

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

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Cox Family Big House Complex

Other names/site number: Cox, Frederick Walter, Sr., House; Provstgaard, Nels & Maria, House

Name of related multiple property listing:

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

2. Location

Street & number: 98 North 100 West

City or town: Manti State: UT County: Sanpete

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

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 X 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 X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

/Deputy SHPO	
Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
<u>Utah Division of State History/Office of Historic Preservation</u>	
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

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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

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multi-dwelling
DOMESTIC: single dwelling
COMMERCE/TRADE: shop
TRANSPORTATION:
wagon shed
garage

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: multi-dwelling
DOMESTIC: single dwelling
VACANT

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

MID-19TH CENTURY:
Greek Revival
LATE VICTORIAN

Materials: (Enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE, STUCCO, WOOD, ALUMINUM SIDING

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 most prominent resource in the Cox Family Big House Complex is a two-story stone residence, built between 1854 and 1861, and located at 98 North 100 West in Manti, Utah. The house is an unusually large example of a double-pile floor plan with a central passage in the rear half. The house is built of oolite limestone laid in coursed rubble. Most of the modest Greek Revival and Late Victorian features have been retained. Despite a history of nearly one-hundred and sixty years, the house has seen only minor modifications. These include the addition and removal of historic porches, an early south-side addition (later replaced by a carport), and a circa 1980s west porch. On the interior, the modifications include a conversion from a polygamous household, to a single-family household, to a six-unit apartment building. The house was recently rehabilitated using state and federal historic preservation tax credits. During the rehabilitation, the non-historic porch was removed and replaced by a more compatible porch. The carport was removed and a new one-story side addition was built in the location occupied by the historic addition. Non-historic aluminum and vinyl windows were replaced with compatible wood windows. The house sits on a corner lot of 0.14 acres.

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The property also includes two associated historic buildings on separate parcels. One is a 1½-story stone house built circa 1871. The smaller house, known as Emma's House, is located just south of the Big House on 0.07 acres. It has a distinctive stepped Flemish parapet and has been covered in stucco for many years. This contributing building is in the process of rehabilitation and will be maintained as a rental by the owners of the Big House. The second building is a historic frame jeweler's shop built circa 1895 east of the Big House on 0.10 acres. A wagon shed (later car garage) was attached to the east side of the shop building. This non-contributing building is currently covered in aluminum siding and was expanded in the rear (circa 1980s). It has been used as a rental house since the 1980s but is currently vacant. The owners plan to rehabilitate the frame shop in the future. The Cox Family Big House Complex with the main house and the contributing small house have good historic integrity in the qualities of location, setting, design, workmanship and materials. The overall feeling and association is intact as demonstrated by the fact that most of the locals still refer to the property as the "old polygamy" house, or by its nickname since the 1850s, the Big House. The Cox Family Big House Complex is recognized as a landmark from the pioneer-era and makes a significant contribution to the historic resources of Manti.

Narrative Description

Exterior: Big House

The footprint of the Cox Family Big House Complex is 40 feet by 32 feet with the wide ends facing west and east. The house has a raised basement on a stone foundation and has a large attic making it appear nearly three-stories tall. These grand proportions set the house apart from other 1850s to 1870s stone houses in Manti [Photographs 1-2].¹ The foundation and walls are constructed of the same oolite limestone. The stone is laid in coursed rubble, but some sections of masonry appear more random than coursed with an attempt to lay ashlar blocks at the corners as quoins. The stone walls ranged from 30 inches thick in foundation to 18 inches thick in the upper walls. The lintels and sills and a water table course of long stones are the only dressed stonework. The stringcourse at the water table is along the west and north elevations only [Photograph 3]. As part of the rehabilitation, the stone was gently cleaned and the mortar was re-pointed as needed.

The roof is a simple gable with a fairly low pitch due to the width of the building. The ridgeline is parallel to 100 West. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The house originally had four end chimneys, but these were removed and two interior chimneys installed during a circa 1910 remodeling. The south interior chimney was demolished and the corbelled top of the north chimney was removed circa 1994. There is an original beaded cornice under the eaves with Greek Revival-style cornice returns on the north and south elevations. A round window in the attic of the north elevation is one of the few decorative elements [Photographs 4-5]. The south gable features a small square window [Photograph 6].

¹ Of the approximate sixty stone houses in Manti, five are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All are more traditional in both size and features. For example, the Cox-Shoemaker-Parry House at 50 N. 100 West, was completed in 1858 around the same time as the Big House but is a typical two-story double-pen house (NRIS #82004157).

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Through the years, the façade (primary elevation) of the residence changed from the west to the east to the west elevation depending ownership and usage [Figures 1-3]. The stone stringcourse suggests that the west elevation was the intended façade as completed in 1861. There are no available photographs of the west elevation prior to the 1930s, but written descriptions of the house from its occupants in the 1860s suggest there was a porch on the west elevation, removed by the time the first Sanborn fire insurance map of Manti was prepared in 1892.

The west elevation is divided into six bays [Figure 3]. On the main level, two doors are flanked by windows. On the upper level, each of the six bays has a window opening. In the late 1970s, the steps to the two doors were removed and a full-width concrete deck was installed on the west elevation, obscuring the two basement windows and a possible coal chute [Figure 4]. A two-story porch with a shed roof and eight 4 x 4 posts was installed in the late 1970s. In 1994, a low-pitch simple gable dormer was added to the center of the west roof. During the recent rehabilitation, the non-historic porch was removed and a historically compatible porch was installed. The new porch is less ornate than the Victorian porch that appears in a historic photograph of the east elevation [Figure 3].

The east elevation is divided into five bays [Photograph 5]. The central bay has doors on both the main and upper levels. The other bays have window openings. Around 1895, a Victorian Eclectic-style porch was built on the east elevation.² The porch featured a hipped roof, pairs of lathe-turned columns, and a half-width balcony. Because of this porch, the east elevation was considered the façade of the house during the twentieth century until the late 1970s porch was built on the west elevation. Sometime between the 1970s and 1981, the east porch was removed from the Cox House and later reassembled on the Historic Manti Inn at 401 N. Main Street when that building was converted to a bed & breakfast.

During the recent rehabilitation, the 1980s exterior stair was replaced with a sturdier wood stair and balcony. On the north half of the east elevation, a non-historic shed roof was removed over the entrance to the basement laundry room. This basement entrance had an arched stone hood and appears to be an original opening. There are two historic basement windows on the east elevation (dates unknown, but probably before the porch was added). At around the same time the east porch was added, four double-hung windows were cut into the north elevation, two on the main level and two on the upper level. The circa 1910 windows are slightly taller than the original double-hung windows but were also historically six-over-six wood sash windows. There is a central basement entrance on the north elevation (date unknown, but before 1971). The basement entrance features stone steps and rails similar to the stone of the original construction. A second basement opening on the north elevation was probably added for a coal chute in the early twentieth century. The opening is currently blocked with plywood and used for a vent. The round attic window is from the original construction.

² The east porch does not appear on the 1892 or 1908 Sanborn map of Manti but was from the Victorian era. It was probably built when the jewelry shop was built to the east around 1895. The porch does appear on the 1931 update to the Manti Sanborn map.

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On the main level of the south elevation are two door openings. One is original with a stone header. One from the 1930s with a wood header. Both had been filled with matching stone by the 1990s. There was a one-story frame addition on the south side of the house, believed to have been built in 1880s or 1890s [Figure 2].³ The addition was demolished around 1959. In the late 1970s, a carport was added to the south side of the house. Due to the slope of the site, there are no basement windows on the south elevation. The upper level of the south elevation is blank. The attic window and a horizontal window (circa 1930s) on the main level were the only window openings in the south elevation. In order to provide access for the new one-story addition, the stone infill was removed from the north door opening. The addition is a frame structure, built on a concrete foundation and sheathed in wood clapboard siding. The windows are six-over-six double-hung windows similar to the historic windows of the original house. The addition is setback from the façade and extends past the east (rear) elevation of the original house. There is an exterior basement stair and door at the rear. Although the new addition is wider than the historic one-story addition, it is visually subordinate to the original stone house and does not diminish the historic character of the Big House [Photographs 2 & 6].

The original windows of the Big House were six-over-six, double-hung wood sash windows as seen in several historic photographs. The windows were replaced in the late 1970s with aluminum sliders, except for one wood sash window on the east elevation. This window had six lights and was probably a replacement from another historic house (date and location unknown). In the 2010, the upper windows were replaced with four-over-four vinyl windows with faux muntins. The attic windows have original frames, but at the time of purchase in 2015, the north round window opening was fitted with a cheap vinyl rectangular slider and the south square window was fitted with a home-made single pane wood window mounted with piano hinge. The basement windows were a mixed of wood and aluminum sashes. During the recent rehabilitation, all of the double-hung windows were replaced with six-over-six wood sash windows that match the historic photographs. The attic windows were replaced with historically compatible wood windows and the basement windows were replaced with wood multi-light windows. The same windows have been used in the side addition. The front dormer window was replaced and the dormer was re-sheathed with wood. A new rear door was installed on the east elevation. The non-historic front doors were replaced with four paneled doors similar to existing period doors on the interior. The rear and basement doors were replaced with compatible half-glass doors.

Interior: Big House

On the interior, the Cox house has 1,280 feet of space on the main floor and on the second floors. The basement is fully excavated and mostly finished. The attic has approximately 800 square feet of useable space under the ridgeline. Because of the thick stone walls, the essential layout of the original floor plan remained intact for many years with later partitions made for the apartment bathrooms and closets (circa 1940s to 1970s) [Figure 1]. On the west side of the main level, the two rooms are of equal size. On the east side, the bearing wall is offset to the south to allow for the central-passage and staircase. [Photographs 7-9]

³ The addition does not appear on the Sanborn maps, but does appear in historic photographs.

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The main floor was divided into two apartment units. It has been rehabbed into one residential unit, but the walls have not changed. The west rooms were rehabilitated as a living room (south) and kitchen (north). Only one of the original wood fireplace mantels on the main floor was intact, but it has been retained and rehabilitated. The formerly blocked firebox was opened, the mantel re-stained and a new hearth installed. The east rooms were rehabilitated as bedrooms with bathroom partitions. The second floor was originally built with a moveable partition that could be opened to create a large room along the west wall (demolished, date unknown).

Two of the original wood mantels are intact although the fireboxes are blocked on the second floor, all three are on the south side of the house. The north mantels were removed when the north windows were added.⁴ All the apartment units had fixtures and finishes dating from the 1970s and 1980s. There were two apartment units on the second floor, which was not included in the recent rehabilitation and is currently being used for storage [Photograph 10]. The basement was originally divided into four main rooms. The apartment unit in the basement has been rehabilitated [Photograph 12]. The attic was originally one long room with the residential unit added in 1994. Like the basement, the attic was rehabilitated with new fixtures and finishes, including a new rear dormer [Photograph 11]. The rehabilitated house currently serves as the owners' residence with rental units in the basement and attic.

Emma's House

The small contributing stone house to the south of the Big House is commonly referred to as Emma's House (the name the youngest polygamous wife). The address of the house is 76 North 100 West. The circa 1871 house is constructed of rubble stone and was covered in stucco some time during the twentieth century [Photographs 13-15]. The original footprint was square with a frame addition (built before 1892). The addition is also covered in stucco. The house has one of the most unusual façades in Utah. The house features a stepped parapet in front of the simple gable roof. A central chimney is the tallest feature of the parapet.⁵ The façade of the main floor has one door and one window. There is a circa 1920s simple gable shelter over the front stoop. The upper floor features two historic semi-circle window openings with each straight side turned to be vertical. These openings and the stepped parapet are unique features of the house.

The one-story frame addition on the rear has a shed roof that, like the main roof is covered in asphalt shingles. There is a rear door facing north and newer windows in the addition. The main floor of the interior is separated into a large living room in front and a kitchen in the rear addition. The living room features a central mantel on the west wall [Photograph 16]. On the east wall is a staircase to an original loft upstairs. The house is currently being rehabilitated for use as a single-family rental. New windows and doors have been installed, but the modifications do not greatly impact the overall historic integrity. The owners are planning to expose the original stone on the west elevation, which will enhance many of the historic qualities of the building.

⁴ Historic descriptions include a mantel in the basement, but there is no extant evidence of the placement. There were either eight or nine original mantels in house.

⁵ Stepped (or Flemish gables) were popular in the 1840s in Nauvoo, Illinois, where the Mormon settlers had lived before migrating to Utah. Stepped gables were also popular in Danish churches in the nineteenth century.

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Jewelry Shop and Wagon/Auto Shed

To the east of the Big House sits a non-contributing one-story frame building that was originally a jewelry shop and wagon shed (built circa 1895). The wagon portion was converted to an automobile garage in the 1920s. The address of this building is 75 West 100 North.⁶ The shop portion is a simple gable building with the ridgeline perpendicular to 100 North. Historically there was an enclosed addition and a large open shed attached to the east elevation of the shop. The building was originally sheathed in clapboard siding. The original façade had a central door flanked by two pairs of double-hung windows. The addition had a square window. In the 1970s, the building was converted to an apartment unit and large windows replaced the double-hung windows [Photographs 17-18]. In the 1980s, an addition was built on the rear, the open portion of the shed was demolished, and the entire building covered in aluminum siding. The building has a living room, kitchen and bedrooms in the later addition. There are a few historic wood interior doors, but most of the features and finishes area from the 1970s or 1980s. The owners plan to remove the non-historic siding and rehabilitate the building in the near future. It is currently vacant.

Setting

The Cox Family Big House Complex sits on a combination of parcels (0.31 acres) that are a remnant of the original 0.50-acre parcel. There is landscaping on the west side, and a second gravel driveway on the east side. Surrounding the property are the associated historic buildings that contribute to integrity of the setting: the smaller stone house for the fifth wife on separate parcel to the south, the jewelry shop and wagon shed to the east (altered), a nineteenth-century stone and wood barn to the southeast (separate owner and not included in this nomination), and the neighboring NRHP-listed Cox-Shoemaker-Parry House (NRIS #82004157). The character of Manti still represents small town, semi-rural Utah. The Big House is the largest private stone house in Manti and Sanpete County. The Cox Family Big House Complex is a multi-resource landmark in the community.

⁶ The historic address was 91 North 100 West.

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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.)

- 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

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1861-1882

Significant Dates

1861
1879
1882

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

F. W. Cox & family, builders

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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 Cox Family Big House Complex in Manti, Sanpete County is a unique example of a two-story vernacular stone house designed specifically for a polygamous family. Constructed over the course of seven years, between 1854 and 1861, the Big House was designed to house separate family units and also provide a space for communal social and education activities. The building is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History for its unique contributions to the understanding of polygamous households in nineteenth-century Utah. Five of Frederick Walter Cox's six wives lived in the house. Their names were Emeline Whiting Cox, Jemima Losee Cox, Cordelia Morley Cox, Lydia Margaret Losee Cox, and Emma Sophia Peterson Cox. As documented by primary and secondary sources, the main floor of the house was divided into four sections, each assigned to the four older wives. The youngest wife, Emma, briefly shared one of the quarters before having the small stone house built next door around 1871, which contributes to the significance of the property. The period of significance begins with the first occupation of the house in 1861 and ends in 1882, the last year the wives lived in the house. Twenty-five of Frederick Walter Cox's thirty-eight children were raised in the house. The Cox families made significant contributions to Manti and Sanpete County in the late nineteenth century.

In addition to living quarters, the large room in the Big House was designed for use as a classroom. It was not only used for educating the Cox children, but older youth and adults living in Manti would attend evening classes in the Big House after their daily work was completed. The classroom was also used for dances, music recitals, theatrical productions and community meetings. The attic was used in the pioneer era as a spinning and weaving workshop with up to a dozen women working at a time. The building was given the nickname the Big House during its initial construction and it is still called the Big House by those with a cursory knowledge of Manti history today. The landmark is also known as the "Old Polygamy House" to locals. Although there were numerous polygamous families in Manti during the period of significance, no other historic building is recognized by that distinctive title. The Cox Family Big House Complex was listed on the Utah State Register of Historic Places in 1972.

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

Criterion A Significance: Social History

The Cox Family Big House Complex is recognized as Manti's only example of a residence specifically designed for multiple wives and an extended polygamous household, and therefore significant under Criterion A in the area of Social History. The uniqueness of the Cox Family Big House Complex extends beyond Sanpete County. Among extant polygamous houses in the state of Utah, the design and use of the Cox House is a one-of-kind and the origin of 30,000 descendants.⁷

⁷ With the exception of the dormitory-style Lion House, part of the Brigham Young Complex in Salt Lake City (NRIS & National Historic Landmark #66000739), all of the polygamous residences in Utah currently listed on the NRHP are common house types used by no more than three families. Several large polygamous residences and compounds in Utah have been documented but were later demolished. See Carter, "Living the Principle": 223-251.

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Frederick Walter Cox was among a small number of early Mormon Church leaders who crossed the plains with multiple wives and families. Frederick Walter Cox, commonly known as Walter, was born in New York in 1812. Walter Cox joined the LDS Church in 1834 in Ohio, where he met his first wife, Emeline Sally Whiting. Emeline was born in Ohio in 1817. They were married in 1835 and had twelve children, born between 1836 and 1863. The Cox family moved from their home in Far West, Missouri, to Illinois in 1838. After eventually settling in Nauvoo, Walter Cox accepted the principle of plural marriage. With Emeline's consent, he married Jemima Losee in December 1844 and Cordelia Morley in January 1846. Jemima Losee was born a Quaker in Ontario, Canada, in 1823. Walter and Jemima had eight children, born between 1846 and 1862. Cordelia Calista Morley was born in Kirtland, Ohio, in 1823, and as a young woman turned down an offer of marriage from LDS Church founder Joseph Smith. Walter and Cordelia had eight children, born between 1846 and 1866.

After being driven from Nauvoo, Walter and his three families lived in Silver Creek, Iowa, as they prepared to make the journey to the Salt Lake Valley. In the winter of 1851-1852, Jemima and Cordelia became especially close "sister wives" when Walter was arrested for polygamy and the two younger wives had to hide together in a small stable in another county. Between June and September of 1852, the three Cox families crossed the plains together in a wagon train. After spending a few days rest in Salt Lake City, the families journeyed to Sanpete County where Cordelia's father, Isaac Morley, and others had founded the Manti settlement. They arrived in Manti on October 4, 1852 and made a home among the cluster of log cabins within the five-acre stone fort. During this time, the settlers were busy building the stone fortification walls around nine blocks of the platted town site. Walter Cox was a wagon builder by trade but spent his time farming during the day and hauling stone from the canyon quarry in the evenings.

In October 1854, Walter Cox married his fourth wife, Lydia Margaret Losee, Jemima's younger sister, who was born in Ontario in 1837. Lydia had three children born between 1855 and 1859. Between 1858 and 1861, Walter Cox was briefly married to Mary Ann Darrow Richardson, with whom he had two sons. Mary Ann lived on the outskirts of Manti separate from the other wives and never lived in the Big House.⁸

Around the time of his fourth marriage, Walter Cox and his family began working on the Big House. Some members of the family lived in two cabins in the fort, while others slept in a nearby barn (possibly the surviving stone and wood barn to the southeast or a barn across the street to the north, later demolished). The Big House took seven years to complete. One descendant described the work as follows:

⁸ Mary Ann Richardson, her husband, Edmund Richardson, and their two children arrived in Manti in 1858. Because Edmund was unable to have more children, Brigham Young granted the couple a temporary divorce and asked them to choose from three polygamists in Manti for the purpose of producing offspring. During her marriage to Walter Cox, Mary Ann is listed living with Edmund on the 1860 census of Manti. The family moved to Springville, Utah, in 1861 and the boys were raised as Richardsons. They referred to their biological father as Uncle Walter, but met him only twice. Because of the unusual circumstances, Mary Ann Richardson is frequently described as the sixth wife or excluded from Cox family histories.

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Work on the house had to be done after the day's work in the field was accomplished. Father Cox and his sons put all their available time in cutting stone from the stone quarry, and hauling timber from the mountains . . . The girls worked as hard as their brothers. It was their job to haul the mud and rock up the walls to the men working above. They built twelve rooms with one large room [which] they used for a school room and dance hall. The house was quartered like a pie and each of the four wives lived in a section.⁹

The families moved into the Big House in October 1861. A number of remembrances written by children and grandchildren of the Cox families describe how the Big House was used. The women and smaller children slept in the stone house, while many of the older boys continued sleeping in the barn.

In general, it is known that Jemima and Cordelia shared a kitchen in the east side of the basement with Emeline's space on the west side. The basement had stone floors, a fireplace, a flour bin, and an interior staircase, although none of those features have survived. The main floor was divided into four quarters: Emeline and Jemima had separate entrances from the west doors; Cordelia and Lydia had separate living quarters on the east side accessible from the central hall. Each wife had her own entry and fireplace. There are conflicting accounts of how the wives divided the second floor, but most agree that a moveable partition between the west rooms created a large space that was used for a school room. The Cox children attended class during the day and in the evenings, older youth, young couples, and adults would attend classes. The room also served as a social center (ball room) for dances, music recitals, theatrical productions, and sometimes a council room for church and community meetings. Walter Cox was an accomplished flutist and encouraged his family to gather together in the large room to sing.

The third-floor garret (attic) was used as a work space with spinning wheels and looms. According to one historian: "When Brigham Young, during the 1870-80 decade, urged people to produce silk, the Cox house attained considerable fame for the production of this fine and useful fiber."¹⁰ As the tallest building in Manti in the 1860s, the gable end windows were used to keep a lookout. When Father Cox traveled to Salt Lake City or during his three missions for the LDS Church, the youngest daughters would take turns at the north window waiting for his return. The older sons and daughters were instrumental in keeping the farm and home industries viable during Walter Cox's long absences. The unusual living arrangements account for differences of opinion regarding which elevation was the original front of the house. The dressed string course along the street elevations suggests the primary elevation faced 100 West. However, the Big House was still within the confines of the Big Fort at its completion and the public classroom/dance hall was accessed from the staircase on the east side. Frederick Walter Cox spoke three Indian dialects and there are several accounts of him preaching to Native Americans from the steps or a porch at both the northwest and northeast corners of the house.¹¹

⁹ Norma Wanlass, "History of the Old Cox Home or the 'Big House' as It Was Called," unpublished TMs, circa 1975: 1.

¹⁰ Curtis Greeley Booth, *The Cox Family: A Biographical Sketch of the Frederick Walter Cox and His Six Wives*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Oquirrh Press, 1997): 52. Other accounts suggest the school room was used as work room and the attic (or garret) was sleeping quarters.

¹¹ Frederick Walter Cox's brother, Orville, completed his house on the lot to the south a few years before the Big House was completed. The Orville Cox house faces west making it likely that the Frederick Cox house also faced west with a similar porch. It is listed on the NRHP as the Cox-Shoemaker-Parry House (NRIS #82004157).

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According to family tradition, when Father Cox was in Manti, he spent a month living with each wife. Each had her own special traits that contributed to the household. Emeline was an excellent seamstress and storyteller. Jemima's Quaker upbringing made her patient with the children and a good nurse. Cordelia was the family school teacher and also taught some of the adult evening classes. With her smaller family and organizational skills, Lydia was able to lend a hand wherever she was needed. In October 1869, Walter Cox married Emma Sophia Peterson, a nineteen-year-old Danish immigrant. On the June 1870 census, Emma Cox is listed living in the Big House in Cordelia's household. It has been suggested that the young Danish wife was uncomfortable with life in the busy Big House. Within a few years, Walter Cox had built the stone house south of the Big House at 76 North 100 West, where Emma raised her six children, born between 1871 and 1878. The stepped gables may have reminded Emma of churches in her native Denmark.

In his later years, Father Cox was known as Frederick Walter Cox Sr. to be distinguished from his oldest son. It is estimated that twenty-five of Walter's thirty-eight children had some connection to the Big House.¹² On June 2, 1879, Father Cox was pinned between two large logs while unloading a wagon. He was taken to the Big House where he died from his injuries two days later. The 1880 census records the four wives living in the Big House with eight of the youngest children. In 1882, the estate of Frederick W. Cox Sr. deeded the Big House property to Gustav F. Carlson. Emeline and Jemima moved from the Big House to live with grown children. Emeline Cox died in 1896. Jemima Cox died in 1901. Cordelia Cox moved into her own home and died in 1915. Lydia Cox Snow remarried in 1888 and died in 1921. All of the wives stayed in Manti until their deaths. When Frederick Walter Cox died in 1979, he left Emma widowed with 4 small children. Two had died as infants. Emma Pederson Cox Clausen Burt remarried twice and had six more children. She died in 1900.

Additional Historical Context

Early History of Manti

On July 24, 1847, a small contingent of members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS or Mormon Church) entered the Salt Lake Valley under the direction of Brigham Young. Within a few years, the valley had been settled by thousands of Mormon pioneers and incoming converts were directed to settle outside of the Salt Lake Valley. Manti was the first settlement in the Sanpete Valley and the first south of Provo, Utah.¹³ In late November 1849, Brigham Young sent a colony of 224 men, women, and children, to the Manti area. The settlers were invited by Ute Chief Walker to join the encampments of Chief Sanpeetch's people already in the area.¹⁴ Brigham Young named the settlement "Manti" in the summer of 1850.¹⁵

¹² Removed from the estimate are his children that were mostly grown by 1861, infant deaths, Emma's children, and the Richardson boys.

¹³ Manti is located approximately 125 miles south of Salt Lake City and approximately 80 miles south of Provo, Utah.

¹⁴ Albert Antrei, "Manti" in *Utah History Encyclopedia*, Allan Kent Powell, ed., (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1994): 343-344. Sanpeetch was modified to "Sanpete" and the name given to the valley and the county. The river that drains the valley is called the Sanpitch.

¹⁵ The name is derived from a geographical name in the *Book of Mormon*. This brief history was adapted by the author from the Poulsen-Hall House nomination (NRIS #11000235).

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The first settlers camped along the banks of Manti City Creek. Jesse W. Fox surveyed the town's Plat A in the summer of 1850.¹⁶ Manti was incorporated in February 1851.¹⁷ In Manti, the settlers built a series of fortifications. The Little Fort (Stone Fort) was built in 1852 at the corner of Block 64. In 1853, the settlers were asked to move their cabins near the stone fort within an enclosure called the Log Fort. The Big Fort was built in the summer of 1854 with a combination of rock and adobe. The Big Fort enclosed nine blocks including Block 65 where the Cox Family Big House Complex stands.¹⁸ With the end of hostilities between the native Utes and the settlers, the adjacent mountains became available for a range livestock industry, mostly large sheep herds. Pioneer subsistence-level agriculture soon gave way to the production of grain and hay for the market. A mercantile economy emerged to support more specialized agriculture. Manti citizens who were not large-scale farmers or rangers became shopkeepers or artisans, many of whom engaged in cottage industries at home. Most residents also continued to raise produce from small gardens and orchards on their residential lots.

One of the most important events to occur in Manti was the construction of the Manti LDS Temple, which began in 1877. The temple was dedicated in 1888. Both the temple and the Manti Tabernacle (built between 1879 and 1889) are landmark buildings in the city.¹⁹ The characteristic pale yellow oolite limestone used in the construction of the tabernacle and temple is also found in numerous pioneer-era homes, not only in Manti, but throughout the Sanpete Valley. The Cox Family Big House Complex was completed before construction on the temple began, but the use of the limestone in residential construction gave valuable experience to local masons who would later work on the Manti Temple. Frederick Walter Cox Sr. laid the northwest cornerstone of the temple in April 1879, just two months before his death.

Polygamous Households in Manti

The practice of polygamy, commonly known in the Mormon Church as plural marriage, began before the pioneers entered the Salt Lake Valley, but was not practiced openly until the church prospered in the relative isolation of the Intermountain West. Not all Mormons "lived the principle" as it was called, but there was an expectation that Mormon men of sufficient standing and resources within the LDS Church would have multiple wives. The practice was abolished by Church President Wilford Woodruff in 1890.

¹⁶ In Manti, as it was throughout Utah, settlement patterns were based on the Plat of the City of Zion that was outlined by the Mormon church founder Joseph Smith. The plan, though not fully implemented, served as a model for Mormon settlements across the Intermountain West under the direction of Brigham Young. The plats were typically one-mile square, the blocks were ten acres each and forty rods square and the lots were laid off alternately within the squares. The towns were set out in a grid pattern with the public buildings and church located in the center of town, surrounded by residences, with the outlying areas being used as farmlands. Mormon settlements became characterized by in-town family farmsteads with a daily trek to the outlying fields. The original plat was resurveyed in 1871. The town has not grown much beyond the late-nineteenth-century plats.

¹⁷ Manti was also named the county seat.

¹⁸ The Walker War ended in December 1869 and the forts were dismantled within a few years. *The Other Forty-Niners: 475*. A fourth fort was built around the public square (Block 56, now called the tabernacle block) in 1866. Centennial Committee, Manti, Utah, *Song of a Century, 1849 — 1949*, (Provo, Utah: Community Press, 1949), 36-37.

¹⁹ The Manti Temple was listed on the National Register on August 12, 1971 (NRIS# 71000854).

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It was common for polygamist men to have two or three wives, but only a small percentage of church leaders had more than four wives. Historian Jessie L. Embry has stated "Since polygamy was openly practiced for only a short time by Mormons, there were no established rules about how family members should relate to each other. Instead, each family adapted to their particular circumstances."²⁰ This applied to living arrangements. The domestic architecture of nineteenth century polygamous households did not differ substantively from American single-family households in the same period.

Studies of Manti in Sanpete County, indicate that between 1850 and 1890 approximately 21 percent of members lived in polygamous households, slightly above the church-wide average of 20 percent for the same period.²¹ During the settlement era, multiple wives might share a tent or log cabin out of necessity, but as soon as resources were available, the preference was for a separate dwelling for each wife. Occasionally, traditional house types, such as a Victorian double cross-wing or Scandinavian pair house would be adapted so that wives could have their own space under a shared roof. One historian described nineteenth-century Mormon polygamous architecture as "business as usual but with more wives. We might see polygamous houses in the same light—as American houses but with more doors."²²

In Manti, the vast majority of polygamous and monogamous households had similar accommodations. Between the early 1850 and the late 1860s, most of the families transitioned from living in log cabins within the confines of the town's fortifications to sturdy stone houses, built from the oolite limestone at the nearby quarry.²³ Approximately sixty pioneer-era stone houses still stand in Manti today. With the exception of the Cox House, all are examples of traditional house types for the period (e.g. hall/parlors, double cells, central passages, and cross wings). Available information suggests today's surviving stone houses in Manti were built either for a monogamous family or one polygamous wife's family, in contrast to the Big House arrangement.²⁴

Subsequent History of the Big House

The second owner of the Big House, Gustav F. Carlson, sold the property to Lars C. Kjar for \$500 in 1883. Four years later, the property reverted to Carlson who sold it to Nels J. Provstgaard for \$750. It is unclear who lived in the house before Nels J. Provstgaard purchased the property. Nels J. Sorensen Provstgaard, and his wife, Mette Maria Cathrine Bendtsen, were Danish immigrants, who married in Manti in 1888.

²⁰ Jessie L. Embry, "Polygamy" in *Utah History Encyclopedia*, edited by Allan Kent Powell, (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press, 1994): 429. See also Embry's *Mormon Polygamous Families: Life in the Principle*, Publications in Mormon Studies, Vol. 1, (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah Press): 1987.

²¹ Kathryn M. Daynes, "Single Men in a Polygamous Society: Male Marriage Patterns in Manti, Utah," *Journal of Mormon History*, Vol. 24, No. 1 (1998): 89-111.

²² Thomas Carter, "Living the Principle: Mormon Polygamous Housing in Nineteenth-Century Utah," *Winterthur Portfolio*, Vol. 35, No. 4 (Winter 2000): 251.

²³ A few adobe brick houses were built during the settlement period. Traditional frame and fired bricks houses were not common in Manti until the late 1870s and early 1880s.

²⁴ Information from the files of the Utah SHPO and local histories. All six of the Manti stone houses currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places were built for monogamous families.

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The couple had two sons, Alvin Jensen and Niels Leonard, born in 1891 and 1894 respectively. Nels J. Provstgaard was a jeweler with a shop just east of the house (extant but altered). Provstgaard may have added the fancy east porch to attract attention to his business. Around 1907, Nels and Maria Provstgaard adopted an eight-year-old Norwegian girl named Florence Deseldia Olsen. They are listed on the 1900 census with their sons, and with all three children on the 1910 and 1920 enumerations.

In the space of five years, between 1917 and 1922, Maria Provstgaard, lost her husband and her two sons, both still living at home, who had been farming and working in the family jewelry business. Maria Provstgaard was the proprietor of a restaurant on Main Street in Manti by the time of the 1930 census enumeration. Florence married in 1923, but her husband died a few months later. She married again in 1925 to Linden Lauritz Larsen. The Larsens had eight children.

In 1940, Maria B. Provstgaard deeded the Big House property to a granddaughter, Olive Christie Larsen. Maria B. Provstgaard died in 1944. During this period, there were likely multiple renters living in the Big House, possibly boarding house style. The Larsen family lived in various locations in Manti, but by the 1960s, Florence Larsen was living in the Big House. In 1969, Olive Larsen deeded the property to her mother, Florence Larsen, who sold the property to Paul K. and Loretta F. Bender. The Benders converted the house to the five rental units. The attic unit was added in 1994. The building was listed on the Utah State Register of Historic Places in 1972.

Between 1977 and 2015, the property changed hands five times, with at least three owners contacting the state about listing the property on the National Register of Historic Places. In March 2015, the property was purchased by the current owner, Gary and Rashel Erickson. Gary is a descendant of Frederick Walter and Emeline Whiting Cox. The Ericksons rehabilitated the ancestral home using state and federal historic preservation tax credits. They are in the process of rehabilitating Emma's house and will rehabilitate the frame shop in the future.

Cox Family Big House Complex
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9. Major Bibliographical References

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[Sanpete County Title Abstracts and Plat Maps]. Available at the Sanpete County Recorder's Office.

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[Utah State Historic Preservation Office]. File for 94 N. 100 West, Manti, Sanpete County, Utah.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been 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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.14 acres

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

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

Latitude: 40.653972°

Longitude: -111.864596°

Or UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

Zone: 12

Easting: 426907

Northing: 4500705

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

Parcel Legal Description:

98 North 100 West: BEG NW COR BLK 65 PLAT A, MANTI CITY; E 82 FT, S 73.28 FT, W 82 FT, N 1.11 CHS TO BEG.

76 North 100 West: BEG 1.11 C S NW COR BLK 65 PLAT A MANTI CITY E 100 FT S 31 FT W 100 FT N 31 FT TO BEG.

75 West 100 North: BEG 82 FT E NW COR BLK 65 PLAT A MANTI CITY SURVEY; S 73.28 FT E 18 FT S 31 FT E 30 FT N 104.28 FT W 48 FT TO BEG.

Boundary Justification

 (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries are currently and have been historically associated with the resources.

11.

Form Prepared By:

name/title: Korral Broschinsky, Preservation Documentation Resource

organization: prepared for the property owners

e-mail: kbro@kbropreservation.com telephone: 801-913-5645

date: January 30, 2020

Property Owner information:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Gary & Rashel Erickson

address: 98 North 100 West

city or town: Manti state: Utah zip code: 84642

telephone/email: 435-835-2014

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Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, 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: Cox Family Big House Complex
City or Vicinity: Manti
County: Sanpete State: Utah
Photographer: Korral Broschinsky and Rashel Erickson
Date Photographed: 2018-2019

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

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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Photograph 1

Streetscape of 100 West (left to right: 98 N., 76 N., and 50 N.). Camera facing southeast.



Photograph 2

West elevation with addition on right. Camera facing east.

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Photograph 3
West elevation of house. Camera facing east.



Photograph 4
North elevation of house. Camera facing south.

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Photograph 5
North and east elevations of house. Camera facing southwest.



Photograph 6
South and west elevations of house. Camera facing northeast.

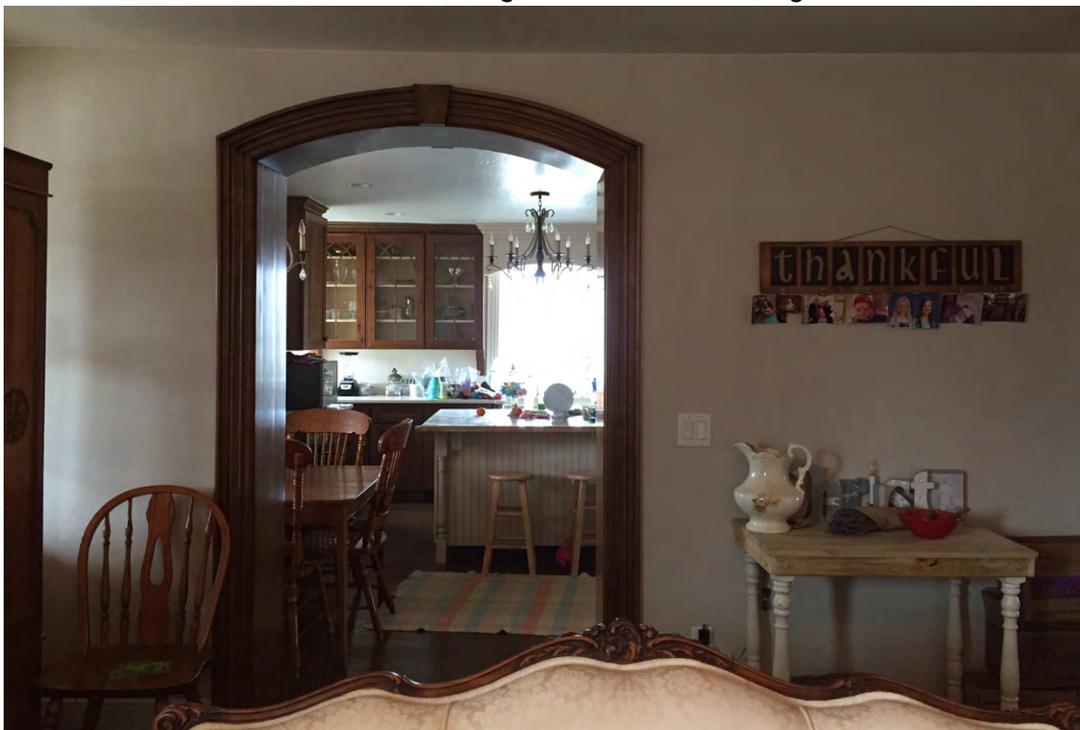
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Photograph 7

Interior, main floor, living room. Camera facing south.



Photograph 8

Interior, main floor, living room to kitchen. Camera facing north.

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Photograph 9

Interior, main floor, central passage, stair detail. Camera facing west



Photograph 10

Interior, second floor, living room. Camera facing southeast.

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Photograph 11
Interior, attic apartment. Camera facing northeast



Photograph 12
Interior, basement apartment. Camera facing north.

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Photograph 13

Emma's house on right, Cox Family Big House on left. Camera facing northeast



Photograph 14

West elevation of Emma's house. Camera facing east.

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Photograph 15
South and east elevations of Emma's house. Camera facing west



Photograph 16
Emma's house, interior, living room. Camera facing west.

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Photograph 17

Jewelry shop and shed on left, Cox Family Big House on right. Camera facing southeast

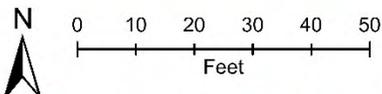
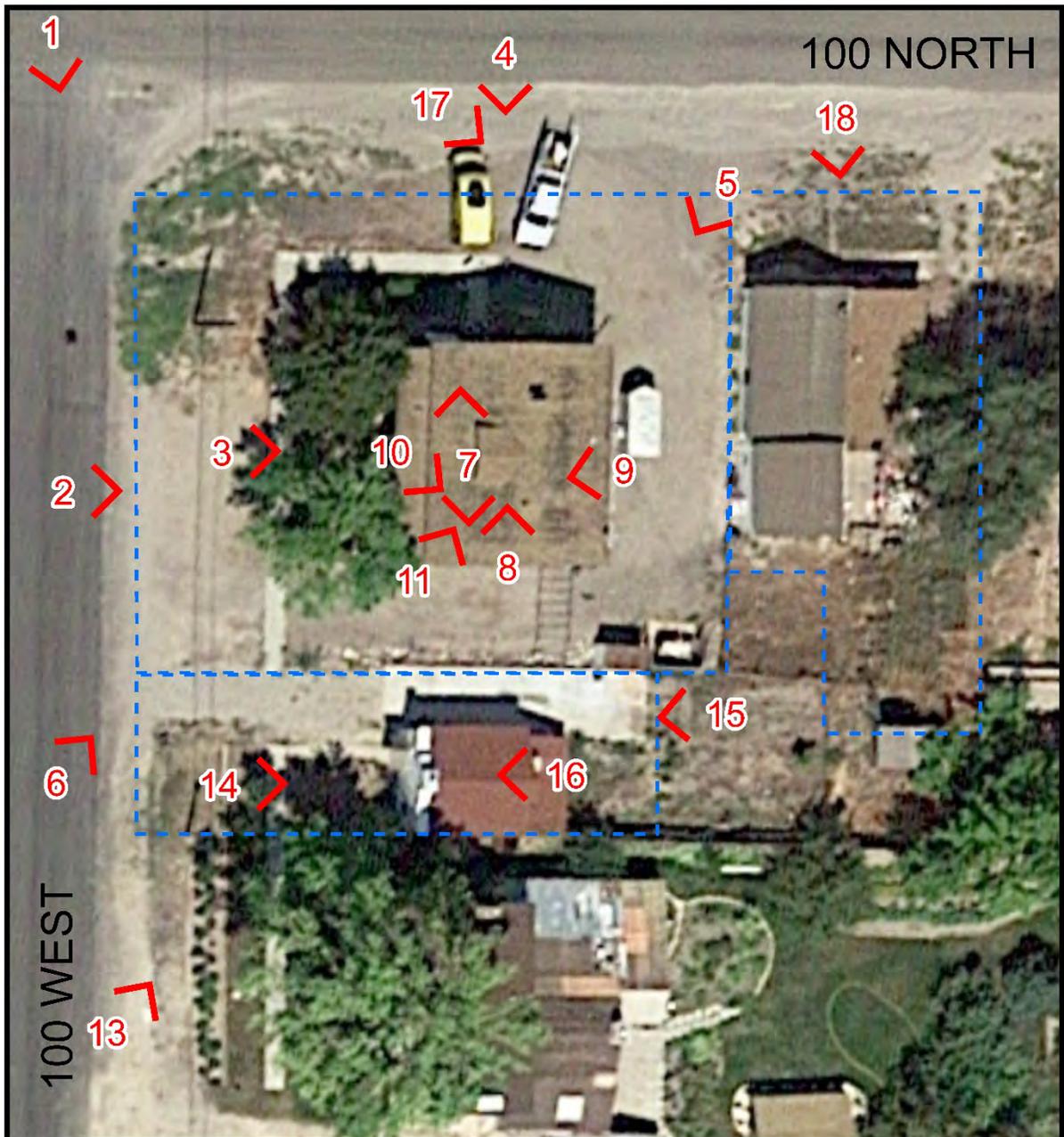


Photograph 18

North elevation of the jewelry shop and shed. Camera facing south.

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98 North 100 West, Manti, Sanpete Co., Utah

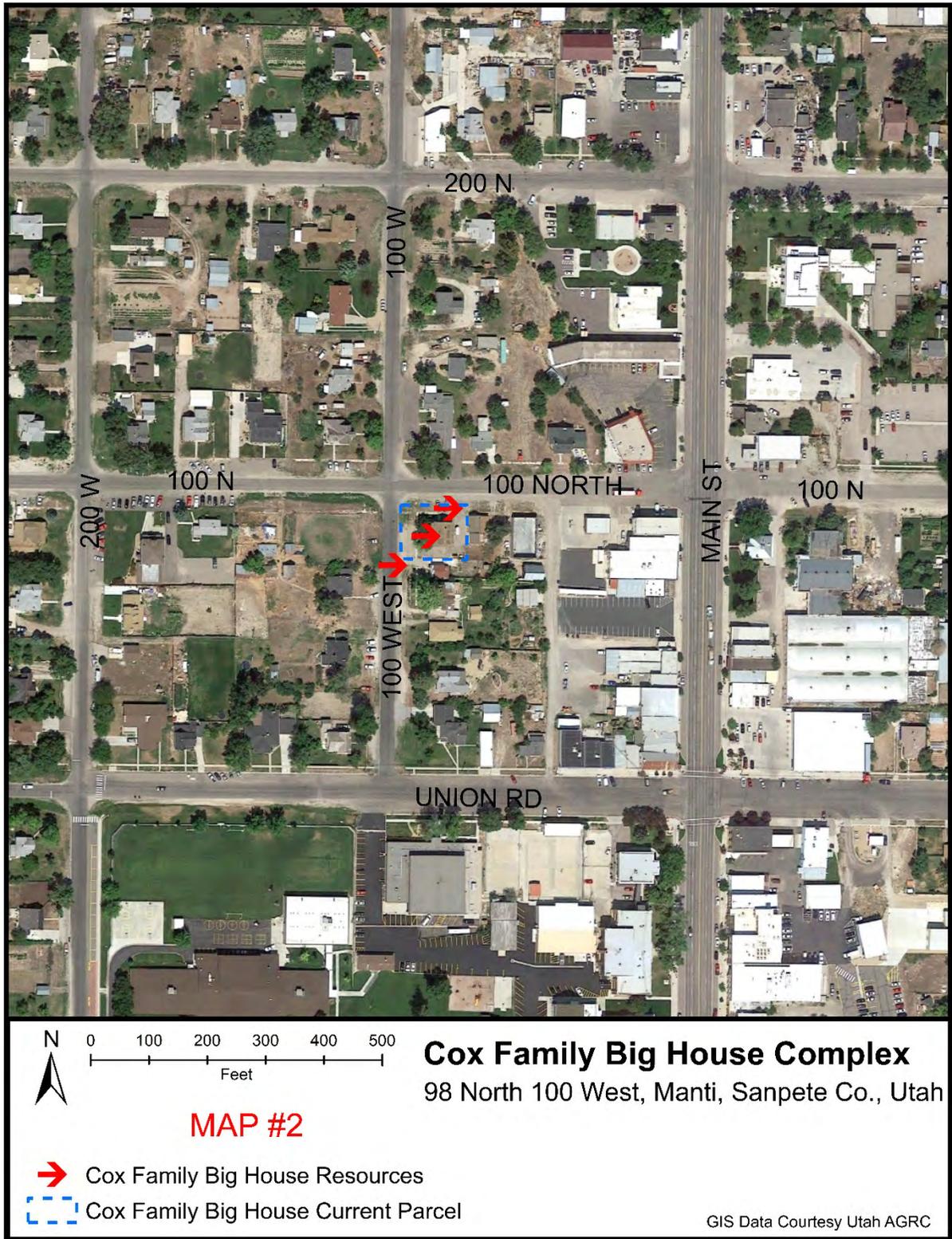
 **MAP #1 - PHOTO KEY**

 Cox Family Big House Complex Current Parcels

GIS Data Courtesy Utah AGRC

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List of Figures:

1. Schematic floor plan showing historic use of space
2. Circa 1930 photograph of house
3. Circa 1971 photograph of house
4. Circa 1960 photograph of house
5. Circa 1975 photograph of house and site

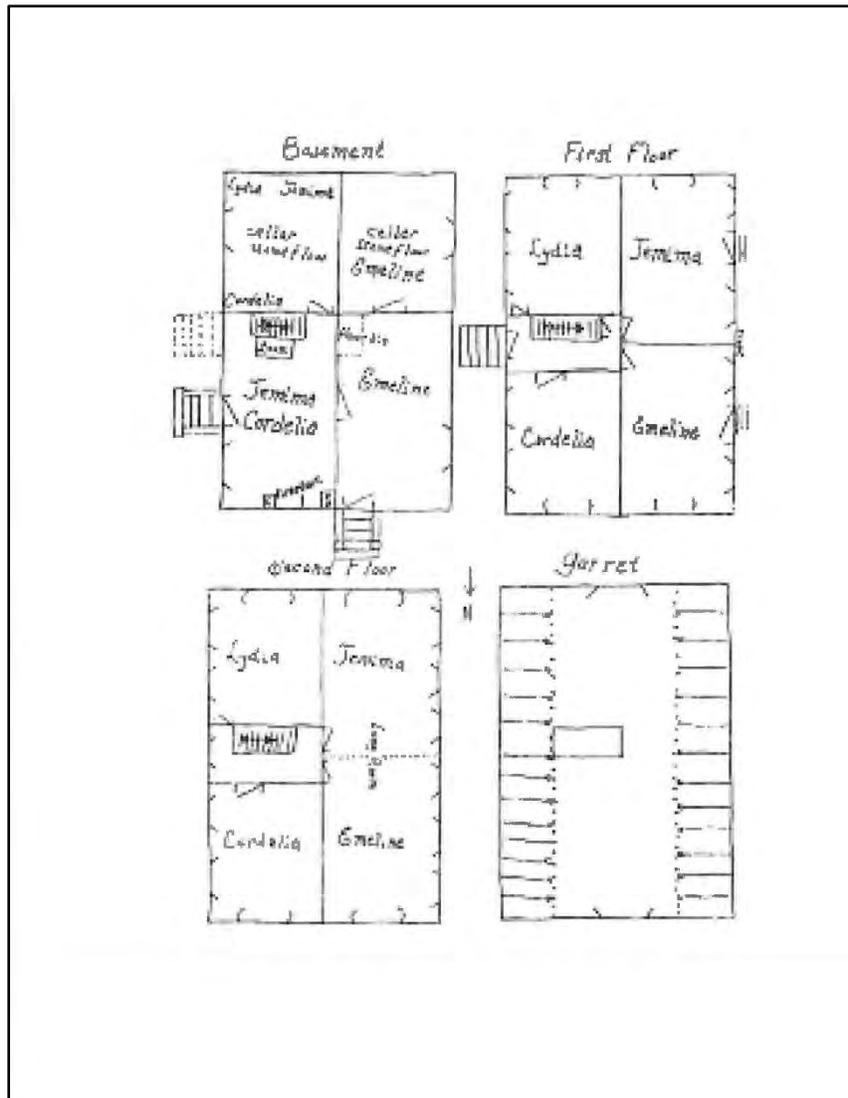


Figure 1
Schematic historical floor plan.

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Figure 2

West and south elevations with frame addition (circa 1930). Camera facing northeast.



Figure 3

East and north elevations (circa 1971). Camera facing southwest.

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Figure 4
West and north elevations (circa 1960). Camera facing southeast.



Figure 5
West and north elevations (circa 1975) with Emma's house on right.
Camera facing southeast.