, the family appeared to struggle after Linnie's death. Elmer and Linnie may have already financially needed to take in boarders for some extra money, since an ad appeared within days of his wife's death offering furnished rooms in Elmer's home.<sup>48</sup> The family may also have been demoralized with a number of deaths, starting with Linnie's in 1902, and only a few years later Elmer and Linnie's only son Lynn.<sup>49</sup> In 1904, Elmer's father Dewitt C. Miller also died. By the time of the 1910 census, Elmer's mother Sarah had moved in to the house at 89 NE Thompson with Elmer, along with Elmer and Linnie's daughters Ermel and Cecil, assumed relatives Jamie and Maude Miller, and five other lodgers.

In November 1912, Oregon Voters approved suffrage; Sarah E. Miller in May 1913 charmed the press by registering to vote for the first time at age 84. The article noted that she "has been in Oregon for 42 years. Although she is 84-years-old, she came to the registration office unaccompanied. She seemed to be well acquainted with the matters pertaining to politics. She registered as a Republican."<sup>50</sup> Sarah, the pioneering mother of Elmer E. Miller, died in 1919 after a fall at the house at 89 NE Thompson.<sup>51</sup>

### **Elmer Miller and Belle Miller**

Elmer E. Miller, even with three daughters and an infant son after the death of his first wife, did not remarry immediately. Seventeen years after his first wife's death he married Belle Murray on October 18, 1919, in San Francisco.<sup>52</sup> In 1913, a newspaper reference to Mrs. E. E. Miller residing at 89 NE Thompson "sojourning at

<sup>44</sup> Polk 1888.

<sup>45</sup> Sally Donovan and Kim Lakin. *Shipley-Cook Farmstead*. (National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, United States Department of the Interior, 2007), 8:3-8:6 and "Death of an Old Pioneer," *The Oregonian*, July 15, 1893, p 6.

<sup>46</sup> Timothy Askin and Ernestina Fuenmayor, "North Buckman Historic District," Washington, DC: Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places Determination of Eligibility, 26.

<sup>47</sup> "In Her Husband's Hands: Will of Mrs. Linnie Miller Leaves Everything to the Widower," *The Oregonian* February 7, 1903, 12.

<sup>48</sup> *Oregonian* June 29, 1902, 14.

<sup>49</sup> Email correspondence between the current owner and resident of the house and Janice Beyer-Erickson, granddaughter of Cecil Miller Ellenwood (who grew up in the house). Janice Beyer-Erickson relayed a story that Lynn Miller died of diphtheria when he was only about two. Later, in 1918, Ermel Miller (who had married Glenn L. Briedwell, a young merchant) died leaving behind her two-year-old son. *The Oregonian* December 27, 1918, 2.

<sup>50</sup> "Four More Days in Which to Register" *The Oregon Daily Journal*, May 14, 1913, 7.

<sup>51</sup> "Sarah E. Miller Dies," *The Oregonian*, November 27, 1919, 7.

<sup>52</sup> Biography information from Janice Beyer-Erickson, great-granddaughter of Elmer and Linnie Miller. Also, Belle (Murray) Miller was born 1888 according to the 1930 U.S. Census, and her age at first marriage is noted as 30, so 1918-1919 would be their marriage date.

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Seaside" with her daughters may indicate that Belle and Elmer were a couple by that time.<sup>53</sup> (See Figure 9 for a photograph of Elmer, Belle, and Elmer's daughter Cecil.)

In the years after Elmer's first wife's death and before the dissolution of the brothers' law firm Miller & Miller, the firm would be involved in the formation of the Mount Hood Railway and Power Company. Charles Miller, the other half of the firm, was the official organizer of the company. Most likely, Charles would have had little to do with operations, but may have been retained as legal counsel to the new firm.<sup>54</sup> The Mount Hood Railway and Power Company was an early contemporary of Portland General Electric. In 1906 the company was an early developer of hydroelectric power and was invested in trolley lines. The company built the Bull Run Hydroelectric Project; the powerhouse opened in 1912. In retirement, Charles Miller was connected with the Broadway Improvement Company.<sup>55</sup> Miller & Miller closed in 1907 when Charles retired; Elmer Miller continued in private practice.<sup>56</sup>

Elmer E. Miller remained in the 89 NE Thompson home until his death in 1931 at the age of seventy. In addition to his career as a lawyer, Elmer was an active member of many fraternal and social organizations. He was a member of Brotherhood of American Yeomen, Woodmen of the World, Secretary-Treasurer of The International Anti-Cigarette League, and a partner in the Wapinitia Irrigation Company.<sup>57</sup> He was survived by his second wife Belle. After Elmer's death, and perhaps before that time as well, Belle worked as a clerk at the State Auto License Department.<sup>58</sup> She also operated the family home as a boarding house until the 1940s.<sup>59</sup> She died on July 18, 1951 in Los Angeles.<sup>60</sup> Belle and Elmer are buried at Riverview Cemetery in Portland.

#### **House Ownership After the Miller Family**

In the period 1952 to 1978, there were several owners and, according to Portland City Directories, many people resided at the address at 89 NE Thompson. Newspaper articles mentioning the house address from this period of time were often related to the arrest of a person living at the address, often for theft, gambling, or other petty crime. Lee A. and Willie L. Bell owned and lived in the house from 1952 to at least 1956.

A newspaper article stated that the house had a 'racy' past, and it was once known as the house for "soiled doves" (house of prostitution).<sup>61</sup> There is no documentation to prove/disprove this.<sup>62</sup> In 1959, the house was again sold to new owners Walter & Geneva Langdon.<sup>63</sup> Finally, in the late 1960s to early 1970s the house was sold to Sjef Wildschut, a Portland-area photographer. Reportedly, Sjef had worked as a photographer for Janzen Sportswear and purchased the house to use the main floor as a studio.<sup>64</sup>

#### **Walter Cole (Present Owner)**

Walter Cole purchased the house, along with its neighboring and associated Queen Anne cottages on NE Rodney, in 1978. Walter Cole was born in Linnton, Oregon in 1930.<sup>65</sup> As a female impersonator and

<sup>53</sup> "Launch Trip Given for Younger Set," *The Oregonian*, July 29, 1913, 8.

<sup>54</sup> "Charles W. Miller" *The Oregon Daily Journal*. November 15 1915, 1.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>56</sup> *History of the Bench and Bar of Oregon*. Historical Publishing Company, 1910.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*; also LL. B. *General Register of the Officers and Alumni 1873-1907* (U.of Oregon, March 1908); also "A New Homestead," *The Oregon Daily Journal*. July 29, 1902,5.

<sup>58</sup> R.L. Polk & Co's *City Directory*, 1939.

<sup>59</sup> Roos, Roy. *The History of Albina, Including Eliot, Boise, King, Humboldt, and Piedmont Neighborhoods*. (Self-published, 2009),190.

<sup>60</sup> River View Cemetery records

<sup>61</sup> Barbara Jordan, "Exhibit preserves fast-receding era, *The Oregonian*, September 8, 1980, C1.

<sup>62</sup> HPLO "Victorian Home Tour" brochure, 1991, also stated that the house had been known as the House of the Soiled Doves until it was shut down by Mayor Dorothy McCollough Lee. It is not clear where this information was derived.

<sup>63</sup> "Slots Case Arrest Made," *The Oregonian*, May 8, 1959, 18.

<sup>64</sup> HPLO "Victorian Home Tour" brochure, 1991. Also, Multnomah County warranty deed 1244/ 1470, Wildschut to Cole, 1978.

<sup>65</sup> Walter Cole and Sharon Knorr. *Just Call Me Darcelle*, 2010.

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performer, Water Cole's alter ego Darcelle has become a national icon of the Gay Civil Rights Movement. A successful business operator and entertainer, Walter is "the proprietor of the longest-running drag cabaret on the West Coast".<sup>66</sup> His club Darcelle XV Showplace is the country's oldest continuous female impersonation review, and is considered one of the most historic places significant to queer history.<sup>67</sup> In the Portland area, many of the early leading historic preservationists in the 1970s and 1980s such as Eric Ladd, Jerry Bosco, and Ben Milligan were "out" gay men who dedicated energy and funds towards purchasing and renovating older, often highly ornamental, houses.<sup>68</sup> In this vein, Walter Cole/ Darcelle refurbished the interior of the Queen Anne style Elmer and Linnie Miller House. Stained glass and lighting fixtures were added, and other minor changes to modernize bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry facilities.<sup>69</sup>

Walter Cole/ Darcelle has held numerous events at the 89 NE Thompson house, including political activism and gay rights events. One such event, held on July 10, 1983, held by the Right to Privacy PAC, featured Christine Jorgensen, the first person known in the U.S. for having had gender reassignment surgery.<sup>70</sup> The Elmer and Linnie Miller House was also featured prominently in several newspapers and brochures during the 1980s, often as part of local tours of houses by preservation groups.

### The Queen Anne Style

The Elmer E. Miller House is a Queen Anne style design. Indicative of late-nineteenth century architecture, the Queen Anne style was dominant from 1880-1900, and was popularized in America through features in popular architectural, trade, and style magazines, as well as a through a host of pattern books. With ornate details and illustrated designs, the drawings in these publications captured the public's enthusiasm and the style's popularity grew. The availability of ready-made plans and the expanding transportation options for sending architectural elements across the country, meant that builders and contractors could build a house without the need for an architect.<sup>71</sup>

Features representative of the Queen Anne style generally include complex rooflines, towers or turrets, mixed types of wood surfaces or finishes, intricate ornamentation, and an asymmetrical facade with a partial or full width porch. The earliest American examples often featured half-timbered designs within the gables and groupings of three or more windows. By the 1880s, Queen Anne houses embraced Victorian-era detailing, such as turned posts and spindlework. As the end of the century neared, many Queen Anne house designs began to tone down the spindlework detailing and shift towards more classically-derived details, such as full columns or porch-support columns grouped together in units of two or three. Finally, by 1910, the style's popularity waned as early-twentieth century movements, such as the Craftsman style, which emphasized horizontality over height and relative simplicity over ornamentation, grew in popularity.<sup>72</sup>

### Comparative Analysis

There are few surviving houses built before 1900 in the Eliot Neighborhood that demonstrate the style, size, integrity, and quality that is represented in the Elmer and Linnie Miller house. The house is listed on the

<sup>66</sup> Valerie Brown, "Walter Cole/Darcelle," listing in *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed online at [https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/cole\\_walter\\_darcelle/#.XRldj6ZORs](https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/cole_walter_darcelle/#.XRldj6ZORs) (Oregon Historical Society, listing updated October 3, 2019).

<sup>67</sup> Jordan Gass-Poore. "On the 50th Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots, Here Are 10 Other Places Gay Americans Broke the Mold" *Mother Jones*, June 2019.

<sup>68</sup> Personal recollections of Walter Cole/Darcelle, but also see Richard Engeman, "Bosco-Milligan Foundation," listing in the online resource *The Oregon Encyclopedia*, accessed at <https://oregonencyclopedia.org/articles/bosco-milligan-foundation/#.Xbx3GNVIA2w> (Oregon Historical Society, listing updated January 24, 2019).

<sup>69</sup> Sonja Johnston, "Re-creating a Period," *The Oregonian*, January 12, 1986. A two-page spread discussed the 18-room house citing its 32 crystal chandeliers from the Goldie Lasorda Estate, among other features.

<sup>70</sup> Invitation flyer from the personal collection of Walter Cole/ Darcelle

<sup>71</sup> Virginia Savage McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 2013. 350.

<sup>72</sup> McAlester, 346 and 370.

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Historic Resource Inventory of Portland, Oregon as a "Rank II" historic resource. It is also Contributing to the Eliot Conservation District.<sup>73</sup> From its completion in 1896 to the present day, this home has stood on the corner of NE Thompson and Rodney and has been one of the strongest examples of "high style" Queen Anne architecture in the neighborhood. It reflects the slightly later shift in Queen Anne detailing that occurred close to 1900, without elaborate turned or jigsaw detailing and with a few more Classically-inspired details.

There are only nine remaining houses that were built before 1900 that are listed either on the Historic Resources Inventory or that are individually listed in the Eliot Conservation District. This number includes the Miller House. Large areas of what was once Albina were cleared in past redevelopment projects, including the Veteran's Memorial Coliseum, Interstate 5, and the Legacy Emanuel Hospital. Despite these losses, there are still a number of resources considered contributing to the Conservation District that were constructed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Houses numbered (1) through (8) below are shown for comparison; see Figure 17.

(1) The Lewis and Elizabeth Van Vleet House (1894), located at 202 NE Graham Street is listed on the National Register. In the Van Vleet nomination, the Elmer and Linnie Miller House at 89 NE Thompson is compared to the Van Vleet House as being more "high-style" Queen Anne than any of the other houses cited as examples in the nomination, and comparative in scale and detailing, but lacking the decorative spindle-work of the Van Vleet House.<sup>74</sup> While this is true, the Van Vleet House is a mid-block property and does not have the distinctive corner tower with its vertical emphasis and presence that the Miller House exhibits.

(2) The H.C. Keck House (1898), at 53 NE Thompson Street, is also listed individually on the National Register under NR Criteria A and B (rather than for its architecture). Comparatively, it has some of the Miller House attributes, but it has been moved to its current location from another site in the Eliot neighborhood. The Keck House exhibits a front polygonal bay which supports a steeply pitched gable at the front of the house. Architecturally, the Miller House is comparatively larger and statelier.

Also, on the same block as the Miller house or directly across the street, there are others in proximity built before 1900, almost all of which are considered Queen Anne cottages at one or one and a half stories. While not comparable to the Miller House in scale, these include:

- The house built for Dewitt and Sarah Miller next door at 77 NE Thompson (1892). The house is only 1.5 stories, so significantly smaller in size, but it does possess numerous Queen Anne details such as a polygonal bay at the front, a bracketed gabled dormer at front with fishscale shingles and sunburst detailing, and other details. Windows and a dormer appear to have been altered.
- 76 NE Thompson, across the street (1898) is a fine example of the Queen Anne style. Like 77 NE Thompson, it is more modest in size than the Miller House, and has been altered at the front with a garage tucked under the ground level.
- There are two notable pairs of Queen Anne style cottages on the block with excellent integrity. One pair at 45 and 47 NE Thompson was built in 1891 by a Swedish carpenter, Nels Johnson.
- The other pair, at 61 and 63 NE Thompson, was built in 1891 by Robert H. Moore.<sup>75</sup>

Two other modestly-scaled cottages were mentioned as comparative resources in the Van Vleet House nomination. These Queen Anne vernacular cottages are located at 2145 NE Rodney (1898) and 22 NE Graham (1892).

<sup>73</sup> Eliot Conservation District is shown on PortlandMaps database, stretching from approximately Fremont Street at the north to Hancock Street at the south, and from NE 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the east to N. Williams on the west. The map is accessed at <https://pdx.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=9b7e5b99790d44608d440f6bce15451f>

<sup>74</sup> Cathy Galbraith and Valerie Campbell, *Lewis and Elizabeth Van Vleet House*. National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, United States Department of the Interior, 2001, 10.

<sup>75</sup> Roy E. Roos, *H. C. Keck House/ Mt. Olivet Parsonage*, National Register of Historic Places Registration Form, United States Department of the Interior, 2002, 7:2.

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(3) The Patrick J Bannon House (1899) at 27 NE Thompson seems to have some similar attributes of the Miller house, such as a polygonal turret, and is listed as a "Rank III" resource on the HRI. However, this house has been modified (re-sided in asphalt shingles) on the exterior, and its tower form is chunkier and less elegant than the "high Victorian," spire-like form of the tower at the Miller House.

(4) The Mayo Cottage (1895) is listed on the Historic Resource Inventory as a Rank III resource. It was at 206 NE Sacramento but has recently moved to 236 NE Sacramento. Though a lovely example of Queen Anne style architecture, the house is significantly smaller than the Miller house, and has now lost some integrity of location (it has been moved twice in its history) despite being still in the Eliot neighborhood. A more altered "twin" of this house stands at 205 NE Thompson.

(5) The George E Scoffins House (1880) at 212 NE Sacramento is a duplex, and although large in scale, it is more Queen Anne vernacular in style. It is also listed on the Historic Resource Inventory as a Rank III resource.

(6 and 7) Both the Frederick Armbruster Cottage (1898) at 502 NE Tillamook and a House (1898) at 622 NE Tillamook Street are single storied homes with dormers. The Frederick Armbruster Cottage is listed individually on the NR, while the house at 622 NE Tillamook is listed on the HRI as a Rank II resource. 622 NE Tillamook has some unique and very lovely architectural detailing on the front gable end.

Lastly, (8) the Simon Abraham Duplex (1890) located at 522-530 NE San Rafael Street is a single level duplex and does not compare to the architectural styling or detail of the Elmer and Linnie Miller House. It is listed individually on the NR.

## Conclusion

As shown by comparisons with other Eliot neighborhood residential properties built before 1900, the Elmer and Linnie Miller house is a highly intact, visually striking example of the Queen Anne style used in the Eliot neighborhood at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The property is significant under Criterion C, for its architecture, "for (it) embod(ies) the style, form, and method of construction of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the Pacific Northwest."<sup>76</sup> It should be noted that this particular house is one of only a few that were saved during various redevelopment projects in the area such as the Emanuel Hospital Renewal Project.

The losses of historic buildings across the United States ultimately led to the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, but as noted in the MPS, the Albina neighborhood "remains an area threatened by development incompatible with its historic environment."<sup>77</sup>

The Eliot Historic Conservation District was created to preserve such structures as the Elmer and Linnie Miller House. The house will continue to remind us of the area's rich historical significance that includes the development of the City of Albina, to the incorporation into the City of Portland as well as the area's vibrant immigrant population.

<sup>76</sup> Thayer Donham, et al. F:2.

<sup>77</sup> Thayer Donham, et al. E:11.

Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House

Name of Property

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House  
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"Wanted-Girl" September 28, 1901, 9.

"Died" June 16, 1902, 8.

"Births" June 17, 1902, 13.

"Funeral Notice" June 17, 1902, 8.

"Choice Furnished Rooms" June 29, 1902, 14.

"In Her Husband's Hands" February 7, 1903

"Four More Days in Which to Register" *The Oregon Daily Journal*, May 14, 1913, 7.

"Mrs. E.E. Miller" July 29, 1913, 8.

"Death of D.C. Miller" 5-11-1904 (no page number)

"Chi Omega" November 12, 1915, 12.

"Charles W. Miller, Organizer of Mount Hood Railway, Dead," *The Oregon Journal*, November 15, 1915, 1.

"Elizabeth Blount" August 6, 1918, 16.

"Miller" Funeral Notice June 3, 1931, 9.

"Elmer E. Miller Heart Attack Fatal" August 2, 1931, 16.

"\$15-Well Furnished" October 18, 1931, 35.

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Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House  
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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House  
Name of Property

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than one

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: N/A

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>45.539215°</u>	<u>-122.664387°</u>	3	<u></u>	<u></u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	<u></u>	<u></u>	4	<u></u>	<u></u>
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The entirety of the current lot, 70' by 100', is the extent of the nominated property. The property is legally described as Block 24, East 75' of Lot 14 and 15, Albina, "EXC PT IN ST" (meaning that 5' of the original property frontage along Rodney Street was taken for widening of the right-of-way prior to 1957).

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The original Miller family ownership was lots 14, 15, and 16 of Block 24, Albina. By 1901, the two cottages fronting Rodney were on their own lot (though still in Miller family ownership) as shown on the Sanborn map, 1901 (Figure 6a). The two houses fronting Thompson street were not divided into separate lots until 1957 (see Figure 7). Only the immediate parcel surrounding the house at 89 NE Thompson is being nominated as the property that is still directly associated with the Elmer and Linnie Miller House.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Don Horn, Kristen Minor, Tanya March, and Val C. Ballestrem date Aug 12, 2019  
organization  telephone 503-239-5919  
street & number 89 NE Thompson email don@trianglepro.org  
city or town Portland state OR zip code

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Regional Location Map**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Miller, Elmer and Linnie, House  
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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

**Photo Log**

**Name of Property:** Elmer and Linnie Miller House

**City or Vicinity:** Portland

**County:** Multnomah County **State:** Oregon

**Photographer:** Kristen Minor (unless otherwise noted)

**Date Photographed:** August 7, 2019 (unless otherwise noted)

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0001  
Looking northwest at house  
Photographer: Dan Haneckow, Date: February 6, 2012
- Photo 2 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0002  
Looking north at front (south side) of house
- Photo 3 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0003  
Looking west and up at turret and porch roof
- Photo 4 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0004  
Looking west at the east façade of the house  
Date: November 16, 2019
- Photo 5 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0005  
Looking west at the basement entry on the east side of the house  
Photographer: Walter Cole. Date: March 9, 2018
- Photo 6 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0006  
Looking south at the northeast corner of the house- upper sleeping porch was enclosed (kitchen addition on the right)
- Photo 7 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0007  
Looking south/southeast along the west side of the house
- Photo 8 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0008  
Looking northeast at the west side of the house and southwest corner of the porch
- Photo 9 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0009  
Interior, looking southwest into the front bay and primary stair  
Photographer: Walter Cole. Date: March 9, 2018
- Photo 10 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0010  
Interior, looking northwest into the corner bay beneath the turret
- Photo 11 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0011  
Interior, looking north within the living room  
Photographer: Walter Cole. Date: June 24, 2010

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- Photo 12 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0012  
Interior, looking southeast within the dining room  
Date: November 6, 2019
  
- Photo 13 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0013  
Interior, looking south from the enclosed porch down the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway
  
- Photo 14 of 14:** OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0012  
Interior, looking west and down the primary stair towards the landing

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Elmer and Linnie Miller House

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### List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

- Figure 1:** Regional Location Map
- Figure 2:** Local Location Map
- Figure 3:** Tax Lot Map: Multnomah County Tax Assessor's Map for 1N 1E 27DA
- Figure 4:** Site Plan/ Roof Plan
- Figure 5a:** Floor Plan at Ground level
- Figure 5b:** Floor Plan at Second level
- Figure 5c:** Floor Plan at Basement level
- Figure 6a:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1901
- Figure 6b:** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1909
- Figure 7:** Multnomah County Tax Lot Survey, 1958
- Figure 8:** Elmer Ellsworth Miller and Celinda "Linnie" Miller, no date
- Figure 9:** Elmer Ellsworth Miller, Belle Miller, and Cecil Miller in Tijuana
- Figure 10:** 89 NE Thompson, c. 1978
- Figure 11:** 89 NE Thompson, photo from Oregonian, September 8, 1980
- Figure 12:** East side of the house, family photo c. 1910s or 1920s
- Figure 13:** "The Entry Hall," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date
- Figure 14:** "The Living Room," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date
- Figure 15:** "The Dining Room," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date
- Figure 16:** Front Entry and Porch with current owner Darcelle, c. 1980
- Figure 17:** Comparative photos of nearby houses



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Figure 2: Local Location Map, Latitude/Longitude Coordinates: 45.539215°, -122.664387°



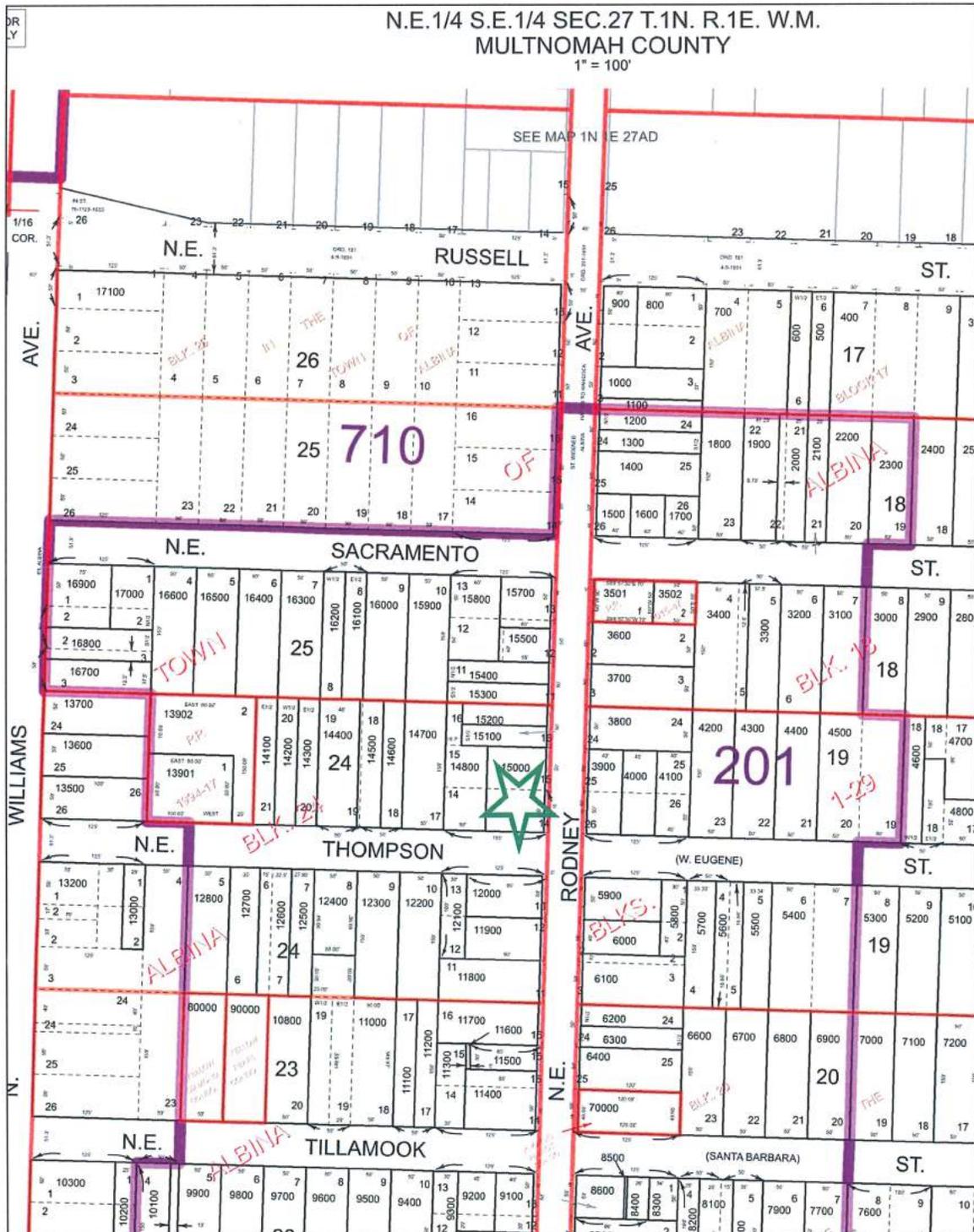
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Figure 3: Multnomah County Tax Assessor's Map for 1N 1E 27DA



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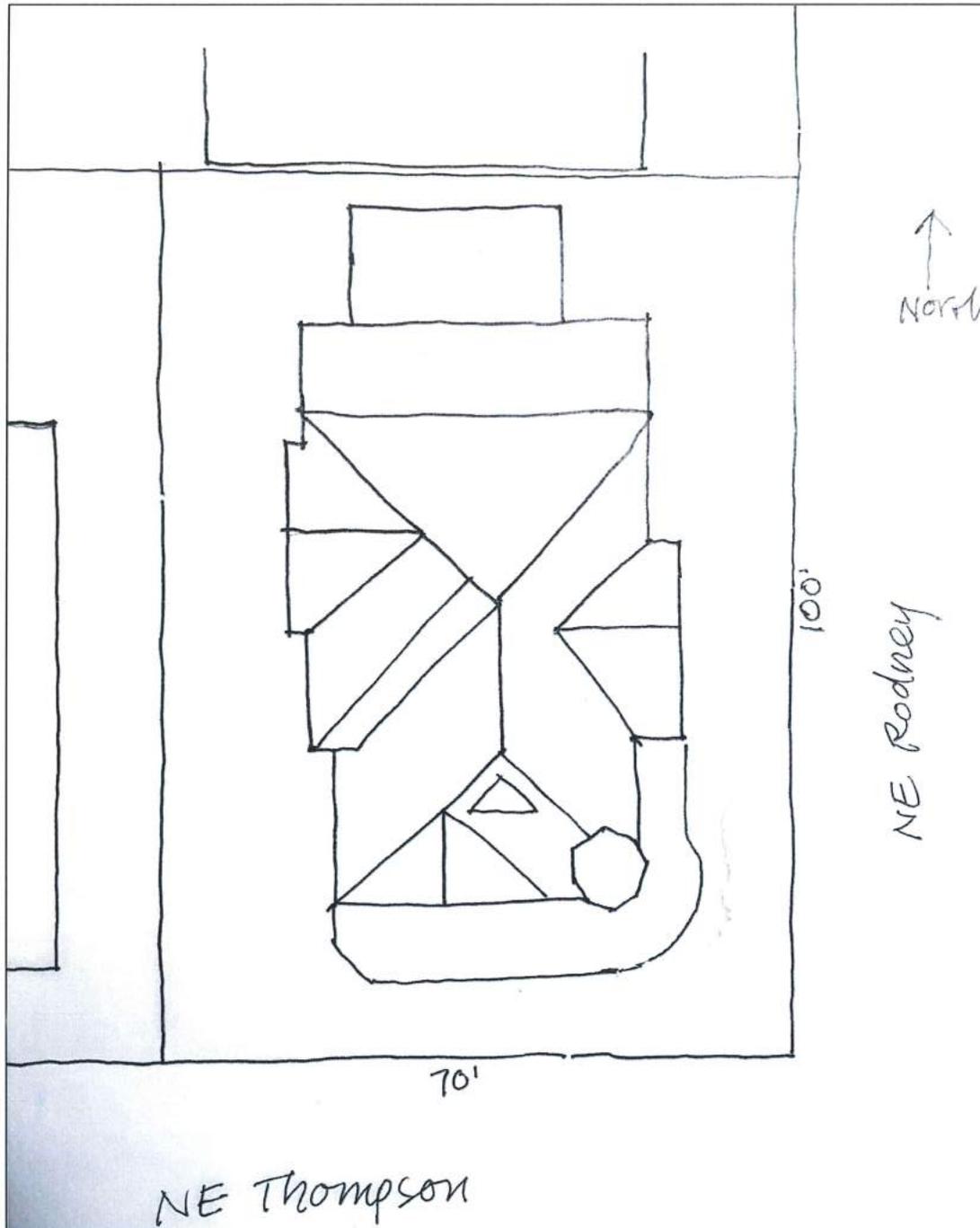
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Figure 4: Site Plan



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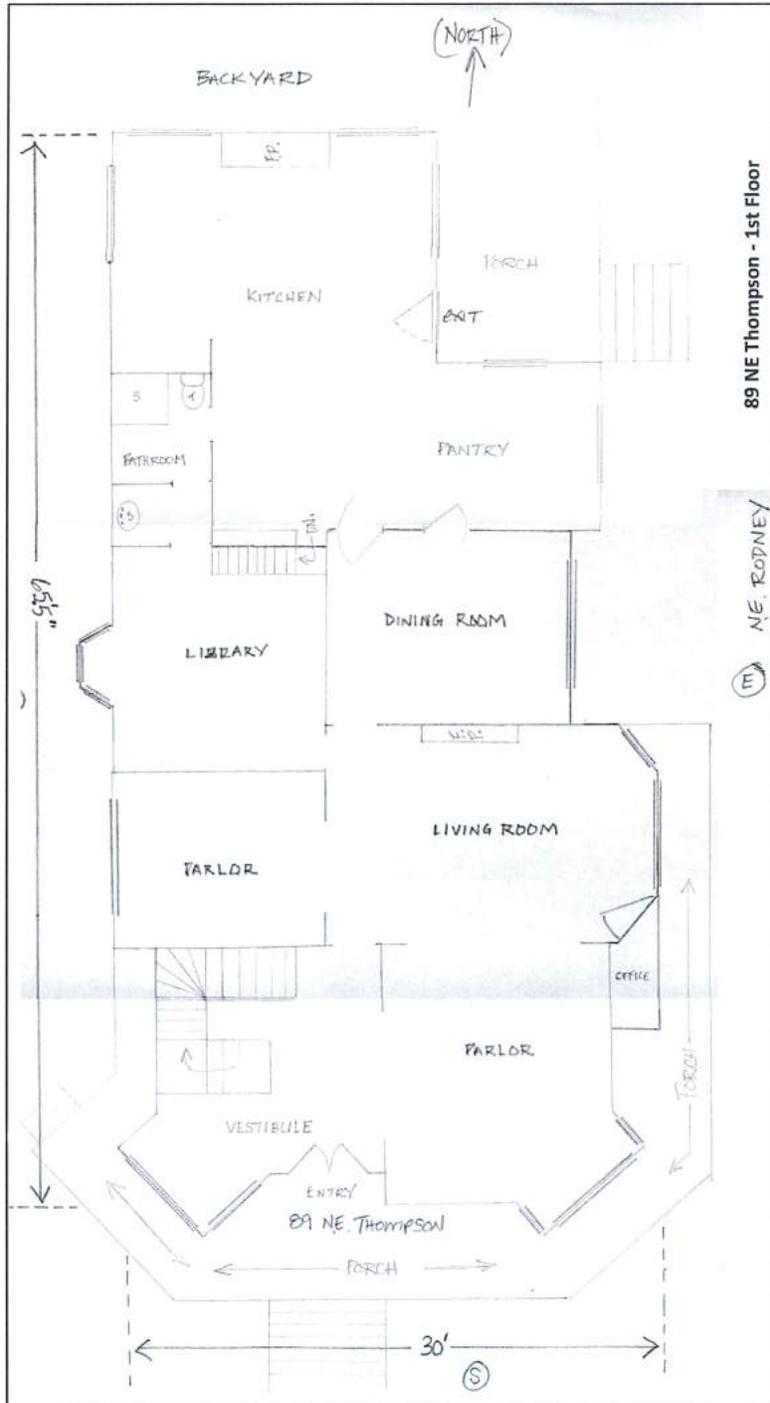
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Figure 5a: Floor Plan at Ground Level



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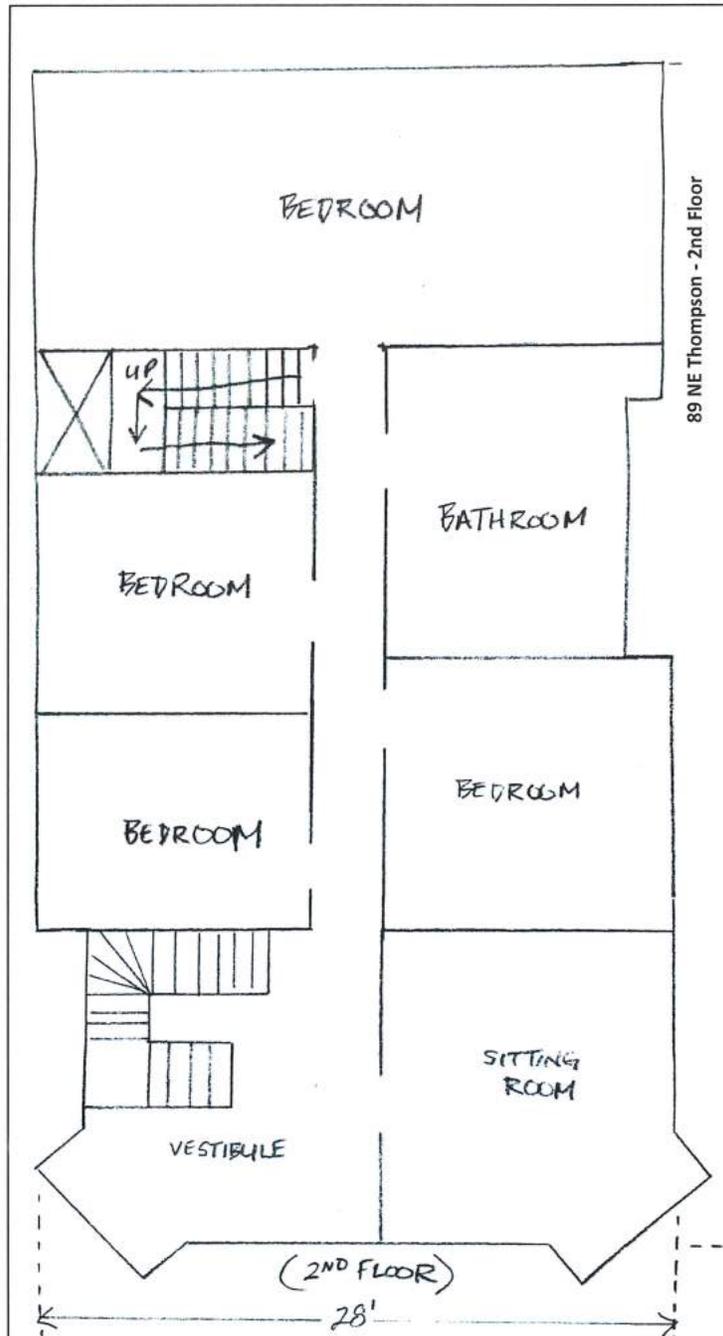
Historic and Architectural Properties in the  
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Figure 5b: Floor Plan at Second Level



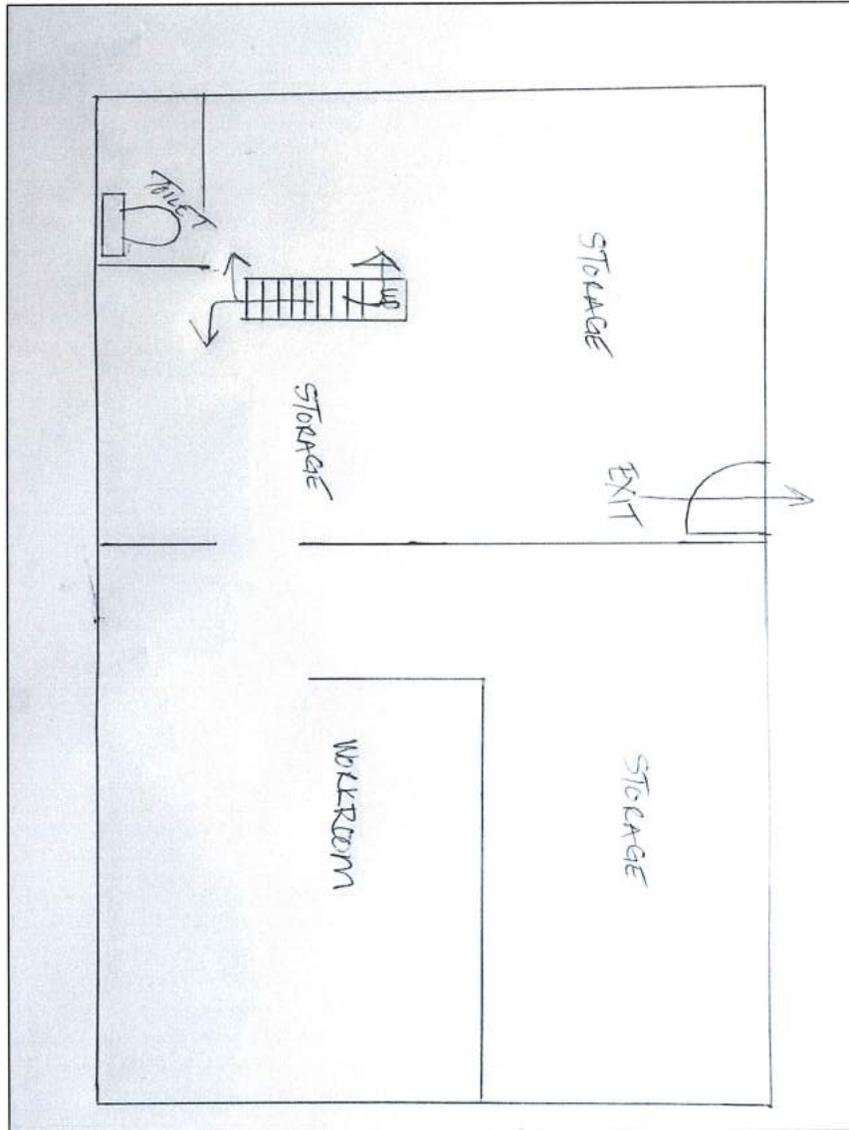
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Figure 5c: Floor Plan at Basement Level



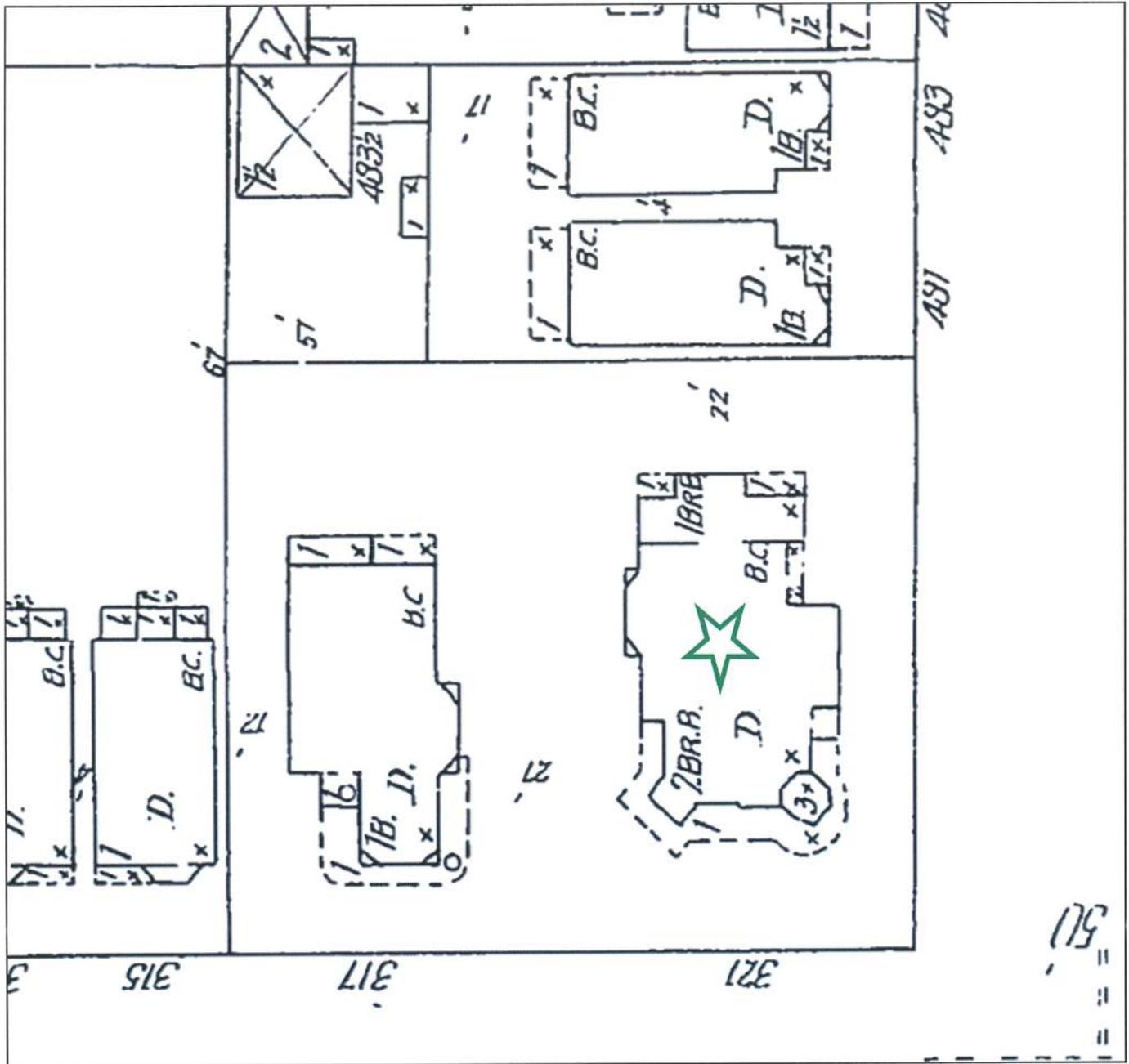
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Figure 6a: (partial) Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Albina, 1901.



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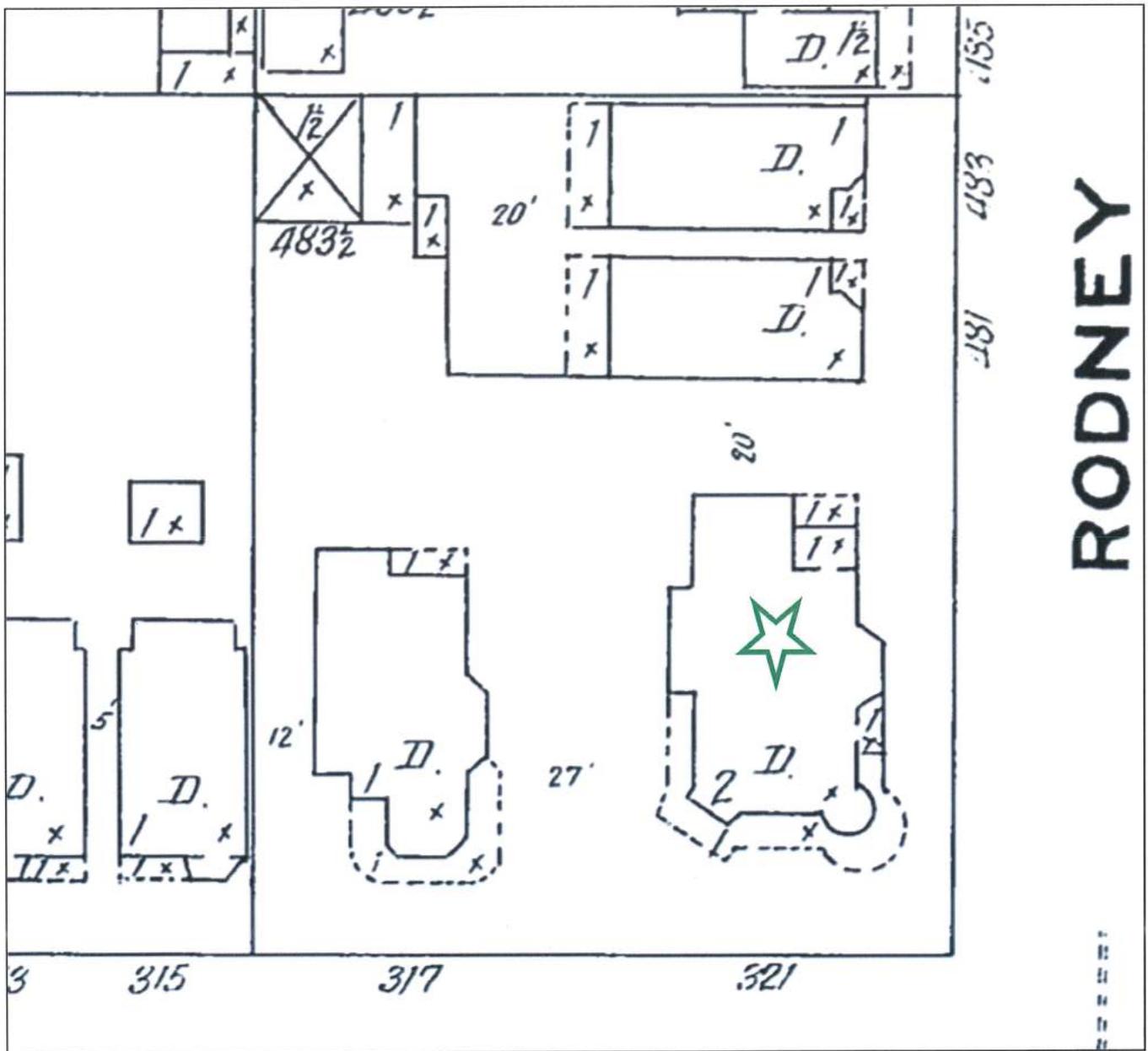
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Figure 6b: (partial) Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Albina, 1909.



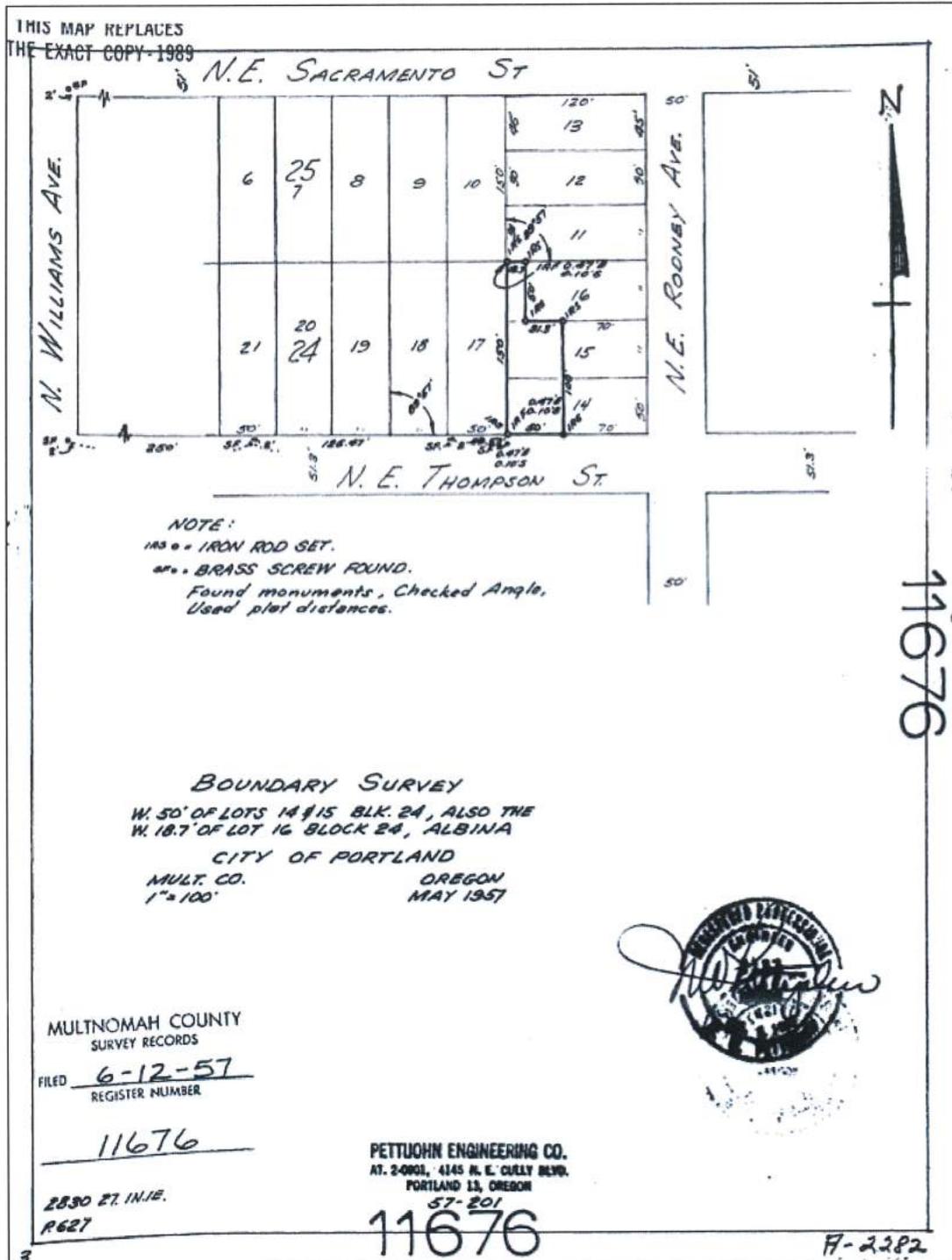
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Figure 7: Multnomah County Survey for lots 14-16, Block 24, Albina. 1957.



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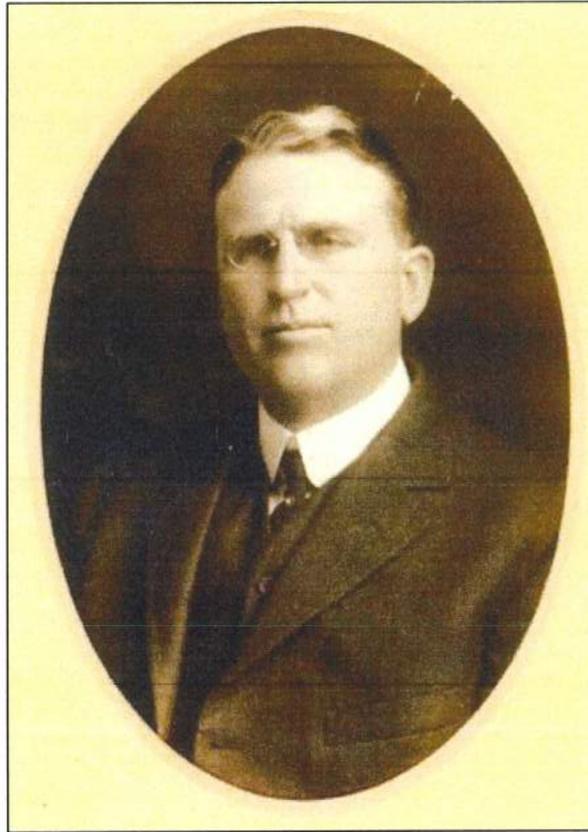
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**Figure 8:** Elmer Ellsworth Miller and Celinda "Linnie" Miller, no date. Images from Janice Beyer-Erickson, their great-granddaughter.



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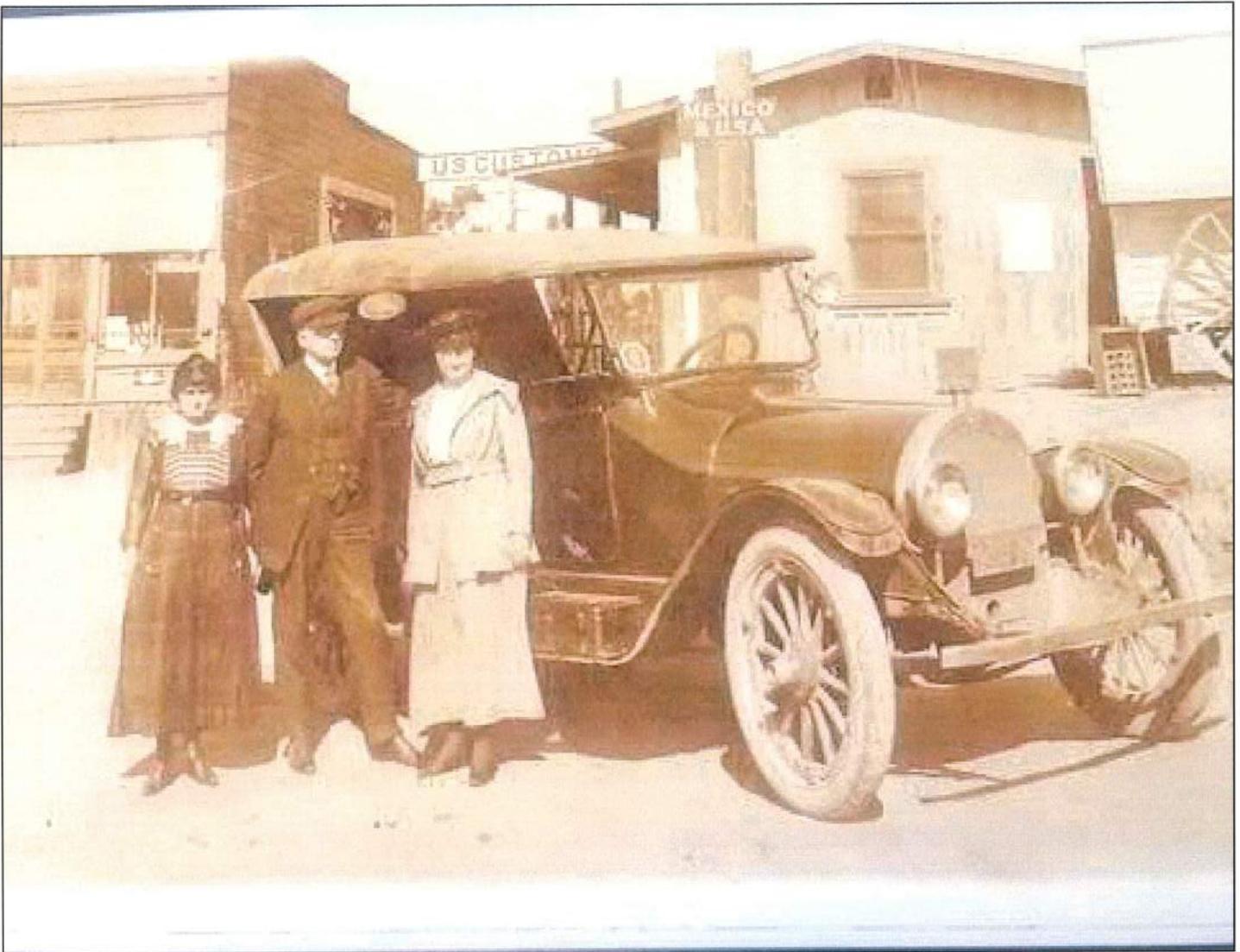
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Figure 9: Elmer Ellsworth Miller, Belle Miller, and Cecil Miller in Tijuana, no date. From Janice Beyer-Erickson.



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Figure 10: 89 NE Thompson, c. 1978. Image courtesy of Walter Cole/ Darcelle, current owner



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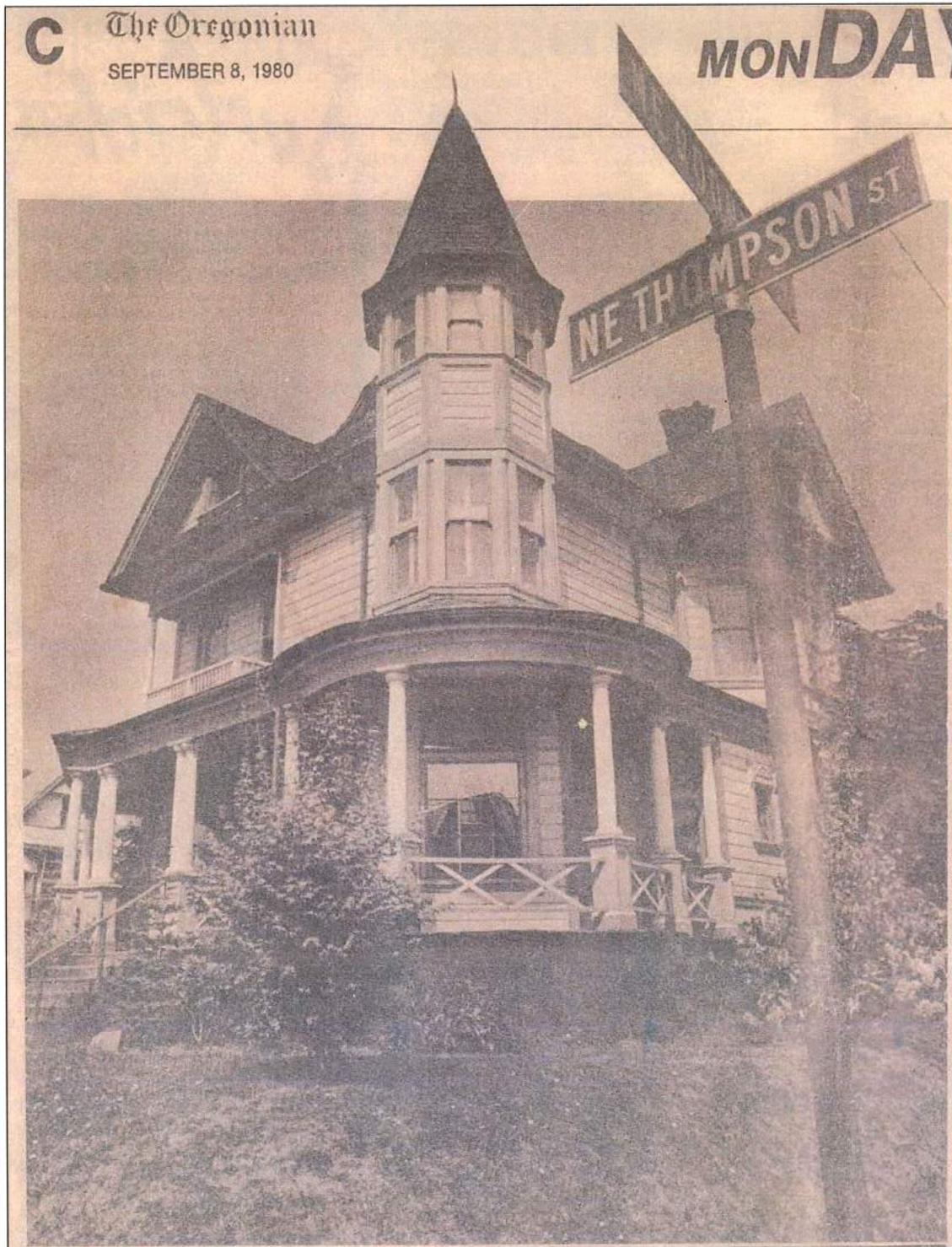
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Figure 11: 89 NE Thompson, photo from Oregonian, September 8, 1980.



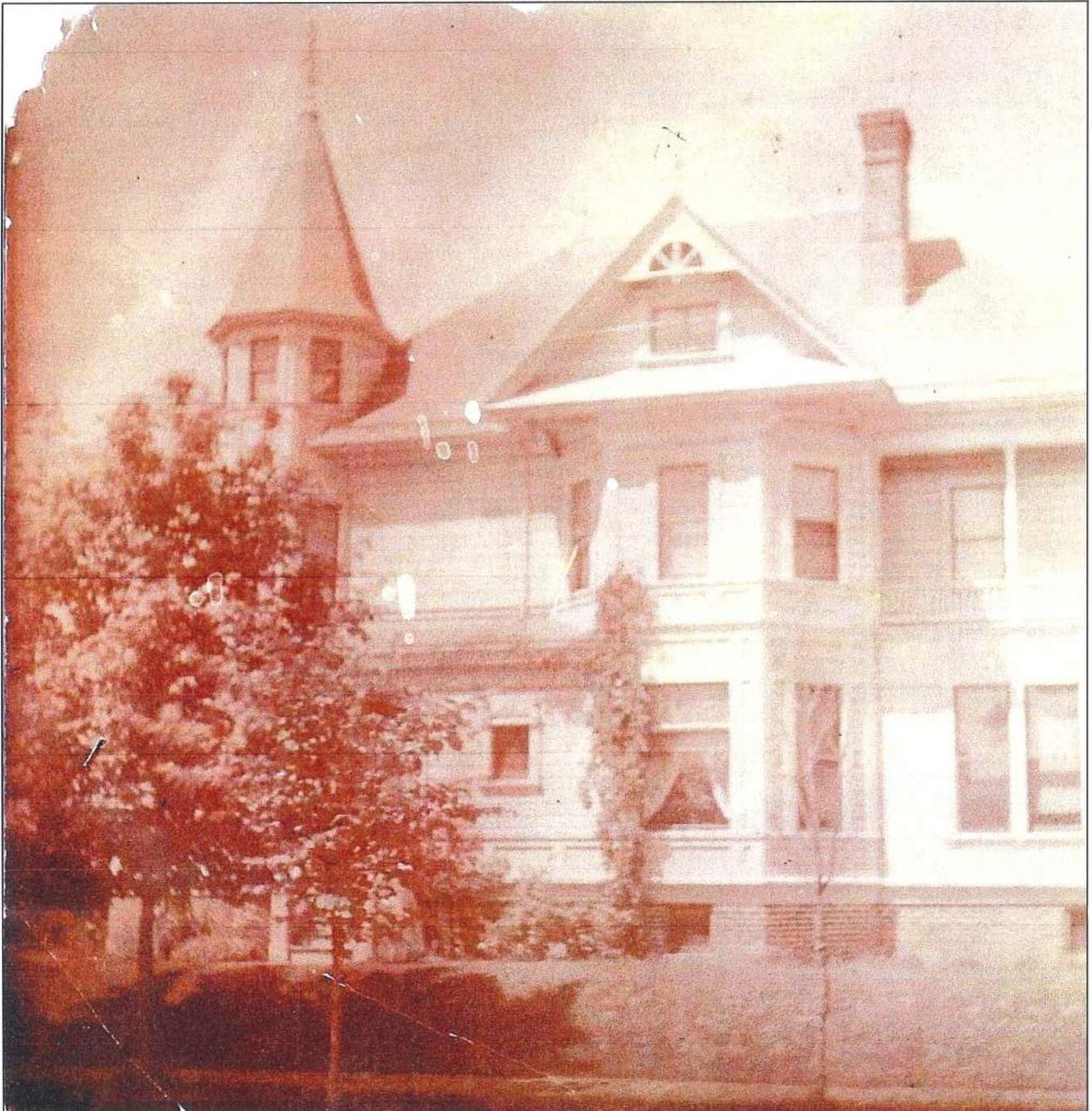
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**Figure 12:** East side of the house, family photo c. 1910s or 1920s. Image from Janice Beyer-Erickson.



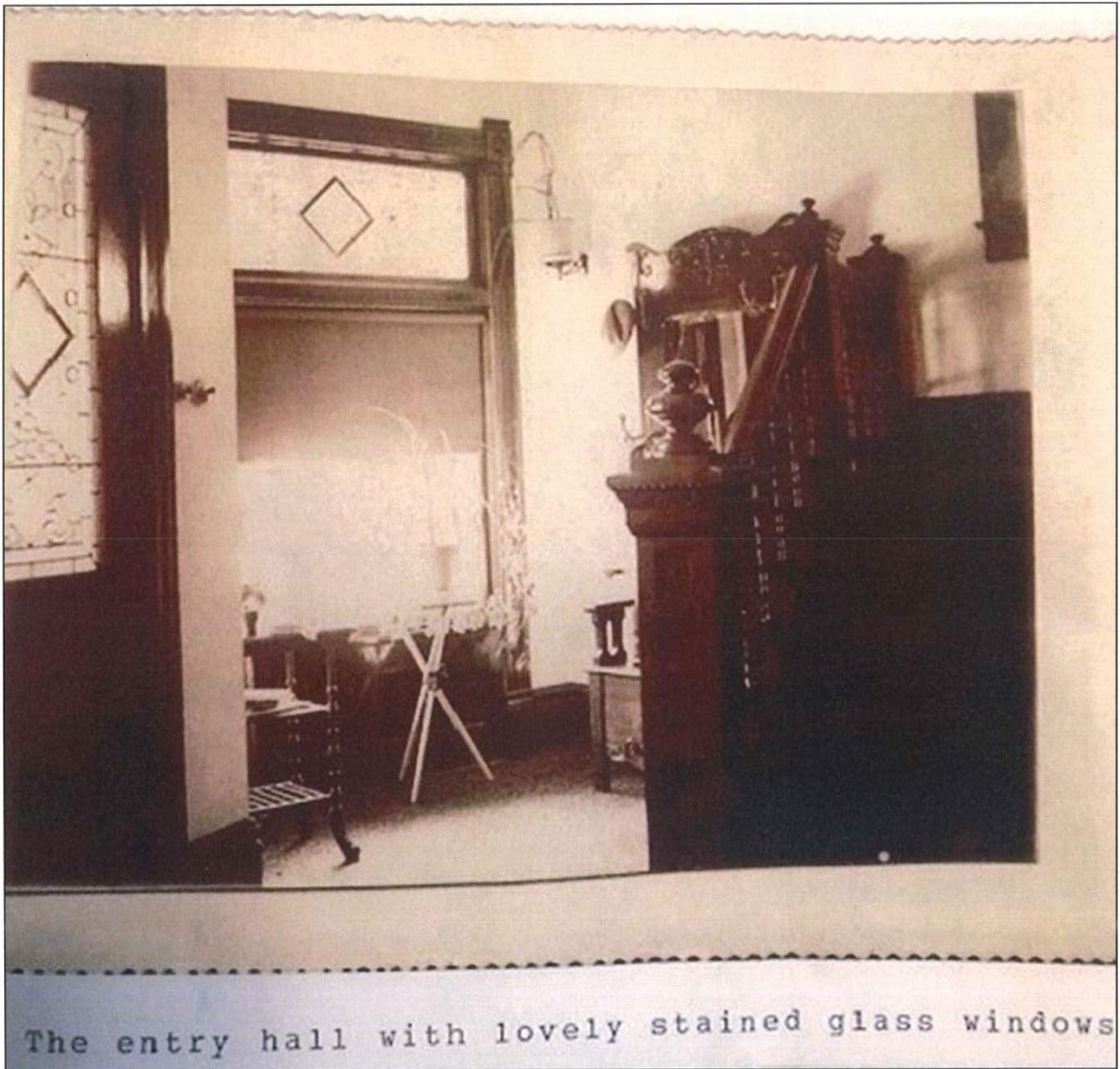
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Figure 13: "The Entry Hall," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date.



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**Figure 14:** "The Living Room," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date.



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**Continuation Sheet**

~~Elmer and Linnie Miller House~~ <sup>Put Here</sup>

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**Figure 15:** "The Dining Room," Historic interior family photo from Janice Beyer-Erickson, no date.

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**Figure 16:** Front Entry Steps and Porch with current owner Darcelle, c. 1980.



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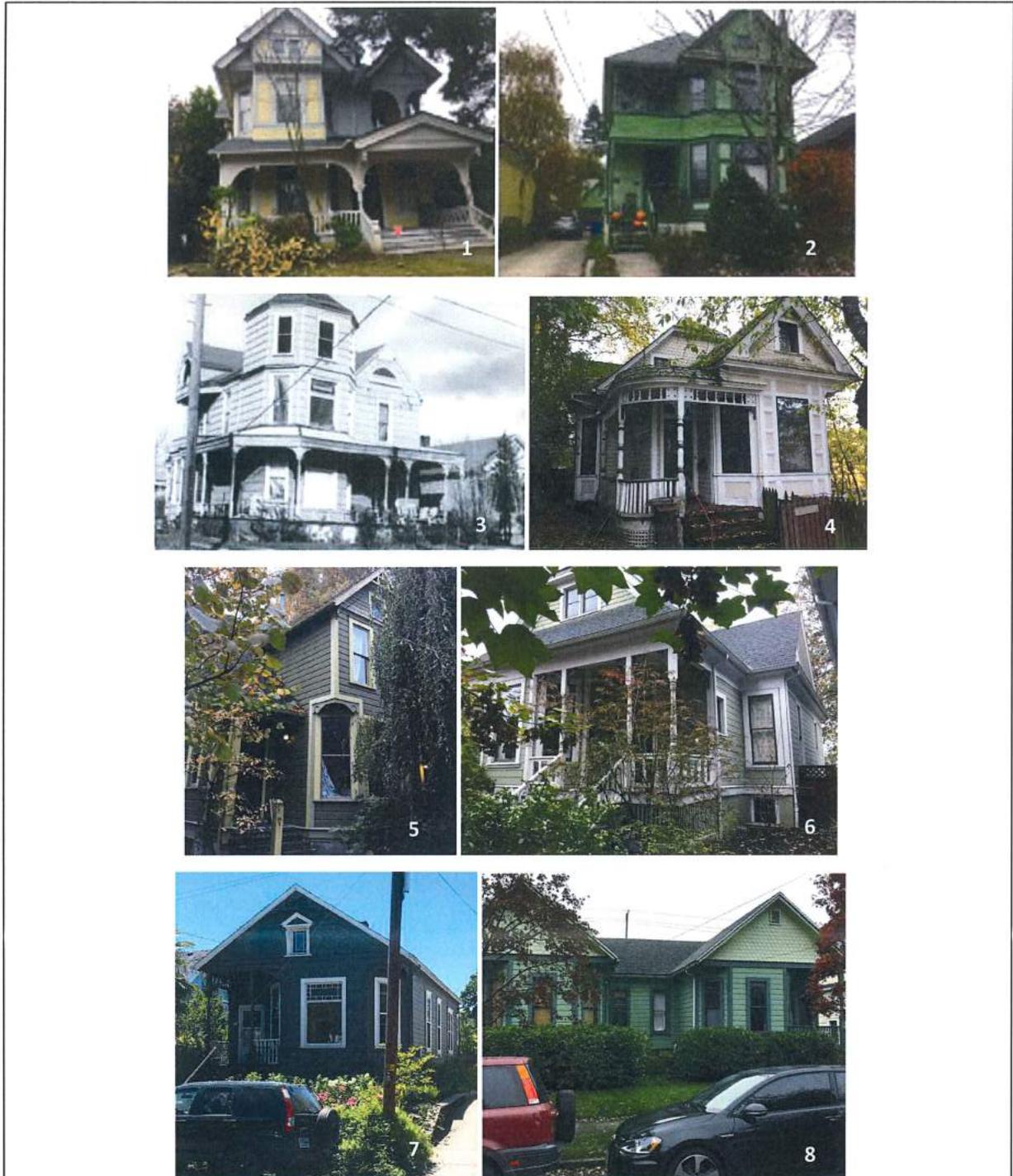
Elmer and Linnie Miller House

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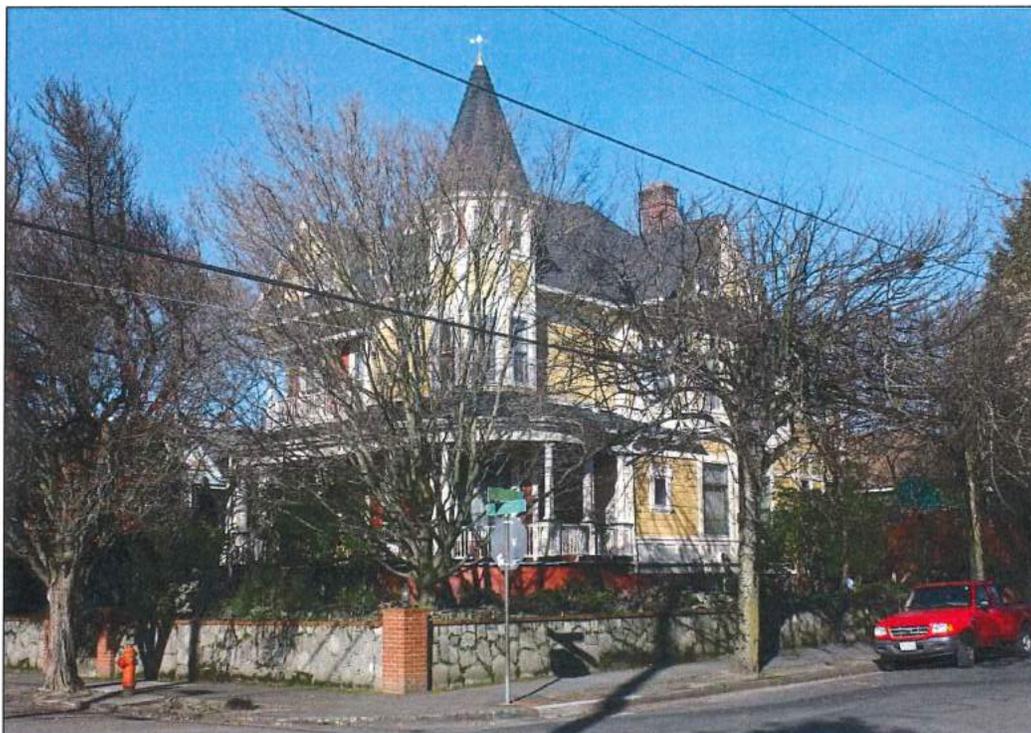
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Figure 17: Comparative photos of nearby houses



**Elmer and Linnie Miller House**  
**Multnomah County: OR**



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0001  
Looking northwest at the house



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0002  
Looking north at front (south side) of house

**Elmer and Linnie Miller House**  
**Multnomah County: OR**



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0003  
Looking west and up at turret and porch roof



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0004  
Looking west at the east façade of the house

**Elmer and Linnie Miller House**  
**Multnomah County: OR**



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0005  
Looking west at the basement entry on the east side of the house



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0006  
Looking south at the northeast corner of the house- upper sleeping porch was enclosed (kitchen addition on the right).

**Elmer and Linnie Miller House  
Multnomah County: OR**



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0007  
Looking south/southeast along the west side of the house



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0008  
Looking northeast at the west side of the house and southwest corner of the porch

Elmer and Linnie Miller House  
Multnomah County: OR



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0009  
Interior, looking southwest into the front bay and primary stair.



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0010  
Interior, looking southeast into the corner bay beneath the turret (front parlor)

Elmer and Linnie Miller House  
Multnomah County: OR



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0011  
Interior, looking north within the living room



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0012  
Interior, looking southeast within the dining room.

Elmer and Linnie Miller House  
Multnomah County: OR



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0013  
Interior, looking south from the enclosed porch down the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor hallway



OR\_MultnomahCounty\_ElmerLinnieMillerHouse\_0014  
Interior, looking west and down the primary stair towards the landing