

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: 91000458 Date Listed: 4/26/91

<u>Benjamin Watlington House</u>	<u>Washington</u>	<u>ID</u>
Property Name	County	State

N/A  
Multiple Name

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 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.

<u><i>Antoinette Lee</i></u>	<u>4/26/91</u>
Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action

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**Amended Items in Nomination:**

**Statement of Significance:** The Period of Significance is amended to read "1890." "1890-1910" is removed.

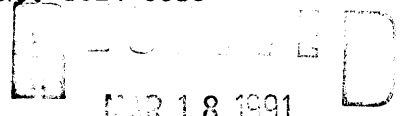
This information was confirmed with Elizabeth Eggleston of the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

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

NPS Form 10-9000  
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018



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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

**NATIONAL  
REGISTER**

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Watlington, Benjamin, House

other name/site number: Clausen, Steve and Cheri, House/013844

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2. Location

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street & number: 206 West Court

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Weiser

vicinity: N/A

state: ID county: Washington code: 087 zip code: 83672

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3. Classification

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Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: building(s)

Number of Resources within Property:

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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.

Donald L. Watts 3/12/91  
Signature of certifying official DEPUTY SHPO Date

IDAHO STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY / SHPO  
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 Antonieta Jhee 4/26/91  
\_\_\_ 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): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
for Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: Domestic Sub: single dwelling

Current : Domestic Sub: single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Late Victorian/Queen Anne

Other Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: foundation stone roof asphalt  
walls wood; weather board other \_\_\_\_\_  
shingle

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

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A & C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/A

Areas of Significance: Architecture  
Exploration/Settlement

Period(s) of Significance: 1890 1890-1910

Significant Dates : 1890 \_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: King, James

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

X  See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

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:

X  State historic preservation office

Other state agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property:  Less than 1 acre

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A  11   502310   4899220  B \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description:   See continuation sheet.

Lots 11-12, E10 ft of Lot 13, Blk 37; Watlington Add

Boundary Justification:  X  See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title:  Cheri Clausen, owner/Elizabeth Egleston, State Arch.   
Historian

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Date:  October 3, 1990

Street & Number:  206 West Court  Telephone:  (208) 549-3014

City or Town:  Weiser  State:  ID  Zip:  83762

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The Benjamin W. Watlington residence is a two-story, wood frame house in a residential neighborhood in the small agricultural town of Weiser, population approximately 4,400. It is located on the northwest corner of West Court and Second streets and faces south. With the exception of alterations made to the porch and the replacement of an oculus window on the east wall, the house has retained a high degree of integrity. Although there are other turn-of-the-century homes on the street, this Queen Anne house is the oldest by at least a decade.

The structure is built on a rock foundation, has a clapboard first story, shingles on the second and fishscales on the gable ends. The upper wall flares slightly over the first story. The house is cross-gabled with boxed cornices and has a one-story porch on the southeast corner, an oriel window on the east elevation and an enclosed porch on the northwest corner. Gable roofs, also embellished with fishscale shingles, are evident over the south porch and the oriel window. The roof is sheathed with asphalt shingles. All of the gables, except that of the north elevation, are closed. The gable on the north wall is open and has cornice returns.

The south elevation contains the main entrance. This is a single, solid oak door with a carved wreath detail that retains its original oval window of beveled, leaded glass. The door has side lights and a transom. On either side of the transom are etched glass windows with a daisy motif. The front porch originally had turned columns and balusters, and the cornice was decorated with lacy brackets. The brackets were removed years ago and square supporting elements replaced the columns and balusters. The present owners are in the process of returning the porch to its original appearance. Another door is located on the north wall of the enclosed porch, at the rear of the house.

Other alterations include the replacement of a round window to the south of the oriel window by a rectangular light, raising the gable at the rear of the house, the stuccoing of all exterior foundation stonework, and the removal of one of two original chimneys below the roofline.

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Almost all of the windows are one-over-one, double-hung sash, with simple frames that match the corner boards. There is a double-banked set of this type on both stories of the south facade, three single sets on the first story and one on the second story of the east elevation. A set of triple-banked windows as well as a single window on both stories are located on the west wall; the west wall also contains a set of triple-banked windows as well as a single window on each story. Exceptions include the square, single lights in the attic story in the gables, the rectangular panes of the second story on the east and west walls, the double-banked single lights on the first story of the north elevation, and the horizontal sliding windows on the second story, which are also on the north wall. The windows of the enclosed porch are fixed, with multiple lights and narrow muntins. The oriel window on the east wall is one of the most prominent features of the house; it is a two-over-two cruxiform and is comprised of multi-colored, geometric pieces of glass. This window has a wineglass base.

Like many buildings of the Queen Anne style, the complex massing and variety of the wall texture provide the house with its visual interest and ornamentation. Other decorative features can also be seen, such as the widely-spaced dentils in the belt course separating the first and second stories and the layered molding seen in the cornices and the panels of the oriel window.

The house is situated on an elevated lot that is enclosed with original cement slump stone and capping. The house acts as an important anchor to the architectural and historical value of the streetscape.

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The Benjamin Watlington residence in Weiser, Idaho, is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A and C. It is historically significant for its association with an early era of this small town, and it is architecturally important as an example of the Queen Anne style and as the work of James King, Idaho's first architect with professional training.

Weiser is located seventy-one miles north of Boise, near the Oregon border. Situated at the confluence of the Weiser and Snake rivers, thousands of settlers passed through the area during the nineteenth century. They were either heading west to the Oregon Territory or east to the gold fields of the Boise Basin. People began to farm in the Weiser valley during the 1860's, and by 1879 Weiser had a school, a courthouse, several businesses and a few homes. By the early 1880's the Oregon Short Line Railroad, part of the Union Pacific, built a line near Weiser as part of a route from Omaha to Portland. This fueled the speculative mining ventures of the region, and this, along with irrigation, contributed to Weiser's growth. Prosperity in Weiser, however, was sporadic, and it was not until the building of the Pacific and Idaho Northern rail line in 1899 that the community experienced a steady and stable economy. Although the town has recently suffered economic decline, it is a county seat and remains a center for its rural environs.

Constructed in 1890, the Watlington house represents the early, but not nascent, attempts of the the town to establish itself and prosper. The house was built for Benjamin Watlington, an emigrant from Bermuda who played a major role in the settlement of Weiser. He and his partners, Joseph Perrault and Alfred Eoff, both of Boise, owned the Idaho Commercial Company, which operated in both Weiser and Boise. This company established a bank in Weiser in 1886, and also owned a large hardware and implement store. Watlington managed the branch located in Weiser, and later managed another of the group's enterprises, the Idaho Land and Improvement Company.

When a fire destroyed much of Weiser, including two blocks of the commercial center, on May 31, 1890, Watlington encouraged citizens to rebuild on the west side of town. This land was owned by his company and came to be known as the Watlington Addition. In order to encourage the sale of the land in this section, Watlington quickly made plans to build his own house in the new addition. Construction started in October, and was finished by December. Although the newspaper reported in October that twelve new buildings were to be erected in the



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Watlington Addition, it stood alone among the sagebrush for at least a decade. The December 19, 1890, Weiser Leader called the Watlington home "one of the finest residences in the state;" the home was a symbol of civilization and refinement to Weiser citizens, many of whom still lived in simple cabins. Civilization did follow, but it took about ten years for comparable dwellings to appear in this neighborhood.

Perhaps the slow start of the Watlington Addition was a harbinger of the remainder of Watlington's time in Weiser. By 1893, during a national economic depression, the Idaho Commercial Company had failed, and the Idaho Land and Improvement Company was also suffering. Watlington attempted to meet his payments to the investors, but to no avail. On November 9, 1893, the newspaper reported that he had departed for Salt Lake City and would not be heard from again. The street bearing his name was soon changed as many local citizens were adversely affected when Watlington's ventures failed.

Architecturally, the property derives its significance as an example of the Queen Anne style and for its association with an early Idaho architect, James King. King was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where he studied architecture and is known as the state's first professionally trained architect. He served in the quartermaster's department in West Virginia during the Civil War. After the war, he practiced architecture in West Virginia, moving to Boise in 1888.

Research has not revealed much information about King, and few of his buildings remain. Those extant include the C.W. Moore residence on Warm Springs Avenue, the state penitentiary's administration building, and the Boise City National Bank Building, all in Boise. He also designed Washington County's courthouse, constructed in 1890 and demolished in 1938. Photographs of this building and the other surviving works showed that he worked in the prevailing eclectic idiom style: the C.W. Moore house is a flamboyant Chateausque residence, and the bank building is Richardsonian Romanesque; the courthouse had a Georgian Revival cupola, a projecting pavilion reminiscent of Federal architecture and round Romanesque arches.

The Watlington house is more modest than other extant works of King. Although it does not express the usual exuberance common to Queen Anne architecture, nevertheless it retains all of the qualities common to this style. These characteristics include asymmetry, a diversity of textures on the wall surfaces, huge chimneys with complex masonry, and a

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variety of massing in the roofline. Stained glass was frequently used, and colored lights often outlined the upper panes of windows. Queen Anne was first used in America by H.H. Richardson for the Watts-Sherman house in Newport, Rhode Island in 1874 and was quickly adopted by the wealthy for summer "cottages." Despite this early association with the country's wealthiest citizens, the style was used by homeowners of varying means throughout the United States. It lent itself well to both commercial and residential architecture, but is most frequently associated with single-family houses.

The Watlington house displays many of the qualities common to the style. With its cross gables and small gable over the porch roof the structure achieves asymmetry. The use of clapboarding on the first floor, rectangular shingles on the second and fishscale shingles in the gables give the walls a variety of texture. One of the most prominent features that gives the house its Queen Anne distinction is the oriel window with the wineglass base on the east elevation. This window contains a stained-glass window of undetermined vintage which illuminates the hall. The house originally had a porch with a balustrade with turned spindles, as well as turned posts. The current owners are renovating the porch so that it will more closely resemble this original appearance.

The Watlington house is located in a neighborhood that contains many examples of turn-of-the-century architectural styles: Queen Anne, Eastlake, Colonial Revival, and Craftsman. It is significant both as an early example of a substantial house for Weiser and as a representative of late nineteenth century eclecticism. The Watlington house is a solid contribution to the town's architectural heritage and diversity.

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Blake Coats. "Oregon Short Line Railroad." IMACS Site Form,  
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Derig, Betty. Weiser: the Way it Was. Weiser, Idaho: Rambler  
Press, 1987.

Hibbard, Don. Weiser, A Look at Idaho Architecture. Boise,  
Idaho: Idaho State Historical Society, 1978.

Articles from the Weiser Leader:

June 6, 1890  
October 31, 1890  
December 19, 1890  
September 21, 1893  
October 5, 1893  
November 9, 1893

Letter from Tony Edmondson. Weiser, Idaho: February 14, 1991. On file  
at Idaho State Historical Society.

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Boundary Justification

The boundary is based on the legally-recorded boundary lines of the property. The boundary includes the house, and it contains the area which has historically been associated with the Benjamin Watlington house.