

Jamison Residence
17917 113th Avenue Northeast
Bothell
King County
Washington

HABS No. WA-217

HABS
WASH
17-BOTH,
2-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
Columbia Cascade Support Office
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, Washington 98104-1060

HISTORIC MEXICAN
BUILDINGS SURVEY

JAMISON RESIDENCE
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WASH
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Location: 17917 - 113th Avenue Northeast
Bothell, King County, Washington 98011
U.S.G.S. Bothell, Wash. 15' Quadrangle,
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 10-560780-5289520

Historic Owner: Bernice E. Jamison and others

Present Owner: The University of Washington and Cascade Community College

Present Occupant: Vacant

Historic Use: Single Family Residence

Present Use: University campus under development

Significance: The Jamison property has local significance through its association with early settlement in the Sammamish River Valley, and with the general pattern of development in King County, Washington. Constructed in 1885, the house was once one of several single-family homes that once made up a small residential community known as Stringtown. Stringtown was located along North Creek, a small tributary to the Sammamish River. The site is currently in the city of Bothell, Washington, approximately 30 miles northeast of downtown Seattle.

The Jamison House is deteriorated and was changed considerably in the early 1990s. Records indicate that, until recently, it retained many characteristics of a pioneer-era dwelling. Designed in a vernacular residential style the house typifies late nineteenth century, wood-framed farmhouses of the American west.

PART I: HISTORIC INFORMATION

Historic Overview of the Sammamish Valley and Stringtown

The area known as Stringtown, in which the Jamison House is located, is in the northern portion of the Sammamish Valley. Native settlement in the valley included camps of the Simump tribe of the Coastal Salish speaking Duwamish Indians. These camps were located on the upper edges of the seven-mile long Squak Lake and Squak Slough, its northern tributary. (These were later renamed Lake Sammamish and the Sammamish Slough). An estimate 200 Indians lived on the lake and in the valley when the whites first explored the area, and in 1863 a trading post was established at the south end of the lake at the town site of Issaquah. Initial white settlement in Puget Sound region occurred on its open prairies and flats near rivers or bays. Gradually the entire area that makes up King County, from the Sound to the Cascade Mountains, was cleared and subsistence farms were established.

River systems, such as the Sammamish Slough, served as transportation routes in the pioneer era. Early towns along the Lake Sammamish and the Slough -- Bothell, Redmond and Issaquah -- were connected to one another by river scows. Initially these narrow (typically 8' by 52'), flat-bottomed wood boats were poled and rowed, and carried passengers, freight, and mail. In 1876, the first steam-powered scow, the Mud Hen, began its stops at boat landings in Bothell, Stringtown, Woodin's place (Woodinville), Jacobsen's and Derby (Hollywood). This steam scow operated until 1889.

In the late 1880s the Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad (Northern Pacific) established a rail line and established passenger rail service from Seattle to North Bend via the Sammamish Valley towns. By 1910 regular boat transportation on the slough had ceased, but boats continued to come to the Bothell dock until 1916. River traffic continued, however, until 1916 at which time the water level in the slough was lowered, making boat traffic impossible. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, however, the Sammamish River continued to be used as a route for delivering logs to booms on Lake Washington.

Gradually Bothell developed, surpassing and later encompassing Stringtown which had remained exclusively residential. Bothell, which was platted in 1884 and incorporated in 1909, became the area's earliest commercial market center, drawing its income from nearby farming and dairying up through the 1930s.

Stringtown was in a strategic location on the river. Its "main street" -- currently 113th Avenue NE -- was also a short block extending from one of the earliest roads leading from Bothell to Woodinville and Redmond. This early road crossed the Sammamish River near Stingtown. (Construction of State Route 522 in the mid-1950s obliterated this.)

Association with Early Settlement

The small residential settlement in which the Jamison House was built was established in the early 1880s. Its name -- Stringtown -- apparently was descriptive of the "string" of houses placed on the west side of North Creek, a small tributary to the Sammamish River. The Jamison Residence (named for Bernice Jamison who owned it in the 1930s) was one of an estimated half-dozen dwellings that made up this community. The Sammamish River, which ran perpendicular to 113th Avenue NE and North Creek, is located approximately one half mile south of the Jamison Residence.

Stringtown is associated with earlier settlers to the upper Sammamish River Valley and Bothell area. Settlement occurred relatively late in this valley in contrast to development along the edge of Puget Sound; in 1870 there were only an estimated nine white residents in the valley.

Early settlers to the area near Stringtown included George Wilson, Ed Guthrie, and Columbus S. Greenleaf, homesteaders who took advantage of the Donation Land Act of 1850. (This law had opened Washington Territory in what would become King County, to agricultural settlement.) Wilson and Greenleaf established settlement claims on property along the North Creek in the early 1870s. Wilson and Greenleaf's claims were north of what was to become Stringtown, and were typical of many homesteaders' tracts with large, 160 or 320 acre parcels. In contrast, Stringtown, which was platted from a 40-acre parcel owned by John M. Keener, was made up by smaller one± acre sized parcels, sized for single-family dwellings. (Keener, a later settler, came to the Bothell area in 1883 - 1884. He was prominent in Bothell's early development, and helped establish its first school. The Keener family was prominent too for their meat business and market.)

Early settlers to the Sammamish Valley typically logged timber from their homestead claims to finance subsequent development. Logging was followed by stump removal and grading of the land to provide home sites and farmsteads. Development in the area may have been effected by a financial panic in the Sammamish Valley which occurred in 1874 - 1875. Stringtown was a swampy area, but in 1880 a log flume was constructed, using water from North Creek. Its construction had the effect of straightening and ditching the channel, draining the area and Stringtown.

In 1889 George Wilson donated one-half acre of land for a cemetery. Currently this parcel is a part of the five-acre historic Bothell Cemetery which is located approximately one-quarter mile west of the Jamison property at the corner of 108th Avenue NE and NE 180th Street.

The most prominent historic resident of Stringtown was Dr. Reuben Chase who lived in a wood-framed house at 17819 - 113th Avenue NE, two parcels south of the Jamison House, from 1889 - 1895. Dr. Chase was Bothell's first doctor. His house, which was constructed in 1885, the same year as the Jamison Residence as Chase's first residence in the area. In the mid-1880s Chase also constructed a two story frame building in Stringtown that served as the area's first doctor's office and hospital.

Early photographs suggest the Chase House was very similar in design and construction to the Jamison House. Both were very simple, relatively unadorned, one and one-half story structures with gable roofs. Both were clad with wood shingle roofing, painted horizontal siding with corner board trim, and had fixed and double-hung wood windows. (The historic and architectural significance of the Reuben Chase House has been recognized by its listing in the National Register in 1990.)

The King County Tax Assessor's records, which date as early as 1939, indicate the owner as Bernice E. Jamison in 1934, and the property address at that time as Route 2, Bothell. The property was later purchased by G. A. Newberg in 1958.

Development in the Sammamish Valley

From early white settlement until World War II, the economic character of King County, Washington, was concentrated in the primary or extraction industries -- collection and processing of forest, fish and agricultural resources -- rather than the secondary industries of manufacturing, service or construction.

In 1916 the Chittenden Locks in Ballard were opened and the Montlake Cut in Seattle completed. Lakes Sammamish and Washington were lowered 9 to 11 feet by this construction. A brick paved road had been constructed that linked Bothell to Seattle in 1913, and roads had been constructed to other Sammamish Valley towns by 1916. After 1916, low properties in the valley were drained as a consequence of construction of the Locks. Adjacent wetlands, which previously had provided duck ponds for hunting, became usable flood plains.

Up through World War II, most of the County's east side areas remained agricultural in character, and residential and commercial development was clustered around recognized villages and towns. In the 1890s King County's rural landscape was dominated by logging and sawmills. By 1940 its principal

agricultural industry was dairying. Low level pastures provided grazing, typically for dairy herds, and space for vegetable and berry farms.

Many dairies were established in along North Creek. In the 1920s these included Phineas Frease's Bothell Creek Dairy Farm (Ross homestead), James D. Jones Dairy (Wissinger homestead) and the Stewart Dairy; and in the 1930s, the Monte Villa Dairy and Victor Boyd's dairy. (Other dairies in the Bothell area were located north of the town, and in the Canyon Park and Woodinville areas.) Local truck farms, owned by Migiliore-Vitulli family members, Dan Davies, Lloyd Helseth, Forrest Watts, Bill Yaguchi and others were also located in the North Creek area. Some of these farms operated into the mid-1970s. Up through the 1980s, Stringtown, which originally had included a strategically placed boat dock during the era of the river scows, remained as a residential cluster surrounded by agriculture.

As Puget Sound's economy evolved from resource extraction to service-based industries, its development patterns changed. King County's post-war economy was characterized by the rise of the aerospace, high-tech and service industries. Suburban development -- including housing, light industry and commercial facilities -- became more dispersed, moving outside of cities and towns.

Economic and social changes in the Sammamish Valley and Bothell area have been dramatic in the last thirty years. Bothell's city boundaries were expanded several times. Initially this city's growth was slow: the 1910 census documents recognized 599 residents, and in the subsequent 30 years this figure grew only to 794. The population grew to 1,019 in 1950 and 2,237 in 1960. After this date, growth became expansive with populations of 5,540 in 1970; 7,843 in 1980; and 12,345 in 1990. Bothell's estimated 1995 population was 25,850, more than double its 1990 figure. The pattern suggested by these population figures contrasts with King County as a whole where the greatest growth occurred during the decades 1890 - 1910, and 1940 - 1950. The Bothell area is typical of the Eastside of King County; it remained relatively stable and unchanging until the 1960s, but since that time its economic and physical transformation has been significant.

This transformation is represented clearly in the Stringtown area by construction of interstate highway systems. State Highway 522, which was built in the early 1950s, effectively subdivided the remaining Stringtown community and made 113th Avenue NE a dead-end street. Presently this multi-lane highway is only 1,200± feet from the Jamison property. Nearby, an estimated half-mile to the east, is I-405, an interstate freeway which was constructed in the early 1960s. Highway 522 and the major highway interchange that connects it to I-405 have had considerable impact on the remaining pioneer houses of Stringtown. Nearby development is also evident by the presence of nearby industrial and office parks, and suburban tract houses.

Current Plans for the Jamison Property

The State's Higher Education Commission acquired the Jamison Residence in the early 1990s for use by the University of Washington's Bothell Campus and Cascadia Community College. Plans for development of the new campus have been ongoing, and have included a conceptual Master Plan which was completed in 1992, and subsequent site investigation and design of the campus and its buildings.

The University's current schedule calls for the phased construction of academic buildings, with eventual campus facilities to serve up to 20,000 full and part-time students. The center and densest area of the campus will be approximately one-half mile north of the Jamison Residence. The campus Master Plan indicates that the low level pastures west side of 113th Avenue NE will be restored as wetlands. The Jamison House, and the neighboring 1936-era dwelling to the south, are scheduled for removal and/or demolition. (The nearby Reuben Chase House will remain.) Eventually the 130-acre campus will include 1.2 million gross square feet of buildings and 4,200 parking spaces, to be constructed by 2010.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Construction Dates: 1885

Architect/Builder: Unknown

Significant Features of the Site and Structures

- Sloped, semi-rural site
- 40,267 sq. ft. residential property with remnants of landscaping with deciduous and evergreen shrubs and trees, and wood and wire fences
- Vernacular-styled house of wood-frame construction with wood pier/post foundations; gable roof and side gables; painted, horizontal, clapboard wood siding with corner board and verge board trim; wood shingle roofing; wood windows with divided sash with center muntin, double-hung operation and plain trim and lugsills; and front and side porches
- Utilitarian, 12' by 18' wood-framed garage structure with flat roof and horizontal wood siding, and a shed-roof, open addition
- Within the residence, wood-framed partitions with painted plaster over lath walls and ceiling, painted wood flooring, base and trim, and multi-panel, painted wood doors
- Masonry fireplace chimney

Architectural Description

The setting for the Jamison property was originally a swampy, poorly drained area approximately three-quarters of a mile west of downtown Bothell. This area was drained in 1916, when the Montlake Cut was made in Seattle, to link Lake Washington to the Ship Canal and Elliott Bay. Prior to its being drained, the Sammamish Slough had served as a transportation route with flat-bottomed scows bringing passengers and materials to and from the Bothell-Woodinville area. A boat dock at the south end of Stringtown made this small community part of the settlements linked by water transportation.

The river valley had occasional and seasonal floods, but after 1916, the land was drained sufficiently to support livestock, dairies, truck farms, and the raising of crops. Native trees such as Alder and Cedar, and Willows have grown along the North Creek, a small tributary on the east side of 113th NE, directly across from the Jamison House. These trees create a visual and planted edge between the road on which the house is placed and the open flood plain to the east. The flood plain pastures contain crops, and some native herbaceous grasses.

Stringtown was incorporated into the City of Bothell in the 1980's. Throughout its history, it has been located on the edge of the city. Currently there are only three houses remaining in Stringtown -- the 1885 Jamison House and Chase House and another dwelling dating from the 1930s. In its existing condition the site and dwelling retain characteristics of a nineteenth century single family dwelling.

The property is 0.92 of an acre and located on the southwest corner of two, 30±' wide paved roads, NE 180th Street and 113th Avenue NE. The property slopes gradually down approximately 30' from west to east. The property is nearly square with dimensions of 191.15 on the north along NE 180th Street, 219.25 on the east along 113th Avenue NE, 190.35' on the south and 202.95 on the west.

It appears that the land was completely cleared in the nineteenth century. Tax records dating from 1939 list the land use for the Jamison House as "Res. - Fruit, Home Garden." Landscaping on the property currently includes remnants of a small orchard and several mature fruit trees and deciduous shrubs, and brushy overgrowth. Part of the property is fenced: along the front property line, 25±' east of the house, along 113th NE, are remnants of a 3' tall, wire fence with wood posts. Along the south property line are remains of a 4±' wood rail fence.

There are two buildings on the site -- the house and remnants of a garage structure. Records date the house construction from 1885. Although there are no records dating the garage it appears to be a later construction. Presently a paved driveway leads directly north to the garage from 113th Avenue NE.

A survey of the site was provided in 1988 as part of a comprehensive history inventory by the City of Bothell. At that time it was described as "retain(ing) its original appearance well, and is in fine condition." However, the character of the Jamison House and site were changed considerably in the early 1990s due to a former owner's plans to remodel and/or move the house from the site.

The Tax Assessor's records provide a clearly itemized listing of the original features of the house. It was a one and one-half story, four room dwelling with three interior rooms at the 525 square foot, first floor and one on the 336 square foot second floor. The building footprint was 24' by 25' with a projecting, shed roofed, 5' by 16', front porch which was placed on the front or west facade. The main roof gable is oriented north-south, and is bisected by a cross gable on the back or east side. A small, 4' by 5' open porch was incorporated into the southwest corner of the building under a shed roof. A similar shed roof extended over another porch on the northwest corner. The house was accessed by a symmetrically placed wood stair at the center of the front porch and from grade on the back side.

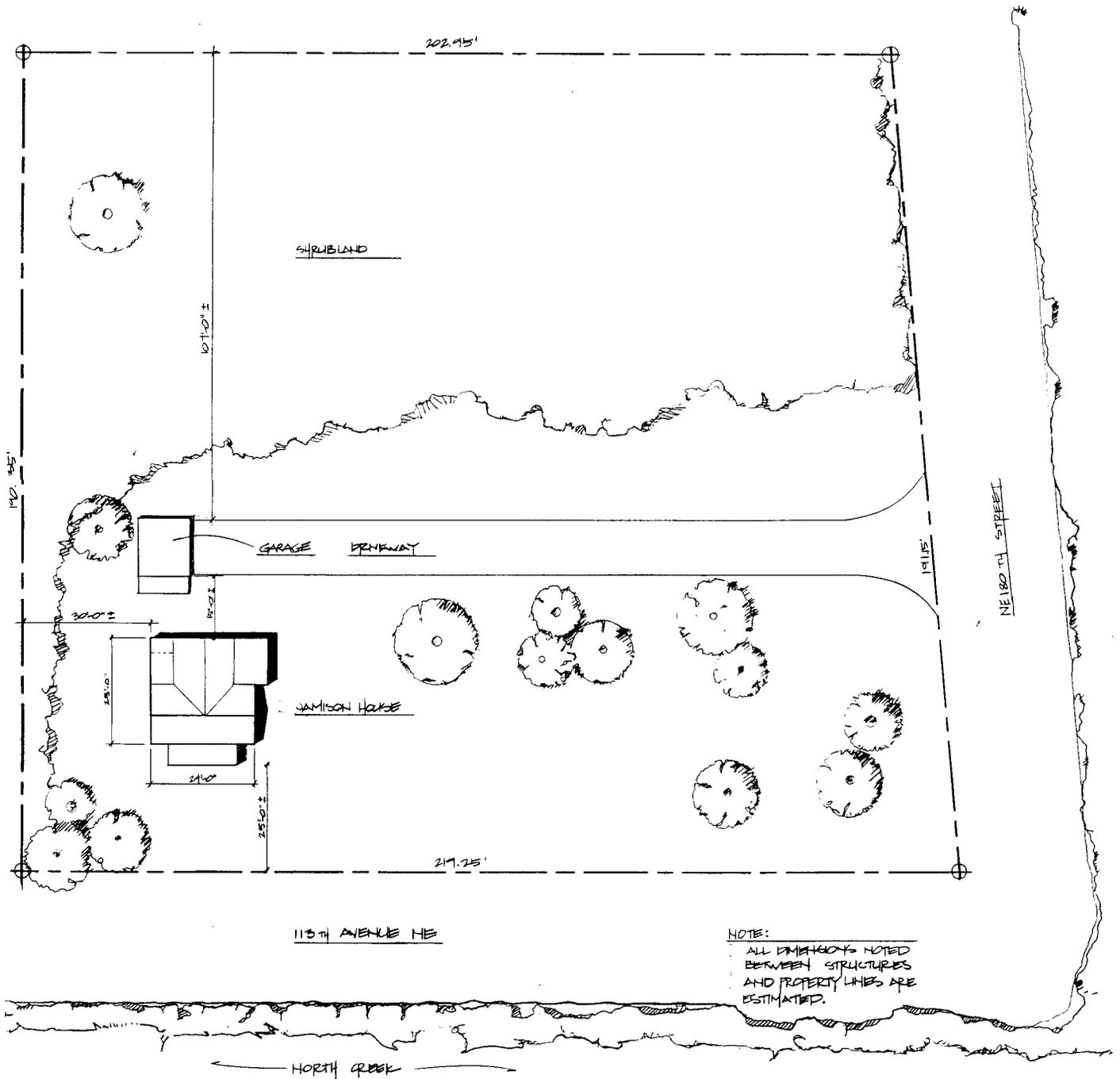
The main building was supported by wood piers and/or concrete block foundations, and the front porch by piers and posts. Exterior walls were clad with horizontal, rustic siding with cased corner trim. Roofing consisted wood shingles. Primary roof gable ends were trimmed with verge boards with decorative cut ends. All original windows appear to be double-hung types, some with divided sash, and set in single or paired openings. Window and door trim was plain. The current front door is a vertical panel type. Exterior walls, doors and windows were originally painted.

Original interior finishes were listed in the tax records as fir floors, shiplap interior walls and fir trim. (Plaster board wall finishes were added in 1948.) Heat was provided by a wood stove vented through a corbelled, central, brick masonry chimney. Originally the house contained only one plumbing fixture and one sink; a full bath was added in 1948. By comparing the present appearance of the house with earlier tax records it appears that a kitchen, located at the northeast corner of the building, was extended north approximately 3'. A small, multi-light casement wood window on the north wall of this single-story, gable roofed addition, appears newer than the other windows. This extension may date from 1948.

Reportedly the house was vacant ca. 1990 when its former owners decided to remodel or move it. The house was raised above its original crawlspace. The wood frame structure was placed on steel beams and wood cribbing, and the ground below it excavated. Three below-grade concrete walls were constructed under the main structure to form a garage-like space. The excavated fill was piled in the front and north side yard, obliterating any remaining sense of a residential garden. During this construction the front porch floor framing was removed; currently the shed roof is cantilevered from the walls with unsupported posts. In addition to its re-structuring, it appears that the interior has been partially gutted. Some exterior features the house are deteriorated or damaged. Most of the window panes are broken and/or missing, and several doors removed. Presently there is no electricity.

Because of its current state of structural instability, the building is not accessible, and the descriptions in the report have been derived only from exterior views and the Tax Assessor's records. In its current condition, the Jamison House and its site retain very little physical integrity. Rather it is a ruin that recalls the simple vernacular architecture of an original pioneer dwelling.

Figure 1. Site Plan, the Jamison House property. Source: Boyle • Wagoner Architects, March 1997.



JAMISON HOUSE
HABS NO. WA-217



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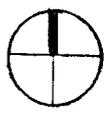
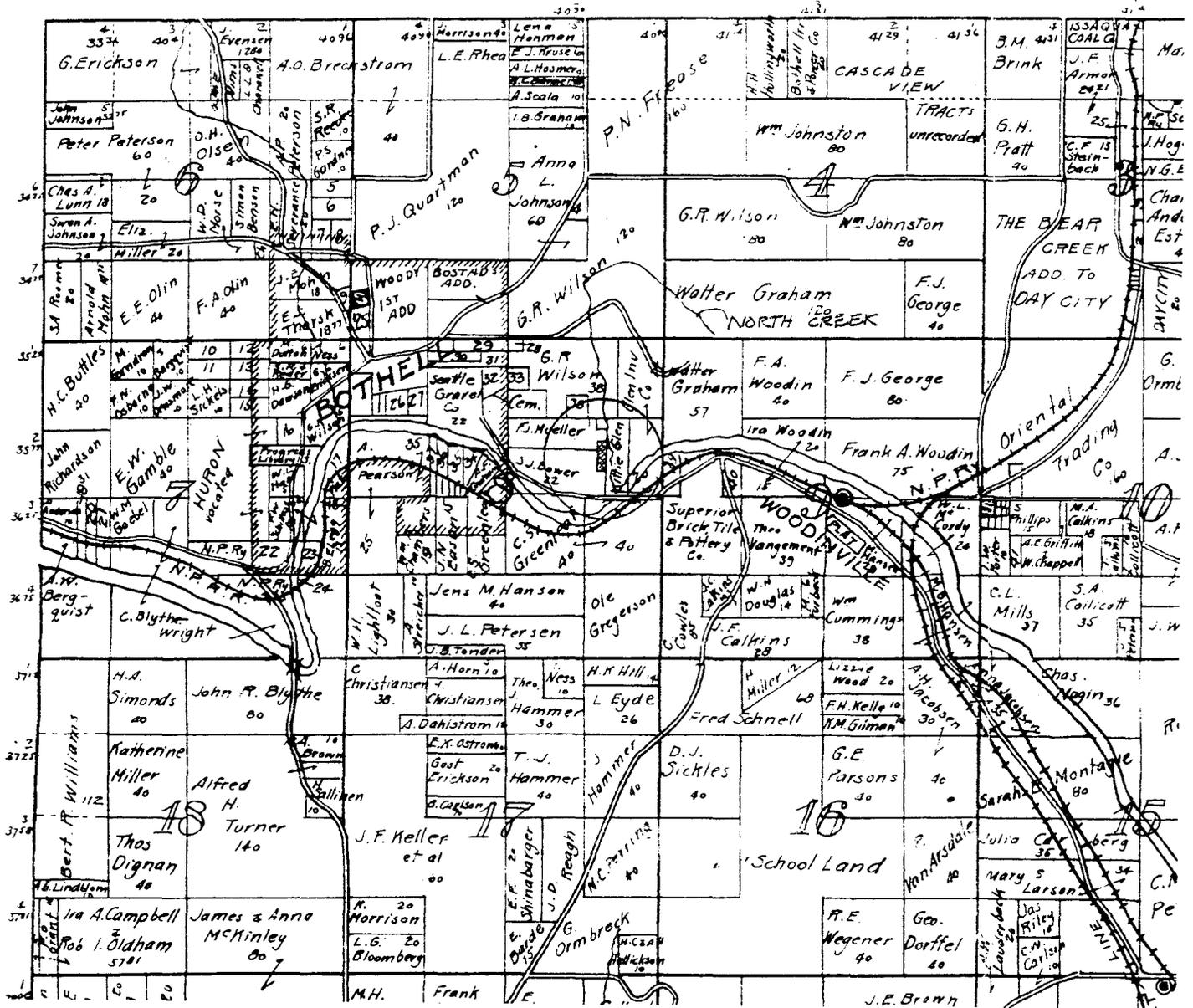
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PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

SUPPLEMENTAL GRAPHICS

Image 1. Photocopy of a Plat Map, 1916, identifying the North Creek near Stringtown. Stringtown appears to be the small rectangle right of the parcel identified as "J. J. Bower 22" and left of "ittie Glen." The Kroll Map Company, Seattle. Source: The Seattle Public Library.



PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This Historic American Building Survey document has been prepared in response to a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), regarding the construction of the University of Washington, Bothell/Cascadia Community College Campus, Bothell, King County, WA (Permit No. 35-4-01737) which was signed by representatives of the Seattle District Army Corps of Engineers, and the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, with the concurrence of the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, which was accepted by the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on June 28, 1996.

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