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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

ADR

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Joshua and Martha Armitage House

other name/site number: Herman and Mary Lindstrom House; Armitage-Lindstrom House

2. Location

street & number: 1117 East Broadway

not for publication: na
vicinity: na

city/town: Helena

state: Montana code: MT county: Lewis and 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.

Mark F. Zaunler / SHPO March 30, 2005
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:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet	<u>C. Scott Beall</u> Signature of the Keeper	<u>5/10/05</u> Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet		
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet		
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> see continuation sheet		
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain): _____		

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:	Private	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property:	Building	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> building(s)
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:	na	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
		<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing:	na	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions:	Current Functions:
DOMESTIC/single dwelling	DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure	DOMESTIC/secondary structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification:	Materials:
LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne	foundation: STONE/CONCRETE
LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/	walls: WOOD
Neoclassical	roof: ASPHALT/shingle
	other: BRICK; CONCRETE

Narrative Description

The Joshua Armitage House is located on the south side of a busy east-west thoroughfare in Helena, just a block west of the Montana State Capitol Building. The residential neighborhood features tree-lined streets and comfortable homes built in close proximity to each other. Foothills of the Elkhorn Mountains rise above the city to the south, and the house is situated on a high terrace. The two-story rectangular wood-frame house displays the massing, bays, large porch, and complicated roofline frequently associated with Late Victorian design, but no fanciful ornamentation. Instead, the pedimented gable ends show a Neoclassical influence, as do the boxed eaves, sleek cornices, and capped porch columns. The roughly rectangular house rests on a sturdy stone and poured-concrete foundation. The roofline is gabled toward the façade (north) and hipped at the rear (south) with protruding, gabled bays on the north, east, and west sides. The north elevation bay is more than half the width of the house, and dominates the façade.

A sturdy, four- to five-foot stone and concrete retaining wall defines property at the north sidewalk. A short flight of concrete steps leads up from the sidewalk to the terraced lot, and a narrow concrete walkway leads to the welcoming, one-story, front porch. The porch is raised on a poured concrete foundation, and accessed from the east side. Four, square, wooden columns support its deck (flat-topped, hipped) roof and effectively divide the porch into three bays. The east bay and central bay are open, and the west bay is enclosed by a pair of nine-light fixed windows on its north side and a single nine-light fixed window to the west. Milled dimensional lumber composes the porch floor, and three-inch tongue and groove covers the ceiling. Plain, squared milled lumber balusters form the balustrade across the east and central bays of the porch. A balustrade of similar design circles the deck of the roof, creating a balcony. The west bay features a clapboard kneewall below the fixed windows. Beadboard sheathes the skirt that encloses the underside of the porch across the north and west sides.

A two-story, gabled bay projects from the eastern two-thirds of the façade. A single, large picture window is centered in the bay at the first story level, and features a full-width transom above. Access to the home is gained through an Eastlake style oak door. At the bottom two thirds of the door, the tiger grain highlights its twelve ornately carved panels. The top third features nine lights, three smaller lights above and below three larger openings. A vintage wooden storm door protects the main door from the elements.

At the second story level, the façade features a centered, single, one-over-one light double-hung window in the east bay. The one-light wooden pedestrian door centered in the west bay provides access to the balcony.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria:	A	Areas of Significance:	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):	n/a	Period(s) of Significance:	1889-1896
Significant Person(s):	n/a	Significant Dates:	1889
Cultural Affiliation:	n/a	Architect/Builder:	unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

Set on a high terrace, the Armitage House enjoys a commanding view of the City of Helena and the Helena Valley to the north. Located a mile east from bustling downtown of Helena, and just a block from the State Capitol building, Jesse and Martha Armitage's home is on the major thoroughfare that connects those centers of commerce and politics. Constructed in 1889, the house is representative of comfortable homes built during a heady time of development bolstered by Helena's transition from a rough mining town to a territorial capital and finally a refined Capital city for the state. Joshua "Jessie" Armitage was a colorful character in the history of Montana, and by the late 1880s had settled into a career in real estate. As a real estate developer, Armitage took great interest in the platting of the town, and participated in the development of the small Montana Avenue Addition in which his home was built. He was keenly aware that the community was growing at a great rate, and anticipated its growth towards the east side of the city, closer to a potential Capitol building lots, and away from the mining and commercial centers on Last Chance Gulch. The Armitage House embodies the patterns of development witnessed by the City of Helena during the late 1880s and 1890s. For these reasons, it is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

Settlement of Helena

The town of Helena was born on a warm July evening in 1864, when four prospectors discovered gold along the banks of a rippling mountain stream they named "Last Chance." By the following summer, the strike was legend. Gold miners flocked to the diggings from all over the land. . . .

In addition to the miners, who dreamed of digging their fortunes out of the ground, came others hoping to make their fortunes off the miners. The clang of the blacksmith's anvil, bang of the carpenter's hammer, and cries of auctioneers and shopkeepers soon rang throughout the gulch. By 1870 there were hundreds of businesses in Helena, and the burgeoning downtown, which sprouted at the foot of what is now State Street, soon stretched for blocks in all directions.

Early businesses were located in log cabins, and soon sawmills were milling lumber to add false fronts to the early shops. But these clustered wooden buildings were vulnerable to fire, and several major blazes ravaged Helena during its first decade. Shopowners began to use brick and stone for most remodeling and new construction, transforming Helena from a ramshackle mining camp to a dapper young town. Although early buildings were often rather modest and functional, most builders found ways to add decorative touches and give them more class.

Helena lies near the heart of Montana's goldfields, and the town became a point of exchange for goods coming by steamboat through Fort Benton on the Missouri River, and silver and gold being hauled out of the mountains. Helena's importance rose as other Montana mines played out, and in 1875, the territorial capitol was moved from Virginia City to this thriving commercial center. By 1880, the settled population of Helena grew to over 3,000 residents. The Northern Pacific Railroad's first train pulled into town in 1883, strengthening the connections between the territorial capitol and the outside world. The railroad's long-awaited arrival was a tremendous boon to Helena, and within a few short years, the town's population quadrupled.

Helena's economy skyrocketed. Merchants, delirious with success, erected lavish business blocks, often named in their honor. The exuberance of the popular Victorian architectural styles embodied the unbridled optimism and prosperity of the day.

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

UTM References: **Zone** **Easting** **Northing**
 12 421841 5159264 (NAD 27)

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): SE ¼ NE ¼ NE ¼ of Section 31, T10N R3W

Verbal Boundary Description

Block 3, Lots 8-10 of the Montana Avenue Addition to the City of Helena.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn, based on legally recorded boundary lines, to include the land surrounding the building that has been historically associated with the building and conveys the property's historic setting.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kate Hampton
organization: MTSHPO date: November 2004
street & number: 1410 8th Ave. telephone: (406) 444-3647
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59620

Property Owner

name/title: Elizabeth V. Kohlstaedt
street & number: 1117 Broadway
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59801

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The east elevation is divided into three bays. The central, protruding bay contains four one-over one light double-hung windows at both the first and second stories, a pair centered at the east side and single windows at the north and south sides. Single, centered one-over-one double-hung windows are located within both the north and south bays of the east elevation, at the first and second stories. A narrow, modern, cinder block exterior chimney rises at the south side of the north bay.

The Armitage House's west elevation also features a central, protruding bay, but lacks the balanced fenestration pattern present at the east side of the building. Within the central bay are single, one-over-one light double hung windows at both the first and second stories. Additional windows on the west side of the home are limited to single one-light windows within the south bay at both the first and second stories.

The rear of the home features a centered, enclosed shed-roofed porch. The porch has a wooden entry door at its east elevation, and a large window across its south side. Single, one-over-one light double hung windows flank the porch. Above, there are two more windows of the same style evenly spaced across the second story.

The interior of the house retains a high degree of integrity, as the floorplan has remained largely unchanged since construction. Original finished, hardwood floors and trims are present throughout. The first floor features a large living room, which opens into a formal dining room. A hallway leads to a family room and kitchen at the rear. A large staircase leads to the four rooms upstairs.

Garage:

The two-bay garage at the south end of the property was built by Herman and Gerald Lindstrom in 1928. Though of historic age, it was constructed after the period of significance identified in this nomination, and is therefore non-contributing. The gable-roofed building has a shingle roof, clapboard siding, and minimal fenestration. The south (front) elevation contains two garage door openings: the door to the east is a ten-panel overhead style, and the west opening features a pair of tongue and groove, side-hinged doors. A pedestrian door is located to the east side of the north (rear) elevation. There are windows in the gable ends, providing light to the loft area. The east elevation features two, evenly-spaced fixed windows. The south window has two lights, and the north window has one. The west elevation features a large one-story, shed-roofed garage addition. The addition contains a single garage door at its south (front) side. The rectangular addition extends farther north than the original garage, and has a entry door within its east elevation.

Integrity:

The Armitage House retains a remarkably high degree of integrity. The design, materials, and workmanship of the home's original construction are intact. Changes are limited to the installation of glass enclosure of the west third of the front porch, and a cinderblock chimney on the east elevation. On the interior, the few changes include modernization of the kitchen and enclosure of the staircase. These changes do not detract from the overall integrity of the property. Indeed, its integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association are intact.

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Examples of Gothic Revival, Romanesque, and French Second Empire architecture all appeared in Helena, along with many buildings that combined the different styles. A number of talented architects worked in Helena during this period. As the profile of tall buildings cut into the skyline, and modern conveniences like electricity, telephones and trolley cars became commonplace, the "Queen City of the Rockies" came of age.

This prosperous atmosphere was short-lived however, for Helena's "golden years" ground to a halt with the Panic of 1893. Sparked by federal curtailment of annual silver purchases, the ensuing depression sent Helena and other mining communities across the West into a tailspin. The town never regained the momentum it once had, and in time the freewheeling profit of the goldfields gave way to a more stable economy that revolved around the affairs of state government.

Although the downtown grew slowly over the decades that followed, through the twentieth century it continued to change. During the past century many fine buildings, parks, and a walking mall have been built, while flames, earthquake tremors, and the iron ball of urban renewal have all taken a toll on historic downtown buildings. All of these factors have changed the Victorian face of the city, and given us the downtown we know today.

Physical Development of Helena

This section taken directly from Helena: A Historic City, by Herbert L. Jacobson, Donald L. Byrd, and Chere Jiusto, prepared for the City of Helena and MTSHP, January, 1982.

Helena's physical growth, that is the actual buildings, was largely determined by its topographical features. By virtue of the rich gravel bars extending from the surface to bedrock located at the lowest levels of the gulch, placer mining usurped that location as building sites for the first year. Bridge Street, located to the east side of the gulch, became the first commercial area of the mining camp.¹ The earliest pictures of Helena in 1865, shows business establishments extending from Main Street to the top of the hill at Rodney Street. Nearly all of the structures were constructed of log. Bridge Street was also the center of Helena's first residential neighborhood because there were building sites available there and because the proprietors of its first businesses lived in the back portions of their stores. It was impossible for the town to develop to the west because of the steep hillsides that comprised the gulch's western edge. Main Street was extended north, down the gulch as mining was terminated, claim by claim, and it was here that the first permanent structures of stone and brick were located.

The old Fire Tower, known as the "Guardian of the Gulch," is now the symbol for the City of Helena, and with good cause. From its prominent location, a person could have witnessed nine fires in a period of five years, from 1869 to 1874. The last most general and disastrous fire of all occurred January 9, 1874. It began in Chinatown. The wind was blowing furiously. The magnificent International Hotel, one of the finest buildings ever erected in Helena, costing \$75,000 and from Bridge Street to Grand Street was gutted. Following the 1874 fire, the Lewis and Clark County commissioners passed a fire ordinance forbidding the erection of frame buildings on Main Street below Wood Street on May 22, 1874.

The delivery of water to the area immediately east of Last Chance Gulch was an added advantage for its development as Helena's first residential area. The first water system consisted of a series of hollowed-out logs that transported water from Grizzly and Oro Fino Gulches. In 1869, the Helena Water Company improved and expanded the system by extending pipes along Warren Street to Fifth Avenue and east on Fifth to Rodney Street. Finally, the construction of the Hale Water Works reservoir above Pine Street in 1884 assured the east side of an adequate water supply.

As far as Helena's early business district is concerned, it should be remembered that as late as 1884, it was only four blocks long, extending from the corner of Bridge Street, north on Main Street to Sixth Avenue, and only two blocks deep, from Jackson Street on the east to Clore (Park Avenue) on the west. The site now occupied by the Power Block (southwest corner of Sixth and Main), was taken up by the Holter's Lumber Yard and Mill.

¹ Bridge Street became State Street in 1890 to commemorate Montana's statehood.

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A number of the early merchants who built buildings, in the original business district had a great deal of faith in future events in that they didn't have title to the land upon which they built. The United States Land Office was first established in Helena in September 1867, and until then no titles other than possessory right, could be acquired. It was not until some time after this, March 20, 1868, that the Helena townsite was filed on by Probate Judge Truitt. The patent was dated June 15, 1872, and it became possible to acquire title to the ground on which stood at least \$2,000,000 worth of improvements.

The development of local industries in Helena was largely a response to the construction needs of the community. The first industry was lumbering and by the summer of 1865, two sawmills and a planing mill were operating at capacity. Stone quarries were opened both east and west of Helena and by 1867, brickyards had been constructed. The basic bedrock formation in the Helena area is limestone and lime kilns were built in Oro Fino and Grizzly Gulch just a mile south of town.

By 1884, several other basic industries had been added. There were three sawmills and a planing mill, four breweries, two foundries, two brickyards, an electric light company, a soda water factory, and a sash, door and blind factory. Within six years, two more sawmills and planing mills had been established, another electric light company, a vinegar works, a sampling works and a gas works (coal-gasification plant).

The height of Helena's building boom was 1889. No less than 425 homes were built in 1888. The City Directory of 1889 lists nine architectural firms, four brick manufacturers, two stone quarries, eight lumber companies, three tile manufacturers, five stone contractors, fourteen carpenters, eight painters, four wallpapers, and three calciminers. There were also four cornice manufacturers, three mantel firms, and two sky light manufacturers.

Although the townsite of Helena was laid out in 1864-65, there was a definite need to have it resurveyed, which was done by a professional in 1884. There is relatively little difficulty in tracing the ownership of various lots within the original townsite. However, it is a far different question in the adjoining land that was incorporated into the city later. A definite pattern of the original ownership emerges. Nearly all of it was first a mining claim. With little or no thought to actually mining the land, filing a claim upon it was tantamount to gaining ownership. And enterprising miners, with an eye to the future and ambition to establish a permanent city, quickly claimed all of the land surrounding the townsite. The government land office, established in Helena 1867 deeded the title of the land to those having filed claims, creating the basis for a quick fortune in real estate development. The next step in the process was the surveying, sub-dividing and filing of addition plats to the city with the county commissioners. Then, sale of lots to prospective builders and real estate investors and speculators completed the process.

A study of the additions to the city and the dates they were filed reveals its pattern of growth. (see map of Helena and listing of Helena Additions on continuation pages 11 and 12) However, like every other city, large portions of each division were not built upon before other additions were added. That is, there were many unoccupied city lots even as the perimeter of the city was being enlarged. For example, both the Lennox Addition on the eastside and the Kenwood Addition on the westside were created in 1890—at least two miles from the extremities of the city. Yet it was not until the late 1950's and 1960's that the town eventually built out to join them.

The first addition to the original townsite was the Mauldin Addition on Helena's southwest side in 1879. In both 1883 and 1887 there were eight additions added, the former caused by the coming of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Helena in June of that year. During the years 1888 and 1889, six more were added each year. By the year 1893, a watershed had been crossed in the development of Helena. From that date until 1948, only two small additions were added to the city.

The Panic of 1893, a severe national depression, marked an end of an era.

By the latter part of the 1880's, Helena, with a population of 15,000, was the foremost commercial city in the Territory. Prosperity and growth continued until the Panic of 1893, which coincides with the termination of the most energetic and opulent era of architecture in Helena's past...the depression of 1893 eliminated many fortunes in Helena, thereby terminating that period of romantic commercial building – the most productive architectural period

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in Helena's past. It had lasted less than a decade, from 1886 until 1893, but in no other Montana city was the romanticism and optimism of Nineteenth Century businessmen so clearly and boldly expressed.²

The real estate developers, speculators, and their unwitting customers were hard hit:

A real estate boom in the late 1880's triggered the rapid expansion of Helena. Suddenly people began to buy vacant lots. There were few of these in the original Townsite so owners of adjacent property laid out "additions", subdivided them into lots and sold their acreage at prices, if they could sell their entire holdings, would net them 100% to 200% on their investment.

One of the first to sense the possibilities of the boom was Charles Cannon, proprietor of the leading grocery store in Helena. "Charlie Cannon", as he was locally known, was gifted with imagination, and he envisaged a greater Helena, with additions and suburbs which would accommodate a much larger population. So he laid out his acre property adjoining Helena into town lots and began advertising in the papers. One of the favorite advertisements read: "Lots-lots of lots in the Cannon Addition at lowest prices."

The newspapers began featuring real estate. They carried stories everyday about the property sales and thus helped along the boom. In a year the people were real-estate mad, paying hundreds of dollars for a lot which probably cost the owner only a few dollars. The craze lasted two years, and in that time the owners of land adjoining the Helena townsite made millions. When the boom subsided, many purchasers found themselves loaded up with lots which they could not put to profitable use. The town did not grow fast enough to justify the inflated values. Several speculators lost all they had invested and those able to hold on had to wait years before their lots became marketable.³

Up to 1893, then, the city of Helena saw unprecedented growth, and saw a huge expansion of economic, political, and social influence. This optimism and fiscal reward translated into the physical development of the town with substantial construction in newly-formed additions to the town. In the middle of it all was a man named Jesse Armitage, whose multi-faceted career choices and talents lead him to partake of the real estate boom in Helena through the late 1890s.

Joshua and Martha Armitage

One of the more colorful characters in the history of Helena, and the state of Montana, is Joshua "Jesse" Armitage. Upon arriving in Montana in the fall of 1863, Armitage saw success as a grocer, then worked as a blacksmith, engineer, and even a singing teacher. He served as an Indian agent, and police magistrate. His diverse career choices then turned to cattle ranching and mining. In 1885, during a stint as the police magistrate for the city of Helena, Armitage became "identified with a line of industrial enterprise which has important bearing upon the material prosperity and advancement of any community, that of dealing in real estate."⁴ Four years after turning to real estate as a career, Armitage constructed his large, comfortable home at 1117 Broadway, within the Montana Avenue Addition to the City of Helena.

Joshua "Jesse" Armitage, third of five children of Isaac and Anne Armitage, was born in Yorkshire, England in August of 1838. The family migrated to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1841 and then to South Bend, Indiana where Jesse went to school and followed the blacksmithing trade of his father. They engaged in the manufacture of mining tools and Studebaker wagons. In Galena, Illinois on October 27, 1857 he married Martha Nnette Argent, a schoolteacher whose father was a soldier in the Blackhawk War. Two years later, they welcomed their first son, William Alberte. In 1860, Jesse, his father and their families joined an excited group, which crossed the prairie to Pikes Peak, Colorado. Jesse was clerking in a wholesale grocery business in Denver in 1862 when Martha gave birth to their second child, Jesse Argent. In 1863 Jesse (Sr.), Martha, and their two children crossed the plains to Bannack and Virginia City, Montana, by ox team. Jesse engaged in the grocery and hardware business in Virginia City, and by 1865, had been

² Willard H. Robinson, "Helena's Fabulous Business Blocks," *Montana the Magazine of Western History*, Vol. XVIII, No. 1, p. 46.

³ James Blair Walker, *A Boy Pioneer in the West and Other Remembrances*, n.p. 1963.

⁴ *Progressive Men of Montana*, p. 11.

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appointed County Assessor.⁵ He and Martha had another child during their stay in Virginia City, Charles Harry, in 1865.

Jesse's wanderlust brought him and his young family to Virginia City during its earliest settlement by non-Indians. Those that came with them were enticed by the riches promised through mining, and by the promise of commercial gain.

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 they began to like the Siren, that had wound her arms around them...and their visions were filled with the kaleidoscopic views of endless mountain peaks...they found that an early idea of home in the states could not wean them from their new love...And the women, too, were there. They had dared for love, the traverse of the dreary plains, and had, for love, fearlessly 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

Martha Armitage is remembered as one of the "brave women who bore so much toward making our abodes so pleasant."⁷ But amid all this adventure, the citizens of Virginia City recognized the need for law and order. On December 23, 1863, a group of citizens in Virginia City met secretly to form a Vigilance Committee. They adopted a set of bylaws and twenty four individuals signed an oath of allegiance. During January and February of 1864 they executed twenty-one men by hanging, with more to come in the months and years ahead.⁸ Not one of the executed men had a trial, nor an appeal, nor even a chance to set his affairs in order before being hung. Jesse Armitage, though not a founding member, was active in this committee that vowed:

We...uniting ourselves in a party for the purpose of arresting thieves and murderers and recovering stolen property, do pledge ourselves upon our sacred honor, each to all others, and solemnly swear that we will reveal no secrets, violate no laws of right and not desert each other or our standards of justice, so help me God.⁹

In the Fall of 1867, the Armitages located in Helena after returning from six-months at a Salmon River (Idaho) mining camp. Jesse worked as a stationary engineer for placer mining and taught music. In Helena, Jesse made a name for himself as the head of the local Vigilance Committee, and continued in that position through the 1870s. The leaders and advisors of this committee had served in Virginia City. Local Historian David Hilger described them as "resolute." During his tenure as chief of the Vigilantes, three men were hung from Helena's "hangman's" tree. These included Ah Chow, a Chinese man accused of murder. Lynched on January 24, 1870, the placard pinned to his back as he hung from the tree read: "Ah Chow, the murderer of John R. Bitzer. Beware! The Vigilantes Still Live!"

Armitage's dedication to "justice" may have led to his appointment as an Indian Agent to the Blackfeet Reservation.¹⁰ The Superintendent for Indian Affairs for Montana, J.A. Viall, wrote of Armitage's arrival at the agency:

5 As Virginia City boomed it became the site of a dramatic ordeal of Western lawlessness and revenge. The vigilante movement drove much of Virginia City's history. As the town boomed, the incidence of robberies and murders increased. Many of the robberies depended on inside information by people usually called "road agents." The miners' sheriff, Henry Plummer, who had "persuaded" the sheriffs in Bannack, Nevada City, and Virginia to turn over their duties to him, turned out to be the leader of the road agents. As sheriff, he knew the timing of the gold movements. No legal relief was possible, because the nearest officials to administer an oath were 400 miles away. In 1863, when a popular miner, Dutchman Nicholas Thiebalt, was murdered for \$200, the other miners were outraged. The killer, George Ives, was captured and tried by a miners' court, then hanged. The local residents formed "vigilance committees" to capture and bring the road agents to justice. They hanged at least 21 more of the road agents -- including Plummer -- and some order was restored to the area.

6 AL Noyes, *History of Southern Montana*, (Helena, MT: State Publishing Company, 1915), Chapter 29, p. 1.

7 Ibid.

8 Louis Schmittroth, "The Vigilantes of Montana, 1864 Revisited," http://www.yanoun.org/mont_vigi/revisit/intro1.html. There have been numerous books and articles written about the Vigilantes in Virginia City. A few of the more recent are: Stan Lynde's *Vigilante Moon: A Novel of Old Montana*, Cottonwood Publishing, 2003; Nathaniel Pitt Langford's *Vigilante Days and Ways*, American and World Geographic Publishing, 1996; and Ruth E. Mather's *Vigilante Victims: Montana's 1864 Hanging Spree*, History West Publishing Company, 1991.

9 Ibid, Chapter 27.

10 *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America*, Volume 19, pp. 604, 605, 671. President Grant nominated Armitage on January 11, 1871, and his appointment was resolved by the Committee for Indian Affairs on February 28, 1871.

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"In March last J. Armitage was appointed agent for the Blackfeet, Bloods, and Piegans, and on April 1, 1871, I accompanied him to the agency to place him in charge...Some two hundred Piegans, under Chief Big Lake, were at the agency, desiring to remain there permanently and engage in farming. Owing to misrepresentations made to them by [former agent] McCauley, I found them bitterly prejudiced against myself and the Department, and disposed to prevent Armitage from taking charge, desiring to retain their late agent."¹¹

Granddaughter Virginia (Armitage) Tint recalled the family's story about their arrival to the reservation:

As the family neared the reservation with three of their children in the back of the wagon and one [newborn John Thomas] in his mother's arms, a group of young Indians rode out on their ponies with guns pointed, making a fearful sight. Joshua reached for his rifle under the seat, but Martha laid her hand on his arm and said, "Jesse, don't, you'll only make a bad situation worse." After that, the Indians called him "Brave Man." Behind that man was a brave woman.¹²

Despite this initial resistance, apparently the result of graft on the part of McCauley, Superintendent Viall reported that Armitage had some "success" at the agency: "Up to the time of Agent Armitage taking charge not a single acre of land had been broken or fenced; now...some 75 houses built for them next year and proper provision made that they may farm for themselves." Armitage's tenure there is not well documented, and while lauded for his "signal efficiency" in the subscription biography *Progressive Men of Montana*, by the Fall of 1872 his superiors noted that he "failed to make any report for the past year ([through] September 15, [1872] on which date he was relieved by the present agent, William F. Ensign) on the condition of affairs at the Blackfeet Agency..." Whether Armitage was fired, chose to leave, or his appointment was intended to be temporary is unclear, but his superintendents report does go on to indicate that the "Indians belonging to this agency...have been peaceable and well-behaved during the past year..."¹³ His career as Indian agent ended, then, eighteen months after his appointment. Armitage returned to Helena, and once again took up the grocery business.

In 1874, Helena residents Joe Wilson and Arthur L. Compton were accused of beating and robbing a man named George Lenhart. When placed under arrest, "someone had handbills printed and distributed, calling for a mass meeting of citizens at the courthouse square." The mob clamored for immediate "justice," but the trial was set for the next morning. Jesse Armitage, described as a "positive, active fellow" was chosen as a jury member. The trial lasted four and a half hours, and upon conviction, the men were hung.¹⁴ Wilson and Compton were the last to be hung in Helena via "vigilante justice", but Armitage remained active in the committee, and their threat remained in place through the late 1870s.

Jesse Armitage is described as "an adventurer, as he was always looking for a place of action."¹⁵ By 1875, Armitage was restless, and took up the cattle business near Fort Logan (Meagher County), Montana. There, sons Rommel Joseph and George Comfort were born in 1876 and 1878. Jesse continued in the cattle industry for six years, but moved back again to Helena in 1881. There, within a month of arrival, their only surviving daughter, Mabel Nnette, was born. The next year, Jesse worked in mining at Wickes, twenty-two miles south of Helena. By 1885, he was chosen as police magistrate in Helena, a position he held for two years.

11 J.A. Viall, Superintendent Indian Affairs for Montana, to Francis A. Walker, Commissioner of Indians Affairs, September 1872, in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Year 1872, (United States. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, United States--Washington, D.C., 1872) p. 276.

12 Madison County History Association. *Pioneer Trails and Trials: Madison County, 1863-1920*, (Sheridan, MT: Madison County History Association, 1976), p. 10.

13 *Progressive Men of Montana*, p. 11; J.A. Viall, Superintendent Indian Affairs for Montana, to Francis A. Walker, Commissioner of Indians Affairs, September 25, 1872, in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Year 1872, (United States. Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, United States--Washington, D.C., 1872) p. 276. There is some indication that the Methodists may have appointed Armitage, and that his tenure was only a temporary position.

14 For a complete description of the events surrounding Wilson and Compton's trial and execution, see Clyde McLemore's "Last Hanging by Vigilantes," in which David Hilger, witness to the events and local historian, conveys his recollections of the events. The pamphlet is on file in the "Montana Case" at the Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT.

15 *Pioneer Trails and Trails*, p. 10.

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Also in 1885, Jesse Armitage recognized that the city of Helena was thriving and expanding at a rapid pace, and jumped into the real estate business. Armitage proved to be a gifted realty entrepreneur. He took great interest in the platting of the town, and participated in the development of the small Montana Avenue Addition in which his home was built. He was keenly aware that the community was growing at a great rate, and anticipated its growth towards the east side of the city, closer to a potential Capitol building lots, and away from the mining and commercial centers on Last Chance Gulch.

Within four years, Jesse's business was thriving. Charles S. Jackman, a principal in the real estate development firm of Jackman, Cutler, and Jackman, platted the Montana Avenue Addition to Helena in 1887. The lots were surveyed on December 12, 1887, and Armitage served as the notary public to the action. By then, Jackson was partnered with Armitage, who purchased a lot in the new subdivision on July 19, 1889.¹⁶ In 1889, *Helena Illustrated* reported on their partnership:

Among the busiest and most reliable real estate dealers in Helena, are doing a rushing business, and some of the largest sales in property are effected through their office. Their business is increasing rapidly and this year (1889) they have handled over \$700,000 worth of real estate at a handsome profit... Seeing that Helena's future was a great one, Mr. Armitage started, in the winter of 1885, in the real estate business, which he carried on alone very successfully until 1887, when, his business becoming very extensive, he was obliged to take a partner. After looking around he became much pleased with the business ability and integrity of Charles S. Jackman. Mr. Armitage thinks his best business move was in the selection of this partner. The firm title since has been Armitage and Jackman.¹⁷

The understated elegance of his home at 1117 Broadway is a testament to Jesse's success. The house was not only spacious enough to accommodate his large family – he and Martha had nine children together, seven of whom lived to adulthood – it also proved an enticement to others to come and build in the area.

The home offered Martha Armitage the opportunity to care for her family in comfort. Martha was, by all accounts, a kind, generous, and wise woman. Indeed she traveled West with her "adventurer" husband, leaving her own family behind. In addition to her experience as a schoolteacher, Martha was an "excellent seamstress and practical nurse, always willing to be of service on short notice." She oversaw a home full of "laughter, music, and singing."¹⁸

The Armitage family lived together in the house from its construction 1889 until 1891, when Jesse again changed careers. Always a devout Presbyterian and active in the temperance movement, Jesse disposed of his very successful real estate business and moved his family once again, this time to Tacoma Washington. He stayed on in Tacoma for six months, where he "devoted himself to gospel temperance work."¹⁹ Soon he moved on, and went to his sons' ranch to help establish their cattle business. In 1899, Armitage again partnered with Charles Jackman in the real estate industry, this time in Butte:

they have here built up a large business, their operations extending across the state, and upon their books are always represented most desirable investments. Their fair and honorable methods of business has gained for them a marked prestige, and their operations are steadily increasing in importance.²⁰

The Armitages did not reside again in Helena after leaving the home they built at 1117 Broadway. After a short tenure in Butte, they homesteaded near their sons' ranch in the upper Madison Valley (Montana) in 1900. Martha died in 1905 when traveling with her husband:

16 "Book of Deeds 26," Clerk and Records Office, City/County Building, Helena, MT, p. 122.

17 *Helena Illustrated*, 1890, p

18 *Pioneer Trails and Trails*, p. 10.

19 *Progressive Men of Montana*, p. 12.

20 *Progressive Men of Montana*, p. 12.

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She had been sewing baby clothes...the horse bolted when frightened and threw Joshua from the buggy. Martha was thrown into Bear Creek at the Irish College Crossing when the two outside wheel went off the bridge. When Joshua reached her in his dazed condition, nothing could be done.²¹

After Martha's tragic death, Jesse moved again, this time to California to be near his son Jesse. He died there in 1912, and was buried next to his wife in Madison County, Montana. Though the Armitage family moved from place to place as Jesse sought his adventures, the house they built at 1117 Broadway in Helena embodies the culmination of Jesse's entrepreneurial success. Jesse found economic prosperity amid the heady period of development in the city of Helena. He was able to take advantage of the burgeoning growth of the community during its transition from mining town to Capital. The Joshua and Martha Armitage House, constructed at the peak of his career during the most active period of expansion and growth in Helena, embodies that period of community development.

Helena in the Twentieth Century

Jesse Armitage got out of the real estate business in Helena just before the Panic of 1893, and did not suffer economic peril when the real estate market crashed. Others, however, were not so lucky as property values quickly dropped and many speculators lost fortunes. With Helena's economy and population in decline after 1893, building construction was sporadic. There was nearly imperceptible metamorphosis of Helena from the transportation-commercial center of Montana to that of a government city. New Deal legislation of the 1930s, characterized by government centralization both at the federal and state level, initiated this change. Public works projects and relief programs were administered from Helena. Highway and bridge construction became important as Montana began to build its first system of paved highways.

Helena's population finally reached its former size of 1890 in 1940, and the town began to build again, mostly homes in the residential areas to the east and west of the downtown business district, adjacent to the older more established neighborhoods. The effects of World War II mobilization programs greatly aided Helena's economy. Lead was a critical material; consequently East Helena's smelter operated at full capacity. As rail transportation increased, more train crews and maintenance personnel were hired. Men employed by both the smelter and the railroads were considered as part of the strategic labor force, and, therefore were exempt from the draft. Fort Harrison became an Army training camp for the First Special Forces, a combined American and Canadian paratroop regiment. The return of World War II veterans spurred another building boom in Helena. Hundreds of homes were built in both the eastside and Westside areas of the city.

The sterile population figures for Helena are truly a reflection of Helena's history. In 1880, there were only 3,624 people living there, yet by 1890 the population nearly quadrupled, to 13,834. This was the decade of Helena's greatest population growth, coinciding with its greatest building period. The Panic of 1893 was devastating to Helena's economy; during the following decade its population loss was approximately thirty-five percent, shrinking to 10,700 in 1900. It was not until 1940, nearly half a century later, that Helena's population equaled the 1890 figures. Again, the population figures mirror Helena's lack of growth, the half century between 1893 and 1948 that Helena's building expansion lay dormant.

The Armitage House becomes the Lindstrom Family Home

When Jesse moved his family to Tacoma in 1891, he kept the house in Helena as a residence for his sons, John and Rommel, who continued to work in town. By 1896, however, the family had moved on, and Jesse sold the property. A succession of owners occupied the property through the turn of the century, until 1918, when Herman E. Lindstrom purchased it.

Herman Lindstrom was born February 23, 1891 in Eskilstuna, Sweden; one of nine children born to Erick and Lovisa Lindstrom. He was fifteen years old when he followed the example set by his oldest brother, Elmer, and sisters Anna and Emma, and moved to the United States. He emigrated to Boston on August 16, 1906. After a stopover in St. Paul, Lindstrom made his way to Helena by 1908. Eventually, his five other brothers and sisters, together with his parents, left Sweden for the United States.²²

²¹ *Pioneer Trails and Trials*, p. 10.

²² Elmer emigrated in 1898, Anna and Emma in 1901, Herman in 1906, Ama in 1908, and Karine in 1912. Parents Erick and Lovisa emigrated with their three youngest sons, Herbert, Erick, and Everett, in 1915.

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Mary T. Wandrei was born in Minnesota on February 4, 1891. She was the daughter of Wilhelm Frederick and Albertina Fredericka Schmoekel Wandrei. Mary's aunt and uncle, Robert and Augusta Schmoekel Sturrock, had homesteaded at Beaver Creek, just east of Helena near Winston. They maintained a home at 566 Highland in Helena, and in 1912 encouraged Mary to join them there because job opportunities were abundant. Mary worked for several families in town.

Herman Lindstrom earned a reputation as a skilled carpenter, and joined that local carpentry union, Local No. 153, on May 1, 1909. Lindstrom married Mary Wandrie in Helena on April 28, 1915. The young couple started out in the older south-central neighborhood at 418 Chaucer Street. They welcomed their first son, Gerald, on May 14, 1917. Though much of the luster had gone out of the building industry after 1893, Lindstrom was secure enough in his business to purchase the house at 1117 Broadway in 1918. There, son Kenneth was born on March 28, 1919. Their daughter Marian Helen followed on December 30, 1928. Herman was involved with community organizations, and served as noble grand of the Oddfellows Lodge and served on the local Selective Service board for nineteen years. For a number of years, he worked as a contractor for Elmer "Al" Johnson's carpentry business.

The sons followed in their father's footsteps, and became prominent local carpenters and contractors in their own right. Older son Gerald served in the military during World War II. He returned to Helena, and worked for Carson Construction Company, an important firm responsible for several landmark buildings in the community, including the Montana Veterans and Pioneers Memorial Building (NR listed 12/15/2004), home of the Montana Historical Society. Gerald also worked on the restoration of Helena's landmark Fire Tower. He never married, and enjoyed working as a rodeo clown in his free time. Gerald continued to live in the house at 1117 Broadway until his mother's death in 1976. In 1977, he moved to a home in Jefferson City, Montana. He lived there until his death November 3, 1996.

Kenneth Lindstrom was also a World War II veteran and carpenter. He built houses in and around Helena for a number of years. He was later employed by the Helena School District as a maintenance carpenter and retired from that position. He was married to Betty Lou Houston on June 14, 1952, and after her death he married Annabele Rhein. He passed away on away on January 3, 1996.

Marian Helen Lindstrom married local businessman Kenneth M. Larson, and still lives in Helena. She was employed by the Western Life Insurance Company from 1946 through 1952, and was secretary to the State Maintenance Office of the Montana National Guard from 1953 through 1959. During the 1960s, she worked at home raising their three children. In 1969, Marian took a job for the State Board of Oil and Gas Conservation at the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, where she stayed for twenty years. She retired in 1989.

Altogether, the Lindstrom family's tenure at 1117 Broadway lasted more than seventy years. Herman died on May 5, 1969, but Mary and son Gerald continued to live there until her death on February 29, 1976. The children sold the house in 1977, and it witnessed another incarnation as the Last Chance Youth Home during the early 1980s. After a succession of owners through the 1990s, the Kohlstaedts purchased it in 2003. They continue the well-established tradition of care and maintenance so that the history and integrity of the house might remain intact for generations to come.

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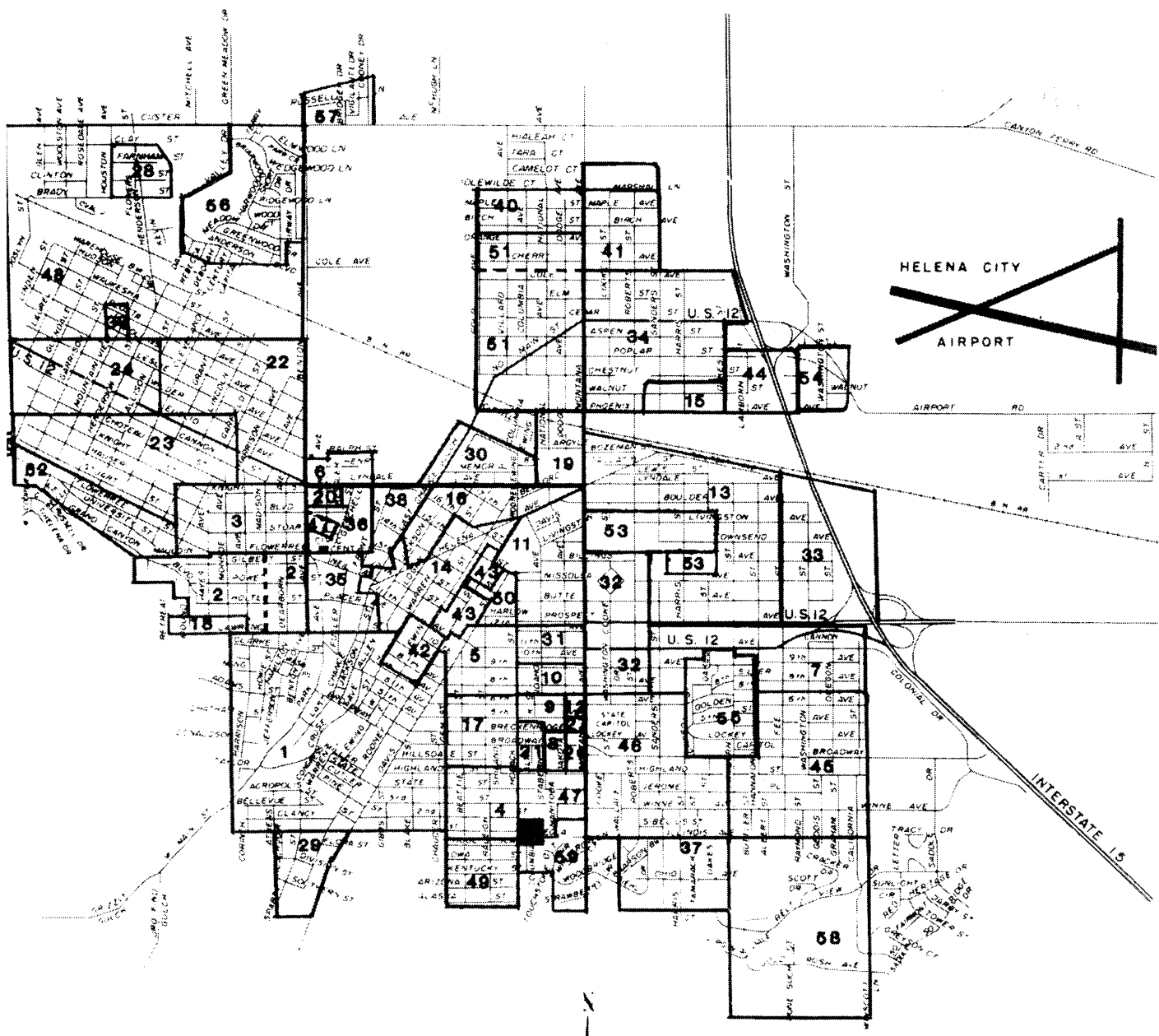
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Map of Helena's Additions, the numbers correspond to the table on the following page.

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DEVELOPMENT OF HELENA

ADDITION	DATE	ADDITION	DATE
1. Original Townsite	1865	32. Floweree	1888
2. Maudline-Storey	1879	33. Northern Pacific #2	1888
3. Hauser	1880	34. Flowergarden	1888
4. Easterly	1881	35. Thompson Placer	1888
5. Hoback & Cannon	1883	36. Getchell-Childs Placer	1888
6. Capitol Hill	1883	37. Fairmont Park	1889
7. C. W. Cannon	1883	38. Chessman-Davis Placer	1889
8. Gabisch	1883	39. Sizer	1889
9. Tietjen	1883	40. Richmond Hill	1889
10. Basset	1883	41. Hersfield	1889
11. Lockey	1883	42. Allen	1889
12. 10 th Street	1883	43. Rodney Street Tracts	1889
13. Northern Pacific #1	1883	44. Phoenix	1890
14. Central #1	1884	45. Lenox	1890
15. Depot Parchen	1885	46. Corbin	1890
16. Central #2	1885	47. Chris Kenck	1890
17. Blake	1886	48. Broadwater #2	1890
18. Shaw	1886	49. Courthouse	1891
19. Grand Avenue	1886	50. Burlington	1891
20. Parchen	1887	51. Cambridge & Grand	1893
21. Valley View	1887	52. Collins & Neil	1908
22. Broadwater #1	1887	53. Conrad Stanford	1914
23. Cannon	1887	54. Airport	1948
24. Ming	1887	55. Carson	1949
25. Barretts	1887	56. Sunhaven #1	1959
26. Montana Avenue	1887	Sunhaven #2	1960
27. East Valley View	1887	Sunhaven #3	1962
28. Flowers	1888	Sunhaven #4	1963
29. Joseph Cox	1888	57. Barney	1969
30. Central #3	1888	58. Prospect Heights	1973
31. Beattie	1888	59. Shaffers	1977

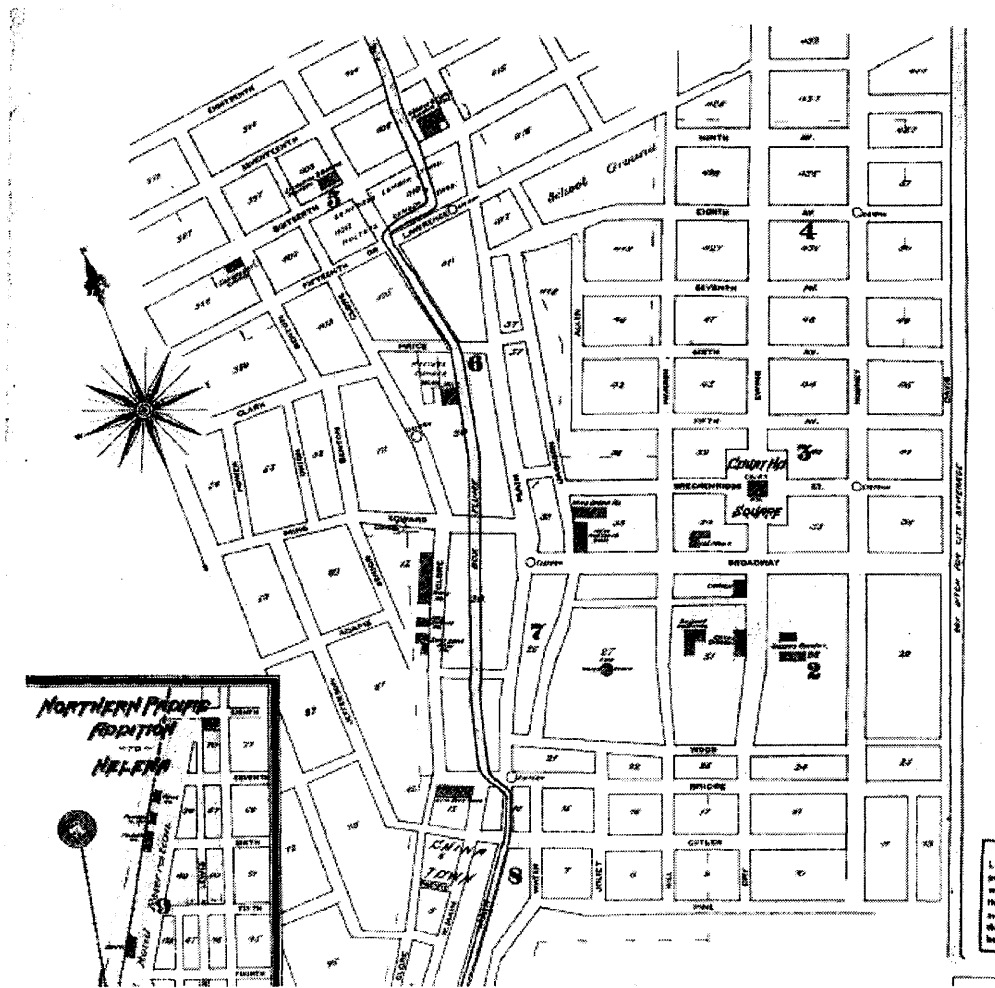
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Sanborn Map of Helena, 1884.

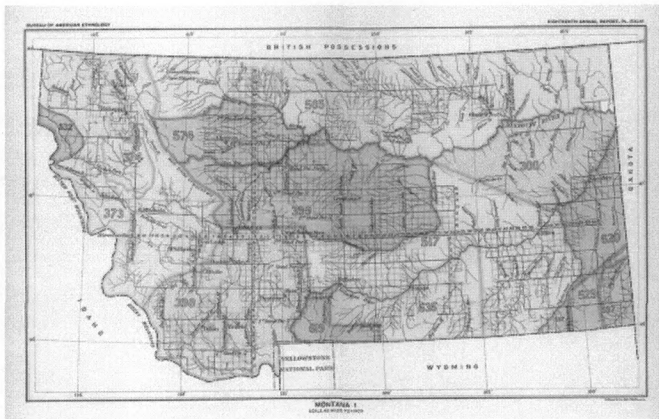
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Map of the Indian Reservations in Montana, 1874. Montana I, U.S. Serial Set, Number 4015, 56th Congress, 1st Session, Pages 874 and 875

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Aerial Photograph 4/26/2004— Helena, MT

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Joshua J. Armitage



Martha Nnette Armitage



Rommel Joseph Armitage



Charles H. Armitage



Beckwith S. Bowen. Helms, M. S.

Mabel Armitage, the youngest child and only surviving daughter, was eight years old when the family moved into the house at 1117 Broadway.

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Lindstrom Family photographs taken at their home, 1117 Broadway c. 1929 courtesy Marian Lindstrom Larson.

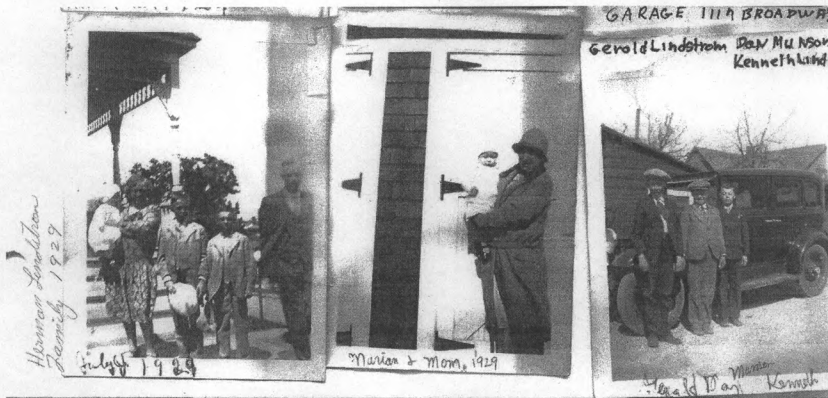
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Lindstrom Family photographs taken at their home, 1117 Broadway c. 1929 courtesy Marian Lindstrom Larson.



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Left: Herman and Gerald Lindstrom on scaffold in front of garage, 1928.

Above: Herman and Gerald Lindstrom on east side of the house, 1920.

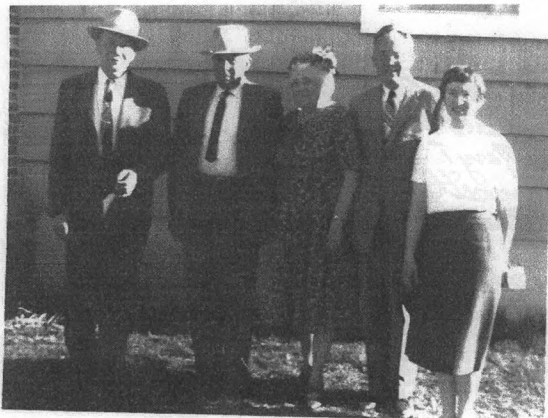
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*Gerald, Herman, Mary, Kenneth, and Marian Lindstrom, 1955.
Photograph courtesy of Marian Lindstrom Larson.*



Undated photograph of Armitage-Linstrom House, courtesy of Marian Lindstrom Larson.

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*Looking west down Broadway from the Armitage-Lindstrom House, c. 1944.
Photograph courtesy of Marian Lindstrom Larson.*



*Looking east across Broadway, c. 1946. The Armitage-Lindstrom house is second from the right.
Photograph courtesy of Marian Lindstrom Larson.*

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*Interior of Armitage-Lindstrom House, 1117 Broadway, view from living room into dining room.
Photo taken by homeowner Elizabeth Kohlstaedi, December 2004.*



Left: maid's room, second story; right: stairwell. Photos taken by Elizabeth Kohlstaedi, December 2004.

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Master Bedroom and garden. Photos taken by homeowner Elizabeth Kohlstaedt, December 2004.

