

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

Crook House

AND/OR COMMON

Gibbons House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

314 East 21st Street

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

1st

STATE

Wyoming

__ VICINITY OF

CODE

56

COUNTY

Laramie

CODE

021

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 checked="" 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 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

Ronald G. and Charlotte A. Gibbons

STREET & NUMBER

314 East 21st Street

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

Wyoming 82001

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

City and County Building

STREET & NUMBER

19th Street and Carey Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82001

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Wyoming Recreation Commission, Survey of Historic Sites, Markers and Monuments

DATE

1967 (rev. 1973)

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Wyoming Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Cheyenne

STATE

Wyoming 82002

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

The Crook House faces south on 21st Street, in an area that was once the original city of Cheyenne. Its setting, comprised of old cottonwoods, a cobblestone drive and an ornate carriage house, and its placement next to the old Greek Revival Governor's Mansion - both buildings complement each other - creates a scene from a bygone era.

An excellent example of Queen Anne, the structure incorporates a variety of forms and roof planes. Its elaborate, but careful, detailing accentuates the house's three-dimensional quality. Although the structure has numerous projections, its foremost architectural components are visible at the front elevations and include a projecting, gabled bay, a pedimented, hip-roofed veranda, and a substantial square tower with a pyramidal roof and ornate finial. These main parts are massed in an asymmetrical, but balanced, composition.

The surface of the exterior in both color and material is visually rich and simple. The walls are clapboard, the roofs are wood shingles. It's been said the blue and white cottage resembles the soft look of a wedding cake. Overall, the building is a tasteful, unostentatious example of Queen Anne.

Recurring details help to unify the design of the building. A stylized fan in low relief appears on the pediment of the front gable end, and as a blind circular arch on the tower. Typically, a number of windows are bordered with small square lights.

The interior of the Crook House is based on a radial plan. The entrance vestibule, or hub, incorporates a magnificent walnut staircase enclosed in the square tower which leads to the second floor. The walnut, some of it burl, is worked into elaborate, carved newel posts, a delicate balustrade, and a lacy frieze.

The first floor rooms -- parlor, sitting, dining, kitchen -- are laden with original hardware, fixtures, and woodwork. Doorknobs, locks, hinges and other hardware are cast and include vignettes, coiled rope, chain and other designs. In the early 1900's crystal light fixtures utilizing both gas and electricity were hung from the ceilings and walls. Door and window casings are reeded and incorporate carved rosettes. Egg and dart moulding is prevalent. The three bedrooms and bath on the second floor contain, though to a somewhat lesser degree, the same amenities. The floors throughout the house are maple.

Built-in features include glass-doored, maple bookcases in the library, a cherry cupboard in the kitchen, and two fireplaces--designed to burn both wood and coal--with oak and mirror mantles. They're located in the parlor and the sitting room.

The house has some interesting, if not unique, mechanical and structural components. The flow to and from the hot water heater is handled in a single line with two tubes, one surrounding the other or, in other words, a pipe within a pipe. The interior line carries hot water to the fixtures, while the exterior line carries the return. The logic of this system is that the water being returned serves as insulation for the interior hot water line, thereby reducing the load on, and energy consumption by, the hot water heater.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW | <input checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The W. W. Crook Home is significant for its historical role in the social-political milieu of the Rocky Mountain Region and as one of the few remaining examples of Queen Anne architecture in Wyoming. Much like the City of Cheyenne, the Crook home was a child of the Union Pacific Railroad and cattle frontier. In 1885 the temporary tents, camps and prefabricated structures, reflecting the speculative nature of the frontier town, had faded. In their place arose more permanent dwellings and businesses. Soon Italianate villas and Victorian homes housed the growing cattle elite congregating in Cheyenne. Population tripled between 1880 and 1885 in response to a tremendous influx of eastern and European capital. By 1885 the estimated value of ranch holdings exceeded \$1,000,000. It was this dynamic climate which attracted a young Kentucky-born physician.

Dr. William W. Crook was born in Madison County, Kentucky on October 20, 1836. He taught school for a time in Kansas. Medicine, however, remained his true vocation. Shortly before the outbreak of the Civil War, he enrolled in the University of Iowa's medical program. Receiving his degree in 1861, he practiced for ten years in Kansas. His interests were by no means confined to the clinic and, in 1870 he was elected Mayor of Doniphan, Kansas.

Attracted by the glowing accounts of Wyoming's agricultural and stock-growing potential, as well as Cheyenne's dramatic population growth, Crook moved to Cheyenne in 1875. Hanging out his shingle in that same year, he became one of the Territory's first permanent doctors.

Dr. Crook married in 1864 and his only child, Fannie, later became the wife of O.K. Snyder. Both men became partners in the purchase of the Capitol Pharmacy.

Shortly after settling in Cheyenne, Dr. Crook became associated with the Rhodes and Troxell Pharmacy, one of Cheyenne's first businesses. In addition, Crook was the driving force behind Wyoming's fledgling medical association. He was later rewarded for his organizational efforts by election as association president in 1902. An accomplished writer, Crook frequently contributed scholarly articles to medical journals. No pedant, however, Crook's interests always embraced both civil and scientific pursuits.

In August of 1890, Crook leased the house to William A. Richards for \$35 a month. Richards, a rancher from Red Bank in the Big Horn Basin, had earlier been surveyor general of Wyoming, 1889-1893. The Queen Anne home temporarily became the Governor's

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Addendum, Item 9.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Cheyenne North, WY

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 13 515620 4553970
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

E. 16' of Lot 6, all of Lot 7, Block 235, Original City of Cheyenne. Lot size: 82' X 132', or 1,720 square feet.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME/TITLE Charlotte A. Gibbons, houseowner, 314 East 25th Street
Walter Sedovic, Jr., Historical Architect, and Greg Kendrick, Historian

ORGANIZATION Wyo. State Historic Preservation Office DATE Dec. 8, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 604 East 25th Street TELEPHONE (307)634-5630
(307)777-7695

CITY OR TOWN Cheyenne STATE Wyoming 82002

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 *Jan L. Wilson*

TITLE Wyoming State Historic Preservation Officer DATE May 17, 1979

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

William H. Brackham DATE 7-10-79
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: *William H. Brackham* DATE 7-3-79
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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CONTINUATION SHEET DESCRIPTION ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The system is still in use and functioning very well. Structurally, it's interesting to note that each wall, including interior partitions on the first floor, has its own brick foundation which is one foot wide. Differential settling has been kept to a minimum.

There are three outbuildings on the property. The large two-story carriage house remains little changed since it was built in 1885. The building still has a dirt floor. Two stalls remain as built, the front is a single which also leads to the backyard and the rear is a double. On the second floor a large grain bin is still in place, as well as chutes through which forage was lowered. The once-furnished servants' quarters are over the stall area. Adjacent to the carriage house is a small one-story coal storage house. Another building which was once the chicken house has been reworked into a covered patio.

In summary, the Crook House, one of the finest and most well kept examples of Wyoming's contribution to Queen Anne Style architecture, deserves the protection and recognition offered through enrollment in the National Register of Historic Places.

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CONTINUATION SHEET SIGNIFICANCE ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

Mansion when in 1894 citizens selected Richards for the state's highest post. Nominated on a Republican platform which endorsed the McKinley high-tariff, Governor Richards advocated liberal pensions for Civil War Veterans, and demanded free coinage of gold and silver at a ratio of sixteen to one, thus working to combat the lingering depression following the Panic of 1893.

After completing his term of office, Richards served as Assistant Commissioner of the General Land Office from 1899 to 1903 and as Commissioner from 1903 to 1907. During these years, he worked to adapt land laws to the distinctive needs of the western stock-grower. Following his wife's death, Richards resigned his post to join a federal public-lands commission conducting a study of public land policies. Chairman of a commission which included F. H. Newell and Gifford Pinchot, Richards publicized the inadequacy of existing land law. The Commission reemphasized the earlier recommendations of the noted explorer-scientist John Wesley Powell and stated that most of the laws and departmental practices which grew up under them were framed to suit the lands of the humid region and were unsuited for use in the arid west.

Richards transferred his house to banker B. David in April of 1899. Shortly thereafter, David once again sold the home to Judge Josiah Van Orsdel for the sum of \$2,000.

Born in November of 1860, Van Orsdel later studied law in Nebraska where he was admitted to the bar. Moving west, he opened a law office in Cheyenne in 1891. A quick series of promotions followed. A stint as Laramie County Attorney soon led to his appointment as Attorney General of Wyoming. Six years later he became Associate Justice of the State Supreme Court. President Theodore Roosevelt acknowledged his forensic aptitude by appointing Van Orsdel to the office of Associate Attorney General of the U.S. and later Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals. In 1901 Van Orsdel added a room to the east to be used for formal state dining, a butler pantry that opens into the kitchen, and a breakfast room on the west.

In February of 1907 Van Orsdel sold the house to P.S. Cook. Cook established the first plumbing firm in Cheyenne. The large Cook family inhabited the home until 1955, when P.S. Cook, II died. The house remained vacant for several years. Eventually, the Victorian cottage was sold in 1974 to Ronald and Charlotte Gibbons. Today the house has been restored and furnished in the mode of its original construction..

For its historic association with prominent Wyoming politicians and personages, as well as for its architectural distinctiveness, the Crook home deserves enrollment in the National Register of Historic Places.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Crook House ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

ADDENDUM

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Books: Bartlett, History of Wyoming, Vol. 1, 2, 3., Chicago, S. J. Clark Company, 1918.
Beach, Women of Wyoming, Casper, Wyoming, 1927.
Coutant, Chas. J. (compiled by), Progressive Men of Wyoming, Chicago, A. W. Bowen & Company, 1903.

Newspapers:

Cheyenne Daily Leader

Feb. 1, 1886 through Jan. 11, 1895, Jan. 13, 1885, April 29, 1886, Jan. 8, 1895.

Denver Post

Aug. 24, 1952 article on Governor's Mansion

Mountain States Collector, Denver

Vol. 6N2, Feb. 1978, Vol. 6N3, March 1978

Records:

Laramie County Records in books:

No. 33 pg. 363, No. 70 pg. 308, No. 10 pg. 187, No. 76 pg. 198 & 294, No. 32 pg. 435.

Laramie County Tax Record books

1884-1900

Laramie County Abstract Records of

Block 235, Original City

Polk's Cheyenne City Directory

All years from 1884-1887, 1892, 1907-1916, 1920, 1922.

Miscellaneous:

Copy of letter from Alice R. McCreery, daughter of Governor W. A. Richards, Nov. 25, 1939, from file of Richards in Wyoming Archives and Historical Dept.
Personal interview with Dave Cook, Feb. 1976, by Charlotte Gibbons.