

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received APR - 6 1983
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Eugene Rourke House -50T175

and/or common Rourke House

2. Location

street & number 619 Carson n/a not for publication

city, town La Junta n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Otero code 089

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	n/a in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Galen R. and Nancy S. Baker

street & number 619 Carson

city, town La Junta n/a vicinity of state Colorado

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number Box 511

city, town La Junta state Colorado 81050

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date October 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society; 1300 Broadway

city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Rourke House, constructed in 1898, is a two-story brick structure combining late Victorian with Colonial Revival elements. The most prominent feature is the turret at the southwest corner of the house. The residence sits on four corner lots (each lot 25 feet by 140 feet) on a lawn among many ash trees. Next to the public walk on two sides is a decorated, cement retaining wall which originally supported an iron fence. On the alley, to the rear (east) of the house is a small building of around 1920 construction now used for storage,¹ The neighborhood surrounding the house consists mostly of smaller, more modest houses, the majority in good repair. Belleview Avenue, the next street to the east, boasts some imposing houses among smaller, older residences.

The front (west) facade retains its original two-story portico which extends over the first and second floor central doorways. Above the two-story porch is a railing which runs across the later central gable. Originally the front section of the hipped roof displayed a double gable decorated with swags, which was later replaced with a single gable when the third floor was converted into an apartment.² A door was placed in the gable, flanked by windows.

On the south side, a smaller gable originally extended from the larger roof to form a roof over bay windows on the first and second floors. A Palladian window was set within this gable. It was replaced by two-double-hung windows for the third-floor apartment. The trim at the corners of the second gable remain.

On the north side, the gable was changed when a second story, sided with wooden shingles, was added over the back part of the house. Still later, a third one-story brick addition was built to the back (east) of the structure.³ Another change on the north has been the removal of a fireplace and its chimney.

The back entrance to the house was from an open porch placed on the southeast corner. This element has not been changed.

The foundation of the house is rock-faced sandstone. The windows are double-hung. Some of the original window casings have been replaced by aluminum. The window sills and ear lintels are of sandstone.

1. The structure was originally built for a three-car garage c.1920. It was converted into apartments around 1945, and is now used for storage.

2. John Horner, the second owner of the Rourke House, was responsible for the changes in the gables, and the other alterations to the exterior when he converted the house to apartments about 1945. (According to information provided by Mrs. Frances Keck)

3. The brick addition to the rear was constructed c. 1955 in order to create one more apartment on the first floor.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input 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		

*no pic
X theater
1/20/78*

Specific dates 1898 **Builder/Architect** Builder--Blankenship

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Eugene Rourke House is significant in being one of the few substantial examples of its type in La Junta. It also has historic interest because of its association with Eugene Rourke (1849-1918), a prominent pioneer, rancher, and businessman in the area.

Eugene Rourke was born 17 March 1849 in Wicklon County, Ireland. The youngest of ten children, he came to the United States (La Salle, Illinois) with his family in 1852. He later explored what is now southeastern Colorado, investing his savings in a cattle ranch which he established at the head of Bent Canyon near the Purgatory (Picket-wire) River. The ranch, which is thirty-five miles southwest of La Junta, proved a success and in 1875--the year La Junta was founded--Rourke married Mary Dooner, bringing her to the ranch to live. They also maintained a home in Trinidad, sixty miles southwest of the ranch.

By 1898 La Junta had developed into a sizable railroad town with good schools¹. The Rourkes made the decision to move to the community and began the construction of their home there in 1898. They soon became established in the town and by 1907, Rourke had organized the Colorado Savings and Trust Company. (The bank is still in existence².) In 1913 and 1914 Rourke built the Rourke Theater, located at 11 East Third Street. (The building remains standing.) Live entertainment was offered there for many years, which was important to the life and culture of La Junta. In 1914, the Opera House Apartments were built by Rourke on the northeast corner of Third Street and Colorado Avenue, which is still owned by members of the Rourke family.

Rourke died in 1918; however many of the businesses which he began remained in the family for many years. The ranch continued under the management of the family until 1971, one hundred years after it was founded by Eugene Rourke.

The Rourke house has architectural importance for La Junta because so few substantial houses of its style remain in the community. The later additions to the rear of the building are not visible from the front and do not so alter the appearance as to compromise integrity. The building has particular importance in being one of the better examples

¹The Rourkes had ten children, which accounts for their interest in the quality of the local schools.

²Columbia Savings and Trust Company is one of the two major banking institutions in La Junta.

9. Major Bibliographical References

The La Junta Tribune-Democrat; La Junta, Colorado; 21 August 1971
Serra County Assessor's Office
Interview-Jerry West-111-La Junta 1982
Interview-Jerry West-111-La Junta 1982

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property .32

Quadrangle name LaJunta

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	6	2	7	5	6	10	4	2	0	4	6	1	10
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

Lots 13-15 and Lot 16 except N. 2 feet Block 2 Mountain View Addition. (As worded in the assessor's records.) (lots are 25' by 140')

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

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title E. Frances Keck

organization La Junta Heritage Foundation Inc.

date November 5, 1982

street & number 701 Grace Avenue

telephone 303 384-2702

city or town La Junta

state Colorado 81050

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

Barbara Sudler

title State Historic Preservation Officer (Acting)

date March 23, 1983

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 5/9/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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



Eugene Rourke House
Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

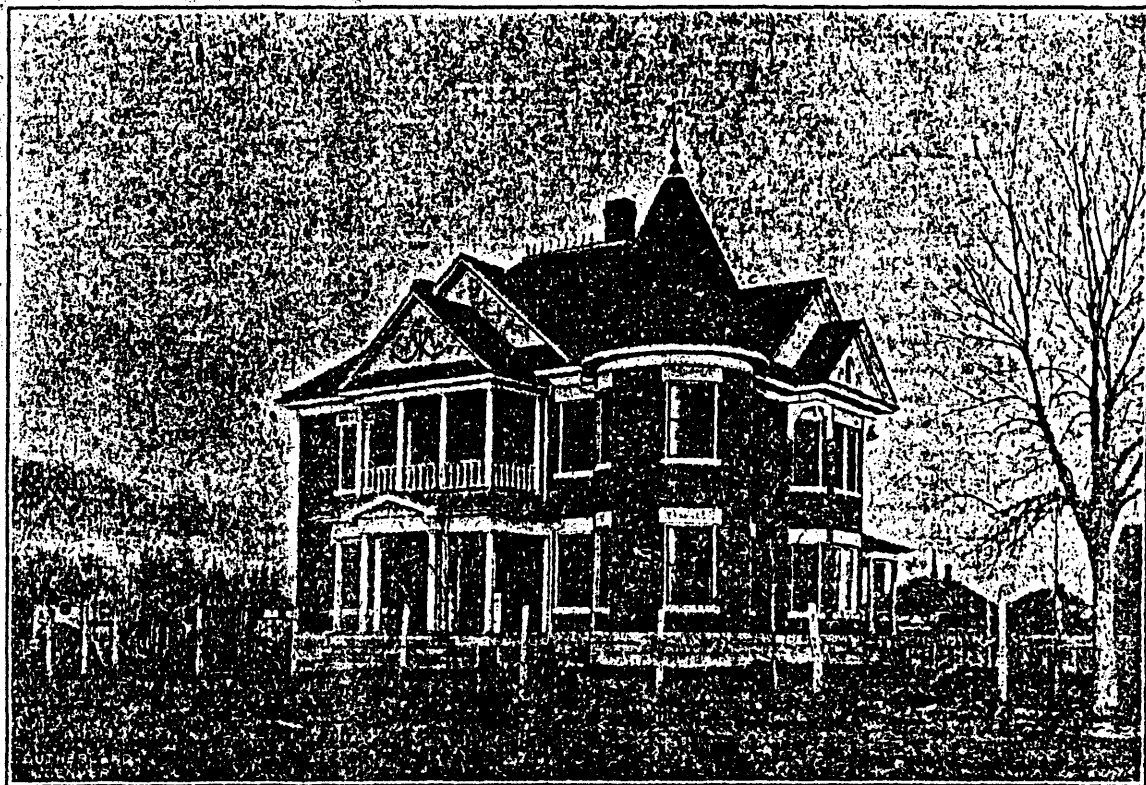
exhibiting the transition between late Victorian eclecticism and the Colonial Revival style. Interesting features include the original two-story Colonial Revival portico, a turret with the finial intact on the top, and iron cresting around the hipped roof.

Eugene Rourke House
Otero County, Colorado

Photo 1

Copy of a photograph of
unknown age showing the
original appearance of
the Rourke House.

Location of photo and
negative, unknown.



Residence of Eugene Rourke.