

MONTANA HISTORIC PROPERTY RECORD

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
Montana Historical Society
PO Box 201202, 1301 E. Lockey
Helena, MT 59620-1202

Property Address: **301 Pleasant St**
Historic Address (if applicable):

City/Town: **Miles City, MT**

Site Number: **24CR1354**
(An historic district number may also apply.)

County: **Custer**

Historic Name: **Charles and Milley Brown Home**

Original Owner(s):

Current Ownership Private Public

Current Property Name:

Owner(s): **Collins Peter Michael**
Owner Address: **305 Pleasant St**
Miles City, MT 59301

Phone:

Legal Location

PM: **Montana** Township: **08N** Range: **47E**

SE ¼ of **NW** ¼ of Section: **33**

Lot(s): **001-002**
Block(s): **015**

Addition: **Miles City Original Townsite**
Year of Addition:

USGS Quad Name: Year:

Historic Use: **DOMESTIC / single family residence**

Current Use: **DOMESTIC / single family residence**

Construction Date: **1910** Estimated Actual

Original Location Moved Date Moved:

UTM Reference www.nris.mt.gov

NAD 27 or NAD 83(preferred)

Zone: **13** Easting: **434308** Northing: **5139540**

National Register of Historic Places

NRHP Listing Date:

Historic District:
NRHP Eligible: **X** Yes **No**

Date of this document: **8/18/2016**

Form Prepared by: **Diana Nettleton**

Address: **1301 E. Lockey St Helena, MT 59601**

Daytime Phone: **406-444-7715**

MT SHPO USE ONLY

Eligible for NRHP: **X** yes no

Criteria: **X** A B C D

Date: 9/9/2016

Evaluator: Kate Hampton

Comments: Property record form written as part of the
"Identifying Montana's African American Heritage Places
Project."

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merge pages with this form

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

NRHP Listing Date:

NRHP Eligibility: Yes No Individually Contributing to Historic District Noncontributing to Historic District

NRHP Criteria: A B C D

Area of Significance: **Ethnic History**

Period of Significance: **1909-1916**

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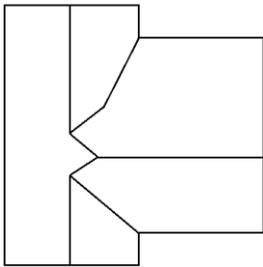
Architectural Style: **Other** If Other, specify: **National Folk**
Property Type: Single Family Residence Specific Property Type: Single Family Residence

Architect: Architectural Firm/City/State:
Builder/Contractor: Company/City/State:
Source of Information:

Architectural Description:

Setting & Location

The Charles and Milley Brown home, located at 301 Pleasant Street in Miles City, Montana occupies lots 1 and 2 of historic block 015 and is part of the original Miles City townsite. The streets bounding this historic block are Pleasant on the Southeast, 3rd on the Southwest, Palmer street along the Northwest, and 4th on the Northeast side. An alley dissects the block along its East-West axis, which lies behind the house. The house enjoys a view of Riverside Park to the Southwest. The southeast end of the property features a very large bush that encloses the southernmost corner of the building and creeps toward the front entrance and a tall and wide tree that sits on the eastern corner of the building. The southernmost corner of the entire lot lays one panel of a wooden split rail fence. A long and tall bush runs along the southwestern edge of the property, and a tall white wood diamond trellis 'fence' runs along the northernmost portion of the northeastern edge of the lot, separating 301 from the neighbor to the northeast.



Overview

301 Pleasant Street is a one-and-one-half story National Folk style residence featuring a concrete foundation, light blue aluminum siding, and white aluminum corner and soffitt trim. The T-plan footprint consists of the original shotgun cottage and gabled addition to the north. The roof is clad with asphalt shingles and a concrete block chimney projects from the center ridge line.

Southeast Façade

The southeast façade features the original front gable of the 1910 shotgun on the south and the 1916 addition to the north. The main entrance is located on the eastern half of the gable front, and consists of a six-paneled white, wood door with white trim. Directly to the south of the door sits the outside porch light and a dark colored plaque with white numbering that labels the house as 301. The black metal mail-box sits on the exterior of the house directly to the east of the main entrance. Two concrete steps lead up to the door, and the bottom step continues to the south and to the east, marking the sunken garden patches that have infilled with various vegetation. The eastern bay of the southeast façade contains one double-hung sash unit. Another tall shrub partially obscures the view of this window. A concrete chimney sits on the cross gable addition, slightly to the northeast of where the two roofs connect.

Northeast Elevation

The northeast elevation features a view of the side gable of the original 1910 shotgun on the east side. A double-hung sash unit is located in the addition side of the cross gable bay. Another tall shrub partially blocks the view of the window.

Northwest Elevation

The gable end also features a metal pipe and electrical box on the northern edge of the gabled bay, denoting the connection to a larger, city-wide infrastructure. A white metal rain gutter projects from the edge of the north slope of the

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gabled roof, and runs horizontally for approximately one foot out from the house to the northwest. Visibility of the concrete chimney that sits on the westernmost end of the ridge on the cross gable addition is maintained in this elevation. The photographs allow a partial view of a wooden patio along the side gable of the salt box addition; however, it is not clear from the photograph whether this patio is attached to the house or if it is standing alone.

Southwest Elevation

Fenestration includes a vinyl slider window on the west, a smaller, vinyl slider window to the south of the first window. A third one-over-one, double-hung sash sits to the west of the second window and also sits approximately two feet below the eaves. A window air conditioning unit sits in this third window. The southernmost bay of the elevation contains a single-light window that sits about one foot below the eaves. All windows have white metal trim. The very large bush that wraps around the southernmost corner of the building partially obstructs the view of this window.

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History of the Property

According to the Polk City Directories, Charles and Millie Brown arrived in Miles City around 1909, and rented the house at 301 Pleasant Street for at least seven years, from the time of their arrival through 1916.

The 1910 Census enumerates Charles and Milley Brown as a couple married for 12 years. In a pattern of migration common among black in Montana, both hailed from Missouri, though Charles was her senior, born c. 1852. Unable to read or write, Charles worked as a porter for W. E Savage's pharmacy at 510 Main St – just a few blocks from his home. His wife Millie was eleven years Charles' junior, born c. 1863. Millie's parents were both born in Kentucky – another common migration pattern among blacks in the mid-19th through the early 20th centuries.

While little is known about the Browns, they were members of the small community of African Americans living in Miles City in 1910. Only 60 black residents were counted in the city that year, most lived near downtown – either on Pleasant Street or Atlantic Avenue. By 1920, they had departed Miles City for parts unknown. They do not appear in the 1920 census for Miles City, though a Charles B. Brown is listed in the Miles City Directory in 1923, living at 108 North Third Street.

The original house showed up shortly before 1910 in the form of a two-bedroom shotgun, which is consistent with other residential houses along the street from that same time period (see 24CR 1353). Construction of the cross-gabled addition on the northeast side of the house began around 1915, and the addition of the saltbox extension occurred sometime shortly before 1928. A deck or porch that exists in the Sanborn maps is no longer present; however, there is a concrete patio that has been filled in with vegetation.

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Information Sources/Bibliography

Federal Census Year: 1910; Census Place: *Miles Ward 1, Custer, Montana*; Roll: T624_829; Page: 5B; Enumeration District:0079; FHL microfilm: 1374842, *Ancestry.com* – accessed August 2016.

Polk City Directories, *Ancestry.com. U.S. City Directories, 1822-1995* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011. – accessed August 2016.

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Statement of Significance

The Charles and Milley Brown Home finds significance in being one of the very few African American homes to remain standing in the Miles City area. Two African Americans living in Miles City in from 1909 until 1916 called this house home.

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Integrity (location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association)

The 301 Pleasant Street retains integrity in the overall location, feeling, and association. Despite changes to the design, workmanship, and materials, the rarity of the property type and the overall integrity feeling and association, particularly given its association with neighboring houses also connected to the African American population in Miles City, renders the property eligible for listing in the NRHP.

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Photographs



Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Southeast elevation (front) view to north-northwest.



Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Southeast elevation, view to northwest.

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Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Southeast and northeast elevations, view to west-northwest.

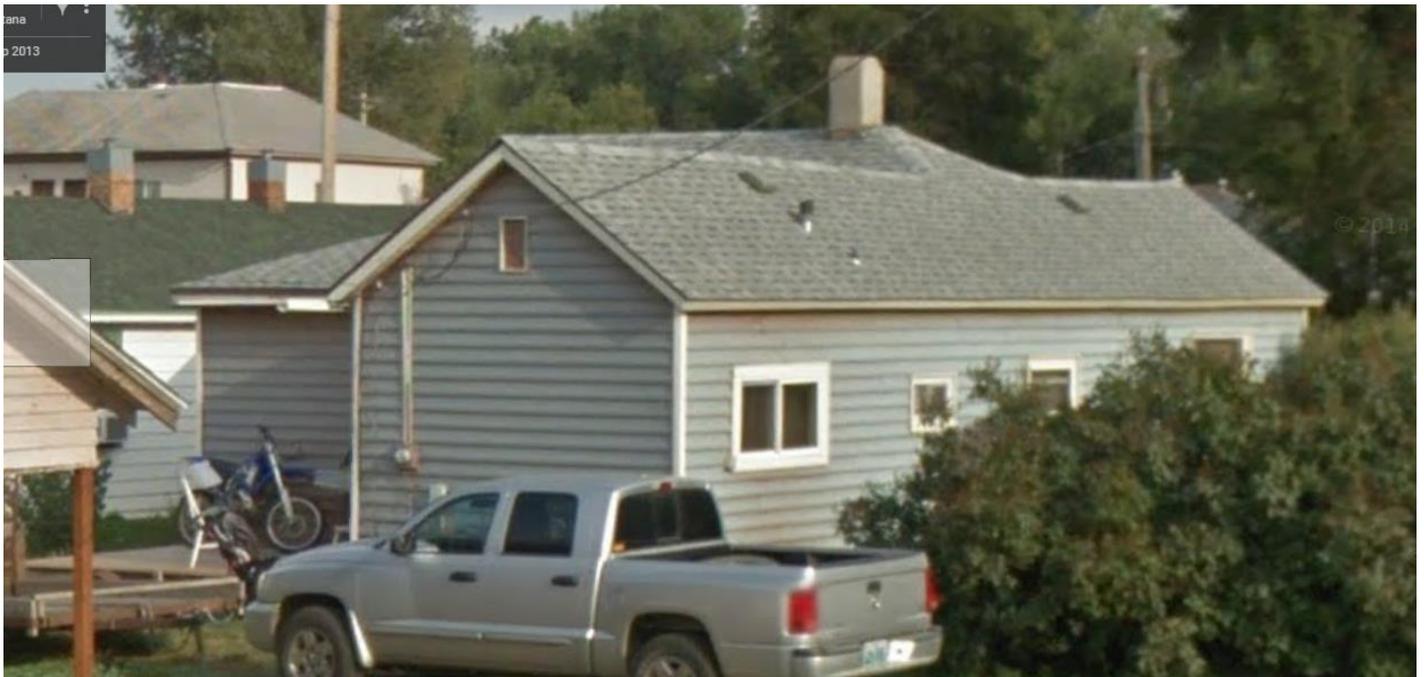


Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Northwest (rear) and southwest (side) elevations, view to east.

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Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Southwest elevation, view to northeast.



Photo Supplied by Google maps – accessed August 2016. Southwest elevation, view to northeast.

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Site Map/Aerial Photo



Photo Supplied by mt.gov – accessed August 2016.



Photo Supplied by mt.gov – accessed August 2016.

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Topographic Map

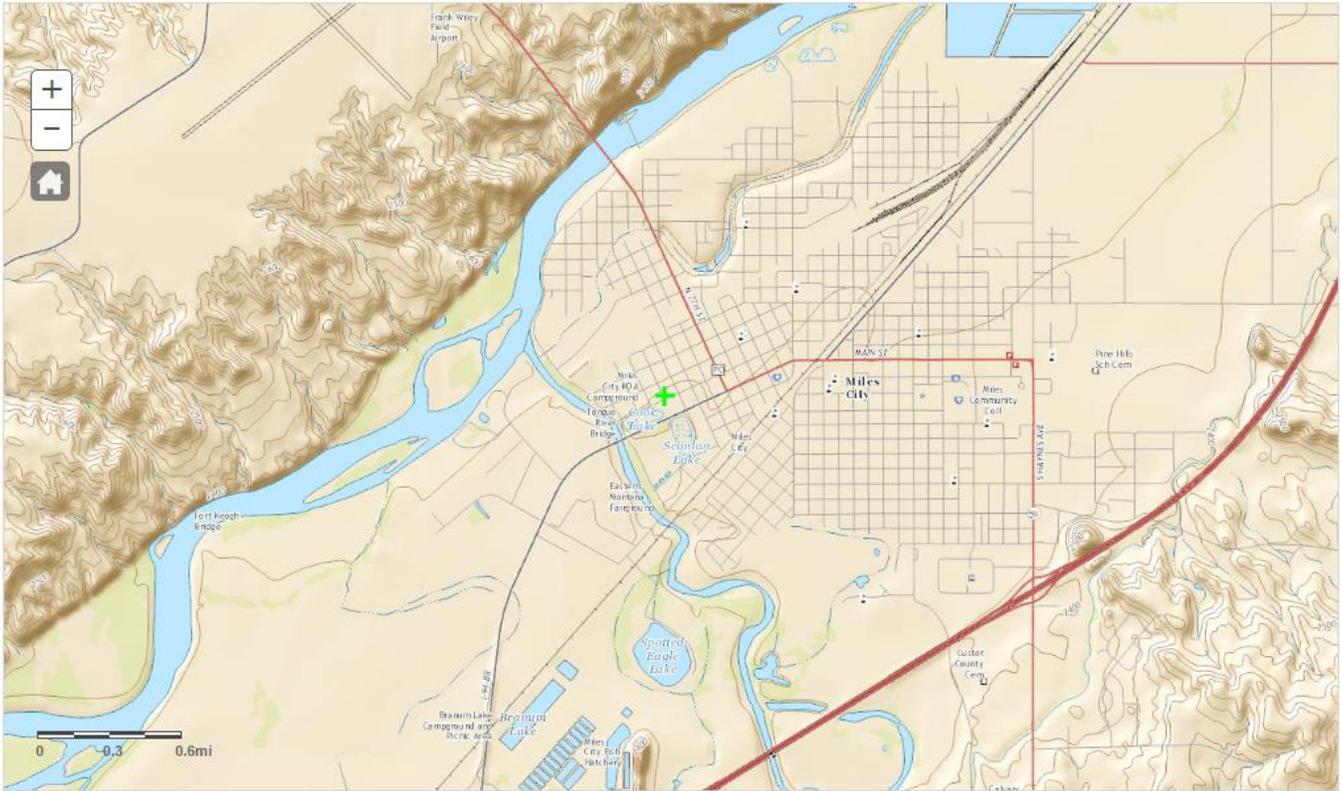


Photo Supplied by mt.gov – accessed August 2016.

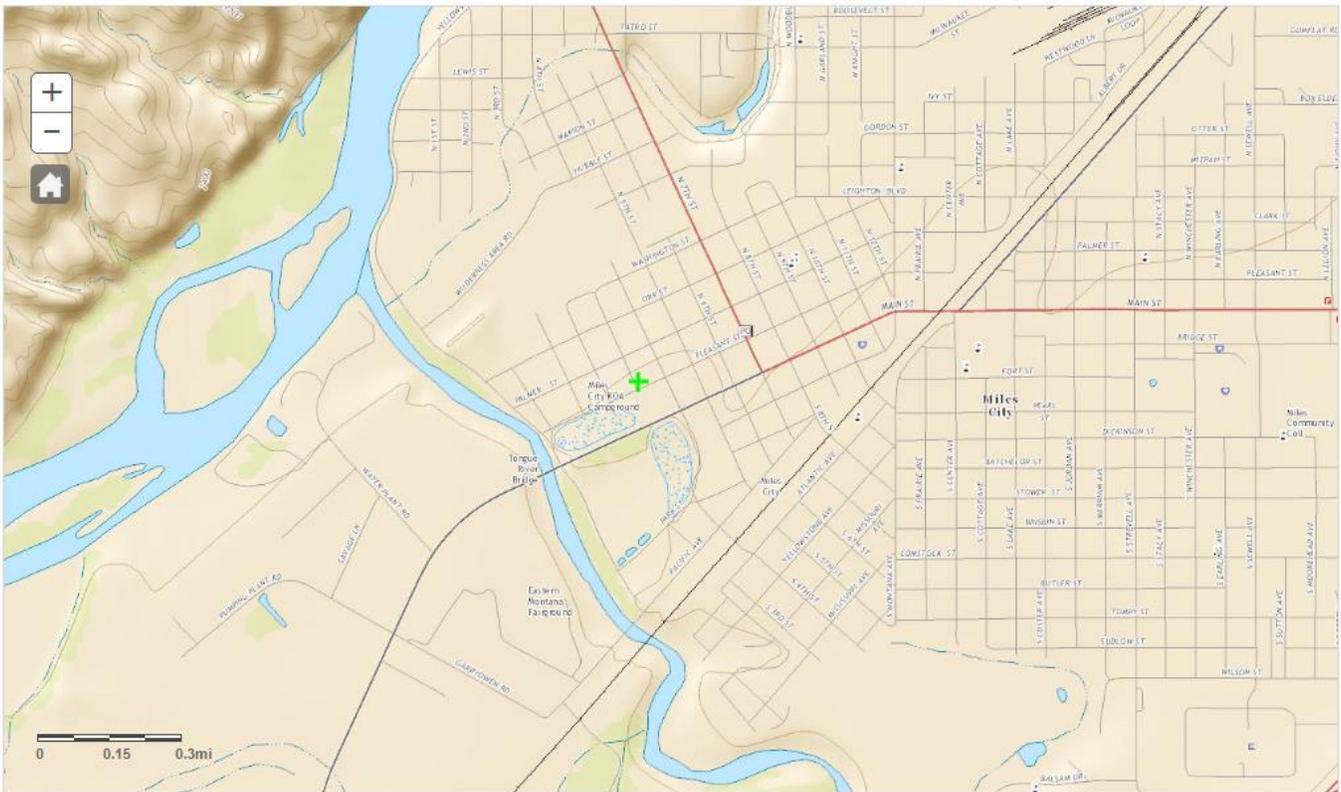


Photo Supplied by mt.gov – accessed August 2016.

Our thanks to the National Park Service Underrepresented Grants Program and the Montana History Foundation for their generous contributions to this project.

Disclaimer:

This material is based upon work assisted by grants from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service and the Montana History Foundation. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of the Interior nor of the Montana History Foundation.



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