



**Architectural & Historical Report
for
3 Magnolia Avenue
Siasconset, Massachusetts**

January 20, 2024

Prepared by Marsha L. Fader, AIA Architect and
Betsy Tyler, Historian for The 'Sconset Trust, Inc.



THE 'SCONSET TRUST, INC.

Preservation Easements

The 'Sconset Trust preserves the unique character of the east end of Nantucket Island in Massachusetts through conservation of areas of open land and preservation of structures of historical and architectural significance in 'Sconset. The Trust works with the entire island community and collaborates with conservation and historic preservation groups to achieve its goals.

This report was prepared to highlight the important architectural and historic features of this house. The Trust hopes that emphasizing such features will encourage current and future owners of historically significant houses to preserve important interior and exterior building features for future generations. The Trust stands ready to assist homeowners in assessing the appropriateness of tools like preservation restrictions and rights of first refusal, which may include tax benefits.

For more information on how the Trust can help, please contact the Executive Director, Julie Meade.

The 'Sconset Trust is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Please visit the web site at sconsettrust.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction: 'Sconset Trust, Inc. Preservation Easements

1. Summary and Project Scope	1
2. Statement of Significance	1
3. Historical Information	1
4. Architectural Information	2
4.1 Description	2
4.2 Alterations/Evolution	3
4.3 Character-Defining Features	5
4.4 Outbuildings	5
5. Property Information	5
5.1 Property Identification	5
5.2 Setting	5
6. Sources of Information	5
6.1 Published and Archival Resources	5
6.2 Historical Maps and Plans	5
6.3 Historical Photographs	11
6.4 Year 2023 Photographs	14
6.5 Chain of Title	44

1. SUMMARY AND PROJECT SCOPE

Built in the Old Historic District of Siasconset, the property at 3 Magnolia Avenue known as Wild Goose and Neosho, is a contributing resource within the Nantucket Historic District, a National Historic Landmark District, which is listed in the State and National Registers of Historic Places as well as a local historic district.

The intent of this study is to present the history of the dwelling at 3 Magnolia Avenue and establish its architectural and cultural significance. This study includes a survey and study of the architecture, form and materials of the existing structure, a survey of historical maps and photographs of the property, an examination of the records on file at the town of Nantucket Registry of Deeds, Probate Court and Planning and Land Use Services (PLUS) records, as well as published and archival sources.

This report was prepared for The 'Sconset Trust, Inc. by Marsha L. Fader, AIA Architect and Betsy Tyler, Historian.

2. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The house at 3 Magnolia Avenue is significant for its distinctive Queen Anne architectural style. The decorative exterior wood detailing presents a style and exuberance fashionable in the US in the late 19th century but rare on Nantucket. Painted wood gable finials, decorative wall coverings, asymmetry, complex roof design, bay windows, and wrap-around porches showcase this historic style.

3. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

3 Magnolia Avenue, Neosho, Wild Goose, built between 1872 and 1888

In 1872, visionaries Charles H. Robinson (1829-1915) and Franklin A. Ellis (1833-84) purchased land at the end of Main Street, Siasconset, south of the gully, and laid out a grand plan for a hotel and house lots for summer homes on the high bluff overlooking the ocean. They had the foresight to realize that the village of Siasconset, long a summer playground for Nantucketers, could become a resort for visitors from the continent. Robinson, a prolific local builder, built the Ocean View hotel and many of the private homes in the Sunset Heights development. Robinson sold the house at 3 Magnolia, then known as Neosho, to William Appel in 1910. The house appears on Harry Platt's 1888 map of the village of 'Sconset, indicating that it was built between 1872 and 1888 by Robinson; a more exact date of construction is impossible to ascertain from available sources.

Although deeds prove that Charles H. Robinson sold Neosho to William Appel in 1910, there is conflicting information in the *Inquirer and Mirror*, which reports that Joline Butler (1867-1929) purchased Neosho in 1906. Butler, an actor, was the son of Edward J. Butler and Lydia Folger (Butler) (Worth) Robinson, the third wife of Mr. Robinson, who was her third husband. Perhaps there was some family agreement that Joline could have Neosho, but there was no legal transaction. Newspaper reports indicate that Mr. Butler moved Neosho in 1906 to center the house on the lot and that he was going to change the name of the house to California Lodge. Sanborn maps show that the house was moved, but the changes don't appear on the insurance company map until the 1923 version. The proposed name change did not stick.

Nantucket town valuation and tax lists published every five years from 1896-1921 show that Robinson owned two unnamed houses (locations not noted) in Sconset in 1896. In 1901 he owned a house called Swiss Cottage, on Cottage Avenue, and a dwelling on Laurel Avenue. The front entry of what is now known as 3 Magnolia (formerly Hills Avenue) faces Laurel Avenue, indicating that it is the dwelling referred to in the tax list. The 1906 tax list shows that Robinson owned only one house in Sconset. Joline Butler does not appear in the tax lists, even though newspaper accounts of his association with Neosho appear in 1906. In 1911, William N. Appel (1862-1937), owned the dwelling (he purchased from Robinson in 1910, NRD Book 92, p. 113) which had increased in value from \$1300 in 1906 to \$2500 in 1911. The increase in property value from 1906 to 1911 reflects improvements made to the property. Appel was from Lancaster, PA, where he had established a law firm.

On May 20, 1911, the *Inquirer and Mirror* noted: "Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Appel, who last season purchased

Neosho, are in town for a few days arranging for some improvements to their cottage, which they expect to occupy permanently for the season about the last of June." After more than a decade summering at Neosho, the Appels advertised their house for sale beginning in 1923, after they had purchased a house called "the Orchard" on the north bluff of 'Sconset. The earliest ad states that Neosho had "eleven rooms, two bathrooms, open fireplace, veranda, enclosed sun porch, lawn, fine shade trees, convenient to bathing beach." Subsequent ads in 1924 clarify that Neosho was a nine-room house, plastered, with town water and sewer. Robert Elder purchased the house in September 1926 and a week later sold it to Mary L. Gouin (1879-1965). The house appears to have been rented in the summers during Gouin's ownership. She sold the house in 1962 to criminologist Howard B. Gill (1889-1989) and research psychologist Isabelle V. Kendig (1889-1974), who took the house on as a renovation project. The *Inquirer and Mirror* reported February 1, 1963: "Taking a house that was once considered 'the most elegant house' in 'Sconset, but which, during the past ten years, had fallen into a state of disrepair, Mr. Gill restored it to become once again a creditable part of the neighborhood at Magnolia and Laurel Avenues." Gill and Kendig renamed the house Wild Goose, a name etched in the glass of the front door.

Wild Goose was not intended as their personal residence by Gill and Kendig, who also owned the house at 3 Grand Avenue nearby. After the restoration, Wild Goose was sold in 1963 to Elizabeth L. Stone (d. 1979) and Charles P. Stone (d. 1983) of Washington D.C. Charles P. Stone was in the real estate business in D.C. He divided the house into two units to better accommodate visiting family. Stone and his daughter, Lee Fierro, an actress best known as Mrs. Kintner in *Jaws*, sold the house in 1981 to John B. Connell and Kincaid Perot Connell. Kincaid (Kinny) Perot rented half of the house to Charles Stone, who continued to spend summers there until he died. She and her family occupied the other half of the house in the summer. In 2004, Perot renovated the first floor, according to plans made by Milton Rowland & Associates (1996) and Sanford Strauss Architects (1998). She restored the cottage to a one-family dwelling. Perot sold the property to 3 Magnolia LLC (George and Mary Williams) in 2006. It included a 10x12 shed built in 2003.

Doug and Joanna DeMuro of San Diego purchased 3 Magnolia in 2021. Doug DeMuro is a writer and internet entrepreneur with a YouTube channel focused on the automotive industry.

4. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

4.1 Description

This distinctive late-nineteenth-century house on the corner lot of Magnolia and Laurel Avenues is a Queen Anne design built by Charles H. Robinson. The front of the house was built to face Laurel Avenue on the east. The Sunset Heights subdivision plan laid out ten lots on the block defined by Magnolia, Laurel, and Grand Avenues. Platt's 1888 map and the 1898 Sanborn map (with Magnolia Avenue named as Hill) shows six houses on this block with 3 Magnolia located close to the corner of Magnolia (formerly Hill) and Laurel Avenues. By 1923 the house had been moved to the north which centered it on the lot. The footprint also increased.

This house is a wood-framed, two-story plus an attic level house with a rectangular footprint and asymmetrical facades. A one-story portion of the house is at its west end and along the south facade. The decorative exterior wood detailing presents a style and exuberance fashionable in the US in the late nineteenth century but rare on Nantucket. Its painted wood surface treatments are rich and varied including first floor walls of horizontal, coved shiplap, second level walls of patterned shingles, roof overhangs supported by open-work brackets, detailed rake boards and gable peak finials, and a variation of window shapes and sizes. Later first floor additions have unpainted shingles and plain porch posts and railings. Exterior paint colors include historically-typical polychrome colors of muted greens, beiges and burgundy.

The roof of 3 Magnolia is a complex design with multiple gables and shed roofs. The primary and secondary gables with a hipped skirt have their main ridge running parallel to Magnolia Avenue or east-west. Facade gable dormers on the north and south provide second-floor windows. Shed dormers also on the north and south provide windows at the third floor level. There is a substantial roof overhang supported by decorative wood brackets. Painted wood finials at the peaks of the gable roofs together with decorative rake boards detail the gable roofs. A one-story addition to the main house at the west end has a hip roof with a facade gable entrance on the south open deck side. A shallow hipped roof covers a porch on the south/Magnolia

Avenue side and a closed-in dining room which extends from an original inset porch as the main east/Laurel Avenue entrance. Shed-roofed bay windows serve a study on the south and a bedroom on the north side. A brick chimney is at the north side of the first floor study. A second chimney also provides a fireplace on the west end of the 1-story living room. The roof is asphalt shingles. The foundation is primarily brick piers boarded with limited to no visibility.

The first floor of 3 Magnolia Avenue has an entry hall on the east, or Laurel Avenue side, with stairs to the second floor. The entry hall leads through a dining room into a living room which opens into the kitchen and laundry room. Also leading from the front entry hall is a bedroom, bathroom, and study/office room. The original entry door has a complex arrangement of chamfered openings with beaded tongue-and-groove recessed panels. The top square panel contains an etched glass design representing the name "Wild Goose". Door and window trim has bulls-eye corner blocks with beaded casings, mostly found in the front, eastern portion of the house along with baseboards with ogee mouldings. Either from a hierarchy of more detailed treatment or resulting from alterations, the western, back portion of the house has simpler, plain woodwork detailing. Interior and exterior decorative wood trim would have been purchased ready-made through catalogs popular during the late-nineteenth century.

Turned newel posts, handrail and balusters form the original stairs from the front hall to the second floor. There are four bedrooms and two bathrooms on the second floor. A second stair from the kitchen leads to the western bedrooms as well as a third floor with one large bedroom and bathroom.

The availability of utilities in 'Sconset affected the design and evolution of 3 Magnolia Avenue. Town sewer was installed by the late 1890s with some level of water service. A standpipe upgraded the water service along with electricity systems that were installed in the mid-1920s. While each home may have installed private systems, it cannot be assumed that indoor plumbing and lighting was available until those dates.

4.2 Alterations/Evolution

The footprint at 3 Magnolia Avenue as shown on Sanborn maps dated 1898, 1904, and 1909 remained the same. The house fronted to the east on Laurel Avenue and close to Magnolia Avenue. While the original 1872 *Plan of Sunset Heights, Nantucket Mass.* delineated ten lots for the land defined by Grand, Magnolia, and Laurel Avenues, the maps show an actual six lots, with 3 Magnolia occupying one of the southern corner lots.

This 1898-1909 footprint (possibly the original footprint) shows a rectangular, two-story house with a small inset front porch flanked by a bay window connected to a one-story, L-shaped section to the north with a narrow addition and a small outbuilding.

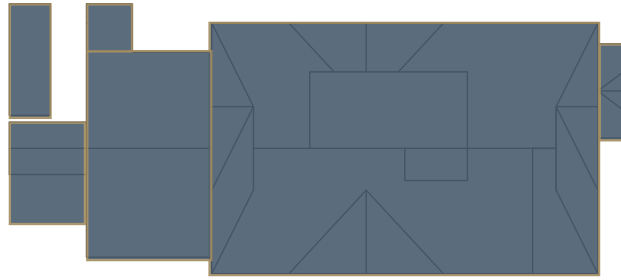
Between the Sanborn maps of 1909 and 1923, the house was moved on the lot, slightly to the north and more centered on the property. This twentieth-century move brought what is believed to be the first change in the footprint with a wrap-around covered porch facing Magnolia and Laurel Avenues on the south and east, a larger one-story addition on the west, a bay window on the north, and a second covered wrap-around porch on the north and east. William N. Appel was the owner during these changes. The next and final updated Sanborn map shows that this extended footprint did not change again until after the updated 1949 Sanborn map.

During the ownership of the Stone and Perot families, the house was divided into a duplex with a north/south division. For forty-one years, from 1963 to 2004, the one-story west portion with its separate stair to the second floor and attic floor bedrooms and bathrooms, served as a separate dwelling. Architectural plans by Milton Rowland & Associates (1996) and Sanford Strauss Architects (1998) include a new kitchen, laundry/utility room, open deck on the south, and first-floor bathroom with the intent to restore the house to a single family home again. Four round columns, a decorative ceiling treatment, and an inlaid wood compass rose were added for the dining room. Exterior paint colors represent typical Victorian colors that treat the walls and trim in variations of muted greens and burgundy. These existing colors may or may not be original. The original roof of cedar wood shingles has been changed to asphalt roofing. It does not appear in Photo GPN526 that the existing gutter and downspout drainage system existed originally. The two fireplaces were added prior to this turn of the twenty-first-century renovation and after the 1949 Sanborn map:

**3 Magnolia Avenue
Evolution of Architectural Footprint
1898 - 2023**



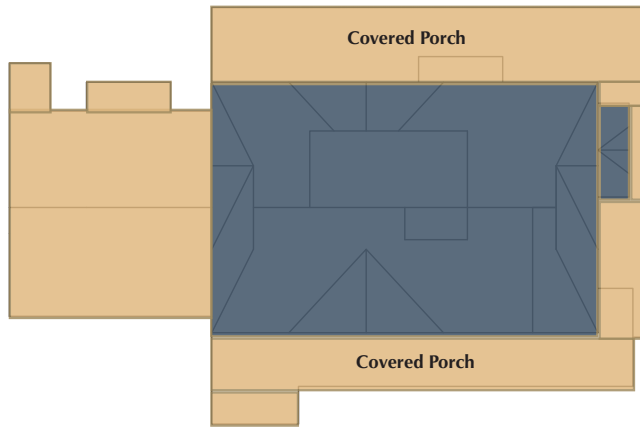
NORTH



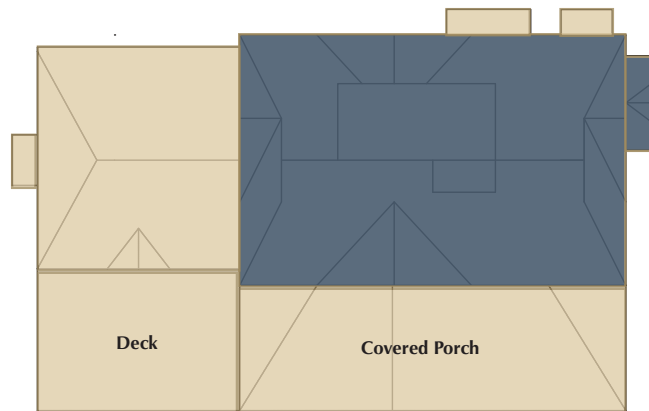
LEGEND

- 1898-1909
- 1909-1949
- 1949-1999

WEST



EAST



SOUTH

NOTE: These schematic drawings are based upon changes found on Sanborn Insurance maps from 1898-1949, 1996-1999 architect plans, and the current GIS map.

one with a classically-columned surround in the first floor office/study fronting on Laurel Avenue and one in the cathedral-ceiling, open rafter space of the one-story living room. Both chimneys are brick and built on the exterior of the wall. The fireplace surrounds, the exterior brick chimneys, the exposed framing, and the interior classical columns belong to a different architectural style than this Queen Anne house. A small 10' x 12' outbuilding in the northwest corner of the property was added in 2003 by Perot.

Original exterior details that were removed at an unknown date can be seen on Photo GPN526 on page 11. These details include gable decoration which would have been within at least four of the major roof gable ends, a small gable on the front/east bay window shed roof, and turned porch columns with upper brackets.

4.3 Character-Defining Features

The character-defining features at 3 Magnolia Avenue include an original form, footprint, and materials with an abundance of distinctive Queen Anne period details. The original rectangular house with its complex roof design has survived intact despite its conversion into a two-family house with its various porch additions.

4.4 Outbuildings

A small outbuilding in the northwest corner of the property was added in 2003.

5. PROPERTY INFORMATION

5.1 Property Identification: 3 Magnolia Avenue, Nantucket Assessor's Map 73.3.1 Parcel 80, 0.16 acres in the SOH zone.

5.2 Setting: This house is located within the Old Historic District of Siasconset in the 1872 Sunset Heights subdivision south of Main Street and walkable to the ocean. At 3 Magnolia Avenue, there is a combination of lawn, plantings, and fencing.

6. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

6.1 Published and Archival Sources

Inquirer and Mirror:

- 6/6/1903 - Neosho rented for the season;
- 9/1/1906 - Joline Butler purchases Neosho;
- 10/27/1906 - David W. Gibbs to move Neosho to center of site;
- 11/10/1906 - Joline Butler to make changes to Neosho, now California Lodge;
- 11/17/1906 - Gibbs moved California Lodge;
- 9/17/1910 - Robinson sells Neosho to Appel; 5/20/1911 - Appel makes improvements to cottage;
- 8/25/1923 - Neosho for sale, 11 rooms;
- 5/10/1924 - Neosho for sale, 9 rooms;
- 2/1/1963 - "Most Elegant House" in Sconset Is Being Rebuilt to Former Glory;
- 8/1/1963 - "Wild Goose Christened, Again is Elegant House";
- 7/12/1979 - Elizabeth L. Stone obituary;
- 2/3/1983 - Charles P. Stone obituary

6.2 Historical Maps & Plans

1872 Robinson, C.H. and James D. *Plan of Sunset Heights, Nantucket Mass.* J. H. Bufford, Lith., Boston [1872]

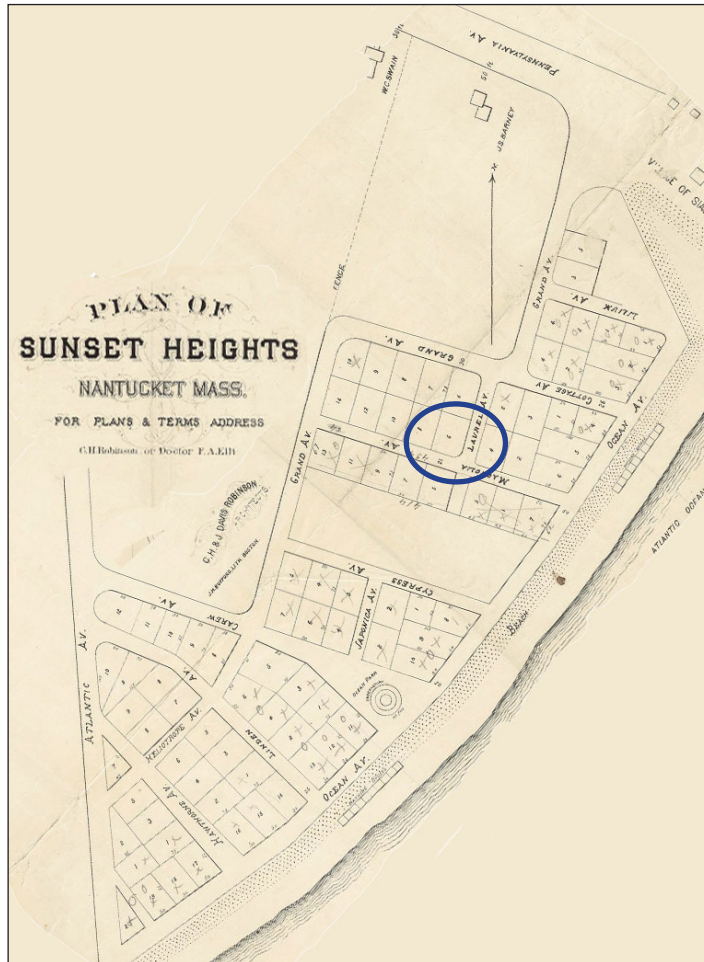
1888 Platt, Harry. *Map of the Village of Siasconset on the Island of Nantucket*, published by E. T. Underhill & Co., New York, 1888.

1898 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 15

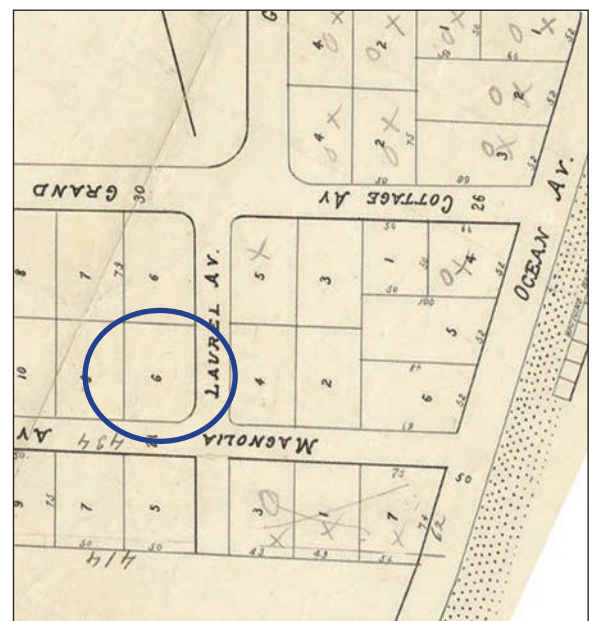
1904 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 19
1909 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 21
1923 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 23
1949 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 23

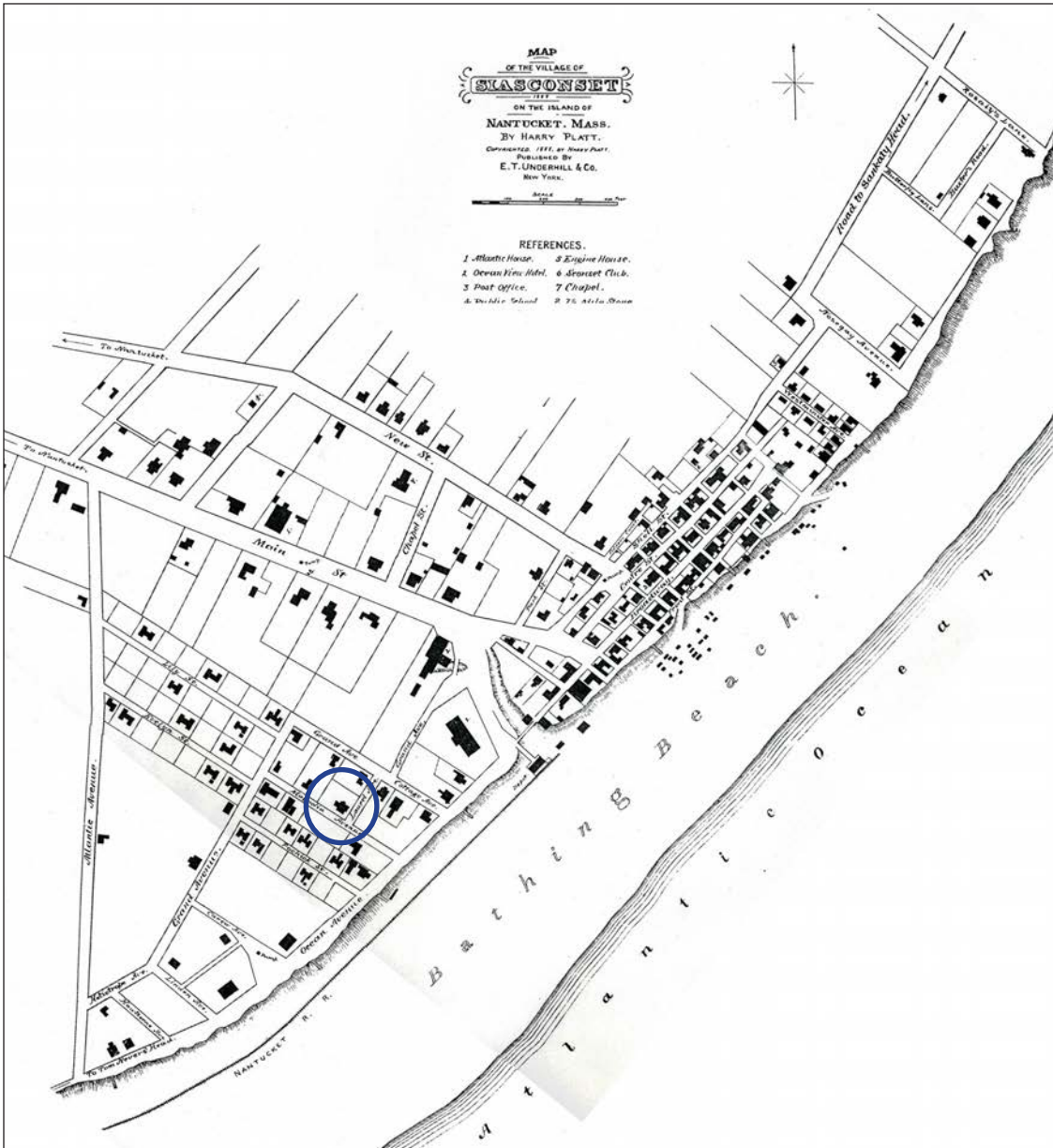
Milton Rowland & Associates, drawings 1 & 2, 1996-1997

Sanford Strauss Architects, 1998 drawings by James Sanford; <https://www.sanfordstrauss.com/portfolio.html#section=sanford>

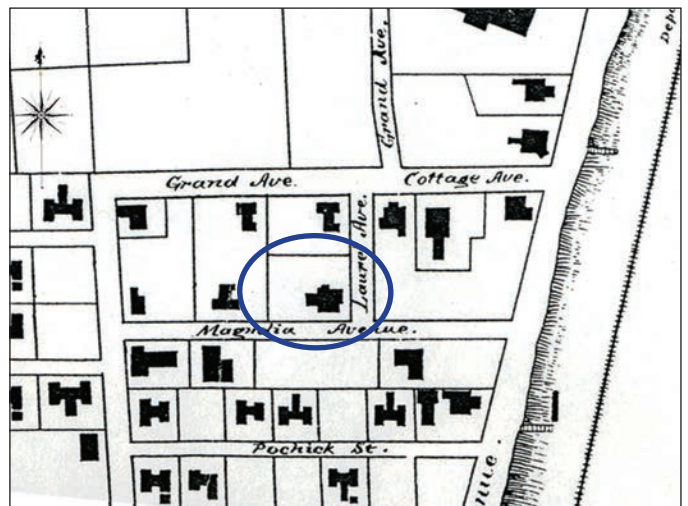


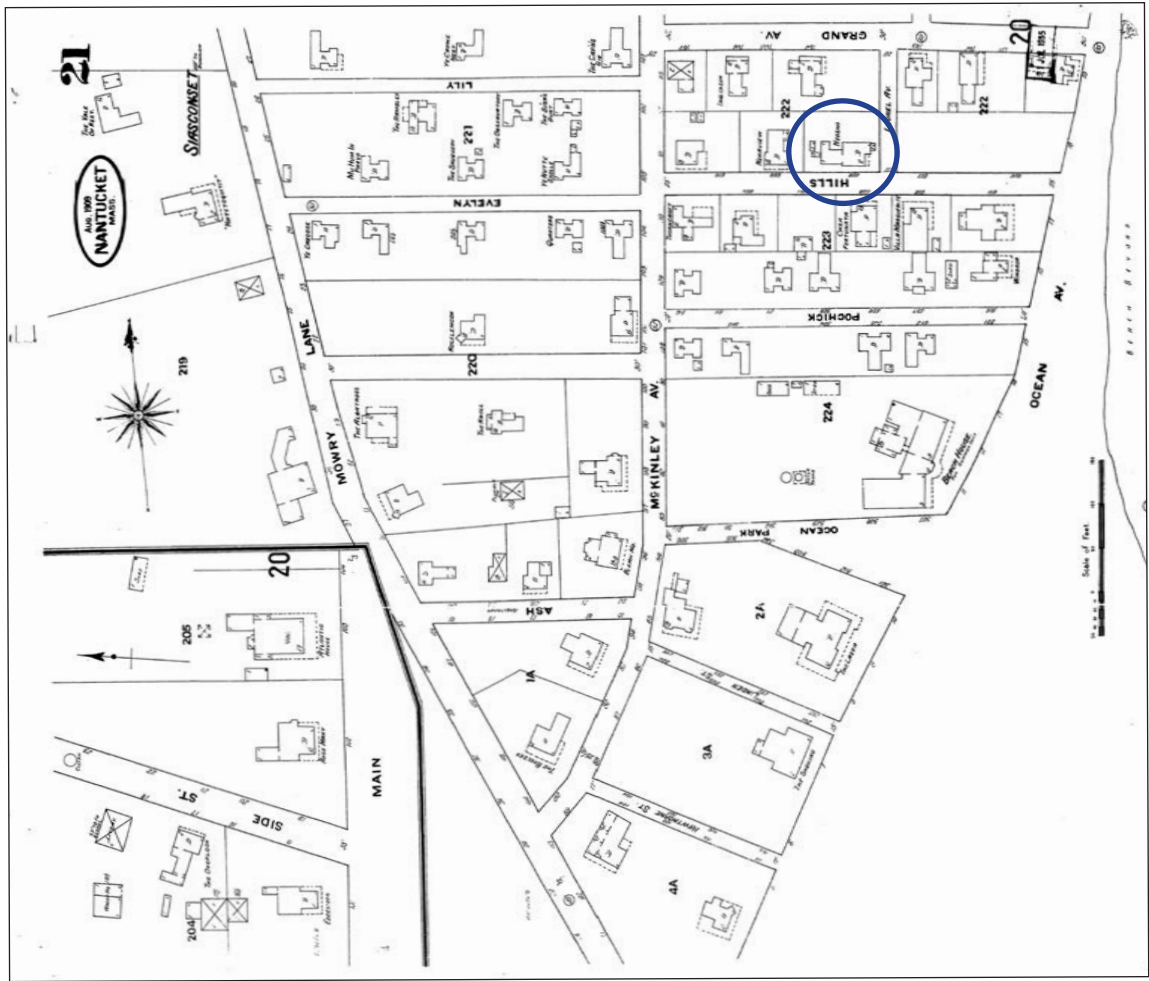
1872 Robinson, C.H. and James D.
Plan of Sunset Heights, Nantucket Mass.
with enlarged site shown to the right.



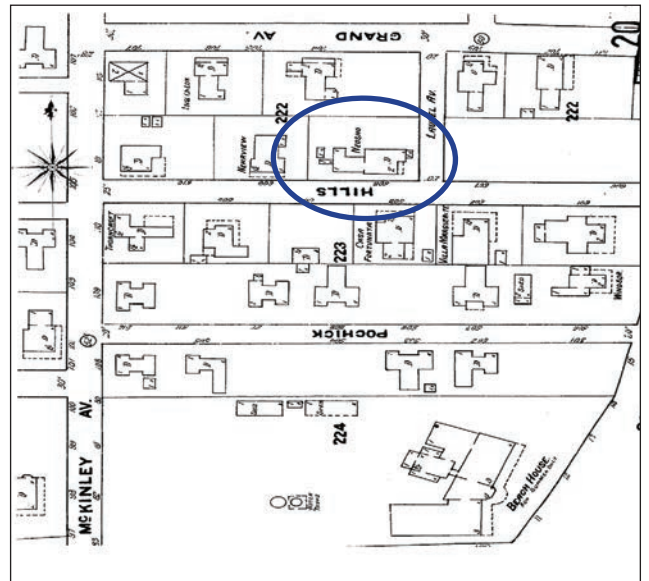


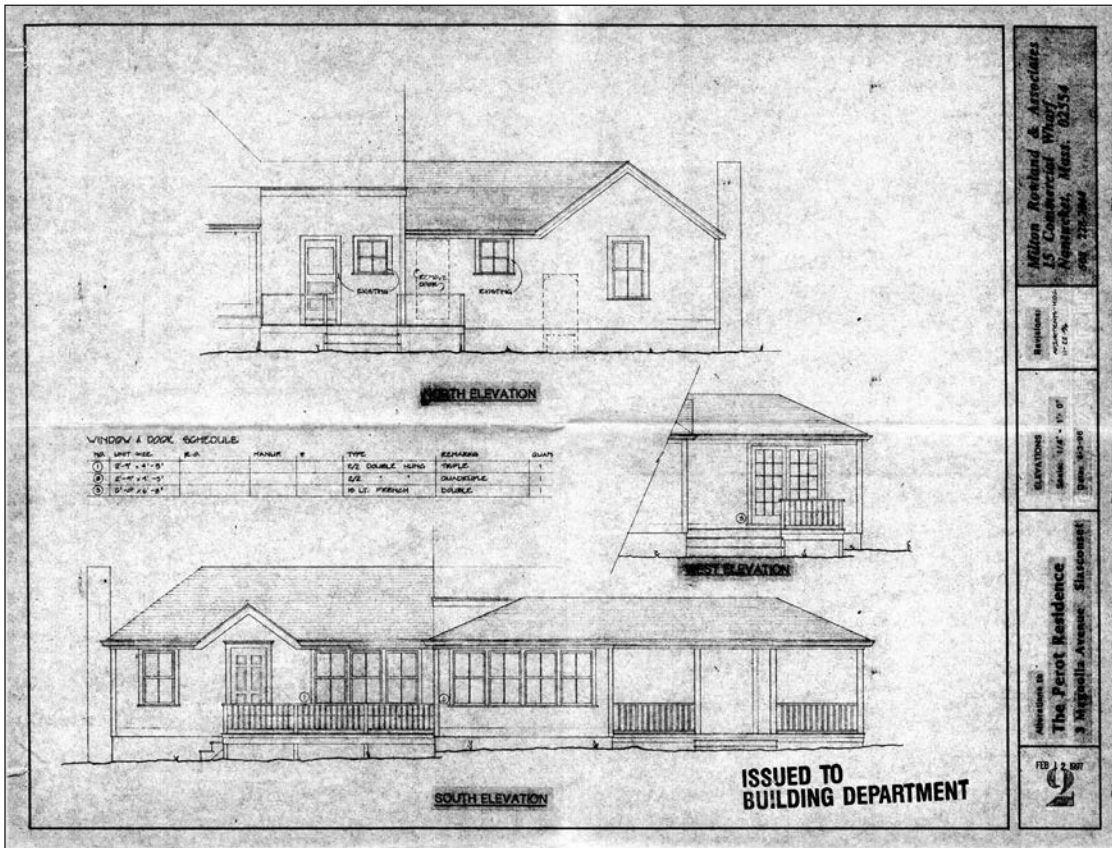
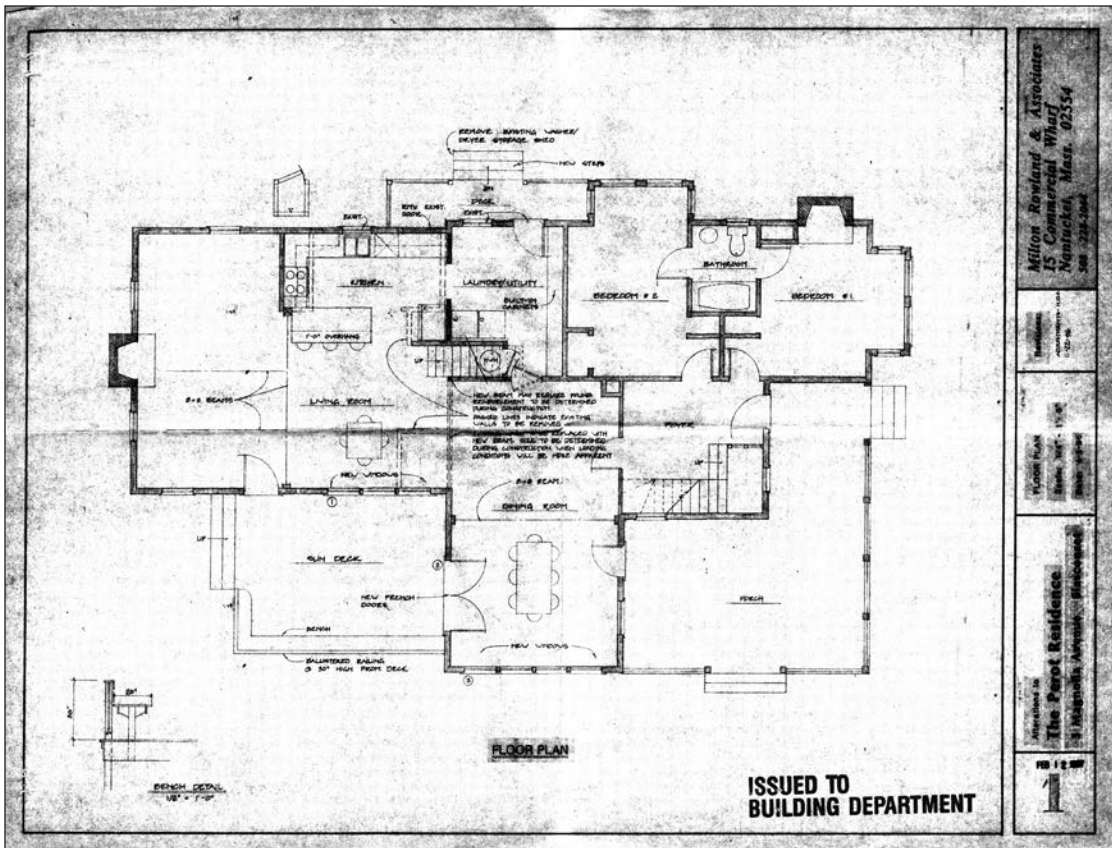
1888 Platt, Harry. *Map of the Village of Siasconset on the Island of Nantucket with enlarged site shown at right.*



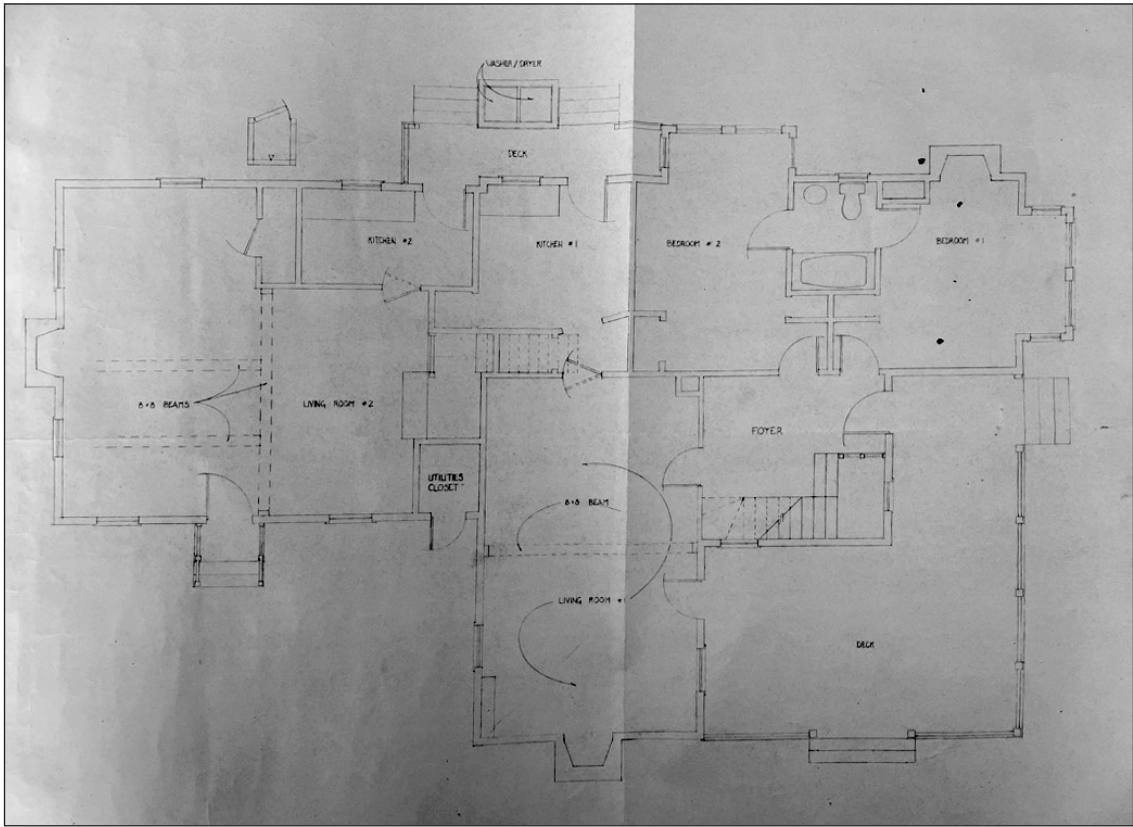


1909 Sanborn Insurance Company, Nantucket, Sheet 21 with enlarged site shown at right. No change from 1898 Sheet 15 and 1904 Sheet 19.

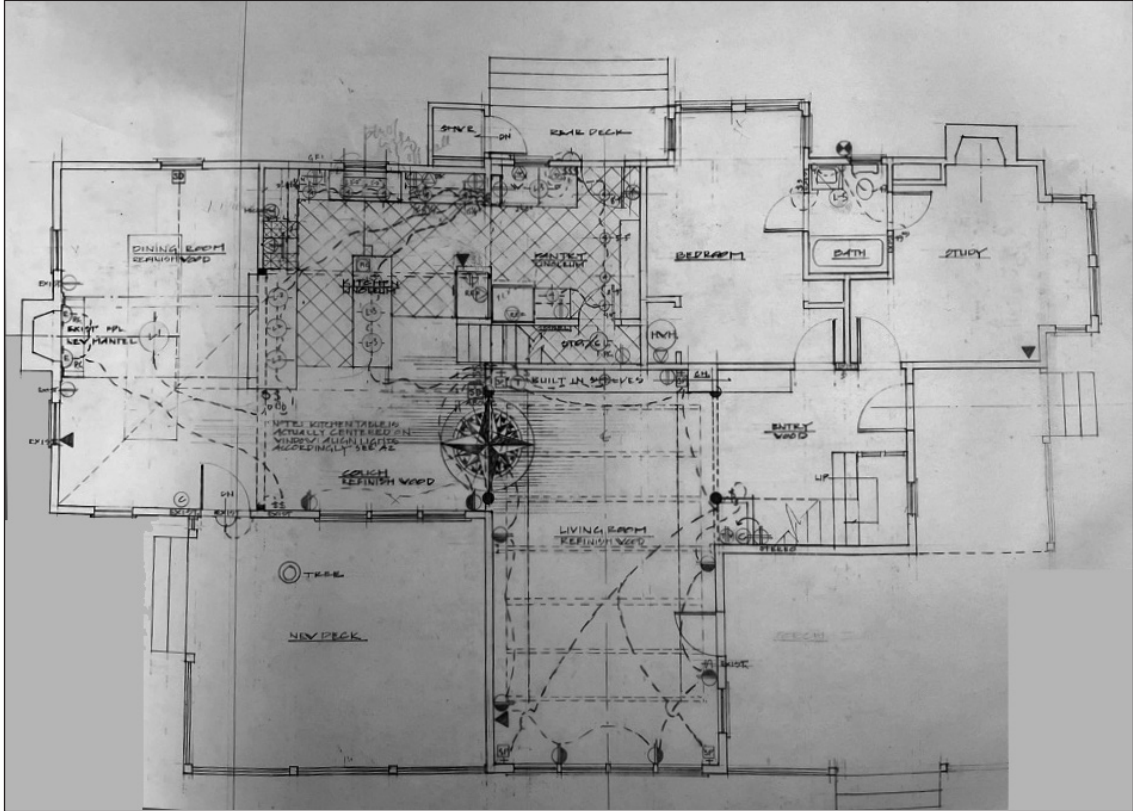




Milton Rowland & Associates, drawings 1 & 2, 1996-1997
 What work, if any, that was completed
 from these drawings, is not clear.



Existing conditions plan by Sanford Strauss Architects showing the house as a 2-family divided house.



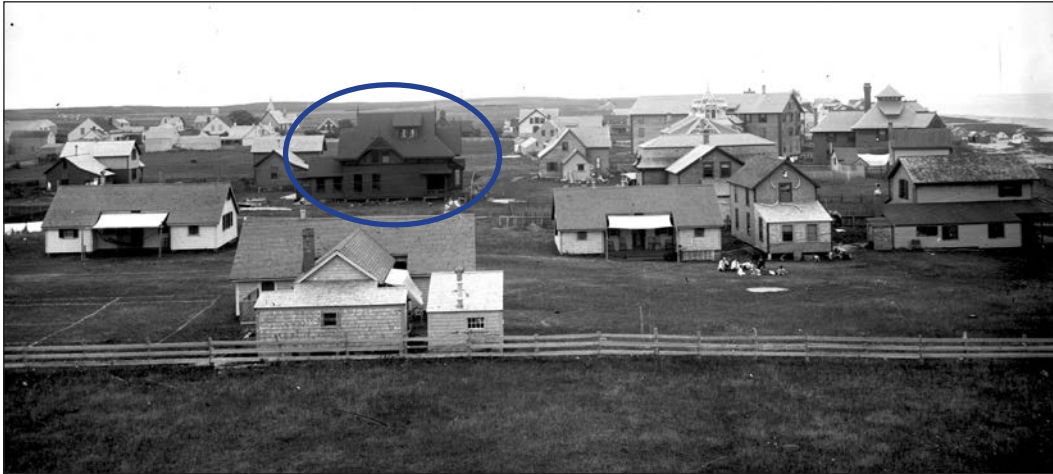
Sanford Strauss Architects, 1998 proposed floor plan drawing restoring the house back to a 1-family house.

6.3 Historical Photographs: Courtesy of the Nantucket Historical Association

GPN526: view of south elevation

PH23-54: 1930s aerial looking east

p20940: partial distant view of south elevation first floor windows, after 1909-1923



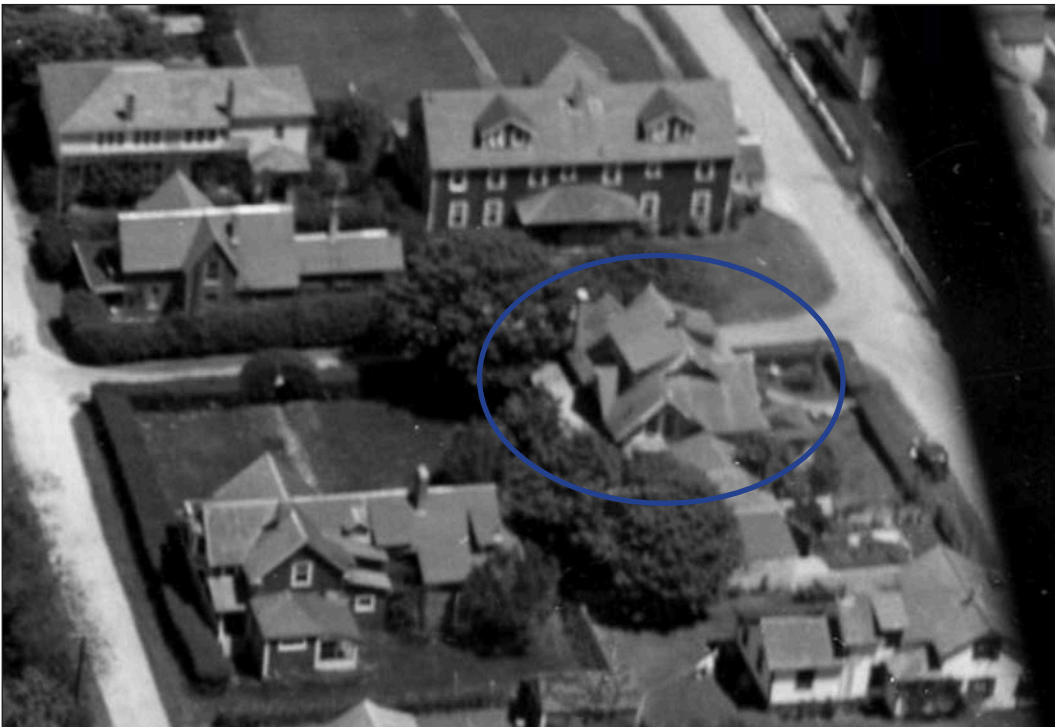
GPN526: view of south elevation



Close-up view of GPN526



PH23-54_aerial view looking east, 1930s



Close-up view of PH23-54



p20940: partial distant view of south elevation first floor windows,
after 1909-1923

6.4 Year 2023 Photographs



South Elevation



South Elevation



South Elevation



South Elevation



South & West Elevations



Shed at Northwest



North Elevation



North Elevation



North Elevation



East & North Elevations



East Elevation



East Elevation



East Elevation



Front Door: Facing Laurel Avenue



Front Door



Front Door Hardware



Front Hall Stair



Front Hall Stair & circa 2000 Column



Front Hall



North Wall of Dining Room



Circa 2000 Dining Room, 2023



Circa 2000 Dining Room



Dining Room Compass Rose



Living Room



Living Room



Kitchen



Kitchen



Kitchen



Kitchen/Utility



Kitchen/Utility



Study/Office Fireplace



Bedroom First Floor



Bedroom First Floor



Bathroom First Floor



Study/Office



Front Stair to Second Floor



Front Stair to Second Floor



Second Floor Stair Landing



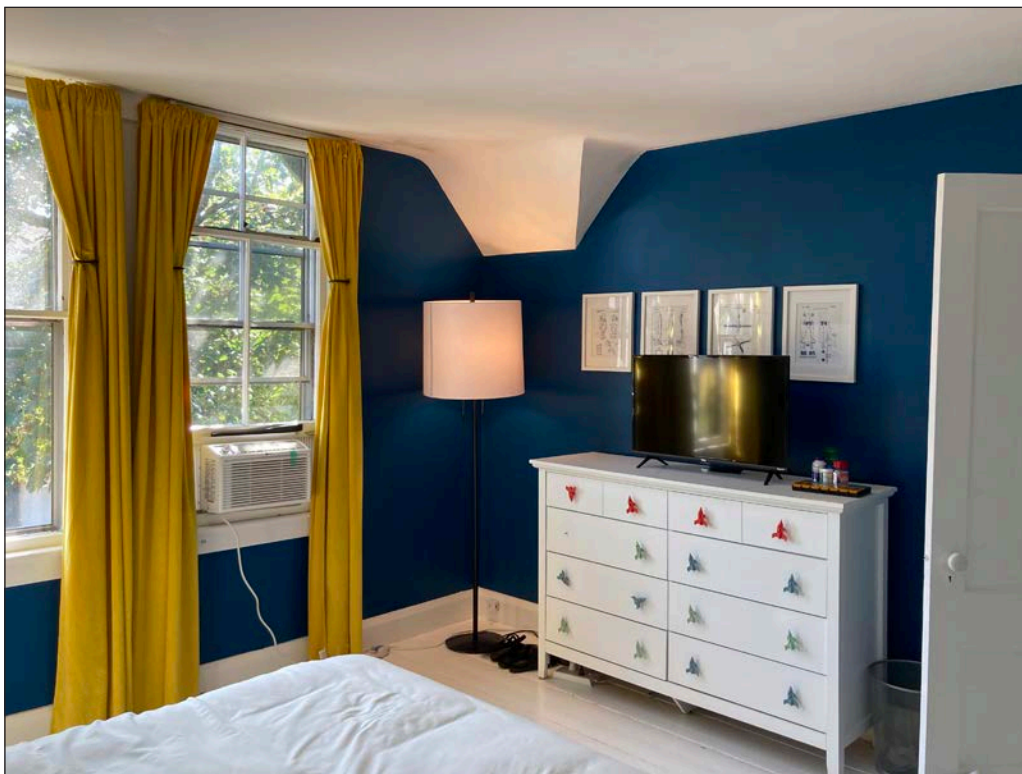
Second Floor Stair Landing



Second Floor Stair Landing



Second Floor East Bedroom



Second Floor East Bedroom



Second Floor South Bedroom



Second Floor South Bedroom



Second Floor Bathroom



Second Floor Bedroom



Second Floor Stair to Attic



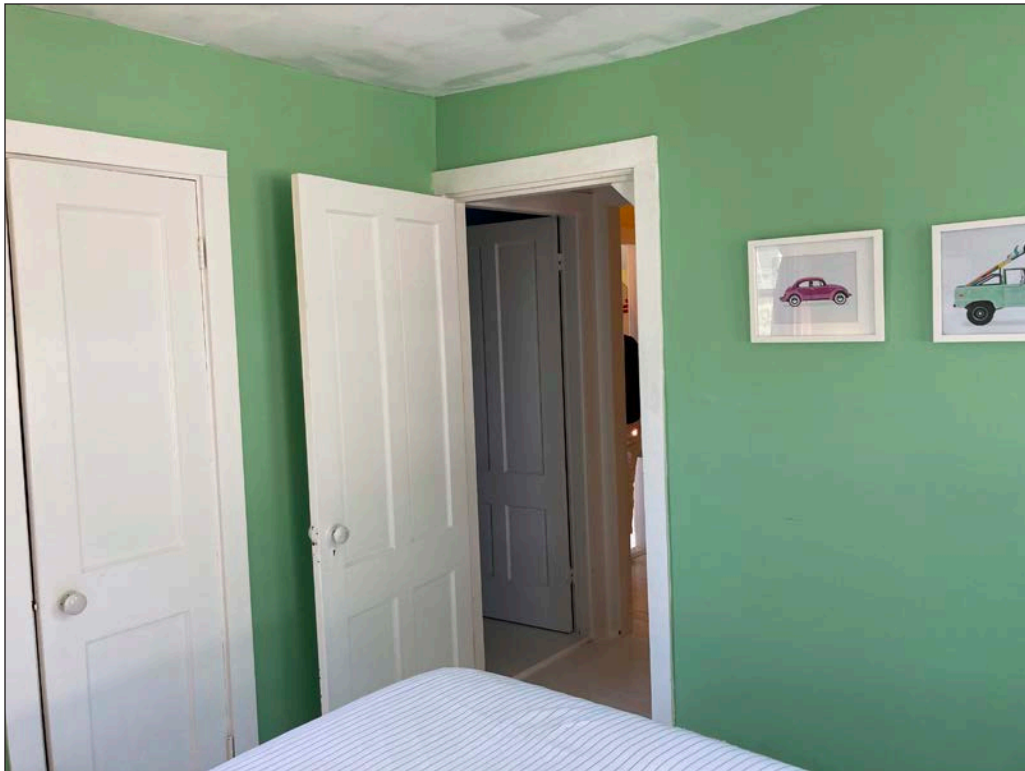
Second Floor Stair to Kitchen



Second Floor Northwest Bedroom



Second Floor Northwest Bedroom



Second Floor Northwest Bedroom



Second Floor North Bathroom



Second Floor North Bathroom



Second Floor Stair to Attic



Third Floor Stair to Second Floor



Attic/Third Floor Bedroom



Attic/Third Floor Bedroom



Attic/Third Floor Bedroom



Attic/Third Floor Bathroom

6.5 Chain of Title

Nantucket Registry of Deeds Book = NRD

- 1872 Swain to Robinson and Ellis
NRD Book 62, p. 123: Ann Swain to Charles H. Robinson and Franklin A. Ellis, 1872 (land only)
- 1892 Shores to Robinson
NRD Book 76, 314: Sarah Anna Shores (heir of Franklin A. Ellis) to Charles H. Robinson, 1892
- 1910 Robinson to Appel
NRD Book 92, p. 113: Charles H. Robinson to William N. Appel, 1910
- 1926 Appel to Elder
NRD Book 102, p. 596: William N. Appel to Robert D. Elder, 1926
- 1926 Elder to Gouin
NRD Book 103, p. 5: Robert D. Elder to Mary L. Gouin, 1926
- 1962 Gouin to Gill and Kendig
NRD Book 123, p. 236: Mary L. Gouin, widow, to Howard B. Gill and Isabel V. Kendig, 1962
- 1963 Gill and Kendig to Stone
NRD Book 125, p. 378: Howard B. Gill and Isabelle V. Kendig to Elizabeth Lee Stone, 1963
- 1975 Stone to Stone
NRD Book 150, p. 139: Elizabeth Lee Stone to Charles P. Stone, 1975
- 1981 Stone and Fierro to Connell
NRD Book 183, p. 276: Charles P. Stone and Elizabeth Lee Fierro to John B. Connell and Kincaid Perot Connell, 1981
- 1993 Connell to Connell
NRD Book 422, p. 300: John B. Connell and Kincaid Perot Connell to Kincaid Perot
- 2006 Connell to 3 Magnolia LLC
NRD Book 1045, p. 300: Kincaid Perot Connell to 3 Magnolia LLC, 2006
- 2021 3 Magnolia LLC to Bearded Lauriosaur LLC
NRD Book 1868, p. 202: 3 Magnolia LLC to Bearded Lauriosaur LLC, 2021