

# BUCKLEY'S ADDITION HISTORIC DISTRICT

## From the National Register Nomination

### Summary Paragraph

The Buckley's Addition Historic District is a rectangular-shaped residential district located in Tacoma, Washington, on a portion of land above the south shore of Commencement Bay. The area is known to most of us for its historic homes and tree-lined streets. The streets are laid out in the North-South, East-West orientation like most of Tacoma. Buckley's Addition to Tacoma, which defines the parcel layout, was filed for record on June 12, 1883. Buckley's Addition was named for the Buckley's Addition that runs through the northern part of the district. The District encompasses 118 acres.

As a whole, the District is mainly residential; however, it does have an elementary school, and six commercial businesses. The district is attractive with well-maintained residences and many of the homes have mature landscaping and large, old trees. The mixture of housing styles, along with narrow streets, gives the District a unique character.

The district is bounded by North 21<sup>st</sup> Street, a main arterial on the north of the District, and N 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the south. North Steele Street is the east boundary and Pine St. is the boundary on the west. Pine St., on the west, is unique by having only 3 houses on it; North Anderson, just to the east, has 120 houses. For Buckley's Addition, Pine St. is used as an alley lined with garages for the houses on North Anderson; just outside Buckley's Addition to the west, the street is used for houses.

Just across the eastern boundary on North Steele St. is the North Slope Historic District, (on the National Register). The south boundary, North 8<sup>th</sup>, separates Buckley's Addition Historic District from a Tacoma Mixed Use Center on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, a commercial corridor with a different zoning category and use. The recorded version of Buckley's Addition to Tacoma extends one block more to the north; however, the busy arterial, North 21<sup>st</sup> St. defines the Buckley's Historic District today.

The Buckley's Addition Historic District is a rectangular-shaped district located in Tacoma Washington. The location is known to most for the tree-lined streets and historic homes, and its proximity to three bridges, only two of which remain. The primary development of the Buckley's Addition Neighborhood occurred prior to 1941, and structures exhibit both the characteristics of a neighborhood that developed during the streetcar era, as well as typical middle class architecture from the 1890s through the 1941. The District developed over many years, not all at once, and it is common to find

structures built as early as 1900 standing beside structures built 20, 30 and 50 years later.

### **BUCKLEY'S ADDITION**

The Buckley's Addition Historic District homes represent the homes of residents whose skills and talents contributed to the development and growth of the City of Tacoma. Early residents included professionals, business proprietors, railroad employees, independent trade people, and workers in downtown businesses, all living in a close-knit neighborhood.

The houses in the District have the distinctive characteristics of homes built in Tacoma from 1883 to 1941. Many of these dwellings represent the work of a master craftsmen and/or architect; a majority of the resources represent significant characteristics of architectural styles popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The homes in the Buckley's Addition Historic District are separated from surrounding neighborhoods by the street layout and plat of 1883. The streets were laid out in a north-south line with alleys between each street. While the District's homes are only part of Tacoma's rich treasure chest of historic homes, this area offers a high concentration of intact historic resources.

The settlement pattern and building styles are a direct reflection of the alternating periods of national economic growth and then stagnation, as these dramatic fluctuations impacted Tacoma. Stylistic influences from the East Coast, Midwest, and California combined with local vernacular styles and materials to create a unique local appearance. The common influences and representative styles include classic American Foursquare, the Craftsman style, Colonial, and the California bungalow, with an occasional Queen Anne structure.

### **J. M. BUCKLEY**

The area known as Buckley's Addition was platted in 1883, and named for Tacoma railroad pioneer, James M. Buckley. Buckley came to Tacoma from Portland in 1883 to become the Assistant General Manager of the Northern Pacific Railroad, with the specific job to finish the line from Helena, Montana to Portland and Tacoma, with the headquarters to be in Tacoma.

Particularly difficult terrain faced Mr. Buckley in order to complete the line over the Rockies and the Cascades. He actually pounded in the last spike himself, "...at 6:02 P.M. on June 1, 1887, on the summit of the mountains." (Hunt, Vol. 1, p. 398.) Thus, the final section was finished to complete the Northern Pacific Railroad line to Tacoma. After instituting some improvements in the Tacoma and Old Town yards, Buckley retired from

the NP Railroad in February, 1889, to take care of his substantial property holdings in Tacoma and Spokane, including the property he owned in Tacoma's Buckley's Addition.

As Buckley's Addition Historic District developed, buyers had many available lots to purchase. This wide range of choices gave rise to a checkerboard or hopscotch pattern of development. Such a pattern is reflected today in the building styles and construction dates of the houses throughout the area where the Queen Anne and homesteader styles and American Foursquare homes are juxtaposed with Craftsman bungalows. The buildings manifest the influence of locally available lumber and an eclectic Northwestern mixing of styles. These physical features are distinguishing characteristics of the homes in the District.

The period of significance for Buckley's Addition Historic District begins in 1890 with one contributing house, still standing, being built that year. On June 12, 1883 the plat for Buckley's Addition was filed for record. The Tacoma Daily Ledger of 1891 had an advertisement for Buckley's Addition where lots were offered for sale from \$100 to \$300. Beautiful views of the Olympic Mountains and Mt. Rainier, claimed the ad. "Only one-half down and the balance on contract," it stated.

### **DONATION LAND LAW**

Early in the 1850s, the tree-lined shores of Commencement Bay began to lure sawmill operators and loggers eager to provide lumber for the California Gold Rush. Quickly, a tiny, dreary lumber-mill settlement grew at the mouth of the Puyallup River, on what is known today as Tacoma's Tide Flats. Tacoma officially began in 1852, when Nicholas Dellin filed a Donation Land Claim at the head of Commencement Bay and built a small sawmill to supply local settlers with lumber. Many of Dellin's mill workers built cabins in the area around the mill.

The Donation Land Law of 1850 brought growth to the Oregon Territory (present day Washington State was a part of this territory.) The law provided that 160 acres could be given to each settler, but to obtain title, the settler had to cultivate his claim for four years. The Homestead Act passed Congress in May 1862, and provided that a settler could obtain title to 160 acres if he lived on the land and improved it. In addition, a settler could obtain title to 160 acres if he paid \$1.25 per acre for the land, and by purchasing the land direct there was no residence requirement. Thus, the Homestead Act attracted thousands to the West.

### **TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD TERMINUS**

Also influencing development in Tacoma was legislation signed by President Abraham Lincoln on July 2, 1864, which offered up to 40 million acres of public land as reward for completion of a railroad between the Great Lakes and Puget Sound. Like previous laws,

this one allowed public land to be purchased for \$1.25 per acre. These land claims were for 320 acres to individual male settlers or 640 acres to married couples. Speculators were eager to stake claims and develop their homestead because word was out that a railroad was coming.

Job Carr, a Civil War veteran, was one such speculator. He arrived in Commencement Bay in November 1864, and filed a claim on the southern shore of Commencement Bay where it flows into Puget Sound. In 1865 his sons, Anthony and Howard, helped him build a cabin in present day Old Town. Carr had learned the Northern Pacific Railroad would be building a line to Puget Sound that would bring growth to the area, and he hoped his claim would be the terminus of the railroad.

Carr built his cabin and settled in to wait for the railroad. However, it was M. M. McCarver, a Portland, Oregon promoter that got real estate development started in Tacoma. McCarver promoted his new "Tacoma City" to the railroad, and sold lots that brought in residents.

During this time, speculators were still unsure of the location for the "end" of the railroad and had to wait until 1873 to learn that Tacoma was selected as the terminus of the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railroad. Unfortunately for Carr and McCarver, the railroad stopped two miles short of McCarver's "Tacoma City." Instead the railroad started its own city, called "New Tacoma". This left McCarver and his supporters high and dry. The Railroad selected the New Tacoma site because a group of investors had accumulated a large amount of property, including a long stretch of waterfront, just south of the fledgling Tacoma City, and the Railroad took the offered deal.

## **LAND SPECULATION**

Once the ending site was chosen, the Northern Pacific Railroad engaged in an aggressive campaign to attract investors and working families from the East and Mid-west. The Tacoma Land Company, headquartered in the Northern Pacific Railroad Building, posted advertisements for lots. Land speculators, as well as every type of businessman and entrepreneur, began to move into the growing railroad town strung along Commencement Bay where the rails ended. Wharves and mills quickly proliferated.

As a result, Tacoma rapidly developed as an important point of shipment for the Pacific Northwest's vast untapped timber resources; the many agricultural products of the interior followed in coming years. Lumber and grain flowed to destinations along the West Coast, as well as the Orient and South Pacific. The city's importance expanded exponentially when the railroad tracks were finally completed to St. Paul, Minnesota in 1887, connecting Tacoma with all points East.

Tacoma City became known as Old Town, and that area became a working class neighborhood occupied by fishermen, longshoremen and mill workers who patronized the many saloons found there. Then, in 1886 when Tacoma submitted its territorial charter, the two cities joined together and became "Tacoma".

The Pacific Northwest's untapped natural resources were a draw that caused the population of Tacoma to grow rapidly. The waterfront tracks, warehouses and docks were part of an infrastructure that connected shipments of grain, lumber and manufactured goods to stations and ports up and down the West Coast. The fact that Tacoma's port was sheltered from all except north winds played a major factor in the selection of Tacoma as the western terminus of the railroad and as a shipping port.

## **STREETCAR SUBURBS**

While all of this was occurring, the Buckley's Addition Historic District maintained a clear physical proximity to the business and commercial core of Tacoma, accessible via the streetcar lines on North I St. and on North K St. The K St. Line ran along North K St. and North 11<sup>th</sup> and then crossed North Steele into Buckley's Addition at North 12<sup>th</sup> St. The neighborhood was accessible and attractive to both middle and upper class citizens. The people who built Tacoma lived here because of the easy access to motor transportation to downtown jobs.

A century ago Tacoma, like many American cities, had an extensive streetcar system. The first two lines in Tacoma were constructed in 1888 along the lengths of Pacific Avenue and Tacoma Avenue. A pair of horses pulled each of the yellow streetcars. The lines were a success from the start, carrying many passengers, and were very soon thereafter extended. From these few lines others sprang up, each emanating from Downtown Tacoma into the surrounding areas, allowing for houses and business areas to develop.

Buckley's Addition Historic District was a "streetcar suburb" of Tacoma and popular with residents, as they could easily get from home to jobs downtown, or the factories on the Tide Flats. There were three streetcar lines serving the district, one on 6<sup>th</sup> Ave a few blocks south of the District; a second streetcar line served the people to the north as it ran along North I St./North 21<sup>st</sup>.

The third streetcar line, the K Street Line, ran through the North Slope Historic District on N K St, turned to the South on N 11,<sup>th</sup> and on to the 5-way corner where N Steele, N Cushman, N 11<sup>th</sup> and N 12th all come together. From there the streetcar went west on N 12<sup>th</sup> through the middle of the Buckley's Addition to N Pine St. There is visual evidence remaining today of the K Street streetcar line.

## **ZONING**

As more and more families came to settle in Tacoma, city officials wanted to ensure that residential areas remained residential. By 1895, Tacomans had begun to develop accepted areas where certain uses, specifically saloons, would be allowed. Local property owners could also reject the location of other business within residential parts of Tacoma. By 1918, Tacoma had a zoning code, dividing the city into residential and industrial areas. A planning commission came two years later.

In 1955 the City of Tacoma changed the zoning laws, encouraging apartment houses to be built in its oldest neighborhoods. However, since by 1941 Buckley's Addition Historic District was mostly built-out, only single-family-size lots were left; Tacoma's new zoning laws kept Buckley's single-family neighborhood pattern intact by not allowing building of multi-units, except on the edge of the commercial street, N 21<sup>st</sup>. As a result, very few old houses were demolished to build new apartments in the District, and new construction consisted primarily of single-family homes.

## **WAVES OF BUILDING DEVELOPMENT**

By 1902 the second building boom started, lasting until 1915. During this era, Tacoma's housing returned to a more classically inspired formal design. Dwellings consisted of a variety of classic and regional American Foursquare designs and Craftsman style dwellings. The second boom came to an end with the onset of WWI. I.

The third "building boom," from 1919 to 1929, greatly influenced building in the District. During this time, the Craftsman style gained in popularity, slowly replacing other building styles.

Ancillary structures are another category of building found throughout the District. Almost all of the detached garages are located off the alleys. Most are gable-roofed and wood-framed. Usually they are clad with horizontal clapboard or drop siding. Many new garages have been built in the District, as the older garages were not big enough for the longer cars of today, and were replaced with garages with roll-up doors and clad in T-1-11 plywood.

A very small commercial element has always had a presence on the northern edge of the District, along North 21<sup>st</sup>. Today there are 6 buildings with commercial use.

## **THE BRIDGES OVER BUCKLEY GULCH**

By 1888, it was clear to the Tacoma land speculator Allen C. Mason, that a bridge was needed over Buckley and Garfield Gulches to open up his large land holdings west of the new City's downtown area to new buyers. Roads were being graded and improved, but the gulch was an obstacle to development west of it, and the City was too slow to suit Mason. Buckley Gulch didn't help development in Buckley's Addition either, which was just getting started. But, there were routes into Buckley's Addition from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, to the south, and from the east along the trolley line from N K St and along N 12<sup>th</sup>.

So, Allen Mason decided to build two bridges himself, over Buckley and Garfield gulches, and give them to the City. He figured to recoup the cost as his lands west of the bridge sold. And, he was right – his lots sold quickly. So did the lots in the north end of Buckley's Addition and along N 21<sup>st</sup>; the Bates Store was built in 1904, just across the bridge. When the trolley tracks were laid and the cars running on N I St and N 21st St, Buckley's Addition lots had easy access to routes south to downtown and west and north the new Point Defiance Park, just recently donated to the City by the military in 1888.

The gulch presented problems for some lots in Buckley's Addition, and to solve one trouble spot, on N Oakes St, where a finger of the gulch was too deep for easy fill, a wooden bridge was built at N 19th. The bridge lasted well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century before the gulch was filled and paved. The deep finger of the gulch still wanders southwest before dead-ending at N 17th and Junette. Even today the steep drop-off on the west side is marked by a white wooden railing where N 19th would be.

## **NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS TODAY**

The District developed over a 50-year period, and it is common to find structures built as early as 1900 standing beside structures built 20, 30 and 50 years later. According to various Tacoma street maps, structures were built sporadically throughout the area rather than showing a concentration of building in one area at any one stage of growth.

Fifty percent of the houses were built by 1910; it took an additional 19 years for another 25% percent of the homes to be added. By 1941, only 8% of building lots were left for development. Such a development pattern has resulted in the varied architectural style and types found on any block.

Setbacks are various and usually deep enough to give most dwellings separation from the street. Side setbacks were not mandated by the city and some houses are built almost lot-line to lot-line; but in some cases 40 feet may separate each house.

The streets of the District are narrow, mostly tree-lined, and often change in width as one progresses down the street. Sidewalks are a mixture of old and new. Many of the sidewalks were built by the WPA in the 1930s, and are crosshatched on 5 and 6-ft. widths. Driveways off the streets are infrequent and most garages are accessed from the alleys.

The Buckley's Addition Historic District contains housing stock that dates from 1890 to the present. About 92% of the homes were built before 1941. Within the district you will find a variety of styles including the Queen Anne, the American Foursquare, the Craftsman, Colonial and Tudor styles.

The variety of architectural styles is a reflection of the District's development and growth pattern. The average number of homes being built spiked at three different times. The first "building boom," occurring between 1888 and 1893, and was composed of simple vernacular structures.

### **ARCHITECTS OF BUCKLEY'S ADDITION**

The Buckley's Addition Historic District has many dwellings, which represent the work of local craftsmen and architects. This collection, as a whole, represents significant characteristics and trends of architectural styles popular during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The following is a description and list of some of the more prevalent architects and builders in Tacoma whose work can be found within the Buckley's Addition Historic District.

Individuals acting as combined architect and builder led design and building in the early years of Buckley's development. Bringing varying degrees of experience to the job, these individuals, many whose names are unrecorded, were the first to develop the residential neighborhood. As pioneers of residential development in Tacoma, their work was soon augmented by schooled professionals who moved into to the area after learning about the pending building boom.

The district has a number of structures designed by notable local architects: George W. Bullard, Larkin & Barton, C. A. Darmer, Tuttle & Woodruffe, Ambrose Russell, Oliver Perry Dennis, Proctor & Ferrell, and Frederick Heath.

The styles of the buildings in Buckley's Addition represent what was most popular in American home styles at that time of construction. Most are not high styles, just good solid examples of what worked within the tastes and budgets of their owners. Prevalent styles show excellent representations of Queen Anne, stick styles, classic American foursquare, and the Craftsman styles.

The following is a list of some of the more notable architects who worked within the Buckley's Addition Historic District and homes they built.



**Allison, C H., Architect**

Allison built homes at *1409 N Fife, 1411 N Fife, 1415 N Fife.*

**Bullard, George W., Architect**

BULLARD & HAYWORTH / BULLARD & HILL

Bullard was born in Illinois and was a graduate of the University of Illinois. He came to Tacoma in 1890 and opened the firm of Bullard & Hayworth. Some time later Bullard formed a new partnership with I. H. Hill. The firm is best known for their design of the YMCA Building, the First Congregational Church, the First Christian Church, the State Historical Society Building, and Epworth Methodist Church.

G. W. Bullard is credited with *2420 N 21<sup>st</sup> and 1926 N Anderson.*

**Darmer, C A, Architect**

C. A. Darmer learned about American building techniques before taking a position with Warren Williams in Portland, Oregon. He followed the lead of many young architects and builders and relocated to Tacoma in 1884. Darmer worked for W. Ferrell for a time, and became a partner. Together they designed residences, but also entire business blocks, schools, churches, and hotels in and around Tacoma. Seven years later he organized another partnership with Otis Cutting and by 1914 was independent.

Darmer and Cutting were the architects for *1429 N Prospect; W. S. Pine was the builder.*

**Dennis, O. P., Architect**

Mr. Dennis designed homes in Tacoma, including two in Buckley's Addition. The builder he worked with was

J. C. Brockenbrough, Jr.

Homes built in Buckley's Addition were *2602 N 15<sup>th</sup> and 2608 N 15<sup>th</sup>.*

**Heath, Frederick, Architect**

HEATH & SPAULDING / SPAULDING, RUSSELL & HEATH / HEATH, GOVE & BELL, 1911-

Born in La Crosse, Wisconsin F. H. Heath received his architectural training primarily through the firm of Warren H. Hayes in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Heath arrived in Tacoma in 1893, and in 1901 established business as an architect. Heath was, for a time, the architect for the Tacoma School Board and responsible for the conversion of the old Tacoma Land Hotel into Stadium High School. Heath, or the firm, with which he was partnered, was responsible for schools, office and public buildings, hospitals, churches, and homes.

This includes *1524 N Prospect, 1908 N Prospect and 1909 N Prospect.*

**Proctor & Ferrell, Architects**

John C. Proctor was considered an "aggressive pioneer" in the architectural field in the west; he served for a period as Washington State Architect. He is credited as the

designer of the Washington Exposition Building, 1890, Western State Hospital, and the Washington State Capitol Building. In 1891 he formed a partnership with W. Ferrell.

William Ferrell's architectural training was similar to that of many "frontier" architect-builders. The firm of Proctor & Ferrell was responsible for a number of residences and commercial structures in Tacoma. The majority of these buildings are no longer standing, such as the Pierce County Courthouse on South G Street. The firm was responsible for *1718 N Fife, 1722 N Fife, and 1719 N Prospect.*

#### **Hill, Frank, Architect**

Frank Hill was involved in the real estate profession in Tacoma from 1889 until his death in 1957. Mr. Hill was active in Tacoma as an architect as well, designing and building homes with his brother, Edward C Hill.

The homes include *1731 N Prospect, and 1525 N Prospect.*

#### **Knapp, I. J., Architect**

*1125 N 11<sup>th</sup>, 1102 N Oakes, 1118 N Oakes, and 2709 N 11, 1912 N Steele*

#### **Larkin, John P., Architect**

John P. Larkin designed *1208 N Steele and 828 N Steele with James Loyhahan, builder.*

#### **Tuttle Bros., Architects**

Rollin S. Tuttle was an architect who for a time with his brother, Paul, who was a **builder.**

They designed and built homes at *1122 N Steele and 1724 N Steele.*

#### **Tuttle-Woodroffe, Architect**

Rollin S. Tuttle was trained as an architect and initially worked with his brother, Paul Tuttle, who was a builder. Together they were responsible for designing and building several homes in Tacoma. After what had appeared to be an enthusiastic trip to Southern California in 1906, Rollin joined forces with another architect, Arnott Woodroffe. Arnott Woodroffe was a former head draftsman for the firm Russell & Babcock. He once stated that he received the most satisfaction from the design of homes in the Bungalow Style.

In 1907 Woodroffe purchased the firm, and by 1908 Rollin had disappeared from the scene.

Tuttle-Woodroffe was responsible for *1501 N Anderson, 1912 N Anderson, 1528 N Prospect, and 1702 N Prospect.*

#### **Woodroffe & Constable, Architects**

A. Woodroffe trained and worked for the architectural firm Russell & Babcock. After his partnership with Rollin Tuttle, he formed a firm with Constable and the firm was busy building homes in Buckley's Addition.

These homes include: *1402 N Anderson, 1414 N Anderson, 1002 N Anderson, 807 N Pine, 1517 N Prospect, 1732 N Prospect, and 1105 N Prospect.*

## **BUILDERS OF BUCKLEY'S ADDITION**

The following is a list of some of the more notable builders who worked within the Buckley's Addition Historic District, and homes they built.

### **Duff, R.D., Builder**

The partnerships with others and as an individual, R.D. Duff created many dwellings within the district: 1511N Anderson, 1715 N Anderson, 1703 N Fife, 1211 N Oakes, 1722 N Oakes, 1230 N Fife, and 1508 N Steele

### **Edward Cook Hill, Builder**

Mr. Hill moved from Cincinnati, Ohio to Tacoma with his wife in 1889. Born in Cincinnati in 1861, Mr. Hill entered the contracting business in Florida, and returned to Ohio prior to moving to Tacoma. In addition to being a prolific house builder between 1901 and 1905, Mr. Hill was also reputedly involved in the construction of several Tacoma Schools. In 1903, Edward Hill took ownership of the South Tacoma Mill Company, and in partnership with J.R. Addison, reorganized the company as **Addison-Hill Lumber** Company in 1911. Edward Hill's brother, Frank Hill, was also an active developer and designer of homes in Tacoma. Edward Hill died in 1951.

### **Corner, W H., Builder**

1921 N Fife, 1927 N Fife, and 1931 N Fife

### **Dillon, A. L., Builder**

1121 N Anderson, 1122 N Anderson, 1123 N Anderson and 1127 N Anderson

### **Seymour, W. W, Builder**

Seymour worked with architect I. J. Knapp to build four homes in Buckley's Addition: 1125 N 11<sup>th</sup>, 1102 N Oakes, 1118 N Oakes, and 2709 N 11, 1912 N Steele