

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. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Durlacher Residence  
other names/site number 48AB1500

## 2. Location

street & number 501 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street  not for publication  
city or town Laramie  vicinity  
state Wyoming code WY county Albany code 001 zip code 82070

## 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     statewide X local

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property     meets     does not meet the National Register criteria.  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 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:) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Durlacher Residence  
Name of Property

Albany, WY  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only **one** box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
		site
	1	structure
	1	object
1	2	<b>Total</b>

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC- single dwelling

RELIGION- religious facility

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE - financial institution

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late Victorian- Queen Anne

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Sandstone

walls: Stucco

Shingles

roof: Asphalt

other: \_\_\_\_\_

Durlacher Residence  
Name of Property

Albany, WY  
County and State

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Durlacher Residence faces west on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Custer Streets. The dwelling sits on a medium sized lot and an alley way runs behind the house on the east side. The two-and-a-half story, Queen Anne style dwelling is roughly square in plan, but irregularly shaped. The first-story is composed of stuccoed brick, and the upper floors are frame construction sheathed with coursed wood shingles. A porch with original turned spindle posts wraps around the façade of the home to the north elevation, and there is a steeply pitched roof. The residence retains many of its original materials and features including the majority of the windows and exterior decorations. Although the floor plan has been altered and some of the features removed, the interior of the home also retains sufficient integrity.

The Durlacher Residence is located within the Original Town plat of Laramie, Wyoming, in what was one of the first residential neighborhood developments. The neighborhood is diverse and many of the homes from the period of significance remain. Commercial development has compromised parts of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets west of the Durlacher Residence, but overall the residential streetscape and feeling of the house remain.

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### Narrative Description

The Durlacher Residence faces west on the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Custer streets in what was once a strictly residential neighborhood that is currently zoned for general business. The dwelling sits on a medium sized lot and an alley way runs behind the house on the east side. The block, like others in the neighborhood, features a poured concrete sidewalk set back from the curb by a lawn with large, evenly spaced cottonwood trees. The property is separated from the sidewalk by a new iron fence. Several mature bushes grow in the front lawn area of the home. A poured concrete driveway is found to the south of the building, and a large poured concrete area also extends from the porch in the back of the house on the east elevation. A modern, non-contributing shed sits close to the alley on the southeast corner of the lot and a non-contributing freestanding monument type sign stands in the south side of the front lawn; two posts support a panel reading the name of the business.

The two-and-a-half story, Queen Anne style dwelling is roughly square in plan, but irregularly shaped. The building has a steeply pitched hipped roof with three lower cross gables, a roof type typical of the Queen Anne style. The roof is sheathed in gray asphalt shingles with an open eave, enclosed rafter roof-wall junction with decorative shingle moldings, decorative soffit boards, and patterned bracket cornice returns on the gable ends. Decorative trim on the gable peaks matching the bracketed cornice returns has since been removed. The building also once featured a gable roof portion built up from the central hipped roof which featured a louvered wood vent in the gable end. This portion of the home was removed at an unknown date, possibly for structural reasons.

The building rests on a rough-cut, locally quarried sandstone foundation with a basement of the same under the eastern portion of the house. The first story is composed of stuccoed brick and upper floors of frame construction sheathed with coursed wood shingles. The shingled portion of the wall is flared. A detailed wooden molding runs the length of the house on all sides between the first and second stories, and also between the second story and cross gable ends.

The building features many windows, including an original, 4-light, arched window in the west façade and several with stained glass, Queen Anne style sash. The first-story windows on the building have an elliptically arched opening and most are filled with original, 2-over-2, single-hung, wood frame sash. The windows on the south façade of the building have replacement, 1-over-1, double hung, wood sash. Windows in the upper floor are set in rectangular openings and are all replacement, 1-over-1, double hung, vinyl sash.

The front, west-facing façade has a dominant cross-gable projection and adjacent wall section, each with two bays. On the first story, the dominant cross-gable projection features an original arched window. The large, 4-light window consists of a central opening filled with single-hung, 1-over-1, wood sash window with arched upper light surrounded on either side wood sash sidelights with curved upper edges. Historically, this arched window was framed with brick voussoirs capped with stone lintels. The brick has been stuccoed over and the lintels removed, but the large sandstone

Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

sill remains exposed. The adjacent wall section contains one original window.

The second story contains two replacement windows in each bay flanked by original wood shutters. In the gable end of the projection a pair of windows are set flanking a decorative paneled mullion with an eyebrow arch, a sill with curved detailing, and a carved scroll pattern in the upper portion similar to that seen on the cornice returns. The two original, square opening, fixed, Queen Anne style windows have 9 lights with smaller lights surrounding the central light. Each of the structure's gable ends has wood shingles with a scalloped edge detail.

The front porch is a prominent feature of the house and its shed roof, which extends from the junction of the first and second stories, wraps around from the west façade to the north elevation of the house. A diagonally placed gable on the northwest corner aligns with the main entrance of the house that features a replacement solid wood door with oval leaded light and rectangular sidelight set in an elliptically arched opening. The porch has ten original turned spindle supports that have been repaired at the bases as well as the original Eastlake motif bargeboard in the upper portion of the gable end. The spindle work brackets are replacements. Though historically the porch was wooden floored, it has been replaced with poured concrete and is accessed by two poured concrete steps.

The north elevation features four bays. The western bay on the first floor features an original, 13-light, fixed, wood sash Queen Anne styled window with bordering lights in stained glass of red, blue, green, yellow, and purple. The other three bays of the north elevation feature original windows. On the second story, the central and west bays have replacement windows with the original wooden shutters. The central two bays are capped with an intersecting gable-roof, the face of which features a grouping of three original windows in a variation of the Palladian window motif with a curved sill detail matching that seen on the west facade. A rectangular, 13-light, fixed, wood sash Queen Anne style window matching that found on the first story is flanked by two original, 1-light, wood sash hopper windows

The east elevation has five bays. The north bay has no windows and the bay immediately south of it projects slightly from the house. An original Queen Anne style window matching those found on the west elevation is butted up against the eaves of the hipped roof portion of the home. The southern bay contains an original window. In the southern bay of the second story, a window opening has been retrofitted to include a door leading to an outdoor staircase. A cross gabled projection on the east elevation matches the one seen on the façade, though the window unit has a somewhat less elaborate paneled mullion and the two windows are slightly smaller.

The central three bays of the east elevation feature a one-story, hipped roofed, ell with a square footprint which comes directly off of the main building. The north and south elevations of the ell each have a two-light, wood sash hopper basement window. The windows sit level with the ground and each has a shallow, semicircular window well constructed of rough cut sandstone.

On the north elevation of this projection, there are two adjacent original windows. A poured concrete pad sits outside of these windows. A shed roof dormer emerges from the hipped roof and is tucked under the eaves of the main structure's hipped roof. The dormer contains a small, original, 1-light, fixed, wood sash window on the east side. A shed roof dormer with a flush wood door extends from the south side of the hipped roof. This exit leads to the small landing of an outdoor staircase and appears to have been constructed in the 1940s or 50s when the building was converted for use as a church. During the recent certified federal rehabilitation tax credit project, an exit door was added in the south bay of the second story on the east elevation.

The one-story ell also features a stuccoed brick chimney in the center of the east wall, and a replacement, steel core door with a semicircular light in the north third of the wall. A poured concrete porch covered is covered by a flat roof with eaves that extend from the one-story ell's roof. The porch has aluminum porch supports dating from the 1940s or 1950s. The original porch supports appear to have been square wood posts. The poured concrete porch is connected to the main sidewalk by a smaller poured concrete path.

The south elevation of the building has five bays. The second bay in from the west contains a large, stuccoed brick chimney that extends several feet above the roofline. The chimney has been anchored to the roof for support. Each of the other four bays on the first story has replacement windows with canvas awnings. The second story bays contain replacement windows.

The interior floor plan of the home has been altered from its 1878 form and mostly reflects the room configuration established in the 1940s and 1950s when the building was altered for use as a church. A stage area in the main room

Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

was removed due to rot during the most recent rehabilitation and an office constructed in its place. During the 1950s, a kitchen was constructed upstairs and two of the three bedrooms were converted to a large dining room by the Salvation Army. The kitchen has been removed in the latest rehabilitation but the large, open room remains. The wood floors throughout the home are original and have been restored. The ceilings in the building are currently acoustical tiles, added when the building was used as a church. The walls are the original lathe and plaster, except for the walls of the recently constructed office. Interestingly, a large steel column runs from the ground floor to the attic supporting the main beam of the house; the column is exposed on the ground floor.

Before the house was sold to the First Christian Church in the 1945, much of the interior of the home was gutted and its furnishings and décor sold. Original features still found inside the home include double doors between the foyer and the main room, large folding doors leading to what would have been the dining room, and several wood panel doors leading to the bathroom, the original kitchen, now used as an office space, and butler's pantry, now used as a closet. The woodwork on the stairs, including the tread, risers, balusters, banister, and newel post were all restored to their original condition. The banister piece at the top of the stairs was removed. While a few of the doors upstairs, some baseboards, moldings, and the upper chair rail in the eastern portion of the building are original, most other decorative elements are not. Skirt moldings for the staircase, as well as floor, ceiling, chair, door and window frame moldings and decorative spindle work throughout the building are all replacements. The radiators throughout the building are original and have been restored.

The historic integrity of the Durlacher Residence is very good in terms of location, setting, feeling and association. The neighborhood remains residential and the house retains its residential feeling, particularly on the exterior. The only physical element that reveals that the property is used for a business is a sign. The physical integrity of the design, materials and workmanship was reduced during the conversion of the residence to institutional use. All historic fabric that remained in the building was retained and rehabilitated during the recent project. The integrity of design and materials, though diminished somewhat by changes made to the building, is certainly sufficient to convey the Queen Anne design of the building and its presence within the residential streetscape.

Durlacher Residence  
Name of Property

Albany, WY  
County and State

**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.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Community Planning and Development

**Period of Significance**

1878-1930

**Significant Dates**

1878

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

**Architect/Builder**

Klingerman, Charles

**Criteria Considerations**

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

Property is:

- 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.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance for this dwelling is from 1878, the date of construction, to 1930 when the death of Durlacher's wife, Hannah, signified the end of ownership of the home by the family it was closely associated with. In the years from 1875 to 1900, many merchants and railroad associates constructed substantial homes in the area bounded by Grand Avenue, Park, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Streets. 1930, the end of the period of significance related to the Durlacher family, also coincides with the time when nearly all of the lots in the neighborhood had been filled in with homes of various sizes, but the commercial development that currently characterizes the area had yet to begin.

**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Durlacher Residence is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A due to its association with community planning and development. It is significant at the local level. The presence of merchants was essential to the growth of Laramie, Wyoming, a town established in 1868 along the path of the Union Pacific Railroad. Simon Durlacher moved to Laramie shortly before the railroad arrived. As a clothing merchant, Durlacher provided essential commodities to the townspeople of Laramie and became a prominent citizen. His substantial residence serves as a testament for the success of his business and how such substantial residences in Laramie were located throughout much of the original plat of the town, and therefore the development of the residential portion of the community. The Durlacher Residence was one of the first of such noteworthy, merchant-built homes and remains as one of the best preserved of such dwellings.

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

The Durlacher Residence is significant in the area of community planning and development. The property signifies the importance of merchants living in the area and building large homes as a display of their wealth and influence. The Durlacher Residence is significant as an early example of these homes. This residence, in its neighborhood setting, conveys the residential development pattern in the southern portion of the original plat during the late nineteenth century. It also remains as one of the most well preserved of this group of substantial, merchant-built homes and serves as a testament to the success of his business and the prominence of Durlacher's family in the community.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information** (if appropriate)

### **The Early Development of Laramie**

Laramie, Wyoming, began in 1868 as a tent town along the construction line of the Union Pacific Railroad. Located at a staging area for the railroad, Laramie quickly became an economic center of the area. The surveying process for what would become Laramie City's Original Town plat began in February of 1868 by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. The Union Pacific platted Laramie in a generic manner common to most railroad towns, with numbered streets running in a north-south direction parallel to the railroad tracks. Lettered streets ran in an east-west direction perpendicular to the railroad. These streets were renamed sometime between 1887 and 1890 to reflect regional and national history. Because the early streets were aligned with the railroad tracks, they are slightly askew from the cardinal directions. The Original Town plat ran from 1<sup>st</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> streets, depending on the location, and from Lewis to Park Streets. Blocks in the area are evenly spaced with alleyways running in a north-south direction.<sup>1</sup>

The initial development of Laramie relied not only on the railroad, but also on the establishment of basic infrastructure. In a region as arid as Laramie, access to a reliable water source was paramount. In 1868, water from the Laramie River was provided to the town by a combination of private and community-owned systems. By the 1870s, irrigation ditches were present beside the streets and by 1874, a piped water system had been constructed for municipal use along Grand Avenue. Eventually, this system was privatized and by 1907 twelve and fourteen inch pipes were laid to serve the town. The water allowed residents to create a civilized, comfortable community. In 1870, the town was described as "completely treeless." Soon concrete sidewalks and curbs were poured and the strips between the sidewalks and curbs were planted with grass and evenly spaced cottonwood trees. By the end of the 19th century the area was reported to be well developed with homes having groomed lawns. These homes included modest wood-framed cottages and more substantial and stylish dwellings.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1870 and the economic depression of the 1890s, Laramie was regarded as the most industrialized city in Wyoming. Laramie had several railroad support industries including machine shops and the first rolling mill constructed

<sup>1</sup> "Laramie [Wyoming], 1887." Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Sanborn Map Co., 1887; "Laramie [Wyoming], 1890." Sanborn Fire Insurance Map. Sanborn Map Co., 1890; Mary Humstone, "National Register Nomination, Laramie's University Neighborhood Historic District," Section 8, 71, 73; "Official Plat Map of the City of Laramie," Laramie, Wyoming City Engineer, 1924.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Humstone, "National Register Nomination, Laramie's University Neighborhood Historic District," Section 8, 73; Residence and Business Directory of Laramie City, Wyo. (Laramie, WY: Boomerang Book and Job Print, 1883)

Durlacher Residence

Albany, WY

Name of Property

County and State

west of the Mississippi River. The local railroad tie treating plant processed 1,250,000 ties annually. There was also a planning mill, a glass factory, cigar factory, and a soda works plant which produced lye, soda ash, caustic soda and salt cake from raw materials found in the nearby soda lakes. In addition, Laramie served as an important shipping and processing center for local agriculture and boasted a flour mill, tannery, and wool market to serve local sheep and cattle ranches. Unfortunately, many of these industries never fully recovered from the severe winter of 1886, which decimated the cattle industry, and the ensuing economic depression of the 1890s. Nevertheless, Laramie had a thriving commercial sector in its downtown where residents, settlers, and students found manufactured goods brought in by the railroad.<sup>3</sup>

Additional infrastructure improvements, civic developments, and community initiatives coincided with the early economic growth. The first school was built in 1869, and a larger, improved building called the "finest public school building in the territory" was constructed in 1878 at what were then the far eastern limits of town on 7<sup>th</sup> and Garfield Streets. The economic stability resulting from the railroad, local industry, and commercial enterprises provided the civic stability to establish a city hall, court house and jail, hospital, and fire department. Residents had access to several newspapers, telephone service in 1882, and electric lights by 1896. The University of Wyoming was founded in Laramie as a land-grant University in 1886 and established its campus on 9<sup>th</sup> and University Avenue soon thereafter. The prosperity within the community led to the development of a club house and an opera house. In addition, Laramie residents had social and religious interests and leaders arose from the various economic sectors. Laramie had Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches by 1883, as well as nearly twenty fraternal organizations or societies.<sup>4</sup>

Through the 1920s, the Union Pacific Railroad Company continued to be the major employer in Laramie, but other industries did contribute to the prosperity of southern Wyoming. The Standard Oil Company operated two refineries in Laramie, and in the 1920s the oil industry was "booming and [the] monthly payroll was large." The natural resources in the Laramie area also provided materials for brick and tile factories, plaster mills, and a cement factory. In 1924, three of the four plaster mills in Wyoming were located in Laramie; the annual plaster production of which varied between 35,000 and 40,000 tons.<sup>5</sup>

Despite fluctuations in its industrial and economic base, Laramie grew steadily. In 1870, Laramie had 828 residents. This number expanded over sevenfold by 1890 when the population reached 6,338. By 1910, Laramie had grown to a population of 8,200 with only a slight increase to 8,609 by 1930. The large majority of Laramie's residents at the time were building homes and businesses within the original town plat, including Simon Durlacher whose business and residence were both within that area. Eventually growth of the University pushed development east.<sup>6</sup>

### **Substantial Residences in Early Laramie, Throughout the Neighborhood**

The Durlacher Residence, which was built in 1878 by Charles Klingerman and occupied by the Durlacher family, was a substantial home in Laramie during the late nineteenth century, and one with a stylish presence.<sup>7</sup> In addition to it likely being one of the early Queen Anne style homes in Laramie, it had eleven rooms and was built on a corner lot.<sup>8</sup> The Durlacher Residence in its neighborhood conveys the nature of residential development in Laramie during its early decades. At the time it was built in 1878, the neighborhood around the Durlacher Residence was already quite diverse and continued to be throughout the period of significance. A mixture of merchants, clerks, railroad workers, and laborers all lived in the blocks surrounding the residence. This diversity is evident in the types of buildings present, as there are

<sup>3</sup> Mary Humstone, "National Register Nomination, Laramie's University Neighborhood Historic District," Section 8, 72, 75.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Lou Pence, The Laramie Story, (1968), 25.

<sup>5</sup> Mary Humstone, "National Register Nomination, Laramie's University Neighborhood Historic District," Section 8, 73; Mary K. Mason, ed., Laramie, Gem City of the Plains, (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corp, 1987); The Center of Southern Wyoming's Industrial and Recreational Area, Laramie Council of Industry, Laramie and Albany County Wyoming, 1924.

<sup>6</sup> City of Laramie, Background and Existing Conditions Report for the City of Laramie. Rep. No. 1982, (Laramie Planning Commission, Fall 1982).

<sup>7</sup> "Purchase of Land by Simon Durlacher from Charles and Ella Klingerman," November 8, 1978, Personal records of Jon L. Johnson; Decree of Estate, Hannah Durlacher Gramm, Deceased January 14, 1930," October 7, 1937, Personal records of Jon L. Johnson; "Laramie [Wyoming], 1931," Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, Sanborn Map Co., 1931.

<sup>8</sup> Amy Lawrence, "Simon Durlacher: The Clothing Prince of Laramie," Wyoming History Journal, Volume 68 (Winter 1996); Whiting Map, Laramie City, 1885, American Heritage Center; J.H. Triggs, History and Directory of Laramie City, Wyoming Territory, (Laramie: Daily Sentinel Print, 1875); Residence and Business Directory of Laramie City, Wyo., (Laramie, WY: Boomerang Book and Job Print, 1883).



Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

substantial houses built by prominent merchants and higher ranking railroad employees, smaller single-family dwellings owned by clerks and tradesmen, shotgun houses owned by laborers, and several boarding houses where railroad workers, laborers, and students resided. Residences were constructed of a variety of materials including wood, brick, stone, stucco, and timber frames. The initial residential development of Laramie occurred within the fairly small original plat. This led to people of varying economic levels living in the same area.

This development pattern that is somewhat different from the one where a certain street or discreet neighborhood was the location of the majority of the most impressive homes in a community. Instead, in Laramie, the architectural style, materials used, and the location or orientation of the building on the block often expressed the social and economic position of the owner. The homes of merchants and higher-ranking railroad employees tended to be large, frequently with more than one story, have more stylistic influences, often occupied the corner lot, and constructed of higher quality materials. These properties displayed the affluence and prominence of the owners within the community of Laramie, more so than location. Consequently, the Durlacher Residence in its neighborhood setting conveys how residential architecture conveyed status and success in Laramie, as well as the success of its merchant owner, Simon Durlacher.<sup>9</sup>

There are several examples of other substantial homes built in the area by merchants and businessmen between 1875 and 1900 which are still standing in the large neighborhood of the southern portion of the original plat to document the pattern of development. Merchant Charles Trabling built a two-story Italianate-style brick residence at 320 5<sup>th</sup> Street in 1875, the same year that newspaper proprietor William Chaplin erected a gambrel-roofed brick house at 419 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Two brothers who were skilled craftsmen, William and George Naismith also built in 1875, a two-story brick Queen-Anne house at 619 5<sup>th</sup> Street. This house had typical Queen Anne-style forms with a two-story bay window and a complex intersecting gable roof; the Free Classic style porch has round columns. Charles Klingerman built the Queen-Anne style house long associated with the Durlacher family three years later. Merchant E.H. Lehman built a Queen Anne style brick house with round-arched windows similar to those in the Durlacher Residence at 618 Grand Avenue during the early 1890s.

The size and presence of the dwellings reflected the success and prominence of the builders. W. H Holliday Lumber Company foreman and contractor Frank Cook built a Stick-style wood-framed residence at 612 7<sup>th</sup> Street in 1883. This house has stylistic development, but is not a large dwelling. County physician Dr. J. H. Finrock selected a Queen Anne cottage for his residence at 400 6<sup>th</sup> Street completed in 1885. The Queen Anne style window sash and the Free Classic style porch with columns were gestures at stylistic expression in an overall rather plain dwelling.

Brick was the preferred building material as it represented higher cost, fire resistant construction, and permanence. Though simpler in style than the Durlacher Residence and other substantial homes, the dwellings built by fireman and engineer James Ponting in 1875 at 601 5<sup>th</sup> Street and A. M. Baumant at 606 7<sup>th</sup> Street in 1883, demonstrated how a mason built in brick with arched window openings. John Mast, a mason by trade, demonstrated his skills in the house he built in 1883 at 609 5<sup>th</sup> Street, which incorporated corbelled forms and rowlock arches as window heads.<sup>10</sup>

At one end of the spectrum, the most prominent merchant and town benefactor, Edward Iverson, built a quite large Queen Anne style house designed by Laramie architect, W. E. Ware. Completed in 1892 for the sum of \$40,000, the Iverson Residence was truly was the city's mansion. The home of Laramie merchant W.H. Holliday, of the Holliday Lumber Company, was nearly equal in stature. Holliday built a large Queen Anne style mansion with a polygonal tower on the northwest corner of Garfield and 4th Streets between the years of 1887 and 1890. The Iverson and Holliday Residences provide a context for the substantial and stylish, yet larger size of merchant house than the Durlacher Residence represents.

### **Simon Durlacher, Frontier Merchant**

Simon Durlacher was born January 31, 1837, in Schmieheim, Baden, Germany. He and his family immigrated to

<sup>9</sup> Amy Lawrence, "Simon Durlacher: The Clothing Prince of Laramie," Wyoming History Journal, Volume 68 (Winter 1996); Whiting Map, Laramie City, 1885, American Heritage Center; J.H. Triggs, History and Directory of Laramie City, Wyoming Territory, (Laramie: Daily Sentinel Print, 1875); Residence and Business Directory of Laramie City, Wyo., (Laramie, WY: Boomerang Book and Job Print, 1883).

<sup>10</sup> Various maps, city directories, and Albany County Assessor Records were used to determine the owners and building dates for those houses comparable to the Durlacher residence.

Durlacher Residence

Albany, WY

Name of Property

County and State

Pottsville, Pennsylvania, in 1852. Durlacher's career as a merchant began shortly after when he began clerking in a dry goods store while attending business school. In 1861, Durlacher enlisted as a private in the Sixth Pennsylvania Reserves, Company H, and fought in the Civil War until 1864 when he was severely wounded in the shoulder at Gettysburg. After being discharged, Durlacher moved to Burlington, Iowa, and began working in the L. Lehmann clothing store. While in Burlington, he joined the Masonic Lodge, of which he was an active member for the remainder of his life.<sup>11</sup>

In 1867, Simon Durlacher moved to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and worked for Ben Hellman in a dry goods store and as the railroad began to move west, so did Durlacher. He arrived in Laramie in April of 1868, just before the railroad, as manager of the Laramie branch of Ben Hellman's dry goods store. The store was operated out of a tent and then a log cabin. Durlacher later worked for a men's clothier, H. Frank, and then in 1871 formed his own store with partner William Manesse, selling men's clothing on one side and tobacco and jewelry on the other. In 1872, the log building they had been operating out of was torn down and construction began on their "two-story brick building with an iron front," at 203 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in the downtown area. The Masonic Hall Laramie Lodge, of which Durlacher was an active member, was housed in the upper story of the commercial building until 1882.<sup>12</sup>

In 1878, Durlacher visited the East coast on a buying trip and was introduced by a friend to Hannah Gross. Gross had been born in 1853 in Koenigheim, Baden, Germany, and was living in Boston with her uncle. The two were married on October 2, 1878, returned immediately to Laramie, and moved into the residence at 501 5<sup>th</sup> Street. The house had been constructed by local architect and builder Charles Klingerman. Klingerman and his wife, Ella, purchased the lot from the Union Pacific Railroad Company in 1874 for \$150. They built the house sometime between 1875 and 1878 and may have lived there. Klingerman's work is yet to be documented, but it is evident that the family was well off from his appearance in local news items and his service as a legislator. The Klingerman family moved to Kansas in 1878 and Durlacher purchased the improved property with residence at a cost of \$2,000.<sup>13</sup>

The Durlacher family was wealthy and popular and their names, especially those of their three daughters Blanche, Hilda, and Jeanne, were often listed in the social columns of Laramie newspapers. In 1883, Durlacher gained attention by adding a basement, plate glass windows, a drinking fountain, and gas lights to his downtown business. The newspapers also noted that in 1888, wallpaper and tinted paints were added to the family home.

As a successful merchant and influential resident of Laramie, Simon Durlacher was involved in a variety of organizations, boards, and committees as well as active in politics. He was a prominent member of the Masonic Hall Laramie Lodge 1. He also participated in Maennerchor Hall and the Grand Army of the Republic, the Custer Post. Durlacher was elected an Albany County Commissioner in 1874 and was also appointed to the Penitentiary Committee by governor in 1878. He served as a Democratic delegate to the party's first state convention in 1890.<sup>14</sup>

Simon Durlacher died in 1893 in Laramie, Wyoming. A large funeral, hosted by the Masons, was held at the residence. That same year, Durlacher's brother-in-law, A. M. Bauman, formerly a manager for a Trabing Brother's store and owner of a grocery store, took over the Durlacher clothing business. The store failed by 1897 and was bought out by another local business, the Temple of Economy. Hannah Durlacher was remarried in 1909 to prominent Laramie businessman Otto

<sup>11</sup> Amy Lawrence, "Simon Durlacher: The Clothing Prince of Laramie," Wyoming History Journal, Volume 68 (Winter 1996): 19; "Simon Durlacher Dead," Laramie Daily Boomerang, July 19, 1893: 3; Walter C. Reusser, Through the Halls of Time: Historical Sketch of Laramie Lodge No. 3, A.F. and A.M. 1870-1945, (Laramie, Wyoming: Laramie Printing Company, 1945), 10; Walter C. Reusser, History of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of Wyoming, 1874-1974, (Order of the Grand Lodge of Ancient, Free, and Accepted Masons of Wyoming, 1975), 83.

<sup>12</sup> "Old Landmarks Fast Disappearing," Laramie Daily Sentinel, August 27, 1872; "Simon Durlacher Mansion: The Role of the Masonic Lodge in Laramie, Wyoming, 1869-1893, Statement of Significance," Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, May 2006.

<sup>13</sup> Amy Lawrence, "Simon Durlacher: The Clothing Prince of Laramie," Wyoming History Journal, Volume 68 (Winter 1996): 20; "Approval of Land Sale from the Union Pacific Railroad to Charles Klingerman and Ella Klingerman, Lot 5, Block 229," November 12, 1874, Personal records of Jon L. Johnson; "Albany County Republican Ticket, C. Klingerman for House of Representatives." Laramie Daily Sentinel, August 28, 1877; Gladys Beery, The Front Streets of Laramie City (Laramie: Albany Seniors Inc., 1990), 96; "Gone East: Mrs. Klingerman and family head for Kansas," Laramie Daily Sentinel, December 3, 1877; "Purchase of Land by Simon Durlacher from Charles and Ella Klingerman," November 8, 1978, Personal records of Jon L. Johnson.

<sup>14</sup> Evelyn Hodgell, Faces and Voices of Laramie: Mr. Simon Durlacher, (Laramie Plains Museum, 1994); Amy Lawrence, "Simon Durlacher: The Clothing Prince of Laramie," Wyoming History Journal, Volume 68 (Winter 1996): 19-20; Gladys Beery, The Front Streets of Laramie City, (Laramie: Albany Seniors Inc., 1990).

Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

Gramm. The two continued to live in the Durlacher Residence. Hannah Durlacher's death in 1930 ends the period of significance for the residence as it signifies the end of ownership by the occupants with whom the house was closely associated with.<sup>15</sup>

### Later History and Rehabilitation

The Durlacher's daughter Hilda, who had married prominent Laramie businessman Neale Roach in 1905 at the Durlacher Residence, lived with her husband at the home from 1905 to 1941, when the couple built an International-style residence at the corner of 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Grand Avenue. In 1945, the Durlacher Residence was sold to the First Christian Church. In what may have been a family dispute over ownership, many of the interior features including furnishings, decorative moldings and light fixtures were removed and sold prior to the sale. The First Christian Church remodeled the interior of the home to accommodate church services.<sup>16</sup>

In 1954, the Salvation Army acquired the property and altered the second story of the interior to accommodate a soup kitchen. Modifications were also made to the exterior of the home between 1945 and 1954, although it is unknown which of these two owners were responsible for the changes. The building may have also been stuccoed during this time. The residence was built with locally fired brick, known for its limited durability. During interior renovations, it was noted that the brick walls were in unstable condition so it is likely that this building, like many others in Laramie built of local brick, received a stucco exterior treatment to maintain stability of the lower story. The Salvation Army occupied the property until 2005, when it was sold to Jon and Sheila Johnson, the present owners.<sup>17</sup>

The use of the neighborhood has changed significantly since the construction of the Durlacher Residence in 1878, though enough dwellings remain to clearly indicate that it was a residential one historically. The area is currently zoned for general business, with large portions of 4<sup>th</sup> and some portions of 5<sup>th</sup> Street dedicated to commercial use. In past decades, many of the large homes built by merchants, especially on Grand Avenue and Garfield, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 4<sup>th</sup> Streets, have been demolished or moved in favor of building commercial properties. The Durlacher Residence has maintained a good level of integrity throughout these changes.

The interior of the residence has been rehabilitated by the Johnsons using federal rehabilitation tax credits. The owners were able to restore all remaining historical features of the residence to their original character, thus maintaining a good to very good level of integrity in the areas of design, materials, workmanship and feeling. Even with the heavy presence of commercial space, overall the neighborhood retains a residential feeling and the current business use of the Durlacher Residence is evident only by the presence of a single sign. The association with the neighborhood community places this residence in an historical context that allows it to be understood as a key piece in the development of the surrounding area.

By establishing a clothing business in Laramie shortly before the arrival of the railroad, Simon Durlacher played an important role in shaping the community. He and his family were well-known in Laramie's business and social circles. The prominence of the Durlacher Residence in the neighborhood adjacent to the downtown commercial district solidifies its local significance under criteria A, in association with community planning and development. The Durlacher Residence typifies the pattern of important Laramie citizens owning substantial homes and portraying their influence in the community.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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<sup>15</sup> "A Large Funeral," Laramie Daily Boomerang, July 20, 1893; "Durlacher Clothing Co. Are Going Out of Business," Laramie Daily Boomerang, March 18, 1898; "Honorable Otto Gramm," Gramm File, Laramie Plains Museum.

<sup>16</sup> Laramie Plains Museum Docent Handbook, Laramie Plains Museum, 2009; Mary K. Mason, ed., Laramie, Gem City of the Plains, (Dallas, TX: Curtis Media Corp, 1987); Jon L. Johnson (Personal Interview, November 19, 2009).

<sup>17</sup> "Deed of Sale from the Trustees of the First Christian Church to the Salvation Army, a California Corporation," March 9, 1954, Personal records of Jon L. Johnson; Jon L. Johnson, "Edward Jones: 40 Years of Business in Laramie, Wyoming," 2009.

Durlacher Residence

Name of Property

Albany, WY

County and State

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Name of Property

Albany, WY

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Durlacher Residence  
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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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**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): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.2 acres  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>13</u> Zone	<u>451020</u> Easting	<u>4573585</u> Northing	3	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing
2	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing	4	<u>          </u> Zone	<u>          </u> Easting	<u>          </u> Northing

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

The property is located on lot five of block 229 in the Original Town plat in Laramie, Wyoming.

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

The boundary includes the parcel historically associated with the Durlacher Residence.

**11. Form Prepared By**

Durlacher Residence  
Name of Property

Albany, WY  
County and State

name/title Carly-Ann Anderson  
organization \_\_\_\_\_ date April 8, 2010  
street & number 1801 Gordon Road telephone 307-214-7747  
city or town Cheyenne state WY zip code 82007  
e-mail [camander@uwyo.edu](mailto:camander@uwyo.edu)

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

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

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property: Durlacher Residence**  
**City or Vicinity: Laramie**  
**County: Albany County** **State: Wyoming**  
**Photographer: Richard Collier**  
**Date Photographed: 7-22-2010**

**Description of Photograph(s):**

- 1 of 7: north elevation, entrance, and west elevation, camera is facing southeast
- 2 of 7: north elevation, camera is facing southeast
- 3 of 7: entrance, camera is facing southeast
- 4 of 7: west elevation, camera is facing east
- 5 of 7: west elevation and south elevation, camera facing southeast
- 6 of 7: east elevation and north elevation, camera facing southwest
- 7 of 7: south elevation and east elevation, camera facing northeast

---

**Property Owner:**

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Durlacher Residence  
Name of Property

Albany, WY  
County and State

name Jon and Sheila Johnson, S & J Properties, LLC  
street & number 501 South 5<sup>th</sup> Street telephone 307-742-3739  
city or town Laramie state WY zip code 82070

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.