

PH0688363

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	NOV 19 1978
DATE ENTERED	DEC 29 1978

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC

B.J. Ricker House

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1510 Broad Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Grinnell

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Iowa

Poweshiek

159

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Robert F. and B.G. Voertman

STREET & NUMBER

1510 Broad Street

CITY, TOWN

Grinnell

VICINITY OF

STATE

Iowa

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Poweshiek County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Grinnell

STATE

Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The B.J. Ricker House is a dwelling in the Prairie School style designed by Walter Burley Griffin in 1910-1911. The house is rectangular in shape, 51' x 35' in dimension, with the long axis parallel to the street. Attached to the house are two appendages, a covered veranda on the south end and a garage with connecting passageway on the north.

The house grows out of a high cement basement which reaches to the level of the first-floor window sills. Four broad piers of brick define the corners of the house. These reach to the level of the second-floor window sills and are topped by screened sleeping porches. Between the piers on the first floor, the windows and doors of the front and rear form a continuous band, the openings divided by brick mullions. These bands are sheltered by shelf roofs which overlap the corner piers. Above the shelf roofs, the wall of the house extends to the level of the 2nd floor window sills, where a continuous cemer stringcourse, which is at once the sills of the windows and the caps of the corner piers, runs continuously around the entire house. The second floor windows, are like those of the first floor, arranged into a continuous band divided by brick mullions. The mullions overlap the stringcourse and extend down to meet the shelf roof. The windows are case-ments, each sash divided by wooden muntins into a large center pane with a narrow pane on each side and a narrow pane containing leaded glass above and below. On each side of the house two of the window bays are occupied by decorative stucco panels featuring geometric designs of brick and tile. These are symmtetrically placed on each facade. They are not confined to the window zone, but extend downward to meet the shelf roofs and, on the ends, upward to meet the soffits of the raking eaves. On the ends of the house the attic windows are diamond-shaped slits positioned tightly against the underside of the roof.

Directly above the window zone, the tile roof, disengaged from the wall below, seems to hover. It is a gable roof of restfully low pitch, with raking eaves of the ends extended well beyond the plane of the wall. The fascia of the horizontal cornice is splayed out at the bottom and slightly returned on the gable ends, a characteristic seen in other early Griffin houses. At the raking eaves the roof flares up slightly, a featur repeated on the roof of the veranda and garage. This oriental touch was also used by Griffin on other houses of the period. Two broad brick chimneys, set perpendicular to the axis of the roof, divide the roof into approximate thirds.

The veranda on the south side of the house is a near Greek cross in plan. Brick piers rise from above the concrete basement and support a roof formed of gables intersecting at right angles and detailed similarly to the main roof. The two-car garage to the north is separated from the house by a hyphen which originally contained a side entrance and parlor and veranda for the maid. Although planned from the start, it was only added later by Barry Byrne (the round-arched window in the rear wall of the garage is a clear indication of Byrne's participation), who redesigned the roof by placing the gable to face the street (Griffin planned the gable parallel to the street).

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/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

1911

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Walter Burley Griffin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The B.J. Ricker house is a significant early work of Walter Burley Griffin. Along with the houses of the Rock Crest/Rock Glen subdivision in Mason City, designed by Griffin in the following several years, and the Clarke House in Fairfield, designed by Barry Byrne, one-time collaborator of Griffin's, in 1915, the Ricker House ranks as one of the preeminent examples of the Prairie School in Iowa.

Construction of the Ricker house began in the spring of 1911 and it may therefore be surmised that the designs date from 1910. Millwork and labor problems delayed completion of the house until 1912.

Perhaps more pointedly than any other house designed by Griffin in the years around 1910, the Ricker house marks his emergence as an architect of independent maturity. Griffin, born in 1876, was raised in Oak Park and Elmhurst (ILL) and studied architecture under N. Clifford Ricker (it is not known if a relationship existed between Griffin's teacher and his later client) at the University of Illinois. After graduation in 1899, he began an independent practice, joining the informal group of avant-garde architects -- Dwight Perkins, Robert Spencer, Pond and Pond and Frank Lloyd Wright -- working at Steinway Hall in Chicago. Here he remained for two years, before entering Wright's employ.

Griffin's first significant commission, the William Emery House in Elmhurst (1901-2) dates from this period, and embodies many of the characteristics which were to be further developed in his later houses: corner piers with sleeping porches above, windows arranged in steady rhythmical bands, a broad gable roof extending well beyond the house on the ends, lateral extensions to the main body of the house, and a split-level plan with space interacting vertically.

Griffin remained with Wright at his Oak Park studio until 1905. The work of Griffin's next five years (1906-1910), when he began to practice independently, leaned heavily on ideas borrowed from Wright. The Bovee house in Evanston (1909-10), for example, with its cantilevered balconies anchored to a central core, has a great deal in common with Wright's T.H. Gale house of 1904 in Oak Park. The Sloan house (1907-09) in Elmhurst, with its interpenetrating masses and expansive, flowing horizontality, recalls Wright's Willets house of 1902.

A step in the direction of independence was taken with the Carter house in Evanston (1909-10) which with its corner piers, gable roof and lateral extensions recalls the Emery house of eight years before. The Ricker house is a development of the Emery, Carter idea. Here, however, for the first time is the massive, solid, almost static quality (in contrast to Wright's interpenetrating horizontal masses and volumes) that

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Johnson, Donald Leslie. The Architecture of Walter Burley Griffin. Melbourne: The Macmillan Company of Australia, 1977.
 Birrell, James. Walter Burley Griffin. St. Lucia, Australia; University of Queensland Press, 1964
 Van Zauten, David. Walter Burley Griffin: Selected Designs. Palos Park, Ill.: The Prairie School Press, 1970.
 The Western Architect 20 (August 1913), pp. 66ff. See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Des Moines, Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:250,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 522800 4622000

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property consists of three lots on the northeast corner of Broad St. and 10th Avenue, extending along Broad Street.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

S.J. Klingensmith, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

26 East Market Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Iowa City

STATE

Iowa 52240

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Adrian D. Apolunski

TITLE Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE 11/13/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/29/78

ATTEST: William H. Graham 12-27-78

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The interior, still essentially as originally planned, exhibits qualities of both compactness and spaciousness. The living and dining rooms are set in an L-shaped relationship; space flows around the dining room fireplace but is nonetheless tightly contained within the framework of the corner piers. The living room occupies the entire south side of the house, with the dining room in the center of the rear. The main stair ascends in a dogleg formation in the center of the house behind the fireplace. The northwest corner of the house contains a library and the northeast corner the kitchen with ample pantry areas. Between the two rooms is a secondary staircase. Upstairs 5 bedrooms and three baths are arranged with ingenious compactness around a central hallway.

The downstairs rooms have cabinets and shelves built into the corner piers. That in the library retains its original cabinetry with leaded glass doors. The fireplace in the library retains its original tile mural overmantle. The fireplace in the living room has been altered. The downstairs rooms have cove lighting and wooden molding bands set into the ceiling plaster. The bedrooms feature double-pitch tent ceilings, which impart an uncanny sense of spaciousness to the rooms.

Bibliography, cont:

- Wilson, Richard Guy. The Prairie School in Iowa. Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1977.
- Brooks, H. Allen. The Prairie School: Frank Lloyd Wright and his Midwest Contemporaries. New York: W.W. Norton, 1972.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

came to dominate Griffin's mature work, and for which he is to be appreciated as an architect of stature. Still present are the lateral extensions, but, as much appendages as extensions, they are now distinct from the house and a sense of horizontal movement is thus clearly impeded. The material is predominantly brick in contrast to the large areas of plaster and the general use of wood membering on the Carter and Emery houses. The piers, of the same material as the walls, stand out less as independent elements as they do at the two earlier houses, and there is thus more emphasis on the wall as a continuous enclosure.

The Ricker house, while building upon the past, is thus a clear introduction to the houses of the future -- the primitive Solid Rock (Kenilworth, Ill) of 1911, the houses of Rock Crest/Rock Glen of 1912-13, with their interesting variations on the square, corner-pier scheme first seen in Wright's "Fireproof House" design of 1907, and the lat houses of Griffin's Australian period.