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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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|   | TYPE ALL ENTRIES   |   |             | . REGISTER FORM.<br>SECTIONS         | S                                     |
|---|--|---|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 NAME  | *<br>WASSWEILER HOTEL AN   | id bath house   | S           |                                      |                                       |
| AND/OR COMMON   | HOT SPRINGS HOTEL,   | WASSWEILER W  | ARM SPRINGS |                                      |                                       |
| LOCATIO   | N what here  |   |             |                                      |                                       |
| STREET & NUMBER   | 4528 HIGHWAY 12 WES  | ST, E 1/2 NE  | 1/4 SEC. 28 | , T. 10 N., R. 4                     | 4 W.                                  |
| CITY, TOWN  |  | · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·   |             | CONGRESSIONAL DISTR                  | RICT                                  |
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| CLASSIFI  | MONTANA<br>CATION  |   |             |                                      | 049                                   |
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| DISTRICT  | PUBLIC   | OCCUPIED  | -           |                                      |                                       |
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| SITE  | PUBLIC ACQUISITIC  |   |             | ENTERTAINMENT                        |                                       |
| OBJECT  | IN PROCESS   | XXYES: REST   | RICTED      | GOVERNMENT                           | SCIENTIFIC                            |
|   | BEING CONSIDERED   | YES: UNRE<br>NO   | STRICTED    | INDUSTRIAL<br>MILITARY               | TRANSPORTATION                        |
|   |  |   |             |                                      | _Omen.                                |
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## 7 DESCRIPTION

#### CONDITION

\_\_EXCELLENT \_\_\_GOOD XXFAIR

\_\_\_DETERIORATED \_\_\_RUINS \_\_UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE \_\_UNALTERED XXALTERED

CHECK ONE

XX\_ORIGINAL SITE \_\_MOVED

DATE\_\_\_\_

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS #1 and 2.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD             | AR                     | EAS OF SIGNIFICANCE CH | IECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |                     |
|--------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| -PREHISTORIC       | ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | COMMUNITY PLANNING     | LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | RELIGION            |
| 1400-1499          | XXARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC  | CONSERVATION           | LAW                    | SCIENCE             |
| 1500-1599          | AGRICULTURE            | ECONOMICS              | LITERATURE             | SCULPTURE           |
| 1600-1699          | XXARCHITECTURE         | EDUCATION              | MILITARY               | SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| 1700-1799          | ART                    | ENGINEERING            | MUSIC                  | THEATER             |
| <b>X</b> 1800-1899 | XXCOMMERCE             | EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | PHILOSOPHY             | TRANSPORTATION      |
| 1900-              | COMMUNICATIONS         | _INDUSTRY              | POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|                    |                        | INVENTION              |                        |                     |

SPECIFIC DATES

#### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS #3 through 7.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET #8

|                                      | ·····                  |                        | ······                          |           |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|
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| VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRI               | PTION                  |                        |                                 |           |
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| LIST ALL STATES AND                  | COUNTIES FOR PROP      | ERTIES OVERLAPPING ST  | ATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIE         | S         |
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| CIAL2                                |                        |                        |                                 | -         |
| <b>11</b> FORM PREPARED              | BY                     |                        |                                 |           |
|                                      |                        | hitect and Edrie V     | Vincon Hictorian                |           |
|                                      | M. and Shirley         |                        | Inson, miscorian                |           |
| ORGANIZATION                         | <u></u>                |                        | DATE                            | <u> </u>  |
| Montana St<br>STREET & NUMBER        | <u>ate Historic Pr</u> | eservation Office      | June 8, 1978                    |           |
| 225 North                            | Pohorte                |                        | (406)449-2694                   |           |
| CITY OR TOWN                         | TODET (3               |                        | STATE                           | Code      |
| Helena,                              |                        |                        | Montana 59601                   | 030       |
| <b>12 STATE HISTORICI</b>            | PRESERVATI             | ON OFFICER CH          | ERTIFICATION                    |           |
|                                      |                        | OF THIS PROPERTY WITH  |                                 |           |
| NATIONAL                             |                        | TATE X VET 5/21/78     | LOCAL                           |           |
| NATIONAL                             | 5                      |                        |                                 |           |
| As the designated State Historic Pre |                        |                        |                                 |           |
| hereby nominate this property for    |                        |                        | it has been evaluated according | ng to the |
| criteria and procedures set forth by | the National Park Serv | ice.                   | I I KIN                         |           |
| STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFF      | ICER SIGNATURE         | Chull                  | (Mh-                            | <u> </u>  |
| TITLE                                | /                      |                        | DATE 6. 13. 78                  | •         |
| FOR NPS USE ONLY                     |                        |                        |                                 |           |
| I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS I         | PROPERTY IS INCLUE     | ED IN THE NATIONAL REG | GISTER                          |           |
|                                      | (AN)                   |                        | DATE Q.1.7                      | r -       |
| KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL               | REGISTER               | 914J                   | u - / /                         | ×         |
| ATTEST: Charles                      | alfen                  | $\mathbf{P}$           | DATE 7.3.                       | 8         |
| CHIEF OF REGISTRATION                |                        |                        |                                 |           |
|                                      |                        |                        |                                 |           |

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY RECEIVED JUN 2 () 1978 AUG 1 1978

1

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE

An interesting brick house and an out-building of field stone stand on the western edge of Helena. The former apparently was built in 1883 as a small hotel and the stone building served as a bathhouse. The same natural hot water springs that later supplied the Broadwater Natatorium that opened in 1889 farther to the east was used for this small scale business.

The one story red brick structure has a steep gable roof and was built upon a native fieldstone foundation. The sloping site, dropping off to the north from Highway 12, permits access to the basement at grade level by means of a doorway on the north side. The basement is beneath the additions and there is only a crawl space under the original portion of the building.

An "old-time" mason, in doing some maintenance and tuck-pointing of the stone bathhouse examined the brick of the main house and its addition. It was his opinion that the brick of the L-shaped older part of the house were fired on the site and were what is referred to as "straw brick," having been fired with straw. The brick of the additions were coal fired and are much harder brick.

On the west side the junction of old and new in the wall is very noticable, with a vertical joint and brick joints that do not match. This addition, tacked onto the "L", has a shed roof. On the east, a gabled wing projects towards the nearby bathhouse. No attempt apparently was made to match the brickwork joints in the 90 ° intersection although the curved window-head caps match those of the main house. This addition also extends to the west across the rear of the original building. Its north-south gable roof is slightly lower than the roof of the main roof.

There are two doors in the north wall of this addition. The sill height is about 6' above grade level -- the porch is long since gone. The threshold of one of the doors (on the northeast) shows considerable wear as if this may have been the door used most often to reach the bathhouse. There are no other openings or the north except the basement door in the stone foundation. There is a single window on the west wall; its decorative wood cap matches those of the original house.

A wood porch extends across the front of the building. It once wrapped around the east side. Today a small roofless porch is located in the intersection of the house and addition.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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CONTINUATION SHEET 2

ITEM NUMBER 7

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PAGE

Of special interest is the fact that there are seven doors to the exterior of the building. Only the shed-roofed addition on the northwest corner of the "L" lacks an exterior door. Thus, there is a doorway to each of the seven rooms except the one in that addition. Four brick chimneys are visible above the roof lines. These vented stoves since there are no fireplaces.

The windows of the house are double-hung wooden sash units set in segmental arched brick openings. The windows in the original portion have 2/2 lights while those in the additions have 6/6 lights. Set within the arches above the windows are decoratively carved wood panels. The only exceptions are the two wood doublehung windows in the shed-roofed addition. The doors have arched openings like the windows, with the exception of the two doors in the north wall on the rear of the building; these have flat heads. The doors of the original building have transom lights, except that the one door in the south wall of the intersection of the rear addition lacks a transom light.

The interior is relatively plain and has been altered over the years. The interior trim is not significant, although that of the original portion of the house is more ornate (in a simple way) than that of the additions. Walls and ceilings are plaster and there are some remnants of wallpaper still on the walls. The ceiling of the shed-roofed addition is missing. The interior is in relatively poor condition. The owners have maintained a weathertight roof on the building and the windows are intact.

To the northeast of the house stands a one story native rubble stone bathhouse that has a shed roof. The front or south facade has the only openings. There are four doorways and four windows in a door-window arrangement. There is evidence of the wooden partitions that once divided the building into individual compartments. Old timers tell of the wooden tubs that were in each compartment. The shed roof (which slopes to the back) has been recovered several times. In recent years skylights have been installed. Some of the stones utilized for the building are fairly large and must weigh several hundred pounds.

The bathhouse and the main house with its apparent early additions, alterations and adaptive uses are reminders of a lost era. A small hotel-resort constructed at a moderate distance from a growing mining camp reflects a definite social aspect of life in the mid-to-late nineteenth century.

> John N. DeHaas, Jr., AIA June 7, 1978

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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PAGE 1

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The Wassweiler Hotel and Bathhouse, also known historically as the Hot Springs Hotel, stand on the west side of Helena in an area of presently expanding residential development. The hotel, however, still maintains some of its out-of-town atmosphere in the adjoining vacant lots east, west, and north of the site. The Hotel and Bathhouse is significant in representing the early commercial and recreational development in Helena, a youthful placer mining camp which eventually became the capital of Montana.

The search for historical records on the Wassweilers and their business was not exceptionally fruitful, and the financial information available from an Abstract of Title undoubtedly biases ones perspective of these two individuals. In this case, however, the abstract gives insight into their characters. Helena's early records bulge with information on the giants who became financially and politically powerful or socially prominent, but the Wassweilers failed to meet these criteria, and their personal lines have been mostly forgotten.

Ferdinand J. Wassweiler emigrated from Germany at the age of 12. Most of his youth was spend traveling about the country. He picked a bride, Caroline Warrel, in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1864, and headed for Virginia City, Montana, territory. The following year, they moved to Helena, and settled on Ten Mile Creek just west of town. As residents of a developing mining camp only two years into its existence the Wassweilers sought to make a living by running a hotel and bathhouse with hot mineral spring water.

Though records are scant, one can imagine that the grimey, growing gold camp inhapitants made good use of the Wassweiler's facilities. According to the Business Directory of 1868, "The Hot Springs... is destined, at some future day, to be to Montana what Sarotoga now is to New York. These springs, both hot and cold, are pronounced by able physicians as possessing medicinal properties of rare virtue. hey) are at present the resort of invalids, visitor and pleasure seeker. The hotel at the Springs is fitted up in an elegant manner, as also are the grounds. The bathing facilities are good; and, in fact, everything connected with this resort is conducted in the best possible manner. The stranger, visiting Helena, should by all means pay these noted Springs a visit."

One of their early guests, history has recorded, was Pauline, wife of Anton M. Holter. Pauline came up the Missouri River on the Steamer <u>Gallatin</u> in 1867, and boarded at the Wassweiler's for \$10. a day until her husband could prepare a home for her near his sawmill. Anton's wife did not wish to remain long at this establishment, and she moved into his crude cabin before their house was finished. Although Pauline did not stay long at the Wassweiler's, she apparently

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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developed a friendship with her hostess, and her husband recorded that she sewed for Caroline for several years.

As land and water were to be had for the taking, and only mineral claims ranked as important in the early days, it was not until June 14, 1869, that Ferdinand officially filed claim to the water from the two springs on Ten Mile Creek. The springs were situated 4000 and 4300 feet above his Hot Springs Hotel. Each produced 12" of water which he piped along with ground water through wooden boxes underground to his bath house.

The survey of the area was not completed until 1868, and on August 12, 1869, the Wassweiler's obtained a pre-emption certificate of title to the NE 1/4 Section 28.

Even before acquiring full title, Ferdinand and Caroline must have tired of running the business. In 1868, Mr. Horace Mattison was operating the place, which he billed as the "most tasty and attractive Garden in the territory". He advertised balls, social parties, and picnics, and "re-arranged and refitted the entire premises".

In spite of having a manager, Wassweiler was forced to mortgage his land on November 1, 1868, to William Fohr for \$1500. Fohr assigned the mortgage over to William Snavely, who collected the debt on May 10, 1872.

Although situated in an area where many men grew to be millionaires as a result of mining, transportation, and commercial ventures, the Wassweiler's, time shows, were not so adept at handling their financial affairs. Ferdinand emerges as a wheeler-dealer who lived from loan to loan through fraud, deception and clandestine activities.

The means of repayment for the above note set a pattern which typifies the rest of Wassweiler's financial dealings. The day before the note was due, he borrowed \$2500 from Snavely, using the W 1/2 of his land as a mortgage, repaid the original note, and walked away with \$1,000 cash. When the second note expired in one year, Wassweiler again borrowed \$2,000 from Snavely, and apparently came up with \$500 cash, to make payment. There is no evidence that this third note was repaid.

Along with financial problems, Wassweiler had a management turnover. In October of 1871, he leased his property to E. K. Shed for a three-year term. Again, the property was rebuilt and renovated to make it "one of the most notable and fashion-able places of resort in Montana".

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



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By the time the three year lease with Shed expired, on October 28, 1874, the Wassweiler's sold the W 1/2 of the NE 1/4 Sec. 28, to Charles A. Broadwater and A. J. Simmons for \$10,500. The sale included the hotel and bath house, and the rights to the hot springs. Colonel Broadwater continued to operate the Hot Springs - also referred to as the Helena Hot Springs, for at least 15 years, when he completed his famous Broadwater Hotel and Natatorium, which used the same hot water source. This first Wassweiler Hot Springs, just as the Broadwater Hotel, have now vanished without a trace.

It is not known what the Wassweiler's did for nearly a decade after selling their Hot Springs, but in 1883, they erected a new hotel and bath house on the E 1/2 NE 1/ of Section 28. This is the property being considered for the National Register of Historic Places. The place was billed as a "favorite resort for people afflicted with rheumatism and other diseases, who are benefitted by bathing in the medicinal [sic] water. The temperature varies from 110° to 190° Fahrenheit. They are situated in a picturesque glen, and there are a hotel and bath houses neatly kept and of ample accommodations".

The remaining 80 acres of Wassweiler property was not involved in any financial dealings for ten years after selling out to Broadwater. Then, on December 9, 1884, more than a year after the erection of this new hotel and bath houses, he mortgaged to Patrick Kelly. The long dry spell must have whetted his appetite, for only ten days later he also mortgaged the same property to George T. Jackson of New York for \$4,000. This latter mortgage must have been a commercial investment for Jackson, as the note specifically mentions the "Hot Springs", if not Kelly's note.

Fortunately for Kelly, Wassweiler did pay him on June 16, 1885, but Jackson did not live to see repayment. When Wassweiler failed to pay, the heirs filed suit, and finally collected \$4,000 plus interest on July 18, 1890. Apparently, Wassweiler came up with the repayment on some temporary arrangement, for only 13 days later, he again mortgaged. This time he borrowed \$4,500. from the Thomas Cruse Savings Bank. The mortgage indicates that Wassweiler had already sold a right-ofway to Montana Central Railway. It does not, however, mention that 12 days prior to the mortgage - one day after his repayment to Jackson's heirs - Wassweiler had also sold a right-of-way to the Helena and Red Mountain Railway for \$1,300. (Helena and Red Mountain transfered title to the Northern Pacific in December 1899).

Then, clandestinely, and without satisfying his debt to Cruse, on June 1, 1892, Wassweiler sold his entire property to H. S. Tullis for \$4,000. Only four days later, and undoubtedly prearranged, Tullis sold the property for the same amount to Caroline, Wassweiler's wife.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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Apparently, prior to the mortgage with Cruse, but before the note to Jackson was satisfied, Wassweiler made a financial deal with a former customer. On September 22, 1887, Wassweiler mortgaged to Anton M. and M. M. Holter for a sum of \$838.20. As he failed to repay, the Holter's sued in court in March 1f 1893, and won their case. The sheriff was to attach the property and sell it at public auction to satisfy the legal debt.

The sheriff returned to court claiming that Ferdinand Wassweiler had no property. The Holter's were not to be tricked, and filed suit again, claiming the transactions with Tullis and Caroline were fraudulent and intended to cheat them. The court so found, declaring the Tullis and Caroline transactions void, Ferdinand Wassweiler the lawful owner. The sheriff again was ordered to attach the property and sell at public auction to satisfy the Holter's claim. Wassweiler appealed the decision, but lost his case on March 15, 1897.

For some reason as yet undetermined, the debt was not paid, and the property was not sold. But the problems did not go away.

On July 15, 1903, nearly 13 years after the debt in question, Thomas Cruse Savings Bank filed suit against Ferdinand and Caroline Wassweiler, the Montana Central Railway, and Anton M. and M. M. Holter. Cruse apparently was still not aware of the deal with Helena and Red Mountain Railway or their successor, the Northern Pacific. At any rate, Cruse claimed rights over Holters' as his mortgage agreement of 1890 was duly filed, and theirs was only a lien. The court decided that total claims against the property were \$6,679.68, and again ordered a public sale. Cruse purchased the place for \$5,500, enough to satisfy only his claim. Wassweiler failed to redeem the property within the six months alotted, and on March 12, 1904, he lost control of the hotel and bath houses.

It is indeed odd that Wassweiler could not make a financial sucess out of either of the two hotels and bath houses he built on his property. Hot Springs were favorite recreational places throughout the intermountain west. The hot springs on Ten Mile Creek are the only ones known to be developed in the Helena area.

Even stranger, is the fact that Wassweiler went into the same business again after selling out the place and the water rights to the springs to Broadwater. Yet, he was most definitely in business, as recorded in the Directory in 1883-4, 1888, 1889, and the History of Montana in 1885.

Correspondence from Mrs. Thomas E. Mills of Port Angeles, explains the situation

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of the second enterprise this way: "Old Gen.'Washwellow' saw how Col. Broadwater was making a killing with his mineral baths, so Mr. W. dug a sump, into which seeped hot leakage from the springs which he pumped over to his place--then built all the long row of little houses for baths and massages. In his own house, he converted to a duplex and made quarters for professional masseur. When Broadwater saw what Mr. W. was up to, he dug a trench around his springs and filter lined them with Bentonite-stopping all leakage and bursting Mr. W.'s balloon. Mr. W. looked sadly at his now oft empty bathhouses, and all of a sudden they reminded him of a row of criles he saw (or heard of) in some city red-light district. So he imported a madame with a string of girls and got into another business."

Since its Hot Springs hayday, the Wassweiler property has had several adaptive uses. After the red-light era, it served as housing for nearby State Nursery employees. Then, it was leased to Scott's Poultry Farm, and back to State Nursery again. The bank gained ownership again during the depression, and sold it to Ben Dreher.

Of the "Health Resorts" billed in the Helena Directory of 1889, only the Boulder (now the Diamond S in Jefferson County), and Wassweiler's remain. The greater and grander Broadwater, Alhambra, Hunters', White Sulphur and the first Wassweiler or Helena Hot Springs Hotels have all disappeared The Wassweiler Hotel and Bath House is one of the few reminders of our early and exciting history of hot springs as a major source of recreation. And this site traces its ancestory to the early development of Helena.

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