

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received FEB 2 1988
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Savoy Historic District

and or common

2. Location

street & number 209-221 West Jefferson St. not for publication

city, town Louisville NA vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Jefferson code 111

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> na in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> na being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: vacant

4. Owner of Property

name Multiple (see continuation sheet)

street & number

city, town vicinity of state

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jefferson County Courthouse

street & number 6th and Jefferson Streets

city, town Louisville state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory
(JFCD 120, 128 & 208) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Multiple federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Savoy Historic District is situated in Louisville's Central Business District and is within the boundaries of the Market and Jefferson Streets Multiple Resource Area. It includes three contributing structures and one non-contributing site (a parking lot) on West Jefferson Street, an important east-west transportation artery. The Savoy Theater, for which the district is named, is an excellent example of late Victorian Theater architecture and has a colorful history both in terms of the building's ownership and its architectural design, as well as its many entertainment oriented commercial uses. The other two structures included in the district were both constructed for commercial uses. One also housed living quarters on its upper floors. All of the buildings are masonry and share a common setback. The size of the buildings were determined by their intended uses. The Savoy Theater is the largest of the three. The other two structures occupy smaller rectangularly shaped lots. Built between 1880 and 1897, the buildings are excellent examples of either theater architecture or Victorian commercial architecture.

C #1 Savoy Theater: 209-213 West Jefferson Street (1886, 1892, & 1894

The Savoy Theater is an eclectically styled three-story brick structure dominated on the exterior by Italianate elements. Having a total of seven bays, the building's external focus is on the widest, central bay. This bay has a recessed entry flanked by glass display windows where theater bills are displayed. Above, a wide arch with a variety of curvilinear and geometric bas relief designs and flanking paired pilasters draws attention to this entry. A large expanse surmounting the arch is centered by a large window topped by a sunburst and surrounded by a variety of recessed panels. This central pavillion is slightly taller than the flanking bays and is topped by a curvilinear parapet. On either side of the center bay, commercial storefronts, now sheathed in plywood, originally had dentilled cornices and large transoms above display windows and recessed entrances. The two floors above the storefront are three bays wide with segmentally arched windows (now boarded) with a course of rough-cut brick forming the lintels. Rising above a shed roof, the building's cornice has recessed panels and dentils. Aside from the the wood infill at the windows and storefronts, the building's, exterior is quite intact and has much the same appearance now as it did in a 1941 photograph. The only

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	German/Jewish Ethnic History	
Specific dates	1880-1913	Builder/Architect	Murphy, D. X.; unknown	

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Savoy Historic District is significant under three criteria: under criterion "A" for its contribution in the area of local commerce, especially in the area of theater and entertainment; under criterion "B" for its association with John and James Whallen, brothers who were influential political bosses during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; and under criterion "C" for the Savoy Theater's excellent eclectic theater design by prominent Louisville architect D. X. Murphy and for the remaining structures which embody distinct characteristics of Victorian era commercial architecture. The district's period of significance spans from 1880 to 1913, during which time all of the buildings were constructed and underwent major remodeling and the district, in particular the Savoy Theater, experienced its heyday as one of Louisville's premier entertainment centers. The area first developed as a commercial district with a variety of ground floor shops and residential space in the upper floors of the smaller buildings. The large-scale structure in the district, the Savoy Theater, originated as a department store but after a few years was converted to a theater. Italianate and eclectic architectural influences are present throughout the district with the theater as the only large-scale example. The area is cohesive architecturally, with only one intrusive site (photo # 1).

The Savoy Theater is an excellent example of Victorian theater architecture and dates from 1886. It is unknown if the 1886 building was architect-designed. As originally constructed it was intended to serve as a department store whose principal interior feature was a wide central area flanked by two tiers of galleries used for the display of goods. Under one roof everything from hats to house furnishings could be purchased. Due to poor sales, this use was short-lived, and in 1892 the building was remodeled as the Wonderland Museum and Theater, an establishment that featured sideshows. As the Wonderland Museum and Theater, the display area was converted to a stage with an auditorium. The Wonderland competed with legitimate theaters like the Macauley's Theater (NR 1978) and the Grand Avenue Theater (demolished), popular entertainment centers also located in the Central Business District (photo # 1, 5, 8 & 9).

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property One Acre

Quadrangle name New Albany

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6
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6	0	8	9	8	0
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4	2	3	4	4	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code county NA code

state NA code county NA code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joanne Weeter, Research Coordinator

organization Louisville Landmarks Commission

date 8/87

street & number 609 W. Jefferson St.

telephone 502/587-3501

city or town Louisville

state Kentucky

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature David L. Meyer

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date January 26, 1988

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Patrick Andrews
for Keeper of the National Register

date 6/1/88

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT;
Louisville, Jefferson County,
Kentucky

Section number 4 Page 1

OWNER OF PROPERTY

PROPERTY

OWNER

Haupt Building
219-221 W. Jefferson

Parking Authority of River City
c/o City of Louisville
601 W. Jefferson Street
Louisville, KY 40202

215-217 W. Jefferson

Parking Authority of River City
c/o City of Louisville
601 W. Jefferson Street
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

Savoy Theater
209-213 W. Jefferson

Jefferson Street Theater Development Co.
3300 First National Tower
Louisville, Kentucky 40202

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additional changes are the removal of scrolls and Corinthian capitals at the central bay and the addition of a marquee (photo # 1, 5, 8 & 9).

The interior of the Savoy is remarkably intact. In floor plan, the centered lobby and staircase are flanked by two large rooms of equal size. The walls and ceilings of the lobby are adorned with ornate plaster molding and mirrors. The marble floor below is still in place. The auditorium occupying the north end of the building has a stage, orchestra pit, and backdrop area on the north side with seating facing it. A semi-circular balcony overlooks the first floor seating arrangement and includes semi-circular viewing boxes around its perimeter. These viewing boxes, when the theater opened, were described as howdah-like box seats enhanced by wicker and lace curtains.

Constructed in 1886 as "The Fair" Department Store, it was remodelled in 1892 as a museum with side-show entertainment. In 1894 it was again remodelled, this time as a theater and again underwent major changes in 1886. Today it appears much as it did in 1897. This theater was linked for many years with vaudeville and burlesque and had quite a few famous people grace its stage. Additionally, The Savoy Theater is recognized for its association with local political history because the brothers John and James Whallen, influential political bosses in Louisville at the turn of the century owned and conducted business in the theater from 1894 to 1913. It is a fine example of theater architecture, designed by the prominent architect D. X. Murphy.

C #2 215-217 West Jefferson (1880)

This three-story brick Italianate style structure adorned with stone trim has two identical storefronts on the ground floor level. Cast iron pilasters divide the commercial display area into seven evenly spaced bays. Scallop motifs adorn the column capitals and the first floor cornice. The second and third floors are identical and all have four evenly spaced one-over-one windows. A stone lintel adorned with a floral motif caps each one. The building's wooden cornice has brackets and dentils. A shed roof tops the building. Although the storefront has been altered with replacement doors and windows and boarding over of the transoms, these changes are reversible and do not seriously compromise the building's overall integrity, which is dominated by the intact upper elevation. A two-story gable roofed addition dating from circa 1890 is located at the rear. This early

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addition is intact and considered a contributing element. The first occupants of this structure were J. Lang, a bookseller, and P.E. Bonkhofsky, a milliner (photo # 1,2 & 5).

C #3 The Haupt Building: 221 West Jefferson Street (1894)
The Haupt Building was designed to house a florist shop on the ground floor with living quarters on the floors above. Frederick Haupt opened his business here in 1894 and the building remained in The Haupt family until 1970. A 1926-1927 photograph indicates that the storefront originally had an unusual semicircular glass display window. A door to the west provided access to the first floor and another to the east provided access to the upper stories. A broad metal canopy with scalloped leaded glass trim, fluting and corner consoles spanned the width of the facade above the storefront. Tile mosaic spelling out the name Haupt in script and framed by floral motifs embellished the interior walls. The corner pilasters had additional tile work and similar floral motifs. Although the canopy has been removed and replaced with another that is less ornate and the glass display window has been covered over, the unusual curved shape of the display area remains plainly apparent. Fortunately, the tile work, one of the highlights of this building, survives intact though it is suffering from disrepair in places. At the east edge of the building a single cast iron pilaster that originally adorned the building which formerly stood next door remains in place. The second and third floors of the Haupt Building look exactly the way they did in the 1926-1927 photograph. Each of the upper floors has three one-over-one windows with continuous stone sills. The second-floor windows are topped by a single stone lintel while the third floor windows are topped by the building's cornice. Made of metal, it has recessed rectangular panels, dentils and corner brackets. A shed roof tops the building. The interior of the first-floor was inaccessible at the time of this writing; a relative of the original owner, however, reports that it had a late nineteenth century tin ceiling that may be intact though now covered by a drop ceiling. The second-floor living space has several tile-faced fireplaces, although the wooden mantels, which probably had centered mirrors, are gone. A totally intact bathroom is still in place and has period fixtures which include a claw foot bathtub, porcelain sink with a marble top that is supported by iron or brass brackets, and a toilet with a tank anchored into the wall about eight feet above. In total, this structure displays an array of Victorian era furnishings and fixtures that has become a rarity in the Central

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Business District. This building was first occupied by Christian Haupt in the residential space and Frederick Haupt, a florist, on the first floor (photo 1, 3, 7, 10 & 11).

Structures, of course, are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archaeological remains, such as trash pits, wells, and structural remains, which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the structure. Information concerning use patterns, social standing and mobility, as well as structural details are often only evident in the archaeological record. Therefore, archaeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structure. At this time no investigation has been made to discover these remains, but it is probable that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

APR 18 1980

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Still not a great financial success, in 1894 the building was sold again, this time to brothers Colonel John H. and James P. Whallen. Between 1880 and 1913, these two men were among Louisville's most powerful political bosses. Although John H. Whallen served as the city's police chief in 1885, they never held political office but used their considerable influence to rig elections through bribery and vote tampering, thus ensuring their allies held strategic political positions. Their business interests, integral to their political power, consisted almost exclusively of entertainment enterprises such as theatres, taverns and brothels. Of these, the extremely popular theatres were the ventures most closely identified with and symbolic of the Whallens' political careers. The Buckingham Theatre, considered their seat of power for many years, and all of the other buildings that housed their businesses have been destroyed with the sole exception of the Savoy Theatre.

Upon acquiring the theatre, the Whallens supervised yet another remodelling of the Savoy, this time based on the plans of architect D. X. Murphy (1854-1933). Murphy was one of the city's most prominent and sought after architects during the later half of the nineteenth century. He worked with Henry Whitestone; another important local architect, and assumed his practice in 1880. Ten years later his brother James joined him in a practice known as D. X. Murphy and Associates. Among his important works are the church and rectory of St. Boniface (1893), the Jefferson County Jail (1902) and the German Bank (1913-demolished).

After the renovation, the Wonderland Museum and Theater was renamed the Grand Opera House. According to an article in the Courier Journal on September 1, 1894, D. X. Murphy's renovation transformed the Theater into ". . . a new Theater with polished marble floors, glittering chandeliers and a multitude of mirrors set off in an oriental fashion." The Grand Opera House geared its prices toward the working man, with entertainment affordably priced. In 1899 its name was changed to the New Buckingham Theater. Among the performers to grace the stage of the new Buckingham were Jimmy Durante, Red Skelton and W. C. Fields.

The two smaller structures in the district were both constructed during the late 1800s when this area was a thriving commercial area. The ground floor commercial storefronts allowed convenience and accessibility to walk-in customers with the added

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bonus for the shop owner of either warehouse storage on the floors above or, as in the case of the Haupt Building, living quarters.

Late in 1913 John Whallen died, ending thirty years of political control of Louisville's democratic machine. His surviving brother Jim, having lost interest in power and politics, faded from the scene. Prohibition was bad for business and in 1919 the Buckingham was sold and renamed the Jefferson, which featured slapstick and an orchestra.

In 1922 the Jefferson was sold and renamed the Savoy. Again, the theater featured shows, revues, farce and slapstick. During World War II, Westerns were shown on the newly installed movie screen. Live strippers graced the stage around 1958, but because of booking and union problems the live strippers were soon replaced with movies.

The Savoy, until its recent purchase by a national developer, continued to feature x-rated movies. Future plans for the building are unknown, but it is hoped that the Savoy will be renovated so that future generations can enjoy its magnificent theater architecture.

The Italianate style, with its characteristic vertical emphasis, incised decorative lintels or projecting hoods above both windows and doors, and its and bracketed cornice, is found throughout this small district. The Savoy's primary facade is architecturally emphasized by its prominent center bay which is embellished with a variety of treatments, including curvilinear and rectilinear bas relief designs, sunburst, and pilasters. The flanking bays receive less detail and are quite similar to 215-217 West Market, especially on each building's storefront treatment and in their window and cornice details. The Haupt Building, though it has a narrower street frontage and the windows appear more unified by their placement and lintel treatment, is similar in overall Italianate design and verticality.

The commercial structure at 215-217 West Jefferson is typical of the Italianate style in commercial architecture. It fits in well with the surrounding structures in terms of its overall massing, setback, and scale (photo #1, 2, & 5).

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The Haupt Building is a remarkably intact example of Victorian architecture and craftsmanship and is also indicative of Victorian domestic interiors as well. From the exterior, at first glance, the building appears to be fairly typical of commercial style architecture of the late 1800s. Upon closer inspection, it is evident that Frederick Haupt took great pride in the quality of his own work by providing the passerby a look at his floral arrangements through an unusual semi-circular glass viewing case. Additionally, the intricate and colorful tile used to face the building on the ground floor was, in a way, a subtle advertisement in itself. The motifs chosen to adorn the building reflect its intended use as a floral shop (photo 1,3-5, 10 & 11).

The building's interior was designed in keeping with Victorian interior architectural trends. Fireplaces were embellished with tile of stock design. The bathroom, similarly, was furnished as countless other Victorian bathrooms were. What makes this building unusual is that its character defining details such as the colorful tile fireplace and claw-foot tub have survived to the present day and are wonderful examples of their era (photo 6 & 7).

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Section number 9 & 10 Page 1

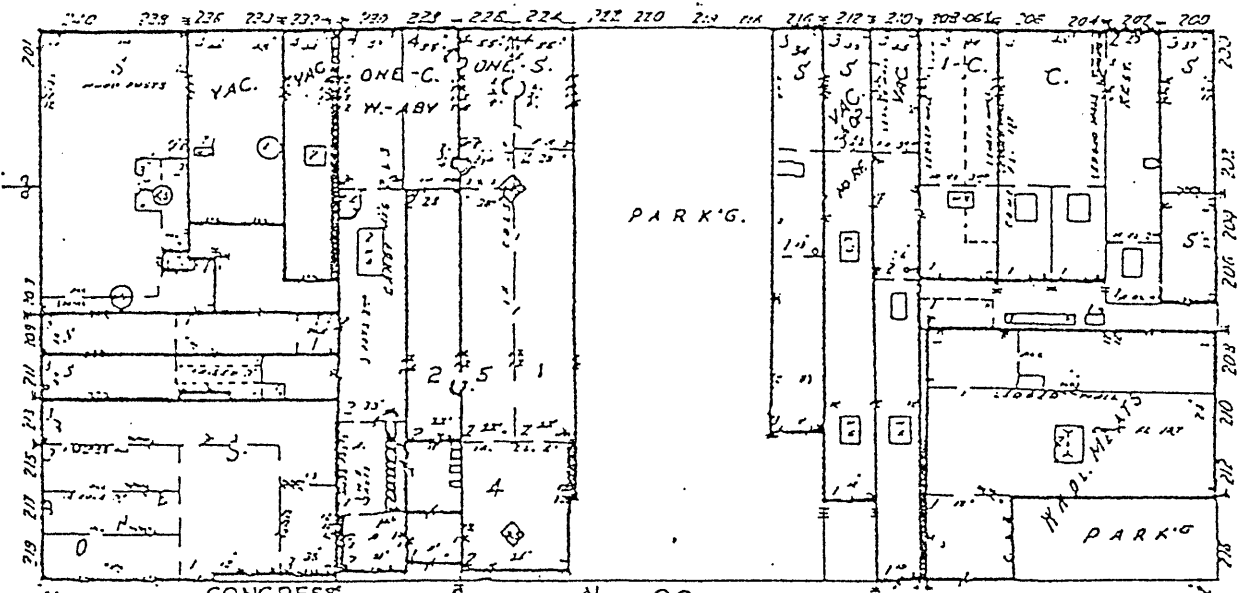
Bibliography

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Louisville: City of Louisville Community Development
Cabinet, 1978.
- Martin, Boyd "Burlesque Ghost Strut at the Savoy". The
(Louisville) Courier-Journal 18 September, 1977.
- Murphy, D. X. Ledger at Lockett and Farley Architects,
Louisville.

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification

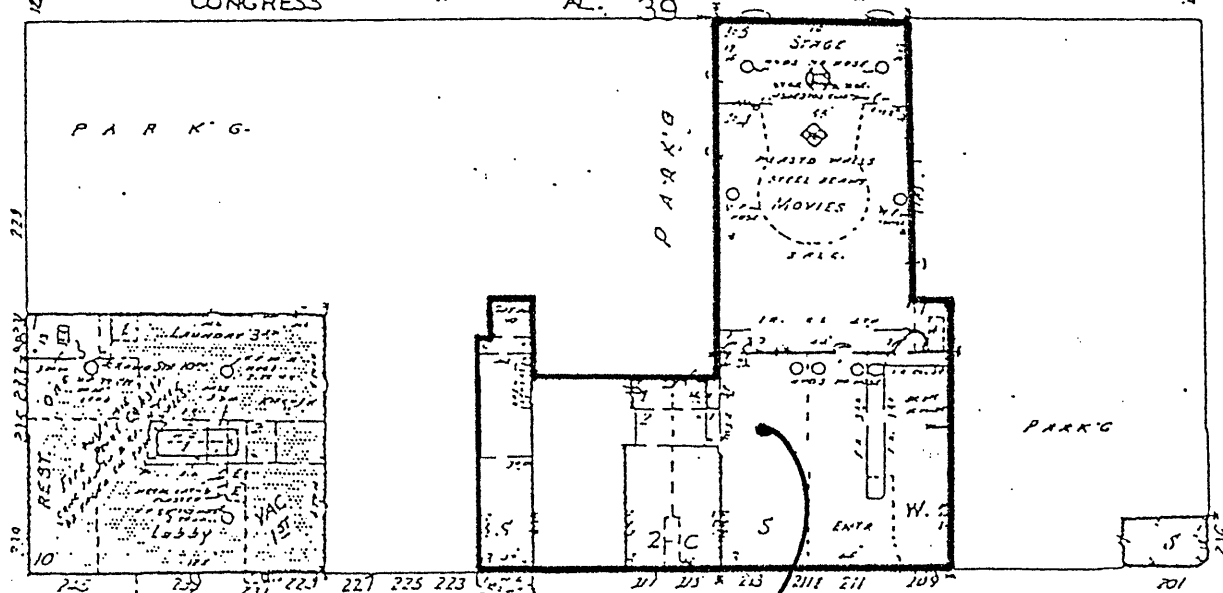
The legal description of the properties being nominated includes Block 17A, Lots 2, 3, and 4. The boundaries have been drawn to exclude much of currently undeveloped land on Block 17 A, Lot 2 that is now used as surface parking. The rear boundary of the vacant site was aligned with the rear of the building at 215-217 West Jefferson Street. The vacant site measures 28' x 72'. The boundaries chosen for this historic district include the lots historically associated with these buildings and the non-contributing site. Properties immediately beyond the boundaries are parking lots and an alley which do not contribute to the character of the district.

MARKET ST.

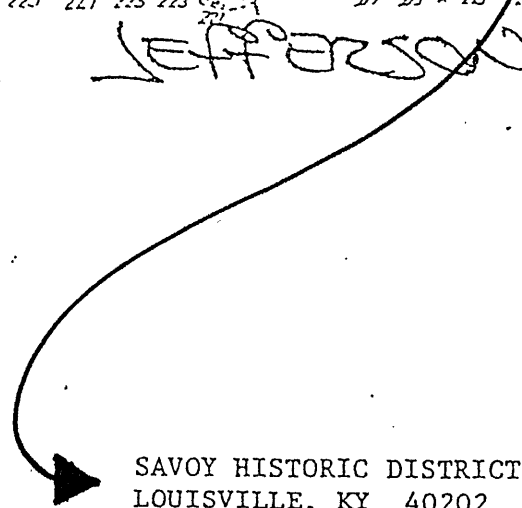


Handwritten vertical text on the left side of the upper plan, possibly 'S. 211'.

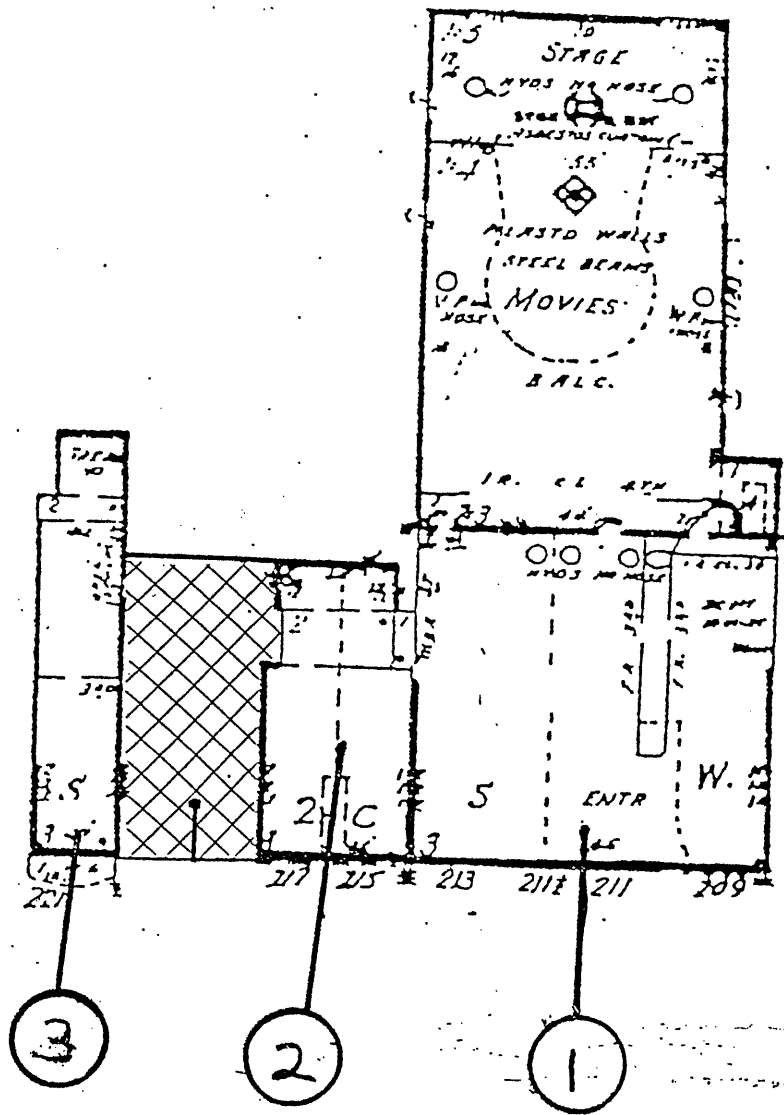
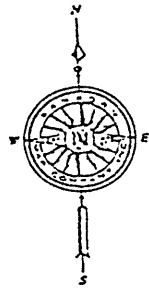
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JEFFERSON ST.

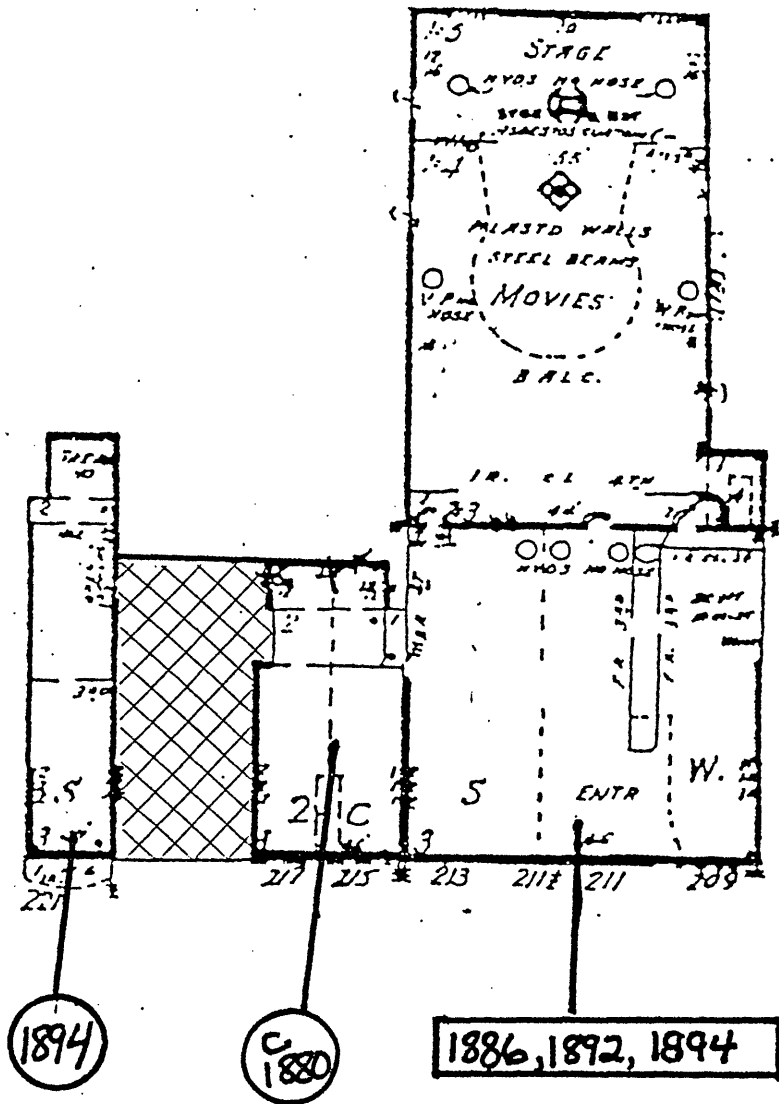
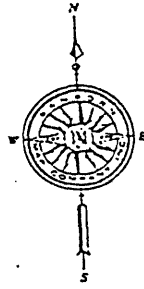


SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202



SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
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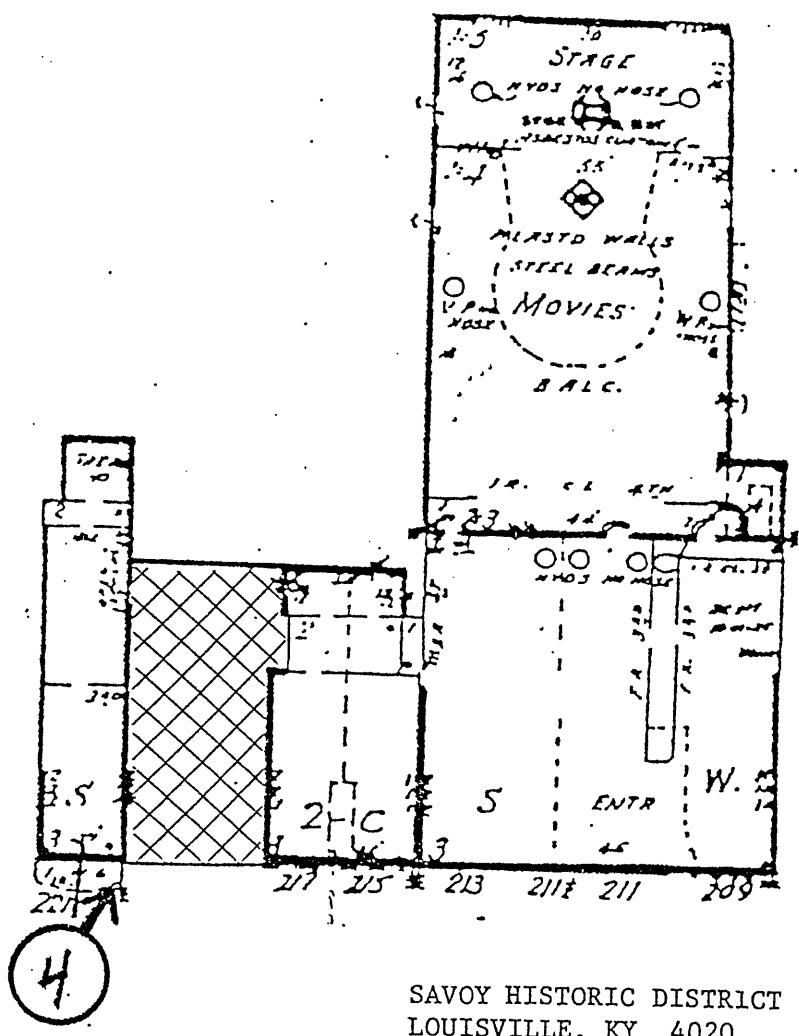
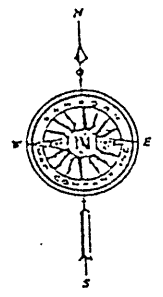
BUILDING INVENTORY NUMBERS



SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202

Dates of Construction

5



SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 4020

Photographic Key

#6 and 7 not shown on map

1

3

2



PHOTO #8

THE SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202

primary facade: The Savoy Theatre

Royal Collection
University of Louisville Photographic Archives

FEB 2 1988



PHOTO #9

THE SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202

Streetscape: 201-213 W. Jefferson Street (Jefferson Meat
Market at (201-207 demolished)

Royal Collection
University of Louisville Photographic Archives
circa 1940-1941

FEB 2



PHOTO #10

THE SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40202

streetscape: The Haupt Building at 221 West Jefferson
Street: center building with canopy. (adjacnet building
now demolished)

Caulfield and Shook Collection
University of Louisville Photographic Archives
circa , 1926-1927

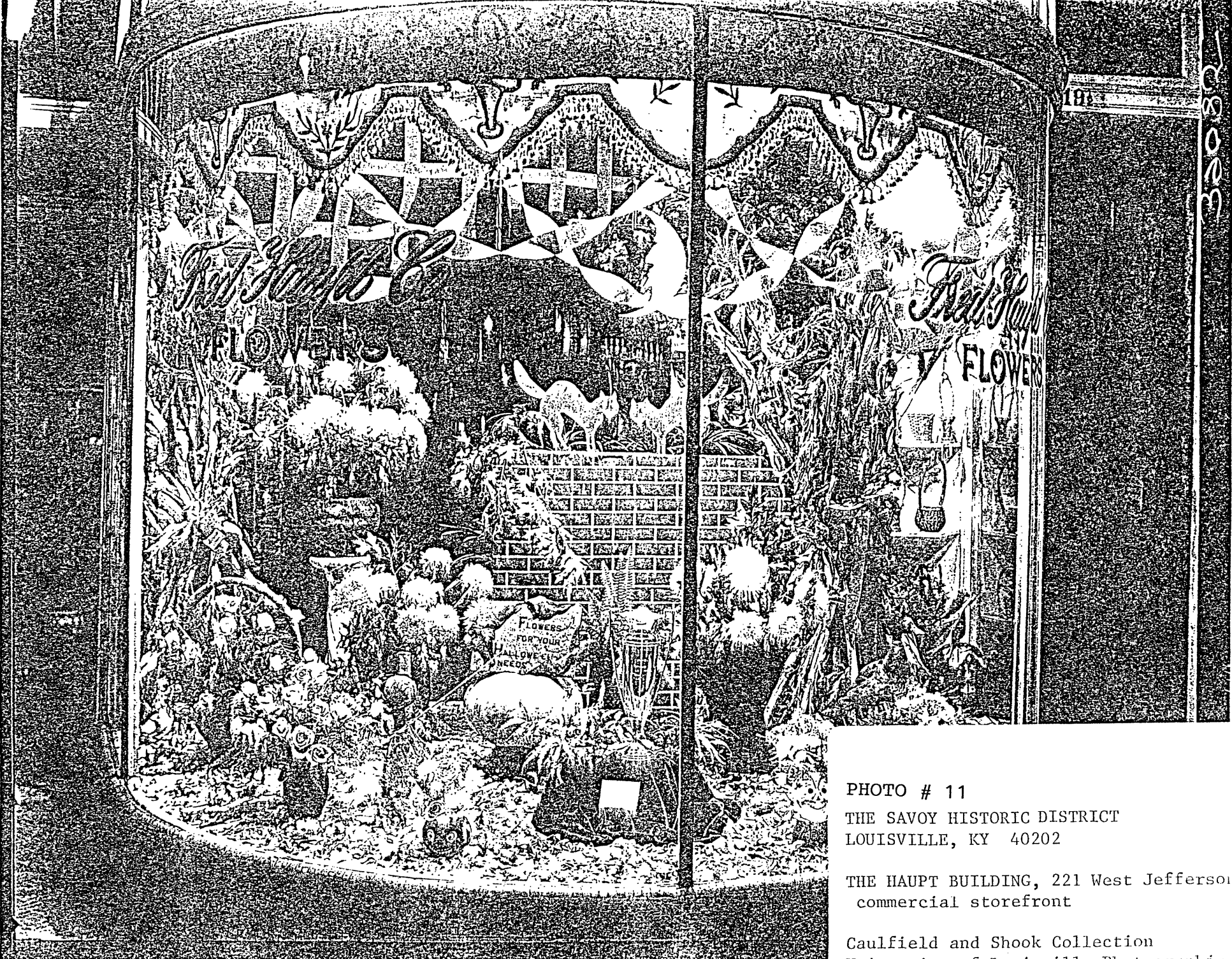


PHOTO # 11

THE SAVOY HISTORIC DISTRICT
LOUISVILLE, KY 40202

THE HAUPT BUILDING, 221 West Jefferson Street
commercial storefront

Caulfield and Shook Collection
University of Louisville Photographic Archives
circa 1921-1922

FEB 2 1922