

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

**DATA SHEET**  
FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED **MAR 23 1977**  
DATE ENTERED **NOV 23 1977**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC W. P. Sawyer House AND ORCHARD JHG 10.17.77  
AND/OR COMMON  
Sawyer Mansion

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER  
U. S. Highway 12  
CITY, TOWN  
Sawyer  
STATE  
Washington  
VICINITY OF  
No. 4 - Mike McCormack  
CODE  
53  
COUNTY  
Yakima  
CODE  
077  
NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME  
Frederick C. Erickson  
STREET & NUMBER  
Rt. 2, Box 2177  
CITY, TOWN  
Wapato  
STATE  
Washington  
VICINITY OF

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Assessor's Office, Yakima County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
Second and "B" Streets  
CITY, TOWN  
Yakima  
STATE  
Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE  
Washington State Inventory of Historic Places  
DATE  
January, 1975  
DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS  
Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission  
CITY, TOWN  
Olympia  
STATE  
Washington  
FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" 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 W. P. Sawyer House is a Colonial Revival style mansion of generous proportions, located in Washington's lower Yakima Valley at Parker Bottom. Completed in 1910, the lavish farm house was the central structure on Elmwood Farm, one of the area's earliest fruit ranches. Although plans for the house were prepared by Yakima architect W. W. De Veaux, its design was founded upon the thoroughly researched ideas and specific needs of Sawyer and his large family.

Elmwood Farm is situated some thirteen miles south of Yakima on U. S. Route 12. The ranch once encompassed as many as 223 acres of orchard lands, but the property has today been reduced to eleven acres.

The Sawyer mansion stands on a ridge or bench above the road, and faces south toward the banks of the Yakima River. To the rear and sides of the house are Bartlett pear orchards which were planted by Sawyer and are still in production. Massive elm trees and seedlings screen the house from the road. Along the driveway to the east of the mansion is a combination carriage-bunkhouse-horse barn, standing intact but somewhat deteriorated. On the west lawn is a large swimming pool installed by the present-day owners.

The bottomland opposite the house and below the road is now open alfalfa pasture crossed by railroad tracks running parallel to the highway. An access to a public fishing area on the river bank leads past the dilapidated Moore-Mattoon log cabin, a small modern home of Sawyer's son-in-law, and various outbuildings. The architect's original plans for these flats called for picturesque landscaping with terraces, rustic pergolas, and lakes. This project was never executed, probably because the flats represented Sawyer's most fertile orchard land. Other structures on the property relating to the ranch complex which are no longer extant include: a team and hay barn, a cow barn, three cottages for hired help with families, a packing house, and a passenger station situated on the tracks opposite the mansion.

The mansion itself is a two and one-half story stone and frame structure with a hipped roof, approximately 50 feet by 50 feet in dimension. The house rests on a poured aggregate cement foundation measuring three feet in thickness at its base. The ground floor is constructed of rock-faced basaltic stone rubble. A portion of the rear elevation is of river stone taken from the Yakima River bed. Above the first story, wall construction is framed with narrow lapped siding. The wood shingled hipped roof has a slightly bellcast curvature and a deck with a Chippendale railing. Three chimneys constructed of brick from nearby Granger are laid up with wide, white mortar joints.

Basically square in plan, the Sawyer house is made asymmetrical by expansive covered porches with Tuscan columns on the south and east elevations. A third large porch on the west facade is covered with a trellis constructed by the present owners. These broad, covered porches provide an amenity in the form of shaded protection from the fierce desert sun, and the various deck levels afford impressive views of Valley scenery.

One of the most distinctive elements of the building's exterior is its fenestration, which varies widely in design on each elevation. A number of forms are represented: double-hung sash with six, eight, or ten lights over one; six over six light sash; Gothic sash; fixed leaded or multi-paned transoms over single plate glass sash. In addition, the front facade features a projecting polygonal bay and a Palladian window with casements. In the hipped roof are numerous gabled dormer with returned cornices and Gothic sash. An especially

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large central dormer on the south facade has a broken pediment. The formal front entrance with its leaded sidelights and semi-elliptical fanlight is also of major interest.

On the interior of the Sawyer house, the basement served a number of utilitarian purposes. A large kitchen and dining room with an exterior entrance were designed to serve the hired ranch hands. The dining room still retains an original slab table and a massive fireplace with recessed shelves for pot warming. Cement-walled root cellars for the storage of fruit and vegetables are equipped with a simple cold air ventilation system. One cellar room contains a single small wood stove which originally provided supplementary heat to the living room exclusively. A coal-fired furnace was installed at an early date, yet the heat which it generated was circulated to the "public" rooms on the first floor only.

A spacious entrance hall divides the ground-floor rooms longitudinally and sets the tone for the richly-furnished interior. The woodwork is a dark-stained fir most predominantly displayed in the closed-stringer, panelled staircase. The walls are covered with an original embossed, wood-grained wall wallpaper. The hangings are carefully arranged in vertical panels narrowing in regular sequence up the staircase wall. Paper in a continuous grained pattern forms a dado, or wainscoting.

The hallway provides access to a parlor, library and rear bedroom with bath to the west, and a living-room, dining room and kitchen to the east. Except for the kitchen and bath which have undergone renovation, all ground-floor rooms are essentially intact. Throughout the house only the sub-flooring was installed, a fact which indicates that Sawyer perhaps had financial difficulties in completing his ambitious project. The sub-flooring has been recently grained and varnished. The house has an abundance of clear-grained fir woodwork which has been largely left unpainted over the years. Because of the mansion's country location, a fire-fighting system was installed, employing a two-inch water line from the outdoor well and interior hose hook-ups on both first and second stories. A dumbwaiter extending from basement to roof permitted the transport of food to all levels. Located in the dining room on the first floor, the lift is still operative.

A most fascinating feature of the first floor interior are four original wallpapers, all of which remain in sound condition. In addition to the wood-grained paper in the central hallway, the library is lined with embossed, pseudo-leather paper hangings with simulated wainscoting. The hangings in the dining room are also imitation leather with embossed, blue and gold shield motifs and swags, extending up to a bracketed chair rail. The wallpaper in the rear bedroom is a simulated silk with green and white Adamesque patterns. Like the other wallpapers, it is hung in repeating vertical panels.

Fireplaces are another interesting feature of the first floor interior. They occur in the parlor, the bedroom, the library, and the living room. The latter is a Mission-style construction recessed within a small nook that includes a cozy fireside bench. A plastered hood overhangs a squared brick base, and original heatilator elements force hot air through ducts into the adjacent dining room.

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Six spacious bedrooms are situated on the second floor. The master bedroom in the south-east corner is entered through an anteroom brightly lit by the large Palladian window on the south facade. The upstairs bath includes a partitioned water closet with a fresh air circulation system, similar to that of the downstairs bath.

The attic consists of a large open space fourteen feet in height, specified by the architect as a playroom for Sawyer's four children. At the center of the roof is a skylight which was originally planned to provide light to the interior halls down to ground-floor level. The skylight has since been obscured by covering of the attic floor opening. Four small corner rooms in the attic were provided for hired help.

# 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 checked="" 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1910

BUILDER/ARCHITECT W. W. De Veaux, architect

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sawyer mansion and carriagehouse are the sole surviving structures of Elmwood Farm, one of the first large-scale fruit ranches in the lower Yakima Valley. In 1892, William P. Sawyer purchased approximately 150 fertile acres along the Yakima River, and in subsequent years became one of four or five early orchardists to fully develop the agricultural potential of the Parker Bottom area. Elmwood Farm was known chiefly for its production of Bartlett pears, and through its enterprising and civic-minded owner, W. P. Sawyer. Businessman, transportation promoter, horticulturist, and state legislator, Sawyer was a true Renaissance man of the developing West. His Colonial Revival mansion, completed in 1912, was designed by the Yakima architect W. W. de Veaux. It is a home of urban sophistication, based largely upon Sawyer's own ideas of comfortable, efficient, and esthetic country living. The mansion remains essentially unaltered today, and stands as a tangible monument to the earliest material success of the Yakima Valley orchardists.

William P. Sawyer was a native of Boston. He is known to have spent a number of his adult years in Stillwater, Minnesota, where he owned and operated a hardware store. In 1889, Sawyer closed his hardware business and, in partnership with Fred Pennington, a Stillwater dealer in timber, ventured west to the city of North Yakima in the Washington territory. In Yakima the partners purchased the A. B. Reed Hardware business then located at the corner of Yakima Avenue and First Street.

In three years time Sawyer sold his interest in the business to Pennington, with the intention of entering into agriculture. He purchased from a Mr. Lord undeveloped acreage at Parker Bottom some fifteen miles south of Yakima. On the new property Sawyer's family resided for a number of years in a modest board and batten farmhouse on the "bench", or ridge, above the Yakima River flats. On the bottom lands below, Sawyer cleared away cottonwood trees and prepared for the planting of hops.

Although Sawyer was to spend the rest of his life as an orchardist on his Parker Bottom estate, he was continually involved in community and statewide affairs. From 1892 through 1895, he served as a state legislator. In 1907, Sawyer became one of seven original trustees of the Yakima Valley Transportation Company, an organization which promoted the construction of Yakima's streetcar system. Sawyer was instrumental in forming the State Horticultural Society and served as its president in 1912. In Yakima, he headed the building committee for the Masonic Temple. The committee employed W. W. De Veaux, the architect of Sawyer's own imposing mansion at Parker Bottom.

Elmwood Farm, as Sawyer's fruit ranch was known in later years, is situated in a particularly historic portion of the Yakima Valley. Adjacent to the present-day mansion is reputedly one of the earliest sites of the St. Joseph's Mission complex, a series of Oblate stations founded amongst the Yakima Indians in the late 1840's and early 1850's. The Parker Bottom area was inhabited by cattlemen in the 1860's. Close to the river's edge

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

1. De Veaux, W.W. "A Yakima Ranch House", Pacific Builder and Engineer. Vol. 6, No. 19. May 9, 1908. draft
  2. Erickson, Frederick. "Sawyer Mansion", nomination to the National Register.
  3. Helland, Maurice. Our Valley, Too. Maurice Helland, publ. Yakima, 1976.
  4. Sawyer, William P. Collected Correspondence, in the possession of Frederick Erickson, Rt. 2, Wapato, Washington.
- Continued on attached sheet

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one SEVEN (7) ACRES <sup>1146 10-17-77</sup>

UTM REFERENCES

A	1   0	7   0   3   0   4   0	5   1   4   7   6   6   0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

SEE ATTACHED LETTER OF 10/6/77

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE

Florence K. Lentz, Historic Preservation Specialist

ORGANIZATION

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

DATE

January, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

Box 1128

TELEPHONE

(206) 753-4116

CITY OR TOWN

Olympia

STATE

Washington

# 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

*Jeanne M. Welch*

TITLE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/16/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*Robert B. Rettig*

DATE

11/23/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST

*Charles [Signature]*

DATE

11-21-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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on the original Sawyer estate stands the Moore-Mattoon Cabin, a small log structure dating from c.1864 and generally thought to be one of the oldest structures remaining in the Yakima Valley. Because of its low-lying flatlands, Parker Bottom was the first area in the lower Yakima Valley north of the River to be cultivated. Early experiments in fruit-growing were conducted here, prior to the advent of irrigation, but it was not until the era of W. P. Sawyer that fruit became the economic mainstay of the region.

With his own property, Sawyer was a progressive planner and developer as well as an imaginative orchardist. He first experimented with hops on his newly-acquired ranch. Soon he began to concentrate on the cultivation of Bartlett pears, and on a self-devised method of "short-pruning" which increased the strength and longevity of his trees. Elmwood Farm pears were guaranteed "perfect", and all operations on the ranch, including planting, packing, and shipping, were personally supervised by Sawyer. Elmwood also produced apples, prunes, cherries, and alfalfa. Sawyer was successful in routing the Oregon, Washington Railroad and Navigation Company tracks across his farm parallel to the county road. On his private side track he constructed his own packing house. In an attempt to realize the full value of his property, Sawyer subdivided a portion of it, and platted the town of Sawyer complete with streets and a town square. Although the village did not materialize in Sawyer's day, a fruit storage warehouse and several commercial structures of a later date mark the townsite today.

The Sawyer mansion is architecturally significant for several reasons. In terms of its relatively isolated country setting, the Colonial Revival style house is notable for its ambitious scale and its attention to fashion and comfort. The mansion is unusually well-equipped for the housing and feeding of hired help. Finally, the house is a self-contained unit with design features and "modern" conveniences carefully calculated to fulfill each and every need of the rancher and his family. In an article detailing plans for the house by W. W. DeVeaux, in Pacific Builder and Engineer (May, 1908) the architect noted:

*It is unusual, in this part of the country, to find a rancher who will put so much money into his home, but as the rancher himself stated: "Being so far from town, my home has to serve me as my office, my theatre, my church: because a man is a rancher is that any reason why he should not have things as good, and as comfortable, as a man who lives in the city?"*

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5. Sawyer, William P. "Location and Description of Elmwood Farm" no date (post 1909).