United States Department of the InteriorNational Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

received NOV 28 1984 date entered 4/4/85

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

| Type all entries | s—complete application | able sections | et House in Debroit is a | SWY .H METERNIA NO NEW A |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Nan | 16 cc urs bujarg-i | toos harolone in the south | ick piers topped by cens | supported by square bo |
| historic | Ossian H. Swe | et, House | isle-light downer. The | projecting central, to |
| and/or common | same | | | |
| 2. Loca | ation | northwest corner of Carland St | House is located on the | The Ossian Sweet |
| street & number | r 2905 Garla | nd on the west by Bevick, the ounder fieldstone bown alorb | ANA commented on a m | not for publication |
| city, town De | etroit me me | | or privile a living co | |
| state Michig | nan imedizen end no | code 26 county | Wayne - handin harbets | |
| 3. Clas | sification | onis shoos publicut ons of | hee exterior alteration | There have hear t |
| Category district X_ building(s) structure site object | Ownership public X_ private both Public Acquisitio N/A in process being consider | X yes: restricted | Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military | museum park X private residence religious scientific transportation other: |
| 4. Own | ner of Pro | perty | | |
| name Mr. Wi | lliam Herbert B | | | |
| | 2303 441 14 | | | 10074 |
| Commission of the last section of the last sec | etroit | N/Avicinity of egal Description | state Mi | chigan 48214 |
| J. LUC | | | | |
| courthouse, regi | istry of deeds, etc. | Wayne County Register o | of Deeds | |
| street & number | 2 Woodward Av | enue, City-County Bldg. | | |
| city, town | Detroit | | state Mi | chigan 48226 |
| 6. Rep | resentation | on in Existing S | urveys | |
| title Detroi | t/Urban Conserv | ation Project has this prop | erty been determined eligi | ble? yes X no |
| date 1976 | | | federalX state | county local |
| depository for si | urvey records | Michigan History Divi | sion | |
| city, town | Lansing | | state Mi | chigan 48918 |

7. Description

| Condition deteriorated | Check one unaltered | Check one _X original site | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--|
| good S VOM ruins unexposed | X altered | moved date | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ossian H. Sweet House in Detroit is a one-and-one-half-story, flank-gable, red brick, Bungaloid-style structure, sited on a full basement. Features include a first-story open porch with extended eaves supported by square brick piers topped by cement caps, and an enclosed south-facing sun porch. The second story has brown stained wooden shingling, and features a simple gable roof with plain eaves sheltering a projecting central, triple-light dormer. The house is enclosed by an unpainted silver aluminum fence.

The Ossian Sweet House is located on the northwest corner of Garland Street and Charlevoix Avenue in a residential neighborhood on Detroit's lower east-side. Bounded on the north by Goethe, on the south by Charlevoix Avenue, on the east by St. Clair, and on the west by Bewick, the house is enclosed by an unpainted silver aluminum fence mounted on a rounded, fieldstone berm along the sidewalk line.

The interior is arranged with a living room, dining room, kitchen, den and sun porch on the first floor; four bedrooms and a bath occupy the second floor. Behind the house, on the western edge of the property line, stands a detached hipped roof, one-story brick garage building.

There have been three exterior alterations to the building facade since its 1919 construction: (1) the installation on the first story of a central picture window, (2) the enclosure of the property by an aluminum fence, and (3) the placement of a modern lamp post in 1975. Otherwise, the structure remains unaltered.

8. Significance

| Period | | heck and justify below community planning conservation economics education engineering exploration/settlemer industry invention | politics/government | science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater transportation X other (specify) |
|----------------|------|---|-----------------------|---|
| Specific dates | 1919 | Builder/Architect | Maurice Finkel of Det | ghts, Ethnic History croit, architect |

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ossian H. Sweet House in Detroit, the home of Detroit black physician and gynecologist, Ossian Sweet (1895-1960), has historical significance as the site of a racial incident, resulting in a nationally publicized 1925 murder trial, at which Sweet was accused of firing into a crowd of angry whites gathered in front of his home at 2905 Garland. Defended by the distinguished attorney Clarence Darrow, Dr. Sweet won acquittal, asserting that a man's home is his castle, and that a citzen has a right to defend his property against mob intervention.

Black migration from the South to Detroit exploded during the years 1910 to 1930. A population of 5,841 in 1910 grew to 40,838 by 1920 - a decennial increase of 611.3 per cent. Doubling again to 81,831 by 1925, the figure would rise to 120,066 by 1930. Detroit's lower east side absorbed fully 85% of this crushing migration. Decent housing became the prime goal of thousands of migrating Detroit blacks, seeking to escape the rigidly segregated Negro ghetto bounded by the Detroit River on the south, and the Gratiot Avenue corridor on the north.

In the summer of 1925, Dr. Ossian Sweet, an Orlando, Florida native, and a graduate of both Wilberforce University and Howard Medical School, purchased for \$18,500 a two-story brick house at Garland and Charlevoix, in a previously all white neighborhood. On July 14, 1925, aroused whites held a mass protest at the Howe School diagonally across from the house at 2905 Garland to confront the imminent black invasion. Later that night in the school yard, the Waterworks Park Improvement Association, whose stated purpose was "...to retain the present high standards of the neighborhood...," was born. The Association's understood purpose was to keep the neighborhood white.

On September 8, 1925, Dr. Sweet, his wife Gladys and nine associates, each armed with a gun and 400 rounds of ammunition, moved into the Garland house under police escort. The next evening, a large, unruly crowd gathered. Rocks and bottles pelted the house, breaking several windows. At one point the crowd rushed the house, creating panic within. A volley of gunfire issued from an upstairs window. Leon Breiner, sitting on his porch across the street smoking a pipe, was struck by bullets and died instantly. A second by-stander, Eric Houghberg, sustained serious wounds. Half an hour later, Detroit police arrested Dr. Sweet and his ten companions and booked them all on an open charge of first degree murder.

A fledgling race organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (N.A.A.C.P.), asked the controversial Clarence Darrow to undertake Sweet's defense. Darrow, who had spent that previous summer as principal counsel to John T. Scopes of Dayton, Tennessee, agreed to consider the prospect.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet

| 10. Geographical | Data | | | 8 S |
|--|---|--|---|---------------------|
| Acreage of nominated property 1ess | than one acr | 2 | Α* | |
| Quadrangle name Belle Isle Quad | | | Quadrangle sca | ale 1:24000 |
| UTM References | | | | |
| A 1 7 3 3 6 6 2 0 4 6 9 2 Zone Easting Northing | 5 9 0 | B Zone | Easting North | thing |
| c | Litt | DIII | Hilida | Libert |
| Election of the color of the | Landar 1 | E L L | I I a de da Calda | |
| | | | | |
| G | | H | | |
| by Goethe, on the south by west by Bewick. It occuping 17 feet of Lot 469 and the | Charlevoix / es less than North 26.44 | Avenue, on the one acre of of Lot 468.0 | land, and encompa of Bewick's Subdiv | ir, and on the |
| List all states and counties for prop | erties overlap | oing state or co | unty boundaries | the waste of |
| stateN/A | code | county | Land to the state of the state | code |
| state | code | county | | code |
| 11. Form Prepare | d Rv | | | |
| name/title Charles C. Cotman organization Michigan History Di | vision | 02,810 mil his ul nO bocked C inos to s I dect t hereda | te August 6, 1 | 984 |
| street & number 208 North Capi | tol Avenue | colorida te | ephone (517) 373 | -0510 |
| city or town Lansing | relational eni- | the shall st | ate Michigan | 48918 |
| 12. State Historic | Preser | vation (| Officer Cer | tification |
| The evaluated significance of this proper X national As the designated State Historic Preserve | state | local | ric Preservation Act of 1 | OSS (Public Law 80_ |
| 665), I hereby nominate this property for according to the criteria and procedures | inclusion in the I | lational Register | and certify that it has be | |
| State Historic Preservation Officer signa | ture D |) areas | M. Dige | lon |
| title Director, Michigan Hi | story Divisi | on | date /// | 16/84 |
| For NPS use only | | | | |
| I hereby certify that this property is | | | | . / / |
| 1 Selvres Brees | E | atered in the | tar date | 4/4/85 |
| Keeper of the National Register | N | STIONAL MAGIC | , | |
| Attest: | | | date | |
| Chief of Registration | | | | |

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

data entated

Page

Continuation sheet Sweet House - waynels my

Item number

Sig. p.2

In an October meeting in Chicago with Walter White, Executive Secretary of the New York Chapter of the N.A.A.C.P., Darrow asked whether the defendants had shot into the mob. White reluctantly acknowledged that they had. "Then, I'll take the case," said Darrow, noting that"...if they had not had the courage to shoot back in defense of their own lives, I wouldn't think they were worth defending...".

Detroit Recorders Court Judge Frank Murphy (1890-1949) (later Governor of Michigan and member of the United States Supreme Court) presided over the Sweet trial. It commenced in early November, 1925, and lasted three weeks. In his discourse to the jury prior to its deliberation, Judge Murphy stated that, according to law, a man's home is his castle, and that a citizen has a right to defend his life and property if he has reasonable cause to believe there is danger. After forty-six hours of rancorous deliberation, on November 25, 1925, the jury returned without a verdict. Judge Murphy then declared a mistrial, dismissed the jury, and released Dr. Sweet. A second trial involving Henry Sweet, Dr. Sweet's younger brother, in May 1926, resulted in his swift acquittal after a mere four hours' deliberation by the jury.

Dr. Ossian Sweet returned to his Garland home in 1928, and remained there until 1944. Politically active, Dr. Sweet later unsuccessfully sought elective office to the state senate in 1932, and to Congress in 1950. In later years Sweet withdrew from public life and became a virtual recluse. On the evening of March 18, 1960, alone, despondent and suffering severely from arthritis, Ossian Sweet committed suicide by shooting himself behind the right ear with a 32 caliber revolver.

Since May 26, 1958, the Ossian Sweet House has been owned by William Herbert Baxter. Baxter, an Alabama native, had lived in Detroit since 1927, and knew Dr. Sweet from childhood. Dr. Sweet never discussed the events of 1925 on Garland Street with Baxter prior to his death. Nor did Baxter ever inform Sweet that he now lived in the doctor's old house. Baxter explained that "...I never did tell him on account of his pride...".

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

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet June Hume

Item number

Page

1

BIBL IOGRAPHY

Asher, Cash. "The Judge in the Sweet Trial," Crisis 67 (January, 1961), 16-19.

Darrow, Clarence. The Story of My Life. New York: Scribner's Publishing Company, 1932.

Deskins, Jr. Donald R. Residential Mobility in Detroit, 1837-1965. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, Department of Geography, 1972.

Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research. The Negro in Detroit. Detroit: Bureau of Governmental Research, 1926.

Detroit Free Press. Detroit Magazine, October 17, 1971, pp. 28-33.

Detroit Free Press. March 20, 1960, 4A.

Fine, Sidney. Frank Murphy: The Detroit Years. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1975.

Fleming, Thomas J. "The Right to Self Defense," Crisis 76 (January 1969), 9-15.

Interview with William Herbert Baxter, Detroit, Michigan, February 9, 1984.

Johnson, James Weldon. "The Second Sweet Trial," Crisis 32 (July 1926), 117-120.

Levine, David A. Internal Combustion: The Races in Detroit, 1915-1926. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1976.

Sweet Ossian, Defendant: The People vs Ossian Sweet, Gladys Sweet and al.

Transcript of Testimony given in Recorders Court of the City of Detroit, Michigan, November 25, 1925 to May 13, 1926. (Microfilm) Located at the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.

U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. Negroes in the United States, 1920-1935. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1935.

Weinberg, Kenneth G. A Man's Home, A Man's Castle: New York: McCalls Books, 1971.

White, Walter. "The Sweet Trial," Crisis 31 (January 1926), 125-129.

AENR84215A AENR84215D

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only received $3/21/85^{\circ}$ date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 10

Page 2

Verbal boundary description and justification (continued)

Liber 23, p. 14 of the Wayne County Register of Deeds. This is the entire property on which the house stands.



Ossian Sweet House
2905 Garland
Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan
Photo: Charles C. Cotman
Date: February 9, 1984
Neg.: Michigan History Division
Camera facing NW
Photo #1 of 3

newsy



Ossian Sweet House 2905 Garland Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan Photo: Charles C. Cotman Date: February 9, 1984

Neg.: Michigan History Division

Camera facing NNW Photo #2 of 3

Mestry



Ossian Sweet House 2905 Garland Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan Photo: Charles C. Cotman

Date: February 9, 1984

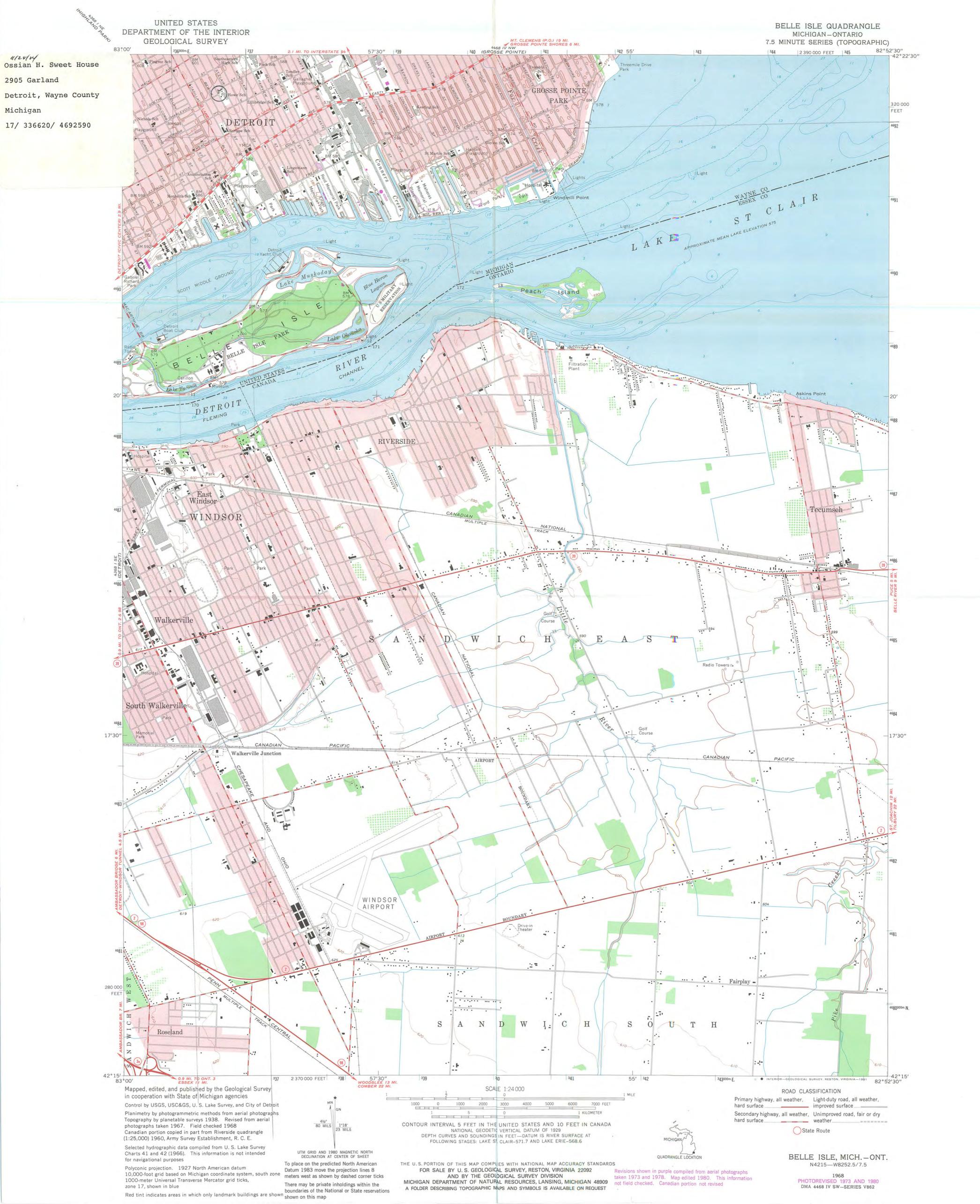
Neg.: Michigan History Division

Camera facing NW Photo #3 of 3

pg 287 mz

MI - 1

ulustry



National Register of Historic Places

Note to the record

Additional Documentation: 2022

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: Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation) | | | |
| Other names/site number: Name of related multiple property listing: | | | |
| Name of related multiple property fishing. | | | |
| (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing | | | |
| 2. Location | | | |
| Street & number: 2905 Garland Street | | | |
| City or town: Detroit State: MI County: Wayne | | | |
| 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 X 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: | | | |
| X nationalstatewidelocal | | | |
| Applicable National Register Criteria: | | | |
| <u>X</u> A <u>B</u> _C _D | | | |
| | | | |
| 2 1 x moder) | | | |
| Mertho Peputy SHPO February 23, 2020 | | | |
| Signature of certifying official/Title: Date | | | |
| State Historic Preservation Office | | | |
| State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government | | | |

| Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation Name of Property | On) Vayne County, MI County and State |
|---|--|
| | s does not meet the National Register |
| criteria. | |
| | |
| Signature of commenting official: | Date |
| Title: | State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government |
| | |
| 4. National Park Service Certification | |
| I hereby certify that this property is: | |
| entered in the National Register | |
| determined eligible for the National Re | egister |
| determined not eligible for the National | l Register |
| removed from the National Register | |
| X other (explain:) Accept Additional [| <u>Doc</u> umentation |
| | |
| | 2/2/2022 |
| James Gabbert Signature of the Keeper | 3/3/2022 |
| Signature of the Keeper | Date of Action |
| 5. Classification | |
| Ownership of Property | |
| (Check as many boxes as apply.) | |
| Private: X | |
| Public – Local | |
| Public – State | |
| Public – Federal | |

| Sweet, Ossian H., House | (Additional Documentatio | <u>n)</u> | Wayne County, MI County and State |
|--|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Name of Property Category of Property | | | County and State |
| (Check only one bo | x.) | | |
| Building(s) | X | | |
| District | | | |
| Site | | | |
| Structure | | | |
| Object | | | |
| | | | |
| | ces within Property viously listed resources N | in the count) oncontributing 0 | buildings |
| 0 | . <u>-</u> | 0 | sites |
| 0 | | 0 | structures |
| 0 | | 0 | objects |
| 1 | | 0 | Total |
| Number of contribu | ting resources previous | ly listed in the Natio | onal Register1 |
| 6. Function or Us | e | | |
| Historic Functions (Enter categories fro _DOMESTIC/singl | om instructions.) | | |
| | <u> </u> | | |

| veet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation) | Wayne County, N |
|--|------------------|
| ne of Property | County and State |
| Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.) DOMESTIC/single dwelling | |
| 7. Description | |
| Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.) | |
| LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN MOVEMENTS/Bungalow/Craftsman_ | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Materials: (enter categories from instructions.) Principal exterior materials of the property: Brick, Wood: Shingl | |

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 Ossian H. Sweet House is located at 2905 Garland Street, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. The house is situated at the northwest corner of Garland Street and Charlevoix Avenue. Built in 1916, the house features design elements that are typical of Craftsman bungalow style architecture of the late teens: a centrally placed second story gabled dormer, a full width front porch, and an exterior that is clad in brick and wood shingle. Nine-over-one

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

Prairie Style windows are found in the central dormer on the main façade and in the box bay window on the south façade. The box bay window is a prominent feature on the south façade. Overall, the house retains historic integrity as it is highly intact with the only modifications being a few replaced windows, an enclosed porch on the rear façade, and a kitchen remodel on the interior.

Narrative Description

Introduction

The Ossian H. Sweet House was listed in the State Register of Historic Sites in 1985 and was listed in the National Register of Historic Places on April 2, 1985. The house was also designated as a local historic district in the City of Detroit on May 24, 2006. This nomination was prepared as an update to the 1985 National Register nomination. This documentation provides additional descriptive information, an expanded historic context and statement of significance that provides additional information about the significance of the house at the national level, specifies the National Register Criterion, adds areas of significance, defines the period of significance, and clarifies the association of the architect noted in the 1985 nomination. This documentation also provides current photographs, maps, geographical references, a boundary justification, and an expanded bibliography. Funding for this project was partially financed by the African American Civil Rights program of the Historic Preservation Fund, National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Setting and Environment

The Ossian H. Sweet House is located at 2905 Garland Street, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. The house is situated at the northwest corner of Garland Street and Charlevoix Avenue and faces northeast toward Garland Street. ¹ The lot is 43 feet wide and 117 feet deep and comprises approximately 0.12 acres or, about, 5,492 square feet. The house is approximately four miles east of downtown Detroit and four blocks north of East Jefferson Avenue, a major east-west thoroughfare. The Hutchinson Elementary-Middle School at Howe is located diagonally across from the Ossian H. Sweet House just beyond the intersection of Garland and Charlevoix. Garland Avenue is residential in nature with single family dwellings and two story up-down duplexes. Charlevoix is a fairly busy thoroughfare that used to house small businesses in the 1920s but is now largely vacant land. The 1921 Sanborn shows six shops, facing Charlevoix, located across Garland, just east of the Ossian H. Sweet House. Further down, at the corner of Charlevoix and St. Clair streets was a filling station. Today, a field of trees has been planted across Charlevoix just south of the Ossian H. Sweet House. The setting around the house has changed as there was an apartment building just south of the house, across Charlevoix, that has been torn down and the six shops across Garland is also gone. Further, the density on the street has been diminished as many houses have been demolished due to vacancy and deterioration.

¹ While originally platted as Garland Avenue and Charlevoix Avenue, modern maps and documentation refer to the road as Garland Street and Charlevoix Street.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The house sits on a slightly elevated lot which rises about one foot above the grade of the sidewalk. The house sits approximately one foot above grade with a rubble rock retaining wall encircling the property on the primary façade and the majority of the south façade. A concrete walkway and concrete steps lead up to the front porch on the east façade. And two concrete walkways lead to the house from the sidewalk that runs along Charlevoix: one walkway leads to the secondary entrance on the south façade and one walkway leads to the back porch on the west façade. A brick column is found next to the walkway to the back porch. A rubble rock retaining wall is found along the boundary of the lawn on Garland Street and along a portion of Charlevoix Avenue. The rubble rock wall is in poor condition and several sections are crumbling and collapsing onto the sidewalk. Just past the brick column on Charlevoix the rubble rock wall terminates, and a low concrete retaining wall runs the length of the rest of the lot. Although the house appears to have always been slightly elevated, the rubble rock retaining wall is not original since early photographs show the house with a lawn that slopes gradually down to where it meets the public sidewalk.

As is nearly ubiquitous in this area of the city, an alley bisects the block, running north from Charlevoix up to Goethe along the western edge of the Ossian H. Sweet House property. A concrete pad for a no-longer-extant three-car garage—that originally faced the alley—is found at the back of the property adjacent to the alley. The garage was destroyed in 2019 in a fire. On the primary facade, a lamp post is located next to sidewalk to the front porch. A Michigan Historical Marker identifies this unpretentious house at the corner of Garland and Charlevoix as an historic site.

The house is a one-and-a-half story Craftsman style bungalow with its primary façade fronting on Garland Street. The primary (east) façade features a full width porch and a gabled dormer centered on the primary façade at the second floor. The first story is veneered in red brick in a running bond pattern while the upper story is clad in wood shingles, currently painted green. The main roof is a steeply sloped side gable covered in green asphalt shingles. Four brick piers support the roof of the porch on the primary façade while a solid brick balustrade encases the porch and porch stairs. Two decorative concrete rain scuppers are located in the porch's solid balustrade to drain water off the floor of front porch. On the porch, there is a plaque on the brick knee wall that commemorates the listing of the house on the National Register of Historic Places and is set around a small surround of decorative Pewabic tiles.

On the primary façade, the main entry door is located slightly north of the center point of the façade while a black iron security door is installed in the frame. A large three light picture window (non-historic) is located just south of the main door and a small square leaded glass window is found to the right of the main door. At the second story, the centered gabled dormer contains three-double hung sash windows which feature nine-over-one prairie style windows. Decorative wood brackets are found on the second story gabled dormer under the wide eave to mimic exposed rafter tails.

The south elevation, facing Charlevoix, features a large side-facing end gable with sloping verge boards and five decorative wood brace brackets. A large box bay is centered on this façade at the

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

first floor and it is covered by a shallow hipped roof. The box bay features nine-over-one prairie style windows. Just above the box bay, at the second floor, are two double hung windows located in the peak of the gable. On either side of these double hung windows are two square casement windows, located just under the eaves at the gable ends. At the first story, just west of the box bay, is a secondary entrance with a solid brick knee wall on either side of the concrete steps. A single double hung window is located next to the secondary entrance door. Just east of the box bay are two small, leaded glass windows encased in rectangular frames. Rectangular basement windows are found just above grade.

On the west (rear) elevation, a small two-story porch dominates the façade. There is a centrally placed dormer with two windows on the second story. At the first story on the northern end of the façade is a small brick-clad one-story backroom that projects past the plane of the rest of the façade. Sometime between 1925 and 1954 a wood framed porch was added just south of the masonry framed back room. This porch provides covered access from the backyard into the first-floor kitchen. Above the brick clad back room and the wood framed porch there is an enclosed upper porch that sits atop the one-story, brick framed back room and the wooden porch below. This upper porch was enclosed at an unknown date although trial testimony from 1925 indicates the upper porch was originally open. Note that this upper enclosed porch only touches the second story at the door which is found in the northern end of the dormer.

The north façade there is a large two light sliding glass window near the northeast corner, a small, square casement window further along, a single hung window beyond that, and then a small, square casement window that is boarded over. Finally, a large two light slider window is found near the northwest corner. On the second floor the windows that echo the window placement on the south façade: in the gable are four windows: two double hung windows centered in the gable and one square, fixed pane window on each side at the gable ends. A louvered attic vent is found directly above the two double hung windows near the peak of the gable.

Interior

The house displays hallmarks of the Arts and Crafts movement, typified by the Craftsman style architecture. The overall simplicity of the ornamentation, typical of Craftsman style houses, is evident in the oak flooring, beams, and trim and the flat plaster walls. Leaded glass windows and the terrazzo floor in the first-floor bathroom serve as a stylistic reminder to earlier, Victorian-era ornamentation styles.

On the first floor the house is arranged around five principal rooms. There is a parlor, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, and a study along with a small entry and a bathroom. Off the small entry hall is a coat closet which has a small, square leaded glass window. The rooms have white oak strip flooring except the kitchen and back hallway which has vinyl flooring and the first bathroom which has a terrazzo floor. There is a fireplace in the living room with a tile surround while the dining room has a box beam ceiling and a built-in hutch—wooden pillars set next to a pony wall divide the living room from the dining room. Directly above the fireplace are two square windows with leaded and beveled glass lites. In the dining room the box beam ceiling

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

(painted white) is comprised of four beams that intersect at each corner of the room. A small light fixture, also painted white, is found at each intersection. The box bay in the dining room has Prairie style, nine-over-one windows. A parlor off the entryway may have originally been a bedroom as there is a closet—there is water damage in the closet with missing plaster and exposed lath. The kitchen and study are located at the back of the house. The kitchen ahs been renovated several times since the house was built and no fixtures or finishes appear to be historic. The study has windows on the south and west sides along with a door that provides access to the south.

The stair to the second floor is located on the western side of the house and the plain pine treads are partially painted. The handrail on the second floor is also painted. On the second floor there are four bedrooms and a bathroom. Two large cracks in the plaster on the wall near the landing indicate a door may have been covered in this area. The bathroom on the second floor has pink and yellow tiled walls and floors along with pink fixtures including a unique, two bowl sink. The bathroom has a large hole in the floor near the toilet and the tiling in this area is missing. An upper enclosed porch was added to the roof of the porch and kitchen nook, below. This enclosed porch is in poor condition with damaged windows and water damage to the ceiling.

The plaster (on both floors) is in fair condition with hairline cracks and some missing plaster at various locations. The basement has had some water infiltration and the finishes in the basement are in poor condition as a result. Overall, the interior of the house is in fair condition with damaged and missing plaster and chipping and peeling paint evident in many areas.

Historic Integrity

The house retains historic integrity in all seven categories as few alterations have occurred. There are some non-original windows (the main picture window on the primary façade and two sliding glass windows on the north façade) and alterations on the back (west) façade. The alterations on the west façade include a small, enclosed porch that was built to provide shelter from the elements at the kitchen entrance and the upper porch, which was originally open, which was enclosed sometime between 1925 and 1954. Additionally, a three-car garage used to exist behind the house but was destroyed in a fire in 2019 and is no longer extant. On the interior, the house is still highly intact and retains its historic integrity. The original floorplan, moldings, built-ins, and most original flooring are still in place. The kitchen has been modified and contains fixtures and fittings that are not original to the house. Because of this, the house retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. As noted above, the setting around the house as changed as the retail shops across Garland are gone, the apartment building across Charlevoix is gone, and the neighborhood is less dense as homes in the area have been demolished due to blight. Even with these changes the house is still surrounded by residential houses and duplexes and is readily identifiable as a residential district of small homes and duplexes and, thus, integrity of setting still exists.

|--|

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI County and State

| 8. Sta | aten | nent of Significance |
|--------|-------|--|
| | 'x" i | e National Register Criteria in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register |
| X | 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. |
| | | onsiderations 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 |

| eet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation) | Wayne County, MI County and State |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ne of Property | County and State |
| | |
| Areas of Significance | |
| (Enter categories from instructions.) | |
| Ethnic History: Black | |
| Social History | |
| Law | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Period of Significance | |
| 1925-1926 | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Significant Dates | |
| <u>1925</u> | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Significant Dayson | |
| Significant Person (Consolate only if Criterian P. is marked above) | |
| (Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.) | |
| <u>N/A</u> | |
| | |
| | |
| Cultural Affiliation | |
| <u>N/A</u> | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Architect/Builder | |
| I II VIIIVOVI I VIIIVI | |
| | |
| | |
| | |

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 Ossian H. Sweet House is significant at under National Register Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic History: Black, Social History, and Law, at the national level of significance. In 1925, after he purchased a home in an all-white neighborhood on Detroit's east side, African American physician Ossian Sweet and several others attempted to defend the house at 2905 Garland Street

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

against an angry mob of local White residents who pelted the house with projectiles. In the melee a White man was shot and killed. Dr. Sweet was a prominent member of the well-educated Black upper class in Detroit and his actions in defending his home resulted in a criminal trial that captivated the nation. Local Black defense attorneys immediately stepped in and collaborated in the Sweets defense. The local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), in turn, collaborated with their national branch to hire renowned defense attorney Clarence Darrow to defend Dr. Sweet. The ensuing trial was news nationwide and the inability of the prosecution to convict Dr. Sweet made headlines throughout the mainstream press. Even though this was a criminal trial as opposed to a civil trial—the former to test whether Dr. Sweet should be convicted while the latter would have changed a discriminatory law—the trial, The People v. Ossian Sweet, Gladys Sweet, et. al., was one of the most important early civil rights cases as it laid the foundation for the principal that Black citizens were equally entitled to safety and security in their homes. At a time of rampant racism, discrimination, and segregation, this case stood for equality, at least in one measure, by showing that a Black man would not be criminally convicted for taking reasonable actions to defend his home and family. Further, the trial and publicity it generated provided the groundwork for the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund, which filed and won some of the most important civil rights cases of the twentieth century.

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

Early History of Detroit

Southeast Michigan was settled by Paleo-Indian people at least eleven thousand years ago. Mound building tribes lived in the area with mounds still extant at Fort Wayne and in what is now the Delray neighborhood in Detroit.² The city that would become known as Detroit was founded in 1701 by a French trader by the name of Antoine Laumet de la Mothe, Sieur de Cadillac, who built a fort on the banks of the river called Fort Pontchartrain du Detroit.³⁴ Although there were no permanent Native American settlements on the location that would become Fort Detroit—raiding Iroquois parties several decades earlier had scattered them—Huron, Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi peoples lived in the general area and later settled close to the Fort for better access to French products.⁵

During the French and Indian War (1756-1763) Fort Detroit was expanded and reinforced due to repeated attacks on the fort by the British. Ultimately, the French surrendered Fort Detroit to the British in 1763 when the Treaty of Paris formally transferred both Fort Detroit and all French lands east of the Mississippi to the British.

² Paul Sewick, "The Mound Builders," Detroit Urbanism, entry posted December 21, 2015, http://detroiturbanism.blogspot.com/2015/12/the-mound-builders.html (accessed April 25, 2020).

³ Guillaume Teasdale, "Old Friends and New Foes: French Settlers and Indians in the Detroit River Border Region," *Michigan Historical Review* 38, No. 2 (Fall 2012): 39.

⁴ Tiya Miles, *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits*, (New York: The New Press, 2017), 10.

⁵ Teasdale, "Old Friends and New Foes," 39.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Throughout the eighteenth century the population of Detroit fluctuated with two thousand people and three hundred buildings counted in 1760; 1,367 people counted in 1773; and 2,191 inhabitants by 1782.⁶ Enslavement in the region is older than the city itself, as Tiya Miles revealed. Native American slaves were more prevalent during the time that Detroit was a part of New France, with Native American slaves outnumbering African American slaves by two to one.⁷ Miles found that enslaved African Americans had been present in the city since at least the mid-1700s, with the earliest written documentation dating to 1760. Although an exact number of total African Americans in the city at this time isn't known, by 1773, there were ninety-three enslaved individuals in Detroit.⁸ By 1782 that figure had grown to 179.⁹ Eventually, in 1783, the territory of Michigan became a part of the United States and just a few years later the Northwest Ordinance was passed in 1787. Ostensibly the Northwest Ordinance outlawed slavery in the areas north and west of the Ohio River but it contained a provision that allowed for the return of fugitive slaves.¹⁰ In practicality, the Ordinance did little but outlaw overt slavery in the region. Miles observed the Ordinance was:

Riven with loopholes that revealed its ultimately equivocal stance toward slavery, the Ordinance, functionally a constitutional document for the region, left people of color at the mercy of previous customs...While the Northwest Ordinance banned blatant slavery in what would later be called the Midwest, it protected access to slave labor.¹¹

In 1795 the Jay Treaty was enacted—to forestall another war with Great Britain—which prohibited the sale of slaves in the city but, again, did not address the enslaved individuals already in Detroit. Over and over again, the law failed to help slaves who were already living in Detroit. In 1807 a decision was handed down by judge Augustus B. Woodward that mandated that no new enslaved individuals could be brought into the settlement but, again, failed to address those already enslaved. With the formation of the Michigan Anti-Slavery Society in 1840, Detroit became an attractive beacon for those fleeing slavery in the south. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Act in 1850 altered the relative safety of Detroit, however, and many former enslaved individuals fled Detroit into the safer arms of Canada (which had abolished slavery in 1834). 15

Fur trading fueled the early settlement of Michigan, and it was one of the earliest commodities traded in Detroit. But, as beaver and fox became scarce due to overhunting, heavy manufacturing

⁶ Clarence Monroe Burton, City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922 (Detroit, MI: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1922) 1:203.

⁷ Miles, *The Dawn of Detroit*, 40.

⁸ Forrester B. Washington, "The Negro in Detroit: A Survey of the Conditions of a Negro Group in a Northern Industrial Center During the War Prosperity Period," (1920), 1.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Miles, The Dawn of Detroit, 99.

¹¹ Miles, The Dawn of Detroit, 100.

¹² Neal Rubin, "Monuments to Detroit Area's Past Seen in New, Troubling Light: Slavery," The Detroit News, September 18, 2020.

¹³ Washington, "The Negro in Detroit," 1.

¹⁴ Mapping Slavery in Detroit, "Map," http://mappingdetroitslavery.com/map.php (accessed April 25, 2020).

¹⁵ Washington, "The Negro in Detroit," 1.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

began to proliferate as these industries took advantage of Detroit's strategic location on the Detroit River. Early manufacturing industries included railroad car manufacturing, tobacco and cigar production, stove manufacturing, and foundries. These early successful industries also contributed to the increase in migration to the area as new settlers began pursuing the jobs afforded by the industries. By 1870 the population of Detroit was 79,577 although the African American population in Detroit in 1870 was less than three percent of the population as a whole, with many being former enslaved individuals either heading to Canada or settling in Detroit after an interlude in that neighboring country. By 1890 Detroit's total population had skyrocketed to 205,876 making it the fifteenth largest city in the U.S. although Black citizens in the city made up just 1.7% of the population at that time. Although African Americans were only a small percentage of the population at the turn of the century, the booming automobile industry further spurred the growth of the city's African American population in the ensuing decades.

History of Detroit's East Side

The Ossian H. Sweet House is located in Detroit's near east side, approximately four miles east of the downtown core. In the 1790s the land upon which the house was later built was owned by a tailor named Joseph Serre dit St. Jean who later deeded the land to Pierre Chene—both men were leaders of Ste. Anne de Detroit, a Roman Catholic parish founded in 1701.¹⁸ Eventually the property was acquired by Charles Bewick, a shipping magnate from Grosse Pointe who subdivided the area in 1902.¹⁹

The 1902 plat map calls this area Grosse Pointe however, in 1903, a new municipality that encompassed the lot upon which Dr. Sweet's house would later be built, was created. Called Fairview Village, it was distinct municipality, situated between Detroit to the west and Grosse Pointe to the east. Bounded by Mack Avenue to the north, Cadieux to the east, the Detroit River to the south, and Bewick Avenue to the west, Fairview Village only existed for four years and was eventually annexed by Detroit in 1907.²⁰ In 1903 this was a sparsely populated area with most building activity beginning in earnest in the 1910s—in addition to build date of 1916 for

¹⁶ "Industrial Detroit," Detroit Historical Society, accessed 1/11/22, https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/industrial-detroit-1860-1900; Victoria W. Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit*, (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 40.

¹⁷ "Industrial Detroit," Detroit Historical Society, accessed 1/11/22, https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/industrial-detroit-1860-1900; "Populations of Various Ethnic Group," HistoryDetroit.org, accessed 1/11/22, http://historydetroit.com/statistics/.

¹⁸ Aaron Foley, "How One Resident is Moving Past the "Mack and Bewick" Trope and Embracing a Neighborhood Packed with History," The Neighborhoods, https://theneighborhoods.org/story/how-one-resident-moving-past-mack-and-bewick-trope-and-embracing-neighborhood-packed-history; Clarence Monroe Burton, *History of Detroit 1780-1850: Financial and Commercial*, (Detroit, MI, 1917) 41.

¹⁹ Mason L. Brown, "Bewick Subdivision Plat Map," 1902, https://aca-prod.accela.com/LARA/Default.aspx; "Charles Bewick Dies in 80th Year," *Detroit Free Press*, May 14, 1915.

²⁰ Rodd Monts, "An East Side Detroit Story: Remembering the Village of Fairview," Model D Media, https://www.modeldmedia.com/features/fairview17008.aspx.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

the house at 2905 Garland, the house directly north was built in 1915, and the two duplexes across the street were built in 1913 and 1914.²¹

Built in 1916²² at a cost of \$3,500, the house at 2905 Garland—originally numbered 587 Garland before the city-wide address renumbering in 1921—was constructed during a period of intense growth in the city. During and after World War I, faced with a severe shortage of housing and a deluge of incoming migrants from rural areas, there was great demand for comfortable (albeit unpretentious) homes like the house located at 2905 Garland Street. Built by local carpenter Alois DeCruydt for his own family the house features then-popular architectural elements associated with the bungalow style: a full width porch and a dormer centered on the main façade at the second floor. The house may have been designed by noted Detroit architect Maurice H. Finkel although substantiating this his involvement (Finkel was listed as the architect in the 1985 National Register nomination) has not been possible. DeCruydt originally lived in the house, listing 587 Garland on his WWI Draft Registration form in September of 1918.²⁴

The area around the DeCruydt's new home was exclusively White but there was a mix of nationalities and socio-economic classes in the neighborhood. The 1920 census reveals immigrants from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, and Sweden occupied the neighborhood and DeCruydt himself had immigrated to the United States from Belgium via Canada in 1905. The 1920 census also shows that many families in this neighborhood had boarders—Isaac Davis at 605 Garland had one "roomer," while Elliot Ulrich at 612 Bewick had two. Most of the people in the neighborhood were employed in what may be called working class occupations, such as metal works and machinists, others were engaged in so-called middle-class occupations and professions, like managers and teachers. Leave the neighborhood were employed in what may be called middle-class occupations and professions, like managers and teachers.

Even with its working-class citizenry and the varied national origins of its occupants, this neighborhood was still strictly off limits for African Americans. As the influx of migrants from the south poured into the city after World War I, the German, Irish, Scottish, and Swedish residents of this neighborhood would soon be confronted with Dr. Sweet and his family. But, as difficult as their own assimilation may have been, these east side immigrants did not welcome an African American family—whose educational and financial means surpassed their own—into their neighborhood and the story of what unfolded on Garland Street during the summer of 1925 would reverberate throughout the nation.

²¹ These dates are presumed based on the address's earliest appearance in City Directories. Note: archival building permit research to confirm these build dates was not possible due to library closures because of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as local flooding.

²² Assessor Card, City of Detroit, Assessor's Office, Record Group 2015-132, Residential Box 1323, Ward 21, Parcel 38298.

²³ City of Detroit City Council, Historic District Advisory Board, *Final Report on the Proposed Ossian Sweet House Historic District*, 4. Note: multiple spellings of his name: Alois DeCruydt was found on his WWI draft registration card.

²⁴ Alois DeCruydt, World War I Draft Registration Form, September 12, 1918.

²⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, "1920 Census."

²⁶ Ibid.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The Great Migration, White Terrorism, and Ossian Sweet

After the last Northern troops withdrew from the South at the end of Reconstruction in 1877, Southern states wasted no time in constructing an elaborate system of laws aimed at promoting white supremacy while cementing racial suppression of Black southerners into every facet of daily life. By the first two decades of the twentieth century Black citizens in the south were completely disenfranchised from any meaningful integration into a society totally ruled by Whites. Completely stuck in a caste system that stymied Black residents from attaining equal standing in both the economic and social systems, and with nearly no opportunity for attaining equality in employment, housing, or social institutions, the urge to move away from the crushing conditions under Jim Crow grew stronger. And the ever-present threat of violence and brutality for even the most minor of perceived "transgressions" was undoubtedly another major cause for the mass migration that continued for the next seven decades.

It was amidst this oppressive system that Ossian Sweet was born in 1895 in Bartow, Florida, forty miles east of Tampa. The eldest surviving child born to Henry and Dora Sweet—one of ten children in total—Ossian attended school in Bartow through the eighth grade, finishing in 1909. With no Black high school available in Bartow the Sweet family made the difficult decision to send young Ossian north to continue his education. It was a cross-country move echoed across families, neighborhoods, towns, and, indeed, the entire country. In what is now called the Great Migration, Black southerners moved north in large numbers beginning in the late 1910s. It was an internal migration that spanned nearly seven decades. Unbeknownst to Sweet he was a part of the massive, collective groundswell of northward relocation—fleeing oppression and seeking opportunity—by leaving Bartow in 1910 for Ohio, where he enrolled at Wilberforce Academy High School. Later, once finished with his preparatory studies at Wilberforce Academy he enrolled at Wilberforce University, the nation's first college owned by African Americans. After graduating from Wilberforce in 1917 with a Bachelor of Science degree, Sweet applied and was admitted to Howard University to study medicine.

Ossian Sweet was in his second year of medical school in 1919. That summer, in July, three days of mob violence in that city led to a number of deaths and hundreds of injuries. A White mob, enraged by a rumor that a White woman was attacked by a Black man, sought retribution. The mob was led by active-duty United States Navy servicemembers, veterans, and members of what was called the Home Defense League, and encouraged by the *Washington Post*,²⁷ which called for "every available service man" to help "clean up" the city in an unspecified manner, but that would "cause the events of the last two evenings to pale into insignificance." Similar, deadly riots occurred in cities across the country year from April to November. This terrible season of bloodshed was first called the "Red Summer" by civil rights activist and writer, James Weldon Johnson. In this wave of violence, Whites, often provoked to violence by unsubstantiated rumor, formed mobs to beat and execute their Black neighbors. The resulting violence, damage, and loss of life was staggering.

²⁷ Gillian Brockwell, "The deadly race riot 'aided and abetted' by The Washington Post a century ago," *Washington Post*, July 15, 2019. Accessed November 2, 2021, www.washingtonpost.com/history/2019/07/15/deadly-race-riot-aided-abetted-by-washington-post-century-ago/.

²⁸ Brockell, *Deadly Race Riot*.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

In his 2011 work, *Red Summer*, Cameron McWhirter observed:

Though no complete and accurate records on the months of violence were complied, analysis of newspaper accounts, government documents, court records, and NAACP files show, at least 25 major riots and mob actions erupted and at least 52 black people were lynched...In almost every case, white mobs—whether sailors on leave, immigrant slaughterhouse workers, or southern farmers—initiated the violence.²⁹

Existing racists sentiments were enflamed by economic and social conditions that some Whites perceived to be injurious. The mass and rapid movement of southern Blacks, a post-WWI economic slump, and continued European immigration resulted in significant competition for jobs and housing, which, in turn, fueled racist sentiment, fear, anger, and violence. At the same time, many African Americans were "imbued with pride in their race and a fierce determination to possess the rights pledged to all Americans," following the "abundant" contributions to the Allied victory in World War I. ³⁰ The demand for equal treatment, in some cases, led to an association with Bolshevism and labeling as radical, which likely only further served to cast Black citizens as the "other" in the eyes of many Whites.

In 1919 most of the violence occurred in southern towns and cities and it seems likely that these campaigns of terror and violence that swept the South hastened many a journey north for the African Americans who had only been reluctantly contemplated it before. While the violence was concentrated in the south, the north did not escape the terrorism. Chicago and Indianapolis both had violent encounters with the attacks in Chicago being the deadliest that summer with 38 fatalities.³¹ In Washington D.C. some of the fiercest clashes between mobbing Whites and Blacks defending themselves occurred just a few blocks south of Howard's campus.³²

Despite all of this, the Red Summer, with all of its terror and violence, was also a turning point that fueled and buttressed the burgeoning Black equality movement with the NAACP quickly solidifying its status as the nation's preeminent civil rights organization—during this time the NAACP grew its membership from 9,200 in 1918 to 51,000 in April of 1919.³³ At the helm of the NAACP were some of the most accomplished Black men in America: W.E.B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson, and Walter White. DuBois in particular had promoted the idea that the *talented tenth* should use their advanced education, social, and political standing to advocate for the race.

²⁹ Cameron McWhirter, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*, (New York, NY: Henry Holt & Co., 2011) 13.

³⁰ Stanley B. Norvell, and William M. Tuttle, Jr. "Views of a Negro During 'The Red Summer' of 1919." *Journal of Negro History* 51, no. 3 (1966): 209–18. https://doi.org/10.2307/2716062.

³¹ William Lee and E. Jason Wambsgans "Ready to Explode: How a Black teen's drifting raft triggered a deadly week of riots 100 years ago in Chicago," *Chicago Tribune*, July 21, 2019, https://www.chicagotribune.com/history/ct-1919-chicago-riots-100th-anniversary-20190719-k4dexppvd5c6bkqbfwhgxfiacy-story.html (last accessed September 11, 2020).

³² Kevin Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, (New York, NY: Henry Holt & Co., 2004), 96.

³³ McWhirter, Red Summer, 26, 28.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Perhaps as an outworking of the violence that occurred in 1919, Detroit and other northern cities saw a rise in activities by white supremacist hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). Throughout the 1920s concern about the KKK was expressed in the city's newspapers and this seems understandable given that, by one account, in the spring of 1923, KKK membership in Detroit topped twenty-two thousand.³⁴ In 1921 the Detroit Free Press ran a series of expose-like articles that delved into the inner workings of the KKK including information about their financial dealings, membership, and rituals.³⁵ Because the topic received such widespread coverage (the articles spanned several weeks in mid-September of 1921) it seems clear the rise of such a virulent and violent hate group was seen as deeply troubling to some in the community.

The KKK of the 1920s in Michigan wasn't the anonymous, night-riding terrorists associated with the post-Civil War era, but rather, was, "a sort of crude, quasi-respectable lodge organization that mixed patriotism, Protestant religiosity and defense of traditional morality with an ugly brew of ant-Catholic, anti-immigrant, racist rhetoric." From its base in Indiana, the Klan of the early 1920s spread into Ohio and Michigan before crumbling in the middle part of that same decade due to repeated public scandals. He to the early 1920s, the KKK permeated the highest levels of government in Detroit. There was a special election for mayor in 1924 and the KKK openly backed candidate Charles Bowles. Bowles and his Klan backers were not very adept at politics and failed to get his name on the ballot in time, so Bowles had to run as a write-in candidate. Bowles lost the race to Johhny Smith, a Catholic, but it was a fairly close contest."

For all the racism and hatred that permeated these early decades of the twentieth century there were a few instances of repudiation—by both Detroiters and those in the suburbs—of this hateful creed. On October 21, 1923 an anti-KKK rally was held in Detroit, but, in a city with such a large KKK membership it should come as no surprise that KKK members themselves showed up to the rally and rioted.³⁹ And, perhaps to counter the anti-KKK rally in October, just a month later, in November, between twenty-five and fifty thousand KKK members attended a rally in Dearborn.⁴⁰ On Christmas Eve of 1923 the KKK burned a cross on the steps of the city's courthouse in a ceremony that was attended by over two thousand.⁴¹ In 1925 there was another KKK rally in Lincoln Park which drew a crowd of five thousand.⁴²

³⁴ Douglas O. Linder, "Sweet Trials (1925 & 1926)," UMKC School of Law, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/sweet/chronology.HTM.

³⁵ "Former Ku Klux Klan Knight Braving Order's Death Threat Bares Its Money Making Aims," *Detroit Free Press*, September 18 1921; "Revival of Ku Kluxism Brings Terrorism and Lawlessness In Train" *Detroit Free Press*, September 28 1921.

³⁶ John S. Hausman, "New Book Looks at 'Mainstream' KKK in 1920's Newaygo County and Michigan, *MLive*, April 9, 2011, https://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/2011/04/new_book_looks_at_kkk_in_1920s.html ³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ The University of Minnesota Law Library, "Clarence Darrow: His Life, Legal Career, and Legacy," moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/photo.php?pid=955.

³⁹ Linder, "Sweet Trials," http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/sweet/chronology.HTM
⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ "Police Quell 2,000 in Klan Riot at County Building," Detroit Free Press, December 25, 1923

⁴² "Klan Holds Rally in Lincoln Park," Detroit Free Press, April 3, 1925, 1.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

There were a number of factors that spurred membership in the KKK in Michigan. The influx of African Americans from the south was certainly one reason but historian Michael Placco mentions that after WWI there was also a huge, organized labor movement which many Americans were deeply suspicious of, thinking these kinds of unions were rooted in communism. Communism was deeply suspect as "The 'red scare' ... was at its peak in 1920. The Bolsheviks in Russia had declared their intent to communize the world." Another factor in the growth of the KKK in Michigan was the huge influx of immigrants into the country during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Anti-immigrant sentiment was high during this period as most immigrants were of different religions (Catholic and Jewish) who brought with them strange languages, strange customs, different food, etc. With new immigrants from Eastern Europe, a strain of intolerance toward communism, and new Black migrants from the south, northern cities like Detroit were poised to bubble over into violent confrontations.

Ossian Sweet became Dr. Ossian Sweet upon his graduation from Howard University in 1921, and, with this accomplishment, he became a member of this DuBois's elite *talented tenth* of the race. The blessing and the burden he may have felt to both advocate for and advance the race could explain the actions he took in 1925. After graduating, he set his sights upon a city with what seemed to be nearly unlimited opportunity: Detroit. It may have been evident to Sweet, from his prior visits to the city, that there was a desperate need for Black physicians in Detroit. Just a few years earlier, in 1921, there were only twenty-seven Black physicians in the city, or one for every 1,500 Black Detroiters⁴⁵

When Ossian graduated in 1921 Detroit was just coming into its own as an economic powerhouse of the Midwest. With its burgeoning automotive industry, relatively well-paying jobs, and nearly unlimited land due to aggressive annexation of neighboring municipalities, Detroit experienced explosive growth during the first five decades of the twentieth century. In 1900 the total population of Detroit was 285,704 while the total African American population was counted at four thousand individuals.⁴⁶ It increased progressively into 1910 with a total African American population of 5,741 amongst a total population of 465,766. By 1920 the total population of Detroit had skyrocketed to 993,078.⁴⁷

With Detroit's manufacturing prowess beginning to show in the 1910s, and with a severe shortage of labor during WWI, the need for additional employees reached a fever pitch. Detroit specifically was aching for new labor sources to support the exploding war munitions industry especially since the flood of European immigrants all but stopped during the war years of 1914-

⁴³ Lee Devito, "Michigan's KKK Reached its Apex in the 1920's – Here's Why," *Detroit Metro Times*, https://www.metrotimes.com/the-scene/archives/2019/03/06/michigans-kkk-reached-its-apex-in-the-1920s-heres-why?mode=print.

⁴⁴ The Illinois Legislative Investigating Committee, *Ku Klux Klan: A Report to the Illinois General Assembly*, October 1976, 19.

⁴⁵ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 112.

⁴⁶ Sheldon Danzinger, Reynolds Farley, Harry Holzer, *Detroit Divided*, (Buffalo, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 21; Detroit Historical Society, "Industrial Detroit (1860-1900)," https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/industrial-detroit-1860-1900.

⁴⁷ Santa Fe Institute, "Population History of Detroit from 1840-1990," http://tuvalu.santafe.edu/~redner/projects/population/cities/detroit.html

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

1918. With international immigration at a standstill and with a surging demand for wartime factory workers, Black migrants from the south helped fill the severe labor shortage. In fact, in 1917, it was reported that a thousand southern migrants per month disembarked at Michigan's Central Station with the primary source states being Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee. By 1920 the number of African Americans in the city had dramatically increased to 40,838 and by 1930 it had almost tripled to 120,066. 49

While manufacturing jobs were plentiful during this era, companies varied wildly in their willingness to hire African Americans. Fisher Body would employ none while Ford Motor Company would send buses down to the Black Bottom neighborhood to recruit factory workers. Racism in the workplace was ubiquitous as Black workers were generally offered the most dangerous, dirty, and lowest paid jobs in the factory. Jobs available to Black workers seeking employment included the foundry, the paint department, and janitorial work, among others. These were unskilled positions that offered little to no opportunity for acquiring skills that would increase pay and job prospects thus ensuring that the Black men who obtained them would be stuck in positions with no advancement.

As further evidence that African Americans were shut out of most employment opportunities from an early date a survey in 1910 found that the total number of African Americans employed in the burgeoning auto industry factories numbered exactly twenty-five. ⁵² African American women fared even worse with another survey in 1910 finding no African American women employed as telephone operators in the city and "only one saleswoman, three clerks, and ten clerical workers." ⁵³

Detroit was not the easiest destination to get to from the South given that it required a change of trains at one of the "first destination" cities like Cleveland or Chicago, which were directly connected on the North-South railroad lines. Sociologist George Edmund Haynes found that because of this extra connection:

migrants often traveled first to Cincinnati on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad and then changed trains to arrive in Detroit via the Michigan Central Railroad. The transportation of migrants who were hired by labor agents was typically paid only to cities such as Pittsburgh, St. Louis, or Cincinnati, and therefore migrants had to pay their own fares to Detroit. 54

Because of this, Detroit became known as a "repository" city meaning it was often a second destination after a migrant had experienced disappointment in another northern city. The net

⁵⁴ Ibid, 51.

⁴⁸ Wolcott, Remaking Respectability, 51.

⁴⁹ https://famous-trials.com/sweet/127-races

⁵⁰ Danzinger, Farley, Holzer, *Detroit Divided*, 31.

⁵¹ Joyce Shaw Peterson, "Black Automobile Workers in Detroit, 1910-1930," The Journal of Negro History Vol 64, No 3 (Summer 1979): 179.

⁵² Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability*, 41.

⁵³ Ibid.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

result being the average Black migrant in Detroit had often specifically chosen it as his or her destination and paid out of their own pocket to get there.

The migrants were often stereotypically depicted as uneducated and unsophisticated rural dwellers when, in reality, most migrants to the north came not from the rural south but from southern towns and cities.⁵⁵ In comparing the increased population in cities both north and south, both of which grew during the period of study (1916-1918), Haynes concluded in 1918, "that the movement northward has been and is a part of a general movement to cities."⁵⁶ It was a movement out of the rural lands into the town and cities of the North, but Southerners also moved from the farmlands of the South to the towns and cities of the South as well. Overall, it was migration from rural areas into more populous towns and cities.

The mass exodus of the Great Migration spanned more than seventy years and reconfigured the demographic composition of the entire nation. At an individual level, the reasons behind the migration varied—some migrants moved for better schooling while others moved for employment and business opportunities—but, at its root, it might be best summed up as a desire for freedom, safety, and opportunity. In her lyrical masterwork on the Great Migration, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, author Isabel Wilkerson described this unprecedented internal migration of millions of African Americans thusly:

The actions...were both universal and distinctly American. Their migration was response to an economic and social structure not of their making. They did what humans have done for centuries when life became untenable—what the Pilgrims did under the tyranny of British rule, what the Scots-Irish did in Oklahoma when the land turned to dust, what the Irish did when there was nothing to eat, what the European Jews did during the spread of Nazism, what the landless in Russia, Italy, China and elsewhere did when something better across the ocean called to them...They did what human beings looking for freedom, throughout history, have often done. They left.⁵⁸

When Ossian Sweet arrived in Detroit in 1921, he set up his own medical practice in Black Bottom, an area of the city just east of the downtown core. Catering to the under-served residents of Black Bottom, Sweet quickly built a thriving medical practice. He met and married Gladys Mitchell in 1922, and the young couple initially lived with the Mitchell family on Cairmey Street just two miles north of the house that would come to define Sweet's life. The next year the Sweets went to France and Austria where Ossian continued his medical training. Their daughter Marguerite, called Iva, was born in 1924 in Paris. When the family returned to Detroit in mid-1924 they began searching for a home of their own.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 51.

⁵⁶ George Edmund Haynes, "Negroes Move North, The Survey," May 4, 1918, 115.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 116-118.

⁵⁸ Isabel Wilkerson, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, (New York, NY: Random House, 2010), 14-15.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Violence, Discrimination, and the Sweet Family Searches for a Home

Ossian and Gladys Sweet found the housing in the city that was available to Blacks inadequate, especially since they had a new baby to consider. Later, while on the stand explaining his desire to move into a better neighborhood, Sweet testified, "I had hoped to have a home for my baby—a place where she could attend school and her environments would be healthy and helpful. It was for her sake that my wife and I determined to sacrifice many things in life so that our little one would have the best advantages possible." To find a quality home with a healthy environment, the Sweets began looking outside the boundaries of the limited areas in which Blacks were forced to live.

With the huge influx of Black migrants from south arriving in Detroit every day, the tightly proscribed areas of the city in which Black residents were permitted to reside could not adequately house the arriving masses.

In the 1910s and the early 1920s Black Bottom and Paradise Valley were practically the only two areas of the city proper open to settlement for African Americans. Paradise Valley was a business district almost exclusively and the housing stock in Black Bottom was old and often deteriorated—the buildings had, for too long, housed more people than they were meant to accommodate. Predatory landlords had deferred maintenance on these dwellings, which were occupied by a completely disenfranchised African American population. During the Sweet's house hunt in 1925 their options would have been virtually non-existent outside of these areas unless they looked in White neighborhoods. It was not until the late1920s that Conant Gardens, with no racially restrictive deed restrictions, became a refuge for middle class African Americans. In the same era that Conant Gardens was developed, the area around Tireman Avenue and West Grand Boulevard also became a residential refuge for African Americans seeking better housing conditions. ⁶⁰ But the Sweets may not have considered these areas, both because they were in the very nascent stages of development and because they were well outside the downtown core where Dr. Sweet's medical practice was located. This confinement of African Americans into the Black Bottom and Paradise Valley neighborhoods was not by choice, but rather these were the only locations available as African Americans had been systematically excluded from every corner of the city by unvarnished racism, and, after the *People v. Ossian* Sweet trial, increasingly, by laws, policies, and, most notably, restrictive covenants.

During World War I the housing shortage became so acute that garages, sheds, and barns were converted into makeshift dwellings which were, predictably, both uncomfortable and unsanitary. A 1919 survey estimated the crippling housing shortage at thirty-three thousand units with more than 165,000 people living in substandard accommodations. By 1923 it was

⁵⁹"Dr. Sweet wanted home for his baby," *Chicago Defender*, December 5, 1925, 3.

⁶⁰ Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996) 36.

⁶¹ Danzinger, Farley, Holzer, *Detroit Divided*, 25.

⁶² Joyce Shaw Peterson, "Black Automobile Workers in Detroit," 182.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

estimated that, nationwide, housing shortage came in at one million units.⁶³ The housing crisis was so severe that a report from the era indicated that some saloons and pool halls in Detroit had started charging patrons a nightly fee to sleep on the pool tables.⁶⁴

The National Urban League was founded in 1910 while the Detroit branch of the Urban League was founded in Detroit in 1916 to provide services to the city's African American population. Detroit Urban League employees met disembarking Blacks at the train station and directed them to an Urban League office to be immediately set up for employment. Finding housing for the newly arrived southern migrants was difficult. And even when a newly arrived Black family could find lodging it was substandard, more expensive, and confined to the specific, overcrowded areas of the city already mentioned. John Dancy, a leader in the Detroit Urban League, commented: "There was much doubling up of families, in houses that, in many instances, were unfit for human habitation. Conditions grew worse. Rents were high. The average rent for white families was \$30 a month; for Negro families, it was closer to \$50, and the Negro got worse housing for his money."

No doubt the experience of Detroit's African American population during this time was fraught with fear, the ever-present threat of violence, and incessant, unyielding racism. Finding housing was no easier than finding a job. African American families who sought better living quarters faced intimidation, threats, and violence if they tried to move into White neighborhoods. In 1917, when a White landlord began renting his apartment complex—located at 202 Harper Avenue—to Blacks, neighbors harassed the new residents by throwing their belongings out onto the lawn.⁶⁷ The police stood idly by and did nothing when the Black residents pleaded for help.⁶⁸

As the Sweet's search widened, they began to look for houses in neighborhoods outside of the boundaries of African American residential settlement. They found the house at 2905 Garland in May 1925 and purchased it a month later on June 14, 1925, for \$18,000. The house had been owned by a bi-racial couple, the Smiths, and Dr. Sweet had hoped this might mitigate the resistance that might otherwise accompany his purchase. But the light skinned Mr. Smith passed for White and the neighbors on Garland Street likely did not know he was African American. Dr. Sweet bought the house with a \$3,000 down payment. He then made \$150 payments on the house throughout the summer, as the Smiths prepared to move out.

⁶³ Manisha Claire, "The Latent Racism in the Better Homes in American Program," JSTOR Daily, February 26 2020, https://daily.jstor.org/the-latent-racism-of-the-better-homes-in-america-program/.

⁶⁴ Joyce Shaw Peterson, "Black Automobile Workers in Detroit," 182.

⁶⁵ Danzinger, Farley, Holzer, *Detroit Divided*, 31.

⁶⁶ Herb Boyd, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination*, (New York, NY: Amistad, an Imprint of HarperCollins, 2017), quoting Dancy, 96-97.

Oorceta E. Taylor, Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility,
 (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014), 212.
 Ibid

⁶⁹ Victoria W. Wolcott, "Defending the Home: Ossian Sweet and the Struggle Against Segregation in the 1920s Detroit," *Organization of American Historians (OAH) Magazine of History*, 7, No. 4 (Summer, 1993).

⁷⁰ Wolcott, *Remaking Respectability*, 140.

⁷¹ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 146.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

The summer of 1925 the city was a hotbed of racial violence. That summer there were several violent racial encounters—White mobs intent on threatening and intimidating Black residents—when affluent Blacks attempted to integrate White neighborhoods. One example occurred when Alexander Turner tried to move into his new home on Spokane Avenue on the city's westside.

After moving in a violent mob of White people drove him out, put his furniture on the front lawn, and forced him sell the house. Ye Sweet, well acquainted with Turner, also a physician, from their tenure together at Dunbar Hospital, likely knew about what had happened to his respected colleague. Likewise, Vollington Bristol attempted to move into his home at 7804 American Avenue and was forced out by an angry White mob that took over two hundred police officers to subdue. On July 10, 1925, John Fletcher tried moving his family into their new home at 9428 Stoepel Avenue on the city's westside but was met with a massive mob, estimated at four thousand by the *Detroit Free Press*. After enduring a half an hour of rocks, bricks, and other projectiles hurled at the house, Fletcher fired his gun. A boy was hit by a bullet and Fletcher and the other occupants were immediately arrested, though, the charges were later dropped.

This repetitious pattern of white supremacist intimidation and violence was not a Detroit or a Michigan phenomenon but, rather, was occurring all over the United States in the late 1910s and 1920s. Richard Rothstein noted that, between 1917 and 1921 in Chicago there were "fifty eight firebombings of homes in White border areas to which African Americans had moved, with no arrests or prosecutions—despite the deaths of two African American residents." In 1919 the Baltimore Sun ran a gleeful article detailing White residents of Baltimore "banding together" to prevent a "negro invasion" on the 900 and 1000 block of North Stricker Street on the city's northwest side—when a Black man moved into the house at 929 North Stricker Street the White residents "raided the premises, smashed windows and doors and painted the steps a brilliant green."⁷⁶ In 1923 in Oakland, California, after a Black man named Burt Powell bought a house on Manila Avenue which was exclusively White his house required around-the-clock protection for months after purchase due to physical threats from White residents.⁷⁷ Heaped on top of the intimidation, threats, and outright violence, a new tool of oppression was being tested out in nearby Oakland County. In 1922 in Pontiac, Michigan, the African American Morris family attempted to buy a lot in the newly developed Ferry Farm Addition subdivision, but a neighbor sued to enforce a restrictive covenant in the deed which stated that no "lot shall not be occupied by a colored person." When it went to trial, the judge found in Parmalee v. Morris that the restrictive covenant was a private contract matter involving action by private individuals and not the State and, therefore, the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment did not apply.⁷⁸

^{72 &}quot;Other Race Troubles Figure in Sweet Trial," *Detroit Free Press*, November 18 1925, 7.

⁷³ The Business of Black Death in Detroit, "Vollington A. Bristol," https://tbobdid.wordpress.com/the-need-for-black-undertakers/undertakers-in-detroit/bristol/

⁷⁴ "Negroes Shoot White Youth in New Home Row," *Detroit Free Press*, July 11, 1925, 1.

⁷⁵ Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law*, (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018), 144.

⁷⁶ "To Prevent Negro Invasion," *Baltimore Sun*, February 24, 1919.

⁷⁷ Haas Institute, "Roots, Race, & Place: A History of Racially Exclusionary Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area," 2019.

⁷⁸ *Parmalee v. Morris*, 218 Mich. 625, Mich. Supreme Court (1922), https://www.ravellaw.com/opinions/765f798c9713b98fc590c581dda0fbfe

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Later, after outright violence was largely replaced in favor of subtle and insidious (and codified) mechanisms for maintaining segregation, the restrictive covenant became the primary tool used to keep Black residents out of White neighborhoods. Restrictive covenants began popping up nationwide in the 1910s. In Minneapolis "the first racially restrictive deed appeared in 1910, when Henry and Leonora Scott sold a property on 35th Avenue South to Nels Anderson. The deed conveyed in that transaction contained what would become a common restriction, stipulating that the "premises shall not at any time be conveyed, mortgaged or leased to any person or persons of Chinese, Japanese, Moorish, Turkish, Negro, Mongolian or African blood or descent."" These types of restrictive covenants were found in deeds of houses throughout the country in the ensuing decades. These covenants were overwhelming successful, as the *Parmalee v. Morris* case foreshadowed. Courts continually upheld the right to privately discriminate via restrictive covenants.

Informal agreements amongst neighbors and communities were also used to keep Blacks out of White neighborhoods. In 1912 the Bloomingdale neighborhood in northwest Washington, D.C., had mutually agreed not to sell their property to Black buyers. 80 Although more informal than covenants written into deeds, these agreements were nonetheless another tool utilized to keep areas segregated.

As White mob violence continued in the summer of 1925, Detroit Mayor John Smith pleaded with the rioters, "do not grow into a condition which will be a lasting stain on the reputation of Detroit as a law-abiding community."⁸¹ But his words fell on deaf ears as the summer drew to a close: word on Garland Street had gotten out. A Black family was poised to move into the bungalow at 2905 Garland and the residents of this working-class enclave were incensed.

As the summer wore on, Sweet continued paying for the house he had not yet moved into. While he bided his time, his future neighbors began organizing. Named after Waterworks Park, which was found at the foot of Garland Street's intersection with Jefferson, the Waterworks Improvement Association (WIA) was hastily formed in July by approximately seven hundred neighborhood residents living in the vicinity of Garland Street. These "improvement associations" were not new in the city nor did they intend to "improve" anything. Modeled after the Tireman Avenue Improvement Association, which had been backed by the KKK and set up to intimidate the aforementioned Dr. Turner, the WIA was set up with the express purpose of organizing neighbors to oppose integration. On July 12, 1925, a paid advertisement was published in the *Detroit Free Press* that declared:

⁷⁹ https://www.mappingprejudice.org/what-are-covenants/

⁸⁰ Sarah Shoenfeld, Mara Cherkaskey, "The Rise and Demise of Racially Restrictive Covenants in Bloomingdale, D.C. Policy Center, April 3, 2019, https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/racially-restrictive-covenants-bloomingdale/

^{81 &}quot;Stop Rioting Smith Pleads with Citizens," Detroit Free Press, July 12, 1925, 1.

⁸² Taylor, *Toxic Communities*, 213.

⁸³ People v. Ossian Sweet, Gladys Sweet, et al., November 10, 1925, The Clarence Darrow Digital Collection, University of Minnesota Law School, 795. http://moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/trials.php?tid=6, Accessed August 4, 2020 (Testimony of Harry Monet).

Wayne County, MI
County and State

To maintain the high standard of the residential district between Jefferson and Mack Avenues, a meeting has been called by the Waterworks Improvement Association for Thursday night in the Howe School Auditorium. Men and women of the district, which includes Cadillac, Hurlburt, Garland, St. Clair, and Harding Avenues, are asked to attend in self-defense."

Hinting at violence—cajoling neighbors to attend in "self-defense"—was a thinly veiled call to action to oppose integration by the incoming Sweet family. Later, at the trial, local residents admitted that the sole purpose of the Waterworks Improvement Association was to keep "coloreds" out of the neighborhood.⁸⁴

Finally, as summer ended and Labor Day passed, the Sweets decided it was time to move his family into their house.

September 8 and 9, 1925

After three months of delaying their move due to the heightened racial aggravations, the Sweet family arrived at their new home on Garland Street the morning of September 8. The Sweets were accompanied by five others as they moved in that first day: Ossian Sweet's driver Joe Mack, a hired mover named Morris Murray, Henry Sweet, Otis Sweet, and two family friends, William E. Davis, and John Latting. The people Dr. Sweet had assembled to help him move into the house on Garland was not by coincidence. Ossian Sweet was well aware of the racial aggravations happening in Detroit that summer and of the conflict that could potentially ensue once his new White neighbors saw a Black family moving into their street. Sweet asked family and friends to join them moving in as a method of protection. Further, "a friend asked the police department to provide the Sweets with protection during their first few days in the neighborhood. 785 The collective mood was one of good spirits and the day went smoothly, moving the family's few belongings into the house. Among the Sweet's possessions was a shotgun, two rifles, six pistols, and four hundred rounds of ammunition. 86 When the police inspector arrived to report to Ossian that four officers had been stationed out of sight near the house for protection, Ossian made no mention of the ammunition he had stored in the linen closet upstairs. Later in the day two friends of Gladys', Edna Butler and Serena Rochelle, arrived at the home to assist Gladys in selecting furniture for their new space.

While inside the house the typical happenings of settling into a new home were occurring, outside on Garland Street and Charlevoix Avenue a large crowd was gathering to catch a sight of their new, different neighbors. As accounted in Marcet Haldeman-Julius' *Clarence Darrow's Two Great Trials*, "midnight came, and there were still from five to eight hundred people there. From time to time, groups of them (the Sweets heard later) gathered in little knots in the confectionary store on Charlevoix, next to the corner grocery. It was about three o'clock in the

85 Boyle, Arc of Justice, 26.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 27.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

morning before the ghoulish crowd dispersed."⁸⁷ Edna Butler and Serena Rochelle stayed the night at the Sweet's new residence, deeming it safter to stay than face the mob of people gathered outside the house that evening of September 8.⁸⁸ But by morning, the street was entirely emptied and the Sweet family resumed their normal moving activities with Butler and Rochelle as well as Davis and Otis Sweet leaving the house for work.

The day continued without anything out of the ordinary and in the afternoon three men from the Liberty Life insurance office (Leonard Morse, Charles Washington, and Hewett Watson) arrived to discuss Dr. Sweet's newly acquired Life Insurance policy. Dr. Sweet invited the men to stay for Gladys' dinner, thus sealing their fate and involvement in the events that transpired the night of September 9. Preoccupied by the inaugural dinner in the Sweet's new home, nobody noticed the crowd which had gathered outside of the Sweet's home. The crowd quickly escalated into an angry and violent mob – throwing rocks, stones, and bricks. As the mob raged on, Davis and Otis Sweet returned from work to find the violence ensuing on Garland Street. ⁸⁹ Both men entered the house, which brought the total number of people in the Sweet residence to eleven.

Aware of the mob raging outside their doors, the eleven people in the house pulled down the blinds, and waited for the mob to die down. But then the mob escalated to a riot as shots were heard outside by the people within. At the sound of shots fired from outside, someone fired from within the house in response. These shots came from the upstairs bedroom window, although trial transcripts indicate there was evidence that the members of the house had dispersed with their weapons to the various windows in the house to guard all sides of the property. While the occupants were unaware of the consequences of these shots at the time, later it was learned that one man was killed, and another injured because of these shots. The *Detroit Free Press* reported on this the very next day stating that, "Leon Briener...who was walking on the east side of Garland, across the street from the house, was killed instantly, a bullet entering his head. Erik Holberg...ran out of his home when he heard the shooting and was just in time to receive one of the last bullets fired. He was taken to Receiving Hospital, shot in the leg." "91"

Accounts of the events of September 9 vary widely and, in character with the predominant beliefs of the time, many news reports paint the picture of the shots fired from the Sweet's new home as being entirely unprovoked. On September 10, the *Detroit Free Press* reported that:

Shots poured without warning and seemingly without provocation last night at 5:30 o'clock from the second-story windows of 2905 Garland Avenue, into which Dr. and Mrs. Ossian H. Sweet, a Negro couple, had moved Tuesday, cost one man's life, put another in the hospital with a bullet in his leg, and called out 200

⁸⁷ Marcet Haldeman-Julius, Clarence Darrow's Two Great Trials: Reports of the Scopes Anti-Evolution Case and the Dr. Sweet Negro Trial, (Girard, KS: Haldeman-Julius Company, 1927), 32-33.

⁸⁸ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 287.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ People v. Ossian Sweet, Gladys Sweet, et al., November 5, 1925, (Testimony of Robert M. Toms, Prosecuting Attorney).

⁹¹ "1 Slain, 1 Shot when Negroes Fire at Crowd", *Detroit Free Press*, Sept 10, 1925.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

heavily armed police reserves, detectives, and regular policemen from every precinct, as well as an armored car. 92

Portraying the violent mob as similarly docile, the *Evening Star* reported that "According to witnesses, the crowd made no attempt to injure the property, but the negroes, seeing the gathering, opened fire." Predominant Black newspapers and most contemporary accounts by and large attest that the mob was violent in nature and insults, stones, and potentially shots were being hurled at the Sweet's new house and it is not difficult to imagine how those seeking shelter within the house were provoked to fire shots. For example, the *Chicago Defender*, a pre-eminent African American newspaper, ascertained that the mob had grown into thousands and Dr.

Sweet's property was being destroyed by stones which were being hurled from amidst the mob. Following the exchanged shots, police entered the house and, finding firearms, swiftly arrested the eleven occupants of the house and carried them off to police headquarters. News of the shooting quickly spread, and the mass of people congregate outside of the Sweet's house only swelled following the shooting. The events of the night drew people from all corners of the city until a throng of over five thousand people were congregated in the streets. As Sweet and company were escorted to the Detroit police headquarters, more than two hundred police officers were sent to Garland to dispel the mob which was still thrumming outside of the house on Garland. By midnight, the mob had mostly dissipated, and the Sweet's house was left – vacant and still only partially furnished – as the Sweet's and the nine others sat anxiously waiting at the Detroit police headquarters.

The NAACP, Clarence Darrow, and the People v. Ossian Sweet

The eleven occupants of the house were quickly arrested and charged with murder. They were jailed without bond—although Gladys was later released—and Dr. Sweet and Henry Sweet remained jailed through the entirety of the trial. They were denied the right to call an attorney as the police separated them and questioned each defendant individually. Eventually, Ossian was able to call local attorney Julian Perry. One of the other defendants, Hewitt Watson, called another local attorney Charles Mahoney. Julian Perry, Charles Mahoney, and another local attorney, Cecil Rowlette all agreed to join together to defend the group. With no charges yet filed and, rebuffed at the police station and unable to see their clients, the defense team of Perry, Mahoney, and Rowlette filed a writ of habeas corpus which would require the court to release the defendants or file charges. The local Black attorneys and other Black Detroiters immediately got in contact with the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The local NAACP branch office had agreed to finance the cost of the defense. ⁹⁹

93 "Resisting Ouster Negroes Kill Man", Evening Star, Sept 10, 1925.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹⁴ "White Rioter is Killed in Attempt to Stone Home of Physician", *Chicago Defender*, Sept 18, 1925.

^{95 &}quot;Seven Testify in Riot Death", Detroit Free Press, Sept 18, 1925.

⁹⁶ "White Rioter is Killed in Attempt to Stone Home of Physician", *Chicago Defender*, Sept 18, 1925.

⁹⁷ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 182.

⁹⁸ Haldeman-Julius, Clarence Darrow's Two Great Trials, 41.

⁹⁹ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 194.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Unbeknownst to the defendants, the Detroit local NAACP branch was already in contact with the national branch of the NAACP, working together on the case to recruit the most high-profile defense attorney in the country, Clarence Darrow. Darrow had successfully defended John T. Scopes in the so-called Scopes Monkey Trial (formally, *The State of Tennessee v. John Thomas Scopes*) and he readily agreed to take the Sweet case, about which he later wrote, "I realized that defending negroes, even in the North, was no boy's job, although boys usually were given that responsibility."¹⁰⁰ In his autobiography Darrow intimated that he took the case because he was at a point in his career where he could cases that interested him with causes he believed in. ¹⁰¹ Darrow, along with Perry, Mahoney, Rowlette and another attorney Arthur Garfield Hayes would constitute the primary defense team.

The NAACP was founded in 1909 with a national office established in New York City in 1910. National leaders in New York quickly determined that the widespread discrimination faced by African Americans across the country necessitated more than just one chapter.

Accordingly, Detroit received its charter in 1912 and was initiated by some of Detroit's most distinguished Black men including Father Richard Bagnall, Reverend Robert L. Bradby, Sr., Benjamin Willoughby Lambert, and William Osby. 103 The NAACP was active in challenging unjust laws nearly from its inception and "[a] series of early court battles, including a victory against a discriminatory Oklahoma law that regulated voting by means of a grandfather clause (*Guinn v. States*, 1910) helped establish the NAACP's importance as a legal advocate." 104 The NAACP chapter in Baltimore led a challenge against that city's race-based zoning laws in 1913 and, later, the national NAACP launched a legal defense fund in order to fight other zoning laws. 105 In 1917 the NAACP established the Anti-Lynching and Anti-Mob Violence Fund in response to violence in East St. Louis, Illinois, which killed more than one hundred African Americans. 106 In 1925, when Ossian Sweet was jailed in Detroit, the NAACP began a fundraising campaign to raise the money for his defense. The failure of Wayne County Prosecutor Robert M. Toms to convict Sweet was a victory for not just Sweet himself but it was crucial to the formal founding of the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund fifteen years later in 1940 and provided both the financial and strategic underpinnings for that department.

The importance of the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund (LDF) to the history of the civil rights movement cannot be overstated. Headed by Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund pursued and won some of the most important civil rights cases in modern history, fought throughout the middle decades of the twentieth century, including one of the most important legal cases ever decided in this country, *Brown v. Board of Education*. Under the stewardship of

¹⁰⁰ Clarence Darrow, *The Story of My Life*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1932), Chapter 34.

¹⁰¹ Clarence Darrow, *The Story of My Life*, (New York, NY: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1932), 301.

¹⁰² "Our History," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, naacp.org/about/ourhistory, (accessed October 13, 2020).

^{103 &}quot;Branch History," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,

https://www.detroitnaacp.org/branch-history (accessed October 13, 2020).

¹⁰⁴ "Our History," NAACP, (accessed October 13, 2020).

¹⁰⁵ Meyer, As Long as They Don't Move Next Door, 22.

¹⁰⁶ "N.A.A.C.P. Aids East St. Louis Refugees," *The Kansas City Sun*, August 11, 1917.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

the LDF, landmark civil rights cases such as *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), *Cooper v. Aaron* (1958), *Green v. County School Board* (1968), *Swann v. Charlotte-Meckenburg* (1971), and *Griggs v. Duke Power Company* (1971) comprise some of the most important legal cases ever decided by the Supreme Court of the United States. Thus, the *People v. Ossian Sweet* was the opening salvo in a legal battle that culminated in the near-total destruction of the Jim Crow system by the attorneys of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund.

That two Detroit cases, the *People v. Ossian Sweet* and *Shelley v. Kraemer—Shelley v. Kraemer* included a consolidated case from Detroit, *Sipes v. McGhee*—are so intimately linked via the involvement of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund illustrates the national significance of the two sites in question. Dr. Sweet's home at 2905 Garland and the house at issue in *Shelley v. Kraemer*, (located at 4626 Seebaldt) are symbolic, tangible icons of two important civil rights cases. *Shelley v. Kraemer* and *Brown v. Board of Education* stand on the shoulders of *People v. Ossian Sweet* with *Brown v. Board* described by legal scholar Louis H. Pollak as "the most important American governmental act of any kind since the Emancipation Proclamation." Without *People v. Ossian Sweet* the road to *Shelley v. Kraemer* and *Brown v. Board of Education* would have been more arduous.

Ossian Sweet's trial opened on October 30, 1925, in the Recorder's Court with Judge Frank Murphy presiding. Clarence Darrow was assisted by Arthur Garfield Hays and by local attorney Walter Nelson as they conducted *voir dire* with a large audience observing from the gallery. Darrow sought to build a jury of minorities, insofar as he could, by dismissing Protestants and seeking out those who had some notion and understanding of discrimination: Catholics and agnostics were his preferred jurors. "The prosecution excused the lone black called; Darrow excused the only potential juror admitting to Klan membership." 109

While jury selection was ongoing the Detroit mayoral election was in its final throes before citizens went to the ballot box. The election again pitted the Klan against the ardent progressives in the city. The election took place on November 3, 1925, and it pitted the Klan-backed Charles Bowles against Johnny Smith—Smith won the election 140,000 to 110,000. Jury selection for Dr. Sweet's trial ended the next day.

Although the Klan-backed candidate lost, Dr. Sweet was still up against formidable prejudice as the prosecution began to lay out its case. In its opening, the prosecution attempted to claim that

¹⁰⁷ Roy L. Brooks, *The Racial Glass Ceiling: Subordination in American Law and Culture* (Yale, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), 30; "Landmark United States Supreme Court Cases," *American Bar Association*, accessed 1/7/22, https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/programs/constitution_day/landmark-cases/; "Supreme Court Landmarks," United States Courts, accessed 1/7/22, https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/supreme-court-landmarks; "7 Famous Supreme Court Cases That Changed The U.S.," *National Law Review*, accessed 1/7/22, https://www.natlawreview.com/article/7-famous-supreme-court-cases-changed-us.

¹⁰⁸ Doug Linder, "Melting Hearts of Stone: Clarence Darrow and the Sweet Trials," Famous Trials, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/trialheroes/Darrowmelting.html (accessed October 13, 2020). ¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ "The Clarence Darrow Digital Collection," University of Minnesota Law Library, http://moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/photo.php?pid=955 (accessed October 13, 2020).

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

Sweet and his companions acted without provocation and with malice aforethought, determined to shoot at the slightest provocation. As the trial got underway the prosecution presented witness after witness who testified that there was no mob outside the Sweet's house and the shooting had been, therefore, unprovoked. And the witnesses the prosecution called were curated especially for this task as Prosecutor Toms "had worked hand in hand with the officers of the Waterworks Park Improvement Association who knew far better than he did which of the people who lived along Garland's row of houses could be trusted to say just the right thing." Toms' major goal was to impress upon the jury that Dr. Sweet and his friends had acted without any justification. But, when Darrow and Hays had their chance to rebut the State's case they were able to poke holes in the testimony of the police officers and the neighbors: they were lying and, while the exact size of the mob will forever be unknown, it was not "a few people" as many prosecution witnesses testified but rather it was a large mob. A mob intent upon intimidating the Sweets as they pelted the house with rocks, bricks, and other items.

The Detroit Free Press carried a front-page headline on November 7, 1925, "Toms Battles with Darrow" as it detailed Darrow's lively defense of Dr. Sweet and the other occupants of the house. Perhaps one of Darrow's most important contributions to the trial was the fact that he introduced evidence as to Dr. Sweet's state of mind. He did this by calling witnesses who recounted the violence that Dr. Turner and another man, John W. Fletcher, experienced when they tried to move into all White neighborhoods. 113

Darrow and his supporting attorneys relied on an 1860 case from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, *Pond v. The People of Michigan*, where the Supreme Court of Michigan "ruled that a man threatened by mob assault had the right to defend his life and property, even if his perception of the mob's intentions proved to incorrect." Even with this convincing precedent the defense of Sweet was no easy task. The testimony of Ossian Sweet does not survive—newspaper accounts and a book by Marcet Haldeman-Julius are the primary sources for it—but based upon these accounts it is clear Sweet provided compelling testimony. When questioned as to his reaction when he saw the mob Sweet replied:

When I opened that door to let them in, I realized that for the first time in my life I stood face to face with that same mob that has haunted my people throughout its entire history. I knew that my back was against the wall, that I was black, and that because I was black and had found the courage to buy a home, they were ready to wreak their revenge upon me.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ "Witnesses Called in Trial, Darrow Defense Gets Under Way in Detroit Case," *St. Paul Echo*, November 14, 1925.

¹¹² Boyle, *Arc of Justice*, 267-268.

¹¹³ "Other Race Troubles Figure in Sweet Trial," *Detroit Free Press*, November 18, 1925.

¹¹⁴ Boyle, *Arc of Justice*, 255; Paul Moreno, "The Pond and Maher Cases: Crime and Democracy on the Frontier," *Michigan Bar Journal*, December 2008,

https://www.michbar.org/file/barjournal/article/documents/pdf4article1453.pdf

¹¹⁵ Haldeman-Julius, Clarence Darrow's Two Great Trials, 41.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

When Darrow stood to deliver his last plea for justice, he began what would later become known as one of the most powerful closing arguments in all of criminal law jurisprudence. Darrow spoke at length invoking both the humanity of his clients and the harsh inequality they faced at every turn, "I know that if these defendants had been a White group defending themselves from a colored mob, they never would have been arrested or tried. My clients are charged with murder, but they are really charged with being black." 116

The trial then concluded, and the jury was sequestered into the jury room. After deliberating for nearly forty-eight hours the jury foreman admitted they could not agree. After Judge Murphy questioned the jurors about their inability to agree, he reluctantly declared a mistrial. The trial is now viewed as a legal landmark case that established, via the mistrial that was declared when the jury failed to reach a verdict, that Sweet's actions in the face of imminent danger were reasonable and not subject to criminal punishment.

The prosecution was not quite done. Rather than try all defendants together, Darrow had insisted, at the conclusion of Sweet's trial in November of 1925, that any future trials be separated and thus Toms next elected to charge the only man who had admitted to firing a gun: Henry Sweet. In April 1926, Henry's trial began again with Darrow at the defense table. This trial, like the first, was closely watched by both African American and mainstream news outlets:

Colored and white people all over the country will watch closely the new trials. The fair treatment of the case by the press, especially by the white newspapers of Detroit, has changed sentiment somewhat towards the defendants, but the opposition of the Klan has been increased because of the magnificent defense made in the first trial, which, it will be remembered, resulted in a jury disagreement.¹¹⁷

Another fiercely fought legal battle was waged but, when Henry was acquitted in May 1926, all charges against Dr. Sweet and the other occupants of the house were abandoned as a conviction was deemed all but impossible. On May 22, 1926, the *Chicago Defender* proclaimed, "Clarence Darrow's sledgehammer defense has smashed once for all the notion that members of the Race have not the right to fight in self-defense." Later, in surveying his illustrious career, Darrow would proclaim, "The defense of this case gave me about as much gratification as any that I have undertaken." 119

¹¹⁶ Douglas O. Linder, "Famous Trials - The Sweet Trials: An Account," Famous Trials, https://www.famoustrials.com/sweet (accessed October 13, 2020).

¹¹⁷ "Dr. Sweet's Trial Resumes April 1", St. Paul Echo, March 27, 1926.

¹¹⁸ "Draft Plan to Free Dr. Sweet," *Chicago Defender*, May 22, 1926.

¹¹⁹ Clarence Darrow, *The Story of My Life*, Chapter 34.

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Housing Discrimination Beyond the 1920s

One of the unexplored areas of academic scholarship regarding the Sweet trial is on the implications the trial had on the landscape of housing discrimination in the ensuing years. While restrictive covenants existed prior to the Sweet trial, perhaps the national attention that the trail drew encouraged an increase in restrictive covenants. Restrictive covenants were a tool contemplated on Garland Street as, upon hearing that the Sweet family would be moving into their new home, the members of the nascent Waterworks Improvement Association allegedly went door to door asking homeowners to add racially restrictive language into their deeds. 120 Restrictive covenants were not the only codified method of housing discrimination employed in the twentieth century. Because restrictive covenants relied on whole neighborhoods acting in concert to restrict access to African Americans it could result in patchy application: Some White sellers may have been sympathetic to families like the Sweets and sold to them despite the restrictive covenant while other White sellers realized they could sell their house at a premium to African American families who had few other options. This spotty system was soon replaced with a set of laws that codified racism into the regulatory and financial systems that denied Blacks access to mortgage loans. One such codification was the creation of "residential security maps" by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC). In 1933 HOLC was established to originate and refinance mortgage loans to prevent foreclosures. The HOLC created these residential security maps to indicate levels of risk for real estate investment. These maps, of course, became known as redlining maps due to the practice of shading undesirable areas (read: areas with higher levels of non-White populations) in red and were, thus, deemed too risky for mortgages. Within the space of just two years the HOLC closed the door on middle class neighborhoods like that which surrounded 2905 Garland Street.

The legacy of these segregationist policies still haunts the metro Detroit area today as many of the first suburbs settled by White former-city dwellers are still largely White today. In fact, today, Detroit remains one of the most segregated cities in the United States. While Detroit is a predominately African American with approximately 78.6 percent of the city identifying as such, most of the affluent suburbs that ring the city are predominantly White. 121

Maurice H. Finkel, Architect

The house at 2905 Garland may have been designed by Jewish Detroit architect Maurice H. Finkel. Finkel emigrated to the United States from Russia and started his architecture practice in Detroit in 1915. He designed a number of ordinary buildings in Detroit, but he may be "best known for his theater work including the Michigan Theater in Ann Arbor (1928), the Michigan Theater of Jackson (1930), and the now demolished People's Theater (1927)." Despite these more glamourous commission, most of Finkel's work in Detroit consists of run-of-the-mill

¹²⁰Boyle, Arc of Justice, 323.

¹²¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "QuickFacts: Detroit City, Michigan,"

https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/detroitcitymichigan,MI/PST045219

Ruth E. Mills, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Apartment Buildings in Detroit 1892-1970, 2017.
 Ibid.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation) Name of Property

Wayne County, MI County and State

buildings. Issues of the American Contractor were filled with notes about his projects including flats, apartment buildings, factory additions, retail buildings, and homes.

The 1985 National Register nomination for the Ossian H. Sweet House indicated that the house was designed by Detroit architect Maurice Finkel but a citation for this information was not given. Despite efforts to substantiate Finkel's association with the house, no corroborating information was found. The assessor's card for the house, now on file at the State Archives of Michigan notes that house was built in 1916 but an architect and builder are not listed. The Burton Historical Collection at the Detroit Public Library contains City of Detroit building department records but, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and a flood at the Burton archives, these records have been inaccessible. Maurice Finkel's grandson was not able to substantiate whether his grandfather designed the house and a scrapbook of Finkel's work, now in the hands of a man in Ann Arbor, Michigan, did not feature the house. Presumably a vernacular bungalow would not be included in one's dossier of standout work so its lack of inclusion in the scrapbook is not dispositive. Because there is no exhaustive archival holding for Finkel's records and drawings. the sources needed to establish the designer of the Ossian H. Sweet House may be lost. Finkel designed a large number of buildings in Detroit, including many multi-family apartment buildings. Many of Finkel's works have been demolished or destroyed over time. Among his known extant works are: 30 East Philadelphia, Detroit, (1922); 2200 Blaine Street, Detroit (1922); Westwill Apartments, Detroit, 630-642 West Willis (1925), the Michigan Theater, Ann Arbor (1928).¹²⁴

Conclusion

After the trials concluded, Ossian Sweet was dealt a devastating blow: Gladys and baby Iva were diagnosed with tuberculosis. Family and friends would later allege she had contracted it while housed in the Wayne County Jail awaiting trial. Gladys and Iva moved to Arizona to take advantage of the hot, dry air which was supposed to be palliative for tuberculosis patients. It did not work. Iva died in August 1926 and Gladys herself died two years later in 1928. 125 In later years, Sweet married and divorced several times and he ran repeatedly for elected office but failed to win those campaigns. 126 Ossian Sweet remained in the house at 2905 Garland until 1958 when he sold it to the Baxter family, who still own it at the time this nomination was prepared. On March 20, 1960, Ossian H. Sweet took his own life in his apartment above this pharmacy shop.

The events of September 9, 1925, were significant for the reasons outlined above, but while a Black man got a modicum of justice at trial, the *People v. Ossian Sweet* did not result in a movement that changed hearts and prompted acceptance in the wider neighborhood. Quite the opposite in fact: White residents continued to oppose incoming Black neighbors, because, when race-based restrictive covenants, segregation, block busting, redlining, and plain old fashioned violent intimidation were outlawed (or tabooed in the latter case) they continued to express their racist views by moving to homes in the suburbs with purchase prices far above what many

¹²⁴ Mills, Apartment Buildings in Detroit, 2017.

¹²⁵ Boyle, Arc of Justice, 344.

¹²⁶ Ibid, 345.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)
Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

African Americans could afford—with their job, wage, and educational opportunities suppressed for hundreds of years—and thus all but guaranteed continued segregation.

The Ossian Sweet case is a landmark case in the annals of fair housing jurisprudence but not because it changed any laws (it was a criminal case after all) but because it signaled the first, tentative death knell for discrimination against African Americans in a court of law. It was the thinnest of victories because, after all, Ossian Sweet was actually brought to trial (a White resident in the same situation surely would not have been) and was not acquitted per se but the mistrial and the ensuing declination to file new charges signaled that perhaps, just perhaps, a Black man could expect impartiality by judge and jury. Discrimination in housing is one of the most consequential veins of suppression of African Americans in this country and it has had a devastating effect on the Black community. The inability to access housing on the same terms as their White counterparts has manufactured and entrenched economic disparities for African Americans. In fact, when Thurgood Marshall (NAACP LDF attorney and later United States Supreme Court Justice) was asked what he considered to be his most important case, he didn't answer Brown v. Board of Education as might be expected, but rather, he said it was Shelley v. Kraemer. 127 The People v. Ossian Sweet laid the foundation for Shelley v. Kraemer by kick starting the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund and it must then be viewed as one of the most important cases in the nation for this catalyst role.

The all-encompassing systematic oppression and violent racism that permeated Detroit in the 1920s created the context that resulted in the events of September 9, 1925, and, ninety-five years later it is clear the United States has not overcome that racism. Richard Rothstein, in a 2017 survey of housing segregation, stated "that the government's purposeful creation of American ghettos created the context for conflicts in places like Ferguson, Baltimore, Milwaukee, and Charlotte." The contexts and conditions that created those situations were in place far before the brutal killings in those cities. They had their impetus in the early decades of the twentieth century. Ossian Sweet, like so many Black men before and after him, experienced the irretractable hate and stifled potential in his own neighborhood on the east side of Detroit. After four hundred years of suppression, brutality, subjugation, and violence, racism still permeates nearly every facet of our lives. Perhaps the discourse and education which results from the recognition of significant Civil Rights sites like the Dr. Ossian Sweet House will, finally, prompt significant change.

¹²⁷ Twin Cities PBS, "Jim Crow of the North," youtube.com/watch?v=XWQfDbbQv9E.

¹²⁸ "The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America," Economic Policy Institute, https://www.epi.org/event/the-color-of-law-a-forgotten-history-of-how-our-government-segregated-america/

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Name of Property

Wayne County, MI
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Newspapers and Journals

Baltimore Sun

"To Prevent Negro Invasion," February 24, 1919.

Chicago Defender

- "Dr. Sweet wanted home for his baby," December 5, 1925, 3.
- "Draft Plan to Free Dr. Sweet," May 22, 1926.
- "White Rioter is Killed in Attempt to Stone Home of Physician", September 18, 1925.

Chicago Tribune

Wambsgans, Jason and Lee, William, "Ready to Explode: How a Black teen's drifting raft triggered a deadly week of riots 100 years ago in Chicago,", July 21, 2019.

Detroit Free Press

- "1 Slain, 1 Shot when Negroes Fire at Crowd", Sept 10, 1925.
- "Charles Bewick Dies in 80th Year," May 14, 1915.
- "Former Ku Klux Klan Knight Braving Order's Death Threat Bares Its Money Making Aims," September 18 1921
- "Klan Holds Rally in Lincoln Park," April 3, 1925, 1.
- "Negroes Shoot White Youth in New Home Row," July 11, 1925, 1.
- "Other Race Troubles Figure in Sweet Trial," November 18 1925, 7.
- "Revival of Ku Kluxism Brings Terrorism and Lawlessness In Train," September 28 1921.
- "Seven Testify in Riot Death", September 18, 1925.
- "Police Quell 2,000 in Klan Riot at County Building," December 25, 1923.

The Detroit News

Rubin, Neal, "Monuments to Detroit Area's Past Seen in New, Troubling Light: Slavery," September 18, 2020.

Evening Star

"Resisting Ouster Negroes Kill Man", Sept 10, 1925.

The Kansas City Sun

"N.A.A.C.P. Aids East St. Louis Refugees," August 11, 1917.

Moreno, Paul, "The Pond and Maher Cases: Crime and Democracy on the Frontier," *Michigan Bar Journal*, December 2008,

https://www.michbar.org/file/barjournal/article/documents/pdf4article1453.pdf

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

- Monts, Rodd, "An East Side Detroit Story: Remembering the Village of Fairview," Model D Media, https://www.modeldmedia.com/features/fairview17008.aspx.
- Peterson, Joyce Shaw, "Black Automobile Workers in Detroit, 1910-1930," The Journal of Negro History Vol 64, No 3 (Summer 1979).
- St. Paul Echo
- Dr. Sweet's Trial Resumes April 1", March 27, 1926.
- "Witnesses Called in Trial, Darrow Defense Gets Under Way in Detroit Case," November 14, 1925.
- Teasdale, Guillaume, "Old Friends and New Foes: French Settlers and Indians in the Detroit River Border Region," *Michigan Historical Review* 38, No. 2 (Fall 2012).

Books and References

- Boyd, Herb, *Black Detroit: A People's History of Self-Determination*, New York, NY: Amistad, an Imprint of HarperCollins, 2017.
- Boyle, Kevin, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*, New York, NY: Henry Holt & Co., 2004.
- Brown, Mason L., "Bewick Subdivision Plat Map," 1902, https://aca-prod.accela.com/LARA/Default.aspx.
- Burton, Clarence Monroe, *City of Detroit, Michigan, 1701-1922*, Detroit, MI: S.J. Clarke Pub. Co., 1922.
- Burton, Clarence Monroe, *History of Detroit 1780-1850: Financial and Commercial*, Detroit, MI, 1917.
- City of Detroit City Council, Historic District Advisory Board, Final Report on the Proposed Ossian Sweet House Historic District.
- City of Detroit City Council, *Proposed Tushiyah United Hebrew School of Detroit / Scott Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church Historic District*, October 5, 2010, https://detroitmi.gov/sites/detroitmi.localhost/files/2018-08/Tushiyah-Scott%20FINAL%20REPORT.pdf
- Danzinger, Sheldon, Reynolds Farley, and Harry Holzer, *Detroit Divided*, (Buffalo, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002), 21.
- Darrow, Clarence, *The Story of My Life*, New York, NY: Charles Scribner & Sons, 1932, Chapter 34.
- DeCruydt, Alois, World War I Draft Registration Form, September 12, 1918

Wayne County, MI
County and State

- Forrester B. Washington, "The Negro in Detroit: A Survey of the Conditions of a Negro Group in a Northern Industrial Center During the War Prosperity Period," (1920), 1.
- Haas Institute, "Roots, Race, & Place: A History of Racially Exclusionary Housing in the San Francisco Bay Area," 2019.
- Haldeman-Julius, Marcet, Clarence Darrow's Two Great Trials: Reports of the Scopes Anti-Evolution Case and the Dr. Sweet Negro Trial, Girard, KS: Haldeman-Julius Company, 1927, 32-33.
- Haynes, George Edmund, "Negroes Move North, The Survey," May 4, 1918, 115.
- The Illinois Legislative Investigating Committee, *Ku Klux Klan: A Report to the Illinois General Assembly*, October 1976, 19.
- McWhirter, Cameron, *Red Summer: The Summer of 1919 and the Awakening of Black America*, New York, NY: Henry Holt & Co., 2011.
- Meyer, Stephen Grant, As Long as They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods.
- Miles, Tiya, *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits*, New York: The New Press, 2017.
- Mills, Ruth E., *National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form: Apartment Buildings in Detroit 1892-1970*, 2017.
- Monts, Rodd, "An East Side Detroit Story: Remembering the Village of Fairview," Model D Media, https://www.modeldmedia.com/features/fairview17008.aspx.
- The University of Minnesota Law Library, "Clarence Darrow: His Life, Legal Career, and Legacy," moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/photo.php?pid=955.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "1920 Census."
- Rothstein, Richard, *The Color of Law*, New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018, 144.
- Sugrue, Thomas, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- Taylor, Dorceta E, *Toxic Communities: Environmental Racism, Industrial Pollution, and Residential Mobility*, New York, NY: New York University Press, 2014.

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

- Wilkerson, Isabel, *The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration*, New York, NY: Random House, 2010.
- Wolcott, Victoria, *Remaking Respectability: African American Women in Interwar Detroit*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Websites and Blogs

- The Business of Black Death in Detroit, "Vollington A. Bristol," https://tbobdid.wordpress.com/the-need-for-black-undertakers/undertakers-in-detroit/bristol/
- "Branch History," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, https://www.detroitnaacp.org/branch-history, accessed October 13, 2020.
- Cherkaskey, Mara, and Sarah Shoenfeld, "The Rise and Demise of Racially Restrictive Covenants in Bloomingdale, D.C. Policy Center, April 3, 2019, https://www.dcpolicycenter.org/publications/racially-restrictive-covenants-bloomingdale/
- Claire, Manisha, "The Latent Racism in the Better Homes in American Program," JSTOR Daily, February 26 2020, https://daily.jstor.org/the-latent-racism-of-the-better-homes-in-america-program/.
- "The Clarence Darrow Digital Collection," University of Minnesota Law Library, http://moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/photo.php?pid=955 (accessed October 13, 2020).
- "The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How our Government Segregated America," Economic Policy Institute, https://www.epi.org/event/the-color-of-law-a-forgotten-history-of-how-our-government-segregated-america/
- Detroit Historical Society, "Industrial Detroit (1860-1900)," https://detroithistorical.org/learn/timeline-detroit/industrial-detroit-1860-1900.
- Devito, Lee, "Michigan's KKK Reached its Apex in the 1920's Here's Why," *Detroit Metro Times*, https://www.metrotimes.com/the-scene/archives/2019/03/06/michigans-kkk-reached-its-apex-in-the-1920s-heres-why?mode=print.
- Foley, Aaron, "How One Resident is Moving Past the "Mack and Bewick" Trope and Embracing a Neighborhood Packed with History," The Neighborhoods, https://theneighborhoods.org/story/how-one-resident-moving-past-mack-and-bewick-trope-and-embracing-neighborhood-packed-history.
- Hausman, John S., "New Book Looks at 'Mainstream' KKK in 1920's Newaygo County and Michigan, *MLive*, April 9, 2011,

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

https://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/2011/04/new_book_looks_at_kkk_in_1920s.ht ml

- Linder, Douglas O., "Sweet Trials (1925 & 1926)," UMKC School of Law, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/sweet/chronology.HTM.
- Linder, Douglas O., "Melting Hearts of Stone: Clarence Darrow and the Sweet Trials," Famous Trials, http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/trialheroes/Darrowmelting.html, accessed October 13, 2020.
- Mapping Slavery in Detroit, "Map," http://mappingdetroitslavery.com/map.php (accessed April 25, 2020).
- "Our History," National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, naacp.org/about/ourhistory, accessed October 13, 2020.
- People v. Ossian Sweet, Gladys Sweet, et al., November 10, 1925, The Clarence Darrow Digital Collection, University of Minnesota Law School, 793. http://moses.law.umn.edu/darrow/trials.php?tid=6, Accessed August 4, 2020 (Testimony of Harry Monet).
- Parmalee v. Morris, 218 Mich. 625, Mich. Supreme Court (1922), https://www.ravellaw.com/opinions/765f798c9713b98fc590c581dda0fbfe
- Santa Fe Institute, "Population History of Detroit from 1840-1990," http://tuvalu.santafe.edu/~redner/projects/population/cities/detroit.html
- Sewick, Paul, "The Mound Builders," Detroit Urbanism, entry posted December 21, 2015, http://detroiturbanism.blogspot.com/2015/12/the-mound-builders.html (accessed April 25, 2020).
- Twin Cities PBS, "Jim Crow of the North," youtube.com/watch?v=XWQfDbbQv9E.
- U.S. Census Bureau, "QuickFacts: Detroit City, Michigan," https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/detroitcitymichigan,MI/PST045219

| Sweet, Ossian H., House (| (Additional Documentation) |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Name of Property | |

Wayne County, MI County and State

| Previous documentation on file (NPS) |): |
|---|---|
| preliminary determination of indiv X previously listed in the National R previously determined eligible by designated a National Historic Lar recorded by Historic American Bu recorded by Historic American En | the National Register ndmark nildings Survey # agineering Record # |
| Primary location of additional data: State Historic Preservation Office Other State agency Federal agency X Local government University Other Name of repository: Historic Resources Survey Number (i | |
| 10. Geographical Data | |
| Acreage of Property Less than one (| 0.115 acres) |
| Use either the UTM system or latitude/lo | ongitude coordinates |
| Latitude/Longitude Coordinates Datum if other than WGS84: (enter coordinates to 6 decimal places) 1. Latitude: 42.370190 | |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

| Sweet, Ossian H., House (Add | itional Documentation) | | Wayne County, MI |
|--|------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| Name of Property | _ | | County and State |
| Or UTM References Datum (indicated on US | GS map): | | |
| NAD 1927 or | NAD 1983 | | |
| 1. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: | |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: | |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: | |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: | |

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

On the north, a line drawn 17 feet north of the north lot line of lot 468, extended east and west of Bewick Sub L23 P14; on the east, the centerline of Garland Street; on the south, the centerline of Charlevoix Avenue; and on the west, the centerline of the north-south alley running between Garland Street and Bewick Street.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary encompasses the parcel on which the Ossian H. Sweet House is situated and reflects the historic extent of the property.

| Wayne County, MI | |
|------------------|--|
| County and State | |

| 11. Form Prepared By | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | |
| name/title: Cassandra Talley & Lillian Candela | | |
| organization: Kraemer Design Group | | |
| street & number: 1420 Broadway | | |
| city or town: <u>Detroit</u> state: <u>Michigan</u> zip code: <u>48226</u> | | |
| e-mail: <u>Cassandra.Talley@thekraemeredge.com</u> | | |
| telephone: (313) 965-3399 | | |
| date: 2021 | | |

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.)

Wayne County, MI County and State

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: Ossian H. Sweet House

City or Vicinity: Detroit

County: Wayne State: Michigan

Photographer: All photographs are by Kraemer Design Group

Date Photographed: See Below

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

camera: See Below

Photograph 0001 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0001

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

East elevation (primary façade) with adjacent property to the north and Charlevoix Street to

the south

Photograph 0002 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0002

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

East elevation (primary façade) close-up photograph

Photograph 0003 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0003

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

View of south (side) and east (primary façade) elevations whereas the south façade is on

Charlevoix Street and the east elevation fronts on Garland Street

Photograph 0004 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0004

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

West elevation (rear façade) with concrete pad of non-extant garage in foreground

Photograph 0005 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0005

Date Photographed: July 19, 2021

View of west (rear) and north (side) elevations

Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation)

Wayne County, MI
County and State

Name of Property

Photograph 0006 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0006

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

View of basement taken from bottom of stairs

Photograph 0007 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0007

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

First floor living room and view into adjacent dining room

Photograph 0008 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0008

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

First floor kitchen

Photograph 0009 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0009

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

View at landing of stairs in the second floor with doorway to enclosed porch in background

Photograph 0010 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0010

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

View looking east down second floor corridor

Photograph 0011 of 0012: MI Wayne County Sweet, Ossian H., House 0011

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020

Second floor bathroom

Photograph 0012 of 0012: MI_Wayne County_Sweet, Ossian H., House_0012

Date Photographed: June 10, 2020 Second floor primary bedroom

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for nominations 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 required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:


Tier 1 – 60-100 hours

Tier 2 - 120 hours

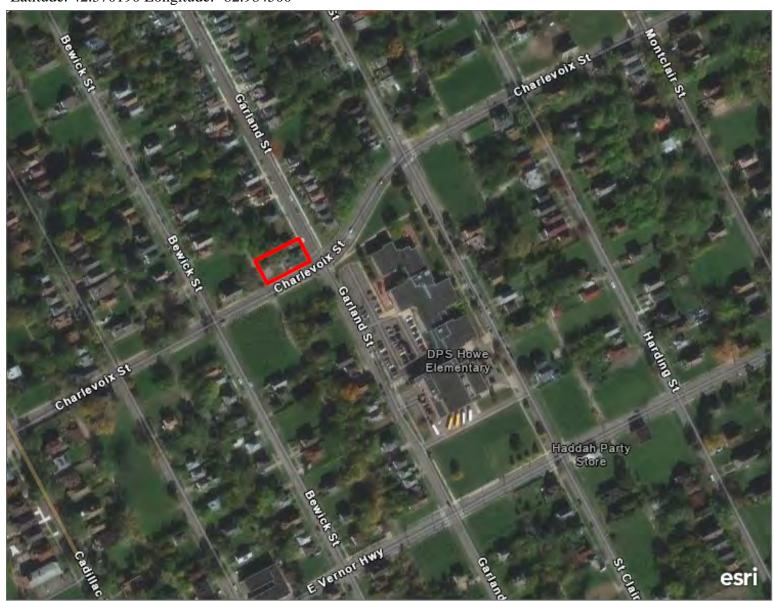
Tier 3 – 230 hours

Tier 4 - 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.



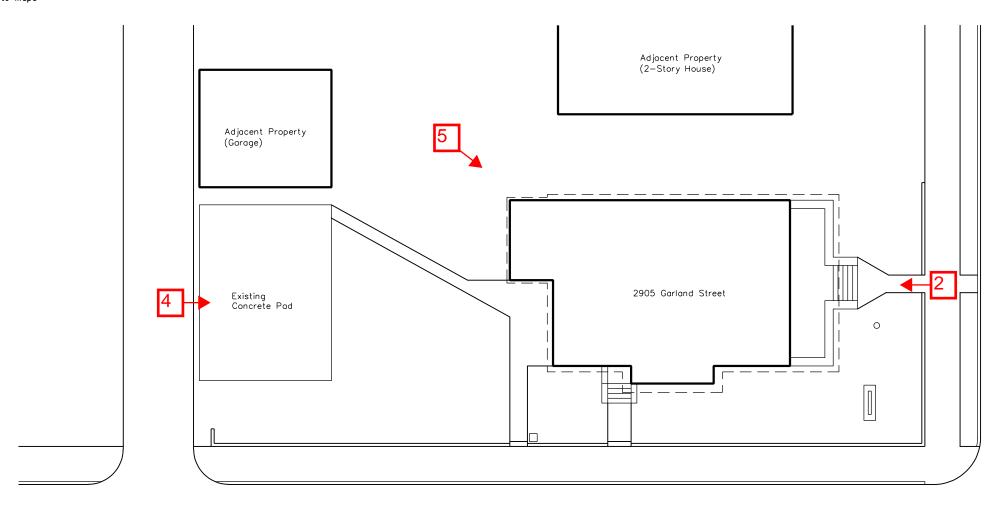
Map of 2905 Garland Street, Detroit, Michigan 48214 Latitude: 42.370190 Longitude: -82.984500

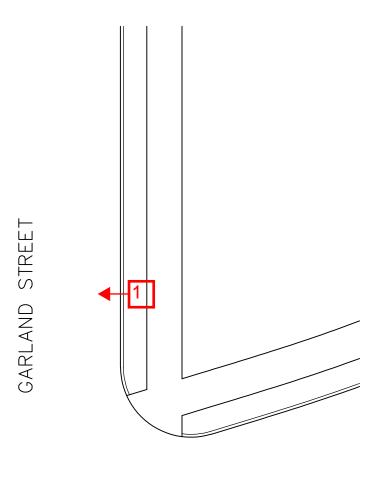


Maxar | Esri Community Maps Contributors, Province of Ontario, SEMCOG, BuildingFootprintUSA, Esri Canada, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, INCREMENT P, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA, NRCan, Parks Canada

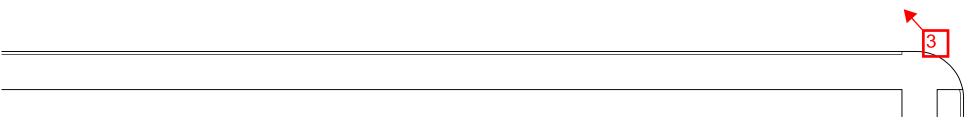
N 100m

Dr. Ossian H. Sweet House



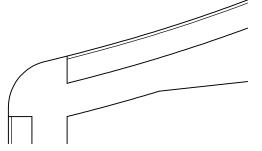


CHARLEVOIX STREET



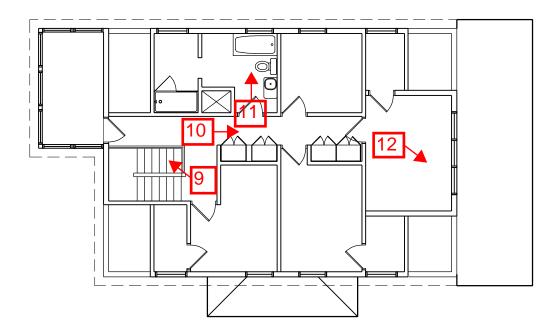
ARCHITECTURAL SITE PLAN

SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"



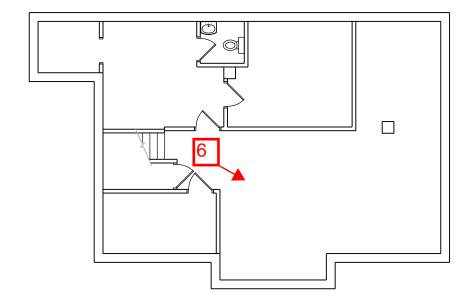


Dr. Ossian H. Sweet House



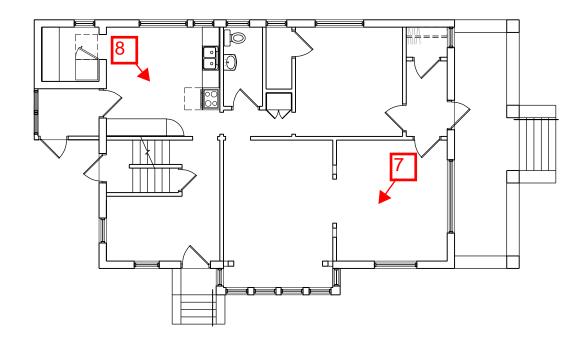
SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"































City of Detroit Executive Office

Coleman A. Young, Mayor

October 18, 1984

Dr. Martha M. Bigelow, Director Michigan History Division Michigan Department of State 208 North Capitol Avenue Lansing, Michigan 48918

OCT 22 1984

(3/0) Den's 10/2,2/8/7

Attention: Kathryn Eckert

Re: Nominations to the National Register of Historic Places

Dear Dr. Bigelow:

We appreciate the opportunity to review the proposal to nominate five (5) properties in the City of Detroit to the National Register of Historic Places:

Elmwood Bar 2100 Woodward Detroit, Michigan Fox Theatre Building 2111 Woodward Avenue Detroit, Michigan

Redford Theater Building 17354 Lahser Avenue Detroit, Michigan Ossian H. Sweet House 2905 Garland Detroit, Michigan

Globe Tobacco Company Building 407 East Fort Street Detroit, Michigan

We find no difficulties with the proposal and, therefore, support the nominations as proposed.

Yours for a better Detroit,

COLEMAN A. YOUNG

Mayor

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD H. AUSTIN

SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING

MICHIGAN 48918

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVISION

ADMINISTRATION, PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH, AND HISTORIC SITES 208 N. Capitol Avenue 517 — 373-0510 STATE ARCHIVES 3405 N. Logan Street 517 — 373-0512 MICHIGAN HISTORICAL MUSEUM 208 N. Capitol Avenue 517 — 373-3559

October 26, 1984

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Supervisory Historian National Register of Historic Places Branch Interagency Resource Management Division National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the Ossian H. Sweet House in Detroit, Michigan. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this property submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Charles C. Cotman (517/373-0510).

Sincerely,

Martha M. Bigelow, Director

Michigan History Division

ana

State Historic Preservation Officer

MMB:ROC:mjr

enc.

AESU84300A

Rec.d 11/28/84

☐ dates

boundary selection

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

| | | | | a toerin | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| | ian H., House | | | | | | State from Dr. Signif |
| Wayne Cour | nty | | | | | | |
| MICHIGAN | | | | | | | |
| | | | | VA. | orking No | | |
| | | | | | | | 2 1304 |
| | | | | , | ed. Reg. Date: | 7/84 - | - 1/12/85 |
| | | | | | | | |
| resubmission | | | | - | ction:AC | TUDN | 273-84 |
| | n or local government | | | | | JECT | |
| | n or local government | | | - | | | |
| owner objection | | | | - | ederal Agency: | | to noissatura L |
| appeal | | | | | | | |
| Substantive Review: | sample | request | appea | al | ☐ NR deci | ision | 10(10) = 1 |
| Reviewer's comments: | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | ecom./Criteria | | |
| | | | | | leviewer | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | 0 | iscipline ate | sho St. Januaria | Service Commence |
| | | | | | see continua | | annones repent |
| | -1/ | | | | | - B70C | Licologamosa .011 |
| Nomination returned for | | | | | | | |
| | substantive re | asons discus | sed below | | | | |
| 1. Name | | | | | | | UTM References |
| 2. Location | | g | mark a | Plea | nortes (fillag), bas | nonquass | y verbal boundary u |
| 3. Classification | 20 202 | 340 T 15 | - AT 12 - AA | 2019A 1 2 2 2 | | | |
| | Ownership | | Status | | Present Us | 0 | |
| Category | Public Acquisit | ion | Accessible | | Tresent Os | Yes | |
| 4. Owner of Property | | | | Halfs | IN DEREST CONTROL | Sturisle 19 | TZ, State Hadovio |
| 4. Owner of Property | | | ate is: | siz arti nic | this property with | to sonsoit! | The evaluated sign |
| 5. Location of Legal Des | cription | | 163 | ool | 93932 | Janol | 7611 |
| 6. Representation in Exi | sting Surveys | | | | | | |
| Has this property been de | etermined eligible? | ☐ yes | □ no | | | | |
| 7. Description | | | , | | clate | | altit |
| Condition | | | Check one | | Check one | | |
| excellent | deteriorated | | unaltered | | origina origina | | |
| | ruins | | altered | | ☐ moved | | |
| good fair | unexposed | | anti-ou | | moved | | En Pri prographs |
| L Tair | unexposed | | | | | | |
| Describe the present and | original (if known) pl | nysical appea | | | | | |
| summary paragraph | | | | | | | |
| completeness | | | | | | | |
| clarity | | | | | | | |
| alterations/integrity | | | C No State | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

| 8. Significance | DOWNED HAY JAKULAN | | (electrical Har) |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify be | SAL REGISTER OF MICHO | | |
| Specific dates Builder/Architect | | | |
| Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) | | | |
| Statement of Significance in one paragraphy | | | |
| summary paragraph | | | |
| completeness \ \(\sqrt{1} \) | | | |
| □ clarity | | | |
| applicable criteria | | | |
| justification of areas checked | | | |
| relating significance to the resource | | | |
| context | | | and nomination by p |
| relationship of integrity to significance | | | |
| ightharpoonup justification of exception other | | | |
| D NR decision | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 18 Walder I | | | |
| 9. Major Bibliographical References | | | |
| 10. Geographical Data | | | |
| | | | |
| Acreage of nominated property | | | |
| Quadrangle name | | | |
| UTM References | | | |
| Verbal boundary description and justification | | 1/denses | |
| Verbal boundary description and justification Plea The are being momenated to | = parate -to | suite of the host | - 11 4 |
| the state of | the northwest C | and car on hor | |
| | | | 3. Classification |
| 11. Form Prepared By | | | |
| 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification | | | |
| The evaluated significance of this property within the s | tate is: | | |
| nationalstatel | ocal | | |
| | | | |
| State Historic Preservation Officer signature | | | |
| | | | |
| title date | | | |
| 13. Other | ano NositO | | Condition |
| artis for long to the | | | |
| Maps bycom [3] | | | |
| Photographs | | | |
| Other | | | |
| Questions concerning this nomination may be directed | | | |
| coestions concerning this nomination may be directed | 10 | de | apsied Vienimus 🗍 |
| | | | |
| N. Bree 1 | Date 12/13/84 | | 343-9553 |
| Signed AM Ogaz | Data / 2/13/89 | Phone: 212 - | 747-9553 |

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RICHARD H. AUSTIN

SECRETARY OF STATE



LANSING

MICHIGAN 48918

MICHIGAN HISTORY DIVISION

ADMINISTRATION, PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH, AND HISTORIC SITES 208 N. Capitol Avenue 517—373-0510 STATE ARCHIVES 3405 N. Logan Street 517—373-0512 STATE MUSEUM 208 N. Capitol Avenue 517—373-0515

January 11, 1985

Ms. Carol D. Shull, Supervisory Historian National Register of Historic Places Branch Interagency Resource Management Division National Park Service U.S. Department of the Interior Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed are National Register of Historic Places nomination materials for the Ossian H. Sweet House in Detroit, Michigan. This nomination is being resubmitted following correction of the technical problem cited in the enclosed review form. I certify that the intent-to-nominate notification requirements have been fulfilled. This property is being submitted for listing in the National Register. All notarized statements of objection and written comments concerning this nomination submitted to us prior to the submission of this nomination to you are enclosed.

Please direct all questions concerning this nomination to Charles C. Cotman 517/373-0510.

TRACES LAND COUNCIL 3

Sincerely,

Martha M. Bigelow

Director, Bureau of History

and

State Historic Preservation Officer

Marcha M. Bigelow

MMB/ROC/s1

enc.

Med 3/21/85

boundary selection

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

| Sweet, Ossian H., H Wayne County MICHIGAN | ouse | | Working No. 11/28/84 Fed. Reg. Date: 2/4/84 |
|--|---|-------------------------------|---|
| resubmission nomination by person or owner objection appeal | local government | Entered in the Mational Books | Action: ACCEPT 4-4-85 RETURN REJECT Federal Agency: |
| Substantive Review: | sample | appeal | ☐ NR decision |
| Reviewer's comments: | | | |
| | | | Recom./Criteria Reviewer Discipline Date see continuation sheet |
| Nomination returned for: | technical corrections cited l substantive reasons discusse | | y heady butstiming to egypto A Custiming a survey |
| 1. Name | | | DTM-Hillemas |
| 2. Location | | | nonactiful the nopphoseb visibilities. |
| 3. Classification | | | |
| Category | Ownership Public Acquisition | Status Accessible | Present Use |
| 4. Owner of Property | | on the state lus | 12. State He forte Preservation Officer Certification of this property within |
| 5. Location of Legal Descrip | tion | Jocal | mats Section |
| 6. Representation in Existin | g Surveys | | |
| Has this property been deter | mined eligible? | □ no | |
| 7. Description | | | edish although |
| Condition excellent good fair | deteriorated [ruins [unexposed | Check one unaltered altered | Check one original site moved date |
| Describe the present and original | inal (if known) physical appeara | | |
| summary paragraph completeness clarity alterations/integrity | | | Questions concerning this nomination may be dir |

| 8. Significance | |
|--|---|
| Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below | |
| Specific dates Builder/Architect | |
| Statement of Significance (in one paragraph) | |
| summary paragraph completeness | Sweet, Orgin H. Forreg |
| ☐ clarity ☐ applicable criteria ☐ justification of areas checked | |
| ☐ relating significance to the resource ☐ context ☐ relationship of integrity to significance ☐ justification of exception ☐ other | Service of local government (1900) |
| | |
| Recom (Criteria Baylowo | Реуваумаг в общипеля: |
| 9. Major Bibliographical References | |
| 10. Geographical Data | |
| Acreage of nominated property Quadrangle name UTM References | |
| Verbal boundary description and justification | |
| | |
| 11. Form Prepared By | Caregory Dyngrahip Sayus Faible Acquisition Accou |
| 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification The evaluated significance of this property within the state is: | 4. Owitenat Property |
| nationalstatelocal | |
| State Historic Preservation Officer signature | |
| title date | |
| 13. Other | Compilities Check and |
| ☐ Maps ☐ Photographs ☐ Other | |
| Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to | Ouselite the present and original (if known) physical appreciance |
| Signed Date | Phone: |



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN MICHIGAN STRATEGIC FUND STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

QUENTIN L. MESSER, JR. PRESIDENT

Wednesday, February 23, 2022

Ms. Joy Beasley, Keeper National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228 Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Beasley:

| The enclosed file contains the true and correct copy of the additional documentation for the Ossiar H. Sweet House, 2905 Garland Street, Detroit, Wayne County, Michigan. This property is |
|--|
| being submitted for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This nomination is a New Submission Resubmission Removal. |
| 1 Signed National Register of Historic Places Registration Form Locational maps (incl. with nomination file) |
| Sketch map(s) / figures(s) / exhibits(s) (incl. with nomination file) Pieces of correspondence (incl. with nomination file) |
| 12 Digital photographs (incl. with nomination file) |
| Other (incl. with nomination file): |
| COMMENTS: Please ensure that this nomination is reviewed. |
| This property has been approved under 36 CFR 67. |
| The enclosed owner objections constitute a majority of property owners. |
| This nomination has been funded by the following NPS grant: African American Civil Rights X (through the City of Detroit) Other: |
| Questions concerning this nomination should be addressed to Todd A. Walsh, National Register Coordinator, at (517) 331-8917 or walsht@michigan.gov. |
| Sincerely yours, |
| morthed. Martan |

Martha MacFarlane-Faes

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

| Requested Action: | Additional Docume | entation | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| Property Name: | Sweet, Ossian H., House (Additional Documentation) | | | |
| Multiple Name: | | | | |
| State & County: | MICHIGAN, Wayn | е | | |
| Date Recei 2/23/202 | | Pending List: Date of 16th Day: | Date of 45th Day: Date of Weekly List: 4/11/2022 3/4/2022 | |
| Reference number: | AD85000696 | | | |
| Nominator: | SHPO | | | |
| Reason For Review: | | | | |
| Appeal | | PDIL | Text/Data Issue | |
| SHPO Request | | Landscape | Photo | |
| Waiver | | X National | Map/Boundary | |
| Resubi | mission | Mobile Resource | Period | |
| Other | | TCP | Less than 50 years | |
| | | CLG | | |
| X Accept | Return | Reject 3/3 | /2022 Date | |
| Abstract/Summary Comments: | purchase of a hou that led to gunfire. NAACP legal defe Clarence Darrow's The AD adds appl | se by Dr. Ossian Sweet, and the s The trial of the occupants of the lense fund come into being as a nat s successful defense served as a fropriate areas of significance and o | of the events and context related to the subsequent intimidation by white mobs house was instrumental in helping the ionally important force for civil rights. oundation for other prominent cases. clarifies the POS. It also discusses the here is no evidence for the justification. | |
| Recommendation/ | endation/ Accept Additional Documentation | | | |
| Criteria | | | | |
| Reviewer Jim Ga | bbert | Discipline | Historian | |
| Telephone (202)35 | 54-2275 | Date | | |
| DOCUMENTATION: | see attached | comments : No see attached S | SLR : No | |

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.