

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

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

For NPS use only

received NOV 28 1984
date entered 1-9-85

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

1. Name

historic JAMES I. GARDNER STORE (Prescott Territorial/ Buildings MRA)
and/or common GARDNER'S GENERAL MERCHANDISE: NEIL'S ECONOMY STORE; THE OAK TREE

2. Location

street & number 201 North Cortez N/A not for publication
city, town Prescott N/A vicinity of
state Arizona code 04 county Yavapai code 025

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input checked="" 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 Jack D. Horner and Karen A. Horner, H/W; Lessee: Paul Murphy
street & number 1209 Overstreet Drive 110 Horizon Circle
city, town Prescott N/A vicinity of state Arizona 86301

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Yavapai County Recorder
street & number 215 East Gurley Street
city, town Prescott state Arizona

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Prescott Historic Buildings Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1974 - 1984 (Continuing) See Continuation Sheet, Item #6, Page 1
 federal state county local
depository for survey records Sharlot Hall Museum Archives
city, town Prescott state Arizona

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY/CONTEXT

The James I. Gardner Store, built in 1890-1891, is a one story masonry structure constructed to the lot lines of a fifty by one hundred fifty foot parcel in Prescott's original town-site which was platted in 1864.

The property is located on a corner lot in downtown Prescott between the Courthouse Plaza Historic District (NR 1978) and the Santa Fe, Prescott and Phoenix Railroad Depot (determined NR eligible 1982).

Prescott, Arizona, the first territorial capital, is located on the northwest slopes of the Bradshaw Mountains in Central Arizona.

Alterations to the building predate 1930, and did not change the essential character.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

EXTERIOR

The Gardner mercantile building is a single story stuccoed brick masonry structure featuring a cast iron front surmounted by a parapet and topped with a pressed metal cornice, which bears a central raised sign panel.

Constructed over a random ashlar granite foundation, the building is now 50 feet wide and 150 feet long, with the longitudinal axis in an east-west direction. A trussed pitched roof sloping toward the east is supported by a post and beam interior bearing line, which divides the space into two bays. The exterior bearing walls are triple wythe red brick masonry capped with a stepped parapet.

The main section of the store, the retail area, measuring 50 feet by about 80 feet, was completed in 1891. Major additions occurred before 1904: an office area under a mezzanine; a warehouse area with a delivery bay over a cellar; and a wood frame stable. All extensions of the building except for the stable were of stuccoed brick and were built to the lot lines to the south and east producing a structure 150 feet deep.

Above the storefront, which faces west on North Cortez Street, a curved hipped canopy with corrugated metal roofing covers the walkway. The canopy is supported by wood beams spanning between round cast-iron columns which are capped with wooden corbels. The spacing of these columns reflects the layout of the six storefront bays.

The canopy, constructed in 1908, is a modification of the original design. The original porch roof, a low pitched hip with metal tee-panel roofing collapsed from snow weight in winter and was replaced by J.I. Gardner with the present roof, curved to allow snow to slide off as it falls.

Continued

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 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1890-1891 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY

The Gardner store is architecturally significant as a rare type and style of construction with cast iron columns and pressed metal cornices, fabricated by the Mesker Bros. of St. Louis, and is the best example of a late 19th century ornamental storefront in Prescott if not in all of Arizona. The building's commercial significance as a general merchandise facility lies in the continuous use of the building to serve the needs of all of Yavapai County and Central Arizona from the time of construction in the late 19th century until the present.

Additional significance is attached to the building as one of the few downtown commercial buildings to have survived the fire of 1900 which destroyed eleven blocks of buildings.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

Founded in 1864 at the direction of President Abraham Lincoln seeking to secure mineral riches of the area for the Union, Prescott was named for the historian William Hickling Prescott by the settlers of the town.

As territorial capital and county seat, laid out in a grid pattern established by a survey in 1864, Prescott's land use and general townscape character clearly demonstrate the middle-western and eastern roots of the populace of that time. The town center with a courthouse centered tree-lined square, the homes on the earliest developed residential streets to the east and the military post established to protect the Anglo settlement from the hostile Indians, all clearly show the influence of the larger American culture.

Few buildings reflecting the early territorial period (1864-1880) survive today although the log Governor's Mansion (NR 1971) stands on the original site. Mining was the main occupation and locally available materials were employed for construction throughout the period.

The middle territorial period (1880-1900) was one of rapid growth and development which was evidenced in significant architectural activity. Commercial structures, with no set back from the property line and abutting another building on either side were built on the streets facing the courthouse plaza. With the advent of the railroad (1886), the street connecting the plaza with the depot, North Cortez, became the major artery for the developing economic base including agriculture and cattle; timber production; commerce, shipping and finance in addition to the mining activities of the area.

Continued

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one
Quadrangle name Prescott, Arizona

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 20, Block 3, Prescott Original Townsite, according to the plat on file in the office of the Recorder, Yavapai County, Book of Maps, Page 22

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

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth F. Ruffner

organization Ruffner-Cibola, Inc. date August, 1984

street & number 1403 Barranca Drive telephone (602) 445-5644

city or town Prescott state Arizona 86301

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 Donna J. Schuber

title SHPO date November 5, 1984

For NPS use only

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

See Continuation sheet for listing date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Continuation sheet

Item number 6

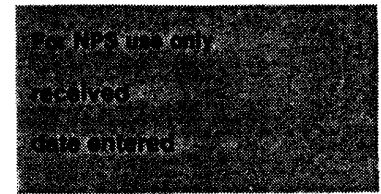
Page 1

6. Representation in Existing Surveys - Property determined eligible by:

National Park Service Western Region; Douglas L. Griffin, Assistant Regional Director Cultural Resources, 1982. Gardner Store, 201 N. Cortez St., Prescott, Yavapai County, Arizona. Project No. 0019-82-AZ (Historic Preservation Certification Application, Part I)

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In 1891 a level boardwalk ran the entire length of the building. This boardwalk was narrower and higher (one step below the finished floor) than the existing concrete sidewalk, and the columns adjacent to the street reached two feet higher. When the boardwalk was replaced by concrete, about 1900, the entry grade was lowered, the columns lined up with the new width, and their height dropped by two feet. Subsequently this roof was replaced, but the columns and support beams were retained. At the same time one column was added to the south, increasing the canopy width.

The main facade, facing west, is a storefront composed of plate-glass windows and doors, divided into six bays by ornate pilasters cast by Mesker Bros. Front Builders of St. Louis, Missouri. The south three bays are broader by proportion than the north three, but each section has a central door. In 1918 alterations were made when fenestration was increased and the larger or south door retained as operable, while the narrower north door was nailed shut.

Originally wood panels infilled the lower portion of the storefront bays, to a height of 24 inches above the floor. At the top of each bay hung an operable transom window. Below these transoms a single window unit was carried above the wooden bulkheads. These wooden elements were removed and the windows were dropped. Below the transoms, which remain stationary, new window units were added to infill the remaining space.

The entry in use has a pair of one light Douglas fir doors 102 inches in height. The ornate door opener and head and foot bolts are solid brass.

The south facade, facing on Willis Street, was first plastered over in 1904 and successive treatments have been applied to counter-act excessive water damage through absorption into the soft local brick and also through the original mortar.

The south elevation fenestration includes two identical windows which are a part of the 1891 fabric, with shutter brackets still in place. The door to the east of these windows opens into the warehouse section. This door with the windows immediately to the east, is undocumented, but the openings are original. On the east facade is an original (to the 1904 additions) shed roof supported by curved wooden brackets.

Three openings to the east are symmetrically placed within the basement wall under the warehouse area and serve as clerestory windows for the below-grade basement.

The east facing exterior wall of the building is made up of a loading dock entrance to the warehouse. Next to the north, the barn, with gabled roof, shares a common wall and has had its original wood siding facade replaced with concrete block at an undetermined time and stuccoed over. The framing and much of the floor of this stable is intact.

The north wall of the building is common in its entire length with the adjoining structure.

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INTERIOR

The spacious interior of the retail area was originally divided by back-to-back shelving facing into both bays. This shelving was removed in 1918. Shelving also lined the perimeter walls and two-thirds of the south wall shelving remains, and all original shelving on the north wall. A library ladder for access remains operable in the north wall shelves. A pressed metal ceiling covers the entire area. This material was also used as sheathing above the wall shelving but was removed at an undetermined time.

The original flooring in the retail section, 1"x4" tongue and groove Douglas fir over an oak sub-floor, remains intact but is in very poor condition. The front entry doors, double hung windows, swinging door into office and another into the warehouse are original. All exhibit original hardware. Surface rim locks are in place on some interior doors and some marbelized door knobs are original.

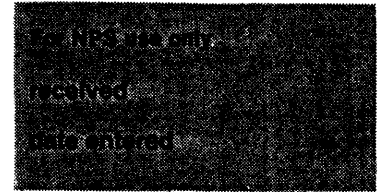
The 1904 extensions of the building to the east lot line provided additional interior functions evidenced by an office in the southeast corner of the original retail space beneath a decorative mezzanine sky-lighted, with a heavy Victorian staircase balustrade and newel post; a receiving area with scale, still in place, a warehouse, skylighted, with cellar below used for coal storage, all on the southeast portion of the site. The interior of the barn in which hay and grain was stored and horses and wagons housed has retained its original framing and flooring (and scents!) and is used at present for storage.

INTEGRITY

Alterations to the building, both interior and exterior, are minimal, except for the removal of the center line shelving, and all predate 1930. The spatial character remains unchanged. The most recent application of stucco to the exterior occurred in 1983, the first in 1904.

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Significance:

James I. Gardner, who arrived in Prescott in 1879, typified the pioneer businessman and rancher. He worked at various jobs after his arrival with a burro pack train from the end of the transcontinental railroad line at Trinidad, Colorado, saving \$1,000.00 to go into business for himself. He opened his first store in 1883 across Willis Street from the present Gardner's store on the ground floor of the Cliff House Hotel. In 1890 he built the masonry structure with a cast-iron front shipped in by rail, in which he established his general merchandise business, purveying practically all of the goods required by a growing town and receiving most of his stock, ordered from various places, shipped in by rail, and carried by wagon to his store from the railroad loading dock a block away to the north.

From a newspaper article of the day, Mr. Gardner and his store are characterized:

"The stock kept is general in its character embracing dry goods, groceries, hardware, crockery, paint and oils, and in fact almost any line of goods which his customers can want or call for. Each line has a separate department for itself and five clerks are employed in the business. There is a commodious office in the rear part of the store. Mr. Gardner, while carrying on his extensive mercantile business, has not neglected the advantages afforded in Arizona for the enterprising man in other pursuits. He is interested in a fruit farm in Skull Valley containing 160 acres of land for which he has a United States patent. Every year the value of such property in Arizona is becoming greater and more evident to the outside world. He is also interested in the mining industries of the country, and in regions where the prospects are favorable.

As a private citizen, Mr. Gardner has the confidence and esteem of the entire community among whom he resides and with whom he does business."

James I. Gardner closed his general store and retired from business in 1918; he sold the building to G.C. Neil, succeeded by his son Gail, who operated a second hand general merchandise (no groceries) store there until the late 1970s when the present owners Jack and Karen Horner bought the building and continue a mercantile business to this day.

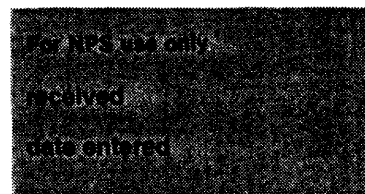
ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

As the only mercantile establishment in Prescott still operating in its original context in a building essentially original in form, both interior and exterior, the J.I. Gardner Store holds a unique distinction. As one of only four remaining buildings in Prescott exhibiting pre-fabricated metal building elements -- the Head Hotel, Benjamin Lindenbaum's Rooming House, and Knights of Pythias building (N.R. 1978) -- this structure exhibits the highest integrity.

Continued

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Continuation sheet

Item number 8

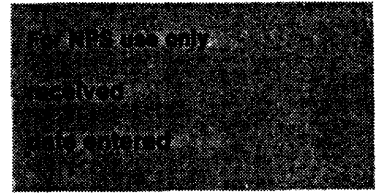
Page 2

The J.I. Gardner Store is architecturally significant as a rare type and style of construction and remains today as an outstanding example of a cast-iron front commercial-mercantile design. The six-bay two entry facade is not extant in any other such building in other Arizona communities, i.e., Pearce, Willcox, Winslow, Flagstaff, Williams, in either scale or integrity.

This building is the best example of a late nineteenth century general merchandise facility in Prescott, if not in all of Arizona, and is one of the few remaining commercial structures in the center of Prescott, as earlier structures in 11 blocks were destroyed by fire in July, 1900, and were replaced after that date. The only remaining buildings are, in addition to the Gardner store, the Bank of Arizona (NR 1978) under construction at the time of the fire, Knights of Pythias (NR 1978) and the adjoining buildings to the south in the 100 block of South Cortez Street to Union Street.

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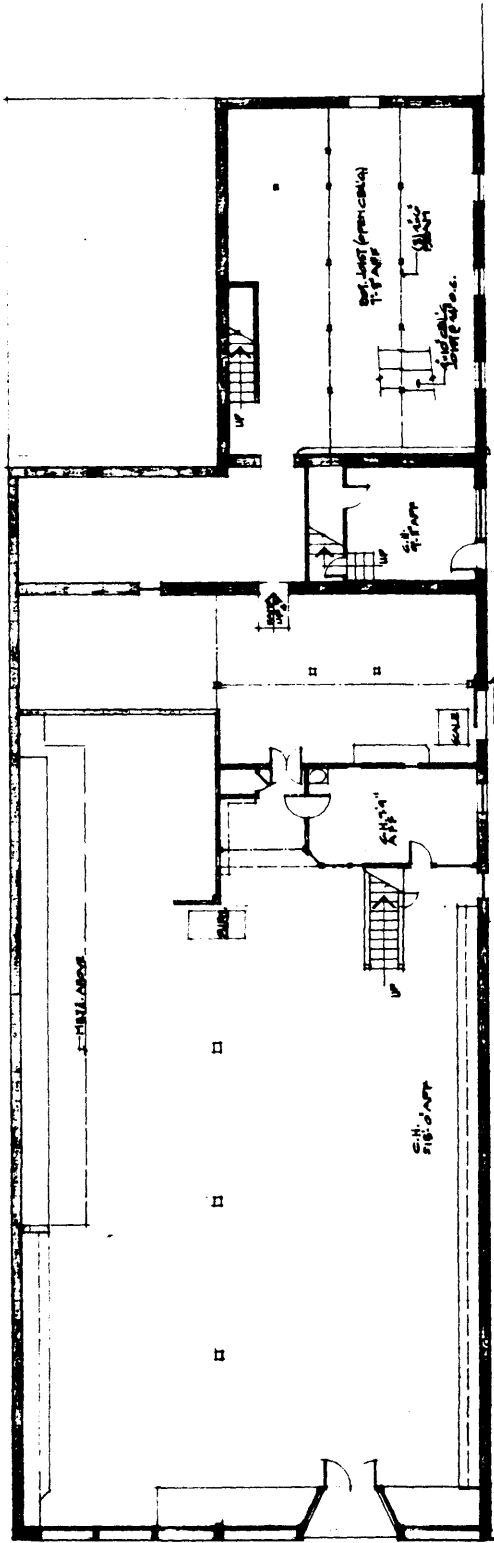
Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

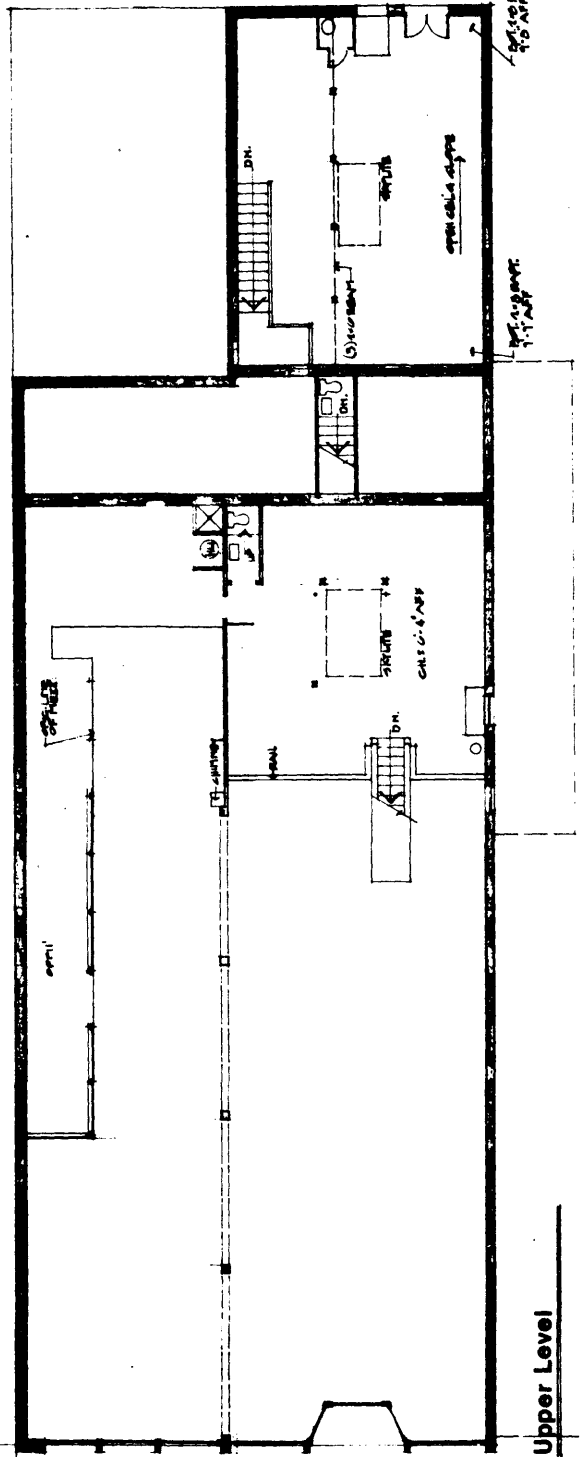
9. Major Bibliographical References

- Gardner, Gail I., "The Pioneer Merchant," Arizona Highways Magazine, July 1957
- Interviews with Gail I. Gardner, 1982, 1983
- Interviews with William Otwell, Architect, 1984
- Interviews with Jonathan Tudan, Preservation Consultant, 1984
- Sharlot Hall Museum, Photo and Subject Files
- Spude, Robert, "The Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad," Arizona and the West, January, 1975
- Yavapai Heritage Foundation Cultural Resource Surveys Files



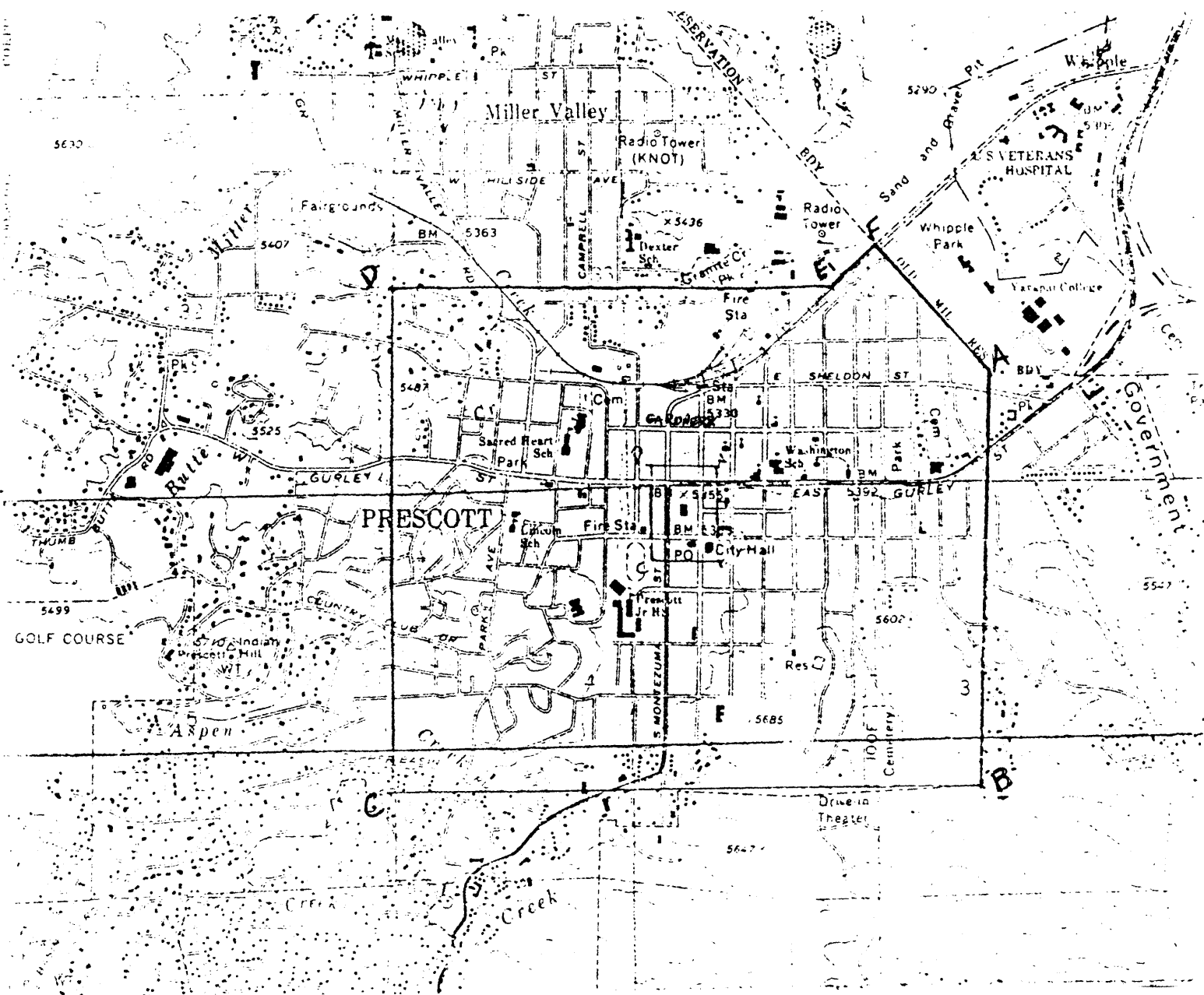
Lower Level

Scale 3/8" = 1'-0"



Upper Level

WILLIAM STEWELL & ASSOCIATES, ARCHITECTS
140 S. GARDNER ST. PRESCOTT, AZ. (602) 444-1151



PRESCOTT QUADRANGLE

PRESCOTT MULTIPLE RESOURCE AREA

and

J.I. GARDNER STORE

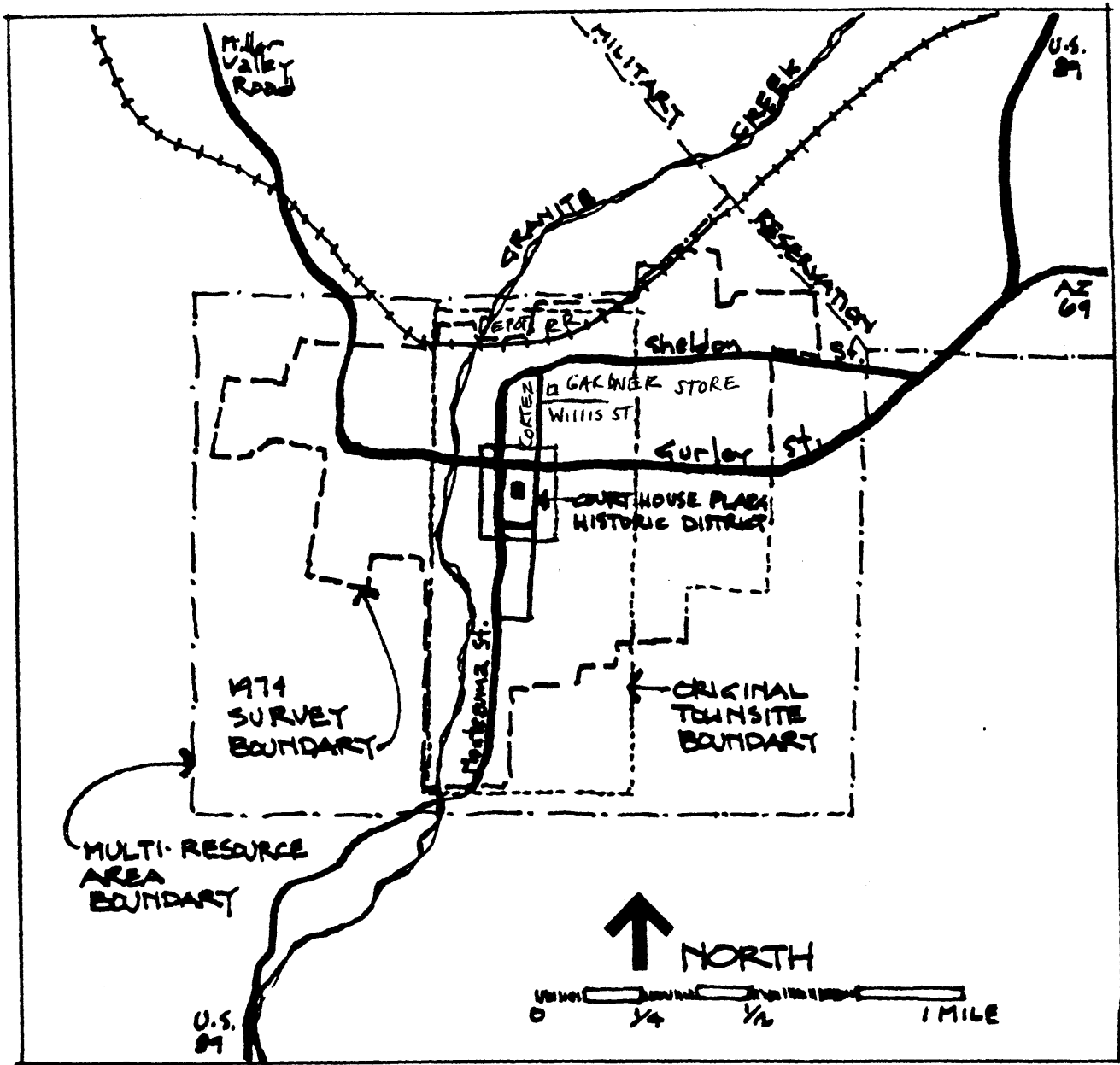
PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

Prescott Multiple Resource Area
UTM References

Gardner Store
UTM Reference

- A 12/366480/3823440
- B 12/366410/3821800
- C 12/364020/3821810
- D 12/364050/3823810
- E 12/365840/3823780
- F 12/366020/3823960

12/365000E/3823400N



SURVEY REFERENCE MAP

This survey reference map delineates the boundaries of an historic district and building survey (Territorial period 1864-1912) undertaken by Yavapai Heritage Foundation, commencing in 1974. The map also shows the boundaries of a Multiple Resource Area listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1978, which nomination included the Courthouse Plaza Historic District and forty-four individual buildings.

Located in the Northeast Quarter of the Original Townsite, the James I. Gardner Store is on the northeast corner of Willis and Cortez Streets.