

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED NOV 7 1976

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 *Ben Olsen Home*

AND/OR COMMON
Vermeren Home

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
South end of D Street

CITY, TOWN
Vader

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
3rd - Donald L. Bonker

STATE
Washington

--- VICINITY OF

COUNTY
Lewis

CODE
041

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Joseph P. & Nora M. Vermeren

STREET & NUMBER
P. O. Box 143

CITY, TOWN
Vader

STATE
Washington

--- VICINITY OF

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Lewis County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Chehalis

STATE
Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
none

DATE
--- FEDERAL --- STATE --- COUNTY --- LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN
STATE

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

Located near the outskirts of Vader at the edge of a meadow, the Ben Olsen House is a large, two and one-half story residence in the Queen Anne style. The yard nearest the home is landscaped with evergreens and shrubs that are somewhat overgrown, with what remains of a small orchard growing in back.

The frame structure sits on a foundation of brickwork posts that are positioned under the sills and girders at regular intervals. Facing west, the house has an irregular plan with a balanced asymmetrical massing that includes three gable wings, a one story polygonal bay and a corner turret typical of the style. These obscure the underlying simplicity of the plan, which is essentially rectangular. The hip roof over the basic rectangle is interrupted by pedimented cross-gables on the sides and a third pedimented gable in front. The latter gable is offset to the south corner, while the turret is positioned on the opposite corner capped by a pyramidal spire (with finial), faceted to reflect the tower's octagonal cross-section.

Shiplap siding is used throughout between corner boards and door and window enframements except for a five foot wide belt of shingles beginning at the second floor level and continuing to the sill of the second story windows. Above the eaves line the tower is surfaced with fishscale shingles. These two bands of shinglework are flared toward the lower courses forming a drip along the bottom edge finished by a moulding and fascia underneath. The pedimented portions of the three gable ends are also shingled.

Double hung windows are the predominant fenestration except for two fixed double-width windows centered on the front wing, one to a floor. The upper lights of these were originally leaded in a curvilinear design, although one of the pair is now missing. On the upper half story, each gable end includes a fanlight within the pediment. A smaller fanlight is positioned in every exposed facet of the turret at this level.

The house once included a long single story veranda and balcony that apparently covered all or part of the ground floor on three sides - extending around the front half of the building from cross gable to cross gable. With the exceptions of reroofing in composition shingles and removal of the veranda and portions of the waterskiirting, the Olsen House is unaltered on the exterior.

The interior has been stripped of most of its fixtures, such as chandeliers and door hardware although it too is basically unaltered. The stained and varnished woodwork is unpainted everywhere except in the dining room, which features a built-in sideboard and beaded wainscotting. The most extensive alterations have been in the kitchen but these are limited to counters, cabinets and wall surfaces.

The house has undergone painstaking restoration in recent years - an ongoing process quite faithful to the original construction. Replacements for numerous rotten window sashes have been custom made to duplicate the deteriorated millwork. Restoration of the veranda is also anticipated as soon as the existing structure has been stabilized.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1905-1913

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ben Olsen House was constructed between 1905 and 1913 in the town of Vader, then a thriving industrial community in southwestern Washington. Vader was first settled in the early 1860's at a location undoubtedly chosen for its easy access to transportation on the Cowlitz River and the military road north from Fort Vancouver. Known as Little Falls until it was renamed Vader in 1913, the town was considered the most prosperous community between Vancouver and Tacoma during the 1890's with about 1400 residents and a number of industries and businesses. After the turn of the century, the local population peaked at nearly 5000 when Little Falls found itself on the main lines of four major railroads. A recent census indicates that there are presently fewer than 400 residents.

The first real impetus to the growth and development of Little Falls was the construction of mills and factories built there in the 1880's and early 1890's to exploit the simultaneous advantages of cheap transportation and locally available resources - timber and clay. In addition to a gas company, two saw mills and a sash and door factory, there were the Stillwater Logging and Lumber Company and the Little Falls Fire Clay Factory which provided employment for a large and expanding work force.

Ben Olsen was president of the Stillwater Logging and Lumber Company, and his substantial late Queen Anne style residence is indicative of his social and financial prominence. Other than this, there is little recorded information as to Olsen's personal history. Both the clay company and lumber mill were destroyed by fire in the 1920's and efforts to rebuild the clay company were frustrated by the Depression. It is probable that the Stillwater Logging and Lumber Company was also unable to recover after the fire because of a lack of demand for construction materials.

Today Vader is essentially a ghost town bypassed by the interstate highway and without an industrial base. Its opera house, banks and hotels have been demolished leaving only a small number of original structures remaining as evidence of the town's earlier prosperity. Among these the Ben Olsen Home is particularly interesting because of its size, architectural style and state of preservation.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

none

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	5,0,3	5,0,0	5,1,3,7	9,0,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

B					
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING	

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Jacob Thomas and Joseph P. Vermeren

ORGANIZATION

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

TELEPHONE

753-4116

CITY OR TOWN

P. O. Box 1128 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

Arthur M. Skolnik

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

5/18/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

AGENT

Conrad R. ...

DATE

11/9/76

ATTEST:

DATE

11/2/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER