

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Oregon	
COUNTY: Clackamas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	MAR 14 1973

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Ainsworth (Captain John C.) House

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
19195 South Leland Road  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Oregon City vicinity  
STATE: Oregon CODE: 41 COUNTY: Clackamas CODE: 005  
Oregon 9th Congressional District Representative Wendell Wyatt

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mrs. Albert H. Powers (Owner notified of proposed nomination 11-7-72.)  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
554 Warner-Parrot Road  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Oregon City STATE: Oregon CODE: 41  
97045

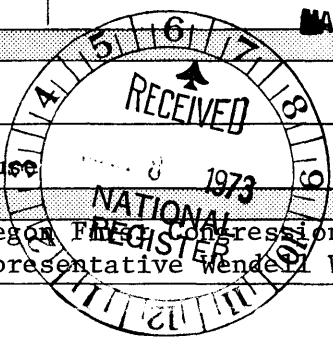
**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Clackamas County Courthouse  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Oregon City STATE: Oregon CODE: 41  
97045

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
DATE OF SURVEY:  
1934  Federal  State  County  Local  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
National Park Service  
STREET AND NUMBER:  
CITY OR TOWN:  
Washington STATE: District of Columbia CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated atop a slight knoll on the outskirts of Oregon City, the Ainsworth House commands a view of Mount Pleasant Heights south of the city. Built in 1851 for Captain John C. Ainsworth, a prominent pioneer steamship captain, merchant and financier, the house is one of the well-known examples of the Classical Revival style in Oregon because of its dramatic two-story portico,

The house is rectangular in plan, with gable ends oriented north to south, and it has an offset kitchen ell. Horizontal lap siding or clapboarding covers the south, east and west exterior walls. On the north face the pedimented gable end and the area protected by the portico have flush wall boards. The porch was designed as a tetrastyle-prostyle portico with a colossal order. The Ainsworth House is believed to be a unique example of the temple front type on a large scale west of the Rockies. The four columns supporting the pediment are octagonal rather than turned. To simulate fluting, lathes were attached to the planes of the octagon. A half balcony on the second story is independent of the columns. At the corners of the facade are two-story pilasters with elaborately molded capitals. The cornice of the rear gable end has returns. The gable roof has a boxed cornice and frieze that is divided into two registers by a strip of molding. An interior brick flue with corbelled cap is located on the ridge of the roof,

Fenestration is unusual in that coupled openings are used on the sides of the house with double-hung sash windows with six lights over six. Openings of the three-bay facade are of the so-called French type extending to the floor line with sashes of six lights over nine. Lintels are slightly tapered and decorated with molding to suggest shallow pediments. The off-center entry serving a side stair hall consists of a six panel door with side lights and transom. Directly above it, a similar entry opens onto the balcony from the second story.

The interior of the house has been essentially unaltered. A projecting bay with sash windows was added to the east elevation to serve the dining room and a bedroom above. The current owner partially restored the house in 1965 and has operated it for the past several years as a house museum accessible on a regular basis during the summer and by appointment,

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

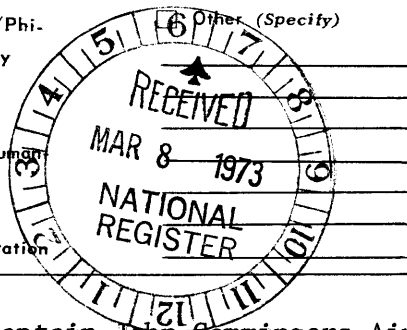
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) ca. 1851

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce     | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1851, the year after his arrival in Oregon, Captain John Commingers Ainsworth built his large house that was one of the most fully-developed examples of the Classical Revival style in Oregon. Captain Ainsworth took a leading role in commercial development of the Pacific Northwest.

Born and raised in Ohio, Ainsworth was thirteen years old when his father died. He immediately began to earn his own living as a storekeeper. When still in his teens he was employed on the Mississippi and gained rapid promotion, becoming a pilot and subsequently master of a passenger steamship plying between St. Louis and up-river points. Attracted to California in 1850 by the gold rush, Ainsworth was in Sacramento when offered the command of a new steamer that was under construction at Milwaukie, Ore. Ainsworth came to the state late in 1850 to take command of the Lot Whitcomb, the first steamer built on the Willamette River, and the first steamer to ply a regular route on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. From this point Ainsworth's mercantile activities grew in proportion to the rapid settlement of the country, and it was at this juncture that he ordered his house built south of Oregon City. Remarkably elegant for the period and conditions, his house was for a time a center of hospitality. When Portland displaced Oregon City as the center of trade and commerce, Ainsworth sold his house and moved to Portland to manage his business dealings down river.

Ainsworth helped organize the Oregon Steamship and Navigation Company, and was its leading spirit until the company merged with the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company. Ainsworth became president of the new corporation and remained at the helm until 1881, when the Henry Villard syndicate purchased the operation. However, Captain Ainsworth's connection with transportation interests were not terminated. He was a factor in the construction of the Missouri Pacific Railroad from California to the South. As the years passed and the Northwest developed he made extensive investments in real estate in Tacoma on the southern end of Puget Sound in Washington and he promoted the building of a railroad between Puget Sound and the terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad on the Columbia River.

In 1881 Ainsworth erected the Ainsworth Block in downtown Portland and later extended his activities to Oakland, California. He established the Central Bank in that city and remained its president until his death in 1893. In 1883 he organized the Ainsworth National Bank of Portland. Many of the most important Portland business projects of the day were backed by Ainsworth. He was also instrumental in the development of Redondo Beach, one of the fashionable seaside resorts of Los Angeles. By the end of his career, Ainsworth was well recognized for his business acumen among eastern financial circles as well as those of the West.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

"Ainsworth House Possible Landmark," Oregonian (June 18, 1970), 24.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Ross, Marion D., "Architecture in Oregon, 1845-1895," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol. 57, No. 1 (March 1956), 40.  
 Scott, Harvey W., History of the Oregon Country, Vol.2 (Cambridge: Riverside Press, 1924), 273-274.  
 Johansen, Dorothy O., Empire of the Columbia (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), 280.  
 Corning, Howard McKinley, ed., Dictionary of Oregon History (Portland: Binford and Mort, 1956), 5. 152, 186.  
 Caufield, Vara, "Ainsworth House," Oregon Historic Landmarks (Portland: Oregon Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1957), 38-39.  
 Johnston, Dick, "Ainsworth Home Now Memorial to Colorful Old Salt," Oregonian

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (September 5, 1965), HG7.

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees	Minutes Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "	45°	19'	44"
NE	° ' "	° ' "	122°	36'	12"
SE	° ' "	° ' "			
SW	° ' "	° ' "			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 9.5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



HM 10/5019340 0610  
SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Paul Hartwig, Assistant Park Historian

ORGANIZATION: Oregon State Highway Division DATE: February 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: State Highway Building

CITY OR TOWN: Salem STATE: Oregon 97310 CODE: 41

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature]

Title: Administrator of Highways

Date: FEB 27 1973

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 3/26/73

ATTEST:

[Signature]  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 3/21/73

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE		Oregon
COUNTY		Clackamas
FOR NPS USE ONLY		
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE	
	MAR 14 1973	

*(Number all entries)*

AINSWORTH (CAPTAIN JOHN C.) HOUSE

2. Location

The Ainsworth House is located in the NE 1/4 Sec. 7, T. 3 S., R. 2 E. of the Willamette Meridian, in Clackamas County, Oregon.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

1970

Parks and Recreation Section  
Oregon State Highway Division  
Salem, Oregon 97310

Code: 41



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

6/21/90

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

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Ainsworth, Captain John C., House

Clackamas County, OREGON

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVAL

for Keeper *Melvin Zyer*  
7/12/90

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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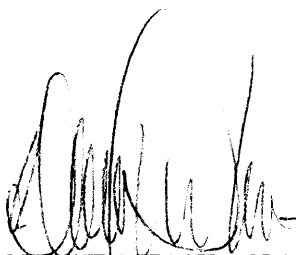
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AINSWORTH, CAPTAIN JOHN C., HOUSE  
19131 South Leland Road  
Oregon City  
Clackamas County  
Oregon

Control number: 73001573

Listing date: 03-26-73

The purpose of this continuation sheet is to verify that the correct address of the above-named property is 19131 South Leland Road.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: June 28, 1990





Capt. J. C. Ainsworth House  
Clackamas County, Oregon

NPS Number 3/14/73

Title: AINSWORTH HOUSE

Loc. CLACKAMAS, OREGON

NORTH FACE

①

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**



Capt. J. C. Ainsworth House  
Clackamas County, Oregon

NPS Number 3/14/73

Title: AINSWORTH HOUSE

Loc. CLACKAMAS, OREGON

EAST ELEVATION

②

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**