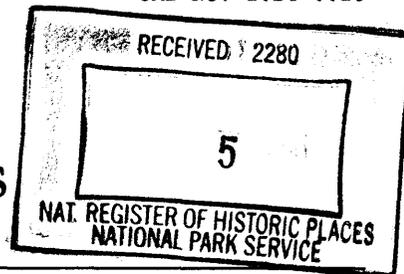


1127

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Spalding-Gunn House

other name/site number: Milton S. and Lena Gunn House; Sarah E. Spalding House

2. Location

street & number: 433 Clarke Street

not for publication: n/a

vicinity: n/a

city/town: Helena

state: Montana

code: MT

county: Lewis & Clark

code: 049

zip code: 59601

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally.

Stan Wilmoth

11/14/06

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office

State or Federal agency or bureau

(_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- determined not eligible for the National Register see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register see continuation sheet
- other (explain): _____

Joe
Signature of the Keeper
Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

12.27.06

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> building(s)
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> TOTAL

Category of Property: Building

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: na

Name of related multiple property listing: na

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions:

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

Materials:

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK, GRANITE; WOOD; ALUMINUM

roof: ASPHALT/ shingle

other: BRICK

Narrative Description

Sited several blocks from bustling downtown Helena, the Spalding-Gunn House is located on a quiet tree-lined residential street in Helena's historic West Side neighborhood, locally referred to as "Mansion District." The West Side neighborhood is one of Helena's oldest, located in the original Helena Townsite, and is comprised of stately examples of residential architecture built for the very wealthy, as well as historic and contemporary upper-middle and middle class homes. The Spalding-Gunn House is located at 433 on the south side of Clarke Street in Helena's historic West Side neighborhood. The house is located near the base of Mount Helena and enjoys a commanding view of Mount Helena, a 5,468-foot mountain located just south of the home.

The house rises about three feet above street level and is located mid-block on a residential street lined with mature green ash trees. The house is a two-story (not including unfinished attic) asymmetrical structure composed of brick and granite on the first story and v-groove channel siding covered by aluminum siding on the second story. The house displays the massing, bays, large porch and complicated roofline frequently associated with Late Victorian Queen Anne design, but no "gingerbread" ornamentation. Rather, the house relies on its decorative brickwork and granite embellishments for ornamentation. The roughly rectangular house rests on a mortared rubble stone foundation with red tuckpointing to effect the appearance of large blocks. Two small pairs of 1/1 double-hung windows are set in the front and eastern sides of the foundation. The roofline is a hipped central roof and protruding, pedimented gabled bays on the north, east and west sides. The eastern bay extends for two stories, and a hipped roof bay "tower" extends diagonally to the northeast adjacent to the front porch. The northern bay extends over the hipped roof of the front porch.

A 3½-foot mortared stone retaining wall topped with rusticated granite capstones runs along the front property line. A set of six granite and nine concrete steps leads up to the one-story front porch, which is accessed from the north. The porch is constructed of poured concrete, the sides of which are covered with decorative sawn boards. Four turned wooden columns support the hipped roof, and the balustrade is supported by chamfered, square balusters. There are decorative sawn brackets adorning the wooden columns. The wide front door is 3/4 glazed with two rectangular wood panels on the bottom. A small Craftsman style beveled glass window is located to the right of the front door. A similar window is located on the western side of the house.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): n/a

Significant Person(s): n/a

Cultural Affiliation: n/a

Areas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE,
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT

Period(s) of Significance: 1889-1921

Significant Dates: 1889, 1901

Architect/Builder: Paulsen, John C./George S. Appleton

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Spalding-Gunn house at 433 Clarke Street embodies the patterns of development witnessed by the City of Helena during its growth from a mining town all the way to its heady days of prosperity in the late 1880s and early 1890s. It represents the success of a pioneer who came to Helena “almost penniless,” developed “one of the finest fruit farms in the west” to meet the demands of hungry miners, and with the money from these labors, acquired vast amounts of real estate for a man of his occupation.¹ The house is a good example of the sizeable, elegant homes built in Helena’s West Side during the late 1880s “boom” expansion that coincided with the extension of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Helena in 1883, as well as admittance of Montana to the Union in 1889.² It represents the second wave of settlement of the city, a more permanent and fashionable construction phase that replaced the temporary wooden mining structures. The original homeowner, Sarah E. Spalding, became a woman of wealth and she commissioned local architect John C. Paulsen to design a home and in a location that was worthy of her family’s status. Therefore, the Spalding-Gunn House is eligible under National Register Criterion A.

The Spalding-Gunn House is also significant under Criterion C for association with Helena architect John C. Paulsen and Helena builder/developer George C. Appleton. The Spalding-Gunn House is one of a few existing representatives of Paulsen’s architecturally significant residential work. According to Dennis McCahon, Helena artist/historian and author of the newspaper *Ten Great Old Buildings, Walking Around on Last Chance Gulch*, a “handful of [Paulsen’s] houses” remain intact in Helena. The demolition of so many structures designed by Paulsen, both commercial and residential, remodels and original construction, illustrates rarity of Paulsen’s commissions in Helena. The house was one of hundreds of homes constructed by Appleton in Helena’s booming years between 1884 and 1892.

Sarah Spalding

Sarah Elizabeth Fish was born on November 30, 1847³ in New York to Horace and Nancy (Sieger) Fish. Both of her parents were born in New York as well. Later, she married a Mr. Griggs from Ohio and they lived in Medina, Kansas, where she gave birth to her only child, Alena (Lena) Louise.⁴ Mr. Griggs died sometime prior to Lena’s fourth birthday, and Sarah found herself traveling to the Montana Territory with Lena. Sarah may have known Daniel before she relocated to Montana, as sources state that she was from New London, Huron County, Ohio, the same county in which Daniel was purportedly born.⁵ Sarah and Daniel were no doubt enticed to come to the Montana Territory by the riches promised through mining, and by the promise of commercial gain. As in the quote below,

A man would be a fool to contemplate an existence in a place so far removed from all that could make life pleasant. But there was an attraction that held him like a lode stone And the women, too, were there. They had dared for love, the traverse of the dreary plains, and had, for love, fearlessly

¹ *The Montana Frontier*, Merrill G. Burlingame, Helena, State Publishing Company, 1942, 346.

² *The Heart of Helena: A Historical Overview*, Chere Justo, September 29, 1989, p. 10.

³ There is a discrepancy in the actual year of Sarah’s birth: the 1880 Census lists her year of birth as 1847, the 1900 Census lists it as 1849, and her death certificate lists it as 1850. The death certificate has other errors as well, which tend to decrease the reliability of the information contained therein.

⁴ According to the 1900 Census and her obituary, Sarah had an adopted daughter, Clara, who was born in 1889. At the time of Sarah’s death in 1921, Clara was married to a Mr. Rosamond and living in Oregon. Clara may have married the Spalding’s coachman, Frank Rosamond, who was 7 years older than her and lived with the Spaldings after they moved out of the Spalding-Gunn House.

⁵ *History of Montana*, 1204. Daniel was born either in Ruggles, Ashland County, Ohio or Huron County, Ohio on September 5, 1835 to Charles and Jemima (Treat) Curtiss. James U. Sanders, ed., *Society of Montana Pioneers*, Akron: The Werner Co., 1899, Vol. I., 138. He resided in Ohio until 1853, when he moved to Wisconsin, where he engaged in the fruit business in Clinton, Rock County. At some point around 1857 he lived in Wheatland, Clinton County, Iowa.

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one acre (7,910 s.f.)

UTM References:	Zone	Easting	Northing
	12	420028	5159858

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): Township 10 North, Range 4 West, NW ¼ SE ¼ SE ¼ of Section 25

Verbal Boundary Description

Helena Townsite, Block 55, Lot 10A

Boundary Justification

The property as originally conveyed to Mrs. Spalding's first husband, D.W. Curtiss included Lots 7, 8, 9 and 10 of Block 55. In 1946, the then owner conveyed the eastern portion of the property to his son, whereon a one-story house was built (present Lot 9A). In 2001, it was discovered that the northeastern portion of the house encroached on Lot 9A, and a property line adjustment was made. The National Register boundary is drawn, according to legally recorded lines, to encompass that real property historically associated with the Spalding-Gunn House and on which the historic house rests.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Pamela J. Attardo
organization: _____ date: August 4, 2006
street & number: 433 Clarke Street telephone: 406.443.6057
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59601

Property Owner

name/title: Pamela J. Attardo and William L. Tonidandel
street & number: 433 Clarke Street telephone: 406.443.6057
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59601

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The first story of the house is composed of painted, soft, locally fired Helena brick. A granite water table runs along the top of the stone foundation. The first-story windows have granite sills above decorative diagonally set brickwork. Between the first and second stories of the eastern bay and tower bay runs a granite strip surmounted by a row of diagonally set bricks.

The eastern bay and the tower bay each have a center picture window topped by a full-width stained glass transom set between two narrow 1/1 double-hungs. The western elevation features the abovementioned beveled window, as well as a small square 1/1 double-hung window, a large 1/1 fixed window, and a smaller 3/1 double-hung window. Three pedimented gables, each with a trio of Gothic-style windows and fish scale shingles, are present on the northern (front, over the porch), eastern (over the bay window) and western sides of the house.

At the second story, a 3/1 double-hung window is centered in the eastern and northern gabled bays. The western side of the house also features a 3/1 double-hung window beneath the pediment, and the tower bay features a 3/1 double-hung center window flanked by a 1/1 narrow double-hung window on either side. The window architraves are decorated with bull's-eye molding in the upper corners. A metal pipe-topped exterior chimney rises alongside the northern side of the east bay.

A small two-story shed-roofed addition is located at the rear of the house that consists of a sunroom and laundry on the first floor and covered porch on the second floor. When the house was built, this was a one-story back porch service entrance, but sometime before 1930 the first-floor porch was enclosed, an interior back set of stairs was added, and a sleeping porch was added on the second story. These changes were made after the period of significance identified in this nomination. Both sunroom and porch have multi-paned windows that wrap around the southern and eastern sides. A 3/4 glazed door with three panels at the bottom is present at the rear, along with a picture window. The rear gable has a single 1/1 double-hung window.

The interior of the house retains a high degree of integrity, as the floor plan has remained largely unchanged since construction. The original oak flooring remains throughout the first floor. The first floor features a small hallway with an elaborate textured plaster ceiling surrounded by raised panels. To the left, a set of pocket doors leads into a formal parlor. A second set of pocket doors separates the parlor from the library, which then leads into the formal dining room. The kitchen is adjacent to the dining room in the rear of the house. The above-mentioned addition is accessed through a door in the library, and a set of narrow stairs lead to the back bedroom and second-story covered porch.

An oak stairway with turned balusters and elaborately carved newel post to the right in the entry hallway leads to the four second floor bedrooms. The master bedroom suite consists of a bedroom and dressing room. An original swing arm gas sconce remains on the wall in the dressing room. The original second floor bathroom is located adjacent to the master bedroom.

Garage A two bay flat-roofed concrete block garage was added to the western front portion of the house in 1946 and after the period of significance identified in the nomination. The garage encroaches on the front porch. The north front elevation contains two overhead style doors with six lites in each. Clapboard siding and a decorative parapet were added to the garage circa 1993.

Integrity:

The Gunn-Spalding House retains good integrity. The design, materials, and workmanship of the home's original construction are intact on the majority of the building. The proportion and organization of the façade, basic plan and mass and fenestration pattern remain. Changes include the encasement of the original wooden siding with aluminum siding, a reversible "improvement", addition of the garage, enclosure of the back porch and second-story sleeping porch addition, and replacement of the original Mansard tower roof with a hipped roof. Interior changes include removal of the wall

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between kitchen and dining room, modernization of the kitchen and the addition of a powder room in the rear portion of the entry hallway on the first floor. These changes do not detract from the overall integrity of the property. Though there have been both historical and more recent modifications to the house, it still continues to convey its historical significance.

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encountered the mountain storm. Those women! Do you know what those women were? They were heroines! They were good women – they were the mothers of men who have since helped make this no small part of a country we all should love.⁶

Sarah, a pioneer to the Montana Territory, came to Helena in 1876 via steamboat from Bismarck, North Dakota, to Fort Benton, Montana, and from there traveled across the plains by stagecoach with her four-year old daughter. Once in Helena, she married Daniel W. Curtiss, also a Montana pioneer. Sarah and Daniel may have known each other prior to their meeting in Helena, as they both had ties to Huron County, Ohio.

Daniel departed for Montana in March of 1864, from Beloit, Wisconsin, with an ox team, traveled across the plains and arrived at Emigrant Gulch on August 4, 1864. Soon after he went to Alder Gulch and Virginia City, where he remained until February 1865.⁷ Daniel finally settled in Helena, where for eight years he divided his time between “the musical profession”⁸ and farming. He began his fruit growing business in 1868 and in 1873 pursued farming as his sole profession.⁹ No doubt the fact that gold miners had little time or inclination to grow crops and were willing to pay premium prices for their food weighed heavily in this decision.¹⁰ Such was the demand that he shipped his fruit to Fort Benton, Bozeman, Deer Lodge and other towns in the vicinity of Helena.¹¹

Sarah and Daniel were married on February 7, 1876, and erected the first house on Rodney Street, one of Helena’s oldest neighborhoods.¹² The location and continued existence of this house could not be verified. By 1879 they had a fine residence on the corner of Clarke and Curtiss Street (named after Mr. Curtiss and now known as Howie; present day Curtiss Street is a few blocks from the historical Curtiss Street).¹³ This house was razed at some point and a newer house was built on the site. At the time of Daniel’s death in 1884, he and Sarah owned nearly 100 real estate lots in Helena and a ranch in Grizzly Gulch, on the outskirts of Helena.¹⁴ So great was the Curtiss’ success that in 1881 Daniel was featured in *Montana and Yellowstone National Park*, a book written by Robert E. Strahorn, who was employed by the railroads to attract settlers to the Montana Territory.

In the suburbs of Helena, [Grizzly Gulch] at an altitude of 4,300 feet above the level of the sea, Mr. D.W. Curtiss has the largest tract devoted to the cultivation of small fruits in the Territory. Nine acres are planted with strawberries, and he has 8,000 currant bushes, 5,000 gooseberry, a few raspberry and other plants, his entire tract consisting of twenty-four acres. Mr. Curtiss states emphatically that he can produce any of the smaller fruits better than Ohio, his old home, if let alone by the grasshopper. With the assistance of one man last year he produced 7,000 quarts of strawberries, a fine crop of gooseberries and raspberries, and has ripened 1,000 bushels of tomatoes in one season. His sales of fruit this year ran as high as \$200 per day at the best season. Strawberries and other small fruits sell readily at from 40 cents to \$1 per quart, and for the very first in market is one dollar obtained. Currants bring 50 to 60

⁶ *History of Southern Montana*, A.L. Noyes, Helena, MT: State Publishing Company, 1915, Chapter 29, 1.

⁷ Daniel may have been accompanied by his younger brother Charles, also a gardener, because the 1870 census lists them as sharing quarters in Helena.

⁸ *History of Montana 1739-1885*, M.A. Leeson, Chicago: Warner, Beers & Company, 1885, 1204.

⁹ *Ibid.* Despite Daniel’s proclamation that he devoted himself to farming full time after 1873, his 1884 probate records indicate that he was making various fruit wines for sale and that he had a brisk business renting and selling pianos and organs.

¹⁰ Miners paid as much as a dollar a pound for flour. *Historic Helena, An Early-Day Photographic History of Montana’s Scenic State Capital City*, John Schroeder, Thurber Printing Company, Helena, 1964.

¹¹ *History of Montana*, 1204.

¹² *History of Montana*, 1204.

¹³ See footnote 14.

¹⁴ According to Sarah’s obituary, Daniel was the proprietor of the “famous Fountain Gardens of Helena”. This may have been the Grizzly Gulch ranch or the gardens behind their house on Clarke and Howie.

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cents per gallon. Tomatoes sell at from 10 to 25 cents per pound. Mr. Curtiss from Ohio to Helena ten years ago, and almost penniless, embarked in small fruit culture. He has now one of the finest fruit farms in the west, from which he markets from \$4,000 to \$7,000 worth of fruits and vegetables per year. He calls Montana "the best poor man's country in the world."¹⁵

Daniel and Sarah came to the Montana Territory with very little money, but were successful through good fortune, hard work, and the demand for produce to feed busy and hungry miners. They were eventually able to acquire vast amounts of real estate, upon which Sarah eventually built the upper-middle class Spalding-Gunn house. Sadly, Daniel died from heart disease on May 10, 1884, five years before the house was built. The house, though built after Daniel's death and Sarah's subsequent remarriage to William S. Spalding, was built on land that Daniel acquired and with the considerable legacy he left his widow. Shortly after Daniel's death, Sarah relocated to a wood frame house, designed by rising star architect John C. Paulsen, the same architect who would design the Spalding-Gunn house.¹⁶ The location of this earlier house and its continued existence is unknown.

She remarried sometime between 1887 and 1889 to William S. Spalding, who was about 13 years her junior.¹⁷

In 1889, Sarah retained John C. Paulsen and builder George C. Appleton to build the Queen Anne style Spalding-Gunn house. The home Sarah commissioned is a wonderful example of an upper middle-class house built upon the success of a pioneer settlers. During this time period, Helena's population swelled tremendously, and businesses prospered during this time, spurring residential as well as commercial construction.¹⁸ Classic Victorian architecture reflected the prosperity of the time, and Mrs. Spalding's home is an example of such.

The Spaldings remained in the Spalding-Gunn House until 1897, when they moved to 16 Homer Block. They were listed at four different address in the city directory until 1907 when they relocated to San Francisco. Sarah deeded her home to her daughter Lena and son-in-law, Milton S. Gunn, the latter who was just achieving success as one of Helena's most prominent attorneys. At the age of 73, Sarah was visiting Lena for a five-week stay when she died in the Spalding-Gunn House on June 3, 1921. Sarah is buried in Forestvale Cemetery in Helena along with her daughter's family, the Gunns. Her obituary reveals that she was a charter member of the First Congregational Church of Helena, had a reputation as an active and consistent worker, and was dearly loved by those who knew her.

Sarah's daughter Lena was educated at the progressive and prestigious Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, further evidence of Daniel Curtiss' economic success in Helena. Like the proper stereotypical Victorian woman, Lena's name never appeared in print other than her wedding announcement and obituary. According to the latter, which made the front page of the Helena Independent Record on November 6, 1933, from the time of her marriage to Milton, she enjoyed a prominent part in Helena's social life and "was associated with many civic and welfare enterprises for the betterment of the community and won esteem and love of all who knew her."¹⁹ Like her mother Sarah, she was a charter member of the Congregational Church in Helena, and when it dissolved, she became affiliated with the Presbyterian church. Her obituary

¹⁵ *The Montana Frontier*, 346. Daniel's step-great grandson, Milton P. Gunn ("Phil") recalls that his great-grandfather had a "truck garden" that covered a lot of property in the west side of town. This is confirmed by the drawing of the Curtiss' house and garden from *History of Montana* that is included in this nomination.

¹⁶ *Helena Board of Trade Report*, 1887, 12.

¹⁷ Mr. Spalding was listed in the 1886/7 Helena directory as a "painter with DC Ross". In 1889, his occupation was listed as "real estate", assumedly from the large amount of real estate he acquired through his marriage to Sarah. In 1896, Mr. Spaulding's occupation was listed as merchant selling "new and second hand furniture, tents, awning, etc." and he ran an advertisement in that year's business directory

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ Helena Independent Record, Nov. 6, 1933, p. 1

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continued, stating that she was “always modest and unassuming, [and that] she had a kindly and charming personality that endeared her to everyone.”²⁰

After the Spaldings moved out of the Spalding-Gunn house in 1897, they gave the house to Sarah’s daughter Lena and her husband, prominent citizen and attorney Milton S. Gunn. The Gunns, who were married in the Spalding-Gunn house on January 19, 1892,²¹ had previously been living in 426 Clarke Street, a lovely brick and granite duplex located diagonally across the street. For some reason, the Gunns lived in the house for only one year and then moved back to 426 Clarke. They subsequently returned to the Spalding-Gunn House in 1901 with their two small children, Milton Curtiss and Maebelle, and 23-year-old servant, Amelia Lindquist. A deed to the property was recorded on February 23, 1901, titling the property in Lena’s name, and the Gunns remained there for 20 years, finally moving on in 1921. Although the Gunns left the Spalding-Gunn House in 1921, the house was not transferred to a new buyer until 1928. The Gunns lived at 3 different addresses between 1922-1929, when they purchased 804 Gilbert Street, also in the West Side. In 1933, Lena died suddenly from a brief illness, and Milton moved out of the 804 Gilbert residence to a house located at 618 Madison sometime around 1937. Milton lived at 618 Madison until his death 12 years later in 1949. The Spalding-Gunn House is a good representation of Milton’s accomplishments and significance because he lived here longer than anywhere else and he lived there during his most productive time of life and during his greatest contributions.

Milton S. Gunn, Esq.

Milton S. Gunn was born in Allegan County, Michigan, on February 19, 1868 to Samuel S. and Cordelia (Truax) Gunn. His mother was born in either Canada or Vermont, and his father, a carpenter, was born in Connecticut, was one of the “Forty-Niners” who traveled to California in 1849 during the gold rush. Milton’s father remained in California for six years, returning to Connecticut in 1856. He then moved to Michigan, where he settled down, raised a family, and remained until his death in 1881. Upon the death of Milton’s father, his mother Cordelia settled in Helena, and was living there as late as 1921. Milton had two brothers, Shelton J., who was engaged in the lumber business on the gulf coast of Florida, and Clinton, who died in Allegan County, Michigan, at age 12. Milton graduated from Wayland High School in Allegan County, and in 1887, he entered law school at the prestigious University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He received a Bachelor of Laws degree and graduated with honors in 1889. Milton was admitted to practice law in Michigan, and shortly thereafter, in July 1889, relocated to Helena, where he worked for the Helena Journal, one of the city’s newspaper from 1889-1892.

Milton’s arrival in Helena coincided with Montana’s admission to the Union, as well as the extension of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Helena six years earlier. He was one of many hopefuls brought by the railroad to Helena in the 1880s to make a home in the West.²² Unlike the earlier strike it rich gold rush influx of the 1860s, which was comprised mainly of single men who came for gold and then left, this second wave of migration brought to Helena by the railroad was committed to Helena’s future as a growing town and included many families and persons interested in remaining in Helena and making it their home.²³

In 1890, Milton began working as a clerk for the law firm McConnell, Carter & Clayberg. By February 1892, he was admitted as a junior partner when name partner Senator Carter retired, and the firm became McConnell, Clayberg & Gunn. Milton remained a partner with attorneys McConnell and Clayberg for 16 years, although the name changed as partners came and went. In October 1892, as part of a “distinguished group of Helena orators and statesman” later known as the “Spellbinders,” Milton became involved in the dispute over what city would be the capital of the recently formed State of

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *From the Quarries*, Vol. II, 40,

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*

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Montana.²⁴ Butte's "Copper King" William A. Clark was the leader of this group, which was organized to "meet in joint discussion any gentlemen who may desire to advocate the claim of Anaconda for the Capital," and members included, among others, Helena movers and shakers Senator Thomas H. Carter, Joseph K. Toole, Wilbur F. Sanders, F.W. McConnell, Samuel Word, Mayor Weed, A.J. Craven, Senator Thomas J. Walsh, and architect Odell W. McConnell.²⁵

Prior to statehood, the gold camp of Bannack had served as the Montana's first territorial capital from 1864 to 1865. However, the seat of government moved to the booming mining camp of Virginia City in 1865. "Ten years later, following a heated referendum, accusations of corruption, and a favorable decision by the Territorial Supreme Court", Helena became the territorial capital.²⁶ When Montana became a state in 1889, legislators let the citizens of Montana choose the location of the state capital through a referendum. "An inconclusive referendum in 1892 led to a vitriolic runoff 2 years later between the top two contenders in the initial contest, Helena and Anaconda."²⁷ In what became the central engagement in the Copper King Wars, Helena was backed by Butte Copper King and future senator William A. Clark and Anaconda was backed by Copper King Marcus Daly (Anaconda was the company town for Daly's Anaconda Copper Mining Company).²⁸ Helena narrowly defeated Anaconda, and according to Helena's supporters, delivered the state from Daly's stranglehold.²⁹

In January 1900, McConnell, Carter & Clayberg became known as Clayberg & Gunn as Milton worked his way up in the firm from junior partner. In October 1903, Milton argued before the United States Supreme Court in the significant case *Helena Water Works Company v. City of Helena*.³⁰ Milton represented the waterworks company, which was seeking to prevent the City of Helena from building or acquiring its own water works company rather than continuing to acquire the city's water from the water works company. The Court decided in favor of the City, establishing an important precedent that would allow municipalities to own and operate water works facilities. By 1911, the waterworks company had tendered an offer for the sale of its facility to the City. Milton subsequently argued before the nation's highest court at least twice more during his career.³¹

In 1908, Milton and District Court Judge Carl Rasch formed the firm Gunn & Rasch (later Gunn, Rasch & Hall).³² At this point in his career, Milton had ascended to the position of first name partner in a firm, a very prestigious position. Milton's performance as an extremely intelligent and effective attorney led him to the position of Montana division counsel for the Northern Pacific Railway. He held the position for 30 years from 1911 to 1941. The vast territory covered by this position included an area of main lines and subdivisions that stretched from Livingston, Montana, to Wallace, Idaho. It was an extremely influential position for Milton, because as division counsel, he was the local representative and contact between Helena business owners and the Northern Pacific Railway. Additionally, he was frequently involved with the Helena community as the railway's liaison. For instance, when a series of earthquakes rocked Helena in 1935, causing severe damage to buildings and humans, Milton announced that the Northern Pacific Railway would transport Red Cross supplies free of charge to Helena residents who had suffered losses.³³ When Milton received news that the high school was so severely damaged that classes could not be held, Milton wired the Northern Pacific Railway and was authorized to use

²⁴ *From the Quarries of Last Chance Gulch*, William C. Campbell, Helena, Bell-Arm Corporation, 1964, Vol. II, 107.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 52 (Summer 2002) 62-65.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.* In 1882, a major discovery of copper near Butte coincided with the rise of a shrewd minder named Marcus Daly. Daly was an Irish immigrant backed by wealthy San Francisco investors, and he quickly monopolized the transportation of ore out of Butte. He also successfully challenged the international cartel that controlled the world's copper market, turning Butte and Anaconda into the world's largest mining and smelting center. Clark Fork Coalition website (www.clarkfork.org), Missoula, Montana.

²⁹ *Montana the Magazine of Western History* 52 (Summer 2002) 62-65.

³⁰ 195 U.S. 383 (1904).

³¹ *Montana Nat. Bank of Billing v. Yellowstone County*, 276 U.S. 499 (1928) and *Ex Parte Northern Pac. Ry. Co.*, 280 U.S. 142 (1929).

³² Upon his graduation from Stanford University School of Law in 1927, Milton's son Milton C. Gunn joined to make the firm Gunn, Rasch & Gunn.

³³ *Helena Independent Record*, October 23, 1935.

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railway coaches as temporary classrooms at no cost to the city. On a lighter note, when the "Know Mississippi Better Train" pulled into the Helena depot on its fourth annual tour of the United States in 1928, Milton, William G. Ferguson, Secretary of the Helena Commercial Club, and Governor John Erickson greeted the 200 Mississippi citizens that were on board the train.³⁴

In addition to practicing law, Milton operated ranch holdings in McCone, Cascade, and Lewis and Clark counties. He was also associated with Richard Harlow in building the Montana Railroad Company, known as the Jawbone Line, in central Montana, and served as President of the line from at least 1909 until it was taken over by the Milwaukee Railway in 1912. The Montana Railroad Company was an important service link between isolated mining towns and the main lines of other railroads in the state. It was built between 1892 and 1911 by Richard Harlow to reach the town of Castle, where silver had been discovered in 1882. Harlow's railroad took advantage of the rich silver, gold and agricultural resources beyond the reach of the major railroad players Northern Pacific and Great Northern Railways. The Montana Railroad Company thus encouraged railroad expansion across the central portion of Montana. By the time the railroad reached the town of Castle in 1897, traffic was already tapering off and financing was difficult. "Between the talk of Richard Harlow to raise money and the talk to keep men working without much pay, the line became known as the 'Jawbone.'"³⁵

Throughout his 57 years of practice, Milton occupied leased space in large office buildings in Helena. He began his career with McConnell & Clayberg in the Merchant's National Bank Building, a stately four-story building on the corner of Main Street and Ming Street. In 1903, the building was renamed the Union Bank & Trust Company Building, and at some point became known as the Wheat Building. It fell victim to the wrecking ball during Helena's urban renewal period, destroying any connection with Milton Gunn. In 1907, Milton took on the position for one year of Vice President of H.B. Palmer & Co., a mortgage loan, fire insurance and real estate firm located in the Palmer Building at 28 West 6th Avenue. He resigned this position in 1908, when he formed the law firm Gunn & Rasch, although he continued to rent space within the Palmer Building until 1911.

In 1912, Gunn, Rasch & Hall moved to 318 Fuller Avenue until 1925, when it leased space in the Montana Life Building at 404 Fuller Avenue.³⁶ The building at 318 Fuller Avenue was replaced with a one-story commercial building. The firm remained at 404 Fuller until 1947, two years prior to Milton's death. This building is still standing, and houses the office of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Montana.

Socially, Milton was a member of the prestigious Montana Club, which is now the oldest remaining private club west of the Mississippi River. The Montana Club was founded in 1885 by Helena's elite and quickly became the hallmark of social distinction. Members of the Club included virtually all of the rich, powerful and influential personalities in the city as well as many VIPs from across the state. The Montana Club retained its status for decades, celebrating its role as a bonding place for the deal makers and breakers of the region well into the middle of the 20th century. As a prominent attorney who represented powerful and influential clients, Milton held the office of president of the club in 1907, an office earlier held by such wealthy, powerful and influential Helena citizens as Samuel T. Hauser (1892-1894; he was territorial governor of Montana from 1885-1887), A.J. Seligman, of the wealthy New York banking family, T.A. Marlow (a director of the Great Northern Railroad), Assayer B.H. Tatem, W.A. Chessman, Norman Holter, E.C. Day (Helena attorney) and *Helena Independent* owner S.M. Neill.

Milton was active in Republican Party activities in Montana, and was twice chosen as a Montana delegate to that party's national conventions. Milton was the only charter member of the Helena Rotary Club who held continuous membership in the club at the time of his death, and was the third president of the club from 1921-1926. He was also affiliated with the

³⁴ *Helena Independent Record*, August 13, 1928.

³⁵ *Montana State Trails Plan*, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 2000, 123.

³⁶ The Montana Life Building became known as the Western Life Building around 1941.

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Helena Elks Club, the Silver Bow Club of Butte, and the Rocky Mountain Club of New York City. Interestingly, Milton was an active member of the Unitarian Church, which is somewhat unusual since Lena was a Congregationalist, and then became a Presbyterian when the Helena Congregational Church dissolved. Milton died in 1949.

Milton and Lena's son, Milton C., was born August 8, 1893. He eventually graduated from Stanford University with a law degree and joined the senior Milton in his law firm, Gunn, Rasch and Gunn. Milton C. served for 29 months in World War I, 14 months of which were spent in France, and as first lieutenant of his company was in the drives at Chateau-Thierry, Argonne and Saint-Mihiel. Milton C. married Irene Lyons, a graduate of the St. Peter's Hospital nursing program, in the Spalding-Gunn House in 1920, and they had two children, Milton P. and Irene E. (Eschenburg). The Gunn's daughter, Maebelle, was born August 17, 1898. She graduated from Castilleja Seminary in Palo Alto, California, an exclusive private girl's school that is still in existence, and Pine Manor, a school for home efficiency in Wellesley, Massachusetts, now Pine Manor College. Maebelle married Frederick Sell on September 29, 1925 and they had two children, Sarah L. (Sally Herring) and Frederick. The Sells also settled in Helena and moved into 804 Gilbert in 1935 when Milton purchased his new house. Frederick was employed with the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company for many years.

John C. Paulsen and George S. Appleton

The Spalding-Gunn House is representative of a residential structure designed by architect John C. Paulsen and his firm, Paulsen & McConnell, shortly after he arrived in Helena in 1886/7. The Spalding-Gunn house is one of only ten residential structures (nine are single family houses and one is a duplex) in Helena that can be conclusively identified and confirmed to have been designed by Paulsen. At least six Paulsen-designed residences in Helena have been demolished, and one of his remodels as well. The majority of Paulsen's commercial buildings built in Helena were destroyed by fire, a series of earthquakes in 1935, and urban renewal initiatives.³⁷ The loss of Paulsen's buildings demonstrates the need for additional means to foster awareness, promotion, respect and preservation of these resources.

Of the ten known examples of residential structures designed by Paulsen, five of them are wood frame, three are completely brick, one is brick on the first story and wood frame on the second story, and one, Paulsen's own residence, is stone on the first story and wood frame on the second story. The Spalding-Gunn House is the only known example of a Paulsen residential structure that is brick on the first story and wood frame on the second story. It is similar in massing and ornamentation to Paulsen's all brick homes, as it has diagonally set brick work and granite accents. Like the brick homes, it relies on the high quality of its craftsmanship rather than applied ornament.

Originally from Germany, where he had studied architecture, Paulsen settled in Helena in 1886/7 after visiting the United States on furlough from the German army. Paulsen quickly gained eminence in Montana, and subsequently became the official Montana State Architect, designing numerous commercial and institutional buildings throughout the state. Despite the fact that Paulsen died only ten years after his arrival in Helena, he was extremely prolific, designing at least 41 commercial buildings and approximately 32 residences (there may be more unknown residences). Paulsen's commercial work was heavily influenced by Beaux Arts and Richardsonian Romanesque architecture, and he was not afraid to mix many styles together. His commercial work shows unique fenestration patterns and mixes of various types of materials. Paulsen used a great deal of granite, both as the primary material as well as ornamentation in his commercial buildings. In his existing residential structures (not including those that were demolished), Paulsen incorporates many granite details, as

³⁷ Bristol Hotel and Penn Block, 1887, demolished; St. Vincent's Academy, 1887, demolished; Helena High School, 1892, demolished; Novelty Block, 1888, demolished; Helena Electric and Light Co., 1890, demolished; Pittsburg Block, 1888, demolished; Bailey Block, demolished; Gates' Business Block, demolished; Phoenix Block, demolished; Thompson Block, demolished; Broadwater Natatorium, demolished; Wesleyan University, demolished; Helena National Bank, demolished; Gans and Klein Building, demolished; Granite Block, destroyed by fire; original Montana Club Building, damaged by fire.

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well as decorative brick work achieved by diagonal setting of bricks, particularly between the stories of the houses or under windows.

Although the exterior of the Spalding-Gunn House has been altered, the essential form of Paulson's vision and the historic structure remains intact. The house has retained the key exterior materials dating from the period of its historical significance, and it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a late Victorian Queen Anne. The Spalding-Gunn House also illustrates Paulsen's preference for granite ornamentation and diagonally set brickwork. Much of the house's appeal is in its massing, the materials from which it is constructed (brick fired in Helena's kilns, granite accents, and shaped wood shingles), and the high quality of craftsmanship rather than its applied ornament. The configuration of the house, with its prominent bay windows, fenestration (including stained glass transoms), brick accent work and gabling embodies those distinctive characteristics associated with the Queen Anne style.

Builder George S. Appleton was affiliated with the Spalding-Gunn House according to the Helena Board of Trade magazine of 1886-87 with a mortgage of \$2,600 to Mrs. S. E. Curtiss, and later another reference in Appleton's records for the "William S. Spalding House, 433 Clarke, Helena, 1889, (\$2600 - mortgage)." Approximately 200 Helena residences were built or are attributed to Appleton. Of those, 105 addresses for Appleton-built homes are on file with the state historic preservation office.³⁸

Appleton was born in Victoria, Vermont, on March 25, 1862. He attended Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio, but didn't study architecture until later in his career. Instead he worked as a journeyman carpenter for the Northern Pacific Railway that delivered him to Helena, Montana. In his spare time he studied architecture which may have lead him to his association with Helena architect John C. Paulsen. He worked with Paulsen for approximately six months in 1886. "In April 1887, Appleton was hired by the firm of Wallace and Thornburgh, an insurance, real estate, and development partnership that played an important role in the speculative land and housing market of Helena during the late 1880s and early 1890s." After leaving that partnership, Appleton established his own architectural office and land improvement company in 1889. In 1890, Appleton invested heavily in the West Side, purchasing over 250 lots throughout the city, but primarily in the West Side neighborhood. He mortgaging \$15,370 for the purchase of his speculative homes, and averaging \$2,560 between the years 1890-91. But this success was short lived due to the Panic of 1893. Appleton sent was sent "scurrying for contracts during the depression years" and left Montana in 1896. Appleton eventually retired to Wading River, New York, where he died in 1941.³⁹

The period of significance for the Spalding-Gunn House is 1889, its date of construction, to 1921 when Milton S. Gunn sold the house and property.

³⁸ Appleton, George S., on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

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Photos by Lena Gunn, c. 1898-1921

Correspondence with Milton P. ("Phil") Gunn and Sarah L. ("Sally") Hertting, grandchildren of Milton S. and Lena Gunn

Telephone conversations with Betty Eschenberg, granddaughter of Milton S. and Lena Gunn, and Susan Gunn, great-granddaughter.

Building permit dated March 29, 1946, City of Helena.

Sewer hookup dated August 25, 1897, City of Helena.

Polk City Directory, 1877-2004.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1888-1958.

Death certificates: Sarah Elizabeth Spalding; Milton S. Gunn; Lena Curtiss Gunn; Milton C. Gunn; Irene Gunn; Maebelle G. Sell and Frederick Stanley Sell.

Obituaries: Daniel W. Curtis, *Helena Weekly Herald*, May 15, 1884, p. 8; Sarah E. Spalding, *Helena Independent Record*, June 4, 1921, p. 2; Milton S. Gunn, *Helena Independent Record*, May 2, 1949, p. 1; Lena Curtis Gunn, *Helena Independent Record*, Nov. 6, 1933, p. 1; Milton C. Gunn, *Helena Independent Record*, Dec. 6, 1960, p. 1; Irene Gunn, *Helena Independent Record*, June 17, 1985, p. 8A; Frederick S. Sell, *Helena Independent Record*, Sept. 25, 1979 p. 2.

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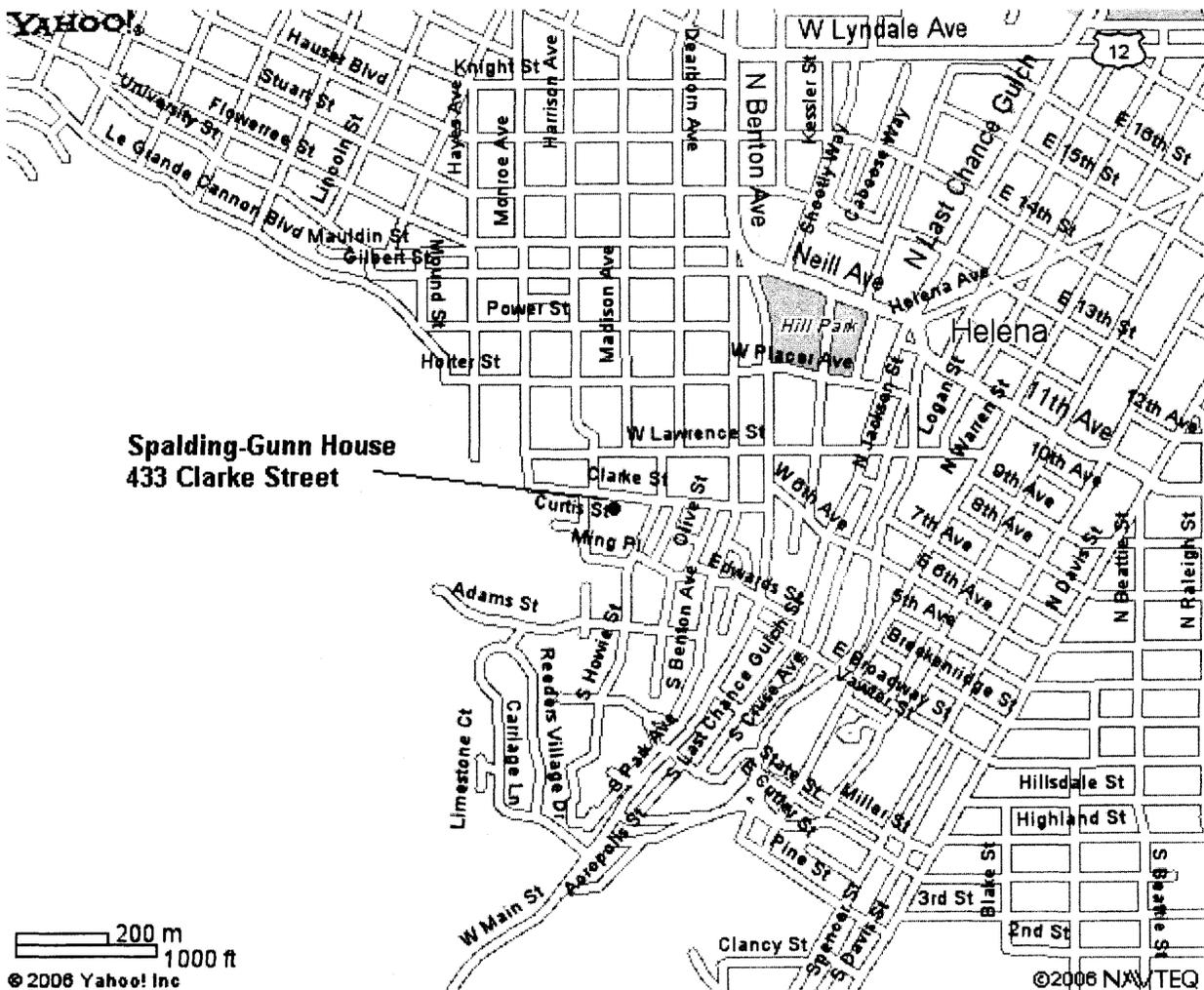
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Street Map showing the location of the Spalding-Gunn House, 433 Clarke Street, Helena, Montana.

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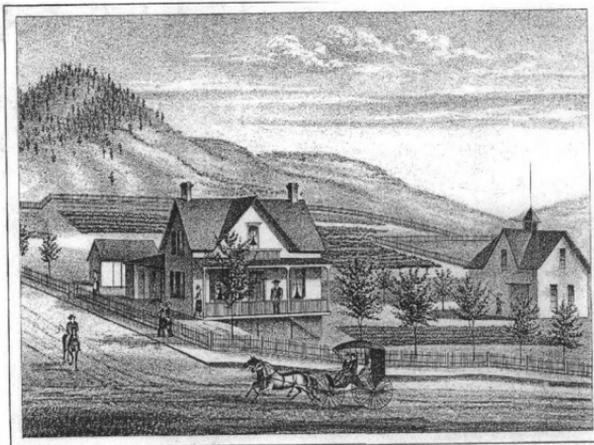
The photographs that accompany this nomination were taken by Kate Hampton August 3, 2006, using a high-resolution digital camera. In accordance with the March 2005 Photo Policy expansion, the photos are printed on HP Premium Plus Photo Paper, using a Hewlett Packard 100 gray photo cartridge. This combination of paper and inks is included on the NR's list of "Acceptable Ink and Paper Combinations for Digital Images." The images are also recorded on a CD with a resolution at least 1200x1800 pixels, 300 dpi in "true color" 24-bit format.

Historic Photographs:



D.W. Curtiss
HELENA.

Sarah Spalding's second husband,
D.W. Curtiss



RESIDENCE AND GARDEN OF D.W. CURTISS.
HELENA, M.T.

Sarah and D.W. Curtiss' residence and small farm on Curtiss Street
(now Howie) just east of the Spalding-Gunn house.

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Sarah Spalding and her daughter and Lena Gunn, 1898.



Milton S. Gunn, 1896.

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IN THE SUMMER OF 1897, BEFORE HOSTILITIES BROKE OUT IN CUBA AND MANILA, STREET CARS RAN ON CLARK STREET.

Nearly every house in the above picture is still standing. The Clark Street hill does not appear to be as steep as it is today, and the street-car is about to make a right hand turn into Harrison Avenue. The old Helena High School may be seen at the top, right, and between it and old Central School, the smokestack on the Electric Block. Lawrence Street has been cut through from Main to Warren, at the left of the high school, and in the distance, in the center, may be seen The Templeton, or Odd Fellows Building, and to the left of it, the Mitchell Block, which is still standing today. To the left of the latter may be seen the Steamboat Block and Helena Avenue. This picture, taken about half way up the Clark Street Hill, is looking to the northeast. The white house at the corner, left of center, was the home of Madame Ericke, the well-known Helena musician. The Kaufman and Stadler homes on Lawrence Street are at the left, top, just below the Steamboat Block.

Clarke Street, 1897. Spalding-Gunn House is on the right, next to the fenced yard.

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Dining Room of Spalding-Gunn house, 1900.



Serenaders in the Spalding-Gunn House library, 1900.

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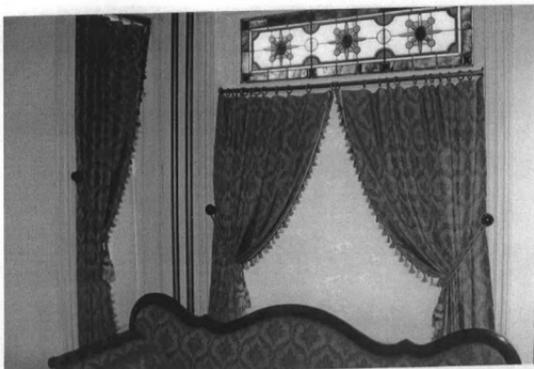
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Foyer.



Living Room.



Master Bedroom.

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Other Helena residences designed by Paulsen:



315 State St, 1887.



717 Dearborn



403 Ewing St., 1887.



642 Madison

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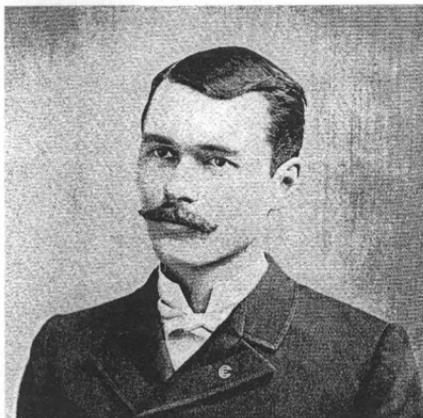
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Paulsen's own residence, 860 Hiawatha.



George S. Appleton, 1890.