

38N 2E 24, 25

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

DT 20

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Eldridge Avenue Historic District

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Washington

VICINITY OF

2nd - Lloyd Meeds

CODE

53

COUNTY

Whatcom

CODE

073

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☒ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☐ MUSEUM☒ PARK☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Multiple

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Whatcom County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

311 Grand Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

STATE

Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Whatcom County Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

Ongoing

☐ FEDERAL ☒ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Whatcom County Park &amp; Recreation Board

CITY, TOWN

Bellingham

STATE

Washington

## 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 Eldridge Avenue Historical District is a gracious residential area situated on a bluff overlooking Bellingham Bay. Character is imparted mainly by the impressive concentration of substantial 1885-1910 houses--many of which have been noted in print--and by the quiet suburban street vistas canopied with mature hardwoods and firs. Also, in the district are an Episcopal church campus with the original 1884 frame church used as a parish hall, a 13,000 sq. ft. playground, an unoccupied neighborhood grocery and a charming two-square-block park.

At the turn-of-the-century a visitor would have found a growing, healthy neighborhood studded with the larger homes situated on several building lots apiece. He would see several small groceries, a developing park and constant building of both larger and more modest houses--the larger attracting attention and procuring status for the builder who, by building a large house in the neighborhoods had thereby announced his financial (and usually social) arrival. The district was so desirable, in fact, that building did not appear to slow down even during the Depression of 1893.

The district was platted in 1881 and 1884 on land originally claimed under the Oregon Land Bill (Donation Claim Law), 1850-1860, by Edward Eldridge (western portion of the district) and Henry Roeder (eastern portion). The two claims included about 130 acres included in the existing district. Approximately 50 city blocks of 200 x 400 feet are within the district and it has about 900 structures including garages and outbuildings. Although the 80 foot wide arterial, Eldridge Avenue parallels the southeast-to-northwest orientation of the bluff, the flat plateau of 60 foot wide cross streets skew off and run directly north-south with right angle cross streets. The north-south streets were named for the most part for Roeder family members and the east-west streets were named for presidents.

Density is essentially "established suburban" and the district has an expansive uncrowded feel. Lots are roughly 50 x 100 ft. and houses are built on from one to three lots each, usually quite forward leaving large backyards serviced by 16 ft. wide alleys.

Architectural styles in the district range from the more common Stick, Queen Anne, Eastlake, Bungalow (Mission), and Shingle to two monumental examples of Neo-Classical Revival. (See appended list for individual descriptions.) Many houses, too, contain elements from several styles: Queen Anne bays and turrets on Stick construction, Eastlake brackets on Shingle roofs, Mansard roofs and Oreil windows on Eastlake.

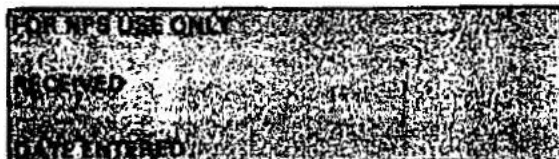
With the exception of an unique brick Queen Anne (the Bolster house), the entire district is constructed of the plentiful Northwest timber and is a tour de force of carpenter skills. Much unique mill and structural work is evident and the use of shingle products is ubiquitous.

A sign of status in the neighborhoods was to import finished pieces--mantels, hardwood flooring, doors, stairwells, pediments and the like--around the Horn from back East and Europe. Most of these pieces are still intact within the original houses.

Also, of note is the repeated use of art glass in differing forms: stained, etched, leaded or beveled in windows, doors and lighting pieces throughout the neighborhood. Adding to the district's air of stability is the recurring use of Cuckanut sandstone

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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



CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

whenever stone work was required. Foundations, chimneys, stanchions and retaining walls throughout the district are of this rough-faced gray stone which was cut from the Roeder-Roth Quarry of Chuckanut Drive south of Bellingham. This quarry, worked between 1856-1916, was used extensively in Romanesque buildings and supplied stone for at least two National Register buildings, the Portland, Oregon Customs House and Whatcom Museum of History & Art. The quarry was important throughout Puget Sound area because of its accessible waterfront location and the Northwest Coast shortage of non wood building material before the advent of iron and structural concrete building techniques (Ca. 1913).

Trees and green space play an important part in the neighborhood. No doubt influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, Henry Roeder donated two square blocks for a park that was beautifully landscaped in 1906 and named for Roeder's wife, Elizabeth. Although the pond fountain, band stand, well-maintained annual beds and ornamental metal work are no longer extant, visitors are struck by the variety of carefully chosen contrasting deciduous and evergreen trees and by the delightful use of open and covered landscaping space.

The streets themselves are recurringly lined with hardwoods--elm, chestnut, maples and oak--and along with its lesser plantings, Lobe Memorial Playground has a magnificent aging maple. Two trees in the neighborhood deserve note: the mature copper beech at the Pettibone house (1711 Eldridge) grown from a slip said to have been brought from England and the large elm tree at the Mason house (1621 Eldridge) taken from the Washington Elm in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bellingham Herald, n.d. (1976, "Bicentennial Note").

Also, serving to differentiate the district is, of course, the bluff on the south with its magnificent views of Bellingham Bay and the San Juan Islands and Squalicum Creek on the west with its imposing ravine.

Because the district accommodates many modest and/or recent structures, a classification system was used in appended list and coded to the maps of Part B. The classes are:

Pivotal - structures of key architectural or historical importance.

Primary - structures dating from the period of significance but of less architectural interest.

Secondary - structures contributing to the neighborhood; unaltered or minimally altered, typical vernacular.

Recent Compatible/Altered Historic - primary or secondary quality sites built before 1910 with physical alteration or unobtrusive recent structures which do not detract from the district and are compatible in scale, materials, massing and siting.

Intrusive - modern structures and commercial buildings that weaken the historic architectural character of the district.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

The following selected sites are sketched here to illustrate variety rather than give an idea of the concentration of sites in the district. Although they are all pivotal sites, this list does not include all the pivotal structures in the district. For the most part the biographical information deals only with the person whose name has remained with the house in the historical sense.

Austin House 1504 Washington Street

This large two story neo-classical home was built before 1890 on ground purchased by the Austin Family about 1884. Today this white house overlooking Elizabeth Park is being restored, so its character is temporarily incomplete. But it stands out in the district as the only example of a very distinguished regional style that is unusual in the Northwest.

Bierney House 1710 Eldridge Avenue

Dr. Homer Bierney built this large bungalow style home in 1903. Besides a physician, Dr. Bierney was on the school board and was well respected throughout his career.

Bolster House 2820 Eldridge Avenue

Tradition has it that Mr. Bolster, who had an interest in a local brickyard, built this house as a showplace to advertise the practicality of brick as a building material since it would allow the most elegant of style and be fire proof as well. James E. Bolster built the two and one half story Queen Anne house in 1890. The now painted red brick used to construct the house can be seen in the two chimneys.

Canfield House 2215 Williams Street

This Queen Anne style two and one half story dwelling was built by Channcey Canfield, the owner of a large implement store in 1892. Canfield also built the triangle building in downtown Bellingham. This house still stands on nearly the same size lot as it did when it was built. It gives one a good idea of what the area was like before grounds became subdivisions.

Charles Cissna House 1810 Eldridge Avenue

When this spacious Bungalow style home was completed in 1908 at a cost of \$10,000 the Bellingham Herald ran a 6"x9" photo and a story describing the wall murals and rooms. It was the height of fashion and Charles Cissna, a Bellingham capitalist, proved that the Eldridge Avenue Area was still the most desirable residential district in the City after more than thirty years with that distinction.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

4

Ray Cissna House 2010 Eldridge Avenue

T. F. Doan was the architect for several of the fine homes built in the Eldridge Avenue Area. This one he built in 1908 for Ray Cissna, the son of Charles Cissna.

Eckhardt House 2300 Utter Street

This Queen Anne Style home was completed before 1900 by W. A. Eckhardt, a book-keeper. It reflects many handmade touches with its turret porch, ornamental latticework dormer, round windows and scrolled brackets. This house has been on the Eldridge Historical Society's House Tour and is being restored inside to the point of taking out all formica and aluminum in the kitchen and bathrooms.

Hamilton House 1905 Eldridge Avenue

T. S. Hamilton came to Bellingham Bay in 1889 and began selling furniture. He built this bungalow style home in 1904. His B & B Furniture building still stands and operates with that name in downtown Bellingham.

Handschy House 2331 Elm Street

F. F. Handschy built this two and one half story shingle style residence in 1904. He and his neighbor, Victor Roeder, founded the Bellingham National Bank. Across Monroe Street from his house on Elm stood the Roth Mansion which was probably the most impressive private residence ever built in the district. Handschy served as Whatcom County Treasurer at the turn of the century. His house has been carefully worked on in recent years, and within the owner's means it is nearly restored.

Keyes House 2230 Henry Street

The final touches were added to this house in 1893. They included scalloped shingle work under the arch-bracketed eaves and tall bay windows on the ground floor. The victorian structure was first lived in by New Whatcom City Treasurer Philip M. Isensee, but fell into the hands of Dr. William Keyes in 1904. It was used as a combination clinic and residence for many years and then was neglected by later owners. The restoration work that has been done has been recent.

Loggie House 2203 Utter Street

Though not built by Lumberman George Loggie, his family name has been associated with this house for over three quarters of a century. His daughter, Helen Loggie, achieved acclaim for the fine etchings and prints she produced while living in this unusual house. The building needs paint and other cosmetic improvements, but it remains one of the most interesting homes in the district, with its mishmash of styles, (eastlake, second empire, Queen Anne) its overgrown appearance, and its rugged elegance. The interior of the house was almost unchanged when Helen Loggie died in 1976 and it was opened to visitors outside the family.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 5

Mason House 1621 Eldridge Avenue

Joseph R. Mason, the builder of this two story Queen Anne home, was director of the Bellingham National Bank and an investor in the City's downtown area. The house was finished in 1897 and the design makes full use of the view to the rear. As in many of the homes in the district, the Mason house has some fine stained glass windows.

Neterer House 1700 Eldridge Avenue

This two story Bungaloid Style home was constructed in 1904 by Judge Jeremiah Neterer. After serving as City Attorney during the early 1890's, Judge Neterer sat on the Superior Court and was U.S. District Judge in Bellingham. This large house of modest style is typical of a day when large families determined size.

Pettibone House 1711 Eldridge Avenue

Of the several homes in the district dating from the 1880's, this house continues to add to the area without being significantly changed or remodeled. It was built in 1887 by A. W. Pettibone not long after his arrival here to take up part of the Pioneer Peabody Estate. Pettibone engaged in business and real estate for the remainder of his life.

Schramm House 2601 West Street

Perhaps more than any other house in the district, the Schramm house illustrates the many influences on Northwest Architecture. Bernard Schramm was a builder by trade. He combined Russian American influence with classical lines. One has to wonder if Schramm ever visited Alaska during the Pre Klondike Era when Russian architecture abounded. The house was finished in 1895. The cupola and roof have recently been re-shingled.

Shields House 2215 Utter Street

A lumberman, Robert Shields, built this home in 1902. The house is trimmed inside and out with delicate woodwork demonstrating its owner's craft and livelihood.

Siemons House 2617 Eldridge Avenue

Siemon Hike Siemons and his family built three shingle and lumber mills on or near Squalicum Creek (Northwest District Boundary). He and his six sons worked and lived in the Eldridge Avenue Area producing the materials to build many of the homes. In 1903 they built their own home overlooking their mill on Eldridge. It is not working class and it is not leisure class, instead it is a family dwelling constructed by a family of lumbermen. The style is classic box.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 6

Smith House 2319 Utter Street

This two story Colonial home was built by Dr. Jacob Smith in 1904. It is designed along classical lines and adds to the diversity of the district.

Thomas House 2727 Eldridge Avenue

Like many of the homes built on the bluff overlooking Bellingham Bay, the John L. Thomas home is of the Queen Anne style with very little decoration. It has shiplap siding that is original from 1890. On the back side there are bay windows upstairs and down to allow for the view.

Van Zandt 1717 Eldridge Avenue

Dr. Euclid Van Zandt came to Bellingham Bay with the Historic Washington Colony in 1881. By 1890 the doctor had become county health officer as well as keeping up a practice as a surgeon. In 1902 he had this shingle style two story home built for his family. The house shows no signs of ever having been neglected.

West House 2737 Eldridge Avenue

Another house designed by T. F. Doan; this residence was built for Dr. Francis B. West in 1905. When Dr. West moved his practice to Mt. Vernon, his daughter and her husband, an attorney, acquired it. The house has been well kept without major changes and is deceptively young looking even today.

*Remains* Although the historic feeling or character of the Eldridge District is mainly imparted by the larger more elaborate homes built before 1909 there are an equal number of carefully built smaller structures which carry out the neighborhood's established ambiance. The majority of these structures, referred to here as Recent Compatible/Altered Historic, were built prior to 1925 and are in a comparatively modest Bungalow, Stick, or simple wood frame style. The remaining minority of homes in this classification were constructed in the years before the second world war. The buildings in the Recent Compatible/Altered Historic class differ from the older homes in that most are built on single lots where the larger older houses were usually sited straddling two or more.

The intrusive structures have all been built since 1945 but their number is remarkably low.

The year 1909 was chosen as a watershed date in the classification system for the Eldridge District because it marks a distinct change in the architectural nature of the area. It also marks the approximate end of the district's historic high point of important personalities residing exclusively in the area. With the city's growth after 1909 several other areas in Bellingham became choice neighborhoods in which to build. The "Golden Age" of massive carefully crafted mansions

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 7

*Revised* in Bellingham was also coming to an end with the proliferation of speciality lumber mills which standardized building materials and consequently construction techniques. The fifty years of age criteria usually applied to National Historic Sites would find that only about ten percent of the structures in the Eldridge District would be excluded from eligibility, and among those only a few seriously violate the area's character. Informationally, we determined that the 1909 date revealed much more about the district than a constantly changing one since it is based on the area's own unique past. But the fifty year cut off date does illustrate a historic consistency within the district that is comparable with Historic Districts throughout the country and remarkable for the Pacific Northwest.



## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input checked="" 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 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Without exception the early pioneer-promoters of North Bellingham chose to build their "career's best" houses in the Eldridge District. These houses stand today as elegant object lessons in Victorian attitudes towards architecture, community boosterism, beautification and style. Men whose names grace local streets, schools, parks and, in the county, a boom town all built their largest houses here using the latest styles and finest finished pieces to come in from Europe, the East and California.

The economy and population growth of Bellingham Bay itself ambled along fitfully from its founding as a sawmill site in 1853 until 1881 when the co-called "Washington Colony" was founded. This organization was a typical Western improvement society, formed by the leading men in the area for the purpose of community boosterism and economic improvement. Papers for this exclusive arrangement were drawn up by Judge Neterer who later built at 1700 Eldridge Avenue. Included in the roster were Edward Eldridge, Henry Roeder, C. J. Pettibone (representing heirs of R. V. Peabody, co-founder of the 1853 Whatcom Creek sawmill), William Utter, Euclid Van Zandt, T. C. Austin and John H. Stenger. Besides pooling resources to rebuild the 1853 mill and starting to advertise in the prairie states, the men also decided that Bellingham needed a showplace residential district and very shortly after Henry Roeder and Edward Eldridge each platted and started selling portions of the free land they had acquired under the Oregon Land Bill of 1850-1855.

Boundaries of the new residential district were easily definable by geography; on the southwest the impressive bluff overlooked the beach and bay. The area below the bluff later became the neighborhood bathing beach. On the west end the wide wooded Squalicum Creek ravine dramatically cut off the district. S. H. Siemons (2617 Eldridge) is the name most associated with Squalicum Creek; he had a shingle mill here and later ran a successful lumber business with his six sons.

The northern boundary of the district is the least distinct. Although it is generally drawn at North Street, several "Pivotal" and "Primary" residences are beyond North Street. The east and southeast boundary of the district are Broadway and Elm Streets. At Broadway the plateau slopes down into the commercial district of town and growth east of Elm Street is also commercial.

Within twenty years of the founding of the Washington Colony all of the founders, along with many newcomers, had impressive houses within the district and, almost in strict accordance with net worth, each house befitted its owner. The bounty of Victorian architectural styles filtering in from back East was translated into fir and shingle vernacular. The neighborhood has an unusually large representative sample of Victorian styles and is an extravagant display of the differing way wood can be shaped. Roofs are highgabled, cross-gabled, mansard or domed. Eaves have projected rafters, boxed cornices,

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE



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

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

and every variation in between. Windows, especially those on the top floors are oval, round, square and every shape describable. But despite all this variety the neighborhood remains a cohesive whole because of its tree-lined streets, recurring use of the same materials and overall sameness of proportion and scale.

Although the district deserves note primarily for its impressive architecture and local historical reasons, two houses in the neighborhood deserve recognition for nationally important reasons: the George Bacon House (2001 Eldridge) and the Helen Loggie House (2203 Utter). The Bacon House, now home of the Bacon Home for Boys, was designed by nationally famous neo-classical architect Robert Bacon. He is the cousin of George Bacon and the architect of the Lincoln Memorial. The Loggie House was the lifelong home of nationally known artist Helen Loggie and would be individually eligible for Register status.

Social life in the 1885-1910 years paralleled economic life closely. Men who financed buildings downtown or banks or mines in Whatcom County all lived and entertained together in their Eldridge Area homes. Contemporary newspapers give rich accounts of these proceedings between the congressmen, bankers, mayors and businessmen of the county, and although the social life was a bit exclusive, there was no exclusiveness whatsoever in limits to house size or social class within the district. Side lots of the mansions were freely sold off to less prosperous newcomers from the Midwest, who were welcomed for the population growth and prosperity they represented.

Even with its smaller structures and less prosperous citizens, the neighborhood remained the most desirable place to live in Bellingham well into the 1920's. The district was eclipsed somewhat from the period 1930-1960 when the railroad switch yard below the bluff gave the neighborhood the reputation of being loud due to the noise of the new diesel locomotives. The demand for quality in-city housing reversed the downward trend in the late 1960's, however, and restoration work has been ongoing for approximately ten years.

The historical consciousness of the neighborhood is advanced and researched by the Eldridge Historical Society, many members of which are life-long residents. An active and knowledgeable Eldridge Avenue Residents Association concerns itself with upgrading the neighborhood through local political action. Since the bicentennial year, the residents have conducted a successful annual home tour which draws attention and pride to the district.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

8

PAGE

3

*Review*

The changes which took place in the Eldridge District over the years and which filled in the once sprawling grounds around the earliest buildings can be best divided on either side of the year 1909. Although the property lines in the district were set in 1884 by the original settler in platting his donation claim most property owners built on more than one lot (50ft. x 100ft or 50ft. x 125ft) before 1909. But once the area's desirability was established an incentive developed for the property owners to sell off single lots being used only as lawns or grounds. The smaller houses built on these single lots reflected a change in taste concerning residential architecture. These newer, more modest buildings continued to utilize the local abundance of lumber and wooden building materials but they no longer emphasized the elaborate hand tooled details so important in the older, larger homes. They did not however conflict aesthetically with their senior counterparts, instead they filled in the neighborhood until by 1925 the street scenes looked much as they do today.

The houses built between 1909 and 1945 (Recent Comparable/Altered Historic) are mostly one story, two or three bedroom single family residences. About two thirds of them are from before 1925 and are either a very simple but solid frame building or a Bungalow style. In some cases Eastlake or Stick style details have been added to the gables or porches of the frame buildings so that they add directly to the neighborhood character but even those which remain much like they were built contribute to the district's uniqueness. Elizabeth Park, in the heart of the district, is the oldest public park in the county. It was created by city father Henry Roeder in 1884 and is named for his wife. It was renovated about 1900 along plans thought to have been drawn up by the Olmstead Brothers Firm which did another park in the city and were under contract at the time. It featured a bandstand, fountain, and waterway system for many years and is being restored by the city parks in conjunction with the district's historic preservation sentiment.

The existing Columbia school was built in 1928 to replace the previous school building which burned. The school yard today, as it has in the past, provides the young people of the area with many memories and the school's students have gone on to achieve in business, government, art, and several other endeavors. Both the present building and it's predecessor are well documented in local writings and histories.

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Roth, Lottie History of Whatcom County. 1926, Superior Publishing Company  
Bellingham Herald Beautiful Home Series 1907  
Interview: Ruth DeMerritt June-July 1978  
Photographic Collection Whatcom County Museum of History & Art  
Archival Materials Center for Pacific Northwest Studies Western Washington University  
Washington State Regional Archives Bellingham Depository  
Polk Bellingham City Directory, 1890, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approximately 150

QUADRANGLE NAME Bellingham North-Ferndale

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

*Ransom*

A 1,0 5,3,7,4,0,0 5,4,0,0,4,2,0

B 1,0 5,3,7,4,0,0 5,4,0,0,4,2,0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 1,0 5,3,6,2,5,0 5,4,0,0,0,0,0

D 1,0 5,3,6,6,2,0 5,4,0,0,1,9,0

E         

F         

G         

H         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Item Number 10, Page 2.

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

Eldridge Avenue Historical Society/Whatcom County Park Preservation Planning Project

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Whatcom County Park & Recreation Board

July 16, 1978

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

3373 Mount Baker Highway

733-2900

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Bellingham,

Washington 98225

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

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

TITLE

DATE 12-25-78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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DATE ENTERED

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

**CONTINUATION SHEET**

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Beginning at the point at which the extension of Broadway Avenue meets the Bellingham neighborhood boundary on Eldridge Bluff and Northwest along that boundary to Squilicum Ravine; thence Northeast up the ravine using the neighborhood boundary to where West Street intersects; thence South along the centerline of West Street approximately one block to the intersection with North Street; thence East along the centerline of North Street to the alley between Walnut and Park Streets; thence South on the alley centerline to the intersection with Jefferson Street; thence East on the centerline of Jefferson Street to the intersection of Elizabeth Street; thence South along the centerline of Elizabeth Street to the intersection of Monroe Street; thence East along the centerline of Monroe Street to the intersection with Elm Street; thence South along the centerline of Elm Street to the neighborhood boundary on Broadway Avenue; then Southwest along the Broadway Avenue neighborhood boundary to the point of beginning.



## ***The Eldridge Historic District***

1eldrid.jpg1eldrid.jpg#981, J. Wilbur Sandison Collection, Whatcom Museum of History and Art, WA

The Eldridge Avenue Historical District is a gracious residential area situated on a bluff overlooking Bellingham Bay. Character is imparted mainly by the impressive concentration of a substantial number of houses built between 1885-1910 and by the quiet suburban street vistas canopied with mature hardwoods and firs. Also in the district is an Episcopal Church campus with the original 1884 frame and a charming two-square-block park.

The district was platted in 1881 and 1884 on land originally claimed under the Oregon Land Bill (Donation Claim Law), 1850-1860; the western portion by Edward Eldridge and the eastern by Henry Roeder. The two claims included about 130 acres that are within the existing Historic District. Approximately 50 city blocks and 900 structures, including garages and outbuildings, are within the district. The streets running north-south were for the most part named for Roeder family members and the east-west streets were named for presidents.

Architectural styles in the district range from the more common Stick, Queen Anne, Eastlake, Bungalow (Mission), and Shingle to two monumental examples of Neo-Classical Revival. Many houses contain elements from several styles: Queen Anne bays and turrets on Stick construction, Eastlake brackets on Shingle roofs, Mansard roofs and Oreil windows on Eastlake.

The entire district is constructed of the plentiful Northwest timber, except for the unique brick Victorian Bolster house, and is a tour de force of carpenter skills. Much unique mill and structural work are evident and the use of shingle products is ubiquitous.

A sign of status in the neighborhoods was to import finished pieces--mantels, hardwood flooring, doors, stairwells, pediments and the like--from back East and Europe. Most of these pieces are still intact within the original homes.

4eldrid.jpg4eldrid.jpg#3771, J. Wilbur Sandison Collection, Whatcom Museum of History and Art, WA

Also, of note is the repeated use of art glass in differing forms throughout the neighborhood: stained, etched, leaded or beveled in windows, doors and lighting pieces. Adding to the district's compatibility is the recurring use of Chuckanut sandstone whenever stone work was required. Foundations, chimneys, stanchions and retaining walls throughout the district are of this rough-faced gray stone which was cut from the Roeder-Roth Quarry on Chuckanut Drive south of Bellingham. This quarry, worked between 1856-1916, was used extensively in Romanesque buildings and supplied stone for some National Register buildings, including the Portland, Oregon Customs House and Whatcom Museum of History & Art. The quarry was important because it supplied the Puget Sound area with non-wood material before the advent of iron and structural concrete techniques (Ca. 1913).

Trees and green space play an important part in the neighborhood. No doubt influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, Henry Roeder donated two square blocks for a park that was beautifully landscaped in 1906 and named for Roeder's wife, Elizabeth. Although the pond fountain, bandstand, well-maintained annual beds and ornamental

metal work are no longer extant, visitors are struck by the variety of carefully chosen contrasting deciduous and evergreen trees and by the delightful use of open and covered landscaping space.

Two trees in the neighborhood deserve note: the mature copper beech at the Pettibone house (1711 Eldridge) grown from a slip said to have been brought from England and the large elm tree at the Mason house (1621 Eldridge) taken from the Washington Elm in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bellingham Herald, n.d. (1976, "Bicentennial Note").

Also, serving to differentiate the district from the rest of Bellingham is, of course, the bluff on the south with its magnificent views of Bellingham Bay and the San Juan Islands and Squalicum Creek, with its imposing ravine, on the west.

The following selected sites illustrate a variety of styles and give an idea of the concentration of historic sites in the district.

#### **Austin House 1504 Washington Street**

This large two story Neo-Classical home was built before 1890 on ground purchased by the Austin Family about 1884, and recently restored. It stands out in the district as the only example of a very distinguished regional style that is unusual in the Northwest.

#### **Bolster House 2820 Eldridge Avenue**

[2eldrid.jpg](#)

[2eldrid.jpg](#)

Tradition has it that Mr. Bolster, who had an interest in a local brickyard, built this house as a showplace to advertise the practicality of brick as a building material since it would allow the most elegant of style and be fire proof as well. James E. Bolster built the two and one half story Queen Anne house in 1890. Now painted purple, the red brick used to construct the house can be seen in the two chimneys.

#### **Canfield House 2215 Williams Street**

Channey Canfield, the owner of a large implement store, built this Queen Anne style two and one half story dwelling in 1892. Canfield also built the triangle building in downtown Bellingham. This house still stands on nearly the same size lot as it did when it was built, which gives one a good idea of what the area was like before grounds became subdivisions.

#### **Charles Cissna House 1810 Eldridge Avenue**

When this spacious Bungalow style home was completed in 1908 at a cost of \$10,000 the Bellingham Herald ran a 6"x9" photo and a story describing the wall murals and rooms. It was the height of fashion and Charles Cissna, a Bellingham capitalist, proved that the Eldridge Avenue Area was still the most desirable residential district in the City after more than thirty years with that distinction.

#### **Eckhardt House 2300 Utter Street**

W. A. Eckhardt, a bookkeeper, completed this Queen Anne Style home before 1900. It reflects many handmade touches with its turret porch, ornamental latticework dormer, round windows and scrolled brackets. This house has been on the Eldridge Historical Society's House Tour and recent restoration took out all of the formica and aluminum in the kitchen and bathrooms.

#### **Hamilton House 1905 Eldridge Avenue**

T. S. Hamilton came to Bellingham Bay in 1889 and began selling furniture. He built this bungalow style home in 1904. His B & B furniture building, downtown Bellingham's Flatiron Building, is on the National Historic Register.

#### **Handschy House 2331 Elm Street**

F. F. Handschy built this two and one half story shingle style residence in 1904. He and his neighbor, Victor Roeder, founded the Bellingham National Bank. Across Monroe Street from his house on Elm stood the Roth Mansion, which was probably the most impressive private residence ever built in the district. Handschy served as Whatcom County Treasurer at the turn of the century. His house has been carefully worked on in recent years.

#### **Keyes House 2230 Henry Street**

The final touches were added to this house in 1893, and restoration work was done recently. They included scalloped shingle work under the arch-bracketed eaves and tall bay windows on the ground floor. The Victorian structure was first lived in by New Whatcom City Treasurer Philip M. Isensee, but fell into the hands of Dr. William Keyes in 1904. It was used as a combination clinic and residence for many years, and then was neglected by later owners.

#### **Loggie House 2203 Utter Street**

Though not built by Lumberman George Loggie, his family name has been associated with this house for over three-quarters of a century. His daughter, Helen Loggie, achieved acclaim for the fine etchings and prints she produced

while living in this unusual house. It remains one of the most interesting homes in the district, with its mishmash of styles (eastlake, second empire, Queen Anne), its overgrown appearance, and its rugged elegance. The interior of the house was almost unchanged when Helen Loggie died in 1976.

#### **Mason House 1621 Eldridge Avenue**

Joseph R. Mason, the builder of this two-story Queen Anne home, was director of the Bellingham National Bank and an investor in the City's downtown area. The house was finished in 1897 and the design makes full use of the rear view. As in many of the district's homes, the Mason house has some fine stained glass windows.

#### **Neterer House 1700 Eldridge Avenue**

Judge Jeremiah Neterer constructed this two-story Bungalow Style home in 1904. After serving as City Attorney during the early 1890's, Judge Neterer sat on the Superior Court and was U.S. District Judge in Bellingham. This large house of modest style is typical of a day when large families determined size.

#### **Pettibone House 1711 Eldridge Avenue**

Of the several homes in the district dating from the 1880's, this house continues to add to the area without being significantly changed or remodeled. A. W. Pettibone built it in 1887 not long after his arrival here to take up part of the Pioneer Peabody Estate. Pettibone engaged in business and real estate for the remainder of his life.

#### **Schramm House 2601 West Street**

Perhaps more than any other house in the district, the Schramm house illustrates the many influences on Northwest Architecture. Bernard Schramm was a builder by trade. He combined Russian American influence with classical lines. One has to wonder if Schramm ever visited Alaska during the Pre-Klondike Era when Russian architecture abounded. The house was finished in 1895; the cupola and roof have been re-shingled.

#### **Siemons House 2617 Eldridge Avenue**

Siemon Hike Siemons and his family built three shingle and lumber mills on or near Squallicum Creek. He and his six sons worked and lived in the Eldridge Avenue Area producing the materials to build many of the homes. In 1903 they built their own home overlooking their mill on Eldridge. It is not working class and it is not leisure class, instead it is a family dwelling constructed by a family of lumbermen in the classic box style.

#### **Van Zandt 1717 Eldridge Avenue**

Dr. Euclid Van Zandt came to Bellingham Bay with the Historic Washington Colony in 1881. By 1890 the doctor had become county health officer as well as keeping up a surgical practice. In 1902 he had this shingle style two-story home built for his family. The house shows no signs of ever having been neglected.

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Although the historic feeling or character of the Eldridge District is mainly imparted by the larger more elaborate homes built before 1909 there are an equal number of carefully built smaller structures which carryout the neighborhood's established ambience. The majority of these structures were built prior to 1925 and are in a comparatively modest bungalow, Stick, or simple wood frame style. The small number of remaining homes were constructed in the years before the Second World War. The buildings of this time differ from the older homes in that most were built on single lots where the larger older houses usually straddled two or more.

The "Golden Age" of massive carefully crafted mansions in Bellingham was also coming to an end with the proliferation of specialty lumber mills, which standardized building materials and consequently construction techniques. The fifty years of age criteria applied to National Historic Sites would exclude only about ten percent of the structures in the Eldridge District.

Once the area's desirability was established property owners had an incentive to sell off single lots being used only as lawns or grounds. The smaller houses built on these single lots reflected a change in taste concerning residential architecture. These newer, more modest buildings continued to utilize the local abundance of lumber and wooden building materials but they no longer emphasized the elaborate hand tooled details so important in the older, larger homes. They did not however conflict aesthetically with their senior counterparts, instead they filled in the neighborhood until by 1925 the scene looked much as it does today.

Elizabeth Park, in the heart of the district, is the oldest public park in the county. It was created by city father Henry Roeder in 1884 and is named for his wife. It was renovated about 1900 along plans drawn by the Olmstead Brothers Firm, which did another park in the city and were under contract at the time. For many years it featured a bandstand, fountain, and waterway system. In conjunction with the district's historic preservation sentiment the city parks department restored it.

The existing Columbia school was built in 1928 to replace the previous school building that burned. The school yard today, as it has in the past, provides the young people of the area with many memories and the schools students have

gone on to achieve in business, government, art, and several other endeavors. Both the present building and its predecessor are well documented in local writings and histories.

3eldrid.jpg

3eldrid.jpg Without exception the early pioneer-promoters of North Bellingham chose to build their "career's best" houses in the Eldridge District. These houses stand today as elegant object lessons in Victorian attitudes towards architecture, community boosterism, beautification and style. Men whose names grace local streets, schools, and parks all built their largest houses here using the latest styles and finest finished pieces to come in from Europe, the East and California.

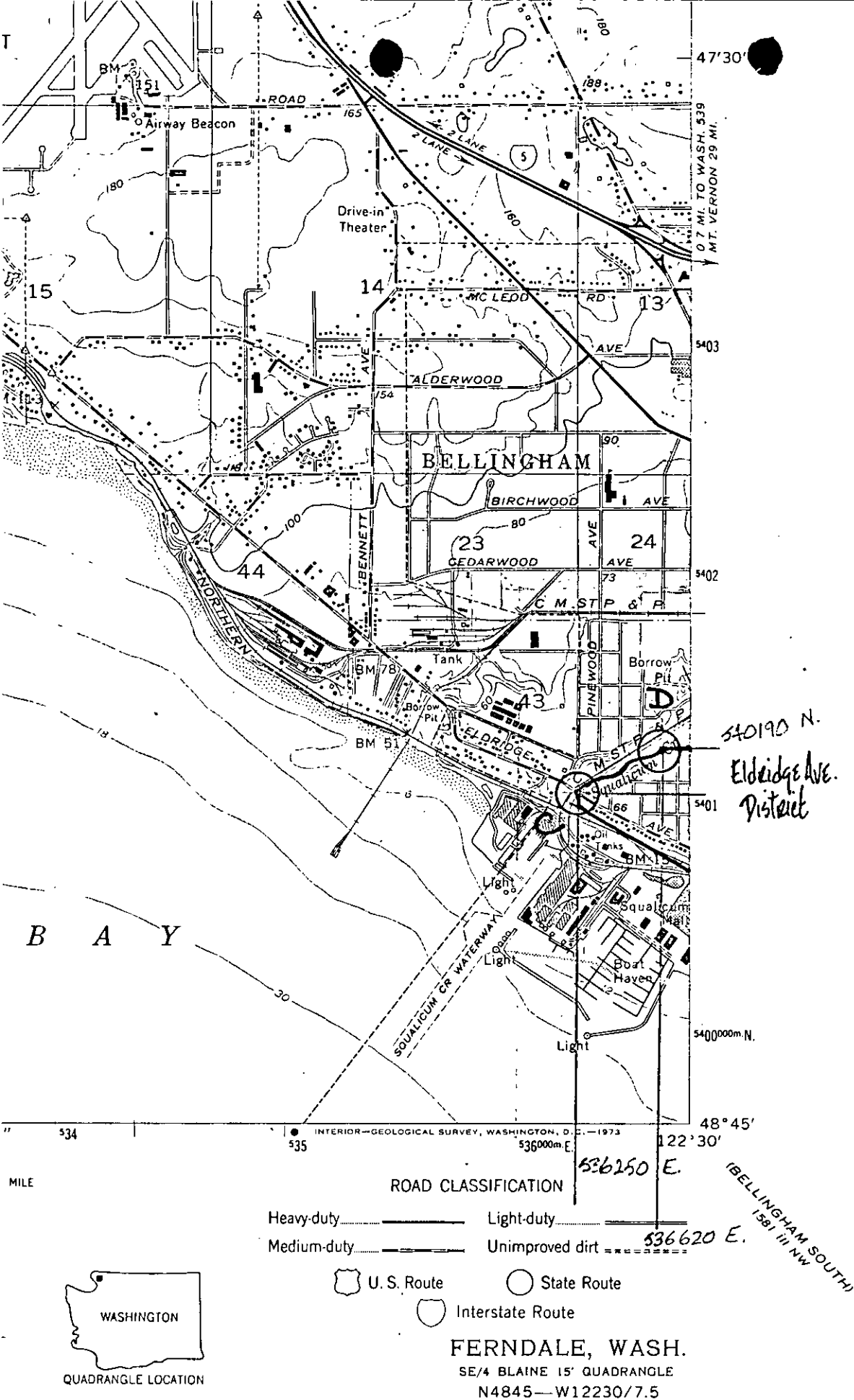
The economy and population growth of Bellingham Bay itself ambled along fitfully from its founding as a sawmill site in 1853 until 1881 when the co-called "Washington Colony" was founded. This organization was a typical Western improvement society, formed by the leading men in the area for the purpose of community boosterism and economic development. Besides pooling resources to rebuild the 1853 mill and starting to advertise in the prairie states, the men also decided that Bellingham needed a showplace residential district. Shortly after Henry Roeder and Edward Eldridge each platted and started selling portions of the free land they had acquired under the Oregon Land Bill of 1850-1855.

Within twenty years of the founding of the Washington Colony all of the founders, along with many newcomers, had impressive houses within the district and, almost in strict accordance with net worth, each house befitted its owner. The bounty of Victorian architectural styles filtering in from back East was translated into fir and shingle vernacular. The neighborhood has an unusually large representative sample of Victorian styles and is an extravagant display of the differing way wood can be shaped. Roofs are highgabled, cross-gabled, mansard or domed. Eaves have projected rafters, boxed cornices, and every variation in between. Windows, especially those on the top floors are oval, round, square and every shape describable. But despite all this variety the neighborhood remains cohesive. Although the district deserves note primarily for its impressive architecture and local historical reasons, two houses in the neighborhood deserve recognition for nationally important reasons: the George Bacon House (2001 Eldridge) and the Helen Loggie House (2203 Utter). George Bacon's cousin and nationally famous neo-classical architect Robert Bacon, who designed the Lincoln memorial, designed the Bacon House. The Loggie House was the lifelong home of nationally known artist Helen Loggie and would be individually eligible for Register status.

Social life in the 1885-1910 years paralleled economic life closely. Men who financed buildings downtown or banks or mines in Whatcom County all lived and entertained together in their Eldridge Area homes. Contemporary newspapers give rich accounts of these proceedings between the congressmen, bankers, mayors and businessmen of the county, and although the social life was a bit exclusive, there was no exclusiveness whatsoever in limits to house size or social class within the district. Side lots of the mansions were freely sold off to less prosperous newcomers from the Midwest, who were welcomed for the population growth and prosperity they represented.

Even with its smaller structures and less prosperous citizens, the neighborhood remained the most desirable place to live in Bellingham well into the 1920's. The district was eclipsed somewhat from the period 1930-1960 when the railroad switch yard below the bluff gave the neighborhood the reputation of being loud due to the noise of the new diesel locomotives.

The historical consciousness of the neighborhood is advanced and researched by the Eldridge Historical Society, many members of which are life-long residents. An active and knowledgeable Eldridge Avenue Residents Association concerns itself with upgrading the neighborhood through local political action. Since the bicentennial year, the residents have conducted a successful annual home tour, which draws attention and pride to the district.



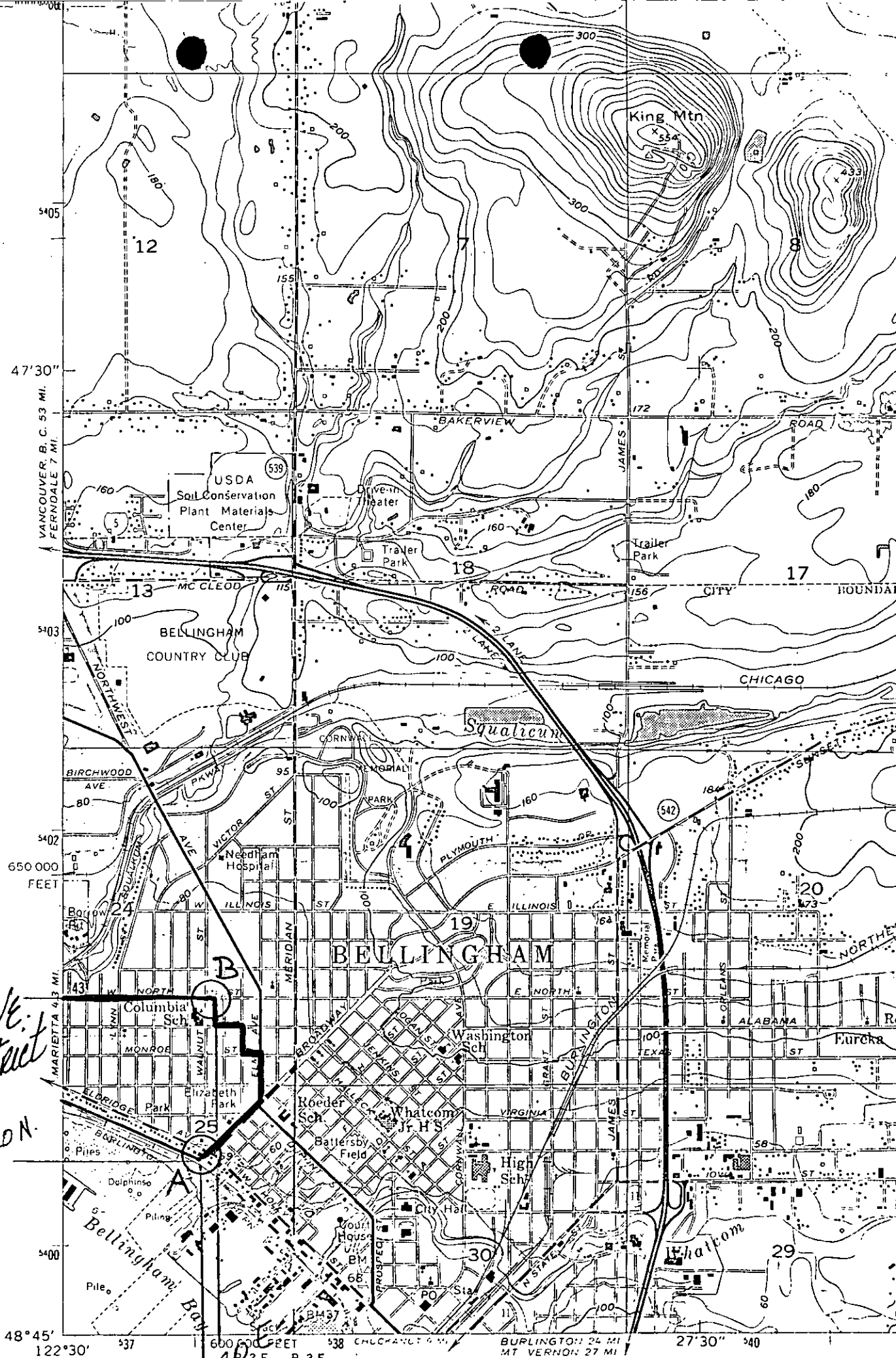
Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1972. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

1952  
PHOTOREVISED 1972  
AMS 1481 I SE—SERIES V891



5401184 N.  
Eldridge Ave.  
Historic District  
5400420 N.





Bierney House  
1710 Eldridge



Cissna House  
2010 Eldridge



Shields House  
2215 Utter



Classic Box  
Utter & Washington



Bolster House  
2820 Eldridge



Lemm's Store  
Eldridge Avenue



Bacon House  
National Register



Mason House  
1621 Eldridge



Pettibone House  
1711 Eldridge



Van Zandt House  
1717 Eldridge



Roeder House  
2405 Elizabeth



Roeder House  
2405 Elizabeth



Handschy House  
Elm & Monroe



Austin House  
1501 Washington



Elizabeth Park



Countryman House  
2120 Utter



Smith House  
2319 Utter



Eckhardt House  
2300 Utter



Canfield House  
2215 Williams



Keyes House  
2230 Henry



Schramm House  
2601 West





Thomas House  
2727 Eldridge



West House  
2737 Eldridge



Eldridge Avenue Historic District

Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis

1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2400 Block of Victor Street

Looking South

#1 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2400 Block of Henry Street  
Looking South

#2 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2400 Block of Lynn Street  
Looking South

#3 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2414 Lynn Street

Recent compatible altered historic

#4 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2300 Block Lynn Street  
Looking North

#5 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Elizabeth Park, Looking North up  
Walnut

#6 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2311 Jaeger Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#7 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2211 Jefferson

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#8 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2407 Cherry Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#9 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2400 Block of Cherry Street  
Looking South

#10 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2522 Jaeger Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#11 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation  
2500 Block of Lynn Street  
Looking North

#12 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

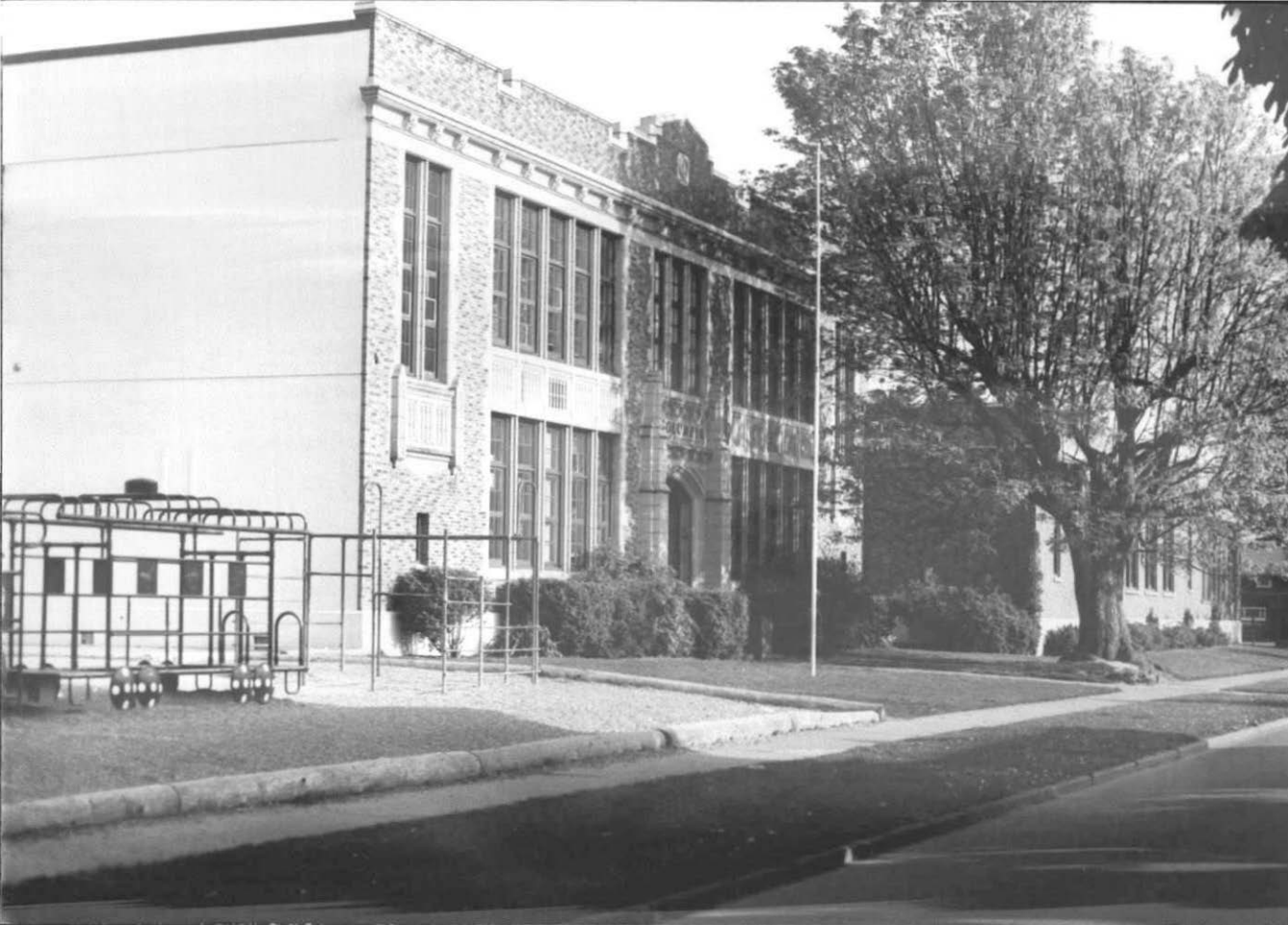
Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2501 Williams Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#13 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Columbia School

#14 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2429 Utter Street  
Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#15 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2430 Utter Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#16 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

2430 Walnut Street

Recent Compatable/Altered Historic

#17 of 21 Negatives





Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation  
Elizabeth Park

#18 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Elizabeth Park

#19 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation

Elizabeth Park Looking West  
down Madison Street

#20 of 21 Negatives



Eldridge Avenue Historic District  
Bellingham, Washington

Richard Curtis - 1979

Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation  
2425 Lynn Street

#21 of 21 Negatives