

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

**NRIS Reference Number: 94000801**

**Date Listed: 7/28/94**

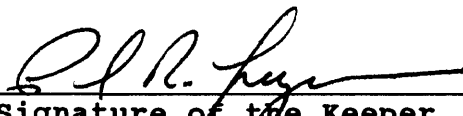
Swain, William, House  
**Property Name**

Whitman  
**County**

WA  
**State**

N/A  
**Multiple Name**

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
**Signature of the Keeper**

7/28/94  
**Date of Action**

=====  
**Amended Items in Nomination:**

**Location:**

The boxes for "Not for Publication" and "Vicinity" were inadvertently checked. The information concerning location is not restricted.

This information was confirmed with Lauren McCroskey of the WA SHPO.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

001

RECEIVED 413

JUN 30 1994

INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NPS Form 10-900  
OMB No. 1024-0018  
(Rev. 10/90)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name William Swain House  
other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number West 315 Main Street  not for publication  
city or town Pullman  vicinity  
state Washington code WA county Whitman code 075 zip code 99163

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. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary M. Thompson 6/28/94  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Mary Thompson, State Historic Preservation Officer  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
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.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Paul R. Ferguson 7/28/94

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Property Name William Swain House

County and State Whitman Co., WA

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

**6. Functions or Use**

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: DOMESTIC/single dwelling Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions.)

Cat: DOMESTIC/single dwelling Sub: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials (Enter categories from instructions.)

Craftsman foundation BRICK

walls WOOD (siding)

WOOD (shingle)

roof WOOD (composition shingle)

other BRICK (chimneys)

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Located at 315 West Main Street, the William Swain house is situated on the east side of Sunnyside Hill, a residential area overlooking downtown Pullman. To the east is an excellent view of Washington State University. The Swain house was one of the first homes built on Sunnyside Hill in the Old Town of Pullman after 1900. It appears to be the first Craftsman Style home built in the area and one of the largest of that style on Sunnyside Hill. Some small farm houses and a few residential structures were scattered on lots to the east and south of the home, but by 1917 several of them had been torn down. Most of the neighborhood was developed as residential properties during the building boom of the 1920s and 1930s. At this time residential building expanded in order to accommodate the State College at Pullman and the needs of college faculty, staff, personnel, and students. Several blocks to the west of the Swain house were platted after the Second World War. Development of Sunnyside Hill continued after the 1940s, though little of it took place in the area of the original plat of the Old Town of Pullman. An architectural chronology is difficult to follow block by block because large lots were often divided and then built upon. Therefore, one will find a bungalow built in 1920 next to an apartment complex erected in 1952.

The Swain house, a two story domestic single dwelling, is built into an east sloping hillside exposing a three story elevation including the basement. Constructed primarily out of wood on a balloon frame system, the home has brick foundations. This side-gabled Craftsman Style home has distinctive architectural features indicative of Swain's personal love of light-filled rooms. Thus, several unusually placed windows illuminate the interior year-round and vaulted ceilings provide a feeling of open space. Built as the residence for William and Penelope Swain, the home maintains a stylish balance between the simple and the flamboyant. Construction on this Craftsman Style home was completed in 1917, the same year Pullman's "pioneer architect" was elected Mayor of Pullman. The residence retains its historic and architectural integrity as its appearance is largely unchanged. Wooden front porch steps at the front of the home have been replaced with cinder block (soon to be covered with a brick facing to match the foundation) for support purposes. A column has been added to the pier on the front porch, also for support purposes, but it closely resembles the original porch pillars and provides a symmetrical appearance to the front entry area.

The Swain house is large and spacious. Its 2,554 square feet (including basement and second floor) are spread over a modified square floor plan which conforms to the shape of the lot. One of the most interesting exterior features is the porch which wraps around the northeast corner of

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the home. This large porch serves as both a massive entry to the home and as an outdoor room. The heavy, squared columns on the porch are echoed throughout the interior. The columns do not reach to the ground as the porch is supported in part by pillars beneath the floorboards. These supporting pillars are shielded from view by intricate lattice work under the porch. The light, lacy lattice work gives the impression that the porch is actually floating in space above the slope of the hill. Boards in the porch flooring join to make a diagonal seam on the north corner, forming a unique visual pattern mimicked in the design of the ceiling planks. A view from the porch is spectacular as it overlooks both the town and the university and in the distance, the rolling hills of the Palouse.

The home is topped by a moderately pitched roof with flared, wide, overhanging eaves. These multi-level eaves with their liling flares suggest a Chinese or Japanese influence on the design. Such influences along with the exposed rafter beams mark the home as having been constructed in the Craftsman Style. Green composite shingles cover the roof. The exterior walls on the ground level display cream painted, rabbeted clapboard siding in a traditional horizontal pattern. The upper level exterior surface boasts green, plain wood shingles under the gables.

William Swain utilized windows in a playful way, locating them in unusual positions on stair landings, in closets and even on an interior kitchen wall. The side-gabled home exhibits ribbon windows and paired windows. Fir framed, they display several sash operations including casement, hopper and double hung. All the windows appear original and are in prime condition due to the protection afforded them by the wide, overhanging eaves. The windows significantly enhance the interior decor while framing dramatic views. Multiple, front-gabled dormers jut out to form whole rooms on the second floor, each one disclosing a different and creative window arrangement. Interior features connote the Craftsman Style while exhibiting the personality of its designer, William Swain. The integrity of the dwelling's interior is well intact. This two story home utilizes every space well; it contains enormous built-in closets and cupboards.

The living and dining areas and the entry are divided by heavy wooden beams along the ceiling and by large, square wooden columns. These columns, situated at room entrances, are fashioned after the porch columns - a theme carried throughout the home's main level. The living and dining areas also have a multitude of built-in cabinets and leaded glass bookcases. The columns, cabinets and wood trim in the home are fashioned of fir, giving the interior a warm, faintly regal atmosphere. The upstairs flooring, doors and wood trim are also of fir and remain in good condition. Handcrafted recessed seats (one with Swain's name written on the back) and English-style settles, both

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typical of Craftsman Style homes, provide intimate seating next to the fireplace and under the dining area window. The brick fireplace is intact and utilizes one of the two original chimneys.

Upstairs the rooms are small but comfortable. Their ceilings slant low with the roof-line. Unique features include the window designs. One example is the paired window which appears perfectly ordinary from the exterior but an interior perspective reveals a wall dividing the two. Thus, a close look from the outside would reveal a view of the stairwell through one window and of a bedroom through the other. A creatively placed interior window looking into the kitchen from the basement stairwell has been closed, but previously offered more natural light to the room. Original light fixtures and hardware remain in place throughout most of the home. Both bathrooms were built as part of the original design; although the full bath downstairs has been modernized somewhat, the half-bath upstairs remains unchanged. The updated furnace still uses the existing radiator system and the basement storage area includes the original coal bin and coal-shute door.

Evidence of wood-stove heating, referenced by the painted tin vent covers which appear in almost every room, presents a mystery. The radiators appear vintage, however, some of the tin covers are tucked behind the wood trimmed door frames and wall treatments. The trim is consistent throughout the home including the wear on the finish. A tour through the home with an architectural historian Professor Henry Mathews, confirmed our assumption that the interior remains largely unchanged from its original appearance and that the design and craftsmanship match the time-period of the home. The theory is offered that perhaps Swain used wood-stove or coal-stove heat while building the home, and then changed to radiator heat shortly after moving in, perhaps before the finish work had been completed on the wood inside. This theory is supported by the presence and location of the vent covers in the home and by the date given by the County Assessor which lists the home as having been built in 1914. All our other evidence however, including addresses in Pullman city directories, cites 1917 as the year the Swain's moved into the house. Perhaps they built it over the course of two or three years? The fact remains that even with this intriguing mystery, the overall exterior and interior of the Swain house are remarkably intact with relatively few alterations.

Property Name William Swain House

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**B. Statement of Significance**

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1914-1917

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1914

1917

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

William Swain

**Architect/Builder**

William Swain

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Property Name William Swain House

County and State Whitman Co., WA

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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:  
WSU Libraries/Special Collections

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than 1 acre

UTM References

1	<u>1/1</u>	<u>4/8/5/9/7/0</u>	<u>5/1/7/5/0/4/0</u>	3	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	4	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Liza R. Rognas, with Brian Hahn, Everett Roscoe, Andrea Sabo.

organization Washington State University Department of History date November 30, 199993

street & number West 112 Main Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Pullman state WA zip code 99163

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Property Owner** (Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Louise T. Ryder

street & number West 315 Main Street telephone 509-332-0125

city or town Pullman state WA zip code 99163



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The William Swain house is historically significant for its association with a prominent figure in local history: master architect and honored public servant, William Swain. The residence is also architecturally significant as an example of the Craftsman Style home design interpreted by Swain, its designer and builder. The house is one of the few of its type extant in the Pullman area with its architectural integrity intact and its original design function preserved. The home was built on Sunnyside Hill, the second area in Pullman to be developed after Pioneer Hill; both are part of the Original Town of Pullman platted in 1881. The Swains lived on Pioneer Hill during the first two decades of the residence in Pullman. They purchased the property on West Main in 1901, and began building a temporary residence on lot 2 during during 1914. In 1917, they moved to their permanent and much grander residence at 315 West Main. This move anticipated the spate of building that took place in the area during the following decade. During the 1920s, Sunnyside Hill and its neighbor to the north, Military Hill, became the new areas settled by Pullman's upper and middle-class residents.

Today the Swain house stands as a reminder of William Swain at the pinnacle of his political career. It was completed the same year he was elected Mayor of Pullman. Indeed, the view from his porch offered him sweeping vistas of the city he helped to build and govern. Both William and Penelope were in their fifties when the house was built. It is possible that the unique home was meant to be their permanent residence throughout the rest of Swain's public career and retirement.

William Swain was born in England in 1856. At the age of 18, he emigrated to the United States and eventually settled in Duluth, Minnesota. In Duluth, Swain took up work as a carpenter. He excelled at his work and soon became an independent contractor, constructing many fine buildings in the city. Ever aspiring to greater deeds, Swain began a diligent ten-year study of architecture, which increasingly captured his interest and formed the foundation for his long career in the field. In 1891, Swain and his life partner Penelope Bates Swain moved to the town of Pullman, Washington, where his skill as an architect and his devotion to public service combined to make him one of the town's most esteemed residents.

During the 1890s Pullman was a town filled with activity and a sense of optimism. In 1890 the town was still rebuilding after a devastating fire destroyed downtown area buildings. In 1891, the State Legislature chose Pullman as the site of the state's first land-grant college. Classes at the "State Agricultural College and School of Science" began the following year. After a tumultuous first year, Enoch A. Bryan was chosen as president, and under his leadership the college steadily grew to become a respected institution of learning. The fate

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of Pullman was tied to the college, and thus it was a bustle of construction and economic activity as residents strove to make their town a suitable host. It was in this atmosphere that Swain began his career as an architect in Pullman. He designed numerous commercial and residential structures throughout Whitman County, including the Pullman High School (c.1892), the Pullman City Hall (1882), and the famous Artesian Hotel (c. 1893). All of these structures were central to life in early Pullman and all were noted for their architectural design and integrity. Unfortunately all three of these prominent structures have been either demolished or destroyed by fire.

Of special significance is Swain's design of the local United Presbyterian Church. President Bryan secured community and monetary support for the construction of the church to serve the growing number of Presbyterians in Pullman. Bryan hired Swain to design the structure and it was completed in 1899. However, this wood-frame structure was soon outgrown by the local congregation and Bryan again took the initiative, contracting Swain to design a new church building. Completed in 1914, the new church, which incorporated parts of the old structure, was an architectural masterpiece. The massive Romanesque Revival church was hailed as being "...one of the best pieces of its style of architecture in Washington." Vacant since 1980, the "Greystone Church" has become a Pullman landmark and was nominated and accepted to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

It is significant that the Swains purchased the property for their house on Sunnyside Hill. Across the street to the northeast was the Pullman High School and down the hill to the southeast stood the Artesian Hotel, both marked with Swain's architectural signature. The Swains owned the corner lot at the intersection of West Main and Church as well as the two lots adjacent to it (lots 1,2 and 3) for well over a decade before building. During that time, William Swain was an active participant in the Pullman City government. He began in 1898 by serving two terms as the City Clerk, followed by his election to the position of City Treasurer, then Police Court Judge, and later Justice of the Peace. He was elected to the Town Council in 1914. Capping his public service career, Swain was elected Mayor in 1917 for a two-year term.

Scant records exist for documentation of Swain's contributions to Pullman's residential architecture. His name appears in some Pioneer Hill title searches as a property owner during the period 1892 through 1910. It is possible that he built and later sold several homes in the area. Local rumor has it that he designed a large Greek Revival home on the east end of Main Street for the McKenzie family when their son married the daughter of another prominent family, the Squires. Duncan McKenzie owned the property on which the Original Town of

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Pullman was platted (1881) and built. Less than thirty other Craftsman Style homes and homes exhibiting elements of the Craftsman Style exist in Pullman. A handful on Pioneer Hill and on residential streets near the college may have been built by Swain. Most of these, like the McKenzie Greek Revival home, are now multi-family residences. Their exteriors and interiors alike have been significantly changed in order to accommodate multiple entrances, fire escapes, and other hallmarks of rental property. Conversion to apartments is the standard fate of most large old homes in this over-crowded college town.

Perhaps the most unique residential structure designed by Swain is the nominated property where he and Penelope Bates Swain lived. Completed in 1917, the Craftsman Style home has the personal touch of a master architect. The shape of the home reflects the slope of the east-facing hill and utilizes its contours. Therefore, the steepest face of the slope surrounds a small garage upon which the front porch rests. Rising up from the basement garage on its eastern face, the residence shows a three story elevation. The home with its multi-leveled eaves seems to step down the slope of the large triangular lot.

Its interior reflects the warm graciousness of an English country home and it is welcoming and roughly refined in the Craftsman Style tradition. The Swains lived in the custom-designed home on west Main until Penelope's death in 1920.

Located just two blocks west and up the hill from the intersection marking the center of town where Main Street meets Grand Avenue, the Swain house afforded its designer a spectacular view of the town he helped design and govern. Easily seen from his porch were the buildings, including City Hall and the National Bank, he had designed and which for a time served as familiar landmarks to Pullman residents. It is unfortunate that so few known structures designed by William Swain remain standing today. The Greystone Church and his residence at West 315 Main Street are the only known structures of significance attributable to Swain left in Pullman. Remarkably intact, its architectural integrity preserved, this residence designed by Pullman's "pioneer architect" continues to serve its original function as a family home. It also stands as an architectural and historical reminder of Swain's contributions to Pullman so many years ago.

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Stickley, Gustav. Craftsman Homes: Architecture and Furnishings of the American Arts and Crafts Movement. 2nd edition. New York: Craftsman Publishing Co., 1909; reprint edition, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979.

Newspapers:

"Cornerstone in Place for New Presbyterian Church," Pullman Herald.  
Nov. 14, 1913.

"William Swain is New City Father." Pullman Herald. April 10, 1914.

"Impressive Ceremonies Mark dedication of New Church." Pullman Herald.  
Oct. 23, 1914.

"Pioneer Architect Died Here Friday." Pullman Herald. Sept. 21, 1934.

Photographs:

Washington State University Libraries, Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections. Hutchinson Collection, Box 123, photographs # 2788 (c. 1936).

Photocopies of all four photographs in the 2788 series were submitted with the nomination form for the National Register of Historic Places.

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November 11, 1993. Black and white photograph series taken of exterior and interior of the William Swain House on West 315 Main Street, Pullman, WA. Robert Hadlow, Photographer. Photographs and negatives submitted with the nomination form for the National Register of Historic Places, December 1993.

Professional Consultants:

Hansen, Jack. WSU History student and Public History House History Project coordinator, Orlan J. Svingen, advisor.

Lipe, William. Washington State University Department of Anthropology. Walk through tour. This nomination was conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the course, "Cultural Resource Management."

Mathews, Henry. Architectural historian, Washington State University Department of Architecture. Walk through tour of home, October 1993. Architectural integrity and design of home discussed and analyzed.

Stark, Lawrence. Archivist and historian, Washington State University Libraries. Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections.

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**Verbal boundary description**

Block 62, Lot 1, Section 6, T14N, R45E.

**Verbal boundary justification**

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the William Swain House.

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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

All contemporary photographs of the Swain house were taken by historian Robert Hadlow on November 11, 1993. Original photographs and negatives reside with the Washington State Historic Preservation Office as part of this nomination.

Photo # 1: North-side elevation of the property. Note the lattice beneath the porch. The double window in the second story dormer is actually separated by an interior wall. From this view, the right window illuminates a bedroom and the left window casts light onto the stairwell.

Photo #2: Northwest corner elevation. Here the focus of the photograph is the massive front porch. Another exterior feature of the Craftsman style is evident in the exposed rafters visible under the porch roof.

Photo #3: Northeast corner and east elevation. A side view of the stairway leading off the back porch is clearly visible here. Note the brick foundation and the multi-level roof.

Photo #4: Full east elevation. This view encompasses the rear of the Swain house. The back porch stairs are in full view. Green shingle siding decorates the second story exterior under the eaves.

Photo #5: South-side elevation and partial front, west-side elevation (note dormer). The contrast between the two types of exterior siding is plainly evident from this perspective. The small square window under the eaves (top right) provides light for a small cupboard-like closet in an upstairs bedroom. The photo also includes a partial view of the porch of the house next door. The Swains lived there briefly while their house was being built. William Swain designed and built this house before building 315 West Main next door. After his wife's death, Mr. Swain back to this house He may have resided there until his death in 1934.

Photo #6: Southeast corner. Here the brick foundation is clearly visible as is the original coal door (see bottom center of east-facing foundation wall).

Photo #7: Northeast corner and partial northside elevation. Three levels are evident here: the exposed basement, main floor and the second story. Note the tri-panel ribbon window which illuminates the dining area. The small window on the main floor's exterior east wall actually rests its internal sill on the floor of the stair landing. Thus, as one climbs the first flight of stairs a view of Pullman and of the Palouse is visible.