

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 02001089

Date Listed: October 3, 2002

Property Name: James H. and Marietta Comfort House

County: St. Louis

State: Missouri

Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Daniel J. Vivian
Signature of the Keeper

October 3, 2002
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 10: Geographical Data

The Boundary Justification is hereby amended to read as follows: "The boundary encompasses the parcel of land historically associated with the Comfort House."

The Missouri State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House

other names/site number Hoyt-Phelps House

2. Location

street & number 235 East Jefferson [N/A] not for publication

city or town Kirkwood [N/A] vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Louis code 189 zip code 63122

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 nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments)

 12 August 02
Signature of certifying official/Title Claire F. Blackwell/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet <input type="checkbox"/> .	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain):	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
St. Louis County, Missouri
Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri**

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources Within Property		
		Contributing	Non-contributing	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	1	1	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	0	0	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	0	0	structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	0	0	objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	1	1	Total

Name of related multiple property listing.

Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register.

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling

Current Functions

DOMESTIC/ single dwelling
DOMESTIC/ secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Late Victorian/ Italianate

Materials

foundation Stone
walls Wood
roof Asphalt
other Wood

Narrative Description See continuation sheet [x].

See continuation sheet []

**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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 of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

See continuation sheet [x].

9. Major Bibliographic References

Bibliography

See continuation sheet [x].

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

Areas of Significance

Architecture

Period of Significance

ca. 1871-1926

Significant Dates

ca. 1871

Significant Person(s)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State Agency

Federal Agency

Local Government

University

Other:

Name of repository:

Kirkwood Community Development Office

**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

A. Zone	Easting	Northing	B. Zone	Easting	Northing
15	726240	4273440			
C. Zone	Easting	Northing	D. Zone	Easting	Northing

[] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title See Continuation Sheet

organization _____ date _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FOP for any additional items)

Property Owner

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

name Mr. Allen Klippel and Ms. Kimberly Reid

street & number 235 East Jefferson Ave. telephone (314) 854-0667

city or town Kirkwood state MO zip code 63122

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**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
St. Louis County, Missouri
Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri**

SUMMARY: The James H. and Marietta Comfort House is located at 235 E. Jefferson in Kirkwood, St. Louis County, Missouri. Constructed ca. 1871, the Comfort house is a highly intact example of Property Type B., Italianate Houses. It meets the registration requirements for that property type set forth in the MPS Cover document "Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri." The two story frame house combines a large version of a common vernacular form, the gabled ell, with high-style Italianate features. Typically Italianate features include an irregular plan, prominent bracketed cornices, and wood siding designed to mimic cut stone, complete with large quoins on most corners. The irregular plan is further enlivened by a polygonal window bay, and a large wrap-around porch which has slender, classically inspired columns. The house is highly intact; all exterior wall cladding and woodwork appears to be original, as do the tall two-over-two wood windows. Interior features are similarly intact. The house has two large rear ells, one of which may be original, and both of which were in place no later than 1926. The house sits far back on a large lot, which also contains a low modern frame garage. The garage, which is the only other resource on the property, is a non-contributing building. The house itself retains integrity in the area of materials, design, workmanship, and location. It is immediately recognizable to its period of significance, and is one of the larger intact Italianate houses in the core of Kirkwood.

ELABORATION: The Comfort house faces south to East Jefferson Street. It is two stories tall, with a one story front porch and a stone foundation. The large house combines the common vernacular form of a gabled ell with sophisticated Italianate styling. The architectural detailing used on the house is extensive enough to classify it as an example of the Italianate Houses property type.

The house has a narrow front-facing gable end, to which a side gable wing is set at a right angle. The one-story porch fronts the side gable wing and wraps around to cover much of the east elevation. The porch has a hipped roof and rests on slender round columns which have Tuscan derived capitals. The wood porch floor is slightly raised, with a wood trellis covering the open foundation. A one-story polygonal window bay is set near the front of the west side elevation. There are two large rear ells on the house; one of those may be original, and the other appears to date to the nineteenth century. (Both were definitely in place by the time the 1926 Sanborn Map was printed.)

The house has many architectural features which are typical of the Italianate Houses property type in Kirkwood. It is clad with wide shiplap wood siding, and has wood quoins at all major corners. The house has a low-pitched gable roof with wide overhangs. The roofline is accented by a dentiled cornice and widely spaced scrolled brackets which are set in pairs. The front facing gable is further ornamented with a raking cornice and prominent cornice returns. The west window bay has a matching cornice, also with dentils and paired brackets.

The front door of the house is wood, with a single large fixed glass pane. The doorway includes narrow sidelights, and a large transom above. Nearly all the windows on the original main portion of the house are two-over-two, double-hung wood sash, with shallow pitched, integral

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pedimented surrounds. The windows beneath the front porch are two-over-two-over-two, triple-hung sash, and provide access to the porch from the house. The windows on the front and east elevation of the original portion have louvered shutters. The first story windows are slightly taller than those on the second. There are two interior fireplaces extending from the roof of the gable-front wing; both have corbeled brick tops.

The rear ells project from the north, or rear elevation. Both are two stories tall, but have lower roofs than the front part of the house. The second story of the ell closest to the main block of the house is clad with the same type of wide, shiplap siding found on the front, and has narrow wood clapboards on the first. Behind and perpendicular to that ell is a hip roof addition. That section of the house has narrow wood clapboards, and narrow one-over-one, double sash windows.

The interior of the house also contains a good deal of original fabric. The large rooms have high ceilings, early or original wood floors, and plaster walls. Much interior woodwork is intact, including high molded baseboards and heavy molded trim along the ceilings. The dining room fireplace has a simple white marble mantelpiece which is also early or original.

The house sits well back from the street, near the rear of a nearly half-acre lot. It is set back from the sidewalk considerably more than are the houses around it, and is many decades older than its nearest neighbors. (The 1926 Sanborn map of the neighborhood shows that the houses on either side of it were built after that date.) A straight paved sidewalk leads from the street to the front door, and also curves around the front porch to the eastern side of the building. The foundation is lined with deciduous shrubs and small, evergreen trees. There are a few large deciduous shade trees on the property as well. A two-car frame garage was built in 1990 at the northwest corner of the house, near the rear of the property.

The Comfort house is clearly the oldest house in its immediate surroundings, and is set apart from its neighbors by its age and extra deep setback. It is in excellent condition, and is immediately recognizable to its period of significance. △

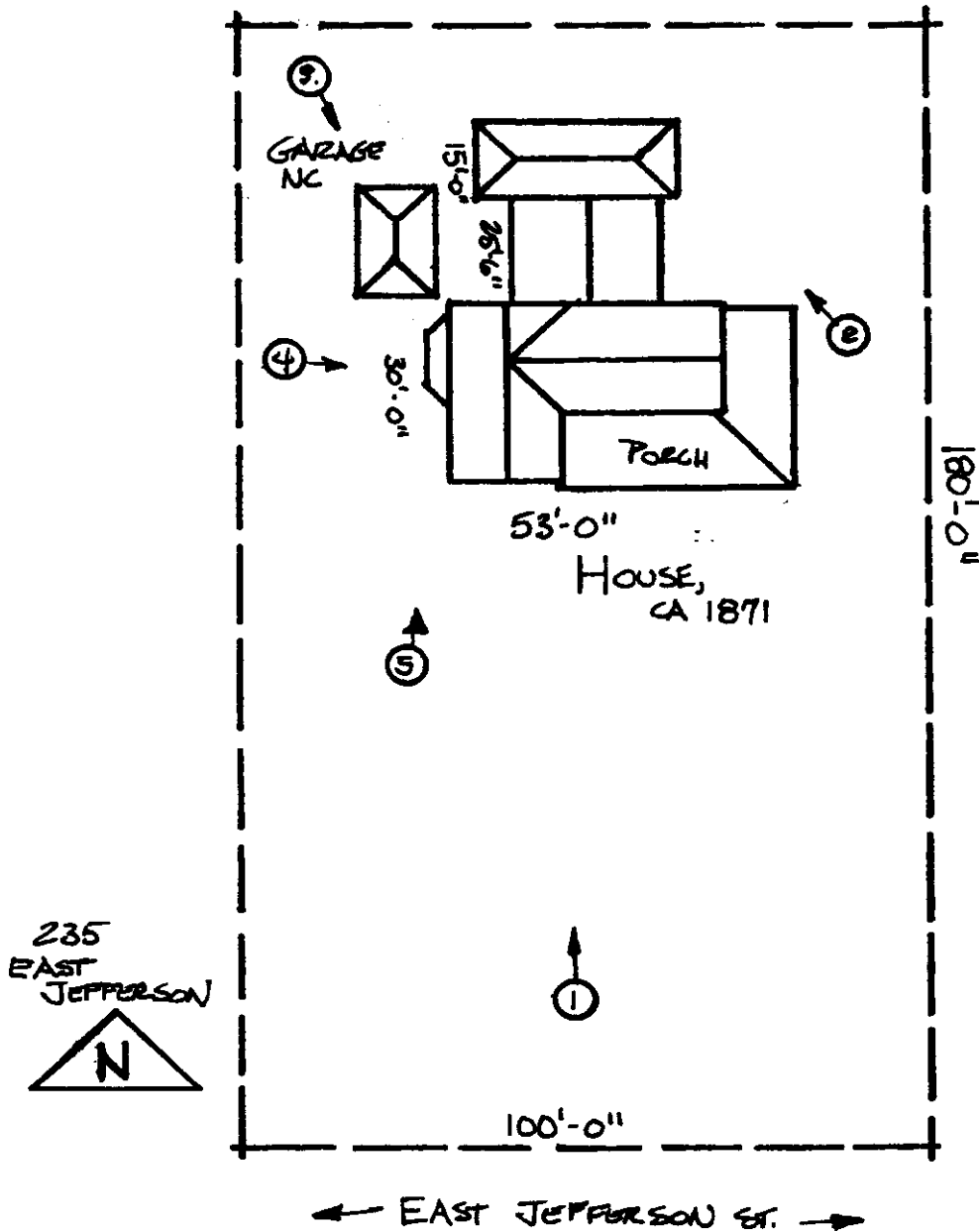
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Figure One. Site plan and photo key.



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**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
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Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri**

SUMMARY: The James H. and Marietta Comfort House, at 235 E. Jefferson, is significant under Criterion C in the area of ARCHITECTURE, as a large highly intact Italianate house. The irregular massing, bracketed cornices, elaborate wall treatments, and general architectural detailing of the house are all typical of Property Type B.: Italianate Houses. The house meets the registration requirements for that property type set forth in the MPS Cover document "Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri," and falls under the contexts "The Creation of Kirkwood, a Planned Railroad Suburb--1851-1864", and "The Town of Kirkwood: Late Nineteenth Century Suburban Growth--1865-1898". This is one of the largest and most intact examples of the Italianate style left in the historic core of Kirkwood. The house gains further significance from its association with James H. Comfort, who, as one of the three original trustees of the Kirkwood Association, was instrumental in the early development of the community. Comfort bought this property from the Kirkwood Association in 1853, and appears to have built and moved into this house by 1872. The period of significance for the property therefore runs from 1871 to ca. 1926, by which time the house had taken its current form. The house is in excellent condition, and exhibits a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is clearly representative of its historic time and place.

ELABORATION: The Comfort house is a large, highly intact example of the Italianate House property type.¹ Even though the basic footprint of this house follows a common vernacular form, it exhibits a notably high level of styling. It is therefore most accurately classified within the Italianate Houses property type, rather than within the Nineteenth Century Vernacular Houses category, which refers to much simpler dwellings.

The general form of the house is that of a large gabled ell, to which have been added stylistic features which were popular at the time of its construction. Among the most notable high-style elements of the house are the well-executed exterior wall finishes. The beveled wall boards and distinctive quoins on all major corners effectively mimic cut stone blocks. Other elements characteristic of the Italianate style include a low-pitched gable roof with wide, overhanging eaves, a dentiled cornice, decorative roof brackets, and classically inspired porch columns. The house shares those design elements with several other Italianate houses in the community which are of roughly the same age and size. It is especially similar to the Elijah Unsell House, at 615 East Monroe Street, which is of roughly the same form and age.

The first owners of this house were James H. and Marietta Comfort, who bought the property during the first public sale of lots to ever occur in Kirkwood. James H. Comfort purchased the

¹ See MPS Cover document "Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri, Section F, Associated Property Types," for more discussion of the Italianate House Revival house property type.

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southeast quarter of Block #13 from the Kirkwood Association in 1853.² It is not surprising that Comfort was aware of that initial offering of lots in Kirkwood; he was a founding member of the Kirkwood Association, and one of the three original trustees of the organization.

A lawyer as well as real estate speculator, Comfort purchased several properties in both the city and county of St. Louis during the 1860s and 1870s. It was not until around 1872, however, that Comfort moved to Kirkwood.³ The Comfort family resided in Kirkwood until 1878, by which time James Comfort had died, and the property had passed into the hands of what was to become a long string of female owners. Catherine J. Hoyt, widow of Cyrus G. Hoyt, and Marietta Comfort, widow of James H. Comfort, appear to have switched addresses in the late 1870s. Marietta Comfort is listed in an 1879 directory as living at 3036 Franklin Avenue in St. Louis, where Catherine J. Hoyt had lived just the year before.⁴ The 1878 atlas map of Kirkwood indicates that the lot at that time was owned by Catherine Hoyt.

The property was next sold in 1880 to Asenath A. Phelps, widow of Harlow Phelps.⁵ (Locally, the house is known as the Hoyt-Phelps House.) The Phelps family had raised the family of Alfred Douglas Donovan after the Civil War. Harlow Phelps fought for the Confederacy with his good friend, Alfred Donovan. The two men promised each other that if either of them died in the war, the other would take care of his family. Donovan died near the end of the war, and Harlow Phelps brought Donovan's family with him to Kirkwood to raise with his own. One of the boys was Douglas Donovan, who later became the architect for the 1893 Kirkwood Train Station, which is listed individually in the National Register.⁶

Historic atlas maps show that the house occupied a very large lot for much of its early history. Atlas maps from 1878 to 1909 show a full half of the block as a single parcel, and the 1926 Sanborn map of the property shows that although it was slightly smaller then, it was still close to its original size. The Sanborn map also recorded 2 outbuildings near the north edge of the block, one of which appears to have been relatively large; that part of the block is no longer associated with the house, and neither outbuilding has survived. The 1909 atlas map shows it as the property of Maria B. Floyd. Maria Floyd may have been related to George C. Floyd, who served as an alderman for Kirkwood

² Book R-6, page 81, at the Recorder of Deeds Office of St. Louis. The property had been expanded to include the entire east half of the block by the time it was mapped for the 1878 Atlas.

³ Gould's St. Louis Directory, 1872, Kirkwood and St. Louis listings.

⁴ Gould's St. Louis Directory, 1878, 1879.

⁵ Book 13, page 283, at the Recorder of Deeds Office of St. Louis.

⁶ Local landmark records, City of Kirkwood Development Office.

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from 1907 to 1909.⁷ The property was subdivided in 1924 and 1925 by its owner at the time, Margaret A. Johnson, and again sometime after the Sanborn map was published.

The house stands out today by virtue of a very deep set back, and is immediately recognizable as one of the oldest houses on the block. The large frame house is in excellent condition. It has seen no changes of note in the last century, and from the street it appears today much as it did when it was home to one of the officers of the Kirkwood Association. △

⁷ June Wilkinson Dahl, A History of Kirkwood, Missouri: 1851-1965, (Kirkwood, Missouri: The Kirkwood Historical Society, 1965), p. 425.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Edward's Annual Directory of St. Louis. 1865-1867.

Gould's St. Louis Directory. 1872, 1878, 1879.

Johnson, Berkeley E. Atlas of St. Louis County. Clayton, MO: C. B. Black, 1893.

Northwest Publishing Company. Plat Book of St. Louis County. Des Moines: IA, Northwest Publishing Company, 1909.

Pitzman, Julius. Atlas of St. Louis City and County, 1878. Philadelphia: A. B. Holcombe and Co., 1878.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, Map of Kirkwood, 1926.

St. Louis County Deed Records. Recorder of Deeds Office, Clayton, MO.

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**Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
St. Louis County, Missouri
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Verbal Boundary Description

Part of Block 13 of the Town of Kirkwood, in St. Louis County, Missouri described as: Beginning at a point in the North line of Jefferson Avenue, distant 77 feet 2 ½ inches West of the West line of Fillmore Avenue, 180 feet to a point in the South line of an alley 15 feet wide; thence West along the South line of said alley 15 feet wide and in direct continuation Westwardly, 100 feet to a point; thence South and parallel with the West line of Fillmore Avenue, 180 feet to a point in the North line of Jefferson Avenue; and thence East along the North line of Jefferson Avenue, 100 feet to the point of beginning, having a total acreage of 0.413 acres.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries are based on the current legal description of this parcel, and encompass all of the land now associated with the house.

Photographs

The following information is the same for all photographs:

Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
235 East Jefferson
Kirkwood, St. Louis County, MO

1-2, taken by Debbie Sheals, 406 West Broadway, Columbia, MO 65203; date: 2002

3-5, taken by Linda Stockman, 139 South Kirkwood Rd, Kirkwood, MO, 63122; date: 1990

(The house was field checked in 2002 to ensure the 1990 photos are still accurate.)

Negatives on file with the City of Kirkwood Dept of Planing and Development, 139 South Kirkwood Road, Kirkwood, MO 63122, 314-822-5808.

List of Photographs

See photo key for indication of camera angles.

1. Facade, south elevation.
2. East edge of front porch, with rear ells.
3. West elevation.
4. Northeast corner(s).
5. Carriage House, southwest corner.
6. Parlor window, south wall.
7. Stair hall, looking south to front door.
8. Parlor fireplace, looking west.

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Comfort, James H. and Marietta, House
St. Louis County, Missouri
Historic Resources of Kirkwood, Missouri

11. Form Prepared By

Name Linda Stockman
organization Kirkwood Landmark Commission date 1990
street & number 139 South Kirkwood Road telephone (314) 822-5808
city or town Kirkwood state Missouri zip code 63122

Name Deon K. Wolfenbarger
organization Three Gables Preservation date 1992
street & number 9550 N.E. Cookingham Drive telephone (816) 792-1275
city or town Kansas City state Missouri zip code 64157

Name Debbie Sheals
organization Independent Contractor date May, 2002
street & number 406 West Broadway telephone 573-874-3779
city or town Columbia state Missouri zip code 65203













