

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received APR 4 1986
date entered MAY 2 1986

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

1. Name

historic Ramsay House

and/or common N.A.

2. Location

street & number 215 East 9th not for publication

city, town Ellensburg vicinity of

state Washington code 053 county Kittitas code 037

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

4. Owner of Property

name Dr. and Mrs. Colin D. Condit

street & number 215 East 9th

city, town Ellensburg vicinity of state Washington 98926

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Kittitas County Courthouse

street & number 205 West 5th

city, town Ellensburg state Washington 98926

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Washington State Inventory
title of Cultural Resources has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1985 federal state county local

depository for survey records Washington State Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

city, town 111 W. 21st Ave., KL-11, Olympia state Washington 98504-5411

7. Description

<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Ramsay House is a two story frame bungalow designed in the Craftsman Style by Canadian architect Samuel Maclure. The house is located on a tree-shaded site of two and one-half city lots in Ellensburg, Washington. The house, which faces south, is located in a neighborhood of well maintained homes of similar vintage (1900-1930). To the north-east of the house is a small single-car garage of similar design. The kitchen and rear yards are enclosed by a five foot fence.

Measuring approximately 50 by 70 feet, the house has a masonry foundation. Exterior walls are covered with the original dark reddish-brown hand sawn cedar shingles. The first floor is raised roughly five feet off the ground and the upper floor is enclosed within a broad hipped roof of multiple levels. The broad overhanging eaves which shelter the house are supported by paired, elongated brackets and underscored by a pronounced frieze. Six large dormers pierce the roof at varying levels; the large southeast bedroom dormer was added during the early history of the house. The roof, originally covered with cedar shingles, is now covered with asbestos shingles. Wooden finials grace every peak and dormer on the roof.

An enclosed veranda extends around the southeast corner of the house; the veranda roof is supported by battered columns resting on a solid shingled balustrade which, in turn, is supported upon a lattice and masonry pier foundation. The veranda, which was enclosed with windows during the early history of the house (approximately 1918), encloses the main entrance and opens on to an unenclosed entrance porch and steps. The entrance porch was originally circumscribed by a similar shingled balustrade which was pierced on the entire south face by a decorative flower box. This feature was replaced in the late 1950's with a crude porch rail and seat constructed of two-by-fours. An enclosed sun porch, similar in style to the enclosed veranda, projects from the south facade to the west of the open porch.

Fenestration generally consists of large fixed or double hung windows arranged in horizontal bands of three or four. The south facade is penetrated by a band of seven tall fixed windows which possess decorative overlights consisting of four L-shaped panes surrounding a fifth square pane. (This design is repeated in differing variations on the windows in the library, dining room, south upstairs bedroom and landing, as well as on the French doors in the library and dining room, and was also repeated on the original porch flower box.) The groups of banded windows are united by continuous hood molds with projecting entablatures and are divided vertically by squat pilaster-like piers. Box bay windows project out from the house on stout corbels from the library, dining room, master bedroom, and kitchen.

The interior of the house consists of twenty finished spaces, including bathrooms and hallways, organized in a loosely arranged cross-axial plan. The large central hallway on the first floor is divided into an entrance hall and a stair hall by a sliding pocket door ornamented with leaded glass panels. Built off the central hallway are the library, dining room, master bedroom, and kitchen. These interior spaces, in turn, lead to vestibules and verandas which connect the interior of the house with the outside. The box bay windows in each of these principal rooms further unite the interior and exterior environments.

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Interior walls and ceilings are constructed of plaster over lath. Woodwork is an integral part of the interior structure and finish and consists primarily of heart-of-the-fir with some oak trim. Floors are of oak and maple on the first floor and fir on the second floor. Ceilings are ten and one-half feet tall on the first floor and are eight feet tall on the second. The ceilings of the library, vestibule, entrance hall, and dining room are heavily beamed; the library ceiling is also paneled in a herringbone pattern between the beams. Other use of woodwork differs from room to room. The vestibule is paneled from floor to ceiling; the dining room has five foot tall wainscoting; the entrance hall is latticed with fir stiles; and the library has a paneled fireplace mantel and overmantel and simple pilasters. The library includes two built-in leaded glass bookcases and three recessed seats, one in the box window and two in alcoves on either side of the fireplace. The dining room has a built-in sideboard with decorative forged iron hinges. Over the sideboard is a set of four stained glass windows representing a grape vine.

The open staircase winds up two levels: first to a room-size mezzanine landing, and then up five steps to a gallery off of which open the upstairs bedrooms. The massive balustrade is punctuated by decorative newels. The interior of the house has survived eighty years relatively intact; only the kitchen and two of the bathrooms have been altered significantly.

The most notable feature of the grounds are twenty large mature trees of different exotic varieties not commonly found in eastern Washington. The trees were imported from Scotland by the original owners. The house, which is located on a corner lot, is one of the most distinguished homes in the First Railroad Addition Historic District, a residential neighborhood located near the campus of Central Washington University.

Contributing resources: 1 (house)

Noncontributing: 1 (garage) See discussion below.

Discussion of garage: The one story single car garage, located in the northeast corner of the property, has a gable roof, wood shingle siding, and a non-historic upward folding metal door. Although the modest structure does not detract from the general integrity of the property, it is not considered to contribute to the significance of the property because it was built after the construction of the house (date uncertain), was not designed by Samuel Maclure, and does not enhance an understanding of the architecture of the period.

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 1903–1905 **Builder/Architect** Samuel Maclure

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ramsay House is architecturally significant as the only documented work in the United States designed by distinguished Canadian architect Samuel Maclure. Constructed between 1903 and 1905 for a prominent Ellensburg merchant, the large bungalow features the hallmarks of Maclure's interpretation of the Craftsman Style, including craftsman-like woodwork, the open spatial flow of the interior plan, and the integration of interior and exterior environments. When completed, the house was acclaimed as "the finest home in the city" by the Ellensburg press. Today, it remains the city's outstanding example of progressive architectural design from the early twentieth century.

The Ramsay House clearly reflects the Craftsman bungalow idiom of the period. But, when compared with other bungalows in Ellensburg, the home is both larger and more stylistically and spatially complex. The high beamed ceilings, broad central hall, and dramatic staircase help transform the home into an elegant residence. The sophistication of the design is attributable to Maclure, a British Columbia architect of Scottish heritage who gained fame for his distinctively Pacific Northwest version of the English Arts and Crafts Style at the turn of the century. In terms of the quality and originality of his work, some scholars have compared Maclure to the great Craftsman architects of the western United States, including the Greene brothers and Bernard Maybeck of California.

Maclure's original plans, drawings, and specifications for the Ramsay House are in the possession of Dr. and Mrs. Colin D. Condit, the present owners. The Condits discovered the writings and drawings in the attic shortly after they moved into the house in 1965. The file includes five drawings on light blue waxed paper, signed by Maclure, showing floor plans, window and porch detail, library elevation, and staircase elevation. Also discovered were six large and slightly tattered onionskin drawings, including one drawing showing the full-size detailing of the mantel shelf and cornice in the library; one fragment of a detail of the design for the flower balcony on the front porch; one fragment containing the rest of the flower balcony, and a full-size detail of the window sashes; one drawing showing full-size details of the dining room ceiling, wall, and sideboard; one fragment detailing the bookcases in the library; and one drawing of the full-size details of the staircase banister, baluster and newels. These onionskin drawings are either signed by Maclure or clearly in his hand. Also part of this file are one letter from the Wheeler & Osgood Company of Tacoma, Washington, to which is attached two invoices for woodwork, doors, windows, etc.; one rough drawing of the floorplans, showing water and steam pipe locations; and one small drawing of the library picture rail. Finally, this file also includes Maclure's careful instructions to the contractor as to the manner, method, and materials for construction.

The Ramsay House was built by pioneer Ellensburg businessman David W.S. Ramsay and his wife, Elizabeth Brown Ramsay. A Scottish emigre, David W.S. Ramsay arrived in Ellensburg in 1890, at the age of 23, to visit his brother, James, who had settled there in 1885 and had opened an implements business. David bought out James' partner's interest in the

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Ellensburg North

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	0	6	8	4	8	6	0	5	2	0	8	0	0	0
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 9 and 10 and the east 35 feet of Lot 11, Block 17, First Railroad Addition, City of Ellensburg.

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

state n/a code county code

state n/a code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey G. Condit

organization N.A. date June 1985

street & number 555 Winter Street N.E. telephone (503) 362-6572

city or town Salem state Oregon 97301

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 [Signature]

title DSHPD date 3.24.84

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

Entered in the National Register date 5/2/86

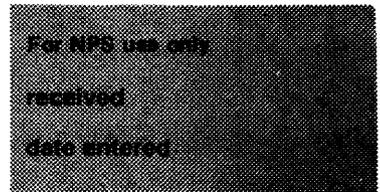
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

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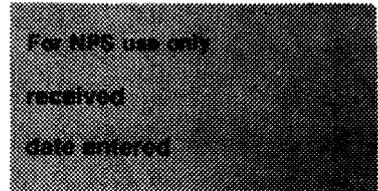
business, and the firm became known as the Ramsay Hardware Company. David and Elizabeth made frequent visits in those years to Victoria, British Columbia, a city that Elizabeth fondly called "the most Scottish city in North America." During these trips, the family became familiar with the work of fellow Scotsman Maclure. By 1903, they had commissioned Maclure to design their Ellensburg home.

In 1911, David bought out his brother James' interest and continued the hardware business until his death in 1943, at which time David's son, James S. Ramsay, took control. James S. Ramsay liquidated the business upon his retirement in 1962.

Throughout its seventy year existence, Ramsay Hardware Company was one of the most important enterprises of its kind in the Kittitas Valley, dealing in hardware, sheet metal, and farming equipment, some of which was fashioned on the premises. The company also operated a steamfitting and plumbing business. An important social center, customers and salespersons passed on the news of the town around a pot-bellied stove in the center of the store. During the early years of the company, the Ramsay brothers were unofficial bankers for area farmers, who would deposit their crop money in the store vault to be withdrawn as needed. Ramsay loans to farms in the Denmark area south of town started many fortunes. David and Elizabeth were both very active in the community. The Ramsays lived in their house until their deaths. Elizabeth died in 1961. (The Ramsay Building is located in the Ellensburg Historic District, listed in the National Register in 1977. This store building is closely associated with the commercial activities of the family.)

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- Bingham, Janet, Vancouver, B.C., Maclure scholar, correspondence and conversations (Mrs. Bingham is publishing a book on Samuel Maclure in October 1985; the Ramsay House will be featured in this work).
- Condit, Jeffrey G., The Ramsay House, 1985. Essay on history and construction of house prepared for Colin and Margaret Condit, copy to be donated to the Ellensburg Public Library.
- Eaton, Leonard K., The Architecture of Samuel Maclure (Victoria: Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, 1971).
- Eberhart, Cory, and Deborah Storlie, The Building of Ellensburg (Ellensburg: The Ellensburg Daily Record, 1976), pp. 30, 35.
- The Ellensburg Capital, Ellensburg, Washington; editions of July 18, 1903; October 26, 1903; October 12, 1904; December 7, 1904; and January 4, 1905.
- Lowe, Clayton, Oral History Tape Kit-79-100, Ellensburg Public Library Local History Collection.
- Maclure, Samuel, Original Plans, Drawings, and Specifications for the Ramsay House, in the possession of Dr. and Mrs. Colin D. Condit, 215 East 9th, Ellensburg, WA.
- This Old House, An Inventory of Residential Heritage (Victoria: City of Victoria, 1979).
- Ramsay, James S. and Mary Louise, conversations and correspondence.
- Spencer, Lloyd, and Landcaster Pollard, A History of the State of Washington (New York: American Historical Society, 1937), pp. 120-121.
- Segger, Martin, and Douglas Franklin, Victoria - A Primer for Regional History in Architecture (Victoria: Heritage Architectural Guides, 1979).