

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hall, S. Edward, House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 996 Iglehart Ave.
city, town Saint Paul
state Minnesota code MN county Ramsey code 123 zip code 55104

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of certifying official Date State or Federal agency and bureau Minnesota Historical Society

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet. Signature of commenting or other official Date State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is: entered in the National Register. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:) Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Domestic/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Domestic/single dwelling

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

no style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation limestone

walls wood/clapboard

roof asphalt/shingles

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

See continuation sheet

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S. Edward Hall House

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The S. Edward Hall house, located at 996 Iglehart Avenue, is a two story wood frame L-shaped vernacular house in a turn-of-the-century residential neighborhood in St. Paul. Built in 1889, the house stands on a limestone foundation, now sheathed with a veneer of concrete. The house elevations are finished in clapboards with cornerboards. The gabled roof is finished with asphalt shingles and the eaves are enclosed. Windows are generally two-over-two wood sash with one-over-one wood storms. A single-story, flat-roofed front porch spans the north-facing front elevation. The eastern portion, containing the main entrance, has been enclosed for three-season use. The western portion of the porch has been enclosed for year-round use as an expansion of the interior living room space.

A early two-story addition intersects the rear, south elevation, roughly at the center and matches the earliest part of the house in material with the exception of the first floor six-over-six windows on the west elevation. A small open single story porch in the west ell of the house protects the rear entry. A wooden open stairway on the rear, south elevation of the addition gives access to the second story and was installed to accommodate Hall's extended family. The second story doorway was cut in at the same time. The alterations to the Hall house do not significantly diminish the original material and stylistic integrity of the house.

A small, single stall garage sits at an angle at the back of the lot on the alley. The garage is finished with ship-lap siding and has a low-pitched asphalt shingled roof. The secondary structure post-dates the significance period of the residence.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Ethnic Heritage / Black  
Social History

Period of Significance

1906-1940

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

S. Edward Hall

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

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The S. Edward Hall house is significant under criterion B within the context of community leadership and social activism in the St. Paul Black Community. The Hall House, located within the present Black community, is significant as the best extant representation of the leadership and involvement of Mr. S. Edward Hall in the ongoing struggle for human, economic and civil rights. The period of significance begins with Mr. Hall's ownership of the house and continues to 1940.

Mr. Hall's career was remarkable for its longevity, its foresight and its lasting impact on the present St. Paul community. Central to Mr. Hall's career was his role in the organization and nurturing of the local Helper's Movement and the St Paul Urban League and the establishment of Union Hall and the Hallie Q. Brown House. His career also included an appointment to the Mayor's Advisory Board (1922), a four-time appointment as a Republican Presidential Elector, (1932-1948), an appointment to Mayor Budlie's General Unemployment Committee in 1931, and an appointment by the Republican state central committee as director for the organization of Black voters in Ramsey County. Hall was also a trustee in the pro-active Pilgrim Baptist Church, a long time member in the St. Paul NAACP, Executive Secretary of the Master Barber's Association, and a member of the National Negro Business League.

Mr. Hall addressed the needs of the St. Paul Black community from both within and without that community and via a number of avenues: political, diplomatic, economic and social. The way in which Mr. Hall melded his career as a barber with community activism is representative of a small class of Black businessmen and laborers who were able to carve a comfortable niche for themselves within a racially segregated society and who were motivated to bring the social, economic and political issues of their day to the attention of their own and the larger white society. The success of their endeavors depended upon their diplomacy, their political skills and an unflinching vision.

As in any community, there is a core group of men and women who acquire long histories of social organization and activism within their communities. Within ten years after the initial settlement of Blacks in St. Paul (ca. 1870) that core of community activists and leaders had evolved. This earliest core was made up of self-made businessmen, laborers, and religious leaders. This early core was responsible for the recruitment of doctors, lawyers, and newspapermen into their community and the establishment of the first organizations that would

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address the needs of Blacks in St. Paul during this period: the availability of money for loans, social fraternity, cultural growth, employment, and protection under the law. These organizations included real estate and loan agencies, a literary society, and fraternal organizations for men and women. Membership within those groups was often analogous. Individuals within this group, acting independently, were also able to wield influence. It was the influence of one such community leader that convinced both the St. Paul Fire and Police Departments to open the first municipal positions for Blacks in the city (1885 and 1892)

The makeup of the core of leaders and activists in St. Paul began to change somewhat after ca. 1885 when professionals, graduated from the Black colleges established in the East and South by the Freedman's Bureau, arrived in St. Paul to establish practices. These more highly educated men and women may have been more attuned to the national scene of Black activism. After 1900 the record indicates that the local Black consciousness was very much in step with the wider spectrum of Black intellectualism and activism. The St. Paul Black, and sometimes white, community hosted such nationally renown leaders as Monroe Trotter, W.E.B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, James Weldon Johnson and A. Philip Randolph. Activism among Black women also increased during this period as more women completed high-school and college and entered the labor force.

By the turn of the century Black communities, like communities across the United States, were faced with the problem of what was then called "adjustment." The large influx of European immigrants, the general migration of rural populations to urban areas and the continuing exodus from the lagging economy of the South, were all related to the rapid growth of industry during this period (1900-1920) and placed great stresses on both the migrant and the host city. In St. Paul, Blacks were attracted to jobs with the railroads (St. Paul was by now a well established regional railroad terminus), the meat packing plants, and river transportation. Although St. Paul did not experience as large an influx of Blacks into the city as did other northern cities between the years 1910 and 1920, a study done by the Urban League in ca. 1924 concluded that 75% of all Blacks living in St. Paul had arrived ca. 1920-1923. The problem of adjustment was a difficult one for Blacks moving to St. Paul without the benefit of reserve savings, family, or an assured job. Many private and church-funded organizations and settlement houses attempted to relieve the immediate stress of settlement in a new place. Such facilities and organizations provided recreational, social, intellectual, and religious activities for its patrons. Although these

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settlement houses provided for the social adjustment of the newcomers, they could not adequately address the need for job referrals.

The extended history of social activism in the St. Paul Black Community is marked by a high level of cooperation between Black churches, and newspapers, social and fraternal organizations, businessmen and laborers. The way in which those groups interacted with each other depended on the issues at hand, but over time the networking between all these groups was complete. The focus of activism was diverse, and was related to the changing needs and challenges of the Black community over time. Different organizations chose to address different needs: The Minnesota Protective and Industrial League (1887), although it did not last long, was interested in recruiting Southern Black immigrants for farm settlement, building affordable housing for Blacks, and protection of civil rights. This organization preceded the formation of the St. Paul Afro-American League, Minnesota No. 1 which was affiliated with the national Afro-American League, the first nation-wide organization to address civil and political rights outside a political party. The Helpers (1908) and the Urban League (1923) confronted the problem of adjustment and employment. The NAACP (1913) dealt with issues of political awareness and education, the legal codes and due process. Union Hall (1915) was built by the St. Paul Black Masons to create a place where Blacks (not exclusively Masons) could gather for social functions, since most private concerns would not accommodate them. The Hallie Q. Brown House (1929) addressed the needs of adjustment for immigrating Blacks.

Stephen Edward Hall came to St. Paul in 1900 from Springfield, Illinois to join his brother Orrie C. Hall. Stephen Edward Hall was 22 years old at the time and began employment as a barber for W.V. Howard, a Black barber who had a shop at 4th and Jackson in St. Paul. By 1906, S. Edward Hall had married, bought the present home at 996 Iglehart, and established a six chair shop with his brother O.C. Hall in the downtown Pittsburgh building at the corner of 5th and Wabasha. (The Pittsburgh Building was listed on the National Register in 1977 as the Germania Bank Building, but Hall's shop is no longer extant.) Orrie Hall left the barbering business to take a job with Ramsey County in 1915 and a second half-brother, Art, took up the slack. The Hall Brothers operated at this location until 1947 when Mr. Hall moved his business to the southwest corner of Selby and Victoria Avenues. The Hall Brothers' clientele was comprised of, among others, St. Paul's prominent

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businessmen and politicians and was constantly buzzing with the news of the day. A newspaper article devoted to S. Edward Hall's 95th birthday called the shop a newspaperman's Shangri-la.

The tonsorial profession has a long and significant history within the Black community both nationally and locally. It has been important to American Blacks as one of a few occupations that Blacks were historically allowed to enter and dominate by the turn of the century. An interview with Mr. Ed Hall, suggests that barbering may have been a natural choice of work for former slaves who may have been barbers within the plantation system. In St. Paul, Black men made up roughly one-fourth of all barbers in St. Paul, and by 1895 barbers comprised the third largest occupational group among Blacks behind porters and waiters. Those barbers who catered to an all-white clientele (mixed clientele was prohibited by de facto segregation) generally could make the greatest economic gains owing to the relative economic prosperity of the white community. The contacts that these barbers made with their white clients were one of the few avenues of communication open between the two segregated societies. Access to those channels sometimes meant jobs, loans or influence for fellow Blacks.

Ed Hall was quick to make the most of his connections with the wealthy and prominent of St. Paul to secure work for his fellow Blacks. With the cooperation of other Black laborers and Black churches, a system was put in place that served as a job service for unemployed or underemployed Blacks. Walking to his shop in the morning, Hall would meet St. Paul's elite and powerful at Cathedral Hill on the way to their offices downtown. According to Hall, when he would arrive at his own shop, several people would be waiting in hopes of securing some type of employment. Black Red Caps at Union Station would give incoming Blacks a card and send them to Hall's shop where Mr. Hall would inquire about possible jobs with his patrons. In 1915, in cooperation with the St James African Methodist Episcopal Church, his shop was referenced in the weekly bulletin *The Helper*. This small four page paper referenced interdenominational church affairs, important social events and meetings and employment information. The cost of printing was paid for by multiracial advertising. Advertisements within the *Helper's* pages read: *DO YOU WANT WORK? See Ed Hall at shop on 4th and Wabasha, Pittsburgh building.* Wherever Blacks worked in St. Paul, "tipsters" would inform the "helpers" of job vacancies. In 1921, advocates of the Be A Helper Movement believed that this type of grass roots support system would become worldwide. Although Mr. Hall was not a member of the AME Church, he remained the Vice-President to the



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Helper Movement well into the 1920s. This early system of employment referral was effective in securing both short-term and long-term employment but could not fully meet the job shortage among Blacks in St. Paul. Nor could it address the need for jobs outside the service sector.

In 1923, when news arrived of a national organization that spoke to the needs of employment and might be underwritten by the local Community Chest, Ed Hall was instrumental in organizing the St. Paul branch of the Urban League. Hall was a member of the founding board in 1923 and was a honorary board member and President Emeritus of the League at his death in 1975. He served on the Executive board and as chairman of the Membership Committee for many years while he continued to refer Blacks to jobs from his position at the barbershop. These additional jobs were typically referenced in the minutes of the Urban League and included positions with the Park Board and the Census Bureau.

Whitney Young, who would go on from St. Paul to become President of the National Urban League, describes the early Helper's Movement as a natural forerunner to the Urban League in St. Paul. In fact, wrote Young, it was many years before employers in St. Paul ceased to use the Hall Barbershop for job referrals. *The Helper*, which continued to print its bulletin after the organization of the Urban League, still listed S.Ed Hall as manager of the Men's Department of employment services, followed by an address for the Urban League. In 1925, when the Executive committee of the St. Paul Ford Plant agreed to hire a fair quota of Black employees, notice was posted in *The Helper* to see Ed Hall.

The focus of the St. Paul Urban League was to create opportunity for the advancement of Blacks within the community. The Urban League is a multi-racial organization and was founded to nurture better race relations, inform Blacks of available social services, educate the larger society about Black life, study the housing and educational needs of Blacks, monitor discrimination in employment and lobby for better relations with industry. The League's first year budget was comprised of \$700.00 from the Community Chest and \$1500.00 raised within the Black Community. During the 1920s and 30s, the Urban League, like other pro-active groups in the Black Community, was involved with several other organizations: the NAACP, churches, settlement houses, Masonic and fraternal organizations, YMCA and YWCA, Ramsey County Child Welfare Board, United Charities, Ramsey County Mother's Aid Department, the Boy Scouts of America, the Salvation Army, the Hammond

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Vocational School, and the Crispus Attucks Home. The League monitored the newspapers and radio programs for their depiction of Blacks and wrote letters concerning that treatment. The League petitioned industry for jobs and developed working relationships with St. Paul Sheet Metal, the Ford Plant, the Swift, Cudahy and Armour meat packing plants and American Radiator Company. The League marshalled the unequal treatment of Black students in the local University and Colleges and cooperated with college students who wanted to study Black life. The League instituted the Big Brothers and Sisters organization and took on case work for county agencies who were less adept at working with Blacks.

Although Ed Hall believed that the issue of employment was central to securing equal footing in American society for Blacks, he was also concerned with the problems of adjustment and the need for social fraternity. In 1908, Mr Hall, a member of the Perfect Ashlar Masonic Lodge joined with the Mars Lodge of the Oddfellows who had purchased six lots on Aurora Avenue between Kent and McKubin, to organize Union Hall. It was the aim of these fraternities to be able to finance a meeting place for themselves and the larger Black community. Traditionally, the churches and private homes had provided the space for these social events, and some events were held in halls located above saloons. The Black community raised the money to build what would be called Union Hall in 1914 (no longer extant). After Union Hall was built, public accommodations opened up at bit for Blacks in St. Paul, and Union Hall had a difficult time meeting expenses.

In 1929, the Black community, like the larger society, was undermined by the beginning of the Great Depression. The Urban League, through an earlier community study, had determined a need for a facility that would provide educational, social welfare and recreational activities. In 1928 a series of events left the Black community without the Colored branch of the YWCA on Central Avenue. As the depression years began to erode the fragile economy of the Black population, the need for a community facility increased. The response of the St. Paul Community Chest was to ask the Urban League to organize an experimental project that would include a recreational and community house organized along racial lines. A Committee of Management, which included Mr. Hall, was nominated by the League to interview and hire a director and to be the liaison between the Urban League and the new center. Within months of accepting her new position, Ms. Myrtle Carden reported that activities had outgrown the Central Avenue location (no longer extant), Ed Hall, then President of the Union Hall helped make arrangements to transfer the property, through the Urban League, to the

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Hallie Q. Brown Center. By November 1930, the Hallie Q. Brown Center became its own entity, separated from the Urban League.

The Hallie Q. Brown Community House (the original building is no longer extant) was particularly important to the St. Paul Black Community during the depression years and was largely funded by federal money during that period: FERA, WPA, NYA, and CCC all directly affected the business of the Hallie Q. Brown Center. By 1934, fully one third of all residents of Ramsey County were on relief and in the neighborhood around Hallie Q. Brown (Kent and Aurora) nine out of ten people were on relief. The railroads and packing plants, major employers of Blacks, laid off many employees. With jobs for men nearly nonexistent, more women sought service jobs to maintain their families. Hallie Q. Brown accommodated their children in its nursery. When federal funds were withdrawn in the late 1930s, volunteers were enlisted and private donations made the adjustment less difficult. Mr. Hall was a life-long member of the Hallie Q. Brown Center and a President Emeritus at his death.

Mr. Hall's commitment to the St. Paul Black community was lifelong. His career is significant on two levels: for the outstanding nature of his contributions as an individual and as a representation of the broad patterns of social organization within the St. Paul Black community. His participation in a variety of social organizations within the community reflect a pattern of cooperation between groups who organized around different issues, but worked toward a common goal. His activities were meaningful to the initial organization of the Helper Movement, the Urban League, the Union Hall, and the Hallie Q. Brown Center. His continued participation was significant to the survival of these organizations through time.

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Young, Whitney M. Jr., *History of the St. Paul Urban League*, M. A. Thesis, University of Minnesota, unpublished, August, 1947.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
  - previously listed in the National Register
  - previously determined eligible by the National Register
  - designated a National Historic Landmark
  - recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
  - recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

- Primary location of additional data:
- State historic preservation office
  - Other State agency
  - Federal agency
  - Local government
  - University
  - Other

Specify repository:  
Fort Snelling History Center  
Saint Paul, Minnesota

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot #5, Block 1, A. B. Wilgus Addition to the City of Saint Paul.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the city lots, and portions of city lots, that have historically been associated with the property. City legal description.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

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city or town Saint Paul state Minnesota zip code 55102

