

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 30 1975

DATE ENTERED

DEC 4 1975

**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

Rucker Mansion *from name*

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

412 Laurel Drive

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Everett

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Washington

__ VICINITY OF
CODE

53

#2 - Honorable Lloyd Meeds

COUNTY

Snohomish

CODE

061

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<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. J. W. Ebert, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

412 Laurel Drive

CITY, TOWN

Everett

STATE

Washington

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Snohomish County Administration Building

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Everett

STATE

Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Washington State Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1974

__FEDERAL STATE __COUNTY __LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Olympia

STATE

Washington

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 Rucker Mansion was completed in 1905 at a cost of over \$40,000. It was built by a local contractor for the family which founded Everett's bayside community and subsequently amassed a fortune in real estate, banking enterprises, and the lumber industry. The large, red brick house is a sturdy example of eclectic patternbook architecture in which characteristics of the Italian Villa, Queen Anne, and Georgian Revival Styles are combined more or less cohesively. The mansion's incomparable feature is its setting atop an elevated plateau which commands a view of Puget Sound, the city and its harbor on Port Gardner Bay, and distant mountain ranges to the west and east.

The Rucker Mansion is located in the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Section 30, T29N, R5E, of the Willamette Meridian. It occupies nearly three acres contained in parcels 06 and 13 in the Replat of Tract 1 of the Rucker Park Addition to Everett. The house is oriented north to south on its hillside site southwest of the downtown core. The fashionable residential neighborhood surrounding it is variously known as Rucker Heights and Rucker Hill. To the south of the house and the southerly loop of a narrow paved street (Laurel Drive) which circumscribes the house and yard is the brick livery stable which eventually was converted to use as an automobile garage. With the exception of a modern ranch style house oriented longitudinally on the adjoining lot to the east, the nearby houses on the hill are complimentary in scale and style. Most are examples of the Georgian Revival Style or later 20th century period architecture. Despite compact development of the neighborhood, the spectacular 180° view north from Rucker Mansion remains unobstructed because of the sloping site. On the west, the land falls off precipitously to a railroad grade at the edge of Puget Sound, and, to the south, a steep gully has been subject to soil slippage in the past, a condition believed to be under control now that storm drains have been installed. Nevertheless, in time it may be necessary to construct a bulkhead or retaining wall to stabilize the bank behind the carriage house.

The building is essentially square in plan, measuring 52 by 52 feet. A balustraded, wood frame veranda ten feet in width extends across the facade, or north face, and returns along either side wall. The main block of the brick masonry building rises three stories above a high basement. The symmetrical facade has two octagonal bays on either side of a central section in which a portico effect is created by a pedimented temple front projecting from the veranda. Under this "portico" a flight of concrete steps leads from the lawn to the first story entrance. The basic roof form is a lateral gable, and the original cover is fish-scale slates. Frontal gables over the bays of the facade intersect with the main roof below the ridge. Centered above and between these gables is a large pedimented dormer which shelters a balcony at the ballroom level. Two wide brick chimneys straddle the ridge of the main roof inside either end. Bracketed eaves extend across all gable ends. Within the gable ends of the side elevations are recessed ballroom balconies protected by bracketed pent eaves. Stemming from the south face is a short kitchen wing with the typical pedimented gable end which, like all the others, is clad with hung slates with fancy butts similar to the original roofing material. Off center to the west of the rear wing is a gable-roofed porte-cochere measuring 16' x 24' and matching the main roof in detail. It is supported at the outside

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 30 1975

DATE ENTERED

DEC 4 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

end by two brick piers. Front bay windows are suitably large to take advantage of the prospect, and they are decorated with transoms of leaded and beveled glass. Windows of the south face are of the double-hung sash type.

Features reminiscent of the Victorian Italian Villa Style are the broadly overhanging eaves, large-scale brackets, and the loggia, or veranda. Hallmarks of the Queen Anne Style, on the other hand, which was in vogue during the last two decades of the 19th century, are the patterned surfaces of the gable ends and the further articulation of those areas by moldings and pent eaves over recessed balconies. The features which appear most up-to-date stylistically, in that they show an awareness of the Georgian Revival Style current at the time of the mansion's construction, are the octagonal bays of the facade (though these were also characteristic of the Italianate mode) and the fluted Roman Doric columns with "entasis" which are used in pairs as veranda posts and as detached framing elements of the ballroom balconies. The temple-fronted "portico" is perhaps the most conspicuous evidence that the revival of certain Colonial and Adamesque prototypes had become fashionable in Everett by this time. These characteristics notwithstanding, the Rucker Mansion is by no means academic revival architecture. Rather, its spirit is one of restrained eclecticism. The building's stateliness and sumptuous interior finishing, its imposing site and the life-style of its original occupants, seemed to call for use of the term "mansion". By local standards, the term was entirely appropriate, and it is still apt today.

The interior spaces are formally organized around a spacious entry stair-hall in which the paneled ceiling, stairway, baseboards and other woodwork are of Golden Oak. The original green cut velvet wall coverings are intact in the hall, as are several other decorative treatments in the house which were supplied by Sloans of New York. The smoking room and dining room on the east side of the hall share a common chimney and were initially connected by portiere arches on either side of the chimney. These passageways were filled in with storage shelves in recent years, and the present marble dining room fireplace surround the north wall paneling also are the results of recent remodeling. Important features of the smoking room are the chimney piece with its dressed stone veneer over brick, and the paneled wainscot of birdseye maple and redwood.

The parlor and the library on the west side of the hall were also adjoining rooms before spaces beside the chimney were filled in to create book shelves in the 1960's. In the parlor, original blue silk brocade wall coverings with matching draperies and valances are intact, though slightly water damaged. Here too, the present fireplace surround and south wall paneling are the results of remodeling. The chimney surround in the library is brick with studded strap iron decoration. Access to the house from the porte-cochere on the south is provided by two adjacent entries, one to the kitchen (now fully remodeled) and the other to a vestibule giving into the library.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 30 1975
DATE ENTERED	DEC 4 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The daylight basement contains what used to be servants' quarters and assorted utility areas, including a well-equipped shower-bath room. For the entertainment of guests, the basement also contains a billiard room in the northwest corner and, in the southeast corner, a card room replete with tile floor, brick-faced chimney surround with strap iron decoration and conical hood. An interesting feature of this level is the enclosed solarium which corresponds to the veranda above. This ten-foot wide ambulatory space is lined with lava-like rock and clinker brick coursed in a grottoesque manner to provide the background for small pools and exotic plants.

The upstairs, or second story contains in addition to the stair hall two bedroom suites in the front of the house, and two smaller suites in the rear. The third, or ballroom story is all wood-lined. The ballroom is a large, open space 52 by 25 feet in which the two chimneys are the only interruptions. Steps lead to small galleries or balconies in the north, east and west walls. To the south of the ballroom are several storage rooms.

The livery stable is a rectangular, brick masonry structure measuring 40 by 35 feet. It contains four stables below grade, the carriage level, and a loft lighted by dormer windows in a slate-covered mansard roof. The loft extends over a porte-cochere measuring 18 by 24 feet which is centered in the north face. As is the mansion's porte-cochere, this one too is supported at the outside end by brick piers. At the center of the main roof is a louvered ventilator or cupola with bracketed pyramidal roof surmounted by a weather vane in the shape of a horse.

Represented in landscaping around the house is a collection of plant materials typical of larger gardens of the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the century. In addition to native evergreens there are imported monkey puzzle and tulip trees; flowering shrubs, such as forsythia, camelia and rhododendron; and conventional bedding plants such as hyacinth. The monkey puzzle tree has not fared well in recent years, but no doubt with proper care it can be revived.

The Rucker Mansion was recently acquired by its present owners, whose intention is to occupy the property strictly as a private residence. Certain necessary stabilization and repair work is planned, but original material will be retained wherever possible. Limited restoration projects, including, for example, the replacement of modern asphalt shingles with roofing slate to match the original, also are in prospect.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1904-1905 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Rucker Mansion is significant to the City of Everett as one of the grandest homes erected in the inland port. It was built in a period of local economic promise, and while it was easily the most notable, it was but one of a number of substantial residential projects carried out in the city in 1904 and 1905. The large house was built for the Rucker family, founders of Everett's bayside community who later amassed a fortune in real estate, banking enterprises, and the lumber industry. The family selected an incomparable site for their home on Rucker Heights southwest of town. From their elevated vantage point, Jane Morris Rucker, her sons Wyatt and Bethel, and Bethel's bride, Ruby Brown Rucker, commanded a 180° panorama of the Olympic Mountains, Puget Sound, the city and harbor and Cascade peaks. The property has been little altered by subsequent owners over the years. Because of its breathtaking setting and its association with community pioneers and business leaders, it is widely regarded a public asset. When the property came up for sale recently, city officials contemplated acquisition for purposes of preserving the property intact. However, it transpired that the city council was divided on the matter of a purchase option. The issue was satisfactorily resolved when the property was acquired by its present owners for continued use as a private residence.

Jane Morris Rucker and her sons, Wyatt H., age 30, and Bethel J., age 25, were attracted to Washington's Puget Sound from Ohio by opportunities in real estate, timber and mining. They arrived in Tacoma in 1888 and proceeded to branch out in search of investment prospects. Wyatt Rucker became interested in the peninsula between Port Gardner Bay and the Snohomish River estuary. Assessing the harbor potential of the peninsula's long stretch of tideland on the Sound, the Ruckers purchased the bayfront homestead of Edmund Smith in the winter of 1889-1890. The following spring, Tacoma lumberman Henry Hewitt, Jr., also weighed the prospects of the area. The Great Northern transcontinental railroad was expected to reach tidewater at this point once it traversed the Cascade Range. With this in mind, the Ruckers had begun platting a city they designated Port Gardner when Hewitt approached them with a compelling proposal to sign over several large tracts. Hewitt's own townsite plan was backed by wealthy investors from the East, including John D. Rockefeller. The Everett Land Company (named for the son of Charles L. Colby, principal owner of the Wisconsin Central Railroad) was promptly incorporated with Hewitt as president, and it promoted a number of supporting industries and enterprises. By 1892 the boom was in full swing. The Rucker brothers shrewdly put the first platted section of the new City of Everett on the market in September, 1891, several months before the Land Company's lots were ready for sale. Their investment and banking concerns prospered during the boom and survived the ruinous Silver Panic of 1893. At the turn of the century the family's

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED SEP 30 1975

DATE ENTERED

DEC 4 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

business dealings continued favorably, and Wyatt Rucker became treasurer of the Everett Improvement Company (successor to the Everett Land Company) backed by Great Northern Railroad President James Jerome Hill.

Between 1900 and 1905 Everett's population doubled to 16,000. The Improvement Company offered free factory sites to major industries, and thousands of immigrants arrived in Everett to fill new jobs. This period of economic revival was marked by harbor improvement and building activity as well as industrial expansion. The Everett Daily Herald boasted that the town's "uncouth appearing cottages" were being "removed and supplanted by ones of neat and artistic design." Included in an impressive list of better homes commenced in 1904 was the Rucker brothers' residence which, it was claimed, "occupies the most beautiful site in the city" and "is one of the handsomest houses in the state . . ."

According to local tradition, Rucker Mansion was a wedding gift to B. J. Rucker's bride, the daughter of local realtor C. C. Brown. Nevertheless, it was also intended to be the family home for Jane Rucker and her older son Wyatt as well. The Ruckers took a suite of rooms at the old Monte Cristo Hotel, one of their investments, while the new house was under construction. Bethel Rucker and Ruby Brown were married the day before Christmas, 1904, and embarked on a three-month tour of the Orient aboard the liner *Princess Victoria* with the idea of taking up residence on Rucker Heights upon their return. The house was reported to be nearing completion in July, 1905, but it is not known precisely when it was first occupied. No architect has yet been identified in connection with the project. It has been stated that the house was the work of a local carpenter-builder, or "artisan-contractor." The somewhat nonspecific style of the house, may, in fact, point to a builder's handbook source. In any event, it was elaborately finished in hard woods and "equipped with every modern luxury." Furnishings were supplied by Sloans, a prestigious New York firm. An elevator was installed for the convenience of Jane Rucker, who was by this time in failing health and confined to a wheelchair. She died in the house in 1907.

In 1913 B. J. and Ruby Rucker moved out to look after family interests elsewhere, and Wyatt lived on in the house alone until their return in 1918. Not until 1923 did the Ruckers divest themselves of the house. The estate, initially compassing approximately four acres, was sold to local lumber company head Clyde Walton for a sum reported at \$32,500. According to terms of the transaction, the Ruckers acquired the Waltons' former home on Hoyt Avenue.

The Clyde Waltons lived out their lives in the mansion, and as Walton was active in a riding club, he renovated the livery stable and opened bridle trails through the south end of the estate. These, reportedly, connected with trails to the City's Forest Park. Following Walton's demise in 1959, the property changed

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 30 1975
DATE ENTERED	DEC 4 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

hands three times, including the most recent transaction. The integrity of the mansion was remarkably well maintained throughout the succession of later owners. The changes of greatest consequence appear to have been made shortly after 1964, when the kitchen and upstairs bathrooms were upgraded and some alterations were made to the adjoining chambers of the main floor.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED SEP 30 1975
DATE ENTERED DEC 2 1975

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Illustrated History of Skagit and Snohomish Counties...(1906).

Phinney, Frances. "Home Atop Rucker Hill Remodeled for Today..." Everett Daily Herald (June 20, 1964).

"Some Pretty Homes Built in Everett During the Past Year", Everett Daily Herald July 1, 1905), p. 6.