

# MONTANA HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL INVENTORY

Site #

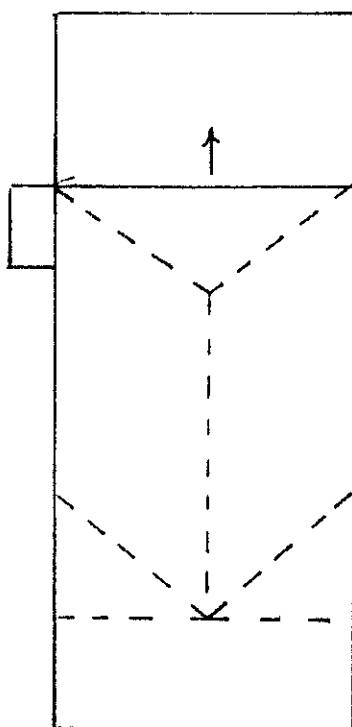
Legal Description: HTA Block 29 Lots 65, 66

Address: 43 Spencer

Ownership: Name: James Parslev

☒ private address: (same)  
☐ public

Roll # 19 Frame # 17



Historic Name: Furlong express stable

Common Name:

Date of Construction: 1887

☐ estimated  
☒ documented

Architect:

Builder: Buchanan Dillard

Original Owner: Moses Furlong

Original Use: stable for express business

Present Use: single residence

**RESEARCH SOURCES:** Note all records consulted to determine dates of construction, original owners, builders, uses, etc.

Abstract of Title: 1875-1904

Plat Records:

Tax Records:

Building Permits:

Sewer/Water Permits:

City Directories: 1867-1900

Sanborn Maps: 1884-1953

Newspapers:

Other:

SPENCER

Location map or building plan with arrow north.

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** Describe present appearance of structure/site, then contrast and compare that with it's original appearance, noting additions, alterations, and changes in materials. Discuss significant architectural features.

This is a single story house which has had major alterations and modifications over the years. Originally it was a rectangular stable building with a gable roof facing the street. This east end of the house has projecting rafters under the south eaves. A shed extension across the east end is original. A gable addition across the front and to the north was made 1930-53.

The original structure was of frame construction. It has a plain box cornice and double hung windows 1/1 on the front portion. The entry at the side is uncovered and the original panelled door with paired arched windows is present. Other windows along the sides are casement type or double hung 1/1. All windows are decorated with fixed shutters.

The entire structure has been stuccoed, on the south wall this is falling away. Common-coursed red brick was added to buttress the foundation at various heights around the structure. Most of this is stuccoed. Coursed fieldstone was likewise added across the front of the brick on the east and north walls.

The house was built right against the front edge of the property. It is in poor condition now, sagging and deteriorating in many places.

This house was originally a stable building which was built, along with a house behind by Buchanan Dillard who lived at 21 Spencer and ran an express business there. Built in 1887, these structures were immediately purchased by Moses Furlong, who also established an express business. He lived and worked here through 1904 when the property was sold, and he died in 1907. Neither of the houses remains today, only this structure.

Moses Furlong was born in Ireland and sailed to California in 1949 to prospect for gold. In 1866 he moved to Montana, initially mining in the Radersburg area and the Helena area gulches. In 1887 he established this express business and worked for the House of Good Shepards until 1904. In the mid-1890s a miner named Peter Larkin boarded here with Furlong.

- 1 Helena Independent...
- 2 Obituary, Moses Furlong, 2/28/07
- 3 Abstract of Title
- 4 U.S. Manuscript Census 1910

The original use of this structure is not apparent due to its present conversion to a dwelling. The additions of the west gable altered the form and the exterior has been stuccoed. Gradual deterioration of the structure has necessitated foundational buttressing. Presently the structure does not belie its initial usage, but the location on this small lot, squeezed in along a narrow unpaved street does convey the historical character of this area. And although the usage has changed, and the condition is poor, the basic construction and design is still apparent conveying the history associated with the property.

This house represents the only extant structure associated with the Dillard and Furlong properties originally located here. As such it does contribute to the definition of this south-central historic district, in spite of the structural deterioration.

Moses Furlong settled this property during a time when the population of Helena was beginning to expand rapidly and the south-central neighborhood was infilling with residences. The Davis-Spencer sector of the neighborhood had its origins as the alleyway behind fashionable Rodney St. and was always characterized by working class residents. This convenient location was probably the major reason several expressmen settled here on Spencer. Moses Furlong, who lived and ran his business here on Spencer, was typical of these early draymen and characterizes the working class and immigrant populations which settled this sector of the neighborhood.