

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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Haight - Bridgwater House

Other names/site number: Immanuel Mission 24LC2272

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

Street & number: 502 Peosta

City or town: Helena State: MT County: Lewis and Clark

Not For Publication: Vicinity:

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national ___ statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title:	Date
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government	

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.	
Signature of commenting official:	Date
Title :	State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure
RELIGION/religious facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

No Style

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property:

WOOD/clapboard

CONCRETE

ASPHALT/shingle

Narrative Description

Summary Paragraphs

Located within the historic Broadwater Addition at the northwest side of Helena, the modest, wood-frame, rectangular Haight - Bridgewater House stands on a narrow city lot. One of Helena's main north-south arteries, Benton Avenue, bounds the property to the east, and the Northern Pacific Railway tracks run roughly east-west just two blocks north. The National Register-listed Benton Avenue Cemetery (NR reference # 03000689) lies one block north of the property, and Carroll College Campus stands across Benton Avenue to the east. The Broadwater Addition residential neighborhood surrounds the property to the south and west.

Measuring twenty-four feet wide and forty-two feet deep, the Haight - Bridgewater House rests on a concrete wall foundation at the west side of its narrow lot.¹ Wood clapboard covers the exterior walls. An asphalt-shingle hipped roof, topped with a gabled peak, covers the majority of the house, and a gable-roofed kitchen extension constitutes the north side. A small shed-roofed entry projects from the south façade's west side, and a narrow hipped back porch fills the ell at the north end of the east elevation, leading to the kitchen door. The west elevation's north end contains a hipped enclosed addition within the rectangular footprint, which contains the bathroom and laundry room. Throughout the house, the roof displays boxed eaves with wood trim boards at the roof-wall junction. A single metal stovepipe protrudes from high on the south side of the kitchen extension's west slope.

A wood-frame, clapboard, L-shaped, historic garage occupies the north side of the property, set perpendicular to the rear of the house, facing Benton Avenue. The building consists of a main gable bay and a shed-roofed extension that projects from the north elevation.

Narrative Description

House (one contributing building)

South elevation

The house's front elevation faces south to Peosta Avenue, and features an eight-and-one-half foot wide by six-foot deep enclosed entry off-center to the west. The south-facing entry contains a centered, two-light,

¹ The concrete was likely applied to the outside of an existing foundation to provide extra stability.

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aluminum storm door flanked by single one-over-one, fixed, wood-frame windows. The entry's east and west elevations each display a centered pair of one-over-one, fixed, wood-frame windows. Within the entry, a single modern, six-light-over-two-panel aluminum entry door occupies the original door opening. The south elevation's east side contains a tall, single, modern, vinyl, one-over-one, double-hung window unit which mimics the original window's design. A single row of wood shingles attached to a piece of clapboard and set at a forty-five degree angle from the exterior wall, serves as a shallow awning above the window opening. This awning treatment tops each of the original double-hung window openings around the house.

East elevation

The house's east elevation faces Benton Avenue, and features two single, evenly-spaced, vinyl, one-over-one replacement windows within original openings across the hipped south bay. The elevation's north side steps back only slightly from the south bay, and contains an enclosed one-story back porch across the east side of the gabled kitchen extension. The porch features wood-shingled half-walls below ribbons of one-over-one wood-frame fixed windows. Two concrete steps lead to the two-light aluminum storm door entry at the porch's south end. A single window unit abuts the entry's south side, and a pair of windows fills the space to the north. Within the porch, a single centered nine-light modern door provides entry to the kitchen.

West elevation

Largely obscured by vegetation, the west elevation contains two single, evenly spaced one-over-one vinyl replacement windows within original openings across the hipped south bay. A shallow-hipped pre-1957 addition fills the ell created by the main south bay and the gabled kitchen extension. Containing a bathroom and laundry room, this extension features a single, small, one-over-one replacement window within an original opening. The extension's siding matches the house's original clapboard in material and design.

North elevation

The kitchen extension constitutes the center bay of the north elevation. It features a single one-over-one replacement window within an original opening set just off center to the west. Wide gable returns and fascia highlight the gable end above, where a small metal louvered vent provides ventilation near the peak. To the east, the enclosed porch features a pair of windows: a one-over-one casement to the west, and a one-over-one fixed unit to the east. The west bathroom addition contains a single one-over-one replacement window within an original opening at its north elevation's east side.

Interior

The Haight - Bridgewater House's interior consists of six rooms. Upon entry from the front (south) door, the interior opens to a large living room that occupies the east side of the south hipped bay. Modern panel doors lead to two bedrooms to the west. North beyond the living room is the kitchen, and a small laundry room and bath fill the extension at the northwest corner of the house. The owners recently updated the interior with modern carpet in the living room and bedrooms, and tile flooring in the kitchen, bath, and laundry. Original woodwork includes wide baseboards, window trim, and door surrounds. Acoustic tile covers the ceilings and plaster coats the walls in the south rooms of the house. The north end rooms feature plaster and gypsum board ceilings and walls.

Garage (one contributing building)

The 1892 Sanborn map shows a small, rectangular, wood-frame garage at the north end of the property. By 1930, a larger, L-shaped, wood-frame garage appears. It is likely, given the shed extension's roofline

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connection to the gable roof's north slope, that the existing garage dates to between 1892 and 1930, and replaced the original outbuilding.² The present building features wood framing, beveled clapboard siding, and an asphalt-shingle roof. Exposed rafter ends support the overhanging eaves. Plank sheathing remains visible beneath the gable-end eaves. There is no visible foundation.

Exterior

The garage's east elevation presents two bays: the southern main gable-ended bay, and the north shed addition. A modern, metal, sixteen-panel overhead garage door fills the south bay, and a single, fixed, four-light, wood-frame original window provides light to the north bay from its east elevation's south side. The north elevation contains a single, original window opening at the east side of the shed extension. Plywood fills the opening. A single, historic, solid wood, five-panel pedestrian door provides entry from the south elevation's west end. A single, fixed-frame, six-light window appears just east of the door. The garage's west elevation displays no fenestration.

Interior

The garage's unfinished interior consists of two rooms: the main parking bay to the south, and a storage room with built-in wood shelves to the north. The garage features a concrete slab floor.

Integrity

Despite a few alterations, the Haight - Bridgewater House retains sufficient integrity to convey its significance under Criterion A. The house and garage stand in their historic locations and settings, bordering a historic residential neighborhood to the south and west, and a main north-south thoroughfare to the east. Overall, the property's integrity of design remains strong in that its structural system, arrangement of spaces and pattern of fenestration remain unchanged from the historic period, as do the textures of surface materials, and the type, amount, and style of ornamental detailing. Though the bathroom addition at the northwest corner of the house has changed the massing slightly, the addition was constructed by August 1957, within the period of significance, is small and unobtrusively set at the rear of the house, discreetly placed within an ell. Though the introduction of non-historic window units does impact the house's integrity of materials, the modern vinyl units fit within the original openings and display the same one-over-one double-hung design as the originals.

Likewise, the modern metal overhead garage door features raised panels and does not overly detract from the garage's integrity of design or materials. Original siding and trim on both buildings remain intact. The property retains the physical features that, taken together, convey its historic character, and a strong integrity of workmanship, feeling, and association.

² Montana tax records indicate the garage was constructed in 1901. 502 Peosta, Helena, MT. Records found at: <http://svc.mt.gov/msl/mtcadastral/> and accessed January 28, 2014.

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8. 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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1890-1964

Significant Dates

1890, 1891, 1894, 1915

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

George B. Diehl, Builder

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

Constructed in 1890, the Haight – Bridgewater House’s modest architecture belies the significant history it represents. Built as a residence during the height of Helena’s prosperity and growth, the house represents one of the oldest residences associated with the 1887-platted Broadwater #1 Addition, and is tied to the city’s continued community planning and development through the late nineteenth century. During this period, both the house and the neighborhood addition itself were situated at the northernmost reaches of the city’s ambitious plan for expansion and development. Through the late 19th and early-mid 20th centuries, the building served as an important gathering place and touchstone for both the Broadwater neighborhood and the African-American community in the city, including a brief tenure as a Baptist mission house. Further, the house embraces the story of three women, who each in their own right, faced and overcame adversity during their time in Helena. Their experiences contribute to our understanding of the social history of Helena during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For these reasons, the building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A.

Significant dates associated with the property include its date of its construction in 1890, and 1891 when the house began to serve both as the original Immanuel Mission of Helena’s First Baptist Church and as living quarters for the young Haight family. In 1915, the house became the Bridgewater family’s residence, where generations would live for the next sixty years.

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Because its significance in part derives from its association with community development associated with the expansion of Helena during the late 19th century, social history, and the Baptist Church's role in those areas of significance, rather than the doctrinal teachings of the church, the property meets Criteria Consideration A.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

Introduction

When the Haight - Bridgewater House was built, the city of Helena was only a few decades old, and witnessing the apex of its first period of community development. Diverse groups of people – of different religions, ethnicities, and economic status – strove to make Helena a prosperous and welcoming community. Until 1893, the city of Helena witnessed a frenzy of construction as developers established new neighborhoods as the population increased.

Built in the nascent Broadwater Addition #1, the house at 502 Peosta stood as one of a handful of small homes constructed in the neighborhood as the bustling city pushed its borders west and north prior to the Silver Panic of 1893 that significantly slowed the town's growth. Soon after its construction, in 1891, Hattie L. Haight purchased the house. In addition to providing living quarters for Hattie and her young family, the house simultaneously served as the original Immanuel Mission of Helena's First Baptist Church in 1891 and 1892. By allowing the First Baptist Church in Helena to meet there, Hattie, a deeply religious woman, provided members of the community a place to gather and learn. After the Hights moved out the following year, Hattie continued to rent out the house following the death of her husband in 1894, and sold it two years later, using the proceeds to enable her to regain guardianship of her son.³

When an active and admired African American family moved into the house in 1915, it became a socially significant place for the city's black community. The Bridgewater family was both representative of the African American experience in Helena through the early twentieth century, and boasted the extraordinary Bridgewater women, whose accomplishments speak to the struggle for racial equality, the strength of the black community in Helena, and overcoming discrimination through World War II and beyond.

Helena Background

When prospectors discovered gold in the gulch, they found this remote wilderness a most beautiful place. Extensive placer mining quickly changed the landscape and with Montana's three great placer gold discoveries—at Grasshopper Creek in 1862, Alder Gulch in 1863, and Last Chance Gulch in 1864—the mostly itinerate population moved from one discovery to the next. By 1865, Last Chance Gulch, christened Helena, was a bustling camp.

Helena's first non-Indian population mirrored that of Virginia City's with miners, merchants, service-providers, saloonkeepers, freighters, gamblers, and prostitutes forming a noisy, boisterous community.

³ During the late nineteenth century, the legal system did not guarantee that widows retained custody of their children, and the court required her to post a substantial bond.

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Within its first two years, Helena had formally established Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish cemeteries. Businesses included 188 retail and wholesale houses; 45 of which were food stores. Helena boasted both Democratic and Republican newspapers and a public school with one hundred students. Daily coaches traveled from Helena to Salt Lake City or Fort Benton. A ticket from Helena to Corinne, Utah, on the Wells Fargo Stage cost \$145 and the trip took at least four and a half days, traveling twenty-four hours, to cover the 550 miles. The arrival of the telegraph in 1866 provided a critical link with the States.⁴

With the end of the Civil War, more newcomers flooded into Montana Territory and Helena's population continued to grow. A. K. McClure wrote in 1867:

Helena has all the vim, recklessness, extravagance, and jolly progress of a new camp. It is but little over two years old, but it boasts a population of 7,500 and more solid men, more capital, more handsome and well-filled stores, more fast boys and frail women, more substance and pretense, more virtue and vice, more preachers and groggeries, and more go-ahead activeness generally than any other city in the mountain mining region.⁵

In 1868, with the continued growth of Helena and its increasing influence, the Montana Territorial Legislature passed a bill allowing a vote to relocate the territorial capital from Virginia City to Helena. Although Governor Green Clay Smith vetoed the bill, it illustrates the shifting power structure within the territory with the decline of one gold camp and rise of another.

The first federal census taken in 1870 reported Helena's population at approximately 3,000 people. Although the town lost significant population when placer mining ceased toward the end of the 1860s, Helena represented the largest urban area in the territory. Men outnumbered women three to one, and residents originated from all over the world and every state, with the most significant ethnic groups in the young community represented by Jews, Chinese, Irish, and African-Americans.⁶

Passage of a bill in Congress in 1874 to establish a federal assay office in Helena provided additional prestige to the town.⁷ Constructed in 1875 at the federal government's expense, Helena shared the honor of hosting such an office with only five other cities that included New York City, St. Louis, Charlotte (N.C.), Deadwood, and Boise; the construction of the assay office in Helena illustrated the town's strategic location on the projected route of the Northern Pacific, its importance as a regional center, and its wealth.⁸ The upward arc of the town continued as the capital moved to Helena in 1875. Along with the seat of government came territorial offices and officials, boosting the town's prestige and population even further. The town continued to diversify beyond its mining roots as industries including a foundry,

⁴ Michael P. Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, rev ed. (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991) p. 78.

⁵ A. K. McClure, *3,000 Miles Through the Rocky Mountains*, (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott and Co., 1869), p. 285.

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, *1870 United States Federal Census*, Population Schedules, Helena, Lewis and Clark County, Montana, NARA microfilm publication M593. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration.

⁷ 18 Stat L., 45.

⁸ William A. Richardson, ed., *Supplement to the Revised Statutes of the United States, Volume I: Legislation of 1874-1881*, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1881), p. 23; William M. McKinney, ed., *Federal Statutes Annotated Second Edition, Volume II: Birds to Customs Duties*, (Northport, Long Island, New York: Edward Thompson Company, 1917), pp. 320-321.

several breweries and brickworks, lime kilns for the manufacture of mortar, and stone quarries opened and operated.⁹

Helena's Physical Development

The 1880s witnessed a period of expansion and building activity, which stemmed partly from an influx of new residents arriving on the Northern Pacific, and partly from the anticipation of the territory obtaining statehood finally on the horizon. At least 425 houses were built in 1888 alone.¹⁰ Not only did the arrival of the railroad link Helena to outside markets, it assured its survival. Statehood arrived by 1889, and construction in the Queen City of the Rockies—so named in the late 1880s for its flamboyant architecture and its wealthy residents—reached a fever pitch. Illustrating the construction craze, the Helena 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, three calciminers, four cornice manufacturers, three mantel firms, and two sky light manufacturers.¹¹

Although the founders laid out Helena's townsite in 1864-65, city planners hired a professional surveyor to correct and confirm the lots and blocks in 1884. Not surprisingly, the first additions represent the earliest residential areas that border the original townsite immediately to the north and the west. The Maudline-Storey and Hauser Additions, platted in 1879 and 1880 respectively, appear along the east slope of Mount Helena, and constitute the historic "West Side" neighborhood. The 1881 Easterly Addition extends from the original townsite's southeast edge. These and later additions sprang from what were originally mining claims that ringed Last Chance Gulch:

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 in 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.¹²

In keeping with this pattern, Virginian and miner George W. Barker filed an entry to the south half of the southeast quarter and the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 24 and the northeast quarter of the northeast quarter of Section 25 in Township 10 North, Range 4 West before 1869, and

⁹Ellen Baumler, "Helena, Montana," in Gordon Morris Bakken and Alexandra Kindell, eds., *Encyclopedia of Immigration and Migration in the American West*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2006), pp. 298-302, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412952439.n135>.

¹⁰Herbert L. Jacobson, Donald L. Byrd, and Chere Juisto, *Helena: A Historic City*, prepared for the City of Helena and MTSHP, January, 1982, p. 9.

¹¹A.W. Ide, *City Directory, Helena, MT, 1889*, (Helena, MT: A. W. Ide, 1889).

¹²Jacobson, Herbert L., Byrd, Donald, L. and Juisto, Chere. *Helena: A Historic City*. Montana Historical Society, 1982, p.11.

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received his cash entry patent for it on February 10, 1871.¹³ He quickly sold it, before confirmation of his patent, to the first of a long line of women present in the chain of title for the property. Deeds show that Barker sold his claim to Lizzie A. and Rachel G. Brooke on November 27, 1869. By 1870, Barker had moved on, mining in the Deer Lodge area.¹⁴ Born in Virginia, the sisters arrived in Montana in 1865 via Kansas with their widowed mother and brothers, Benjamin and Edward. Rachel never married and died at age 49 on January 18, 1877, having sold her share of the property to Lizzie the year before. As was common legal practice in the United States, Lizzie shared ownership of the property with her husband, A.H. Barrett, after she married. The couple sold the property to local businessman Charles A. Broadwater on July 16, 1881 for \$16,000.¹⁵ Broadwater planned to develop north and west of the city, and platted several additions, which included the land purchased from Lizzie and her husband:

A study of the additions to the city and the dates they were filed reveals its pattern of growth. 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.

...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.¹⁶

One of the eight additions platted in 1887 included Broadwater #1 Addition. Named after its owner, the addition was one of Charles A. Broadwater's many investments and interests in the City of Helena, which also included the Broadwater Hotel at the west end of town.¹⁷ Following the pattern noted above, it appears that relatively little construction took place in the neighborhood over the next few years.

In 1890, a plasterer and fledgling real estate entrepreneur named George B. Diehl purchased the lot on which the Haight - Bridgewater House stands. Within the year, Diehl built a small house on the lot, clearly noted on the 1890 American Publishing Company of Milwaukee perspective map of Helena. The map unmistakably illustrates the one-story house on the northwest corner of Peosta and Benton, several

¹³ General Land Office, "Serial Patent No. 114, George Barker, 160 acres," February 10, 1871, BLM Serial No. MTMTAA 051273.

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, *1870 United States Federal Census*, Census Place: Pioneer and Pikes Peak, Deer Lodge, Montana Territory, Roll: M593_827, Page: 90B, Image: 185, Family History Library Film, 552326.

¹⁵ *Helena Independent*, January 19, 1877 and May 17, 1878; "Warranty Deed, George W. Barker to Lizzie A and Rachel G. Brooke," November 27, 1869, Book K, Page 101 and "Warranty Deed, Rachel G. Brooke to Elizabeth A. Brooke," January 24, 1876, Book Q, Page 384, Record #425, Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Records Office, Helena, MT; Charleen Spalding, "Rachel G. Brooke, biographical entry," *FindAGrave.com*, 2012, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Brooke&GSiman=1&GScid=2173052&GRid=89886832&>, accessed December 11, 2013.

¹⁶ Jacobson, Byrd, and Justo, *Helena: A Historic City*, pp. 11-12. See map of Helena and listing of Helena Additions on continuation pages.

¹⁷ Jon Axline and Charleen Spalding, "Charles A. Broadwater House National Register Nomination," on file at MT SHPO, Helena, MT, 2007 (NR Reference # 08000825).

residences crowded on that block, and a streetcar line one block south that connected the city with Broadwater's developments west of town.¹⁸ Two years later, the 1892 Sanborn map depicts many small houses in the addition, most concentrated on the 1300 and 1400 blocks of Madison and Harrison, and the 500 and 900 blocks of Peosta Avenue, including the house constructed by Diehl, identified as Immanuel Mission.¹⁹ This cluster of residences included Diehl's home, and remains as the oldest part of the neighborhood, which continued to grow slowly through the mid-twentieth century.

Baptists in Montana

As Helena grew, so did the town's ethnic diversity. Several members of the burgeoning Helena population were African-American, and they proved a strong and culturally rich segment of the community. In addition to the presence of different ethnic groups, a number of religious organizations founded churches within the city, contributing to the town's social history; among these groups were the Baptists who sought out members of many ethnicities through their "Home Mission" program. Soon after its construction, the house at 502 Peosta hosted one these Home Mission programs during the years 1891 and 1892, courtesy of Hattie L. Haight.

The following information pertaining to Baptists in Montana is from Baptist History in Montana in Religion In Montana, Pathways to the Present, edited by Lawrence F. Small.²⁰

The origins of the Baptists in the New World harkens back to the establishment of two religious communities by Roger Williams and Dr. John Clarke in the Rhode Island Colony in 1638.²¹ Dissemination of the English-American Baptist congregations along with Baptist groups from Europe slowly spread to the other colonies. An 1832 convention of Baptist congregations created the American Baptist Home Mission Society and the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society. The Home Mission Society proved to be a catalyst for spreading the Baptist faith to the western territories, including Montana.²²

Baptists Ezra Fisher and Hezekiah Johnson passed through what was to become Montana Territory on their way to Oregon in 1845, and Reverend A. M. Torbet attempted to organize a Baptist Church in Virginia City in 1864.²³ While other denominations gained a foothold in the territory, it was not until 1880 that the American Baptist Home Mission Society, with encouragement and pleas from local Baptists, ventured to appoint Reverend J. T. Mason of Sterling, Illinois as General Missionary for Montana. Reverend Sterling arrived in Helena on December 5, 1880, and chartered the First Baptist Church of Montana. The group originally met in the Lewis and Clark Courthouse, but after establishing

¹⁸ American Publishing Company, *Perspective Map of the City of Helena, Mont. Capital of State, County Seat of Lewis & Clarke Co.*, Map, (Milwaukee, 1890), Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C., Call Number G4254.H5A3 1890, A4 Oversize.

¹⁹ Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Map of Helena, 1892*, Sheets 21 and 22.

²⁰ Flora K. Willett, PhD., "Baptist History in Montana," in Lawrence F. Small, ed., *Religion in Montana, Pathways to the Present*, Volume 1, (Billings, MT: Rocky Mountain College, 1992), pp. 201-228.

²¹ Robert G. Torbet, *A History of the Baptists: The Role of a Remnant*, (Valley Forge, PA.: Judson Press, 1965), pp. 18-21.

²² Willett, "Baptist History in Montana," p. 202.

²³ Oscar Grindheim, *History of the Baptist Work in Montana*, (Thesis, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT, 1949), p.3. Though a candidate for pastor, Torbet was not chosen to lead Virginia City's church in December 1884, and it was instead dedicated as the Union Church. Torbet left the town in 1865. Willett, "Baptist History in Montana," p. 203.

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their Sunday school shifted to a hall on Broadway, then to the Southern Methodist Church on North Warren Avenue. Within four years, in 1884, the First Baptist Church of Montana edifice was dedicated and opened on the corner of Warren Street and Eighth Avenue; despite fire and earthquake damage, the church remains at this location.²⁴

By 1883, Baptist churches had been established in numerous Montana towns. In an effort to assist each other, nine churches, including Helena's, organized the Montana Baptist Association of the Territory of Montana, the predecessor of the present Big Sky Area Churches of the Northwest Region of American Baptist Churches/USA.²⁵ Affiliated with the state organization were the "Ladies Aid" societies. These groups provided valuable help in raising money for new churches. These early groups reorganized in 1883 as the Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society for Montana which morphed, by 1887, into the Baptist Women's Territorial Board of Mission, Home and Foreign.²⁶

As the Baptists in Montana, including those in Helena, became more established, they launched satellite schools, referred to as mission schools. These schools often catered to different ethnicities, including the Chinese and African-American communities.²⁷ These home missions offered Sunday school instruction, lectures, and services, and often were hosted in residences or in rented rooms in the city. Following this established pattern, Mrs. Hattie Haight and her family offered their home at 502 Peosta for use as the Immanuel Mission, to instruct and build community in the multi-ethnic neighborhood from 1891 through 1892. The use of the house at 502 Peosta for the purpose of hosting the mission was documented in an April 1892 issue of the *Helena Independent*:

The Baptist Church people began work in the northwest part of the city near the old cemetery about six months ago. They now have a flourishing mission interest there. It is probable that they will build a chapel during the summer.²⁸

Advertisements in the same paper indicate that the Baptist Pastor, Reverend C.B. Allen, lectured on Friday evenings, Sunday school was held every Sunday at 2:30, and that "all were welcome."²⁹

In the mid-1890s, what began as the Immanuel Mission in the Haight's home moved its services to the newly constructed Broadwater School in the same neighborhood. By 1893, the Haight family moved back to living downtown, close to Dr. Haight's medical practice. Hattie Haight kept ownership of the

²⁴ Willett, "Baptist History in Montana," pp. 204-205. In addition to organizing in Helena, the Baptists also made inroads soon after in nearby Butte. The Reverend M.T. Lamb arrived in Butte in December 1881, and by February 1882 had established a church with a congregation of sixteen; of these, nearly half were blacks. By April of the same year, both a missionary Sunday school and a Chapel Sunday school were established in the area, and by 1885 the completion of a church edifice occurred. Willet, pp 204-205.

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 210-211.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 211.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 216-217. Butte also holds the distinction of organizing the first black Baptist mission, in addition to the first Swedish Baptist Church, and the first black church. A 1917 Montana Baptist Convention bulletin stated that missions in Montana comprised of "American, Swedish, Negro, Norwegian, Crow, Danish, Chinese, and German" followers.

²⁸ *The Helena Independent*, April 20, 1892, p. 8.

²⁹ *The Helena Independent*, July 10, 17, and 31, 1892.

home, however, and rented to others it over the next several years, providing her with much-needed income.³⁰

Hattie L. Haight

Hattie L. Bigelow was born in Chicago in 1867, the oldest daughter of Charles Bigelow and Harriet Cahoon.³¹ Ten years his junior, young Hattie married Dr. Vincent Haight on January 23, 1883, after the passing of Vincent's first wife in 1880.³² The couple lived in Chicago after their marriage during which time they had a son, who sadly, died three months after his birth. The Hights left Chicago suddenly in 1889, "leaving a large number of debts and several enraged patients behind."³³ They arrived in Helena in the fall of 1889 where Vincent practiced medicine.³⁴ While in Helena, the Hights lived first in the Broadwater Block (later known as the Goodkind Block) where the doctor had his medical office, then moved to a new house at 502 Peosta Avenue, which Mrs. Haight purchased from George Diehl in 1891. For more than two years, the family lived in the home and hosted the Immanuel Mission there. According to newspaper sources, Vincent had ties to the Baptist Church in his native Peekskill, New York, and Hattie was herself a deeply religious person.³⁵

As early as 1891, Vincent experienced health issues, and he and the family travelled to visit his family in New York several times over the next few years. Upon their return from their trip in 1891, his health

³⁰ R.L. Polk & Co., *Helena City Directory, 1892*, (R.L. Polk & CO., 1892), pp. 46 and 290. By the early 1900s, a Second Baptist Church was established in Helena, this one catering to the African American community. They met in various locations for several years during the 1910s, until they constructed a permanent church on Wilder Avenue in 1914. The Wilder Avenue Church still stands just a few blocks from the original Immanuel Mission at 502 Peosta. *The Montana Plaindealer*, October 21, 1910, and various advertisements in the *Plaindealer*, 1909-1911.

³¹ *The Highland Democrat* (Peekskill, NY), January 26, 1939.

³² U.S. Census Bureau, *1880 United States Federal Census*, Census Place: Chicago, Cook, Illinois, Roll: 194, Family History Film 1254194, Page: 279B, Enumeration District 120, Image: 0300; "Hattie L. Bigelow," *Cook County, Illinois Marriage Index*, found at Ancestry.com, FHL Film #1030130, accessed November 20, 2013; Arthur Theodore Andreas, *History of Chicago, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time, Volume III: From the Fire of 1871 to 1885*, (Chicago: A.T. Andreas Company, 1896), p 531. Dr. Vincent Haight attended Syracuse University and graduated from Bellevue Medical College in New York. Prior to marrying Hattie, Dr. Haight became enmeshed in a sordid and ultimately tragic relationship with a young woman named Mary Maher. Haight, 25 at the time, wooed the 19 year old Mayer who apparently became pregnant out of wedlock. To conceal the incident, the couple attempted to terminate the pregnancy, with dire consequences. Adding further intrigue, Vincent spirited Mary away, without the knowledge of her parents, to a rental apartment in town to recover. Within days, on May 7, 1880, Mary fell ill and died. Haight was brought up on manslaughter charges despite Mary's written admission that she performed the ill-fated procedure. However, subsequent investigations into Mary's death suggested the procedure was accomplished by someone with vastly greater medical knowledge. Indicted in the summer of 1880, and tried in the spring of 1881, nearly every paper in the state covered the case with numerous details regarding the couple's relationship brought to light. Deliberations eventually resulted in a hung-jury. Vincent moved to Chicago (his apparent plans to move to Syracuse scuttled), and within two years, married sixteen-year-old Hattie Bigelow. They moved west to Helena in 1889 suggesting that between the loss and events associated with his first wife, and the loss of his first-born son, moving West could prove a panacea to some of the painful memories associated with the East. *New York Times*, May 16, 19, and 21, and June 11, 1880; *New York Herald*, April 21, 1881. Interestingly, Dr. Haight advertised himself in the Anaconda newspaper as specializing in women's health issues. *Anaconda Standard*, November 29, 1890, p. 5.

³³ *The Medical Standard*, Volume VI, Number 5 (November 1889), (Chicago: G.P. Engelhard & Co.), p. 164.

³⁴ *The Helena Independent*, July 22, 1894.

³⁵ R.L. Polk & Co., *Helena City Directory, 1891 and 1892*, (R.L. Polk & Co., 1891 and 1892); *The Helena Independent*, June 12, July 10, July 17, and July 31, 1892. Though no documentation has been located to definitively associate Hattie with the Baptist Church, an article pertaining to her husband, Vincent, stated that he and his first wife were married by a reverend of the Baptist Church. *The Highland Democrat* (Peekskill, NY), May 15, 1889 and January 26, 1939.

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reportedly was “much better than when he left Helena some months” before.³⁶ He continued to practice, tending to those across the county as well as in his own residential neighborhood.³⁷ Never far from controversy, Vincent became associated with another tragic event. The doctor previously sold a downtown property to George Diehl, the same Diehl who constructed the house at 502 Peosta in the fledgling Broadwater Addition neighborhood. Using plans provided him by Vincent, Diehl commenced construction of a brick building, which collapsed onto a neighboring house, killing a young boy. Vincent was not indicted in the incident, and Diehl was eventually acquitted.³⁸ However, owning the house in her own name, offered some protection to the Peosta property, and Hattie, from potential liability and creditors in the incident.

Married women in the United States, for the most part, were not legally allowed to own property independently of their husbands until the middle of the nineteenth century. An “ardent adherent of Women’s Suffrage from the beginning,”³⁹ Hattie Haight purchased the 502 Peosta property separately from her husband by taking advantage of a progression of laws designed to protect a family’s wealth, both from creditors and from the distribution of estates away from the female line of a family. These “Women’s Property Acts,” passed by a number of states during the 1840s, were the first to specifically acknowledge a married woman’s right to own property in her own name. Prior to the passage of these laws, women generally relinquished their property ownership to their husbands and were barred from acquiring property in their own names upon marriage.⁴⁰ Unlike several other states and territories established in the mid-1800s, Montana was not a community property state, but it did allow women to hold and control property in their own name.

By 1894, Vincent’s illness had progressed. He suffered from Bright’s Disease, a reduction in kidney function and effective poisoning of the blood. Tragically, he passed away of the disease on July 18, 1894, leaving pregnant Hattie, only 27 years old at the time, and their toddler son Clifton, behind.⁴¹ Vincent left a will, and named fellow physician and IOOF member, Dr. C.B. Miller, as executor.⁴² The estate was worth only about \$1500, and after auctioning off Vincent’s belongings and paying his debts in March 1895, Hattie received less than \$900. She did, however, own property, not only the house at 502 Peosta, but also a few lots in Massachusetts, perhaps through her mother’s family.⁴³

³⁶ *The Helena Independent*, July 5, 1891.

³⁷ *The Helena Independent*, March 16, 1892 and September 17, 1892.

³⁸ *The Helena Independent*, August 8, October 23, and October 24, 1891.

³⁹ “Obituaries: Mrs. Isaac C. Sturges,” *The Highland Democrat* (Peekskill, NY), January 26, 1939.

⁴⁰ For more information regarding the evolution of women’s property rights in the United States, see Carole Shammas, “Re-Assessing the Married Women’s Property Acts,” *Journal of Women’s History*, Volume 6, Number 1, 1994, pp. 9-30. Available online at: <http://courses.knox.edu/hist267/shammasproperty.pdf>, accessed December 5, 2013.

⁴¹ *The Helena Independent*, July 22, 1894; “Lewis & Clark County – Montana, Forestvale Cemetery Burial Index - 1890 – 7/1/2009,” <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mtlclgs/Forestvale/forestvale-h.html>, accessed December 5, 2013.

⁴² *The Helena Independent*, July 24, 1894.

⁴³ First Judicial District of the State of Montana, In and for the County of Lewis and Clarke, “In the Matter of Dr. Vincent Haight, Petition for Probate of Will, Case No. 632,” Clerk of Court, Lewis and Clark County Courthouse, Helena, MT.

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In June of 1895, Hattie accompanied the remains of her husband back to Peekskill where they were reinterred.⁴⁴ She returned to Helena, residing in a small apartment on Warren Street a block from the First Baptist Church. Hattie faced an additional hurdle. According to prevailing custody laws, she, as a widow, did not receive automatic custody of her children. Historian Mary Ann Mason explains:

In those times, women fought for property rights that had been held exclusively by their husbands. These included the rights to control their own wages and inheritance, to equal control of their children's custody—and complete control when their husbands died... By 1887, 30 states had granted women rights to wages, property, litigation, and contracts, but few states expanded women's rights to their children.

By century's end, only nine states and the District of Columbia gave mothers the statutory right to equal guardianship. Most men and even some women's rights advocates feared too many rights would tempt women to take their children and leave the family.⁴⁵

Indeed, executor C.B. Miller served as guardian to Hattie's son Clifton. To gain guardianship of her own child, Hattie needed to prove to the court her fitness and ability to support her family. Her rental income from the 502 Peosta house barely covered her own rent. She chose to sell the property to Andrew L. Nourse of Bolton, Massachusetts, even though she took a tremendous loss on the purchase price, having paid \$2600 for it in 1891, but receiving only \$1600 in 1896.⁴⁶ Hattie also sold her Massachusetts property to raise the money to pay a \$5500 bond required by the courts to gain custody of Clifton. The court granted her guardianship, with Helena banker George L. Ramsey, on September 17, 1898.⁴⁷ Finally secure in her custody rights, Hattie and her family moved back to Chicago, then to Peekskill, where her husband's family lived, soon thereafter.

She remained in Westchester County, having married twice more, until she died in 1939. Her obituary memorializes her as a devoutly religious woman, and celebrated her involvement with the Suffrage Movement and the Red Cross.⁴⁸ Hattie Haight's story is, sadly, representative of many women's struggles during the mid and late nineteenth century. Her legal right to own property independent of her husband protected her interests not only when Vincent was implicated in a wrongful death inquiry, but also after he died. The house at 502 Peosta was not listed as an asset of Vincent's estate, giving her the security of property ownership inaccessible to her husband's creditors. Faced with a legal system that still failed to recognize a woman's right to custody of her child, Hattie used the proceeds from the house's sale to secure guardianship of her young family.

⁴⁴ Members of the local I.O.O.F. lodge met Hattie at the station and transported Vincent's remains to the Haight family plot at the Hillside Cemetery. *The Highland Democrat* (Peekskill, NY), June 22, 1895.

⁴⁵ Kathleen Kelley Reardon and Christopher T. Noblet, *Childhood Denied*, "Chapter 4: A Brief History of Child Custody Issues Related to Abuse and Neglect," (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009), pp. 89-90.

⁴⁶ "Warranty Deed, George B. and Hannah Diehl to Hattie L. Haight," Book 28, Page 246, August 6, 1891, and "Warranty Deed, Hattie L. Haight to Andrew L. Nourse, Trustee of the County of Suffoex [sic] of Massachusetts," Book 35, Page 634, November 23, 1896, Clerk and Records Office, Lewis and Clark County, Helena, MT.

⁴⁷ First Judicial District of the State of Montana, In and for the County of Lewis and Clarke, "In the Matter of Dr. Vincent Haight, Petition for Probate of Will, Case No. 632," Clerk of Court, Lewis and Clark County Courthouse, Helena, MT.

⁴⁸ "Obituaries: Mrs. Isaac C. Sturges," *The Highland Democrat*, January 26, 1939.

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The connection between Andrew L. Nourse, who purchased 502 Peosta, and Hattie Haight remains unclear. However, whatever connection existed, Andrew L. Nourse “had not then and never had any personal interest in” her house at 502 Peosta in Helena. Nourse served as Trustee to the First Parish and Religious Society, and apparently Hattie conveyed the property to him because of that role.⁴⁹ During the nineteenth century, this non-denominational congregation became identified with the Unitarian movement, characterized by an emphasis on human reason and its commitment to progressive theology and social causes, especially the anti-slavery movement. This corporation, still viable, embraces all denominations and religions.⁵⁰ Given Hattie Haight’s work with the Suffrage Movement and religious organizations, it stands to reason that she would be attracted to the First Parish and Religious Society’s philosophy. Nourse retained the property, likely managing it for the Society, until his death.

Helena at the Turn of the Twentieth Century

After Hattie relinquished ownership of the property, several families resided in the house through the succeeding decades, including miners and tradespeople. The Silver Panic of 1893, and ensuing halt of building activity in the city, contributed to substantial loss in property value between the time Hattie Haight purchased 502 Peosta and had to sell it six years later. Prior to the Silver Panic, Montana achieved statehood in 1889, and Helena won permanent designation as the state capital in a vitriolic fight with Anaconda in 1894.

While building activity never again reached the fevered pitch of the 1880s, Helena settled comfortably into its role as the seat of state government retaining its “Queen City” nickname. The 1900 census reveals that just over 100 families lived in the Broadwater Addition area, including several of Irish, German, and Swedish nativity. Polk Directories and newspaper advertisements from the 1890s and 1900s indicate many of the residences served as rental properties. Like today, the neighborhood housed mainly working class people, as opposed to their wealthier neighbors in the Maudline and Hauser Additions. The census calls out only a handful of African-American Fifth Ward residents, most who worked and lived in wealthy households.⁵¹

Despite the economic downturn of the 1890s, Helena’s population rose during the decade, resulting partially from the arrival of military troops to the nearby post. The meeting of the Great Northern and Northern Pacific lines proved crucial to Congress’ authorizing construction of an army post at Helena in 1892 to consolidate smaller posts. Fort Benjamin Harrison, west of town, opened in 1894 with the arrival of troops from Fort Assiniboine. Originally named in honor of the twenty-third president of the United States (1889-1893), the post was renamed in 1906 Fort William Henry Harrison for Benjamin’s grandfather, the ninth president of the United States, thus avoiding duplication of another existing Fort Harrison.

⁴⁹ “Warranty Deed, Mrs. Rachel C. Nourse, et. al., to First Parish and Religious Society of Bolton Worcester County, Massachusetts,” January 20, 1925, copy on file at MT SHPO, Helena, MT.

⁵⁰ “The First Parish of Bolton,” at <http://www.firstparishofbolton.org/welcome.html>, accessed October 23, 2013.

⁵¹ U.S. Census Bureau, *1900 United States Federal Census*, Place: Helena Ward 5, Lewis and Clark, Montana; Roll: 912; Page: 1A; Enumeration Districts: 0174 and 0175; FHL microfilm: 1240912. Helena’s Fifth Ward included the area north of Lawrence and west of Main Street, and includes the Maudlin, Hauser, and Broadwater #1 Additions. The three black heads of household in the Fifth ward lived in homes on Dearborn, Main and Benton.

In 1895, a detachment of the Hospital Corps from Fort Assinboine south of Havre and several small military posts scheduled to close in the Dakotas began training at the post. The fort functioned as an active army post until 1913. Recruits, which included many immigrants, arrived from all parts of the United States. Adding to the different ethnicities represented at the fort, Fort William Henry Harrison, like several other Montana forts, hosted African-American soldiers.⁵² The presence of the fort brought Samuel and Mamie Bridgewater and their family to Helena, setting in motion the occupancy and ownership of 502 Peosta Avenue by Mamie, and later, daughter Octavia, through much of the house's history.

With the onset of World War I, Montana experienced heavy draft calls and many blacks in Montana heeded the call to serve. War-related jobs out of state likely also drew others away from Montana.⁵³ Despite this, some of these soldiers and their families chose to stay in Helena. Some who remained left indelible marks on not only their respective companies but also the community. The Bridgewater family, who adopted Helena as their home, eventually came to live at 502 Peosta in Helena, yielding another significant chapter in the history of the house. Both Samuel's wife, Mamie, and daughter, Octavia, followed in Samuel's footsteps in terms of service; Mamie's to the community and Octavia to both the community and the military. Their presence contributed to the social fabric and enrichment of both their neighborhood and their adopted town. The persistence of these two women remaining in Helena and making 502 Peosta Avenue home must surely have been difficult at times due to both obvious and subtle forms of racism.

Blacks in Helena

Black Montanans have sometimes lived lonely lives as minorities; however, as their histories begin to unfold and a greater understanding of the hardships they endured emerges, their rich legacies begin to fill an important missing chapter in the history of our state and communities. African-American men and women arrived in Helena with the first waves of settlers. By 1870, seventy-one African-Americans resided in Helena. Twenty years later, out of a total population of 13,834 people, 279 African-Americans called Helena home. By 1910, this number grew to 420 representing 3.4 percent of the city's population. The number of blacks living in the Helena area at that time reflected the solidarity of the prosperous and comfortable African-American community. Black citizens never lived in segregated neighborhoods, rather, their homes dotted many Helena streets.⁵⁴ Although visible prejudice occurred in social segregation, Helena offered many of its black citizens opportunity. Here, as elsewhere in Montana, African-Americans such as James Crump, Walter Dorsey, Julian Anderson, Miles York, J. P. Ball, Joseph Bass, and the Bridgewater family, left important legacies (please see "Additional Context" at the end of Section 8 for short biographical sketches of James Crump, Walter Dorsey, Julian Anderson, Miles York, J. P. Ball, and Joseph Bass).

⁵² "Fort William Henry Harrison, 1894-Today," *Helena As She Was*, http://www.helenahistory.org/fort_harrison.htm, accessed November 18, 2013.

⁵³ William L. Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch 1900-1912," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 70, No. 2, April 1979, (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1979), p. 57.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 50-51.

Despite many successes, the black population in the town, as in most Montana communities, was in some respects invisible. A promotional pamphlet issued about Helena in 1908 makes no mention of its sizable black population. The publication praised Helena's churches, fraternal organizations, benevolent societies, civic improvement groups and social clubs, but failed to mention that Helena's progressive African-American population boasted similar institutions as well.⁵⁵

Its active, civic-minded residents articulated and spoke through the voice of Joseph Bass' Montana-published newspaper *Plaindealer*, protesting acts of prejudice and discrimination. One political organization, the Colored Progressive League, counted 60 active members who pledged to expel black pimps, prostitutes, gamblers, and hustlers from their midst and to defend unjustly harassed local African-Americans. Helena's vibrant black community also enjoyed recitals, plays, socials and formal debates staged by an active literary society.⁵⁶

Helena boasted two black churches. In 1888, the St. James AME Church at Hoback and Fifth Avenue organized, and by 1894, it obtained sufficient national prestige to host the annual national convention. The Second Baptist Church organized in 1887 and during the 1910s, served a congregation of about 30 members. Second Baptist underwent a number of name changes including the Ebenezer Baptist Church (1915-1935), the Wilder Avenue Baptist Church (1937), the Free Methodist Church (1950), and in 1956, the Missionary Alliance Church. Helena's black women participated in social organizations and literary groups including the Pleasant Hour Club, the local chapter of the Montana Federation of Negro Women's Club.

As World War I called many Helena blacks into service the population decreased. In 1920, 220 African-Americans lived in the community, but by 1930, only 131 blacks called Helena home. This number fell to only 45 in 1970, including members of the Bridgewater family.⁵⁷

The Bridgwaters of Helena and 502 Peosta Avenue

Samuel Bridgewater

Samuel Bridgewater, a career army man, was born in Smith County, Tennessee, c. 1861. Nothing is known about his early life except that as a nine-year-old, he and two siblings lived in the white household of Amelia Bridgewater at Dixon Springs, Tennessee. The 1870 census enumerated Samuel as a domestic servant.⁵⁸ The custom of black children without parents assuming the name of the head of the white household in which they worked was a common practice that continued after Emancipation.

By 1879, Samuel enlisted in the army. A career buffalo soldier, Samuel served in the 24th Infantry Regiment, Company A, at various forts in the southwest including Forts Elliott in Texas, Brown and Douglas in Utah, and Huachuca in Arizona Territory. Private Bridgewater's duties included providing escort, logging, and keeping telegraph lines in good repair. His service ratings ranged from "Good" to "Excellent." Not lacking for excitement during his military career, his regiment went to Cuba in 1898

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 50.

⁵⁶ Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch," p. 55 and 57.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 57.

⁵⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, *1870 United States Federal Census*, Place: District 7, Smith, Tennessee, Roll: M593_1564, Page: 86A, Image: 176, Family History Library Film: 553063.

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where he was wounded at the beginning of the famous battle at San Juan Hill on July 1, 1898. Captain Ben W. Leavell's *After Action Report* to the Adjutant Twenty-Fourth Infantry on July 13 noted that of the fourteen men under his command, Private Samuel Bridgewater and seven other men received wounds, while two others were killed during the battle. Captain Leavell further stated: "All ... showed a desire to do their duty, yea, more than their duty, which would have done credit to seasoned veterans. Too much cannot be said of their courage, willingness and endurance."⁵⁹

Private Bridgewater was wounded in the right breast and transported with other casualties via the transport *Cherokee* to Tampa, Florida and back to the States to recover.⁶⁰ Complications from his wound impacted his health for the rest of his life. It is possible he also suffered from yellow fever as many soldiers did who served in this conflict. Reports indicate Samuel sick in the hospital in the Philippine Islands from September to December 1899. Because the reports are sporadic, however, he may have been hospitalized more than once during that period for different causes.⁶¹

In September of 1902, Private Bridgewater returned to the United States from the Philippines with his unit. Company A was reassigned to Fort Harrison where he served as a cook. He retired in 1905 and spent some time in a California veterans' hospital. He then worked in Helena as porter for the Broadwater Hotel and the Seymer Park Saloon. Bridgewater died on June 9, 1912 at the age of 41, leaving a wife and five children. He was buried in the veterans' cemetery at Fort Harrison and subsequently moved to Forestvale Cemetery north of Helena when the original fort cemetery was dispersed.

Mamie E. Bridgewater

Like Hattie Haight, Mamie Bridgewater faced life in the Montana Territory during a time when women were just starting to be recognized politically and legally as equals to their male counterparts. However, as an African-American woman, in many ways Mrs. Bridgewater faced additional discrimination. Like Mrs. Haight, her husband died at a relatively young age, leaving her alone to raise her children, and she turned to religious and socially progressive groups for support. Her story in many ways represents others of her gender and race in Helena at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Mamie E. Anderson was born in Gallatin, Tennessee in September, 1872, to Levi (Levy), a farmer, and Emily (Emma) Anderson. Mamie's siblings in 1880 included Robert, Isam, Sear, Lee, Elizabeth, and Katie. Levi's mother, Lacy Mary Anderson, also lived in the household. After 1880, Levi and Emily had two more children, Rufus and Ida. By 1900, Levi, Emily, and their two youngest children were farming in North Wichita, Lincoln County, Oklahoma.

By the age of twenty, in 1892, Mamie married Samuel Bridgewater at Fort Huachuca, Arizona Territory where he was stationed with the 24th Infantry, Company A.⁶² During this time, the couple had two daughters, Emma and Sophie. Similar to military families throughout history, Mamie and the children

⁵⁹ "Ben W. Leavell, Captain, Twenty-Fourth Infantry, Commanding Company A. to the Adjutant Twenty-Fourth Infantry," War with Spain – Buffalo Soldier After Action Reports, Center of Military History, United States Army at http://www.history.army.mil/html/documents/wvspain/buffalos_sjh/a-24inf.html, accessed October 18, 2013.

⁶⁰ *The Salt Lake Herald*, July 12, 1898, p 1.

⁶¹ *Returns from Regular Army Infantry Regiments, June 1821 - December 1916*, Microfilm Serial M665, Roll 249, (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)).

⁶² *Tombstone Epitaph*, June 19, 1892.

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followed Samuel to Fort Douglas, Utah, by 1897. There they had a third child, a boy named Samuel Earl, in December 1898, who sadly passed away less than a year later.⁶³ Mamie remained at Fort Douglas until 1902, when Samuel's company returned from the Philippines. Upon the company's return to the States, Emma followed her husband to Fort Harrison, Montana.⁶⁴ While living in Montana, Mamie and Samuel had three more children including daughter Octavia and sons Hubbard and Leon.

When Samuel retired, Mamie went to work as matron at Fort Harrison's army hospital. The family lived close by the fort at Seymer Park, and later at Kessler's Row. When her husband died in 1912, Mamie moved the family into town and worked as a domestic. She continued this line of work throughout her life, always scraping enough together to care for her children and grandchildren. Her husband's veteran status entitled her to a small pension as well.⁶⁵

Mamie was deeply religious, a leader of the Second Baptist Church, and socially active throughout her residency in Helena.⁶⁶ She participated heavily in fund raising for the Second Baptist Church building, and by 1910, \$3,000 had been raised for the cause. The *Montana Plaindealer* noted that the building would be "one of the most handsome small churches in the entire Northwest."⁶⁷ Located at 601 Wilder (1260 Harrison), the church first appears in the city directories in 1914.

In 1915, Mamie moved into the home at 502 Peosta Avenue, just a few blocks west of the church she helped to build. Throughout the family's occupancy, the house served as a home and refuge to numerous family members at various times. Always accommodating, Mamie opened her arms to family, and welcomed guests into her home. She was a bulwark in times of trouble. In addition to her church-related activities, Mamie also helped spearhead the organization of the local Pleasant Hour Club, an important African-American women's club, which formed in 1916.⁶⁸ After renting her house for ten years, she purchased it for \$800 from the First Parish and Religious Society in 1925. The progressive organization took a loss on the transaction, as Andrew Nourse had paid twice that much for the house nearly thirty years before.⁶⁹

Daughters Emma and Sophie married and had their own families by 1920. Leon, however, suffered mental illness, which haunted him throughout much of the rest of his life. Divorced in 1931, he lived off and on with Mamie at 502 Peosta Avenue, and was eventually committed to the Colorado State Hospital.

⁶³ Janet Harrell Campbell, "Janet Harrell Campbell to Pam Attardo, Lewis and Clark County Historic Preservation Officer," e-mail communication, May 16, 2013, on file at the Lewis and Clark County Historic Preservation Office, Helena, MT; "Samuel Earl Bridgewater [sic]," *FindAGrave.com*, <http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=BRI&GSpartial=1&GSbyrel=all&GSst=47&GSctry=4&GSsr=281&GRid=62108437&>, accessed December 18, 2013.

⁶⁴ *The New Age* (Butte, MT), September 13, 1902.

⁶⁵ "United States General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934," index and images, *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org/pal:MM9.3.1/TH-1942-24151-17263-21?cc=1919699&wc=M9M2-B1X:1539930785>), accessed December 10, 2013.

⁶⁶ *Helena Independent Record*, April 25, 1950.

⁶⁷ *Montana Plaindealer*, October 21, 1910

⁶⁸ *Montana Plaindealer*, September 8, 1911; R.L. Polk & Co., *Helena City Directory, 1914*, (R.L. Polk & CO, 1914); *Helena Independent Record*, April 28, 1950.

⁶⁹ "Warranty Deed, Hattie L. Haight to Andrew L. Nourse, Trustee of the County of Suffox [sic] of Massachusetts," Book 35, Page 634, November 23, 1896, and "Warranty Deed, First Parish and Religious Society of Bolton to Mamie E. Bridgewater," Book 140, Page 449, April 11, 1925, Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Records Office, Helena, MT.

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He returned to Montana and died at Warm Springs in 1968.⁷⁰ In addition to Leon, Mamie's son Herbert (Hubbard) lived with her through the 1930s; he worked as a janitor for the Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph Company.⁷¹ Drafted into the U.S. Army on March 23, 1945, Herbert followed in his father's footsteps and served his country in the military. While away, Herbert's son, Eugene, lived with Mamie, and upon Herbert's return, both lived in the home. Longtime Helena resident Marlene Carbis grew up on Peosta Street, and remembered the Bridgwaters well. As a friend of Eugene, Marlene delighted in visiting the house during the 1940s, noting that many neighborhood children enjoyed the home, which was "always neat as a pin."⁷²

On a hot August day in 1947, ten-year-old Eugene and a friend were playing in the runoff ditch of the Helena Sand and Gravel Company west of Helena (near the present location of Spring Meadow Lake). Tragically, Eugene, who could not swim, was caught in the current and drowned.⁷³ Carbis remembered the sadness that washed over the neighborhood and the home. Through these terrible times, Mamie's deep faith carried her through adversity. Mamie passed away three years later in 1950 at the age of 77, having worked hard her entire life. An "influential member of the city's negro population," she earned the respect and admiration of the Helena community. At the time of her death, she served as chaplain of the Pleasant Hour Club. Very close to her family and her children, Mamie was always very proud of her children's accomplishments, and rightly so.⁷⁴

Octavia Bridgewater and the Army Nurse Corps

Mamie's daughter Octavia never married and made her home with her mother at 502 Peosta Avenue. Born and raised in Helena, Octavia graduated from Helena High School in 1925. She attended the Lincoln School of Nursing, in New York, at the time, one of only two nursing schools exclusively for African-Americans. She graduated in August of 1930 and then attended the University of the State of New York where she received her registered nurse's degree in September of that year. Octavia returned to Helena, again living in her mother's home. At the time of Octavia's return, the Montana hospitals refused to hire African-American nurses, so she obtained private duty nursing jobs in the Helena community.⁷⁵ She was one of 27 nurses who advertised their services in Helena in 1931.⁷⁶ Despite her advanced degree, she took various other jobs in the community as well, including doing housework and helping with her mother's work as a laundress.⁷⁷

As a black nurse, Octavia Bridgewater faced a long legacy of discrimination. The beginning of World War I witnessed administrative barriers within the Army Nurse Corps and the American Red Cross that

⁷⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, *1940 United States Federal Census*, Place: Pueblo, Pueblo, Colorado, Roll: T627_475, Page: 3B, Enumeration District: 51-6; Ancestry.com, *Social Security Death Index*, Leon Bridgewater [sic].

⁷¹ R.L. Polk & Co., *City Directory for Helena, Montana, 1931 through 1935*, (R.L. Polk & Co., 1931, 1933, and 1935).

⁷² Marlene Carbis, personal interview with Kate Hampton, August 2006.

⁷³ *Helena Independent Record*, August 4, 1947.

⁷⁴ *Helena Independent Record*, April 28, 1950.

⁷⁵ Mary Munger, "In Yesterday's News: Special Women of World War II," 1985, source unknown, Montana Historical Society Vertical Files

⁷⁶ R.L. Polk & Co., *City Directory for Helena, Montana, 1931*, (R.L. Polk & Co, 1931), p. 214.

⁷⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, *1940 United States Federal Census*, Census Place: Helena, Lewis and Clark, Montana, Roll: T627_2222, Page: 3A, Enumeration District: 25-8.

prohibited African-American nurses from enlisting in the war effort. However, during the 1918 influenza epidemic when a severe shortage of nurses existed, regulations loosened and the Army Nurse Corps accepted eighteen African-American women. Because their service began after the signing of the Armistice, they cared for German prisoners of war and African-American soldiers stateside, but did not serve in wartime.⁷⁸

The entry of the United States into World War II in 1941 necessitated a review of the procedures in place regarding service of African-American nurses. Although fully qualified and willing to serve in the military nursing community, racial discrimination and segregation still occurred. Lobbying by the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt prompted the Army Nurse Corps, albeit begrudgingly, to begin accepting African-American nurses. A quota allowed the admittance of only 56 African-American nurses throughout the United States for the initial group. Although the Army Nurse Corps formed in 1901, and African-American nurses served throughout all wars, they generally did so only as contract nurses and not formally in the military.⁷⁹

By April 1941, forty-eight African-American nurses worked at Camp Livingston, Louisiana and Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Slowly but surely, African-American nurses began to serve within the established military system. Octavia joined the Army in 1942, one of fewer than 160 black nurses serving in the Army Nurse Corps, despite there being 8,000 black nurses in the U.S.⁸⁰ These women realized that failure to rectify the established protocols for black nurses serving in the military would retard the integration of African-American nurses into the mainstream medical community. Nationally through the black press, the women mobilized for their cause. They flooded the White House and Congress with telegrams and letters resulting in the Army and Navy finally lifting the boycott against black nurses in 1945. Octavia's was one of the many voices helping to bring about this change. The conclusion of World War II witnessed approximately 600 African-American nurses who served their country.⁸¹ During her military career, she earned the rank of First Lieutenant, and received her officer's training at the Tuskegee base hospital in Alabama.⁸² Her role in promoting and advocating for change in the military regarding African-American nurses brought her a sense of pride and proved to be a life altering experience.

Octavia returned to Helena and the Haight – Bridgewater house after her honorable discharge in 1945. As racial barriers diminished, St. Peter's Hospital began to hire black personnel. She served as a much beloved and long remembered registered nurse in the maternity department at St. Peter's Hospital until her retirement in the 1960s.⁸³ Through the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, she remained highly active in the

⁷⁸ U. S. Army Medical Department, Office of Medical History. "African American Nurse Corps Officers," at <http://history.amedd.army.mil/ANCWebsite/articles/blackhistory.html>, accessed October 27, 2013.

⁷⁹ U. S. Army Medical Department, Office of Medical History. "African American Nurse Corps Officers."

⁸⁰ Mary Munger, "Special Women of World War II.;" Judith L. Bellafaire, "The Army Nurse Corps: A Commemoration of World War II Service," *The Campaigns of World War II Series*, CMH Pub 72-14, Paper (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2008), pp. 8-9 at http://www.history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-14/CMH_Pub_72-14.pdf, accessed December 11, 2013.

⁸¹ U. S. Army Medical Department, Office of Medical History. "African American Nurse Corps Officers."

⁸² *Helena Independent Record*, May 27, 1945.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, December 13, 1985.

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Pleasant Hour Club, often hosting meetings, in her house. She also served as Treasurer and Secretary to that organization for several years.⁸⁴ She was a member of the Montana Nurses Association, and associated with the Helena Chapter of the American Legion. Admiration for her service resonated statewide, and in 1967, the Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs named her "Woman of the Year."⁸⁵

Indicating that racial and gender discrimination still existed in Helena, Octavia was once refused medical treatment at Fort Harrison because she was a woman and black; however, the elected congressman at the time intervened on her behalf allowing treatment. In addition to her life-long work in the health field, Octavia, like her mother before her, was always actively involved with the Baptist church, social groups, and the Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, of which she served as treasurer in 1971. After a long and giving life and career, Octavia Bridgewater passed away in December 1985.⁸⁶

In August 1985, Ms. Bridgewater deeded the longtime family home to Mary Alice Harrell for \$1.00. A widow and teacher, Mrs. Harrell sold the Haight - Bridgewater House to Anthony and Claire Mitchell in 1987. Residents of Casper, Wyoming, the Mitchells then deeded the property to Robert T. and Joan S. Bell in 1988. After Joan passed away, Mr. Bell satisfied the mortgage on the house in 2002.⁸⁷

The City of Helena took ownership of the property and put it up for auction in the Spring of 2013. Saved from demolition by the new owners, Donna and Dick Whitaker, the house now serves as a residential rental property, as it did for many years at the turn of the twentieth century.

Conclusion

Constructed in 1890, the Haight - Bridgewater House stands as one of oldest homes in the Broadwater #1 Addition developed near the northern edge of the city. The house and its location within the Broadwater #1 Addition represent the development of the young town and the planning efforts associated with its growth. The brainchild of entrepreneur Charles Broadwater, the Broadwater #1 Addition represents one of several additions Broadwater intended to develop north and west of Helena.

Within three years of the establishment of the Broadwater #1 Addition, developer George Diehl built the house at 502 Peosta Avenue as an investment property, and quickly sold it to Hattie Haight in 1891. Hattie represents the first of a line of independent women, each with their own story of adversity, who called the house home. As such, the house represents significant association not only with Helena's early planning and community development, but also with the social history of the community.

Beginning with Mrs. Haight, a succession of women owned the property, each of whom faced challenges brought on by circumstance and their gender during a time of transition for women's legal status. The

⁸⁴ *Helena Independent Record*, December 6, 1953, March 4, 1956, October 18, 1957, October 2, 1966, and March 4, 1962; Mary Munger, "Special Women of World War II."

⁸⁵ "Helena Woman Receives Honor," *Helena Independent Record*, June 20, 1967.

⁸⁶ Mary Munger, "Special Women of World War II."

⁸⁷ "Warranty Deed, Octavia Marie Bridgewater [sic] to Mary Alice Harrell," August 13, 1985, Book 5, Page 8567, "Warranty Deed, Mary Alice Harrell to Anthony Mitchell and Claire Mitchell," April 6, 1987, (Book and Page illegible, on file at MTSHPO), "Warranty Deed, Anthony and Claire Mitchell to Robert T. and Joan S. Bell," September 9, 1988, Book 9, Page 5931, and "Statement of Acknowledgement, Robert T. Bell," Satisfaction of Mortgage, May 1, 2002, Lewis and Clark County Clerk and Recorder, Helena, MT and on file at MT SHPO, Helena, MT.

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Bridgewater women, who owned the house for most of the twentieth century, faced the additional challenge of prejudice associated with their African-American heritage. Other shared challenges occurred between Hattie Haight and Mamie Bridgewater who both played the unenviable role of widow at a young age, with young children to raise. Octavia Bridgewater, Mamie's daughter, faced refusal for employment and service due to her ethnicity. Despite these setbacks, all three provided and sought comfort and support through their churches and community groups. However, although comfort through external institutions played a role in these women's lives, much of their fortitude came from within through their own determination to persevere and succeed. It is through their resolution to assist not only fellow Helena-ites, but in the case of Octavia, soldiers during World War II, that a significant chapter of the social history of Helena history was written.

The three women's stories are at once extraordinary and representative of the social experience of many women in Helena and the West through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. For these reasons, the Haight-Bridgewater House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT

African-Americans in Montana

Primary sources regarding African-Americans in Montana have only recently begun to come to light. The federal censuses serve as the main documents; however, these are often unreliable. Regardless, several instances of the presence of African-Americans in the territory before the major gold rushes are known. William Clark's slave, York, traveled with the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1805-1806, Henry "Negro Henry" Mills worked for the American Fur Company in Fort Benton from the late 1850s, James Beckwourth was a well-known trapper of the 1820s and 1830s whose life has been the subject of some interest,⁸⁸ and Isaiah Dorman served as a Sioux interpreter for the army who fell with Custer at Little Bighorn. Blacks also often worked on the steamboats that traveled widely up and down the Missouri River and docked at Fort Benton.

With Emancipation in 1865, African-Americans realized new opportunities and joined the westward migrations. While small in numbers, these pioneers contributed significantly to their communities. In 1870, the federal census counted 183 black people in Montana. The number doubled in 1880, reached 1,490 in 1890, and peaked in 1910 at 1,834.⁸⁹

Western blacks, many of whom carried the burden of slavery, tended to settle in Montana's larger urban areas and founded communities within a sometimes hostile and discriminatory larger society. Against the backdrop of the Civil War, blacks often found themselves caught in the bitter struggle between Democrats

⁸⁸ Barbara Carol Behan, "Forgotten Heritage: African Americans in the Montana Territory, 1964-1889," *Journal of African American History*, Vol. 91, No. 1, Winter 2006 (Riverside, CA: University of California Press, 2006), pp. 23-40; Roger Hardaway, "African American Frontier: A Bibliographic Essay," in Monroe Lee Billington and Roger D. Hardaway, eds., *African Americans on the Western Frontier*, (Niwot, CO: University Press of Colorado, 1998), pp. 235-37.

⁸⁹ Glenda Riley, "American Daughters: Black Women in the West," *Montana The Magazine of Western History*, Vol. 38, No. 2 Spring 1988, (Helena, MT: Montana Historical Society Press, 1988), p. 18.

and Republicans who espoused in theory supporting African-American equality, but did so in varying degrees. School segregation, black suffrage (achieved in 1867) and anti-miscegenation laws were controversial racial issues in Montana's early territorial period.⁹⁰ Finding consolation and community together, black citizens often established their own churches, benevolent societies, newspapers, and social clubs.

Despite the proportionately small numbers, the 1870 census shows that blacks on the Montana frontier engaged in diverse occupations and mostly concentrated in towns, especially Fort Benton and Helena. More than half of males listed their occupation as laborers, domestics, servants, or cooks, and twenty-seven percent represented themselves as barbers. A smaller percentage proffered their occupation as ranch hands, cowboys, miners, with one listed as a saloonkeeper. A decade later in 1880, blacks still clustered in the larger communities of Helena and Butte where mining activities necessarily attracted service providers and laborers. Fort Benton's African-American population jumped from twenty in 1870 to fifty in 1880 because of the steamboat travel that brought in population from diverse places and the employment opportunities steamboats offered.⁹¹

African-Americans who came to Montana in the 19th century include William Taylor, a teamster, Samuel Lewis, a highly successful Bozeman barber, John Gordon, a trained chef, and James Crump who worked as a miner. African-American women also came to Montana with the first settlers and some assumed non-traditional roles. For example, sisters Parthenia Sneed and Minerva Coggsell ran a Virginia City restaurant, Sarah Bickford eventually owned the Virginia City Water Company, Mary Gordon owned a restaurant in White Sulphur Springs, and Mary Fields drove the stage and held the mail route between Cascade and St. Peter's Mission.

In an interview in 1979 for the *Helena Independent Record*, Norman Howard, grandson of James Crump, reflected on what it was like to be black in Montana. He believed that discrimination was tougher for blacks than for Indians. While Montana never posted signs for "Whites Only" as in the South, the same rules applied and most blacks found menial employment as waiters, janitors, and hotel workers. Blacks were excluded from restaurants, bars, and barber shops. By virtue of such exclusion, tightly knit black communities formed; however, as the civil rights movement brought changes for the better, these communities slowly disappeared. Maintaining a strong black community also proved difficult as the lack of job opportunities in the state drew second and third generation blacks elsewhere.⁹²

African-Americans in the Military

In 1866, Congress provided employment for freed slaves by mandating the formation of six segregated black units, the 9th and 10th cavalry regiments and four infantry regiments. Three years later, the original infantry groups consolidated into the 24th and 25th Infantry. These four regiments comprised about 9% of the Army in the 19th century, and 20% of the army in the West. The formation of these units after the Civil War resulted in a number of black males, some Civil War veterans, joining the Army, which afforded an opportunity for adventure, and a chance to raise one's social and economic status.

⁹⁰ Behan, "Forgotten Heritage," pp. 23-40.

⁹¹ Ibid., pp. 29-30

⁹² "Helena Native has 'Roots' Galore," *Helena Independent Record*, December 9, 1979.

Black soldiers typically served on the frontier, away from centers of population and political scrutiny. Those homeless and/or displaced by the Civil War found some security and a career in the military and with an honorable discharge, could often find better civilian employment. The first buffalo soldiers arrived in Montana at Fort Missoula in 1888 and thereafter, black soldiers served at most Montana forts.⁹³

All four black regiments served valiantly in the Spanish American War of 1898. With the first skirmishes and throughout the conflict, black soldiers often served at the forefront of combat. Briefly in the late summer of 1898, the black regiments enjoyed the status of heroes, receiving recognition from whites as well as blacks, among those Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders who fought alongside many black soldiers, including Horace Bivens from Montana's forts. War correspondent Stephen Bonsal wrote, "The services of no four white regiments can be compared with those rendered by the four colored regiments. They were at the front at Las Guasimas, at El Caney and at San Juan, and what was the severest test of all, that came later, in the yellow fever hospitals."⁹⁴ Following the conflict, Company A of the 24th Infantry was assigned to Fort Harrison at Helena, Montana.

Although the military offered certain advantages, segregated units remained the norm. Even by WWII, segregation continued and black soldiers were often treated with disrespect, given insufficient food and clothing, and they endured the worst living conditions.⁹⁵ White officers commanded these regiments, often with racist undertones.

Montana Federation of Negro Women's Clubs

When the Montana Federation of Negro Women's Clubs first met in Butte on August 3, 1921, at least nine African-American women's clubs were active in communities throughout the state. The first African-American women's group, the Mutual Improvement Club, formed in Kalispell in August 1913. Three years later, in 1916, twelve Helena women met and formed the Pleasant Hour Club. The Pearl Club in Butte began in 1918, and two groups, the Phyllis Wheatley Club in Billings and the Dunbar Art and Study Club in Great Falls, organized in 1920. In 1921, the Bozeman Sweet Pea Study Club, Helena's Mary B. Talbert Art Club, Butte's Clover Leaf Club, and the Anaconda Good Word Literary Club, organized. Representatives from seven of the local clubs attended the meeting, called by Mary B. Chappell, to organize the state federation as an affiliate of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs. The Montana representatives elected Chappell as the state federation's first president.

The Montana Federation participated in meetings and activities of the National Association of Colored Women's Clubs and the National Association's Northwest Region with offices in Seattle. In addition to offering social activities for black women, the local clubs and the state federation supported the Claudia Bivens Scholarship Fund to help black high school students attend college, lobbied for civil rights legislation in the state legislature, and worked through a variety of programs to improve racial relations at

⁹³ Carmon Weaver Hicks, Ph.D., and George Hicks, III, "Buffalo Soldiers on Bicycles 1896-1897," Buffalo Soldiers Research Museum website, December 2012, <http://www.buffalosoldiersresearchmuseum.org/research/books/bicycles.htm>, accessed December 12, 2013.

⁹⁴ Anthony L. Powell, "An Overview: Black Participation in the Spanish-American War," The Spanish American War Centennial Website, <http://www.spanamwar.com/AfroAmericans.htm>, accessed October 5, 2013.

⁹⁵ Jami Bryan, "Fighting for Respect: African-American Soldiers in WWI," article originally appeared in *On Point*, an Army Historical Foundation publication, Military History Online website, <http://www.militaryhistoryonline.com/wwi/articles/fightingforrespect.aspx>, accessed December 12, 2013.

the state and local level.⁹⁶ At its annual meeting in 1948, the Montana Federation voted to change its name to the Montana State Federation of Colored Women's Clubs (MSFCWC).

Prior to World War II, the 1920s and 1930s witnessed as many as fifteen active local groups in the state. However, after War, membership in the state's local clubs dwindled reflecting the decrease in the state's black population as a whole. By the 1970s, only four clubs remained active. The continued loss of membership throughout the state resulted in the state federation's executive board's vote to disband on June 17, 1972. Federation assets and monies in the Claudia Bivens Scholarship Fund were given to the University of Montana, Missoula, to provide for a scholarship commemorating the MSFCWC.⁹⁷

Biographic Sketches of James Crump, Walter Dorsey, Julian Anderson, Miles York, J. P. Ball, and Joseph Bass

James Crump served in the Union army at 14 and held the distinction as the youngest Civil War veteran in Montana. He arrived in Montana sometime in the mid-1860s, hauled freight for Charles Broadwater, owned mines in Marysville, operated a saloon in Helena and owned his own home. His wife Clarissa, born a slave in Virginia, came west with her owner, Phil Evans. En route to Fort Benton in 1865 on the steamboat *Lily Martin*, she learned of the Emancipation. She too made her home in Helena and married James Crump in 1869. James and Clarissa's legacy in Helena lived on through five generations of the extended Crump family.⁹⁸

Walter Dorsey owned a restaurant and later, a grocery. The grocery, located on the East Side, was considered one of the best such stores in town. After Dorsey died of pneumonia in 1908, Mrs. Dorsey and her daughters ran the store for several more decades.

Another well-known Helenan was Julian Anderson. Born in Germany to parents whose owners moved them overseas to escape the Civil War, Anderson was bartender extraordinaire for sixty years at the exclusive Montana Club from 1893 to 1953.

Miles York and his family ran a successful laundry business in the 1910s.

J. P. Ball and Son were photographers in Helena in the 1890s who left behind a fantastic photographic record through portraits of many immigrants—including Chinese—who populated Helena's melting pot. The Balls were among the nation's first African-American photographers. J. P. Ball, Jr., also published the *Colored Citizen* in 1894 to rally support during the election that won Helena's permanent designation as Montana's capital city. Ball believed that the paper could obstruct the "iron claw of corporate infernalism which has always crushed out the black man from every factory and workshop."⁹⁹ The *Citizen* estimated 2500 blacks at that time lived in Montana and 500 in Helena, probably an inflated

⁹⁶ Claudia Bivens was the wife of Horace Bivens, expert army marksman and a veteran of the Spanish American War and WWI. He fought with the Rough Riders at San Juan Hill and personally knew Teddy Roosevelt. The Bivenses were longtime Billings residents.

⁹⁷ Marilyn Grant, "Historical Note to MC 281, The Montana Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, Montana Historical Society Archives," at <http://nwda.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv10265>, accessed October 14, 2013.

⁹⁸ *Helena Independent Record*, December 9, 1979.

⁹⁹ *The Colored Citizen*. October 29, 1894.

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number but impressive nonetheless.¹⁰⁰

By early March of 1906, Joseph Bass began publishing the *Montana Plaindealer*,¹⁰¹ and proudly claimed in 1907 that Helena blacks could compete with anyone. When Charles Mason and his professional crew of black waiters from Hot Springs Arkansas came to Helena's famed Broadwater Hotel, Bass could not resist comparing their skill and expertise to the "bum" service previously provided by "the young white men imported as waiters."¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ Ellen Baumler and Dave Shors, *Lost Places, Hidden Treasures: Rare Photographs of Helena, Montana*. (Helena, MT: Farcounty Press, 2002), pp. 7-8.

¹⁰¹ Lang, "The Nearly Forgotten Blacks on Last Chance Gulch," p. 53.

¹⁰² *Plainsdealer*, April 12, 1907.

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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 # _____
- ____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

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Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 0.0674

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: 46.6024920213494 Longitude: -112.041555788719

Or

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or NAD 1983

1. Zone: 12 Easting: 420230 Northing: 5161519

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

BROADWATER ADDN, S24, T10 N, R04 W, BLOCK 32, Lot 13, & E 8' 14

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

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

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ellen Baumler, Kate Hampton, and John Boughton
organization: Montana Historical Society
street & number: 225 North Roberts
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59620-1201
e-mail ebaumler@mt.gov
telephone: 406-444-1687
date: _____

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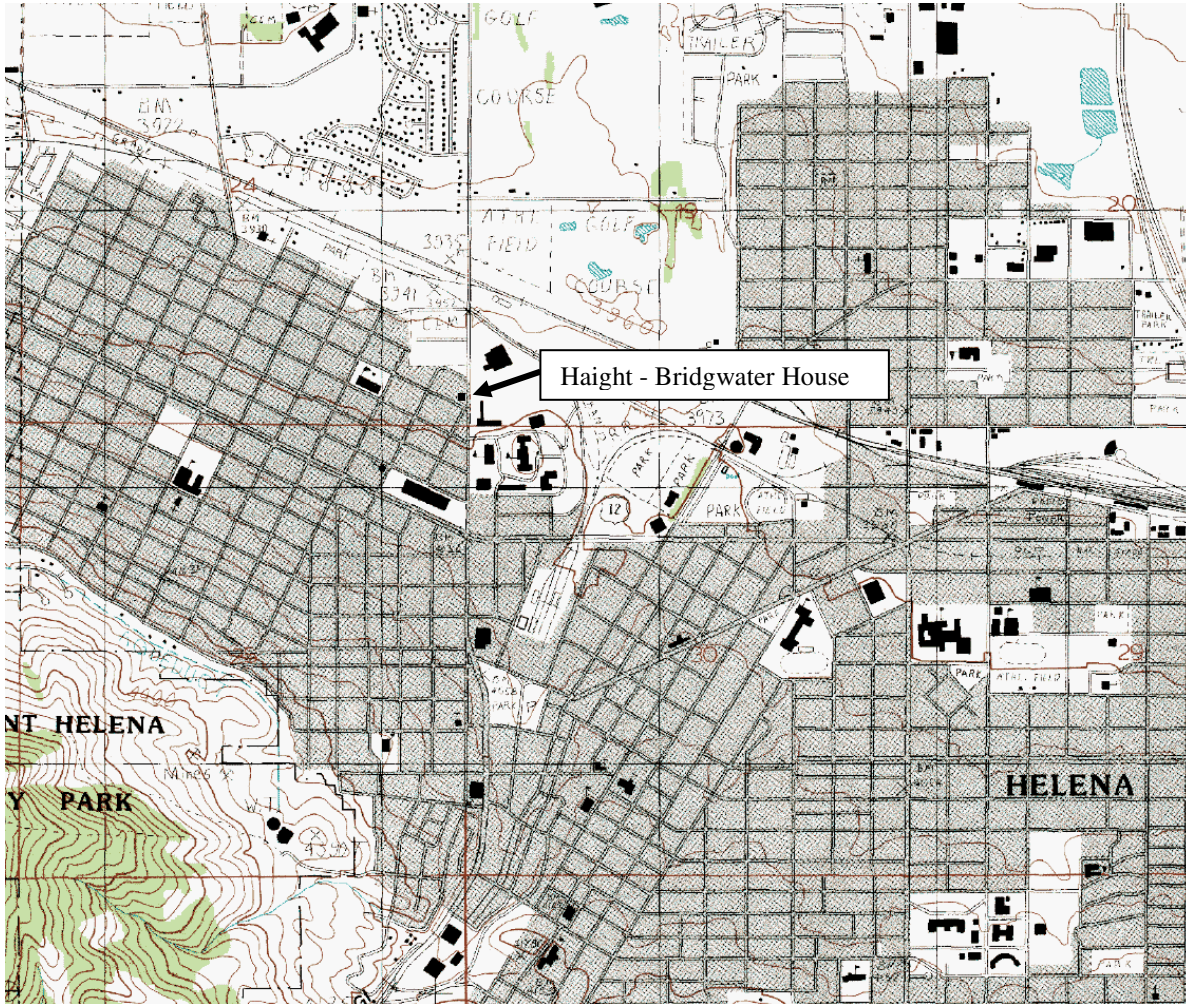
Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)
- **Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).
- **Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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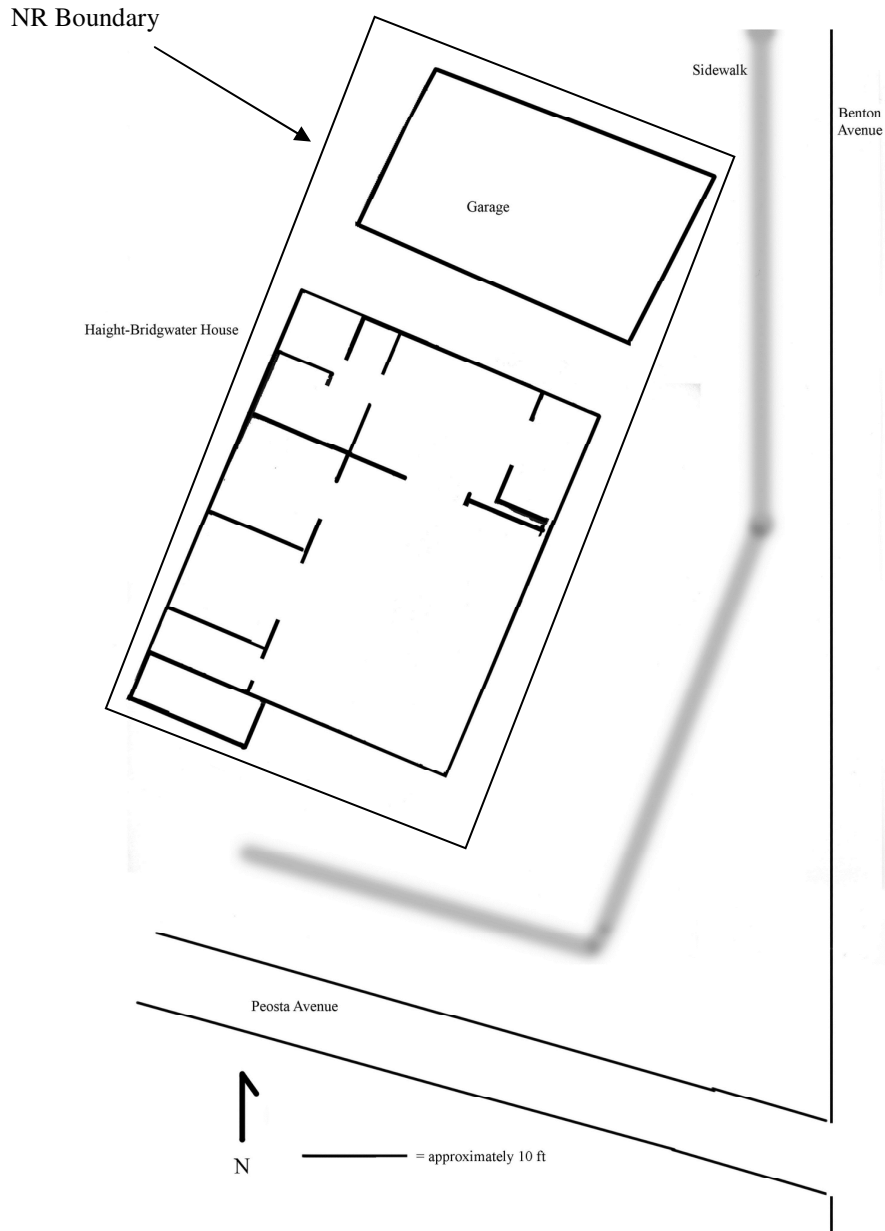
Scale: 1 mile = _____



Location of the Haight - Bridgewater House, 502 Peosta. Found on the Helena, Montana 7.5' Quadrangle Provisional Map (1985)

Haight - Bridgewater House
Name of Property

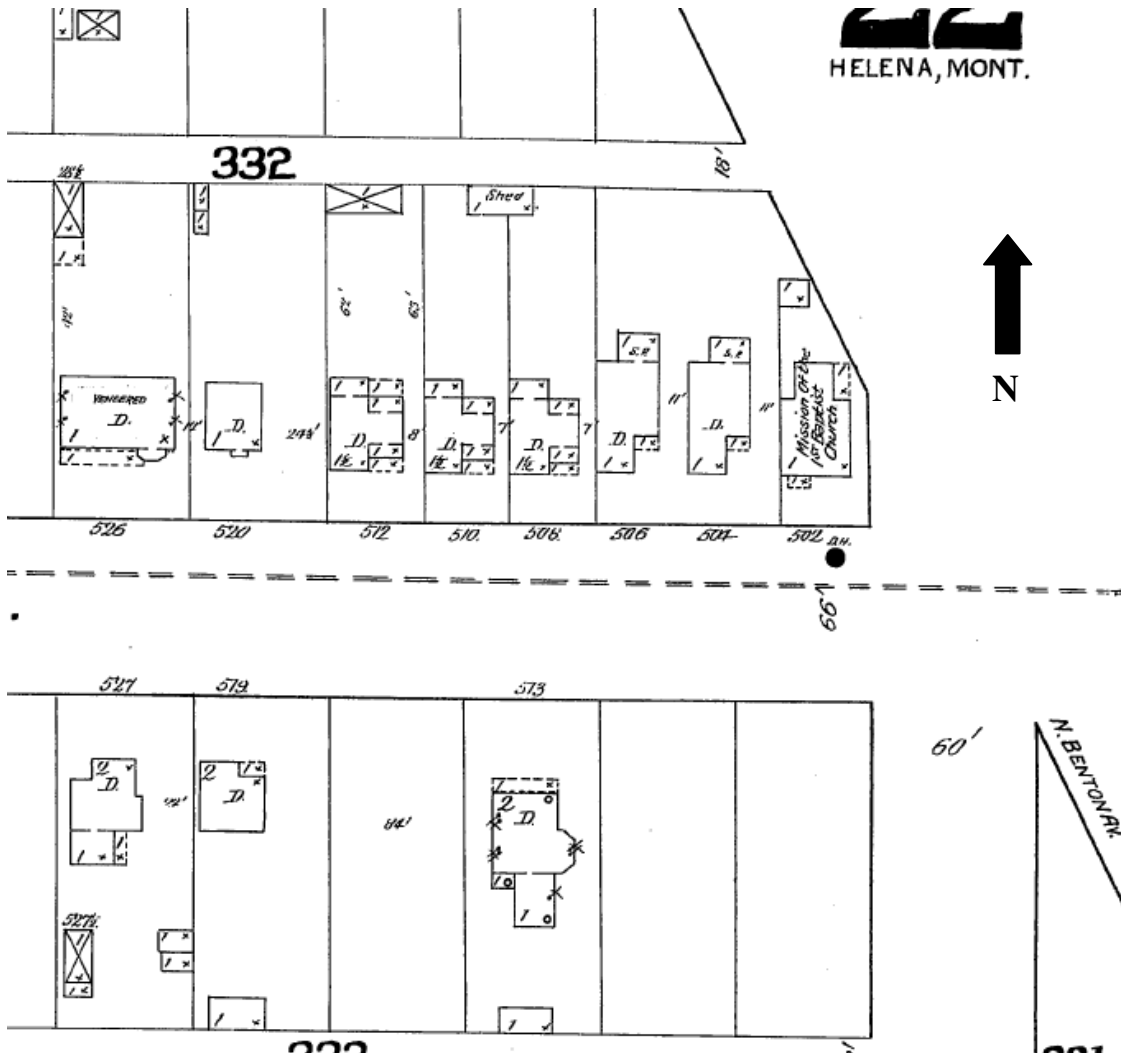
Lewis and Clark, MT
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Plan Map of the Haight-Bridgewater House, 502 Peosta, Helena, Montana.

Haight - Bridgewater House
 Name of Property

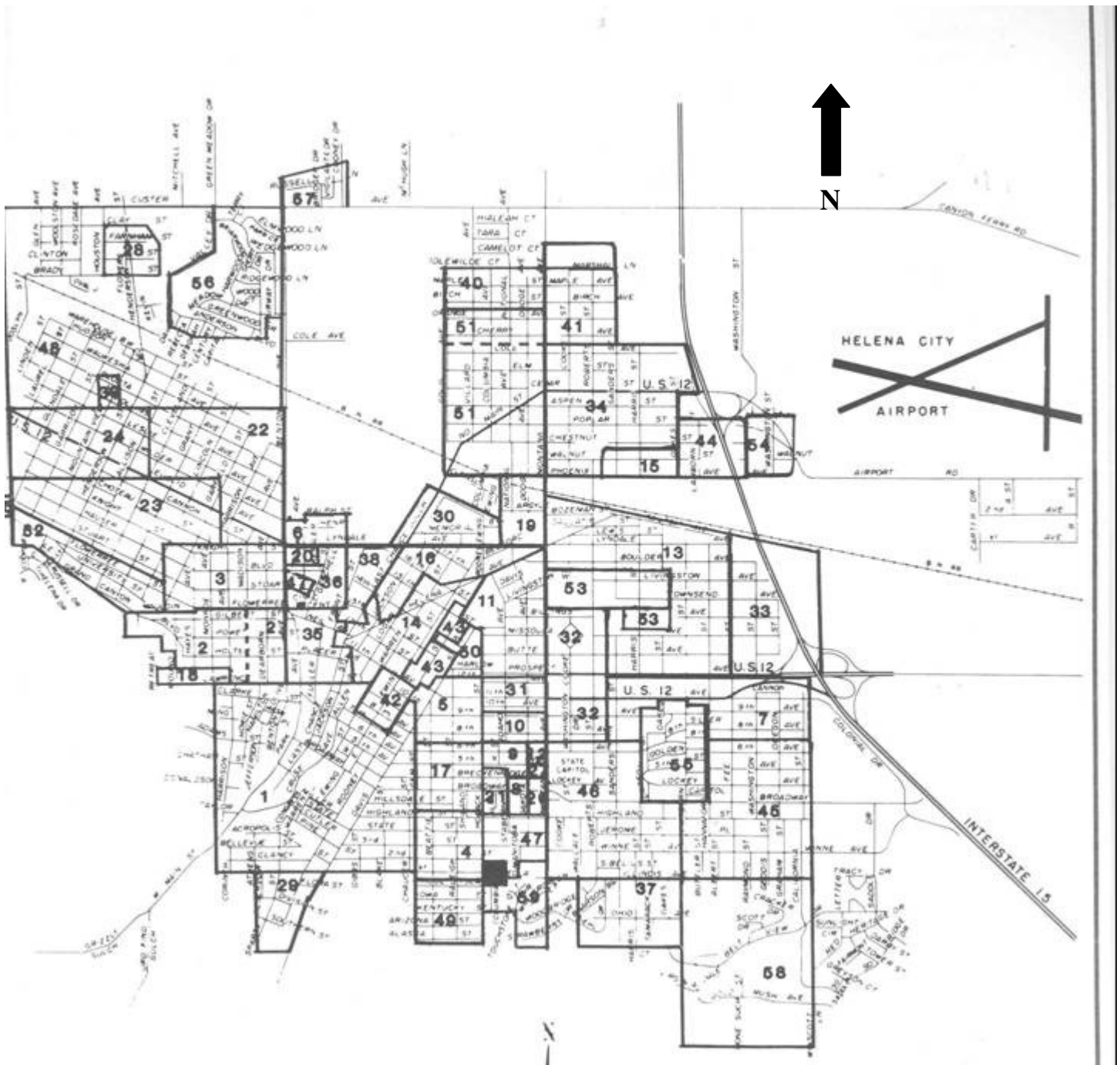
Lewis and Clark, MT
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Detail of 1892 Sanborn Map for Helena, Sheet 22 (502 Peosta indicated on map as "Mission of the 1st Baptist Church").

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Map Showing Additions to Helena. Numbers correspond to the table on the following page.

Copied, with permission, from Herbert L. Jacobson, Donald L. Byrd, and Chere Jiusto, *Helena: A Historic City*, prepared for the City of Helena and MTSHPO, January, 1982.

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

Copied, with permission, from Herbert L. Jacobson, Donald L. Byrd, and Chere Jiusto, *Helena: A Historic City*, prepared for the City of Helena and MTSHP, January, 1982.

Haight - Bridgewater House, Historic Photographs



Leon, Octavia, Herbert, and Mamie Bridgewater in front of their home, 1925.
Photo courtesy of Janet Harrell-Campbell.

Haight - Bridgewater House
Name of Property

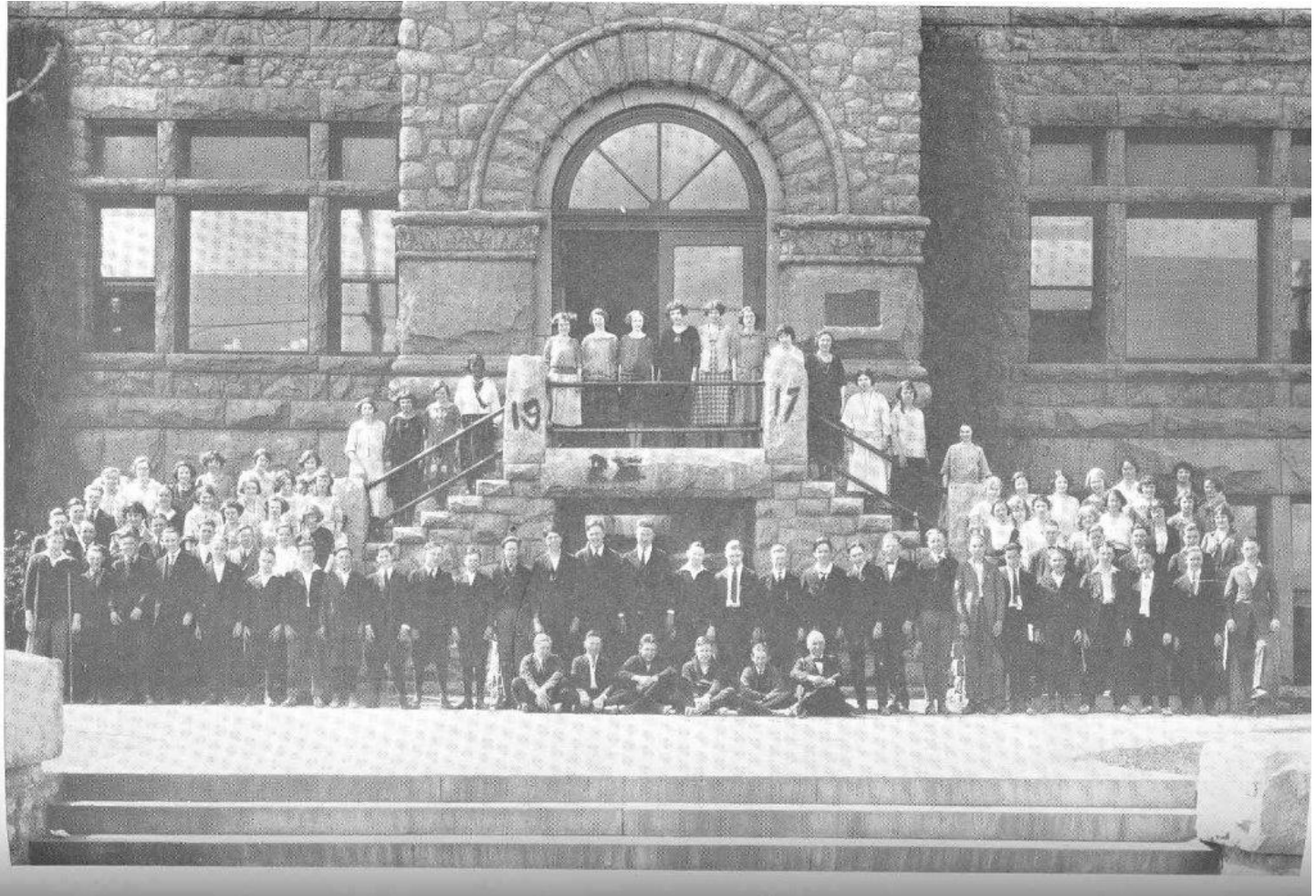
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Mamie Bridgewater with her grandchildren, 1919. Photo courtesy of Janet Harrell-Campbell.

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Helena High School, 1923. Octavia Bridgewater standing on left stairs.

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Haight - Bridgewater House, 1957. Left: south elevation. Right: west elevation. Photos courtesy of Janet Harrell-Campbell.



Haight - Bridgewater House, 1957. Interior view of kitchen, view to the north with Octavia Bridgewater. Photo courtesy of Janet Harrell-Campbell.

Haight - Bridgewater House, Interior Photographs



Haight - Bridgewater house interior. Living/dining room view to northeast.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Haight - Bridgewater House interior. View of kitchen to the north.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Haight - Bridgewater House interior bedroom view to southeast.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Haight - Bridgewater House bedroom view to northeast.

Haight - Bridgewater House
Name of Property

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Haight - Bridgewater House bathroom view to northeast.

Haight - Bridgewater House
Name of Property

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Haight - Bridgewater House utility room view to southeast.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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National Register Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Photograph #s 1-7:

Name of Property: Haight - Bridgewater House

City or Vicinity: Helena

County: Lewis and Clark

State: MT

Photographer: Kate Hampton

Date Photographed: August 21, 2013



Haight - Bridgewater House, south (front) elevation. View to north.
0001 of 0007.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Haight - Bridgewater House, south and west elevations. View to northeast.
0002 of 0007.



Haight - Bridgewater House, east and north elevations. View to southwest.
0003 of 0007.

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Haight - Bridgewater House, west side of north (rear) elevation. Bathroom addition. View to south.

0004 of 0007.

Haight - Bridgewater House
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Haight - Bridgewater House, west elevation. View to northeast.
0005 of 0007.



Haight - Bridgewater House garage, south and west elevations. View to northeast.
0006 of 0007.

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Haight - Bridgewater House garage, north elevation. View to south-southeast.
0007 of 0007.