

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 19 1979  
DATE ENTERED SEP 18 1979

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC The Wreckage

AND/OR COMMON

**LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 256th Place

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Ocean Park

\_\_VICINITY OF 3rd-Hon. Don L. Bonker

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Washington

Pacific

**CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

**OWNERSHIP**

**STATUS**

**PRESENT USE**

\_\_DISTRICT

\_\_PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

\_\_AGRICULTURE

\_\_MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

\_\_UNOCCUPIED

\_\_COMMERCIAL

\_\_PARK

\_\_STRUCTURE

\_\_BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

\_\_SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

\_\_ENTERTAINMENT

\_\_RELIGIOUS

\_\_OBJECT

\_\_IN PROCESS

\_\_YES: RESTRICTED

\_\_GOVERNMENT

\_\_SCIENTIFIC

\_\_BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

\_\_INDUSTRIAL

\_\_TRANSPORTATION

\_\_NO

\_\_MILITARY

\_\_OTHER:

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Roy A. and Valeria June Gardner

STREET & NUMBER

10856 N.E. 108th

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Kirkland

\_\_VICINITY OF

Washington 98033

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Pacific County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Cowlitz and Memorial Drive

CITY, TOWN

STATE

South Bend

Washington 87586

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Pacific County Cultural Resource Survey

DATE

1978

\_\_FEDERAL \_\_STATE  COUNTY \_\_LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Pacific County Historic Preservation Planner

CITY, TOWN

STATE

South Bend

Washington 87586

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" 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 Wreckage" is located on the Long Beach Peninsula of Pacific County. It stands on five and a half lots in the plat of Ocean Park. The northern boundary of the property is 256th Place (or Cambridge Avenue) and the Ocean Park Community Center; the western boundary is N Place (or Melrose Avenue); the southern and eastern boundaries are private property. The lots and surrounding properties are covered with alders and evergreens. Originally the vacant portions of the property were used as a putting green. During several years of neglect the grounds became heavily overgrown with blackberry, ivy and kinnikinnick. Recently most of the lots have been cleared and the property again has the characteristics of a cared for park.

The one and a half story Wreckage is an unhewn log house. It was built by Guy S. Allison, author and educator in 1912. The log house pattern was loosely based on a Sitka, Alaska, log-fluted blockhouse which had captured his imagination several years earlier. The nearby Pacific Ocean provided most of his building materials. Logs from abandoned rafts, lumber from wrecked vessels, and other jetsam deposited along the beach were dragged to his property behind the ridge of sand dunes and combined into a cabin. Notching the logs carefully he built a box surmounted by an overhanging upper story. Mr. Allison and a friend named David Hood stacked the logs in place using a block and tackle.

The logs used in the house average thirty feet in length across the front and rear, and twenty-four feet in length across the sides. They are braced with smaller logs and mortar. The upper story is covered with cedar shakes under the gables. The shakes cover tongue and groove siding.

The high gabled roof has one dormer each on the front and rear slopes. They are a part of the overhanging upper story. Each dormer has a flat roof which slopes forward and four single sashed windows. The windows have a three-over-one glass pattern. The tongue and groove siding is covered with cedar shakes like those under the gables. The windows on the rear dormer have wire mesh screens over them. Below the windows on the front dormer hangs a sign reading "The Wreckage". It is made of bleached driftwood twigs painted white. The name "Wreckage" was applied to the log house in 1911 because it was constructed of beach flotsam and jetsam. The roof is covered with cedar shakes.

There are two chimneys straddling the ridge of the roof. One chimney rises above the roof on the exterior east wall of the house. It has a single stack and is made of brick. The other chimney protrudes from the center of the house above the dormers. It is made of concrete blocks and mortar and has a "T" shaped metal rain cap.

The window and door openings on the lower story were handsawed by Allison. He opened one door each on the front and rear elevations and two sets of windows on each wall. All openings are slightly recessed and are outlined with white painted wood floats. Several of the windows are covered with wire mesh. The windows on the front elevation are larger than the rest and have a panel of six glass panes over three rectangular

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sashes. The sashes are hinged on the sides. The front door is made of tongue and groove siding and has a latch string opener. The original wood float knocker is still secured to the center of the door with a piece of old rope. Above the door is a long, twisted piece of driftwood painted to resemble a rattlesnake. This driftwood snake was a part of Mr. Allison's fanciful driftwood "Wreckage Zoo".

The original front porch was built of planks and had a log railing. The logs were badly deteriorated by 1976 and had to be removed. The replacement planks were taken from an old barn. They blend well with the weathered logs. The railing is being rebuilt to resemble the original.

The Wreckage rests on a concrete block foundation. Each pier is approximately 4'x4' and embedded in the ground an average of two feet. The interior flooring is supported and leveled by the original cedar bolts placed beneath it by Mr. Allison in 1911. According to the diary of construction left by Mr. Allison the fireplace hearth contains one thousand rocks. The rocks were taken from a quarry on Long Island in nearby Willapa Bay.

Very few alterations have been made to the exterior of the Wreckage since it was constructed. In 1934 Mr. Allison attached a lean-to kitchen and bathroom to the rear of the house. Its poor construction and leaky roof make it unuseable. Plans are being made to remove it and replace it with a 20'x24' log addition several feet behind the log house. It would be connected to the rear door by a covered walkway.

Repair and replacement of deteriorating members has been a necessity in the last three years. Supporting logs in various parts of the wall are showing rot and will be replaced with weathered materials like the original in the near future. Weight bearing logs on the rear wall and those on either side of the chimney on the west wall were replaced in July 1977. The deteriorating front porch floor was removed in October 1976 and replaced in September 1977.

A chimney fire in February 1978 damaged part of the roof around it. The brick chimney was torn down to the firebox. In September 1978 a new chimney was constructed. The interior was built of concrete blocks. The original bricks were reused on the exterior wall of the chimney. The damaged roof will be repaired with cedar shakes from other buildings on the grounds.

The interior is as it was when the Wreckage was first built. The unhewn log walls, plank flooring, and furniture built of driftwood remain essentially unaltered and intact.

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There are three out-buildings on the property behind the Wreckage. They were built by Mr. Allison in the 1920's for the enjoyment of the guests who frequently stayed with him. All of the buildings are made of wood deposited on the beach. All of the roofs and walls are covered with cedar shakes.

To the east of the Wreckage stands the remains of a double garage with a living loft overhead. Built in 1926, it was nicknamed "The Wreckagette" by Mr. Allison. A sign over the double garage doors spells out the name in driftwood twigs. To the south of the Wreckage is a Finnish sauna and privy built in 1928. It was nicknamed "The Wrectorium". The remains of the third building, built in 1928, stand at the southwest corner of the property. It was used as a three room guest house during the summer months. There were two bedrooms and a large living and kitchen area inside.

All three of the out-buildings have been neglected for the past couple decades. Structural deterioration appears beyond repair. They may have to be torn down in the near future.

The Gardner Family has owned the Wreckage since 1976. Mr. Gardner is a carpenter and has involved his family and friends in the necessary repair work done on the house so far. The family is dedicated to replacing and repairing deteriorated members with materials as much like the original as possible.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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

1912

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Guy Selwin Allison

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Wreckage is historically significant to the community of Ocean Park and the peninsula as a singular example of Long Beach resort architecture. Built in 1912, it was the product of an inventive mind stimulated by the character of the environment. It has been a coastal landmark from the day Guy S. Allison, author and educator, finished building it. In the decades since it was built it has been used as the setting of a popular novel and several short stories, and it inspired the builder to create several pieces of vernacular art. Today, it is a visible reminder of the energetic formative years of one of Washington's earliest ocean beach resorts.

Guy S. Allison was the creator and builder of the Wreckage. He was born in Hannibal, Mo., in 1883, and came to the Washington coast as a young man. Beginning in 1898 he spent his summers on the peninsula with his brother, J.C., and his sister, Mrs. Bertha Allison Tompkins, a pioneer teacher in Pacific County. In 1906 he attended the Normal School in Bellingham. Between 1907-09 he taught at both McKinley and Sheridan public schools in Tacoma and was the Principal at McKinley. For health reasons he eventually left education for outdoor work, but education and the study of history always remained his major interests. In the 1930's he became famous on the west coast for his syndicated newspaper column "Bypaths of History". He also wrote thousands of short stories for various publications, published a book of poems in 1918, and authored a number of booklets concerning the life of President Lincoln and others. Many of his works were produced at his desk in the Wreckage. Copies of several are still found on the shelves there.

The twenty-five miles of windy peninsula beach and the bustling resort village of Ocean Park attracted Guy Allison from his first visit. In 1910, he purchased two lots in the plat of Ocean Park with his brother J.C. (Joseph Clarence) Allison. Adjacent lots were acquired in later years. In August 1910 Guy Allison and his bride, Virginia, spent their honeymoon in a tent on the newly purchased property. It wasn't until the winter of 1911 that plans were made for a permanent beach house.

Ocean Park was originally established in 1883 by the Ocean Park Camp Meeting Association of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Portland. It was to be a Christian summer resort for the membership. The Rev. William R. Osborn and his flock bought 250 acres of land with ocean beach frontage on one side of the peninsula and Willapa Bay tidal property on the other. When the association platted part of their land they made it available for lease or sale to outsiders. All grantees had to agree to the following rider:

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	4,1,9	4,4,0	5,1,4,8	5,8,0	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C						D					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property nominated is located in Section 33 of Township 12 North, Range 11 West, W.M. Pacific County, Washington. It is bordered to the north by 256th Place (or Cambridge Avenue); to the west by N Place (or Melrose Avenue); to the east by SR 103 and private property; and to the south by private property. The Wreckage is situated on five and one half lots in the plat of Ocean Park. They are Lots 373, 374, 375, 384, 385 and the west half of 386.

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

Larry Weathers and Valeria J. Gardner

ORGANIZATION

Historic Planner

DATE

April 1979

STREET & NUMBER

Box 66, Courthouse

TELEPHONE

875-5591

CITY OR TOWN

South Bend

STATE

WA 98586

## 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

*Jeanne M. Welch*

TITLE

DATE

7-12-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<i>William H. Bruman</i>	DATE <i>8/18/79</i>
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
ATTEST: <i>W. Ray Luce</i>	DATE <i>9/18/79</i>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

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... That neither the said grantee, his heirs nor assigns shall allow, suffer or permit any intoxicating drink or drinks, or other fermented or spirituous liquor or liquors to be manufactured, made, distilled, stored, sold, exchanged or given away on said premises, or any gambling to be carried on upon said premises nor permit any house or other place thereon to be occupied or used for any immoral purpose whatever; and in case of the violation of the above conditions or any of them, this deed shall thereupon immediately become null and void, and the estate hereby granted shall revert to and revest in said grantors or their heirs as fully and completely as if said grant and covenants had never been made, and the consideration paid thereon shall be absolutely forfeited to said grantors.

Many Ocean Park property titles still carry this clause. The deed to the Wreckage is one of these.

The sturdy design of Mr. Allison's beach cabin was a product of his thrifty, often eccentric character. It was a combination of materials salvaged from various nautical disasters which he whimsically dubbed, "The Wreckage".

In the winter of 1911 a huge raft of fir logs headed for San Francisco crossed the Columbia River bar and split apart in high seas. Tugboats were unable to hold the large raft together and for the next few weeks the logs were hurled upon the beaches from Tillamook Head, Oregon, to Leadbetter Point, Washington. Mr. Allison saw the logs bleaching in the sun near Ocean Park and pulled them behind the sand ridge to his property.

The tongue and groove lumber used in the cabin was deposited on the beach during the same winter of 1911. A steam freighter named the WASHINGTON narrowly averted disaster inside the mouth of the Columbia River. The crew jettisoned a large portion of the dimension lumber allowing the freighter to drawback from the sandpits. High winds and surf piled much of the jetsam on the beaches. Walking among the debris Guy Allison conceived the idea of combining the logs and lumber into a loghouse.

In a forward to the "Register of the Wreckage", an informal history of the cabin, Mr. Allison wrote that it, "seemed a wonderful opportunity to procure material for a house". The cabin pattern he had in mind was based on the log-fluted blockhouse he had seen in Sitka, Alaska. The Wreckage was the only structure erected from the

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deposits of the two Columbia River calamities. "The remainder was either used as firewood, or has rotted on the beach," according to the forward.

Volume one of the "Register of the Wreckage" is a slim 8"x11" ledger. It was started on July 9, 1913, and closed on September 7, 1927. It contained lists of guests, a history of the construction, a few pictures and anecdotes connected with guests and parties at the Wreckage. Volume two is a much larger ledger and was started for Guy by his brother J.C. on September 7, 1927. The forward was a duplicate of the one in the first volume, but there are more pictures and various pieces of memorabilia. J.C. wrote that it was, "intended to provide the means for continuing the story of those who will make this house their vacation home, and to be a register for the visitors who enjoy its hospitality...since volume number one of the 'Register of the Wreckage' was started, G. S. Allison, builder and owner of the Wreckage, estimates 5000 persons have entered its doors." Much of the background information on the construction of the Wreckage comes from the register. Both are in the possession of members of the Allison family.

The forward to the register documents the construction phase. The only tools used in the work were an axe, saw, hatchet, screwdriver, froe, and block and tackle. Mr. Allison and friends did the salvage and carpentry work. Once the logs were hauled to the property they were put in place using the block and tackle. The largest log was 18 inches in diameter and 30 feet in length. Cement, salvaged from the wreck of the French barque ALICE, near Ocean Park, was used in the foundation piers on which the logs rested. When the logs were in place the openings were sawed for windows and doors. The white painted wood floats which gingerbread all openings were a late addition to the cabin in the 1940's. The logs were chinked and braced with mortar and smaller logs.

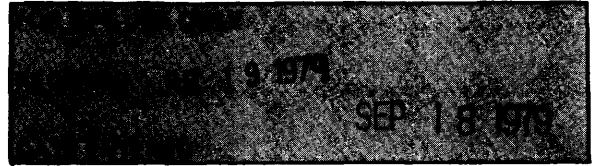
The rafters and siding on the upper story were erected with the help of Zhetley Matthews. Zhetley was the son of S. A. Matthews the builder of the State Registered S. A. Matthews House in Ocean Park. The Matthews family were all carpenters and seem to have had a hand in the construction of many of the dwellings in the area. Cedar bolts taken from the beach were split with a froe into shakes for the roof and to cover the siding on the upper story.

The interior and the furnishings of the cabin enhanced the reputation of the Wreckage over the years. The logs were left unhewn on the inside. The flooring on both levels of the cabin was made of the salvaged tongue and groove lumber. Cedar bolts were placed under the lower floor as foundation posts. The brick fireplace was designed by Guy's brother J.C. in the spring of 1915. The hearth was constructed from 1000 rocks brought from a quarry on the north point of Long Island in Willapa Bay. The Allison's imbedded a whiskey bottle in the concrete as a time capsule. Newspapers



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and memorabilia were put in the emptied bottle. In an OREGONIAN article written in July 1931 by novelist and historian Walker A. Tompkins, nephew of Guy and J.C. Allison, Guy is quoted as saying, "The christening liquor was poured on the house, not down the necks of the builders". This was not necessarily in keeping with the temperance clause in the deed.

Guy Allison was a man of eclectic taste. He designed and filled the cabin rooms with furniture made from driftwood as well as items of historical value, collected during his research and travels. A bedroom set made of silver-barked alder wood still stands in one of the upstairs bedrooms. The settee, stools, desk, picture frames and book-cases in the lower rooms were all fashioned by him from drift materials which sparked his imagination. Driftwood art is today a very popular vernacular art along the Pacific coast. Guy Allison was one of the earliest practitioners, and exploiters, of this style. In the 1930's he planned to open the Wreckage as a museum, or what he referred to as the "Flotsam and Jetsam Brothers Zoo". Later, he had a brochure printed which called his cabin "The Wreckage Zoo".

The main attraction of his "Zoo" was to be his private collection of fifty (50) animals shaped from driftwood. He claimed the driftwood shapes he displayed were natural shapes and looked amazingly like a giraffe, a seal, a deer, a duck, a dog, various birds and a woman. The brochure stated, "All tourist guests are given personal attention by the builder and owner of America's Most Unique Zoo: Guy S. Allison, Ocean Park, Washington". The "Wreckage Zoo" never did open and many of the boxes of brochures are still stored in the cabin. Mrs. Allison objected to her husband's idea and he diverted his energy to other projects. Only a couple of the "animals" remain on the property. Pictures show that a fence was made out of the collection, and it is likely that passers-by borrowed pieces of it over the years. The U.S. Geological Survey topographical maps still label one area of Ocean Park as the site of the "Wreckage Zoo". The collection was also the subject of a "Ripley's Believe It or Not" and Hix's "Strange As It Seems" cartoon.

The other attractions of the "Wreckage Zoo" included the relics of "unknown dramas at sea" and items of some historical worth. The bric-a-brac of historical and nautical interest included: Indian artifacts, pages of the logbook and the charts from the wreck of the LAUREL, ship cabin lamps, stuffed animal trophies, various sea shells, photographs of sites and oil paintings. Photographs and charts were used in some of the upper rooms in lieu of wallpaper. Much of the furniture and bric-a-brac is still in the cabin, but somethings have disintegrated with time. The glass cases on the walls containing letters and photos were never removed and are

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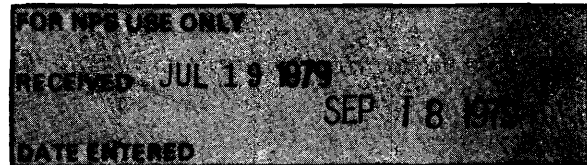
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in fairly good repair. Guy Allison's literary output: historical booklets, biographies, magazine articles, newspaper columns, and a copy of his book of poems, still line the upstairs bookshelves also. A copy of CQ GHOST SHIP, a novel by Walker A. Tompkins, which describes Ocean Park and uses the Wreckage as its setting, is also available.

The summer of 1912 saw the Wreckage christened for the flotsam and jetsam from which it was fashioned. For over six decades it was one of the most famous landmarks on the west coast. Thousands of delighted guests signed the "Register" during summer hiatuses. A unique resort cabin, the Wreckage remains a significant example of man's thrift and ingenuity. In partnership with nature Guy Allison created a beautiful and livable loghouse. The Gardner family intends to preserve this matchless structure.

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Allison, Guy S. America's Strangest Zoo. brochure, 1935.

Allison, Guy S. Register of the Wreckage Vol. I. July 9, 1913 through September 7, 1927. Owned by Guy's daughter, Mrs. Mary Bartron.

Allison, Guy S. and J.C. Register of the Wreckage Vol. II. September 7, 1927 through September 25, 1947. Owned by their nephew, Walker A. Tompkins.

Geurrant, Charlotte. A letter from the niece of Guy Allison to Valeria J. Gardner, dated at Altadena, California, July 14, 1977.

Hix, Ernest. Strange As It Seems. United Features Syndicate, Inc. 1947.

Tompkins, Walker A. CQ Ghost Ship. Philadelphia: McCrae Smith Company, 1960. A novel about Guy, J.C., the Wreckage and Ocean Park.

Tompkins, Walker A. "Davy Jones' Locker Furnishes Blockhouse Material." The Sunday Oregonian, (July 5, 1931).

Tompkins, Walker A. Author and historian. Telephone interviews concerning the history of the Wreckage on April 5, 1979, and April 10, 1979.

Tompkins, Walker A. Two letters to Valeria June Gardner discussing the Allison family and Ocean Park, dated July 17, 1977 and September 26, 1978.

Who's Who in the West. 5th edition, p. 20. Entry on Guy S. Allison.