

# WASHINGTON COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

CITY OF TIGARD

RESOURCE NO: 260/815  
PRESENT OWNER: Tigard School District 23J T2S R/W Sec. 13 1/4 BA  
ORIGINAL OWNER: Durham School District TAX LOT #: 200 & 300  
ARCHITECT/BUILDER: \_\_\_\_\_ CONDITION: Good  
LOCATION: 8040 Durham St., Tigard CONSTRUCTION DATE: Ca.1920  
COMMON/HISTORIC NAME: Durham Elementary School  
USE: PRESENT Offices & Gym & Classrooms THEME: Education; Formal Schooli  
ORIGINAL School TYPE: Building

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Description of the resource and statement of historical significance:  
(Continue on back if necessary)

## ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Durham Elementary School, constructed in 1920 is a one story wood frame structure built in the Craftsman Style. It has a hip roof of composition shingle and exposed rafters. It is sided with tongue and groove and finished with cornerboards. One interior brick chimney is on the south facade. Windows of 1/1 double hung sash are seen singly and in pairs on all building facades.

The main entrance to the school, on the north facade, is covered by a gable roof with exposed rafters and purlins. This portico has square posts and an enclosed rail. Wooden steps lead to the porch. Similar small porticoed entries are on either side of the main porch. Other additions which have been made to the building include: a one story storage area on the east facade, a gabled roof over the back porch entry, and a breezeway on the west facade which connects the school building with the new classrooms constructed in 1951.

## CONTEXTUAL DESCRIPTION

The school is located on the south side of Durham Road, in the City of Tigard. To the north and west are 1940's residences. An open field is to the east, and to the south is a playground. Tall maple and pine trees align Durham Road on the school grounds. These trees were planted in 1906 and 1909.

(Con't.)

## Sources consulted:

- .Cotter, Vi. Interview. March 1984
- .Schilling, Elsie. "Durham School - Then and Now." Tigard School Dist. 23J
- .Hines, R.H.K. An Illustrated History of the State of Oregon. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1983 pp. 489-490

Recorded by: Demuth/McLaughlin Date: April 1984

PRESENT OWNER'S ADDRESS  
(If different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

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### ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Durham School, now known as the Durham Educational Complex, was constructed in September of 1920. It consisted, at that time, of two classrooms. The increase of students attending the elementary school, which reflected the growth and development of the Tigard area, required expansion of the school in 1937. A gymnasium, stage, two additional classrooms and a basement were constructed. The funding and labor for these additions was provided by the Federal Government through the Works Progress Administration.

Durham School was expanded one more time in 1951. Additional classrooms were added east of the existing school house and connected by a covered breezeway. This addition was built by Mr. Serge R. Persin who was from Oregon City. A year later one more room was added to this annex.

Little is known about the original Durham School, which was constructed in 1889, according to Mr. Harold Edwards, a neighboring property owner. The Durham School District was established on March 13, 1889. The Adam Shatter family donated one acre of land for the school building.

Mr. Fred Olsen, who attended Durham School from 1916-1920, gave Mrs. Elsie Shilling a description of the building. She included this information in a historical overview of the school; "Durham School - Then and Now." Mr. Olsen wrote the following:

"The Durham complex consisted of four structures: the main building (one room), a woodshed, and two 4'x 4' smaller structures at opposite corners of the yard, one 'His' and one 'Hers'.... Electricity was not available at that time in our area."

Durham School was named after Albert Alonzo Durham, who came to what is known as Tigard about 1869. Durham owned and operated a saw and grist mill. By 1908, the Durham mills were known as "Durham Station", a railroad stop on the Oregon Electric Railroad.

Previous to the Durham families move to Washington County, they resided in Lake Oswego where they owned a mill from 1850-1863. Durham had this mill built using money he made in the California gold rush during the year 1848.

Albert Durham was originally from New York, as was his wife, Marianda Almira White, who he married in 1836. The Durhams had five children, two of whom died. Their sons; George H., R.D., and S.H. made the arduous trip from New York across the plains with their parents, first arriving in Oregon City. The family relocated in Lake Oswego and then later moved to the Tigard area. In 1860, Mr. Durham was nominated for Representative to the State Legislature, to which he was elected by a wide margin.

(Con't.)

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ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Con't.)

Durham School is significant in its association with Albert Alonzo Durham, an early Oregon pioneer and businessman in what is now the Tigard Community. The school has been in operation since 1920, and continues to serve the Tigard area. Durham School has expanded as the surrounding community has grown and remains an important resource to the City of Tigard.



