

SPOKANE REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
Nomination Form

OPR 91-448

City/County Historic Landmarks Commission
Sixth Floor - City Hall
Spokane, Washington 99201-3333

Type all entries---complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic HOLMES BLOCK

and/or common OLD HILL APARTMENTS

2. Location

street & number 628 NORTH MONROE

city/town SPOKANE

vicinity of

state WA

county SPOKANE

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object			<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes:restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Apartments or Offices
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes:unrestricted	
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	

4. Owner of Property

name RON R. MCDONALD AND CHRISTINE KAYE MCDONALD

street & number 1748 WEST 11TH

city,town SPOKANE

vicinity of

state WA 99204

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse,registry of deeds,etc TICOR TITLE INSURANCE

street & number 521 WEST 1ST

city,town SPOKANE

state WA 99204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title HISTORIC LANDMARKS SURVEY

date SEPTEMBER 27, 1978

federal state county local

depository for survey records CITY/COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

city,town SPOKANE

state WA 99201

7. Description

Condition	Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> _excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> _deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> _unaltered
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _good	<input type="checkbox"/> _ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _altered
<input type="checkbox"/> _fair	<input type="checkbox"/> _unexposed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _original site
		<input type="checkbox"/> _moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Spokane's near north side is the location of a few select historic properties, among them the Spokane County Courthouse and the Monroe Street Bridge (both listed in the National Register of Historic Places.) Between these two diverse structures stands the Holmes Block, a three-story red brick commercial building. Second Empire in character, the Holmes Block is a distinctive landmark among the early commercial buildings still standing in this area.

Monroe Street, rising gradually northward from the bridge, passes between old railroad embankments, a number of turn-of-the-century buildings, and some art-deco storefronts to the intersection of Broadway Avenue. Although the area has deteriorated over the years, many well-maintained, good quality structures remain intermingled with an occasional newer building. Situated between a much-altered painted brick building of equal height and a single-story pre-art deco structure of red brick, the Holmes Block is an arresting focal point midway along the block between Bridge and Broadway Avenues.

The building is of red brick construction with sandstone ornament. Above the first floor an egg and dart string course effectively divides the altered from the unchanged portions of the facade. The ground floor windows, originally of plate glass with a glass transom above, were covered over when state liquor laws required that drinking areas not be visible to the public. At a more recent date, a shingled false mansard roof was applied, obscuring the area between the first floor windows and the string course.

Above the egg and dart molding, the facade is articulated by decorative brickwork that simulates four rusticated pilasters. On the second story level, the outermost windows are flat-topped with jack arch lintels. The minor windows have segmental arch heads with radiating brick voussoirs. The wall plane of the second floor rises unbroken into the third story at the outermost corners of the facade, and is capped on either side by finials in the shape of diminutive convex mansards.

The third story is the most distinctive level of the facade. Outer piers of sandstone with gabled finials frame a steeply-pitched mansard roof sheathed with corrugated copper. A classically enriched semicircular gable breaks the roof-line. Two flat-arched windows between brick pilasters are surmounted by a dentilled, round arch pediment. A massive keystone crowns the pediment's cornice. On either side of the central gable are porthole dormers accented by dentilled hood moldings with volutes. A unique feature of the third story ornament is the use of gargoyle waterspouts on modillioned shelf cornices directly below the dormers.

The interior of the building has been greatly altered. The first floor has been used periodically as a bar and restaurant since its construction and retains only the original, ornamental pressed tin ceiling. The two upper stories, with access provided by the southernmost street entry, include a series of apartments lining a main corridor and a sky-lit stairwell. Original oak wainscoting, door and window surrounds, as well as stair banisters remain intact.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance-Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other(specify)

Specific dates 1904

Builder/Architect ISAAC J. GALBRAITH, ARCHITECT

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Holmes Block is significant to the City of Spokane as one of the few remaining commercial buildings dating from the first decade of the twentieth century to survive on the north bank of the Spokane River. Although Spokane is known in the Northwest for the richness of its historic architecture, large scale destruction of many older buildings occurred here in the 1950's and 1960's. Certain architectural periods and styles were victims of this trend more often than others. Early twentieth century architecture in particular has suffered in recent years. In spite of shop front alterations, the Holmes Block has survived, perhaps owing in part to its unusual and appealing design.

Historically, the building was designed by a little-known but apparently highly-qualified architect, Isaac J. Galbraith. James C. Holmes, a saloon-keeper, commissioned its construction as an apartment house and store in 1904. Holmes converted the ground floor storefront to a bar in 1907. It was operated as a saloon until Prohibition was enacted in Washington in 1915. The upper floors have been run as hotel rooms, furnished rooms, and for apartments during all of its existence. The architect, I. J. Galbraith, was born in Monongehela, Pennsylvania, in 1859. He attended Wesleyan University and trained as an architect in Pittsburgh. From 1882 to 1887 he was a partner in the firm of McBride and Galbraith, which designed the first ten-story building in Pittsburgh. In 1887 Galbraith moved to Montana because of poor health. He designed the Montana State Building at the Columbian Exposition/World's Fair in Chicago in 1893. The building was widely admired for its character within the theme of the White City.

Galbraith moved to Spokane in 1898. Between that time and 1909 he worked as an architect, as well as being involved in mining and other business interests. After 1909 he began a contracting business in Spokane and Portland. He retired after 1914. Because of the sporadic nature of his architectural work, few of his major structures remain in Spokane.

The individuality of the Holmes Block, with its stylistic allusions to the Second Empire mode, contributes much to the vista of Monroe Street above the bridge. Although many older structures, including a few that pre-dated the fire of 1889, lined the streets of the surrounding neighborhood for years, recent changes have

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

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brought about wide-scale demolition of these buildings. The gradual encroachment of courthouse facilities in this area has stimulated a dramatic increase in the appreciation of outstanding resources such as the Holmes Block. I.J. Galbraith was an architect capable of creating the subdued elegance of the Montana State building at the 1893 World's Fair. There are few standing examples of his work in Spokane; the Holmes Block, however, embodies those qualities of design which brought Galbraith recognition in Montana. A fantasy in brick and sandstone, the Holmes Block is an intriguing vision of turn-of-the-century Spokane.

9. Major Bibliographical References

WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL REGISTER OF HISTORICAL PLACES -- 1980

SPOKANE CITY LANDMARK SURVEY -- 1979

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property -----

Verbal boundary description and justification

EAST OF COURTHOUSE 1 BLOCK, WEST OF SPOKANE RIVER 1 BLOCK, 1 BLOCK NORTH OF
SPOKANE RIVER, $\frac{1}{2}$ BLOCK SOUTH OF BROADWAY

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state WASHINGTON

county SPOKANE

state WASHINGTON

county SPOKANE

11. Form Prepared By

name/title CHRISTA MCDONALD/OWNER

organization

date 1/10/91

street & number 1748 WEST 11TH

W 448-2828

telephone H 455-5379

city/town SPOKANE

state WA

12. Signature of Owner(s)

Ron K McDonald
Christine K McDonald

For Office Use Only:

Date Received: 4-2-91

Date Heard: 4-17-91

Commission Decision: Approved

Council/Board Action: Approved

Date: 4-29-91

Attest: Marilyn J. Montgomery
City Clerk

Approved as to Form:

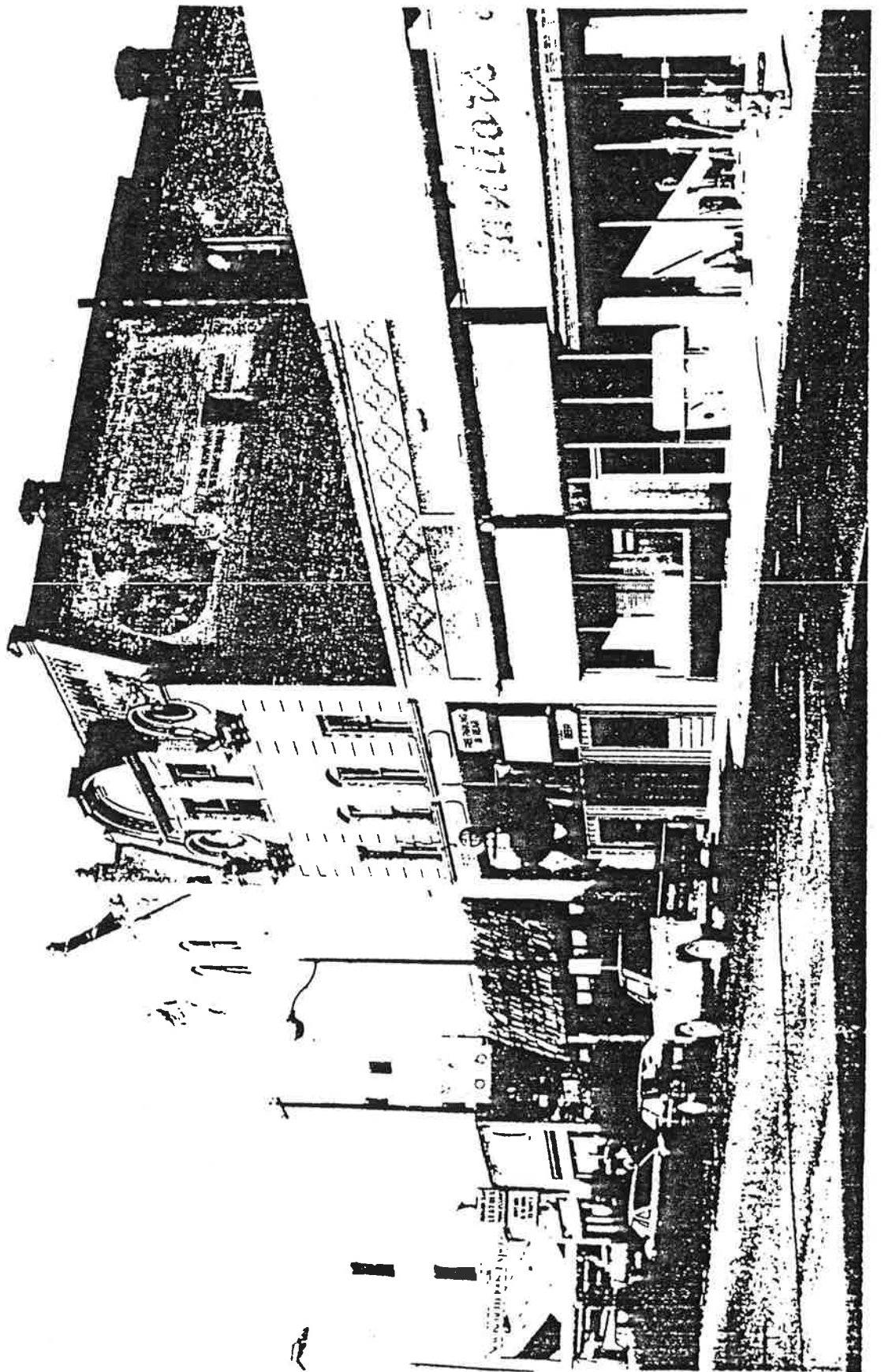
Andreas Schwaib
Ass't City Attorney

We hereby certify that this property has been listed on the Spokane Register of Historic Places:

Sheri S. Barnard or CHAIR, Spokane County Commissioners
MAYOR, City of Spokane

Robert Ogden X
CHAIR, Spokane City/County Historic Landmarks Commission

Katherine W. Jewett
City/County Historic Preservation Officer





2/16/2007



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