

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received DEC 15 1987
date entered

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

1. Name

historic Ernest W. Smith House

and/or common E. W. Smith House

2. Location

street & number 272 S. Los Robles Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Pasadena N/A vicinity of

state CA 91101 code 06 county Los Angeles code 037

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Richard E. Thomas and David H. Gauntlett

street & number 272 S. Los Robles Avenue

city, town Pasadena N/A vicinity of state CA 91101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Office of the County Recorder of Los Angeles

street & number 227 North Broadway, Room 25

city, town Los Angeles state CA 90012

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Pasadena's Architectural & Historical Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date February 1979 (See Continuation Sheet) federal state county local

depository for survey records City of Pasadena, Urban Conservation Dept., Room 111

city, town Pasadena state CA 91109

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

The Ernest W. Smith House is a moderate sized, wood shingled, 2-1/2-story rectangular plan Craftsman style single-family residence designed by Charles and Henry Greene in 1910. This house shows the influence of Swiss chalet design with its steeply pitched interlocking gable roofs, wide eaves and vertical appearance. A broad front porch, carved beam ends, exposed rafter tails, horizontal bands of casement windows and dark brown shingles are distinguishing characteristics of the Greene brothers Craftsman style. Balancing the verticality of the house are window lintels and the broad shed roof over the front porch. These elements help to connect the house with its site. The elevations are subtly divided into three horizontal parts. On the main facade, the porch roof defines the second floor level. Window placement and smaller shed roofs separate the two floors on the other three elevations. The second division, above the second floor windows, is achieved by a string course that continues around the building at gable height. The Smith House sits on a slightly raised grassy knoll. Its arroyo fieldstone foundation anchors it somewhat to its site.

Exterior

The main (west-facing) facade is set back from the sidewalk and has a deep porch covered with a shed roof running its length. The porch is reached by a short centrally located flight of stairs, marked with low arroyo fieldstone posts. The porch has a wood floor and wood railings with wide wood slats as spindles. There are four pairs of double posts each supporting exposed corbels. The ends of these are slightly rounded. Running lengthwise just under the porch roofline is a large carved beam emphasizing the horizontal in its structural expression. Scarf joints and pegging, Greene and Greene trademarks, are visible in the porch construction.

The entry door is placed slightly to the left of center, reflecting the relative size of the interior rooms. The door is of quarter sawn oak and has two large windows in the center bounded by two narrow rectangular lites on either side. It is wider than normal, another Craftsman technique, which was used to deemphasize the vertical. On the left of the door is a horizontal band of two inswinging casement windows and to the right of the door is a three-window band. To further the impression of the horizontal, the windows are divided by a thin mullion at approximately one-third of their height. The openings are surrounded by wide, flat board framing whose lintels extend about one foot to either side of the windows. The second floor windows are symmetrically

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 1910 **Builder/Architect** Charles & Henry Greene, Architects
John Erickson, Builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Ernest W. Smith House, built in 1910, is a fine example of the Craftsman style as developed by Charles and Henry Greene. Designing over 500 buildings during their 28 year collaborative career, the Greenes' work contributed to the development of the Craftsman movement and to the Craftsman style of architecture in Pasadena and throughout the country. Their unique style combined a sensitivity to detail and materials, and attention to fine workmanship. Their unique style developed out of a sensitivity to materials and the desire to integrate the site form with massing and scale while using high quality craftsmanship. In a city well known for the Greenes' architecture, only a few remaining examples of their residential work are as intact as the Smith house. Though the Greenes are probably best known for their five "ultimate bungalows,"¹ including the Blacker (1907) and Gamble House (1908) both in Pasadena, this home combines the simple, orderly lines on their earlier work (1903-06) with their mature design philosophy. It was one of the last Craftsman residences to be built by the Greenes, signaling the end of an era due to high construction costs and a shift in public interest to Mediterranean style architecture. It is significant as one of the last works produced by these master architects of the Craftsman style, and is an excellent example of the style they perfected and for which they and Pasadena have been given national recognition.

Charles and Henry Greene were greatly influenced by the English Art and Crafts movement and vernacular American traditions. Though educated at the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology, they tended to shun the academic design vocabulary taught them. Rather, they looked to more unconventional sources for inspiration, such as Swiss Chalets and the design traditions of the Orient. To achieve their unique style, the Greenes incorporated native materials, exposed structural members and paid careful attention to details. As their work matured, they began to capitalize on the warm Southern California climate by incorporating outdoor living spaces into their designs. Their master works seem to grow from the ground, stressing horizontal lines.

¹Makinson, Randall. Greene & Greene: Architecture as a Fine Art. Salt Lake City, Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977, p. 150.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Pasadena, CA

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	1	3	9	4	8	7	0	3	7	3	8	2	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

See continuation sheet

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ann K. Milkovich/Pasadena Heritage Volunteers

organization Pasadena Heritage

date 11/4/86

street & number 80 West Dayton

telephone (818) 793-0617

city or town Pasadena

state CA 91105

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

Kathryn G. [Signature]

title

date 11/30/87

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

[Signature]
Keeper of the National Register

National Register

date

1-14-88

Attest:

Chief of Registration

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Gebhard, David, and Robert Winter. Architecture in Los Angeles: A Complete Guide. Salt Lake City: Gibbs M. Smith, 1985, p. 371.

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placed. A central window is flanked by bands of double windows. Above the windows the string course meets the exposed header beams of the exterior wall, reflecting the internal structure. There is a horizontal slat vent in the gable end. Connecting the rafter trim is a dovetail-shaped peg; an example of combining structure and ornament.

The south facade is less formal. Growing out of the stone foundation near the southwest corner, the chimney is constructed of stone to the second floor height. Above this level it is built of brick covered with stucco. Three projecting horizontal bands break up the strong vertical sense of the chimney. There is a side entrance to the front porch leading directly from the driveway. This shows the growing importance of the automobile. There is a three sided bay with a shed roof at the southeast corner of the house, containing a horizontal band of vertical casement windows. The other windows on this elevation, except for those in the attic story, are not symmetrically placed but rather reflect the interior room arrangement.

The east, or rear back, facade has two projections. The smaller one near the southeast corner has no windows and is only one story tall. This form is due to a built-in cabinet in the dining room. Centered above this is a pair of windows. The other projection is much larger and rises the full height of the building. Originally it functioned as a service porch on the first floor and a sleeping porch on the second floor. Bands of windows grace the three sides of this projection on both floors. The first floor door is reached via a small porch. The original windows in the service porch have been replaced with anodized aluminum frame windows of the original size and shape.

The composition of the north facade again reflects the internal plan. There is a shallow three-sided bay centered on this side. In the middle of it is an original door with its original hardware and glass reached by a short flight of stairs on either side of a small landing. This door leads to the basement, kitchen and second floor. The Greenes' experience in metalworking is visible in the articulation of the downspout and its brackets as it gracefully angles its way down the facade and around the windows. Fenestration on this facade is irregularly placed, reflecting the interior plan. To the left of the bay, are two windows, which light the kitchen. Centered above these is a pair of windows matched on the other side of the bay. Integrated into the overall design is a window box placed under the right-hand set of second floor

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windows. Below the window box and closer to the west facade is another pair of casement windows.

Interior

The interior plan is simple. A wide hall on the first floor divides the building from west to east just to the left of center. The hall separates the major rooms on the south side from the smaller rooms on the north side. The living room is located in the southwest portion of the building, with the dining room directly behind it. Across the hall from the living room is a smaller room originally designed as a den. Behind this room is the stair hall and then the kitchen. Upstairs the four bedrooms are arranged with two on each side of the hall. The house has two bathrooms: one on the south wall between two bedrooms and the other tucked under the stairs on the first floor.

Original interior features are found throughout the house. Three-quarter wainscoting is found in the living room. A green tile fireplace is embellished with an oak mantel. A plate rail runs around the room above the wainscot and scarfjoints and pegging enhance the woodwork.

Sliding wood doors open to the living room where a built in buffet with drawers and glass fronted shelving is the focal point of the room.

A wooden balustrade and paneling grace the stairs. Upstairs, one-half wainscoting is found in the rear bedroom. The sleeping porch, which now functions as an office, has built in window seats. The original removable windows and screens are in place in the windows. The sleeping porch is paneled and remains unpainted. All of the woodwork in the bedrooms has been painted.

Original oak plank flooring is found throughout the house, except in the kitchens and the bath. Original lighting fixtures, hardware and wall switch plates remain.

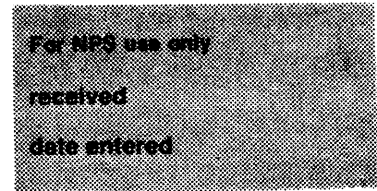
The attic space has been finished and converted to a conference room.

Auxiliary Buildings

A one-story garage with a gable roof and shingle siding stands at the southeast corner of the lot. It is distinguished by an

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original slat vent over the garage door. The garage has been converted to a small living space with the addition of a standard three-foot-wide wood frame door and a plate glass window. The garage originally had some living space and the alterations have been made in keeping with the original design. The original garage door remains intact.

Landscaping

The site measures 200 feet by 67 feet wide. As a result of the setback there is room for a lawn which stretches from the sidewalk to the low evergreen shrubs planted in front of the porch. The driveway runs along the south edge of the property and leads to the original garage. A mature juniper is located near the southwest corner of the house. On the north side are several mature hydrangeas. Marking the north edge of the site is a low, nonoriginal concrete retaining wall and an original concrete walkway connects the north entry porch with the sidewalk.

Alterations

There have been a few minor alterations, none structural. The service porch windows have been replaced by anodized aluminum ones. No visible changes were made to the rough openings. Two streetlights have been added to the front landscaping.

Alterations to the kitchen and baths have been made over the years, and the woodwork in the bedrooms has been painted.

As noted, the alterations to the Ernest W. Smith House are minimal in number and have little impact on the physical integrity of the site. Consequently, the E.W. Smith House retains a very high degree of exterior and interior design integrity.

RESOURCE COUNT

Contributing:	2 Buildings
Non-Contributing:	0
Total:	2 Buildings

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After a brief internship in Boston, Charles and Henry Greene came to Pasadena on a visit and ended up staying, opening an architectural office in 1894. During their lengthy and prosperous career they became known for their unique Craftsman style, which is well suited to the local climate. The Greenses stood for the best in Craftsman design and their houses became the California ideal. In 1948, Charles and Henry Greene were awarded a medal of merit by the Southern California chapter of the American Institute of Architects. They received a national citation in 1952 from the American Institute of Architects for their contributions to American residential architecture.

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Charles Sumner Greene and Henry Mather Greene moved to St. Louis, Missouri just before they were to enter high school. There the boys attended a newly founded school, the Manual Training School of Washington University. The curriculum was supplemented with required courses in carpentry, woodworking and metalworking. This provided them with basic knowledge that helped them eventually achieve their Craftsman ideal. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology rounded out their formal education. In keeping with the age, their first designs were Victorian and Shingle style. Charles' 1901 trip to England was to prove the turning point in their career. He had the chance to study the Arts and Crafts movement where it originated. In 1902, the Greenses' style changed drastically and the brothers began to design not only buildings but accompanying furnishings and landscaping.

The E.W. Smith House returns to the simplicity of their early designs and includes their mature design philosophy. Ernest W. Smith, an assistant trust officer with the Crown City Trust and Savings Bank, the original owner, was not as affluent as some of the Greenses' previous clients such as David Gamble or Robert R. Blacker. Hence the return to the more regular plan and to less expensive interior finishes than were used in the Greenses' masterworks. High quality craftsmanship and high quality materials (but not extravagantly expensive ones) were combined with such Greene and Greene hallmarks and scarf joints and pegging. The basic design vocabulary of the ultimate bungalow appears in the Smith house: the use of native stone as the foundation and lower portion of the chimney, wood shingles as the exterior cladding, a single gable running in each direction, the wide front porch and back sleeping porch and the prominent use of large carved beams. The Craftsman style wood detailing is found around the window openings and on the porch railings incorporate the Greenses' famous "lift" carving technique on the beam ends. The plan has a clear,

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plan has a clear, straightforward order to it having a central hall on both floors. The second floor contains the bedrooms and the important Greene trademark, a sleeping porch, as a direct response to the Southern California climate.

The interior is finished in oak. The highest quality detailing and craftsmanship was used, and the design of all decorative elements, interior and exterior, is appropriate in terms of scale, richness and quantity to the size and form of the house.

It has been noted that the Ernest W. Smith house is less elaborate than the "ultimate bungalows," or masterworks, of the Greenes. It stands, however, as an excellent example of the Greenes' mature style and illustrates their flexibility as architects and their uncompromising commitment to quality craftsmanship, materials and their aesthetic ideals.

Summary

Designed by nationally recognized architects Charles and Henry Greene in their mature Craftsman style, the E.W. Smith House is significant on the local level for its architecture, as an example of the work of master architects, for its association with the development of an architectural style associated with Pasadena, for its place in the context of the Greenes' works and the development of American domestic architecture and as one of the last bungalows to be built by the Greenes. For these reasons, the E.W. Smith House is worthy of listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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Building Permit. City of Pasadena. #8507, April 25, 1910.

"Pasadena's Architectural and Historical Inventory" Survey
Area 8.

Pasadena Star News, June 12, 1974.

Greene & Greene. Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery Catalog,
January 27-March 6, 1977.

Makinson, Randall. Greene & Greene: Architecture as a Fine
Art. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1977, p. 150.

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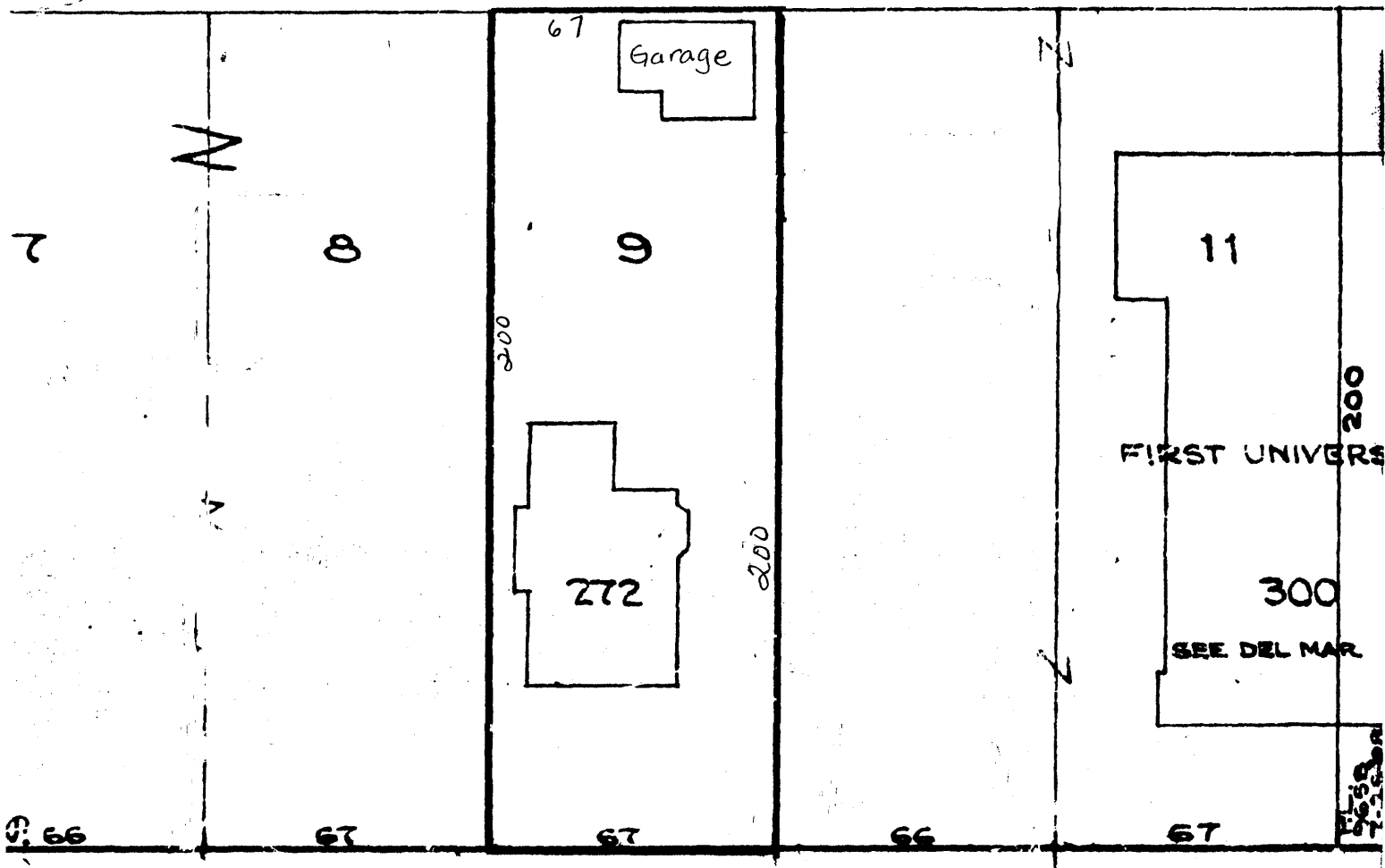
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Verbal Boundary Description and Justification.

The nominated property is contained within the boundaries of Lot 9 of the Bixby Tract, as per map recorded in Book 14, Page 92, Miscellaneous Records of said county. This property is also known as Los Angeles County Assessor's Parcel number 5734-010-059.

The nominated property is contained within boundaries that are historically associated with the property.



LOS ROBLES AVENUE

Ernest W. Smith House
 272 South Los Robles Avenue
 Pasadena, CA
 Los Angeles County

1"=40'

