

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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

For HCRS use only

received MAR 29 1982

date entered APR 29 1982

1. Name

historic Waldo Block
and/or common Waldo Building

2. Location

street & number 431-433 S. W. 2nd Avenue N/A not for publication
city, town Portland N/A vicinity of congressional district First
state Oregon code 41 county Multnomah code 051

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status ^{ground floor}	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied only.	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> 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 type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Hildreth L. Frederici
street & number 201 S. W. Washington Street
city, town Portland _____ vicinity of state Oregon 97204

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Multnomah County Courthouse
street & number 1021 S. W. 4th. Avenue
city, town Portland _____ vicinity of state Oregon 97204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Portland Historical Landmark has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1970 _____ federal _____ state _____ county local
depository for survey records Portland Historical Landmark Commission
city, town Portland _____ vicinity of state Oregon 97205

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Waldo Building, built in 1886, is a three story, 95' x 100' brick and cast iron structure located on S. W. 2nd Avenue in the heart of Portland's early Chinatown. (Some early records refer to the building as "The Leland" or "Leland House" which referred to the lodging rooms on the second and third floors. While the upper floors continued as lodging rooms "The Leland" moved to another location in 1890 - apparently the name followed the proprietor, a Mrs. J. M. Barry. The name was listed again in City Directories at the Waldo Building address in 1899 but only for that year.) Though change has occurred in the area there still remains a significant quantity of late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings. The Waldo Building anchors the south end of a full block 19th century street facade - one of two remaining in the city. To the north are the Grand Stable & Carriage Building (1886) and the Concord Building (1890) both City Landmarks and the latter a National Register property. Other nearby National Register buildings include the Failing Building (1900) to the south across Washington St., and the Dekum (1892) and Hamilton (1893) Buildings to the west across Third Avenue.

STRUCTURE AND PLAN

Layout of the Waldo Building is somewhat unusual for corner buildings of the period - storefronts and the entry to upper floors all face Washington St. rather than the common practice of having the main storefronts opening to the numbered street and the upper floor entry at the rear corner of the east/west named street as can be seen in the Mikado Block and others of the same era. The ground floor is divided into two primary units by a column line and frame wall at the north/south center line. The front (east) half of the building is divided into three equal north/south bays which are framed with 7" diameter cast iron columns topped by Doric capitals which support wood beams. Centered in the west half of the structure is a nine foot wide brick walled bay that originally contained the stairway to upper floors. Flanking the stair bay are single storefront bays, slightly wider than the typical bays in the east half.

The basement structure reflects the organization of the first floor - 8" diameter cast iron columns are located directly under those on the first floor. Columns support 10" x 12" wood beams and 3" x 8" joists. In the west half, 17" brick bearing walls align with the center bay stair walls above. For reasons unknown the first floor structure in the west half is substantially stronger than the east half-centered in each bay flanking the stair bay is a row of wood posts and beams which support 3" x 12" joists, a structural system that could support floor loads 3 1/2 times greater than required for store use. Located at the center of the front half near the north wall is a vault with three foot thick stone and brick walls and the original steel fire door. When added in 1897 the vault extended to the first floor to serve the operations of the Merchant's National Bank which occupied all of the front

(See continuation sheets)

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/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) ethnic history

Specific dates 1886 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Waldo Building achieves significance as an excellent and relatively well preserved example of Victorian Italianate cast iron architecture, and as an important element in the history of Portland's Chinese community. In addition, the building was built by and named for Judge John B. Waldo, a distinguished member of one of Oregon's pioneer families. The Waldo Building, therefore, meets National Register criteria (a) and (c).

Though much has been lost, Portland still retains the largest collection of late 19th century cast iron front commercial buildings in the west. Nearly all of these structures are located on the west side near the Willamette River, Portland's early commercial center. Of the 29 remaining west side buildings, all but three are contained within the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District (National Landmark District) or the Yamhill Historic District (National Register District). Located in a small enclave of historic structures midway between the two historic districts are two of the cast iron front buildings, the Waldo Building and the Grand Stable & Carriage Building, both built in 1886. With two adjacent historic commercial structures they comprise one of only two full block 19th century street facades remaining in the City.

Portland's cast iron commercial era began in 1853 and lasted until 1889 when Richardsonian taste prevailed. The 1880s saw the Victorian Italianate style reach maturity, and the Waldo Block with its ornate cast iron work and generous proportions is an excellent example. It also is among the one third of the extant cast iron structures that retains all of its primary exterior iron work.

Chinese settlers came to Oregon in the early 1850s with the discovery of gold in the southern counties. with the establishment of regular steam service between San Francisco and Portland, and with the development of direct trade with China. Late in the next decade their numbers increased as they came to fill the labor shortage in railroad construction. By the mid 1870s the Chinese had become the largest ethnic group in Portland, and in 1890 the census revealed a Chinese population of 5,184 in a city of 46,385. At that time Chinatown was concentrated along 2nd Avenue from Pine Street to Taylor with the center of the community generally considered to be at 2nd and Alder, one block south of the Waldo Building.

9. Major Bibliographical References

ACREAGE 0.11

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property 0.11 (less than one)

Quadrangle name Portland, Oregon-Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	<u>10</u>	<u>525</u>	<u>560</u>	<u>5040</u>	<u>510</u>
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

B					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

C					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

D					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

E					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

F					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

G					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

H					
	Zone	Easting		Northing	

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 4, Block 18, Plat of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

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

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
-------	------------	------	--------	------------	------

state	<u>N/A</u>	code	county	<u>N/A</u>	code
-------	------------	------	--------	------------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George A. McMath FAIA

organization Allen-McMath-Hawkins - Architects date October 22, 1981

street & number 213 S. W. Ash St., #210 telephone (503) 228-5154

city or town Portland state Oregon 97204

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date March 1, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

for Alonzo Byer
Keeper of the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

4/29/82

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

half until 1911. Some time after the bank vacated the space the ground floor portion of the vault was removed. Side walk vaults extend into both streets - four in Washington St. and two in 2nd Avenue. All but one in each street have been paved over at the sidewalk. There is some physical evidence that the 2nd Avenue vaults went further under the street and may have been used as "Shanghai" tunnels as has been rumored. Other closed openings in the brick foundation walls suggest passageways to adjacent buildings which are alleged to have been escape routes in case of gambling raids. (See 8.)

The second floor is divided into lodging rooms with one, two, and three room units. A common restroom and kitchen are located along the north party wall, and large halls are situated in both the front and rear halves. Structural alterations have included removal of the original stair from Washington St. and flooring over the opening and a new stairway at the northeast corner, both done in 1934, and some minor partition changes in the rear. Otherwise the second floor remains essentially as built. The structure is 2 x 6 wood stud bearing walls supporting 2 x 10 joists.

The original third floor also contained lodging rooms in basically the same layout as the second floor. In 1920 substantial changes were made in the front half: a six foot deep balcony was built across the 2nd Avenue front and all of the lodging room partitions were removed to create a large 40' square open space that was used by the Chinese tenants for social and religious activities. Wood beams, paired 6 x 24s, were installed at the north/south bay lines to replace the bearing partitions and support the clear span roof. Lodging rooms in the rear half are substantially as originally constructed. The kitchen was altered to accommodate gas fired woks.

INTERIOR FINISHES

The ground floor with its 16' -6" ceiling has been altered many times and retains very little original fabric - only some wood lath and plaster walls and ceilings, some cedar baseboard, and the cast iron columns previously noted.

Second and third floor finishes are essentially intact though in poor to fair condition. Floors are single layer tongue and groove fir. Walls and ceilings - 13'-6" high at the second floor, and 13'-0" high at the third - are wood lath and plaster. Most walls are covered with wallpaper, some of which may be original or very early. Paper is generally in poor condition. Halls have wainscoting of V-groove tongue and groove boards set vertically with a cap molding and baseboard, both in classical profiles. Typical hall doors are four paneled, two over two, with bolection moldings, 34" x 90" and have

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 3

clear glass transoms and classical casings. Connecting room doors are the same without transoms. All second and third floor doors have been removed from the frames - approximately half are stored in the building. Doors, casings, wainscot, baseboard and other wood trim is cedar, most of which is painted. A grained finish is evident under the paint.

Fireplaces, six each on the second and third floors, have cast iron frames and trim in several patterns, and marble mantels. Iron frames are either intact or stored in the building-only one mantel remains. Original hearths are ceramic tile, two of which remain intact. Black, maroon, and ochre rectangular tiles with a matte glaze are laid in a geometric pattern.

EXTERIOR SOUTH FACADE

The principal facade on Washington Street is organized to reflect the ground floor plan - three equal bays on the east half, and a narrow central entrance bay flanked by single wide bays on the west half. Pilasters, continuous to the top of the parapet, articulate the corners and vertical divisions, and are fabricated of cast iron at the ground floor and stucco with cast iron detail at the upper floors. Iron pilasters were manufactured by John Honeyman's City Foundry of Portland and feature fluted base elements, modified Ionic capitals with a central female head, and scroll and leaf ornament above and below the caps. Identical iron work can be seen in the Simon Building and the Mikado Block, both completed in the 1880s. Continuous belt cornices define the second and third floors. The original bracketed cornice at the roof line was removed in 1951 due to an unsafe condition. The entrance bay is further emphasized by a vertical extension of the parapet which contains a date panel.

Ground floor storefronts have been altered several times. The present glass and wood panels date from 1963 when the Elephant & Castle, the present tenant, moved in. Original storefronts featured cast iron thresholds, large store windows with paneled bases, and central recessed entries framed by round cast iron columns. Most iron thresholds are intact and two original cast iron entrance columns can be seen behind the glass in the west storefront. The masonry opening at the upper story entrance bay is intact as is the four panel fan light in the round arch head. The present etched glass panel doors dated from the 1963 remodeling.

Typical second floor windows were double hung wood sash, one light over one, in stilted segmental arch openings with cast iron keystones and impost detail. Third floor windows were the same except for round arch openings. In the east half there are two windows per bay while in the west half the central stair bay had a single paired window and the flanking

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

bays each have three windows.

EAST FACADE

The general treatment of the east wall is the same as the south. A continuous pilaster at the center divides the facade into two equal bays which originally had three windows in each bay. When the third floor balcony was built in 1920 two windows at each side of the central pilaster were combined into single segmental arch openings. Original iron keystones and impost trim were reused and original stucco molding profiles were reconstructed.

ALTERATIONS

In addition to alterations previously described the Waldo Building underwent substantial exterior rehabilitation in 1980. Work included: exterior cleaning; stucco repair and restoration; a new roof; replacement of 2nd and 3rd floor sash with new level headed wood sash with insulating glass, and solid panels with sunburst applique above the impost line in arched openings; and exterior painting. Cost of the work was approximately \$85,000. The need for this work was the result of years of neglect by previous owners (the present owner did not acquire full title to the property until 1980). Upper story sash and frames were severely rotted - a sash unit fell out onto the street in 1979 - and water penetration at openings was beginning to cause serious problems. One typical original window frame and the paired round arch window frame at the original entry bay have been saved and are stored in the building. (It should be noted that the present owner was totally unaware of the building's city historic landmark status and the attendant exterior design review process. The matter was further complicated by the fact that the city records had an incorrect address for the building and consequently it was not "flagged" for design review when the building permit application was made. City landmark staff was apprised of the work in progress and a design review hearing was held after all of the new windows and panels had been installed. The Portland Historical Landmarks Commission approved the present exterior color scheme.)

As soon as economic conditions are more favorable the owner plans to restore and rehab the upper floors for use as offices. The owner intends to include the reconstruction of original window casings, and the installation of clear glass in place of the present wood panels in the arched window heads.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The buildings occupied by the Chinese were initially owned by whites who leased them at enormous rates. Ground floors usually contained businesses while the upper floors were used as living quarters. Chinese tenants often modified the buildings particularly on the uppermost floor where balconies were favored. These balconies were important elements during New Year and other celebrations when they were decorated with lamps, streamers and other traditional decorations.

Though the Chinese population began to decline in the 1890s, Chinatown flourished along 2nd Avenue until after World War II when housing in the neighborhoods became available and the Chinese community, particularly the American born generation, became dispersed throughout the metropolitan area. As the older buildings near the river were demolished for parking lots and bridgehead construction the remaining Chinese businesses moved to northwest Portland to join a few others that had located their in earlier years.

It is not known when the Waldo Building had its first Chinese tenants but given its location it must have been during the early years. It is known from building permit data that in 1920 the third floor recessed balcony on the 2nd Avenue facade was built by Chinese occupants. It is also likely that the large third floor space which was used for religious and social activities was developed at this time. In later years the third floor became the home of the Gee How Oak Tin Association, a Chinese District Association that is said to have included the Gee, Chin, Woo, and Leong families. (A District Association, or Hui-Kuan, is a group of families who spoke a common dialect and who came from the same district in China. In this case the Chinese families all spoke Cantonese and came from the T'ai-Shan district of Kwantung Province.) And according to a retired policeman who covered the area for many years, and who wishes to remain anonymous, the Waldo Building was also headquarters for the Bing Kung-Boy Leong Tong, the enforcement arm of the Association and a group that was involved with opium, gambling, and other nefarious activities that prevailed in Chinatown. The police officer further recollected that gambling was conducted in various locations throughout the building and that opium smoking took place in small basement alcoves. Opium scales, and gambling furniture and equipment have been discovered in the building by the present owners. Other physical evidence includes gambling signs and a four inch thick wood door in the basement that secured a gambling area from unwanted intrusion. Third floor rooms were also used for various meetings and banquets, and were served by the Chinese kitchen that is still partially intact.

While the Chinese occupied at least part of the building since early years, Chinese ownership did not occur until 1943. Judge Waldo and his heirs owned the building until 1941 when it was sold to Sidney J. Beck. Two years later Beck sold to Poy W. I. who in turn sold to Woo D. Yuen in 1945. The present owner purchased a 1/4 interest from Aileen Young Yip, Woo's former wife, in 1977, and the remaining 3/4 interest from Woo's estate in 1980.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR HCRS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

During part of Woo's ownership the ground floor was occupied by the Lake Sun Club, listed in directories as a "social club". In 1963, the Elephant & Castle Tavern was established which is now operated by the building owner. The Gee How Society, as the District Association was then known, occupied the third floor until 1965 when it moved to northwest Portland. At that time it was the last remaining Chinese activity in the old Chinatown of S. W. Second Avenue. The ornate furniture and accoutments of the Gee How Society Temple were moved to the second floor of 26 N. W. 4th Avenue where they presently reside under the auspices of the Chin's Benevolent Association, an affiliate of the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Since 1965 the upper stories of the Waldo Building have been vacant. The building stands today as the only remaining example of a 19th or 20th century structure in old Chinatown that displays architectural evidence of the Chinese presence.

The builder, Judge John Breckenridge Waldo was a distinguished member of one of Oregon's earliest pioneer families. Judge Waldo's father, Dan Waldo, was a part of the 120 wagon "Immigrant Train" that crossed the plains to the Willamette Valley in 1843 and included such notables as the Appelgate brothers, J. W. Nesmith, and Dr. Marcus Whitman who accompanied the group as far as Fort Hall. Waldo settled in Marion County near Silverton in an area that came to be known as Waldo Hills. A year later Waldo's second son, John B., was born on the family homestead. Young John Waldo attended local schools and was graduated from Willamette University in 1866. In 1880, after some years of law practice and work on the family property, John Waldo was elected to the Oregon Supreme Court where he served for one term. At the end of the decade he was elected to the State Legislature as representative from Marion County.

Judge Waldo spent much of his free time exploring in the Cascade Range where he was a long time advocate of a Cascade forest reserve, and where he made significant discoveries that included Waldo Lake, and in 1877, Breitenbush Hot Springs near Mt. Jefferson.

As far as is known the Waldo Building was Judge Waldo's only major property development in Portland. Upon Waldo's death in 1907 the building passed to his widow Clara Humason Waldo, and in turn to his son-in-law, Portland architect Folger Johnson. The last member of the family to own the Waldo Building was Folger Johnson Jr., recently retired Bankruptcy Judge of Portland.

FOR HCRS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 1

- The Oregonian, January 1, 1887, p. 4 and p. 10.
- Oregon Historical Library, Scrapbook Collection, SB 66, p. 3; obit. on John B. Waldo, September 2, 1907.
- Hawkins, William John III, The Grand Era of Cast-Iron Architecture in Portland, Portland, 1976.
- Ho, Nelson Chia-Chi, Portlands Chinatown, The History of an Urban Ethnic District, Portland, 1978.
- City of Portland, Bureau of Buildings, Building Permit File; 1920, 1921, 1924, 1928, 1934, 1935, 1951, 1956, 1961, 1962, 1966, 1970, 1980.
- Portland City Directories.
- Scott, Harvey W., compiled by Leslie M. Scott, History of the Oregon Country, Vol. V, p. 294, Cambridge, 1924.
- Interview with Gene Chin and Herb Chin.
- Interview with Folger Johnson, grandson of Judge B. Waldo.
- Portland Sanborn Insurance Maps, 1879 corrected to 1886, 1889 corrected to 1895, 1901 corrected to 1908, 1908 corrected to 1926, and 1969.

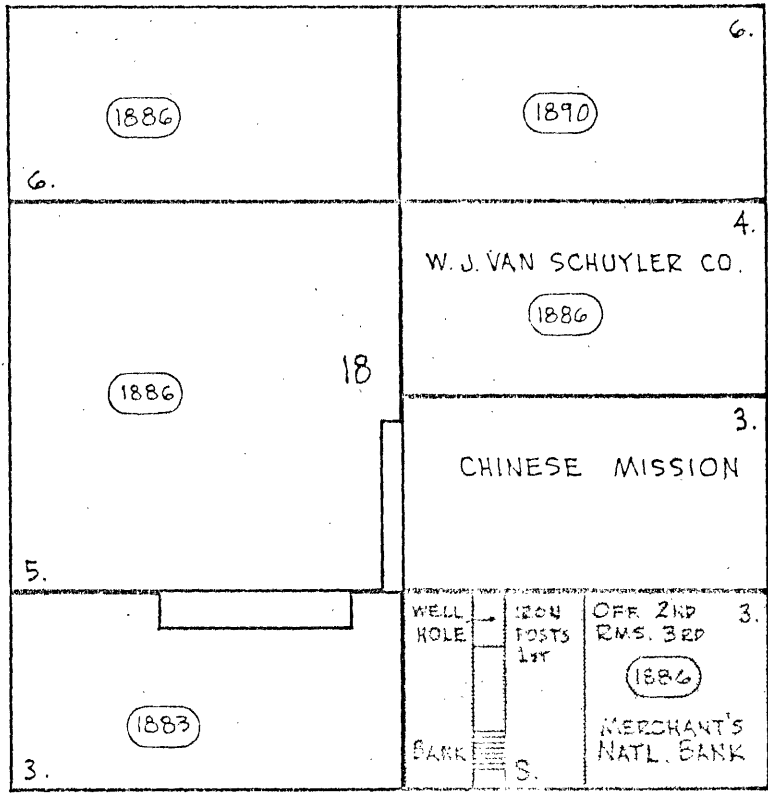
STARK ST.

CONCORD BLDG.

3RD ST.

ABINGTON BLDG. MCKAY BLDG.

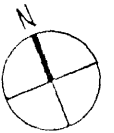
2ND ST.



COUNCIL BLDG.

THE LELAND

WASHINGTON ST.



(DATE)

1" = 50'

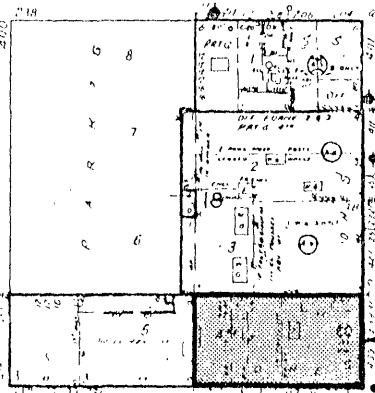
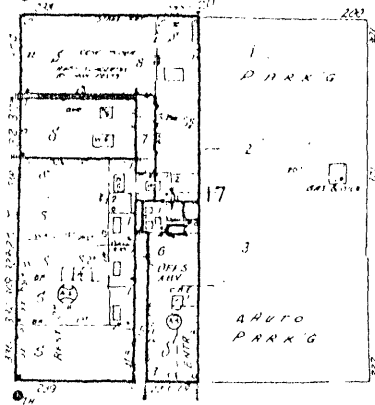
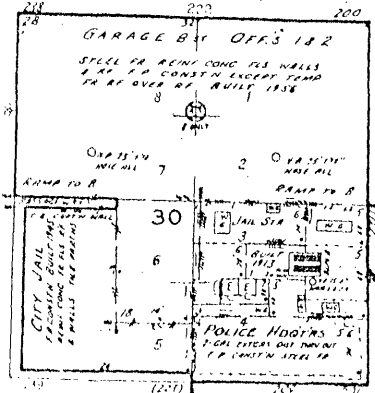
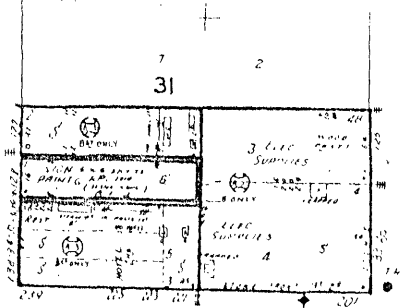
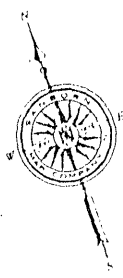
SANBORN MAP

COMPOSITE

1889 CORR TO 1895

1901 CORR TO 1908

1908 CORR TO 1912



WALDO BUILDING

S.W. PINE

S.W. OAK

S.W. STARK

S.W. WASHINGTON

AV.

AV.

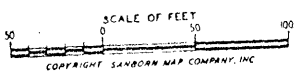
S.W. 3RD

S.W. 2ND

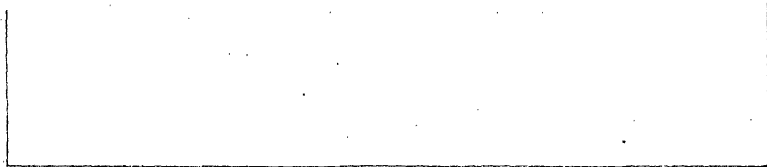
82

84

SANBORN MAP
1969

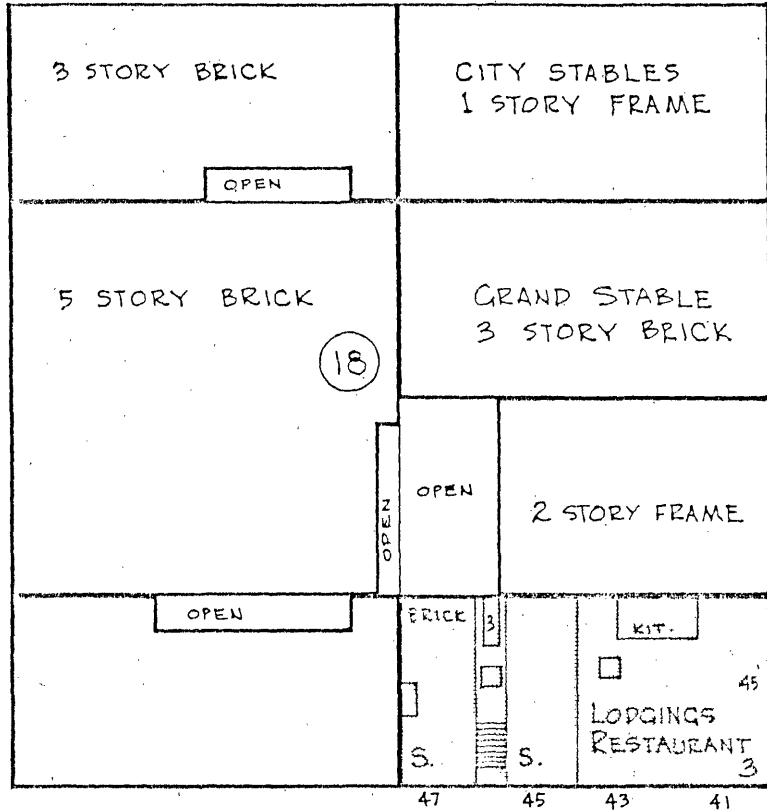


SEE VOLUME TWO



STARK ST.

3RD ST.
REEPS BLDG. REVERE HO.

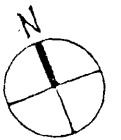
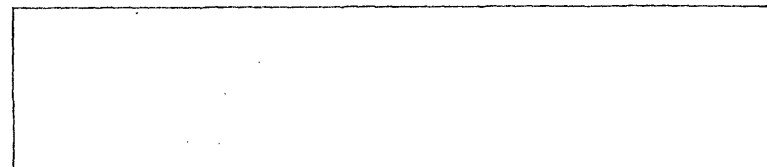


2ND ST.

COUNCIL BLDG

THE LELAND

WASHINGTON ST.



SANBORN MAP
1879 CORR. TO 1883