

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

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

received AUG 22 1984  
date entered SEP 20 1984

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

**1. Name** 5DV1488

historic Dunning-Benedict House

and/or common Dunning-Benedict House

**2. Location**

street & number 1200 Pennsylvania Street n/a not for publication

city, town Denver n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Denver code 031

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Leland Rudofsky

street & number 555 Williams

city, town Denver n/a vicinity of state Colorado

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City and County Building

street & number 1445 Cleveland Place

city, town Denver state Colorado

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date Ongoing  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 1300 Broadway

city, town Denver state Colorado 80203

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located in the Capital Hill neighborhood, an older residential area lying east and south of the Capital Building, the 1889 Romanesque Revival house at 1200 Pennsylvania Street is one of the outstanding residences in Denver of the late 19th century era. Designed by local architect William Lang, it is two and one-half stories, of rusticated stone, and richly ornamented. The building is enhanced by its siting several feet above the level of the street, with the lot enclosed by a rusticated stone retaining wall. The general impression given by the structure is one of solidity, with its deeply textured stone blocks and heavy massing of elements--all of which lend a castle-like quality to its appearance. The truncated tower on the southwest corner topped with a battlement contributes most to the medieval illusion. Across a portion of the facade and wrapping around the northwest corner is an encircling porch with balcony above, the stone rails of which are laid in a checkerboard pattern. The porch, an afterthought amended to the plans six months after the original building permit was issued, is supported by thick round pillars capped with Romanesque foliage. The structure has a composite roof and displays four chimneys. The massive surface of the facade is further enlivened by the window treatment. The first story tower and the bay adjacent to it have four double-hung windows with arches above filled with leaded glass. The second level tower bays, and the adjacent window, are double-hung with rectangular transom at the second story. The central element of the main block includes a large arched opening at the second level accented by radiating stone voussoirs. The opening contains double doors leading out onto the balcony. In the front gable, centered over the arched bay is a band of five small round-arched windows with radiating voussoirs. Underneath this band is a carved stone sill with dentils, terminating in a foliated motif at each end.

Other interesting detailing include small stones inset in the gable creating a checkerboard pattern with a foliated cap forming the apex of the roof gable. The eaves of the roof terminate in a foliated "capital," which rests on a voluted, dentiled base. The main entrance is set slightly off center, with a rectangular window on the north end of the facade.

The south wall is characterized by a large chimney, placed next to a two-story projecting bay topped with a battlement (which forms the baluster of a small balcony at the top floor). Entrance to the balcony is gained through an arch, placed in a gable of the roof. The windows in the bay are rectangular, double-hung with transoms above at the first floor. At the east end of the south wall, abutting the projecting bay, is a one-story enclosed porch with a side entrance to the bay. Above the porch is an arched window. A dormer projects from the hipped and crested roof.

The north wall is distinguished by three chimneys, as well as a variety of interesting openings. Two interior chimneys are placed in a slightly projecting unit, with a large rectangular stained glass window at the stairwell between the chimneys. A lunette is in the gable above with radiating voussoirs. At the first level on the east end of the wall is a double arched window with radiating voussoirs and a window filled with stained glass. Directly above, at the second floor is an oval window bay, inset with three windows with transoms.

The interior of the residence is outstanding in its sumptuous detailing and lavish use of ornate wood trim. The entry hall, which in Lang-designed buildings is always the most impressively decorated, presents an intriguing space. It has coffered ceilings

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with bead and reel molding along the cross beams, and a richly panelled closed stringer staircase. The upper tier of the railing is open with elliptical spindles.

Windows and doorways of the first floor have elaborate trim consisting of a panelled entablature with heavy crown molding, supported by pilasters. The dining room is decorated with open panelling and has a coved ceiling with plaster work. Just above the picture molding is a row of electric lights set in plaster. (The other rooms each have a different plaster frieze motif in the cove. Unfortunately, a built-in buffet in the dining room was removed by a previous owner.) The rooms that were originally the drawing and reception rooms each have a heavily carved trim.

The present owner has carefully restored the woodwork of the residence and has used glass to block entryways, thereby leaving the original feeling of the structure intact.

The second and third stories of the mansion have been partitioned into separate apartments, with kitchens added, but with original woodwork and structural features retained wherever possible.

There is a carriage house at the rear of the house which was connected later to the residence by an addition. To the south of the addition there is a modern structure which was probably used as a garage. It now functions as a separate apartment.

# 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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1889 **Builder/Architect** William Lang : Architect

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

The mansion at 1200 Pennsylvania, designated by the city of Denver as a landmark in 1975, has held a special place in the city's urban landscape since its construction in 1889. One of the first houses designed by William Lang after his arrival on the Denver scene, it displays Lang's special brand of Victorian exuberance and complexity which so well fitted the fashion of the period. The stone Romanesque Revival structure, ornately detailed both on the exterior and interior, retains its integrity and takes its place as one of the city's important residences of the late 19th century.

In 1889 Colorado was in the midst of its second boom fueled by the silver from Leadville and the surrounding mountains. Denver, a city barely thirty years old at the time, had always attracted the newly wealthy from the mountains in addition to migrants from the East who wished to create their new ideal of comfort in the isolation of Colorado. Between 1888 and the silver crash of 1893, William Lang designed almost one hundred and fifty homes for this growing upper-middle-class of the state. Denverites were eager to have houses reflecting the latest styles, such as the style made popular by H. H. Richardson. However, while the overall effect of Richardson's work was dignified, ordered and stately, that of Lang's was lively, complicated, even whimsical--what might be called a truer expression of the American West of the time. The residence Lang designed for the Dunning family reflects his attraction for the Romanesque, for luxurious detail in exterior and interior, for pattern on pattern and complication in design.

Walter Dunning came from a family that had slowly moved West over several generations. He was born on a farm in Edwardsburg, Michigan. His father, who had joined the '49ers in their search for gold in California, decided after his return to move the family to Iowa where he established the town of Mount Ayr. The Dunning cabin at one time or another was the general store, post office, hotel and courthouse for the town. Walter Dunning enlisted with the Iowa Infantry Volunteers during the Civil War, was discharged in 1865 and married Jane Elizabeth Fellows in 1867. In 1869 he established Mount Ayr's first bank.

After the death of his youngest brother, Dunning decided to move his family, which by then consisted of his wife and three children, to Denver. He bought the lots at the corner of 12th Avenue and Pennsylvania in Denver's fashionable Capitol Hill although their grey stone mansion was not constructed until 1889. The plans of the home were drawn to incorporate a library, a ballroom on the third floor, and servants' quarters.

The property was sold in 1898 and for the next thirty-two years was owned by Mitchell Benedict and his wife and then his son James Doolittle Benedict. Mitchell Benedict, a lawyer originally from New York state, came to Colorado in 1865 after service in the Union army. After an unsuccessful attempt at mining in Gilpin County, Benedict resumed the practice of law in Denver. His accomplishments include the position of city attorney for many years prior to establishing his own law firm; a member of the original commission appointed to oversee the erection of a Capitol building for the new state; assisting in organization of Riverside Cemetery; and a distinguished law practice until shortly before

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

- Adams, Rhett. From Broken Stone: The Colorado Work of William Lang. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Colorado, 1976.
- Boucher, Kathy. An Account of the History of 1200 Pennsylvania Street. Unpublished Home Biography of Denver, 1979.

## 10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property less than 1

Quadrangle name Englewood

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	3	5	0	1	7	0	0	4	3	9	8	1	9	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

E 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

F 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

G 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

H 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

### Verbal boundary description and justification

L 18-21 inclusive Bl 84 Porter's Addition to the city of Denver

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

state	n/a	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sharon Elfenbein Edited: Gloria Mills

organization Home Histories date March, 1984

street & number 170 Lafayette Street telephone (303) 722-8162

city or town Denver state Colorado 80202

## 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Barbara Sudler

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 8-14-84

### For NPS use only

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

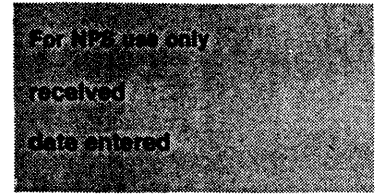
for Helene Byers Entered in the National Register date 9-20-84  
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

Chief of Registration

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his death in 1906.

Benedict married Mary Caroline Doolittle in 1872 and their only child James followed his father into the law, joining his father's firm in 1900 and practicing until 1949.

The mansion at 1200 Pennsylvania has not been a single-family residence since the Benedicts sold it in 1930. Subsequent owners divided the space into apartments, while maintaining much of the mansion's interior details. The present owner has done considerable restoration work while remodeling the first floor for his real estate offices.

The structure is significant as an outstanding example of the work of William Lang, one of Denver's most imaginative domestic architects of the late Victorian period. The design reflects the popularity of Romanesque styling as well as the craftsmanship and ornate detailing possible in stone construction. The interior, almost intact on the first floor, is of exceptional quality and is an important example of the luxurious use of wood in building interiors of the late 19th century era. Therefore, in its design, execution and state of preservation, the house makes as impressive a statement as it did when constructed.