

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 31 1975
DATE ENTERED MAY 30 1975

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

Larrabee House [preferred]

AND/OR COMMON

Lairmont Manor, Mt. St. Mary's Novitiate

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

405 Fieldstone Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Washington

CODE

53

#2 - Hon. Lloyd Meeds

COUNTY

Whatcom

CODE

073

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input 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

Lairmont Manor Trusteeship

STREET & NUMBER

405 Fieldstone Road

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Whatcom County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

STATE

Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Larrabee House is a formidable mansion of more than 25 rooms built in 1915 on what was then a secluded hill south of Bellingham, Washington. The site is a generous landscaped yard with a stand of fir trees behind it and a formal garden including hedges and a goldfish pond.

Measuring about 50 by 70 feet, the house is two and one half stories plus a full basement. Constructed on a concrete foundation the walls are structural clay tile faced with stucco and trimmed in brick and terra cotta.

The architectural style is slightly more imposing than graceful. It has a baronial grandeur achieved through the extravagant use of space and materials rather than consistent design artistry, although there are many fine eclectic details showing considerable craftsmanship.

On the exterior the building is an arrangement of rectangular attachments to a simple rectangular plan structure with a truncated hip roof. The roof, almost Mansard in effect, is surrounded and mostly obscured from view by a three foot brick parapet that continues flush with the wall above the cornice. This parapet includes a wide band of decorative terra cotta panels with low relief designs. There are several small 'Pala-dian' dormers, some without actual sidelights and one wide dormer with a shed roof.

A porte-cochere at one end constitutes the only formal entrance. Its roof is a balcony with a balustrade equivalent in height to the parapet above.

Attached around the corner from this entrance on the wall in front is a glassed-in rectangular porch of the same height and projection. Next to the porch is a two story octagonal bay window with five facets exposed continuing up to the roof introducing the only deviation along its parapet. This provides natural light and additional space for the main interior stairwell. Further down the wall is a massive external chimney, which is the last in this series of three projections where each is taller than the one to its left, while simultaneously it is shallower and narrower as well. Finally, before the corner, there are the tall windows of the living room.

The south end wall faces the formal garden. There are two one-story rectangular window bays, one for the living room, crowned by a crenelated parapet, and another for the dining room.

The interior of Larrabee House is most impressive. Upon entering from the porte-cochere through French doors there is an airy vestibule with a ceramic tile floor. Opposite the French doors in a segmental arched opening is a pair of massive glass and ironwork doors, reportedly imported from Belgium. These open into an entrance hall with a coat-room to one side. The hall widens at the main stairwell to the full width of the living-room, but here it is under a wide balcony. The living room itself is cavernous. The ceilings are 20 feet high with a grid of numerous girders and beams boxed in oak and painted with decorative motifs to match carving in the woodwork below. The walls are paneled in oak to a height of 14 feet. Each succeeding row of panels decreases in height from the bottom toward the top of the wall. The floors, balustrades, and sup-

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

porting columns are oak as well. Above the paneling and on the ceiling between the beams and girders, the surface is plaster. The fireplace was formerly faced with a marble slab, now replaced with concrete.

At the far end of the room, next to the window bay facing the garden, there is a raised oak platform curving gently forward. Here there was originally a parlor grand Steinway piano.

In addition to several single bedrooms, there are two complete suites of two and three bedrooms, including private hallways, baths, and balconies. There are walk-in clothes closets and linen closets each with over a dozen built-in drawers.

The spacious kitchen has a utility room, with a refrigerator wall, a pantry, and a breakfast nook. In the basement, the laundry room is equivalent to a commercial facility. Some of the original machines remain.

Also in the basement is a game room, entirely paneled in oak. One panel opens out providing a built-in cue rack.

All of the plumbing is brass and lead. The rooms were all furnished with telephone intercoms (since removed), patented 1904. There is a built-in vacuum cleaner system, and the original underground sprinkler system still functions.

Behind the house there is a one and a half story concrete three car garage surfaced in stucco and brick with detailing to match the residence. There were servant's quarters above and workshops in the basement. Gasoline pumps were located in the yard outside.

Larrabee House has received many minor alterations, although it remains basically as built. Cheap carpeting and linoleum cover most of the floors. Bookshelves have been installed in the dining room at the expense of the original woodwork and decorative mural panels. Several bedrooms have been plumbed, and most of their woodwork painted. Some walls have been stippled.

A flat roofed brick annex 50 by 70 feet was built to the rear of the house in 1950, and the garage was converted to apartments. The annex is a box-like dormitory structure connected only by a 12 foot hallway. It is well hidden from the front of the house. Although the dormitory is a substantial intrusion, it does not significantly diminish the magnificence of Larrabee House.

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

1915

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Carl Gould, Seattle

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Larrabee House was designed by Carl Gould of the architectural firm Bebb & Gould for Charles X and Francis Payne Larrabee. Late in 1914, before construction began, C. X. Larrabee died. In accordance with his wishes, Mrs. Larrabee completed the house as her own residence the following year.

Charles Xavier Larrabee was a man of tremendous wealth and power whose investments included controlling interests in numerous enterprises from mining, railroads, ranching, and real estate to bulb floriculture. Larrabee was born November 19, 1843, in Portville, New York. At the age of six his family moved to Wisconsin where his father operated a general store. He attended business college at Poughkeepsie, New York before teaching school at the age of 19. With the outbreak of the Civil War, Larrabee paid his entire savings to a mercenary who enlisted in his place so that he might remain behind to support his widowed mother.

In 1875 he left Wisconsin for Montana where, in return for a half interest, he sank the famous Anaconda mine shaft 40 feet. His most significant achievement in mining was the discovery and development of the Mountain View copper mine at Butte City.

After 12 years in Montana, he liquidated most of his assets and moved to Portland, Oregon, retaining his extensive Montana ranch for the breeding of cattle and Morgan horses. Shrewd investments in real estate development in Portland and in Fairhaven, Washington, now a part of Bellingham, expanded his fortune. In 1890, Larrabee located permanently on Bellingham Bay where he is credited with a substantial contribution to the growth of that city. He was one of the builders, and later the president of the Fairhaven and Southern Railroad.

He founded the Citizens' Bank of Bellingham, developed the Roslyn-Cascade Coal Company, and invested in early industrial salmon fishing.

On August 3, 1892, Mr. Larrabee married Miss Francis Payne of St. Louis, Missouri, whose father was a "prosperous agriculturist and stockman". Born in St. Charles, Missouri, she attended the Mary Institute, St. Louis, before earning a degree in music at the New England Conservatory in Boston. She continued her musical education in Germany where she studied the piano.

Mrs. Larrabee was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Colonial Dames. She was also an active parishoner of St. James Presbyterian Church, Bellingham. Shortly after her husband passed away in 1915, Francis Payne Larrabee donated the first

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acreage ever acquired by the then recently empowered Washington State Park Commission, property now included in Larrabee State Park.

At the time of C. X. Larrabee's death, their four children ranged in age from 12 to 20 years. When the new residence was completed, all of the children lived at home with their mother. She was assisted in running the household by a cook, a housemaid, and a man who had previously served the family for many years. In addition, there were two gardeners and a chauffeur not living on the grounds. Among their earliest family cars was a prestigious Locomobile.

Mrs. Larrabee remained in the house until her own death in 1941.

Carl Gould was a highly respected Seattle architect. His important works include numerous residences in the Seattle area, of which nearly all are still standing. He was one of the founders of the Department of Architecture at the University of Washington and chairman when the department was first organized, and he served as president of the Seattle Chapter, American Institute of Architects. Bebb and Gould acted as supervising architects during construction of the present State Capitol Buildings in Olympia, and the firm is credited with the award-winning design of the Art Deco Style Seattle Art Museum in Volunteer Park.

Larrabee House is significant as the intended residence of a man whose wealth and investment activity exerted a powerful force in the development of Bellingham and several other Pacific Northwest communities. It is architecturally significant as a major residential commission of a well-known Seattle firm. Their design is a classic example of an architectural response to the tastes of tremendously wealthy self-made businessmen whose fortunes were acquired during the westward expansion of rail transportation. This style derives its elegance from conspicuous generosity in the use of space, craftsmanship and expensive materials with relatively minor emphasis on academic subtleties. The house demonstrates the growing vogue of built-in convenience features including not only cabinetry but numerous mechanical and electrical gadgets as well. The sprinkler system, central vacuum cleaning system, intercom, refrigerator wall, and gasoline pumps were all quite early examples of a uniquely American innovation in residential architecture.