

JPR 01-190

The McCornack House

*219 East 9th Avenue
Spokane, WA 99202*

Built in 1905



**Nomination Prepared by
Linda Yeomans, Preservation Planner**

Photos taken in May, 2000

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

*Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Sixth Floor
808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, Washington 99201-3337*

1. Name of Property

Historic Name **MC CORNACK HOUSE**

2. Location

Street & Number 219 East Ninth Avenue
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99202
Parcel Number 35203.1020

3. Classification

Category of Property	Ownership of Property	Status of Property	Present Use of Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both		<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<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 Eva Myrle Johnson
Street & Number 219 East Ninth Avenue
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99202
Telephone Number/E-mail 624-8400

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds Spokane County Courthouse
Street Number 1116 West Broadway
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99260
County Spokane

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Title City of Spokane Historic Landmarks Survey
Date Federal__ State__ County__ Local 1979
Depository for Survey Records Spokane Historic Preservation Office

FINAL DRAFT DATE 19 July 2000

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check One

unaltered
 altered

Check One

original site
 moved & date _____

Narrative description of present and original physical appearance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

8. Spokane Register Criteria and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places Criteria--mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for Spokane Register listing:

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory history.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre.
Verbal Boundary Description Cazenovia Heights Add, all Lot 25, west 1/2 of Lot 26, Block 3
Verbal Boundary Justification Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title Linda Yeomans, Planning Consultant
Organization Historic Preservation Planning Services
Telephone Number/E-mail 509-456-3828 or lyeomans@uswest.net
Street and Number 501 West 27th Avenue
City, State, Zip Code Spokane, WA 99203
Date 19 July 2000

12. Additional Documentation

Map Spokane City/County plat map, 1999
Photographs and Slides 15 black & white photos, 16 color slides

13. Signature of Owner(s)

Eow Myrtle Johnson

14. For Official Use Only:

Date Received: _____ Attest: Leri Hjort

Date Heard: 3/5/01 City Clerk

Commission Decision: _____ Approved as to Form: Michael Pucak

Council/Board Action: Approved Assistant City Attorney

Date: 3/5/01

We hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places.

John J. Powers
MAYOR, City of Spokane
or

CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners

CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

Maria J. Power
OFFICER, City/County Historic Preservation Officer
City/County Historic Preservation Office
Sixth Floor - City Hall, Spokane, WA 99201

Narrative Description

Built in 1905, the McCornack House is a fine example of the Colonial Revival architectural style and is one of the best preserved homes in the Cazenovia Heights Addition of Spokane. Located on East Ninth Avenue just south and east of sprawling medical complexes, the McCornack House is one of only seven early 20th-century homes in the neighborhood that was not demolished and replaced by encroaching medical facilities, apartments blocks, condominiums, and parking lots. The McCornack House has had little alteration and retains excellent interior and exterior integrity.

Present Condition and Appearance*Site*

The McCornack House is located on Lot 25 and the west half of Lot 26 on Block 3 in the Cazenovia Heights Addition. Platted less than a mile southeast of downtown Spokane, the small addition is limited to three city blocks and is characterized by a steep slope, rising south to a basalt rimrock that marks the beginning of the Rockwood Historic District. Most of the neighborhood is comprised of high-rise apartment buildings and parking lots built between 1970 and 1995. Only the north side of East Ninth Avenue remains nearly unchanged from when it was developed in the early 1900s. It is characterized by early 20th-century homes and one hundred year-old deciduous trees. The McCornack House faces south along the north side of Ninth Avenue and is set behind a deep manicured lawn that slopes slightly down to the street. The property measures 170 feet deep and 75 feet wide. The McCornack House is bordered by turn-of-the-century historic homes to the east and west, and by condominiums and apartment blocks to the north and south.

Exterior

The two-story McCornack House features formal massing and a simple rectangular footprint that measures 32 feet wide and 25 feet deep with 800 square feet on each floor. The wood frame building reflects typical Colonial Revival style design with a side-gabled roof, a symmetrical facade design, multipaned double-hung, wood-sash windows and window pairs, and a front entry portico supported by Tuscan columns. The pitched roof features two red brick chimneys and is covered with composition shingles. The exterior of the house is clad in four-inch wide wood clapboard siding, and the foundation is constructed of 24-inch thick basalt stone walls. At the rear, north elevation of the house, the principle roof of the house extends over a one-story, full-width porch supported by Tuscan columns. A decorative pergola is attached the west elevation of the house and is also supported by Tuscan columns.

The facade of the McCornack House features a symmetrical design with eight-over-eight multipaned boxed windows that flank the front entry portico on the first floor and four-over-four multipaned window pairs on the second floor. The west elevation also features multipaned windows and is dominated by the one-story pergola. The rear, north elevation features a one-story, full-width porch and a full-width shed dormer with an inset balcony. The dormer's shed roof extends over the balcony and is supported by Tuscan columns. The balcony is protected by

a decorative balustrade. The east elevation of the house is illuminated by symmetrically placed six-over-one and eight-over-one multipaned windows.

Interior

The painted-wood front door of the McCornack House features multipaned stained-glass lites and opens to a small front entry hall that marks the entrance to a large living room. The living room extends from the front of the house to the rear of the house and measures 32 feet long. Living room focal points include a large fireplace with a Moravian-tile surround and hearth, and built-in bookcases located below two windows on the east wall. The living room leads to a small hall and back porch door, a dining room and kitchen, and an enclosed staircase. The staircase rises part way to the second floor, breaks and splits at a landing, and extends both east and west to three bedrooms, two bathrooms, and built-in cupboards. First and second-floor ceiling heights measure more than eight feet, and the floors are solid oak planks except in the bathrooms and kitchen. Throughout the house, the woodwork and built-in cupboards and cabinets are painted white enamel and feature original brass and nickel-plated chrome hardware.

Original Appearance in 1905 and Subsequent Alterations

The McCornack House is well-preserved and retains its original footprint, design, materials, workmanship, windows, doors, hardware, fixtures, kitchen cupboards and other built-in cabinets, fireplace, oak floors, woodwork, and lighting. Original brass wall sconces light the living room, and the original dining room chandelier and porch lantern remain stored in the basement.

The McCornack House has had few alterations and conveys its original use as a single-family residence. In the 1970s, the roof was recovered with composition shingles, a bathroom was added on the second floor, and a closet was constructed in the hallway that leads from the front door to the kitchen on the first floor. During the 1990s, the back porch floor was refinished and a new ceiling was installed, replacing the original deteriorated bead board ceiling.

Areas of Significance	Architecture, Social History
Period of Significance	1905-1935
Significant Dates	1905
Architect, Designer, and/or Builder	Unknown

Statement of Significance

Built in 1905, the McCornack House is one of Spokane's best examples of simple Colonial Revival style architecture. Along with its setting, it is reflective of Colonial Revival style homes built along America's Eastern seaboard and features a "saltbox" roof rarely seen in Spokane. The house was built for prominent Spokane pediatrician and Spokane County Medical Society president Dr. Peter McCornack and his wife Jesse who owned it for 30 years. The McCornack House retains excellent integrity and reveals early 20th-century craftsmanship and association with the development of Spokane and the lower South Hill community surrounding Sacred Heart Medical Center. Architecturally significant, the McCornack House is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Criterion C.

Historical Context

Early Spokane

Spokane began as a small settlement of fur traders and lumberjacks in 1872 who lived next to various Indian tribes located along the Spokane River. By 1900, the town had swelled to 25,000 and was cited in national publications as one of the most beautiful cities in the Northwestern United States. With abundant natural resources and increasing financial gain, Spokane became a center for hydroelectric power, lumber, agriculture, mining, and rail transport. The area offered plentiful jobs with steady employment, and Americans, Europeans, and immigrants worldwide flocked to the city by the thousands. For more than ten years, Spokane experienced a period of fantastic fortune, city boosterism, and unprecedented growth resulting in a population that exceeded 100,000 by 1910. New neighborhoods formed as hundreds of homes were built, including the McCornack House on East Ninth Avenue.

In 1872, Spokane's lower South Hill along Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Avenues from Chandler Street on the east, to Madison Street on the west, was characterized by steeply wooded hillsides that rose south to the base of a series of jagged basalt bluffs. Although they presented a challenge to builders, the steep hillsides commanded spectacular panoramic views of Spokane and distant mountain peaks. Beginning in 1887, several homes along Seventh and Eighth Avenues were built beginning with a house at the head of Stevens Street and a Swiss chalet-style house on Seventh Avenue. By 1900, properties with professionally landscaped grounds were developed on the steep terrain for some of Spokane's most prominent families including James N. Glover, Cyrus Burns, Rockwood Moore, F. Lewis Clark, D. C. Corbin and his son Austin Corbin, Francis Finucane, Horace Cutter, and Kirtland Cutter. In addition to the large elaborate mansions, more modest homes were built throughout the hillside neighborhoods. Streets were paved, sidewalks were poured, schools were built, and streetcars linked the area to Spokane's downtown business district. Before long, the hillside neighborhoods were collectively known as

“the Hill” and included some of Spokane’s more socially prominent streets including East Ninth Avenue in Cazenovia Heights Addition.

Cazenovia Heights Addition

Beginning in 1889 when the addition was platted, Cazenovia Heights comprised about four city blocks and developed quickly with tree-lined streets and turn-of-the-century homes afforded by Spokane’s middle and upper middle-class society. The north side of East Ninth Avenue between Cowley and Chandler Streets offered seven view lots and was completely developed by 1906. Homes designed by builders and architects like W. W. Hyslop were commissioned by the professional residents living along the avenue. They included physicians Peter McCornack and Robert Hamblen; attorneys Winfred Gilbert, W. A. Gilbert, and Laurence Hamblen; and insurance, mortgage, and real estate developer F. E. Elmendorf. The small street boasted an eclectic appeal with house styles ranging from Dutch Colonial, Tudor Revival, and Swiss Chalet-inspired designs, to the Colonial Revival-styled McCornack House. For nearly 70 years, the Cazenovia Heights neighborhood retained its original, turn-of-the-century single-family homes. Beginning in the 1960s, commercial encroachment began to encircle and infiltrate the hillside community. Nearly all of the addition’s historic homes were demolished and replaced by condominiums and apartment buildings built behind the homes on East Ninth Avenue. In addition, a five-story retirement center was constructed directly south and along the hillside across the street from the Ninth Avenue homes. Due to impinging commercial sprawl and surrounding medical facilities, additional pressure was put on the residents of East Ninth Avenue to change their residential zoning to include multi-family housing. Even though two of the houses serve as apartments, the remaining homes along East Ninth Avenue are inhabited by families wishing to retain their homes and zoning for single-family use.

Dr. McCornack and the McCornack House

Peter D. McCornack was born in Iowa in 1874, graduated from Northwestern University School of Medicine in 1898, and came to Spokane in 1900. Dr. McCornack practiced medicine in Spokane at the Paulsen Medical and Dental Building for over 28 years and was noted in the *Spokane Spokesman-Review* as “one of Spokane’s prominent child specialists and best-liked medical men.” He was also cited for his study on preventative medicine where he advocated “outdoor exercise” as a means to deter specific ailments. Elected by his peers, he served as first vice president in 1912, and later as president in 1916, of the Spokane County Medical Society. He was active in Spokane civic affairs and belonged to the University Club, the Rotary Club, and several medical associations.

In 1905, Dr. McCornack bought one- and one-half lots on East Ninth Avenue for \$600 from the Holland Bank. The property was located only two blocks from Sacred Heart and St. Luke’s hospitals where he saw hospitalized patients. Even though no building permits, construction plans, or other documentation have ever been found, Jesse McCornack passed down her story of the McCornack House and its beginning. Jesse said she wanted her home in Spokane to closely resemble a Colonial Revival style house in which she had lived on the East Coast in the United States, so Jesse and Dr. McCornack hired an architect who designed a similar plan.*

In 1929, Dr. McCornack died at age 55, and his wife Jesse continued to live alone in their home for another six years. After residing in her home for 30 years, Jesse McCornack sold the house in 1935 to Consolidated Freightways loader Chester Whitman and his wife Sophy. The current owner, Eva Myrle Johnson, purchased the property in 1974 for \$21,000. Miss Johnson worked as a food service administrator for Eastern Washington University and also owned the R.N. Hamblen House next door at 215 East Ninth Avenue, and the L. R. Hamblen House at 235 East Ninth Avenue during the 1960s and 1970s.

Architectural Significance

Built in 1905, the McCornack House reveals typical identifying features of the Colonial Revival tradition. These features include an accentuated front door with a decorative pediment supported by Tuscan columns; a balanced facade design with center door and symmetrically spaced windows; and double-hung multipaned windows arranged individually or as pairs. The McCornack House retains all of these identifying features and also features a rearward continuation of the main roof slope, giving the house a “saltbox” shape--a design feature originating with East Coast Colonial homes built from about 1700 to 1750 (*McAlester*).

The McCornack House can be compared to the remaining historic homes on the East Ninth Avenue street on which it is located. Of the seven homes, the McCornack House and the Elmendorf House are the only two buildings designed in the Colonial Revival tradition. In contrast to the McCornack House, the Elmendorf House reveals a Dutch Colonial design while the McCornack House is a simple two-story rectangular block with a side-gabled roof. The McCornack House is one of the best examples of pure Colonial Revival style architecture in Spokane and features a saltbox roof slope rarely used in the Spokane area.

*Although undocumented, the Spokane architect is said to be Kirtland K. Cutter.

Major Bibliographical References

Compau, Nancy. Spokane Public Library, Northwest Room.

First American Title Company, warranty deeds.

Johnson, Eva Myrle. Personal interview with Linda Yeomans, April-May, 2000.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*, New York: A. A. Knopf, 1989.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1902-1952.

Spokane County Assessor's Records.

Spokane Spokesman-Review articles: 12 January 1912, 21 January 1912, 15 January 1916, 27 August 1929.

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photos A and B South facade of house.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photo 1

South facade of house.

Photos 2 and 3

West elevation of house with pergola.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photo 4
Photo 5

South facade of house.
East elevation of house.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photos 6 and 7

North, rear elevation of house.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photos 8 and 9

North, rear elevation of house.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photos 10 and 11 Living room fireplace.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet

MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photo 12 Living room looking southeast.

Photo 13 Original kitchen cabinets.



Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination Continuation Sheet
MC CORNACK HOUSE

Item Number 12

Photo 14

Upstairs hallway and built in cabinets.

Photo 15

Upstairs door with stained glass lites.

