

1 RESOLUTION NO. 29082 RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
3 CITY OF PLACERVILLE DESIGNATING THE ROBERT BLAIR
4 HOUSE AS A HISTORICAL STRUCTURE5 WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Placerville has
6 established a policy of designating historic structures; and7 WHEREAS, the structure at 980 Pacific Street known as
8 the Robert Blair House was erected in 1869 and has been maintained
9 and improved upon with the architectural style of the gold rush
10 era; and11 WHEREAS, H. Lee and Doris Harmon, being owners of record
12 of said Robert Blair House have requested the structure be
13 designated a historical structure.14 BE IT, AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED that the structure known
15 as the Robert Blair House is designated a historic structure.16 The foregoing Resolution was introduced at a regular
17 meeting of the City Council of the City of Placerville held on
18 May 12, 1981, by Councilmember Tustin, who moved its
19 adoption. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Borelli,
20 and a poll vote was taken which stood as follows:

21 AYES: Borelli, Tustin, Tuttle, McIntire

22 NOES: None

23 ABSENT: Sullivan

24 The motion having a majority of votes "AYE", the
25 Resolution was declared to have been adopted and it was so ordered.26
27
28 ATTEST:29 James J. McIntire
MAYOR30 Leanne L. Miller
31 CITY CLERK
32

THE ROBERT BLAIR HOUSE

by
MARILYN FERGUSON

Prepared for Dr. H. Lee Harmon
~~3048 Cedar Ravine~~ 980 Pacific St
Placerville, CA 95667
April 13, 1981

THE ROBERT BLAIR HOUSE

The two story structure at the corner of Cedar Ravine and Pacific Streets was built by builder, George Bertschi for the Robert Blair Family and has become a landmark for five generations of Placerville citizens.

Basically unchanged except for an extension of the second story on the west side; a balcony addition on the north side; and an outside staircase leading to the balcony, the Robert Blair House is a well-preserved example of a turn-of-the-century Victorian. The stately yellow house has a center gable, clapboard siding, and ornamental V-shaped and fish scale shingles.

In April, 1980 the property was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. H. Lee Harmon, who began a large restoration and remodeling project that will convert the building into dentist and commercial offices. The building has approximately 2600 square feet.

During the remodeling period care is being taken to retain or reproduce the earlier wood trim, and to retain the eleven foot ceiling in the original front parlor which will serve as the lobby and waiting room. The two focal points in this room are 1/ The straight staircase to the second floor, with a balustrade of graceful design, which is placed at the south wall and 2/ the softly curving bay window area which provides a view of Pacific, Cedar Ravine, and Main Streets.

The original front entrance is framed by an open-veranda porch. At the second floor level a square window of geometric stained glass, tipped to resemble a diamond shape, has been placed like a center stone between the bay window and the center gable.

The original two story roof line runs west from the center gable, and when it meets the bay window it has a hip roof line on the west side. Also on the west side,

a one story kitchen area, with a fan-shaped roof, was part of the original construction. Mr. Frank Devine purchased the property from Robert Blair's daughter in 1944. During Mr. Devine's ownership he extended the second story over the kitchen with shiplap siding, making the addition very visible. The roof line was changed to three graduated gables.

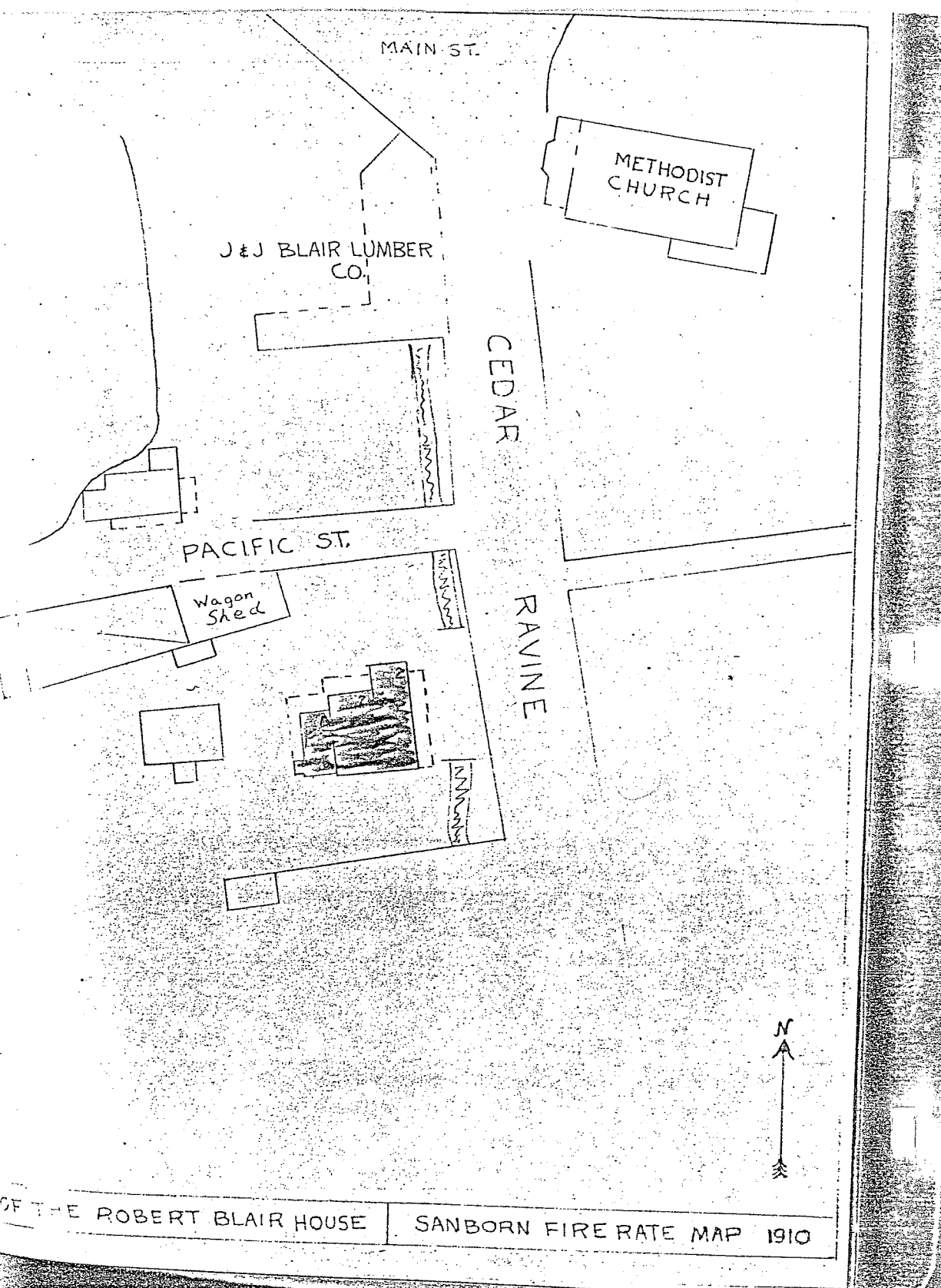
Dr. Harmon has relocated the main entrance to the north side of the house, facing Pacific Street, and a new street number will be assigned.

Robert Blair was the brother of John and James Blair, founders of the J & J Blair Lumber Company, and Robert was active in all of their enterprises. In 1877 Robert married Abigail Pearson, daughter of John McFarland Pearson, founder of the Pearson Soda Works. In 1918 Robert and Abigail's daughter Jessie married Wm. H. Combella, son of Wm. Hill Combella, founder of Combella's Clothing Store, thus joining three of Placerville's most prominent and influential families.

The Robert Blair House meets criteria to be entered into the official Placerville Historical Inventory Survey, i.e. 1/ The structure is strongly associated with important pioneer families of the area. 2/ The structure is an important visual point of reference to members of the community. 3/ The structure would be missed if it were gone, and does contribute to the "sense of time and place". 4/ The structure is an integral part of the streetscape. 5/ The architectural style is a good representation and is typical of what is commonly known, among local historians, as a "Blair House".

Prepared by Marilyn Ferguson
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April, 1981

DATE	HIGHLIGHTS OF OWNERSHIP	NAME	BOOK	PAGE
4-6-1869	S. & Geo. Williams TO Sam J. Ensminger		S	495
4-16-1876	S. J. Ensminger TO Robert Blair		T	246
1-30-1921	Robert Blair TO Abigail Blair		93	305
10-5-1925	Abigail Blair TO Jessie Combellaack ALSO Jessie Combellaack TO Abigail Blair and Jennie Blair in joint tenancy with right of survivorship.		118	14
1-17-1936	Jennie W. Blair and Abigail Blair -- Quitclaim		118	16
2-7-1944	Jennie Blair & Jessie Combellaack TO Frank & Vesta Devine		142	305
1-31-1952	Frank & Vesta Devine TO James & Eliz Spencer		212	257
11-20-1961	James & Eliz Spencer TO Martin & Helen Baer		304	533
4-24-1970	Martin & Helen Baer TO Wm & Anne Steward		568	413
9-13-1973	Wm & Anne Steward TO Al & Dorothy Brandalise		982	492
1-2-1980	Al & Dorothy Brandalise TO H. Lee & Doris Harmon		1220	582
			1864	113





BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Files of Marilyn Ferguson and Jane Schlappi.
Mountain Democrat Newspaper.
Official Records of El Dorado County.

Sanborn Maps.
Picture Collection of the Heritage Association of El Dorado County.

1. Historic Name (if known) The Robert Blair House Yr. 1897 Builder Geo. Bertschi

2. Common Name (if known) _____

Street Address 930 Pacific ~~2043 Cedar Ravine~~ Street City Placerville State CA

Zip 95667

Legal Description Assessors Parcel #3:241:52 Lot 1 Block 22, Placerville Townsite

Threat to Structure: Neglect _____ Development _____ Public Works _____ None X
Unknown _____ Other _____

3. Present Owner H. Lee and Doris Harmon Address 555 Cribbs Rd. City Placerville
State CA Zip 95667

Present Use _____ Private _____ Public _____ Commercial X Other _____

Original Use Private Resident Unoccupied _____ Other Past Uses Rentals and Offices

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

4. Number of Stories: 1 _____ 1 1/2 _____ 2 X 2 1/2 _____ Basement _____ (_____)

5. Foundation: Stone X Brick _____ Slate _____ Other *replaced with cement Over Layer

6. Exterior Walls: Wood _____ Shiplap _____ Clapboard X Board & Batten _____ Other _____
If Shingle _____ Plain _____ Fishscale _____ Other _____

Sheathing _____

****Second story addition.**

Stone _____ Brick _____ (Pattern _____) Fieldstone _____ Slate _____

Riverrock _____ Placerite _____ Other _____

Design or Detail Ornamental shingles at north, south and center gables

7. Roof Shape: Gable: High _____ Medium X Low _____ Center X Offset _____ Cross _____
Hipped _____ Bellcast _____ Gable Ends _____
Special Features _____

Hip: High _____ Medium _____ Low _____ Pyramid _____ Truncated _____ Saltbox _____
False Front _____ Bellcast _____ Flat _____ Steeple _____
Other _____ Special Features _____

8. Roof Material: Wood _____ (_____) Tile _____ Metal _____ Slate _____ Composite _____
Other _____

9. Chimneys: 1 X More than 1 _____ (_____) Terreacotta _____ Brick _____ (_____)
Stone _____ (_____) Other _____

10. Features of Building: (Indicate by number or description)

Dormer Shape None

Roof Eaves Plain boxed cornice with frieze

Roof Trim Plain boxed cornice with frieze

Special Features _____

Ornamentation _____

11. Windows: Shape Square Corners

Detail _____

Side Structure Plain

Sills Some sills even with window openings. Some extend beyond side of opening

Division Two sash

Panes: Stained _____ Leaded _____ Beveled _____ Other _____

Special Features See Narrative Report

12. Main Door: Shape Four Panels with Square Corners Not Original

Detail _____

Side Structure Side panels have glass in upper panels Panes Stained Glass

~~Threshold~~ Transom Panels. Glass divided by small wooden upright bars

Glass Panes: Stained X Leaded _____ Beveled _____ Other _____

Special Features _____

13. Property Features: Trees _____

Fences _____

Walls Stone retaining wall running north and south at the west boundary of property

Sidewalks _____

Tunnels or Cellars _____

Other Buildings _____

Other Features _____

14. Main Porch Open-veranda Porch Supports Four columns

15. Stair Shape Straight approach with open railing

16. Additional Building Features: Exterior Chimney _____ Turret _____ Balcony X
Additional Porch X Other _____

17. Placement to Other Buildings
None X Main Structure _____

18. Plan _____

19. Additional Comments:
See Narrative Report