

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**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 Lockwood-Mathews Mansion
AND/OR COMMON Elmenworth, Elm Park

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 295 West Avenue
CITY, TOWN Norwalk
STATE Connecticut COUNTY Fairfield
CODE CODE COUNTY Fairfield CODE

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME City of Norwalk
Administered by Lockwood-Mathews Mansion, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER 295 West Avenue
CITY, TOWN Norwalk STATE Connecticut
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. City Hall
STREET & NUMBER 41 NorthMain Street
CITY, TOWN Norwalk STATE Connecticut

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
DATE
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
CITY, TOWN STATE
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

- EXCELLENT
- DETERIORATED
- GOOD
- RUINS
- FAIR
- UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

- UNALTERED
- ALTERED

CHECK ONE

- ORIGINAL SITE
- MOVED
- DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion is a huge asymmetrically massed two-and-one-half story granite structure of some 60 rooms. The house has the form of an irregular rectangle and is approximately 114 feet wide and 130 feet deep. When viewed in elevation, the mansion appears to have a Greek Cross plan. Two two-and-one-half story gable-roofed arms intersect at right angles and their crossing is covered by a large mansard roof. The gable ends of the north-south arm have projecting two-story curved bays. The east gable end of the east-west arm has a projecting one-story polygonal bay and the west gable end has a projecting one-story porte-cochere with a carved stone balustrade on its deck and resticated stone piers. The angles between the arms are filled in with rectangular one-story sections that are crowned with mansard roofs. Gable and mansard roofs are crowned with ornate iron cresting and are pierced by dormers with incised pediments. The windows are tall, flat-arched, and framed by eared architraves. A two-story turreted octagonal tower projects from the southeast corner and a one-and-a-half story polygonal tower with a turreted and dormered roof juts from the northeast corner of the mansion. A long one-story trellised veranda extends the length of the south elevation and curves around the tower at the southeast corner. The mansion has double walls, with a four-inch air space between them. The outer wall is of handcut granite, resting on a concrete foundation three-feet thick. Corners and angles of the mansion are marked by large granite quoins. The inner walls are of brick, lath, and plaster.

The grandeur of the exterior is matched by the opulence and elegance of the interiors. In the principal rooms precious colored marbles and porphyry from Italy, bronze medallions, lavish wood carving, intarsia decorated woodwork, inlaid floors, frescoed wall, and sumptuously enriched ceilings abound.

The main entrance is located in the center of the west facade. A vestibule, 10 by 20 feet, leads from the porte-cochere to the formal entrance hall, which connects with the centrally located rotunda. The vestibule has a patterned floor of different marbles. The wainscot is of American black walnut, the panels of burnished English walnut, and the groined ceiling and side wall are frescoed. The entrance hall, with four columns and four pilasters of polished, heavily mottled Florentine marble with porphyry bases and a magnificent inlaid star-patterned Italian marble floor, sets the grandiose character of the interior. On the north (left) wall of the hall, a tall mantel and overmantel of American and English walnut rises almost to the ceiling. The mantel is supported by a pair of caryatids. The fireplace and also the panels in the walnut wainscot are of Italian marble. The ceiling is decorated with recessed panels, and the walls are frescoed and there are corner niches for statuary.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input 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 1864-68

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Detlef Lienau

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designed by Detlef Lienau and erected in 1864-68, the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion is a magnificent, striking, and little-altered example of a huge country house built in the French Renaissance chateau style. Predating by more than 20 years the famous Vanderbilt houses in Newport and New York City, this 60-room mansion helped to establish -- both in its sumptuous scale and the rich materials utilized in its granite construction and interior finish of previously unparalleled display -- a new standard of opulence for the Gilded Age. Erected at an estimated cost of more than \$1,000,000, the Lockwood-Mathews Mansion may also have been the most costly American residence of the period.

History

Legrand Lockwood (1820-72), New York financier, and a director of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and of several railroad companies, acquired the first land for his new country estate in 1863. The 30 acres that soon made up his estate were laid out in a design that has been attributed to the noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead. Carriage roads, foot paths, vegetable, fruit, and flower gardens were arranged around a complex of buildings, lawns and a large pond. This landscaping was never fully completed because of the financial reverses suffered by Lockwood in the Gold Panic of 1869.

Detlef Lienau, a Danish-born, French-trained architect of New York City, was commissioned to prepare plans for the mansion. Construction began in 1864. Artists and artisans were brought from Europe; the stonemasons and woodworkers came from Italy. Lockwood moved into his nearly completed house in 1868 and lived there until his death in 1872. Estimates of the cost of construction have ranged from \$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000. The Panic of 1869 forced Lockwood to mortgage his estate for \$400,000 in November of that year. In 1876 the estate was acquired by Charles Mathews, a New York City importer. The Mathews family occupied the mansion until 1938.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5.452 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	6,3,29,0,0	4,5,5,19,2,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,8	6,3,27,6,0	4,5,5,16,8,0

B	1,8	6,3,29,0,0	4,5,5,16,8,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D	1,8	6,3,27,6,0	4,5,5,19,4,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

Original form prepared by Charles Snell, Survey Historian

NAME / TITLE

Marilyn Larew, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey Division, National Park Service

DATE

February 1978

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N. W.

TELEPHONE

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D. C.

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

TITLE

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/8/83

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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All rooms of the house radiate from the central octagonal rotunda, 38 by 38 feet in size and 42 feet high. Open to the roof, the rotunda is illuminated by a double skylight and served originally as a painting and sculpture gallery.

The woodwork of the walls is of American and English walnuts, with polished panels and hand carved molding. The low fireplace mantel set against the south wall which divides the Rotunda from the music room, supports a tall recessed niche of lightly frosted glass on which is etched Greek figures and motifs. Inlaid Italian marble, carved lions' heads in walnut with boxwood inlay, a portrait bust, and painted tiles complete the sumptuous decorations of this fireplace. The ceiling and walls are of light drab and lavender, mingled with gold and delicate rose. The north side of the Rotunda opens into the stair hall containing the grand staircase. This wide stairway runs to a landing where it divides, then continues as two stairways to the balcony. The black walnut newels are carved with lions' heads and garlands, while the balusters of the staircase and gallery are inlaid with satinwood in delicate Greek key and palmette motif repeated more than 260 times.

The principal first-floor rooms are each decorated in a different style. The dining room, 32 by 35 feet and opening off the east side of the Rotunda, is French Renaissance with an exaggeration of such picturesque elements as the pediments, columns, moldings, raised cartouches, and applied medallions. The fireplace mantel and overmantel are richly carved in garlands, figures, and clusters of grapes. The wainscot and woodwork are of oak, paneled with brazilwood, with moldings of American black walnut. The ceiling is paneled and frescoed, as are the cornice and side walls. A double door in the southwest corner of the room leads to a fire and burglar-proof vault for silver and a second door in the northwest wall leads to a hall that connects with the kitchen, pantries, and laundry, which occupy the northeast corner of the mansion.

The drawing room, 20 by 32 feet and located in the southeast corner of the house, is Louis XVI in style. The woodwork is rosewood inlaid boxwood, ebony, and cedar from Lebanon. The sliding doors are masterpieces of inlay and painted floral motifs. The moldings are handcarved, with gilding applied to high relief. The pediments over the windows and niches are ornamented with bronze medallions representing Roman gods and emperors; the pediments over the doors contain small

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painted portraits. On the ceiling are elegant panels and frescoes surrounding a large mural by Pierre Victor Galland, entitled, "Venus at play with her Cupids." An exquisite card room, 9 by 9 feet and located in the octagonal tower at the southeast corner of the house, opens off the drawing room. The card room has four Italian murals, painted on canvas and affixed to the walls, representing music, paintings, and poetry. The arched ceiling is painted and frescoed with birds and vases of flowers. The magnificent inlays are of boxwood and ebony in bird's eye maple.

The music room, 19 by 25 feet and located in the center of the south side, has its woodwork and mantel decorated with musical motifs. Over the doors and mantel are rectangular ebony panels adorned with more musical instruments. The paneled ceiling is gilded and frescoed with vine and rosette motifs that are also painted on the walls. The fireplace is of Italian statuary marble upon which stands the large etched glass panel that is also visible from the rotunda.

The most striking features of the music room, however, are the bird's eye maple doors which are a magnificent achievement in marquetry and comprised of tulipwood, rosewood, boxwood, and ebony. The upper panels include harps and arabesques; the small, lower octagonal panels depict a boy playing a flute.

The library, 20 by 32 feet and located in the southwest corner of the mansion, is Elizabethan in style. Mantel, doors, door frames, and book cases are of hand-carved English and American walnut, embellished with polished steel cabochon and strapwork ornaments. The ceiling is coffered in black walnut panels with frescoed centers, and the embossed paper covering the walls simulates Moroccan leather. The floor parquetry consists of five different woods set in a geometric pattern. The northwest corner of the mansion is occupied by two adjoining billiard rooms, 20 by 23 feet and 18 by 18 feet in size. Their woodwork is oak with ash panels and black walnut moldings; the mantel is wood, carved and molded. The ceilings are paneled and the cornices and side walls oil frescoed. Their parquet floors contain five different woods.

On the second floor there are nine large chambers, used as bedrooms and sitting rooms, as well as a servants' wing that continues on to the third floor. All bedroom suites are accompanied by elaborate dressing rooms. Walls and ceilings are frescoed or paneled, and several of the fireplaces are elaborately decorated. There are 14 bathrooms featuring Italian marble counters, bronze, gilded, or silver faucets, with bowls hand-painted to match the Moorish, Italian, or Gothic motifs in the adjoining rooms.

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The basement contains rooms for the four steam furnaces, a large coal bin, bowling alleys, a wine cellar, and a large bake oven.

While structurally sound, the interior of the mansion urgently needs the extensive restoration project that is about to get underway. Plaster has fallen and paint has peeled in many of the second and third story rooms due to the absence of heat in the house during the winter months.

The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion is open to visitors.

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In 1941 the City of Norwalk purchased the house and 30 acres of land for "park purposes" at a cost of \$170,000. The mansion and outbuildings were used by the City as offices and storage spaces for records and equipment. The original greenhouses were razed around 1946 and in 1953 a public works garage was built on their former site. In 1955 the Connecticut Turnpike acquired about 10 acres of the south end of the property, including the arboretum and pond. In 1959 a police station and jail were constructed on the east side of the park, near the mansion. In 1961 plans were made to demolish the mansion and erect a new City Hall on its site. Concerned citizens successfully checked this proposal by ballot and in the courts. In 1965 the Junior League of Stamford-Norwalk took a \$1-per-year lease on the mansion. The agreement was for 10 years, with a renewal up to 30 years. The Junior League agreed to restore the mansion and open it as a museum. The Lockwood-Mathews Mansion Museum of Norwalk, Inc., was formed to carry out this purpose and the house was opened to visitors in June 1966. The Museum Corporation has recently received a \$70,000 matching grant from the Connecticut Historical Commission to heat, clean, and fire-proof the mansion. This restoration work will be supervised by Mr. A. V. Rheaume, architect of Stamford, Connecticut.

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All that certain piece, parcel or tract of land in the City of Norwalk, County of Fairfield and State of Connecticut, located in Mathews Park so called, and more particularly described as follows:

Starting at a point on the easterly line of West Avenue, which point marks the intersection of the division line between land of Getty Oil and Refining Company and land of the City of Norwalk, running thence along West Avenue S30° 35' 10"W 70.21 feet, S26°51' 14"W 76.58 feet, and S26° 51' 14"W 25.00 feet to a point, which point is the point and place of beginning, running thence through land of the City of Norwalk on the following courses and distances: S63° 08' 46"E 89.00 feet, thence along a curve to the left having a radius of 386.00 feet a distance of 65.00 feet, and thence still along said curve 108.14 feet, thence along a curve to the right having a radius of 113.84 feet, a distance of 118.56 feet, thence along a curve to the right having a radius of 260.00 feet a distance of 149.81 feet, thence along a curve to the left having a radius of 60.00 feet a distance of 70.69 feet;

thence South still through land of the City of Norwalk and in part along land of the Pine Island Cemetery the following courses and distances: S0° 27' 50"W 178.95 feet, S2° 34' 50"E 177.01 feet and S12° 00'E 115.00 feet to the approximate access line of the exit ramp 15;

running thence along said limited access line the following courses and distances: N59° 00'W 130 feet; N50° 00'W 60 feet; N40° 00'W 215 feet; N33° 00'W 63 feet; N22° 30'W 293 feet; N17° 00'W 182 feet;

thence through land of the City of Norwalk S81° 45' 20"E 164.79 feet; N17° 12' 20"E 140.00 feet, thence in a westerly direction on a curve to the right having a radius of 386.00 feet a distance of 65.00 feet and N63° 08' 46"W 89.00 feet to the point or place of beginning.

Said premises are more particularly shown and designated on a map entitled, "Map Showing An Easement On A Portion of Mathews Park To Be Conveyed To The State of Connecticut By The City of Norwalk Norwalk, Connecticut Scale 1" = 40' October 25, 1977," certified "Substantially Correct" Richard H. Weishet, P. E. & L. S. No. 5557.