

Register of Old Buildings  
Macon County Historical Coordinating Council

Address: 1165 West Main  
Legal description:  
Marilia Dunham Place  
Lots 3 & 4 & W30' of Lot 2 blk 1

Date of original construction: 1911  
1915 (est. - assessor's office)

Name of original owner: Mrs. Della P. Gushard.

History:

1. Data from available city directories follows:

1909-	Directory available, but 1165 W. Main not listed.
1910-	City directory not available.
1911-	Listed as unoccupied Sept. 1, 1911 (New).
1912-1921	Mrs. Della P. Gushard.
1922-1924	Mrs. Della P. Gushard, P. H. Sproat.
1925-	Not available.
1926-1933	Sigma Alpha Epsilon.
1934-	Missing.
1935-	J. F. O'Connell.
1936-1937	E. E. Lindsay.
1938-	Della P. Gushard.
1939-1951	Gushard Apts.
1952-	Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Illinois Delta Chapter.

2. Data from office of Decatur Township assessor:

Bldg Class B  
Multi-family Apt. 2-4  
16 rooms, 2 stories  
Concrete foundation, brick (face) veneer walls  
High, gable roof of tile  
3 porches, full basement  
2 rooms - softwood floors  
13 rooms - hardwood floors  
5 bathrooms  
2 natural fireplaces  
No garage

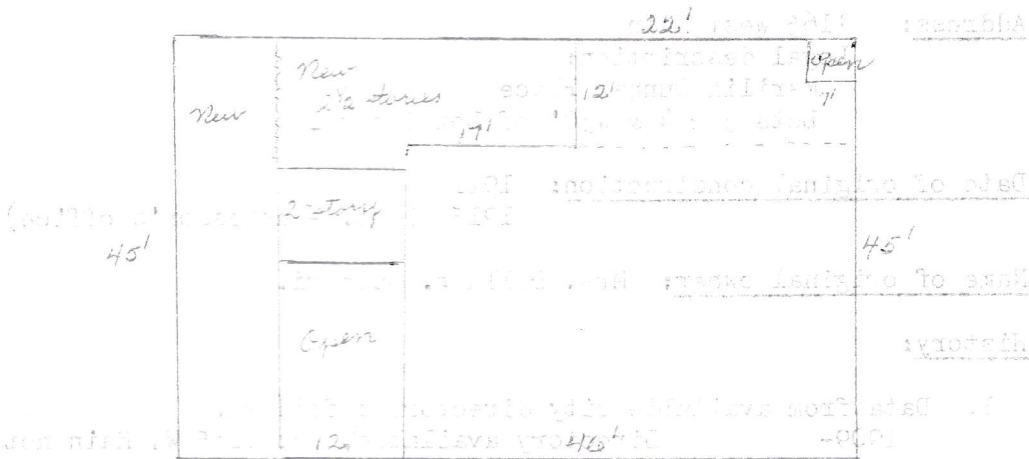
December, 1968 2-1/2 story add. and bath 1454 sq.ft.

(See sketch on next page)

Present owner: Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity House, Levere Bldg. Corp.

History Cont'd.:

2. Sketch:

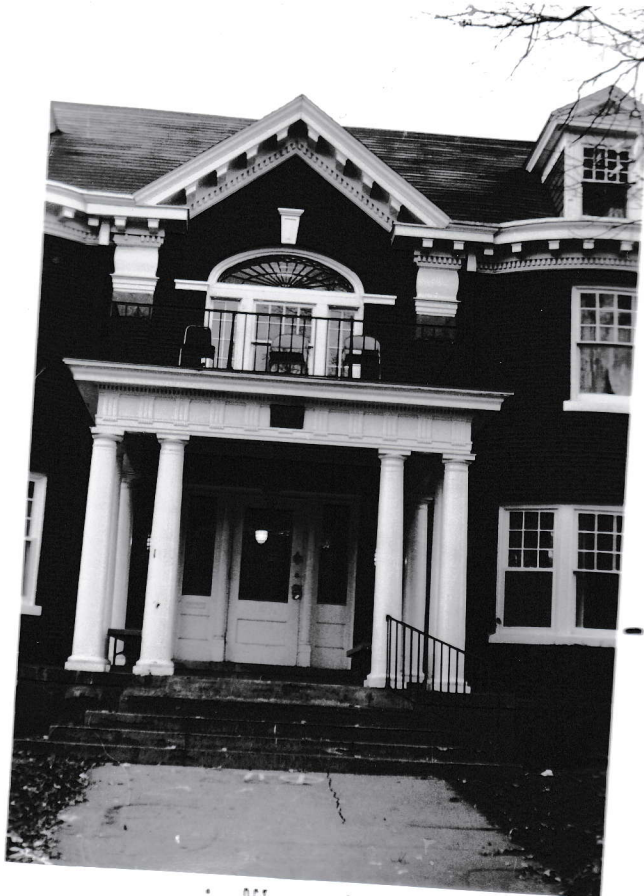


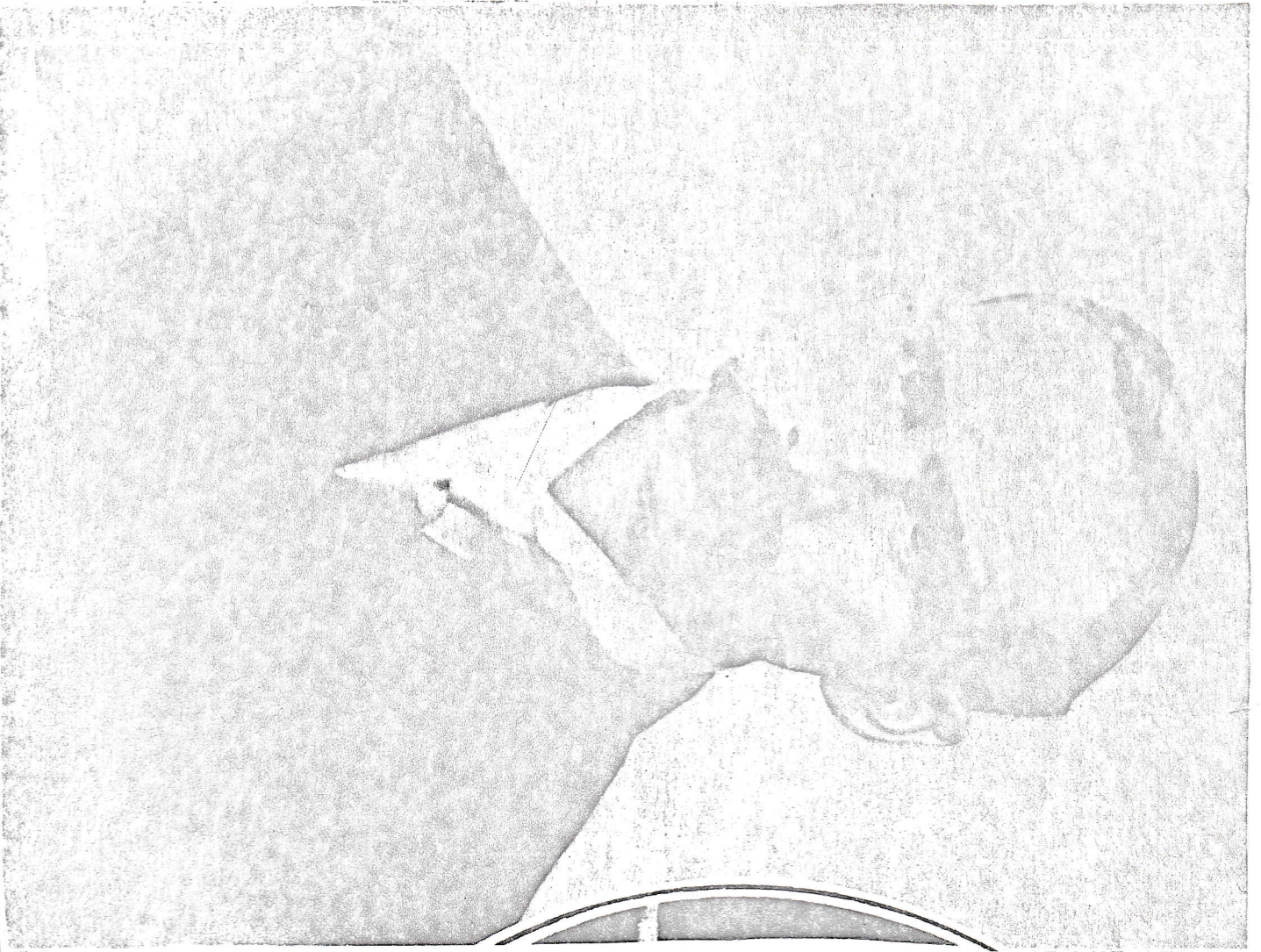
3. See attachments:

- a. Picture of Wm. Gushard, founder of Gushard Dry Goods Store from vertical files, Decatur Public Library. No date given.
- b. Obit. Mrs. Della P. Gushard, Nov. 11, 1957.
- c. Picture of Decatur committee responsible for Mabel Richmond's Centennial History of Decatur and Macon County, 1930. Includes Mrs. Gushard.
- d. Murphy, Adele - Two Miles North, copies of pp. 54-55 and 78-79. (Mrs. Gushard's help with Decatur Memorial Hospital)
- e. Copy of page in 1958 Millidek - Sigma Alpha Epsilon house.

(see sketch on next page)

1165 West Main Street





**STORE FOUNDER:** It was in 1896 that William Gushard founded the great store which now bears his name. He started business in a modest way in a small room at 207 North Water street, but before ten years had passed his business had far outgrown its quarters, though these were twice enlarged. In 1906 the opportunity presented itself to secure the present location on Water street at William.

## getting ready

More to Mrs. Haggaman's divorce. Dr. Barnes had now switched from smoking Litra Rose cigars to the foolish habit of rolling tobacco in little white papers, known as cigarettes. "The unrefined called them coffin-nails, predicting they would lead to early death. It worried Mrs. Haggaman excessively, but one winter night she told herself severely, "I can no more control Dr. Barnes' decisions to do as he pleases than he can control mine. . . . She was adjusting the taper in a gas lighter, and as she held it poised over the jet on the newel post and absently watched it take fire in a fan-shaped blue-and-white flame, she admitted, *Dr. Barnes and I both like our notions; if we get the hospital built, we'd better, both of us, concentrate on that.*

Fasting records are contradictory in a few respects before 1911, regarding constitution, by laws, and membership, but the fact has been established that there were only five members on the original board of directors: Dr. William Barnes,

Dr. Everett J. Brown, Mrs. Sue M. Haggaman, T. T. Springer, and John Mattes. It was they who chose architects and generally made detailed plans for the new building, but by the time Mrs. Haggaman broke ground on November 16, 1911, the number of directors had been increased to fifteen, including representation from Nianic, Argenta, and Maroa—and Mrs. Haggaman herself had been dropped. New men from Decatur were listed as Dr. Cass Chenoweth, C. M. Hurst, Robert Mueller, C. C. LeForgee, E. P. Irving, Theron A. Powers, W. L. Shellabarger, Smith E. Walker, W. M. Wood, and James A. Corbett. A year later the cornerstone was laid.

Mrs. Haggaman didn't sleep much during the night of November 27, 1912, but neither did she feel special excitement. Lying awake, she reviewed announcements she had read in the newspapers. The parade committee for tomorrow's ceremonies had their final meeting the previous evening in the office of L. A. Mills, with James M. Cowan, Marshal of the Day, giving last minute instructions. It was promised that everything would move smoothly and on schedule. She had no doubt of it, with Ted Hitchcock in charge of general arrangements and Dr. Barnes appointed as presiding officer.

Governor Charles S. Deneen would leave Springfield on the 6:30 interurban Thanksgiving morning, tomorrow (or was it morning already?)—and would alight in front of Dr. Barnes' house where he would have breakfast with several members of the hospital association.

In a way it was like a dream—all these goings-on; she felt strangely apart, almost like a disinterested bystander. She

stirred. Renewal—that was a law of nature. Everything alive was doomed to die, but also to live again, and her hope for the hospital which had several times stirred with new life, only to falter later, and then live again . . . surely it could be stirred to new life once more.

. . . Somehow.

As she thought this, she remembered Dr. Barnes' butterflies.

. . . Would he be willing to sell them now?

. . . Would anyone want to buy them?

She trudged on, and her next thought was brisk and businesslike: —When the hospital opens, I must get Congressman McKinley to extend the streetcar tracks all the way to the hospital.

Summer came. The newspapers reported little. People generally seemed apathetic about the hospital. A war had started in Europe. The fifteen hospital board members, individually and collectively, were unhappy and unquiet. It was as if they felt impelled to explode into action, yet were paralyzed by the weight of their trust. Even Dr. Barnes sometimes had the far-away look of a tired man, and said very little out loud. If he ever thought of that blithe entry made one day in Mrs. Hagaman's little brown book, he gave her no indication of hope that butterflies might save the day.

In March J. A. Corbett had resigned as a board member and now a woman was elected to fill his unexpired term—

Mrs. William Gushard.

Later, Mrs. Gushard said to Mr. Shellabarger, "We dare not make a false move."

And Mr. Shellabarger replied: "We dare not do nothing." As it developed, the board took three important steps during the summer of 1915:

First, extra funds were solicited from outside Macon County by making this proposition: Anyone subscribing to the hospital fund would have the privilege of sending patients unable to pay their own expenses to the hospital under terms that would give the patient free services equivalent to one-half of the amount subscribed.

Next, a special committee was appointed, with Charles R. Murphy as chairman, to raise \$40,000 for furnishing and equipping the hospital, once it was built.

Then a strange and unexpected proposition came before the board. Mr. J. J. Wiley of Sullivan offered \$10,000 to the hospital, provided—(1) that his invalid wife, then in St. Mary's, would be moved to one of the best rooms in the new hospital when it was completed, (2) that this room was to be selected by him and that his wife would be furnished room, board, and nursing service to properly care for her as long as she lived, (3) that if she lived only for a limited number of months, the same provisions would be made for Mr. Wiley himself, and (4) if Mr. Wiley needed hospitalization himself during his wife's lifetime, he would be furnished the necessary room, board and nursing care for \$10 per week.

The Board of Directors agreed to this proposition.

# CENTENNIAL

## HISTORY of DECATUR

AND

## MACON COUNTY

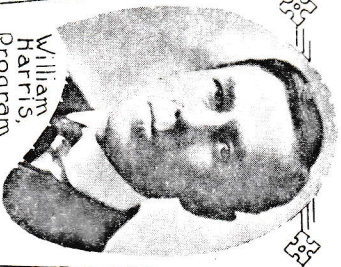
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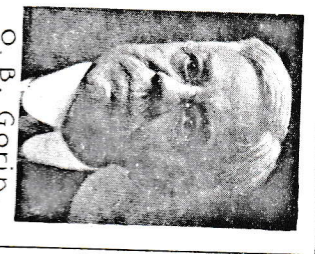
1930



Frank Sawyer,  
History & Relics



William  
Harris,  
Program



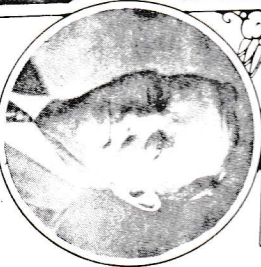
O. B. Gorin,  
Treasurer



T. W. Boruff,  
Membership



J. S. Baldwin, President



G. L. Heinle  
Finance



Mrs. Inez J. Bender,  
Secretary



Mrs. Della G. Gushard,  
Memorial



Mrs. Gora B. Ryman,  
Publicity

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
Of the Decatur and Macon County Centennial Association



# Mrs. Gushard, Wife of Store Founder, Dies

Mrs. Della P. Gushard, 90, whose late husband, William Gushard, founded a department store here, died in Decatur and Macon County Hospital at 5 p.m. yesterday.

Mrs. Gushard, who lived at 408 W. Macon St., had been in poor health for several years.

Mrs. Gushard, the former Della Perkins, was born March 5, 1867, in Scotland County, Mo., a daughter of William and Geraldine Perkins.

She received her education in the schools of Topeka, Kan., where the family lived many years. She taught in the Topeka schools for 11 years before her marriage to William Gushard in Topeka in 1895.

Soon after their marriage, Mr. and Mrs. Gushard came to Decatur where Mr. Gushard, who had had a successful mercantile business in Topeka, formed the William Gushard Dry Goods Co. with a store in the 700 block N. Water St.

A year later the store was moved to the 200 block N. Water St. and within 10 years the firm employed 40 persons.

In 1906 the stock of the Williams Bros. Co. was purchased and the store was moved to the then

## Pioneer Residence

At the time of Mr. Gushard's death, the family lived at the corner of Dunham and Marietta Sts. in a home built by C. C. Burroughs, a Decatur pioneer.

Later Mrs. Gushard and her daughters, Geraldine, now Mrs. Philip H. Sproat, and Louise, now Mrs. Raymond E. Denz, moved to 1165 W. Main St. This house was later sold to Sigma Alpha Epsilon fraternity and now is used as the chapter house.

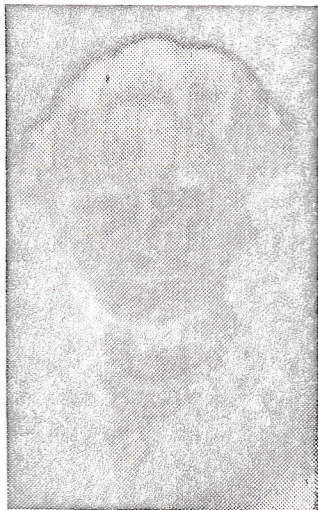
Mrs. Gushard was long active in work at the First Methodist Church. She served as a president of the church's Ladies Aid Society and was on the official church board.

She had been a member of the Woman's Club and served at one time as chairman of the Shakespeare division of the club. She also had served as a member of the board of directors of the Art Institute (now Art Center), a member of the board of directors of the Girls Welfare Home, chaplain of BC Chapter of PEO and was a member of the Country Club of Decatur.

Mrs. Gushard leaves two daughters, Mrs. P. H. Sproat and Mrs. Raymond E. Denz, both of Decatur; four grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. One daughter died in infancy. A sister and two brothers also preceded her in death.

Private funeral services will be at 1 p.m. Saturday in Dawson & Winkoff Funeral Home, where friends may call from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. today. Other arrangements are incomplete.

The family requests no flowers. Memorial contributions may be made to the PEO educational fund.



Mrs. Della P. Gushard

new building at Water and William Sts., now occupied by the Block & Kuhl Co.

Mr. Gushard died in 1909 at the age of 47. After a consolidation with the H. S. Gebhart Co., the store was known as Gebhart-Gushard's. This firm was taken over

Nov. 11, 1957

Decatur Public Library  
Decatur, Illinois





1165 West Main →  
1958 Millideke



## Sigma Alpha Epsilon

During the 1957-58 school year, Sigma Alpha Epsilon continued its reign as the "growingest fraternity on campus." Bob Hart was elected president of the C.C.I. Student Government Conference for 1958, Lowell Bower was president of the Interfraternity Council, Chuck Bach was president of the freshman class, Joe Niess was president and Tom Carlson treasurer of the sophomore class, Bob Muehlebach was business manager of the **Decaturian**, and Ron Rain was Freshman Camp song leader and Co-Chairman of RE week.

In athletics Brother Joe Koger averaged 18.8 points per game in basketball, top average for the team; Chuck Davelis was

first team All-Conference and All-State in Football; Howard Bartley was captain of the track team; and Lou Coe captain of the tennis team for the second time.

Chapter activities included a Wheel-Chair Basketball game with the Gizz Kids of Illinois for charity; Winter and Spring Formals; a Paddy Murphy Dance, complete with funeral procession, casket and all; a Founder's Day Dinner; and our annual initiation trip to S.A.E. National Headquarters in Evanston, Illinois.

There was also much excitement nationally, as Sigma Alpha Epsilon became the first social fraternity in history to go over the 100,000 mark in total members.

Row 1: J. Wasson, T. Foval, D. Fleming, T. Carlson, J. McCoy, D. Gill, B. Hart, S. Phenix, T. Pawlowski.

Row 2: T. Taylor, B. Swearingen, J. Koger, D. Walker, Mrs. Cottle, Mr. Glasscock, L. Coe, H. Knutson, D. Bunting, R. Rain.

Row 3: J. Nies, J. Riddle, T. Richardson, G. Lonnon, L. Larson, D. Macey, D. Cushing, B. Johnson, L. Myers,

J. Hughey, J. Suter, G. Fleetwood, W. Knutson, D. Stark.

Row 4: D. Davis, H. Bartley, B. Hill, J. Henderson, C. Davelis, G. Mays, T. Weyher, G. Kenney, D. Ask, R. Tempel, L. Armstrong, C. Burns, L. Routledge, T. Cooper, B. Muehlebach.

