

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Date Listed 9-30-2014

NRIS No. 14000812

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Oregon SHPO

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Property

historic name _____

other names/site number Aloha Farmhouse

Name of Multiple Property Listing N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1080 SW 197th Ave. not for publication

city or town Beaverton vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Washington code 067 zip code 97006

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A B ___ C ___ D

 Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

8-4-14 Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
		site
		structure
		object
1	1	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: Vernacular

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: WOOD: Shake

other: _____

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Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The 1,516 square foot residence at 1080 SW 197th Avenue in Aloha, Oregon, referred to hereinafter as the Aloha Farmhouse, is a one-story residence with a partial, unfinished basement connected to an outbuilding with a covered patio, referred to historically as a loggia. Collectively, the three spaces form an irregular footprint, with a moderately sloped gable roof with the ridgeline oriented east-west. The wood-frame house is clad in narrow beveled siding, while the outbuilding is clad in wide, shiplap siding. The roof is finished in wood shingles and the foundation is concrete. It is a ca 1915 Craftsman-style residence that was renovated in 1944 and again ca 1946 with added elements that are consistent with Pietro Belluschi's design vocabulary for his Northwest Regional style residences.¹ The outbuilding that is attached to the residence was originally a two-room storage building, used as a fruit room and wood shed; it is still used for these purposes, but was connected to the house with a gable roof with exposed framing in 1944. The barn was moved to the property from a nearby acreage about 1980 and was remodeled at that time for a studio/office in the upper portion. An attached carport with a shed roof was added later (n.d.). The residence has excellent integrity to its Period of Significance, 1944 to 1948, the years that it was owned and renovated by master architect Pietro Belluschi, as a home for his family.

Narrative Description

Location and Setting

The residence is located within a .98-acre parcel in suburban Beaverton, at the intersection of SW 197th Avenue and SW Alderwood Court. Also on the lot, in the southeast corner, is a two-story barn with an attached carport with a shed roof. The residence faces north and is oriented toward the interior of the lot; the barn is oriented toward the north as well. The residence is accessed from a driveway off SW 197th Avenue, which is centered within the lot and passes north of the house, and then circles toward the south to access the barn. On the north side of the lot are the remains of an orchard, comprising half a dozen trees, and a large garden. South of the house, in southwest corner of the lot, is a large fenced yard. Toward the southwest corner is a small rise with mature trees and formal landscaping. In the southeast corner is the barn, whose ridgeline is oriented east-west. Mature trees, including a remnant orchard, and shrubbery occur throughout the parcel.

North, east and south of the one-acre parcel are two small subdivisions developed in the early 1980s, with curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. West of the parcel, on the west side of SW 197th Avenue, are individually developed parcels on which are located residences built from 1940 through to the present. The larger surrounding area is as follows. To the north and east is a small stream which is the focal point of two parks, Arleda and Chantal Village Parks. To the west is a variety of suburban developments, including townhouse and apartment buildings. To the southwest are some open spaces with individually developed suburban residential lots. To the south are numerous suburban-style residential subdivisions of various configurations. The property is north of the unincorporated town of Aloha, which is about midway between Beaverton and Hillsboro on the SE Tualatin Valley Highway.

SW 197th is a north-south road that provides the main access to the property. It has two travel lanes with no parking on the shoulder, and no sidewalks. The east-west arterial closest to the residence is W. Baseline Road.

¹ Historic USGS maps show the structure in place in 1915, the date of the earliest available USGS map for this area.

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In the following description, the residence, loggia, and outbuilding are described separately, even though they are combined in complex. The barn, which was moved to the site ca 1980, is non-contributing to the property and is described briefly here. Following these descriptions is a description of the grounds and landscaping.

Residence

The residence, which was constructed ca 1915, was renovated beginning in 1944 by architect Pietro Belluschi, who lived in the home with his family until 1948. The residence has an irregular footprint and a moderately pitched, side gable roof. A broken gable extends over a projecting bay that encompasses the kitchen and pantry, on the south façade; a similar extension is located over a study on the north side of the house. Knee brackets support moderate eaves. Exposed rafters are very narrow, with rounded ends. A broader fascia covers the gable ends. The residence is clad in narrow beveled siding over a raised, concrete foundation, with a wood shingle roof. A nearly 500-square-foot unfinished basement is entered from a twelve-step stair on the east side of the building, under the Loggia roof.

North façade. The main entry, which has a broad, solid wood, flush door, is centered on the north façade and is accessed via five wood steps with a wrought iron handrail. To the right is an 80 square foot deck that is part of the original remodel. To the left of the door is a bank of narrow, fixed windows which are over the sink in the kitchen. To the right is a bank of tall, narrow, fixed windows, which faces onto the dining room. To the right of these windows is a two-part, narrow, awning style window placed high on this façade and a three-part window of the same design. Mid-century windows have wood frames and narrow wood surrounds. Original windows, seen on the east and the east side of the north façade, have wider surrounds and crown molding.

East façade. The east façade, which faces SW 197th Avenue, is characterized by two, symmetrically placed, horizontally oriented windows with large fixed lights with a smaller single casement on the outside ends. Knee brackets support the eaves and two louvered vents are located under the ridgeline. There are no other openings on this façade.

South façade. The south façade, which faces onto the private, fenced yard of the residence, also presents a major entrance. Here another broken gable extends from the roof over an entry porch, on the west (left), and a bank of three fixed windows that faces onto an office space, to the east (right). The porch is accessed via four steps, three of which are open wood steps. The porch roof is supported by three narrow, simple posts in the southwest corner of the nearly square porch space. The entry door on the back wall of the porch, which is on the main body of the building, has a nearly square light in the upper portion. To its right is the three-part window under the eaves, which is similar to the two- and three-part windows on the north façade. To the east of the entry bay, on the main body of the building, are two individually placed, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. Visible here is a large, concrete chimney which extends from the roof slightly south of the ridgeline.

West façade. The west façade is partially obscured by the roof of the outdoor patio or loggia. Visible here is a secondary entry nearly centered on this façade, under the porch roof, accessed via three wood steps. A simple rail encloses the landing here. Steps continue down to the south, accessing the cellar. To the left of the door is a one-over-one-light, double-hung window. To the right of the entry are tall, paired, one-over-one-light, double-hung windows. Both of these windows are original to the building. As on the west façade, knee brackets support the eaves.

Interiors

The formal front entry to the house is on the north side, facing the driveway and orchard. Secondary entries are located on the east side, facing the Loggia, and the south side, facing the rear yard. On entering the house from the north side, one arrives in a roughly L-shaped open room with the dining room on the near right, the living room beyond, a large, open fireplace at the "apex" of the L to the left, and an open space, originally meant to be a dining area, to the near left. The house is replete with built-ins. On the east wall of the former dining area is a large, built-in china cabinet. Beyond the living room is a large opening with

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bookshelves above and two each side, which leads to a broad bay that serves as a study, overlooking the back yard.

About one third of the north façade of the building projects beyond the face of the main building. This houses the kitchen area, which has the sink facing a large two-part window overlooking the yard. To the east of the kitchen is a small room that serves as a pantry (formerly a bunk room for Belluschi's two sons). It contains a built-in closet that is similar to the other built-ins in the house.

Facing the east side of the house, the exterior entry from the Loggia at about the center of this elevation. To the right, in the northwest corner of the house, is a bedroom that is original (spatially) to the house. To the left is the pantry, mentioned above. Between the bedroom and the living room is a bathroom, also spatially original to the house. It is entered from both the east and west sides.

The addition on the west side of the house is entered from a doorway off the study. This leads to a narrow hallway that runs parallel to the west elevation of the living room along what was originally the west exterior façade of the house. Three rooms open off this hall, two bedrooms and a bathroom. The southerly secondary entry is at the south end of this hall.

The finishes in the house interiors are one of its most unusual features. The original (1944) portion of the house is finished in wood, including the floors, walls and ceiling. The floors are original, finished in wide, fir flooring. The walls are finished in wide, vertical, spruce boards. The ceiling is finished in narrower, shorter boards. Virtually all the rooms have wood built-in cabinets and closets. The fireplace was originally concrete with embedded vermiculite. It has since been altered and is now finished in stone. The ca 1946 addition to the house on the west side is finished in a rough stucco with a dropped ceiling. All woodwork is unpainted wood.

The Loggia

The Loggia is essentially a covered patio that was formed by creating a roof between the main house and the outbuilding to the east. The outbuilding is narrower in width than the residence and occupies the southeast corner of the building complex. The roof of the loggia is open, revealing exposed rafters, which are connected by a horizontal chord about halfway to the ridgeline, and topped by purlins and the sheathing to which the shingles are adhered. An east-west beam on each side of the open structure is supported by simple posts. One bay on the south side of the Loggia is enclosed and covered by vines. The floor is composed of a concrete slab. The ridgeline for the Loggia and outbuilding to the east is lower than the ridgeline of the house.

The Fruit Cellar/Wood Shed

The outbuilding that is connected to the main house by the Loggia roof existed on the site when it was purchased by Pietro Belluschi. Historically it functioned as a fruit cellar and wood shed, as it does today. Today it is fronted by an extension of the Loggia roof. The building is clad in wide, shiplap siding with corner boards. On the west side of the north façade, under the Loggia roof, is a large opening to the wood shed, which has no door. The interior is unfinished and it has a concrete slab floor. On the east side of the north façade is a five-panel door that accesses the fruit room. It is finished with shelves and has a rough concrete floor. There are no other openings on this structure. It is fronted by a deep overhang, formed by the north half of the gable roof. This overhang is supported by simple posts.

The Barn

The Barn was moved to the site from another location, and does not have a historic association with this property. It is located southeast of the house (which is sited roughly in the center of the parcel), in the far corner of the one-acre lot. Since being moved to the site, estimated to be in the 1980s, a large carport has been constructed on the west side of the building. The upper level was refinished into a studio space in the 1980s as well. The one-and-one-half-story, wood-frame building is not recorded further due to its lack of association with the site.

The Grounds

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The parcel contains the remnants of a historic orchard north of the driveway. Additional mature trees are clustered south of the residence in the rear yard and are part of a large planting bed. A particularly noteworthy tree is an old pear tree, located at the southeast corner of the house, now supported by poles. The remainder of the lot is in grass/lawn, with the exception of the formal landscaped areas. The lot is enclosed with a horizontal board fence on the north and west sides and the rear yard are enclosed with a chain link fence. The driveway is finished in asphalt. There are two wells on the property, both with hand pumps. Both are located east of the outbuilding.

Changes within the Historic Period

When Pietro Belluschi bought the property in April of 1944 he began to remodel it for his family's use. As he expressed in an article in *Architectural Forum*, "I don't know whether or not the sketch of the original farmhouse before remodeling carries all the nice feeling of a country slum which the place had when I purchased it. I will add in my defense that what I bought was the orchard, which is filled with all kinds of wonderful fruit trees, rather than the house. Since it was not possible to obtain propriety for a new house, it has become so livable and free of architectural pretense, that I am becoming quite attached to it."² The house was a Craftsman-style building with many of the elements of the style, constructed about 1915, but it was not a classic Craftsman bungalow in form.³

In the 1944 remodel Belluschi removed interior partitions in the Aloha Farmhouse to create a large, open, living-dining space that was also open to the kitchen, which was fitted into what was previously a secondary porch. The existing room arrangement of the secondary rooms was retained, although a bathroom replaced an earlier storage closet. Banks of windows displaying Belluschi's characteristic tall, vertical, fixed panes were added on the north and south sides of the living room. The southerly windows also helped to warm the space. A large corner fireplace with a dramatic concrete hood was added, anchoring the public spaces of the house. The existing fir flooring was retained, but the walls were clad in spruce and the ceiling with a contrasting wood. Built-ins were added throughout the house to accommodate storage, and "provincial" furniture was custom-made for the house, to enhance its rustic character. A new front deck, whose steps meandered down to the slightly sloping yard, anchored the building more firmly in the landscape. A new broad, flush wood door was added. Most dramatically, the existing fruit room and wood shed building was connected to the house with a gabled roof with exposed framing, creating a large, sheltered loggia. To accommodate access from the house to this indoor-outdoor space, a new secondary entry was added on the east façade and a new exterior access to the cellar was created at the southeast corner of the main building. This renovation was accomplished within the existing footprint of the house.

About two years later an addition to the east was constructed to accommodate bedrooms for the boys, who had previously occupied a small bunkroom off the kitchen, and a second bathroom. At this time a small study was also constructed off the living room, to the south, with expansive views of the back yard. A bank of windows, similar to that which had previously been added to the living room, was inserted and the gable extended, similar to the extension over the kitchen. The new bedroom wing was similarly accommodated with a simple extension of the easterly gable, complete with matching beveled siding and re-instatement of the original knee brackets on the house. While the footprint was now enlarged, the simple form of the vernacular structure was retained, while details such as horizontally oriented, fixed and casement windows were added.

Changes after the Historic Period

Very few changes have taken place to the building since Pietro Belluschi and his family left in 1948. When Belluschi remodeled the structure in 1944 it had an asphalt shingle roof; it now has a wood shingle roof. The front entry stairs have been slightly re-configured (n.d.), but the small deck is intact. Stone cladding has been added to the fireplace hood on the interior.

² "Remodeled Farmhouse," *Architectural Forum*, May 1946. See Figure 20 for a sketch of the original farmhouse.

³ The earliest historic USGS map that shows the house is dated 1915.

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The qualities of integrity that remain intact for the property are as follows. The property's location is intact. While the property at the time of its 1944 remodel was six acres in size, the site is still one acre, allowing mature vegetation, including the remnant orchard, to remain intact. The barn that is located on the property today was once located on nearby Beaverton Creek. It is non-contributing to the site, but does not detract from it. Therefore the property largely retains its immediate setting, although the larger setting has been developed with suburban development. The design of the residence, both the exterior and interior, is intact and reflects its period of significance of 1944 to 1948. Very few changes have been made. The materials and workmanship displayed on the building are intact. The residence displays its original cladding and material, which were retained by Belluschi in the 1944/1946 remodel. Windows on the rear facades date from the original building; windows and entries added by Belluschi in the historic period are also in place and intact. Finally, the feeling and association of the building is intact. The aesthetic sense is nearly completely intact from its period of significance. Its association is also in place, as it still serves as a single family home and retains its use as a suburban/rural property, with fruit trees, a large garden, and chicken yard.

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1944-1948

Significant Dates

1944, Property purchased

1948, Property sold

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Pietro Belluschi

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

N/A

Architect/Builder

Belluschi, Pietro, architect (remodel)

Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance extends from 1944, when Pietro Belluschi purchased the property and began renovating the house, until 1948 when he sold it and moved back to Portland.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary) N/A

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Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Aloha Farmhouse is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B, in the area of Architecture, for its association with architect Pietro Belluschi, Oregon's most renowned 20th century architect. The residence is one of three that Belluschi designed or remodeled for his family's own use, and the only extant residence that retains integrity.⁴ The house is closely associated with the most productive period in this first phase of Belluschi's long career, in which he established a reputation that ultimately led to his appointment as Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and his later career as a consulting architect on some of the most high-profile projects in the country. It is significant at the local level.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Pietro Belluschi began his architectural career in 1925 at the office of A.E. Doyle, Portland's most prestigious architecture firm at the time. Although trained as an engineer, he shortly thereafter became the firm's chief designer, reflecting his native talent. Two major commissions in the 1930s placed him in the national spotlight, even as work slowed during the Great Depression. Belluschi used the time to become established in Portland art and architecture circles, forge personal and professional friendships, and explore Oregon's countryside. He and fellow designers John Yeon and Van Evera Bailey also established the beginnings of the Northwest Regional style of architecture in these years, the Oregon interpretation of Regional Modernism that thrived on the west coast, in contrast to International Modernism as it developed on the east coast and in southern California.

Belluschi developed a design approach and an architectural vocabulary in these years that he first applied to his own home in Council Crest (1936-37), perfected in the design of the Jennings Sutor house (1937-38), and later brought to bear on the remodel of the Aloha Farmhouse, his second personal residence. He continued to achieve national recognition for the residences he designed in the early 1940s, even as large scale defense housing and related facilities occupied the Belluschi office in the early years of World War II. By 1943, he bought out his partners at A. E. Doyle and formed his own firm, Pietro Belluschi, Architect, and moved the office into a modest industrial building that he had remodeled for this purpose, in a neighborhood west of downtown Portland. The new firm was announced in *Time* magazine, in an article that lauded his work in the Northwest Regional style.

About the same time, Belluschi bought the six-acre Aloha Farmhouse property, also west of Portland, in what was at the time rural Washington County. Belluschi's two boys, age three and five, were outgrowing the family's 750-square foot home at Council Crest, in Portland, and Belluschi harbored fond childhood memories of summers at a relative's farm in Italy. He particularly loved the old orchard on the property. These were the war years, however, and restrictions on materials and civil development influenced what could be built. Utilizing what he had learned from his residential commissions, Belluschi remodeled the farmhouse in 1944 and again about 1946, to accommodate his growing family.

At the same time, in the years that he lived in the farm house (1944 to 1948), the Belluschi office was designing and constructing some of its most renowned projects, including the ground-breaking Equitable Building (1944-48), known for its use of aluminum and tinted, thermopane glass, and a number of other technical innovations; and the highly regarded Burkes House (1944-48). It was also a very prolific period. Additional commissions in these years included commercial buildings (U.S. National Bank of Portland, The Oregonian Building, and Pacific Telephone and Telegraph headquarters, as well as smaller buildings such as

⁴ Belluschi's first personal home in this period, a 1936-37 residence in the Council Crest neighborhood in Portland, has been altered numerous times. The second home that he remodeled in this period (1948), in the Dunthorpe neighborhood in Portland, has been demolished. His 1920 office building, which he remodeled in 1943 and 1947, has also been demolished.

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the Waddles Drive-In Restaurant); churches; educational buildings; hospitals; residences; and recreational properties. The national architectural press vied for photographs of his projects, and the firm was extensively profiled in *Progressive Architecture* in 1949, as well as appearing in the pages of *Time* magazine and *Life*. It was this busy and creative period that set the stage for his future career.

Belluschi's wife Helen did not like the isolation of the Aloha Farmhouse and in 1948 they sold the residence and moved back to Portland, where he renovated another house for the family in the Dunthorpe neighborhood. Belluschi intended to build a new residence on the parcel, but not long afterwards he accepted a position of Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and moved back east. He would remain on the east coast until 1973, pursuing a national-level consulting career on such projects as the Julliard School and St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco, in addition to his teaching responsibilities. In 1972, he bought the Burkes residence and in 1973 moved back to Portland with his second wife, where he continued to pursue architectural consulting until shortly before his death in 1994. As chronicled by his biographer, architectural historian Meredith Clausen, in this house sited high above Portland, with panoramic views of the city and Mt. Hood, he was able to recreate the serenity he once sought at the Aloha Farmhouse.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

Profile of Pietro Belluschi; the Early Years

Pietro Belluschi was born in 1899 in Ancona, Italy, on the Adriatic Sea, and studied engineering at the University of Rome. When he finished his studies in 1922, he was awarded a scholarship to study at Cornell University for a year. After earning his second engineering degree, he made his way to the west coast, where he worked briefly assisting an electrical engineer at the Bunker Hill and Sullivan Mining Company in Kellogg, Idaho.⁵ By this time, Belluschi knew he wanted to practice architecture. He obtained letters of introduction to several west coast firms and was hired by the Portland firm of A. E. Doyle. A. E. Doyle was one of the most respected and successful architectural firms in Portland, whose work would come to characterize the early twentieth century era of development in Portland.⁶

In his early years with the Doyle firm, in the mid-to-late 1920s, Belluschi became involved in the important commissions in the office, and after the sudden departure of Doyle's chief designer, he assumed a key role in the firm. By 1928, the year of Doyle's untimely death,⁷ Belluschi had participated in a number of substantial projects, including a never-built addition to the Cloud Cap Inn on Mt. Hood. His first major commission while in the Doyle office was for the design of the Portland Art Museum (1931-32, 1937-39), a spare, stripped classical structure reminiscent of public buildings designed in the New Deal era. This was his first project to gain attention in the national press, and is particularly noteworthy because Belluschi enlisted the advice of architect Frank Lloyd Wright as he attempted to 'sell' a more progressive design scheme to the Museum's Board of Trustees.⁸ In this same time frame, his design for the 1936-38 renovation of Finley's Mortuary in Portland and addition of the Morninglight Chapel, another distinctly modern building displaying bold geometric forms that echoed its programmatic requirements, also garnered national recognition.⁹ Belluschi was made a partner in

⁵ Ritz, Richard Ellison, Editor, *Architects of Oregon*. Portland, OR: Lair Hill Publishing, 2002.

⁶ According to Doyle's biographer, Philip Niles, Doyle's firm was the most important architectural firm of Portland's great building boom, which occurred before and after the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition. Philip Niles, *Beauty of the City, A. E. Doyle Portland Architect*. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2008), xii.

⁷ Doyle died on January 23, 1928.

⁸ This was his first project to gain attention in the national press, and is particularly noteworthy because Belluschi enlisted the advice of architect Frank Lloyd Wright as he attempted to 'sell' a more progressive design scheme to the Museum's Board of Trustees. Meredith L. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 59.

⁹ This building was published in *Architectural Forum* in December 1937 and received honors from the national American Institute of Architects and the Architectural League of New York, as well as being included in an international exhibition sponsored by the American Federation of the Arts. Both the Portland Art Museum and the chapel were also selected by the AIA as "two of the hundred most distinguished buildings built in the United States since World War I." Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 75-77.

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the firm in 1933.¹⁰ Doyle's name, however, was to remain the singular name on the firm of A. E. Doyle and Associates for another fifteen years.¹¹

At the same time he was learning his craft, Belluschi was also very involved in the Portland art world and formed friendships with the artist Harry Wentz and designer John Yeon. Wentz taught painting and composition at the Portland Art School, was actively involved in art and architecture circles, and was a close friend of A. E. Doyle. Doyle collaborated with Wentz in the design of his 1916 weekend residence and studio on the Oregon coast, as well as cottages of other friends who would become important to Belluschi's career.¹² Wentz invited the two young men to his weekend residence and they spent time there sketching and painting. Belluschi also spent time touring and hiking with Yeon, developing a great love of the Oregon countryside. These experiences would become central to Belluschi's aesthetic, particularly as seen in the design of his residences and early churches.

Pietro Belluschi and the Northwest Regional Style

Pietro Belluschi was at the forefront of forging the Northwest Regional style in architecture, a style of architecture that first appeared in the mid-1930s in the Pacific Northwest, but was most popular in the post-World War II years for residential and small-scale commercial and institutional uses. Belluschi, along with colleagues such as John Yeon and Van Evera Bailey in the Portland area; Paul Thiry and Paul Hayden Kirk in Seattle; and William Wurster and Gardener Dailey, among others in northern California, working in the parallel Second Bay Tradition. They developed a way of working that focused on working with the site, the climate, and local materials, in collaboration with their clients, to create unique residences, at a time when Colonial Revival was the most popular style for residential design. Primary characteristics of these houses and small structures, seen in much of the work by these architects, included wood-frame construction; relatively simple forms; moderately sloped gable, gable-on-hip or flat roofs with deep eaves; extensive use of glass; and simple detailing.

Belluschi admired the simple form, rustic qualities, and quiet presence of the Wentz Cottage, which was all the more striking for its dramatic setting on Oregon's scenic coastline. It is often cited as an important prototype in the formation of the Northwest Regional Style in the Portland area. Belluschi would later say of the Wentz Cottage "...It has function, appropriateness, harmony, materials, setting, orientation; it is modern, emotional, beautiful."¹³

His next project, which gave him an opportunity to put into effect the lessons he learned from the Wentz Cottage, was a design scheme for Wentz entitled, "House for an Artist in Town." A model of Belluschi's design concept, along with models by John Yeon and six others, was displayed at the Portland Art Museum in 1934. Journalist Catherine Jones, writing for *The Oregonian*, noted that the exhibit, "... provides considerable food for thought for any person interested in seeing developed a style of architecture suited to the Pacific Northwest." Both Yeon and Belluschi's solutions were noted as 'best expressing the character and the personality of the Pacific Northwest through their modern design and generous use of glass in combination with woods suited to our setting.'¹⁴ With its compound-like organization, modest building forms, and practical relationship to the outdoors, it bore a striking resemblance to the future Aloha Farmhouse.

He also designed his own 1936-37 Council Crest home in this time frame, his first built residence to catch the public's eye.¹⁵ Belluschi had married Helen Hemila, a woman of Finnish descent, in December 1934. Their two sons, Peter and Anthony, were born in 1939 and 1941, respectively. This small, elegant home caught the attention of the architectural community when it was published in the seminal, *The Modern House in America*

¹⁰ Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 117.

¹¹ Niles, *Beauty of the City*, 225.

¹² One of the cottages belonged to Anna Belle Crocker, who would guide the work on the Portland Art Museum. Niles, *Beauty of the City*, 222.

¹³ Jo Stubblebine, Editor, *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi* (New York: F. W. Dodge Corporation, 1953), 5.

¹⁴ Catherine Jones, "Art Museum Shows Exhibit of Sketches by Architect," *The Sunday Oregonian* April 15, 1934) 11.

¹⁵ "Oregon Homes . . . An Architect Designs One for Himself," *The Oregonian Northwest Home Show Section*, May 28, 1939.

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of 1940.¹⁶ While the house displayed many of the characteristics that would come to typify Belluschi's interpretation of the Northwest Regional style, it still displayed some traditional elements, such as the brick-clad façade and multi-light bow window overlooking the courtyard to the rear of the house. The Aubrey Watzek house, designed by his friend and colleague John Yeon while working in the Belluschi office and constructed in 1936-38, would place the Northwest Regional style on the national stage. This residence, a National Historic Landmark today, was exhibited in the highly prestigious Museum of Modern Art exhibit, *Built in USA 1932-1944*. It was and is a singular structure, described in the exhibit catalogue as 'intimately related to its magnificent natural setting, with a harmonious arrangement of low-pitched roofs that echo the distant view of Mount Hood.'¹⁷ It would remain for Belluschi's 1937-38 Jennings Sutor house, however, to crystallize the tenets of the Northwest Regional style as practiced in Oregon.

Belluschi's emerging architectural vocabulary found expression in several important residential commissions in these years, including the Philip Joss House (1940-42); the John and Jane Platt House (1940-41); and the Peter Kerr Beach House in Gearhart (1941).¹⁸ These houses were published variously in the 1940 *The Modern House in America*; the prestigious *Arts + Architecture*; *Progressive Architecture* and its forerunner *Pencil Points*; the shelter magazines *House & Garden* and *Sunset*; and regularly in *The Sunday Oregonian*. Belluschi's practice in this area was not, however, limited to residences in these years. In 1940, he designed and built his widely acclaimed St. Thomas More Church, the first of many in his long fascination with the design of modern spiritual spaces. With its interiors of local woods, exposed structure, fine craftsmanship, and manipulation of light, Belluschi created an intimate yet uplifting space that eschewed traditional religious iconography.

The War Years

The level of organization required to undertake large projects during the war years no doubt paved the way for Belluschi's involvement in the large scale, complex commissions his office was awarded after the war, in the years he lived in the Aloha Farmhouse. Like many west coast architects, the development of defense housing and related facilities in anticipation of the United States' entry into World War II brought an end to the paucity of commissions during the Great Depression, when much of the work in the Belluschi office consisted of remodels and small scale commissions.¹⁹ Major wartime commissions included several large-scale defense housing developments, including projects for the Housing Authority of Portland and the Housing Authority of Vancouver, Washington, and the Bagley Downs and McLoughlin Heights Shopping Centers in Vancouver, all procured in 1942. The office also designed later additions to the above facilities and two hospitals, in Pocatello, Idaho and Walla Walla, Washington. The McLoughlin Heights Shopping Center was published nationally and included the prestigious New York's Museum of Modern Art exhibit entitled, "Built in USA, 1932-1944," and published in the museum's catalogue.

In 1943, shortly before buying and remodeling the Aloha Farmhouse, Belluschi bought out his partners at A. E. Doyle and Associate and re-configured the firm under the name Pietro Belluschi, Architect. In 1939 Belluschi had purchased a modest, one-story concrete industrial building in Goose Hollow, west of downtown Portland, and remodeled it for commercial and residential uses. Belluschi moved the firm into the building on March 1, 1942.²⁰ The primary concession to the new headquarters was a re-design of the entry with what would still look like a very modern entry today. He retained the industrial sash of the building and added an angled awning over the entry, clad the back wall in wood, and added a bas relief artwork by sculptor Frederic Littman,

¹⁶ James Ford and Katherine Morrow Ford, *The Modern House in America*. (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc, 1940) 38.

¹⁷ Elizabeth Mock, editor, *Built in USA 1932-44* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1944), 41.

¹⁸ Meredith L. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), 412-414.

¹⁹ Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 412-414.

²⁰ This building was actually purchased from the *Oregon Journal* and remodeled with the use of Federal funds. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 414.

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with whom he had collaborated in the past. "The Office of P. Belluschi, Architect" in Moderne letters was added to the façade. In 1947, due to the heavy workload, he added a second story to the building.²¹

The Post-war Years

In the years that he remodeled and lived in the Aloha Farmhouse, from 1944 to 1948, Belluschi was at the top of his game. In these same years the Equitable Building, which had been planned before World War II, was under construction. This landmark building, the first skyscraper built after World War II, was widely lauded for its sleek aluminum and tinted glass exterior, use of thermopane glass, innovations in heating and cooling, and other technical advances.²² In the words of architectural historian Meredith Clausen, who wrote Belluschi's biography, "The building was momentous." It was a time of great optimism. To illustrate this, Clausen recounts Belluschi's speech to the Building Code Board of Appeals, of whom he had to gain permission to use aluminum cladding:

*The design of this new office building for Portland is fundamentally an expression of faith in the great future for our civilization – a faith born out of a conviction that from our modern techniques, materials, and understanding of present-day architectural problems, we are able to create not only more useful buildings, but also a new kind of beauty – a beauty which is not borrowed from the past but is our own – clean, strong, straightforward.*²³

A large focus in these years was on commercial and governmental buildings, including the Oregonian Building, Portland (1945-48); the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company building, Portland (1947); and the Federal Reserve Bank, Portland (1948-49). The crowning achievement, however, was the Equitable (now the Commonwealth) Building.²⁴

Belluschi was also known for his modern churches, however, which he designed throughout his career, beginning with the St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Portland (1939-40) and ending with the Trinity Lutheran Church in Sheridan, Oregon (1987-90). Two of his best known churches, also designed while he resided in the Aloha Farmhouse, are the Zion Lutheran Church in Portland, Oregon (1948) and the First Presbyterian Church in Cottage Grove, Oregon (1948), both individually listed in the National Register. Both are noted for their relative simplicity of form, although the former has a more traditional form than the latter. Both are also known for their use of wood; manipulation of color and light; and distinctive bell towers. The First Presbyterian Church, which is in a residential neighborhood, is also admired for its peaceful entry court, which has a slight Asian feel. The Zion Lutheran Church also has a forecourt, previously occupied by the original church, but its setting is more urban and today, altered by the presence of the Westside Light Rail line.²⁵

Design Context for the Aloha Farmhouse

About the time that Belluschi bought out his partners and established his own firm, he came across a six-acre rural property with a modest farmhouse and remnants of an old orchard in Washington County, directly west of Portland. His young family was outgrowing his small Council Crest home in Portland at this time, and the property may have brought back fond childhood memories of summers at a relative's farm in the countryside near Piacenza, Italy, which he remembered as a "paradise on earth."²⁶ He bought the property and immediately set about transforming it into a suitable home for himself, his wife Helen, boys Peter (five) and Tony (three), and the family dog.

²¹ *Portland Maps*, <http://www.portlandmpas.com/>, accessed April and May, 2014.

²² Meredith L. Clausen, "Belluschi and the Equitable Building in History," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (June 1999).

²³ Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 168, quoting

²⁴ Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, 31.

²⁵ On his return to Portland in 1973, Belluschi designed an additional six churches in Oregon. Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, 33.

²⁶ Meredith L. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994) 10.

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As early as 1940, Belluschi made the following statement in *The Modern House in America*:

It is to be observed that many farm houses, and as a matter of fact all houses of people whose lives have been close and sympathetic to the soil, have the seed of good domestic architecture which becomes modern only because of the freedom from the artificial standards which have accumulated through many decades of superficial culture. It goes without saying that architecture when free is functional, if function is allowed to include the desire to live fully and with understanding.²⁷

Belluschi shared this love of the simplicity of agricultural buildings with his colleague William W. Wurster, who captured national attention with his 1927 design of the rustic Gregory Farmhouse in rural Santa Cruz county, California. Drawing inspiration from the built and natural environment, with a concern for the site, for the climate, for local materials, particularly wood, incorporating simple forms, and relying on proportions and the materials themselves for expression was a major concern of these architects. Less discussed in conjunction with Belluschi's work, but mentioned often in the work of other Regional Modernists on the west coast, was the influence of traditional Japanese architecture, in particular the roof form that echoes the same gable-on-hip form seen in Belluschi's Council Crest house and others, and expressive wood construction.

By 1944, when he embarked on the remodel of the farmhouse, Belluschi had honed his residential design skills and developed his design vocabulary on such nationally recognized homes as the Jennings Sutor house, the Philip Joss house, the Peter Kerr Beach house, and the William Coats house. He was known for allowing the specifics of a site dictate the siting of a residence, including the topography, available views and vistas, and a response to climatic concerns. This was a characteristic that he shared with other architects designing in the Northwest Regional style, as well as other Regional Modernists, but Belluschi was particularly skilled in this regard. Another quality he shared with other Regional Modernists was the lessons he had absorbed from Frank Lloyd Wright. His residences made extensive use of native woods, utilized built-ins that preserved the spatial qualities of the residences, and placed importance on the fireplace as a psychological and physical center of the main living area.²⁸

Another stated influence on Belluschi's residential design work was that of vernacular forms, specifically the forms and materials and 'rightness-to-purpose' of Oregon's barns. In 1943 *Time* magazine entitled an article on Belluschi's work "Belluschi's Beautiful Barns." Published on the occasion of Belluschi forming his own firm, the article began, "Buildings that look like barns – which many people consider very beautiful – have made the reputation of Pietro Belluschi, architect of Portland, Ore." The *Time* article continued, "Belluschi, an admirer of Oregon's low, richly weathered barns, began by designing long, low, rambling houses with wide eaves, which gave 'a feeling of protection' against the heavy northwest rains. Because eaves cut off too much light, Belluschi introduced many large, carefully placed windows. His materials were mostly local woods – fir, spruce, cedar, hemlock – which, left in their natural state, colored sumptuously with age and weathering."²⁹ The analogy stuck.

²⁷ Ford, *The Modern House in America*, 123.

²⁸ Frank Lloyd Wright had lectured at the University of Oregon in 1931, in conjunction with a nation-wide lecture tour. Donald Leslie Johnson, "Frank Lloyd Wright in the Northwest: The Show, 1931," *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 78, No. 3 (July, 1987), pp. 100-106.

²⁹ "Art: Belluschi's Beautiful Barns, *Time*, March 29, 1943.

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The Aloha Farmhouse

The Aloha Farmhouse was a small, Craftsman-inspired home when Belluschi found it, with a nearly square footprint and a moderately pitched, front gable roof with knee brackets supporting overhanging eaves. It was a simple building, with two substantial porches with shed roofs supported by tapered posts on enclosed rails. In essence, it displayed the major characteristics, if not the classic features, of a Craftsman bungalow. The interior was divided into four major, equal-sized spaces, accommodating a living and dining room, a kitchen, and two bedrooms. A small, two-room shed to the rear contained a wood shed and a fruit room. Belluschi had at first planned to build a new home on the property, but wartime restrictions on materials and civilian development prohibited this. He set about remodeling the home.

In the 1944 remodel of the Aloha Farmhouse Belluschi removed interior partitions in the house to create a large, open, living-dining space that was also open to the kitchen, which was fitted into what was previously a secondary porch. Banks of windows, displaying Belluschi's characteristic tall, vertical, fixed panes were added to light the living room. A large corner fireplace with a dramatic concrete hood was added, anchoring the public spaces of the house. The existing fir flooring was retained, but the walls were clad in spruce and the ceiling with a contrasting wood. Built-ins were added throughout the house to accommodate storage, and "provincial" furniture was custom-made for the house, to enhance its rustic character. A new front porch, whose stairs and landscaped areas meandered up from the slightly sloping yard, anchored the building more firmly in its site. Most dramatically, the existing fruit room and wood shed building was connected to the house with a gabled roof with exposed framing, creating a large, sheltered loggia. This renovation was accomplished within the existing footprint of the house.

About two years later an addition to the east, behind the living room, was constructed to accommodate bedrooms for the boys. The expansion, however, did not involve extensive changes. The existing beveled siding was continued and the building's original knee brackets were reinstated on the gable end. While the footprint was now enlarged, the overall simplicity of the vernacular structure was retained.

The changes to the residence were accomplished with relatively minimal disruption to the building, yet Belluschi was able to bring to the building the qualities that he valued in his houses. While the building sat on a relatively level site, with no dramatic views to be had, the view of the orchard from the kitchen and dining area was framed with large windows. The main living area was designed to be flexible, with abundant light from both north and south, and centered on a modern hearth. The natural textures and colors of wood were used to an advantage. Built-ins made the organization of internal spaces efficient. The new furnishings and appointments, including textured curtains, enhanced the natural finishes of the house and matched its rustic qualities. And indoor-outdoor spaces were added in the form of the loggia and terraced front entrance.

Press for the Aloha Farmhouse

Belluschi had numerous professional photographs taken of the house, featuring himself and his family. The family photograph that most often appeared in professional journals was the photograph of the front of the Loggia with one boy sitting on the well structure, watching Belluschi's other son playing with the family dog. The Aloha Farmhouse was featured in the May 1946 issue of *Architectural Forum* in an article entitled, "Remodeled Farmhouse," with a sketch and plans of the original building, along with the plans of the 1944 remodel. The motivation for featuring the building appears in the introduction to the article: "Oregon abounds with wooden farm-bungalows, all of comparatively modern vintage and nondescript design. And with many returning GI's bringing back a war-nurtured dream of living in a small place on the land, this particular example of a converted farmhouse near Portland is of special interest now as a practical solution of [sic] a pressing problem."

This same year the residence appeared in John Dean and Simon Breines' *The Book of Houses*, a book aimed at the prospective, post-war house buyer. The corner fireplace, which was constructed of concrete with

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embedded vermiculite, was featured in an October 20, 1946 article in the *New York Times* on modern fireplaces. The house also appeared in a series on architects who had found success away from the great urban centers, entitled "the architect and his community." The Belluschi firm was profiled in the February 1949 issue of *Progressive Architecture* which, in addition to featuring the farmhouse and Belluschi's own office, also published some of Belluschi's most highly regarded residential work, including the Menefee house, Myers house, and Kerr Beach house. Commercial and institutional work included The Oregonian Building, the gymnasium for the Catlin School, the Edris Morrison photography studios, the Equitable Building, and the First National Bank of Portland in Salem, Oregon.³⁰ The Aloha Farmhouse was published again in the 1953 monograph on Belluschi's work, which placed an emphasis on Belluschi's regionalist roots by juxtaposing beautiful shots of Oregon scenery with photographs of Belluschi's work. This display was also featured at Museum Books in New York City in 1953, coinciding with the publication of Belluschi's monograph and reviewed by art and architecture historian Aline Louchheim.³¹

Despite his attachment to the house, his wife felt isolated in the country with two children, and Belluschi moved back to Portland in 1948, remodeling another house for his family. In 1950, however, he accepted a position as the Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and moved to the east coast. There he pursued a career as a consulting architect collaborating with some of the top firms in the country on major projects, in addition to his teaching responsibilities.

Helen died in 1962 and Belluschi married Marjorie Bruckner in 1965. In 1973 they moved back to Portland, where they purchased the Burkes house, which Belluschi had designed for Dr. and Mrs. Burkes before the war and constructed in 1944-48. Belluschi continued his consulting career into his late 80s, dying in 1994 at the age of 94. Marjorie, who continued to live at the house, died in 2009. The house is now owned by Belluschi's son Anthony, also an architect, who recently restored and remodeled the house. In 1972 Belluschi was awarded the Gold Medal for Lifetime Achievement by the American Institute of Architects, and in 1991 he received the National Medal of Arts, awarded by then President George Bush in a White House ceremony.³² In his lifetime his work was published in numerous national publications, both general interest periodicals and professional journals. His own writings were also published in a similar range of periodicals.³³

History of Area and Property

The Aloha Farmhouse is located within Section 1 in Township 1S, Range 2W in Washington County. The section is in the far northeast corner of the larger township, which is located within the southeast quadrant of Washington County. It is north of the towns of Reedville and Aloha, about mid-way between the two, just south of West Baseline Road, and east of Hillsboro.³⁴ The property is close to Beaverton Creek, which runs northwest to southeast in this area.

The Tualatin Plains, which are located in central Washington County, represented some of the richest farmland in the Willamette Valley.³⁵ Most of the township is still used for farming, except for the north-northeast area within the subject township, along the Tualatin Valley Highway corridor, which is heavily urbanized. At one acre in size, the Aloha Farmhouse parcel is an anomaly today in its immediate suburban residential setting.

The area in which the Aloha Farmhouse is located was settled for its agricultural potential. The land on which the Aloha Farmhouse is sited still displays the remnants of an orchard. A study of USGS maps over time

³⁰ The latter were all under construction while he lived in the Aloha Farmhouse.

³¹ It is not known whether the farmhouse was included in this exhibit.

³² Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, 32.

³³ Ritz, *Architects of Oregon*, 34.

³⁴ Note that the property is within Washington County's Aloha-Reedville Community Plan area.

³⁵ Historically it was known for its wheat. See Howard McKinley Corning, ed., *Dictionary of Oregon History* (Portland, OR: Binford & Mort, Publishers, 1956), 250.

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shows an abundance of orchards in this area, and an orchard is still noted on these maps on the land in which the farmhouse is located. It appears that for a portion of its history, however, it may have been a cattle ranch. About 70 land patents for this township were issued in the second half of the nineteenth century. Although the patents ranged in size from six acres to 40,570 acres (to the State of Oregon), most patents were for a full 640-acre section or a 320-acre half section. The first patent was issued in 1858.³⁶ The last sizeable patent, for 647 acres, was issued in 1902. The land patent for the Donation Land Claim on which the Aloha Farmhouse is situated today was for 309 acres, issued to John and Mildred Graham on October 15, 1873.³⁷

The property was later owned by A. H. Johnson. Johnson was a butcher who emigrated from England at the age of 13 with his family, arriving in Wisconsin in 1843. Johnson gained experience in Milwaukee in a pork packing plant. In 1852 he headed overland, arriving in Portland on September 17, 1852. Johnson first worked for a butcher, then invested in a butcher shop with partner Richard S. Perkins. In 1873, he built his own market. He was successful in packing, butchering, handling and selling livestock. At its peak, "his yearly business reaching a sum [sic] from \$200,000 to \$400,000." According to historian Harvey Scott, "He has also been an extensive operator in real estate, owning some of the most valuable business blocks in the city, and 2,500 acres of timber and farming lands within ten miles of Portland."³⁸ Over time Arthur H. Johnson and his partner Richard S. Perkins acquired 1,400 acres, including the subject property, in the Aloha-Reedville area, where they ran cattle and raised wheat in the late 19th century.³⁹

The area within which the Aloha Farmhouse property is located appeared in a 1909 atlas as part of 201.52 acres belonging to the A. H. Johnson estate. At this time the estate still held several large acreages in the area. By the time the 1937 Metsker map was issued, this land holding was referred to as the "Johnson Estate Addition," which included 74 parcels.⁴⁰ Today the legal description for the property still reads, in part, "Johnson Estate Addition to Beaverton Reedville Acreage."

The earliest historic map that shows a building at the location of the Aloha Farmhouse is 1915.⁴¹ Since the style and form of the building coincides with properties that would be typical of this date, this information has been used to estimate a date for the building. Pietro Belluschi bought the property in April of 1944, at which time it was six acres in size, and sold it in 1948.⁴² The property turned over several times before it was purchased by Philip Buehner II and his wife Dollie in the late 1950s/early 1960s.⁴³ After Philip Buehner died, Dollie amassed property in the vicinity of the Aloha Farmhouse, which she developed into residential subdivisions in the late 1970s and early 1980s.⁴⁴ It was at this time that the barn, which had been located on Beaverton Creek, was moved by Dollie to the subject property and the upper story refinished for a studio. Richard and Connie Gunkel purchased the property, which by that time was one acre in size, in August 2006.⁴⁵

³⁶ Note that patents were often issued many years after the land was settled.

³⁷ U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records. <http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/> accessed May 2014. Note that according to historian Janel Josephson they established the claim in 1853. Janel Josephson, *Aloha-Reedville*. (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2013), 10.

³⁸ Harvey Scott, "A. H. Johnson," *History of Portland, Oregon with illustrations and biographical sketches of prominent citizens and pioneers*. (Syracuse, NY: D. Mason & Co., 1890). <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ormultno?History/Scott/BlogE-L/johnson.htm>, accessed May 2014. "Mr. A. H. Johnson's Farm," *The Oregonian*, August 19, 1888, p. 5.

³⁹ *Aloha-Reedville*, 2013:31.

⁴⁰ Metsker Maps, *Historic MapWorks*,

<http://www.historicmapworks.com/Search/city.php?query=washington+county&State=OR&x=30&y=1>, accessed May 2014.

⁴¹ "The National Map: Historical Topographic Map Collection," USGS. <http://nationalmap.gov/historical/>, accessed May 2014.

⁴² Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 120.

⁴³ Philip Buehner II was the son of Philip Buehner of Portland, a timber magnet and later an investor. His Portland house, which Philip Buehner II grew up in, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

⁴⁴ Connie Gunkel (property owner) in discussion with author, August 2013, based on conversations with Dollie Buehner, previous property owner, before her death in 2007.

⁴⁵ Connie Gunkel (property owner) in discussion with author, August 2013.

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Conclusion

The significance of Pietro Belluschi's contribution as an architect is well understood both regionally and nationally. Of the four buildings that Belluschi designed or remodeled for himself in Portland (three houses and his office building), the Aloha Farmhouse is the only remaining, intact building. In this sense, it is the most representative building personally associated with Belluschi in these early, groundbreaking years of his professional practice.

While Belluschi's career in architecture and in Oregon began in 1925, he didn't establish his own firm until 1943, shortly before remodeling the Aloha Farmhouse in 1944. About this time he also moved the firm to a building in the Goose Hollow neighborhood of Portland, into a building he had purchased and remodeled for this purpose.⁴⁶ This building, which held a strong association with the Office of P. Belluschi, Architect, and which he occupied from 1942 until the firm's merger with Skidmore Owings and Merrill in 1951, was demolished in spring 2014.⁴⁷

Belluschi's first house in Portland, the Council Crest House, was designed by Belluschi and constructed in 1936. It is significant as an early experiment in the Northwest Regional style and as the first home he designed and constructed for his family. It has been significantly altered over the years, however, and no longer conveys the reasons for its significance. It was originally just a little over 750 square feet in size; the house is now over 3,000 square feet in size and many of the key character-defining features have been lost (see Figure 9).

Belluschi also remodeled a house on Palatine Hill Road in Portland, where he and his family lived briefly (1948 to late 1950), before leaving for the east coast.⁴⁸ This house is no longer extant.⁴⁹

The time that Belluschi and his family lived in the Aloha Farmhouse, from 1944 to 1948, was a period of tremendous production and public and professional acclaim for Belluschi. It was a period that established the basis for his future successes, as well as leaving a legacy of highly significant buildings in Oregon.

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⁴⁶ Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 414.

⁴⁷ Staci Monroe (City of Portland Bureau of Development Services), email message to author, May 2014.

⁴⁸ When he first moved to the house, he had planned to live there only briefly, until he could build a new residence. He accepted the offer from MIT before these plans came to fruition. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*, 416.

⁴⁹ *Portland Maps*, <http://www.cgis.ci.portland.or.us/maps/bds/>, accessed May 2014.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

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- requested)
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

- Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Oregon Historical Society

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .98 acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>45.511988</u> Latitude	<u>-122.879018</u> Longitude	3	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude
2	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude	4	_____ Latitude	_____ Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary is coterminous with the tax lot for the property, which is 15201CA15700.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is the entirety of the present tax lot currently associated with the residence.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diana J. Painter, SHPO staff, with Connie Gunkel date May 16, 2014
organization Oregon State Historic Preservation Office telephone (503) 986-0668
street & number 725 Summer Street NE, Suite C email Diana.painter@oregon.gov
city or town Salem state OR zip code 97301

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **General Location Map**
- **Specific Location Map**
- **Tax Lot Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Photographs:

Aloha Farmhouse
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Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Aloha Farmhouse
City or Vicinity: Beaverton (vicinity)
County: Washington **State:** Oregon
Photographer: Diana Painter
Date Photographed: August 13, 2013, April 29, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0001
North and east facades, looking southwest
- Photo 2 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0002
West and south facades, looking northeast
- Photo 3 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0003
North (front) façade, west end
- Photo 4 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0004
North (front) façade, east end
- Photo 5 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0005
East façade, looking southwest
- Photo 6 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0006
East façade, looking west
- Photo 7 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0007
South façade, west end
- Photo 8 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0008
South façade, east end
- Photo 9 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0009
West façade, looking east
- Photo 10 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0010
Loggia, looking east at Wood Shed and Fruit Room
- Photo 11 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0011
Loggia, looking west at east façade of house
- Photo 12 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0012
Living room, looking south toward study

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- Photo 13 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0013
Main front entry and bank of windows in dining room, looking northwest
- Photo 14 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0014
Kitchen, looking north toward orchard
- Photo 15 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0015
Built-in china cabinet, looking east
- Photo 16 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0016
Rear hallway, looking north
- Photo 17 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0017
Typical built-in (in pantry, former bunk room)
- Photo 18 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0018
Typical window detail (in dining room, showing thermopane window)
- Photo 19 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0019
Barn in southeast corner of site, looking south
- Photo 20 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0020
Remnant orchard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.
- Photo 21 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0021
Plantings in rear yard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.
- Photo 22 of 22:** OR_WashingtonCo_AlohaFarmhouse_0022
Pear tree in rear yard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

- Figure 1:** Regional vicinity map
- Figure 2:** Local location map
- Figure 3:** Tax lot map
- Figure 4:** Tax lot map with building footprints
- Figure 5:** Site plan
- Figure 6:** Floor plan
- Figure 7:** Wentz Cottage and Studio, 1916
- Figure 8:** "House for an Artist," 1935
- Figure 9:** Council Crest House, 1936 and 2014
- Figure 10:** Office of Pietro Belluschi, Architect, ca 1947
- Figure 11:** Equitable Building, 1944-48
- Figure 12:** The Oregonian Building, 1948
- Figure 13:** First National Bank, Salem, 1946-47
- Figure 14:** Oregon State Hospital Addition, 1948
- Figure 15:** Zion Lutheran Church, 1947-50
- Figure 16:** Central Lutheran Church, 1948-50
- Figure 17:** Burkes House, 1944-48
- Figure 18:** Menefee House, 1946-48
- Figure 19:** Robert Wilson House, 1946-47
- Figure 20:** Sketch and plan of Aloha Farmhouse from 1944
- Figure 21:** Floor plan for Aloha Farmhouse, 1946
- Figure 22:** View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi sons, ca 1944; 2014 view
- Figure 23:** View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi sons, ca 1944; 2014 view
- Figure 24:** Historic and current views of Aloha Farmhouse living room, ca 1946, 2014
- Figure 25:** Historic and current views of Aloha Farmhouse dining area, ca 1946, 2014
- Figure 26:** Historic view of Aloha Farmhouse entry and kitchen, ca 1946
- Figure 27:** View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi and sons, ca 1944
- Figure 28:** Photograph of Belluschi family at Aloha Farmhouse, ca 1944

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Articles on the Aloha Farmhouse

Figure 29a-c: Article on Aloha Farmhouse from *Architectural Forum* (1946)

Figure 30a-c: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *Book of Houses* (1946)

Figure 31a-b: Photograph of Aloha Farmhouse from profile of Pietro Belluschi in *Progressive Architecture* (1949)

Figure 32a-c: Photograph of Aloha Farmhouse from *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi* (1953)

Figure 33a-e: Paper on vernacular influences in the Aloha Farmhouse

Figure 34: 1915 historic USGS map showing farmhouse

Figure 35: Accessed May 2014, 1918 USGS map updated to 1943, showing rural character of area

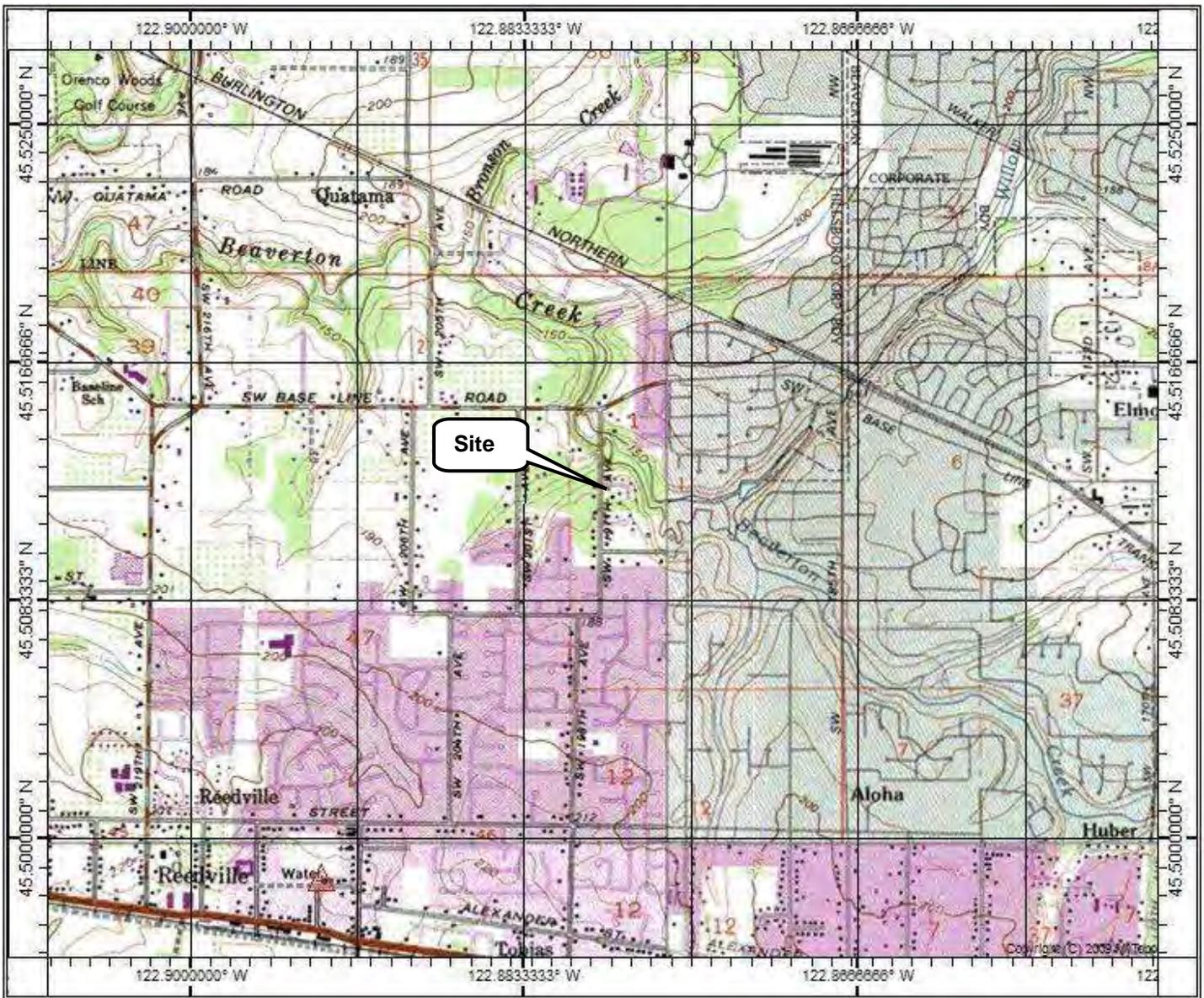
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Figure 1: Regional vicinity map, latitude 45.511988, longitude -122.879018



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Figure 2: Local location map, latitude 45.511988, longitude -122.879018



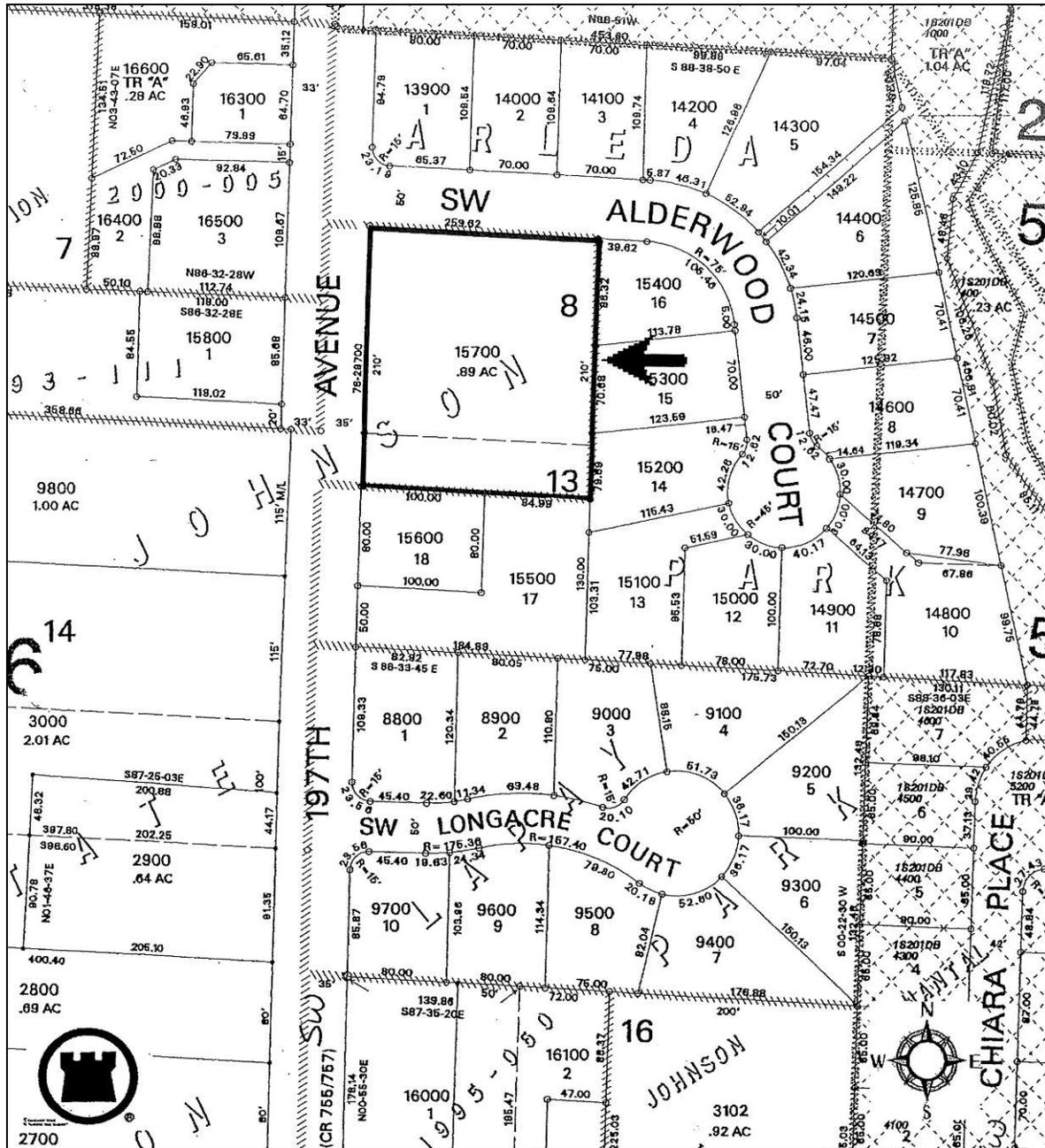
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Figure 3: Tax lot map



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Figure 4: Tax lot map with building footprints



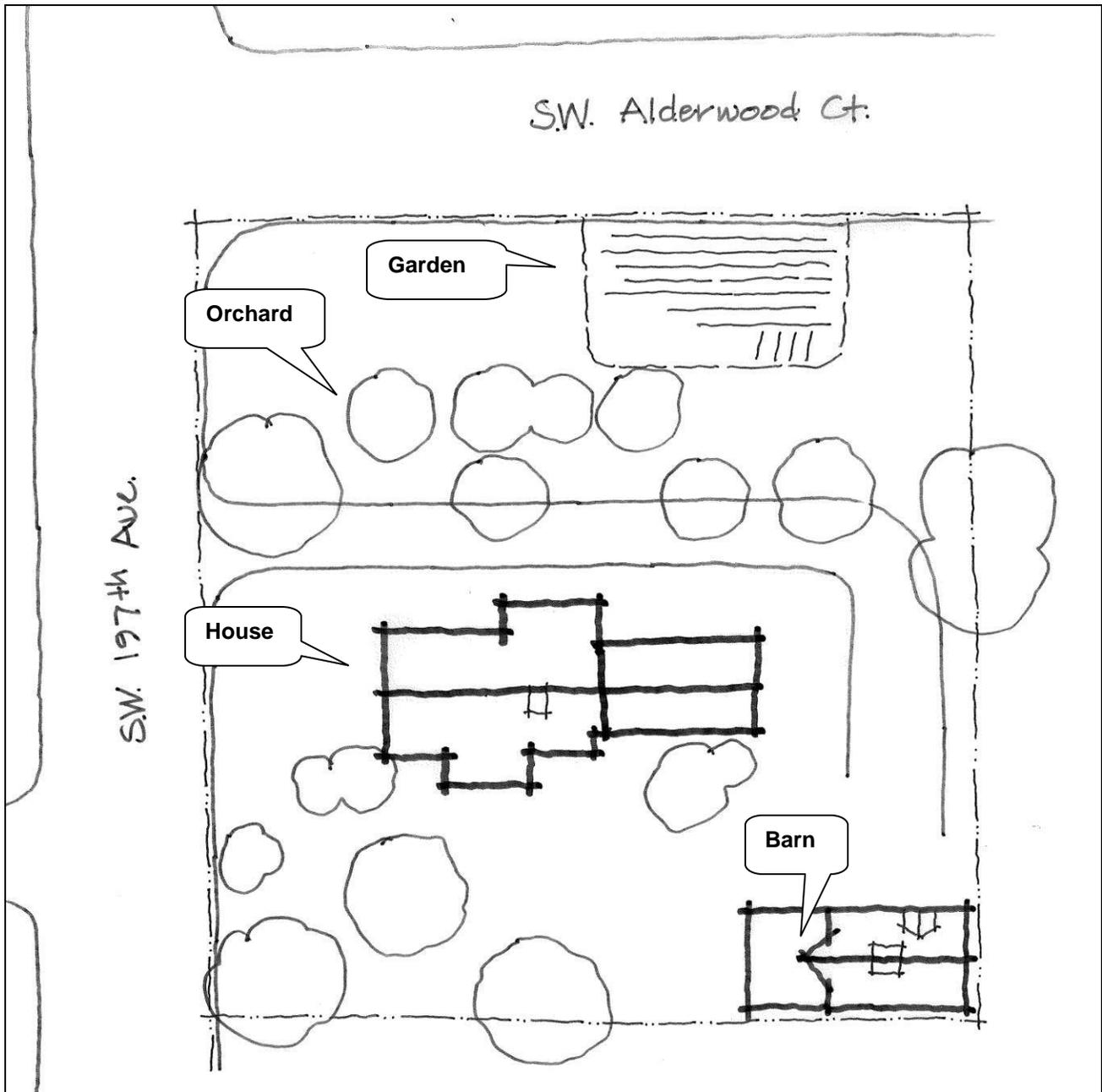
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Figure 5: Site plan



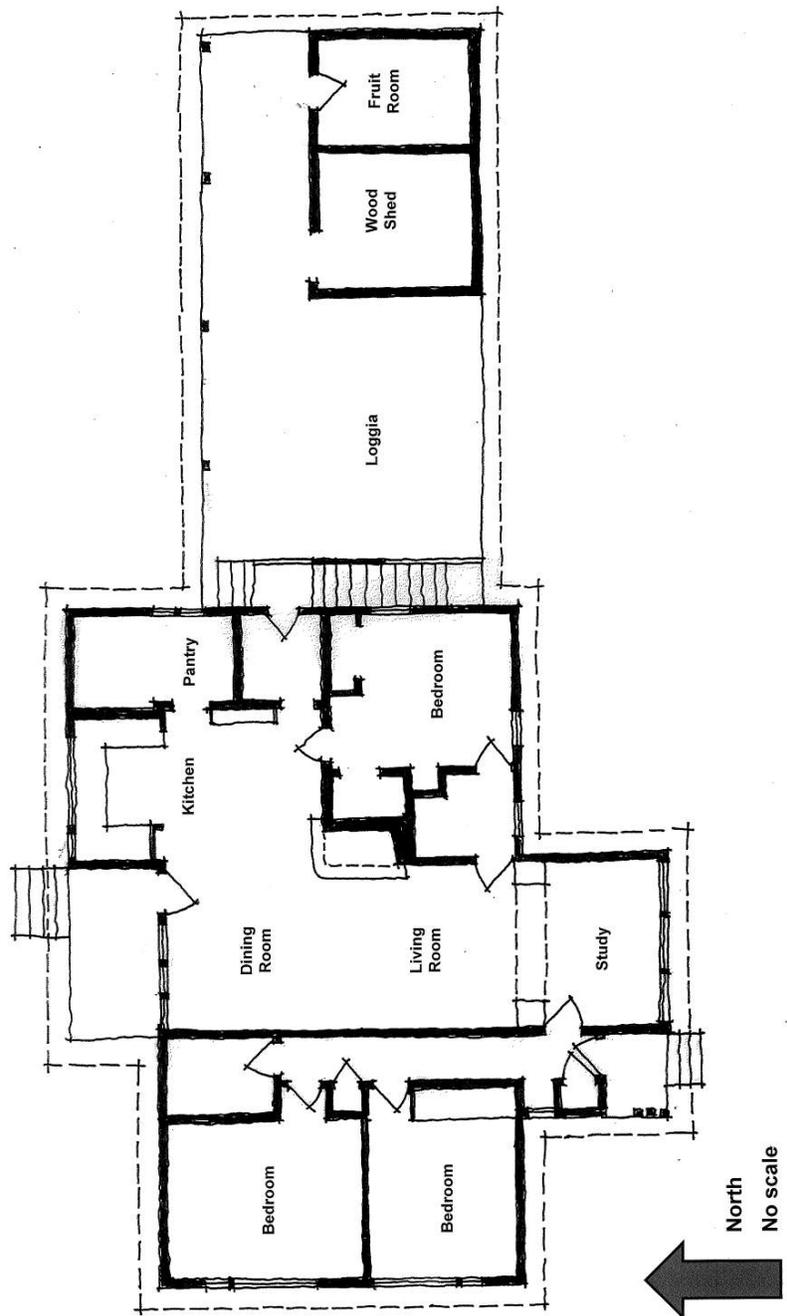
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Figure 6: Floor plan



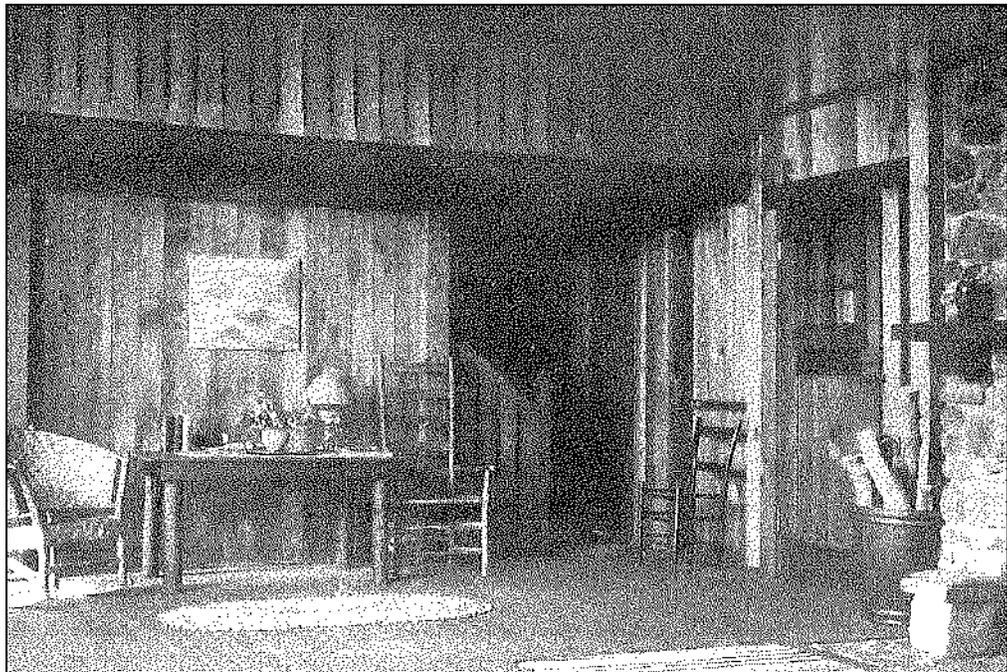
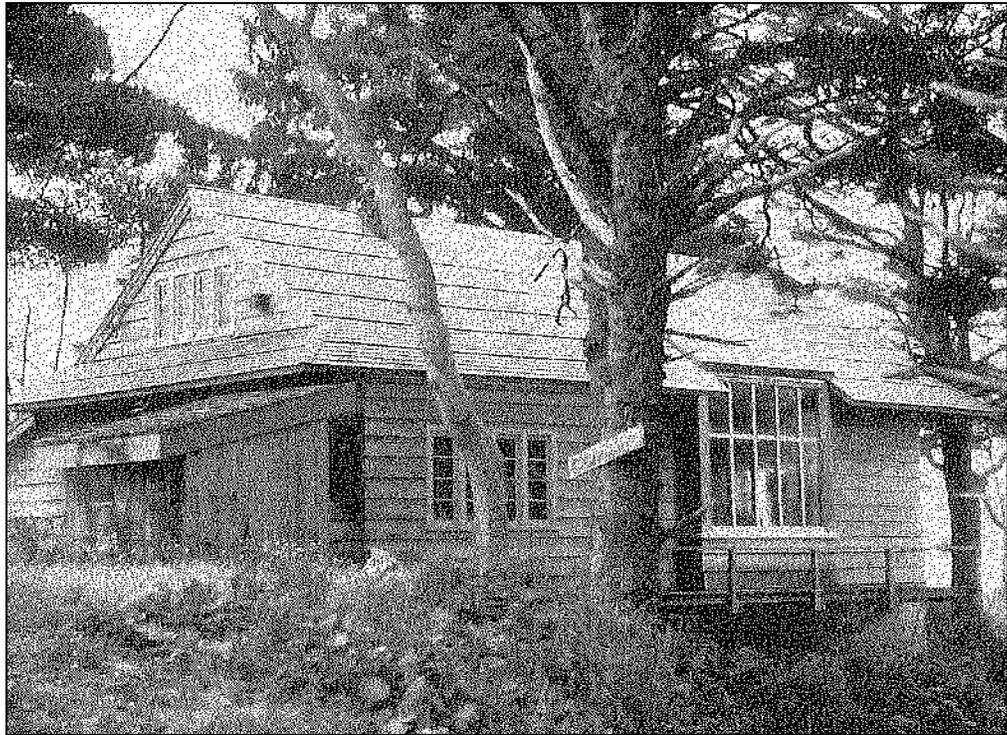
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Figure 7: Wentz Cottage & Studio, A. E. Doyle, 1916



Source: *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*

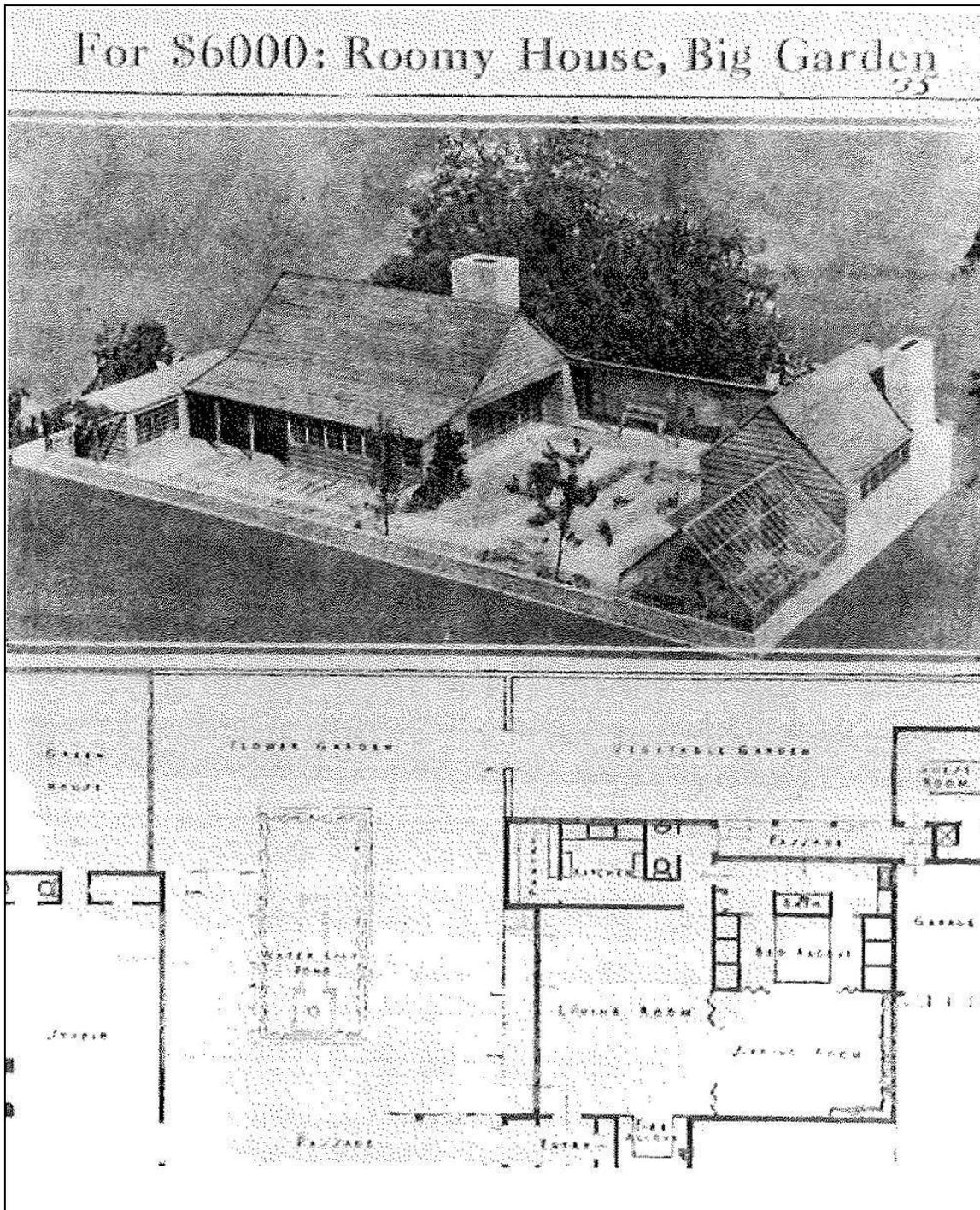
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Figure 8: "House for an Artist" competition, 1935



Source: Pietro Belluschi, *Modern American*

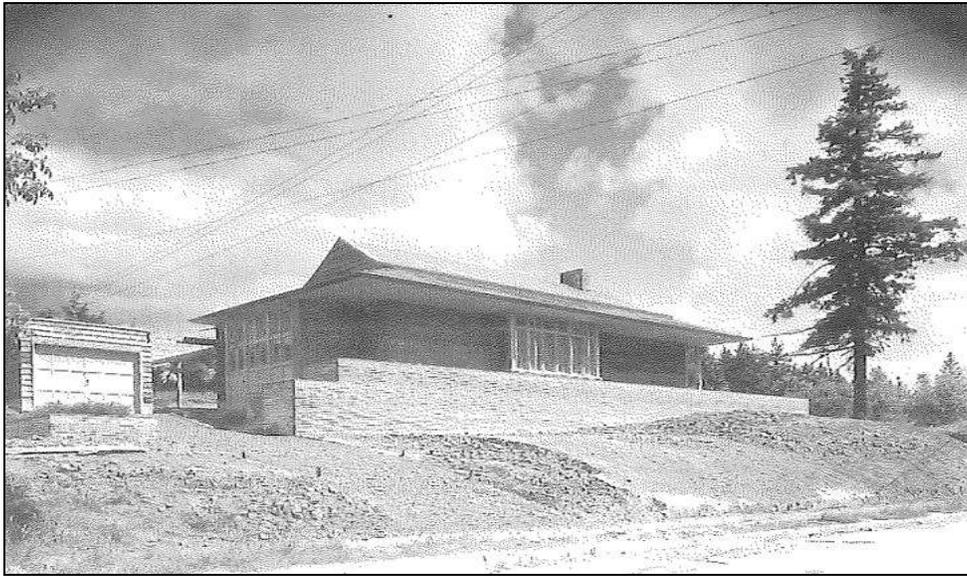
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Figure 9: Council Crest House, Pietro Belluschi, 1936 and 2014



Source: *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*



Photograph by *Diana Painter, 2014*

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Figure 10: Office of Pietro Belluschi, Architect, reflecting 1947 remodel



Source: *Progressive Architecture*, January 1949

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Figure 11: Equitable Building, 1944-48



Source: The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi

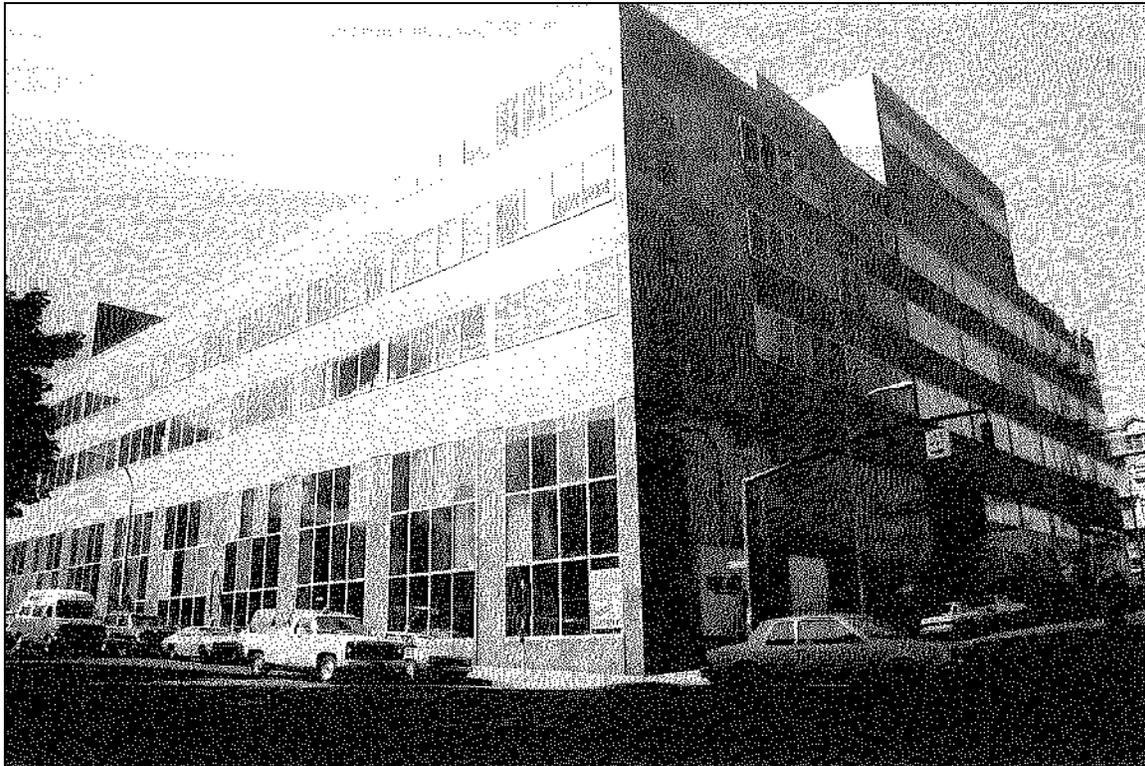
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Figure 12: The Oregonian Building, 1945-48



Source: Oregon State Historic Preservation Office

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Figure 13: First National Bank, Salem, 1946-47



Photograph by Joy Sears, 2011

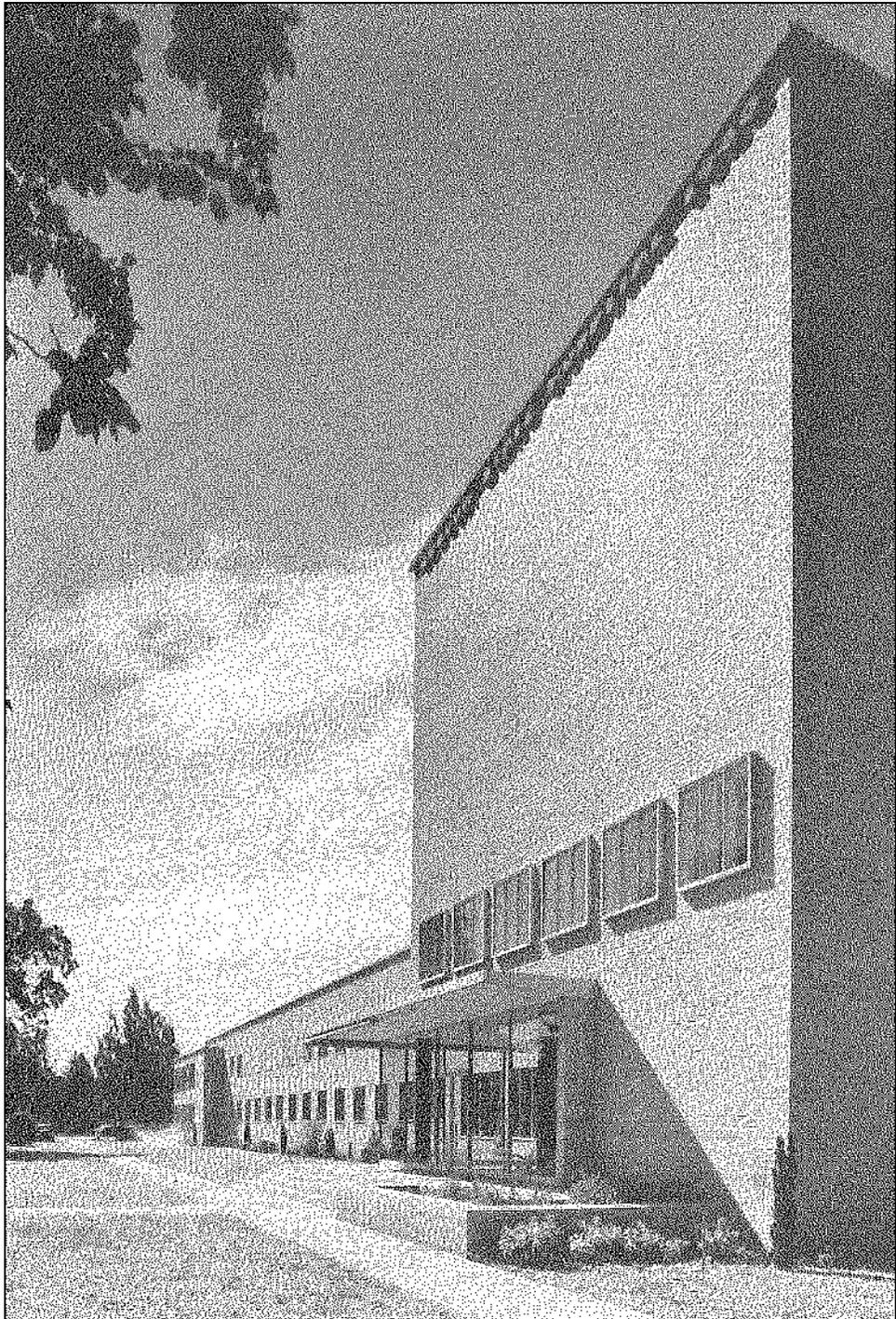
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Figure 14: Oregon State Hospital Building Addition, 1948



Source: *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*

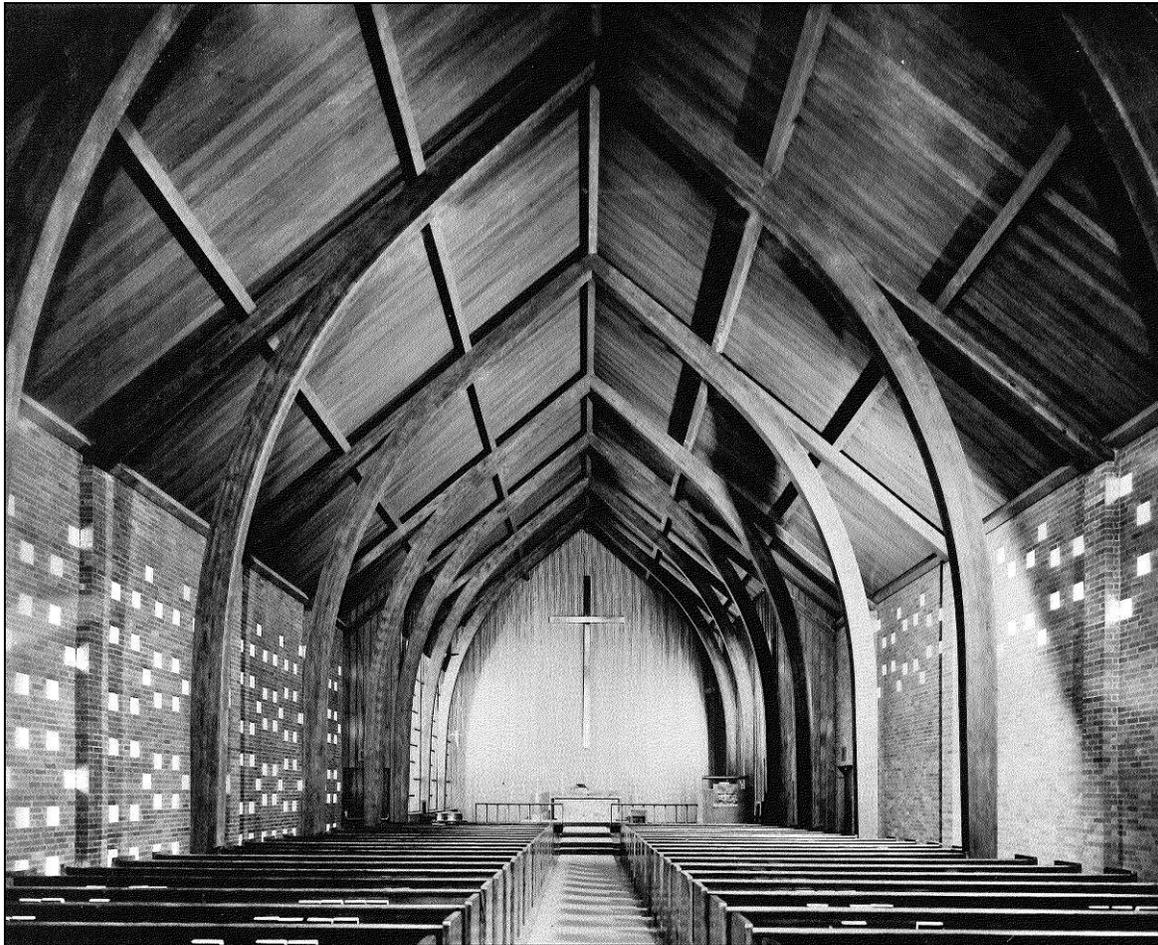
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Figure 15: Zion Lutheran Church, 1947-50



Source: Oregon State Office of Historic Preservation

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Figure 16: Central Lutheran Church, 1948-50



Photographs courtesy Oregon Historic Preservation Office

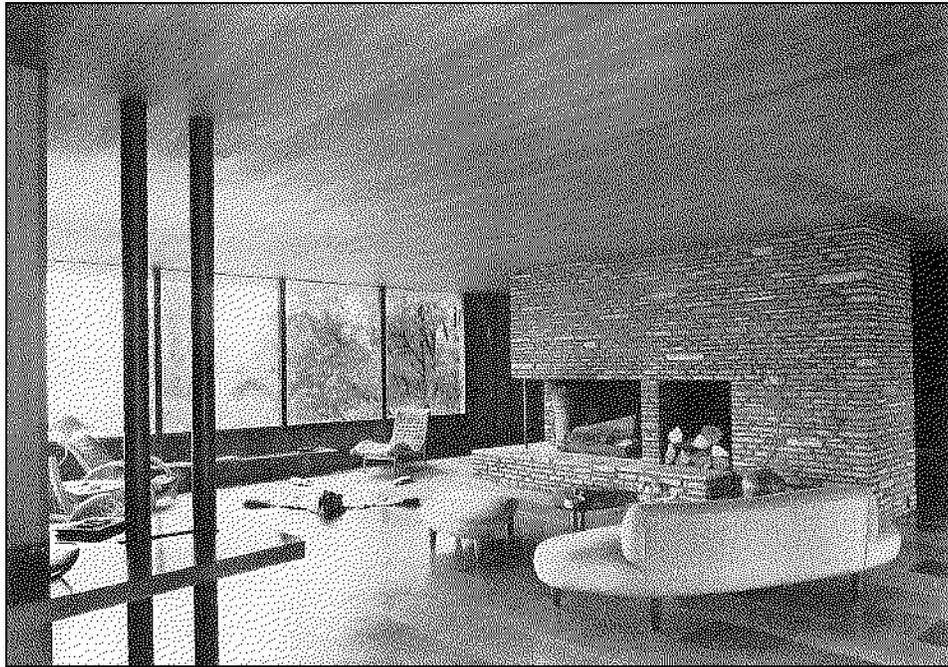
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Figure 17: Burkes House, 1944-48



*Burkes House ca 1953
Source: The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*



*Burkes House 2014
Photograph by Diana Painter*

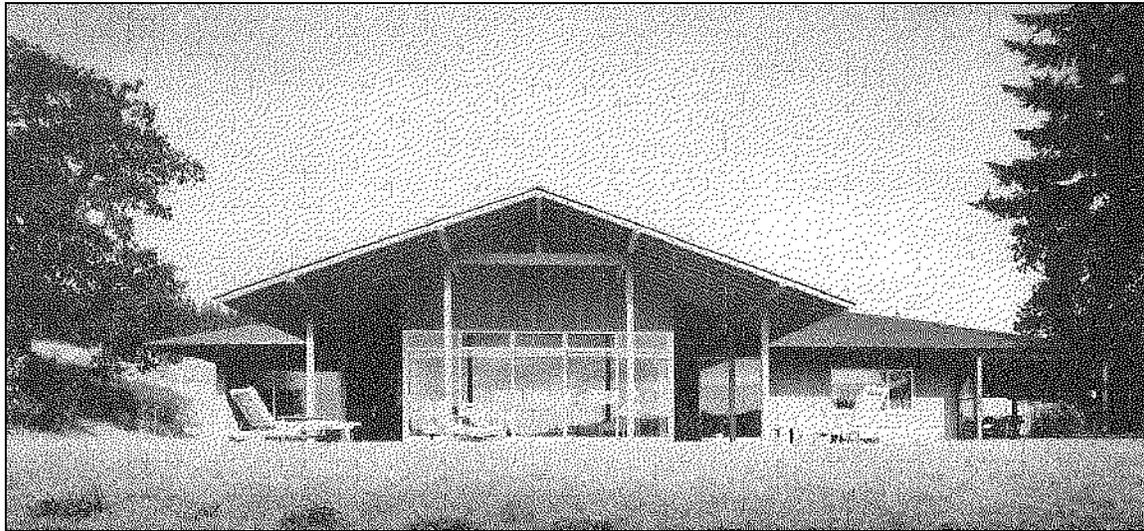
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Figure 18: Menefee House, 1946-48



Source: *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*



Source: *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect*

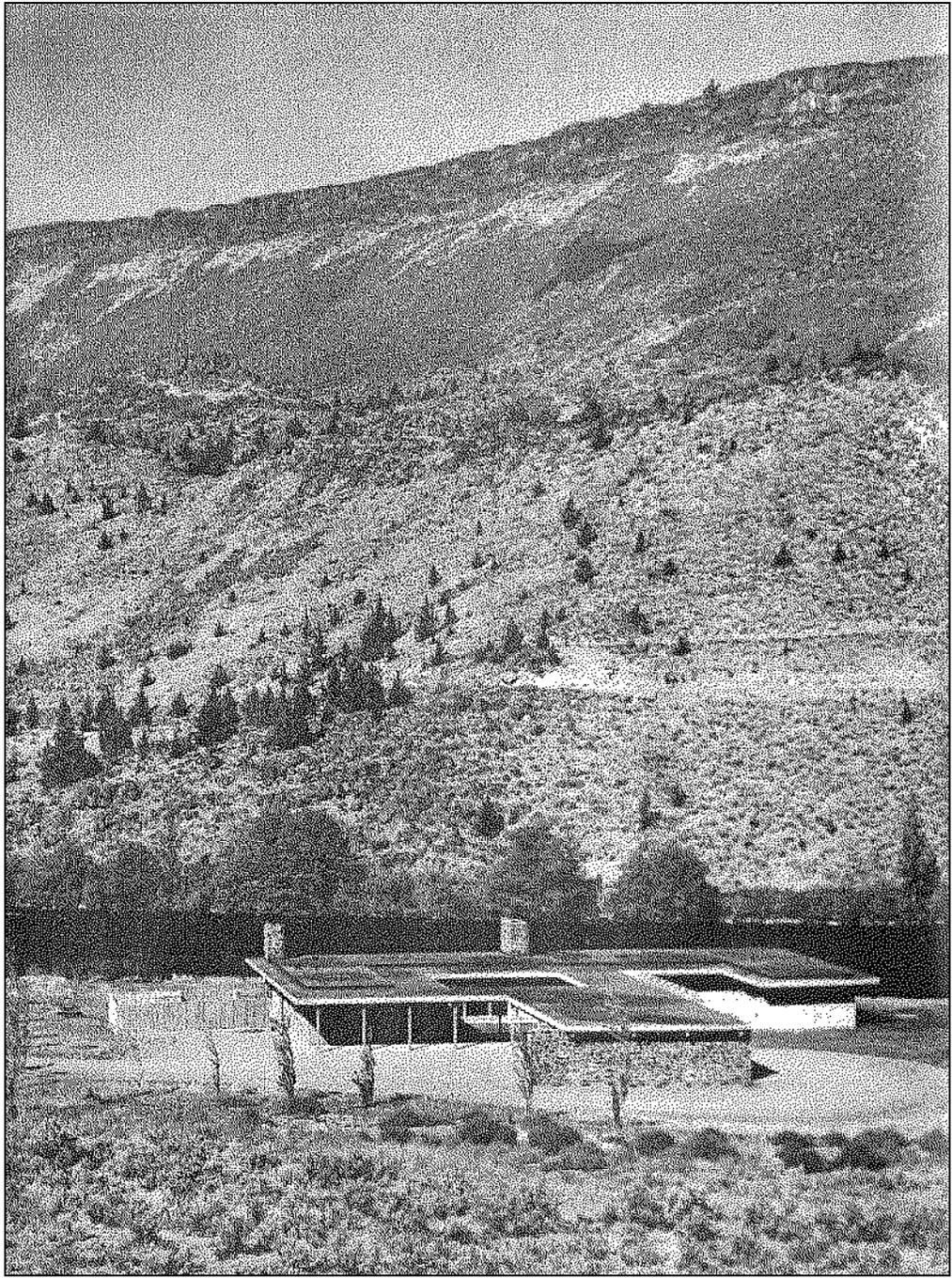
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Figure 19: Robert Wilson House, 1946-47



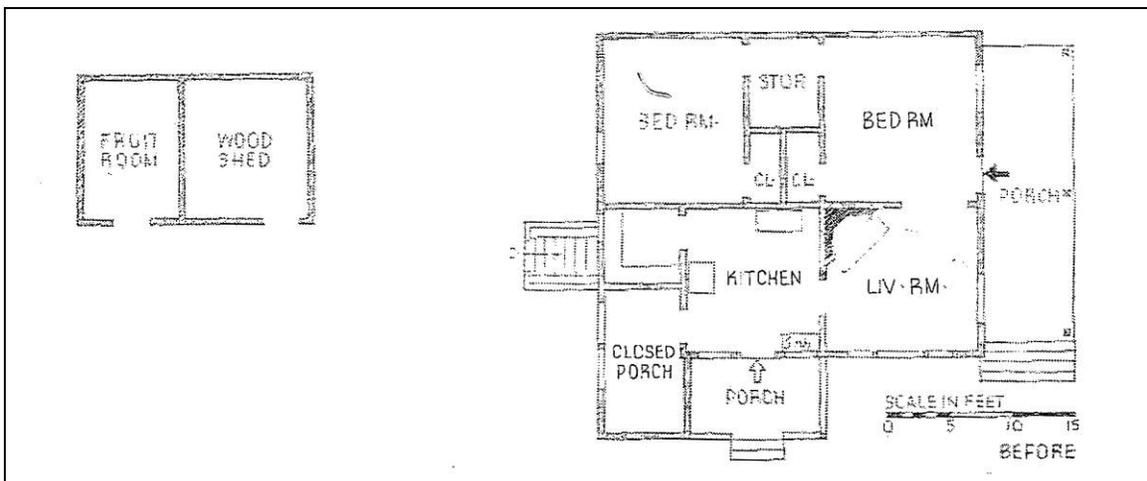
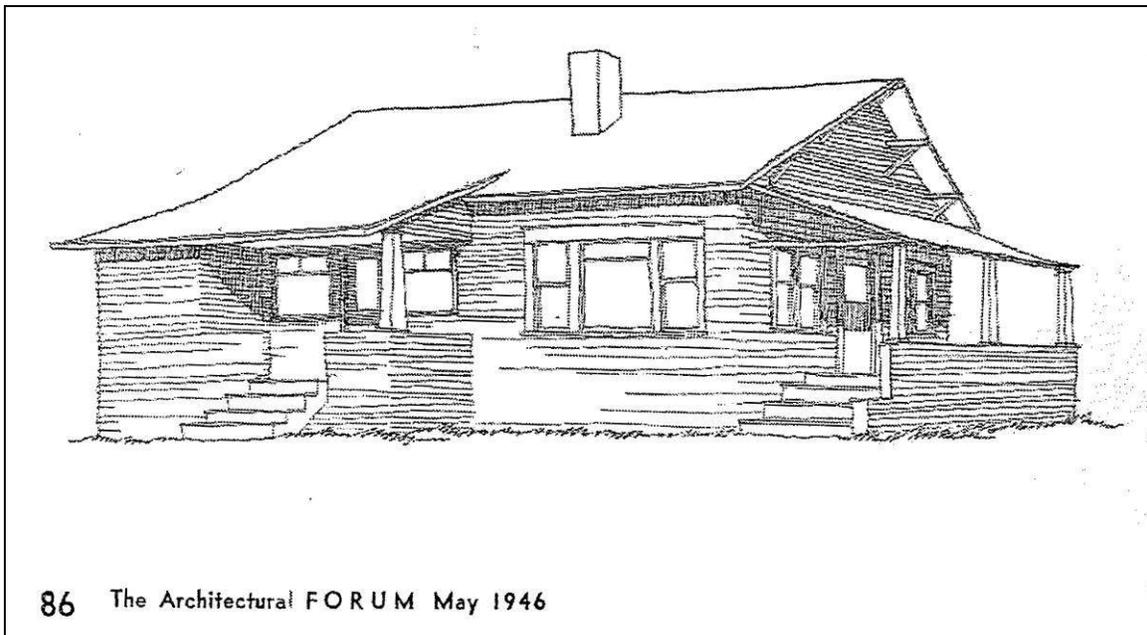
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Figure 20: Sketch and plan of Aloha Farmhouse, 1944



Source: *The Architectural Forum*, May 1946

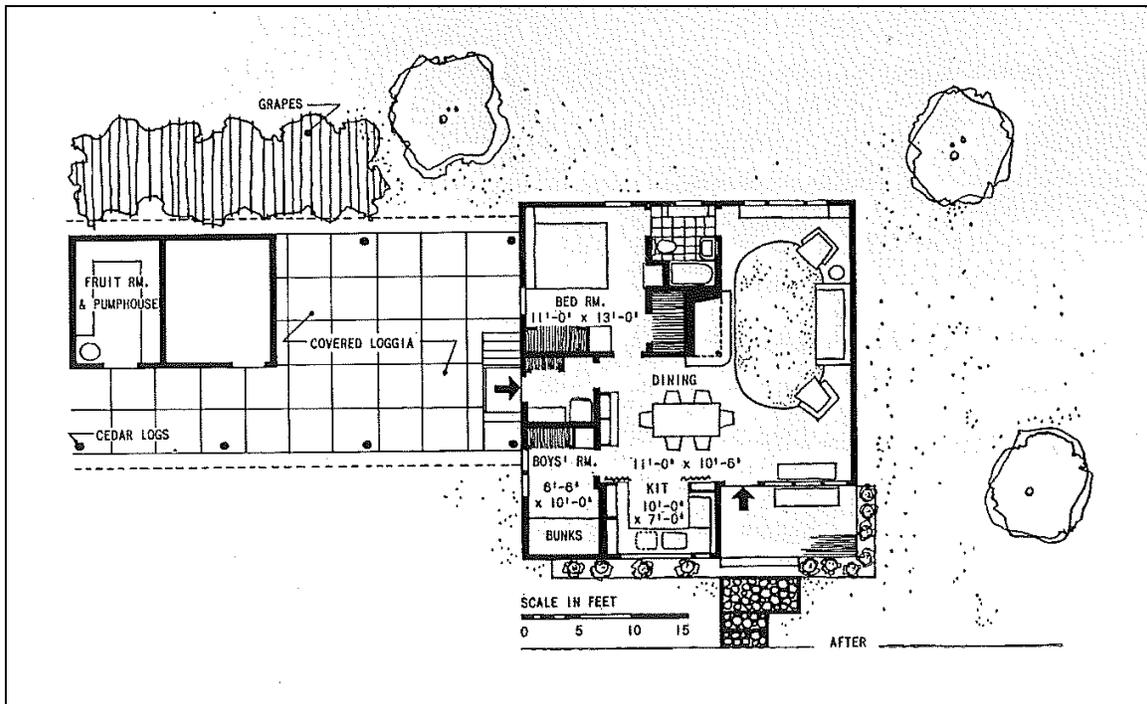
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Figure 21: Floor plan for Aloha Farmhouse, 1946



Source: *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*

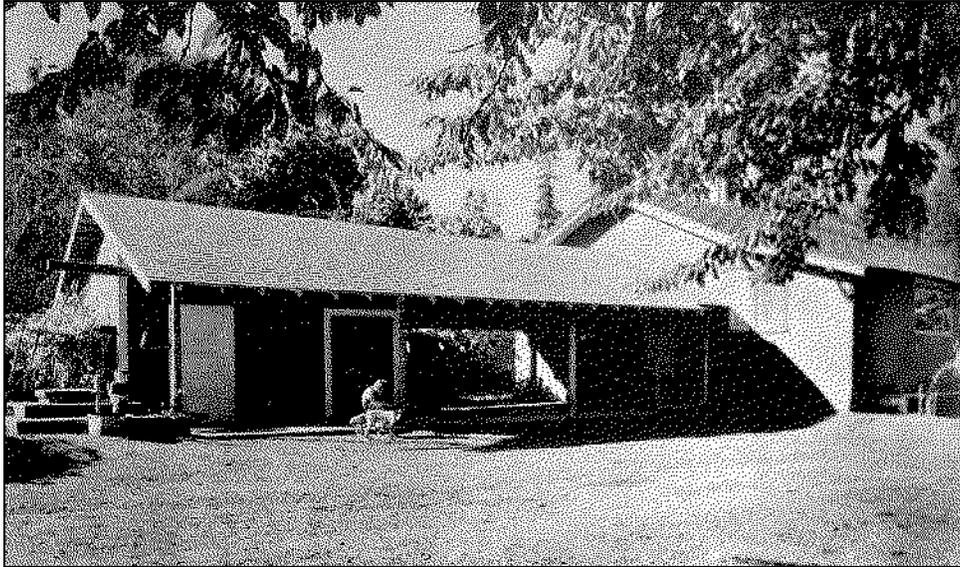
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Figure 22: View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi sons, ca 1944; 2014 view



Source: *Architectural Forum*, February 1949



Photograph by Diana Painter, 2014

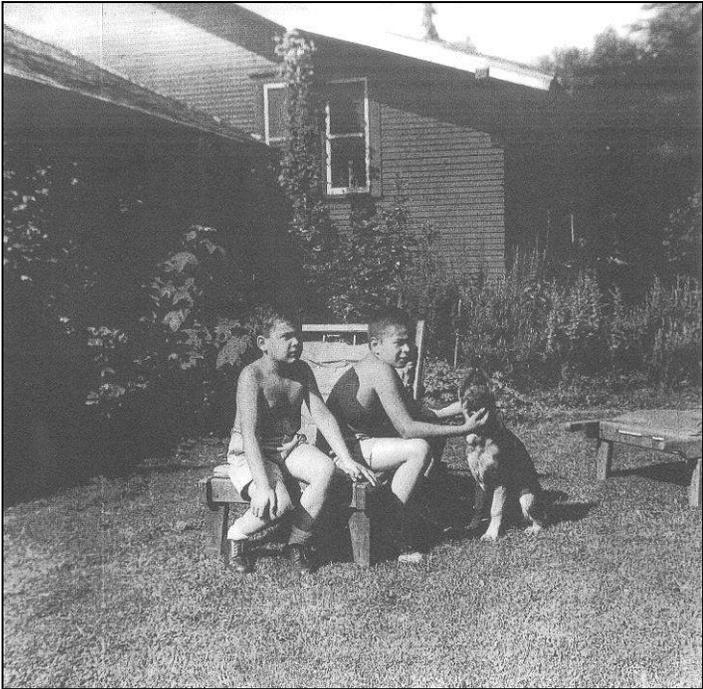
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Figure 23: View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi sons, ca 1944, 2014



Courtesy Connie and Richard Gunkel; Anthony Belluschi



Photograph by Diana Painter

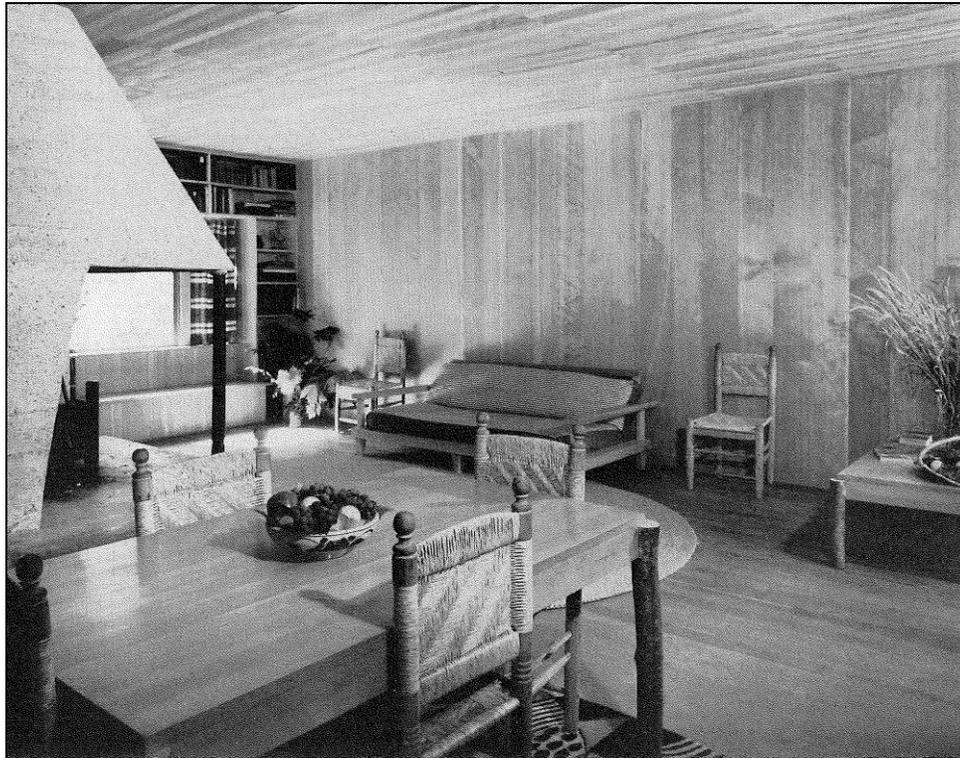
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Figure 24: Historic and current views of Aloha Farmhouse living room, 1946, 2014



Source: *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*



Photograph by Diana Painter

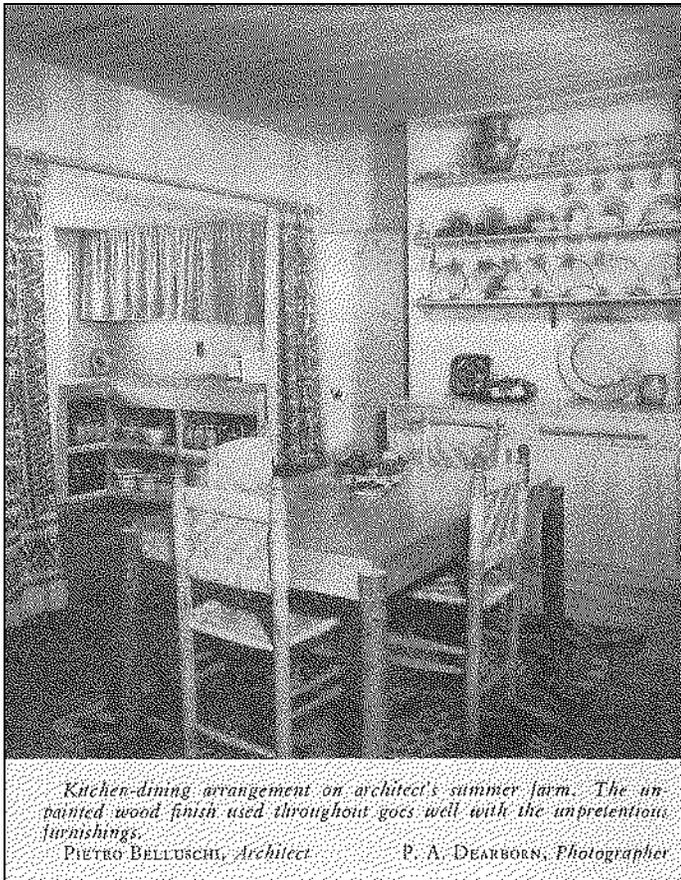
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Figure 25: Historic and current views of Aloha Farmhouse dining area, 1946, 2014



Source: *Book of Houses*, Phyllis Dearborn, photographer



Photograph by Diana Painter

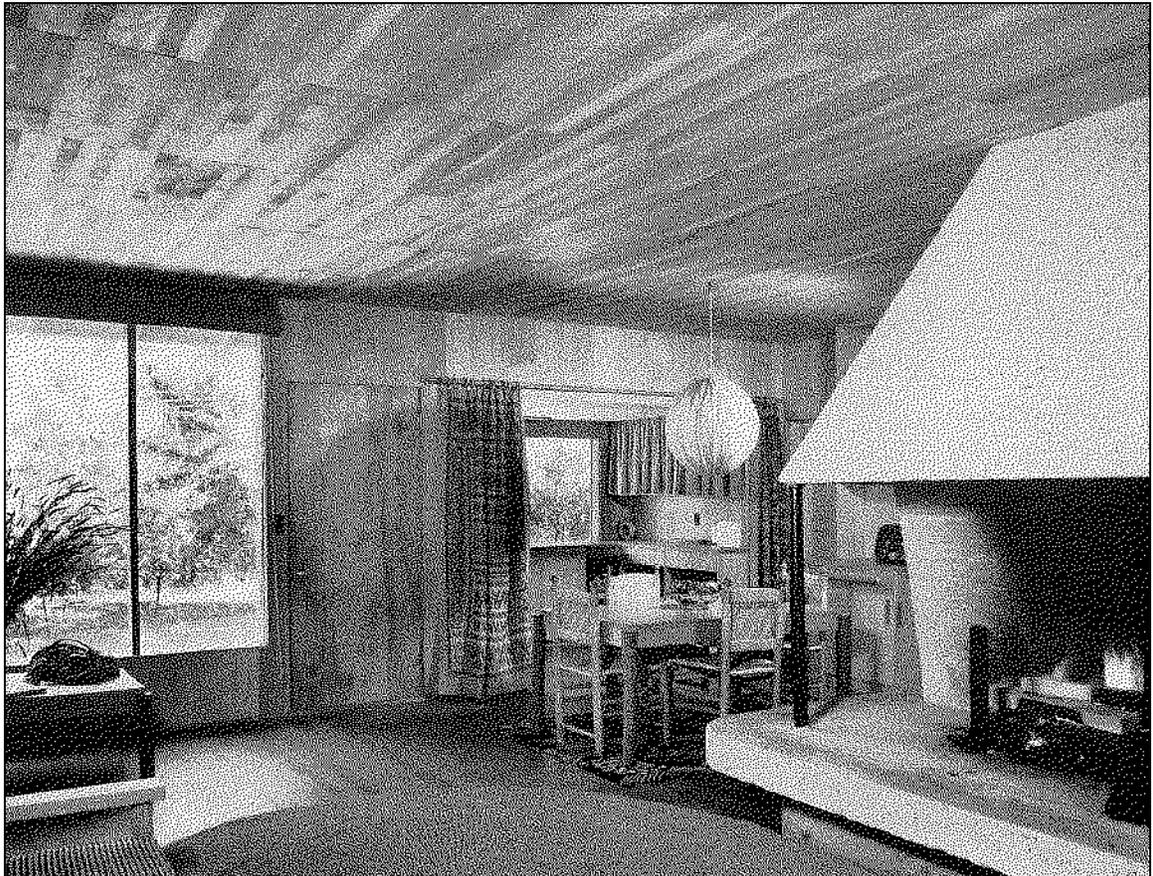
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Figure 26: Historic view of Aloha Farmhouse entry and kitchen, 1946



Source: The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi

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Figure 27: View of Aloha Farmhouse and Belluschi and sons, ca 1944



Source: Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect

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Figure 28: Photo of Belluschi family at Aloha Farmhouse, ca 1944



Courtesy Connie and Richard Gunkel; Anthony Belluschi

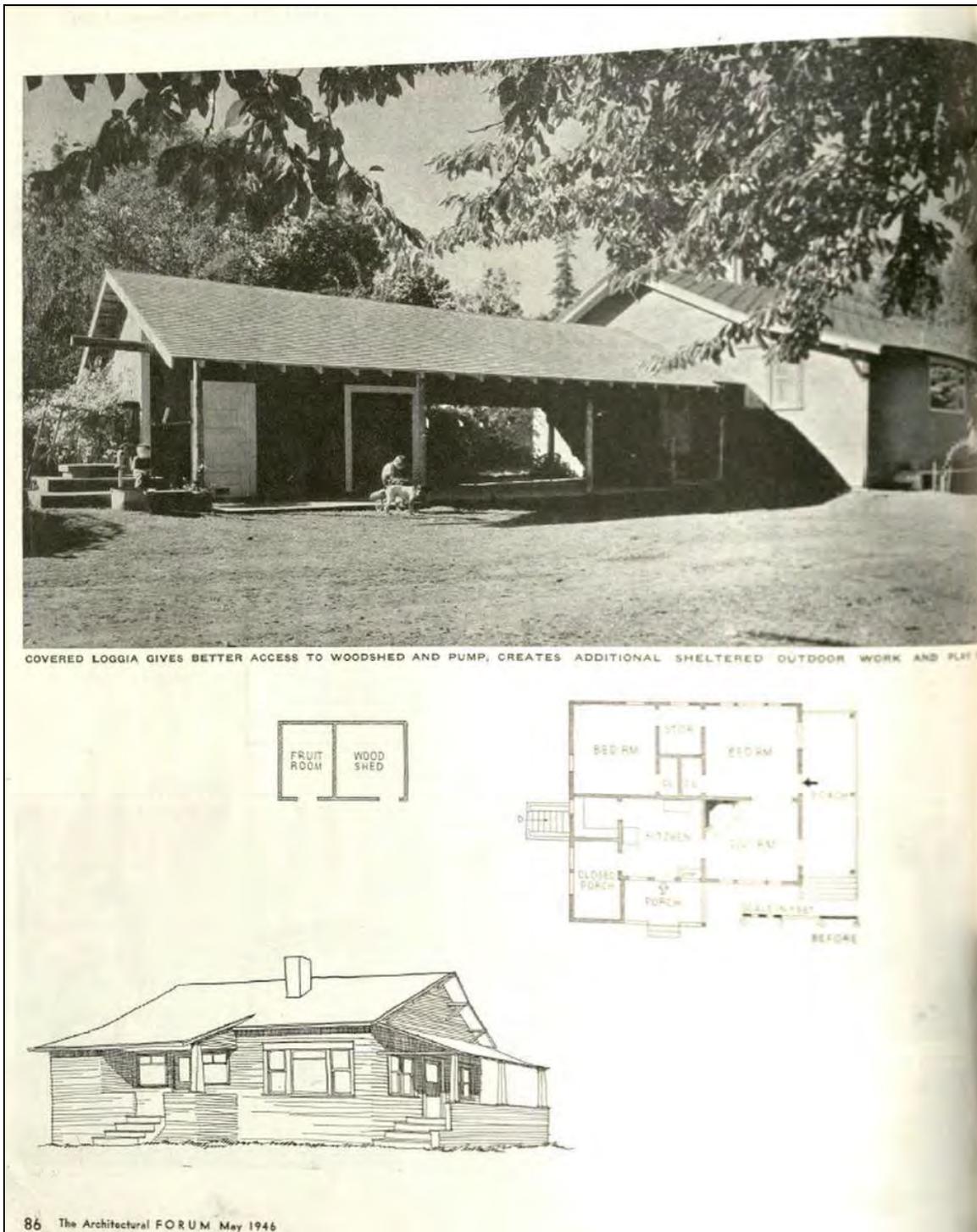
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Figure 29a: Article on Aloha Farmhouse from *Architectural Forum* (1946)



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Figure 29b: Article on Aloha Farmhouse from *Architectural Forum*

Architect Pietro Belluschi solves a priority and scarcity problem in Oregon.

Photo: P. A. Desbora

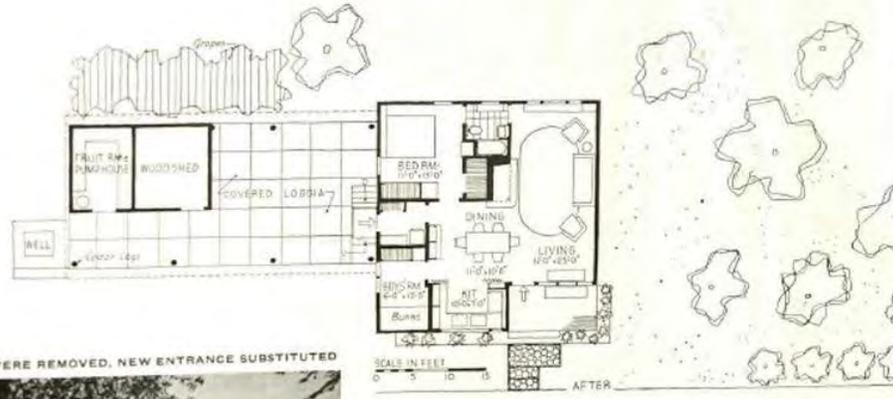


UNUSUAL HOODED FIREPLACE DOMINATES LIVING-DINING AREA

Oregon abounds with wooden farm-bungalows, all of comparatively modern vintage and nondescript design. And with many returning GI's bringing back a war-nurtured dream of living in a small place on the land, this particular example of a converted farmhouse near Portland is of special interest now as a practical solution of a pressing problem.

The architect says, "I don't know whether or not the sketch of the original farmhouse before remodeling (see opposite page) carries all the nice feeling of a country slum which the place had when I purchased it. I will add in my defense that what I bought was the orchard, which is filled with all kinds of wonderful fruit trees, rather than the house. Since it was not possible to obtain priority for a new house, I had to do the best I could with the existing building. As a matter of fact, now that a large porch connects the house with the utility building, it has become so livable and free of architectural pretense, that I am becoming quite attached to it."

In addition to connecting the existing woodshed (a very necessary adjunct in Oregon where wood is the chief fuel and where rain and damp get at that wood most of the season) with the house, Mr. Belluschi has introduced other comforts to country living. He has added a rear entry to the house from this covered porch. He has ripped out the old walls separating kitchen and living room and bedroom, making a spacious living-and-dining combination grouped around a tremendous modern fireplace. He has put in a bath where there was a storage closet. And a particular innovation is that between the living room and corner porch with its new front entrance, he has installed a three-section double-glazed window to catch solar heat. Finally, the interior of the house has been given considerable style by the adroit use of native woods which form wall and ceiling finishes throughout.



OLD PORCHES WERE REMOVED. NEW ENTRANCE SUBSTITUTED



87

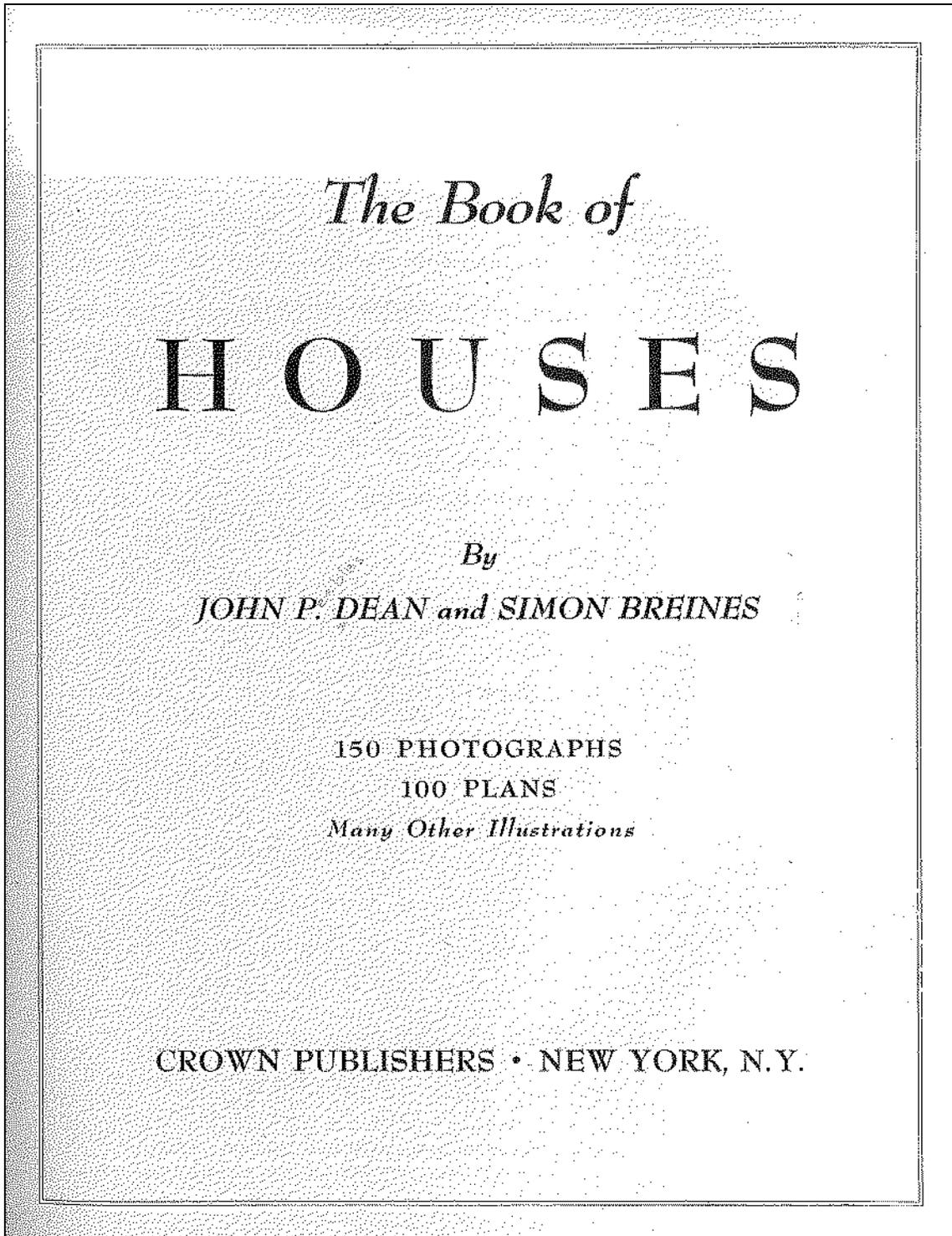
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Figure 30a: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *Book of Houses* (1946)



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Figure 30b: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *Book of Houses*

112 THE BOOK OF HOUSES



New wing, built on to an old frame house, consisting mainly of an open porch. The construction is simple, the design in character.
 PIETRO BELLUSCHI, Architect P. A. DEARBORN, Photographer




An open riser stairway. This stair is the main source of light for the hall. The vertical stair risers are omitted to let light through. Note the cork tread inserts and the stone wall going right through from outside into house. This detail and the preceding one were awarded prizes in a competition sponsored by Journal of the American Institute of Architects.
 POMERANCE & BREINES, Architects EZRA STOLLER, Photographer

Solar Deck above and outdoor living and dining space below. To prevent the shade being too gloomy, the deck was built of redwood slats set about 1/4" apart thus achieving the interesting shadow effect. The wire mesh railing provides safety for youngsters on the deck from the 2nd floor bedrooms. Modern? Yes. But it fits into the setting and the job simply.
 POMERANCE & BREINES, Architects EZRA STOLLER, Photographer

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Figure 30c: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *Book of Houses*



Convenient built-in cabinets and bookcases. High windows on North side give cross ventilation to living room at a level at which additional bookcases would have been out of reach.
POMERANCE & BREINES, Architects EZRA STOLLER, Photographer

Kitchen-dining arrangement on architect's summer farm. The unpainted wood finish used throughout goes well with the unpretentious furnishings.
PETRO BELLUSCHI, Architect P. A. DEARBORN, Photographer



Nursery-studio. This room was designed to be used as a nursery while the children were growing up and as a studio later on. Exposure is north and south, the north window being shown here. The wall of shelving and cabinets is temporary so that it can be removed if the owner should wish to incorporate this room into the adjacent living room. The cork tile floor with radiant heating coils below make this surface agreeable for crawling children.
POMERANCE & BREINES, Architects EZRA STOLLER, Photographer

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Figure 31a: Photograph of Aloha Farmhouse in profile of Pietro Belluschi in *Progressive Architecture* (1949)

the architect and his community

A CASE STUDY

PIETRO BELLUSCHI, ARCHITECT
PORTLAND, OREGON




The discussion of the office of Pietro Belluschi is the third P/A case study (see October 1947 and March 1948) of architects who, having chosen to practice away from the more lurid metropolitan centers, have done outstanding jobs of serving the overall needs of their communities. From the start of his professional career (1925), Belluschi has worked as designer, partner, or head of a firm in the city of Portland, Oregon (400,000). The purpose of these studies is to point up the inherent opportunity that the middle-size city offers the architect with determination and talent. In addition, we are pleased to honor those firms that have made a signal success of professional practice outside the confines of Megalopolis.

The Editors

Photo of Belluschi: National-Wide Pictorial Service. Picture of entrance to the Belluschi office: K. E. Richardson.

FEBRUARY, 1949 39

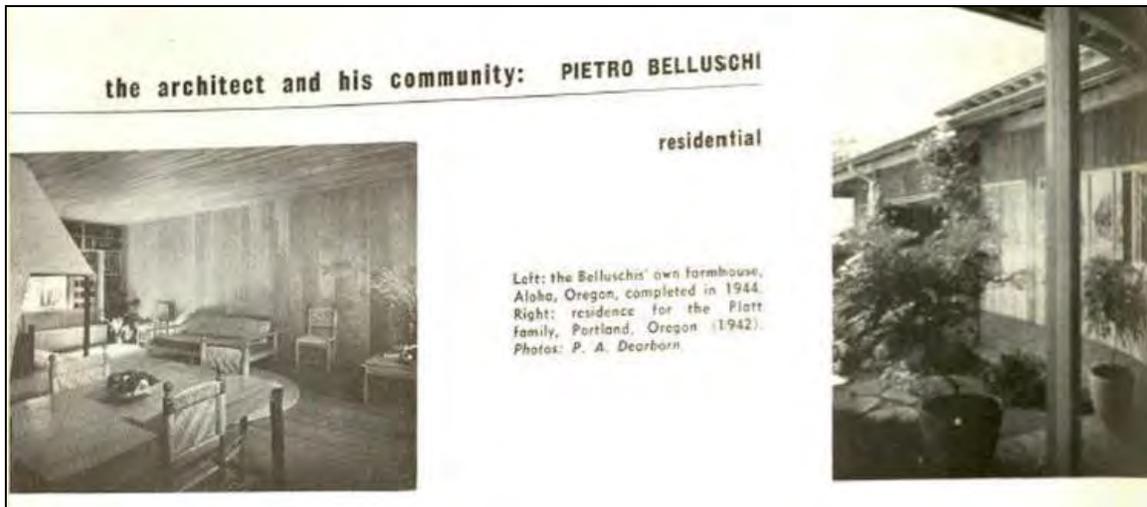
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Figure 31b: Photograph of Aloha Farmhouse in profile of Pietro Belluschi in *Progressive Architecture*



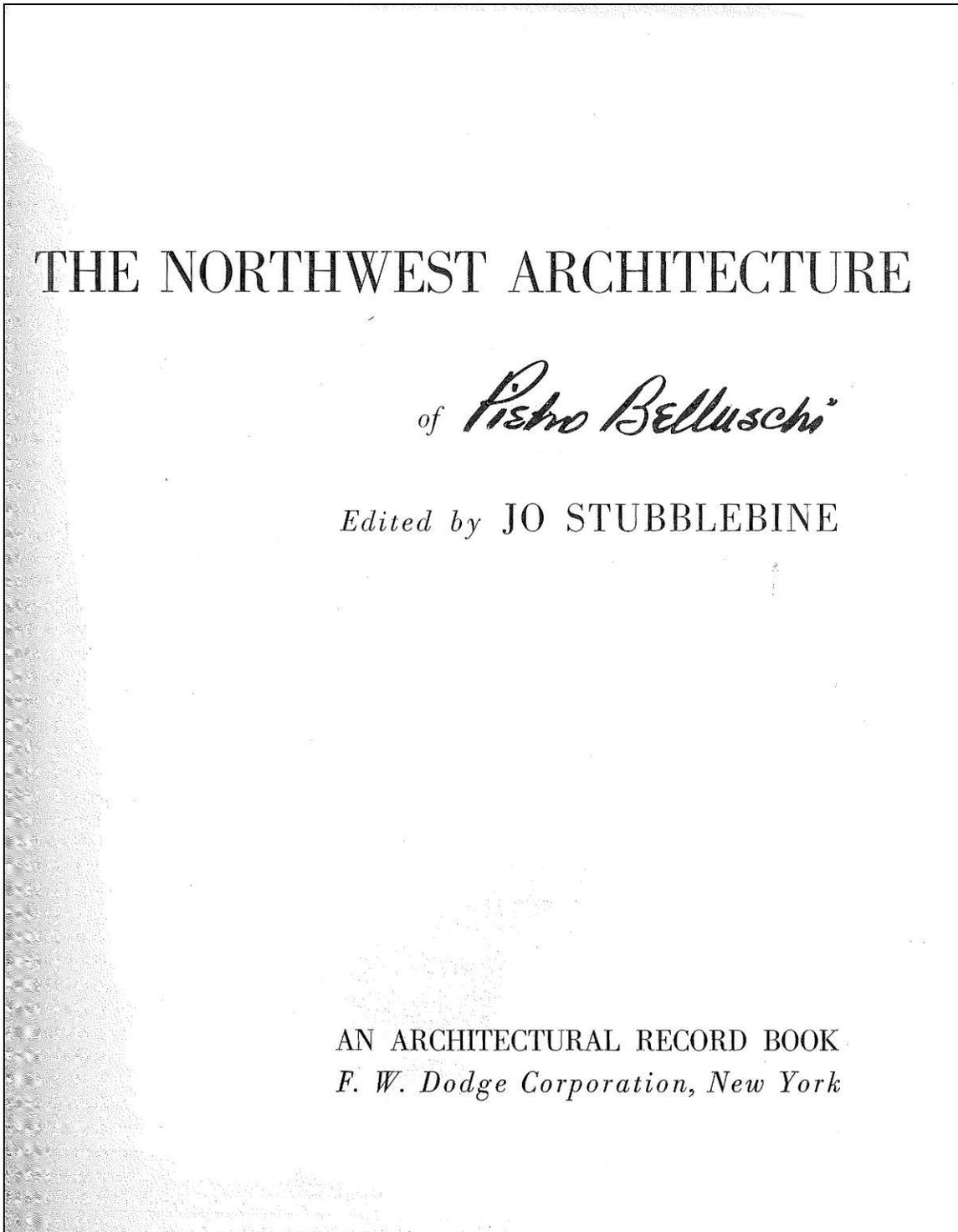
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Figure 32a: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi* (1953)



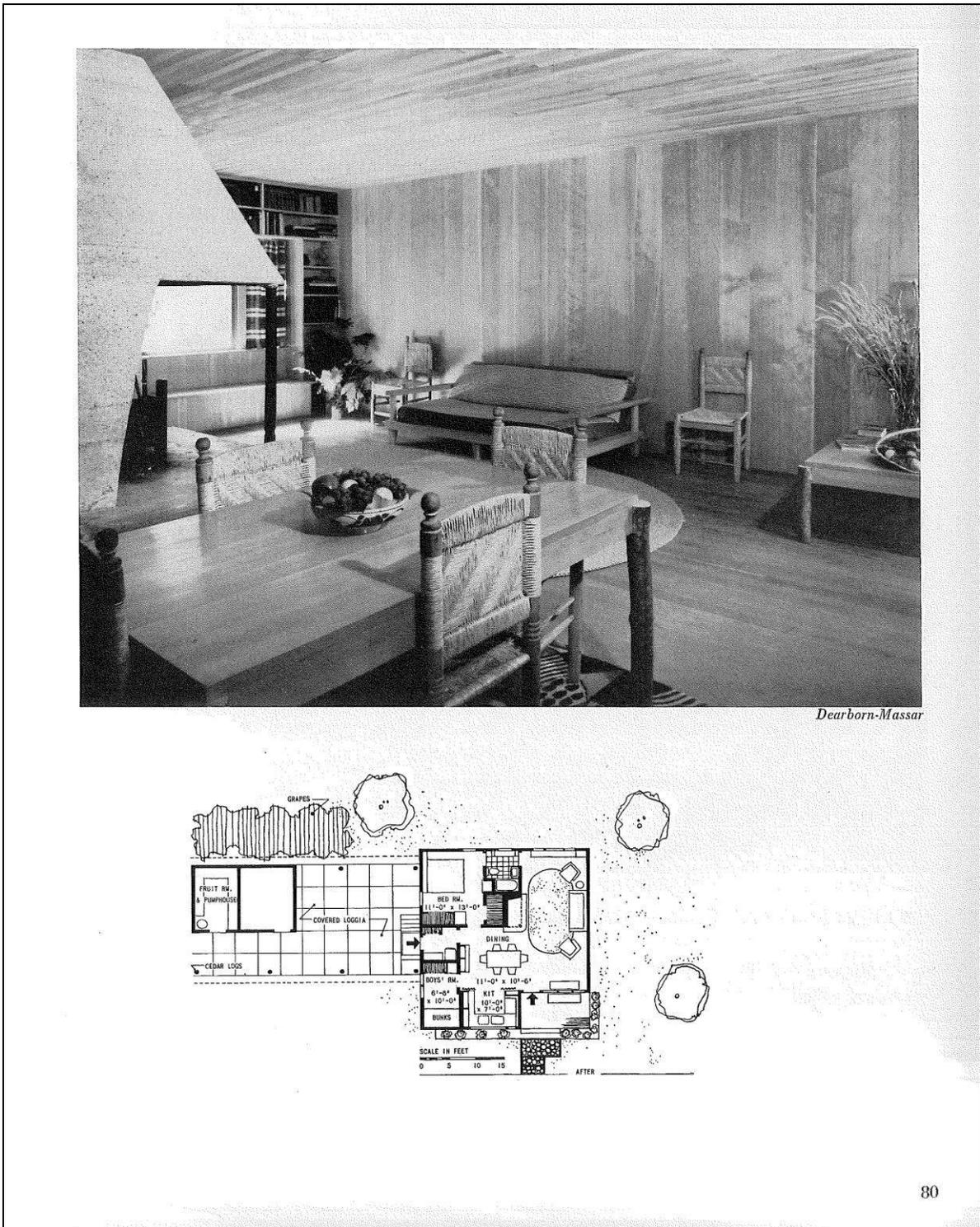
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Figure 32b: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*



Dearborn-Massar

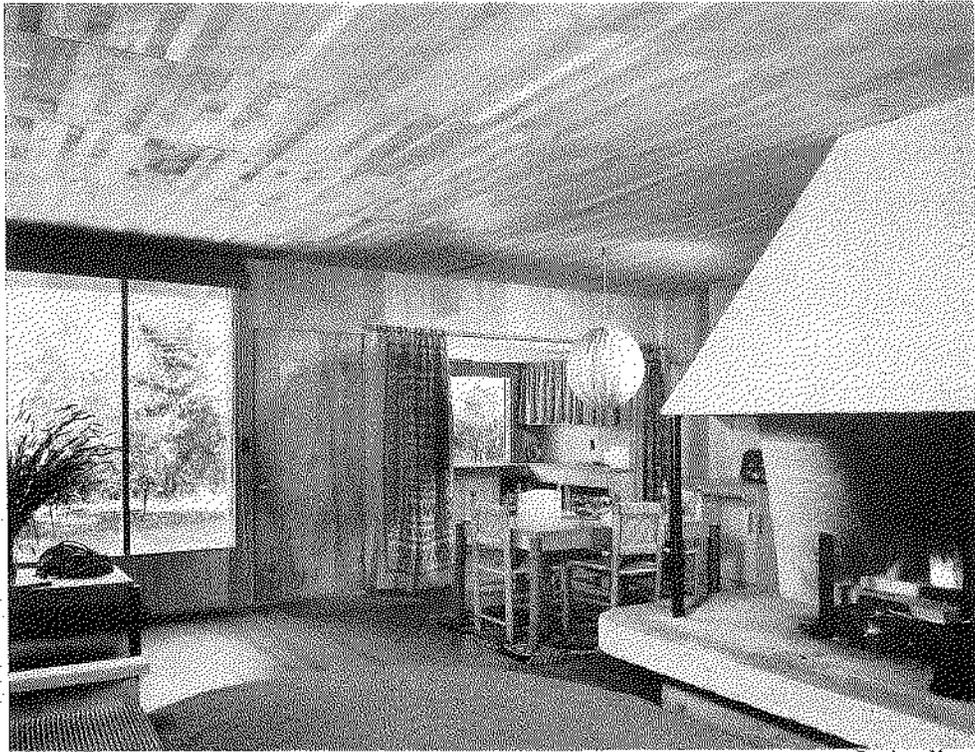
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Figure 32c: Excerpt on Aloha Farmhouse from *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi*



Dearborn-Massar

In remodeling an old farmhouse (1944) for his own family use, Belluschi did the usual things required to make it light and open—removed partitions, added large windows, and removed covered porches. Then he added a huge concrete corner fireplace and had provincial furniture made by craftsmen on the job.

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Figure 33a: "Vernacular Influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi"

**Vernacular influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi:
The Aloha Farmhouse
Diana J. Painter, PhD
Vernacular Architecture Forum – May 10, 2014**

When I began this study, which also involved preparing a National Register nomination for this property, my question was, did the vernacular character of the Aloha Farmhouse influence the architect Pietro Belluschi? Or did the architect, known for his admiration for vernacular buildings and his "barn-like" residences, bring his own sensibilities to the re-design of the structure? The study took place within the larger context of an on-going study of regional modernism in the Pacific Northwest at mid-century. The following outlines the context within which Belluschi was working at the time, and the story of the Aloha Farmhouse.

About 1944, Pietro Belluschi, Oregon's most renowned twentieth century architect, came across a six-acre rural property with a modest farmhouse and remnants of an old orchard in Washington County, directly west of Portland. He was intrigued. His young family was outgrowing his small Council Crest home in Portland at this time, and the property may have brought back fond childhood memories of summers at a relative's farm in the countryside near Piacenza, Italy, which he remembered as a "paradise on earth."¹ He bought the property and immediately set about transforming it into a suitable home for himself, his wife Helen, boys Peter (5) and Tony (3), and the family dog.

In the years that he remodeled and lived in the Aloha Farmhouse, from 1944 to 1948, Belluschi was at the top of his game. In this first phase of his long career, he had already garnered the attention of the national architectural press with his 1932 Portland Art Museum. He had also designed his own 1936-37 Council Crest home, his first built residence to catch the public's eye,² and the attention of the architectural community when it was published in the seminal, *The Modern House in America* of 1940.³ While this house displayed many of the characteristics that would come to typify Belluschi's interpretation of the Northwest Regional style, it still displayed some traditional elements, such as the brick-clad façade and multi-light bow window overlooking the courtyard to the rear of the house. The Aubrey Watzek house, designed by his friend and colleague John Yeon while working in the Belluschi office and constructed in 1936-38, would place the Northwest Regional style on the national stage. This residence, a National Historic Landmark today, was exhibited in the highly prestigious Museum of Modern Art exhibit,

¹ Meredith L. Clausen, *Pietro Belluschi, Modern American Architect* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994) 10.

² "Oregon Homes . . . An Architect Designs One for Himself," *The Oregonian Northwest Home Show Section*, May 28, 1939.

³ James Ford and Katherine Morrow Ford, *The Modern House in America*. (New York: Architectural Book Publishing Co., Inc, 1940) 38.

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Figure 33b: "Vernacular Influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi"

Built in USA 1932-1944. It was and is a singular structure, described in the exhibit catalogue as 'intimately related to its magnificent natural setting, with a harmonious arrangement of low-pitched roofs that echo the distant view of Mount Hood.'⁴ It would remain, however, for Belluschi's 1937-38 Jennings Sutor house to crystallize the tenets of the Northwest Regional style, as practiced in the Portland area.

As early as 1940, Belluschi made the following statement in *The Modern House in America*:

*It is to be observed that many farm houses, and as a matter of fact all houses of people whose lives have been close and sympathetic to the soil, have the seed of good domestic architecture which becomes modern only because of the freedom from the artificial standards which have accumulated through many decades of superficial culture. It goes without saying that architecture when free is functional, if function is allowed to include the desire to live fully and with understanding.'*⁵

Belluschi shared this love of the simplicity of agricultural buildings with his colleague William W. Wurster, who captured national attention with his 1927 design of the rustic Gregory Farmhouse in rural Santa Cruz county, California. Drawing inspiration from the built and natural environment, with a concern for the site, for the climate, for local materials, particularly wood, incorporating simple forms, and relying on proportions and the materials themselves for expression was a major concern of these architects. Less discussed in conjunction with Belluschi's work, but mentioned often in the work of regional modernists on the west coast, was the influence of traditional Japanese architecture, in particular the roof that echoed the same gable-on-hip roof form seen in these residences, and expressed wood construction.

In the early 1940s, Belluschi's colleagues in the Pacific Northwest were beginning to experiment with International Modernism. Paul Thiry, in Seattle, had just returned from a tour of Japan and Europe, where he visited Antonin Raymond, who was constructing modern houses of concrete in Japan, and Le Corbusier. When he returned to Seattle in 1936 he constructed his own home in an early version of the International style. Portland architect Van Evera Bailey experimented with residences reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright in his early years of practice. He also supervised the construction of two residences by Richard Neutra in the International style, and convinced Neutra to clad one of the residences in wood, which was more in keeping with local aesthetics. But Belluschi and Yeon were in the forefront in developing what would be known as the Northwest Regional style.

Belluschi's practice was far from limited to residences in these years. In 1940, he designed and built his widely acclaimed St. Thomas More Church, the first of many in his long fascination with the design of modern spiritual spaces. With its interiors of local woods, exposed structure, fine craftsmanship, and manipulation of light, Belluschi

⁴ Elizabeth Mock, editor, *Built in USA 1932-44* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1944),

41.

⁵ Ford, 1940:123.

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Figure 33c: "Vernacular Influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi"

created an intimate yet uplifting space that eschewed traditional religious iconography. In the same years that he was living in the Aloha Farmhouse, the Equitable Building was under construction. This landmark building, the first skyscraper built after World War II, was widely lauded for its sleek aluminum and tinted glass exterior, use of thermopane glass, innovations in heating and cooling, and other technical advances.⁶

Early profile

Pietro Belluschi was born in 1899 in Ancona, Italy, on the Adriatic Sea, and studied engineering at the University of Rome. When he finished his studies in 1922, he was awarded a scholarship to study at Cornell University for a year. After earning his second engineering degree, he made his way to the west coast. By this time, Belluschi knew he wanted to practice architecture. He obtained letters of introduction to several west coast firms and was hired by the Portland firm of A. E. Doyle. A. E. Doyle was one of the most respected and successful architectural firms in Portland, whose work would come to characterize the early twentieth century era of development in Portland.

In his early years with the Doyle firm, Belluschi became involved in the important commissions in the office, and after the sudden departure of Doyle's chief designer, assumed a key role in the firm. At the same time he was learning his craft, he was also very involved in the Portland art world and formed friendships with the artist Harry Wentz and designer John Yeon. Wentz taught painting and composition at the Portland Art School, was actively involved in art and architecture circles, and was a close friend of A. E. Doyle. Doyle collaborated with Wentz in the design of his 1916 weekend residence and studio on the Oregon coast, as well as cottages of other friends who would become important to Belluschi's career.⁷ Wentz invited the two young men to his weekend residence and they spent time there sketching and painting. Belluschi also spent time touring and hiking with Yeon, developing a great love of the Oregon countryside. These experiences would become central to Belluschi's aesthetic.

The Wentz Cottage

Belluschi admired the simple form, rustic qualities, and quiet presence of the Wentz Cottage, which was all the more striking for its dramatic setting on Oregon's scenic coastline. It is often cited as an important prototype in the formation of the Northwest Regional Style in the Portland area. Belluschi would later say of the Wentz Cottage "It has function, appropriateness, harmony, materials, setting, orientation; it is modern, emotional, beautiful."⁸

His next project, which gave him an opportunity to put into effect some lessons he learned from the Wentz Cottage, was a design scheme for Wentz entitled, "House for an Artist in Town." A model of Belluschi's design concept, along with models by John Yeon and six others, was displayed at the Portland Art Museum in 1934. Journalist Catherine

⁶ Meredith L. Clausen, "Belluschi and the Equitable Building in History," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 50, No. 2 (June 1999).

⁷ One of the cottages belonged to Anna Belle Crocker, who would guide the work on the Portland Art Museum. Philip Niles, *Beauty of the City, A. E. Doyle Portland Architect*. (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2008), 222.

⁸ Jo Stubblebine, Editor, *The Northwest Architecture of Pietro Belluschi* (New York: F. W. Dodge Corporation, 1953), 5.

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Figure 33d: "Vernacular Influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi"

The Aloha Farmhouse was a small, Craftsman-inspired home when Belluschi found it, with a nearly square footprint and a moderately pitched, front gable roof with knee brackets supporting the overhanging eaves. It was a simple building, with two substantial porches with shed roofs supported by tapered posts on enclosed rails. In essence, it displayed the major characteristics, if not the classic features, of a Craftsman bungalow. The interior was divided into four major, equal-sized spaces, accommodating a living and dining room, a kitchen, and two bedrooms. A small, two-room shed to the rear contained a wood shed and a fruit room. Belluschi had at first planned to build a new home on the property, but wartime restrictions on materials and civilian development prohibited this. So he set about remodeling the home.

In the 1944 remodel of the Aloha Farmhouse Belluschi removed interior partitions in the house to create a large, open, living-dining space that was also open to the kitchen, which was fitted into what was previously a secondary porch. Banks of windows, displaying Belluschi's characteristic tall, vertical, fixed panes were added to light the living room and kitchen. A large corner fireplace with a dramatic concrete hood was added, anchoring the public spaces of the house. The existing fir flooring was retained, but the walls were clad in spruce and the ceiling with a contrasting wood. Built-ins were added throughout the house to accommodate storage, and "provincial" furniture was custom-made for the house, to enhance its rustic character. A new front porch, whose stairs and landscaped areas meandered up from the slightly sloping yard, anchored the building more firmly in its site. Most dramatically, the existing fruit room and wood shed building was connected to the house with a gabled roof with exposed framing, creating a large, sheltered loggia. This renovation was accomplished within the existing footprint of the house.

About two years later an addition to the east, behind the living room, was constructed to accommodate bedrooms for the boys. The expansion, however, did not involve dramatic changes. The existing beveled siding was continued and the building's original knee brackets were reinstated on the gable end. While the footprint was now enlarged, the simple form of the vernacular structure was retained.

Press for the Aloha Farmhouse

Belluschi had numerous professional photographs taken of the house, featuring himself and his family, a number of which appeared in professional journals. The Aloha Farmhouse was featured in the May 1946 issue of *Architectural Forum* in an article entitled, "Remodeled Farmhouse," with a sketch and plans of the original building, along with the plans of the 1944 remodel. The motivation for featuring the building appears in the introduction to the article: "Oregon abounds with wooden farm-bungalows, all of comparatively modern vintage and nondescript design. And with many returning GI's bringing back a war-nurtured dream of living in a small place on the land, this particular example of a converted farmhouse near Portland is of special interest now as a practical solution of [sic] a pressing problem."

This same year the residence appeared in John Dean and Simon Breines' *The Book of Houses*, a book aimed at the prospective, post-war house buyer. The corner fireplace, which was constructed of concrete with embedded vermiculite, was featured in an October 20, 1946 article in the *New York Times* on modern fireplaces. The house also

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Figure 33e: "Vernacular Influences in the Residential Work of Pietro Belluschi"

appeared in a case study on architects who had found success away from the great urban centers, entitled "the architect and his community," in the February 1949 issue of *Progressive Architecture*. It was published again in the 1953 monograph on Belluschi's work, which placed an emphasis on Belluschi's regionalist roots by juxtaposing gorgeous shots of Oregon scenery with photographs of Belluschi's work.

Despite this attachment to the house, his wife felt isolated in the country with two children, and Belluschi moved back to Portland in 1948, remodeling another house for his family. In 1950, however, he accepted a position as the Dean of the school of architecture and planning at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and moved to the east coast. There he pursued a career as a consulting architect collaborating with some of the top firms in the country on major projects, in addition to his teaching responsibilities. He would not return to Portland until 1973, when he bought the beautiful Burkes house, which he had designed at the same time he was remodeling the Aloha Farmhouse. Belluschi continued his consulting career into his late 80s, dying in 1994 at the age of 94. The house is now owned, and was recently restored and remodeled, by Belluschi's son Anthony, also an architect.

This study began with the question of whether remodeling a true Oregon vernacular farmhouse of the early twentieth century informed Belluschi's subsequent residential design work, which was often lauded for recalling the barns of the Willamette Valley. Belluschi said that "much significance can be imparted to simple materials such as wood or brick, and much warmth and feeling may be achieved by the judicious use of such intangibles as space, light, proportion, texture, and color." I concluded that, like his regional modernist contemporaries, he considered each residence a challenge met by responding to existing conditions, not an opportunity to bring a pre-conceived formal response to a design problem. The Aloha Farmhouse is the only residence that Belluschi designed as a contextual response to an existing vernacular structure and represents a skillful blending of old and new. It remains a testament to his talent as a designer and represents a short-lived rural idyll before the next phase of his long and successful career.

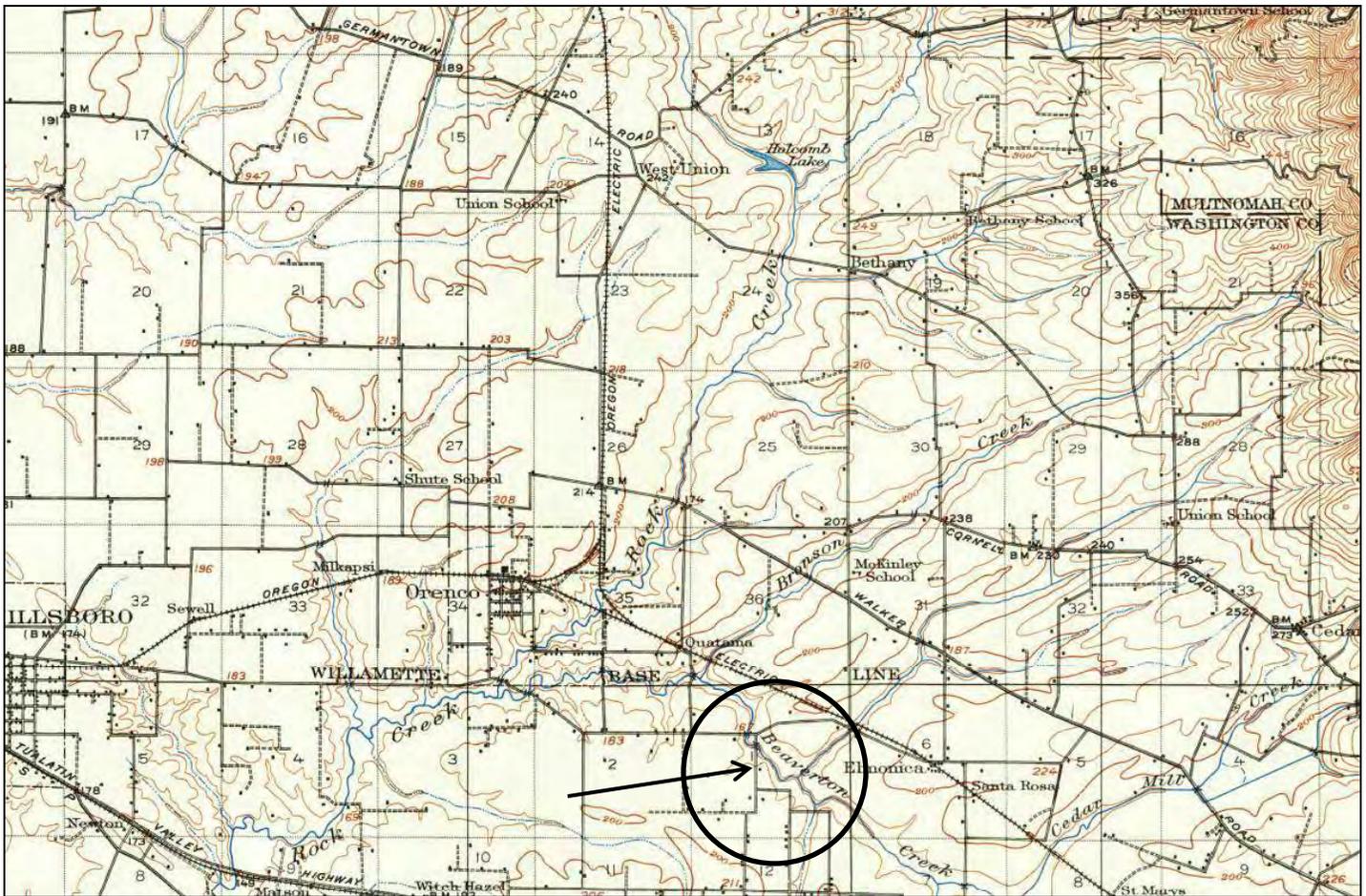
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Figure 34: 1915 historic USGS map showing farmhouse



United States Geological Survey, Hillsboro Quadrangle, 1915

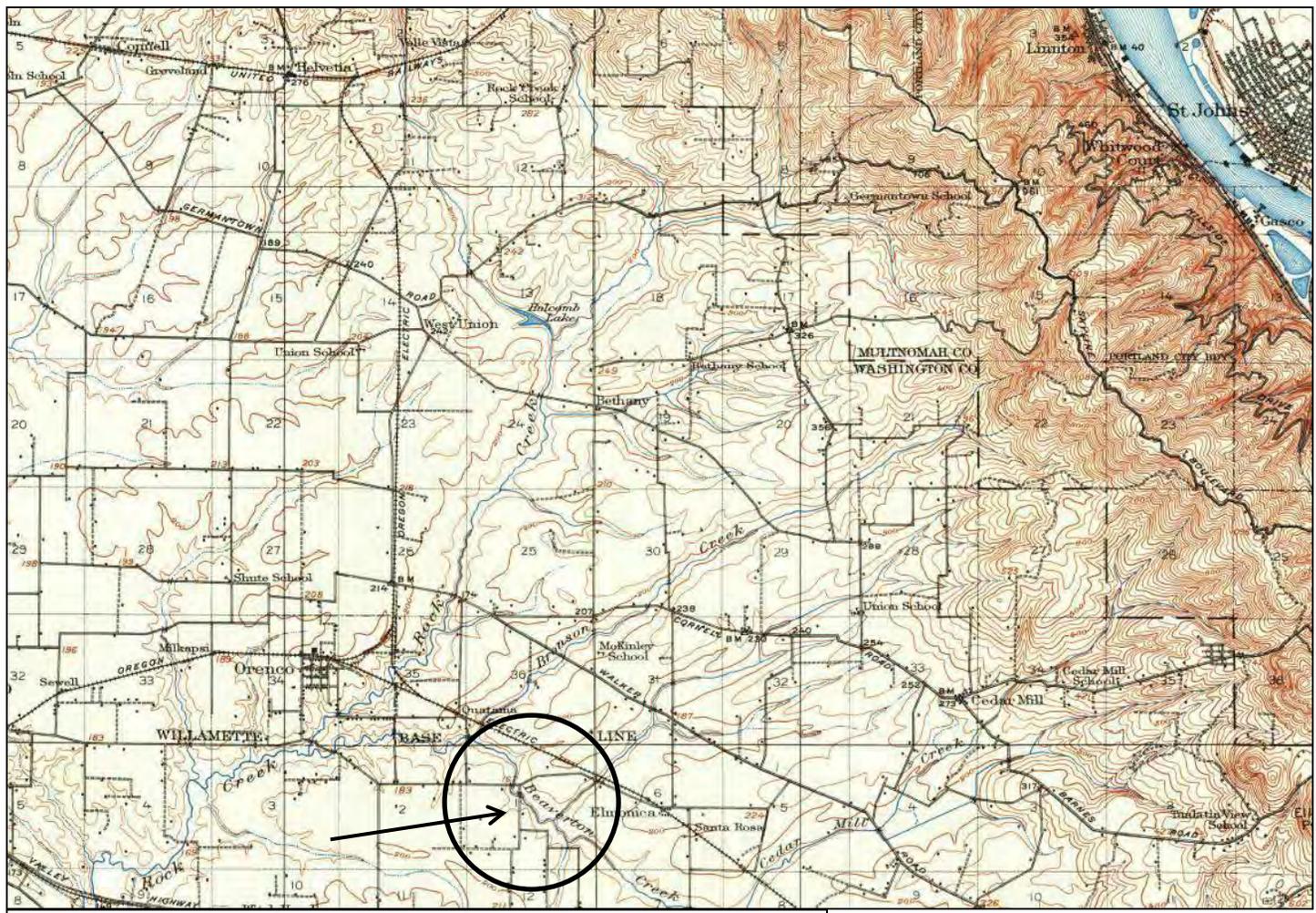
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Figure 35: 1918 USGS map updated to 1943, showing rural character of area at that time



United States Geological Survey, Hillsboro Quadrangle, 1918 updated to 1943

Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.



Photo 1 of 22: North and east facades, looking southwest



Photo 2 of 22: West and south facades, looking northeast

Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.



Photo 3 of 22: North (front) façade, west end



Photo 4 of 22: North (front) façade, east end

Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.



Photo 5 of 22: East façade, looking southwest



Photo 6 of 22: East façade, looking west

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 7 of 22: South façade, west end



Photo 8 of 22: South façade, east end

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 9 of 22: West façade, looking east



Photo 10 of 22: Loggia looking east at Wood Shed and Fruit Room

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 11 of 22: Loggia, looking west and east façade of house

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 12 of 22: Living room, looking south toward study



Photo 13 of 22: Main front entry and bank of windows
in dining room, looking northwest

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 14 of 22: Kitchen, looking north toward orchard

Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.



Photo 15 of 22: Built-in china cabinet, looking east



Photo 16 of 22: Rear hallway, looking north

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**

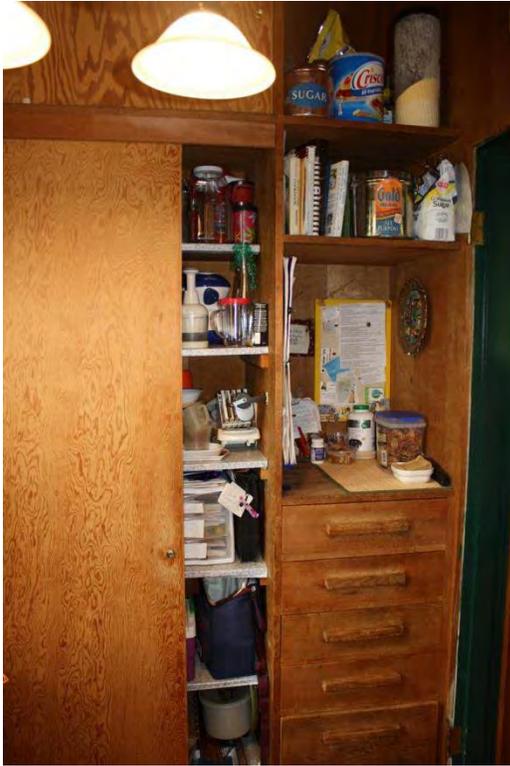


Photo 17 of 22: Typical built-in (in pantry, former bunk room)



Photo 18 of 22: Typical window detail

Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.



Photo 19 of 22: Barn in southeast corner of site, looking south



Photo 20 of 22: Remnant orchard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.

**Aloha Farmhouse
Beaverton vicinity, Washington Co.**



Photo 21 of 22: Plantings in rear yard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.



Photo 22 of 22: Pear tree in rear yard, looking west toward SW 197th Ave.