

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Kaehler-Rector Home

and/or common Judge Rector Home

2. Location

street & number 408 West 25th Street _____ not for publication

city, town Merced _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district 15

state California code 06 county Merced code 047

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Almon Bernard Teel and Laura Hausenfluke Teel

street & number 408 West 25th Street

city, town Merced _____ vicinity of _____ state California

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Merced County Courthouse

street & number 2222 "M" Street

city, town Merced _____ state California

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date October 10, 1977 _____ federal _____ state _____ county local

depository for survey records Chamber of Commerce

city, town Merced _____ state California

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 house is largely unaltered except for additions at the rear. Otherwise the present and original descriptions are the same. The house is a large, asymmetrical composition with a long veranda and a corner tower. It is built on two lots on the northeast corner of the block, facing north. On the east side of the house are two tall palm trees which were planted when the house was built. A large magnolia tree is just to the north (front) of the palm trees near the corner of the house. A huge walnut tree, already large in 1942, is in the back yard on the southeast corner of the house.

The house is a two-story wooden frame, redwood structure. It contains about 5,000 square feet of floor space. It is sheathed in horizontal 10" redwood shiplap with a band of patterned shingles around the top of the walls. It is an excellent example of Queen Anne architecture, and is located only a few blocks from the historic commercial core of the city.

The roof is complex, with several hipped portions combined with gables; it also has a cone-shaped roof over the turret on the northeast corner of the house. The turret is crowned by a rooster wind vane; its cornice is supported by small brackets. On the west half of the front is a gable extending two to three feet in front of the rest of the house. This gable covers a bedroom with a window centered over the front entrance. The entrance is framed by paired columns on each side. On the west side of the house, the hip roof extends out over an area containing the staircase. On the east side, there is a gable the width of the dining room covering its bay windows and the bay windows of a bedroom directly above on the second floor. At the peak of the roof in front, and set back on the hip roof about eight feet, is a dormer window which matches a window in the gable above the entrance. Sunbursts are placed above each of these two windows.

An outstanding feature of the house is the veranda, which extends across the front of the house, and continues around the east side for a distance of approximately 50 feet, ending at the entrance to the back hallway. The veranda is supported by turned columns of maximum diameter of almost a foot. The columns rest on pedestals about 1-1/2 feet square at the balustrade level. The balusters in the balustrade are turned, and are framed in heavy 4" x 6" rails. The front entrance has double doors with insets of 21 squares of beveled glass in each door. Above the front doors is a transom which has gilt initials of the original owner, George Kaehler. On the front of the house, above the porch, and between the turret and the window above the front doors is a two-foot by four-foot stained glass window. The window is backed on the outside with ordinary glass. This window has its own cantilevered roof, which is covered with patterned shingles. The frame under the window is scrolled.

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The entrance hall is 30 feet long by 16 feet wide at its greatest width. It has a sweeping mahogany staircase with a long seat flanking the stairs. On the stairs, above a 12-inch baseboard is a four-foot high wall covering engraved with leaf design. It is also around the entire entrance hall on the first floor. The walls of the entrance hall above the dado are covered with hand-printed wallpaper. A ceiling medallion is located in the front part of the entrance hall where a gas and electric chandelier once hung. Of the ceiling medallions, the one in the front parlor is the most elaborate. It has four human faces in the inner circle, with rosettes in the outer part. The medallion in the dining room depicts fruit. Only one room in the main part of the house is without a ceiling medallion. Almost all original door knobs, door plates, hinges, and window pulls are in place. These were all of engraved brass and were imported from China.

The front parlor is separated from the entrance hall by double doors. The parlor is separated from the dining room by extra large double sliding doors, the opening of which is eight feet wide. The sliding doors are also eight feet high and have a fancy piece of portiere work across the top. Both the parlor and the dining room have elaborate mantels with beveled mirrors and shelves. The mantel in the front parlor is of walnut and the mantel in the dining room is of oak. Around the openings in the fireplaces are ceramic tiles. In the front parlor, the corner tiles are depictions of a god and goddess.

Supporting the arches in the circular bay in the front parlor are corbels of plaster of Paris with cherubs inscribed. Corbels also support arches in the circular bay of the bedroom directly above the front parlor, in the central hall on the second floor, and in the back hall on the first floor.

In the dining room there is a redwood dado four-feet high grained to look like oak. The same material and finish is used for a large built-in china cabinet. There are four bay windows in the dining room. The dining room mantel was mentioned previously.

There is a basement under the back part of the house. It is under the area of the original kitchen and back bedroom and the back hallway.

The house is largely unaltered; major alterations are confined to the rear of the house. At the back, porches have been enclosed and bathrooms have been added to the southwest corner on the first and second floors. This allowed an apartment to be created out of the original sleeping porch on the second floor. An apartment was created on the first floor at the back by converting the original kitchen into a living room, and by converting a back bedroom into a kitchen. The pantry off the original kitchen was converted into a kitchen for the use of the owners. A small screened-in porch was added off the pantry-kitchen. The house otherwise is virtually in its original state. Exceptions are some missing chandeliers.

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 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 type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1891-1894 **Builder/Architect** Louis Wegner

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Kaehler-Rector House is one of the finest remaining examples of Victorian Queen Anne architecture in Merced County. Designed by Louis Wegner, a locally known architect and builder, the home was lavishly constructed in terms of size and appointments, both inside and out. It is popularly referred to as one of the "old castles" of Merced, and is one of the better restored of this group. Integrity remains high despite minor alterations at the rear, which the owners intend to correct. Both Kaehler and Rector were prominent men in Merced history.

Louis Wegner, a native of Preetz, Schleswig-Holstein, studied architecture at Eckernforde, Germany. Wegner was a well-known architect in the Merced area and a builder with the instincts of a craftsman. While other examples of his work exist in Merced, the Kaehler-Rector Home is the grandest in scale. In Gum's History of the State of California and Biographical Records of San Joaquin Valley, 1905, written while Wegner was alive, the house was referred to as one of the finest in Merced County. Wegner was active in local affairs, serving twice as Mayor of Merced. He focused much of his energy at city beautification, improving streets and installing sidewalks. Many of the finest buildings in the town and county are products of his combined talents as architect and builder.

George Kaehler, the original owner, was a prominent businessman. Kaehler and his brothers, Reinhold and Max, were in the wholesale liquor business in Merced, Fresno, and Los Banos.

Judge E. N. Rector, the second owner, served on the Superior Court of Merced County for 38 years. His father had been instrumental in the formation of Merced County, leading the drive to separate it from Mariposa County in 1855. Rector occupied the home from 1903 until his death in 1941.

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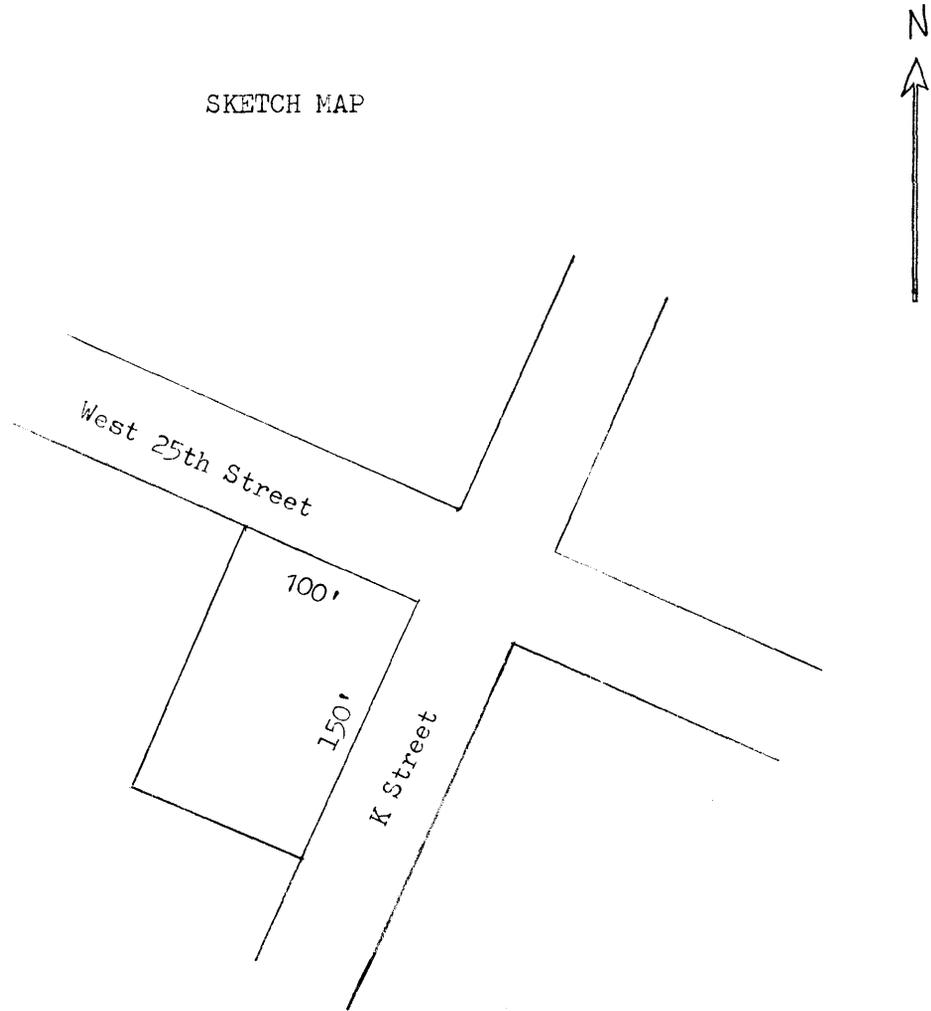
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SKETCH MAP



KAEHLER-RECTOR HOUSE
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