

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
NPS/CHS Word Processor Format
(Approved 03/88)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (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, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printers in 12 pitch. Use only 25% or greater cotton content bond paper.

1. Name of Property

historic name: S. A. Grimm Block
other names/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: 2031 - 2033 Curtis Street (NA) not for publication
city, town: Denver (NA) vicinity
state: Colorado code: CO county: Denver code:031 zip code:80205

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
(x) private	(x) building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
() public-local	() district	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
() public-State	() site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
() public-Federal	() structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
	() object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total
Name of related multiple property listing: <u>N/A</u>		No. of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register <u>0</u>	

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this (x) 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 (x) meets () does not meet the National Register criteria.
 () See continuation sheet.

[Signature] May 14, 1992
Date
 Signature of certifying official
 State Historic Preservation Officer, Colorado Historical Society
 State or Federal agency and bureau

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

 Signature of Commenting or Other Official _____
Date

 State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

Entered in the
National Register

- 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] 6/25/92

 Signature of the Keeper _____
Date of Action

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions**(enter categories from instructions)**Commerce/businessDomestic/multiple dwelling

Current Functions**(enter categories from instructions)**Commerce/businessDomestic/multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification**(enter categories from instructions)**OTHER: 19th Century Commercial
Style

Materials**(enter categories from instructions)**foundations Brickwalls Brick

roof Asphaltother StoneMetal cornice

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Grimm Block is located mid-block on the northwest side of Curtis Street between 20th and 21st Streets in Downtown Denver. Constructed in 1890, it is a classic example of Denver's small scale 19th century commercial blocks. With its single storefront at ground level (2031 Curtis) and street level entry to second and third floor residential hotel space (2033 Curtis), the Grimm Block is representative of a building type once common in downtown Denver. As Denver's downtown area expanded into adjacent residential neighborhoods in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the Grimm Block (along with a livery stable and brick fire station across the street) was the new commercial exception on a street of single family brick residences. Later, larger scale commercial development along Curtis Street began to dwarf the Grimm Block. Today, however, it once again is located in a small scale context. Structures on the opposite side of Curtis have been removed; a recently completed Post Modern style United States Post Office now presents a modern counterpoint across the street. Constructed almost exactly one hundred years apart, the scale of the three story Grimm Block is appropriately echoed by the almost residential scale of the new building.

The Grimm Block is a three story, rectangular brick building with a four bay, ground level storefront and two entrances. The roof is flat, highlighted by a centrally placed simple curvilinear pediment, one bay in width, which originally carried the name of the building.

Above the red brick foundation, the Grimm Block features brick bearing walls along its northeast and southwest sides. Windows in these two walls are a combination of punched window openings with steel lintels and segmentally arched brick openings; both surmount one-over-one wood sash.

(x) See continuation sheet

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S. A. Grimm Block

The street facade is of red brick above the first floor level, carried on a simple steel lintel supported by pink granite clad iron (presumably) columns below. The first floor has four narrow bays created by the alternating piers and storefront infill. The storefront itself is of wood. Three of the four bays contain most of the original wood and glass components with the exception of the kick plates which are faced with non-original wood. The fourth bay has a new door and sidelight installed in 1991.

The upper floor has a symmetrical three bay arrangement created by the placement of the doubled one-over-one hung windows. Each of the three double width window openings on the upper level is surmounted by a flat jack arch with brick voussoirs. The sills rest directly on a continuous red sandstone band running the width of the building front. Another continuous red sandstone band, four feet below, forms the lintel for the second floor windows, and is echoed by the three individual red sandstone sills of these second floor windows.

The pediment is carried by a metal cornice with four decorated brackets defining three bays. Dentils accent the mid-point transition from the upper to the lower half of the otherwise simple cornice. Original signage has, not surprisingly, been removed. The signband above the storefront is of stucco covered brick. Traces of handrail holes left in the granite columns suggest that the building once had a sidewalk elevator to the basement.

At the rear of the building the main material is also of brick. Original segmentally arched window openings cover one-over-one sash. In the middle of the facade at the second and third floor levels the arched opening is two window widths wide, responding to the central daylight hall space within. The first floor level at the rear has been modified with half solidly bricked in. The remaining half is open, with a brick column support in the outer wall plane and a recessed infill wall behind.

The building is structurally simple, with exterior brick bearing walls and simple post and beam framing within. The building retains its original character and structural system. Throughout its life various remodelings have made up for lack of maintenance and changing needs. A number of these alterations are documented. The earliest dates from March of 1934, when a citation was issued to Andrew W. Christopher to build a new rear wall and to repair the building. This was followed by an April 1, 1934 building permit issued to Mrs. J. W. Ramsey, owner, for a new rear wall to be tied to the joists, and the balance of the building to

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: () nationally () statewide (x) locally

Applicable National Register Criteria () A () B (x) C () D
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) () A () B () C () D () E () F () G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1890

Significant Dates

1890

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Adolf Holmberg, architect

L. M. Bitter, builder

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Grimm Block, an excellent example of Denver's late 19th century small scale commercial buildings, is significant for its architecture under criterion C. Between 16th and 30th Streets along Curtis, it is the single remaining example of the type and scale of commercial/residential buildings which typified 19th century Curtis Street. Related by age, building type and design to the George Hamburger Block (listed in the National Register in 1990) at 22nd and Arapahoe which is two blocks away, the lower budget, less stylistically determinate Grimm Block provides a useful typological comparison. Within the larger neighborhood these two structures are the only examples of their type which have not been demolished or altered by extensive remodeling.

In the 1880s Curtis Street between 20th and 21st Streets was a new residential neighborhood. Two story brick houses lined the street, buffered by porches, front yards, generous sidewalks and street tree planting strips from the street itself. Its 1880s residential character can still be seen on Curtis Street, a few blocks further north across Broadway and in the Curtis Park area.

Early water tap records indicate that the property now numbered as 2031-2033 Curtis was first developed in 1884.¹ That earliest development was undoubtedly the brick residence (numbered 2035 Curtis Street) shown on lots 24 and 25 by the 1887 Robinson's Insurance Atlas. The house was one of many lining both sides of the street--a single family home in a typical residential neighborhood. In 1888 or 1889 S. A. Grimm and his family moved into the house at 2035 Curtis Street.

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S. A. Grimm Block

The historic record suggests that S. A. Grimm was a typical Denverite of the period.² A butcher shop owner, he hoped to profit not only from his business, but also from Denver's rapid growth. As did many others who lived near the downtown area, he decided to use the land his home stood on to build an investment property--the Grimm Block. In 1890 he received two building permits. The first, issued in February, was for the 33' x 125' brick basement. The second, issued in August, was for a three story brick store. The builder on these two permits was listed as L. M. Bitter, the architect as A. Holmberg.³ When the 1891 City Directory was published, the Grimm Block, 2031-2033 Curtis, was listed for the first time.

Denver's prosperity received a tremendous set-back with the Silver Crash of 1893. The crash affected everyone. Many who were wealthy became poor and many who were less wealthy and depended upon a trade for their livelihood left Denver to find work elsewhere. This was especially true of Denver's architects and builders. A few of the well known and established stayed on and managed to cope with the long term effects of the crash. Most, especially young architects, left the city. Adolf Holmberg, architect for the Grimm Block seems to have been one of these. He first worked in F. C. Eberly's office in 1889. By 1890 he established his own practice; the Grimm Block must have been one of his earliest independent commissions. The following year he moved to a new location, presumably a more prosperous one. By the next year he was no longer listed in the Denver directories and was probably one of the large number of architects who continued their careers in various cities all over the United States. L. M. Bitter, listed as builder for the Grimm Block, is even more elusive, perhaps for similar reasons. His name never appears independently in the city directory; John J. Bitter, carpenter, is listed from 1885 through 1891. John Bitter may have been a relative, the initials used on the permit may have been incorrect, or L. M. Bitter may have worked only briefly in Denver. Since the written record is so unclear, the Grimm Block appears to be the most substantial evidence of his presence in Denver.

Throughout its hundred year history the Grimm Block has met two continuing needs within the downtown area: those of housing and of small scale commercial lease space. Originally designed for commercial use on the ground floor with two floors of housing above, the building has retained those uses throughout its history to the present.

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S. A. Grimm Block

From 1923 through 1957 Eastwood Printing Company occupied the commercial space. As printers for the legal work of the federal courts, the printing company had no need for the massive presses normally associated with printing operations. Instead, they produced small runs of briefs and transcripts. They were part of "Printers Row", the area between 18th and 21st Streets which held most of Denver's binderies, typesetters and related publishing activities in the first half of the century. Eastwood Printing was started by Sydney Eastwood, a firefighter who had worked at the city fire station across Curtis Street from the Grimm Block. Eastwood was active in city affairs and was at one time a mayoral candidate. One of the most intriguing reminders of the printing company's occupancy is the bowling alley (a single lane) left in the basement. It was installed for the use of print shop employees.⁴

The upper floors of the Grimm Block were used as residential hotel space. In the 1920s and 30s it was called the Leland Hotel. In the 1940s and 50s it became the Reed Apartments. The city directory reflects its true status by listing it as "Reed Apartments (Rooms)". In the early 1960s the building stood vacant. In 1965 it was remodeled by the Civic Center Development Company and continued in residential use as multi-room apartments.

The Grimm Block has architectural significance because it is representative of the neighborhood commercial building type constructed in the 1890s in Denver. Its design incorporates features consistent with that period of construction such as red brick walls, ground level single storefront and entry to the second and third floor residential space. Other than the Paris Hotel, the Grimm Block is the last surviving intact 19th century commercial building in the neighborhood. Other stylistic features of the period include the segmental arched windows with voussoirs, the sandstone belt courses, the pyramidal pediment with the building name and the metal bracketed cornice. The Grimm Block also displays one feature not usually found on small commercial buildings which is the stone clad metal columns dividing the storefront bays.

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S. A. Grimm Block

FOOTNOTES

1. Denver Water Board, Water Tap Permits.
2. Colorado Historical Society, Hart Library, City Directories, 1880 - 1887.
3. Denver Public Library, Western History Collection, Building Permit Files
4. Nick Segal, Eastwood Printing Company, personal communication, September 1991.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Noel, Thomas and Norgren, Barbara, Denver the City Beautiful and Its Architects, Denver: Historic Denver, Inc., 1987.

Denver Public Library, Western History Collection. Building Permit Files, Sanborn Company Fire Insurance Maps, Photo Files.

Colorado Historical Society, Hart Library, City Directories.

Denver Water Board, Water Tap Permits.

() 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:
(x) State Historic Preservation Office
() Other State agency
() Federal agency
(x) Local government
() University
() Other
Specify Repository:

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of property: less than one acre

UTM References

A 1|3 5|0|0|9|2|0| 4|3|9|9|8|2|0|
Zone Easting Northing

B | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

D | | | | | | | | | | | |
Zone Easting Northing

() See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property consists of the northeasterly 1/3 of lot 24 and city lot 25 of Block 93, East Denver as recorded in the City and County of Denver.

() See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundaries represent both the current and historic ownership boundaries of the nominated property.

() See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Leslie Ullman, Architect
Organization: Leslie Ullman Architects
Street & Number: 2075 South University Blvd. #207
City or Town: Denver

Date: November 1, 1991
Telephone: (303) 744-8882
State: CO Zip Code: 80210

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Section number PHOTO Page _____

S. A. Grimm Block

PHOTO LOG

The following information is the same for all photographs.

S. A. Grimm Block
2031-33 Curtis Street
Denver, Colorado
Date of photos: May 1992
Location of Negatives: Rick Borman (owner)

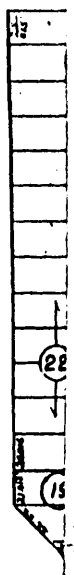
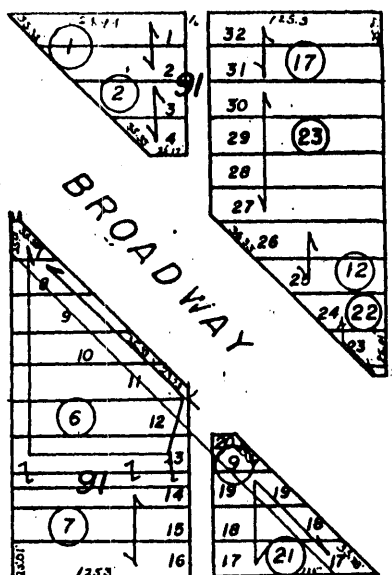
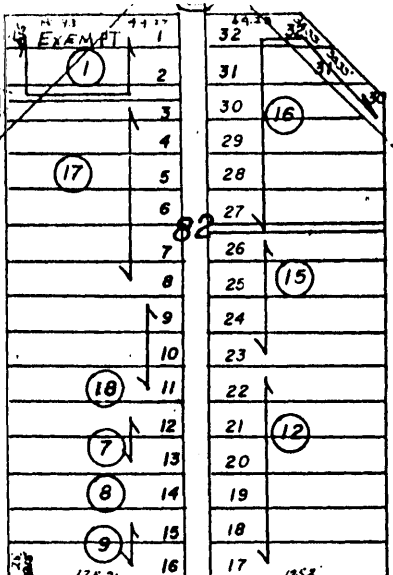
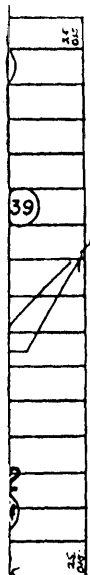
Photo 1 SE facade, View W

Photo 2 SE facade, View N

Photo 3 NE side, View SE

Photo 4 NW rear, SW side, View E

Photo 5 NW rear, View SE



BROADWAY

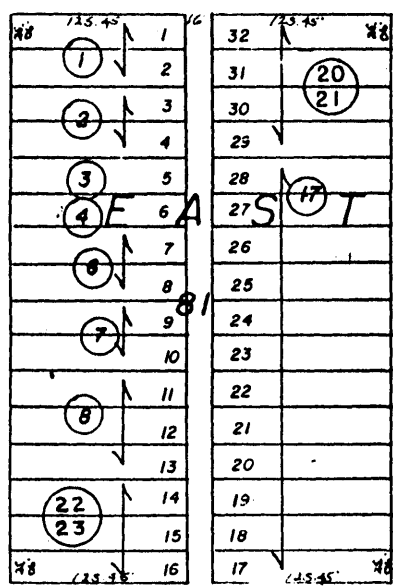
22nd

(34)

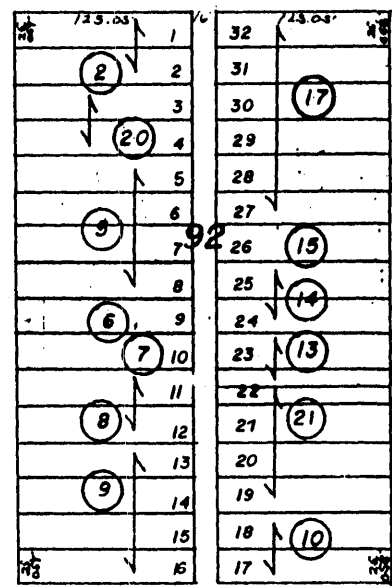
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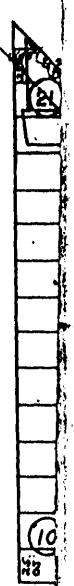
LAWRENCE



ARAPAHOE



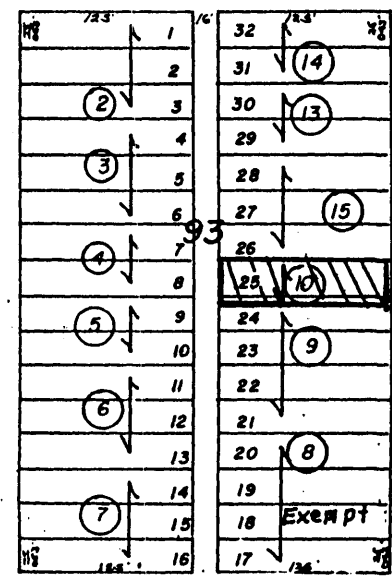
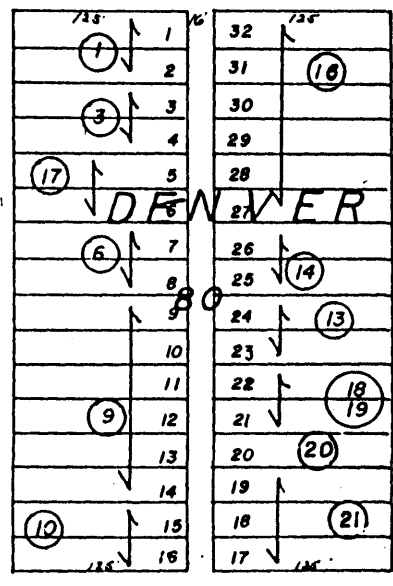
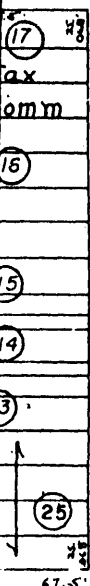
CURTIS



21st

(37)

(38)



NOTE:
BUILDING
OCCUPIES
ENTIRE SITE

20th

