

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register Of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hermitage

other names/site number Craig Adobe

2. Location

street & number 2121 Monte Vista Street NA  not for publication

city or town Pasadena NA  vicinity

state California code CA county Los Angeles code 037 zip code 91107

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 2/21/01  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

California Office of Historic Preservation  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (  See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

[Signature] 4.5.01  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**Hermitage**

Name of Property

**Los Angeles County, CA**

County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	2	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	2	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**DOMESTIC: single dwelling**

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**DOMESTIC: single dwelling**

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**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**LATE VICTORIAN: Queen Anne**

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**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

roof **wood shingles**

walls **adobe, wood**

other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Hermitage**

Name of Property

**Los Angeles County, CA**

County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Architecture**

**Agriculture**

**Development**

**Period of Significance**

**1869-1899**

**Significant Dates**

**1869**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**Craig, James**

**Cultural Affiliation**

**NA**

**Architect/Builder**

**Craig, James**

**Primary Location of Additional Data**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Hermitage**  
Name of Property

**Los Angeles County, CA**  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.5 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	11	398020	3779760	3	___	_____	_____
2	___	_____	_____	4	___	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title **Curtis Mason, Trustee, and William W. Ellinger III, Historic Architect and Consultant**

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date **January 5, 2001**

street & number **RR2 Box 156 AB** telephone **304-724-7008**

city or town **Charles Town** state **WV** zip code **25414**

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **Berthe C. Mason Trust (Curtis Mason, Trustee)**

street & number **RR2 Box 156AB** telephone **304-724-7008**

city or town **Charles Town** state **WV** zip code **25414**

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET #1

Section 7 Page 1

The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

**Summary: Narrative:** **The Hermitage/Craig Adobe**, 2121 Monte Vista Street, Pasadena California, is a 1-1/2 story, 3000 sq ft ranch house with a core unit consisting of two ground-floor adobe-walled rooms built in about 1840 and rehabilitated by James Craig<sup>1</sup> in 1869, an early Pasadena citrus grower and developer. In 1879, an east wing and a west wing of frame construction were added to the adobe portion. A garage was built in about 1925 and in 1965 a semi-attached carport was added. The relationship of these structures to the original home is depicted in the attached site plan (Sheet S-1). The property occupies three city lots in a quiet residential section of Pasadena, about three miles northeast of City Hall. Most of the neighboring houses were built on single 50-ft wide lots between 1930 and 1950. A lot plan for showing the relationship of the three lots to neighboring parcels is attached.

The interior of the two-room adobe portion of the house is plaster over adobe brick, while in the 4-room frame section, the interior facing is wood lath and plaster. The roof is finished with wood shingles and the two double-flue chimneys are constructed of brick. The adobe section is surrounded by a porch to protect the adobe from inclement weather. A large brick patio nestles in the corner formed by the east wing and the adobe portion. The front yard consists of a bi-level lawn, surrounded and separated by plantings of flowers and shrubs. A textured concrete driveway leads from the street to the semi-attached double carport built in a style harmonious with the historic structure. The 2-car garage, also echoing the design and roof materials of the home, occupies the northwest corner of the property. In the narrow space behind the house, raised vegetable beds of recent brick construction provide the owners with organically grown vegetables almost year round. The house is largely sheltered from view from the street by a 20 ft high oleander hedge. A low white block masonry wall and iron gate along the sidewalk discourage neighborhood animals from entering the grounds. Between 1997 and 2000, the home underwent an extensive seismic engineering retrofit and rehabilitation under a grant from the Historic Preservation Partners for Earthquake Response to repair damage from the Northridge earthquake and to mitigate damage from future seismic events. As a result, the house is in excellent condition and appears today much as it looked in 1879, a unique reminder of the early days of California and, as the oldest structure in Pasadena, a designated **Pasadena Historic Treasure**.

**Detailed Description:** The oldest part of the house in all likelihood was constructed in about 1840 as a 2-room adobe building<sup>2</sup> with a flat roof in the Spanish style of the period. It was located on a 5,000 acre tract of land purchased in 1869 for \$31,250 by James Craig from Benjamin D. Wilson and Dr. John S. Griffin, early Southern California land developers.<sup>2</sup> Before selling off much of this tract, James Craig reserved for himself about 150 acres of the eastern portion of the land and named his ranch The Hermitage. The walls of the adobe section of the home are about two feet thick and are constructed of adobe bricks, roughly 12"x24"x4" in size, resting on grade. The largest of the original two rooms, now a living room, is approximately 18 x 25 ft, and the other, presently a dining room, is about 14 x 18 ft in size. The interior walls of these rooms are surfaced with plaster and the window treatments are interior wood shutters. Wood siding attached to the exterior of the adobe section of the house by Craig, and evident in a circa 1925 photograph (attached and used as cover of this application), was removed in the 1930's by Ms. Lenore Shanewise, a noted director at the Pasadena Playhouse, who owned the property between 1935 and 1944.

The remaining ground-level portions of the home consist of an east wing, constructed in 1879, a bedroom on the west side added at the same time, and a kitchen and laundry area of frame construction on the north side of the dining room probably added in about 1925. A first floor plan is attached (Sheet A-1). The east wing of the home contributes to the significance of the property because its design and detailing relate to the original adobe structure, as well as exhibiting a high level of craftsmanship in its own right. Today this wing consists of a bedroom connected by a small passageway to a 3-room apartment, which for many years was leased to California Institute of Technology students and faculty members by Maxwell Mason and his wife Berthe, the home's owners between 1944 and 1997. A brick chimney between the dining room and living room contains flues from two fireplaces: a coal-burning style in the living room and a larger, wood-burning style in the dining room. A similar chimney in the east wing contains flues from two coal-burning style fireplaces. The chimneys, whose upper portions were destroyed by the Northridge earthquake of 1994, were reconstructed in 1999 as part of earthquake damage mitigation grant. In addition, two layers of old wood shingles and shakes were removed from the roof and replaced with new wood shingles of a style closely approximating a late-19<sup>th</sup> century appearance. Steel reinforcement and other types of earthquake mitigation were installed which bonded the adobe walls together with the roof which hopefully will allow the house to survive the next major earthquake. The seismic retrofit was accomplished so

<sup>1</sup> Reid, H.A., "History of Pasadena," pp 342; Pasadena, Pasadena History Company, 1895

<sup>2</sup> See following continuation sheets for Section 3 for detailed discussion

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CONTINUATION SHEET #2Section 7 Page 2The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

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as not to be visible from either the exterior or interior finished spaces of the house. The structure is in excellent conditions and appears today much as it did when the east wing was completed in 1879.

Above the adobe section of the house is an ornamented frame half-story area housing 2 small bedrooms and a storage room (Shown on Sheet A-2). This half-story and a porch surrounding much of the original adobe section and the east wing were probably added by Craig around 1879, for they exhibit a design and craftsmanship characteristic of the mid-Victorian period that is consistent with the east wing.

The garage, constructed in the first quarter of the 20th century, is located in the extreme northwest corner of the property. Almost completely destroyed by fire in 1998, the structure was rebuilt in its original style in 1999 and presently being used as a studio, is shown in the attached photographs and site plan

The house is positioned towards the rear of three 50-ft wide city lots, so landscaping of the grounds has been varied and extensive through the years. Note the condition of the home in the photograph taken ca 1925: a gently sloping front area flanked by large oak (left side) and pepper (right side) trees. Also, note the semi-circular dirt driveway in front of the house, which offered many opportunities for flower beds, cactus, and other shrubbery. Prior to the subdividing of the Craig ranch in the early 1900's, this driveway extended all the way to Villa Street, a block south of Monte Vista<sup>3</sup>. With the demise of these two large trees by 1965, the driveway was reconfigured along the left side of the property and a freestanding carport was built between the street and the garage in a style designed to harmonize with the house. A covered walkway connects the carport to the porch. The remaining portion of the old driveway was converted to an upper lawn and a brick path, and a masonry wall was added for privacy. Numerous plantings of oleander, olive, and other heat-resistant plants today provide an arboretum-like setting for the home.

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<sup>3</sup> Shoop, C.F., "Auld Lang Syne." Pasadena Star-News, June 1, 1947

United States Department of the Interior  
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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET #3

Section 8 Page 1

The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

**Significance of The Hermitage/Craig Adobe:** The Hermitage/Craig Adobe is locally and regionally significant as the only surviving historic (pre-1900) adobe building within Pasadena and is not only its oldest home<sup>4</sup>, but its oldest structure of any kind. It is of exceptional significance because of its age (though it is not quite as old as the Flores Adobe, ca 1843, in South Pasadena), its origin as an adobe structure, its later Victorian-style additions and alterations of unique design and craftsmanship, and its association with **James Craig**, one of Pasadena's earliest land developers and citrus growers. To understand The Hermitage's historical importance, a brief history of Pasadena and the land the home occupies obtained from a city of Pasadena website<sup>5</sup> serves as an introduction:

"The Spaniards established the San Gabriel Mission as the fourth in California on September 8, 1771, and it grew to be prosperous, with abundant orchards, vineyards and herds. The vast lands which it administered for the Spanish Crown were divided into ranchos. After the rule of California passed from Spain to Mexico, the Mexican government in 1833 secularized the mission lands and awarded them to individuals. The northeast corner of San Gabriel Mission, consisting of the 14,000 acres known as Rancho el Rincon de San Pascual, had previously been gifted in 1826 by the padres to Doña Eulalia Pérez de Guillen, noted for her advanced age as well as her devoted service to the mission. On February 18, 1835, it was formally granted by the Mexican government to her husband, Don Juan Mariné. He and his sons subsequently lost the land, which changed ownership a few more times before being granted on November 28, 1843, by Governor Manuel Micheltoarena to his good friend, Colonel Manuel Garfias, son of a distinguished Mexican family. In 1852, two years after California was admitted as a state to the Union, Garfias built an adobe hacienda on the east bank of the Arroyo, where he and his family proceeded to live in grand style, until he could not meet the interest payment due on a loan. Title to the land was then transferred in 1859 to his lenders, Dr. John S. Griffin and Benjamin "Don Benito" Wilson for about \$2000 and the forgiveness of certain loans. Portions of the Rancho San Pasqual were thereafter sold, leaving Griffin and Wilson with 5,328 acres by 1873."

**Period of Significance associated with James Craig: 1869-1899.** James Craig, was born in Armagh, Ireland, in 1840. He graduated from Queen's College in Belfast, Ireland, after completing his studies in civil engineering in about 1860. After serving in the British Civil Service in India and serving as a consultant to the Sultan of Morocco, he arrived in California in 1869<sup>6</sup>. This was 19 years after statehood, five years before the arrival of the Indiana Colony<sup>7</sup>, and 17 years before the City of Pasadena was incorporated. After his arrival he entered into an "indenture" (i.e. a written agreement) on May 15, 1869 for the purchase of 5000 acres ("more or less" with "water privileges") of land from Griffin and Wilson for \$31,250 "in gold coin", based on the deed dated May 10, 1870 and recorded on May 16, 1870. The original deed remains in the possession of descendants of James Craig. The acreage included in the main a portion of the Rancho San Pasqual and a smaller portion of the adjoining Rancho Santa Anita. Some accounts state that the land was acquired by Craig acting as an agent for Alexander and William Grogan of San Francisco. While some later maps name portions of the 5000 acres bought by Craig the "Grogan Tract," the initial deed clearly names only Craig as the "party of the second part." Ives<sup>8</sup> provides a substantial amount of detailed information regarding the relationship between Craig and the Grogans. The amount of detail she provides seemingly indicates a divergent view from that presented by other authors (e.g. Reid and Scheid) that refer to Craig as an agent for the Grogans. Ives states in part:

"There was no specified water right"(though the surviving deed reads "with water privileges") "with the purchase of the Craig Tract, and the price thereof was a consideration of \$31,250. To secure payment James Craig executed three promissory notes: one to John Craig, dated April 27, 1870, for \$5000; the others were to William Grogan, for \$10,000, and to Alexander B. Grogan, for \$10,000, both dated

<sup>4</sup> Lund, Ann Scheid, "Historic Pasadena," pp 15; San Antonio, TX, Historical Publishing Network, 1999

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/History/>: 2000

<sup>6</sup> Reid, H.A., "History of Pasadena," pp 342; Pasadena, Pasadena History Company, 1895

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.ci.pasadena.ca.us/History/1873-1886.asp>: "The concept of Pasadena as a settled community began with a group of friends in Indiana, who organized the "California Colony of Indiana" with the object of relocating to the warmer climes of Southern California. Sent to scout the area, D. M. Berry became entranced with the fine air, the beauty and the good agricultural possibilities of the Rancho San Pasqual. Although financial failure led to an early demise of the Indiana Colony, Berry was quick to reorganize it. After adding a few carefully selected western associates, the group became known as the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association. Negotiations for the purchase of the land were settled in December 1873, and by the following month, 1500 acres were subdivided into 100 lots of 15 acres. The plans for the tract omitted a business district, since it was the intention of the settlers to reside there for the purposes of ranching and agriculture."

<sup>8</sup> Ives, Sarah N., "Altadena," compiled for the Altadena Historical and Beautification Society, pp36-38, 44, 69-71; Pasadena: Star-News Publishing Company, 1938

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CONTINUATION SHEET #4

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The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

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May 10, 1870. These conveyances were in effect mortgages payable in two years, with interest. Mr. Craig reserved and received a deed in February, 1870, for his own chosen home land, a tract of about ninety-three and four-fifths acres south of the Eaton property, or Fair Oaks ranch."

As discussed in more detail below, given the style and estimated age of the adobe portion of The Hermitage, it is concluded that James Craig rehabilitated an existing adobe on the ranch for his home. Architectural details and construction methods exhibited by the house indicate an approximate construction date of 1840.

Between 1869 and 1899, James Craig was one of a very few major landholders in Pasadena and the surrounding San Gabriel Valley and he became a leader in the development of water projects to support the burgeoning citrus growing and other agrarian pursuits on his property. Shortly after purchasing the property, he negotiated with B.S. Eaton, for whom Eaton Canyon is named, to pipe water from that upland source to the Hermitage for citrus production<sup>9</sup>. In 1880-81, he made "the first brave, strong effort to secure artesian water in Pasadena, sinking a well ... 490 feet deep, on East Villa Street, but which never outflowed a drop."<sup>10</sup> In fact, water stood in it 340 feet deep, 150 feet short of coming to the surface as artesian flow. In 1886, the Hermitage Water Company, one of only a few such enterprises in the Pasadena area, was incorporated with Craig as a major shareholder and officer.

In the early 1880's, Pasadena actively sought and supported the construction of a railroad from Los Angeles to the East Coast, whose route would include passage through Pasadena. When contractor problems threatened the viability of the project<sup>11</sup>, James Craig was one of a number of prominent business leaders who took actions to insure the success of the project. This eventually resulted in Pasadena becoming an important station stop on the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroad, in part because it was the most convenient point of arrival and departure for Hollywood's finest. It also contributed to the booming agricultural importance of the region in the late 1800's, for in 1891 Pasadena area orange growers sold and shipped more oranges to eastern consumers than any other community in Los Angeles County.

On December 30, 1899, James Craig died while inspecting a shaft in a tunnel belonging to the Precipio Canyon Water company, for which he was a major shareholder and superintendent. Surviving were his wife, Elinor Howard Craig, and their seven children. Two photographs included in this application show Mr. Craig seated in front of The Hermitage as well as his wife and children seated on the lawn in front of the house. After Craig's death, the ranch was maintained by his son Volney until 1911, when the land was sold to Col. John Lambert of Pasadena.

During this time, the adobe is also associated with another important figure in the history of California and the San Gabriel Valley, Judge Volney Erskine Howard, Craig's father-in-law, known for his work on legalizing Mexican land grants in the state. Judge Howard was also very much involved in the western migration and development of the United States, first in Mississippi in 1832; then Louisiana in 1843; then the Texas Republic in 1844, representing Texas after statehood in Washington DC for four years; finally moving to California in 1853. Initially residing in Northern California, he moved to Southern California in 1861. Judge Howard successfully defended the validity of various land grants for owners, including the rancho Santa Anita for Hugo Reid. Judge Howard had acquired a 600 acre ranch with an adobe ranch house (the Las Tunas Adobe) in San Gabriel and it is possible that Craig was influenced by some of Howard's "improvements" because of certain architectural similarities between the two. In 1880, Judge Howard sold his San Gabriel ranch and moved to The Hermitage to live with the Craigs. Judge Howard died in 1889.

**Later association with notable Californians.** Between 1935 and 1944, The Hermitage was owned by Ms. Lenore Shanewise who, as associate director of the Pasadena Playhouse, was instrumental in developing the Playhouse into a Southern California cultural landmark. In part through her efforts, The Pasadena Playhouse made an indelible mark on American theatre. During its first four decades, The Playhouse produced hundreds of plays, presented 477 world premieres and was the first American theatre to present all 37 of Shakespeare's plays. Its College of Theatre Arts, known during the 1930s, 40s, and 50s as "Hollywood's talent factory," launched the careers of countless playwrights, directors and actors such as William Holden, Gloria Stuart, Dustin Hoffman and Gene Hackman. Between 1923 and 1969 when she retired, Ms. Shanewise also directed and acted in over two hundred Playhouse productions. During her ownership of the Hermitage, she was known to have hosted many parties and social events at her home.

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<sup>9</sup> Carew, H.D., "History of Pasadena and The San Gabriel Valley," V1, pp 277; Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1930

<sup>10</sup> Reid, H.A., "History of Pasadena," pp 343; Pasadena, Pasadena History Company, 1895

<sup>11</sup> Wood, J.W., "Pasadena, California: Historical and Personal," pp 331; Pasadena: published by the author, 1917



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET #5

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The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

**Architectural Significance.** The Hermitage is also significant because it exemplifies an extraordinary class of Southern California architectural design, materials, and craftsmanship. From the beginnings of Spanish settlement in Alta California in the late 1700's through the mid-1800's, it is reasonable to assume that at least several thousand adobe structures were constructed within the state boundaries. One inventory performed around the time of World War II reported about 800 in the vicinity of San Francisco alone<sup>12</sup>. Since then, a drastic loss of these earliest examples of our built environment has occurred through neglect, development, and/or wonton destruction (only about 306 adobe structures built prior to 1900 survive in California today<sup>13</sup>). Thus, a strong rationale and need exist for national recognition and protection of The Hermitage, Pasadena's sole surviving example of this construction type and its oldest structure.

While later recorded accounts date the adobe to 1869 (in association with its purchase by James Craig), a thorough on-site architectural investigation by William Ellinger, a noted Pasadena historical architect versed in early California design, suggests a construction date of about 1840, based on unusual aspects of the existing floor plan that cannot otherwise be explained. The earliest reported frame house was constructed in 1862 on the Fair Oaks Ranch, adjacent to what was to become the Craig Ranch. This house still survives but was later moved to its present location in Altadena. Reports of logging and sawmill operations in the San Gabriel Mountains as early as the early 1860's suggest the ready availability of locally-sawn dimensional lumber for construction by the time of Craig's arrival in 1869. Thus, it seems unusual that he would have undertaken construction of an adobe structure with a sawn wood framed roof and porch. Craig, as a trained civil engineer who had previously worked in other "frontier" parts of the world (e.g. India and Morocco) was undoubtedly both a progressive individual as well as an eminently practical one. It is highly likely that an adobe structure existed on his newly acquired ranch and that he chose to "recycle" it by adding various wood components. This would help account for a presumed earlier episode in the architectural and constructional history of this historic property that is evident from a detailed inspection and documentation of the structure. According to Ellinger's chronological evaluation of surviving adobe structures in Southern California, the vast majority was constructed between 1820 and 1855, indicating that after that time adobe was not a popular choice for new construction.

The ornamented wood gabled half-story and the porch surrounding the original adobe (probably added by Craig shortly after he moved in) are significant features that exhibit design and craftsmanship of the mid-Victorian period. In 1879 an east wing was added to the adobe and, based on similarity in materials and craftsmanship, a smaller west wing was probably added at the same time. These additions contribute to the significance of the property because their design and detailing relate to the original adobe structure, as well as exhibiting a high level of craftsmanship in their own right. The east wing was of wood balloon-framed construction and covered by a double-pitched roof attached in part to the roof of the adobe at its northeast corner. The east wing has three separate doorways on the south side which connect the rooms to a long covered porch with a tin-clad roof. The porch terminates at a small room that was converted to a bathroom (possibly in the 1920's, the date of the current fixtures). In the late 1930's Ms. Shanewise removed wood siding covering the exterior of the original adobe structure, which Craig had presumably added to establish a complementary architectural appearance with the wood-sided east wing.

In 1944, Ms. Shanewise sold the house to Mr. Maxwell Mason, an aeronautical engineer and architect who, with his wife Berthe, raised a family of three sons and one daughter in the home. The Masons frequently rented the studio apartment in the east wing to California Institute of Technology graduate students and professors. Upon Mrs. Mason's death in 1997, ownership of The Hermitage was transferred to the Berthe C. Mason trust and the home is presently being cared for by the trust and the Mason children, two of whom reside there. In 1997 the City of Pasadena designated "The Hermitage" a **Pasadena Historic Treasure** (see attached designation) and in December 2000, the Pasadena Cultural Heritage Commission agreed to support the nomination of The Hermitage to the National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>12</sup> Hendry, G.W., and J.N. Bowman. "Spanish and Mexican Adobe and other Buildings in the Nine San Francisco Bay Counties, 1776 to about 1850," illus., unpublished manuscript; Berkeley: Bancroft Library, 1940.

<sup>13</sup> "Inventory of Historic Adobe Buildings in California (pre-1900)," Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 31 May 1991.

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National Park Service

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The Hermitage/Craig Adobe

name of property

Los Angeles, CA

county and State

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property boundary consists of all of Lots 6, 7, and 8 in Block "E" of Tract No. 8075, located on the north side of Monte Vista Street, between Oak and Craig Avenues, in the City of Pasadena, County of Los Angeles, State of California, as per map recorded in Book 99, Pages 93 and 94 of maps in the office of the County Recorder of said County. A copy of a portion of a similar map showing lot boundaries in relation to the neighborhood is attached (Pasadena Lot Sheet 1389) and its location is also shown on the attached USGS quadrangle sheet.

**Boundary Justification** The Boundary includes the three contiguous city lots described above, which encompass the entirety of **The Hermitage**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET #7

Section Addnl.Dcmntatn. Page 1 The Hermitage/Craig Adobe  
name of property  
Los Angeles,CA  
county and State

**Photographs Nos. 1 & 2:**

Photographer ceased business, the following information is printed on the reverse of the vintage prints:

"The Solar Art Gallery"

F. H. Rogers & Co.

No. 624, San Fernando Street

(Opposite the New Depot)

and No. 15, First Street

Los Angeles, Cal.

Services offered:

"Views of Residences to Order"

"Enlarged Photographs from Small Pictures"

**Photograph No. 1**

3. See above

4. ca. 1890, based on age of children

5. Original negative location unknown

6. Partial south and east elevations, looking north-northwest, James Craig, Elinor and five children

**Photograph No. 2**

3. See above

4. ca. 1890, based on age of children

5. Original negative location unknown

6. Partial south and west elevations, looking north-northeast, Elinor Craig and all seven children

**Photograph No. 3**

3. Photographer - (Albert) Hiller Studio, Pasadena

4. ca. 1925, based on date of subdivision

5. Original negative location unknown

6. Partial south and east elevations, looking north-northwest

**Photograph No. 4**

3. Photographer unknown

4. ca. 1930-1935

5. Original negative location unknown

6. South elevation, looking north

**Photograph No. 5**

3. Photographer unknown

4. ca. 1935

5. Original negative location unknown

6. Partial south elevation at east wing, looking north, figures under porch roof are Lenore Shanewise and her mother

**Photographs 6 to 17:**

Photographer - William W. Ellinger III

Negatives located at 516 South Oakland Avenue,  
Pasadena, CA 91101-3330 Phone: 626 792-8539

**Photograph No. 6**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. South elevation of adobe wing, looking north, east wing at right rear

**Photograph No. 7**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. South elevation of adobe wing, looking north, east wing at right rear

**Photograph No. 8**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. South and partial east elevations of adobe wing, looking north-northwest, ±1969 carport at left

**Photograph No. 9**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. South elevation of adobe wing, looking north, east wing to right rear

**Photograph No. 10**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. Partial east elevation of adobe wing, looking west-northwest

**Photograph No. 11**

3. See above

4. January 2001

5. See above

6. Partial east elevation of adobe wing and south elevation of east wing to right, looking northwest

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET #8

Section Addtnl.Dcmntatn. Page 2 The Hermitage/Craig Adobe  
name of property  
Los Angeles,CA  
county and State

Photograph No. 12

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial east elevation of adobe wing and south elevation of east wing, looking west-northwest

Photograph No. 13

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial east elevation of east wing showing bay, looking south-southwest

Photograph No. 14

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial north elevation of east wing, ±1964 addition to 1920's kitchen beyond at left, looking west-southwest

Photograph No. 15

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial north elevation of east wing, stuccoed adobe "stub" wall at right, ±1911 kitchen addition to "apartment" at right rear with covered storage area on the near side, looking east-southeast

Photograph No. 16

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial west elevation showing west wing with gable and bay with later kitchen addition at near left, looking south-southeast

Photograph No. 17

3. See above
4. January 2001
5. See above
6. Partial west elevation, with west wing and bay to the left and a portion of the adobe wing to the right, attic dormer and chimney obscured by trees, ±1920's bathroom addition inserted into covered porch area to right of west wing, looking east

Photograph No. 18

3. Copy of watercolor painting by E(va) J. Fenyes
4. 15 Dec. 1917
5. Original in collection Braun Research Library of the Southwest Museum, Los Angeles, CA; copied on archival quality, acid free paper
6. South elevation of adobe wing with east wing to right rear, looking north-northeast; note Queen Anne gable end treatment has been added at south end of the main roof by the date of watercolor, replacing the original clipped hip seen in Photograph No. 2 which matched the original clipped hip that survives till now at the north end of the roof; note also the "artistic license" taken in showing 5 bays between 6 porch columns at the south side of the porch, instead of the actual 4 between 5 columns; note the weather vane which still exists, presumably added with the Queen Anne gable



Hermitage  
Pasadena, CA  
Los Angeles County

