

# INFO ON OLD HOUSE THAT IS FALLING DOWN

porch.

Around 1930, the rectangular plan became t-shaped when a one-and-one-half story gable roofed addition was constructed to the rear (the addition was attached to a barn constructed at the same time, creating a dog-run between the two buildings). The back addition incorporated two more gable roofed dormers, but with paired double-hungs. A Prairie-style window was added to the first floor at this time. Original weatherboard siding was removed and lapboard siding was applied. Wood shingles were applied to the upper floor of the East and South elevations.

Within the last 20 years, five 1/1 double-hung windows on first floor west (front) and south (side) elevations were replaced by various double-hung and single-light fixed wood sash windows. One small casement window was replaced by single-light aluminum slider, second floor, north. And, paired, single-light, wood sash, double-hung windows were replaced with aluminum sash, second floor, south. Within the last five years, the enclosed front porch was removed and replaced with an open porch constructed with pressure treated lumber.

## Interior Description

Significant features: Architrave trim surrounds all windows in the front portion of the house. Four-panel wood doors remain in many rooms. Original or early floor boards remain in the upper level of the front section. Hand-hewn beams are visible in the basement. The circa 1930 addition retains T&G beveled walls in the kitchen, stairwell and upper hall. The addition retains floor boards and plain casings around doors and windows. The kitchen also retains built-ins from this period.

Alterations and Approximate Dates: Original window trim was lost when windows were converted between 1890-1900. Interior four-panel doors likely date from this period, but may be original. Most alterations likely occurred when the house was enlarged and remodeled in 1930: the stairwell was moved between the two additions, the front parlor was opened to a new dining room, interior bathroom was installed, floor boards laid over original floors on first floor. Few light fixtures, from any period remain in the house.

## Significance



Why is the property significant? The Robert and Nancy Morrison farmhouse gains its significance for its association with the original owners as well as William and Elizabeth Morrison and Harold and Nancy Tagg (Criterion B).

Robert and Nancy Morrison were among the earliest settlers on Clatsop Plains (now a part of Warrenton), acquiring their 640 acre donation land claim in 1846. They came west, starting in 1844 from Missouri. Robert was one of the captains of the wagon train and had two teams, one driven by John Minto. Robert was a pioneer in raising grain on Clatsop Plains, operated a small saw mill near Seaside (the first on the plains), was an officer in the Cayuse War, deputy sheriff of Clatsop County and elected to the legislature of the State of Oregon. Robert and Nancy donated 10 acres to assist in the building of the First Presbyterian Church across the highway from their home. The church previously met in their home and is considered the first Protestant church west of the Rocky Mountains.

The Morrison's son William inherited the farm after his father's death in 1894. William was one of nine children born to Robert and Nancy and claims to be the first white child born in the county. William owned 430 of his father's donation claim. William married Elizabeth Tagg in 1895. He later used 250 acres for cultivation while the rest were devoted to raising 32 high-grade dairy cows.

William's significance is based on continuing his family's work and influence in the political, agricultural and educational development of



Clatsop Plains--an area which at first surpassed Astoria in attracting pioneers. William was a trustee of the town of Clatsop and was a county road supervisor. He maintained one of the first farms on Clatsop Plains and was active in its agricultural political life as a charter member of the county's first grange, the Clatsop County Grange #156 in 1874. Furthermore, he was a member of the school board. Early Clatsop Plains schools, such as the Morrison School, were preferable to Astoria schools. Well-to-do Astoria residents sent their children to Clatsop Plains to be educated rather than educate in their home city.

Prior to dying in 1929, William was at age 84, the oldest living white resident born on Clatsop Plains. It is believed William and Elizabeth altered the house around 1895 and added Victorian elements to it at that time (i.e. 1/1 double-hung windows, dormer windows and an enclosed front porch).

William and Elizabeth's only child, Nancy, married Harold Tagg in 1918. Harold was a distant cousin of Elizabeth Tagg. Harold and Nancy lived in the Morrison farmhouse with her parents. Harold took over the farm from William and operated Tagg Dairies. Then from 192\_, through 193\_, he owned and managed Tagg Motor Co., a Ford automobile dealership in Seaside. Harold also established a service station near his house in 1926, but it was destroyed by fire in 1930. A "well-known Clatsop County farmer" he maintained the farm until his death in 1984.

Nancy taught at Morrison School and was active on Clatsop Plains as a charter member of both the Pacific Grange (1910) and the Clatsop Garden Club. She also served as organist for the First Presbyterian Church which was organized by her grandparents. It is believed Harold and Nancy remodeled the back end of the house including a second story addition connected to a (hand-made) concrete block barn around 1930.

William and Nancy's son, Robert, owned the house and farm through 2003. The Morrison-Tagg farm is a designated Century Farm.

The design of the Morrison-Tagg farmhouse may qualify under Criterion C. It is significant as the oldest extant farmhouse on Clatsop Plains, which boasts three 1860-era farmhouses, none of which are intact. One of the farmhouses, the Goodwin-Wilkinson farmhouse (circa 1862), is listed on the National Register. Of the three pioneer houses remaining on Clatsop Plains, the Morrison-Tagg farmhouse is the most easily recognized as such. Its eclectic design includes elements from the Greek Revival, Queen Ann and Craftsman periods. Most of the alterations occurred between 1895 - 1930. Each of the historic alterations represent a family adapting its home during a 140 year period of continuous ownership. In 1974, ODOT determined, through a cultural property inventory, the house was eligible for the National Register.

>>Hello Jay, Hope all is well with you and your staff. I can not find >>the folder that describes the historic house at the ranch. Do you >>or John have a copy that you could mail to me? Thanks in advance >> >>

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