

APPLICATION FOR HISTORIC DESIGNATION

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION FORM  
(Additional Sheets of Paper will be necessary for  
complete documentation)

Please type or print

1. Owner's name and address: 1885 Rogers House Partnership  
102 S. Cherry Street, Winston-Salem, NC 27101
2. Location of Property: 102 S. Cherry Street  
Winston-Salem, N. C.
3. Tax Block 70 Tax Lot 110
4. When was the building erected? For whom? (If you don't know the exact date, please give a general time frame.) Have there been additions or modifications? If so, describe and give dates.

The house was built between 1883 and 1885 for James Mitchell Rogers. It has remained amazingly intact through the years, with very few alterations or additions. In fact, the floor plans shown on both the 1907 Sanborn Insurance Map (the earliest year in which this location is depicted) and in the current property tax assessment file in the Forsyth Co. Tax Supervisor's Office show that the house has virtually the same configuration now as then. An inspection of the house suggests that several modifications, in the form of porch space being enclosed for bathroom and storage use at the rear of the house, probably occurred around the turn of the century and then later, around mid-century. After the house was purchased in 1979 by the 1885 Rogers House Partnership, it was renovated

5. Do you know the names of any of the craftsmen who worked on the building? (i.e., architects, carpenters, contractors, landscape designers, etc.) Do any architect's plans or building accounts exist? Where?

The Rogers House was built by the construction firm of Miller Brothers (J.S. and Gideon L.), which built many of the principal businesses and private residences in Winston-Salem during the 1870s and 1880s. Names of an architect or particular craftsmen associated with the original construction of the house are not known, and the original plans or other early building accounts are not known to exist. Edwin E. Bouldin Jr. was the architect for the 1979 renovation, and plans for this renovation are on file at Mr. Bouldin's office at 626 S. Main Street, Winston-Salem.

6. Do you have any old photographs of the building? If so, do you know the dates of the photographs?

We are not aware of the existence of old photographs of the house.

7. How has the building been passed down through the years, from whom to whom? (i.e., a quick chain of title). If possible, please give some background on each occupant. (i.e., occupations or other interesting facts). List the sources of your information.
  - 1) On November 1, 1882, Henry T. and Emma F. Bahnson sold the property to J. M. Rogers, who had the house built soon thereafter. (Deed Book 18, pg. 17, Forsyth Co. Register of Deeds)
  - 2) Upon the death of J. M. Rogers on January 4, 1924, his son, Francis M. Rogers, inherited the house and lot, under the terms of J. M. Rogers' will, dated June 6, 1921. (File W - 1515, Estates Division, Clerk of Superior Court in Forsyth County)
  - 3) Francis M. Rogers died on February 26, 1962, and his will, dated July 30, 1954, stated that the house was to be held in trust by Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. and that his cousins, Anne R. and Mary R. Moran, were to be allowed to use the house as a home as long as either of them should live and have need of it. Upon the death of the last of the two sisters, Wachovia was to sell the property. (File W - 4778, Estates Division, Clerk of Superior Court in Forsyth Co.)
  - 4) Mary R. Moran died on May 18, 1967 and Anne R. Moran died on March 9, 1979. (Death Index, Forsyth Co. Register of Deeds) On August 7, 1979, Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. as Trustee under the will of Francis M. Rogers, sold the

8. What was the building's original use, if different from today? Has the building ever been moved? List the sources of your information.

The building was originally used as a private single-family dwelling and continued to be used as such until 1979, when it was converted to use as law offices. The building has never been moved. (For sources of information, refer to question #9)

9. What is the significance of this property. (Please be specific and to the point). Include a complete list of sources for your information.

Statement of Significance --

Built between 1883 and 1885 for prominent local businessman James Mitchell Rogers, this house is one of the last survivors of the stately homes which once lined Cherry Street and other neighboring avenues in downtown Winston-Salem. The house, which was built by the popular construction firm of Miller Brothers, is an excellent example of the trend toward eclecticism in late Victorian architecture, with its clearly stated influences of the Gothic Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne styles. This remarkably well-preserved structure remained the home of Rogers family members for nearly a century. After moving to Winston-Salem in 1880, J. Mitchell Rogers quickly established himself as an astute businessman, and served not only as president of the Brown, Rogers and Company hardware business for over 40 years, but also served as the first president of the Winston-Salem Chamber of Commerce when this group was formed in 1885. The house was also the boyhood and retirement home of Dr. Francis M. Rogers, chief chemist for the Standard Oil Company of Indiana and a pioneer in developing methods for refining gasoline in quantity from crude oil.

Assessment of Specific Areas of Significance (keyed to National Register criteria)--

- A. The Rogers House is associated with the rapid growth and resulting prosperity of Winston-Salem during the late nineteenth century.
- B. The Rogers House is associated with the lives of James Mitchell Rogers and his son, Francis Mitchell Rogers. J. Mitchell Rogers was one of the most prominent businessmen in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Winston-Salem, serving for over 40 years as president of Brown, Rogers and Company, a major hardware firm in the area, and as the first president of the Chamber of Commerce, organized in 1885. Rogers played other important roles in the community as well. At First Presbyterian Church he served for years as Ruling Elder, and in both life and death much of his wealth was channeled into philanthropic efforts. Francis M. Rogers, as chief of Standard Oil Company of Indiana, worked with a small team of research chemists to develop a process for cracking heavy oil into gasoline through the use of high temperature and pressure. This process had a major impact on the American petroleum industry.
- C. The Rogers House is an excellent example of the eclecticism which was prevalent in the architecture of the late Victorian period. The irregular massing and variety of detailing of this large two-story frame house reflects influences of several stylistic trends popular across America during the second half of the nineteenth century. Influence of the Gothic Revival is seen primarily in the board and batten siding (a contrast to the weatherboarding which covers the rest of the house), which boast pointed-arched louvered ventilators, kingposts with sawwork bargeboards and other decorative detailing. The projecting hood moulds found directly below the gables also reflects this style. At the same time, the bay windows with paneled dado and frieze, the segmental-arched windows of the first story with their heavily molded lintels, and the combination of projecting and receding planes recall the Italianate style -- and particularly the Italian Villa phase of it. On the other hand the general irregularity of massing, texture and detailing is suggestive of the Queen Anne style. The interior is characterized by an asymmetrical arrangement of rooms around a center hall, a heavily detailed stairway, mantels of various designs, plaster ceiling medallions, and an ornate spindle frieze in one of the rooms. In addition to its visually stimulating design, the Rogers House is lent prominence by its position on a corner lot on a knoll overlooking downtown Winston-Salem.

steeply pitched gables sheathed in



10. Describe the present condition of the property.

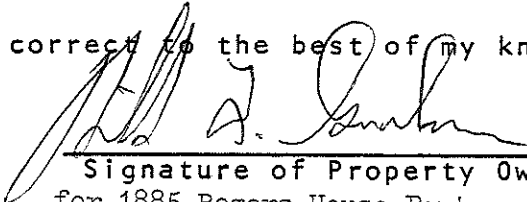
Occupied as a single family residence for nearly a century, the Rogers House was generally well-maintained during those years. After it was purchased in 1979 by the 1885 Rogers House Partnership, it was sensitively renovated for use as law offices by its owners. The renovation sought to retain the architectural integrity of the house while making it suitable for an adaptive use. The well-preserved building is presently in excellent condition.

11. Is the property listed in any existing Historic Register or survey? (i.e., the National Register of Historic Places or any other state or local history). If so, please give the title of the listing.

The Rogers House is listed in the Historic Inventory of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County, conducted by Gwynne S. Taylor and jointly sponsored by the N. C. Division of Archives and History and the City-County Planning Office (Historic Properties Commission). Soon to be published.

The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

September 30, 1981  
Date

  
Signature of Property Owner(s)  
for 1885 Rogers House Partnership  
Mailing address:

102 S. Cherry Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

This report was prepared by:  
Laura A. W. Phillips, Preservation  
Consultant  
637 N. Spring Street  
Winston-Salem, NC 27101

question #4 --

for use as law offices. Because the house had been generally well-maintained through the years, and because the new owners wanted to retain its architectural integrity, little real changes were made beyond those which modified earlier alterations. Changes which did occur in 1979 include the following:

- 1) The front porch was glass-enclosed to create a waiting room/reception area.
- 2) The room directly behind the porch and to the left of the center hall downstairs was divided by a partition into two offices along with the creation of two small storage areas. While the fireplace was enclosed by partitions, it was left intact behind the enclosure with the exception of the mantel which was removed for use upstairs.
- 3) In the library/conference room downstairs in the left rear of the house, a door leading to what had been an added bath (now converted to storage space) was enclosed, though not removed.
- 4) At the rear of the house between the library/conference room and the kitchen/lounge, where a "rabbit warren" of rooms had been created earlier from porch space, the present owners removed various partitions and doors to create a more open space for secretarial work space.
- 5) Behind the south office upstairs, an area which had earlier been converted to a half bath and closet was changed to serve as storage space only.

question #7 --

house and lot -- Tax Block 70, Lot 110 -- to the 1885 Rogers House Partnership, the present owners. (Deed Book 1281, page 382, Forsyth Co. Register of Deeds)

For additional information, refer to question #9.

question #9 --Historical Background --

On November 1, 1882 J. M. Rogers purchased a tract of land on the southwest corner of Cherry and North (now First) Streets from Harry T. and Emma F. Bahnson.<sup>1</sup> Shortly thereafter Rogers had a house erected on the site which was owned and occupied by family members for nearly a century.

On January 3, 1884 the Union Republican reported in its annual list of buildings erected during the previous year by several contractors that the Miller Brothers firm had erected a 10-room frame dwelling for J. M. Rogers.<sup>2</sup> The firm of Gideon L. and J. S. Miller was a large one employing an average of forty men, and it was responsible for the erection of many buildings in Winston-Salem during the 1870s and 1880s, including the Methodist Church, the Farmers' Warehouse, the Gray (commercial) Block, the J. A. Gray residence and the Brown, Rogers and Co. Depot Warehouse.<sup>3</sup> The Union Republican report strongly suggests that all or a majority of the Rogers House was built in 1883, although it may not have been entirely completed until 1885, as a brick in one of the chimneys bears that date.

question #9 (continued from continuation sheet p. 1) --

Sanborn Maps beginning in 1907 reveal that the house has undergone very few alterations from its early appearance.<sup>4</sup>

Both James Mitchell and his wife, May Erwin Rogers, were prominent residents of Winston-Salem, active in numerous community affairs. James Mitchell Rogers was born in Charleston, S. C. in August 1844 and was educated at the Citadel Academy there. He enlisted in the Confederate Army at age seventeen and fought until the end of the war. After the war Rogers returned to Charleston but remained there only a year before moving to Shreveport, La. where he was involved in the hardware business. While there Rogers married May Erwin of Morganton, N. C., and in 1880 they moved to Winston-Salem where they remained for the rest of their lives.<sup>5</sup>

Upon arriving in Winston-Salem, Rogers formed a partnership with T. J. Brown and W. B. Carter which was later incorporated as the Brown-Rogers Hardware Company, located in a double front store on the corner of Fourth and Main Streets. Under Rogers' leadership, the firm became one of the most prominent in the area, marketing a number of products aimed primarily at the needs of the agricultural community, including farm implements and machinery such as threshers, horse powers, grain drills, mowers, binders, steam engines, mill supplies, paints, buggies and carriages.<sup>6</sup>

As a prominent businessman, Rogers was selected as the first president of the Chamber of Commerce in Winston-Salem when this group was organized in 1885.<sup>7</sup> In addition Rogers was an active member of First Presbyterian Church, where he served for years as Ruling Elder and was on various committees of the church.<sup>8</sup> Both in life and after his death through the terms of his will, J. M. Rogers was a philanthropist whose gifts assisted many programs of the Presbyterian Church, orphanages, hospitals, schools and the YWCA.<sup>9</sup>

Mary Erwin Rogers was also active in the community. When the Twin-City Hospital Association was formed in 1887, she was elected secretary, and when the Associated Charities of Winston-Salem was organized in 1905, she served as third vice-president.<sup>10</sup> Mrs. Rogers played a large role in strengthening the religious life of the womanhood of First Presbyterian Church.<sup>11</sup>

Mary Erwin Rogers died on March 3, 1914, after which her sister, Mrs. S. E. Moran, and her two daughters, Annie and Mary Moran, resided at the Rogers House.<sup>12</sup> Ten years later James Mitchell Rogers died on January 4, 1924.<sup>13</sup> Rogers will his home to his son Francis M. Rogers, with the stipulation that his sister-in-law, Sarah E. Moran, be allowed to continue living in the house.<sup>14</sup>

Francis Mitchell Rogers was born on March 22, 1883.<sup>15</sup> He attended Salem Boys School and afterward Guilford College and Davidson College. He received a Ph.D. degree from Johns Hopkins University and then became associated with Standard Oil Company of Indiana, where he became chief chemist.<sup>16</sup> There, in 1909, he was part of a small team of researchers who developed a method of increasing the yield of gasoline from crude oil by a process of cracking the crude oil through the use of high temperature and high pressure. The success of this experimentation had far-reaching effects on the American petroleum industry.<sup>17</sup> In 1914 in an effort to produce a medicinal white oil from crude oil, Rogers served as part of a self-appointed three-man "poison squad" to take a dose of Polarine motor oil to learn about its reaction on the human body. Fortunately all members of the squad survived, with varying degrees of discomfort,<sup>18</sup> but they decided to pursue a solution to the problem at hand in a different way.

question #9 (continued from continuation sheet p.2) --

After his retirement in 1948, Francis Rogers returned to Winston-Salem to live in the family home.<sup>19</sup> He died on February 26, 1962.<sup>20</sup> By his will, the family home was left in the trust of Wachovia Bank and Trust Company with the provision that Rogers' cousins, Anne R. and Mary R. Moran be allowed to remain in the home as long as they, or either of them, should live.<sup>21</sup>

Mary Moran died on May 18, 1967 and Annie Moran followed on March 9, 1979.<sup>22</sup> On August 7, 1979, as Trustee under the will of Francis M. Rogers, Wachovia Bank and Trust Co. sold the house to the 1885 Rogers House Partnership, a group of local lawyers who have sensitively renovated it for use as their law offices.<sup>23</sup>

Footnotes --

<sup>1</sup>Deed Book 18, pg. 17, Office of the Register of Deeds, Forsyth County Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem.

<sup>2</sup>Union Republican (Winston-Salem), January 3, 1884.

<sup>3</sup>D. P. Robbins, Descriptive Sketch of Winston-Salem, Its Advantages and Surroundings, Kernersville, Etc. Compiled under the Auspices of the Chamber of Commerce from a Matter of Fact Standpoint (Winston: Sentinel Job Print, 1888), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup>Insurance Maps of Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, N. C. Sanborn Map Company, New York. 1907, 1912, 1917, 1924, 1955.

<sup>5</sup>Winston-Salem Journal, January 5, 1924.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.; Robbins, p. 75.

<sup>7</sup>Union Republican (Winston-Salem), November 19, 1885.

<sup>8</sup>Winston-Salem Journal, January 5, 1924; Mary Callum Wiley and William E. East, The Book of Remembrance 1862-1962 (Winston-Salem, First Presbyterian Church, n.d.), p. 46.

<sup>9</sup>Adelaide Fries, Stuart Thurman Wright, and J. Edwin Hendricks, Forsyth: The History of a County on the March, Revised Edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1976), pp. 201-202; File W-1515, Estates Division, Clerk of Superior Court in Forsyth County, Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem. Rogers donated space above his hardware business to the YWCA, but soon thereafter a fire started in the ceiling of their rooms -- apparently caused by a faulty stove flue, which created a major conflagration causing damage estimated at between \$35,000-\$65,000. (Journal, January 21, 1908)

<sup>10</sup>Fries, pp. 168, 200.

<sup>11</sup>Wiley and East, p. 46

<sup>12</sup>Winston-Salem Journal, March 3, 1914, January 5, 1924.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., January 5, 1924.

Footnotes --

<sup>14</sup>File W-1515, Estates Division, Clerk of Superior Court in Forsyth County, Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem.

<sup>15</sup>Sarah LeCompte, "Residents of the Rogers' House," Unpublished student report for Introduction to Historic Preservation (History 366), Wake Forest University, Fall 1979.

<sup>16</sup>Winston-Salem Journal, February 27, 1962.

<sup>17</sup>Paul H. Giddens, Standard Oil Company (Indiana): Oil Pioneer of the Middle West (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1955), pp. 141-142, 145.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 194-195.

<sup>19</sup>LeCompte report.

<sup>20</sup>Winston-Salem Journal, February 27, 1962.

<sup>21</sup>File W-4778, Estates Division, Clerk of Superior Court in Forsyth County, Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem.

<sup>22</sup>Death Index, Office of the Register of Deeds, Forsyth County Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem.

<sup>23</sup>Deed Book 1281, pg. 382, Office of the Register of Deeds, Forsyth County Hall of Justice, Winston-Salem.