

# The Croke Patterson Campbell Mansion



## History:

The mansion is named after Thomas Bernard Croke.

Mr. Croke was born on March 4 1856 in Magnolia, Rock County, Wisconsin. The family name was originally Croak but it was changed in the mid 1800's.



Mr. Croke moved to Denver to become a School teacher, but he found employment at a local department store. Mr. Croke was employed as a clerk at the Daniels and Fisher department store. He was initially a clerk and eventually work his way to becoming the manager of the carpet department.



**The Croke furniture store**

Mr. Croke wanted to open his own business and with an investment from Daniels and Fisher he opened Thomas B. Croke & Co. The business was located at 1630 Lawrence St. Mr. Croke was also known for his experimental plant breeding.



**Inside the Furniture store**

Through his financial success, he was able to have a home constructed for \$18,000, the contractor J.M. Cochran and architect Isaac Hodgson constructed the home at 1075 Pennsylvania in 1890.

The mansion is 12,500 square feet and features a grand ballroom, nine bedrooms and nine bathrooms, a living room, a library and a dining room. It is located on 9,450 square feet of land.



Depending on the source, Mr. Croke may have never lived in the home or may have lived there for several years. The story related by Thomas Noel, Phil Goodstein and the most common story, claims that upon entering the mansion for the first time after construction, Mr. Croke did not even examine the entire home. The claim is that he stepped into the mansion and then “turned around and left, never to return”.



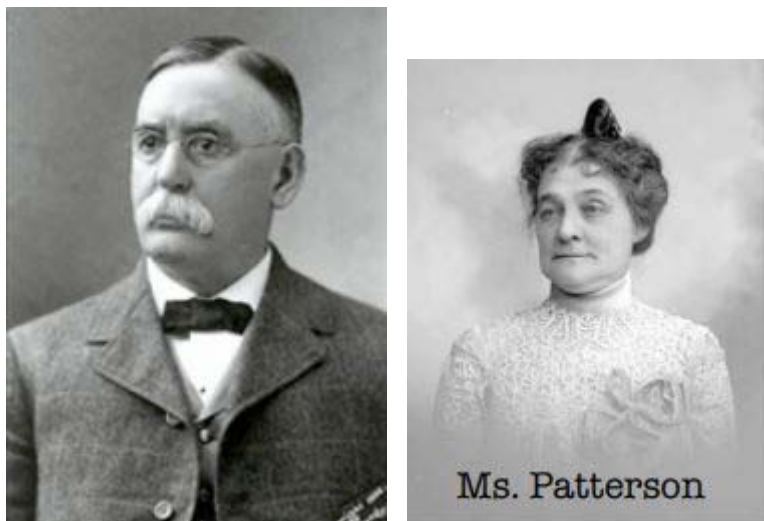
The story from Historian Amy Zimmer is that Mr. Croke and his family lived in the home for about six months. This was after moving into the home with his wife, two children and his parents. The death of his wife Margaret Dunphy Croke in 1887 and his mother seemed to have brought on the move.

Another story is that Mr. Croke was distraught because of a major loss in the silver market, so when he first went to the mansion, he realized that he could not afford to keep the home and had just walked out and found a way to get rid of it.

In 1892 or 1893 Mr. Croke traded the mansion with Thomas McDonald Patterson for Mr. Patterson's 14,400-acre Jones Lake Ranch that was adjacent to a ranch that Mr. Croke owned. The sale included all of the furnishings that were in the mansion.

There was a fire at the mansion that caused one of the chimneys to be permanently lost and required the front of the mansion to be re-constructed.

Thomas Patterson was born in 1839 in County Carlow, Ireland. A lawyer, politician and journalist. He was married to Katherine Grafton in 1863. Mr. Patterson was the Colorado State Congressman from 1877-1879. Mr. Patterson was a member of the Peoples Party, which allowed him to become acquaintances of William Jennings Bryan, the presidential candidate. Mr. Bryan was rumored to be a regular visitor to the mansion. Mr. Patterson eventually became a State Senator (1901-1907).



**The Pattersons**

In 1892 Mr. Patterson's son killed himself at the age of twenty-six.

In 1894 Mr. Patterson's daughter died of "an illness" at the age of twenty-seven.





**Looking north in the basement (kid's playroom / Medical offices)**

On July 16, 1902 Katherine Grafton Patterson died in the home. According to the reports, she died due to "nervous collapse, the result of cholera morbus"

Mr. Patterson willed the mansion to his only surviving child, Margaret Patterson Campbell. Mr. Richard Campbell and Margaret lived in the mansion with Mr. Patterson Sr. and because of the will they inherited the mansion after Mr. Patterson's death.



**First floor room**

According to newspaper reports, “a daughter, Mary G. Patterson and an infant child also died a number of years ago”.

Mr. Richard Campbell and Margaret Patterson Campbell were married in the library of the mansion in 1895, they later had three children.



**Second floor landing at top of main stairs**

In the 1890's Mr. Patterson owned controlling interest in the Rocky Mountain News and was Managing Editor. In 1905 Mr. Patterson was found guilty of contempt due to the Rocky Mountain News publishing satirical content about Denver Politics. He had exposed a blackmail scheme of Frederick Bonfils the co-publisher of the Denver Post who had threatened several Denver businessmen that he would publish negative articles about them unless they paid him off. After the article, Mr. Bonfils attacked Mr. Patterson while he was walking to work. While reports from the two newspapermen vary, it is generally accepted that While Mr. Patterson was walking to work he was ambushed by Mr. Bonfils and was knocked down. Magistrate Carlson investigated the charges of battery and the court ordered that Mr. Patterson should name the two men who had conversations with him. He charged Bonfils with blackmail in connection with the Colorado Industrial Exposition Company, which was formed to take over Overland Park. The court decided that the testimony as to the truth of the story published in the News-Times, which caused the assault and which stated that the blackmailers should be driven from the community and to the penitentiary was admissible. It was the publication of these articles that Bonfils was claiming was the justification for his attack on Senator Patterson. The court ordered Senator Patterson to give the names of the two men who supplied him with the information and charged Bonfils with blackmailing in the Overland deal. Senator Patterson

immediately replied that they were Charles Stubbs and A. H. Wahlgreen. The financial decision was in favor of Mr. Patterson. Mr. Bonfils was fined \$50 plus court costs.



**Second floor bedroom**

Mr. Patterson sold the Rocky Mountain News in 1913 to John Schafer, who would buy the Denver Republican soon after.





**Second floor bedroom under turret**

On July 23, 1916 shortly after 1:00 Mr. Patterson died of a sudden cardiac arrest. At the time he was with his daughter, the rest of the family was visiting Grand Lake. He was interred at Fairmount Cemetery. The local paper said "There will not be any use for anyone to fill his place, for there can be only one Tom Patterson".



**Second floor bedroom entrance**

When Mr. Richard Campbell and his wife Margaret Patterson-Campbell inherited the mansion, they lived there until 1924 when they purchase a new home at 909 York Street. The home on York Street in that mansion that is now the offices of the Botanic Gardens. Mr. Campbell died in June 1929 followed by his wife a year later.



**Second floor bedroom**

The mansion was sold in 1916 to the Louise Realty Company who used the mansion as the Joe Mann School of Orchestra.



Second floor bathroom

In 1927 the mansion became the home of KFVR radio



**Stairs to fire escape**

Mr. Croke died in 1929 at his home, located at 1735 York Street.



**Third floor hallway**

In 1930 the mansion was converted to an apartment building with seven units.

In 1932 the City of Denver re-numbered the address of the mansion to 430 E. 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue.





**Third floor office**

Dr. Archer and Tuleen Sudan purchased the mansion in 1947 and moved into apartment number two. The east room of the basement was used as Dr. Archers medical offices.

Dr. Archer was the President of the Colorado Medical Society 1946-1947.



**Third floor bedroom**

Dr. Sudan Jr. was given the mansion in 1958 when his father decided to move to Boulder. The mansion was still used as apartments and Dr. Sudan Jr. continued using the basement medical offices.



**Third floor Master bedroom**

Dr. Sudan had started to tour the country, talking at medical conferences and his wife Tuleen spent a lot of her time at the mansion alone. Apparently the separation and loneliness finally got to her. She purchases some cyanide based rat poison and went to a small room on the top floor of the mansion. She added boiling water to the poison, which created a cyanide gas, which killed her.

Dr. Sudan sold the mansion in October 1972



**Third floor office**

According to Phil Goodstein, after Dr. Sudan moved out is when the ghost stories started. The most common of the undocumented stories is that of an infant that was found dead in the mansion. Because of this tragedy the mother was said to have committed suicide. There were also reports of an "old man" who would wander between the carriage house and the mansion, as well as stories of a baby who was "tortured to death" in the carriage house. He also reports a ghost named "Maggie", who visits the mansion on cold nights.



**Basement storage area**

Mary Rae a local Realtor discovered the mansion just as it was being scheduled for demolition. She fell in love with the building and decided to purchase it. While Mary owned the mansion, she kept it as apartments but never lived there.

While Mary owned the mansion, she received several complaints about a room on the fourth floor. The tenants of the apartments were complaining about sounds coming from this one fourth floor room. The sounds being reported ranged from a loud party to a screaming baby. The only problem was that this was a small storage area that was not used as an apartment. She claims that she never discovered what the sounds were.



**Cat playroom**

The mansion was designated a National Historic Location in 1973.

After several years of ownership Mary Rae was having issues with the upkeep of the mansion, so she sold it to Trenton Parker in 1976.





**Main floor dining room**

Trenton Parker converted the mansion to an Office building.



**Main Entrance Room**

“My mom used to live there in the 1970’s when the mansion was six apartments and she lived on the third floor for about six months, and heard a woman screaming and a baby crying in the tower and would hear parties going on in her apartment and when she opened the door nothing would be going on. Her and the roommate that she lived with could not live there

anymore because the ghosts were very active and they could not get any rest living there". – Anonomys source



**Mirror in main entrance**

Due to the lack of upkeep and the neighborhood deteriorating, there was a problem with break-ins. There were several burglaries at the mansion, but the largest happened in August of 1976. According to Police reports, the neighbors had seen the back door had been forced open. The Police reported that six of the large stained glass windows had been removed and they found them leaning against the back wall of the mansion. When the Police did not find any suspects they left, the burglars returned later that day to complete their job.



There are reports that during the conversion to Offices, the construction workers would show up in the morning to discover tools and supplies missing and even claimed that work that had been done the previous day had been “undone” so the work had to be done again.



**Hole in the wall and floor in the basement**

During the conversion they also had issues with homeless people living in the mansion. The owner hired a security guard to watch the property overnight, but according to reports they could not find a “reliable security guard”. They would leave without any notice. The first one only lasted one day. Because of this it was decided to erect a security fence. This was not successful in keeping out the homeless people and burglars out of the mansion, so the final step was to obtain guard dogs.



**The children's room**

There are several versions of the guard dog story. The mixed stories are that there were two or three dogs, and that they were either German Shepherds or Doberman Pinschers. The story about the dogs is, on the first night the dogs were left for the night and one of them jumped from the third floor turret window "killing itself". The story has other variations, one story has the first dog jumping to its death and another was found in the basement hiding and whining in a corner. Or that there were two dogs who had jumped out of the third story turret room on consecutive nights. There are newspaper reports suggesting that a dog jumped out the front window on the first floor. It was suggested that this was caused by a homeless person who had encountered the dog and thrown it through the window. A person on Facebook claims to have seen a German Sheppard jump from the "tower window" in 1979.

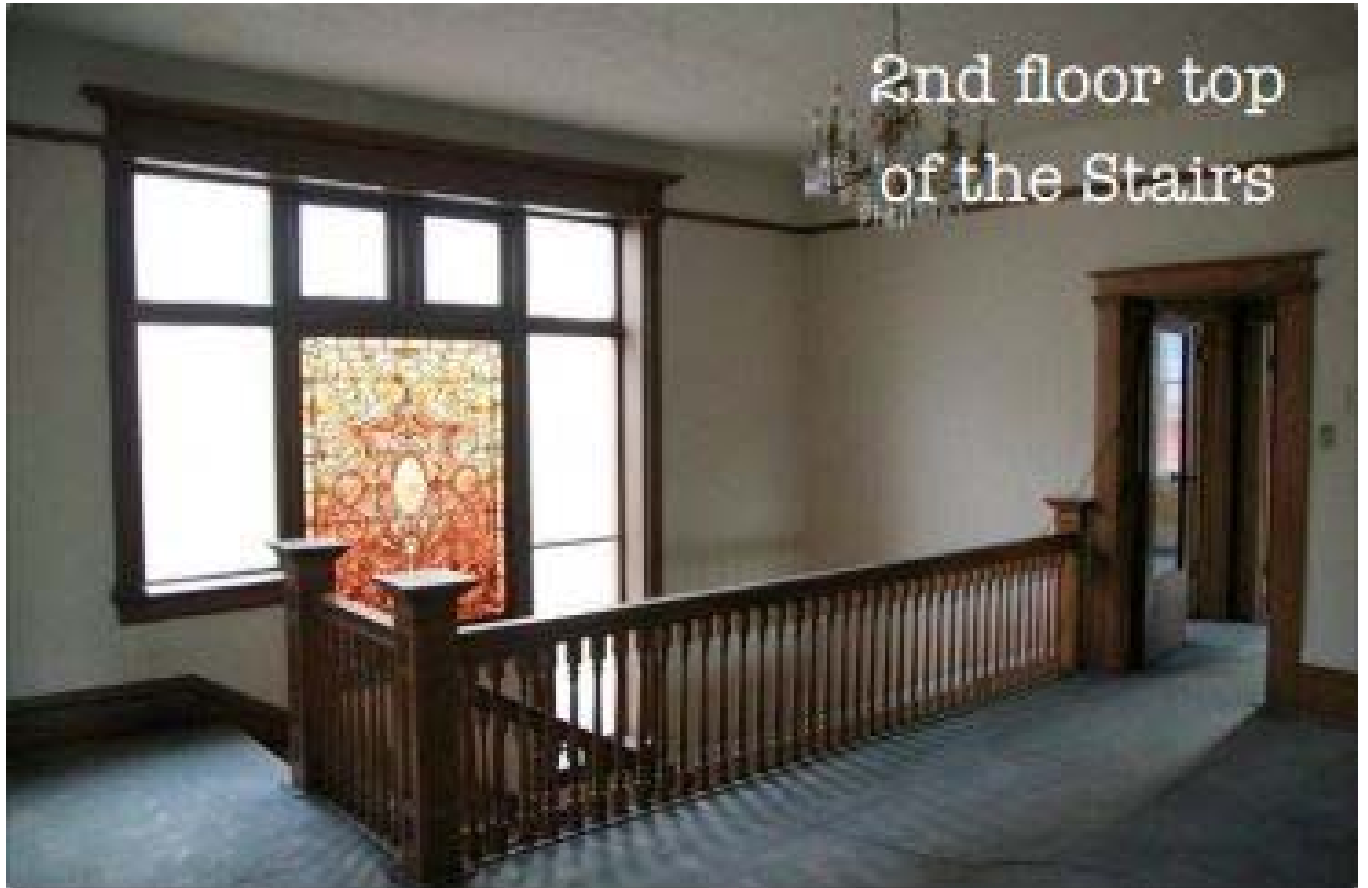


**Kitchen on the first floor**

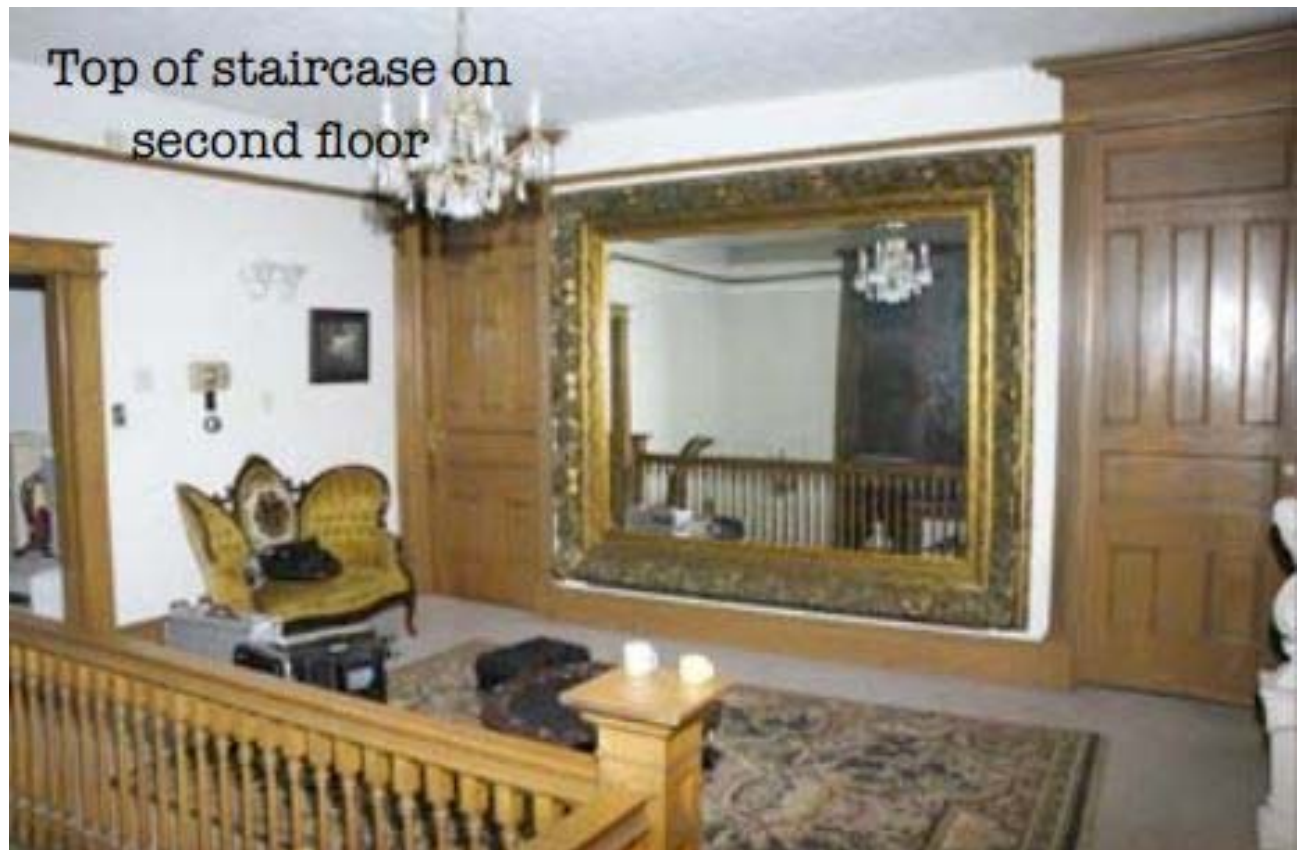


After the conversion of the mansion to offices, employees started to complain of odd events. They claimed that office equipment would turn on and run by itself, and several people reported unknown documents would appear on the copy equipment.

In the 1980's sweeps week, the mansion was featured several times on the local news. They had live séances, during one of these séances a reporter claimed to see an apparition "glide up the main staircase".



During another media stunt a Medium was invited to the mansion by a local newspaper. She claimed that there was the body of a young girl buried in the basement. They dug a hole in the concrete floor and knocked a hole in a supporting chimney wall and discovered nothing. The holes remain.



The television show Perry Mason featured the mansion in the episode “The case of the Glass Coffin”, in 1991. It was featured as law offices.

In 1996-1997 Claudia Hall Christian had her first psychotherapy office in the mansion. Her office was “the door left to the second floor mirror”. She was there until the mansion was purchased in 1998.



**Basement Laundry room**

In 1998 the mansion was sold to Dr. Douglas and Melodee Ikeler for \$600,000. They lived in the mansion for 10 years



Dr. Douglas Ikeler moved to Colorado to set up his veterinary practice.



Upon purchasing the mansion, they had the front door etched with "The Ikeler Castle"



**Knight at the bottom of the main stairs**

Mr. Ikeler is quoted as saying "It was everything I dreamed of, I was wealthy and looking for a grand architecturally magnificent historic mansion." "I was able to live in a large place shaped like a castle with fancy and elegant interior and exterior."



**Main room during the Ikeler's stay**

At the time Mr. Ikeler was worth over ten-million dollars with an annual income of \$300,000.



**Room between main house and Carriage House**

In October of 2002 the mansion was featured as a backdrop for the television show *The Scariest Places on Earth*, where a Highlands Ranch woman (soon to be a "world famous psychic") claimed that she lived and witnessed paranormal activity.





**Basement storage room with architectural pieces**

Ikeler claims that in 2002 he had to close two of his cat clinics because of the .com marked, and eventually ending up closing the rest by 2007.



**Basement phone room**

When the Ikelers moved into the mansion, Melodee had a full time job. After the birth of their triplets she became a full time parent.



**Second floor room**

While in the mansion one evening by herself, Melodee reported that she was alone in bed and at the end of her pregnancy, she was attempting to get out of bed. Due to her condition she was having problems rolling over to get out of bed. She said "I was rolling trying to get out of

bed and looked to the side of the bed a saw a woman standing next to the bed, offering her hand to help me out. I took her hand and got out of bed. Then, she just vanished through the wall next to the bed”.



In 2004 the 850 KOA ZOO BOO Tour radio show featured the mansion. We were the featured paranormal research group. At the end of the nights broadcast, all of the people who were staying for the 5:00 a.m. broadcast was told to “find a place to sleep in the mansion”. Casey Lamb a radio station employee, decided he was going to sleep in the basement where the medical offices had been located. When he got to the room he saw a person in the corner of the room by the fireplace, then he realized that he could only see the head and he knew that there was not supposed to be anyone left in the building. He ran upstairs to get us to search for someone who had either been left behind or had broken into the mansion. Several people went to the basement and searched, but nobody was found. The next morning, one of Melodee Ikelers children said that that was where they always “saw a man standing in the corner”.



In 2004 the KHOW Peter Boyles radio show featured the mansion. We were once again featured as the on-site paranormal team.



**Stairs leading to basement**

In 2005 the Spirit PI ghost hunting team filmed what was claimed to be a "pilot" for a tv show at the mansion.





The Turret room

The mansion has been used by many different tv and radio stations from the mid 1908's to current times during the Halloween season.

Around 2006, Mr. Ikeler started requesting a "rental" fee of \$5000,00 per night for any television show, radio show or paranormal group that wanted to spend the night. This cause a sudden drop in the exposure that the mansion was getting.



**The area above the hole in the wall in the basement**

In 2007 Melodee filed for divorce and was awarded the divorce and \$580,082 court costs plus \$5000 for expert witnesses fees. She was also awarded custody and maintenance. The custody has since changed.

The Ikelers put the home up for sale in 2005. They lost the home to foreclosure in 2007.





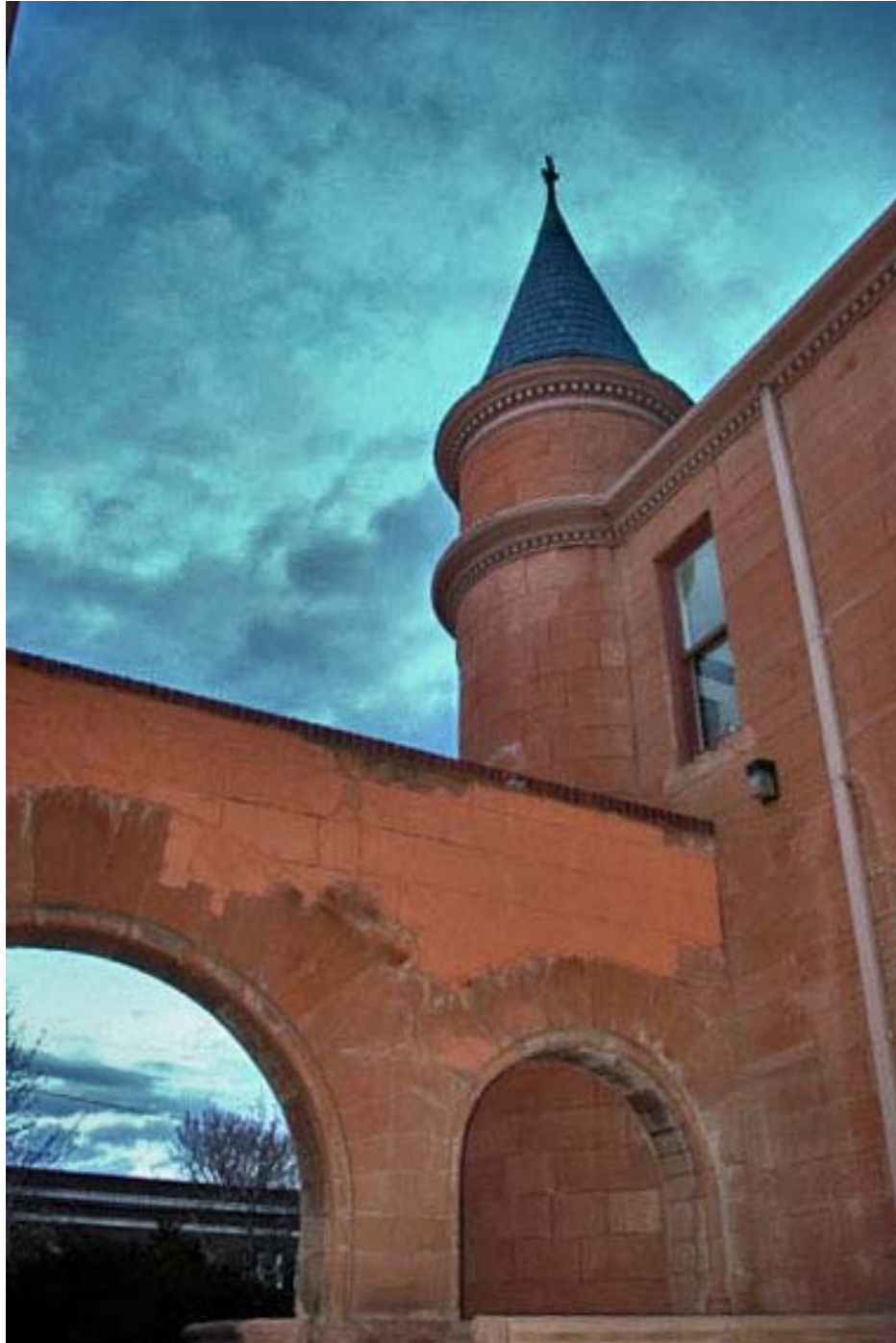
**Children's playroom on the first floor**

Mr. Ikeler is currently publishing books and doing research on "bariatric medicine and the neurological diseases that cause multiple sclerosis and fibromyalgia". He is also the publisher of a book that makes the claims that anyone can live to 150-180 years old using his "real life extension technologies". He also claims to be the inventor of the Ikeler 4000 the world's first flying car, which was to go into production in 2012 after he would set the world record for solo flight around the world to show off the car.



**Door to the turret room**

Mr. Ikeler was quoted as saying "Whoever moves into the mansion has to be wealthy, When I live there I was spending \$100,000 per year on my mortgage and another \$100,000 on taxes, utilities and insurance.



The mansion was defaulted to American Home Mortgage on 12-03-2007. The mansion then became the property of AHMSI Default Services on 03-30-2008.



**“hanging” beam in the Carriage house**

On November 17, 2009 – “I was there with a Relator last week and it remains VERY active. None of the usual suspect ghosts are there. Mostly people of recent history, it’s more like a meeting place, energetically for ghosts. One of the ghosts stated that she wasn’t a ghost at all, and some of the others were trying to get me to help her. I believe that she might have actually been a coma patient what was lost... An impressive house to be sure, but I DO NOT recommend prowling around there. Sadly, it has been broken into and is unsafe at night.” – A Local Ghost-Hunter

“Was there today 1-16-10, with my family to survey the place from an investment standpoint. I have always been sensitive to the spirit world, and have to say – I thought the home was very peaceful. There wasn’t a scary or foreboding feeling about it at all as we walked the main level and the two upper floors. The turret was interesting however and I was anxious to get out of it, but once I was out – I was fine. The home has been horribly retrofitted which is sad with a home of that grandeur – but, a building of that size has to evolve as time does I guess, to suit

various needs. Would love to make it into an amazing showpiece of a home someday. I will say, however, there was a very dark and penetrating feeling in the cellars – the game room and the family room was fine. However, the cellar areas were very unsettling and again, I was EXTREMELY anxious to get back upstairs. I truly don't know if I could live in that home – Not because of the ghost stories online, but because of the terrible anxiety that I had while in the basement. I don't believe everything that I read and found very contradictory stories as to "Maggie" the ghost who died as a child on the paranormal sites vs. historical sites where Maggie was Margaret, a grown daughter to Mr. Patterson and a very busy woman in Denver Children's home charities and such around town"

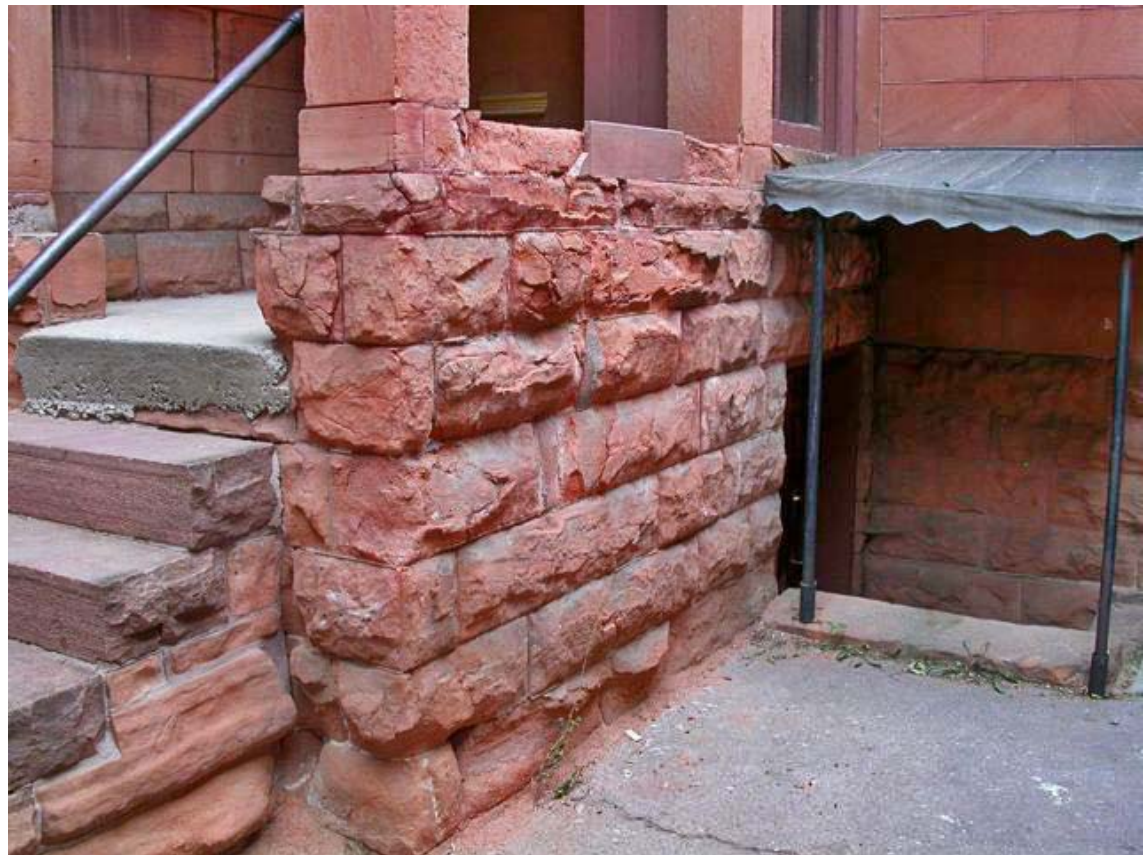


**Main room in the Carriage House**

The property changed ownership to Unique Real Estate Investments on 2-12-10.

Historic Denver hosted an event on July 15, 2010 to launch the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization.













  
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**Repairs to the sandstone**

8-4-2010, "Sadly, it's under contract to Open Door Ministries who want to open a homeless men's group facility there (and generally rip out the historic upstairs bits to maintain many SRO-style bedrooms). It was purchase by an investment group to "flip" it in January and they apparently have done minimal work and basically are trying to triple their money on the fly. The whole situation is rather odd; how does Open Door Ministries have gobs of money to pay triple what the investors paid five months ago? Why would they do that? Another of Denver's cozy real estate mysteries. sad bit s that it is putting 30 homeless men in the would really put extreme wear and tear on the site. And probably render it yet more historically inaccurate and unloved. The Open Door Ministry guy said that he hopes they'll rip out all of the bathrooms (claw feet, etc.) for plastic showers and the like in order to make it more user friendly for their targeted residents.



September 15, 2010 Because of zoning issues and neighborhood association complaints the Open Door Ministries cancelled their contract on the mansion.





The 630 KHOW Peter Boyles show featured the mansion in 2010 for the Halloween show. We were the on-site paranormal team once again.



Camera views during one of our investigations

The Colorado Historical Society awarded Historic Denver, Inc. a \$22,382 grand for a renovation study of the mansion.



Dr. Noel and Mary Rae during a broadcast with Peter Boyles



**Dennis Gallagher on live broadcast**

Amy Zimmer discovered some interesting history of the mansion. She discovered the names of several of the servants that were employed in 1900. Sophia Schafer and Michael Dorrer who had just emigrated from Germany lived and worked at the mansion. San and Sadie Winner were employed in 1910. Anna Henry and Mary Hogan who were recent Irish immigrants worked for the Campbell's in the 1920's. There was a "cook" that worked for Mrs. Croke that went to work for Mr. Patterson when the mansion changed ownership.

The mansion was placed on the market for 6.2 million dollars and showed no sign of being sold. Many people came in to look at the property, but even when they were interested in the property, nobody seemed to qualify for the loan.

After several years the mansion was sold to CPC Mansion LLC on June 9, 2011 for \$565,000. They have converted the mansion to a Bed and Breakfast Hotel.

The current owners produced a documentary about the mansion called The Castle Project. It was initially going to document the history of the building and the renovation, but it became a ghost hunting video with several ghost hunting teams and psychics being involved.



## Fire at the mansion:

DENVER — Denver fire crews rushed to protect one of Denver's oldest houses early Saturday morning after the famed Croke-Patterson Mansion caught fire.

The Denver Fire Department responded to smoke streaming from a second-floor window on the northeast side of the house at 12:39 a.m., said Division Chief Steven Garrod.

Crews used an engine ladder to get into the mansion.

The fire appeared to have started in a second-floor bedroom, Garrod said. Firefighters were able to contain the fire to the bedroom and quickly extinguished it.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. The house is under renovation, and various construction materials were present.

The house, a three-story, red-sandstone mansion



Denver fire crews at the Croke-Patterson mansion at 11th Avenue and Pennsylvania Street early Saturday morning. (Nick Groke, The Denver Post)

at 420 E. 11th Ave. between Pennsylvania and Logan streets on Capitol Hill, was built in 1890. It has Denver, Colorado and national historic-landmark designation.

In recent months, the mansion was bought by C-P-C Mansion LLC and was being renovated into a bed-and-breakfast inn.

The house is also known as a stop on haunted-history tours of the city.

Nick Groke, The Denver Post

June 24, 2012 – There was a fire at the mansion. The Denver Post reported that the fire started in a second floor bedroom.



**Damage from the fire**

The fire actually started at the top of the second story landing on the main staircase. This was attributed to the “ghosts” by several sources, but the reality is that during the renovation, one of the construction workers had left a pile of oily rags behind and they had combusted. The damage was mostly to the floor of the landing, but the Fire Department had broken a window on the second floor and continuously flooded the mansion for over thirty minutes. The lower floors suffered major water damage and the sculpted plaster ornamentation was destroyed.

**There are many stores that have no historical backing and appear to have been made up to add to the legends of the mansion:**

“In the 1970’s a baby born to the owners, died in the third floor nursery. The mother then committed suicide.”

When a séance was held by a local newspaper, they stated that “the spirit of a little girl whose body was entombed in the cellar” was there. They excavated the area and found nothing. However, when the basement was excavated, they found a hidden chamber that was supposedly filled with “sea sand”.

“Thomas Patterson, former owner of the home is said to have been seen in the courtyard numerous times”

“A man who lived in the carriage house (Willy) had abducted and killed a young boy and after killing him, he hung him from the tree in front of the building”

“A woman killed herself by hanging in the turret room that the dog had jumped from”.

“A man hung himself in the basement”

“A woman who had an infant die at the mansion was so distraught by the death of the child, she went to the cemetery and dug up the child. She returned to the mansion and buried it in the wall. After the authorities discovered the child it was re-buried and the mother committed suicide in the mansion” – this story is spread by a walking tour that features the mansion.

The Carriage House is haunted by a spirit “Willie”. Back in the day he was ordered to dig up the graves over at Cheesman Park. While he was digging them up, he was actually robbing the graves. He was using the bodies for Satanic rituals. But after a while he got bored with using dead bodies and started kidnapping people off of the street. Upstairs in the Carriage House is a steel beam that sticks out of the wall, which is where it is said that Willy would hang the bodies from. The basement of the Carriage House has a tunnel that he would use to transport the bodies from the Carriage House to the mansion (the tunnel has been closed).

There was a Dr. who married a young woman and late one night, he was called away from the mansion. His pregnant wife had delivered the child (stillborn), so she buried the child in a wall of the basement and then killed herself.

## On-Site Investigations:

We have spent many nights in the mansion with various television and radio programs, and a few time on our own with some quiet time.

February 26-27 2011

The conditions during the investigation were a little unusual because of the mansion being “winterized”, this meant that there was no running water, restrooms or heat. We supplied heat via four space heaters at the base location to make the room more tolerable.

The initial mapping and EMF readings were conducted and then repeated hourly throughout the evening.

On the first night around 2:30 a couple entered the main entrance and asked about the building. This was the first of many people who stopped by, peered in the windows or stopped to take photographs while we were there. There was even a man seen standing on the east side of the mansion standing on one of the window sills looking into the mansion early Sunday morning.

Throughout the investigation we noticed that there were several different places in the mansion that have drafts from outside. This is caused by the old windows not having a good weather seal as well as well as several windows being broken in different rooms.

One of the most noticeable of the drafts was at the bottom of the main staircase, this one was so strong that paper would blow around at our base.

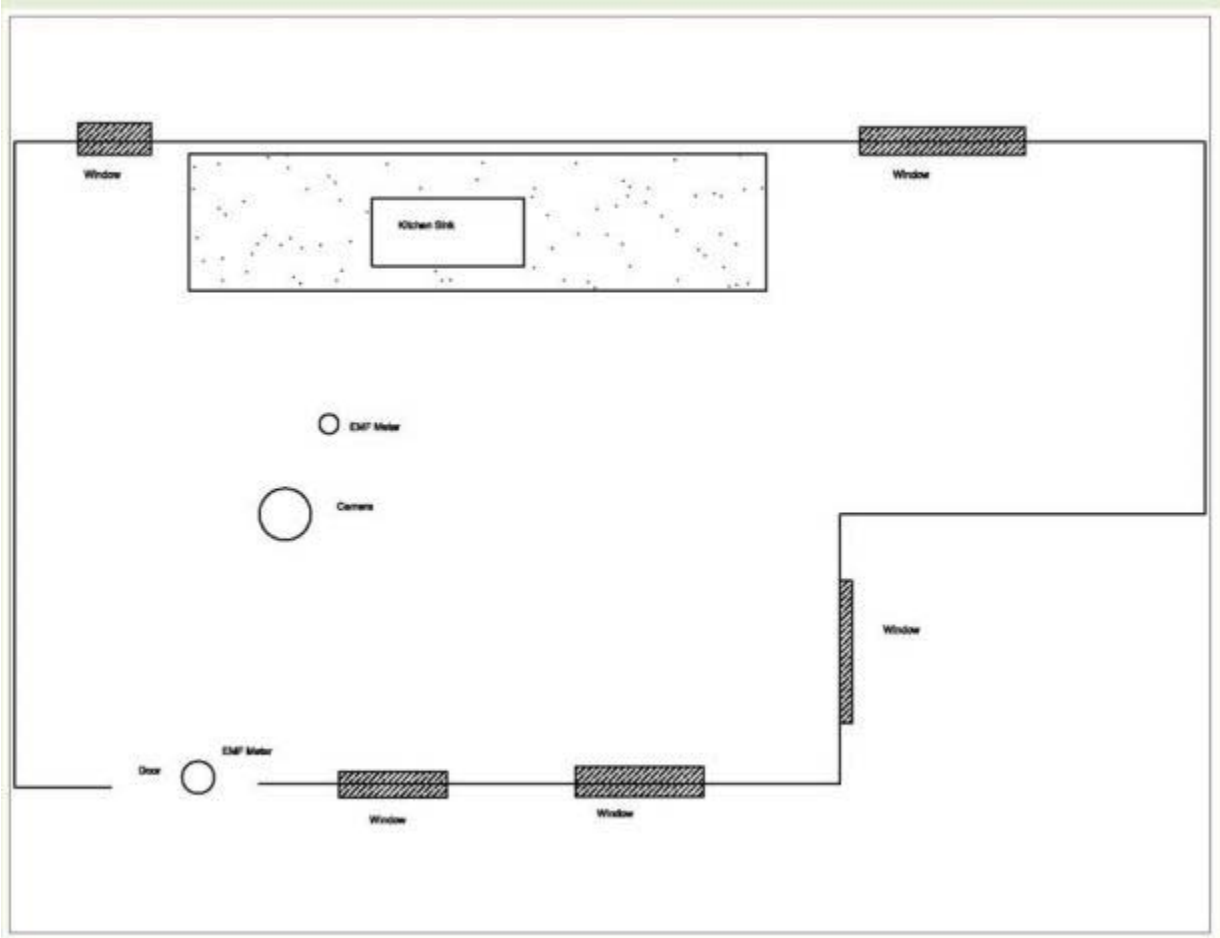
One of the most consistently reported paranormal events was that of a ghost being seen walking up the main staircase. This was discovered to most likely be an optical illusion that was caused by the bottom of a chandelier hanging in the middle of the main room. The bottom of the fixture has a large ball. When a person is walking from the east side of the mansion into the main entrance and the room is in just the right condition (low light) the ball can be mistaken for the shape of a person ascending the stairs.

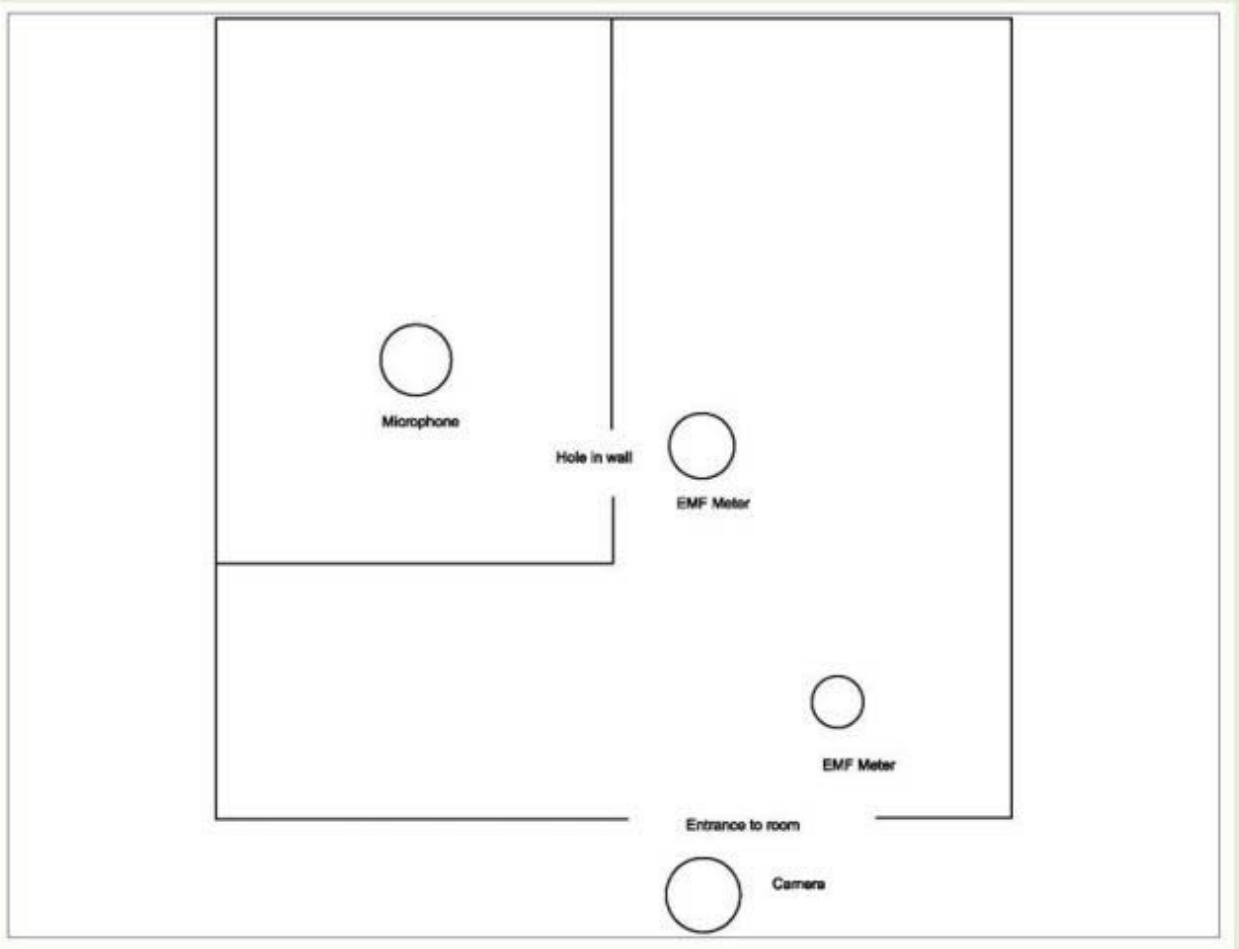
Other claims of ghostly phenomena are of seeing people walking in different rooms of the mansion when nobody is there. This is easily reproducible by watching the reflections and shadows caused by traffic on the two streets that form the intersection where the mansion is located. This effect is accentuated due to the imperfections of the antique glass.

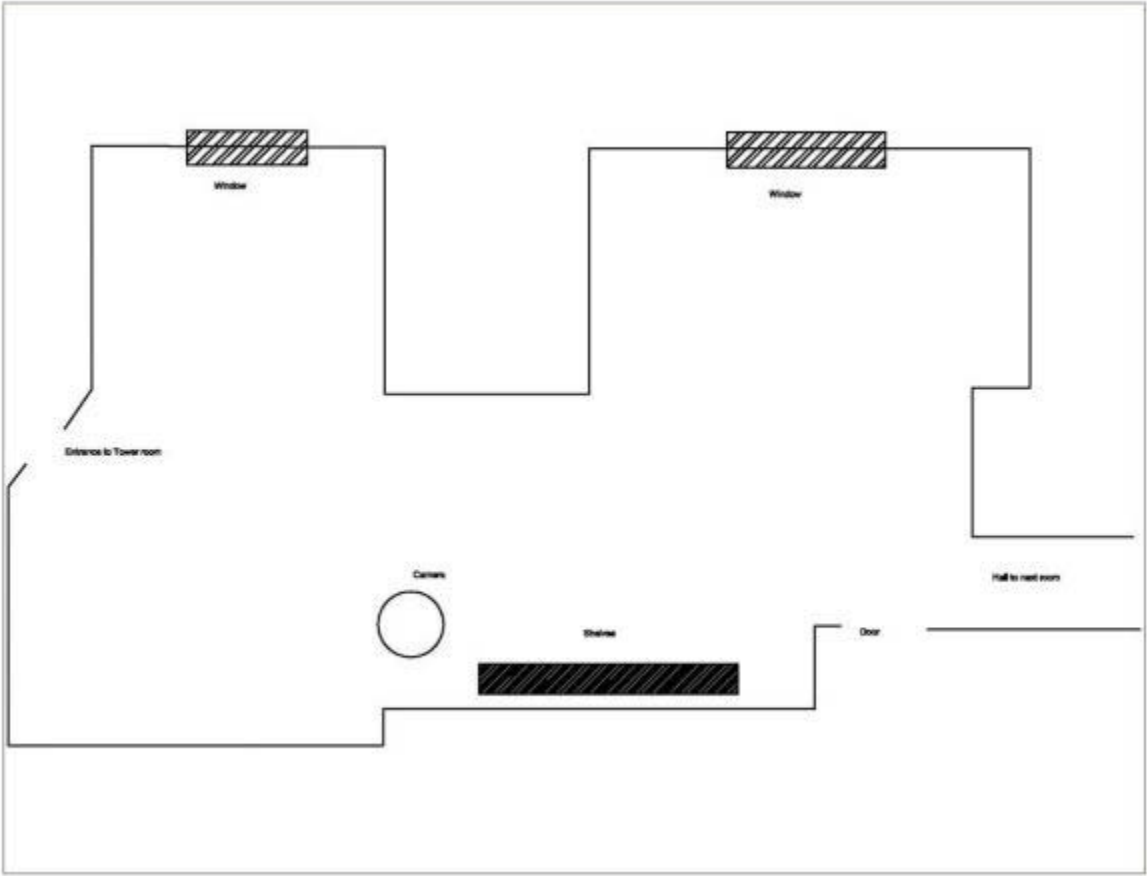
We discovered that the “hanging beam” where Willy was claimed to hang his victims in the Carriage House is actually a device used as a pulley to bring supplies to the second floor when it was an active Carriage House.

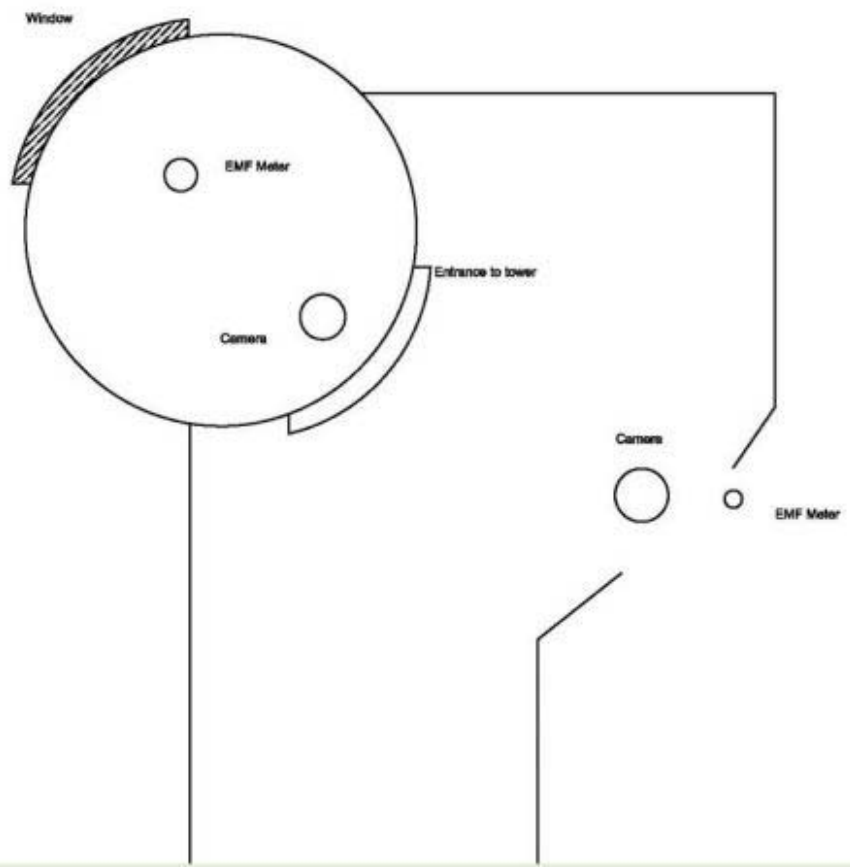
For the duration of all of our investigations, there were no unusual or unexplainable events.

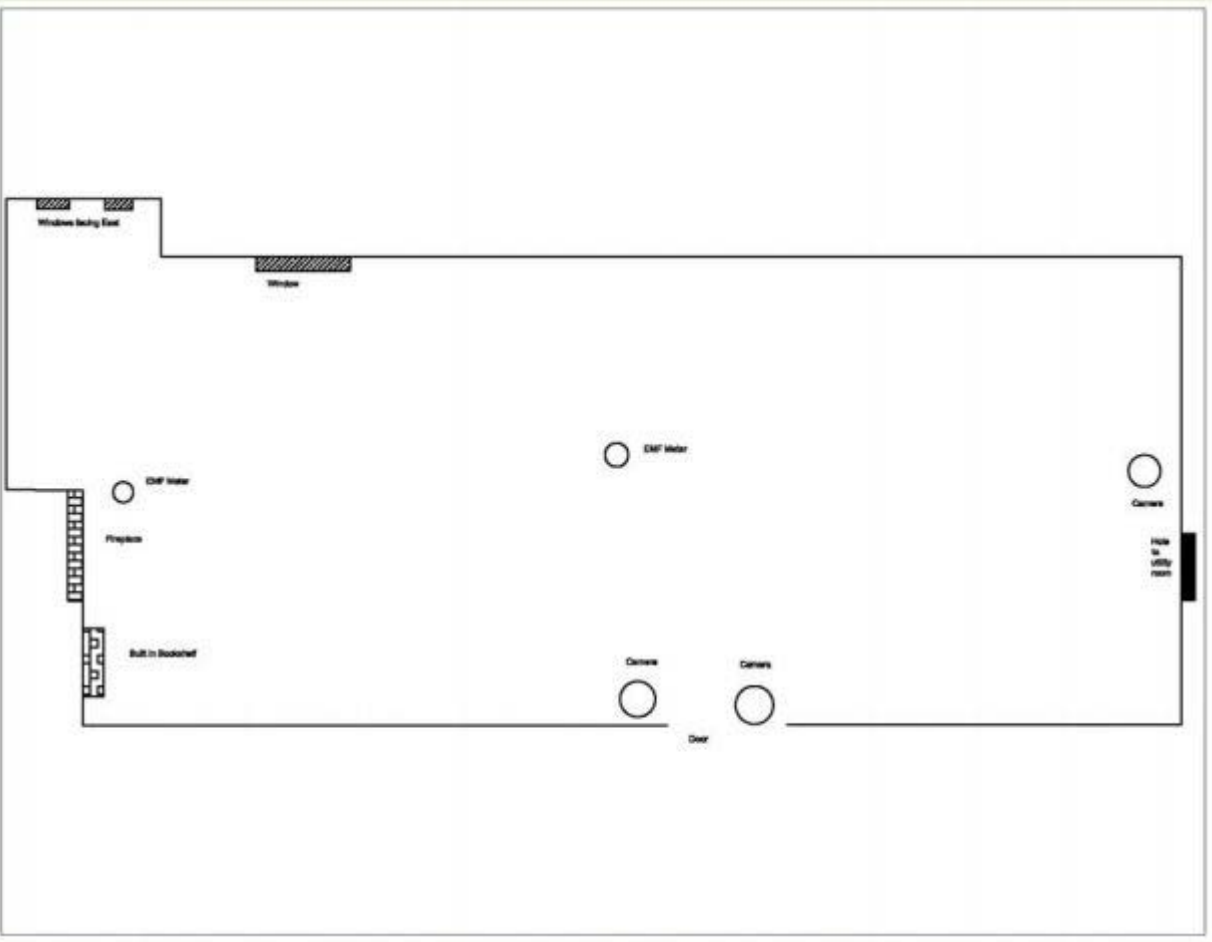




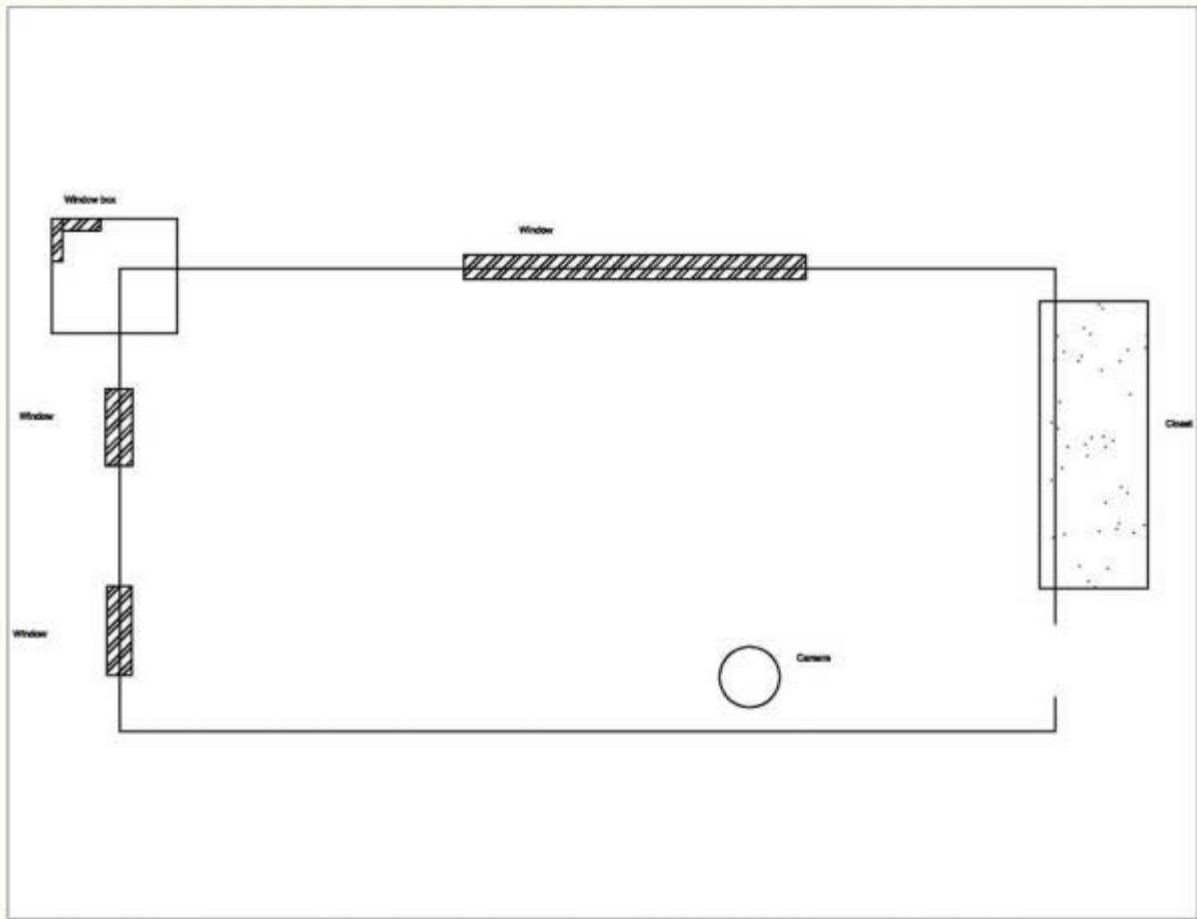














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