

38. THE JOHN M. WALTHALL HOME
118 Sycamore Avenue (1911)



Landmark Preservation Commission Resolution: May 19, 1997
Designated by City Council: June 24, 1997

Description: This brown shingle-style residence has a rectangle plan. Its massive side-facing gable roof is relieved by a large shed dormer containing three pairs of multi-paned casement windows. The front edge of the roof extends over a full porch. Square brick posts resting on a low brick wall support the porch structure. The posts and wall have projecting decorative headers in the brickwork as does the chimney which extends slightly above the ridge of the roof. Weathered brown shingles sheath the exterior of the house.

Historic Significance: This home was built in 1911 for Mr. and Mrs. John Walthall in the new Wisecarver Tract which been subdivided from a wheat field only three years earlier. Mr. Walthall, a great-grandson of President James Madison's sister, came to Modesto on June 1, 1889, after graduating from law school. He served as Stanislaus County District Attorney for two years and then went into a law partnership until 1914, when he started his own practice. He was active in a number of civic organizations. Dr. John Cooper, a prominent Modesto physician, bought the home from the Walthalls and lived there for many years.