

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 92001290 Date Listed: 10/1/92

Commerce Building
Property Name

Snohomish County WA State

N/A
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for *Anthony J. Lee*
Signature of the Keeper

10/1/92
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Statement of Significance: The local level of significance should be indicated.

This information was confirmed with Leonard Garfield of the Washington State historic preservation.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL
REGISTER

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

historic name: The Commerce Building

other name/site number: NA

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2. Location

street & number: 1801 Hewitt Avenue

not for publication: NA

city/town: Everett

vicinity: NA

state: WA county: Snohomish code: 061 zip code: 98201

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3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

4. 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. See continuation sheet.

Mary M. Hampton Signature of certifying official Date 2/24/92

Washington Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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 of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Commerce/Trade Sub: Financial institution
Commerce/Trade Business
Education School
Current: Vacant/Not in use Sub:

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7. Description
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Architectural Classification:

Other: Commercial Vernacular
Late 19th and 20th American Movements/Commercial Style

Other Description: NA

Materials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Brick other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

The Commerce Building is a five story brick building situated on the northeast corner of Hewitt and Rockefeller Avenues with approximately 48 front feet on Hewitt and 120 feet extending along Rockefeller. The original first floor banking space and the stair lobby to the upper floors open onto Hewitt while two storefronts open onto Rockefeller.

Comparably scaled commercial buildings anchor the northwest and southeast corners of the intersection creating a very urban feel. A fourth substantial building was torn down at the southwest corner. Smaller scaled business houses surround the Commerce Building. This was a pivotal early 20th Century commercial hub.

Touted as "fireproof" when it was announced in January of 1910, the Commerce Building is constructed of reinforced concrete, steel and pressed brick. It has a shallow U shape so that "2/3 of the offices" on the upper floors will be on the street, "each office has an outside room insuring plenty of light and fresh air". (1)

The facade of the Commerce Building is characterized by a three part composition, with dominant windows and decorative cornice. The large one over one wooden sash windows, which swing open from a center pivot, consume enough surface area to give the brick walls a somewhat skeletal appearance. This is particularly true at the first level where scored masonry pilasters appear to support a heavy architrave on which the upper floors rest. A bracketed cornice, with an atypical parapet above, tops the Commerce Building.

Two storefronts remain intact on the west side of the building. They have recessed entrances with wood framed show windows, transoms and sidelights. A light well along the west side also provides an entrance to the finished basement.

The first floor banking space was a large open area now subdivided by partial height partitions. Decorative detail of the space is intact and features a "beamed" ceiling with classical motif plaster ornament.

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8. Statement of Significance
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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: _____.

Applicable National Register Criteria: C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : NA

Areas of Significance: Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: c1910-1920

Significant Dates : 1910

Significant Person(s) : NA

Cultural Affiliation: NA

Architect/Builder: Benjamin Franklin Turnbull

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

Criterion C- Architecture

The Commerce Building (1910) is significant as representative of the achievements of architect Benjamin Franklin Turnbull whose work dominated Everett, Washington's commercial development from about 1907 until 1920. Turnbull designed at least seven major commercial buildings in Everett's central business district including multi-story commercial blocks on three of the four corners at the pivotal intersection of Hewitt and Rockefeller Avenues. Only two of Turnbull's documented commercial buildings survive. Of these, the Commerce Building is most representative of Turnbull's place in the history of Everett. It was built at the height of Turnbull's most productive period, it is aesthetically superior to the other surviving building and it was the location of Turnbull's office from 1910 until the end of his Everett career in 1927.

Criterion C- Architecture

The Commerce Building (1910) is significant as an excellent, intact local interpretation of the early 20th Century Commercial style. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of that style including five or more floors; masonry construction; facades dominated by large, regularly grouped windows; balance between vertical and horizontal lines; and a modest cornice.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Dilgard, David and Riddle, Margaret. A Survey of Everett's Historic Properties, City of Everett Bicentennial Committee, 1976.

Everett City Directories 1895-1938.

Everett Herald, January-February, 1910.

Everett Public Library, Northwest Collection building index and photograph files.

Index to Architects, Office of Urban Conservation, Department of Neighborhoods, City of Seattle.

Interview with Margaret Riddle, History Specialist, Everett Public Library.

May, Allan and Preboski, Dale. The History of Everett Parks, City of Everett, 1989.

Seattle City Directories 1925-1938.

The Coast, Vol.16. No.5, 1908.

Woodbridge, Sally B. and Montgomery, Roger. A Guide to Architecture in Washington State, University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1980.

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: Everett Public Library

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10. Geographical Data
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Acreage of Property: Less than one

UTM References: Zone 10 Easting 559370 Northing 5314130

Verbal Boundary Description:

Lots 9 and 10, Block 665, Plat of Everett, Snohomish County Washington.

Boundary Justification:

The Commerce Building has a zero lot line and the property boundaries correspond to the footprint of the building.

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11. Form Prepared By
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Name/Title: Marilyn B. Sullivan, Preservation Consultant

Organization: NA Date: May 9, 1992

Street & Number: 4004 NE 46th Street Telephone: (206) 522-6686

City or Town: Seattle State: WA ZIP: 98105

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The lobby entrance to the upper floors is recessed between two pilasters at the southeast corner of the Hewitt Avenue facade. It leads to a small elevator lobby with marble stairs to the second floor. The stair has square wooden newel posts and handrail with turned spindles. Above the second floor the stairs are wooden as opposed to marble.

The upper floors of the Commerce Building are essentially alike with the exception of the fifth floor. Floors 2 through 4 have offices arranged along a shallow U shaped hallway. The Hewitt Avenue offices on floors three and four have distinctive curved walls. Originally, single light, paneled doors, transoms and relights lined the hallways. Many are still intact. It appears that the vast majority of the interior alterations, which are on floors 2, 3 and 4, are superficial applications of false wood paneling and dropped ceilings.

A February 1910 newspaper article explains the fifth floor. "According to a telegram received by Architect Turnbull...it has been decided to make the proposed structure a five story building instead of four story...A local school would take the entire upper floor of the building for school quarters." The fifth floor features, among other details, light wells with multi-light skylights and a reception area with service window.

Although not elegant inside, the Commerce Building is nicely detailed with molded window frames and heads, picture molding, scored plaster wainscotting and molded baseboards.

The Commerce Building retains a remarkable degree of integrity. Its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and feeling convey unquestionably the architectural significance of this building and its historical associations.

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Newspaper announcements further credit him with business blocks at 2809-2811 Colby Avenue (1916), the Powell (1910) and Henning Blocks (1907) in the 2800 block of Colby and the telephone building (1906) at the corner of Rockefeller and California. (7)

Additionally, it has been documented that Turnbull designed realtor, Charles Spriesterbach's house at 2404 Hoyt (1905), the Lewis Schumacher House at 2421 Rucker (1905), the Clark Park bandstand (1921) and a "store and office building" in the Greenlake area of Seattle (1912). Presumably, Turnbull also designed his own houses at 1722 Hoyt (c19__-1915), 2121 Hoyt (c1915-1925) and 3611 Rockefeller (c1925-1928). (8)

Little of Turnbull's commercial work has survived. All of the documented buildings, with the exception of the Commerce and Hodges Buildings, have been either demolished or altered to such an extent that they no longer convey their historic or architectural identity. Several of his residential works survive including his delightful Craftsman cottage at 2121 Hoyt.

The Commerce Building is thus important as the finest intact example of Turnbull's work and is representative of his influence on Everett's commercial development. It was built at the height of his most productive period, it is aesthetically superior to the other remaining example and it was, in fact, the location of Turnbull's office from 1910 until the end of his Everett career in 1927. (9)

Contemporary newspaper accounts, in general, give surprisingly little information about the designers of early 20th Century buildings but speak in glowing terms about the features of the buildings and the enterprises that they will house.

The \$100,000 Commerce Block was announced in the Everett Herald on January 25, 1910, listing the investors as George A. Dailey, L.H. Eckhoff and C.S. Baldwin, "all newcomers from Nebraska." Much of the article, however, was given over to the comments of William Stockbridge, President of the Bank of Commerce which would occupy the building. He stated, that "it is the intention of the bank to install as fine a fixtures as seen anywhere on the Pacific coast."

Mr. Stockbridge went on to say "the current change of location was forced upon us by the increase in our business, the present quarters being too cramped for even comfortable operation" and that the "capital stock of the Bank of Commerce will be increased at the time we take possession of our new quarters."

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"The location for the building", said Mr. Stockbridge, "is regarded as idea[1] for its purposes. With the paving of Rockefeller Avenue, the corner will be further improved. The property...was bought by Mr. Dailey and his associates from Mr. Mehan shortly after the fire that laid to waste the Bailey Block last summer."

An excited little article in the Herald's February 3, 1910 issue announced "according to a telegram received by architect Turnbull sent by Mr. Dailey...it has been decided to make the proposed structure a five story building instead of four story...A local school would take the entire upper floor of the building for school quarters." Subsequently, the Everett Business School occupied the fifth floor.

Another noteworthy occupant of the Commerce Building was the Everett Women's Suffrage Club. The group was meeting here in 1910 when the State of Washington extended the vote to women, a full decade before the 19th Amendment guaranteed the right nationwide. (10)

Today, the Commerce Building is vacant and is being considered for reuse as housing.

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Footnotes

1. Everett Herald, January 25, 1910.
2. Dilgard and Riddle, Survey.
3. Survey and Woodbridge, Guide.
4. Coast, 1908; Herald, January 3, 1910; Guide.
5. The Seattle City Directory of 1932 lists Laura E. as the widow of Frank Turnbull.
6. Survey
7. NW Collection building index and Survey.
8. Ibid. Also Index, OUC; History of Everett Parks.
9. Everett City Directories 1900-1930.
10. Interview, Riddle.

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Photographs taken April 24, 1992 by Marilyn Sullivan. Negatives on file in the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.

1. Hewitt Avenue facade
2. Rockefeller Avenue facade
3. Eastern facade viewed from Hewitt Avenue
4. Basement access on Rockefeller Avenue
5. Storefront, Rockefeller Avenue
6. Hewitt Avenue entrance to floors two through five
7. Stair from entrance lobby to second floor
8. Representative view of second floor
9. Representative view of second floor
10. Stair detail
11. View of primary stairwell
12. View of office/hall wall on third floor. Sheetrock sheathing
13. Typical window detail
14. Fourth floor hallway
15. Eastern elevation viewed from primary stairwell
16. Fifth floor hallway
17. Fifth floor reception area
18. Typical original interior treatment and finishes for floors two through five