

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received FEB 28 1985

date entered MAR 28 1985

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

1. Name

historic University Apartments

and/or common University Apartments

2. Location

street & number 400-422 Roosevelt n/a not for publication

city, town Missoula n/a vicinity of

state Montana code 030 county Missoula code 063

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

4. Owner of Property

name Eric and Cheryl Hefty

street & number 770 Big Flat Road

city, town Missoula n/a vicinity of state Montana

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Missoula County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Missoula state Montana

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Missoula Historic Resource Survey has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date March 1980  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Montana Historical Society

city, town Helena state Montana

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date 11/30/84
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The University Apartment is a two-story apartment structure with a high parapet wall and a flat, built-up roof. This structure is an excellent example of the flats that A.J. Gibson designed in Missoula and represents early 1900's rowhouse apartments with neo-classical details.

The front facade has a repetitive rhythm of six equal bays along Roosevelt Street. The facade is extended on the east side and angles north at a 45 degree angle, following the angle of Higgins Avenue. The north side of the structure also is broken up into repetitive bays, but is not as detailed as the front. The brick is a common brick with very thin (1/8") "battered" mortar joints. The brick is lighter red in color than that used on the north side of the building. The north side is a common brick with regular joints (3/8"). There is some decorative brickwork at the corners and under the cornice.

A wood cornice runs along the front of the building and along both ends to the back of the structure. The bay windows in each of the apartments on the front have a large fixed glass window with a beveled, leaded glass transom above. The rest of the windows are 9/1 and 12/1 double-hung wood frame windows with the upper sash smaller than the bottom in a 2 to 3 ration. There are fixed windows below the brick water table allowing light into the basement. The windows on the north are double-hung wood frame windows with a brick arched top. There is a stone sill on each of the windows.

The entrances have concrete steps and covered porches with a simplified square Roman Doric order columns. The square columns sit on a stone plinth and brick pedestal. The columns have a bracket supporting the entablature. The shaft of the column is smooth, and there are gutters on the face just below the bracket. The entablature includes both metopes and triglyphs, and there are gutters below each of the triglyphs. The ballustrades are missing above each of the porches.

The physical appearance of this building is virtually unaltered from its original condition. The only visible exterior changes from the original drawing are: (1) removal of ballustrades above the six entries, (2) added aluminum storm doors at the Roosevelt Street entries, and (3) a new chimney at the rear of the building.

There are twelve apartments in the building. Five upper units and five lower units are virtually identical. The eastern-most upper and lower units are triangular in shape and slightly larger. The dining rooms in each have a built-in china closet with beveled glass doors. Much of the interior fir trim and panel doors have been painted. Solid brick walls separate each pair of flats. The heating system has been converted to a central steam heated system. Internal changes are limited to paint, carpet over some of the hardwood floors, and typical mechanical/electrical changes common to buildings of this age.

The building is in good condition. Original drawing of the University Apartments (labeled Johnson Flats on the plans) are on file with Witwer, Price & Crabtree (Box 1; Tube 5; #109) architects in Missoula, Montana.

# 8. Significance

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

**Specific dates** ca. 1909      **Builder/Architect** A.J. Gibson, Architect

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

This structure possesses local and regional architectural and historic significance because it was designed by Albert J. Gibson, early Missoula's best known architect, and because it is one of the finest examples of the two-story, row, multi-family apartment units in Missoula. The neo-classical detailing in the cornice, windows, and entrance add to the importance. With its high degree of integrity, it represents one of the finest examples of A.J. Gibson's residential apartment architecture in the city. The building is representative of the building boom that occurred on the south side of Missoula during the early 1900s in relation to the founding of the University of Montana and the formation of the University residential district.

These apartments were constructed on the south side of Missoula, in a transitional zone between the downtown commercial section to the north, the University district to the east, and southside residential areas to the east, south, and southwest at about the time this area began to develop rapidly. One major reason for this southside boom was the construction of the University buildings at the turn of the century. Development was extensive in the area until just before 1910, when apartments were built. They were designed for white collar workers, university employees, and other professionals. The Polk city directory shows several university professors living there in the late 1920s and 1930s. These whitecollar residents were clearly representative of the new prosperity felt in Missoula due to a revived lumber industry, intensive area agriculture, and the construction of the University, as were the new upper middle class residential areas that grew up on the south side of town during this time. The structure, now the University Apartments, has always been a multi-family housing unit.

Albert J. Gibson was Missoula's best known architect at the turn of the century. The public, institutional, commercial, and residential structures that he designed in the late 1800s and early 1900s and that were constructed at the time symbolized the rapid development and civic pride of Missoula during this period more than the structures designed by any other architect. He designed large Queen Anne style homes such as the Greenough residence and neo-classical style residences such as the Gustav Peterson residence, and public/institutional building with several influences: (Carnegie Library-- currently Missoula Art Museum), and Beaux Arts Classical structures such as the Keith Ross building at the northwest corner of Higgins and Pine, and Lucy's on the east side of Higgins between Broadway and Pine. The University Apartments and the Boulevard Flats are further evidence of his architectural versatility. The University Apartments were designed and constructed about 1909 for a Charles E. Johnson, a cement contractor (who owned the property from 1908 to 1910).

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Helen F. Sanders. A History of Montana, 3 vols, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company: 1913, p.1356.  
The Missoulian. Janaury 1, 1928, pp. 1,6.  
(SEE ATTACHED SHEET)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name S.E. Missoula

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	2	2	7	11	5	18	15	5	11	9	4	0	1	3	1	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

Block 1, Lots 11, 12, 13 of South Missoula Addition

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 William A. Babcock and James R. McDonald

organization Heritage Research Center date November 30, 1984

street & number P.O. Box 9316 telephone (406) 721-1913

city or town Missoula state Montana

# 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 *Maureen Sheffy*

title SHPO date 2-15-85

For NPS use only

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

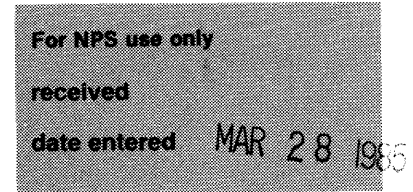
*Maureen Sheffy* date 3-28-85  
Keeper of the National Register Entered in the National Register

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

Chief of Registration

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

008

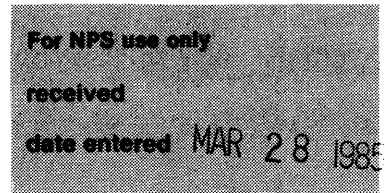
Page 001

A.J. Gibson was born in Savannah, Ashland County, Ohio, in 1862. He was not formally schooled in architecture, but starting in 1882 worked as an apprentice of H.M. Patterson, a friends of Gibson's family, and an architect and builder in Butte. Gibson moved to Missoula in 1887 and established his own business there in 1887. He was at first a partner with E.C. Selander and later Robert Westrum. He first distinguished himself through the design and constructions of St. Patrick Hospital in Missoula, in 1889-90, the Miner's Union Hall in Wallace, Idaho, in 1890, and the Columbus Hospital in Great Falls. He also designed and constructed the Gibson Block in Missoula, the Science Hall at the U of M, St. Mary's (Sacred Heart) Academy in 1899, and the County High School (Hellgate) in 1908. He also constructed the University's gymnasium (1903), Women's Hall (1903), and Library (1909). The County Courthouse built between 1908 and 1910 was considered his crowning achievement. It was at the time he designed the University Apartments.

Gibson retired in 1909 and devoted most of the rest of his life to automobiles and automobile touring. He was the first or one of the first to own an automobile in Missoula, and took numerous automobile tours throughout the United States. He was among the first to drive from Missoula to New York City. He toured Canada in 1911 and California in 1912, traveling through Nevada, Utah and Montana on the trip. He and his wife were killed on December 31, 1927, when their automobile was struck by a train near Missoula.

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

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



Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page

001

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES: (Cont.)

James R. McDonald and Historical Research Associates. Missoula Historical Resource Survey, Missoula: 1981, p. 201.

Michael Douglass, Unpublished manuscript for Albert J. Gibson Exhibit, Historical Museum at Fort Missoula; Missoula: 1981.

Polk City Directories, Missoula, Montana: 1901-1940, misc. pages.

Missoula County Plan Books, County assessor's Office, Missoula County Courthouse Missoula, Montana

Missoula County Deed Books, County Clerk and Recorder's Office, Missoula County Courthouse; Missoula, Montana.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Missoula (1884-1921), Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, New York.