

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

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received  
date entered

**1. Name**

historic CHARLES MANNING REED MANSION

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 524 Peach Street

not for publication

city, town Erie

vicinity of

congressional district 24

state Pa.

code 42

county Erie

code 049

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other private club

**4. Owner of Property**

name Erie Club

street & number 524 Peach Street

city, town Erie

vicinity of

state Pennsylvania

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Erie County Court House

street & number West Sixth Street

city, town Erie

state Pennsylvania

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title (a) Western Pennsylvania Architectural Survey  
has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 1932-36

federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Room, Carnegie Library, Pittsburgh, PA

city, town Pittsburgh

state PA

RECEIVED  
DEC 23 1977  
PH 2 MC  
Historic Preservation

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

Charles M. Reed Mansion, Erie County

Continuation sheet

Item number

U.S. N.P. 1021-0118  
Erie, Pa.

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## REED MANSION

### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS contd.

(b) Historic American Buildings Survey  
1935

Federal  
Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

(c) Erie County Historical and Architectural Preservation Plan  
1976

Local  
Erie County Department of Planning, Erie, Pa.

## 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 Charles Manning Reed mansion, now occupied by the Erie Club, is in the best traditions of the Greek Revival style - incorporating a bold silhouette, broad proportions, and simplified details. It is constructed of brick, with stone foundations, and wooden trim and embellishments.

The mansion property is actually a complex of two buildings: the former residence - now club eating and meeting rooms, and former office - now club office and recreational hall. The main building or former residence is essentially square measuring 68' 5" wide (seven-bay front) by 75' long by 55' high (two-story plus attic). The recreational hall is long and narrow measuring 20' by 125'. There have been alterations to both structures: on the residence - a one-story bay on the south side (ca. 1855), a two-story bay on the north side (ca. 1865), and a two story extension on the west side (1970). The one-story recreational hall was extended to the west (ca. 1920).

The front or east elevation of the residence facing the park, is of the Ionic order. Four massive fluted columns rise to the height of the two stories and support a pedimented portico roof. The portico cornice is a continuation of the cornice which encircles the remainder of the house. The columns rest upon Attic bases. The caps as well as the ornamentation suggest the Erechtheum in Athens. The seven steps leading to the platform are flanked by bronze figures of goddesses holding lights. Flat pilasters ornament the corners and wall at the rear of the platform.

The attic which rests on a flat roof is designed in the form of a central temple-like monitor, measuring 46' by 22'. It is surrounded by an ornamental cast iron railing.

Most of the interior of the house has been remodeled to accommodate the needs of the present owners. The plan of the three floors, shows a central room, oval in shape, and measuring 25' by 50'. At one time this room was open throughout the full height of the building, but was closed off when air conditioning was installed several years ago. The layout of this room on the first floor is suggestive of a first class saloon in a luxury steamship, which would be appropriate for the residence of the owner of one of the largest fleets on the Great Lakes. The Grecian influence is evident throughout the first floor in the floor length windows, columns, mantels, ceilings, wainscotings, and other elements. However, there are some Gothic and even Rococo details, particularly in the west foyer, which it is believed once served as a card room. The east foyer has an open-string stairway placed to the north. The metal service stair at the rear is unique, since it is helical in design with 58 steps leading from the lower floor to the third floor.

The second floor does not open upon the central oval room for reasons of privacy. On the south side are three private dining rooms, originally bedrooms; and on the north side a banquet room, originally the family dining room. Ionic pilasters are featured throughout.

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## #7 Description - Continued

The third floor is perhaps the most unique portion of the house since here the oval room is surrounded by a railed walk upon which all bedrooms open. Thus at one time it would have been possible for the occupants of this floor to have had an unobscured view of what was occurring on the first floor. Above the walk is the cupola or penthouse with windows set on every side, and peaked sky-light (now framed in). At this level there is also a railed walk inside, as well as access to the roof which is enclosed by an ornamental cast-iron fence.

The Reed mansion sits five feet above street level, the lawns enclosed by a stone wall on two sides. On the north side there is a small courtyard between the residence and recreational hall with steps and flatstone walk leading from the street.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1846-1849 Builder/Architect E. B. Smith  
J & W. Hoskinson, builder

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Charles Manning Reed Mansion (Erie Club) is probably the best known landmark in Erie, both for its size, architecture, and association with the city's most prominent family during the nineteenth century.

Colonel Set Reed was the area's first permanent settler arriving here in the summer 1795. He started in business by establishing a trading post, saw mill, and inn on the site of the 1753 French fort. Succeeding generations, namely Rufus and Charles Manning, would considerably expand the family's commercial enterprises. By the mid-1830's, Rufus was already one of Erie's wealthiest men, owning extensive property throughout the borough, as well as interests in shipping, grist mills, lumber mills, distilleries, and stage-coach lines. Son Charles gave every indication of being an even shrewder businessman than his father.

The choice of the site for his mansion by Charles Reed is significant. It not only reflects a new direction in Erie's pattern of development, but also a shift in Reed's own social and business values. The mansion stands as a symbol of a town and entrepreneur turning away from a lifestyle based exclusively on the economy of the waterfront. When Reed died in 1871, he had been among other things, president of the Erie and Pittsburgh Railroad, vice-president of the first National Bank, and owner of a magnificent hotel bearing his name; and Erie was well on its way to becoming an important manufacturing center. The stately homes of its new captains of industry extended westward from Reed's mansion along Sixth Street.

Reed was well aware of his position in the community, and he spared no effort or expense in securing the services of the most talented craftsmen to create an edifice that would dominate the landscape. For an architect, he engaged Edward B. Smith of Buffalo, who had designed some of the best public buildings and fine homes in that city. Rather than a general contractor, the accomplished Erie masons James and William Hoskinson were hired to build the structure, while E. F. Barger, the skillful head carpenter of Reed's own shipyard, supplied the trim and interior woodwork. Barger was a resident of Westfield, N.Y., and is credited with the design and construction of at least one Greek Revival residence in that town. The construction of the imposing dwelling whose main floor stood a full ten feet above the level of the street, attracted considerable attention. On May 14, 1846, the Erie Gazette wrote "Our citizens were pleased to observe on Tuesday, that our enterprising townsman General C.M. Reed had broken ground for the erection of a mansion worthy of himself and. . . as creditable to

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#8 Significance (continued)

his native town, as have been his talents and enterprize." It was a spectacle that they would regard with a great deal of patience, for Reed's insistence upon perfection and the inability of his shipwrights to devote full time to the project, delayed completion of the mansion for two and a half years.

Perhaps the best way to record the architectural excellence of the Reed mansion is in the words of the various critics who have written about it. In The Architectural Heritage of Early Western Pennsylvania, Stotz commented that . . . "the Charles M. Reed House in Erie, used by the Erie Club, (is a) striking example(s) of a city home(s) of the 1840's that (is) well suited for such modern occupancy." (p.31). Stotz also observed that "the portico was sometimes applied to the long elevation, as in the Reed House, where, if not an integral part of the house structure, it had a more logical relationship to the plan than did the cumbersome portico of the Wilkins House." (p.109). The editors of Erie: A Guide to the City and County felt that. . . "The Reed Mansion, 1849, is likewise of interest chiefly for its broad Ionic portico. The third floor is arranged like a boat deck with the entrance to all rooms from a corridor, with a ship's 'railing' on one side. Its adjacent small office, built in 1846, simulates a Greek Doric temple." (p.53). Finally Talbot Hamlin writing in Greek Revival Architecture in America claims "The highest point of the Greek type in Pennsylvania was reached in the Charles M. Reed House at Erie, with its strong formal composition crowned by a well-designed and impressive attic!" (p.276).

Following Reed's death his widow continued to occupy the mansion until her own death in 1901. Three years later, that portion of the Reed property on which stood the house and the connecting office building was sold to the Erie Club for \$32,500 and payment of the 1904 taxes. The Erie Club chartered in 1882 was composed of Erie's leading civic and business leaders. One of the original subscribers to stock was Reed's son Charles, and other Reed descendants continue to enjoy the privileges of membership today.

## 9. Major Bibliographical Reference (see attached sheet)

- (a) Hamlin, Talbot, Greek Revival Architecture in America. New York, Oxford University Press, 1944. p.276.
- (b) American Guide Series, Erie: A Guide to the City and County/ Philadelphia: William Penn Association, 1938. p. 53.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .625  
Quadrangle name Erie North Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A	17	575400	4664350	B			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

### Verbal boundary description and justification

The property is situated at the northwest corner of the intersection of West Sixth Street and Peach Street, and extends 165 feet on all sides

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: John R. Claridge and Roger H. Taft

organization: Erie County Historical Society

date: April 1981

street & number: 417 State Street  
Erie

telephone: (814) 454-1813  
Pennsylvania

city or town

state

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Larry E. Tise, State Historic  
Preservation Officer

title: \_\_\_\_\_ date: \_\_\_\_\_

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register: \_\_\_\_\_

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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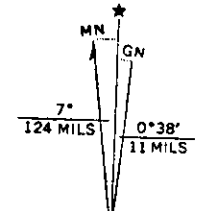
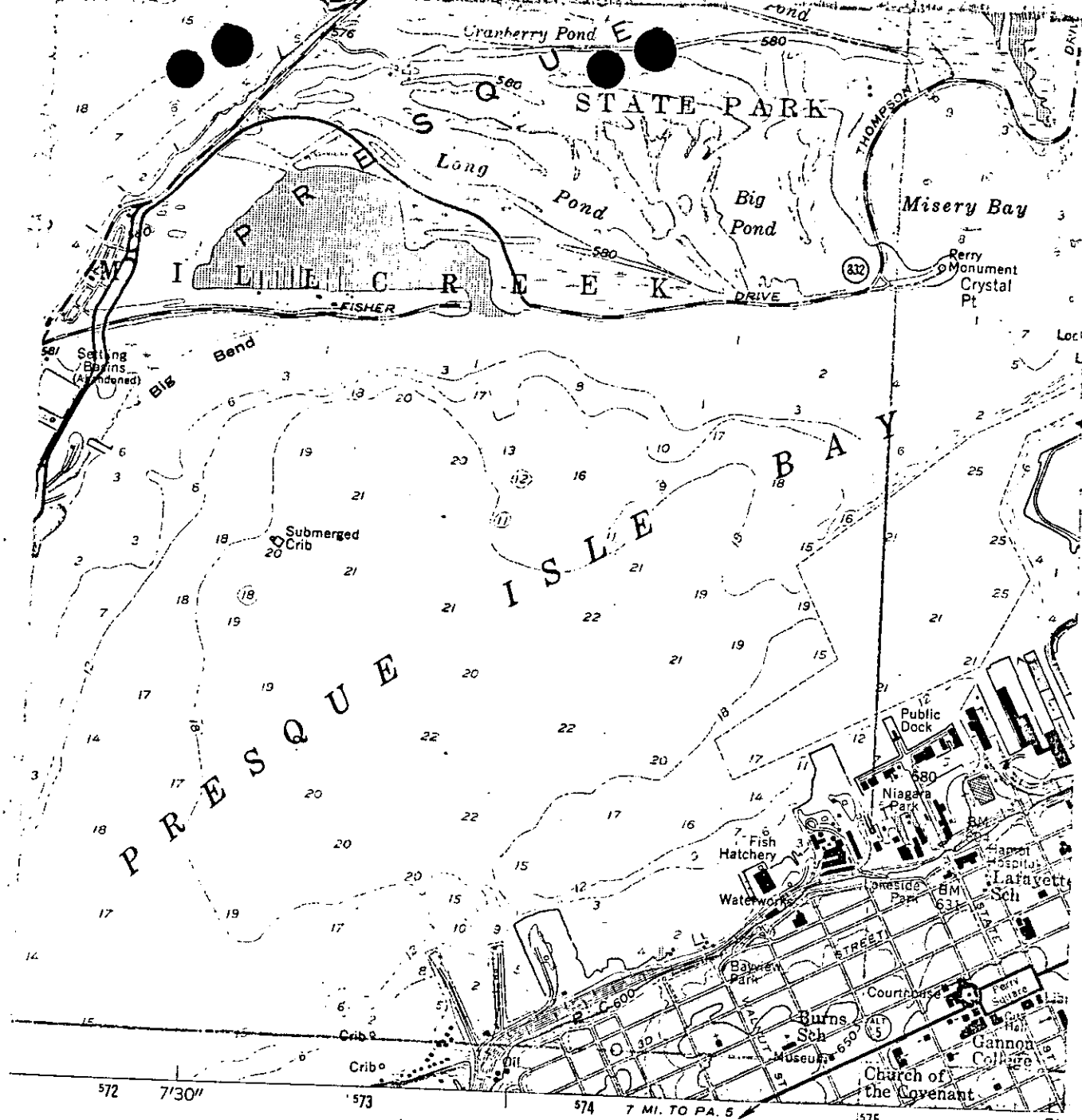
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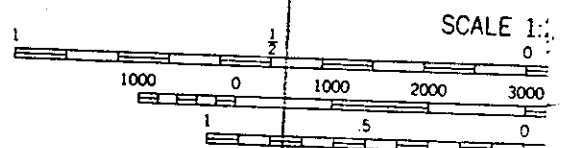
date entered

9. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DATA continued.
- ; (c) Spencer, Herbert R., "The Reed Mansion," Inland Seas. Vol. XX, No.4 (1964), pp. 313-322.
  - (d) Swetnam, George and Smith, Helene, A Guidebook to Historic Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1976. p.117.
  - (e) Stotz, Charles Morse, The Architectural Heritage of Early Western Pennsylvania (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1966), pp.32,109,143,268,287.





UTM GRID AND 1975 MAGNETIC NORTH DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FT.  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM  
 DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACT  
 FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND

Contours shown in purple compiled in cooperation with Pennsylvania agencies from aerial photographs of 1969 and 1975. This information not field checked. Pink tint indicates extension of urban areas.