

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| STATE:           | Washington  |
| COUNTY:          | King        |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY |             |
| ENTRY DATE       | FEB 20 1975 |

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Ronald Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC: *James T. Home*  
Judge Ronald Home [preferred]

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 421 - 30th South

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: #7 - Honorable Brock Adams

STATE: Washington CODE: 53 COUNTY: King CODE: 033

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

| CATEGORY<br>(Check One)   | OWNERSHIP  | STATUS  | ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC   |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> District<br><input type="checkbox"/> Site<br><input type="checkbox"/> Object<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building<br><input type="checkbox"/> Structure | <input type="checkbox"/> Public<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private<br><input type="checkbox"/> Both                                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied<br><input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress<br><input type="checkbox"/> In Process<br><input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered | Yes:<br><input type="checkbox"/> Restricted<br><input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No |
| PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)  |  |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural<br><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Educational<br><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Government<br><input type="checkbox"/> Industrial<br><input type="checkbox"/> Military<br><input type="checkbox"/> Museum | <input type="checkbox"/> Park<br><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence<br><input type="checkbox"/> Religious<br><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation<br><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)<br><input type="checkbox"/> Comments       |

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: William John Woodrow

STREET AND NUMBER: 431 31st Avenue South

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle STATE: Washington CODE: 53

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: King County Auditor's Office

STREET AND NUMBER: County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle STATE: Washington CODE: 53

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: Municipal Art Commission list of Historic Buildings

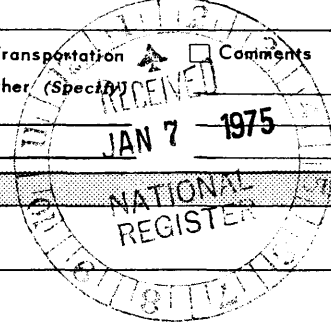
DATE OF SURVEY: 1968  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Municipal Art Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: Seattle Municipal Building

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle STATE: Washington CODE: 53

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE: Washington

COUNTY: King

ENTRY NUMBER: FEB 20 1975

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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**7. DESCRIPTION**

|           |   |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|-----------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| CONDITION | (Check One)                                 |  |                                |   |                                |                                    |
|           | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair  | <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated             | <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins | <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed |
|           | (Check One)                                 |  |                                | (Check One)                                       |                                |                                    |
|           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered | <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered       | <input type="checkbox"/> Moved | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site |                                |                                    |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Built in 1889, the Judge Ronald house is a two story frame building on a brick foundation with detailing reminiscent of Georgian Revival and 'Southern Plantation' styles. It is located a few hundred yards west of Lake Washington and one and a half miles east of Seattle's central business district.

The house is basically square in plan with a truncated and bellcast hip roof. Most of the central portion of the front facade is behind a two story pedimented portico supported by four fluted columns, each with plinth, base and composite capital. Above the columns rests an architrave-frieze box and wide cornice arrangement originally fairly correct in terms of the composite order. Recently one moulding was removed, although the dentils and scroll sawn soffit decoration remain. The porch ceiling is recessed flush with the overhanging soffit. In the triangular recess of the pediment there is a semicircular fanlight with a decorative keystone in the enframing. The pediment is the end of a gable roof covering the portico that continues back with its ridge joining the main roof level with the truncation. There is a corresponding bellcast at the cornice on the gable which has the same overhang and detail as is continued around the main roof. The deck of the portico is at the head of a short stairs that extends across full width in front. Running in between the outside columns and the front wall of the building is a railing with turned balusters and baserail.

Directly behind the outside edges of the two central columns is a rectangular one story enclosure extending the formal entrance hall a few feet forward from the remaining wall plane. The main doorway was originally surrounded by colored, leaded glass sidelights and transom lights; however, the sidelights have been replaced. On top of the projecting entrance is a second story balcony, its cornice overhanging about a foot in front with large scrollwork brackets at the outside corners and smaller brackets in between. Directly above the large brackets, newel posts surmounted by urn finials support a balustrade similar in design to the others previously described.

On the side of the house there was originally a semicircular one story open porch-balcony combination extending across most of the south wall and skirted all around with semicircular steps. The details included columns, entablature and balustrade of the same style as on the portico; however, this porch has been removed.

Centered on the opposite side of the house is a nominal wing extending outward a few feet to a point where at both corners its width is reduced by the same amount that it already projects before continuing farther outward an equal distance.

There is what appears to be a two story addition at the back of the house as indicated by a change in the footings, and fire escapes have also been added.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

#7 - Description  
Ronald Hall

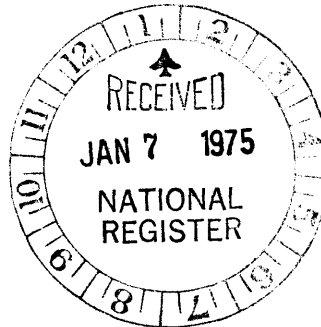
Rising from the roof above the semicircular porch just behind the south wall of the house is a substantial chimney with decorative string courses and a corbeled cap. Facing south flanking the chimney is a pair of small dormers. At one time there was an open walk with balustrade crowning the main roof.

The original narrow clapboard siding has been recently supplemented with aluminum, and as a result the corner mouldings and the frieze were covered over, and the window enframements were removed.

All of the windows are symmetrically placed, one above another at generally frequent intervals. The heads of second floor windows all abut the frieze above. The band of first floor windows were once enhanced by individual shallow pediments over each window.

The interior is organized around a basic central hallway and front stairs plan, but extensive alterations have changed its appearance beyond recognition.

Although somewhat denuded, the Judge Ronald house retains enough of its elegance and imposing style to represent personality characteristics of its builder that are otherwise not apparent.



**5. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1889

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |                                       |   |  |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry     | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention    | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature   | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military     |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> Music        |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

James T. Ronald was born in Missouri in 1855. By his family's account he was a descendent of Ronald, Lord of the Isles and Edith of Lorne who were central figures in Sir Walter Scott's epic poem "Lord of the Isles". His parents were Scotch and Irish, having emigrated separately to Missouri from Virginia.

Ronald was the son of a poor farmer living in primitive circumstances. His family was nearly self sufficient, growing their own food while spinning and weaving flax and wool for clothing. In his memoirs, Ronald describes his childhood in minute detail including the farming and craft methods of his parents. He tells of exchanging eggs for calico at the store systematically avoiding the paper money then in circulation known derisively as "shinplasters". The family kept no slaves, although his mother had inherited two blacks from her grandfather. They worked almost constantly, and young Ronald "made a hand" before the age of 16.

He studied at North Missouri State Normal School at Kirksville, where he met the girl who would later become his wife. After graduation at age 20 in 1875, he borrowed \$150 and departed for California, seeking work as a teacher. After a series of bitter disappointments following up leads that sent him traveling all over California, in a state of depression with only 15¢ remaining he stumbled across a position in a one room school at Danetown. This was a small farming community where they were only able to pay him a subsistence salary of \$50 per month, less than half the prevailing compensation. His room and board were provided by rotating his lodging from family to family.

Ronald left this job after one year and transferred from district to district -- eventually securing a paying position. He then wrote to his fiancée in Missouri, requesting that she come to California to be married. For economy reasons he asked that she travel alone without his returning to Missouri to accompany her "advising her truthfully that such was quite a usual, economical and practical step in the West". Although their fares would have cost three times as much, she refused to journey without him on the grounds of propriety. Eventually she did make the trip in the company of an older mutual friend who was able to go back to Missouri for his own wedding. The friend and his new bride were able to convince her that this arrangement was considered perfectly acceptable

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bagley, Clarence. History of Seattle. Vol. III, 1916.

Hanford, Seattle and Environs. Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1924. Vol. II.

McDonald, Lucile. Where the Washingtonians Lived. Seattle, Superior Publishing Company, 1969.

Seattle Daily Times, February 14-21, 1891. (Cont'd)

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

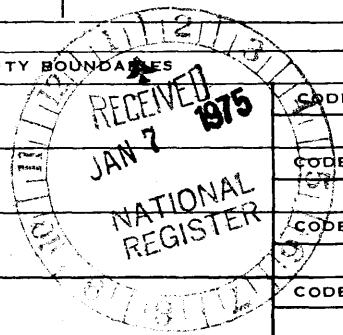
| LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY |                         |                         | O<br>R | LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES<br>DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY<br>OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES |                         |  |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------|---|-------------------------|--|
| CORNER   | LATITUDE                | LONGITUDE               |        | LATITUDE  | LONGITUDE               |  |
|  | Degrees Minutes Seconds | Degrees Minutes Seconds |        | Degrees Minutes Seconds   | Degrees Minutes Seconds |  |
| NW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        | 47° 35' 55"   | 122° 17' 30"            |  |
| NE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SE   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |                         |  |
| SW   | ° ' "                   | ° ' "                   |        |   |                         |  |

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than one

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

| STATE: | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|--------|------|--------|------|
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |
|        |      |        |      |

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5271700



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE: Margaret A. Corley

ORGANIZATION: Seattle Historical Society DATE: June, '69

STREET AND NUMBER: 2161 East Hamlin Street

CITY OR TOWN: Seattle STATE: Washington CODE: 53

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Charles H. Odegaard  
for Director - Washington State Parks & Recreation Commission

Date Jan 3, 1975

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

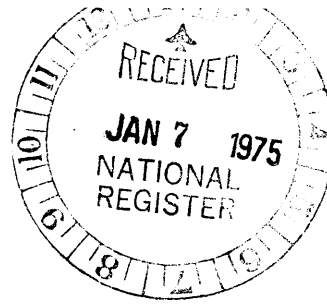
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 2/20/75

ATTEST:  
George F. Emery  
Atty. Keeper of The National Register  
Date Feb 20, 1975

#8 - Significance  
Ronald Hall



in California, under the circumstances. The Ronalds were married in Greenville on March 4, 1877. Their first child was born in 1879.

Ronald soon undertook the study of law, reading on his own time in the offices of Cheyney and Bruner. During this period he was elected principal for the public schools in Lincoln, a town north of Sacramento. He failed the bar exam in 1881 but passed in 1882.

The Ronald family moved to Seattle in July of 1882, traveling on a six-day voyage aboard the "Geo. W. Elder". They settled "up among the stumps on Fifth [Avenue] between Union and Pike Streets", in shared quarters with a young couple that they met on the boat.

Mr. Ronald promptly formed a law partnership with W. D. Wood. Their combined equipment consisted of one small, second hand table with four plain chairs and two copies of the Code of Washington Territory. There were 43 lawyers then practicing in Seattle, and business was extremely slow. He lost his first two cases, one a contingency claim defending a man for beating a woman. He sold real estate and kept books for a local meat market to keep up with expenses. Mr. Wood then quit the partnership declaring "Ronald, I don't believe you will ever make a lawyer - I don't think that you are cut out for one".

He was appointed Deputy District Attorney in 1883 at a salary of \$20 per month to be paid from divorce fees. By the arrangement then in effect, the District Attorney went unpaid if sufficient fees were not collected. In two years he received less than \$100.

During these years he caused the arrest of Lou Graham, Seattle's most notorious madam, and the trial that ensued was a free-for-all with little attention paid to legal niceties. At one point Ronald was so provoked that he struck the defense attorney in the face.

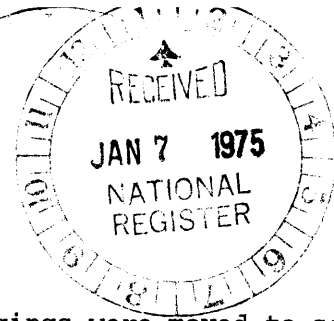
The district was subdivided by the Territorial Legislature in 1883, reduced from its earlier mammoth proportions, and Ronald was elected District Attorney for King, Kitsap and Snohomish Counties at a guaranteed salary of \$125 a month.

He was the prosecutor following the anti-Chinese riots of 1885-86, during which Chinese were driven from their homes in many Northwest cities. Some Chinese had been killed and public sentiment supported the murderers. The only convictions that Ronald was able to obtain were on charges of riot. The situation steadily worsened to the extent that martial law was declared by the Governor. A grand jury was convened and it was Ronald's responsibility to prepare the evidence.

During his second term as District Attorney in 1887, he formed a law partnership with S. H. Piles. Piles also served as Deputy Prosecutor without salary. The firm prospered.

Following the expiration of his second term in office, Ronald was retained by striking miners to defend them against charges of murdering non-union members in Newcastle, a mining community near Seattle. During the trial, Seattle's business district was nearly consumed by the devastating fire of 1889. In the attempt to remove what they could to safety, "trucks" (wagons) charged and

#8 - Significance  
Ronald Hall



collected as high as \$100 an hour. Ronald's belongings were moved to safety by twenty of the striking miners who returned several times to move his books and furniture as the fire advanced, repeatedly threatening locations earlier thought secure. The miner's help was unsolicited, and they asked for no compensation.

Following the fire Ronald had built an elaborate home (the subject of this nomination), at a cost of \$30,000, located not far from Lake Washington.

In 1892, Ronald was elected Mayor of Seattle as a Democrat. This began, he wrote, "the two years of the most unhappy experiences of my whole life". Upon election, the chief of police attempted to bribe the new mayor in an attempt to prevent closure of the many thriving gambling establishments and houses of prostitution. The chief suggested that only favored individuals be allowed to operate paying a percentage of their take for the privilege. Ronald refused to cooperate, forced the chief to resign, and proceeded to close down the illegal casinos and brothels with the assistance of a new police chief. Even the "respectable" businessmen pressured him privately to relax the enforcement policy claiming that it discouraged commerce forcing sailors and "traveling men" to stop at other ports where such pleasures were permitted.

There were also many problems associated with patronage jobs and political appointments. Mayor Ronald was not partisan enough to satisfy those who had helped elect him, while at the same time he was subjected to the traditional abuse of the spirited opposition. Newspapers printed allegations of corruption, inferring collusion with the same powerful criminals that he publicly denounced.

Seattle was suffering from a severe economic depression during Ronald's administration, and in an attempt to provide work for local married men with families, he issued a regulation specifying that hiring preference should be given family men on a \$350,000 sewer bond project. However, he was unable to gain the cooperation of entrenched subordinates who had already assumed patronage powers of their own. This program was a failure.

Although the records of Ronald's term as mayor are shrouded in controversy, Seattle's respected historian Clarence Bagley wrote only words of praise in 1916. It is probable that the story as told in Ronald's memoirs is basically an accurate account.

As a result of the by then worldwide depression, the period following his mayoralty was one of great financial hardship for the family which by then included three daughters. Economic conditions gradually improved and so in turn did his legal practice. Eventually Ronald was appointed to the Seattle School Board and the Board of Regents, University of Washington, serving from 1905 to 1909, when he was appointed Superior Court Judge for King County by Governor Hay. He presided 40 years at the bench, retiring in 1949.

Ronald was an early automobile enthusiast. In the summer of 1907, he and three other men, including a mechanic, drove from Seattle to San Francisco in his

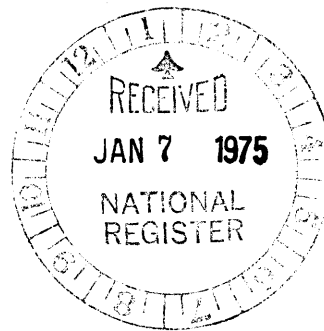
#8 - Significance  
Ronald Hall

"White steamer". This trip was fourteen days of arduous travel, and it was reportedly the second time in history that an automobile completed the journey. The vehicle was new when they began, and nearly worn out by the time they arrived. Gasoline could only be obtained at hardware stores, and due to the inefficient steam condenser, frequent stops were required to take on water.

Upon his return from San Francisco, Ronald joined the "Good Roads Club", organized by and under the leadership of Samuel Hill. A derivative organization was the "Pacific Highway Association" which promoted the idea of a continuous coastal road from Vancouver, B.C. to the Mexican border. He traveled extensively to speak on this subject and ran into vehement opposition from the farming community. They accused him of seeking "automobile roads at the expense of farmers" and their animals were terrified at the sight of gasoline powered machinery. This highway promotion was also opposed by the Automobile Club of Southern California which feared that such a road would provide a drain for their prosperous tourist industry.

Mrs. Ronald died in 1923, and the Judge despaired after her death. He experienced vivid, persistent dreams where she would appear as if still alive; an entire chapter of his memoirs is devoted to these dreams. He himself died December 27, 1950.

Ronald Hall is significant as the residence of an influential Seattle attorney, politician and judge of the late Victorian era built at the height of his financial success. Its pretentious temple form architectural style reflects the attitudes, aspirations and public image then cultivated by a man in Ronald's position.





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(Continuation Sheet)

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| STATE<br>Washington |                    |
| COUNTY<br>King      |                    |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY    |                    |
| ENTRY NUMBER        | DATE               |
|                     | <b>FEB 20 1975</b> |

(Number all entries)

#9 - Major Bibliographical References  
Ronald Hall

Ronald, J. T. Reflections Along the Wayside of Life, unpublished, 1926.

