

Spokane Register of Historic Places Nomination

*Spokane City/County Historic Preservation Office, City Hall, Third Floor
808 Spokane Falls Boulevard, Spokane, Washington 99201-3337*

1. Name of Property

Historic Name: The Marcus and Augusta Elias House
And/Or Common Name: Elias Family House

2. Location

Street & Number: 925 South Cedar
City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA, 99204
Parcel Number: 35193.1206

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building	<input type="checkbox"/> public <input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure			<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> residential
<input type="checkbox"/> object	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes, restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes, unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other

4. Owner of Property

Name: Melissa M. Flynn
Street & Number: 925 South Cedar
City, State, Zip Code: Spokane, WA, 99204
Telephone Number/E-mail: 206-708-3526/bedbakedandbeyond@gmail.com

5. Location of Legal Description

Courthouse, Registry of Deeds	Spokane County Courthouse
Street Number:	1116 West Broadway
City, State, Zip Code:	Spokane, WA 99260
County:	Spokane

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Title: Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District
Date: 2021 Federal State County Local
Depository for Survey Records: Spokane Historic Preservation Office

7. Description

Architectural Classification

Condition

- excellent
 good
 fair
 deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check One

- unaltered
 altered

Check One

- original site
 moved & date _____

Narrative statement of description is found on one or more continuation sheets.

8. Spokane Register Categories and Statement of Significance

Applicable Spokane Register of Historic Places category: Mark "x" on one or more for the categories that qualify the property for the Spokane Register listing:

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of Spokane 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 history.
- E Property represents the culture and heritage of the city of Spokane in ways not adequately addressed in the other criteria, as in its visual prominence, reference to intangible heritage, or any range of cultural practices.

Narrative statement of significance is found on one or more continuation sheets.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography is found on one or more continuation sheets.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: .15 acres
Verbal Boundary Description: The south 66 feet of lots 6 and 7, block 4, McIntosh Addition, according to plat recorded in volume "A" of plats, page 188, in the city of Spokane, Spokane County, WA.
Verbal Boundary Justification: Nominated property includes entire parcel and urban legal description.

11. Form Prepared By

Name and Title: Emily Rebert, Historic Preservation Specialist, Ability Bradshaw, Owner
Street, City, State, Zip Code: Emily Rebert, 2033 South Rebecca Street, Spokane, WA 99223
Ability Bradshaw, 925 South Cedar Street, Spokane, WA 99204
Telephone Number: Emily Rebert: 717-891-1582 Ability Bradshaw: 206-324-0421
E-mail Address: emilyrebert@gmail.com, abil.bradshaw@gmail.com

12. Additional Documentation

Additional documentation is found on one or more continuation sheets.

13. Signature of Owner(s)





14. For Official Use Only:

Date nomination application filed: October 19, 2022

Date of Landmarks Commission Hearing: November 17, 2022

Landmarks Commission decision: Approved

Date of City Council/Board of County Commissioners' hearing: _____

I hereby certify that this property has been listed in the Spokane Register of Historic Places based upon the action of either the City Council or the Board of County Commissioners as set forth above.

Megan Duvall **Date**
City/County Historic Preservation Officer
City/County Historic Preservation Office
Third Floor – City Hall
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201

Attest: _____ Approved as to form: _____

City Clerk

Assistant City Attorney



Figure 1: The west facade of the Elias House facing Cedar Street

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Narrative Description of Property

Built in 1909, the Marcus and Augusta Elias House is a fine example of a transitional architectural type of the Queen Anne Free Classic style with some Craftsman style features. The 1 ½ story structure rests on a basalt foundation with a front-facing gabled roof and a wraparound porch that encompasses the first floor of the west and south elevations. Wide eaves with a flat fascia and soffit with no ornamentation protrude from the asphalt shingle roof, protecting two sleeping porches/balconies on the upper half story. The siding is a combination of clapboard siding on the first story and wood shingle detail on the second story, commonly found in both the Queen Anne and Craftsman styles of architecture, particularly in Spokane. The majority of the windows are one-over-one, wood frame, double-hung configuration. A few of the windows on the first floor, primary elevations have original diamond-paned, leaded-glass upper lights across the prominent sashes and are fixed. The wrap-around porch with round columns and pedimented gables is more akin to the Free Classic style. The interior of the house reveals a formal staircase with a board and batten half wall, oak floors, and spacious closets with casement windows. There are three bedrooms upstairs that retain the original built-in cabinetry. Located in Spokane, Washington's lower South Hill residential neighborhood, the property resides on the northeast corner of South Cedar Street and West Tenth Avenue. With most of its original form, design and materials intact, the property retains strong architectural integrity as an early 20th- century single-family residence built on Spokane's South Hill.

CURRENT APPEARANCE & CONDITION

Site

925 South Cedar Street is surrounded by a well-manicured lawn with deciduous trees. The property is identified as tax parcel 35193.1206, and the lot is 66 feet wide and 100 feet deep. The section of West

Tenth Avenue beside the home has the original brick road revealed. Ghost lines from where former streetcars once ran are visible in the brick pattern of the road. A small section of lawn between the home and street is enclosed with a new decorative iron fence. A newly constructed single car garage is located in the back of the house (facing West Tenth Avenue) in the southeast corner of the property. Between the garage and dwelling is a patio, landscaped with decorative brick pavers and ornamental trees. A concrete driveway connects the side entrance to the house and garage to West Tenth Avenue. The property is surrounded by tree-lined streets and domestic architecture built in the early half of the 20th-century.

Exterior

The Marcus and Augusta Elias House's footprint measures 65 feet wide by 44 feet deep, and faces west along South Cedar Street. The home was constructed on a corner lot and has a secondary entrance facing West Tenth Avenue. This entrance's original purpose was for a one-room apartment that was included in the original construction. Aside from the primary front entrance and secondary side entrance, there is one more entrance on the back of the house. Small casement windows can be seen throughout the upper half story. The casings surrounding the windows and doors are plain with a simple decorative crown. Modern aluminum storm windows cover the original window units.



Figure 2: Front facade of the Elias House

West Façade

The *primary façade* of the Marcus and Augusta Elias House faces west. A course of concrete stairs lead from the sidewalk up to the walkway to approach the stairs to access the porch and front door. Designed to identify the front entrance of the house, a small pediment with wood shingles projects slightly above the porch roof. The front door is offset to the left of the entryway to accommodate the large, fixed diamond-paned, leaded-glass upper lights window that peers into the living room. Another smaller, fixed, diamond-paned, leaded-glass window is on the left side of the

door for the coat closet inside. The large gable in the half story is symmetrical, with three, original, one-over-one, wood-frame, double-hung windows in the center, flanked with one small casement window on either side. A fixed, diamond-paned, leaded-glass window rests at the peak of the gable. The porch covers the first floor of the west façade and wraps around to the south side of the home. The full-width, wrap-around porch is covered by a shallow, pitched-hip roof and is supported by full-length, wooden Tuscan columns. The balustrade features are solid, wooden rails and turned balusters. The porch floor is wood planking, but has been coated over with a rubber, decking material. The ceiling is covered with tongue and groove paneling. Basalt piers support the columns and wood lattice fills the space in-between at the ground level.



Figure 3: South elevation facing 10th Avenue

wood frame, double-hung windows are also on the first floor of this elevation. A large gable protrudes from the roof above the first floor, where a sleeping porch/balcony with a pedimented gable is constructed. Miniature Tuscan columns support the pedimented gable and roof. At one time, the sleeping porch/balcony was open or screened in, but sliding glass windows have replaced the screen/open air. A small casement window flanks each side of the balcony at the corner of the gable.

North Façade

Shielded from the neighboring property and vegetation, the *north elevation* is a secondary façade with a variety of differently-sized, one-over-one, wood-frame, double-hung windows throughout the 1 ½ story dwelling. Between the two floors is a bay window consisting of two, one-over-one, double-hung windows. These are located at the staircase landing. There is another balcony/sleeping porch in the northeast corner of the gable. It was also likely

South Façade

The *south elevation* is considered another primary façade because the structure resides on a corner lot and has an entryway, however, it is not as prominent as the west façade. A small, open pediment projects slightly from the porch roof and marks the south-elevation entrance. The entrance leads to what was once a one-bedroom apartment. To the left of the doorway, there is a bay window on the first floor with a diamond-paned, leaded-glass window in the center. Next to the bay window a brick chimney runs up along the eave wall. Three more original, one-over-one,



Figure 4: North elevation



Figure 5: East, or rear, elevation

open or screened in at one time, but sliding glass windows have replaced the screen/open air. The bottom sashes of the two windows located at the first-floor, northeast corner were shortened during the kitchen remodel in 2022. A shallow shed dormer with an inward-swinging awning-window projects from the north side of the western gable.

East Façade

The *east elevation* is the back of the house. This façade also has a variety of differently-sized one-over-one, wood frame, double-hung

windows throughout the 1 ½ story. The first floor has a small addition. The 1910 Sanborn Map shows the space was an open porch. With a hipped roof and siding that matches the first floor, there is a modern set of French doors that lead out to an open porch and into the back yard. A second chimney stack can be seen on the roof from this side of the house.

Interior

According to the Spokane County Tax Assessor records, the first floor and basement of the Marcus and Augusta Elias House have 1,570 square feet each, and the second floor has 1,100 square feet of space. The first floor boasts nine-foot-high ceilings, whereas the upstairs retains eight-foot-high ceilings. Made of solid oak with a large beveled-glass oval shaped center light, the front door opens into a small vestibule at the first floor. The vestibule leads east into the parlor where the focal-point is the ornate staircase with a board and batten half-wall and oak floors.



Figure 6: Interior of the Elias House looking at the front door and entry vestibule

The newel post is square with a flat cap, traditional to the Craftsman style. The staircase leads up to a landing to accommodate turning the stairway 180 degrees. The landing of the stairs has two windows set at a 45-degree angle to create a reading nook. A narrow-plank, oak, wood floor with decorative inlay (stained darker) exemplifies the space to include Greek key-corners around the exterior perimeter. At the opposite side of the landing, there was a doorway that led down to the kitchen in the back of the house, but the fenestration was converted into a shallow bookshelf. To the left of the vestibule, in the parlor, is a coat closet with a diamond-pane leaded-glass window.



Figure 7: Staircase from the first floor

To the right of the vestibule are French doors leading into the formal living room. Focal points in the living room include the picture railing, two large fenestrations with French doors transitioning between the parlor and dining room, large windows with decorative leaded glass, box beams, and a fireplace. The fireplace appears to maintain the original mantle with wide-spaced dentil blocks and a flat frieze, complete with a large plain shelf. The façade and hearth have been replaced with a cream-colored marble square tile and the firebox has been retrofitted to accommodate gas.

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Figure 8: Parlor showing west-facing front window and fireplace

Progressing east, toward the back of the house, from the living room and through another set of French doors with frosted sidelights, is the dining room. This room contains the three bay windows and reading nook, plate rail, japanned copper floor registers (these can be found throughout the house), and multiple doorways with five paneled doors with original hardware. One doorway looks out to the parlor and staircase. Another door opens to the built-in Chinaware closet and the next doorway leads into the kitchen. A newer bathroom was installed off the dining room, and the

final door opens to the modest, one-bedroom and one-bathroom apartment in the rear southeast corner of the house. Immediately to the right of this doorway, once inside the bedroom, is the main entryway from West 10th Avenue.



Figure 9: View from the dining room to the north

Back through the dining room, and into the kitchen, the butler's pantry is on the immediate right, with original, glass-door cabinetry. After a remodel in the 1970's the kitchen was revitalized again in 2022 to be more historically appropriate to the Craftsman style. Counter tops are tiled, and white appliances, reminiscent of those used in kitchens of that era, have been installed. A drop ceiling was removed to reveal the original ceiling heights and the remaining intact beadboard was moved to be used as the back splash under the hanging cabinets. The two windows above the kitchen sink, on the north wall, had their bottom sashes shortened to accommodate the sink. The original, enclosed porch on the back of the house was utilized to expand on the kitchen's square footage. A breakfast bar was added in the 2022 remodel.



Figure 10: The kitchen, remodeled in 2022



Figure 11: Upstairs hallway

Moving beyond the landing of the staircase, and onto the second floor, the top of the staircase is met with a hallway running perpendicular to the stairs (east to west). At the back end is a bedroom in the northeast corner with a sleeping porch and attached bathroom. An original cupboard is built into the wall, and there are more dressers like this in the closets of the bedrooms. The original bathroom is across the hallway in the southeast corner. Directly across the hall from the staircase is another bedroom that comes equipped with two flanking closets in the gable ends and a sleeping porch in the center. On the west end of the upstairs hallway is the master bedroom that also has large closets (one of the closets is large enough to include a small office) in the gables. The last space in the hallway is a large linen closet, equipped with an early, light timer. Knowing the Elias family was in the fashion, retail business, it is no coincidence that the house was constructed with spacious closets, to include built-in dressers and windows. Today the basement remains largely unfinished. Three rooms were, recently, sectioned off in the basement for a rumpus room, an extra room, and a laundry room.

ORIGINAL APPEARANCE & SUBSEQUENT MODIFICATIONS

The Marcus and Augusta Elias House appears to retain all of its original exterior form, finish, and workmanship with the exception of enclosing the 10' x 6' porch on the east façade. The current roofing material is asphalt shingle. The original roof was likely wood shingles, as was popular at the time of construction and style of the home. The roof was likely replaced a couple of times since its construction in 1909. Whereas, the original flooring continues to reside in the wraparound porch, it has been coated in rubber-decking material. At one point the screen/open air in the upstairs sleeping porches/balconies were replaced with sliding glass windows.

Circa 1990: French doors between the living and dining room were created to match the original French doors between the parlor and living room. New tile and a gas insert were installed in the living room fireplace. An ADA compliant bathroom was constructed off of the dining room. Two rooms were finished in the basement to be a rumpus room and an extra room.

2020: Four bathrooms were remodeled, garage construction, driveway and walkway installation.

2022: The staircase that used to connect the landing to the kitchen was removed and the doorway was fitted with a shelving unit. One room was finished in the basement, which was a laundry. Kitchen remodeled. Decorative iron fence installation.

Elias House

Areas of Significance:	Architecture, Women’s Social History
Period of Significance:	1909-1984
Architect:	Unknown
Builder:	Unknown

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The house at 925 S. Cedar Street was constructed in 1909 in a transitional architectural vocabulary of both the Queen Anne Free Classic and Craftsman styles for the Elias family. The house is one and a half stories with a pedimented entryway and a distinctive wrap-around porch that reveals aspects of both the Queen Anne Free Classic as well as the Craftsman style— a not-so-uncommon blending together of styles during transitional periods of architectural trends and popularity. The house is located on Spokane’s lower south hill in an early streetcar suburb that was serviced by the Washington Water Power Company streetcar line. The house was constructed for the Elias family who were active in Spokane’s business and social scene for 75 years, living at the house at 925 S Cedar for the entire time. The Elias family owned one of the first women’s “ready-to-wear” clothing stores in Spokane, and the youngest Elias sisters and their mother hosted countless social gatherings in the home during the time of their residence when the scene of female social life that was primarily in women's homes.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The Spokane Cable Railway and Early Development of the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District 1883-1898 (Adapted from Cannon Streetcar Suburb Local Historic District Context)

Anthony Cannon recorded the plats for Cannon’s Addition soon after he received the land patent for his homestead in 1883. Lots on the north end of Cannon’s Addition near Coeur d’Alene Park were quickly sold and developed. Despite the spectacular views, the southern section of the addition located on the South Hill was less desirable for residential development, due to the challenge of transportation up the steep bluff. But, as Spokane’s population continued to grow, the pressure to build on the hill increased. In 1888, three new plats were recorded adjacent to the southwest corner of Cannon’s Addition between Cedar Street and Monroe Street: Booge’s, McIntosh, and South Park Additions.

Advertisements for buildable lots in Cannon’s, Booge’s, McIntosh, and South Park Additions frequently appeared in the newspaper from 1883-1889, but there was limited reporting about new residences constructed during that period. (There were no Sanborn maps drawn for the district until 1891, so we are limited to newspaper records and building permits.) In 1889, Monroe Street was paved up to 9th Avenue and Adams Street was graded from 5th to 14th Avenue. These infrastructure improvements, among others, encouraged the first substantial wave of residential development in the district, primarily on 6th and 7th Avenues but some new residences were built as far south as 11th Avenue. Although there were likely more residences built between 1883 and 1889, only three residences built



A newspaper headline announcing the opening of the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line. *Spokane Chronicle*, October 24, 1899.

accompanied them, were more important than the burial places of city residents who had long passed.

The city was prepared for rapid development, but it took longer to materialize than anticipated because getting up the hill was tough. After years of struggling with inconsistent service and issues with their infrastructure, the Spokane Cable Railway Company ended service up the South Hill in 1894 due to slower than expected property sales along the route, possibly as a result of the nationwide financial Panic of 1893.

No homes that are still extant in the neighborhood were constructed in the district from the end of 1895 until the end of 1898.

The Cannon Hill Car Line Building Boom 1899-1930

By the end of the 1890s, the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District was lightly sprinkled with residential development. Whereas, nearby Browne's Addition, which did not have the same topographic transportation challenges, still retains nearly ninety homes built before 1899. As the *Spokane Chronicle* explained, the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District was "rapidly becoming one of the most popular residence districts in the city, but had the disadvantage of being reached only by walking up the long and steep hill." Although it was lagging behind nearby neighborhoods, the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District would soon enter its period of greatest growth.

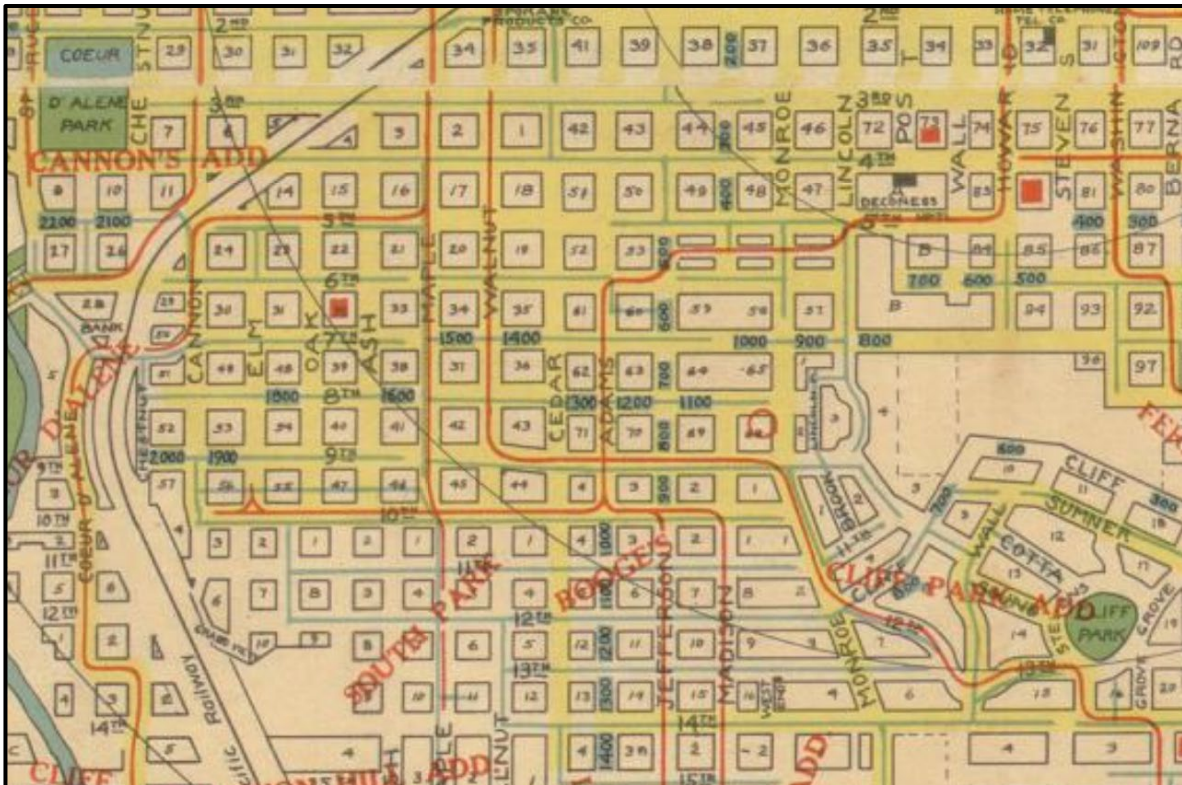


Drawing of a small house at 11th Avenue and Cedar Street before major residential development began in the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District, undated. Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture.

In July of 1899, the Spokane Street Railway Company proposed the construction of the first reliable transportation up the hill, the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line. The new streetcar would not be operated by cable, like its predecessor which struggled and failed. The new streetcar line featured a revolutionary technology that was spreading across the United States, the electrified locomotive. The first electrified streetcars began operating on the east coast in 1886, and the technology arrived in Spokane shortly after in 1888. Spokane was an ideal location for electrified streetcars because the city had easy access to water-generated electricity.

The first tapestry of streetcar lines in the city were owned by a variety of companies operating routes that primarily stretched from west to east from Browne's Addition through downtown and northward toward residential districts like Corbin Park. The Panic of 1893 had slowed streetcar development and companies were nervous to build a line

into the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District due to the steep grade and limited residential development on the hill. In 1899, the Washington Water Power Company (WWP), who operated the hydroelectric power stations on the Spokane River, absorbed most of the city's streetcar companies. On August 10, 1899, WWP purchased the franchise agreement from the Spokane Street Railway Company and completed the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line. The company considered multiple options but settled on a route that ran “along Howard Street from Fourth to Fifth Avenue, thence along Fifth to



Street Map of Spokane from 1922 showing the streetcar routes as red lines. Notice the line from Bishop Court at the north and the curved route along 12th and 13th Avenues to the southeast. Designed by H.H. Weile and printed by the Spokane Lithographing Company.

Lincoln, up Lincoln to Bishop Court, along Bishop Court nearly to Jefferson Street, thence through a rock cut and across Jefferson Street to Sixth Avenue, thence along Sixth to Adams, south on Adams to Tenth Avenue, and west on Tenth to Elm Street.” This route was selected because it did not require substantial rock cuts, and because it avoided “heavy grades and expense of construction.”

Although the streetcar line was removed long ago, evidence of the route is sprinkled throughout the neighborhood. At Tenth and Adams, ghost marks from removed tracks show the sweeping bend the streetcar took as it rounded the corner. The most notable remaining evidence of the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line is the sweeping bend that connects Bishop Court with Sixth Avenue. Before the streetcar line, Bishop Court and the surrounding streets were all rectilinear. But, in 1899, Bishop Court was modified because the streetcar required a sweeping bend through the rock cut in order to ascend the hill.

The curved section of Bishop Court remains in 2020, and although the tracks have been removed it is still unpaved.

The Cannon Hill Car Line opened in 1899 and it was immediately successful. Local newspapers reported the importance of the new infrastructure to current residents of the hill. While, in the same newspapers, real estate speculators lauded the line in their advertisements and homes in the district quickly flew up. In the five years following the completion of the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line, at least fifty new residences were constructed in the district. The lots closest to the original streetcar line were selected for development first, and as new lines were built into the district residential development followed their route. By 1902, the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line was so crowded that folks were writing the *Spokesman-Review* to complain. In 1905, the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line increased service to every 15 minutes from 30 minutes. In 1906, the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line was extended up Monroe and then east to Cliff Park at 12th Avenue.¹

Virginia McAlester's *A Field Guide to American Houses* gives an excellent overview of how electric streetcars facilitated residential development:

The speed of electric cars facilitated a new real estate development process. A typical pattern was to build a trolley line into vacant countryside, often terminating at a recreational destination - a park, a fairground, an amusement park, or a large cemetery (which, in the 19th century, functioned as tranquil open space), this planning helped attract riders immediately. House lots were placed adjacent to the line, subdivision improvements were added (sidewalks, utility connections, etc.), and the vacant lots placed on the market. Signs advertising "Home Sites for Sale" greeted passengers traveling along the line. As lots were sold and homes built, the new residents increased the number of daily commuters. The streetcar line added value to the vacant land, and the development of the land brought value to the streetcar. Often the owner of a trolley line and its adjacent property was either the same or connected in some way. By 1900 trolley lines and streetcar suburbs had become the primary factor in the development of new urban neighborhoods throughout the country.

The pattern for streetcar driven residential development presented by McAlester describes the development patterns in the Cannon Streetcar Suburb Historic District, and much of Spokane, almost perfectly.

The rapid pace of development continued in the district until World War I. The district retains 301 buildings that were constructed in the twenty years following the completion of the Cannon Hill Streetcar Line. This amounts to 63% of the buildings in the district in 2020. Although the majority of new construction in this period was single family residences, large scale apartment buildings became popular in the 1910s and many were constructed between 1910 and the beginning of the First World War. No buildings were

¹ "Cannon Hill Cars Crowded," *Spokesman-Review*, February 2, 1902, page 1.

constructed in the district in 1917 or 1918. Once the war wrapped up, building in the district resumed but with notably less energy. Only 42 buildings were constructed between the end of the war and the onset of the Great Depression.

Homes built in the first half of this period, from 1899-1915, generally did not include provisions for automobiles like garages. Whereas, during the second half of this period from 1916-1930, most of the homes were built with either attached or detached garages and many new garages were built adjacent or attached to existing homes that were constructed before the first wave of personal automobile ownership. Two notable examples of garages that were added to existing homes include Thadius Lane's detached garage and chauffeur quarters at 1312 W. 9th Avenue, and Martin Woldson's attached garage at 903 S. Adams Street. Both of the garages seem like small insignificant projects, however both were designed by renowned Spokane architect Kirtland Cutter to closely match the primary residence.

The Development of the Elias House

The Elias House was constructed in 1909. The 1909 built date is assumed due to a permit to connect the house to the Spokane city water supply which was taken out in 1908 and the 1909 City Directory that listed Marcus Elias' home as S 925 Cedar. There is a citation in the June 10th, 1908 Spokesman Review for Augusta Elias having applied for a permit to build at the address. And finally, the Eliases built an en-suite bedroom with a separate entrance in the house for boarders. A classified ad for the room ran in 1909 in the Spokesman-Review. The ad was for "one or two gentlemen" to rent a "furnished room on Cannon Hill" in a "new modern house". The Eliases offered a "private room – no housekeeping". This ad was the first of, conservatively, 100 citations, in the Spokane Daily Chronicle and the Spokesman-Review, in which the Elias family name would appear throughout their seven decades of entertaining in and out of this spacious and grand house built for a working family.

The Eliases built their house in one Spokane's early suburbs, Cannon Hill, facing one of the new streetcar routes. Many of the grandest homes were built facing the streetcar line, at a time when transit was embraced. The streetcar lines that ran to the Cannon Hill neighborhood were a significant, civic accomplishment. "Trolley lines were created by local real estate developers to entice people to buy lots outside of the city's core, thus many lines preceded the building of homes. The trolley lines were sold to the city when the real estate developers no longer had properties in the area. The Elias House was built on the already existing MT line, which was bought by Washington Water and Power. The power company had plenty of energy to run the line and made money on fares. The brick-covered tracks, which run up W. 10th Avenue, on the south-facing side of the house, are still visible today. The house reflected the social position of a prominent, working family with expensive taste.

The Elias Family – to Spokane with Style (Category A)

Marcus J. and Augusta Elias came to Spokane from Montana in 1905 along with their three daughters, Frieda, Elsa, and Marguerite. Both Marcus and Augusta were born in Germany and were listed in the 1910 Census as “Ger. - German” meaning that they were both ethnically German and were born in Germany. Elias immigrated to the United States in 1875 and was naturalized as a citizen, while Augusta arrived in 1886. They were married in approximately 1887. In 1910, Marcus was 56 and Augusta was 48. Their daughters were in their late teens and early 20s. All three of their daughters were born in Montana.

All of the Elias daughters were well-connected in Spokane’s social scene. Although less is known about Frieda, her reputation as a “well-known society girl” was documented in the Spokane Daily Chronicle in 1912, for her marriage to Mr. W. P. Cottingham, a “city engineer at Toppenish.” Her name also appears in the Spokesman-Review for the birth of her daughter, Katherine, in 1916, and in the Daily Chronicle for her untimely death in 1936. Frieda married in 1912 and left Spokane for Gary, Indiana, in 1921, with her husband and daughter.



Although they were not part of the elite, silver-mining families of the day, they were hobnobbing with the more affluent members of Spokane society as a result of the Elias women’s ability to play bridge. Many of the citations in the Spokesman Review and the Spokane Daily Chronicle placed the Elias women in a who’s who of who’s playing whom. The Eliases were getting to know their prospective, dress-shop clients through the main social activity of the day: card parties.

The Elias woman played cards, a lot. They also attended social events throughout the year as very young women. Marguerite, the youngest Elias, was hosting events before graduating high school. She graduated from Lewis and Clark High School in 1912, the first graduating class of the new school. Two years earlier, Marguerite hosted a “card luncheon at her home on South Cedar Street”. It would be a “pretty affair”, during which “Miss Elias will entertain more than 30 friends at an afternoon party...A luncheon will be served and the later hours spent at the card tables”. Two years after graduation, Marguerite hosted “one of the week’s most attractive affairs [for] Miss Mildred Eckhart of Chicago. Miss Elias has bidden a dozen of the younger maids to a box party at the Clemmer to be followed by tea at Davenport’s”. There were “Gay Affairs” at the Women’s Athletic Club attended by both Marguerite and

her elder sister, Elsa. They attended luncheons, anniversaries, received a Red Cross award, many of these took place at the Davenport Hotel.

It could be Mr. Elias' investment in Spokane's retail scene, or perhaps it was the frequent socializing of Mrs. Elias and her two youngest daughters during the first two decades of Spokane as an official city, but the family was referred to, in at least two articles in the Spokesman Review, as "pioneers". One of these references comes in the form of a birth announcement, in which "An eight-pound daughter was born to Mrs. W. P. Cottingham (Frieda), of Gary, Ind. Mrs. Cottingham is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Elias of S925 Cedar Street, a pioneer family of Spokane". The other article references the end of a life, as the Spokesman Review announces, "Pioneer Store Operator Dies. M. John Elias, 80, Started One of Spokane's First Specialty Shops". Mr. Elias was, also, one of the first members of Spokane's historic, Masonic Lodge, which was built the same year he arrived.

One gets the idea, from the extensive and long-running appearances in the local newspapers, that Mr. Elias was far overshadowed by his very social and intelligent wife and daughters. Mr. Elias, alone, appears in the paper a total of five times. His wife and,

eventually, their daughters appear, approximately 100 times. The female Eliases were having meetings, playing bridge, attending social events, employed, flying to New York for the family business, and Marguerite held a position as an election supervisor for over 25 years. Neither of the Elias daughters who remained in Spokane married or had children. They did, however, have full lives, along with their mother, Augusta.



The society pages were peppered with meetings that were held at S925 Cedar, or attended elsewhere, by the Elias women. Augusta was a member of the Kellogg

Travel Club. She hosted meetings in her house, and attended meetings hosted by others. At these meetings, the attendees would perform and sing, among other practiced activities. At one such meeting, held at the Cedar house, "Mrs. C. O. Donason will read a paper on "Peru" and there will be a parade of the flags of the Pan-American countries, [and] Mrs. Mildred Carmichael will sing the national anthems of each county. Miss Evelyn Kellogg will be the accompanist." Mrs Elias was, also a member of the Electa Chapter Order of the Eastern Star, as well as a member of the Morning Glory Breakfast Club, the latter meeting frequently at her home.

The Ladies' Specialty Shop

Women's ready-to-wear shops became popular in the United States around the turn-of-the-century. They were clothing and accessory shops where one could purchase items off the shelf that would compose an entire outfit. Although it is hard to imagine, ready-to-wear clothing did not become widely available until the late 1800s. Up until that time, clothing was made at home or it was purchased from small clothiers who handmade their items in small quantities. The capacity to mass produce clothing accelerated rapidly from 1880-1900 and producers needed retail outlets to sell their items. That need catalyzed the development of department stores and specialty shops like the ones owned by the Elias family.

They owned three clothing stores in Montana: in Bozeman, Butte, and Helena. When they arrived in Spokane, they followed suit, opening what would be called, "the first specialty shop in Spokane" that sold ready to wear clothing – a somewhat novel idea in 1905. The 1906 Polk City Directory

(the first time the Elias' were listed in Spokane) shows Marcus Elias as owning the "Spokane Sample Store." An ad in the August 12, 1905 Spokesman-Review states that the "Spokane Sample Store, Co. sells you ladies and children's ready to wear garments at wholesale prices." The address was listed as 308 Riverside which was a two-story building with stores on the street level and lodgings above (no longer extant) called the Emory building. The Spokane Sample Store Co. Published frequent ads in all of the Spokane newspapers which often proclaimed that they were the "only strictly sample store in Spokane."

The Spokane Sample Store continued to sell wholesale goods to Spokaneites until they proclaimed that they were closing for good on December 15, 1911 with this ad (left) in the Spokane Chronicle. True to their word, this was the final ad that ever ran for the store. In early 1912, a Spokane Chronicle ad ran for the 308 Riverside address advertising "Spokane Barber Supply Company."

Spokane Sample Store Company
 308 Riverside Avenue

320 Women's \$10 to \$20 Linen ...Tub Suits...

Just received from New York, all in the latest fashionable styles and shades, ranging in sizes from 30 to 44 inch bust, pure linens of superior quality—to close out at once, Saturday and Monday only, your choice at

\$2.50

Also, just received a large line of fall sample suits, in sizes 34, 36, 38, which you can buy at strictly wholesale prices.

Spokane Sample Store Co.
 Only Strictly Sample Store in City.
 308 RIVERSIDE AVENUE.

STOP! LOOK! READ!

THIS WILL PROBABLY BE THE LAST "AD" YOU'LL EVER READ FROM THE **SPOKANE SAMPLE STORE.**

We Close Wed., Dec. 27th, Never to Open Again
 And beginning tomorrow (Saturday) morning everything in the house will be sold at **HALF PRICE** and some lines less than Half Price.

You'll Be Sorry if You Are Not Here
 For We Mean Actually What We Say.

Half Price and Less

Hosiery at Half Price.
Knit Underwear at Half Price.
Muslin Underwear at Half Price.
Coats and Tailored Suits at Half Price.
Skirts and Kimonos at Half Price.
Fancy Silk Scarfs at Half Price.
Fancy Linens and Stamped Goods at Half Price.
Willow and French Plumes at Half Price.
Infants' Wear at Half Price.
Children's Dresses at Half Price.
Battersberg Pieces at Half Price.
Sweaters All Selling at Half Price.
Outing Gowns at Half Price.
Silk Petticoats at Half Price.
Baby Comforts, Knit Goods and Shawls at Half Price.
White Waists are on sale at 10c and 20c up to \$2.00
Furs in Single Pieces and Sets at 30c on the Dollar.
All Trimmed Hats 30c on the Dollar.

The Last Days of This Store
 Stock being sold for half and less—an actual bona fide fact—and everybody in Spokane should come here before it is too late. Sale opens 9 a. m.

SPOKANE SAMPLE STORE
 308 Riverside Opposite The Wonder



L87-1.28978-25, JEF Research Archives, Charles Libby,
Spokane Chamber of Commerce Building, 1925

In March of 1912, the “Ladies Specialty Shop” opens at 310 Riverside, right next door to where they were located previously. In December of 1913, the Ladies Specialty Shop announces that they have moved to a new location at 338 Riverside in the Chamber of Commerce Building (today known as the Legion Building). The Ladies Specialty Shop took up the easternmost storefront of the building fronting on Riverside.

Both Elsa and Marguerite were employed in the family business as soon as they graduated high school. They were bookkeepers until they worked their way up to clerks and managers. They ran the Ladies’ Specialty Shop for most of the time it was doing business on Riverside Avenue. Mr. Elias had long relinquished control by the time he passed away in 1934. He had two smart and driven daughters who were excellent businesswomen.

Elsa, particularly, distinguished herself as a shrewd businesswoman. In 1932, two years before the death of her father, she filed a lawsuit to retrieve “damages of \$1000 for the alleged refusal of the First National Bank to lease the Ladies’ Specialty Shop a store building at N 109 Wall.” The bank had refused to lease the building so that the Eliases could open another store, so Elsa sued. The article goes on to say that, “Edwin K Barnes of the bank had assured Mr. Elias that a two-year lease at a monthly rental of \$100 would be made and a removal sale was advertised by the shop” the complaint recites. Later Mr. Barnes told Mr. Elias that “the matter was in the hands of W. J. Kommers who has declined to make the lease” the allegation continues. The Elias women were not respected as the plaintiff in court, given the defendants refusal to acknowledge Miss Elias, preferring instead to deal exclusively with her father. However, five years later, on March 14, 1937, the *Spokesman-Review* noted the number of businesses that were owned and operated by women when they ran a full-page ad for 27 such businesses, among them, the Ladies Specialty Shop.

The daughters remained committed to the shop into the mid-century. One month before their father died in 1934, the Elias sisters were interviewed by the *Spokesman-Review* about how well the Specialty Shop was doing, with Elsa noting that, “Business has tripled in the last year...and we are looking forward to an even heavier increase in sales this fall.” Elsa made trips to New York to bring back the latest fashions to her well-heeled customers in Spokane.



July 16, 1944, *Spokesman Review*

Elsa and Marguerite continued to live in the Elias House and ran the family dress shop until it closed in 1944, four years after their mother’s death. An advertisement to sell the shop was in the July 16, 1944 *Spokesman-Review*.

When the shop closed in 1944, the many articles, ads, and card party notations slowed to a trickle until the elder daughter, Elsa passed away in 1973 and the younger, Marguerite, followed in 1984. They were 84 and 88 years of age, respectively. Marguerite received two grand obituaries. Prior to their obituaries, the last entry in the city papers was from 1955. It’s a photograph of the two sisters sharing a laugh at an election table in the fire station at S 804 Monroe, four blocks from the house on Cedar.



VOTING SCENES Harry W. Buck, 5156½ Browne, casts his vote at a sidewalk booth in Boyd precinct despite the inclement weather which prevailed during today’s municipal election in Spokane. Voters had the choice of an outdoor booth or an inside table. At right, Lillian O. Peterson casts her ballot at Cowley precinct in the fire station at S804 Monroe. Left to right at table are Elsa E. Elias, inspector, and Marguerite S. Elias and Mrs. Grace Dean, judges. Early voting was reported light.

November 29, 1955, *Spokane Chronicle*. Elsa Elias, left. Marguerite Elias, Center.

The Eliases were outgoing, well-liked, and part of the early social culture of the city, having been written about numerous times in the two main newspapers of the day. The newspapers referred to the Eliases as a pioneer family, and they were well-known in high

society. The house was often the place where social meetings and events were held for female acquaintances of the Elias women, making it a notable address in Spokane. The house is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register under Category A as an intact example of a prominent home used to entertain, educate, and advocate for women for the better part of the 20th century while it was in the Elias women's hands.

Subsequent Owners

After the death of Marguerite in 1984, who became the legal owner of the house in 1939, the house changed hands several times. It was flipped by a lawyer, sold to a weight-loss doctor, then to a mother and daughter, who sold it to the current owners, Abil Bradshaw and Melissa Flynn. The current owners likely are not going to live in this grand house, as did the Elias family, for 75 years, since both are over 60 years of age. Abil and Melissa will be the caretakers, though, fixing this, stabilizing that, painting that other thing, and generally allowing this house, on this parcel, in this city, to continue, wrapping its welcoming porch around the fortunate people who get to live and visit and have meetings and gay luncheons and pretty affairs in its charming interiors.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In addition to Category A: Women's Social History as described above, the Elias house is also eligible under Category C: Architectural Significance.

In order for a property to qualify under Category C, properties must be “significant for their physical design or construction, including such elements as architecture, landscape architecture, engineering and artwork.” The Marcus and Augusta Elias House embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and period of construction, combining two styles of architecture and exemplifying a transitional time in Spokane's vernacular architecture when Queen Anne Free Classic was fading from popularity and Craftsman was on the rise.

The Marcus and Augusta Elias House is eligible for listing on the Spokane Register of Historic Places under Category C for its architectural significance. The house is a fine example of a transitional design primarily in the Queen Anne Free Classic style with a few touches of the up-and-coming Craftsman style. According to Virginia McAlester in *A Field Guide to American Houses*, the Craftsman style was developed in California around 1903. The Elias House, constructed in 1909, is most closely aligned with the Queen Anne Free Classic style, but includes some characteristics of the early Craftsman style in Spokane with its sleeping porches and simplified ornamentation. McAlester identifies features of a Queen Anne Free Classic as having classical columns, rather than the delicately turned posts with spindlework detailing of other Queen Anne types; steeply pitched roof of irregular shape, usually with a front-facing gable; differing shingle types; bay windows to avoid a smooth-walled appearance; and an asymmetrical façade with a partial or full-width front porch extended along one or both side walls.

Queen Anne Free Classic had been a popular style at the turn of the 20th century leading up to the Craftsman era. The Craftsman style contained much less decorative features than the often Colonial touches that would be typically included in the Queen Anne Free Classic style such as swags, garlands and Palladian windows. The Elias House mainly exhibits qualities of the Queen Anne Free Classic with its Classical columns, pedimented entryways, and large wrap-around porch; Craftsman elements include the lack of overt decorative embellishments, widely overhanging eaves and the introduction of sleeping porches.

The Elias House exhibits the following architectural components of the Queen Anne Free Classic style:

- a front gable roof with wide, overhanging enclosed eaves
- classical columns, rather than the delicately turned posts with spindlework detailing of other Queen Anne types
- an asymmetrical façade with a full-width front porch extended along the south elevation side walls
- console brackets exposed in the gable of the primary façade
- multiple roof planes and gabled dormers
- the siding of the house is traditional with a mix of clapboard and shingle
- bay windows to avoid a smooth-walled appearance
- windows with original leaded glass transoms and large panes
- interior oak woodwork throughout the house dominates the primary rooms.

Craftsman components include:

- the trim around the doors and windows throughout the exterior and interior of the home are simple and embrace the Craftsman aesthetic
- widely overhanging eaves
- the introduction of sleeping porches (although they were also popular in Queen Anne style homes)

The Marcus and Augusta Elias House exemplifies the transitional approach to architecture that occurred regularly in the early part of the 20th century. Even so, it is a largely intact example of a later Queen Anne Free Classic with many typical features of the style. The house contains excellent integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association.

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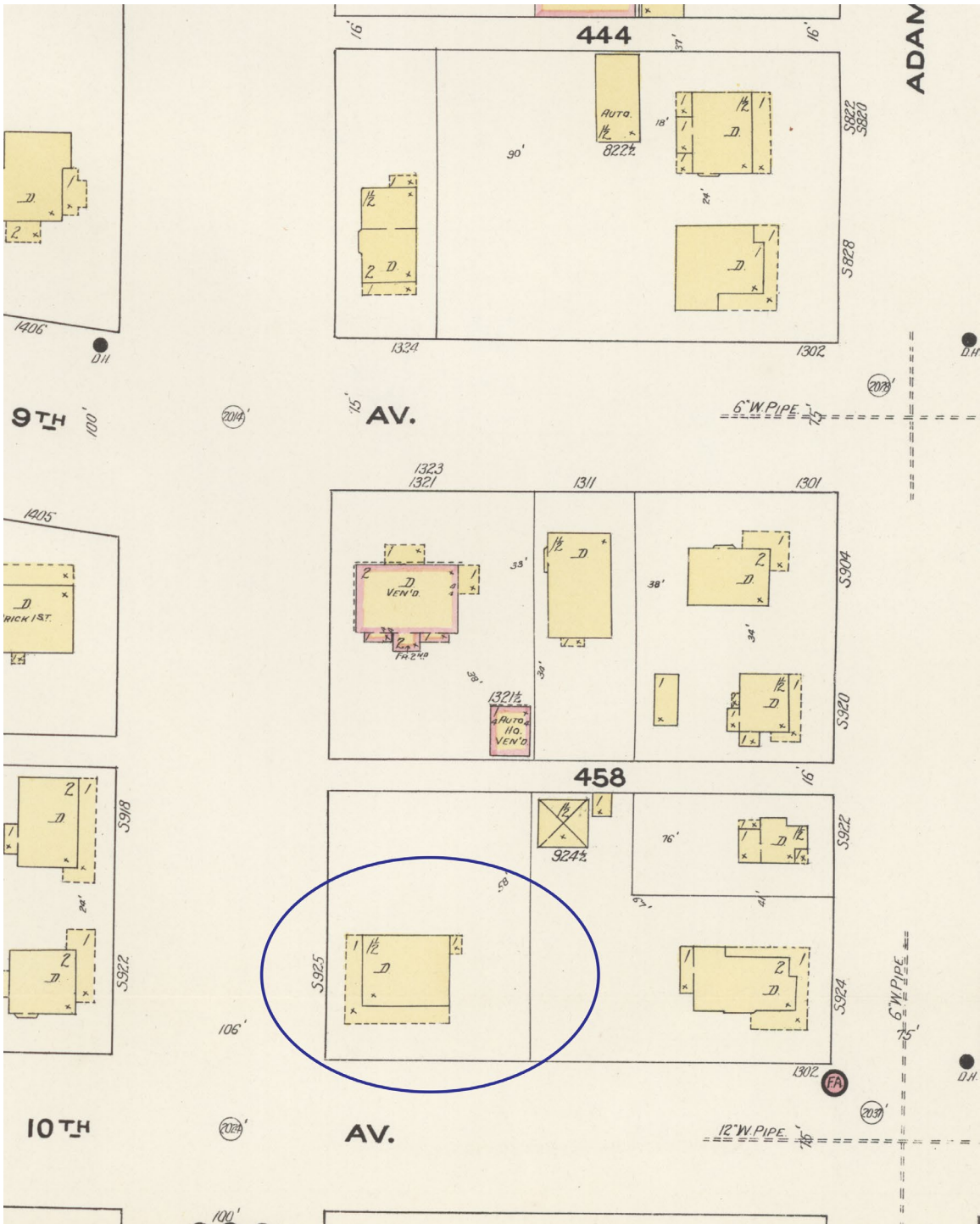
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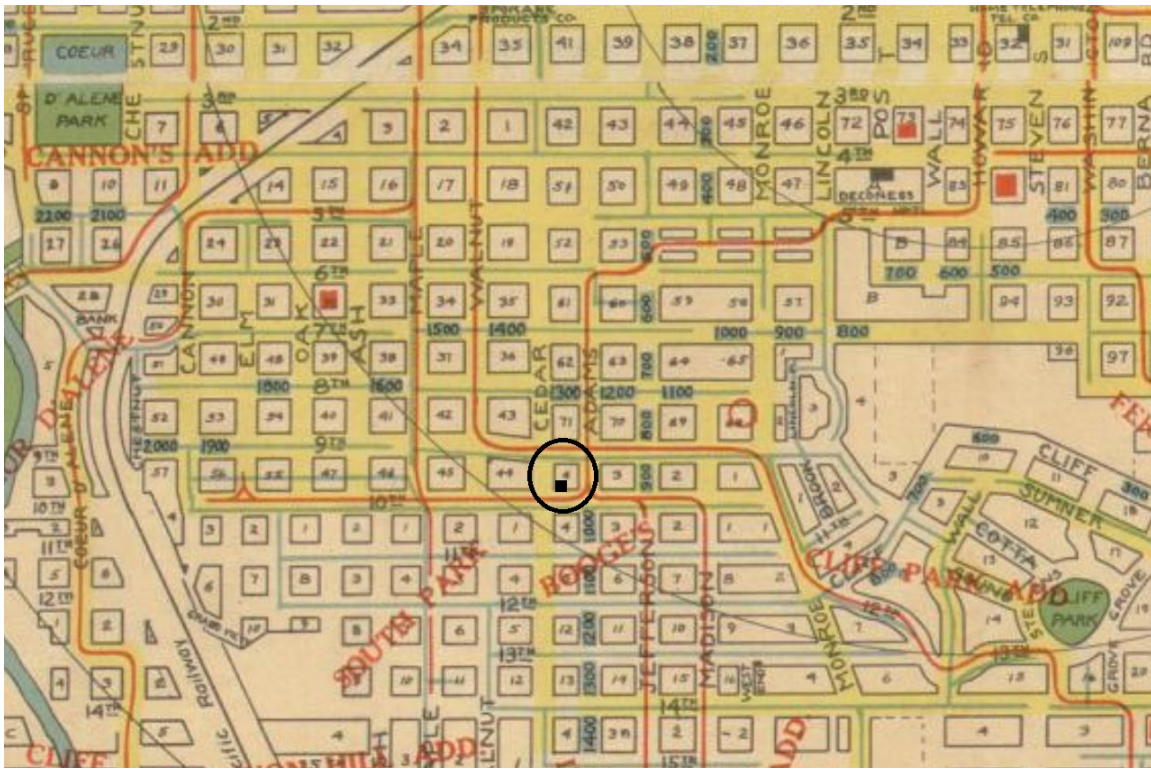
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Sanborn map 1910



Sanborn map 1950



Streetcar map 1906



Elsa Elias on left, Marguerite Elias in center, at polling place, S804 Monroe, 1955



Photograph 1, October 2022: West and South façade.



Photograph 2, October 2022: West, primary façade.



Photograph 3, October 2022: South façade.



Photograph 4, October 2022: Garage, facing south.



Photograph 5, October 2022: North and west façade.



Photograph 6, October 2022: The back yard, east façade.



Photograph 7, October 2022: Front door on west, primary façade.



Photograph 8, October 2022: The large, fixed diamond-glass upper lights window on west, primary façade.



Photograph 9, October 2022: The south façade first floor of the wraparound porch.



Photograph 10, October 2022: The vestibule inside the front door from the west facade.



Photograph 11, October 2022: The parlor with the ornate staircase with a board and batten half wall and oak floors.



Photograph 12/13, October 2022: The staircase leading up to the landing, and the closed off doorway that connected the stairway to the kitchen.



Photograph 14, October 2022: The coat closet with a diamond pane leaded glass window in the parlor.



Photograph 15, October 2022: The formal living room facing southwest.



Photograph 16, October 2022: The formal living room facing north into the parlor.



Photograph 17, October 2022: The dining room facing south.



Photograph 18, October 2022: The dining room facing northwest.



Photograph 19/20, October 2022: The 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom apartment seen from the south façade entryway.



Photograph 21, October 2022: The butler's pantry attached to the kitchen. Note the bead board under the hanging cupboards that was repurposed from the back porch ceiling.



Photograph 22, October 2022: The kitchen facing west. Note the shortened bottom sash of the two windows above the sink.



Photograph 23, October 2022: The kitchen facing east. Note the enclosed back porch that has been incorporated into the kitchen's square footage.



Photograph 24, October 2022: The upstairs hallway leading to the 3 bedrooms and bathroom.



Photograph 25, October 2022: The bedroom that includes a sleeper porch add attached bathroom in the northeast corner of the house.



Photograph 26, October 2022: The sleeper porch and attached bathroom in the northeast corner of the house.



Photograph 27, October 2022: The bathroom in the southeast corner of the house.



Photograph 28, October 2022: The bedroom that comes with two flanking closets in the gable ends and a sleeper porch in the center.



Photograph 29/30, October 2022: The enclosed sleeper porch on the south façade. A closet in one of the bedrooms.



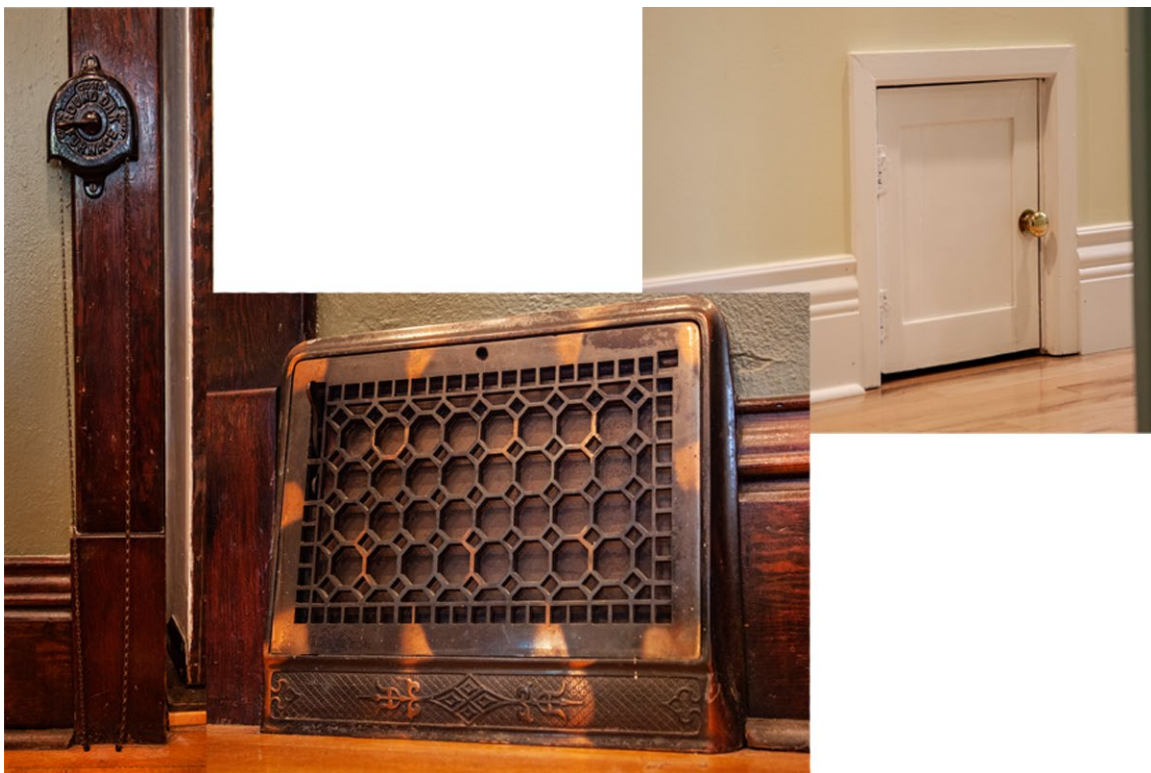
Photograph 31, October 2022: A built in dresser with window in one of the upstairs bedroom closets.



Photograph 32, October 2022: The master bedroom located in the west, front part of the upstairs.



Photograph 33/34, October 2022: The linen closet located beside the staircase upstairs. The automatic switch located in the jamb of the door.



Photograph 35/36/37, October 2022: From right to left: furnace adjuster, japanned finish register, and the original laundry shoot in the butler's pantry.