

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 11 1984

date entered NOV 8 1984

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

1. Name

historic Watkins, Paul, House

and/or common Watkins Memorial Methodist Home

2. Location

street & number 175 East Wabasha Street

N/A not for publication

city, town Winona

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

code 22

county Winona

code 169

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name Paul Watkins Memorial Methodist Home

street & number 175 East Wabasha Street

city, town Winona

N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Winona County Courthouse, County Recorder's Office

street & number Third and Washington Streets

city, town Winona

state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Survey of Hist. Resources
has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1981 federal state county local

depository for survey records Minn. Historical Society, Ft. Snelling History Center

city, town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55111

7. Description

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Paul Watkins House is located at 175 East Wabasha Street, Winona, Minnesota, in a residential neighborhood near the center of the city. Situated near the center of its relatively small lot, the house is not far from the street and faces north-northeast.

It is a brick house with stone trim and quoining, built on a T-plan, with the cross of the T parallel to the street. The cross of the T is two and one-half stories, 38 x 87 ft.; the perpendicular part of the T is 33 x 80 ft. and contains a single two-story room. According to the architect, Ralph Adams Cram, the house was designed in "a modified English XVith century form, partly Tudor, partly Elizabethan." This form corresponds with the Jacobethan Revival style described by Marcus Wiffin.

As with the Jacobethan Revival, the Paul Watkins House has ridged roofs whose steep-sided gables rise above the roof line. The roof itself is composed of very thick slate (totalling 350,000 pounds) secured by copper screws and nails on quarter-inch copper plating. Large dormers, similar to the gables, rise above two-story window bays on the front facade. Other smaller, hipped dormers are located elsewhere on the roof. There are several multi-flued chimneys. Extending to the east is a hip-roofed two-story addition; extending to the west is a similarly shaped porte cochere. Each has its own large chimney. A stone-trimmed sun porch is located in a corner between the two wings of the "T." Windows generally are in rectangular clusters with stone mullions and surrounded by stone trim. In many cases the leaded glass has been taken from old European buildings. Doors generally are in round-arched openings with elaborate stone trim. The main entrance door has hand-wrought-iron gates by Samuel Yellin. Areas immediately in front of the west and north facades are defined by stone balustrades.

The most prominent interior element is the Great Hall or music room, constituting all of the perpendicular part of the "T." This 30 x 60-ft. open-timber-roofed room, according to Cram, is "more or less suggestive of the hall in an old English manor house." Among its many features are an enormous stone fireplace, a mullioned and transomed bay window, and a 6,000-pipe Aeolian organ. Along with many other rooms, the Great Hall includes much wood panelling and carving. Also of note are the Georgian drawing and dining rooms which occupy most of the remaining first floor.

[see continuation sheet]

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input 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 1924–27

Builder/Architect Cram & Ferguson

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Paul Watkins House is significant for its architecture and for its association with Paul Watkins and the Watkins Products Company. Commissioned by Paul Watkins, the house was designed by the firm of Cram & Ferguson, particularly by Ralph Adams Cram, who was the architect while Ferguson was the business manager. The house was begun in 1924 and completed in 1927.

Ralph Adams Cram (1863–1942) is considered to be "the foremost Gothic revival architect of the United States" and was one who "exercised a wide national influence" (Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects, v. 1, p. 471). In Marcus Whiffin's discussion of the Late Gothic Revival, Cram (along with his earlier partner, Goodhue) is virtually the only architect mentioned. The Watkins House is one of five Minnesota buildings associated with Ralph Adams Cram and the only house. Cram is universally known for his Gothic and Jacobethan (and Collegiate Gothic) revival designs for churches and institutional buildings. Houses are relatively rare among his designs, especially during his later years. The 1929 book on The Work of Cram and Ferguson, Architects includes only four residences and the most heavily illustrated is the Watkins House (although it is misidentified as being in Winona, Illinois). It also is the only one clearly in the Jacobethan mode. The Watkins House is one of the few houses that Cram designed and today survives virtually unaltered on both exterior and interior.

Cram thought enough of his work on the Watkins house to describe it in a well-illustrated 1928 article in The American Architect. His primary design consideration, he noted, "was the providing of a right setting for a very remarkable collection of works of old art and craftsmanship gathered during many years from various parts of Europe. . . . This collection of art work . . . determined very largely the type of house that must be made to house them." Thus, Cram concluded, the "modified English XVith century form, partly Tudor, partly Elizabethan" seemed best. The same consideration also let Cram to pay particularly close attention to the interior, notable the Elizabethan Great Hall and Georgian drawing and dining rooms. These rooms, especially the Great Hall, are virtually unaltered. The Great Hall, in fact, still contains the tapestries and furnishings visible in photos accompanying Cram's 1928 article, even though the house is no longer a private residence.

[see continuation sheet]

9. Major Bibliographical References

[see continuation sheet]

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Approx. four.
Quadrangle name Winona West, Minn.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	5	6	0	9	3	2	1	0	4	8	7	7	8	2	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing							

B

Zone			Easting						Northing							

C

Zone			Easting						Northing							

D

Zone			Easting						Northing							

E

Zone			Easting						Northing							

F

Zone			Easting						Northing							

G

Zone			Easting						Northing							

H

Zone			Easting						Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 7, and Block B, Drew, Mead & Simpson's Subdivision, Plummer's Addition, City of Winona.

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

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Robert M. Frame III, Historical Consultant

organization N/A

date August 1984

street & number 202 McBoal St.

telephone 612-291-7882

city or town St. Paul

state Minnesota 55102

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

Russell W. Fridley

Russell W. Fridley
title State Historic Preservation Officer

date 9/26/84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 11-8-84

for Silvers Byers
Keeper of the National Register

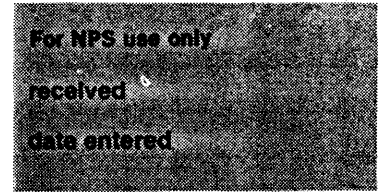
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet **Watkins House**

Item number **7**

Page **2**

The Watkins House exterior and interior, especially the more decorated areas, are largely unaltered. Only the porte-cochere was altered to any noticeable degree when a large new building was built to the west, and that alteration consists primarily of filling in the arched openings. The new building construction did destroy extensive landscaping on the west grounds. Located at the southeast corner of the property is a large, two-story garage designed similar to the house and at the same time. The garage has four large round-arch doors.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

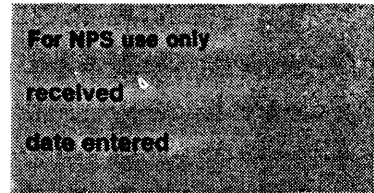
Continuation sheet Watkins House Item number 8 Page 3

The Watkins Company, headquartered in Winona, is significant for having been the largest direct-selling company in the United States from 1915 to 1940. It began as one among many medicinal remedies firms in the late nineteenth century, employing travelling "wagon salesmen." It survived, prospered, modernized and expanded its product line, and brought the selling technique into twentieth century cities, establishing distribution warehouses throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, South America, and elsewhere. It became Winona's largest business and has been extraordinarily influential in the city's financial growth.

Paul Watkins was the nephew of Joseph Ray Watkins, founder of J.R. Watkins Company, a patent-medicine liniment firm in Winona. Joseph R. Watkins had purchased an existing business and expanded it into one of the largest of its kind in the world, producing ointments, liniments, vanilla, and spices of all kinds. The products were sold in a unique system by the travelling "Watkins Man," a sales device which reportedly made Watkins a household word. J.R. had brought the business from Plainview to Winona to take advantage of the city's rail facilities. His nephew Paul was brought to Winona in 1892 as vice-president when business had increased to multi-million dollar proportions. Paul became the firm's second president in 1911 and held that office until his death in 1931. His wife lived in the house until 1956. Paul Watkins is considered largely responsible for the development of the company's door-to-door marketing technique by the travelling "Watkins Man," a device which helped to expand the firm's product line and market area while dramatically boosting profits.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form



Continuation sheet Watkins House Item number 9 Page 4

Buswell, Beulah. Watkins United Methodist Home, Winona, Minnesota. [Winona]: Watkins United Methodist Home Board of Directors, n.d.

Cram, Ralph Adams. "Home of Paul Watkins, Winona, Minnesota." American Architect and Architecture 134 (Aug. 20, 1928): 223-35).

Gebhard, David, and Tom Martinson. A Guide to the Architecture of Minnesota. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1977 [page 331].

Kennedy, Roger. Minnesota Houses. Minneapolis: Dillon Press, 1967 [pages 225-26].

Ralph Adams Cram; Cram and Ferguson. New York: Whittlesey House, 1931.

Tucci, Douglass Shand. "Cram, Ralph Adams." Macmillan Encyclopedia of Architects. Vol. 1. New York: Free Press, 1982.

Work of Cram and Ferguson, Architects, Including Work by Cram, Goodhue, and Ferguson. New York: Pencil Points Press, 1929 [plates 338-342].