

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAR 23 1982

DATE ENTERED APR 22 1982

**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

Edward Hill Brewer House

AND/OR COMMON

The Palms

**LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

240 Trismen Terrace

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Winter Park

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

9

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Orange

CODE

095

**CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY** DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT**OWNERSHIP** PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION** IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

N/A

**STATUS** OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE** YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO**PRESENT USE** AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Robert W. Govern

STREET &amp; NUMBER

240 Trismen Terrace

CITY, TOWN

Winter Park

STATE

Florida

N/A VICINITY OF

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Orange County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

65 E. Central Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Orlando

STATE

Florida

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Jr. League of Orlando-Winter Park, Inc. Survey

Property has not been determined eligible.

DATE

1977

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Jr. League of Orlando-Winter Park, Inc., 1081 Woodcock Road

CITY, TOWN

Orlando

STATE

Florida

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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 Edward Hill Brewer House, "The Palms", in Winter Park is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architectural style. Set on one acre on a slight rise on the eastern shore of Lake Osceola, the Palms commands a prominent position on the Lake. Thus situated, the Palms retains its historical significance as a Winter Park showplace. The house possesses its share of architectural importance: this 1924 structure is the result of an extensive remodeling of an 1899 house. Edward Hill Brewer based this remodeling on his mansion in Cortland, New York, which he built in 1904.

In 1898, Edward Brewer bought forty acres of land in Winter Park. One year later he began construction on his winter home. The original house was a two-and-a-half story cube with a truncated hipped roof which had a balustraded deck. One chimney rose from this deck. It appears that from an early photograph, gabled porches and/or pavilions projected from at least two slopes of the roof.<sup>1</sup> The house was sheathed with weatherboard; the roof, covered by wood shingles. Evidently, a veranda extended around three sides of the first story.<sup>2</sup> This veranda and the porches on the second story had spindle balustrades and smaller spindles in the friezes. A porte-cochere projected from one side of the house. The porte-cochere had a shallow gable roof and a frieze similar to that of the veranda. Fenestration was regular: five bay on the first story; three bay on the second story. The foundations of the house were obscured by latticework infill between the porch piers.

In 1923 Edward Brewer decided to enlarge his Winter Park home, and in the process, remodel it to resemble his 1904 Cortland, New York, Colonial Revival mansion. Brewer's major changes were to extend and enclose several of the gabled pavilions, and to apply classical decoration.

The original entrance pavilion was converted into a portico with a full entablature and paired fluted Ionic columns. The main entrance consists of paired doors with an elliptical fanlight with radiating muntins. The entrance is flanked by pilasters which carry an open-bed pediment.

The veranda was altered during remodeling. On the entrance facade it is interrupted by the two-story portico. Above the porches are balustraded second story decks. Because the side pavilions were enclosed, the decks run only along the entrance facade. They do not extend under the portico. With the extension of the side wall pavilions, the porte-cochere was also extended. Above the porte-cochere is an enclosed room which may previously have been an open porch.

The configuration of the original rear (service) wing is unknown. However, it is possible that it also was extensively altered and possibly enlarged. Presently, it is T-shaped and two story with steeply pitched pedimented gable ends. It also appears to be centered at the rear facade.

Changes to the roof include the addition of a second chimney on the deck, a design change in balustrades, from spindle to Roman screen, and the inclusion of dormers on either side of the portico. These dormers have pedimented gables and round-headed windows.

The detailing of the house is robust and consistent: dentils and modillions, Ionic

# 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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		Local Social

SPECIFIC DATES      +1899      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Peterson Brothers; Orlando, Florida

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Edward Hill Brewer House in Winter Park, is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival architectural style. The present house is a product of a major remodeling effort of a twenty-five year old house undertaken by Edward Brewer, the original owner, in 1923-24. Edward Hill Brewer was a wealthy seasonal resident of Winter Park, Florida. He contributed much to the social, cultural, and educational prosperity of Winter Park, and his home and gardens became the setting for numerous social entertainments.

Edward Hill Brewer was a prominent Cortland, New York, industrialist. One of his first businesses, the Cortland Carriage Goods Company, manufactured harnesses and carriage accessories. Eventually, Brewer enlarged his holdings to form the Brewer-Ticher Corporation of Cortland.<sup>1</sup>

In the fall of 1895 Brewer and his family (wife, six children, and cousin), visited Winter Park, Florida. Brewer, a semi-invalid, sought a warm winter climate and found Winter Park so agreeable that he decided to make it his winter home. The family lived in Florida during the winter months and returned to New York for the summer "season". This migratory pattern remained constant for almost thirty years.<sup>2</sup>

In 1895 Winter Park was truly a seasonal haven for fair-weather northerners, many of whom bought land and built vacation homes. In addition, Winter Park was the home of Rollins College and Rollins Academy. **These** private schools played important roles in contributing to Winter Park Society. The Academy accommodated the children of the wealthy vacationers, and the College provided a modicum of culture to the still-evolving society of the wintering elite.<sup>3</sup>

Initially, the Brewers rented two well-known Winter Park residences, the Chapman bungalow (traditionally believed to be the first residence in Winter Park), and the Schultz home. In 1898 Brewer decided to build his own home. He purchased a forty-acre tract of land located on the eastern shore of Lake Osceola. The land, the "Rollins College Orange Grove", had formerly belonged to Mr. A.W. Rollins, who had donated it to the college which bears his name. Unfortunately, all of the orange groves had been destroyed in the "big freeze" of 1894-95.<sup>5</sup> Brewer disposed of the dead wood, and commissioned Coan and Argyle, "two leading carpenters in this section" to build a house "to cope with any in that vicinity in beauty and magnificence".<sup>6</sup> Prior to building the house, Coan and Argyle completed a boat house and barn on the Rollins College Orange Grove property. Whether or not Brewer commissioned these structures is unclear.

The original house was two-and-a-half stories with gable porches and/or pavilions projecting from each face. A veranda extended around the first story. The house had a truncated, hipped roof which was topped by a balustrated deck. Mr. Brewer named his

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

UTM NOT VERIFIED  
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

(See Continuation Sheet)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME USGS Orlando East

QUADRANGLE SCALE 7.5 min.

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 466510 3163640  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

P. Ana Gordon (Assistant Historian)

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Florida Division of Archives, History and Records Management December 3, 1980

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

The Capitol

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Tallahassee

Florida

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

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

L. Ross Morrell, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

6/22/82

FDR NPS USE ONLY

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

Delores Byers  
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered In the  
National Register

DATE

4/22/82

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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capitals and fluted round or square columns. A small lunette was placed in the tympanum of each gable end.

From 1899 until at least 1924 the original grounds of the Palms covered forty acres. Over the years, parts of the estate have been sold until the present site is approximately one acre. Edward Brewer built a Grecian pergola, a boathouse, barn, packing houses, two pump houses, a caretaker's house and two guesthouses. Besides the main house, only one pump-house remains. The pergola was destroyed in the 1947 hurricane, and the caretaker's house was moved to 234 Detmar Drive, Winter Park (Florida Master Site File #253). The numerous palm trees historically associated with the Brewer House still populate the grounds.

FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup>Residence of E.H. Brewer, (1902 - 1915) Courtesy of Jr. League of Orlando-Winter Park, Inc.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

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new residence "The Palms." Following construction of the main house, Brewer built a packing house, two pumphouses, two guest cottages, a Grecian pergola, and a caretaker's house.

The Palms soon became a Winter Park showplace. When in residence, the Brewers hosted civic meetings and entertainments. The house also served as the setting for Rollins College's annual Founder's Day celebration. One of the most spectacular events of this celebration was the "Return of Chief Osceola, complete with canoes" which took place on Lake Osceola.<sup>8</sup>

When the Brewers returned north for the summer, the Palms, under the direction of a caretaker, served as a "public park." The grounds, featuring one of the first azalea gardens in Florida, were visited annually by thousands of tourists and residents of Winter Park, Orlando, and the surrounding country."<sup>9</sup>

Although he was only a seasonal resident of Winter Park, Edward Brewer took an active interest in community affairs. In 1909 he spearheaded the organization of the Winter Park Board of Trade, and became a charter member of the group. He was a sponsor for the Congregational Church and the Town Library. Like many of his winter neighbors, Brewer developed a great interest in Rollins College. In 1900 he became a trustee of the college, a position he held until his death in 1924. Throughout his lifetime he was a liberal donor to the college.<sup>10</sup> Mrs. Brewer was also active in social circles, and served terms as President of the Library Association and as chairman of the Rollins College Ladies Auxiliary Committee.

Brewer's major business interests were located in Cortland, New York, and he was very active in civic concerns there. He was President of the Cortland Hospital for many years, and he was also a generous benefactor of the Y.W.C.A. and the Children's Home. During the first World War Brewer placed the first and second liberty loans in Cortland.<sup>11</sup>

Sometime in 1923 Brewer decided to remodel his Winter Park residence into a comparable facsimile of his Cortland, New York home.<sup>12</sup> The Edward Brewer house in Cortland is a Colonial Revival mansion built in 1904 or 1905. The reason for this remodeling, almost twenty-five years after completion of the original structure, is unknown. One supposition is that Mrs. Brewer was homesick for the grandeur of her New York mansion.<sup>13</sup>

The Orlando Morning Sentinel recorded the renovation:

The E.H. Brewer home under reconstruction at the cost of thirty-five thousand dollars, new rooms fill porches and roof strictly modern in every way, at present the Peterson Brothers, contractors of Orlando, have forty-two men at work, getting the place in readiness for the return of the Brewer family in early November.<sup>14</sup> (sic)

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Clearly, it was a major undertaking. Converting the original house into a Colonial Revival mansion took over a year. Unfortunately, Edward Brewer died on September 24, 1924, in New York, and never saw the finished renovation.<sup>15</sup>

After Brewer's death, his wife moved into a smaller house near the property.<sup>16</sup> During this time other family members used the Palms on a "sporadic basis." The family continued to open the grounds as a scenic drive and park. Mrs. Brewer's attempts to sell the mansion were delayed by litigation, and a clear title was not issued until January 1937. That same month, Mrs. Brewer died.<sup>17</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Detmar Trismen of Forest Hills, New York, purchased the Palms in 1938. The Trismens took a serious interest in gardening, and developed a collection of exotic flora which attracted botanists and garden experts from all over the world. Prior to World War II, a Dr. Northern of Rollins College used a two-acre vegetable garden to the Palms' grounds to conduct early experiments in hydroponic gardening. In addition, Mr. Trismen planted exotic palms in the neighborhood, and Mrs. Trismen was an active member of the American Rose Society and the Winter Park Garden Club.<sup>18</sup>

FOOTNOTES:

<sup>1</sup>William Fremont Blackman. History of Orange County. (Deland: E.O. Painter Printer Co., 1927), p. 163.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Hiram Powers, Winter Park, Florida (Privately printed, 1924), n.p.

<sup>4</sup>Blackman, p. 163.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Joshua Chase Scrapbook, (ed. by Dorothy Shepard Smith) Vol. II, p. 520, 529, and 540. Research in the Joshua Chase Scrapbook was conducted by Meredith D. Lacey and Leila E. Trismen, members of the Junior League of Orlando-Winter Park, Inc.

<sup>7</sup>Photo of Brewer Estate, Rollins College Archives, Winter Park, Florida.

<sup>8</sup>Powers, n.p.

<sup>9</sup>Blackman, p. 163.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 186, 192.

<sup>12</sup> The Edward Brewer House of Cortland, New York, was built between 1904 and 1905. It was listed on the National Register as part of a district in 1975. Conversation, Shirley G. Heppell, Cortland County Historian, Cortland, New York, with P. Ana Gordon, FDAHRM, November 3, 1980.

<sup>13</sup> Winter Park Sun Herald, January 12, 1978, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Orlando Morning Sentinel, September 14, 1924.

<sup>15</sup> Blackman, p. 164.

<sup>16</sup> Whether this was the caretaker's house, one of the guest cottages, or a building unrelated to The Palms is not clear.

<sup>17</sup> Meredith D. Lacey, and Leila E. Trismen, Florida Master Site File, "The Palms", FDAHRM.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.



FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Blackman, William Fremont, History of Orange County. Deland: E.O. Painter Printer, Co., 1927.

Chase, Joshua Scrapbook, Ed. by Dorothy Shepard Smith.

Lacey, Meredith D. and Leila E. Trismen, members of the Junior League of Orlando-Winter Park, Inc.

Orlando Morning Sentinel, September 14, 1924.

Powers, Hiram. Winter Park, Florida. Privately printed, 1924.

Rollins College Archives, Rollins College, Florida.

Winter Park Sun Herald, January 12, 1978.

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From a point 254.4 feet South of Southeast corner of Lot 16, Lakeview (now Osceola), as per plat thereof recorded in Deed Book J, page 167, run West at right angles 465 feet, thence South at right angles 112.72 feet to point of beginning; thence continue South 159.98 feet; thence West at right angles 226.90 feet; thence North 50° 01' West 160.6 feet to a point 240.94 feet due West of beginning; thence East 240.94 feet to point of beginning.

Lake front

Bounded and described as follows:

Commence 367.12 feet South of Southeast corner of Lot 16, Lakeview (new Osceola) as per plat thereof recorded in Deed Book J, page 167, Public Records of Orange County, Florida. Thence run West 705.94 feet, thence run S 05° 01' 00" E, 37.4 feet to the point of beginning. Thence run S 05° 01' 00" E. 100.38 feet, thence run West 222.5 feet more or less to the Shore line of Lake Osceola. Thence run Northerly along said shore line 100 feet more or less. Thence run East 215 feet more or less to the Point of Beginning.

TOGETHER with an easement for ingress and egress as follows:

Begin at the Southwest corner of the above described property, run thence N. 50° 01' E. 27.71 feet, thence South 16° 47' E. 130 feet, more or less, to a point on the North line of Osceola Shores, Section One, as per plat thereof recorded in Plat Book S, page 10, Public Records of Orange County, Florida, said point being 20.08 feet West of the Northwest corner of Lot 2, Block "D", said subdivision, thence run East 20.08 feet to said Northwest corner, thence N 16° 47' W. 133 feet to the Point of Beginning.