

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JUL 26 1996
Archaeology
Historic Preservation

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

SEP 14 1993

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA,
1900-1910

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Growth of the City of Spokane, 1900-1910
Working Class Housing in Spokane's Central Business District

C. Form Prepared by

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D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary M. Sampson
Signature and title of certifying official

4/13/93
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patricia Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

10/15/93
Date of Action

for

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

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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. 470 *et seq.*).

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

E. Statement of Historic Contexts

Introduction

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Hotels in the Central Business District (CBD) of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910 are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A because of their association with properties built to house working class people during a period of rapid growth of the city of Spokane. While extensively prevalent in Spokane, SROs dating to that time period were built in other cities of the Pacific Northwest to serve the same function. SROs reflect the presence of a working class population that arrived relatively suddenly, to fill the employment rolls of new or rapidly expanding industries. Some newcomers found housing in SROs while working temporary or seasonal jobs; others lived more or less continuously in such accommodations; others sought shelter while searching for work or opportunities to homestead, or simply until they could establish themselves within the city or the surrounding area.

SRO hotels in Spokane may also be eligible under Criterion C because they represent a type of construction executed during a specific period within, for the most part, a well-defined section of the city. The preponderance of SROs were built in the CBD, defined approximately as lying between Division and Cedar streets on the east and west, respectively, and 3rd Avenue on the south and the Spokane River on the north. During the period of significance (1900-1910), all addresses within that area would have been accessible on foot to all basic necessities of an itinerant worker. Those would include grocery stores, restaurants, bars, bath houses, barber shops, laundries, mercantile stores, and railroad depots, to name but a few services readily available.

Single room occupancy hotels can be defined as unreinforced masonry structures of two or more stories, with commercial bays on the ground or street level, and the upper floors consisting primarily of single rooms without baths, with a limited number of rooms with baths. Some SROs had no rooms with baths, but all were equipped with at least one common bath (toilets and tub) on each floor. Some rooms had sinks, but not all. Hinged glass transoms above doors helped provide ventilation. Skylights and light wells lit interior rooms and occasionally hallways on upper level floors. A stairwell in front usually led to a lobby or manager's desk on the second floor, although some lobbies and desks were on the ground level. Secondary stairways usually existed in the central or rear portions of the buildings, with fire escapes exiting rear hall windows.

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SROs provided more privacy than lodging houses, perhaps privacy comparable to that in boarding houses but probably less than apartments. Meals were not provided in most SROs, whereas by definition boarding houses provided them. Unlike many apartments built in the years after 1900, kitchens were not installed in SRO hotel rooms. Private baths could be had in but a few SRO units, whereas many apartments and first-class hotel units of the era included baths. Some rooms in SROs had closets and sinks with hot and cold running water, but most apparently did not. Clothes were hung in portable wardrobes or armoires in most units. Price ranges for SROs offered the itinerant worker or traveler with alternatives to the less expensive, less private lodging houses, as well as to the more expensive apartments and fine hotels.

All or nearly all single room occupancy hotels contained commercial and retail space in street-level bays. While some businesses leasing space in SROs dealt in goods and services unrelated to working class needs, most appear to have catered to the clientele housed in those buildings. Clusters of SROs, such as along West First Avenue, provided a market base for such enterprises as cafes, restaurants, barber shops, beauty salons, hardware and grocery stores, and the inevitable bars and taverns.

Related Property Types

A variety of building types were constructed to provide housing for the working class. Terminology was anything but precise for the great variety of temporary lodging available during the turn of the century era. Working class housing can be grouped into the following general categories of property types:

Lodging houses provided minimal service and privacy, usually with sleeping quarters in dormitory or barracks style with many individuals to a room. Reports in the press of the day indicated that at times, when not enough beds were available, guests slept on floors. If the report of 65 men sleeping in a single room is at all representative of such facilities, buildings serving as lodging houses surely contained large, open rooms unlike those available in SROs. Lodging houses served as temporary quarters for the poorest itinerant workers, almost always men. Meals could be had in some establishments, but probably not in all. Neither lodging nor boarding houses appear to have contained commercial or retail space. **Boarding houses** offered rooms for rent with board, in private residences or occasionally in structures devoted exclusively to hostelry. In Spokane they appear also to have been called "tenement houses," and many, if not most, were located just outside the CBD. In the case of tenement houses dating to ca. 1900, reportedly among the "modern" variety at the time, they were two-story frame structures with a common

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or shared bath in each. As they appear in City Directories from 1900 through 1910, all boarding houses had a matron on the premises, presumably the owner or manager, who presumably provided services not available in hotels or apartments, such as cooking and cleaning.

Apartments and apartment houses or "flats" served single men and women as well as couples and families for longer durations. Apartments were contained in buildings with commercial space as their primary income-producing function, as well as in structures devoted primarily to residential use. The term "flat" seems to have appeared towards the latter half of the 1900-1910 decade and denoted a building smaller than the multi-storied structure prevalent at the time. Flats appear to have been two-story multi-room units on the periphery of the CBD or in residential neighborhoods. **Single family houses or duplexes** were built by investment realty companies and speculators for rental purposes, and often by large employers, such as sawmills or factories, for their employees. Those dwellings were usually modest in size and architectural style, normally what would today be referred to as vernacular houses. Company housing constituted substantial investment in its work force by employers and resulted in more permanent employment for a segment of the working class whose lifestyle was considerably different from that of the more transient, seasonal or temporary worker. Since no company housing is known to have existed in the CBD, and likewise very few if any single family houses were ever there as well, those property types are not addressed below.

Background

The period of significance (1900-1910) encompasses the era of most dramatic growth in the city's history. During that decade Spokane's population nearly tripled from around 36,000 to over 104,000. Recovery from the Great Fire of 1889 had been spectacular, only to be slowed for some years by the financial panic of 1893 and depression that followed. In 1900 Spokane had fully recovered from the economic doldrums of the previous years, with construction noticeably on the rise. Through the next decade the city experienced the greatest building boom since that witnessed after the 1889 fire. Subsequently the frenzy began to subside; hotel and apartment construction appears to have peaked in 1910, with relatively few buildings erected for working class housing thereafter. Momentum from the immigration rush prolonged Spokane's prosperity through the next decade, during which monumental structures, such as the Davenport Hotel, were built. But by 1910 the population boom had ended, and new construction of working class housing all but ceased.

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

Historic Context: Development of the City of Spokane through 1910

Founded on the banks of the Spokane River, the future queen city of the "Inland Empire" began as a rude cluster of frame shacks adjacent to the falls from which it took its name. Appropriately enough, a sawmill was Spokane Falls' first industrial installation, purchased in the early 1870s by the town's founder, James N. Glover, who described the community he platted in 1878 as consisting of "half a dozen board and log cabins." Arrival of the Northern Pacific Railway (NP) in 1881 ensured the destiny of the rapidly growing town rich in water power. (Eventually six transcontinental rail lines gained access to Spokane). A sawmill and four flour mills were the only users of the site's water power until 1885, when hydroelectric generation began in the city. With abundant power from the new technology and its ideal location in proximity to seemingly boundless natural resources, Spokane emerged as a prominent focus of industry and commerce in the region.

It was as a rail center that Spokane gained her early fame. Slow growth characterized her first decade, but with arrival of the NP the city began expanding rapidly to accommodate the stream of immigrants and those traveling on to other booming destinations. Unrelenting growth stopped suddenly on 4 August 1889 when a fire starting in a row of frame buildings adjacent to the NP tracks swept across 32 city blocks, devastating the business district. As if mimicking nature in responding to fire's rejuvenating qualities, a new city arose from the ashes more vibrant and vigorous than before.

Spokane's recovery from the Great Fire might be termed miraculous. All tents were ordered removed from within the city limits in August 1890, the first anniversary of the fire, marking a year in which 500 buildings had been erected. The pace of the recovery accelerated until the nation slipped into what has been termed the panic of 1893. Financial problems forced seven of every ten banks in the city out of business, and with them went the fuel of Spokane's economic fire. Spokane languished over the next few years, awaiting the next inevitable reversal of fortune.

It came about the turn of the century, the product of regional economic revival and improved financial conditions nationwide. Construction had been on the rise; in 1900 more buildings were erected in the city than in any previous year since the Great Fire. Again in 1903 more structures went up than any previous twelve-month period. The following year investment in building construction increased 100 percent over that of 1903. Yearly building permits issued in the city in 1900 were 675; by 1908 almost 3,000 permits

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per year were issued. At one point in 1905, nineteen commercial blocks were simultaneously under construction, most within the CBD. Spokane was second only to Chicago in construction rate increase nationwide. During the first five months of 1909, building permits increased 15 percent over the same period the previous year, while monetary investments in the buildings to be erected was estimated at 53 percent greater than what had been spent in 1908. In June 1909 the city's first "skyscraper," the eleven-story Paulsen Building, was nearing completion, as was the new Federal Building. Twenty-five "flats" were then under construction, presumably several in the CBD. Paralleling the excitements downtown were erection of commercial buildings along North Monroe and East Sprague and expansion of the residential districts.

Spokane's population growth during the first decade of the twentieth century was phenomenal, if the official census figures are to be believed (and some say they are not). From 36,848 in 1900, the number of persons recorded as living in the city increased to 104,402 in 1910. A prominent critic (Orville Clyde Pratt) of those figures attributed the immensity of the ten-year increase to the counting of transients occupying the many working class residential establishments: "thousands of names were copied from the registers of hotels and rooming houses - names of people only temporarily in Spokane," said Pratt. Census records do, indeed, record individuals lodging in SRO hotels and the like, most of whom claimed to be "laborers" or of other occupations likely to require mobility. Nevertheless, during the first decade of this century Spokane experienced growth like never before nor since.

Spokane was particularly affected by sudden influxes of immigrants for several reasons, including: 1) proximity to industries in rapid expansion, such as mining, lumbering, and agriculture; 2) proximity to extensive tracts of unsettled lands suitable for homesteading; 3) development of manufacturing, brokering, and commercial activities within the city; and 4) the number of rail lines, both local and transcontinental, serving the city facilitated movement of freight and passengers in and out of the area, to and from great distances, in relatively short amounts of time. Rail connections, along with vast expanses of grazing lands on nearby national forests and public rangelands, made Spokane a major livestock shipping center. Coinciding with improvements in transportation, development of the silver and lead mines in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains contributed to the \$40 million in ore produced in the Inland Empire in 1908. The large-scale shift of the timber industry from the depleted forests of the Midwest to the largely untapped Pacific Northwest brought waves of working people. According to grossly inflated estimates of the day, the forests of the Inland Empire alone would last 275 years "before the last tree falls to the woodman's

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axe" (*Spokesman-Review* 17 June 1909:2:2). Associated industries attracted workers; sawmills alone reportedly numbered 400. Other businesses operated in Spokane, including lumber yards, sash and door factories, and box factories, as did machine shops, foundries, iron and cement works, and brick plants, virtually none of which had been in business more than a few years.

Agricultural development of the surrounding area tributary to Spokane also contributed to the city's prosperity. Homesteading and the purchase of NP railroad lands for farming purposes had been underway before the turn of the century. In 1909 it was announced that nearly nine million acres of public domain remained unclaimed in the four northwestern states. Hopeful settlers poured into Spokane and Coeur d'Alene to record their names in lotteries which determined distribution of unallotted lands on the Coeur d'Alene, Spokane, and Colville Indian reservations. Others came to perform seasonal agricultural work in activities that were extremely labor-intensive by today's standards. Harvest of grain using horses for motive power depended upon handling and storage of grain in burlap sacks, requiring many hands, some of which had to be skilled and experienced. Likewise maintenance and harvest in the orchards around Spokane and along the Columbia River prior to inundation by Grand Coulee Dam were labor-intensive. Spokane and nearby Stevens counties together had more apple trees in production in 1909 than any other single county in the state, except Chelan and Yakima counties. Shortages of farm laborers were reported in the *Spokesman-Review* (17 June 1909):

The labor problem, as in all new countries, is a serious one. The near proximity of mines and timber lands and the continual railroad construction going on bring into the country a floating class of labor, which is able to secure a higher standard of wages than agricultural conditions might justify. The nature of the farming carried on is such as to prevent the holding, for more than the brief summer season, of many farm laborers. They are to be found drifting from mine to lumber mill or railroad construction camp and perhaps for a few weeks, in the height of the season, seeking employment in the harvest fields.

The cry for a steady, dependable class of farm laborers is heard on every hand.

Itinerant laborers on farms and in mines and logging camps usually worked seasonally. Winters would often leave them unemployed and in search of other work and lodging. Thousands drifted in and out of Spokane out of necessity.

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Historic Context: Working Class Housing in Spokane's CBD

It is not known when the first working class housing appeared in Spokane. W.C. Gray erected the first hotel, the California House, at Front and Howard in 1878. Other similar frame structures soon followed, as did the first brick hotel, the Arlington, a four-story building erected at Howard and Main in 1886. In the local *Spokesman-Review* newspaper, Louis M. Davenport, later builder of Spokane's grandest hotel, wrote in 1903 (1 January):

The business of caring for the wayfaring man in need of temporary shelter or of refreshment has always been well looked after here from the time Spokane was a small frontier village. Even in its early days the town was a great resort for transients, and as the city of chief importance between Minneapolis and the coast, it is still a headquarters for traveling men of all classes, as well as capitalists in search of investments, sportsmen in search of game and fish, and tourists in search of scenery. The fame of Spokane's hospitality is as widespread as its reputation for wealth or beautiful women.

Nearly all of the city's lodging facilities were lost in the Great Fire of 1889. Louis Davenport recounted events after the fire from a future hosteler's perspective (*Spokesman-Review* 1 January 1903):

The day after the fire a large part of the population of Spokane took to cotton duck. Tents were pitched on every vacant lot. . . .

The hotel proprietors were hard put to accommodate their regular guests, to say nothing of the multitude of homeless men and women turned adrift by the disaster. Scores of hotels and lodging houses were set up under canvas. Some of these came to be very imposing affairs. . . .

Good accommodations in these canvas hotels cost from 50 cents to \$2 a night.

Following the disastrous fire of 1889, laborers, carpenters and architects poured into Spokane, resulting in one of the most rapid rebuildings experienced by any fire-gutted city in the West. Working class housing must have been among the first structures to rise up from the ashes, surely before the last tents were ordered removed a year later. Lodging houses accommodating large numbers of men were probably among the initial structures erected for the arriving armies of workers.

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

Lodging and Boarding Houses

During the first decade of the twentieth century, inadequate housing for the working class poor left many temporarily homeless on the streets of Spokane. "So many homeless men were thronging in that the hotels and lodging houses could not care for them. Many slept on chairs or floors in hotels and saloons," claims one source (Pratt 1948:134). Lodging houses were reportedly

numerous large and densely populated buildings where the poorest class of men are provided with beds at the very cheapest rates, the prices ranging down to 10 cents. Formerly these places were hotbeds of disease and crime, but they are now pretty well regulated from a sanitary standpoint, and provided with baths, and transient dwellers in the city who can afford no better quarters can secure a night's lodging in a cleanly kept room for one dime. The Ondawa Inn and other charitable organizations provide clean beds and good meals at a very reasonable rate (Raymer 1906:86).

Lodging houses continued unhealthy practices long after those prematurely rosy reports. Conditions attracted the attention of the health department, which announced in January 1911 an "Investigation into the sanitary condition of lodging houses occupied by foreigners in the lower part of the city" (*Spokesman-Review* 22 January 1911:8:7). The proprietor of the Seattle lodging house on Sprague Avenue was arrested for failing to keep a register of guests in what police said was an establishment that had "had a shady reputation for a long time" (*Spokesman-Review* 25 May 1909:7:2). A local health officer arrested the proprietor of the Workingmen's Home for allowing 57 beds to be occupied in one room. At the same time, the proprietor of the New York lodging house was fined \$10 for violating the hotel sheet law by using one sheet per bed instead of two. At the Owl lodging house, a health inspector found 60 men sleeping in an unventilated basement, 30 of them on the floor. Upstairs were "65 beds, most of them being occupied by men who had not removed their clothes before retiring" (*Spokesman-Review* 26 January 1911:6:4).

What purported to be the city's "Complete Encyclopaedic (sic) Dictionary" (Raymer 1906:30) attempted to define "boarding houses" as follows:

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An excess of the masculine element of the population is characteristic of the western cities, and Spokane is no exception. Consequently an army of boarding houses are brought into existence. They range from the cheap barracks, where the laborer lodges, to the elegant hotels. Rates range from \$2 to \$25 per week. Good board can be obtained at from \$4 to \$7 per week, room rent and other accessories being extra. For \$10 per week one can get very pleasant quarters and a good table. . . . charges made at hotels . . . cover a service not usually given at a boarding house. Many people prefer to rent a room and take their meals elsewhere. Rooms may be obtained at from \$5 per month up, according to location and furnishings. Rooms within half a mile of the business center range from \$10 to \$15 per month.

Twenty-one boarding houses are listed in the 1900 edition of the *City Directory*, 15 of them located within the CBD. By 1905 the number had grown to 43, with only about 14 establishments in the CBD. In 1910 about half of the 39 boarding houses were within or adjacent to the CBD. Listing varied between a house or business name, such as "Williams Boarding House," to the more frequent name of the house matron, the vast majority of whom appear with "Mrs." preceding their names. Perhaps boarding was a reliable source of income for widows, as well as for married women with families who put men up in spare rooms of the family house. That practice was particularly prevalent in the working class neighborhood of Peaceful Valley, particularly in winter when men returned from the woods, mines, and fields to bide their time in Spokane.

Determining the precise number of lodging houses that once operated in Spokane is somewhat more difficult. Of the 46 listed in 1900, several later became hotels, or perhaps were actually hotels to begin with before being listed as such among the 37 lodging houses in the 1905 *City Directory* and the 68 such facilities in the 1910 edition. The Bellevue House on Post Street, for instance, listed as a lodging house in 1900, later became the Pennington Hotel. Most of what could be termed true lodging houses (that is, dormitory-style facilities) were located on Front, Main, and other streets adjacent to the railroad center of town near the river. None are known to have survived succeeding building booms and periods of mass demolition.

The construction boom of 1900-1910 accelerated property appreciation in the CBD, resulting in the sale to speculators of marginally profitable residential properties, chiefly boarding and lodging houses. Five

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

two-story frame "tenement houses" (presumably boarding houses) at Adams and Second Avenue were sold to an investor who was "considering it coming business property." Each of the structures contained six rooms and a bath, and were reportedly "perhaps the first modern tenement houses that were built in Spokane, having been erected some six years ago [ca. 1900]" (*Spokesman-Review* 1 November 1906:9:1). The Livingston Investment Company bought the Savoy lodging house on Main and Howard for \$5,000, including furnishings and "the good will of the house" (*Spokesman-Review* 1 February 1906:8:2). Similarly the Great Western lodging house on Riverside between Bernard and Browne, a two-story frame building with lodging rooms above ground-floor commercial space, was sold to a buyer who "expects to improve the property, but his plans are not matured" (*Spokesman-Review* 27 July 1907:9:3). Older frame structures such as those were gradually replaced by larger brick buildings with street-level commercial bays and rooms for rent on the upper floors.

Hotels

The first hotel completed after the fire was the Merchant on west Riverside, followed shortly by the Pacific, the Grand, and another structure erected at Howard and Main. The Hotel Spokane, which was seriously damaged in the fire, was subsequently converted to a "first class" hotel with 200 rooms, and reportedly the "finest house in town" (*Spokesman-Review* 1 January 1903).

By 1900 twenty hotels in the CBD appeared in the *City Directory*. Some advertised both "American Plan" and "European Plan" lodging, some only "High-Class European Hotel." In modern parlance, "European" implies "with breakfast," "American" without breakfast. But those connotations do seem to apply to turn of the century terminology. Although the distinction between the two "plans" is obscure, the "European" alternative seems to have commanded higher rates. Louis Davenport shed some light on the subject when he wrote (*Spokesman-Review* 1 January 1903):

Like the best hotels throughout the country, the Spokane hotels are run on the European plan. The old style American plan, with a blanket mate for every guest, has never taken here in recent years. Guests in this western country prefer to pay for what they get. In Spokane hotels they get the worth of their money. Rates are reasonable, and the accommodations as good in every respect as can be found for the same prices in any town in the land.

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

Hotel construction and remodeling soared in Spokane's CBD between 1907 and 1910, due primarily to a financial upswing beginning in 1907. Multi-story single room and multiple-unit facilities appeared on virtually every block in the CBD. Owners capitalized on the market of the growing working class who could afford somewhat more private, comfortable, and secure surroundings than that offered by the older, often unclean and unsafe lodging houses. More single working women may also have factored into the need for secure individual rooms to rent. For example, in 1910 men and women, nearly all young unmarried working people, resided in the Commercial Apartments, a single-room occupancy hotel on West First Avenue. Nearly all the new buildings were built on the single room occupancy plan, some rooms having sinks, and usually a very few rooms with private baths. Some rooms were connected and could be let as either single or double (or more) units. All had common baths on each floor; even the Davenport Hotel, the West's most elegant hotel, had common baths in the hallways for use by guests in some rooms without baths. But the majority of the Davenport's rooms did have baths (370 of its 405 guest rooms), and in that, as well as so many other ways, it stood in grand contrast to nearly all other hotels of its day in Spokane.

There can be little doubt that single room occupancy hotels comprised the predominant type of hotel in the CBD. Typical of the style was the Commercial Hotel, designed by I.J. Galbraith and built at 1111 West First Avenue in 1906. Reportedly planned to be "thoroughly modern," the three-story brick structure contained commercial bays on the street level and "apartments" on the upper two floors (*Spokesman-Review* 1 June 1906:8:1). Its modified "U" shaped floor plan, with mostly single rooms facing onto wide hallways near the front of the building and down two side wings, provided the maximum number of individual units that space would allow. Originally the rooms had no sinks nor built-in closets; armoires or wardrobes were probably provided. Baths and toilets were shared by as many as 19 guests (assuming single occupancy of rooms) on each floor in both wings; nevertheless, the single room occupancy floor plan represented a level of privacy vastly superior to that of the typical lodging house.

The Commercial Hotel mirrored the single room occupancy/shared bath concept of countless hotels in the CBD, including the later Bakke-Mogstad Building, erected at Browne and Pacific in 1909. Unlike the Commercial, the Bakke-Mogstad's 160 rooms had running water and "closets" (perhaps armoires) in every room. Designed by architect Carl Jabelonsky, it too was "modern in construction" throughout its four stories (*Spokesman-Review* 28 November 1909:III:1:5). Of similar floor plan and construction were the New Madison (1904), Norman (1908), Jefferson (1909), and Willard (now Otis) (1911) hotels on West

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First Avenue. All of those structures remain, although the New Madison has undergone numerous modifications, including installation of bathrooms in most units, which are now multi-room rather than single rooms as originally constructed.

Architecturally, the SROs were generally prosaic -- "dignified and plain, of the strictly commercial type," said the newspaper account upon the opening of the Arlington Hotel at Sprague and Bernard (*Spokesman-Review* 22 January 1911:IV:1:7). Constructed of brick, usually red although some buff, like the New Madison. Their height ranged from two to about five stories, although three to four levels appears to have been most common. In the case of the Arlington, and probably many of the finer establishments, the lobby, office and entrance occupied most of the ground floor. In the case of the Willard (Otis) and New Madison, the ground floor is given over to lobby, entrance, and commercial bays. In many SROs, the lobby, if they had one at all, was situated on the second level, along with a manager's office and registration desk, and ground levels contained commercial bays and storage space. The tile-floored lobby of the Empire Hotel, built in 1909 at Division and Riverside, shared the ground level with a dining room, a feature not uncommon in SROs but by no means universal. The Empire was also served by "an electric passenger elevator, installed at a cost of \$5,000" (*Spokesman-Review* 24 October 1909:III:2:1). Elevators were sometimes installed in single room occupancy hotels, but not usually during the 1900-1910 era. Many, in fact, still have no elevators: the Commercial, Norman, and Jefferson hotels, for example.

The 1900 *City Directory* listed 21 hotels in Spokane, including the adjacent railroad community of Hillyard. By 1905 that number had more than doubled to 56. The number of hotels listed in the 1910 *City Directory* was more than twice as many as appeared five years earlier: 126 total, or a gain of 70 hotels in five years, perhaps more than had been built in all the city's history. Certainly not all of those were constructed to serve working class clientele, but there can be little doubt that the vast majority were built specifically for that purpose. Considering what is known about the type of buildings constructed to house primarily working class transient guests during that period, it appears likely that most of the hotels built at that time were single room occupancy structures.

Numerous older hotels underwent renovation during the first decade of the twentieth century. Some had already been remodeled, such as the New York Hotel, built originally as a brewery at Washington and Front Avenue and converted for use as a hotel in 1898. In 1906 the Virginia (previously known as the Cascade) was sold, to be remodeled to make it "suitable for hotel purposes," perhaps indicating its

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

previous use had been as a boarding house (*Spokesman-Review* 17 February 1906:8:1). Harry Baer and Jacob Goetz, of North Idaho mining fame and fortune, remodeled and expanded their well-known Coeur d'Alene Hotel in 1910. Other hotels added floors, such as the Pacific Hotel at Post and West First Avenue, which announced a four-story addition in the planning in 1910. Remodeling usually included the addition of toilets or complete baths to what had been single or multiple-room units. Toward the latter half of the decade, new and remodeled hotels increasingly advertised private baths as innovative features, while maintaining the single rooms without baths as "standard equipment" for the budget conscious.

Lodging houses were obviously no place for homeless women. The Swedish Congregational Church at Second and Division opened its basement for "unattached Scandinavian working girls," but such charitable gestures could hardly fill the need for housing growing numbers of single women in Spokane. In September 1904 the Women's Hotel opened in the old St. Luke's Hospital at the corner of Madison and Sprague Avenue to provide housing for unmarried women, many or most of whom worked in the city. Three baths and three toilets were to serve an expected 40 female occupants on its two floors. As an additional feature, the hotel offered temporary accommodations for "women who come into the city in the morning and have no place to go for a noon rest, or luncheon, or to check their parcels, without going to a hotel and paying fifty cents to a dollar for the privilege" (*Spokesman-Review* 18 September 1904:7:2). The facility operated in those quarters until a fund raising drive brought about the new Women's Hotel, which opened in what had been the Bedford Apartments at West 507 Fifth Avenue in February 1914. It was reported that 100 women would occupy the facility's 60 bedrooms.

Relatively few new hotels were built in the CBD in the years after the building boom. The Willard (present-day Otis) Hotel at Madison and West First Avenue, the last in a long line of SROs on West First, came to completion in 1911. In January of that year, the five-story Arlington Hotel at Sprague and Bernard opened for business. Conveniently located opposite the NP depot, the facility's 100 rooms were "arranged in private and in suites, and there are 10 private bath rooms, besides general baths on each of the floors" (*Spokesman-Review* 22 January 1911:IV:1:7). Long-time local merchant P. Saffron completed the Idaho Hotel on West Main Avenue in 1916 at a reported cost of \$40,000, not an overwhelming investment when compared to other earlier structures. For example, the three-story Globe Hotel, containing 72 rooms and over 30 private baths, was built at Main and Division for \$80,000 in 1908. Some renovation occurred in older hotels, such as the \$12,000 remodel of the Halliday in 1912, the year after it changed hands (see below).

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E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

The opening of the Davenport may have adversely affected the business of some hotels, but not likely those catering to working people. Once the flagship of the city's fleet, the Hotel Spokane went into receivership after losing \$2,000 during the three summer months of 1916. Some older hotels, such as the New York at the corner of Washington and Front Avenue, were torn down. A brisk business was carried on in hotel properties; some transactions indicated that those experienced in the lodging industry sought greener pastures. An example was R.C. Halliday's trade in 1911 of the Halliday Hotel for 960 acres of cultivated land in Whitman County. Perhaps few opportunities remained for making the kind of money Mrs. K.N. Laney did: an initial investment of \$600 in the Cadillac Hotel in 1906 led to financial involvements in the Antlers, Lorraine, and Stratford hotels, eventually netting her up to \$30,000 by June 1911. When the number of building permits issued in 1911 was less than those issued the previous year, some observers may have suspected a temporary lull in an unending expansion. But keen observers were aware that the boom was already over, and that Spokane had already met its housing needs for the next several decades.

Apartment Housing

The concept of apartment living was present in Spokane before the turn of the century. Apartments had been installed in commercial buildings in the CBD for some time. Leydford B. Whitten used the insurance settlement from his frame building destroyed by the fire to erect the five-story brick Whitten Block at North 1 Post Street. Completed in November 1890, its upper floors contain apartments, perhaps among the first in the city. Like many of the better class hotels, it is doubtful the building housed many, if any, truly "working class" guests in its early years. Yet the appearance of apartment buildings, often, as in the case of the Whitten Block, with commercial bays at ground level, indicated a response to the growing need for residential housing in the CBD for working people. Construction of the Montvale Apartments at Monroe and West First Avenue in 1899 belied the absence of apartments in the 1900 City Directory. Soon to follow were the Felix Block (1900) on West First Avenue and the Avondale Court Apartments (1902) on West Second Avenue, both architecturally prosaic and obviously tailored for working class clientele, and the elegant San Marco (1903) at the junction of West Sprague and Riverside. By 1905 the *City Directory* listed 19 "Apartment Houses," although the sixth floor of the Review Building, which housed the offices of one of the city's two principal newspapers, is included in the category. If the concept of apartment living had yet to catch on, the need for such facilities existed.

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

For both promotional and informational purposes, the *Spokesman-Review* ran a piece in its real estate section (5 December 1909) on apartment concept and design. Extolling the virtues of "modern science," the piece elaborated on the advanced amenities of apartment houses, including elevators, "refrigerator plants, mail chutes, vacuum cleaners, telephones, cold storage room for furs, and electric installation, giving all kinds of power and light" in the "most pretentious apartment houses." The article addressed the practicality of the apartment building concept:

In the development of habitations, for its ever-increasing and constantly changing populace, possibly no other type of structure has exhibited such startling improvements in construction, regarding their external appearance and utilitarian arrangement of plan

This transition has been brought about through new methods and ideas in design. Largely through the modern architects, the French apartment or flat building has become an improvement over the present residences and apartments, and in a great measure more suited to public needs and requirements. . . . And right here in our progressive city of Spokane, it is easy to see why building of apartments is appealing to the individual and corporation who have money to invest in the realty market.

In the latter years of the decade, more apartment buildings appeared in Spokane than ever before, although not all in the CBD. In 1909 at least two "family hotels," which appear to have been apartment buildings, were built in the CBD. Noted architects Preusse and Zittel designed one such structure for J.M. Maloney, a local clothier merchant. Its three stories were to contain 42 rooms, most of which were to be "independent" (perhaps single room studio apartments), with running water and closets in every room. A kitchen and dining room occupied the ground floor, allowing the building's manager to "board the occupants of the rooms" (*Spokesman-Review* 20 February 1909:8:3). Another Preusse and Zittel-designed "family hotel" went up on Fourth Avenue between Lincoln and Post in 1909, arranged singly and "in suites," all with lavatories and "a large closet" (*Spokesman-Review* 25 March and 15 August 1909). A basement dining room and ground floor parlor and library were installed for use by the residents. By mid 1909 it was reported that 25 "new flat buildings" were under construction, "while many more will be started this year" (*Spokesman-Review* 17 June 1909:2:30). The 1910 *City Directory* lists 97 apartment houses in the city, a drastic increase over the 19 facilities listed in the 1905 issue.

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

E. Statement of Historic Contexts (continued)

Conclusion

Time has taken its toll on working class housing in Spokane, particularly on single room occupancy hotels. During World War II, many of the older hotels and apartment buildings were renovated under a federal program designed to increase available housing in areas receiving defense-related work forces. Spokane was one such area, where thousands of workers and military personnel arrived to staff expanded existing bases, such as Fort Wright, and new facilities, including Fairchild Air Force Base, the Velox naval supply depot, the Baxter Hospital (now Veterans' Hospital) for troops wounded in action, and the Mead and Trent Kaiser Aluminum Company plants. Bathrooms were added to many SRO hotels, single rooms connected to adjacent rooms to form multiple-room units, and the like. While the downtown largely escaped wholesale leveling that visited other cities in the form of "urban renewal" in the 1960s, sections of the CBD, particularly nearest the river, were radically altered in the early 1970s. "Exposition '74," a world's fair with an environmental theme, was centered in what had been the city's rail yards. Blocks of neighboring decrepit buildings were removed, including many SROs. A 1972 survey of 197 hotels, apartments, and other "locations" that once served as residences in the CBD revealed that 44 had closed and 38 had been demolished for a 41 percent total reduction in places used for housing citizens, mostly economically disadvantaged. Although the figures do not specify how many SROs were demolished, the number was high. By November of the following year (1973), at least 71 hotels and apartment buildings had been demolished, according to a 1975 study of housing in Spokane. Since then more SRO hotels have been lost, and their numbers continue to decline, despite the rise in demand for low-income housing. What was true at the turn of the century is still true today: housing is always a problem for the lower classes of society. Then as now, single room occupancy hotels fill some, but not all, of that need.

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

F. Associated Property Types

I. Name of Property Type: Single Room Occupancy Hotels

II. Description

Single room occupancy (SRO) hotels were typically of unreinforced masonry construction, usually red or buff bricks. Architectural detailing was rarely elaborate, and normally sparse. Although sizes varied, they were normally more than two and less than five stories high, although some had additional levels. Today some SROs have elevators, but most of those have been installed subsequent to their original construction. Most SROs had basements, usually used to house coal-burning furnaces and for storage. Unlike finer hotels, SROs normally did not have barber shops, bath houses, and such in their basements.

In most SROs, a stairway entering from the front of the building provides direct access to the second level, where a small lobby or waiting area with a built-in bench is situated adjacent to a manager's office or nook with registration desk. Interior stairways are often included in SROs, usually positioned near the rears of the two side wings, or in the building's midsection. Fire escapes provide emergency exits from rear hall windows.

Fenestration patterns on the upper levels normally reflected the regular, consistent arrangement of the guest rooms. Windows were almost always double hung wood sash. Plate glass display windows were common features of the street level commercial bays that existed in most SROs.

Perhaps the most character-defining feature of single room occupancy hotels is their floor plans on the upper, residential floors. Normally hallways cross the width of the buildings paralleling the street behind the bank of rooms facing onto the street; hallways, often wide in dimension, run at ninety degree angles off the front hall into side wings of the buildings, with rooms facing into the hallways. Rear hallways paralleling alleyways behind the buildings may exist to complete a square configuration surrounding a light well providing sunlight to interior rooms. In the typical modified "U" shaped buildings, the light well opened out into the alleyway behind the structures. Some upper level hallways received both artificial and sunlight from ceiling skylights. Hallways were occasionally, but not always, adorned with wainscoting, sometimes with interior windows which may have served to cast additional light from rooms into the hallways, although their function remains in doubt. Hinged transoms above the doors provided ventilation to the rooms, all of which had additional ventilation from exterior windows. The few interior rooms

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

F. Associated Property Types (continued)

without exterior windows were apparently always connected via single doors with another room having an exterior window.

As originally constructed, most SROs included multiple-room units as a small percentage of their guest space. The overwhelming majority of rooms were designed for single occupancy. Many of those rooms were connected by locking doors to adjacent rooms, allowing rental of multiple-room units. That flexibility led to advertizing for single rooms or rooms "en suite" or "in suite."

While some rooms were originally equipped with private baths, the overwhelming majority of rooms in all SROs did not have baths nor toilets. Those features were found on each floor and shared in common by residents of as many as 19 rooms. Some rooms had sinks with hot and cold running water, but most appear not have had sinks originally. Some SROs had built-in closets; most had wardrobes or armoires.

Kitchens were not provided in single rooms in the hotels. Some SROs did have house or community kitchens as well as dining rooms, but many had neither. SROs that did usually housed those facilities on the main (ground) floor or in the basement. Guests of SROs without cooking or dining facilities were expected to dine at any of the numerous restaurants available in the CBD. While many of the nicer hotels contained house-run restaurants and bars, SROs did not.

Locations of SROs within the Spokane CBD reflect the necessity for their being situated in proximity to goods and services essential to the health and comfort of their guests, usually itinerant workers or homestead seekers who arrived, and eventually left, by train, and who traveled about town on foot, for the most part. There was no need for livery stables nor parking garages at SROs, as guests had neither horses nor automobiles. If guests did possess such luxuries, they were stabled or parked elsewhere.

III. Significance

Single room occupancy hotels were, for many years after the turn of the century, one of the most common building type in Spokane's CBD. Reflecting the presence of a working class population that arrived to meet the labor demands of new and expanding industries in and around the city, SROs are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion ^A~~B~~ for their association with the period of unparalleled growth in Spokane's history. Erected on virtually every block of the CBD, they constitute a discrete and significant property type built to house itinerant workers and people in search of new

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Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of Spokane, WA, 1900-1910

F. Associated Property Types (continued)

livelihoods in the Spokane area. As a property type, they are recognizable in their physical characteristics, including size, proportions, materials, floor plans, and spacial arrangements of interior features. Those characteristics reflect the original function of the buildings, as well as the time period in which they were built.

Most SROs in Spokane date to the period approximately delineated by the years 1900 and 1910, although records clearly indicate that some were constructed before and after those dates. Architecturally they reflect the common commercial style of building of the day. In their spacial arrangement of rooms, baths, and toilets, SROs provide clues about the notions of privacy and comfort possessed by their guests.

Constructed during the first decade of the twentieth century, single room occupancy hotels in Spokane's central business district are associated with the greatest period of growth in the city's history. They also reflect demographic changes that have had lasting effects on Spokane and the larger surrounding areas. As a result of the city's rapid development as a commercial, industrial, and service center, Spokane became, and continues to be, the dominant city in an area of several thousand square miles rich in natural resources.

IV. Registration Requirements

To be eligible for listing in the National Register, a single room occupancy hotel must convey its sense of historic character through structural and associative integrity, and must have documented historical significance within the contexts of working class housing and the development of Spokane's central business district.

An SRO of masonry construction, having at least two stories, should retain sufficient exterior integrity on its upper level(s) to convey a sense of its original design and architectural detailing. Fenestration patterns should be retained on its upper level(s), although window replacement in kind (including metal windows replicated to appear like original wood sash) should be permissible. Compromised street level facades, window and door openings, and materials are universal throughout the property type and should not be cause for ineligibility.

Interior integrity must be retained in original floor plan of upper levels to be considered for eligibility. Removal of some original partition walls and addition of some doors connecting guest rooms should not

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F. Associated Property Types (continued)

be cause for disqualification. Original fixtures, such as gas lights, doors, toilets and tubs, and such should likewise not disqualify the building from National Register consideration. Interior window openings, such as transoms and hall windows, may contribute to eligibility, but their absence should not be cause for ineligibility. Interior integrity of ground level commercial spaces should not be a requirement of eligibility.

Retention of stairways, upper level lobbies and managers' nooks, dining rooms, and kitchens should be required for eligibility. Similar facilities on ground floors and in basements should not be expected to have retained levels of integrity comparable to that on upper floors. Installation of elevators, kitchens, dining rooms, laundry rooms, and the like should not be disqualifying provided the modifications have not compromised the integrity of association of the guest rooms as originally constructed.

G. Geographical Data

The geographical area encompasses the central business district (CBD) of the city of Spokane, Washington. The CBD can be defined as lying between Division and Cedar streets on the east and west, respectively, and 3rd Avenue on the south and the Spokane River on the north.

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The multiple property listing of single room occupancy (SRO) hotels in the central business district (CBD) of Spokane, Washington, is based upon historic property inventories conducted by the city, which identified numerous examples of the SRO hotel property type. Additional research was then conducted by Craig Holstine, who reviewed *City Directories*, fire insurance maps, articles from the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper and its invaluable multi-volume index, and other published and unpublished historical records. Spokane County Assessor's work sheets were reviewed for selected properties to determine types of construction, materials used in walls, floors, and ceilings, numbers of rooms, sinks, tubs, and toilets, and possible insights into modifications occurring since original construction. Newspaper accounts dating from the period of significance (1900-1910) shed light on many aspects of these properties; details from those accounts were compared with assessor's worksheets and first-hand observations in arriving at conclusions regarding integrity of floor plan, materials, and the like. Building permit files were also checked of a

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H. Summary of Identification and Evaluative Methods (continued)

representative example SRO building to determine amount of alteration over the years, as well as dates for obtaining original permits for water and sewer pipe installation.

The boundaries defining what is normally referred to as the Spokane CBD were chosen as parameters for the study after a combination of historical records research and visual survey of the downtown area determined the former and present concentrations of SRO hotels. Mr. Holstine then visited selected SRO hotels. Inspection of the buildings provided comparative data on architectural styling, materials used in construction, floor plans, fenestration patterns, spacial arrangements of rooms, hallways, and other features, such as light wells and skylights. Modifications were noted to assemble contexts for evaluating relative integrity. As original floor plan drawings were not available, on-site inspections proved invaluable in compiling requisite information. From the data base so assembled, registration requirements were developed for the SRO property type.

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Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: N/A

Date Listed: 10/15/93

N/A
Property Name

N/A
County

WA
State

Single Room Occupancy Hotels in the Central Business District of
Spokane, Washington MPS
Multiple Name

This multiple property documentation form is approved in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Patrick Anderson
Signature of the Keeper

10/15/93
Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Documentation:

Associated Property Types/Significance:

The correct area of significance for the eligible resources is A. This corrects a typo in the original cover document. (Page F-18)

*Form corrected
DHH*

This information was confirmed with David Hansen of the Washington SHPO

DISTRIBUTION:

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