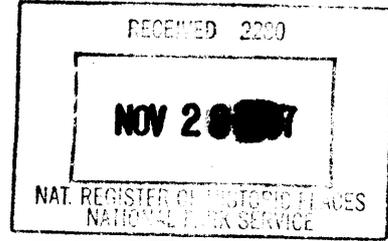


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1. Name of Property

historic name Copperopolis Armory

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 695 Main Street

N/A not for publication

city or town Copperopolis

N/A vicinity

state California code CA county Calaveras code 009 zip code 95228

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for 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. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] 11/18/97
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State Historic Preservation Officer

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 commenting 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]
Signature of the Keeper
[Signature] 12/30/97
Date of Action

Copperopolis Armory
Name of Property

Calaveras County, California
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | 0 | 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)

Defense, Armory
Social, Clubhouse

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Social, Clubhouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century
Greek Revival

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
walls brick
roof sheet metal
other metal exterior shutters

Narrative Description

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

Copperopolis Armory
Name of Property

Calaveras County, California
County and State

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.)

- 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 values, 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.

Criteria Considerations

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

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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture _____
- Military _____
- Social History _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Period of Significance

1864-1903

Significant Dates

1864

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Copperopolis Armory
Name of Property

Calaveras County, California
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property. Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | |
|---|-------------------|---|
| 1 | 10-707780-4205600 | 3 |
| 2 | | 4 |

Verbal Boundary Description

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

The Copperopolis Armory is located on Calaveras County Assessor's Parcel No. 54-008-01, listed as lot 5, block 2 of the original Copperopolis Townsite

Boundary Justification

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

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

11. Form Prepared By

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| name/title | Judith Marvin, Principal Investigator | | |
| organization | Foothill Resources, Ltd. | date | |
| street & number | P.O. Box 2040 | telephone | (209) 728-1408 |
| city or town | Murphys | state | CA zip code 95247 |

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 the SHPO or FPO.)

| | | | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------|--|
| name | | | |
| street & number | | telephone | |
| city or town | state | zip code | |

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

SUMMARY

The Copperopolis Armory is located on the east side of Main Street in Copperopolis, the southernmost of three brick buildings which comprise the north side of the historic "Plaza," once the commercial center of the community. The front facade faces Main Street, on a level lot which extends to Antelope Street, no longer in use. Behind the street, the hillside slopes gently to the base of Bear Mountain, which rises to the east behind Copperopolis and forms a geographic barrier extending the length of Calaveras County. The Armory is constructed in a simple brick Vernacular Greek Revival style with metal shutters popular throughout the Mother Lode in the mid-1850s and 1860s. The building is supported by a stone perimeter foundation and stone piers, with a full basement accessed via stone stairways beneath the front porch. Double French doors, flanked by multi-pane windows, are located on the front facade and are fitted with metal shutters. As only one early 1860s photograph of the building appears to be extant, it is impossible to accurately date the alterations in its appearance, but most were made prior to 1900 and may date to as early as 1868 when the building was acquired by the I.O.O.F. Lodge. Early alterations include a brick addition to the rear of the building and the addition of a pyramidal metal roof over the original flat roof. During the 1950s a modern frame porch was added to the front of the building (replaced in the 1980s) (C. Stone, personal communication 1997), a corrugated metal canopy over the rear doorway, and a frame bathroom to the exterior north side. The building appears to be in its 1860s condition except for these minor alterations.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Copperopolis Armory is a simple one-story, rectilinear Vernacular Greek Revival brick building with a sheet metal hip roof with projecting eaves. A flat roof is depicted in the only extant historic photograph; its covering is undetermined. The present roof has been unchanged for at least 70 years, and may date to the late 1860s when the building was acquired by the Odd Fellows. Walls consist of brick laid in common bond, with a simple decorative cornice at the roofline and relieving arches over the openings. A brick addition was added to the building in the early years, probably after the building was acquired by the Odd Fellows Lodge in 1868. The brick has been rumored to have been transported from Columbia, across the river in Tuolumne County, where the townspeople were in the process of dismantling many of their brick buildings in order to mine the ore beneath. The front facade is four bays wide, with two central double doors flanked by windows. The doors are French, with lights above recessed panels. The doors and windows have metal shutters, which are original to the building. There are no other openings in the building save for a window in the north rear wall and two small doors in the rear brick addition.

Primary access is provided by a small frame porch on the front of the building. The porch is modern, with a shed roof supported by six square posts and a wooden railing; flooring is wood and the foundation is concrete; the exact configuration of the original entry is unknown. The building has a full-size basement, floored with slate and accessed via two doorways entered from the street level by stairways on either side of the first-floor entry. The entire building is supported by a stone perimeter foundation and stone interior piers.

Flooring in the interior of the building is tongue and groove, with walls of brick and ceiling of sheet rock (which replaced the original building board). The interior space consists of one large room, with a small kitchen in the rear addition. A small frame bathroom addition was constructed on the exterior north side in the 1950s, with access from a window, but the building is otherwise in original condition. The building is situated on a bare lot; the only other structure is a modern metal storage building near the northwest rear corner of the building.

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Continuation Sheet

Copperopolis Armory
Calaveras County, California

Section number 8 Page 6

SUMMARY

The Copperopolis Armory is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C. Under Criterion A, the building served as the armory for the Union Guard of Copperopolis during the waning years of the American Civil War. It is the only extant armory in Calaveras County of the many which were constructed or converted during that epic conflict, and the only brick armory in the Southern Mother Lode. Built by public subscription in 1864, the building saw only a brief period of use as an armory, where troops were enlisted and trained to serve in the Union Army. After the end of the war the building was converted into a hall for public meetings, rallies, balls, church services, and, after 1868, for Odd Fellows Lodge meetings. As such, it was the military, social, and fraternal center of the community for almost 40 years, during periods of boom and bust in the copper mines, until 1903 when the lodge moved into the old Congregational Church. It is one of only four remaining brick buildings which were constructed in the early 1860s in the community, when over 60 commercial buildings lined the streets. The armory is also eligible under Criterion C, because it embodies a distinctive Vernacular Greek Revival brick commercial architectural style, popular in the California Mother Lode during the late 1850s and early 1860s. The use of brick, with simple cornicing, relieving arches over the windows and doors, multi-paned sash windows, and glass and panel double doors with metal shutters, reflects a period in history when simple, well-constructed brick commercial buildings lined the main streets of America.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

From its beginnings in 1860 to the end of World War II, Copperopolis has been directly related to and affected by the extraction and production of copper ore. Copper ore was first discovered locally in May, 1860, and shortly thereafter by W. K. Reed and Thomas McCarty in what one year later became known as Copperopolis. From rolling hills of ranchland, the area was transformed almost overnight into a booming community due to the extraordinary need for copper for munitions and shell casings in the American Civil War. The strike came at a time when the Mother Lode gold mines were almost dormant and, although the copper excitement promised more than it ultimately delivered, for seven years copper was "king" in Calaveras County. The town that owed its existence to the Civil War developed around the "Plaza," with streets named for their associations with the Civil War: Union (now Main), Lincoln, Grant, and Sherman. Staunchly northern in their sympathies, the town sported in addition to Union Street, the Union Hotel, Union Mine, and Union Bridge. Of the more than 60 commercial establishments which once lined the streets of the community, only seven were constructed of brick and only four are extant: two stores, a church, and the armory.

Military History

There is no record of the architect of the armory and very little is known of its construction other than that it was built by public subscription in 1864. A letter, dated October 31, 1864, to General George S. Evans, Sacramento, from James Oliphant, Captain Commander of the Union Guard of Copperopolis, however, sheds some light on the issue:

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 5th inst. together with arms etc as per invoice received. Sergeants swords, sword...and plates were not included in the invoice. Please forward the same at your earliest convenience.

How about uniforms, Can they be had. We would like them as soon as it is possible for furnish them. We would also like a few copies of Military Law.

Our Armory is nearly completed. It is 40 by 80 brick and fire-proof, and will cost about \$8000. Our expenses have necessarily been very heavy, and we do not feel able to furnish our own uniforms. If there is any show to procure them from the State let us know. P.S. You will hear a good account from Calaveras on November 8th.

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Continuation Sheet

Copperopolis Armory
Calaveras County, California

Section number 8 Page 7

As the home of the Union Guard, also known as the Copperopolis Blues, the armory was where men enlisted in the military, marched and trained for battle, and stored arms and uniforms for the officers and men who were to serve the north in their epic cause. Celebrations and mournings for battles won and lost were held there, as well as grand military balls whose details were recounted with enthusiastic praise by the reporter for the *Copperopolis Courier*. It was at a ball held in April of 1865 that an American flag, made by the women of the town, was presented to the Captain, officers, and members of the Guard, and still hangs in the hall. Another extant remnant of the Civil War was the six-pounder bronze metal cannon, cast in 1837, one of the few 19th-century bronze United States cannons in California. It was purchased by the Copperopolis Blues, and used for training and ceremonial purposes during the Civil War. The cannon, now mounted, was at that time on wheels and housed in or near the armory.

The firing of the cannon was the signal for a great meeting of Unconditional Surrender held in town by the Union men in October 1864. Large delegations came from all the other communities in Calaveras County, carrying their appropriated banners, transparencies, mottoes, and designs. They marched into town in one solid column "presenting as fine an array of patriotic men as was ever before seen in one body in the county." Eight hundred men, marching to music, carrying banners, mottos and burning torches, marched from the armory to a speakers' stand under a grand oak where orations were given by important San Francisco and local Union officers, judges, and other dignitaries. One of the most somber events to be held at the armory were the funeral obsequies for President Lincoln's assassination, held on April 17. The Union Guard in full uniform joined a crowd of over 700 on the Plaza in front of Armory Hall, marched down Main Street, then returned to the hall, where the Reverend Starr, accompanied by the Congregational Society choir, delivered the address. The Catholic Church bell tolled, work was suspended in all the mines, and all stores and other businesses were closed. With the cessation of hostilities, the building became the property of the Armory Hall Association and its function as a local center for military enlistment, training, and storage of arms, equipment, and uniforms ended.

Social History

The Armory continued to be utilized for the major events in Copperopolis after it ceased operating as a military facility, for numerous accounts in the *Copperopolis Courier* over the ensuing two years note that weddings, balls, funerals, church services, meetings, and rallies were held within its walls. The death knell for little Copperopolis was soon to be pealed, however: a disastrous fire in September 1867 destroyed half the town and over thirty businesses. Coinciding with the falling world price of copper, the high cost of transportation, and the fact that most of the readily accessible ore was mined out, the town was virtually deserted. The following year the Armory Hall Association sold their building to the Mineral Lodge, Independent Order of Odd Fellows.

The Odd Fellows, one of four fraternal lodges to be established in Copperopolis (others were Masonic, Good Templars, and the Emmet Circle of Fenians), met monthly in their facility and were responsible for holding many of the local balls, civic celebrations, and funerals. Immensely popular in the early days, the lodges contributed stability and social order to the normally rough and tumble life of the miners. They supported the widows and children of local miners, conducted funeral services, and provided an opportunity for men to congregate and establish friendships and a social order. In Copperopolis, the Odd Fellows and Masons often cooperated with each other in presenting dances, dinners, and other community events. Both organizations also established cemeteries adjoining each other and the Catholic and Protestant cemeteries, all delineated by stone walls and decorative metal gates.

There is no information available as to the dates of closure of the Fenian or Good Templars' lodges in Copperopolis, but the Keystone Masonic Lodge moved to Milton in 1881, consolidating with Bear Mountain Lodge which is still in use today. The Odd Fellows, however, maintained a continued presence in Copperopolis, moving to the old Congregational Church in 1903 and conducting activities there until 1939. As the only fraternal lodge in the town for almost sixty years, the Odd Fellows maintained a major presence in the social and fraternal life of Copperopolis and its townspeople. For over twenty of those years the lodge operated from the old armory, which continued to play an important role in the social history of the community, as the place where folk gathered on important civic, religious, lodge, and celebratory occasions.

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Copperopolis Armory
Calaveras County, California

Section number 8 Page 8

The building was sold to the Copperopolis Community Center in 1940 and has been in continuous use since that time as a community hall where dances, bingo games, meetings, and social events are held. Although past its period of historic significance, the armory retains its usage as the center of social activity for Copperopolis.

Architectural Significance

Designed by an unknown builder, as were most of the brick commercial, fraternal, and religious buildings of the California Mother Lode in the mid-1850s and early 1860s, the Copperopolis Armory was constructed in a simple brick Greek Revival style ubiquitous in that region. It is, however, the only extant brick armory in the Southern Mother Lode, and a fine example of its style. One of seven brick buildings constructed in Copperopolis during the boom years of the Civil War, only three others are extant: the Congregational Church, and the Reed and Honigsberger stores, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The armory is typical of its neighboring brick structures, the one-story Honigsberger and two-story Reed commercial buildings, with simple brick corncicing across their upper front facades, double glass and panel doors, multi-paned sash windows, and iron shutters. Utilitarian in design, they reflect a period in California history when establishments were erected almost overnight in response to gold and copper mining booms and their attendant commercial, educational, social, and military needs. Although the architect and/or builder of the armory are unknown, the workmanship and design appears to be almost identical to the other brick buildings in town, as well those as in many other such communities in the California foothills.

The building, although not unique, is important as a typical example of early 1860s architecture in the Mother Lode, coinciding with the first copper boom in California. As was typical of most other such buildings constructed during the heyday of brick and stone construction in the 1850s and 1860s (a response to the ever-present danger of fire), the armory has undergone some alterations. The original flat roof was covered with a hip roof, clad in corrugated metal, at some early date. Although the date of the reconstruction of the armory roof is unknown, many flat-roofed brick or stone buildings in Calaveras County were replaced within a few years of construction because of leakage. Flat roofs, usually covered with sheet tin, quickly rusted in the rainy winters and were replaced with hip and gable roofs with overhanging eaves to protect the buildings. Other alterations, such as the exterior construction of the frame bathroom and the front porch, are reversible and could be redesigned if any information regarding the construction of the original porch becomes available. The rear addition, measuring approximately 18 by 40 feet, was made at an early date also, probably in the late 1860s when the building was sold to the I.O.O.F., and does not detract from its architectural significance. The southernmost of three brick buildings constructed during the copper boom, the armory anchors the Honigsberger and Reed's stores on the north side of the "Plaza," on what remains of the historic core of Copperopolis.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 9

Calaveras, County of
var. Assessment Tax Rolls
var. Deed Books

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1981 *California Historical Landmarks*. Department of Parks and Recreation, Sacramento.

Clark, W. B., and P. A. Lydon
1962 *Mines and Mineral Resources of Calaveras County, California, County Report 2*. California Division of Mines and Geology, San Francisco.

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Elliott, W. W.
1885 *Calaveras County Illustrated and Described*. W. W. Elliott, Oakland.

Hoover, M. B., H. E. Rensch, and W. N. Abeloe
1966 *Historic Spots in California*. Stanford University Press, Stanford.

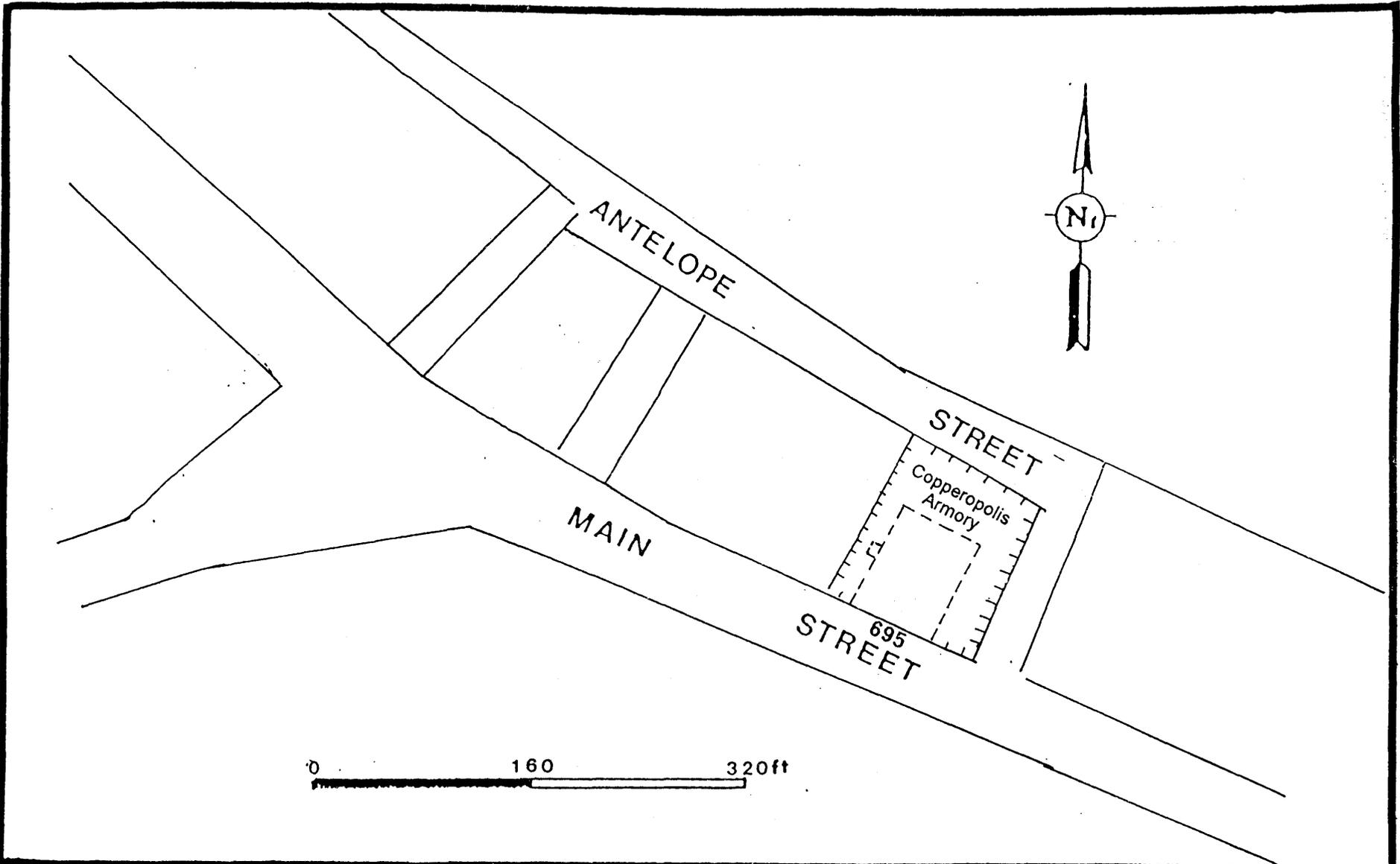
Jenkins, O. P.
1948 *Geologic Guidebook Along Highway 49 - Sierran Gold Belt, The Mother Lode Country*. California Division of Mines and Geology, San Francisco.

Lewis, L. Helen
1960 *A History of Copperopolis*. Calaveras County Office of Education.

Limbaugh, R. H., and W. P. Fuller, Jr.
1980 *Calaveras County Mining, Logging, and Railroading*. Manuscript prepared for the Calaveras Heritage Council, San Andreas. Funding provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Stone, Charles
1997 Notes on interview of 3 September 1997. On file, Foothill Resources, Ltd., Murphys, California.

Stone, Rhoda, and Charles Stone
1991 *The Tools are on the Bar. The History of Copperopolis, Calaveras County, California*. Charles and Rhoda Stone, Copperopolis.



COPPEROPOLIS ARMORY (From 1873 Townsite Map)
Copperopolis, Calaveras County, CA

| LEGEND | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Property boundary | — |
| Building | - - - |