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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

BACKROUND

Begun in 1875 and completed in 1876, the Mount Pleasant Museum House was designed by the architectural firm of Ezra F. Kysor and W.H. Mathews and built for William H. Perry, an early lumber magnate in the City of Ios Angeles. The house is of Classic Italiante style of the post Civil War period. Originally located at 1315 Pleasant Avenue, in the Boyle Heights district of Ios Angeles, it was relocated in 1975, to Heritage Square, 3800 Homer Street, Ios Angeles, a site which the City of Ios Angeles has set aside as a cultural park to preserve those structures which define the character and quality of a past era in the city's history.

ENVIRONMENTAL

The site at Heritage Square is similiar in nature to the site upon which the house originally stood, being specifically selected because of those similiar features. The original site soped from back to front and the new location slopes in the same direction, even to the steeper slope that was in existence behind the house at its old site. The front of the house faces a Westerly exposure, just as it did at the old site. And, the land slopes enough in front of the house that the terrance wall that was part of the old site can and will be refreated as part of the landscaping using the original brick brought from the old site. Although all of the fir trees and the orange grove shown in early photographs have long disappeared, these former conditions will be used as quide to landscaping the house at the new site.

ARCHITECTURAL

The house consists of two parts, a main building and a service wing at the rear. The main house measures approximately 53' in width, 40'-6" in depth, and 28' high at the eaves (above the sill plate line of the first floor). At the eave is a wood cornice element about 42" in depth with an eave projection of about 24". The roof is hipped at about 25° from the horizontal which because of the large dimension of the house, provides a flat surface about 35' above the first floor. An early engraving (Photo #1) shows an iron railing around this portion of the roof. The rear wing measures 39' in width and 18' in depth, with an eave at approximately 22' above grade and a cornice element smaller than the main house. The roof is also hipped and mates with the roof of the main house.

PLAN FEATURES

The main building is arranged about a central hallway running Fast - West and containing a staircase curving at the second floor. A porch of 6' depth sets into the Norhtwest corner. North of the hall is a library (or parlor) 15'x15' and a dining room 22'x16' with a bay window at its North end. South of the hall is a large parlor, 16'x35' with a bay at the Western end. The parlor is visually divided in two by a false beam supported by two Corinthian columns of wood, backed up by square pilasters in the same design. The ceiling height on the first floor is 12'-6". The second floor has a full central hall with a door leading to an open balcony over the porch. Bedrooms are located over the library and dining room and are of the same dimensions. Over the main parlor area, the space is divided into two large bedrooms with closets, back to back and a sitting or sewing room at the

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CONTINUATION SHEE!

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

at the exterior wall, entered from each bedroom. In 1920, this room was converted into a bath room. Second floor ceiling height is 11'-0".

On the first floor of the rear wing, the North half is kitchen. The South half contains a hallway and a narrow (26") servants stairway going to the second floor. Off the hallway were two bedrooms. Over the kitchen, on the second floor, is a large sitting room. The second floor hall is directly over the first floor and a stairway leads to the attic. Two more bedrooms are located over those on the first floor. Ceiling height both floors is 11'-0". In 1920, two of the bedrooms, were partitioned off to provide bathrooms on the first and second floor. There is no evidence that interior bathroom facilities were ever a part of the original house.

MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION

Nearly 100% of the brick used in the foundation and terrace walls of original house were salvaged and used in the reconstruction at Heritage Square. A nearly white mortar was used to reflect the whiteness of the original mortar which had a very high lime content, prohibited by contemporary building codes. The bricks were randomly tested during the reconstruction and found to have a compressive value in excess of 5000 psi, higher than the average of most brick of similiar nature made in this area today. The brick carries the imprint of J. Mullally and undoubtedly were from the Mullally and Johnson kilns, one of the earliest brick manufacturers in Ios Angeles. The foundation walls were two wythes thick, running bond for six courses and stretcher bonded each seventh course.

The house has balloon framing of fir, full-dimension 2x4's on 16" centers. These members run from the sill plate to a point 3' above the attic floor level, or 28' in height. Exterior covering is redwood shiplap horizontal siding a full 1" thick, with a 1" wide rabbet at the top edge to provide horizontal accent. All exterior corners are mitered and at each corner on the main building, pre-frabricated wood quoins (imitating stone) were placed from the sill line to the cornice. In 1926 a two story addition was attached to the Northeast corner of the house and the entire house then covered with stucco after having first removed all the quoins and window trim. The window bays were seft in their original condition. The shingled roof was also covered with clay tile, without removing the existing shingles. The clay tile roof has been removed as part of the restoration process and a new shingle roof to match the old is being installed. The stucco is being removed as restoration proceeds (see Photo #6) so that the entire fabric of the original house will be restored.

Floor construction is 2×10 's at 16" O.C. for both floors and 2×6 's up to 36' long are used for attic joists, taking advantage of two span configurations for load distribution. Rough flooring is 1" width fir boards laid 90° to the joists. There is evidence that an oak veneer flooring was used over this at one time but as the building stands today, virtually all this material is gone.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 3

The interior is plastered throughout except for the attic. The main building walls are uniquely lathed, with lx2 strips nailed at 45° bias across the stude about 12" O.C. Over this is nailed 1/4"x 1" wood lath, normal spacing, on a 45° bias in the other direction. This provided unusual strength characteristics to the walls that have allowed it to come through unscathed from earthquake effects. Ceilings are lathed with 1/4"x1" wood lath at 90° to the joists, as is lathing in the rear wing. The 3/8" plaster (over the lath) is standard throughout the house. Cross walls and partitions are not tied to supporting walls or ceilings as in contemporary stude corner construction. Instead, the supporting walls were lathed first and the other walls were built up to the lath, but not connecting to it.

All nails used in the original construction, including lath nails, were square or rectangular forged shapes with no flat, spread heads as is common for contemporary wire nails. This has provided a means for identifying those materials added after the original construction. Hardware, mostly cast-iron hinges with recessed shape cast in the hinge leaves, escuteons, etc., was fastened with coarse threaded wood screws in which the threads appear to have been cast, not cut, as in modern screws.

Originally, the house used gas lighting extensively and is said to be one of the first houses in the city to be electrified (probably about 1900). The original chandeliers are gone but the large cast plaster (up to 30" in diameter) and elaborately ornamented ceiling rosettes are still in place.

The parlor, dining room, library, and three bedrooms on the second floor all had fireplaces at one time, apparently all with marble fronts (carved) and possibly cast-iron finish trim surrounds. A fragment of the marble was found in a remote corner of the building and matches closely fireplace designs in other homes designed by Kysor. All fireplaces were dismantled and plastered over to flush with the surrounding wall in 1926 except for the parlor fireplace which was rebuilt using face brick and a wood mantel. This was probably done to permit the combined fireplace flues to be used as a chimney for a new heating system. In 1926, a central gravity furnace heating system was installed (using coal for fuel); which itself was abandoned in 1935 in favor of individual gas room heater when the building was converted into a home for unwed mothers. The disasterous Long Beach earthquake (1933) may also have been an influence in declaring the ornate chimneys a hazard, for they were removed and metal flues installed above the roof. These chimneys are to be restored to their original design.

Exterior ornamental detail may be viewed in the attached photographs. Post bases and porch columns are of hollow wood construction and wood moldings are highly detailed, balancing fine small concave and convex molded shapes against large ogee shapes within the same molding piece. Brackets are jig-sawed, wood laminated shapes. Dentils are separate bits of moldings in contrasting sizes, nailed individually in place. Large brackets may have been carved but most ornament was accomplished

Form No. 10: 300a (Rev. 10:74)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF METORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 4

through the use of milled moldings. Moldings appear to have been made with "standard" knives but used in such combinations that moldings used for the various decorative treaments each had its own individual profile, varying in very small ways, one from another. Balusters are turned from solid wood, again with finely detailed "moldings" contrasting the heavy urn shapes. Railing are solid, shaped wood.

A very brief historic summary:

1876 - built for W.H. Perry- engraving shows "widow's walk" railing.

1887 - purchased by S.C. Hubbell- photo shows no roof railing.

1916 - fire in attic-building reroofed (some original charred rafters, etc., remain in repaired condition).

1920 - inside plumbing added when house became YWCA dormitory.

1926 - dormitory addition built on Northeast corner of house, house stuccoed, clay tile roof installed.

1935 - house became home for un-wed mothers- "Bide-A-Wee" home chimneys dismantled.

1975 - moved to Heritage Square- restoration proceeding expect to be completed 1976-77 and used as museum house and historical society headquarters.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW __PREHISTORIC __ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC __COMMUNITY PLANNING __LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE __RELIGION __1400-1499 __ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC __CONSERVATION __SCIENCE __AGRICULTURE **X**ECONOMICS __1500-1599 __LITERATURE __SCULPTURE __1600-1699 XARCHITECTURE __EDUCATION __MILITARY __SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN __1700-1799 __ART __ENGINEERING MUSIC __THEATER X1800-1899 __COMMERCE __EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT __PHILOSOPHY _TRANSPORTATION __1900-__COMMUNICATIONS __INDUSTRY __POLITICS/GOVERNMENT __OTHER (SPECIFY) __INVENTION SPECIFIC DATES BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A. HISTORICAL

The Mount Pleasant House is both historically and architecturally significant in the history of Ios Angeles. Historically it was first the residence of William Hayes Perry and then later of Judge Stephan C. Hubbell, both distinguished, civic-minded individuals who made lasting contributions to the establishment and growth of early Ios Angeles.

The house was constructed in 1875-1876 for Mr. Perry, an early lumber magnate who was greatly involved in local community activities in Los Angeles and a leading figure on the West coast. Perry's story began in Newark, Ohio, in 1832. After mastering the trade of cabinetry in his youth, he traveled across the midwestern plains to California, arriving in Los Angeles in 1854. From simple beginnings as a cabinetmaker, Perry opened the first furniture and cabinet business in the City which was so successful that he was soon able to offer stock transported from San Francisco. Perry expanded his activities with Wallace Woodworth in 1858 under the firm name of Perry, Woodworth & Co. and in 1873 the firm changed from the manufacturer of furniture to the sale of lumber, builders hardware, and finishing supplies, then becoming Perry & Woodworth Lumber & Mill Company. With Mr. Woodworth's death in 1883, the Company became the W.H. Perry Lumber & Mill Company which became one of the largest lumber industries in California. The success of the company was founded on the fact that the company handled all operations from the beginning timber land, logging camps, saw-mills, shipping vessels, private wharves, yards, and railroad lines throughout the country. Perry subsequently organized the Los Angeles and Humboldt Lumber Co. located at San Pedro to supply both foreign trade and the State of Arizona, the Pioneer Lumber and Mill Co. located at Colton to supply the area east of Los Angeles county, and the Los Angeles Storage, Cement and Lumber Co. which carried numerous building supplies for the local market. In his Los Angeles lumber plant, he installed the first stationary steam engine.

Perry as an organizational leader had numerous successes. In 1865 he was granted a franchise from the City of Los Angeles to illuminate the City with gas. He gave the City its first artificial lighting and he organized the City's first gas company known as the Los Angeles Gas Company of which he was President and General Manager for five years. During the years 1866 and 1869 he was City Councilman for Los Angeles. In 1879 he was elected President and Manager of the Los Angeles City Water Company and continued as Manager for twenty-five years. Perry is credited with putting the City Water Company on a sound financial basis whereas previously it had been heavily indebted and generally inefficient.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See enclosed bibliography.

			
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 2

Perry's other offices include: Director of the Farmers and Merchants Bank of Los Angeles, President and Director of the Southern California Pipe and Clay Company, President of the Ventura Valley Water and Improvement Company, Director and one of the organizers of the Southern California Insurance Company, Director of the Cosmopolis Mill and Trading Company of Gray's Harbor in Washington, President of the Bard Oil and Asphalt Company; Director of Olinda Crude Oil Company and the Reed Oil Company of Kern County, President of the W.H. Perry Lumber and Mill Company and the Pioneer Lumber and Mill Company, President of the Charles Nelson Shipping Company of San Francisco, President of the Gas Consumer Association of San Francisco, and President of the Crystal Springs Water Company which he organized to develope and additional water supply for the City of Los Angeles. As a pioneer manufacturer, lumberman, merchant, banker, and public-spirited citizen, W.H. Perry contributed much to the development of the City of Los Angeles.

In 1887 Judge Stephen C. Hubbell became the second owner of the Mount Pleasant House. Mr. Hubbell was born in New York in 1841, grew up on his father's farm, became a teacher and then a lawyer. He was admitted to practice in the Superior Court of New York in 1863 and then to the Federal Court and the United States Supreme Court. He was known as Judge Hubbell since his appointment as surrogate in 1869. In 1870 he moved to California and settled in Los Angeles in 1873. There he formed a partnership with the visiting attorney of Los Angeles County, Rodney Hudson. After Hudson's retirement Hubbell continued in law but he also became involved with a variety of other business and civic interests. He was President and a Director of the National Bank of California and he was Treasurer of Hubbell Investment Company. He was one of the men who planned and initiated the first system of urban transportation in the City of Los Angeles. He helped organize the first street railway company, Spring and Sixth Street Railway Company, and was President for ten years. This company was very influential in the building of cable railways in Los Angeles.

In addition, Judge Hubbell was one of the organizers and founders of the University of Southern California. He was one of the first Board of Directors and first Treasurer of the University. Stephen Hubbell was also appointed to serve as a member of the City's first Park Commission to determine a park system for the City of Los Angeles. Hubbell served as a Park Commissioner for many years and assisted in establishing the City's park system. He also donated Westlake Park (renamed Mac Arthur Park) to the City.

B. ARCHITECTURAL

In addition, the Mount Pleasant House is architecturally significant in the history of Los Angeles. It is not a carpenter's copybook house, but one that was designed and built by a well-known pioneer architect of Los Angeles, Ezra F. Kysor.

Form No. 10: 300a (Rev. 10: 74)

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF INCTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 3

Kysor was born in New York in 1835 and moved to Los Angeles in 1868 to begin architectural practice. He formed various partnerships and his firm was very active as a pioneer architectural firm in Los Angeles until 1888. An early important work of his firm was the Pico House (hotel), a state historical monument, located on North Main Street in Los Angeles, a three story brick and stucco building executed in 1869 and still standing. Later significant commissions included St. Vibiana's Roman Catholic Cathedral located on Main Street, the three-story Cosmopolitan Hotel (later called the "Lafayette"), several business blocks on Main Street, including the Mc Donald and Cardona Buildings, and a series of domestic residences and other buildings in Los Angeles and environs.

One such domestic residence was Mount Pleasant, designed and built in 1875-1876 for William H. Perry. As most of the bankers' homes of that day were only cottages, Mount Pleasant was important because it was constructed at the cost of approximately \$9,000.00, a considerable sum in the 1870's. At the time of its construction, Kysor was in partnership with W.H. Mathews. Mount Pleasant is one of the earliest residences of Kysor's still in existence and is one of the few early Victorian dwellings of the beginning of the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century left in Los Angeles. The house is significant because it possesses a high level of integrity in design, materials, and workmanship and is an excellent example of the neo-classic Italianate house of the post Civil War.

The house embodies the distinctive characteristics of balloon construction and is one of the few architectural examples extent of the 1870's in Los Angeles. Farly photographs of the house show the restrained, clean architectural lines of the original structure. The hipped roof, the elongated, modified rectangular shape, the chimneys, the shiplap horizontal siding, the brick foundations: all worked together in a dignified whole. The exterior elements are composed of superimposed splayed front and side bay windows, flanked by finely detailed pilasters, a graceful two centered arched entry way having fluted Corinthian columns, and Doric wood columns at the main porch, balustraded railings at the porch and the second floor balcony, handsomely framed second story windows, wood quoins at the corners of the facade, and an ornamental wood broketed cornice typical of the Italianate style. The Mount Pleasant Museum House is an example of skillful architectural design unity, restraint, pleasing proportions and esthetic interest, in an era when Victorian eclecticism eventually became known for its excess in both style and detail.

The Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America (N.S.C.D.A.) - Resident in the State of California - learned of the Mount Pleasant House plight and expressed an interest in the restoration of the house. This committee had previously assissted the State in rebuilding and furnishing the Hugo Reid Adobe in Arcadia, California. It is part of the national non-profit organization that has worked since its founding in 1891 to perpetuate American

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ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 4

History through such activities as preserving and restoring buildings of historical interest and importance. The National Society is currently operating 77 historic places throughout the country.

The Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee realized that the house was associated with lives of persons significant in the early history of California and of great importance for its architectural value. In order to save and to restore the Mount Pleasant House, it was imperative that it be removed to a new location. mer owner of the house donated the structure to the Committee which then recieved an invitation from the Cultural Heritage Foundation to move the house to Heritage Square, historical park of the City of Los Angeles, located in Highland Park. Cultural Heritage Foundation, Inc., a non-profit charitable corporation interested in the cultural heritage of Los Angeles, operates Heritage Square, a ten-acre site for significant historic Victorian structures of 1865-1914. The houses selected for the Square are being restored and displayed for the education and enjoyment of the public. On December 18, 1975 after raising considerable funds, the Los Angeles-Pasadena Committee of N.S.C.D.A. removed Mount Pleasant House from Pleasant Avenue and relocated it to Heritage Square, with the professional assistance of restoration architect, Raymond Girvigian, F.A.I.A., and Alfred B. Sylvanus, associate architect.

The intent of the Colonial Dames is to restore the house to its original high level of architectural integrity. Although the house in the past was a victim of the stucco modernization craze and some of the architectural detailing was lost, the stucco was valuable in protecting the original red wood siding from the elements. The Committee, with its restoration architects, is now in the process of accurately and painstakingly reconstructing and restoring the house as close as possible to its original integrity and elegance making visible once again the hidden architectural features that were lost for so many years.

After the completion of the restoration, the house will be furnished, maintained, and preserved by the Colonial Dames for all citizens of the community as a Museum House of Los Angeles of one hundred years ago. Mount Pleasant is to be used by the Committee as their headquarters and to be available for the benefit of the public with the Committee's members as docents and to contain an extensive research library for the study of geneology.

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF INSTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 2

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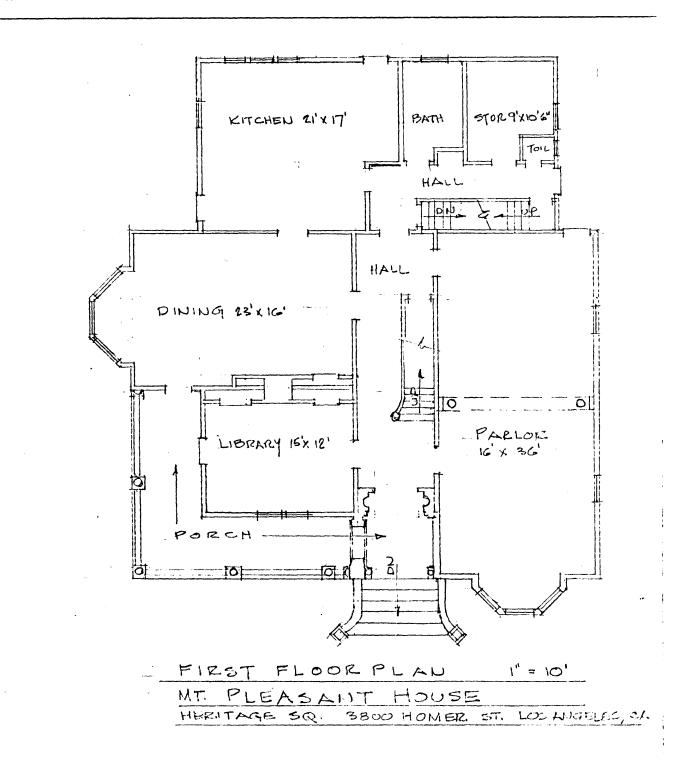
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RAYMOND GIRVIGIAN, F.A.I.A. / Architect

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architecture restoration planning interiors



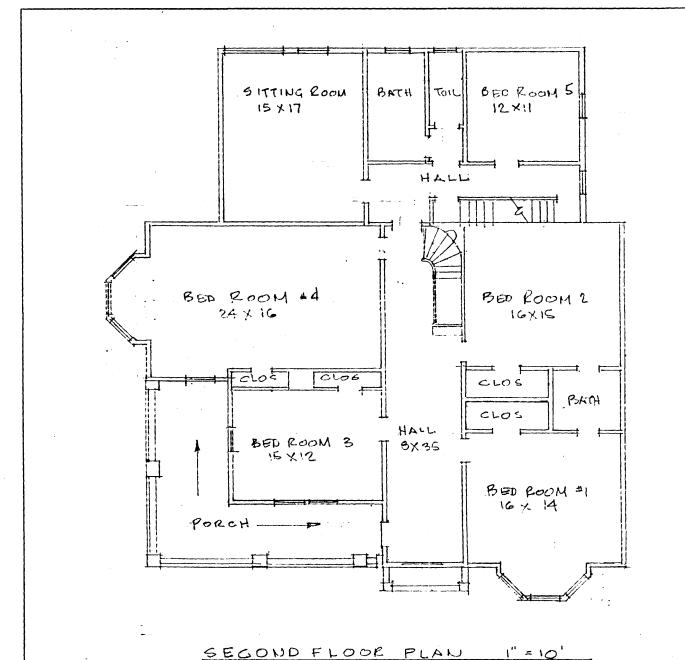


RAYMOND GIRVIGIAN, F.A.I.A. / Architect



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MT. PLEASANT HOUSE

HERITAGE SQ., 3800 HOMER ST., LOS ANGELES, CA