

JACKSON COUNTY CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCE SURVEY

1990 ADDENDUM FORM



T 37S R 1W S 21 TL 300
 Theme Agriculture; Architecture
 Common Name Hillcrest Orchard House
 Historic Name Parsons, Reginald House
 Address 3285 Hillcrest Rd.
Medford, Oregon 97501
 Present Owner Parson's Investment Co. %
Parsons, Judson
 Address 3285 Hillcrest Rd.
Medford, Oregon
 Original Use Residence
 Present Use Residence
 Date of Construction 1916
 Ranking: Primary

Date of Photo 6 April 1992 National Register (X) Yes Date 1984
 Negative No. KIV:10 Determination of Eligibility () Yes Date _____
 Slide No. KC:29 Statewide Inventory (X) Yes

See following pages

Recorded by Clay/Atwood Date 1979/1991

Sources Consulted:

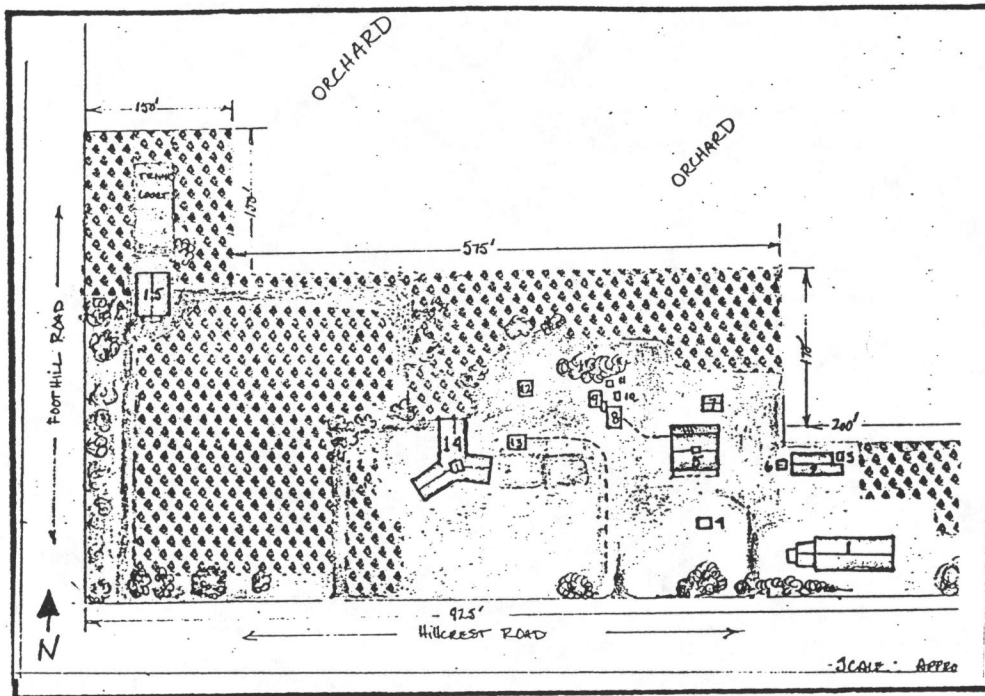
1992 Field Check: No changes noted

SHPO No. 379

JC No. 193

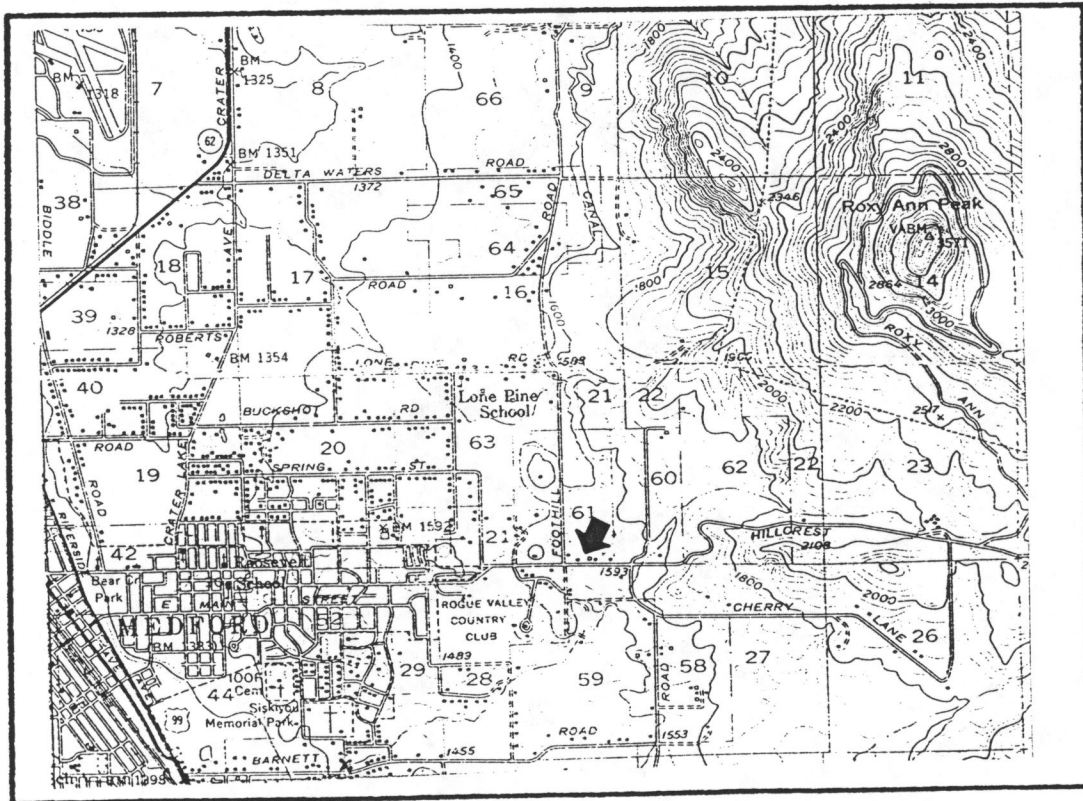
JACKSON COUNTY CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL RESOURCE SURVEY

NAME: Parsons, Reginald House



VIEW: _____

DATE OF PHOTO: _____



QUADRANGLE: Medford: 1954

SHPO NO _____

JC NO 193

FRANK CLARK INVENTORY -1982

SITE NO. 46a

IDENTIFICATION

Jackson County
 Other towns
 Grants Pass
 Central Pt.
 Medford
 Ashland

1. Historic name: Reginald Parsons House/Hillcrest Orchard
2. Common name: _____
3. Street address: 3285 Hillcrest Road
 City: Medford, Or Zip 97501 County Jackson
4. Legal Descrip: T 37S, R 1W, Section 21, APN 300
5. Present owner: Hillcrest Orchard, Inc. c/o Judson M. Parsons
 Address: 3285 Hillcrest Road City Medford, Or Zip 97501
6. Present use: Residence Original use: Residence

7. Nat. Reg. _____ Other _____

DESCRIPTION

- 8a. Architectural style: Period Colonial
- 8b. Briefly describe the present physical description and any major alterations.

Two story wood frame; Y-shaped plan; gable roof; wood shingle siding; projecting two-story wing on the north consists of porte cachere and screened sleeping porch; fan lights in gable ends of main arms of house; six-over-six double hung sash windows are framed by louvered shutters.



9. Const. date: 1916-17
 Estimated Factual
 10. Architect: Frank C. Clark
 11. Builder: _____
 12. Prop. size: _____
 or acreage _____
- Date of photo: May 1982
 Location of neg: SOHS
Roll 11: 10
 Slide no. _____
 Location of slide: _____

DESCRIPTION (CONT.)

Ranking: Primary.

15. Condition: Excelent Good _____ Fair _____ Deteriorated _____ Gone _____
16. Alterations: Addition of sleeping porch over porte cochere (1926).
17. Is the structure: Onits original site? Moved? _____ Unknown? _____
18. Surroundings: Open land _____ Scattered bldgs. _____ Densely built-up _____
Residential _____ Industrial _____ Commercial _____ Other Agricultural _____
19. Threats to site: None known Private dev. _____ Zoning _____ Vand. _____
Other _____
20. Related features: Surrounded by orchards to the north; farm buildings to the east.

SIGNIFICANCE

21. Historical and/or architectural importance (dates, events, and persons).

The Hillcrest Orchard House was the summer home of prominent Rogue Valley orchardist Reginald H. Parsons who bought the future site of Hillcrest orchard in 1908. Reginald and Maude Parsons made their permanent home in Seattle, Washington.

Parsons was born in 1872 in Flushing, New York. He married Maude Bemis of Newtown, Massachusetts, in 1901. The Parsons held extensive business operations in Seattle but travelled every year to spend summers in Medford. With the help of several good foremen, the Parsons family ran a well-managed orchard through the years. Parsons was instrumental in the founding of the Rogue Valley University Club and in the development of social and cultural life in the Medford area. Blossoms and Branches (Kay Atwood) contains an interview with Reginald Parson's son, George Parsons, concerning family and orcharding history. Reginald Parsons and his wife died in 1955.

See also State of Oregon Inventory of Historic Properties, Jackson County (Scott Clay) 1979.

22. Main theme of historic resource
 Architecture _____ Arts & Leisure _____
 Economic/Industrial _____ Exploration/Settlement _____
 Government _____ Military _____
 Religion _____ Social/Education _____

23. Sources (books, documents, interviews, surveys and their dates).

Building specifications (Hillcrest Orchard);
 Clark's account book (Louise Patterson); Medford
Mail Tribune 6/1/20; Jud Parsons interview (4/82);
Clay, Jackson County Historical Sites Survey
 (1979).

24. Date form prepared May 1982

Name Gail E. H. Evans
 Address P. O. Box 339
 City Jacksonville, Or Zip 97530
 Phone (503) 899-8216

Locational sketch map (draw and label site and surrounding streets, roads, and prominent landmarks):



UTM ZONE	UTM ZONE
EASTING	EASTING
NORTHING	NORTHING
SIGN	SIGN
SCALE	SCALE
QUAD NAME	QUAD NAME



County JACKSON

Theme 5c, 9, 10b, 10c

Name
(Common) Hillcrest Orchard House

(Historic) Parsons (Reginald H.) House

Address Hillcrest Orchard, 3285 Hillcrest Rd.,
Medford, Oregon 97501

Present Owner Parson's Investment Company
% Judson M. Parsons

Address 3285 Hillcrest Rd., Medford, OR 97501

Original Use Residence (summer)

Date of Construction 1916

Physical description of property and statement of historical significance:

The Reginald H. Parsons house is a two story, wood frame building which stands on the north side of Hillcrest Road, east of Medford, Oregon. This house is a sophisticated example of the Eastern Shingle Style, with Colonial Revival influences as seen in detailing of the trim, fanlights in the gable ends, and louvered shutters. The house has a "Y" shaped plan and a gable roof. The projecting two story wing, on the rear (north) elevation, is composed of a porte cochere, a second story screened sleeping porch, and an observation tower located at the intersection of the perpendicular gable roofs. Native sandstone was used in the construction of the foundation, chimneys, and the massive piers of the porte cochere. The house has six-over-one, double hung sash windows, and French doors, opening on to the screened front porch that runs across the front (south) elevation. A second screened, sleeping porch is on the west end of the second floor. The exterior is shingle siding. The house is placed in a park-like setting of manicured lawns, trimmed boxwood hedges, flower gardens, and Colonial Revival gate posts, along with lattice-work gates.

Reginald Hascall "Reg" Parsons was born in 1872 in Flushing, New York. In 1898, he graduated from the University of California, and three years later in June 1901, he married Maude Bemis of Newtown, Mass. The Parsons' had five children. The family continued to list Seattle, Washington as their place of residence, using Hillcrest as

-continued-

continue on back if necessary

Recorded by L. Scott Clay Date 03 April 1979

Photography by Marjorie Edens. S.O.H.S., Neg. No. 35mm-35-28

Sources consulted (continue on back if necessary):

Barry 'Nan' Parsons Day, "oral history interview, 28 February 1979, Southern Oregon Historical Society. Cordy, C.B. History of the Rogue Valley Fruit Industry, 1977, unpublished paper, Southern Oregon Historical Society.

Please enclose map. Township 37 ^N _S 1 ^E _W Section 21 Tax Lot 300

Physical description of property and statement of historical significance:

a summer home. Reginald's involvement with the Rogue River Valley, was the result of his financial investment in the area's new orchard industry. In 1908, he bought what has since been known as Hillcrest Orchard. Sections of the present 400 acre orchard were layed out in 1897 by Bill Stewart, son of pioneer orchardist, J. H. Stewart (see file sheets on the Colonel Gordon Voorhies House and Dillon R. Hill House). Two other business enterprises in the region owe their start to the Parsons interest, the Mountcrest Cattle Ranch near Hilt, California, and Pinnacle Packing Company, a major wholesale business since the 1920's in Medford's fruit packinghouse district.

The large orchard residence was built in 1916, replacing an earlier house. This Shingle style house, along with most of the orchard buildings (see file sheet on Recreation House, Barn and Packing House) and the families hunting lodge (see file sheet), near present day Howard Prairie Lake were designed by Frank C. Clark. Clark was a prominent Rogue Valley architect during the first half of the 20th century.

Reginald Parsons is remembered as a "meticulous man" who managed his orchard in a highly structured manner. The Hillcrest tradition of labeling the buildings with painted signs, such as, "BARN," "PACKINGHOUSE," and "WAGON SHED" is a result of his management philosophy.

Although the Parsons kept only summer residence in the area, they were influential in valley society of the era. They entertained frequently at Hillcrest, using the spacious home, tennis courts, recreation house, swimming pool, and gardens. An interesting historical object, kept on the orchard, is the 1912 custom-built, 10-passenger "Hillcrest Orchard" surrey. This horse-drawn vehicle was used to chauffeur family and guests between the town and the orchard.

Reginald was a member of the Seattle University Club and a charter member of the Rogue River Valley University Club, organized in 1910. He was instrumental in the Rogue River Valley University Club's hiring of a Japanese chef from the Seattle club. This lead to a number of Japanese families moving to the valley during the 1910's and 1920's. Many of these Japanese-American were interned at the Tule Lake "relocation camps" in California near the stateline during the second World War.

Another form of emigration that Reginald was partially responsible for was that of several "remittance men," slightly rebellious, bachelor sons of wealthy, eastern families. After hearing of the valley's potential, from friends such as Reginald Parsons, these families sent their sons to the area to settle down and learn the facts of business life. During this period, Medford was referred to as "The Ranch Colony" due to this colony of young men, and the acres of orchard ranches owned by them, which surrounded the town. Many of these gentlemen, such as Alfred and Leonard Carpenter, who had been houseguests and were family friends of the Parsons (see file sheets on the Alfred and Leonard Carpenter Houses), married and remained in the valley becoming prominent citizens influential in philanthropic, cultural, social, and business circles.

Reginald and Maude Parsons died within a month of each other, at their Seattle, Washington home in 1955. After Reginald's death, his business and personal papers were given to the University of Oregon, where they are part of the University's manuscripts collection.

Hillcrest is still a commercial orchard, under family ownership and managed in the same meticulous manner that it received under Reginald Parsons. The orchard, with its complex of related structures, shows the development and evolution of Rogue River Valley's orchard industry from the late 1890's to the present.

The main house of the Montcrest Cattle Ranch was constructed as Cole's Stage Station in the 1850's (see Colestin file sheet).