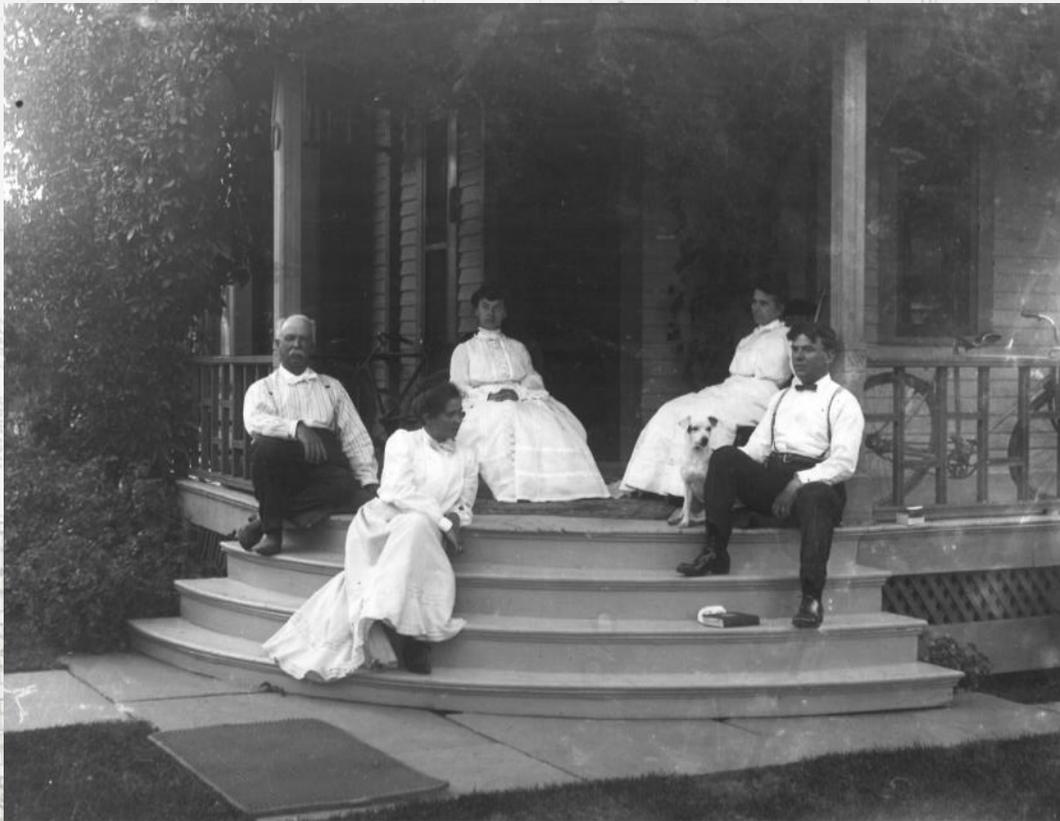


# HISTORIC HOUSES OF FORT MORGAN, COLORADO



In 1908, Fort Morgan became unique by offering free electricity to power a 40 watt porch light. This allowed the city to glow at night, thus earning the nickname "City of Lights." Two prominent Fort Morgan bankers, M. L. More (left) and his son-in-law J. H. Roediger (right) relax with their family on the front porch of the More home located at 423 East Platte Avenue.

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## Sherman Street Historic District

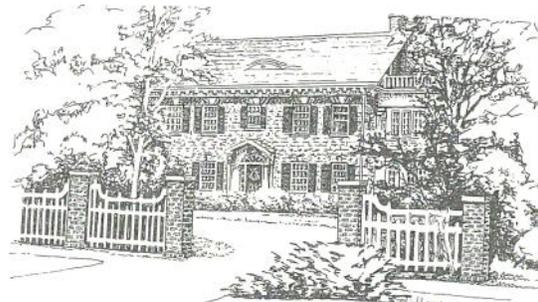
Four Sherman Street houses built from 1886 to 1926 were placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior on September 10, 1987. The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources. The standards set by the National Park Service are uniform throughout the nation. The homes are significant for their individual architectural styles and for their association with prominent pioneers of Fort Morgan. Fort Morgan has a history of vigilance and resourcefulness in reclaiming the great plains and making them into prosperous farms.

The historical district was part of the original 160 acre tree claim made in 1883 by George Warner (a leading promoter and developer of Fort Morgan). In those early days, Sherman Street was not only a vehicular thoroughfare, but also a route for cattle and sheep which were moved from the Burlington railroad stockyard to the outlying farms. Sherman Street remained a dirt and gravel road until 1945.

Illustrations by Robin J. Laws



Warner House



Bloedorn House



Graham House



Curry House

A special recognition to Alyse Campbell whose research and expertise made this publication possible. Also, thanks to Lyn Deal, Don Ostwald, Chandra McCoy, and McKinley Thompson for their contributions.

This brochure and map are compliments of the City of Fort Morgan.

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## Sherman Street Historic District



### 508 Sherman Street “Warner House”

1

Victorian, Queen Anne (1886)

Around 1900, the original, hand formed, soft brick homestead house was completely remodeled into a one-and-one half story Queen Anne style. A polygonal tower and low balustrade were constructed in the L above the front corner entrance. The sloping porch roof is supported by Tuscan columns.

The Warner House is significant for its association with its original owner, George W. Warner. He and several friends incorporated the Fort Morgan Land and Canal Company that brought the first irrigation water to the area. With a fellow pioneer, he founded, edited, and published the Fort Morgan Times. As a politician, he was involved in the formation of Morgan County out of old Weld County. He was the first clerk of the District Court and the first Justice of the Peace in Morgan County. The house was built for his bride, Louise Farnsworth, a lively lady with a great enjoyment for life.



George W. Warner



Louise Warner

### 428 Sherman Street “Graham House”

2

American Foursquare (1914)

Ralph and Olivia Graham, who also owned 8,000 acres of farms and grazing land known as the Bijou Ranch, chose Sherman Street for their town home. The American foursquare styled house was designed by Denver architects Stein and Westfall and contracted by William Killebrew for \$10,628. This typical two-story square plan was constructed with stuccoed brick walls, and it is topped with a hipped roof, gabled dormers, and broad overhanging eaves. The focal point of the facade is the gabled entry porch supported by heavy square piers. On the south lawn, a long pergola designed to support grape vines connects to a gazebo at the east end.

Ralph Graham was active locally and statewide in the livestock industry. He organized the Morgan County Lamb Feeders Association and was president of the Colorado Nebraska Lamb Feeders Association. He was appointed by Colorado Governor Carr to the State Highway Board.

Olivia Graham was an heiress to the fortunes of the Gilmer Lumber Company of Remig, Texas and contributed significantly to the social quality of life in Fort Morgan.



Olivia Graham



The pergola at the south lawn of the Graham House.

## Sherman Street Historic District



### 440 Sherman St. “Bloedorn House”

3

Georgian Revival (1926)

The traditional Georgian house is a combination of various Colonial styles and designed by Denver architects Mountjoy and Frewen. The Georgian style is predominant in its brick exterior with decorative quoins and classic symmetrical two-story form. The moderately pitched roof has an eyebrow dormer and the eave overhang is embellished with a modillioned cornice and dentils. The front door is accented by a porch which is supported by Tuscan columns and decorated with an elliptical fanlight and side lights. The two-story south sun room has a low balustrade on the flat roof.



John and Corliss Bloedorn

In 1919, John and Corliss Bloedorn moved to Fort Morgan from Nebraska to purchase the Fort Morgan State Bank which quickly became the Farmers State Bank. John served as president from 1919 to 1967. The bank's original building, located on the corner of Main Street and Kiowa Avenue, is now on the National Register of Historic Places. John also served on the board of directors of the Great Western Sugar Company for 10 years.



### 404 Sherman St. “Curry House”

4

Victorian, Queen Anne (1898)

James P. Curry bought the first two acre lot from the Warner farm for \$150.00. Curry's brother-in-law, Charles Eyser, was the contractor who built the two and one-half story wood framed Queen Anne styled house. The wrap around front porch is decorated with turned balusters, a spindle frieze, and fan-like brackets under the eaves. The second story square porch has a pyramidal roof topped by a finial.

The outbuildings include a water tower that once supplied the house with indoor running water with the help of a now demolished windmill. A barn with an attached carriage house was built for the Curry's milk cow and matching thoroughbred horse team and buggy.

Curry's genius in the business field had a profound effect upon the development of Fort Morgan. In 1888, J. P. and Alma Curry homesteaded a ranch south of Fort Morgan. By 1890, J. P. became active in the founding, promotion, and administration of banks. He became the president of the First National Bank in 1903. He took an active part in directing irrigation projects and served 20 years as president of the Fort Morgan Irrigation District. He also served one term as Morgan County Commissioner in 1895.



James P. and Alma Curry

## 407 Sherman St. “Ivo Dyar House”

5



Ivo B. Dyar

Foursquare (1909)

This simple foursquare home, with a large porch, doric columns and wide set windows, boasts a special history for the people of Fort Morgan. Purchased by local nurse, Ivo Dyar, it opened in 1916 as the city’s first maternity home. According to the *Fort Morgan Times*, “the two bedrooms were large enough for four patients, and a larger room on the first floor was used for surgical procedures and deliveries” (Anderson). This served as the only hospital facility of any kind in the city from 1916 to 1921.

After a brief hiatus, Ivo Dyar returned to Fort Morgan to help open the city’s first full hospital on June 1, 1923. This 25 bed hospital, located at 1100 State Street, repurposed the former dormitory of the Great Western Sugar Co. During its tenure, it served as many as 16,224 patients and oversaw the delivery of approximately 3,000 babies. This hospital served the area until the opening of what was then the Fort Morgan Community Hospital and is now known as Colorado Plains Medical Center in 1952 (Anderson).

Ivo Dyar was dauntless in her pursuit of proper facilities for her patients, and a strong supporter of the local community. She enjoyed attending the local high school athletic events and often provided transportation to athletes and coaches. According to her adopted son, Joe Dyar, “people nowadays like to use the term ‘mover and shaker,’ and Ivo was one of those people back then.”

## 718 Sherman St. “Dulweber House”

6



Judge Alfred Dulweber  
(center), with friends Rufus  
Johnson (left) and George  
Glenn (right)

Bungalow (1909)

Composed of simple, low lines surrounded by a sweeping porch, this home demonstrates the inherently cozy feel of the bungalow style (Walker 184). The columns that frame the porch add Classical flair and demonstrate the adaptability of this style. The multi-gabled roof is an interesting feature of this home as it steps outside the typical Western bungalow, with a more gradual pitched roof. Distinctive in the bungalow style, and characteristic of this home, is the creation of large walkways or stoops that encouraged visitors to gather. The large sweeping porch would also allow for outdoor seating and visiting, leaving the interior of the home available for visits from close friends and family (Walker 185). This home also features a beautiful period kitchen completed in 1958 and preserved in excellent condition. It includes painted steel cupboards, a built in stove with an overhead vent system, and a unique hidden built-in refrigerator.

Alfred Dulweber arrived in Fort Morgan in September of 1917. A Catholic and member of the Elks club, he served as a local attorney for some years with his partner, F. E. Pendell. His success as an attorney provided the income to purchase this home in 1929. He later served as the Morgan County Judge from 1936 to 1952.

**“Roediger Mansion”**

Georgian Revival (1920)

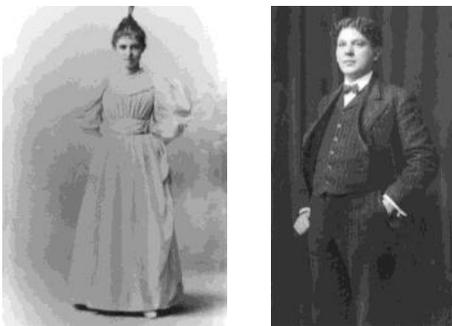


Built with strong, clean lines and great attention paid to symmetry, this lovely brick home harkens back to a simpler time. The upper level of the home is framed by three dormer windows, while each side of the house has a large 8-over-8 sash window on both the upper and lower levels of the home. Above the front door, there is a large pediment, which is also distinctive of this style.

Known locally as the “Roediger mansion,” this home is one of the most noteworthy of the remaining homes along Platte Avenue, and has a long and interesting history. The home was originally owned by J. H. Roediger and Susan More Roediger. Mrs. Roediger’s father, M. L. More, was also a prominent figure in early Fort Morgan. A banker by trade, M. L. More also owned a large home located next door to this current property. He served as City Council member, Mayor, and founded the Morgan County National Bank. He died in 1912, when his residence caught fire and the home was completely destroyed. Rumors in Fort Morgan flew that the fire was deliberately set, but no legal charges were ever filed.

J. H. Roediger was an important person in the development of Fort Morgan in his own right. He worked for the Morgan County National Bank and Great Western Sugar as a liaison to the newly arrived German-Russian workforce, who spoke only German. As president of the Morgan County National Bank, he later combined it with the First National Bank to form The First National Bank of Fort Morgan. J. H. and Susan had one daughter, Virginia, who would later inherit the home. The Roedigers separated in 1923 and later divorced. J. H. later re-married and lived elsewhere in Fort Morgan (Rickel 27).

Also located previously on the property is a smaller brick home that was formerly the home of the gardener and domestic servant, a married couple who took care of the home and, in the gardener’s case, the orchard later planted on the property.



Susan M. and Julian H. Roediger



Roediger family (Susan, J. H., and daughter Virginia) in their first car, a Thomas flyer, at M. L. More’s home at 423 E. Platte Ave.

8

### 530 Lincoln St.

Spanish Colonial Revival (1922)



The popularity of this style increased consistently throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and reflects a “more decorative style than either the Mission or Mediterranean style” (Pearce 47). This unique home represents a combination of many distinct Spanish elements, including its flat roof and decorative tiles along the parapet, as well as the wrought iron window fencing and stylized front door. Homes of this style were typically constructed of stucco, and painted light colors (Pearce 47). It is an important landmark in Fort Morgan, because it is one of the most well maintained examples of this style that remains.

Little is known about the original owners, Augusta and Leroy Jacox. However, the oral history of this house claims that Augusta designed the home with details that mimicked her neighbor at 617 Lincoln Street, including the windows and arch above the door.

9

### 503 Lincoln St.

“J. B. Farnsworth House”

Dutch Colonial Revival (1898)



Built two years before the expansive growth in popularity of this type of home, the distinctive gambrel roof or “dutch roof” makes the style of this home obvious (Pearce 42). This home is distinctive in that there are two distinct gambrels that intersect near the top of the roof where the chimney is located. The original front porch, as seen in the photograph from 1947, was substantial and included sweeping columns that supported the gambrel roof with overhanging eaves, another distinctive aspect of the Dutch Colonial Revival style (Pearce 43).

The original owner of this home was J.B. Farnsworth, who served as mayor, county clerk, and city clerk. A man of many pursuits, he also ran a local grocery store and sold insurance. When he died in 1935, he was serving as the municipal magistrate. Locals knew him as “Uncle Joe” and as an avid supporter of the local athletics programs. (Rickel 86).



Joseph B. and Hattie Farnsworth

#### Please Note:

All houses included in this brochure are private residences. Please be respectful of the homeowners as you enjoy the tour.

10

**231 Lincoln St.**  
**“Atchinson House”**

Edwardian Vernacular (1905)



This home was constructed with local baked brick and stucco and has a sweeping open porch that frames most of the first story and the brick exterior. The local kiln, known as the Killebrew & Burk kiln, was owned by the father of the longtime resident Robert Atchinson. This house represents a strong example of the quality of the locally produced bricks as well as a slight shift away from the heavy ornamentation of the previous Victorian era. Houses of this style tend to be simpler with multi-gabled roofs, dormer windows, and some classical detailing (Pearce 28).

The former owner, Robert Atchinson, was a man of many talents. He formed the Atchinson-Dailey construction company in 1907, and he and his partners built many reservoirs and ditches in the area. He also owned a livery stable in town. Atchinson owned the first 4 door car in Fort Morgan, a 1911 Maxwell (Rickel 162). He later served as a charter member of the Elks Lodge, located at 430 State Street (also a notable Fort Morgan landmark).

11

**325 E. Beaver St.**

**“The Castle” or “Edwards House”**

Queen Anne (1904)



This stunning example of the Queen Anne style, complete with a round turret, leaded glass, and varying roof planes, demonstrates the resurgence of this style in Colorado mining towns throughout the 1890s and early 1900s (Stoeh 24). Known for its intricate details, elaborate porches and woodwork, this style captures a simple, yet ornamental, time gone by.

This home was originally the residence of William A. Hill. Judge Hill, as he was known locally, later became the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court in 1918 (Western History Subject Index). He commissioned the construction of this house by Chicago architects but chose to sell the home to the William H. Edwards family in 1905.

Here, Mrs. Annie Edwards and William H. Edwards raised six children. Mr. Edwards served as Morgan County Treasurer (1900-1904), Vice President of First National Bank, President of First National Bank, and President of the School Board (1911-1917). Members of the Methodist Church, Mr. Edwards in particular is remembered for his faithful, if slightly off-key singing of the hymns each Sunday (Rickel 51).



Annie and William H. Edwards

## 505 Ensign St.

12

### “George Patterson House”

Edwardian Vernacular (1900)

Built at the crossroads between these two historical periods, (the reign of Queen Victoria, which ended with her death in 1901, and that of her son, King Edward), this home demonstrates significant elements of both the previous Victorian era and the later Edwardian style. Characteristic of the Victorian eclectic style, this house is taller and broader than typical Victorians. Its lack of adornment, as well as large wrap around front porch supported by large doric columns, is also one of the features typically associated with the later Edwardian period.

Former owner, George Patterson, served 3 terms as Fort Morgan Mayor (1911-1918). He served as a city council member during the construction of the current city hall, and his name appears on its cornerstone. He also owned and operated Patterson Hardware with younger brother R.L., which remained a family business until 1970. He later created the Patterson Automobile Company (Rickel 85). According to the *Fort Morgan Times*, at the time of his death in September of 1928, “Mr. Patterson was known and respected in every section of Morgan County because of his long residence here and his business dealings with nearly every family in the county” (“George M. Patterson”).



George Patterson

13

## 313 Meeker St.

Victorian Eclectic (1900)

Built in 1902 by Clare Work for his great uncle, this home demonstrates a change in scale and depth from the previous Victorian styles. Both taller and wider than its predecessors, this home showcases the spacious porch, multi-gabled roof, straight headed windows and dormers characteristic of the Victorian style but without the typical whimsical adornments (Pearce 26).

Former resident, Josiah Work, contributed to Fort Morgan by helping to build Bijou Canal as well as multiple reservoirs in the area with his partners in the Bijou Irrigation Company. He was also the father of 12 children, 11 of whom survived to adulthood. In 1902, he became one of the founding members of what was known as the United Presbyterian Church, then located at the corner of Ensign Street and Beaver Avenue. Work encouraged the development of the church community by advertising his properties, specifically west of Fort Morgan, for sale in the church publications, and attendance of the congregation grew exponentially. At the time of his death in 1909, it was the largest United Presbyterian congregation west of Chicago (Rickel 67).



Josiah Work, Jennie M. Work, and son McLean



Clarence Work and Sylvia Brownlee Work

## 816 West St.

(originally stood at 530 Ensign St.)

### “U. J. Warren Home”

Colonial Revival (1898)

This home originally graced Platte Avenue, but was moved from that location to its current plot. According to museum records, the upper floor of this home is the original main level. It was raised and the lower floor constructed below it at the time of the move. The predominate large windows in the front lower level and on the north side of the house are Colonial Adams style windows as are the columns that frame the porch. The Colonial Revival marked a period of including these colonial details on Victorian or even post-Victorian buildings (Pearce 40).

Original owners, U. J. Warren and Lillian R. Warren, moved to Fort Morgan in 1901 from McCook, Nebraska. He encouraged families living in McCook to come west and even provided a few with jobs in his office. He was President and Treasurer of Warren Lumber Company until his death on Sept. 1, 1943. He also supported the city's early light and power projects (Rickel 88). Mrs. Warren was politically active, and she was a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The Warrens were devoted members of the Methodist church. The couple celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary on June 6, 1943. Mrs. Warren served as president of the Warren Lumber Company until her death on May 21, 1951 (Rickel 89).



U. J. Warren



Lillian R. Warren



Adults pictured from left to right include Mr. & Mrs. U. J. Warren, Martha Warner, Ruth Warren, and Mr. & Mrs. Stratton.

15

## 1106 E. 6th Ave.

(originally stood at 703 E. Platte Ave.)

Colonial Revival (1929)

Originally located at the corner of Sherman Street and Platte Avenue, this home has served as both a residence and hospice house. While some modernization has occurred, most specifically the addition of a tiled roof and a modern pediment, the traditional brick facade of this house remains, as does the symmetrically set windows. The addition of the portico area slightly skews the symmetrical two story form, but supports additional space on the second story.

The original residents were Max and Janet Roediger. Max worked with his brother, J. H., at First Morgan County National Bank and then its predecessor, the First National Bank of Fort Morgan. Janet was a well known piano teacher in town, whose students often gave recitals for the townspeople to enjoy. Local residents recall that the piano room was located in the southwest end of the house. It was a sun room with many windows on the west and south sides. The home also had a sort of greenhouse with huge plants growing along all four walls. The plants were not potted but were planted in a trench of soil about a 12" to 18' wide in the floor on three sides of the room.



## History of Fort Morgan

Fort Morgan is part of the high plains region that an early explorer, Major Stephen Long, called the “Great American Desert.” A city of approximately 12,000 people, it is the center of an agricultural area. As the county seat and the largest city in Morgan County, it is a destination for professional services, shopping, and a variety of social and cultural events.

Fort Morgan first existed as a military post between 1864 and 1868. The fort was created to protect mail routes, stagecoaches and wagon trains. The military fort was located approximately a mile east of the cemetery; however, there are no remains of the structure in existence today.

The city was founded in 1884 by Abner S. Baker, an energetic Wisconsin man who had moved to Union Colony Number One (Greeley). While hunting bison near Beaver Creek, Baker recognized the potential of the land if it could be irrigated. The original town plot filed by Baker in 1884 designated the town as bound by Lake Street on the East, Railroad Avenue on the South, Deuel Street on the West, and Platte Avenue on the North. Canal building began in earnest, and the period between 1900 and 1920 was one of rapid growth.

Constructed in 1905, Jackson Lake was the first in a series of irrigation reservoirs and canals which provided water to the farmers. In 1906, The Great Western Sugar Company built a large factory located northeast of the cemetery. The factory became the economic engine for the region, and local farmers were encouraged by Main Street businessmen to grow sugar beets. During the early 1900s, the city developed a City Park, a waterworks, an electric generation plant, an opera house, a courthouse, the City Hall, a Carnegie Library, and a sewer system.

Locals remember the wooden sidewalks along Main Street where local businesses like Louis Kinkel’s butcher shop and Mrs. Christie’s Millinery advertised their wares. Local drug and grocery stores like Creitz Drug Store were also known for their candy counters with plenty of penny candy for children to choose from.

Today, Fort Morgan prides itself on its agricultural roots and diverse populace, with the goal of being the city of choice for current and future generations – beautiful, clean, and safe.



The Graham House  
428 Sherman St. — under construction in 1914.

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## Helpful Resources

### Websites:

Denver Public Library, Western History Resources Collection — [www.denverlibrary.org](http://www.denverlibrary.org)

National Register of Historic Places — [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov)

### Other:

The Bloedorn Research Center at the Fort Morgan Museum

Fort Morgan Times Newspaper — Archives located at the Fort Morgan Museum



The Graham House  
428 Sherman St. — under construction in 1914.