

**United States Department of the Interior**  
 National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

## 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Shaw's Best Factory  
 Other names/site number: G.W. Shaw & Co. and H. Menown & Co., 24LC2766  
 Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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

## 2. Location

Street & number: 426 1/2 Harrison Avenue  
 City or town: Helena State: MT County: Lewis and Clark  
 Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

I hereby certify that this X nomination     request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national      X statewide      X local  
 Applicable National Register Criteria:  
X A          B      X C          D

<b>MT State Historic Preservation Officer</b>	
<b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>	<b>Date</b>
_____	
<b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b>	

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

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

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

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

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

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

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

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	_____	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
<u>1</u>	_____	Total

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

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling (staff housing)

DOMESTIC: secondary structure (carriage house)

INDUSTRY/PROCESSING/EXTRACTION: manufacturing facility (factory)

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC: secondary structure (garage)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

OTHER: American Foursquare

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: STONE: Siltstone, WOOD, BRICK

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

Shaw's Best Factory sits one-half block west of Hawthorne Elementary School and only two blocks east of Mount Helena Park on the west side of Helena, Montana. Helena's main historic core sits less than one-half mile to the southeast and the Elkhorn Mountain foothills lie just to the south. Shaw's Best Factory nestles amid old growth trees at the northwest corner of the west half of Lot 1 in Block 1, plus 5 feet of the north end of Lot 2 of the G.W. Shaw Addition. The portion of the lot included in this nomination measures 56 feet in length (north-south) by 40 feet in width (east-west) and encompasses the building and some of the immediate landscape surrounding it. Designed by the local architectural firm of Neuhausen and Williams as a carriage house and animal shelter, the two-story American Foursquare building of quarried stone sits behind the Shaw family residence at 424 Harrison Avenue (not included in this nomination). Its first function was to accommodate businessman George W. Shaw's horse team and conveyance, living quarters for a hired hand, and feed storage. Circa 1893, Shaw converted the two-story carriage house to a home industry for the manufacture of baking powder and pancake flour. Although the ground surrounding the first floor on the west and north elevations was filled in to accommodate the industry, the building has had very few external changes since 1893. Horse, carriage, and wagon traffic accessed the building via an unpaved driveway off Harrison Avenue to the south of the residence. A faint imprint of this access is visible on aerial views. However, an alley off Harrison Avenue at the north serves as the only vehicular access to the building today. A modern chain link fence encircles the entire lot. A gate on the northeast opens to a driveway leading from the alley to the lower-level entry. The east-west alley connects to Monroe Avenue on the west and Harrison on the east. A secondary alleyway, overgrown and no longer

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accessible to vehicles, once bordered the barn's pedestrian entry on the west and connected to another alleyway opening onto Harrison at the east and Monroe on the west. Holter Street to the north and Lawrence Street to the south are the closest east-west city streets. Two spacious lots adjacent to the south were historically, and remain, vacant. They now form the city-owned Peanut Park. Harrison Avenue, as in the past, serves as the primary access point. Well-seasoned nineteenth-century homes and outbuildings characterize the immediate neighbors. Despite the change in use, the building is in excellent condition and retains its 1890 footprint and 1893 appearance. Almost all the manufacturing equipment remains intact on the interior.

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## Narrative Description

### EXTERIOR

The carriage house, designed by Helena architects Carl Neuhausen and Frank Williams, retains excellent integrity. The primary footprint survives intact although a one-story hen house on the south façade no longer stands. Built of serviceable Woolsey siltstone from G.W. Shaw's quarry on Mount Helena west of the property, the rather crude stonework mimics that of Helena's utilitarian buildings of the period. Many foundations in the neighborhood exhibit this same type of stone obtained from several Mount Helena quarries. As the building reflects, the color of the stone varies from gray, to ochre, to a reddish hue. Mount Helena's Wolsey siltstone was a common and convenient building material during the late 1880s and 1890s. The building's uncoursed, rough-worked masonry is similar for example, to the retaining wall below South Benton Avenue and the Morelli Bridge above Reeder's Alley. Both date to the early 1890s.

The building is nearly square, measuring 26 feet on the north and south and 27 feet on the east and west. It has a half-hipped asphalt shingle roof with shed roof dormers on the west and east. Narrow wood fascia surrounds the wide, overhanging eaves and wooden soffits. All the trim and doors are painted dark green. Simple window frames include 10" jambs with neither pulleys nor pockets. A cupola once capped the peak. In 1933, owners replaced the original cedar shingles with asphalt and the cupola was removed after a fire damaged the roof. However, a family photo taken before 1930 confirms that the roofline, minus the cupola, remains unchanged from that time. A brick chimney that served as a woodstove in the second floor living quarters and factory also remains intact.

The building originally showed two stories. Upon conversion to the home industry in 1893, Shaw raised the ground level, banking up the north and west alleyways and the corresponding west and north walls bringing the two second-story entries to ground level. Stairs with railings originally provided access to these upper entrances until they were removed upon raising the ground level. A circa 1890 Shaw family photo, taken of the residence looking west from Harrison Avenue, shows the north side of the barn's first floor behind the house with the first floor at ground level. Four square windows, still extant but now infilled, provided daylight and fresh air to each of four horse stalls. The windows remain in place, visible on the interior wall while the outer north wall on the first floor is now buried. A double-wide entrance on the east initially accommodated horses and vehicles, and later automobiles. By 1892, Shaw had built a

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secondary barn and corral in the yard to the south to accommodate his livestock. These features are not extant but indicate that Shaw made other arrangements for housing his horses and carriage before the conversion in 1893. An overhead garage door replaces the double wide carriage entrance in the east wall. That, along with the replacement of the shingle roof with asphalt tiles and removal of the cupola and a hen house, constitute the changes to the building since 1893.

### **East Elevation**

The east elevation shows the original full two stories as built in 1890. The double-wide carriage entrance on first floor at ground level is left of center on the façade. The opening features a protruding segmental arch of rough-cut slabs of stone that display soldier coursing. The opening has an arched, solid wooden transom. A modern, overhead 16-panel garage door fills the opening; however, the original sliding barn door and hardware remain in place within the interior. This door change represents the only alteration to the façade.

A shed roof dormer interrupts the roofline directly above the doorway on the second story. The lower portion of the window is set in the stone wall while the upper portion punctures the roof. The two-over-one window displays 10" jambs and a narrow wood muntin.

The remains of a non-historic, stepped rock garden constructed of the same type of stone and salvaged from the collapsed wall of the hen house partially covers the lower northwest corner of the wall.

### **West Elevation**

Elevation of the ground level to the second story upon conversion to industrial use concealed the outer wall of the first story. Stairs and a railing that originally provided pedestrian access to the second-floor entry were removed upon raising the ground level in 1893. A faint imprint of the upper portion of this feature remains on the stone façade. Paired shed-roof dormers at the center of the wall include the doorway and adjacent window. A small section of the roof slope extending down between the dormers provides separation between the door and window. The entrance is centered on the wall and the window sits adjacent to the south. The entry is filled with a wood plank door with transom—originally glass—now infilled with wood. The two-over-one window features 10" jambs and a narrow muntin. Like the dormer on the east, the lower half of the window and the door are set into the stone wall, while the upper half of the window and the transom above the door interrupt the roof.

### **South Elevation**

Two full stories show on the south elevation. The first floor holds one small segmental arched window opening, now boarded up, centered on the east half of the lower wall. The arch is rather crudely fashioned of slab stone. The upper wall exhibits two windows, evenly spaced. Each features a slab-stone segmental arch, wooden arched window hoods, and two-over-one windows, the same as those found in the west and east facades. A centered brick chimney on the roof pierces the south hip end. An interior wall brick chimney slightly extrudes through the second-story wall. A horizontal line of smaller slab stones and dimensional boards extends from the southwest corner of the wall to the lower edge of the east window.

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Remnants of a one-story stone wall are all that survive of the hen house once attached to the barn at the southwest corner. An historic photo reveals that a shed roof topped this hen house extension and attached to the horizontal line of smaller slab stones and dimensional boards described above.

A photograph and Sanborn maps show a first-floor doorway, below the west window, accessing the hen house from the building.<sup>1</sup> This doorway does not survive. Portions of the masonry on the first floor do not match the rest of the building, indicating that the lower wall was partially rebuilt at some point during the historic period and the doorway enclosed.

### **North Elevation**

As with the west elevation, only the upper story of the north wall of the barn remains visible. Banking the soil of the alley and burying the first floor circa 1893 brought this second-story, entry, like that on the west, to ground level, to better accommodate industrial activities. A stairway with a railing once accessed this entry. The entry is centered directly under the eave below the roof's north hip. The wide opening features a slightly protruding segmental arch of rough-cut slabs of stone that display soldier coursing, and an arched wooden five-light transom. Original, large-gage industrial metal wire mesh fills the lights. The opening originally sported a double-wide door to facilitate the delivery of grain and hay to a feed storage area. A sliding door designed to match the carriage door on the east was added during the conversion. The sliding door, fashioned of diagonal wood planks and its original hardware, remain in place. A well-worn wood doorstep and sill reflect more than a century of heavy use.

### **INTERIOR**

Interior features of the building reflect both the use as a carriage house (that also housed animals) and as a factory for baking powder and flour products. The ground floor originally included a harness room at the west end, a row of four horse stalls on the north wall, and grain chutes adjacent for the delivery of feed from the storage area above. These features were removed upon conversion to industrial use. However, each horse stall had its own square window providing light and air. These survive intact on the interior north wall. The exterior side of the windows were buried when the banking of the outer north wall occurred. An interior stairway at the northwest corner leads to the second floor.

The second floor is partitioned into three spaces. The outer walls are stone and the interior walls that partition the spaces are of rough, unfinished, horizontally cut planked pine, darkened with age to a pleasing patina. The storage room runs the length of the north wall with access via a ladder to a loft above the south half of the building. The loft's floor provides a partial ceiling for the two rooms below on the building's south side. These two rooms, first intended as living quarters for a hired hand or groom, span the south half of the second story.<sup>2</sup> With the conversion to industrial use, these two rooms became the main production area. The west doorway provided

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<sup>1</sup> See Photograph #0003, Dan Sidor Collection, December 2020, page 52 and 1892 Sanborn map of Helena, Sheet 28, page 40 of this document.

<sup>2</sup> When first built, the building boasted its own 426 ½ Harrison address, indicating residential use.

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direct access from the north-south alley to the living quarters/production area. A woodstove attached to the chimney provided heat. An interior door fashioned of unfinished pine planks and wood-infilled transom on the west end separate the storage space from the residential/production area. The original knob and tube wiring that powered the manufacturing equipment remains intact throughout.

In 1933, children playing with matches started a fire in the west entryway that burned through the roof. Almost 90 years later, the dramatic fire damage is readily visible. Owners replaced the joists and rafters but left the burned members in place. Burned and replacement joists and rafters occur side by side.

### **Engineering/Interior Manufacturing Equipment**

Except for a packaging/weighing apparatus, all the building's original manufacturing equipment remains intact and in-place. The line shaft system with its electric motor power source and ceiling-mounted rotator shaft are also intact and in place. The system of pulleys and belts, referred to as millwork, that completed the transfer of mechanical power to the manufacturing equipment also remain in their original locations. The two leather belts that connected the various components hang on the rotator shaft but, due to aging, aren't able to be strung over the pulleys.

### **D & D Electric Motor, Line Shaft, and Associated Millwork**

Mounted on the interior wall of what was originally the west room of the residential quarters and connected to knob and tube wiring, this 2 horsepower, 50-volt motor was made by the D & D Electric Manufacturing Company of Minneapolis. The company operated from 1891 to 1918. This motor powered the line shaft and millwork system that transferred mechanical power to the Hunter Lightning Sifter and Mixer, as well as the Whipple Rectangular Churn.

### **Hunter Lightning Sifter and Mixer**

J.H. Day Co., of Cincinnati and New York, manufactured this piece of equipment that dates to the early 1890s. Located in the east room, on the other side of the wall from the electric motor, this served as the main piece of equipment used in the Shaw's Best manufacture of their baking powder and pancake flour. The double-spiral agitator of the sifter/mixer could either be operated manually via a crank handle, or mechanically by the electric-driven line shaft system, described above. The Shaw's Best business employed both methods during the course of its operations. The components of the sifter/mixer included a hopper, sifting mechanism, mixing box, double-spiral agitator, and an exit hole.

### **Whipple Rectangular Churn**

The Whipple Rectangular Churn was introduced around 1871. It was manufactured originally by Cornish, Curtis and Greene Mfg. Co. of Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, later bought out by the Creamery Package Manufacturing Company of Chicago. The churn, likely moved from its original location near the power source, now rests in the north storage room. It is a large rectangular metal box mounted on a wooden frame from which it rotates on two pivots positioned on opposite corners of the box. In Shaw's implementation, this churn could also be operated manually or mechanically powered via the electric-driven line shaft system.



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### **Weighing and Packaging Equipment**

In the storage room sits a piece of equipment that lacks significant portions of its infrastructure, including any tags identifying the manufacturer. The apparatus contains several features associated with a weighing and packaging machine and is believed to be a Bond Automatic Weigher Style 50 built by the Bond Scale Company of San Francisco and purchased by Shaw's Best.

### **INTEGRITY**

The Shaw's Best Factory displays excellent integrity of location as it sits in its original place of construction. The building also retains excellent integrity of setting, feeling, and association as the area retains its historic residences; although the original Hawthorne School that stood east of the business was replaced with a new educational facility in 1920, the replacement served the same purpose as the original structure, keeping the original feeling of the neighborhood. Shaw's Best Factory, built as a carriage house in 1890 by George Washington Shaw, was soon converted to industrial use. The building survives intact with evidence of its domestic and industrial operations. Four square windows that serviced the horse stalls, the wide carriage entrance, and the pedestrian entry to residential space speak to the necessity of horses in 19<sup>th</sup> century transportation, and the need to provide live-in care of livestock crucial to prominent urban families.

Removal of the west and north stairways and railings, banking up the alley to facilitate industrial deliveries, and the repurposing of the second-floor north doorway to a sliding door, document the historic change in use from animal shelter/feed storage/housing to manufacturing enterprise. These outward changes, accomplished during the early to mid-1890s, illustrate the evolution of the building from carriage/animal shelter to factory.

Loss of an attached hen house and first floor opening/doorway on the south, removal of the original sliding carriage doorway (which survives intact on the interior), and the removal of the cupola and replacement of the cedar roof shingles with asphalt in 1933 are the only other physical changes.

The changes, which all occurred over 80 years ago, reduced integrity of design minimally, with the result that integrity of design is strong, and integrity of workmanship and materials is excellent. With the above noted exceptions, the barn appears exactly as it did during more than two decades of use as a factory from 1893 to 1918. Further, entering into the second-floor production rooms provides a step back in time. The archaic equipment, overhead network of belts and pulleys, and antiquated knob and tube electrical system evoke a bygone era. A wealth of original Shaw's Best packaging and quaintly phrased advertising reinforce the historic ambiance. The building retains exceptional integrity of location, setting, design, materials, and feeling.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry

Architecture

Commerce

Engineering

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1890-1918

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1890, 1893, 1918

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Carl Neuhausen and Frank Williams

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Shaw's Best Factory building is significant at a local and state level of significance under criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the Shaw's Best Factory is significant under the areas of industry, commerce, and transportation. Shaw's Best Factory was Montana's first successful food manufacturer, established in 1893.<sup>3</sup> Its products included Montana Peerless Baking Powder, Shaw's Best Pancake Flour, and Shaw's Best Wheat Cream-lets. Its products reached statewide through commercial marketing. Three generations of the Shaw family founded and operated Shaw's Best. The factory was unique to Helena's West Side and the throughout its longevity, was the only home industry in the neighborhood.

Shaw's Best exclusively used flour milled from Montana grown wheat. This practice helped market home industries and encouraged statewide commerce during the depressed 1890s. Shaw's Best promotion and marketing extended from newspaper ads to fairs and a self-published monthly 'bulletin. The Shaws' consumer ethic not only promoted their own business, but also other Montana-based food producers.

The Shaw's Best Factory is also significant under Criterion C as an architect-designed carriage house and barn and a rare example of transitional industrial engineering technology. Built as a carriage house and barn designed by architects Carl M. Neuhausen and Frank M. Williams in 1890, the building's initial purpose was to store feed, house livestock, and store the family conveyance. Soon converted to industrial use, the factory functioned until 1918 when the family returned it to vehicle storage.

All industrial aspects survive in the Shaw's Best Factory building. Further, the line shaft and millwork power system—widely used in hundreds of industrial manufacturing facilities across the country—is remarkably intact and illustrates the evolution of motive power in small industries. For much of the middle to late 1800s, many manufacturing enterprises used a line shaft system powered by a central power source, such as a water wheel, wind turbine or steam engine. As electrification became more widespread in the early 1900s, there was technological transition from motive power and line shafts to electric-driven machinery. The Shaw factory employed hybrid engineering technology combining aspects of both.

A rare example of transitional industrial engineering between the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the manufacturing equipment and power system, as well as a trove of original product packaging and advertising, survive intact.

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<sup>3</sup> Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry of the State of Montana for the Year Ending November 30, 1906* (Independent Publishing Co.: Helena, MT), p. 299.

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The period of significance begins with the architect-designed building in 1890 and ends in 1918, when the factory ceased to operate. Significant dates include the year of construction, 1890, the year 1893, when the carriage house was converted to industrial use, and 1918, when the Shaw business ceased to operate.

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

## **HISTORICAL ASPECTS AND OVERVIEWS**

### **Early Helena<sup>4</sup>**

Helena, Montana, was born with the discovery of placer gold in 1864 along a small, remote creek. The area was part of a travel corridor and hunting grounds used for generations by Montana's native people. The gulch, tangled with undergrowth and chokecherry bushes, was home to abundant wildlife including bear and rattlesnakes. Four down-and-out prospectors travelled by this way and decided to take one last chance before heading back to Virginia City—Montana's first commercial hub—to replenish their supplies. They hit pay dirt and named the camp that quickly sprang forth, "Last Chance."

At the time of this discovery, previous placer gold finds at Grasshopper Creek (Bannack) in 1862 and Alder Gulch (Virginia City) in 1863 began to dwindle. Typical of gold rush populations, prospectors, along with merchants and service providers, followed these discoveries. Last Chance, soon named Helena, grew rapidly and miners' claims covered most of the areas that today are part of the state's capital city. Residents included many former inhabitants of Bannack and Virginia City. As the Last Chance placer gold dwindled, developers and speculators began to plat and subdivide former claims to accommodate the growing population. When the proposed route of the Northern Pacific Railway bypassed Virginia City in 1872, that town's importance began to diminish. Helena matured into the territory's commercial, political, and social center, wresting the territorial capital from Virginia City in 1875.

The Northern Pacific Railway arrived in 1883 opening Helena to expansion in both commerce and population. The growing number of immigrants brought a need for housing and building activity accelerated during the mid-1880s. The railroad cemented Helena's future and as statehood became a reality in 1889, flamboyant and extravagant architecture earned Helena the nickname, "Queen City of the Rockies." Its wealthy stockmen, investors, and bankers spared no expense on downtown building blocks and private homes.

The Silver Panic of 1893 brought the collapse of the silver market, financial ruin for many, and general economic depression. Helena at the time was still a mining-based community, and the depression hit the future capital especially hard. Building activity ground to a halt. Even with its serious economic difficulties, the town celebrated victoriously in a highly contentious battle against Anaconda for permanent state capital in 1894. Building activity never again reached the fevered pitch of the 1880s, but Helena settled comfortably into its role as the permanent seat of

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<sup>4</sup> The following overview of the Helena area and West Side Neighborhood discussion is from Ellen Baumler, *The Town That Gold Built: The First 150 Years* (HPN Books: San Antonio, TX, 2014).

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state government as the economy slowly recovered and building activity resumed in the early 1900s. No other Montana community saw the amount of wealth poured into its homes and buildings. Other Montana towns owed their prosperity to agriculture, timber, hydroelectricity, the railroad, or copper and coal mining, but of all the Montana gold camps, only Helena became a viable, thriving community. Helena alone can claim to be the town that gold built.<sup>5</sup>

### **West Side Neighborhood**

At the base of Mount Helena, the town's West Side lay below the Yaw Yaw Ditch, the flume built in 1864 that carried water eight miles across the base of the mountain from Ten Mile Creek to the south end of Last Chance Gulch. The ditch was the city's earliest water system and supplied water to the mines, residents, and early gardens and orchards that stretched out below Mount Helena. The area became the logical suburb for the rich, powerful, and prominent.

Among the first to build homes on the West Side were foundryman John Stedman at 504 Dearborn in 1873 and early Helena pioneers Stephen and Luella Fergus Gilpatrick who built their National Register-listed home at 604 Dearborn in 1875.<sup>6</sup> These historic homes reflect optimism for the new territorial capital and the future of the neighborhood. However, at that time, fruit trees and gardens dotted the neighborhood and the Gilpatricks' friends complained that the move put the couple too far out in the country.<sup>7</sup>

Other prominent citizens soon began to build homes along Lawrence Street. Hardware merchant Sanford B. Evans built the National Register-listed Christmas Gift Evans House in 1877 at the corner of Benton and Lawrence;<sup>8</sup> Merchants National Bank teller W.O. Whipps built 427 West Lawrence in 1879. The Fifth Ward School (Hawthorne Elementary), across Harrison Avenue, opposite Block 1, fulfilled a need for the growing neighborhood. The school has occupied the same location in various incarnations since 1879.

By the 1880s, Helena's wealthy elite began to favor the area for its suburban proximity, building opulent residences. Wealthy mining magnate and banker Thomas Cruse, U.S. senators Thomas C. Power and Thomas Walsh, territorial governor Samuel T. Hauser, Chief U.S. Assayer Benjamin Tatem, mining engineer Albert Seligman of the New York-based Seligman banking firm, cattleman Conrad Kohrs, and sheepman Henry Sieben, all made their homes on Helena's West Side.<sup>9</sup> No other Montana community saw opulence equal to Helena's homes and building blocks. Although the neighborhood appeared to cater to high-end residences, it also welcomed the less pretentious homes of solid citizens like the Gilpatricks, well-known freighter Hugh

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<sup>5</sup> Ellen Baumler, *The Town That Gold Built: The First 150 Years* (HPN Books: San Antonio, TX, 2014) and Ellen Baumler, *Historic Helena Walking Tours* (Montana Historical Society: Helena, MT, 2014).

<sup>6</sup> The Gilpatrick-Root House was listed in the NR on 8/10/2005 (NR #05000883).

<sup>7</sup> "Wed 50 Years; Hold Jubilee," undocumented newspaper clipping in the Gilpatrick vertical file, Montana Historical Society Research Center, Helena.

<sup>8</sup> Listed 4/16/1980 (NR #80004271).

<sup>9</sup> The Samuel Hauser's residence is an independent National Register listing; the Power, Tatem, Walsh and Sieben homes contribute to the Helena Historic District.

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Kirkendall, Dr. William Treacy, Supreme Court justice William Brantly, and the Shaw family.  
The Shaws were the only West Side family to operate a home industry in the neighborhood.

### **History of Home Industries in Helena**

Helena was first and foremost a mining community, but territorial residents needed goods and services. In the first few years, all that could not be locally supplied came via heavy mule or ox-drawn freight wagons either originating in Salt Lake City or offloaded from steamboats docked at Fort Benton. Helena's early industries were crucial and included breweries, lime manufacturers, brick works, foundries, and lumber mills, all well established by the later 1860s. Such home industries assured Helena a prominent place in the Territory and gave the town a significant advantage over other places.

In 1868, the *Montana Post* noted that Helena had not only become the commercial hub of the Territory, but that it had also been especially diligent in establishing manufacturing concerns, and anyone who needed any item could obtain it there. The newspaper counseled that "you cannot better serve ... the Territory than by the establishment and promotion of home industries."<sup>10</sup>

By the 1880s, Helena boasted many established industries such as soap factories, marble works and monument makers, dairies, florists, planing and flouring mills, machine shops, sewer pipe makers, bottling works, and many others. While Helena never became a manufacturing center, by the end of the 1890s, it supported more diverse home industries than most other Montana cities. Montana promoted home industries, especially during the immediate aftermath of the 1893 Silver Panic: "Every dollar sent out of state to buy what we can make at home is twice lost."<sup>11</sup>

### **Montana's Regional and Local Flour Milling**

Flour represents a staple food and its milling has a long colorful history in Montana. Father Pierre Jean De Smet harvested the first crops of wheat grown in Montana at St. Mary's Mission in the Bitterroot Valley in 1842. The wheat was either ground by hand with a mortar and pestle or roasted or boiled for mush. Three years later in 1845, Father Anthony Ravalli brought the first heavy millstones from Fort Vancouver, Washington to the Bitterroot Valley. Mules carried the heavy buhrstones over the treacherous Rocky Mountain trails. He and lay brothers constructed a water-powered mill that could grind a dozen bushels of grain daily into graham, or whole wheat, flour. The mill operated until 1850 when the mission temporarily closed.<sup>12</sup>

With the first wave of miners and fortune-seekers came a dire need for flour. The difficulty in transporting this essential commodity over snow-choked mountain passes and roads in the winter of 1864-1865 raised the price of a hundred-pound sack of flour to more than \$100 and led to the

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<sup>10</sup> "Home Industries," *Montana Post* (Virginia City, MT), September 4, 1868.

<sup>11</sup> R. L. Polk's *Helena City Directory* for 1890 Directory, p. 53; "A New Industry," *The Daily Independent* (Helena), December 27, 1893.

<sup>12</sup> Ellen Baumler, *St. Mary's Mission Historic District National Register Nomination Form* (listed August 16, 2010, NR 10000552), on file at the Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Helena.

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infamous "flour riots" in Virginia City.<sup>13</sup> Such astronomical prices dictated that the cultivation of wheat was an immediate necessity. Responding to the need, Gallatin Valley farmers were among the first to produce crops of wheat in 1864. As the Montana gold rushes brought more settlers into Montana Territory, early crops of wheat were at first not formally milled. Instead, every household had a coffee grinder that proved useful to grind small quantities of wheat for bread. One creative settler threshed his wheat by spreading it on a floor with the heads out. He led his horses over it, raised it to a platform and the wheat and chaff were thrown down and separated.<sup>14</sup>

T. W. Cover and P. W. McAdow reputedly built the territory's first commercial flour mill near Bozeman in 1865.<sup>15</sup> Mills soon appeared in many Montana communities including Helena. Nelson Story's flour mill at Bozeman produced 500 bushels of flour daily in 1882 and supplied Forts Ellis and the Crow reservations in southeastern Montana.<sup>16</sup> In 1891, most flour mills at Helena and elsewhere shipped in eastern wheat for mixing with Montana wheat, as the best flours at that time were made by combining the different qualities of different kinds of wheat.<sup>17</sup>

By 1893, the Royal Milling Company's Rex Four Mill in Great Falls was Montana's largest flour mill. Wheat growing at this time was still in its infancy in Montana and the mill imported 6,000 bushels of hard Dakota seed. Quantities of Rex Flour were warehoused at Helena and sold in all groceries.<sup>18</sup> Ghost signs advertising Rex Flour can be found in many Montana communities including Helena on the Allen Livery Stable at Ewing and Breckenridge Street east of courthouse square.

In 19<sup>th</sup> century Montana, a lack of uniformity in locally grown wheat handicapped millers. It proved difficult to mill a flour with inconsistent qualities and required adjustments in baking. Soft spring wheat grown in Montana at that time was insufficient. Winter and Hard Spring wheat were necessary to meet the requirements of a good locally grown flour, and while Montana later became a great wheat producer, its cultivation was still developing. The exclusive milling of Montana-grown wheat was uncommon.<sup>19</sup>

Availability of quantities of flour for any home industry requiring this commodity was essential. Shaw's Best Pancake Flour, however, didn't use just any flour, but boasted use of Montana-grown wheat. The ability to use only Montana-grown wheat necessitated a supplier who in fact only milled such a specific wheat. In 1893, when Shaw's Best was established, the Montana Milling Company based in Helena boasted their exclusive use of Montana grown wheat. The company produced White Lily and Arabella flours and likely served as the early flour supplier of

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<sup>13</sup> Phyllis Smith, *Montana's Madison Country: A History* (Gooch Hill Publishing: Bozeman, MT, 1999), p. 69.

<sup>14</sup> Montana Genealogy, Gallatin County, 2021, [First Flour Mill - Montana Genealogy](#), accessed January 8, 2021.

<sup>15</sup> "News from Gallatin Valley," *Montana Post* (Virginia City), September 16, 1865.

<sup>16</sup> Merrill G. Burlingame, *Gallatin County Heritage-A Report of Progress 1805-1976* (Gallatin County Bicentennial Committee: Bozeman, MT, 1976), p. 22.

<sup>17</sup> "That Hearty Disapproval," *The Daily Independent* (Helena), April 2, 1891.

<sup>18</sup> "The 'Rex' Brand," *The Independent Record* (Helena), October 26, 1893.

<sup>19</sup> Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, *Third Annual Report, Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, and Industry for the year ended November 30, 1895* (State Publishing Co.: Helena MT, 1896), p. 113.



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Shaw's Best. Montana Milling Company, under the ownership of the Helena Roller Mills, operated until about 1898.<sup>20</sup> Its mill was located between the tracks of the Montana Central and the Northern Pacific railroads in the Sixth Ward.

### **The Shaw family's journey to business startup**

George W. Shaw moved to Montana in 1880 to take a position as bookkeeper/auditor at the Alta Montana Company's mining operation in Wickes, one of the largest silver mines in the state.<sup>21</sup> The company re-organized in the second half of 1879 and the New York owners brought in a new management team. Prior to their move west, George W. and his family lived in Hartford, Connecticut. George W. was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on April 27, 1843, to Dr. John and Margaret Shaw. In his youth, the family moved to Sparta, Illinois, where he and his siblings grew up on a small farm. George W. entered the Civil War in 1862 as a member of Company G, Eighteenth Illinois Infantry. He served until the end of the war, primarily as a first-aid trained bearer of the injured and ended his service as a captain. George married his wife, Eliza Menown, in St. Louis on June 20, 1871.<sup>22</sup>

George W. came to Montana unaccompanied because of a dearth of rental opportunities in Wickes at the time of his employment. His wife and three children, Abbie, George H., and Lida, waited for word from him while staying with Eliza's family in St. Louis. All the Shaw family members would eventually become an essential cog in the operation of the Shaw's Best business. After a year-long wait, in June 1881, Eliza and the children began what would be a one-month journey from St. Louis to Montana. The journey was filled with unfamiliar and wondrous experiences, particularly for the children, ages four to seven. Abbie vividly recalled their journey, which began in the splendor of a three-deck, double-wheel river steamer that took them up the Mississippi River to St. Paul, Minnesota. From there they took a train to Bismarck, North Dakota, where they caught one of the wood-fueled, rear-paddle riverboats that carried them up the Missouri River to Fort Benton. These boats undertook the journey upriver to Fort Benton only three or four times a year necessitating meticulous planning of the entire trip in advance. The trip to Fort Benton proved particularly eventful. Being the only woman and children on board, they dined at the captain's table during the river journey. Passage on the river fomented its own challenges as the boat ran aground on sand bars and had to be pried free with crowbars to get back in the main channel. The family saw some of the rapidly diminishing herds of bison crossing the river, at times, causing the boat to stop up to an hour while they crossed. Native Americans from nearby reservations appeared at several stops and came on board to barter with the passengers for their wares. Once they reached Fort Benton, the family ran into the infamous Montana vigilante and lawman, John "X" Biedler. Upon Biedler learning that the travelers were the family of George W., whom he knew, he lent the children a buffalo robe for their upcoming

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<sup>20</sup> "Patronize the Home Mill," *Independent Record* (Helena), December 7, 1894. Arabella flour was prized as cake flour, the kind used for pancake mix. The Montana Milling Company is last listed in Polk's Helena city directories in 1897.

<sup>21</sup> "George W. Shaw, A Pioneer, Dies," *The Helena Daily Independent*, February 19, 1913.

<sup>22</sup> "Silver brought several miners to Wickes Area," *Independent Record* (Helena), December 5, 2004; W.A. Lewis, "Wickes. The Coming Leadville of Montana," *Helena Weekly Herald*, January 1, 1880; "George W. Shaw, A Pioneer, Dies," *The Helena Daily Independent*, February 19, 1913.

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stagecoach trip; the robe proved quite useful as the children used it as they spent the night in the boot of the stagecoach. The stagecoach trip from Fort Benton to Helena, where they would meet George W., required a day and a half of continuous travel. The following day after their reunification, the family took the entire day to travel the last 25 miles to Wickes by wagon.<sup>23</sup>

The Shaws moved to Helena in 1882, where over the next ten years George worked at numerous jobs, beginning with bookkeeper positions at First National Bank, and then N P (Northern Pacific) Refrigerator. Subsequently, he earned a living being self-employed in the fields of real estate, mortgage loans, insurance, and, finally, as a mining expert in the early years of the 1890s.<sup>24</sup>

On June 8, 1886, the Shaws bought a parcel of land in Eliza's name from George W. and Lucy Storey. The undeveloped property lay adjacent to Block K of the Mauldin Addition along Harrison Avenue in Helena's fast-growing West Side neighborhood. The land ran west from Harrison Avenue (across the street from the Fifth Ward school) to the lower flank of Mount Helena. This parcel, along with other contiguous property acquisitions by the Shaws, was dedicated to the city on June 17, 1886, as the Shaw Addition. As block and lot numbers were assigned to the new addition, the Shaws chose Lot 1 of Block 1, plus 5 feet on the north end of Lot 2 of the Shaw Addition, as the future site of their home and business.<sup>25</sup>

The Shaws built their family home at 424-426 Harrison at the front of the property facing the street, circa 1886-1887. City directories show the family in residence by 1888. The stone building that became the Shaw's Best Factory sat immediately west, behind the house, and was initially built as a carriage house in 1890. At the time, urban Helena families usually housed varied livestock, especially horses necessary for transportation. The Shaws kept chickens in an attached hen house shed. The first floor housed the family conveyance and four horses stabled in four horse stalls. Shaw tapped into the Yaw Yaw Ditch that ran west of the property for the family's water system, delivered to the ground floor of the carriage house through a clay pipe from the alley. Sanborn Perris Fire Insurance maps show the building's address as 426½ Harrison, indicative of its intended residential use. The floorplan of the building bears this out, as the pedestrian entry opens into the two second-floor rooms intended as residential space for use by a groom or hired hand to care for the livestock. These rooms later became an essential part of the manufacturing business.

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<sup>23</sup> Abbie Shaw Pope, "A Biography—George Washington Shaw January," 1945. Copy in possession of the Sidor family.

<sup>24</sup> Clarrisa Start, "She's Looking Back at the West," *Post-Dispatch* (St. Louis), June 27, 1955; Abbie Shaw Pope, "A Biography - George Washington Shaw," January 1945. Copy in possession of the Sidor family; R.L. Polk's *Helena City Directories* for 1883-1894.

<sup>25</sup> *Abstract of Title to Lot 1 in Block 1 of Shaw's Addition to the City of Helena*, Helena Abstract and Title Insurance Company. Copy in possession of the Sidor family.

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Hugh Menown, Eliza Menown Shaw's father, made numerous trips from his home in St. Louis to visit the Shaw family in the late 1880s and into the early 1890s.<sup>26</sup> Hugh was a widower who lived with the Shaw family in Helena for extended periods of time in the early 1890s. He found the climate in Helena better suited his health than that of St. Louis. Hugh's presence in Helena led directly to the startup of the business that became Shaw's Best operated out of the carriage house building behind his son-in-law and daughter's residence. Hugh's background and experience included that of a prominent businessman in Kansas City, Missouri, founding the first tea and coffee house in the city. In addition to the business' specialization in teas, coffees, and spices, it manufactured Peerless Baking Powder for 25 years.<sup>27</sup> During these stays, Hugh decided that Helena was ideally suited to distribute his baking powder to Northwest markets.<sup>28</sup> His desire to establish a plant in Helena resulted in the family converting the carriage house behind the family home into a factory, with the renovation occurring during 1892 to early 1893. Conversion required moving the livestock and feed storage elements—essential to 19<sup>th</sup> century suburban living—out of the building elsewhere. The 1892 Sanborn map reveals the addition of a corral, hen house, and second barn with living quarters built on the property to facilitate this change in use. None of these features remain today.<sup>29</sup>

The business began manufacture and distribution of its product, Montana Peerless Baking Powder, in mid-December 1893. The price was \$.35 for a 12-ounce can. The business name provided on the back of the baking powder read "H. Menown and Co." A newspaper interview identified Hugh Menown and his daughter Eliza Shaw as owners of the business.<sup>30</sup>

### **The Baking Powder Industry**

Bicarbonate of soda, baking soda, came into use in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as a rising agent in baked goods. British chemist Alfred Bird, whose wife was allergic to yeast and eggs, discovered how to make baking powder as he searched for an alternate leavening agent. He manufactured the first baking powder in 1843. The discovery greatly impacted the ease of making cakes and other goods that required rising. Marion Harland's *Common Sense in the Household: A Manual of Practical Housewifery*, published in 1873, was one of the first to include recipes for white and yellow cakes using baking powder.<sup>31</sup>

Baking powder consists of an acid ingredient, an alkali, and a filler. The addition of moisture causes the acid to interact with the alkali producing carbon dioxide, the leavening agent. Classification of baking powders occurs by their acid ingredient, including cream of tartar

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<sup>26</sup> Abbie Shaw Pope, "A Biography—George Washington Shaw January," 1945. Copy in possession of the Sidor family; *Independent Record* (Helena) documents Hugh Menown's lengthy visits to his daughter in "Personal and General," October 8, 1893 and "Jottings About Town," August 23, 1891.

<sup>27</sup> "Jottings About Town," *Independent Record* (Helena), December 17, 1893; "A New Industry," *The Daily Independent Record* (Helena), December 27, 1893.

<sup>28</sup> "A New Industry," *The Daily Independent Record* (Helena), December 27, 1893.

<sup>29</sup> Compare the 1890 Sanborn of Helena, Sheet 23, with 1892, Sheet 28. See this document, p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> "A New Industry," *The Daily Independent Record* (Helena), December 27, 1893; "To Introduce Our Goods," *Independent Record* (Helena), April 30, 1896.

<sup>31</sup> "Food History: History of Baking Powder," December 5, 2014, [world-foodhistory.com](http://world-foodhistory.com), accessed January 5, 2021.

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(tartaric acid), phosphate (calcium phosphate as the acid ingredient), alum (acid ingredient potash, ammonia or soda alum), or alum-phosphate (acid ingredient sodium aluminum phosphate and calcium phosphate).

At its introduction, Montana Peerless Baking Powder was a cream of tartar-based baking powder.<sup>32</sup> Cream of tartar was a byproduct of the wine fermentation process formed when an acid material settles on the sides and bottom of the cask. After further processing, this material, known as argol, ends up as a thick crust on a water surface; its removal, similar to cream, earned the name "cream of tartar" (or tartaric acid). As the American wine industry was at the time still in its early years, this cream of tartar was imported from Europe, an expensive proposition; by the 1880s, cream of tartar cost \$.30 per pound. American entrepreneurs sought a cheaper baking powder formula that used ingredients found in the United States. Chemists in laboratories developed the various phosphate formulas, derived from minerals in rocks and bones. Their efforts proved successful; soda alum cost as little as \$.03 per pound to produce. The disparity in production costs, and subsequently also in retail prices, of these new formulations led many cream of tartar-based companies to shift their baking powder product to a phosphate-based formulation.<sup>33</sup>

Although Montana Peerless Baking Powder began life as a cream of tartar-based baking powder, the high price of the product resulted in a switch to an alum-phosphate based baking powder by 1898. While this allowed the company to remain competitive in the marketplace, it also introduced a new set of problems.

### **Food safety and food adulteration**

By the 1890s, hundreds of alum-based baking powder companies operated in the U.S., severely cutting into the profits of cream of tartar-based companies. The largest of these cream of tartar formula companies was the Royal Baking Powder Company of New York whose overall market share dropped precipitously with no end in sight. In an effort to regain market share, Royal began a nationwide advertising war against alum-based formulas and the companies that sold it. The scale and aggressiveness of the campaign was stunning and even reached small-town Montana.<sup>34</sup> The campaign fed on peoples' general fears about chemicals and specific fears of chemicals adulterating their food professing that alum companies were poisoning their customers without citing any studies or authorities to back the claims. To the chagrin of the alum-based baking powder companies, these ads pre-dated any governmental regulations that required truth in advertising. Royal presented its baking powder as made from the grape and therefore, pure. With their monetary might, Royal also lobbied state legislatures to outlaw alum as toxic. In 1899, through a process subsequently revealed to be thoroughly corrupt, Missouri passed a law that

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<sup>32</sup> "Buy Peerless Montana Baking Powder," *The Missoulian* (Missoula), August 1, 1894.

<sup>33</sup> Linda Civitello, *Baking Powder Wars* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2017), pp. 71-81.

<sup>34</sup> *Dupuyer Acantha* (Dupuyer), October 10, 1895.

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banned the use of alum in food, thereby banning the sale of all alum baking powders in that state. The scandal eventually came to light resulting in the repeal of the law six years later.<sup>35</sup>

Further inflaming the false rhetoric of the negative national ad campaign and the venal Missouri law, in 1898, Montana published its own baking powder test results that also disparaged alum baking powders. The Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor, and Industry collaborated with the Montana State University (MSU) Experiment Station to test the chemical composition of twenty baking powders for sale in the state, including Montana Peerless Baking Powder. The test results described the alum-based products as "inferior powders" and "cheap and unwholesome" and stated their use should be restricted because of their adverse effect on a person's physiology.<sup>36</sup>

The combination of the negative ad campaigns, the Missouri law banning alum, and the MSU lab test results no doubt shook Montana consumer confidence in alum baking powders, including that manufactured by the Montana Peerless Baking Powder in Helena. The statewide market penetration by the large national companies through advertising, coupled with the need to continually evolve formulas to remain competitive, created a less-than-optimal business environment for small Montana baking powder manufacturers.<sup>37</sup>

While the Shaw's Best Factory continuously operated from 1893 to 1918, it appears to have only sporadically produced its Montana Peerless Baking Powder. Company and grocer advertisements for the baking powder appear in Montana newspapers in the years 1894-1897, 1899, 1903-1906, and 1910, though in several of these years, advertisements appeared for only a portion of the year or in a limited number of newspapers. The lack of ads in 1898, 1900-1902, 1907-1909, and 1911-1918 suggest no production occurred at all. A likely reason for some of the lack of advertising is a change in the formula. Company advertisements often cited an improved product; that at least four different designs used in the product packaging appears seems to support this premise. It is also possible that during the periods the company didn't advertise, they may have continued to manufacture baking powder but only distributed it to an established customer base; the 1911-1917 business section of the Helena Polk city directories list G.W. Shaw & Co. under a section titled Baking Powder Manufacturers, supporting this possibility.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the expansion of the business to include pancake flour with baking powder as its essential ingredient further supports such an idea.

Other baking powder manufacturers operated in Montana during this era, but they lacked the longevity and widespread distribution compared to Montana Peerless Baking Powder. These

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<sup>35</sup> Linda Civitello, *Baking Powder Wars* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2017), pp. 97-98; Ben Panko, "The Great Uprising: How a Powder Revolutionized Baking," *Smithsonian Magazine*, June 20, 2017, [The History of Baking Powder | Science | Smithsonian Magazine](#), accessed January 8, 2021.

<sup>36</sup> Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry of the State of Montana for the Year Ending November 30, 1898* (Independent Publishing Co.: Helena, MT, 1898), p. 316.

<sup>37</sup> Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, *Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry of the State of Montana for the Year Ending November 30, 1898* (Independent Publishing Co.: Helena, MT), p. 318.

<sup>38</sup> R.L. Polk's *Helena City Directories* for Helena, MT the years 1911-1917.

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others included: Gold Leaf (Philipsburg, 1894 to 1896), Mountain Top (Butte, 1900), Silver Queen (Butte, intermittently over the period 1899 to 1903), and Montana Chemical Company (Helena, 1906-1912), which operated during this period but did not advertise in any newspaper.

### **Business Expansion**

The successful launch of Montana Peerless Baking Powder in late 1893 prompted the company to follow up with a self-rising pancake flour in early 1894 called Menown's Montana Pancake Flour.<sup>39</sup> The introduction of pancake flour was a natural progression for the business as the pancake flour incorporated baking powder to make it self-rising. The pancake formula was 1/2 teaspoon of baking powder per 1 cup of flour.<sup>40</sup> The primary markets in the early days of the business were Helena, Butte, and Anaconda. Hugh Menown probably came up with the idea of a pancake mix from the Kansas City-based Pearl Milling's Aunt Jemima brand pancake flour that was also sold in the area. The local presence of Helena's Montana Milling Company and their ready supply of Montana-grown Arabella flour, a fine cake flour necessary for the manufacture of pancake flour, presumably served as the source that supplied Menown's enterprise.

During the first years of the business, George W. Shaw's primary involvement was serving as its merchandise broker. He traveled to other cities touting the business's products and soliciting sales. He was evidently a good salesman, as one newspaper ad announcing his arrival referred to him as, "a popular knight of the grip."<sup>41</sup> Although George commenced a new line of work with the Menowns, he maintained ties to the mining industry, even throughout his years as a bookkeeper, appearing as a trustee or incorporator for multiple startup mining operations in 1889 and 1890. Polk City directories for the years 1891 through 1893 list his occupation as a mining expert.<sup>42</sup> It is likely that the Panic of 1893, which dealt a devastating blow to the mining industry in Montana, forced George to turn his focus away from mining. This shift, however, toward home industries and their promotion, especially during these hard times, worked in the Shaw family's favor.

The U.S. Government's cancelling of its contracts to purchase silver greatly precipitated the Panic. The silver market collapsed, and a domino effect of crises rippled through other sectors of the economy, with the banking industry also particularly hard hit. The depression that followed lasted into the early 1900s. The ability of the Shaw's Best business, a start-up, to withstand and survive during what became the worst depression in U.S. history up to that point is quite remarkable. Helena in its role as one of the major financial centers in the western U.S., suffered more than most cities as Helena's four largest banks held over 70% of total bank assets in the city

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<sup>39</sup> "Try Menown's Montana Pancake Flour," *The Daily Independent (Helena)*, February 11, 1894; "Helena's Pride," *The Daily Independent (Helena)*, January 3, 1895. In 1894, the company sold 8,500 cans.

<sup>40</sup> Linda Civitello, *Baking Powder Wars* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2017), p. 128.

<sup>41</sup> "Personal," *Daily Missoulian (Missoula)*, July 1, 1896.

<sup>42</sup> R.L. Polk's *Helena City Directories* for Helena, MT the years for the years 1891-1893.

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in 1893. By 1897, the fallout of the depression witnessed all four banks either merging or closing.<sup>43</sup>

The Silver Panic and ensuing depression adversely affected most Montanans and intensified the patriotic push for home industries and use of Montana products. Newspapers likewise reminded citizens: "Wherever and whenever the Montana produce comes into competition with the product of outside labor, every loyal Montanian (*sic*) should make it his duty to give his own state and home the preference."<sup>44</sup> The local efforts of companies such as the Montana Milling Company and its Montana-grown Arabella flour stand as an example of the businesses the newspaper urged one to support: "patriotic citizens" to help the local market by buying Arabella flour and patronizing home businesses.<sup>45</sup> Such encouragement to support the home industries easily extended to the Shaw family's enterprise. While other home in industries existed in Helena, the Shaws' business was the first in Montana to manufacture a food product, and remained the only home industry in the West Side neighborhood.

The death of Hugh Menown on July 5, 1895, at the age of 68 spurred George's fulltime involvement with the business stepping in as manager of the company. Hugh's death marked the first of several in the family that occurred during the operation of the business. In every instance, however, other family members stepped forward and assumed roles as needed to keep the business going. It was after Hugh's passing that the first use of the brand name, "Shaw's Best," surfaced. Ads for Shaw's Best Pancake Flour first appeared in newspapers beginning in October 1896.<sup>46</sup> This product became the staple of the company and was sold widely and continuously from 1896 into early 1918. The distribution of the pancake flour sometimes required assistance from outside the family. This included school children from the nearby Fifth Ward (later Hawthorne) School who were hired to come in after school and on Saturdays to help package and box the company's products.<sup>47</sup>

With the popularity of the pancake flour, the business greatly expanded its sales territory. Company or grocer's ads appeared in newspapers in at least sixteen different towns in Montana over the years including Anaconda, Belt, Billings, Butte, Choteau, Columbia Falls, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Lewistown, Missoula, Neihart, Philipsburg, Ronan, and Townsend. The Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry published a report each year that summarized the state's economic environment. The Tenth Report of the bureau for the year ending November 30, 1906, states that, "the first successful food manufacturer in Montana is Mr.

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<sup>43</sup> Carlos Ramirez and Wayne Zandbergen, "Anatomy of Bank Contagion: Evidence from Helena, Montana During the Panic of 1893," (George Mason University Department of Economics, Working Paper No. 13-23, 29 July, 2014), [First National Bank Helena, MT \(richmondfed.org\)](http://richmondfed.org), accessed January 9, 2021.

<sup>44</sup> "Home Industry," *Helena Weekly Independent* (Helena), March 21, 1895.

<sup>45</sup> "What They Should Do," *The Helena Independent* (Helena), February 18, 1894.

<sup>46</sup> "Helena In Brief," *The Daily Independent* (Helena), October 26, 1896.

<sup>47</sup> An unsigned, undated reminiscence in possession of the Sidor family names Joseph K. Rowland, Sr., of Edmonds, Washington, and Jack Flannery, who died during WWI, as two students so employed.

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G. W. Shaw, who, in 1893, started the manufacture of pancake flour at 424 Harrison Avenue, Helena, where the business is still conducted."<sup>48</sup>

In mid-June of 1906, the company introduced a third product, Shaw's Best Wheat Creamlets (farina or cream of wheat). Newspaper marketing of the product first occurred in Great Falls and Lewistown from mid-June through December 1906.<sup>49</sup> A gap in advertising occurs until it is heavily marketed in the Helena area beginning in the middle of May through mid-July of 1907.<sup>50</sup> The company likely tweaked the product between the two ad campaigns but apparently lacked the customer interest to continue its production. Similar to Shaw's Best pancake flour, a main competitor at the time was Aunt Jemima's brand of cream of wheat.

Although the Shaw's Best Wheat Creamlets apparently underwhelmed, the company's baking powder and pancake flour both won premiums and diplomas numerous times at the state fair, as well as other county and regional fairs in Montana.<sup>51</sup> Exhibitors entered specific categories and cash was given to those awarded premiums (first through fifth place). A diploma was awarded to first place winners only. Such recognition was important as fairs served as an important component of a business's marketing strategy. These events offered the opportunity for large aggregations of people to view and interact with vendors and their products. Exhibited products that won awards were reported on in State newspapers and made for good publicity and ad copy. The State Fairs that occurred prior to 1903 were unsanctioned events sponsored by private interests. In 1903, the state legislature stepped in and officially sanctioned a Montana State Fair to be hosted in Helena and allocated monies to subsidize the event.<sup>52</sup> They also allowed counties to annually spend up to \$1,000 to support the creation of county fairs. Two legislative sessions later, the legislature permitted the counties to spend an additional \$1,000 for the transport of county fair exhibits to the State Fair for entry. These actions proved additionally beneficial to businesses as rather than the State Fair marking the end of the line for product display in exhibits, it created a chain of exhibit venues, and thereby, expanded markets across the state.

As the business moved through the first decade of the 1900s, Lida was the only one of the Shaw children to continuously live at home. She was heavily involved in the day-to-day activities of the business as the primary operator of Shaw's Best, and in April 1911, she bought the business from her parents.<sup>53</sup> By the time of the sale, George W. was in his late sixties. Lida's ownership, however, proved tragically short-lived. As the family member perhaps longest involved in the actual production of the products, exposure to flour dust may have contributed to her unexpected

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<sup>48</sup> Montana Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry, *Tenth Report of the Bureau of Agriculture, Labor and Industry of the State of Montana for the Year Ending November 30, 1906* (Independent Publishing Co.: Helena, MT, 1906), p. 299.

<sup>49</sup> *Fergus County Argus* (Lewistown), June 12, 1906; *Great Falls Daily Tribune*, June 8, 1906.

<sup>50</sup> "Current Events," *The Helena Daily Independent*, May 15, 1907; "Current Events," *The Helena Daily Independent*, July 11, 1907.

<sup>51</sup> "Awarded Shaw's Best Hot Cake Flour," *The Helena Daily Independent*, December 2, 1906.

<sup>52</sup> "Montana State Fair," *Independent Record* (Helena), June 15, 1903.

<sup>53</sup> John D Pope, III, letter to J.E. Sidor, November 2, 1964, in possession of the Sidor family.



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death from pulmonary tuberculosis on November 22, 1912 at the young age of 36.<sup>54</sup> The constant motion of machinery and mixing of flour and baking powder undoubtedly created thick and fine particles in the small, confined space and likely contributed to her illness. Less than three months later, George W. passed on February 18, 1913 at the age of 70.<sup>55</sup> His death certificate read, "Manufacturer flour."<sup>56</sup>

George W. Shaw was a man full of ideas and energy. Prior to his Shaw's Best years, he held jobs in a wide range of occupations. During his time in real estate, he acquired a multi-block piece of property on Helena's west side that, to this day, is known as the Shaw Addition. His stone quarry on Mt. Helena supplied the stone for several homes and foundations in Helena's mansion district including the residences of territorial governor B. P. Carpenter at 825 Madison and W. E. Cox at 531 Power.<sup>57</sup> He was involved in the startup of numerous mining companies and published a monthly bulletin called "The Friendly Visitor" encouraging people to buy locally.<sup>58</sup> His own business, utilizing Montana-grown wheat—was a model example of that practice. Additional side ventures included sales of gas lamps, brooms and brushes, and coffee.<sup>59</sup>

The Abstract of Title for the property where Shaw's Best Factory sits shows that Shaw was also a man who regularly struggled to meet his financial obligations. He was named in several lawsuits for non-payment of mortgages, experienced two sheriff's sales (1893 and 1904) for the property where his house and business stood, and filed once for bankruptcy (1898).<sup>60</sup> Through all that, he managed to retain possession of his residence and avoid shuttering the business.

George W. Shaw was well thought of by his peers and rose to leadership positions in virtually every organization that he joined. He was a post commander of the Wadsworth Post #3 G.A.R.

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<sup>54</sup> "Funeral of Lida Shaw Monday Morning At 10," *The Helena Daily Independent*, November 24, 1912; "Father Omitted," *The Helena Daily Independent*, November 24, 1912; State of Montana Bureau of Vital Statistics Certificate of Death (no. 65 261) for Lida Shaw, dated November 23, 1912, [https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5437/images/47791\\_1220706333\\_0183-00264?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryid=3163811c72bfd039745ff78ec508669d&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=EAF637&\\_phstart=successSource&usePUBjs=true&\\_ga=2.63235759.1420202060.1613411739-81078601.1549491296&pid=750968](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5437/images/47791_1220706333_0183-00264?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryid=3163811c72bfd039745ff78ec508669d&usePUB=true&_phsrc=EAF637&_phstart=successSource&usePUBjs=true&_ga=2.63235759.1420202060.1613411739-81078601.1549491296&pid=750968), accessed February 16, 2021.

<sup>55</sup> Helena, MT. *Independent Record*, February 19, 1913.

<sup>56</sup> State of Montana Bureau of Vital Statistics Certificate of Death (no. 68 388) for George W. Shaw, dated February 18, 1913, [https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61255/images/47429\\_550805-00325?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryid=f17ca09cd0e5073c86ac853c00fcd5c&usePUB=true&usePUBjs=true&pid=281455](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61255/images/47429_550805-00325?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryid=f17ca09cd0e5073c86ac853c00fcd5c&usePUB=true&usePUBjs=true&pid=281455), accessed February 16, 2021; "George W. Shaw, A Pioneer, Dies," *The Helena Daily Independent*, February 19, 1913.

<sup>57</sup> Abbie Shaw Pope, "A Biography—George Washington Shaw January," 1945. Copy in possession of the Sidor family She mistakenly gives W.E. Cox's address as 615 Power.

<sup>58</sup> *The Friendly Visitor* was published from August 1895 to August 1896, on microfilm, H-542, at the Montana Historical Society Research Center in Helena.

<sup>59</sup> "Personal," *Daily Missoulian* (Missoula), July 1, 1896 refers to Shaw's selling brooms and brushes. Various crates, catalogues, and correspondence in the factory and in the Shaw family papers support this conclusion.

<sup>60</sup> *Abstract of Title to Lot 1 in Block 1 of Shaw's Addition to the City of Helena*, Helena Abstract and Title Insurance Company. Copy in possession of the Sidor family; "Sheriff's Sale," *Independent Record* (Helena), July 26, 1893; "Sheriff's Sale," *Independent Record* (Helena), June 4, 1904.

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(Union Army veterans), Vice-President of the A.O.U.W. (Ancient Order of United Workmen) Hall association (fraternal benefits), Deputy Supreme Regent of Montana for the Royal Arcanum (fraternal benefits), and was known statewide in the Masonic Order.<sup>61</sup> At one point, the Helena mayor appointed him to the Board of Health.<sup>62</sup> George W. Shaw represented the kind of energetic, entrepreneurial citizen that a newly designated state and state capital needed to move forward and thrive.

After his father's passing, George H. Shaw, who had been living in Butte, moved back to Helena and he and Eliza managed Shaw's Best through several years of slow decline until cessation of business in 1918.<sup>63</sup>

Throughout the twenty-five-year longevity of Shaw's Best, Eliza Shaw was the family member who proved vital to the business. In the first several years, Eliza was co-owner with her father while George W. was occupied with other business concerns. Upon Hugh Menown's death, George W. took on the responsibility of the business, but the abstract of title clearly reveals his shortcomings and Eliza's name is sprinkled throughout, likely as a safety net.<sup>64</sup> Although the property was auctioned at sheriff's sale in 1893 and 1904, the Shaws never lost possession.

After Lida and George W. died, Eliza assumed the role of proprietor and with her son George H., and kept the business until 1918. Over its lifespan, Eliza was the only family member continuously involved in the business as her father, daughter, and husband, who ran the day-to-day operations, passed away. Throughout their financial difficulties, Eliza seems to have offered stability and continuity.

### **The Rest of the Story**

After Shaw's Best ceased production, the family returned the first floor to its partial original use as a garage. George H. continued to live with Eliza in the family home until Eliza's passing in August 1928, at the age of 79. After Eliza's death, the family attempted to sell the nearby house (not included in this nomination) and factory several times before Abbie Shaw Pope and her husband, John, moved back to Helena and took up residence on the property in the 1930s. Prior to moving to Helena, the Popes made their home in Butte for 35 years where John was one of Montana's most prominent mining engineers.

On August 4, 1933, neighborhood children playing with matches started a fire inside the west entryway of the former factory. A spectacular smoke plume that appeared to emanate from Hawthorne School brought hundreds of sightseers. Damage was limited to the roof but it was extensive, estimated at \$250. Portions of the roof were replaced, while other parts received

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<sup>61</sup> "George W. Shaw, A Pioneer, Dies," *The Helena Daily Independent*, February 19, 1913; "Jottings About Town," *Independent Record* (Helena), May 7, 1891; "A.O.U.W. Hall Elections," *Independent Record* (Helena), January 18, 1891.

<sup>62</sup> "City Council," *Independent Record* (Helena), April 24, 1889.

<sup>63</sup> "Sandahl Grocery," *Great Falls Tribune* (Great Falls), February 27, 1918, p. 4, is the last newspaper advertisement for Shaw's Best.

<sup>64</sup> *Abstract of Title to Lot 1 in Block 1 of Shaw's Addition to the City of Helena*, Helena Abstract and Title Insurance Company. Copy in possession of the Sidor family.

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support beams nailed alongside the burnt beams to ensure the necessary level of support. From inside the building's second story, evidence of the fire remains visible in the rafters.<sup>65</sup>

The Popes occupied the nearby house at 424 Harrison Avenue until 1954. John Pope passed away on December 29, 1953 and Abbie remained until the next year when she moved to St. Louis to be closer to her son. The property, including the residence and carriage house/factory sat vacant for nearly two years before Joseph and Patricia Sidor bought it in 1956. The family still owns the property today. In 1995, the Helena and Lewis and Clark County Historic Preservation Commission awarded the Sidor family a Historic Preservation Award for their care and attention toward preserving the integrity of the Shaw's Pancake Flour Factory.

Both the Pope and Sidor families used the carriage house/factory building's first floor as a garage, similar to its original function when it was built as a carriage house. In the 100 years since the business closed, neither family made alterations to the rooms on the second floor where the main production of Shaw's Best products took place. As a result, most of the original machinery remains in the building. In addition to the machinery, a trove of original advertising material, much of which is still in excellent condition, remains. Numerous wooden barrels of product ingredients, including tartaric acid and flour, still sit in the building; several of these have never been opened.

## **CRITERION C**

### **19th Century Manufacturing**

Before the advent of electricity in the 1880s, manufacturing facilities from textile mills to sawmills to flour mills utilized mechanical power generated from a central source to power their machinery. These central power sources began with water wheels, and evolved to include windmills, steam engines, and internal combustion engines. Mechanical power systems receive energy in one form, for example, falling water, wind or steam pressure, and transform it into mechanical energy. This mechanical energy is then used to create the motion, via a network of interconnected line shafts, gears, pulleys and belts, that powers attached machinery. This type of energy generation is referred to as motive power.

In the "Shaw's Best" factory pursuit of mechanical power, the business utilized a line shaft system in their operation. A line shaft is a rotating shaft that generally attaches to ceilings. The system of belts, pulleys, and gears that attached to, and powered, the line shaft and distributed the generated power is referred to as "millwork" by industrial historians. A single line shaft could power many individual pieces of equipment and, when linked together with other line and counter shafts, could power all of the equipment in an entire manufacturing operation.

Although, steam became the predominant central power source by the 1890s, the search always continued for a better and more efficient way to power equipment. Despite which generation system to which one ascribed, however, all had significant drawbacks. Water power was subject to inconsistencies due to stream flow fluctuations and floods. Steam engines were dangerous and

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<sup>65</sup> "Blaze In Barn Near School On West Side Attracts Big Crowd," *The Helena Daily Independent*, August 5, 1933.

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often unreliable. Internal combustion engines proved expensive to operate because of fuel and maintenance costs.

The increasing availability of electricity around the turn of the 20th century saw the introduction of large electric motors, a revolution that marked the beginning of the end for the moribund motive power technology. Electricity boasted many advantages including its ability to be carried from a distance without the need for an on-site power source. One drawback noted by many manufacturing operations, however, was the extensive investment in infrastructure that dissuaded many from taking immediate advantage of electric-driven systems. But as small electric motors subsequently became available, Shaw's Best embraced the technology and implemented a line shaft and millwork system powered by a D&D 2 HP electric motor.

### **Shaw's Best Manufacturing Operation**

One advantage of these small electric motors was how economic they were to power a single piece of equipment. In Shaw's case, the D&D motor drove a Hunter Lightning Sifter and Mixer, a piece of equipment that stood as the heart of their production process and used in the manufacture of both their baking powder and pancake flour products.

A driving spindle with attached driving pulley connects to one end of the motor. A belt connected to the pulley runs through a small rectangular aperture to a large 3-foot diameter pulley connected to a line shaft in the adjoining room immediately behind the D&D motor. When turned on, the driving spindle and pulley of the motor rotate, engaging the attached belt and transferring the energy to the second 3-foot pulley located on the far end of the ceiling-mounted line shaft in the adjoining room. A third smaller pulley occurs at the opposite end of the line shaft; a belt connects this pulley to a fourth smaller pulley attached to the sifter/mixer. The spinning of the second belt and the pulley attached to the double-spiral agitator of the sifter/mixer results in the mixing of the ingredients.

The system required to adapt these motors for this kind of use wasn't without technical issues. One issue was the faster revolution rate of the motor's driving spindle than what is desired for the double-spiral agitator in the sifter/mixer that rotates to mix the baking powder. The transfer of power from the D&D motor to its final destination of the double-spiral agitator of the sifter/mixer required a significant drop in revolutions. This effect occurred through the use of the large 3-foot pulley; the increased diameter pulley not only served to decrease the revolutions (speed ratio) transferred to the sifter/mixer to an acceptable level, but it also helped flatten small power fluctuations in the motor's output.

Other issues at the time also plagued the use of line shaft technology. These included the potential danger associated with their operation, high levels of noise, and they were dirty. Loose and slipping belts was nearly a daily occurrence. Belts also occasionally broke, a safety hazard for the operator. The potential of clothing or hair getting caught up the machinery was also a real concern. The system required frequent lubrication, meaning oil constantly dripped on everything. Air quality also was an issue. Spinning shafts and belts create air movement with the result that any immediate particulate matter, such as dust and baking powder, became airborne and a health

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hazard to the operator. To alleviate some of these potential risks, Shaw's Best built a custom wooden framework to help the belts stay in proper alignment on the pulleys.

Belts generally consisted of either tanned leather or a canvas material impregnated with rubber. Leather, the choice Shaw's Best used, was preferred as over time it tended to form to the operating surface. Improved pulley traction and belt alignment occurred by placing the leather hide-side down. It was a specialized skill to seamlessly splice the ends of the leather belt together so as to not disrupt the cadence of the belt on the pulleys. Lacing served most often as the joining method because it was flexible and noiseless, like the belt itself.

### **Shaw's Best Sifter and Mixer Operation**

The operation of the Hunter sifter and mixer began with loading the ingredients into the hopper on one end of the machine. The operator was responsible for ensuring that the appropriate proportions of each ingredient were placed into the hopper. This particular sifter/mixer was produced in 10 different sizes that reflected the capacity of the hopper. The sifting mechanism lay immediately underneath the hopper. And consisted of either a revolving set of brushes or a half-cylindrical wire mesh screen. The sifting mechanism served to aerate the material, break up any lumps, and to separate out impurities and other anomalies.

The long horizontal portion of the equipment is the mixing box. It featured a metal lined trough in the shape of a half-pipe. Inside the mixing box and running its entire length lies the double-spiral agitator consisting of a center shaft around which wrap two continuous, curved blades of differing sizes. As this shaft is rotated either by a hand crank or the belted pulley attached to the line shaft, it causes the two blades to push the material in the mixing box. The outside blade moves it toward the outlet while the inside blade moves it back in the direction of the hopper. The opposing action of these two blades causes thorough mixing of the contents of the box.

A small hole in the bottom of the trough at the opposite end of the mixing box from the hopper served as the outlet for the now well-mixed product. The Shaw's Best installation featured a pipe that funneled the finished product down through a hole in the floor to the first story where it was packaged, boxed, and shipped.

Hinges on the hopper unit allow for it to be easily removed and replaced with another hopper. The hopper currently seated on the sifter/mixer displays a sifting mechanism consisting of four stiff revolving brushes. A second hopper in the building is equipped with wire mesh in a half-cylindrical casing to screen ingredients strongly suggesting the processing of at least two different products through this sifter/mixer, most likely the baking powder and pancake flour.

Shaw's Best operation also utilized a Whipple Rectangular Churn. Although designed for use as a butter churn, Shaw's Best factory used it to mix the dry powder ingredients associated with their product line. There remains a white powder residue inside the churn. Reasons for the unconventional use of this particular apparatus relate to its advantages as a butter churn. During the churn's rotation, the contents fall from one corner to the opposite corner, an overall distance greater than similar box churns, assuring a greater blending of its contents. The churn was also

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touted for its ease of cleaning as it contained no interior baffles or apparatus.<sup>66</sup> This allowed not only an ease of cleaning, but also simplified loading and unloading the contents.

The churn was likely used for several purposes including to mix the ingredients of Shaw's third product, the Wheat Cream-lets. Small batches of any of the company's products could also have been mixed via the churn. It stands as highly likely that the churn also was used for premixing the ingredients prior to their placement in the sifter/mixer's hopper, such as the self-rising Shaw's Best Pancake Flour that contained baking powder. Premixing the pancake flour and baking powder allowed a finished product ready for use by the customer. An attachment on this churn that allows operation via the line shaft system and powder residue strongly suggest its use for the industrial applications of the business. A second Whipple Rectangular churn box that lacks a lid sits in the building. Similar to the Whipple Rectangular Churn, it too contains a white powder residue.

Another piece of equipment within the building is tentatively identified as a weighing and packaging machine. It stands several feet tall and lacks several elements, including a manufacturer's identifying tag. However, it does possess a scale, a cutoff mechanism associated with the scale, and a funneling trough. Corroboration regarding this equipment's function stems from a series of letters between George W. Shaw and the Bond Scale Company, dated 1908 and 1909, that detail problems that Shaw's Best experienced trying to get a weighing machine to work correctly. The papers identify problems with pulleys, rods, and placement of the product carton, all discernible features on the existing apparatus. There are also a series of payment receipt slips from an installment purchase plan that identify the Bond Weigher Style 50 as the product for which the payments are being made.<sup>67</sup>

### **Architectural Significance—Carl M. Neuhausen and Frank M. Williams, Architects**

Although resources indicate the Shaw Carriage House was designed by architects Carl M. Neuhausen and Frank M. Williams, the paucity of information in the record about Williams strongly suggests the design may have been limited to Neuhausen. Carl M. Neuhausen was born in Stuttgart, Germany in 1858 and studied architecture at Southern Germany's polytechnic institutions. As young man of 24, he traveled the country to learn about the architecture of his native land, hoping to one day practice his profession in the United States. At the age of 28, he accomplished his goal and immigrated, first settling in Iowa. He relocated to Minneapolis-St. Paul in 1887 where he practiced architecture in partnership with draughtsman Frank Dustin. Neuhausen. He struck out on his own in 1888 and designed, or helped design, several buildings in the Minneapolis area. By 1890, Neuhausen had relocated with his wife, Julia, to Helena, Montana.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Springfield, VT, *Vermont Journal*, September 27, 1873, p. 6.

<sup>67</sup> Shaw family papers, discovered in the residence, in possession of the Sidor family.

<sup>68</sup> Tracy Lewis, *Carl M. Neuhausen House National Register Nomination Form* (listed October 3, 1980, NR #80003932), on file at the Utah State Historic Preservation Office, Salt Lake City.

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Neuhausen soon formed a partnership with Frank M. Williams and opened offices on the third floor of the Atlas Block on North Main Street in Helena. The pair advertised themselves as "architects and superintendents." During their time in Helena, Neuhausen and Williams, in addition to preparing plans for the Shaw Carriage House, undertook designs for a Catholic church in White Sulphur Springs, and may have submitted plans for the expansion of the Seventh Ward School.<sup>69</sup> Neuhausen's time in Helena was short, however, and he soon moved on to Salt Lake City.

Very little information about Frank M. Williams has come to light. He is first listed in Helena in 1889 rooming at 712 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue and working as a carpenter. By 1890 he and Neuhausen were in partnership with Neuhausen billed as the architect and Williams as superintendent. After the partnership dissolved circa late 1890, Williams served as superintendent of the building of Helena High School in 1891-1892. From 1893 to 1894, he practiced architecture from his home at 1061 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and in 1895 was listed as an architect with the Montana L & Manufacturing Company.<sup>70</sup> Thereafter, Frank Williams disappears from public records.

Neuhausen subsequently established a lucrative practice in Salt Lake City and quickly rose to prominence for his stylistic versatility. His work reflects his study of the great architecture of his homeland. He was the only prominent architect in Utah to employ the Chateausque style. Neuhausen left an impressive legacy when he died in 1907 at the age of 49 of heart failure after a long recovery from typhoid fever. His well-known work in Salt Lake City includes the Cathedral of the Madeleine, the Orpheum Theatre (now the Promised Valley Playhouse), the Walker Bank Building, St. Anne's Orphanage, and his own residence, the National Register-listed Carl M. Neuhausen House.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> "General News Of The State," *The Daily Independent* (Helena), September 17, 1890; "School Finances," *The Daily Independent* (Helena), March 9, 1891. Notes that the schoolboard's October receipts show \$150 credit to Neuhausen for "balancing plans for the 7<sup>th</sup> Ward School Building."

<sup>70</sup> Frank Williams was not in Montana during a census year, and so no clues were found about his birthplace or early life. The scant information about him includes listing in the Helena Polk directories 1889-1895 and reference to his employment with the school district as building superintendent of the high school, "School Finances," *Independent Record* (Helena), March 9, 1891.

<sup>71</sup> Tracy Lewis, *Carl M. Neuhausen House National Register Nomination Form* (listed October 3, 1980, NR #80003932), on file at the Utah State Historic Preservation Office, Salt Lake City.

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[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61255/images/47429\\_550805-00325?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=f17ca09cd0e5073c86ac853c00fdb5c&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=281455](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/61255/images/47429_550805-00325?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=f17ca09cd0e5073c86ac853c00fdb5c&usePUB=true&usePUBJs=true&pId=281455), accessed February 16, 2021.

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[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5437/images/47791\\_1220706333\\_0183-00264?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=3163811c72bfd039745ff78ec508669d&usePUB=true&phsrc=EAF637&phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&ga=2.63235759.1420202060.1613411739-81078601.1549491296&pId=750968](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/5437/images/47791_1220706333_0183-00264?treeid=&personid=&hintid=&queryId=3163811c72bfd039745ff78ec508669d&usePUB=true&phsrc=EAF637&phstart=successSource&usePUBJs=true&ga=2.63235759.1420202060.1613411739-81078601.1549491296&pId=750968), accessed February 16, 2021.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

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**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** Less than 1/2 acre  
Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**  
Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_  
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 46.591210 | Longitude: -112.046280 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:             |

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

The property lies in Lewis and Clark County in Township 10 North, Range 4 West, Section 25. The building sits in the west half of the property defined as "Block 1, Lot 1, N5' LT2" of the G.W. Shaw Addition. The National Register boundary includes less than 1/2 acre of land, approximately 2,240 square feet. The property is bounded by an east-west running alley to the north, a north-south running alley to the west, and the east-west running property line to the south. The east boundary runs parallel (north-south) to the east wall of the nominated building, at a distance of six feet providing space from the grounds and residence to the east.

See attached map Section 9 page 41; reference to the aerial view map confirms the boundary.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary is determined by the property lines associated with the property except for the eastern boundary, which sits six feet east of and runs parallel (north-south) to the east wall of

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the building. At the preference of the owner, this eastern boundary was selected to allow separation of both the grounds and residential unit to the east. The impressive building is able to fully convey its historic and architectural significance despite the tight eastern boundary.

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ellen Baumler, PhD  
organization: Historian/ private consultant  
street & number: 729 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59601  
e-mail mbaumler@aol.com  
telephone: 406-449-3062  
date: December 2020/January 2021

and

name/title: Sidor Family  
organization: Property Owners  
street & number: 424 Harrison Avenue  
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59601  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
telephone: 406-461-0291  
date: December 2020/January 2021

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

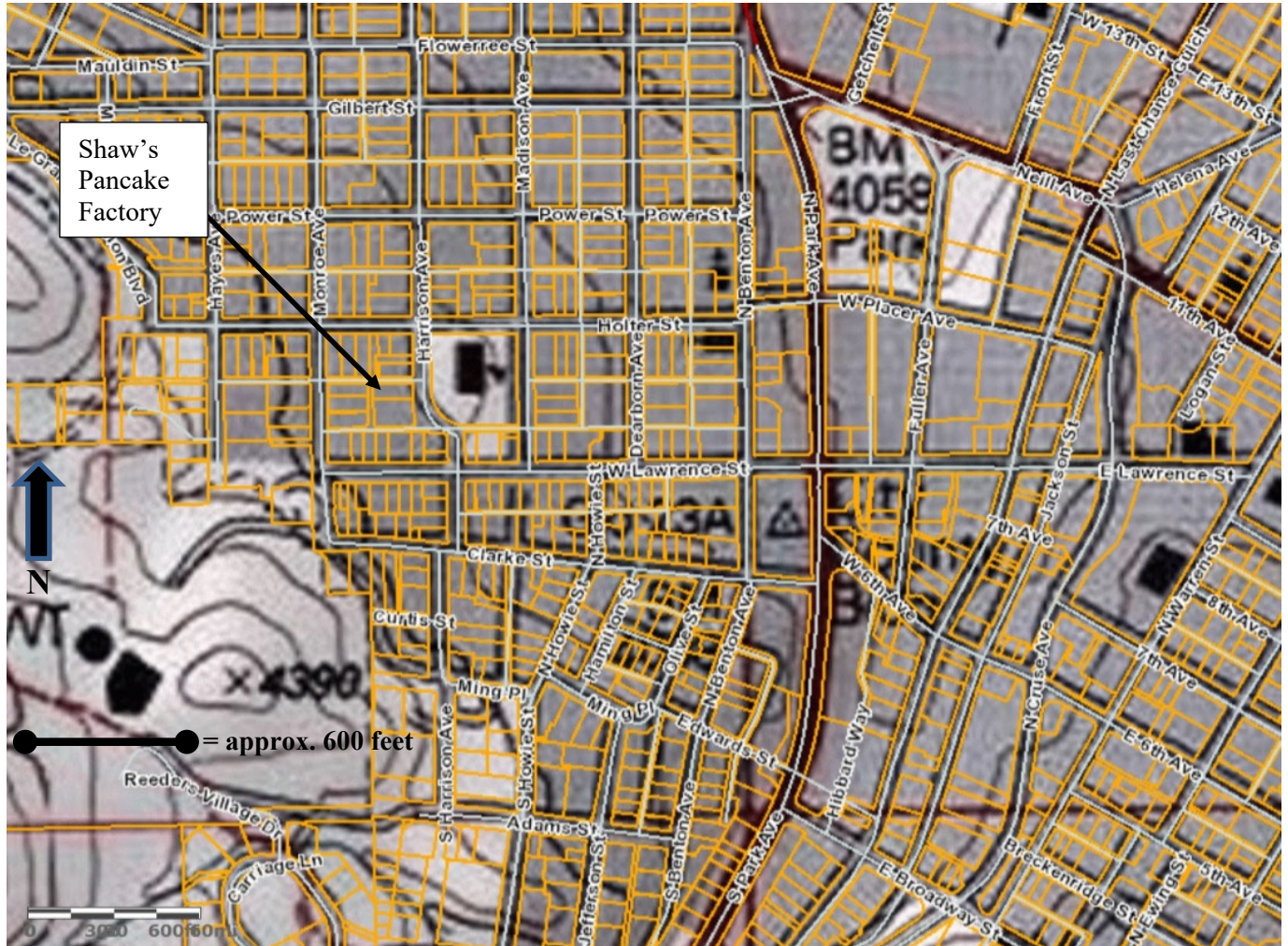


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**MAPS**

**Topo Map**

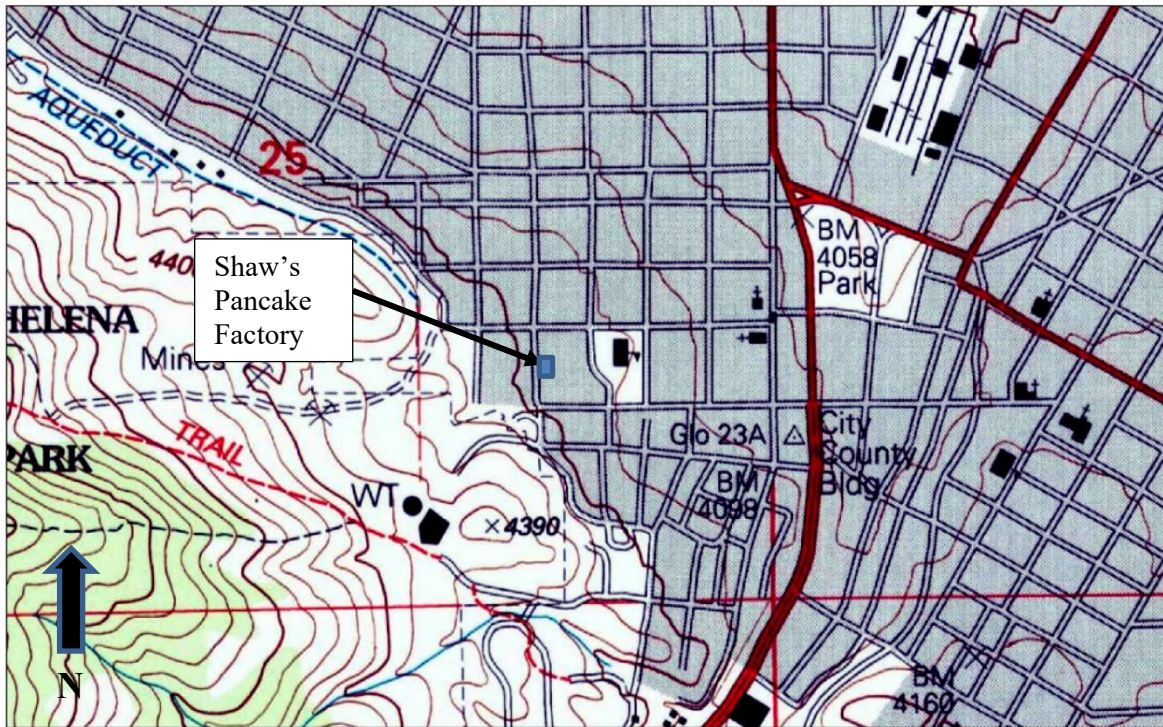


**Location of the Shaw's Best Pancake Factory, 426 1/2 Harrison Avenue, Helena MT. Montana Cadastral. Center Point of Shaw's Pancake Factory: Latitude 46.591210 Longitude -112.046280.**



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●—● = approx. 400 feet

Map created using the Digital Atlas February 18, 2021  
<http://mst.mt.gov/GIS/Atlas>

Montana State Library - Digital Library  
(406) 444-5354 | [geoinfo@mt.gov](mailto:geoinfo@mt.gov) | <http://msl.mt.gov>

**Location of Shaw's Best Pancake Factory, 426 1/2 Harrison Avenue, Helena MT. T10N R4W Section 25, found on the Helena 7.5' quadrangle map. Center Point of Shaw's Pancake Factory: Latitude 46.591210 Longitude -112.046280.**



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●————● = approx. 200 feet

Map created using the Digital Atlas February 18, 2021  
<http://msl.mt.gov/GIS/Atlas>

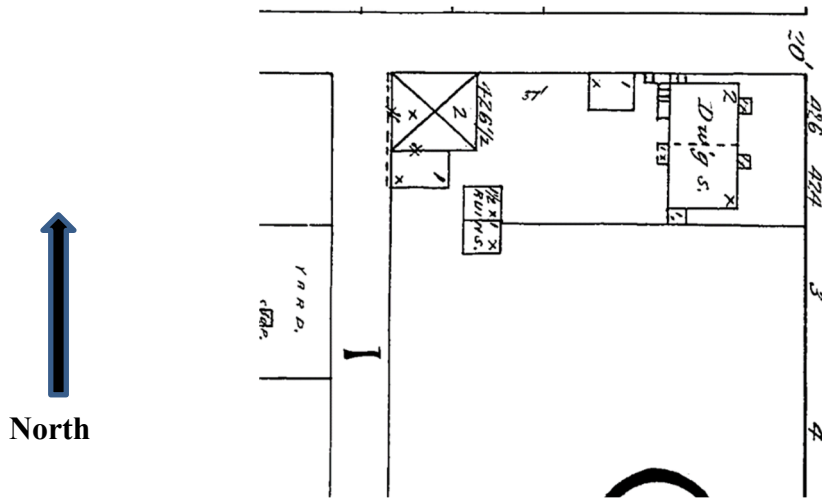
Montana State Library - Digital Library  
(406) 444-5354 | [geoinfo@mt.gov](mailto:geoinfo@mt.gov) | <http://msl.mt.gov>

**Aerial View of Location of Shaw's Best Pancake Factory, 426 1/2 Harrison Avenue, Helena MT. Center Point of Shaw's Pancake Factory: Latitude 46.591210 Longitude -112.046280.**

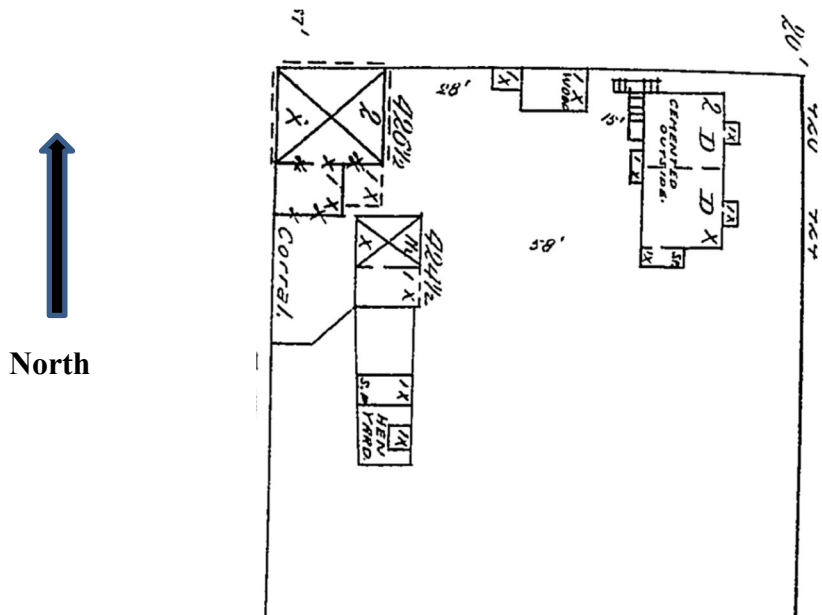
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### Additional Maps, Sanborns



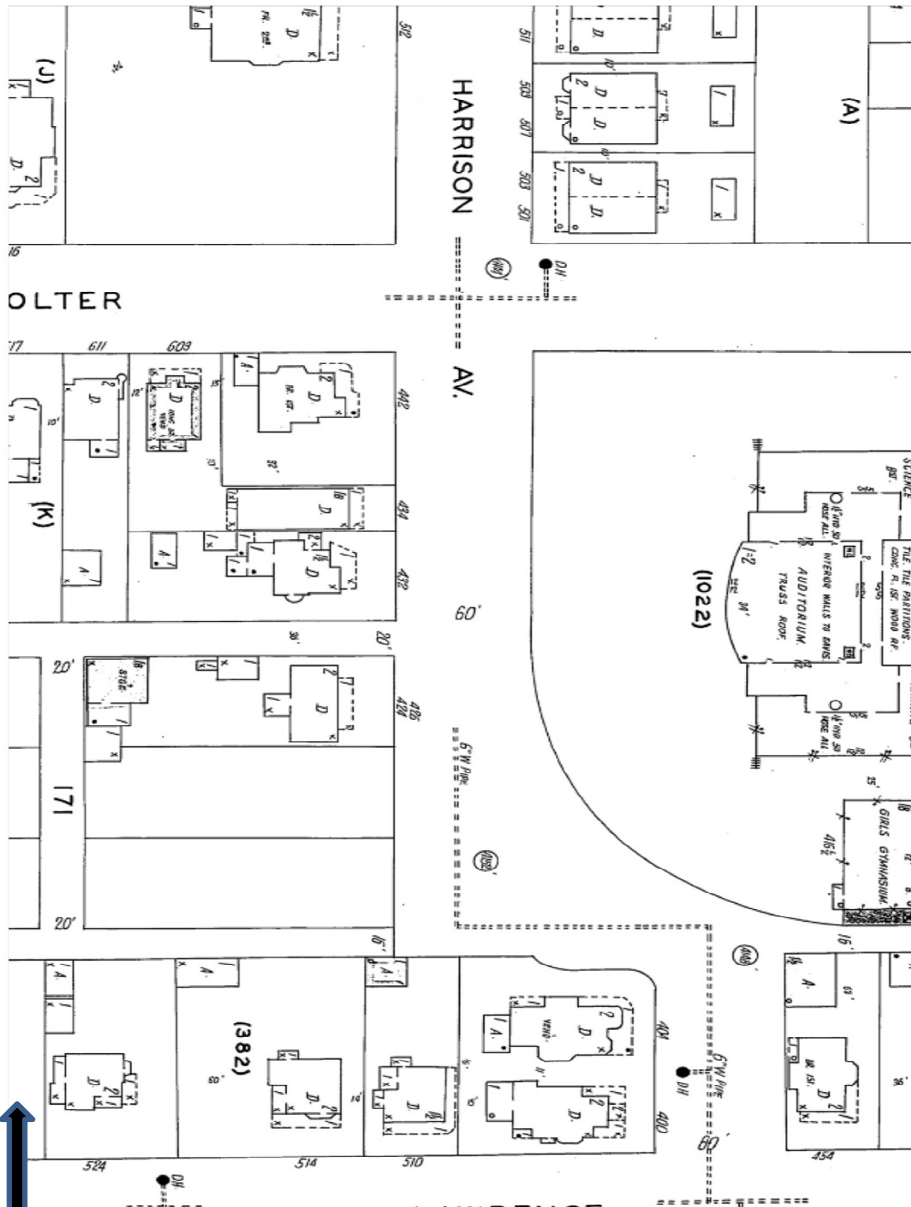
1890 Sanborn map, sheet 23.



1892 Sanborn map, sheet 28.

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Helena 1930, Sheet 132

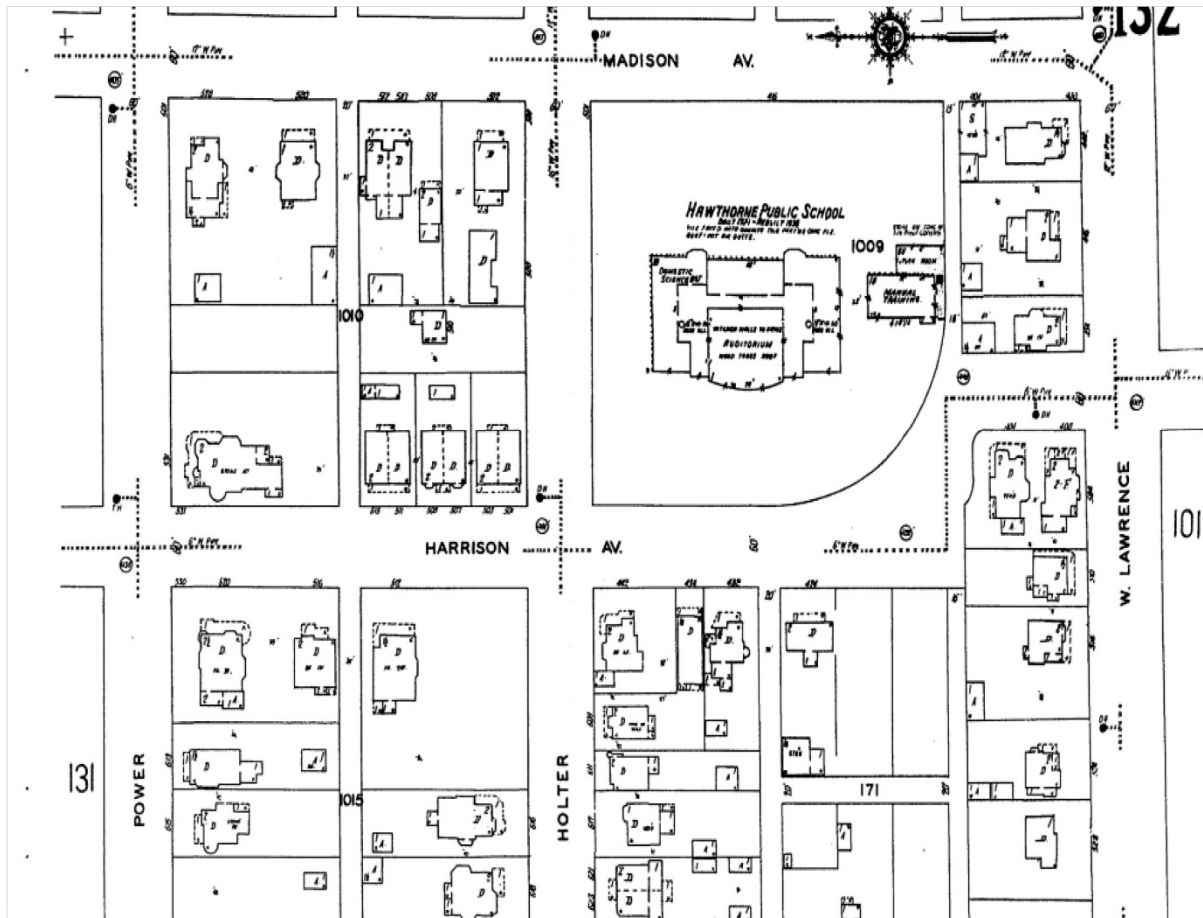


1930 Sanborn map, sheet 132

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Helena 1930-1958, Sheet 132



← North

1930-1958 Sanborn map, sheet 132

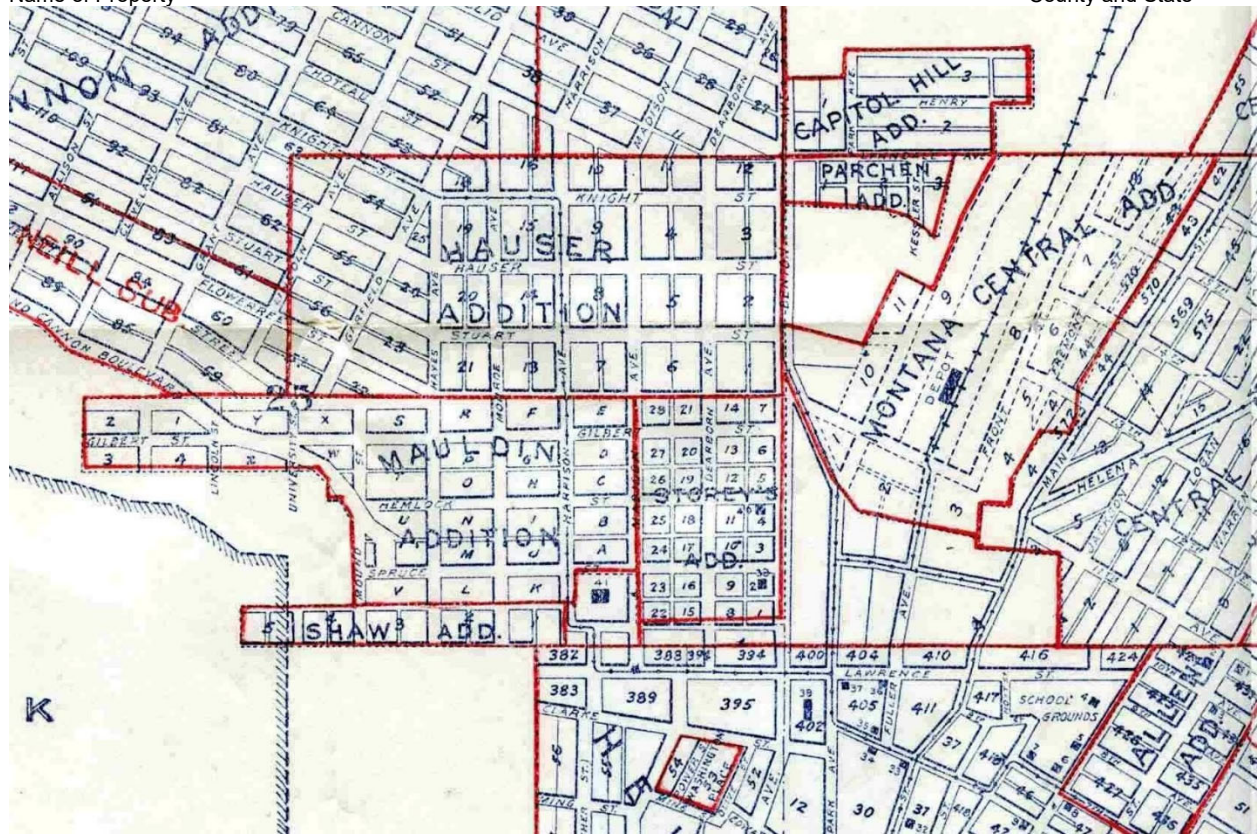


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Portion of City of Helena Map, Clason Map Company, Denver, CO, 1909. Shaw's Addition, [Helena, Montana city limits in 1909 \[8041x5851\] : oldmaps \(reddit.com\)](https://www.reddit.com/r/oldmaps/comments/8041x5851/helena-montana-city-limits-in-1909/), accessed February 27, 2021.

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**"BIRDSEYE" IMAGES OF HELENA**



**1875 Birdseye Map of Helena, looking west, showing the West Side (above Curtiss Street) before development and the Yaw Yaw Ditch running along the base of Mount Helena. Library of Congress, American Memory Map Collection.**



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**1883 Birdseye, looking west, showing Hawthorne School (Labeled B), lack of development above the school, and the line of the Yaw Yaw Ditch running above. Library of Congress, American Memory Map Collection.**

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**HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS**



**MHS Photograph Archives Pac 86-72.01. West Side neighborhood overview, circa 1888-1892. Howard J. Lowry Photograph.**



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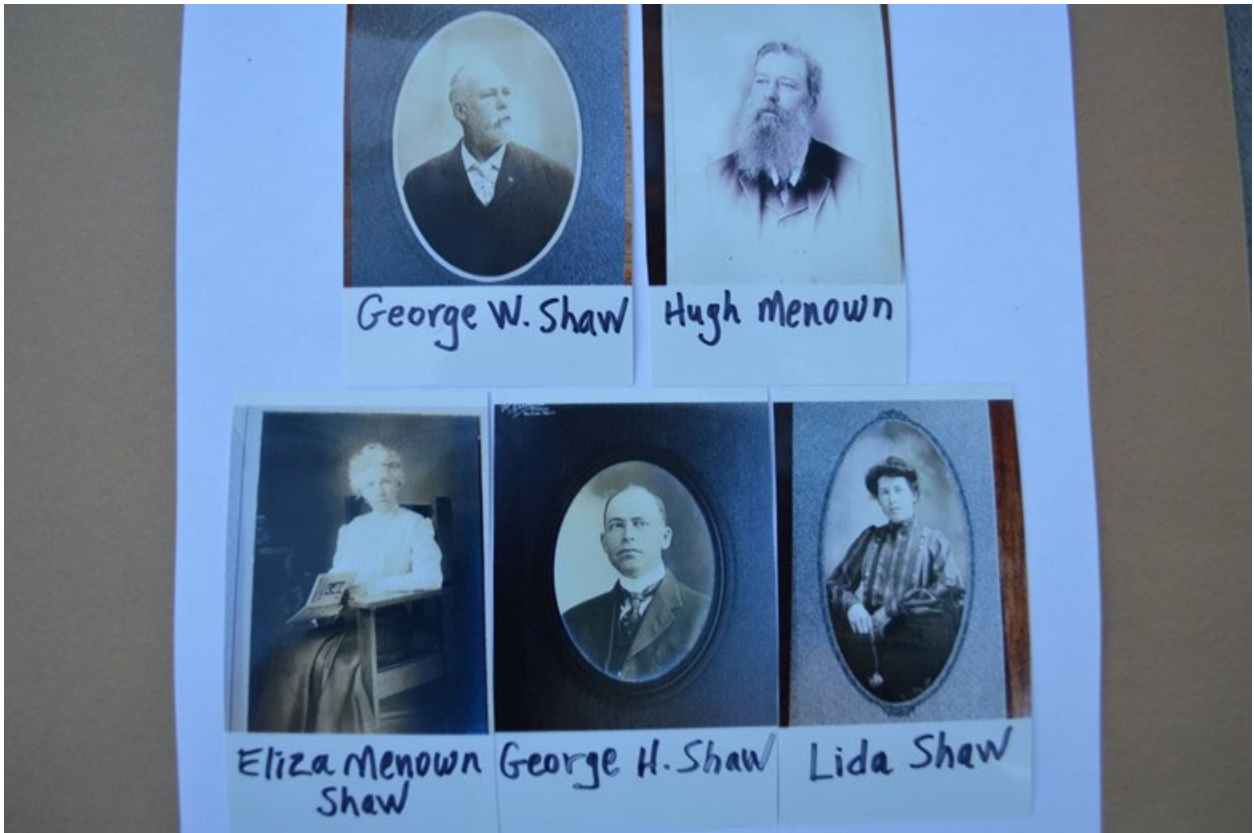
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**Shaw's Best Factory. Historic photo, factory and outbuilding, south and east facades looking southwest. Shaw family photo collection, 1893-1930.**

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**Shaw's Best Factory. Shaw family portraits, Shaw family collection.**

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### **National Register Photographs**

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

### **Photo Log**

Name of Property: Shaw's Best Factory

City or Vicinity: Helena

County: Lewis and Clark

State: Montana

Photographer: Daniel Sidor

Date Photographed: January 2021

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of \_\_\_\_.

See below

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0001 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. East Elevation looking west.**



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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0002 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. West Elevation looking northeast.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0003 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. South Elevation looking northeast.**



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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0004 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
North Elevation looking south.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0005 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. First floor interior, looking west.**



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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0006 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. First floor interior north wall, horse stall windows, looking northwest.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0007 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
Second floor interior burnt rafters and adjacent replacements from the 1933 fire.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0008 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Second floor interior, east residential/production room, looking northwest.**



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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0009 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Second floor interior, east residential/production room, south wall looking southeast.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0010 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
Second floor interior, west residential/production room, looking west at pedestrian entry.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0011 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Second floor interior, west residential/production room, east wall, D & D motor.**



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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0012 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Second floor interior, east residential/production room, west wall, Hunter Lightning Sifter/Mixer looking west.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0013 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Second floor interior, east residential/production room, west wall, Hunter Lightning Sifter/Mixer and rotator shaft, pulleys and belts looking southwest.**



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Name of Property

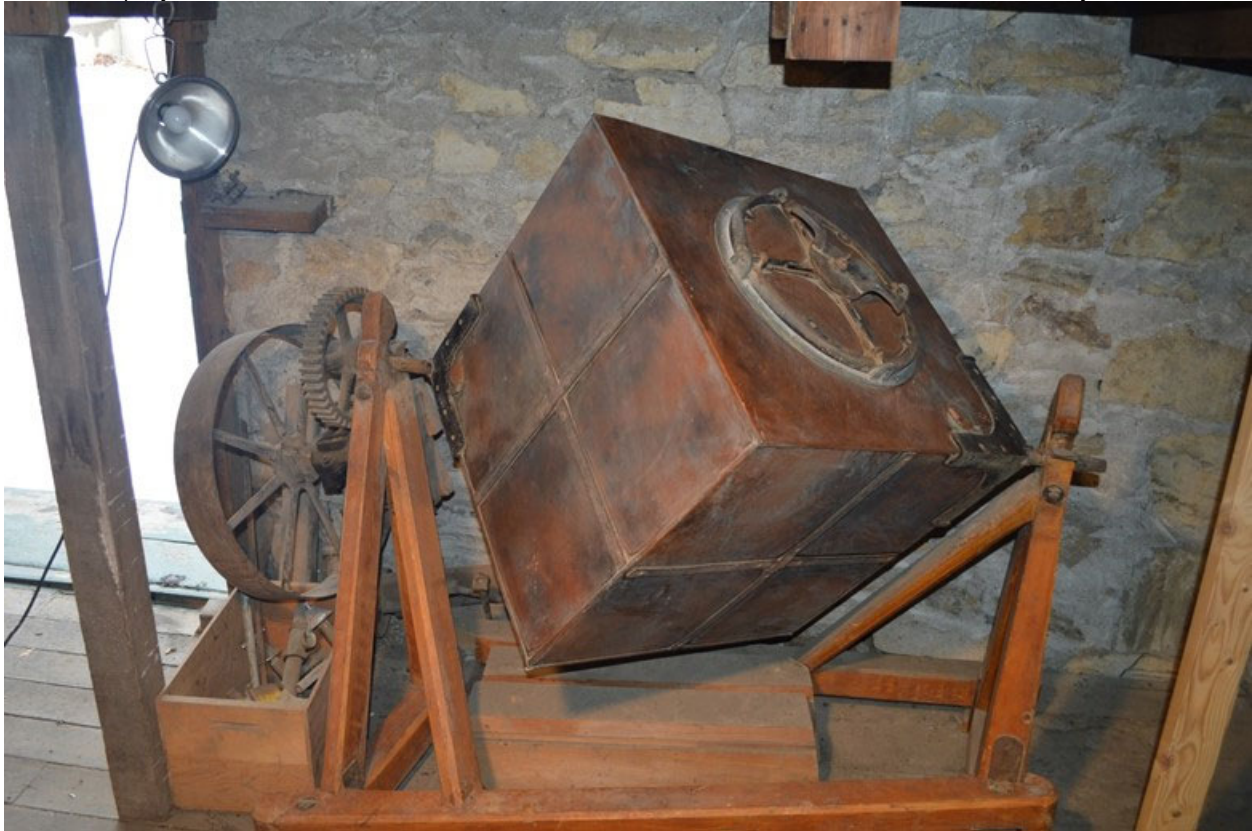
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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0014 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
Close-up photograph of mixing box, looking south.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0015 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
Second floor interior, north storage room, north wall, Whipple Rectangular Churn.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0016 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory.  
Second floor interior, storage room with entry into residential/production rooms, west wall,  
Packing and Weighing Apparatus.**



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MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0017 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Shaw's three products.

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0018 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory. Four different Baking Powder Labels.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0019 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory packaging.**

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**MT\_LewisAndClarkCounty\_Shaw'sBestFactory\_0020 of 0020: Shaw's Best Factory Advertisement.**

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for nominations to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.). We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for each response using this form is estimated to be between the Tier 1 and Tier 4 levels with the estimate of the time for each tier as follows:

- Tier 1 – 60-100 hours
- Tier 2 – 120 hours
- Tier 3 – 230 hours
- Tier 4 – 280 hours

The above estimates include time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and preparing and transmitting nominations. Send comments regarding these estimates or any other aspect of the requirement(s) to the Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Drive Fort Collins, CO 80525.