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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1623

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Venice of America House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1223 Cabrillo Avenue

not for publication

city, town Los Angeles

vicinity

state California

code CA

county Los Angeles

code 037

zip code 90291

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request of determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Samuel Abeyta

11/21/00

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of Keeper

Del R. Fung

Date of Action

4/9/01

Venice of America House
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply) **Category of Property** (Check only one box) **Number of Resources within Property** (Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> buildings	Contributing	Noncontributing	
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-state	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian

foundation brick
walls weatherboard
roof asphalt

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic value, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Community Planning and Development
Architecture

Period of Significance
1906-1925

Venice of America House

Los Angeles, California

Name of Property

County and State

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Significant Dates

1906, House constructed

1925, Venice is annexed by City of Los Angeles

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical Reference

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1				3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	11	364420	3761900	4			

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Venice of America Tract, Block 15, Lot 10 (See attached map.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

The boundary is the historic legal parcel number.

Venice of America House
Name of Property

Los Angeles, California
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Teresa Grimes

organization N/A

date March 30, 2000

street & number 4211 Glenalbyn Drive

telephone 323-221-0942

city or town Los Angeles

state California

zip code 90065

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Stephen Pouliot

street & number 1223 Cabrillo Avenue

telephone 310-396-4944

city or town Los Angeles

state CA

zip code 90291

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions (102400018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 page 1

Summary

Located in the beach community of Venice, California, the Venice of America House is a Late Victorian style, single family residence on the north side of Cabrillo Avenue. The distinguishing feature of the wood-framed house is a two-story entryway with arched openings and an Islamic-style dome on the roof. A gate, topped by a semicircular hood, marks the entrance to the front of the property, which is surrounded by a metal fence. A one-story garage sits behind the house and is accessed via the alley on the north. Characteristic on the neighborhood, the house and the garage occupy the majority of the lot, leaving little room for landscaping. The house retains its physical integrity and is in good condition.

Exterior

Two stories in height, the main volume of the house has a definite rectangular shape which is covered by a hipped roof. The eaves are boxed in the slight overhang of the roof. Very narrow wood clapboards sheath the exterior. Dominating the front (south) elevation is a two-story bay. Projecting from the west end of the elevation, the bay has a square shape. The first story of the bay shelters the main entrance, while the second story functions as a balcony off the master bedroom. A large arched opening, accessed by a short flight of stairs, leads to the main entrance. The front door is solid wood with three vertical narrow lights above a bracketed ledge. Arched openings are also located on the sides of the bay, but are closed on the bottom by a clapboarded wall. On the second story, pairs of arched openings spring from square wood columns. A turned wood rail set between the columns defines the bottom of the balcony. Crowning the bay is an Islamic-style dome resting on a flat roof. A denticulated molding trims the shallow overhang of the roof. East of the bay are two, widely proportioned windows set one above the other on the first and second stories. The tripartite, wood-framed windows, which are also found on the side elevations, have small, diamond-paned transoms. The rear (north) elevation has only one double-hung sash window on the second story. The back door has three narrow vertical panels in the lower portion and a diamond-paned light in the upper portion.

Interior

From the main entrance at the southwest corner of the house, one arrives in a small foyer with a staircase, characterized by a turned wood balustrade and arched openings. Between the foyer and the living room are four tapered columns resting on a low wall. Dividing the living room from the dining room are built-in cabinets, on which rest tapered columns. A sitting area is located on the west side of the dining room, in front of a brick fireplace. The kitchen and utility room are to the rear of the house. Upstairs are three bedrooms. Throughout the house, the floor is clear pine, the molding is fir, and the walls and ceilings are plaster.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 page 1

Summary

The Venice of America House is significant under National Register of Historic Places Criteria A and C. Contextually, the house relates to the theme of community planning in Los Angeles. Completed in 1906, the house is historically significant under Criterion A as one of the first, and now oldest, residential buildings erected by the Abbot Kinney Company in Venice of America. Kinney created one of the most unusual communities in Los Angeles when he developed the beach-side resort based on the culture and architecture of Venice, Italy. The house is architectural significant under Criterion C as it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Late Victorian style, which is made all the more exotic by the Islamic-inspired dome over the front entrance. The Late Victorian style of the house is a rarity not only in the community of Venice, but on the west side of Los Angeles in general.

Criterion A

Venice of America was conceived and developed at the beginning of the century by Abbot Kinney. Arriving in southern California in 1880, Kinney settled in Sierra Madre, at the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. At 24 years of age, Kinney had joined the family business, Kinney Brothers Tobacco Company. With an amazing gift for languages (he spoke French, Spanish, Italian, German and Arabic fluently) he was the ideal candidate for the job of buying foreign tobacco. After living and working abroad for several years, Kinney took a much needed vacation and began his search for a permanent home with a climate conducive to his asthma. The crisp, pure air of Sierra Madre apparently suited him. Shortly after arriving, he purchased 550 acres of land and built a house. The property was dubbed Kinneola, meaning Kinney's Hill in Hawaiian. There he lived for many years, dabbling in citraculture, politics, and journalism. With the land boom of 1887, Kinney began buying and selling real estate all over the area. He formulated a particular plan for a Nob Hill type of community in what is now the Pacific Palisades which never came to fruition. In 1891, Kinney took a business partner, Santa Monican Francis G. Ryan. Together they began developing a resort in the southern part of Santa Monica, later called Ocean Park. Unfortunately, Ryan died and his interest was transferred to new partners with whom Kinney had differences of opinion. The partnership was finally dissolved in 1904, and on the flip of a coin Kinney chose the undeveloped southern half of the property as his 50 percent share.

Kinney immediately embarked on plans to build another resort, only this time it would be even more grandiose. Designed by landscape architects in Boston on what was thought to be worthless swampland, Venice was conceived as a beach community that would foster a cultural Renaissance. The idea of constructing the resort around a series of canals was both romantic and pragmatic, and not completely original. With Santa Monica and Ocean Park just to the north, Kinney need a concept for his community which would set it apart from the others. But more importantly, the land could not have been developed without draining the salt water. The canals were a means of controlling the water. The Venetian theme was a logical extension of the canals which also served Kinney's marketing goals. Building and canal construction began in the summer of 1904, but winter storm damage necessitated hasty rebuilding before the resort opened on July 4, 1905.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 page 2

Kinney's rush to build Venice of America stemmed from his desire to open before two other nearby beach resorts, Playa del Rey just to the south and Naples in south Long Beach. Transportation moguls, Moses Sherman and Eli Clark, purchased the land around Playa del Rey in 1902 with the intention of developing it as a Venetian-style resort. While the plans did not include a network of canals, it did call for bridges and towers, a bathing pavilion along the beach, and a 250-room luxury hotel. In 1904, a pavilion and small hotel were built in an Oriental Craftsman style around a lagoon. The resort was a modest success in attracting day tourists, but few investors built on their lots. Naples was developed between 1903 and 1905 by Arthur Parson's Pacific Amusement Company and Henry Huntington. They conceived a plan where they would take 340 acres of mud flats and marsh land in Los Alamitos Bay, create a large island by dredging around it, then dig three miles of canals through the island's residential district.

Although the Venice plan was not totally without local precedent, it owed much to the Columbian Exposition that had been built on reclaimed lowlands along the Chicago shoreline in 1893. Kinney and his planners followed the Chicago World's Fair example in creating a detailed comprehensive town layout. Like the planned communities of later generations, Venice would separate housing areas from commercial and entertainment areas. The plan included two miles of canals laid in a fan shape, a club house, bowling alleys, a bathhouse, a dance pavilion, hotels, a casino, and a theater. Amusement activities were concentrated on a pier which extended from Windward Avenue, the location of the business district. There were 504 residential lots, of which 289 fronted on canals. Kinney hired the local architecture firm of Norman Marsh and Clarence Russell to design the principal buildings.

The first sale of residential lots, located primarily in the canal district was offered to the public on Saturday, November 12, 1904. Initial lot prices, depending on the location, ranged from \$600 to \$1200. To prevent speculation, Kinney restricted sales to two lots per person. Kinney retained ownership of several lots on which he built houses, including the one at 1223 Cabrillo Avenue (then Cabrillo Canal). Completed in 1906, the house was rented for many years until it was purchased by John and Emma Fonnell in 1918. As the original building permit for the house does not exist, the name of the architect is unknown. Marsh and Russell, the only architects associated with Kinney, may have designed the house.

Even in its day, the Venice of America House stood out from its neighbors. The house appears in numerous postcard images of Venice. In one image of the canals under construction, the house appears in the distance, with the house next door as its only neighbor. Sanborn Maps and historic photographs indicate that the earliest residential buildings were predominately one-story, single-family houses, which could best be described as cottages or bungalows. A Sanborn Map from 1909 shows blocks of small wood-frame houses with front porches. Kinney filled United States Island, created by surrounding canals, entirely with one-story wood bungalows. These bungalows are currently being rehabilitated.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 page 3

Venice was annexed by the City of Los Angeles in 1925 after a series of hotly contested elections in which amusement interests vied with permanent residents seeking increased city services and a more strict moral code. In the late 1920s the canals north of Venice Boulevard were filled in to form streets. The great Venice Lagoon became the traffic circle which today joins Main Street (once Coral Canal), Grand Boulevard (once Grand Canal), and Windward Avenue (once Lion Canal north of the Lagoon). Also about this time, multi-family structures began to replace some of the earliest single family houses.

The development of Venice of America had a remarkable impact on the west side of Los Angeles. Surrounding land that had been thought to be worthless, was purchased and subdivided. Most lots were sold within days of being put on the market. The Venice Canal Subdivision was one such tract which owed its existence to Kinney's development. It was developed by Strong and Dickson who would dredge a two mile long canal to connect Kinney's canal with the Playa del Rey lagoon. These canals are listed in the National Register, but were not a part of the original Venice of America plan. The Venice of America House at 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, is historically significant as one of the oldest and last remaining buildings from Abbott Kinney's Venice of America.

Criterion C

The Venice of America House is an unusual example of Late Victorian architecture, with its Islamic-inspired dome over the front entrance. Victorian architecture encompasses the revival and eclectic styles popular in England and America during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). The most widespread of these, in terms of American domestic architecture, was misnamed after Queen Anne (1702-14). It would have been more accurate if the style had been named after its principal protagonist, the English architect Richard Norman Shaw. Between approximately 1870 and 1890, Shaw had a successful practice of designing country houses. He, and his contemporaries such as Philip Webb, drew from historical precedents which had little to do with the time of Queen Anne. Instead, they borrowed most heavily from late Medieval models. Complex shapes, strongly asymmetrical facades, multi-textured or multi-colored walls, and steeply-pitched roofs were common features of the style.

Virginia and Lee McAlester identify "the half-timbered Watts-Sherman house in Newport, Rhode Island as the first American example of the style" in their book, *A Field Guide to American Houses*. By the 1880s, however, the English models executed in stone were supplanted by the American interpretation rendered in wood and heavily decorated with spindle work. The style was spread throughout the country by pattern books and architectural magazines. The expanding railroad network also helped popularize the style by making pre-cut architectural details conveniently available through much of the nation.

The second trend that was to end the Victorian era turned toward the architecture of Colonial America. This movement began with the Centennial celebrations of 1876 and picked up momentum through the 1880s and 1890s. Its influence is evident in the borrowed Georgian and Adam details seen in many late Victorian houses. Houses which merged the Queen Anne

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 page 4

with the Colonial Revival became widespread. Typically these hybrids would have irregular plans and asymmetrical facades found in the Queen Anne, but more subdued, classical ornamentation of the Colonial Revival.

One of the earliest examples of Victorian architecture in southern California is the "Queen Anne Cottage" built on the estate of E.J. Lucky Baldwin in 1881. The largest concentration of the style occurred in the early suburbs around downtown Los Angeles, such as Angelino Heights, Westlake, and West Adams, which were constructed during the boom of the 1880s. Many examples can be found in the outer lying towns which emerged during the boom as well. When the boom abruptly turned into bust in 1887, building activity subsided. By the time the real estate market regained its composure in the 1890s, the late Victorian styles had gained popularity. By the first decade of the twentieth century, late Victorian architecture was almost completely supplanted by the Colonial Revival, and then the Craftsman.

The Venice of America House is an excellent example of the Late Victorian architecture which blended the Queen Anne with the Colonial Revival. The house has the strong rectangular shape, hipped roof, and narrow clapboard siding found in the Colonial Revival. While the house is void of the usual surface decoration associated with the Queen Anne style, it features decorative tripartite windows on the front and side facades. Lattice-patterned transoms, common in Queen Anne houses, top the windows. The most decorative feature of the house, however, is the two-story entryway. It, like the main body of the house, is boxy in shape and may have been the designer's attempt at including the tower and front porch normally associated with Victorian architecture into the small beach lot. The turned wood railing on the balcony and the denticulated molding at the edge of the flat roof are also features typical of the Queen Anne. The double arches on the second story and the dome atop the roof, however, are references to Islamic architecture. It was not terribly uncommon during the period to use eastern architecture as sources of inspiration. The Morey House in Redlands (1887) has a Byzantine-style dome crowning a turret and the Mooers House on South Bonnie Brae Street in Los Angeles (1894) has a Moorish-inspired cupola.

In west Los Angeles, there are very few houses with which to compare the Venice of America House. The other older residential buildings in Venice are predominately Craftsman. There is a good concentration of early twentieth century residential buildings on the short streets north of Windward, between the Speedway and Pacific Avenue. Virtually all, however, have suffered inappropriate alterations as a result of being converted into multifamily housing. There is also a significant cluster of bungalows from approximately the same time period on what was originally United States Island, but stylistically they blend the Craftsman with the Colonial Revival. Santa Monica and Ocean Park are the only west side communities with any Queen Anne or Late Victorian style house worthy of note, and they are few and far between. The Jones House (1894) was moved to its current site at Main Street and Ocean Park Boulevard in 1977 and functions as the California Heritage Museum. It is a simply detailed version of the Queen Anne style.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 page 1

Bibliography

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Schmidt-Brummer, Horst, *Venice, California: An Urban Fantasy*. New York: Grossman Publishers, 1973.

Stanton, Jeffrey W., *Venice, California: Coney Island of the Pacific*. Los Angeles, CA: Donahue Publishing, 1993.

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Golden Anniversary edition of the *Evening Vanguard*, Friday, April 26, 1957.

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Los Angeles County Tax Assessor Records

Los Angeles County Deeds

City of Los Angeles Building Permit Records

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Additional Documentation page 1

Photographs

The following information is the same for all of the photographs:

County: Los Angeles
State: California
Photographer: Teresa Grimes
Date: February 2000
Location of negative: 4211 Glenalbyn Drive, LA, CA 90065

1. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: Looking west on Cabrillo Avenue
2. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: South elevation, looking north
3. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: South elevation, balcony, looking north
4. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: South elevation, front entrance, looking north
5. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: South elevation, second story window, looking north
6. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: East and south elevations, looking northwest
7. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: East and north elevations, looking southwest
8. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: North elevation, back door, looking south
9. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: Staircase

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

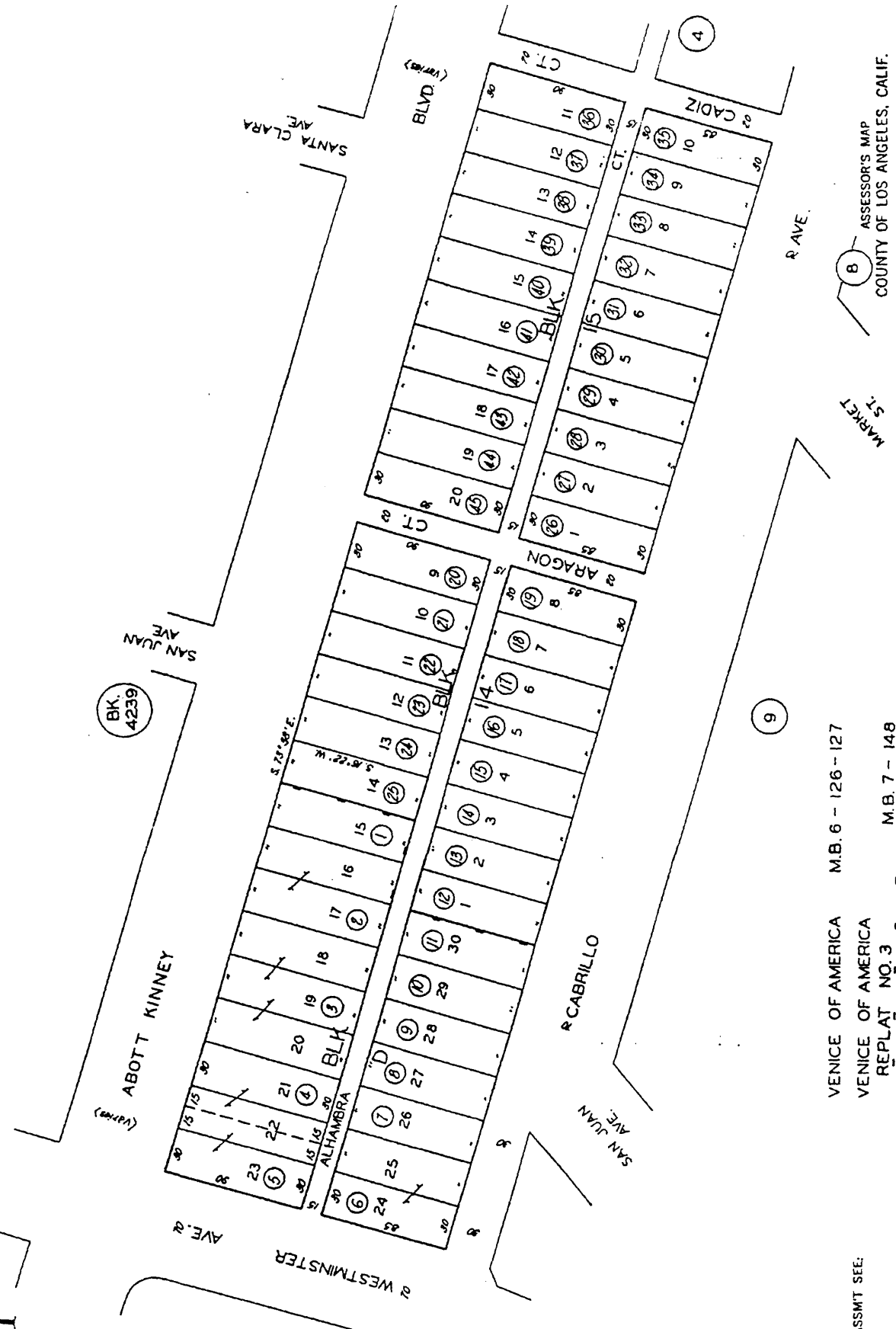
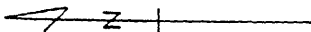
Additional Documentation page 2

Photographs Continued

10. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: Foyer, as seen from living room
11. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: Built-in cabinet between living and dining rooms
12. Name: Venice of America House
Address: 1223 Cabrillo Avenue, Los Angeles 90291
View: Fireplace in dining room

4238 3
SCALE 1" = 60'

1991



BK. 4239

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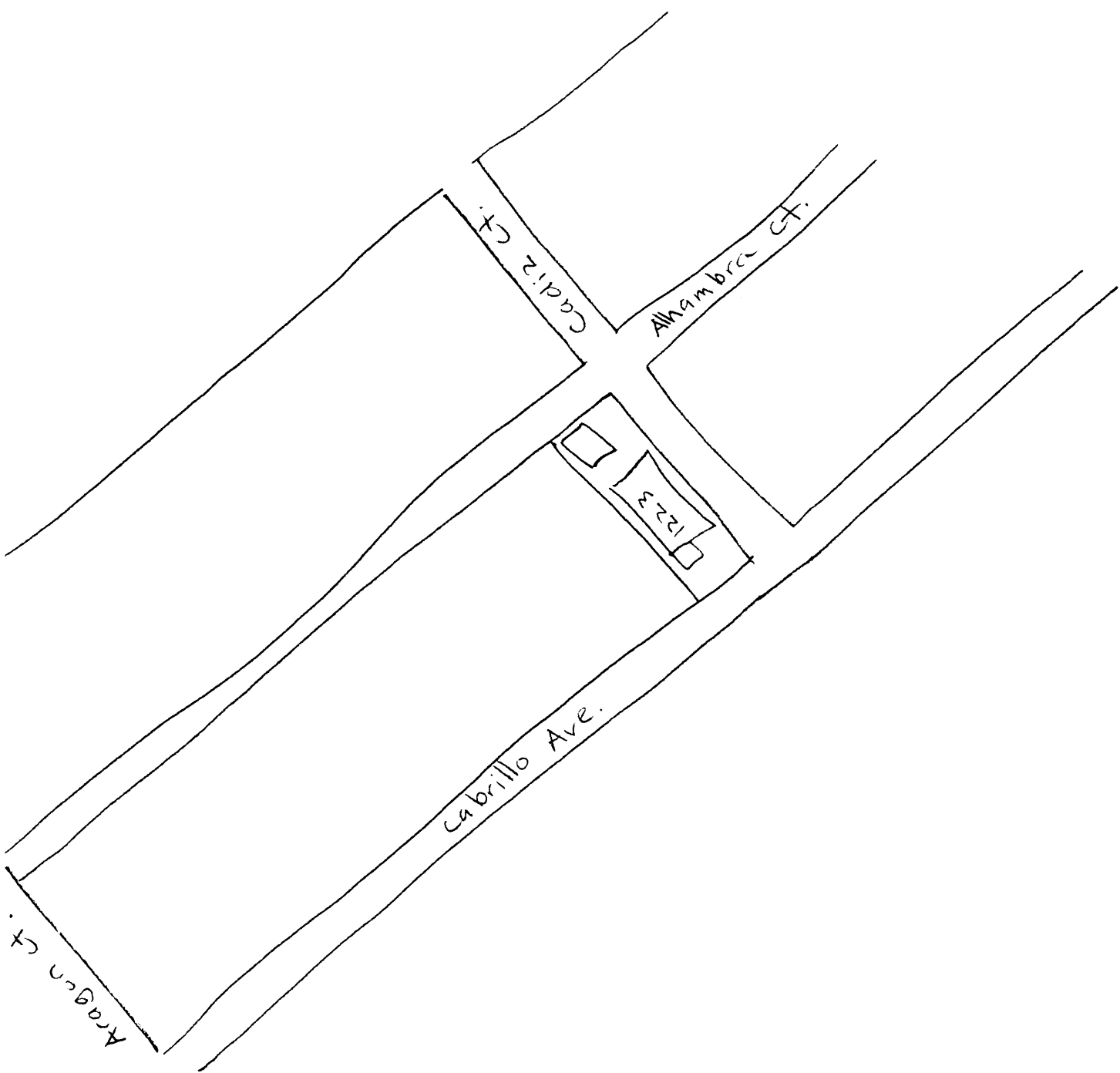
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 VENICE OF AMERICA
 REPLAT NO. 3 - - - M.B. 7 - 148

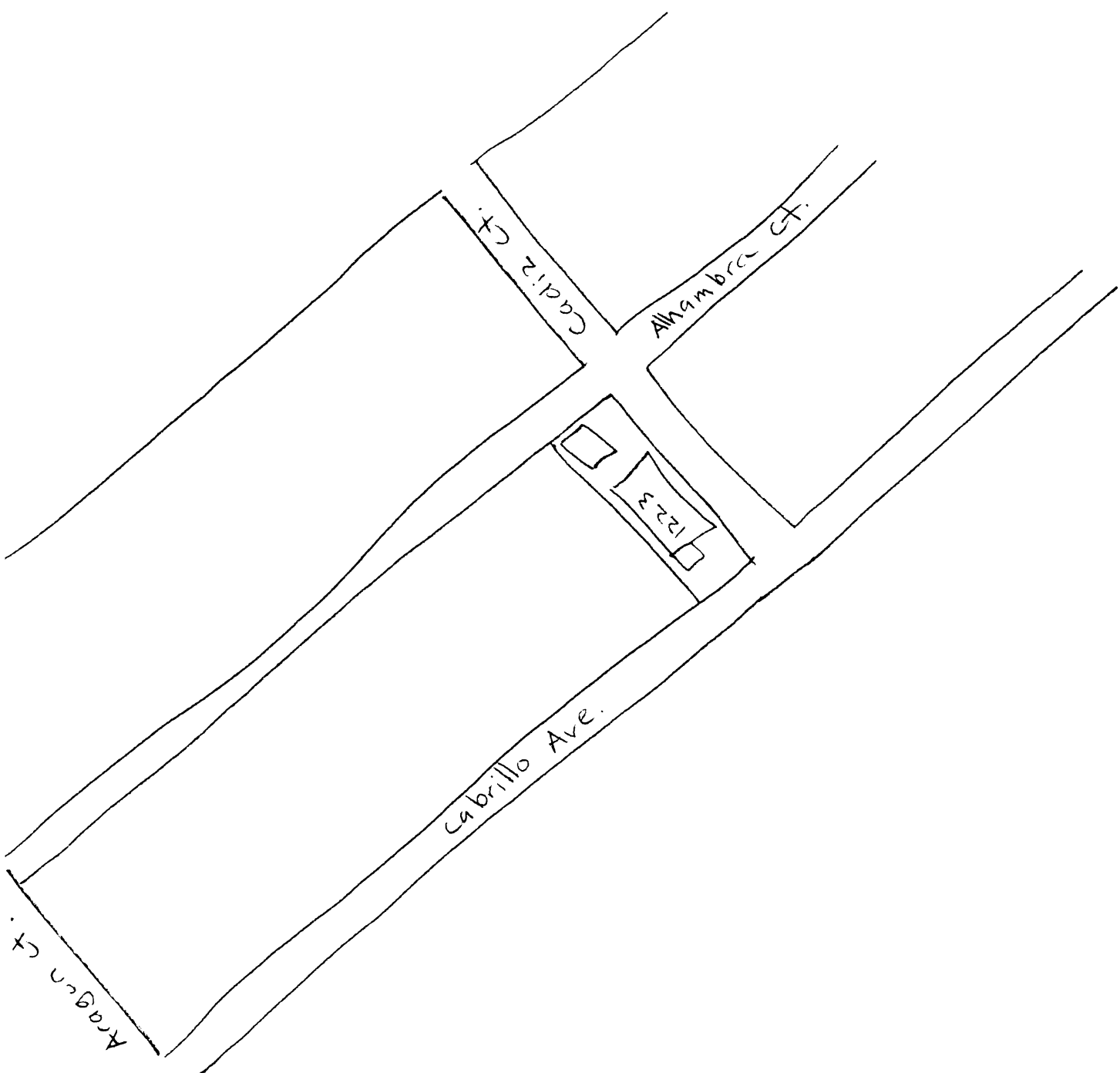
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8

ASSESSOR'S MAP
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIF.



↖ 2



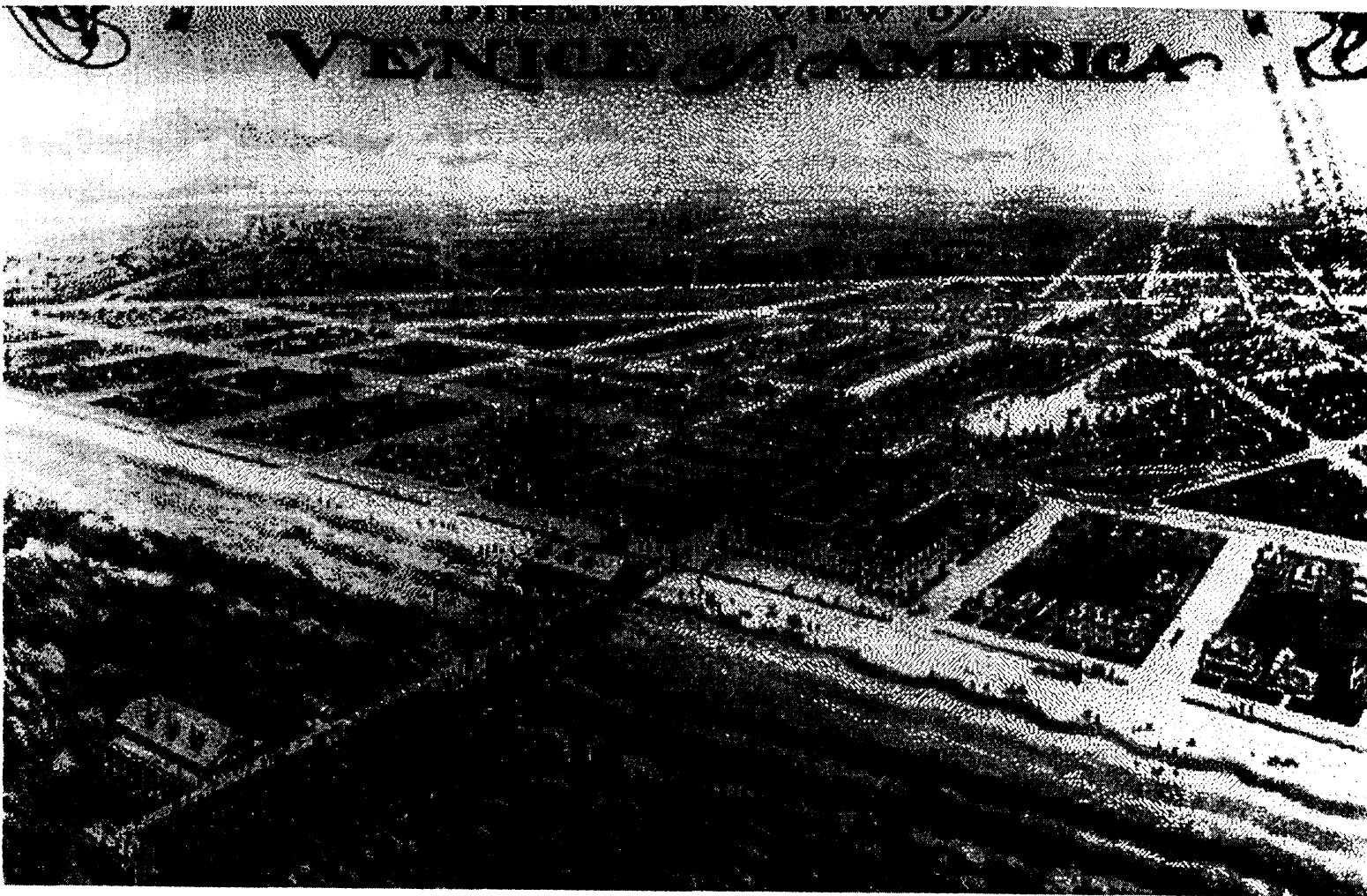
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Boating on the Grand Canal, circa 1908. Villa City on the right.

Courtesy: Security Pacific Bank Collection, L. A. Public Library.

VENICE OF AMERICA





United States Island, 1924
Los Angeles Central Library Photograph Collection



Windward Avenue, 1905
Los Angeles Central Library Photograph Collection