

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUL 24 1979  
DATE ENTERED SEP 10 1979

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Guerrieri-DeCunto House  
AND/OR COMMON

Guerrieri-DeCunto House

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1650 Pennsylvania Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Denver

VICINITY OF

1

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Colorado

08

Denver

031

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER: Office

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William Houston & Clarke Houston

STREET & NUMBER

715 Franklin Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Denver

VICINITY OF

Colorado

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

City and County Building, Annex I

STREET & NUMBER

1445 Cleveland Place

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Denver

Colorado 80203

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Colorado Inventory of Historic Sites (16/01/0287)

DATE

Ongoing

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Colorado Historical Society; 1300 Broadway

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Denver

Colorado 80203

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<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 _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located at 1650 Pennsylvania Avenue in Denver, the first structure south of 17th Avenue on the east side of the street, the Guerrieri-DeCunto House is a single detached structure two and one-half stories in height and built of brick set over a foundation of rusticated stone. The main or west facade has two bays, the north facade three bays, the east facade four bays, and the south facade no bays. The roof is hipped with small dormers on each face. Six chimneys, three on the south and three on the north, project upward through the roofline.

The main facade, unusual for Denver, gives the building its distinctive appearance. This side of the building is divided into four elements. Sheltering the entry on the south half of the first story is a porch with Corinthian columns and engaged columns supporting a low hipped roof accentuated by a dentil course under the eaves. A large narrow window lies to the north of this entranceway. On the second story are two matching elements. Each consists of a door that opens onto a balcony with a wrought-iron railing. Each door is flanked by sidelights and set beneath a round arched window. A Romanesque, compound arch, found on many Denver buildings of the period, caps the structural opening. The arch has decorative brickwork inside and a contrasting stone outline that ends in an inward-turning scroll. At the top of the arch is a console keystone. The decorative treatment of the facade is completed by the dentil course and band under the eaves, a treatment which extends as far back as the first chimneys on the north and south sides.

Other secondary elements reflect the late nineteenth century origins of the house. There are three contrasting stringcourses, the first of which forms the sills of the first story windows, the second of which forms the lintels of the first story windows, and the third of which forms the sills of the windows on the second story. The windows themselves are two sashed and double hung and capped by stone lintels along the second story. All the dormers have a casement.

The interior exhibits many of the characteristics of Denver's Victorian houses. There is a stained glass window to the side of the entry and a large dining-room window with diamond-shaped panes in the upper sash. The bannister is carved and graceful with a repeated pattern of stylized acanthus leaves at each riser, and an egg and dart beaded border. There is much woodwork throughout the house. An unusual carved acanthus leaf appears at the corners of windows and doors on the first floor, with the more familiar "cookie" at the corner of woodwork surrounding doors and windows on the second story. The living room ceiling is lowered with a carved wood molding and a heavy carved plaster garland of fruit and flowers. The ceiling itself is decorated with a rectangle of carved plaster molding enclosing an oval of another pattern of molding, and a central chandelier, once lit by gas. The fireplace has a mirror and cornice above the mantel, pedestals to each side, and a brass inset for a gas fire. The rectangular arch between the living and dining room is decorated with filigree. The upstairs consists of four equal-sized bedrooms and a bathroom. Each room is entered through a high narrow door with transoms above.

# 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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1896

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank Guerrieri

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Guerrieri-DeCunto House is an interesting example of a small, middle-class home of the 1890s. It is significant for its architectural features which are unique for Denver, for the interest it adds to a block that has been almost stripped of its original elements over the years, and for its associations with the Guerrieri and DeCunto families, two of the more successful families in the early period of Italian immigration to Colorado.

Frank Guerrieri was part of a large family that emigrated from Paladello, Italy, via St. Louis, to Denver in 1876. He and his brothers became successful wholesale liquor dealers, often using their homes as warehouses, and sometimes as retail establishments. It was in 1895 that Frank and his wife Maria bought a lot at 1650 Pennsylvania Avenue in Denver and erected this townhouse. Although the architect remains unknown, the Guerrieris clearly had the main facade designed to resemble the Italy they had known many years before. In 1902, however, the Guerrieris sold the property to Frank DeCunto, a well-known acquaintance and fellow Italian immigrant. For the previous thirty years DeCunto had prospered as a dealer in domestic and imported wines, liquor, and groceries as a partner in the firm of DeCunto, Barra & Co. DeCunto and his wife lived in the structure until 1919 when they sold it to David Serafini, another Italian immigrant with mercantile interests. What is particularly interesting about the Guerrieris and DeCuntos is that even though they were Italian immigrants, they chose not to live in Denver's Little Italy, but rather on Capitol Hill where there were few, if any, other people of that ethnic group. So far as is known, the Guerrieri-DeCunto House is the only property remaining associated with these two families.

From an architectural perspective the house is the only one of five townhouses remaining on this block in Denver, the others having fallen to the wrecker. The structure itself represents the last vestige of how this block appeared during the early twentieth century--a block of small rectangular homes for the middle classes. Yet what makes the structure particularly interesting and virtually unique in Denver is the main facade with its Italianate details and lineage, reflecting the Guerrieris' attempt to recreate in Denver a style they had known many years before in Europe. Today the house stands in Denver as a pleasant island in Capitol Hill.

