

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received AUG 1 1984  
date entered AUG 30 1984

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

1. Name

historic Ashford Home ~~House~~

and/or common Ashford Mansion

2. Location

WA WA 5

street & number Mount Tacoma Canyon Road west of Echo 1 not for publication

city, town Ashford vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county Pierce code 053

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Walt and Jan Green

street & number Box G

city, town Ashford vicinity of state Washington 98304

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pierce County Assessor

street & number 2401 South 35th Street

city, town Tacoma state Washington 98409

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Washington State Inventory of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date January 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

city, town 111 West 21st Avenue, Olympia state Washington 98504

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved      date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ashford Mansion is a large two and one-half story wood-frame home set against a forested hillside in southeastern Pierce County. The home exhibits some of the design qualities of the Colonial Revival Style, though these elements are greatly simplified. The building is located in the town of Ashford near the Nisqually River. Surrounding the town are the lush foothills of Mount Rainier, and the National Park boundary lies about five miles to the east. The Ashford Mansion faces south toward Mount Tacoma Canyon Road, part of the original highway to the park.

The Ashford Mansion rests on a concrete foundation which is obscured by a wooden skirting. The building is sheathed with clapboards on the first floor and wood shingles on the second floor and roof. When originally constructed, the building was rectangular in shape, with a small one story cross-gable ell on the rear or north side of the home which has been enlarged over time. The main or south elevation is detailed with a large center cross-gable that rises above the home's front entrance. Extending the length of this elevation is a one story flat roof porch detailed with simple posts and balustrade. This porch is attached to similarly detailed two-tier porches on the east and west facades. The second floor levels of these two identical porches are truncated at their ends by the slope of the overhanging roof. Above the center of these porches is a single window beneath the roof's clipped gable peaks. It is the presence of these two symmetrically placed porches that clearly ties the design of the house to the formalism of the Colonial Revival. Other details of the house include gable roof dormers, stairs servicing the porches, and corner boards.

Most windows on the building have simple molded surrounds. Within the front center gable are two one-over-one double-hung sash windows. Immediately below the eaves of the main roof on each side of the center gable are pairs of square single pane casement windows. Large single pane fixed windows with transoms are on the front facade of the first floor. The transoms have a border of colored glass. Other windows in the home are primarily single or paired double-hung sash. Wood paneled doors with square upper windows are on the first floor. The doors opening onto the second floor porches are wood with paired arched windows.

The gable-roof kitchen ell on the north side of the home is irregularly shaped due to its incremental development. The ell was extended and two shed-roof additions were also added on its west side. Details on the addition include: exposed rafter tails, simply molded window surrounds, fixed casement and double-hung windows, and a wood and glass door similar to those on the second story porches. A chimney services a wood stove once used in the Tacoma Hotel and brought to the mansion by Mr. Ashford.

The interior of the house is quite simple with detailing limited to door and window surrounds, a stairway with turned newel and balusters, and fir floors. The original fireplace was refaced with sandstone. The attic has never been finished even though at one time it was used as sleeping quarters for hotel guests.

The building has experienced only a few minor alterations. Interior changes include the widening of an interior archway between the front room and dining room and the enclosure of a back stairway which was remodeled into cabinet space. Exterior alterations are limited to the rear of the building. A glass door flanked by fixed windows was added to the dining room (north wall, east corner) probably at the same time interior changes were made. This door is covered by a small shed roof hood. One of the fixed windows on the kitchen ell has also been enlarged.

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Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

2

To the west of the Ashford Home is a small wood-frame garage that was constructed in the 1930's. Its design imitates the house with its use of clapboards and a clipped gable roof. Nevertheless, the garage does not contribute to the significance of the property due to its relatively late construction date and incremental alterations. Immediately north of the garage is a large wood-frame barn. The barn was constructed within the last five years and it also employs a clipped gable roof.

The present owners have been repairing the house and operate a small "bed and breakfast" establishment for those on their way to visit Mount Rainier National Park, a use made popular by Mr. Ashford eighty years ago.

## 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1903 **Builder/Architect** Cora Ashford, designer

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ashford Mansion is significant as the home and private hotel of Walter and Cora Ashford, founders of the community which bears their name. This settlement, as the terminus of the Tacoma Eastern Railway, was a focal point for early lumber mills and was the gateway to Mount Rainier National Park. The house is a unique application of the Colonial Revival style in a remote area of rural southeastern Pierce County.

Homesteaders began to file claims in the Nisqually Valley in the late 1880's, with the intention of developing farms within the heavily forested foothills of Mount Rainier and mining the known coal deposits in the area. The community remained isolated until a Tacoma Eastern (Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul) Railway spur line to the valley was completed in 1904, five years after Congress declared Mount Rainier a national park. Improved transportation brought increasing numbers of tourists to the park and opened the surrounding area to logging. Two major lumber companies involved with this development were the Pacific National and Mestlers, both with ties to Tacoma.

Walter and Cora Ashford were two of the first pioneers in the settlement of this area. The Ashfords came to the Nisqually Valley in 1888. By 1891, they had platted the town-site of Ashford and began to contribute the services needed to establish the town. Walter built the first post office, a grocery store (which still stands), and a dance hall. Cora Ashford was the postmistress from 1894 (when the post office first opened) until 1938. Mr. Ashford also provided an outdoor pavilion near his home which was used for plays and other activities by the local grade school. One Ashford daughter married W.S. Van Dyke, who was to become a leading movie director in the 1920's and 1930's. Mr. Ashford financed Van Dyke's way into the movie industry. When the Tacoma Eastern Railway extended its line south from Tacoma to the Nisqually River, Ashford was chosen as its terminus.

In 1903, Mr. Ashford built his house on the wagon road to Mount Rainier. Mrs. Ashford supposedly designed the house after a Georgian mansion she had seen on a visit to England. In addition to housing the family, it served as a semi-private hotel for well-to-do Tacoma families including executives of the Northern Pacific Railroad, individuals associated with both Tacoma and Ashford lumber companies and other investment companies whose offices were in Tacoma. The close association between Ashford and major Tacoma promoters suggests that he may have been sent to this area of Pierce County by Tacoma investors for the specific purpose of developing a town.

The house is architecturally unique in this area of Pierce County. Though the home may appear rather modestly detailed when compared to Colonial Revival homes in Seattle and Tacoma, the Pierce County Cultural Resource Survey has yielded no comparable structures within the vicinity. The term "mansion" was first applied to the Ashford home by nearby residents, for most early buildings in the area are very simple vernacular structures representative of rural pioneer settlement. The scale and design of the Ashford Mansion reflect the ambitions of its builders and the contributions they made to local community development. These accomplishments include providing the terminus for a railroad whose constructions opened up southeastern Pierce County to further settlement and resource development as well as providing the means whereby more travelers could visit Mount Rainier National Park.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Beech, James L., "The Ashford Story." Walt and Jan Green, Box G, Ashford, Washington.  
 Engel, Pearl, and Jeannette Hlavin, History of Tacoma Eastern Area. Manuscript, Washington State Historical Society Library, Tacoma, Washington.  
 Hannibal, Frances O., Taped interview with Jan Green and family records. (Granddaughter of Ashford), South 1715 Oberlin Road, Spokane, Washington.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Kapowsin

Quadrangle scale 1:62,500

### UTM References

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**Verbal boundary description and justification** The property is located in Section 27, Township 15 North, Range 6 East, Willamette Meridian (parcel No. 06-15-27-1-053) on the Mount Tacoma Canyon Road in Ashford, Washington.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	n/a	code	county	code

state	n/a	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Caroline Gallacci, Preservation Planner	date	April 1984
organization	Pierce County Planning Dept.	telephone	(206) 591-7172
street & number	2401 South 35th Street	state	Washington 98409
city or town	Tacoma	code	98409

Edited by Mark L. Brack  
Archaeology & Historic Pres.

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer date July 25, 1984

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the National Register date 8/30/84

for Melores Byer  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

Chief of Registration

date