



THE PIONEER PERIOD 1840 - 1890

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Before the 1840s most people in Oregon (other than the Native Americans who had lived here a long time) were explorers, workers for the Hudson's Bay Company, traveling salesmen and missionaries.

In the 1840s, settlers began to arrive in Oregon by wagon train, and by 1850, there were 10,000 new residents.

Many people were anxious for the US. government to claim the Oregon Country as a territory before the British. This brought about the passage of the Donation Land Act in 1850. The act offered any American male over the age of 18 the opportunity to acquire 320 acres of land. His wife could claim an additional 320 acres. This was a total of 640 acres, which was a lot of land for one family to develop. They had to agree to stay and work on it for at least four years. This encouraged many people to settle in the Oregon Country, and the population soon grew to 50,000.

The California Gold Rush in 1849 lured many settlers away. Some returned empty-handed, but some "struck it rich" and returned to improve the economy by building new homes and businesses. The living conditions in Oregon became a great deal better.

After the first pioneers who came to Oregon in the wagon trains decided what land they would settle on, they immediately needed to provide shelter for their families. This usually meant building a series of three different shelters.

1. The first had to be a simple one that could be built quickly to provide shelter right away. It was usually built by one person and was so small it was often called a "pen." It had one room and a smoke hole in the roof. The wind blew through it, and it usually leaked.
2. The second house was usually built after some of the land was cleared and the first crops had been planted. It took about a month to build. Friends helped by having a "house raising," in which they gathered to work with a picnic like celebration. It was very lonely for the pioneers because they lived so far apart.

The logs for these buildings were cut (or hewn) to about a four-inch width, and squared off with notched joints, so they fit together very tightly. These were a little larger than the first buildings, usually having one or two rooms with a sleeping

loft. People were a little warmer and more comfortable in them.

3. The third house was probably built about five or six years later. The people called it the "real" house. By then there were saw mills so the framework was made of evenly sawn lumber that could be fit together tightly. These buildings were much stronger, and many have lasted a long time. By 1860 there were a number of these houses.

Having sawn timber made it possible to build in the architectural styles popular at that time in the East. The houses and barns the pioneers built were very much like the ones their grandfathers had built in Pennsylvania, Virginia and other places from which they had come. The pioneers were lonesome for the things they could not bring with them. Buildings that looked like the ones they left behind made them feel this new land was not so far away from the homes and friends they had known.

Since they came from every part of the eastern states, and their ancestors had come from many different European countries, there were many different styles of architecture.

You might think adventurous people like the pioneers would like to build their houses in new and adventurous ways, but the truth was quite the opposite. This was partly because they did not have much in the way of equipment, so they built things in familiar ways.

Fortunately, Oregon is still a very young part of the United States, and we still have a number of fine examples of these early houses to look at. The styles described here are not the only ones built in the Pioneer Period, but they are the most common. You will notice the dates for each style overlap. Some people were the first to build a style and others among the last, so older styles continued to be built while new styles were developing.



The Horace Baker Cabin near Carver, OR, is an example of the late log building period and is one of the oldest cabins still in existence. It is open to the public by appointment—(503) 681-8274 or 631-2307. See field trip list.

Characteristics of the architectural style: Horace Baker Cabin 1856 (National Register of Historic Places 1976)

Roof

An unusually wide, overhanging, gable roof covered with shingles created a sheltered area for the first story.

A stone fireplace is at the end opposite the outside stairway. The first cabins had only a hole in the roof to let the smoke out.

Shape and Size

Typical cabins varied from 14 to 20 by 20 to 30 feet. This building is a typical rectangle, 20 by 30 feet.

Windows and Doors

The windows were small paned so they let in light, but kept out the weather and enemies. The door was of simple wood planks.

Construction Materials

The walls were of hand-hewn logs, notched in the manner of the Scandinavian building techniques. There were several ways to notch the logs that were plentiful materials in Oregon.

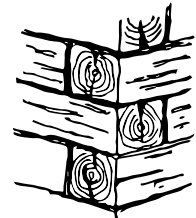
Details

The wide overhang of the roof gave protection to the outside stairway. The chimney was made of stones found on the land.

As soon as the settlers were better established, they wanted better buildings, so very few log buildings remain. Weather, fire and demolition to make way for new construction have destroyed most of them.

As mentioned in the introduction to this period, on a typical claim three houses were usually built.

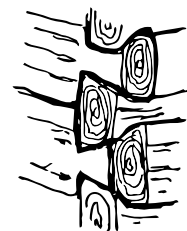
1. The first was a small one room log cabin, usually built within a month after arriving, to provide quick shelter. It was used for a few months or perhaps years, depending on the progress of the family in the new location.
2. The second was a "hewn" (shaped) log house that was larger. Typically, it had two rooms and a sleeping loft. It had windows with glass (glazed), a fireplace, stairs to the loft and one or two porches.
3. The third house was what they called the "real" house. It was built of "sawn" lumber that became available from the new sawmills and other building materials that could be shipped from the east on the new railroad. The settlers used the period designs from their former homes in the east.



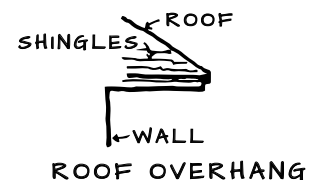
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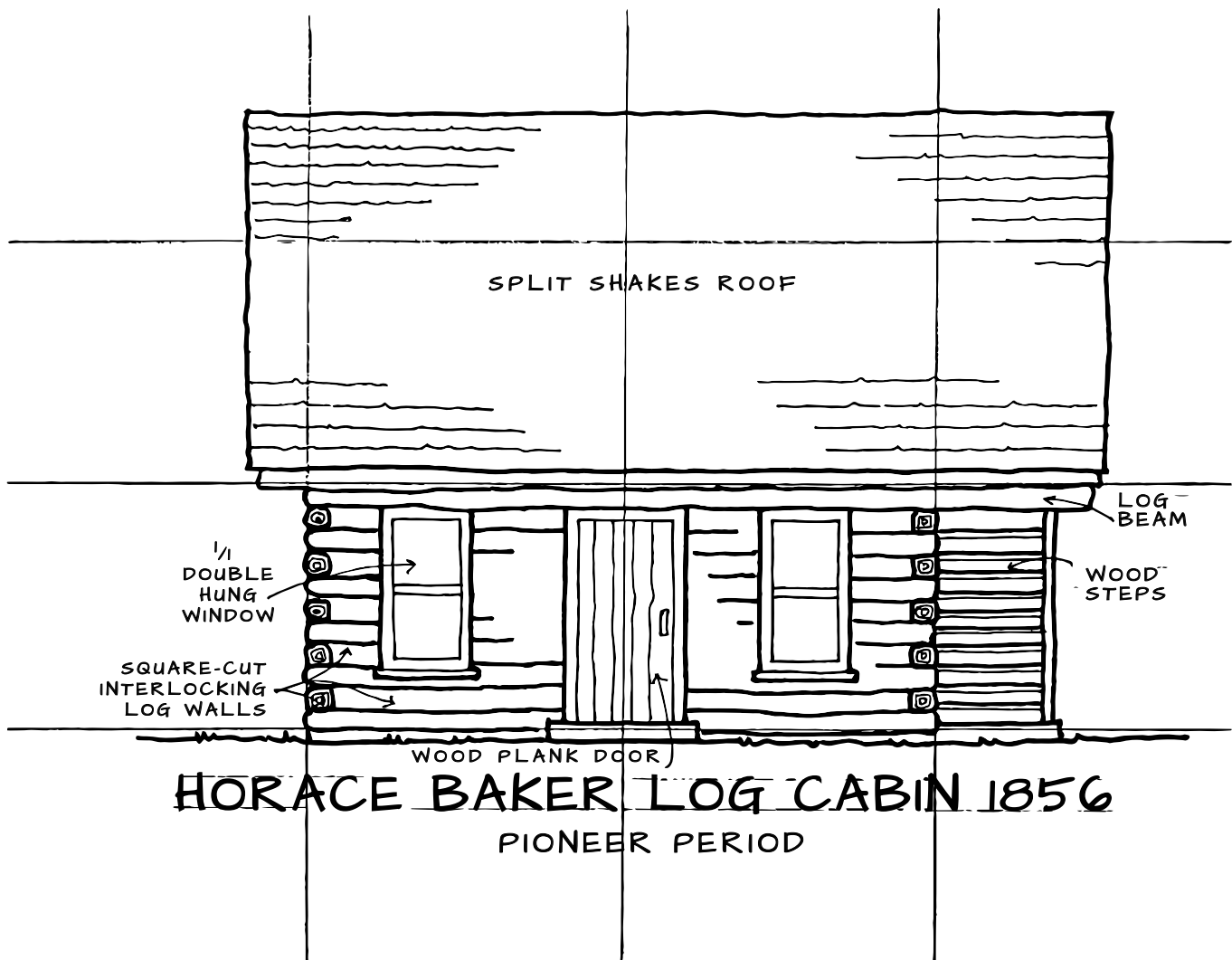


HOTCHED



DOVETAILED





LOG BUILDINGS 1840-1870**3.31***Pioneer Period*

NAME

DATE

The three stages of early pioneer homes were:

real home**pen cabin****log house**

Sketch each of these in the order in which they were built.

Tell at least two characteristics of each.

Building: _____

Use: _____

Characteristics: _____

Building: _____

Use: _____

Characteristics: _____

Building: _____

Use: _____

Characteristics: _____



Characteristics of the architectural style:

Roof

Low pitched roofs were gabled or tripped and covered with shingles. Fireplaces and chimneys were on the interior of the buildings.

Shape and Size

They were usually rectangular with a symmetrical plan and measured about 30 by 50 feet.

Windows and Doors

The doors were in the center with windows evenly spaced on each side with six over six panes the most common, but there were many other combinations.

Construction Materials

Sawn lumber was used for the weatherboard siding, and heavy hand hewn beams for the framework.

Details

There were plain boards at the corners and simple moldings around the windows, sometimes with more elaborate ones at the roof line.

Many settlers were attracted to this architectural style, which was popular in the eastern states, but originally came from England. The Oregon climate and the materials available were different, so there were variations in the way the style was built here. People used their own ideas and built buildings that fit the new land in which they lived.

In the 1850's, the first sawmills began to be built. This made it possible to build houses with Colonial and Federal details, because the mills could saw lumber in different sizes as required. The mills often were set up at the site of a building project and then moved to another location when the building was finished.

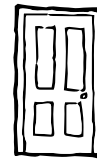
The style is called "survival" because only a few examples remain standing. They may not be the best or the most typical, but they are all that remain.



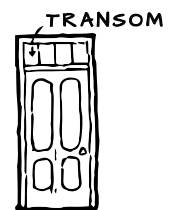
HIPPED ROOF



LOW PITCHED
GABLE ROOF



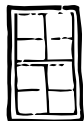
PANELED DOOR



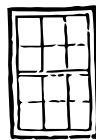
PANELED DOOR
WITH TRANSOM



1/1 PANES

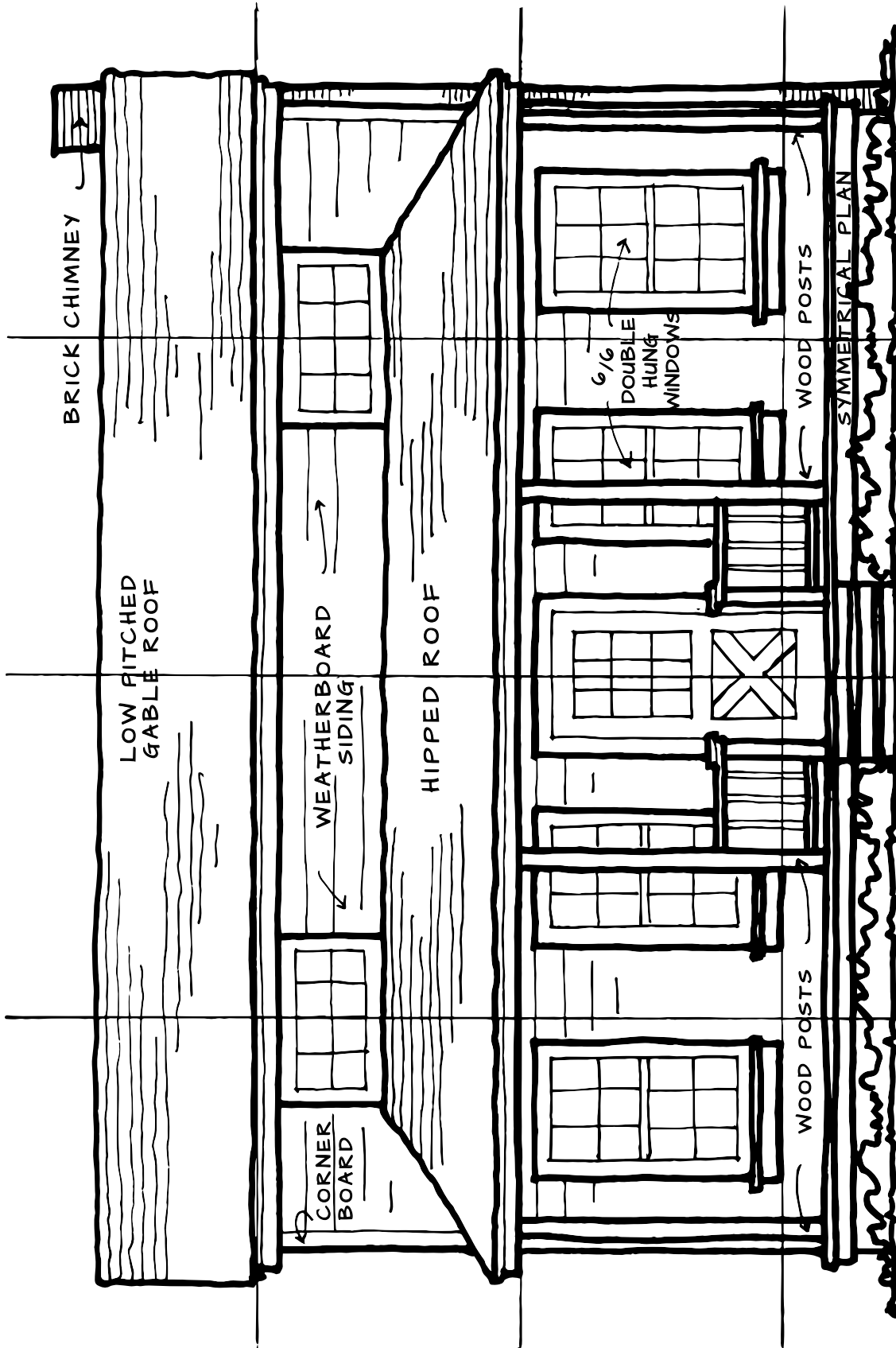


4/4 PANES



6/6 PANES

SOME TYPICAL DOUBLE-HUNG WINDOW PANE DIVISIONS



COLONIAL SURVIVAL 1848-1860

PIONEER PERIOD



The Dr. John McLoughlin House at Seventh and Center in Oregon City is one of Oregon's few early examples (and probably the best known) of the Georgian Colonial architectural style. The house has been well restored with many of the original furnishings that came by ship around Cape Horn. It is open to the Public. See Field Trip list for more information.

Characteristics of the architectural style: Dr. John McLoughlin House 1846

Roof

The low pitched, tripped roof is covered with shingles. There are two brick chimneys at each end.

Shape and Size

The building is a 30 by 50 foot rectangle. It is a two story building with doors in the center that open into a central hallway.

Windows and Doors

The front door has a transom light over the top with side lights on each side. The back door has only a transom above and is the door that now faces the street.

The windows are rather large, with 16 panes over 12, with narrow muntins and trim.

Construction Materials

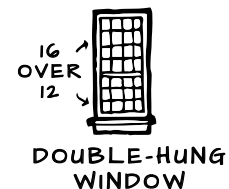
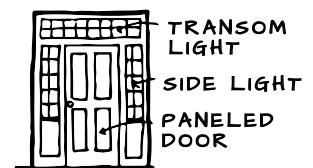
The outside walls are covered with narrow weatherboard siding, with corner boards.

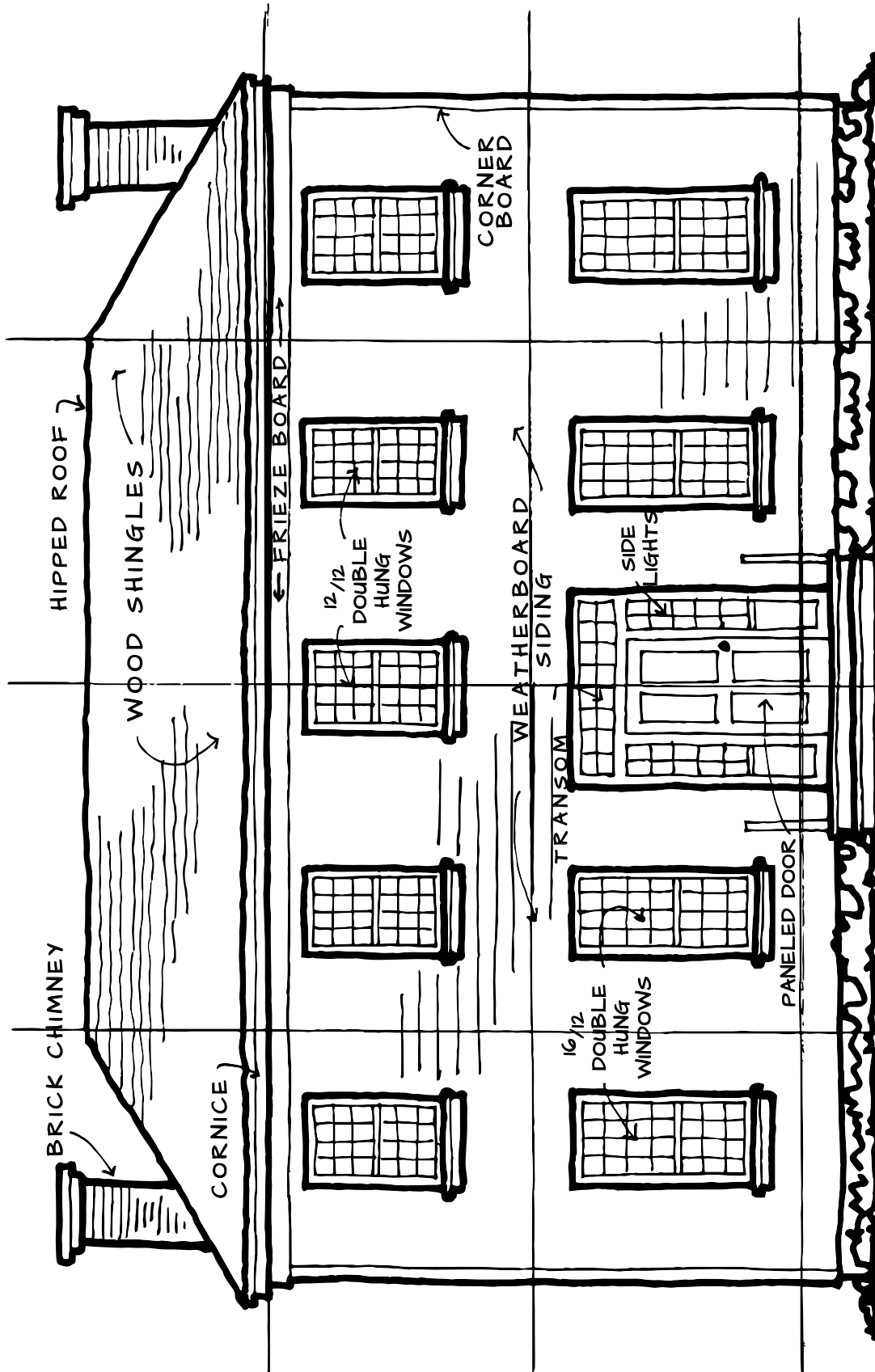
Details

There is a wide board below the cornice of the roof, called a "frieze."

Dr. John McLoughlin came to Oregon in 1824 as a leader in the operation of the Hudson's Bay Company. The company supplied the settlers with most everything they needed. The Native Americans called him the "White-headed Eagle," because his head was covered with lots of white hair. He was also known as the Father of Oregon.

McLoughlin designed and built his house in 1846, and lived there until he died in 1856. In 1909 it was moved to its present location, so people could get to it easily, but also so it would have a setting more like the original one—before Oregon City grew.





GEORGIAN COLONIAL - 1864

PIONEER PERIOD
JOHN MCLOUGHLIN HOUSE



Characteristics of the architectural style:

Roof

A low pitched, shingle roof was gabled with a triangular pediment, with heavy moldings that filled the gable end.

Size and Shape

They were mostly rectangular and had one or two stories. The size varied, but an average might have been 25 by 40 feet. They most often were symmetrical.

Windows and Doors

Double-hung windows were often six panes over six panes, but there were variations. Doors had side lights, transoms and classical moldings.

Construction Materials

Thin weatherboard siding was put over the wood frame and usually painted white.

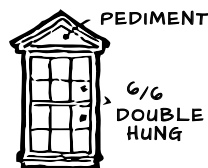
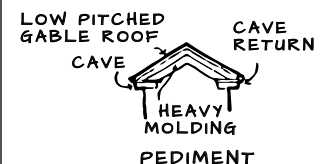
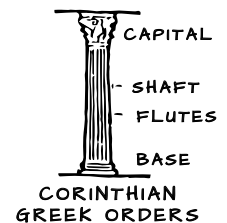
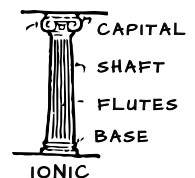
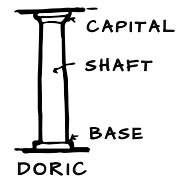
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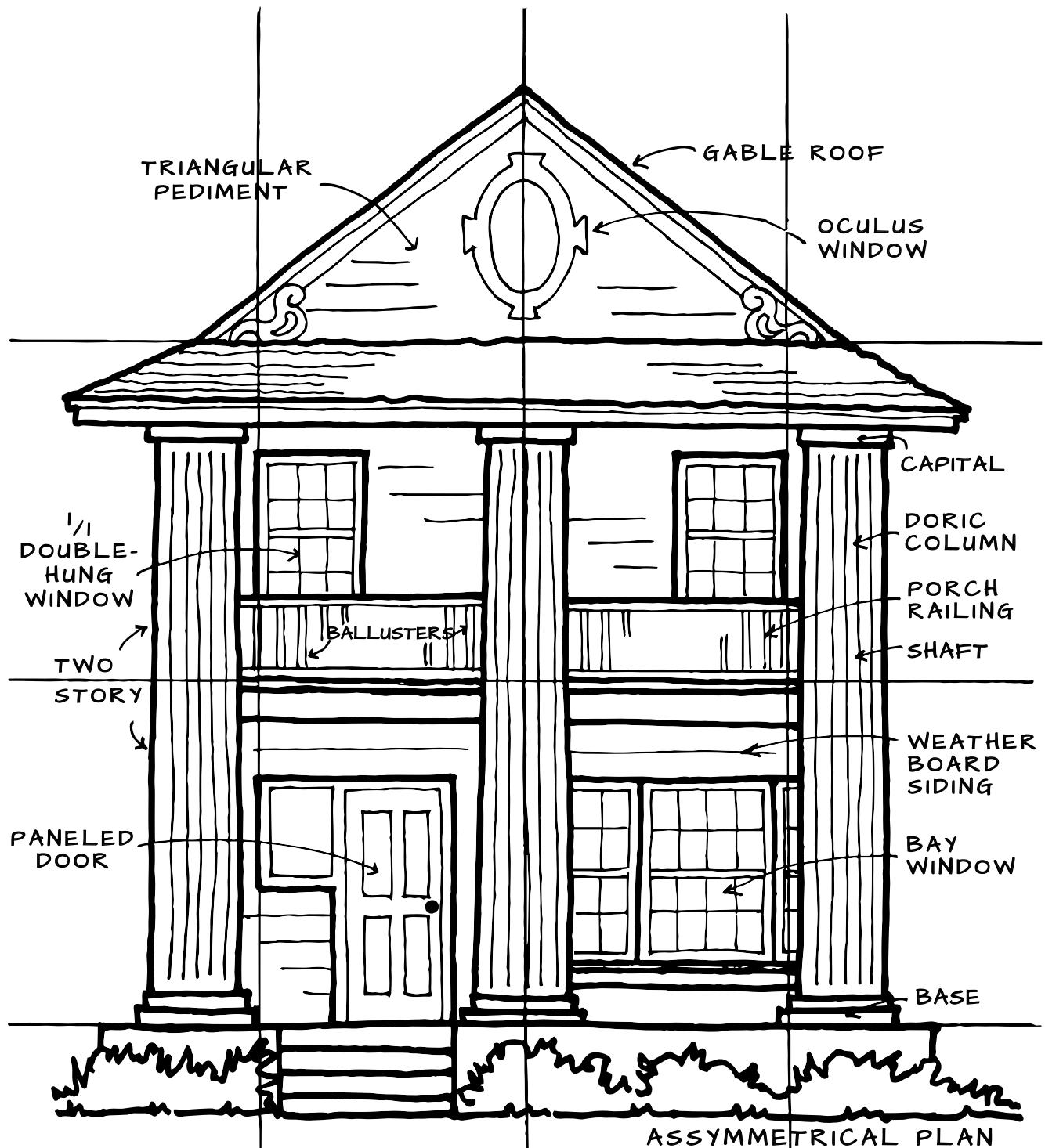
The most outstanding detail was the use of large columns in the classic Greek and Roman "orders" of architecture—Doric, Ionic and Corinthian.

After the American Revolution, citizens of the new republic wanted to break clear away from England. Americans knew a lot about the Greek culture and liked Greek ideas about government, art and the way to plan cities. They also liked the Greek and Roman styles in architecture. Thomas Jefferson built many beautiful buildings in this style. He was both a president and an architect.

In Oregon, the Greek style was more popular than the Roman. A number of buildings were designed like Greek temples similar to the Parthenon in Athens. The style was often used for banks because the heavy columns made the building look strong and that made people feel their money would be safe!

This style is called a "revival" because the designs were taken from designs developed by the Greeks and Romans hundreds of years before.





CLASSIC REVIVAL
1845-1865
PIONEER PERIOD



Characteristics of the architectural style:

Roof

The steep pitched gable roof was covered with shingles. There were often several gables on one roof. The edge of the roof often had a decorative board called a barge board.

Shape and Size

Basically a rectangular box, but often with bays and porches projecting out from the walls making the plan asymmetrical. The ceilings were quite high.

Windows and Doors

The most easily recognized feature is the pointed arch, which was used for windows and doors. Windows often were divided vertically, which makes them look taller, which is a Gothic characteristic.

Construction Materials

Builders were concerned about utility, economy and comfort so they used simple construction techniques and ornamentation.

Details

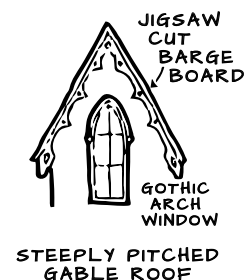
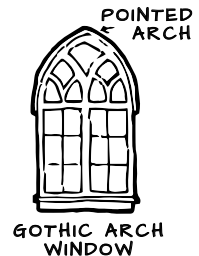
A new invention, the jigsaw, interested carpenters in creating many new design details in wood, because they could be done quickly and cheaply.

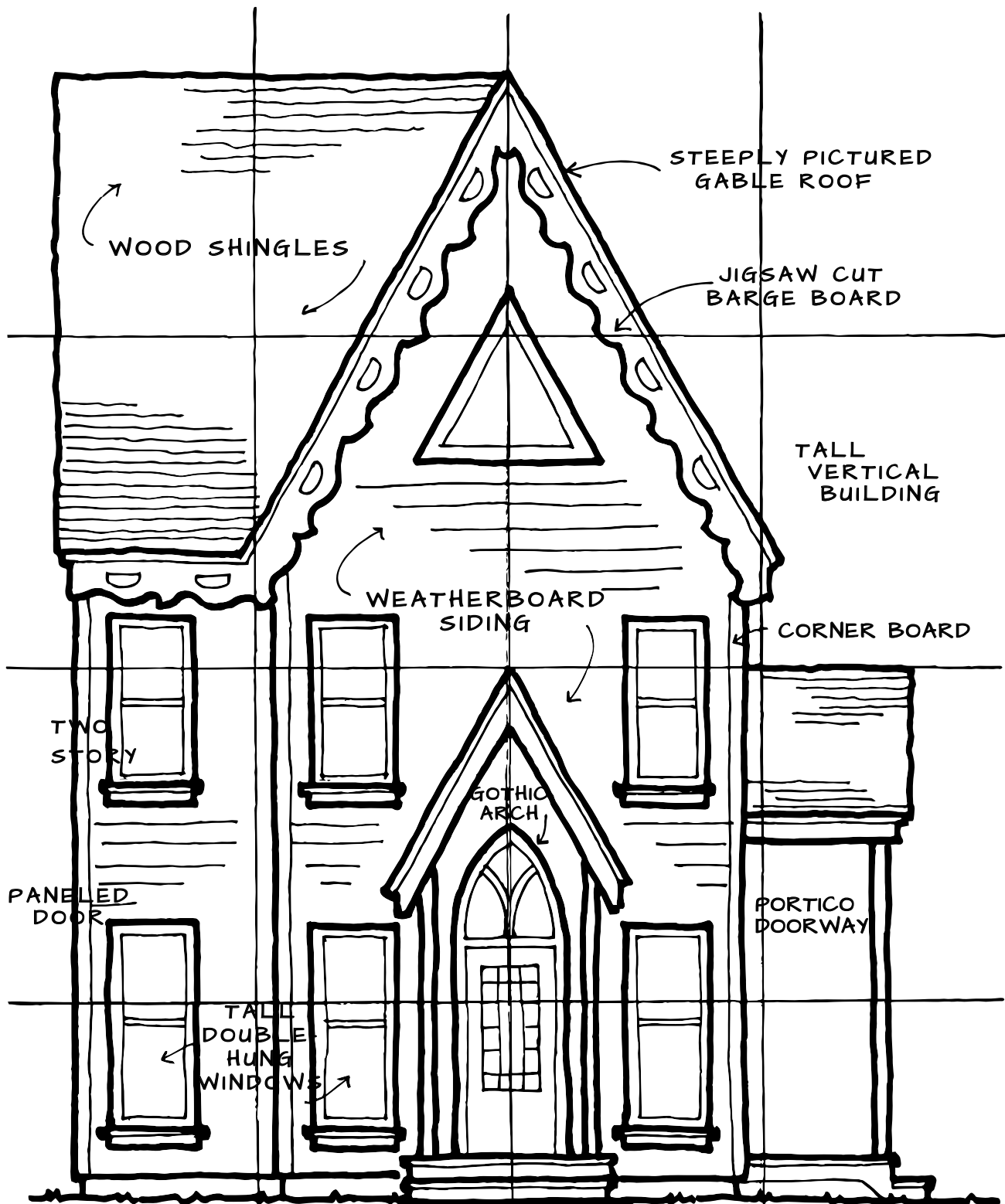
The romantic Gothic style came from England, where it had been made popular partly by the stories of authors such as Sir Walter Scott. The solid and formal Greek and Roman styles were replaced by the imaginative styles of the Middle Ages, when great Gothic cathedrals were built. Because of this, it was a popular style for churches, although it was used for public buildings and houses, as well.

A decorative version is called Carpenter Gothic, because carpenters liked to play around with design ideas that their new tool, the jigsaw, made possible. They created very charming buildings.

However, another contribution to the popularity of this style was the pattern books by Arthur Downing and others, which illustrated many designs from which people could choose.

A famous painter named Grant Wood did a painting of a farm couple in front of a Carpenter Gothic farmhouse. The painting is called, "American Gothic."





GOTHIC REVIVAL 1850-1890

PIONEER PERIOD

GENERAL QUESTIONS**3.40***Pioneer Period*

NAME

DATE

1. What does the term “revival” mean?

2. What does the term “survival” mean?

3. What is the historic origin of the “Classic Revival” style?

4. What is the historic origin of the “Colonial-Federal Survival” style?

5. Why are the terms “Classic Revival” and “Colonial-Federal Survival” appropriate for these styles?

6. What is one of the best known “Colonial-Federal Survival” style houses in Oregon?

7. In what ways are the “Classic Revival” and the “Colonial-Federal Survival” most similar?

8. What was the most distinctive difference between the “Classic Revival” and the “Colonial-Federal Survival styles?”

9. Describe the general changes from 1840 to 1890 from the Log Building style to the “Gothic Revival” style of architecture.

10. If you were to build a house based on the Pioneer Period, which style would you choose? Why?

VOCABULARY

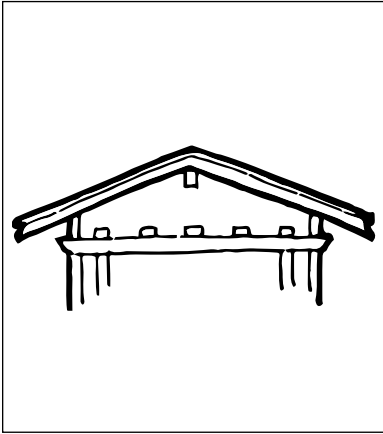
3.41

Pioneer Period

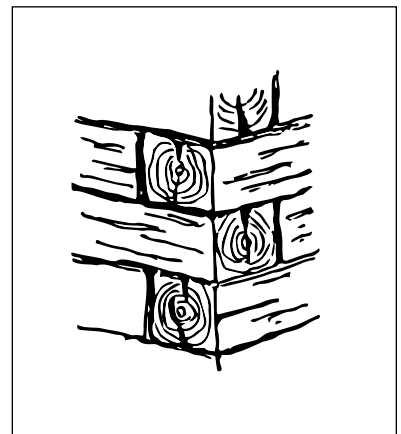
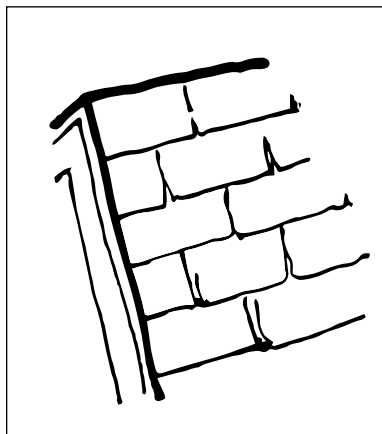
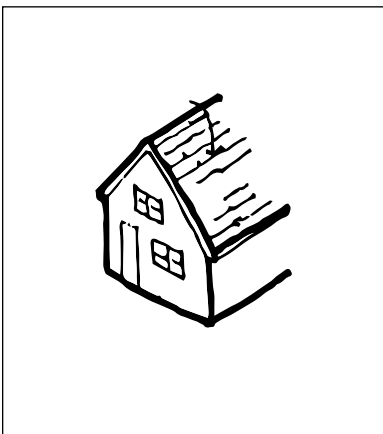
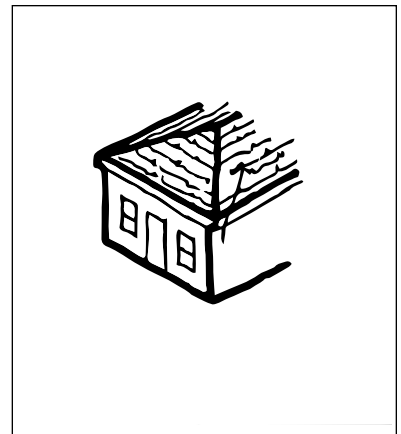
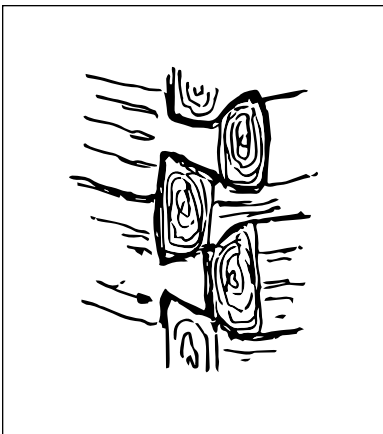
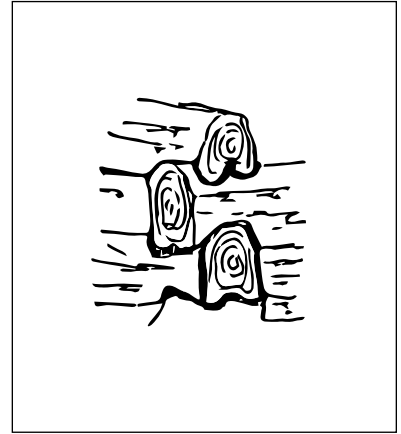
NAME

DATE

Label each picture with the correct term.



- a. interlocking
- b. notched
- c. dovetailed
- d. low pitched
- e. gable roof
- f. tripped roof
- g. shingles



COMPARATIVE PERIOD CHARACTERISTICS**3.42***The Pioneer Period*

NAME

DATE

Give at least one characteristic of each style in each section	STYLES			
	Log Buildings 1840 - 1870	Classic Revival 1840 - 1865	Colonial-Federal 1840 - 1860	Gothic Revival 1850 - 1890
Roof				
Shape/Size				
Windows/Doors				
Construction Materials				
Details				
Historical Information and Examples in Oregon				