

1939

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property:

historic name: Burgess Garage (1931-present)
other name/site number: Winkes Garage (ca 1913-1917); Armour Garage (1918-1921),
Motor Inn (1921-1925), Lambert Garage (1925-1927)

2. Location

street & number: Corner of 3rd and Main not for publication: n/a
city/town: Lambert vicinity: n/a
state: Montana code: MT county: Richland code: 083 zip code: 59243

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.

Mark F. Gamber / SHPO *November 15, 2004*
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official 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 see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register see continuation sheet
- other (explain):

Raymond Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

12/30/04

5. Classification

Ownership of Property:	Private	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property:	Building	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> buildings
		<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register:	n/a	<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
		<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing:	n/a	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

6. Function or Use**Historic Functions:**

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store; professional
HEATH/doctor's office

Current Functions:

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum storage

7. Description**Architectural Classification:**

OTHER: Western Commercial

Materials:

foundation: concrete
walls: wood-framed stucco
roof: metal/tin
other: (floor)--concrete

Narrative Description

The Burgess Garage is a balloon-framed, single story structure with stucco exterior and concrete floors located on lots numbered 11 and 12, block 3 in Lambert, Montana. It was constructed by or for Henry Winkes sometime prior to 1913 and has been used as a mechanic's garage for its entire commercial existence. Very little is known of the actual construction history. It is assumed that Henry Winkes either built the structure himself, or closely supervised the process, as was common among homesteaders of the era.

Only three photographs of its early days are known to exist: one shows a wood-sided building with signage painted directly on the siding, a second is of the building sided in corrugated galvanized tin. The third is a pitched roof with stucco siding obviously taken prior to 1923, as many of the buildings visible in the background perished in a fire of that year.

At some point during this early time period Mr. Winkes began renting office space in the front of the building to the local physician, Dr. George Armour. Advertisements and articles in the local newspaper at the time (*The Lambert Promoter*) suggest that Dr. Armour had set up his practice in the front office by 1915. This office remains intact with original glass-topped room dividers. The base trim is 1"x6" mopboards with an additional 3/4-round piece next to the floor as was typical for the era.

The building's exterior is largely unchanged from the original appearance. The exterior walls are sheathed in one-inch thick stucco. This finish has not been repaired or reapplied since its original application in the late teens or early twenties, a genuine testament to that material's durability. The corrugated metal roof was replaced in 2003.

A ten-foot by ten-foot exterior sliding door originally located in the center of the east face was relocated to the northeast corner early in the period of significance; this was likely to accommodate the office space now occupying that portion of the building. Two thirty-six-inch double-hung windows are now in place where the

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sliding door was. The exterior passage door situated in the southeast corner is framed at a forty-five degree angle to the rest of the structure and covered with a cantilevered roof.

The south exposure has three vintage twenty-four-inch single-hung, four-light, mullioned windows. These are retrofitted into twenty-four by thirty-six inch openings with the lower sixteen inch void framed over and patched with stucco. One twenty-four by thirty-six inch double-hung window is in the east corner of the south elevation. All four windows are spaced equidistant along its length. A single nine-by-twelve foot sliding garage door suspended by steel tracks is located in the southwest corner. The west exposure has two sixteen-inch single-hung windows set off-center near the apex, and the north exposure has four more of the same dimensions. All the above-mentioned windows are protected by a screen of orange-painted expanded metal mesh.

Conversations with Alvin Burgess' daughters, Olive and Viola, indicate the next major renovation would have been the addition of concrete flooring in the shop some time in the early 1940's. Other than the installation of superficial shelving and equipment in the garage itself, and minor face-lifts in the office area, this would have been the last improvement made.

The Burgess Garage is the oldest remaining structure in the community of Lambert, and is unique in that it remained a commercial garage throughout its entire existence; even though other businesses were sometimes located in the office. It is significant more so in the fact that very little renovation has occurred throughout the years, other than the addition of stucco siding sometime before 1923, concrete floor in the 1940's, and replacement of the southern exposure windows sometime after that. Historic photographs reveal the exterior lines exactly match those of the earlier photographs, indicating no dramatic physical changes have occurred since original construction.

The Richland County Commissioners provided a grant to the Lambert Historical Society in 2003 to replace the metal roofing on Burgess Garage. Additional moneys were allocated at the same time to restore the foundation under the east and west end-walls, and the floor in the office; projects that are currently underway. Painting material and supplies are also on hand to repaint the exterior once the previously mentioned jobs are completed.

A five-year plan is in process to continue the work of rehabilitating the structure while retaining its historical aspects. These proposals will include rewiring to meet current building safety standards, installation of insulation and era-appropriate interior wall covering, installation of climate control to enhance preservation of artifacts, and conversion of storage areas to accommodate museum inventory. None of these projects will have any effect on the exterior appearance of the building.

Integrity:

The Burgess Garage retains a high degree of integrity. A few changes to the exterior of the building, including stucco application to the original wood siding, movement of the sliding garage doors to the north side of the east elevation, and changes in the roofline date to the period of significance, and indeed contribute to our understanding of how the building was used through time. The property remains as the oldest building in the community of Lambert, and retains its integrity of location, setting, feeling, association, design, workmanship and materials.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: **A**
 Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): **n/a**
 Significant Person(s): **n/a**
 Cultural Affiliation: **n/a**

Areas of Significance: **EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT;
 TRANSPORTATION**
 Period(s) of Significance: **1913—1966**
 Significant Dates: **1913, 1914, 1918, 1921, 1925, 1931**
 Architect/Builder: **unknown**

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Burgess Garage was constructed c. 1913, during an era of tremendous growth and optimism in eastern Montana. Its construction coincided with the introduction of the automobile as a mainstay of transportation and the influx of non-Indian settlers to the area in the 1910s. These patterns of settlement were due largely to the expansion of the railroad, and the Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909. Both these events served as encouragement for thousands of homesteaders to try their luck in the dry prairie of eastern Montana. The Burgess Garage served not only the passenger car needs of the surrounding population but also provided sales and maintenance of agricultural equipment to those settlers. As both a garage and office space, the building served the town in multiple and very important capacities. Through the first half of the twentieth century, the garage has been subjected to the boom and bust patterns of settlement and commerce in the region. Indeed, the Burgess Garage has stood in the community of Lambert, Montana since its incorporation, and is one of only a handful of buildings there representative of the earliest commercial activities. For these reasons, the Burgess Garage is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A.

Henry Winkes and his family first came to eastern Montana from Iowa in 1903 and settled in the area near Fox Lake Post Office. At that time in history the large cattle operations common to the region were in decline following the harsh winters in the late 1880's and early 90's, and by 1900 all but two were gone: McCone Ranch and the V bar A Ranch. The first major influx of homesteaders arrived in 1909 courtesy of Northern Pacific Railroad, forever sealing the fate of cattlemen dependant on open range. The Northern Pacific branch line south from Bainsville arrived in November of that year.

The town of Lambert was officially platted by the Northwest Improvement Company in December 1913, supplanting the original community of Fox Lake with a railroad official's name. By the time the railroad arrived in November of 1914 Winkes Garage was a booming business, supplying local homesteaders and townsfolk with parts and equipment for Ivery automobiles and Acme harvesting equipment.

Between 1880 and 1920, advances in dryland farming permitted the establishment of a stable agricultural community on the semi-arid prairies of northeast Montana and southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Before 1900, farming on the open prairie was a very hit and miss affair, with crops being destroyed by drought or early frost. Only with the application of scientific agricultural methods did farming the prairie become a more viable and predictable enterprise.¹ By all accounts Lambert, Montana was the largest community in the county during

¹ Dryland farming was accomplished on expansive operations. It was a capital-intensive operation which demanded a high level of mechanization. The introduction at the end of the 1880s of steam engines changed the face of ploughing and threshing. The age of steam lasted from 1890 to about 1915, when a new invention, the lightweight and inexpensive gasoline tractor sparked a new revolution that permitted farmers to attain a new level of self-sufficiency.

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this era, supporting upwards of 3,000 transients as trainloads of immigrants descended upon the region during the last great land rush of the 19th century.

Winkes Garage was one of the first sources for motorized vehicles and machinery in Richland County in an era when the automotive industry was in its infancy. The railroad had yet to come, and travel to commercial centers in Sidney or Glendive took multiple days by horse and wagon. The advent of gasoline engines shortened that trip to mere hours. It is uncertain when Winkes Garage was first constructed, however Richland County was formed in 1914 and first assessed improvements on the property in 1915. Photographs dated from 1913 support the claim of construction on or before that year. Henry died of acute appendicitis at the age of 38, on February 17, 1916 in the Glendive Hospital, and was buried in the Pioneer Cemetery near Sidney. His widow, Clara Winkes, sold the garage to George Armour in 1918. That year, the community experienced its second year of drought, and the influx of new settlers began to stem. Adding to their troubles, Railroad entrepreneur James J. Hill died in 1916, and his dream of connecting Sidney to Lewistown, Montana died with him. The line between these two cities, which would have connected Lambert to markets and opportunities to the east and west, was never completed.

George Armour MD, a local physician in Lambert at that time, had been renting office space from Henry Winkes prior to his death. A testament to the popularity of the automobile and the local resident's dependency on mechanized implements, Dr. Armour re-named the business Armour's Garage and hired two local mechanics to run it while he continued his medical practice in the front office. He also replaced the inventory of Ivery brand autos and Acme Harvesting parts and implements with McCormick-Deering implements and Overland automobiles.

Lambert businesses at the time included two banks, First National and Farmer's State. Four lumberyards are also listed in the records, Roger Templeton Lumber Company, Savage Hardware and Lumber, Yellowstone Lumber, and Richland-Midland Lumber Company. Other businesses included three livery and feed stables, two dance halls, four grocers, two pool halls, two barbershops with five barbers, two hotels, six cafes, a dray line (shipping), three garages, two oil companies, four saloons, two bowling alleys, a drugstore, several dry-goods and hardware stores, a phone company, and a post office.

By the late 1910s the fortunes for homesteaders and farmers throughout Montana began to turn. Widespread drought began in 1917. In 1919 eastern Montana homesteaders faced humidity that averaged four percent, massive grasshopper infestations, and prairie fires. The effect was devastating. Homesteaders enticed by boosterism about the fertile lands of Montana saw their investments literally blown away by the dry wind. Historian Joseph Kinsey Howard described the continuing disaster:

In the spring of 1920, however, it rained...but the rain stopped and the wind came. These winds were the first "dusters" the northern plains farmer had ever seen. Day after day he watched, first incredulous, then despairing, as the gale whipped his fields into the sky...The ruined homesteaders gathered in little groups in the towns to compare notes...the fourth dry year, and

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now the wind! Nothing like it had happened before...But the stockmen grinned wryly, knowing it had happened before and would happen again...²

By the early 1920s, over 11,000 Montana farms “blew away,” leaving more than 40,000 people in eastern and central Montana destitute. Some farmers turned to the towns for alternate employment; others moved on to more fertile locales out of state. Compounding the natural disasters were the strains on the national economy following World War I, and the resultant constriction of extractive industries in Montana, such as logging and mining. This combination of factors resulted in a keen economic depression that brought “upon the State and its banking structure an almost complete breakdown.”³

During the period 1919-25...twenty thousand mortgages were foreclosed, and half of Montana’s farmers lost their land. The average value of farmlands fell by 50 percent. During the flush times prior to 1918, Montana had become heavily overstocked with banks, and many of them had been reckless in their lending policies. Now the overextended banks fell like dominoes. Between 1920 and 1926, 214 of Montana’s commercial banks - over one-half the state’s total – failed, carrying thousands of family savings accounts with them.⁴

A catastrophic fire in 1921 destroyed many of the businesses in Lambert. In March of the same year Frank Korab, the owner/editor of a newspaper, the *Richland County Leader* (formerly the *Lambert Promoter*) purchased the garage from Dr. Armour and renamed the business again, to the Motor Inn. He also moved his printing presses into the location.

In January of 1925 another large fire destroyed several entire blocks of the Lambert business district, once again sparing the garage (possibly due to its stucco exterior). *Richland County Leader* editor Frank Korab retired that year and sold the newspaper and its associated equipment to George Howell. He also sold the garage back to Dr. Amour at the same time. The community of Lambert was hard-pressed to recover from the devastation of fires and the substantial loss in population, and Dr. Armour’s business felt the strain. The US Building and Loan Association foreclosed on the garage in 1927, and soon after Richland County took possession in a Sheriff’s auction.

Although the late 1920s saw a brief period of prosperity in eastern Montana as a whole, it was short-lived and in 1929 Montana saw more “drought, depression and depopulation.” Montana experienced severe drought and economic depression that lasted until the 1940s, creating reduced circumstances and decreasing the number of farms. Alvin Burgess purchased the garage from Richland County in 1931 for \$62.00. Yet another fire swept through the town in September of that year, burning a complete city block. The *Richland County Leader*

² Joseph Kinsey Howard, *Montana: High Wide and Handsome*, (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press/Bison Books, 2001), p. 202.

³ Clarence W. Groth, *Montana Banking History 1864-1954*, Helena Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank, (Helena Montana: Montana Historical Society, June 1955) pp. 42-3.

⁴ Michael Malone, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang, *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*, rev. ed. (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1991), p. 283.

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reported the cause of the fire as being friction between the mortgage and the bank note of Frettim's Garage. Alvin owned/operated Burgess Garage until his death in 1966.

During his tenure, Burgess forged a going concern at the garage, managed to keep the enterprise going through the depression. It is interesting that through all the boom and bust cycles that plagued the community—droughts, fires, the stock market crash in 1921 and the Great Depression of the 1930's—Burgess Garage remained a viable institution providing much-needed expertise and services. The garage's continued existence throughout these tribulations also demonstrates the phenomenal impact automobiles had upon our society as a whole. Within a few years of its introduction the family vehicle had become such an integral part of life that even in times of financial destitution and environmental catastrophes that displaced hundreds of families around the region, the services of a good mechanic were still required.

By the late 1930s and early 1940s, improved climatic conditions coincided with an economic upswing following World War II. Automobiles and motorized farming equipment were more in demand than ever, and the community, as well as the Burgess Garage, saw an increase in business and financial security. This relative prosperity was tempered, however, when the Montana Department of Transportation made a fateful decision. The main road through town was Montana Highway 23, and automobile traffic continued there late as 1951. There was discussion of improving Mt Hwy 23 in the early 1950s, and the Department of Transportation considered a southern route that bypassed Lambert (1953) but by 1955, that chose a realignment that bypassed the community one half-mile to the north. Local records indicate that 125 Lambert citizens traveled to Helena to protest the realignment, but to no avail. That improved road was called Hwy 20 until 1969, when it became Highway 200.

Alvin Burgess' children donated Burgess Garage to the Lambert Historical Society in 1989. Due to Mr. Burgess' sudden death in 1966, and the subsequent 23 years of disuse prior to the Lambert Historical Society's acquisition in 1989, many original stores and equipment remain intact. Two shelves contain repair manuals and parts catalogs, in addition to dozens of unopened packages of replacement parts dating back to the 1930's and 40's, a series of cubbyhole shelves are filled with unidentified used parts, and several large floor-mounted tools are on site.

The building itself remains much the same as Alvin left it before his death. Future renovations will address structural stability and modification of interior spaces to accommodate museum collection display and storage. The most immediate project is the rehabilitation of Dr. Armour's office into a gallery for the museum's historic art collection, and to display the current work of local artisans.

Burgess Garage

Name of Property:

Richland County, MT

County, State

9. Major Bibliographic References

(see continuation sheet)

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
- Specify Repository: Richland County Clerk's office, Lambert Museum

10. Geographical Data**Acreage of Property:** less than one

UTM References: **Zone** **Easting** **Northing**

 13 E 528447 N 5281126 (NAD27)

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): SE ¼ NW ¼ NE ¼ Section 11, Township 22 North, Range 55 East**Verbal Boundary Description**

Block 3, lots 11-12, Lambert Montana

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn, according to legally recorded boundary lines, to include the property historically associated with the Burgess Garage.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Rob Knotts

organization: Lambert Historical Society date: 3/14/2004

street & number: Box 252 telephone: 406-774-3778

city or town: Lambert state: MT zip code: 59243

Property Owner

name/title: Lambert Historical Society

street & number: 3rd and Main telephone: 406-774-3439

city or town: Lambert state: MT zip code: 59243

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Howard, Stanley. *Life in the Lower Yellowstone Valley: 1920-1980*. Privately Published, 2004.

Malone, Michael, Richard B. Roeder, and William L. Lang. *Montana: A History of Two Centuries*. rev. ed. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1991.

Richland County Leader, Leader Cooperative Publication Association.

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Lambert Historical Society Archives.

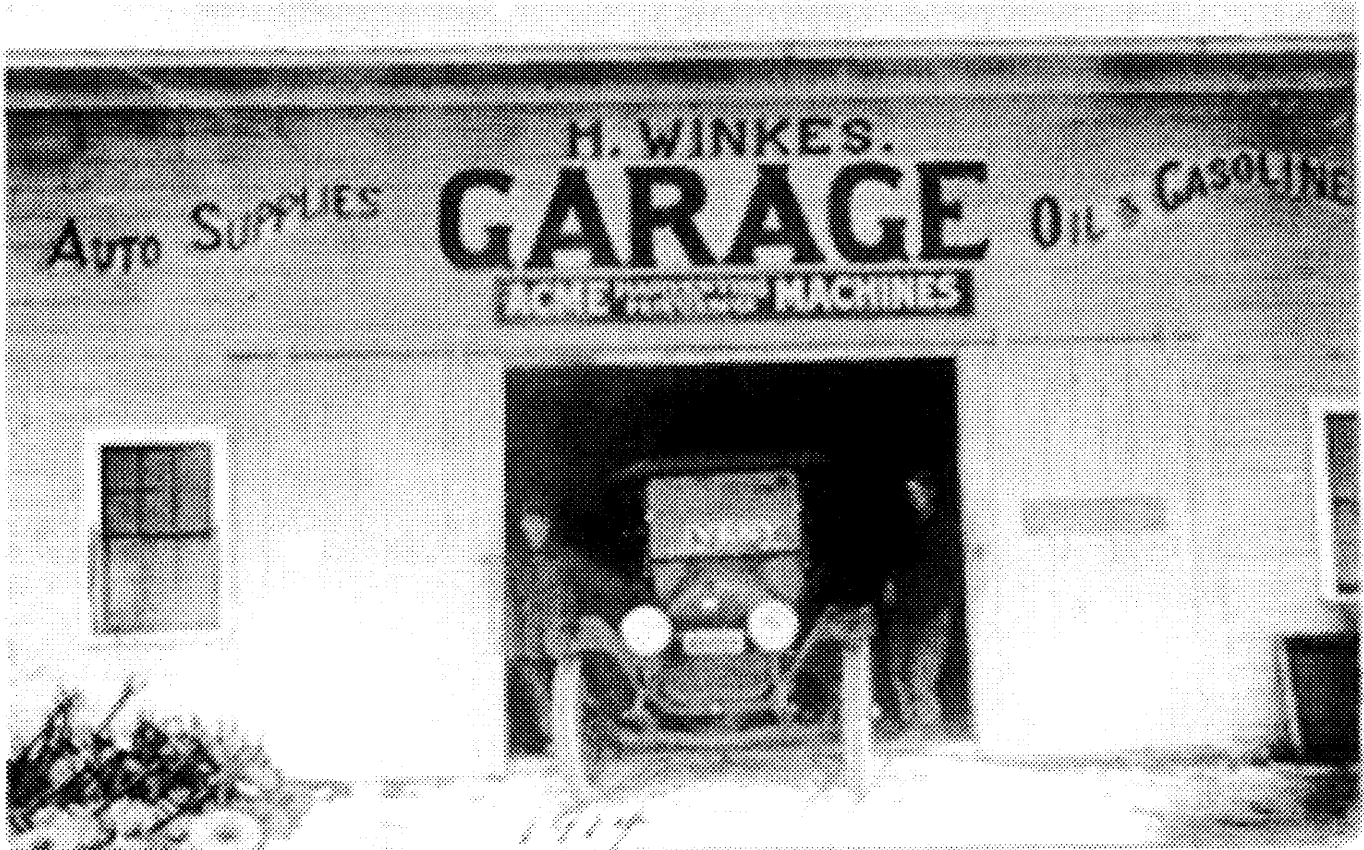
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Winkers (later Burgess) Garage, 1914, Lambert Historical Society.

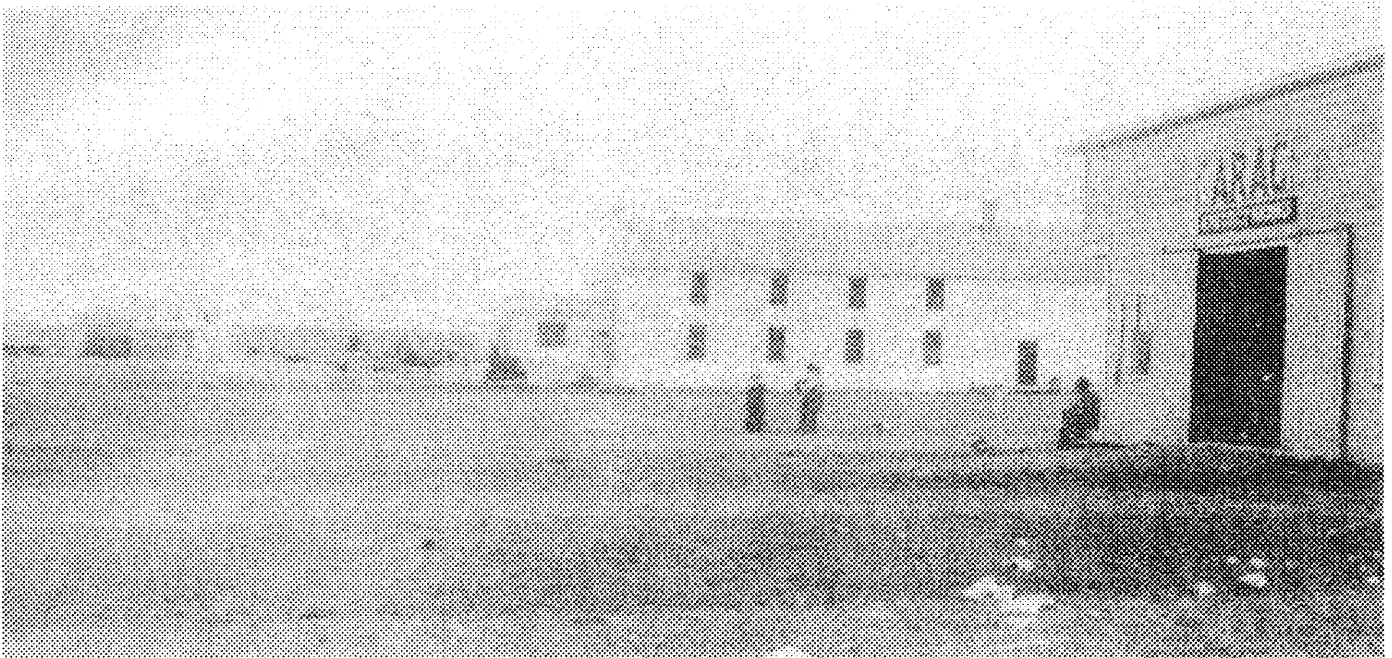
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**Winkes Garage from Main Street looking south, c. 1913-1914, Lambert Jubilee Journal, 1964
(on file at the Lambert Historical Society)**



Henry and Clara Winkes
**Henry and Clara Winkes , date unknown
(on file at the Lambert Historical Society)**