

DATA SHEET

PH 0695165

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 23 1979
DATE ENTERED MAR 23 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

AND/OR COMMON

Old Market Historic District

2 LOCATION

bounded by 18th, Farnam, 10th and Jackson St.

STREET & NUMBER

(See enclosed maps)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

VICINITY OF

Second

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Nebraska

CODE

031

COUNTY

Douglas

CODE

055

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Multiple ownership - see continuation sheets

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

VICINITY OF

STATE

1 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, Omaha/Douglas County Civic Center

STREET & NUMBER

18th & Farnam Streets

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

2 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Omaha City Architecture

DATE

1977

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Mrs. Cynthia Schneider, 314 S. 67th Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The "Old Market" Historic District is located in the eastern section of downtown Omaha about five blocks from the Missouri River. The five and one-half blocks of the historic district are characterized by wholesale jobbing houses which developed from the 1880's into the early 20th century. The accompanying maps relate period of construction (map #2), building height (map #3), construction material (map #4) and existing land use (map #5) for the district and its environs.

As the maps indicate, the boundaries were chosen to maintain uniformity. Demolition in blocks to the north, west, and south has destroyed the historic integrity of those areas. To the east there is a potential historic district of 20th century jobbing houses centering on S. 9th Street which will be nominated at a future date.

D009:

1-2. Windsor Hotel (1885), 520-524 S. 10th (Photo #12)

The oldest hotel in the district, the Windsor is the only one still operated as a hotel. The shop-fronts on 10th Street were usually occupied by retail businesses. The original owners of the building were Charles Schank and Solomon Prince. Through the years, saloons, barber shops, pawnbrokers and cafes occupied the spaces. The most common businesses were cafes and, as today, a bar.

The Windsor Hotel was constructed in 1885 and measures 66 x 132 feet. The distinctive architectural qualities of this three-story brick over partial basement building have been severely compromised over the years, most notably in the permastone remodeling of the store-front level and the removal of the (presumably) metal cornice and balustrade.

1-3. Omaha Fire Station No. 1 (1902-04), 514 S. 11th (Photo #13).

Omaha Fire Station No. 1 is a two story over basement brick structure designed by the prominent Omaha architects, Fisher and Lawrie in 1902. Contractor R. B. Carter built the building from 1903-04 for a cost of \$30,000.

As originally constructed, the building had a steep-pitched hipped roof which displayed one large (south) and two smaller (east) stepped brick gable dormers. The wide overhang of the roof was supported by large wood brackets. The main walls of the building were articulated with a regular rhythm of brick, segmentally arched windows on the first and second floors, except at the south end where large doors were placed for the fire equipment. The segmental and pointed segmental arches of these doors (and the doors and windows between) received special cut-stone voussoirs and skewbacks which are still notable features of the design. A stone over brick string course and a stone sill course connects the second floor windows while a stone water table runs along the sill line of the ground story windows.

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Measuring 110 x 66 feet, this masonry bearing wall structure has a masonry wall which runs north-south through the building dividing it into a narrow east and wide west half. Ten by ten posts in the basement support the floor of the apparatus rooms above. A large timber truss system supported the roof of the original structure.

While the building was serving its original function, it provided space for the east and west apparatus rooms toward the south front of the building. Stables, stalls, box stalls, grain and bedding bins and hay storage occupied the north end of the ground floor. Sleeping rooms, lockers, baths, hallways and a gymnasium occupied a major portion of the second floor. The hayloft, grain and feed storage spaces were provided in the northwest quarter of this floor. Seven poles, placed at strategic locations, provided quick access to the apparatus rooms below.

A 1917 fire in the hayloft destroyed the original roof. The remains were removed and a new, flat roof was constructed according to the drawings of W. E. Stockham, architect. The second story wall was extended upward with an elaborate frieze of blank, pointed arches and a corbelled wall cornice.

The building served the city as firehouse until the mid-1940's. Several firms used the structure as warehouse and garage until 1972 when the upper two floors were remodeled for use as the Firehouse Dinner Theater. Later, the basement was adapted for use as the Wine Cellar. This adaptive re-use required the blocking up of the fire apparatus doors on the south and the addition of two entrances on the east. These represent the only major exterior alterations to the building since the 1917 fire. The interior, of course, has been substantially renovated to accommodate the new uses.

1-5. P.E. Iler Block (1900-01), 1113-1117 Howard (Photo #14)

Built as a wholesale warehouse by Peter E. Iler, a prominent local businessman, the building was rented upon completion in 1901 to the wholesale drygoods firm of Byrne and Hammer. The firm had a small shipping office at the alley entrance of the main floor and used the remainder of the six story over basement structure for warehouse storage. The top three floors of the Morse-Coe Shoe Company Building, adjacent to the west (see #1-37), was the firm's overall factory. This building was used exclusively for warehouse space by various jobbers until the 1970's when the developing "Old Market" attracted commercial enterprise to the ground floor. Tentative plans call for the conversion of the loft spaces into apartments.

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1-5. continued

Designed by Omaha architect Charles Cleves, the Iler Building is standard mill construction within a masonry envelope. Measuring 66 x 132 feet, the structure is four bays wide and eight bays deep. Graduated wood posts (from 16 x 18 in the basement to 8 x 8 on the top floor) support heavy beams on cast iron capitals. Only the main floor level utilized cast iron columns. The beams support heavy joists (7 x 12 @ 3'-2½") in metal stirrups. Floors are two-inch planks with 7/8" finish wood floors. All floors are loft spaces except for the vault in the basement and the shipping office on the main floor. Stairways and two elevators occupy space adjacent to the east wall.

The front facade, which was an attempt at some architectural pretension, does not reflect the structure of the interior. The tripartite formal composition of the facade is three bays wide. The ground floor or base of the composition features large expanses of window set between the four iron columns. A large steel girder supports the wall above. The main body of the composition (floors 2-5) features full height windows set into a simple molded brick architrave. Large, transomed Chicago windows in each floor are separated by a narrow brick spandrel. Set above a narrow stone stringcourse, the top floor features a row of arched windows which betray the non-structural composition of the facade. An arcuated, corbelled cornice caps the building.

1-6. Millard Block No. 2 (1887), 1109-1111 Harney (Photos #15, 31)

Built by the Ezra P. Millard estate in 1887 as an extension of his rental properties at 1101-1107 Harney (see 1-11), this building stands as one of the most straight-forward designs in the district. Designed by regionally known architects, Isaac Hodgson and Son, the masonry bearing wall structure has been used for its intended purpose since construction. The first wholesale jobbers to occupy the building were the firms of Gilmore and Ruhl (clothing) and Z. T. Lindsey and Company (rubber goods). Lindsey, along with his successor firm, Interstate Rubber Company, were long-term early occupants of the structure. The building was used exclusively for warehouse space until the Kirkendall Boot Company established its manufacturing business after the turn of the century and expanded from its location at 1101-1107 Harney into the upper three floors of this structure. It was probably at this time that the saw-tooth skylights were added to the roof to light and ventilate the boot and shoe factory. After the Kirkendall Company ceased its operations, the building once again returned to warehouse use with the Philadelphia Leather Company, its present occupant.

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1-6. continued

Designed as warehouse space for smaller jobbers, the structure is divided into two equal cells by a masonry bearing wall which runs the length of the structure. Stairways and elevators formerly occupied space adjacent to this wall prior to modifications made to accommodate the Kirkendall factory. These modifications also required the cutting of doorways not only through the central bearing wall but also to connect this building to the earlier Millard Block. All openings were equipped with steel fire doors.

The rock-faced stone of the symmetrical front facade to some extent reflects the early interior arrangement and does so in a thoroughly modern way for its time. Large single windows open into the wall above the dual entrances below while large double windows with iron imposts open into upper floors above the large store front windows which flank the entrances. Transom lights above these windows and the doorways are separated into small square lights. Notable features of the facade include the large proportions of glass to wall, the somewhat Richardsonian handling of the stonework, particularly in the reticulated patterns of the parapet and below the main beam of the ground floor columns and the incised spiral column separating the two entrances.

1-7, 42. Mercer Hotel - Gahm Block (c. 1890-92; 1900), 1202-1208 Howard; 414-418 S. 12th Street (Photo #16).

Built by the prominent local physician and entrepreneur, Samuel D. Mercer (see NRHP, Mercer House), the hotel served a useful life for less than a decade. The original hotel was the three-story brick structure at 414-418 S. 12th Street which is extant adjacent to the north of the present six-story edifice. Built in 1890 with a cast iron front on the ground floor, the venture was successful enough to begin planning for a six story addition in 1891. The enlarged hotel was completed in 1892 under the supervision of architect Charles F. Beindorff. Mercer sold the buildings in 1895 and in 1900 the building was completely renovated into warehouse and wholesale space for Joseph Gahm of Boston. Architect Charles Cleves of Omaha was in charge of the renovation.

In spite of the drastic changes made to the building, the exterior retains much of its original character and its distinctive lines. The design emphasizes the vertical, not only in the five part composition of the facade with its slightly projecting central and end pavilions, but also in the tall vertical proportions of the windows. Recessed spandrels between the second, third and fourth story windows and full height pilasters add to the overall vertical effect. Set on a carefully detailed stone, brick and iron ground

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1-7, 42. continued

floor, the brick walls of the upper floors exhibit considerable sophistication in execution. Rounded brick are used for window jambs and the circular arches. The masonry arches themselves, moving up from the second story, display a progression from segmental jack arches to segmental arches to full circular arches. A corbelled brick cornice supports the arcuated top floor.

The structure which architect Cleves inserted for the 1900 renovation for warehouse use consisted of cast iron columns in the basement, first and second floors. Fifteen inch steel girders supported the floor at these levels. The upper floors (3rd through 6th) were structured with timber posts and girders. All floors were of standard frame construction.

The building has been used for wholesale, warehouse and factory space since its 1900 renovation. Early occupants included the D. J. O'Brien candy factory and the A. I. Root printing and binding company. Numerous other companies, representing a diversity of concerns (i.e. furniture, floral, saddlery and harness, etc.), have occupied the building over the years. Presently one storefront, 1208 Howard, is occupied by an "Old Market" retailer.

1-11. Millard Block (1881-82), 1101-1107 Harney Street (Photo #31)

The Millard Block is a substantial structure erected in 1882. It occupies the southwest corner of Eleventh and Harney Streets, and the dimensions measure 88 feet on Harney and 132 feet on Eleventh. As built, the Millard Block contained three separate stores which were four stories in height. The masonry fire walls between the stores served as structure for the floors with the exception of the larger store on the east which utilized a row of wood posts. Floors are standard frame construction. The basement walls are 30 inches thick and are constructed of brick and stone.

The ground level facing Harney has a cast-iron front that retains much of its original character. Windows piercing the main facade are in a variety of shapes and arrangements. One notable composition appears in the central sections of the second and third floors and consists of four rectangular openings--the outer ones having flat hoods and the inner ones being united by a molded segmental arch. The product is reminiscent of a Palladian motif. A four-part division of the facade is maintained by pilaster strips. All windows of the fourth floor, including those on the side wall, have rounded heads. The fifth floor was added in 1905. This addition called for the removal of a fanciful cornice.

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1-11. Continued

This is the earliest of three buildings in the historic district erected by Ezra Millard, a local banker, as rental property (see 1-6; 2-40). Wholesale dealers have occupied the building throughout its history. Tootle and Maul, one of the earliest dry goods dealers in Omaha, were the first to rent the eastern half of the building in 1882. It and its successor firm, Kilpatrick-Koch Dry Goods Company, continued operation at the same location until the late 1890's. The other early occupants in the west half were Vineyard and Schneider, wholesale notions; and W. L. Parrotte and Company, wholesale hats, caps and gloves.

The Kirkendall Boot Company is the most notable of the number of firms who occupied the building. Near the turn of the century, Freeman P. Kirkendall, partner in the Omaha branch of a wholesale boot and shoe company, was organizing his own company and moved the firm from across the street (see 2-40) to 1101-1105 Harney. Kirkendall established a shoe factory which was necessary after the dissolution of the partnership, in the upper floors of this building. Eventually it expanded into the rest of the building and the upper floors of the adjacent Millard Block (1-6). The Kirkendall Boot Company was in business for nearly 50 years supplying a national market.

1-14. W. J. Broatch Building (1880; 1887) 1209-1211 Harney Street (Photo #5)

The Broatch Building's street facade essentially retains its appearance of 1887 when the fourth floor was added. This addition was carefully executed by architects Mendelssohn and Lawrie and is not noticeable as being of a later date.

The building has a street frontage of 44 feet, and the ground level is a cast-iron front that features large display windows and fine, abstract-like columns that support a plain fascia. The iron front was manufactured by the Aetna Iron Works of Quincy, Illinois. Each tier of windows in the upper levels has a stringcourse below the sills and another stringcourse uniting the hoodmolds while those hoodmolds of the second floor are segmental.

All fenestral openings of the facade are somewhat elongated and, as a result, in harmony with the overall proportions of the wall. The crowning element is an emphatic and decorative metal entablature that is similar to others found in the district. Originally, the entablature was topped by a balustrade and a plaque bearing Broatch's name.

Structurally the building is a small loft, two bays wide with a center row of wood posts supporting a wood beam. Floor construction is of the standard frame type bearing in the masonry walls and on the center beam.

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1-14: Continued

William J. Broatch (1841-1922) erected the first three stories of this building in 1880 for office and storage space for his wholesale hardware business. Broatch had settled in Omaha and opened his business in 1874 after serving in the army. As one of the first heavy hardware dealers in the city, he did a wholesale business in iron, steel, wagon stock, hardwood lumber and heavy hardware. A strong supporter of Omaha business interests, Broatch served as mayor of Omaha twice (1887; 1895), a representative to the Nebraska legislature 1881-1882 and was a member of the Missouri River Commission and the Omaha Board of Trade.

Broatch's firm and its successor remained in business at the same location for nearly 40 years. The retail firm of Beard Wall Paper Company then occupied the building until 1966.

1-15. Steele, Johnson and Co./Baum Iron Co. Building (1880), 1219-21-23 Harney (Photos #'s 17, 18, 19).

In the 98-year history of the building only three firms, all wholesalers, have occupied this building.

The Steele, Johnson and Company, wholesale grocers, was organized in 1868 in Council Bluffs, Iowa and St. Joseph, Missouri. In the 1870's the Council Bluffs branch moved across the river to Omaha to expand the business. The three-story building was erected in 1880 to provide more space. The large wholesale trade was carried to all surrounding states and as far west as Montana, Utah and Idaho. Samuel R. Johnson managed the Omaha house until 1885 and Dudley W. Steele was in the St. Joseph office.

The Lee-Clarke-Andreesen Hardware Company moved their wholesale hardware, cutlery and tinware business into the building in about 1890. The firm was organized in 1888 as a successor to Lee, Fried and Company (see 2-39). The fourth floor was added by this company during the 1890's; however, the firm moved to larger quarters shortly after the turn of the century.

Baum Iron Company purchased the building in 1905 and still occupies the structure. Incorporated in 1888 as wholesale dealers in hardware, the Baum Iron Company consolidated with the Omaha Iron Store Company, the successor of W. J. Broatch (see 1-14) and continued an extensive trade with surrounding states.

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1-15. Continued

Virtually unchanged on the exterior since its erection, the Baum Iron Company Building is a four-story structure that presents a facade of nine bays to Harney Street. Four piers and six colonnettes of Egyptian inspiration are incorporated into the cast-iron front of the street level. All windows on the two sides facing streets are rectangular and enhanced with stonework in a variety of treatments. At the northern end of the Thirteenth Street side is a large graphic of a bold and straightforward nature. A fine, very three-dimensional metal entablature wraps around two sides of the building.

1-18. Poppleton Block (1886) 413-423 S. 11th Street (Photo #20, 21).

The two-story Poppleton Block is situated on the northeast corner of Eleventh and Howard Streets, with the orientation toward Eleventh. The six-part interior remains intact on the 1st and 2nd floors. Each is a separate store and each division is defined by a cast-iron front between square brick piers. Slender Neo-Grec pilasters are on each front, and window openings are plentiful. There are also full regular doorways on the 1st-floor exterior for direct access to the 2nd floor. The wide awning that extends to the curb on Howard Street was added ca. 1900, and the awning on the Eleventh street sidewalk was added after 1934. Each section is provided with a cellar door leading into the subterranean level. Second-floor windows on the Eleventh street facade are in a distinctive arrangement of threes--the middle opening having a pedimented hoodmold, and flanked by windows with flat hoodmolds.

The Poppleton Block boasts a well-executed wall cornice of corbelled bricks in ten rows. In the last few years, the alleyway at the rear was covered and the basement level was exposed, which is now used for shops with entrance from the alley.

Andrew J. Poppleton, general attorney for the Union Pacific Railway, erected this building in 1886 as investment property. The six bays of the building were occupied primarily by wholesale commission merchants dealing in food products. Each bay was used as office and storage space. Produce dealers and fruit dealers were the most common type of merchants in the building. The corner store (423 S. 11th) was often a restaurant or a saloon.

In 1971, the Old Market Company purchased the building and retail shops began using the storefronts for the first time.

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1-19. Ernest Meyer Building, (1912) 1016 Howard Street (Photo #4)

The Meyer Building, erected in 1912, has four identical windows in the second floor with stone lintels at their heads and sills. Above these openings is a stone-coped parapet that is corbelled outward. The parapet contains brick recesses and an elevated stone plaque inscribed with the first owner's name.

This two-story brick building was built for Ernest Meyer, a wholesale fruit dealer, who used the building for his office and storage and rented offices to brokerage firms and other wholesale dealers on second floor. Fruit and produce dealers continued occupying the building until the late 1960's. Today the offices of the Old Market Company are upstairs and a boutique is on first floor.

1-20. Hotel Howard, (1909) 1002-06 Howard Street (Photo #4, 22)

The early-20th-century Hotel Howard is a Classic Revival building of brick construction. Orientation is toward Howard Street to the south, and the structure is 70 feet wide and 66 feet long. Brick piers punctuate the ground level which contains numerous large openings. The building's location at the intersection of two streets is emphasized in a subtle manner; the two corner bays are slightly projected and the first floor's corner is beveled-allowing for the placement of a free-standing column. A heavy and unadorned entablature separates the ground floor from the two levels above where all windows are the same size and have splayed flat arches with keystones. A Doric entablature of galvanized iron is above the third level on the two sides facing streets. Above the entablature is a brick parapet.

1-21. Lehman Building (ca. 1905) 1008-1012 Howard Street (Photo #4).

The street level of this early-20th-century building is a cast-iron front recessed from the masonry above, and the parapet contains a stepped gable with a circular recess in its center.

Sophia Lehman erected the one-story building as rental property. Commission merchants, primarily fruit and produce dealers, such as Weinstein and Adler, F. M. Williams, Young-Burke Company, Roach-Kastener Company, and Nathan Levison Company occupied the building until the recent interest in the Old Market. The Omaha Peddler's Union was located in the building in 1920.

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1-22. 1014 Howard Street (post 1934), (Photo #4)

Like its eastern neighbor, 1014 Howard Street is a one-story building with a stepped parapet facing the street. Construction of this more recent structure, however, is of concrete blocks, and the stepped gable spans the entire width. Still, a certain harmony exists between 1014 and 1008-12 Howard.

1-23. Mercer Block No. 2 (1887) 501-509 S. 11th Street (Photo #23, 24).

A metal awning added ca. 1900 wraps around the two street sides of the building. The cast-iron front of the lower level is much intact and is fitted with regularly spaced openings that serve inner divisions. The upper level of the west side contains five Diocletian windows whose stone impost blocks are embellished with organic carvings. The northern wall's openings are narrow and rectangular, and in differing shapes above the heads of these windows are recessed panels. A rusticated stone band continuous on the exposed sides visually separated two floors destroyed by fire. The Mercer Block was designed by the local architect, Henry Voss.

As originally constructed, the building was divided into six separate stores. The two stores at the northwest corner of the building utilized shallow masonry arch construction for fire-proofing and to support the printing machinery above. After the fire which necessitated the removal of the upper two stories, the interiors of the lower levels were substantially altered. Wood posts replaced two masonry walls so that structurally, the building was then divided into only four stores.

Samuel D. Mercer, a prominent local physician, retired from active practice in 1887 at the age of 47 to manage and develop his real estate holdings in Omaha. Built the same year, this block is the oldest of four buildings he constructed in the Old Market and it has been continuously owned by the Mercer family.

A variety of produce or fruit wholesale dealers almost exclusively occupied the five bays of the building along with an occasional saloon or restaurant until the late 1960's when small retail shops started in re-awakening of interest in the Old Market. Today small shops occupy each store on the first floor and apartments have been developed on second. Originally built as a four-story building, a fire destroyed the upper two floors in about 1901.

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1-24. Rocco Brothers/Craftsmen Guild (1895) 511 S. 11th Street (Photo #23, 24).

This turn-of-the-century commercial building is of brick construction, and a cast-iron front serves as the facade's ground level. The structure was designed by the firm of Blake and Zander of Omaha. Windows on the facade's second level have segmental heads, while windows of the third level have semi-circular heads and are set into brick recesses. All upper-level windows had been filled with brick, but the in-filling has been removed excepting where lintels once were at the sills. A fine corbelled cornice envelopes the two exposed sides of the building. Above is a tile-coped parapet. Virtually all openings of the south wall have segmental heads. Like windows of the front, many of these had been filled with masonry, but are now exposed again. The shed-roof awning was added ca. 1900.

The Peter Rocco and Brothers Company, wholesale fruit dealers, opened the Omaha house of their Kansas City firm in 1887. Both brothers, Peter and Frank, were working in Omaha by 1895 when construction began on their own building. The Rocco family retained ownership of the property until recent years. However, since the turn of the century, it was rented to fruit or produce dealers, such as J. M. Baudo, S. Caruso, and English and Eagle. Today the building houses an art gallery and artists' studios.

1-25. Kosters/Gilinsky/French Cafe Building (1891) 1013-1017 Howard St. (Photo #24).

The main facade of 1013-17 Howard Street has been relatively unaltered since the building's construction in the early 1890's. The street level is a cast-iron front sheltered by a metal canopy stretching the length of the block. The nine windows of the second level have segmental heads, and there is a fine modillion cornice at the apex. Cleaves Brothers, an Omaha architectural firm, provided the building's design.

Commission merchants, primarily fruit dealers, have occupied the three stores in this building from the time of its construction in 1891 until the 1960's. Henry A. Kosters erected the building as rental space after his family had lived in a house on the property until 1887. The Gilinskys of the Gilinsky Fruit Company owned the building from 1921 to 1969, and located their business there while renting stores to other commission merchants. In 1969 the Old Market Company purchased the building only days before demolition was scheduled and started the French Cafe as the first project toward the re-vitalization of the area. Today the French Cafe, a noted French restaurant, occupies the first floor and apartments have been developed on second.

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1-28. Metz Block (1890's) 508-10-12 S. 10th Street (Photo #9)

Metz Brothers, local brewers, owned a saloon and summer beer garden on the site in the 1880's, and then replaced that building with the present two-story brick one in the 1890's. A number of service and retail businesses have used the building including saloons, barber, hotel, men's clothing store, and auto repair shop.

Despite neglect and mutations, most of the Metz Block's character remains. This building is of brick construction and the street facade is dressed with rusticated stone. The southeast corner is beveled, and overhead is a rounded oriel with a pressed metal exterior. Openings that pierce the brick walls are rectangular with segmental relieving arches. In the center of the facade's second story is a polygonal oriel of slight projection.

1-29. Public Market, NE corner of 11th & Jackson (Photo #30).

The Public Market, located on a quarter of a city block at 11th and Jackson, was an important part of the Old Market commerce and atmosphere from the time it began shortly after the turn of the century, until the 1960's. The entire area takes its name from this market. Each spring local gardeners, hucksters and wholesale dealers rented stalls in the open-air market and sold fresh fruits and vegetables on a retail or wholesale basis. In the 1930's a shed roof was erected over part of the market and an additional half lot was purchased on the east, parallel to the alley. The Omaha Wholesale Products House Company owned the land and operated the market. After the closing of the market, the area became a parking lot.

1-30. Ames Block (1889) 1101-1111 Howard Street (Photos #1, 2, 25).

The Ames Block is a massive five-story building that fronts 133 feet on both Howard and Eleventh Streets. Large brick piers with stone bands ascend to the top of the second level on the north and provide structural support for the weight above. Windows in the three levels beyond are coupled, and the masonry sections between act as posts. All windows are rectangular, excepting those in the fifth level which are round-headed, and stone banding is between all floors. This building is a landmark in the district--being the tallest and largest on the 11th and Howard Street intersection which is the focus of the district.

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1-30. Continued

Structurally this masonry building is divided into three cells or stores by two interior brick walls. The two small stores in the west half of the building each have a central row of columns while the larger cell on the east has two rows. Graduated cast iron columns are used from the basement through the third floors with hard pine posts used for the fourth and fifth floors. Heavy wood beams carry the standard floor joist construction of the floors. All of the joists were fire-proofed, creating a finished ceiling.

Frederick L. Ames of Boston, who had the large five-story building erected in 1889 as rental property, was a director of the Union Pacific Railroad and a national power in railroad and industrial circles. The Kansas City architectural firm of VanBrunt and Howe designed the building.

The eastern half of the building had been designed for the wholesale dry goods firm of M.E. Smith and Company. A manufacturer and jobber of work clothing, dry goods, furnishings and notions, the M. E. Smith and Company was a growing business with an extensive trade from Iowa, where it had started in 1868, to the west coast and Alaska. Manufacturing space, offices and storage were all located in this building. The firm later expanded into the western half of the building and rented space in adjacent properties until 1906 when the company moved to larger quarters.

The first occupants of the other two stores were the C. A. Coe and Company, manufacturers and jobbers of boots and shoes; and Schneider and Loomis, wholesale notions, hosiery and gloves.

A variety of manufacturing, wholesaling, and storage firms have been later occupants of the building. Wholesalers were the most common type of firm covering a wide range of products, i.e., glass and paint, shoes, groceries, cigars, fruit, confections, and leather. Manufacturers were the Marks Brothers, saddle and harness-makers, and the West Disinfecting Company. Several moving and storage companies have rented space in the building. Today the first floor is occupied by a restaurant and several small shops. A van-and-storage company rents space on the upper floors.

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1-31. Mercer Block No. 3 (1905) 1102-1112 Howard and 414-424 S. 11th (Photo #26).

Mercer Block Number 3 replaced a previous five-story building on the site also owned by Samuel D. Mercer, which was destroyed by fire in 1905. Construction of the present building began the same year to the design of local architect, Charles Cleeves. Fire, striking again in the 1930's, destroyed the two stores in the northern portion of the building and that section was subsequently demolished.

This masonry building is a multiple-celled construction originally containing six separate stores. Two of the four equally sized stores along 11th street have since been destroyed. The other two stores, unequal in size and both larger than the 11th street stores, face onto Howard Street. Each store except the westernmost one utilized a row of columns down the center between the masonry walls. These were graduated cast iron columns on all floors except the uppermost floor in each case which was wood. Floors were of the standard joist type and were not fire-proofed.

The six stores in the building were occupied almost exclusively by commission merchants dealing in fruit, produce, poultry and general groceries, until the last 25 years when other wholesale dealers, such as agricultural implements and army surplus, began using the building.

Today the building is a significant part of the revived Old Market. It is located on the main intersection of the new retail/entertainment area and is still managed by the Mercer family. The occupants in 1977 are a women's clothing boutique, an art gallery, two bars and an agricultural implement dealer.

Located northwest of the intersection of Howard and Eleventh Streets, the Mercer Block is a significant corner structure with a rich textural surface on the two sides exposed to traffic. Corbelled bricks imitate quoins at the corners, and this treatment is repeated between bays. Openings in the upper levels follow two arrangements; windows on the east are coupled and have transoms, but windows on the south are modeled after windows of the Chicago school. Regardless, all have flat brick arches with keystones overhead. Additional corbelling is in the architrave near the building's summit. The sidewalk shelters on east and south are slightly later additions.

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1-32. Woolworth Building (1887) 1114-24 Howard Street (Photo #27)

The Woolworth Building was designed by the firm of Mendelssohn and Lawrie of Omaha, architects who were responsible for large commissions both in and outside the city where they practiced (p. 51, Glimpses of Omaha). The Woolworth Building fronts both Howard and 12th Streets for 132 feet, and a comparison between an old photograph and the present-day appearance shows that the exterior has changed little.

The structure, as originally built, consisted of three separate cells dividing the building east to west. Each cell was separated by a masonry fire-wall and each had a row of columns dividing the cell into two bays. The columns were iron in the basement and on first floor but were wood above. By 1934 the iron had been replaced with wood. Each bay is expressed in the facade by brick piers. The original glass entrance and store-fronts of each bay have been replaced.

The fenestral arrangement is the same on the Howard and 12th Street facades. Windows are in groups of three, excepting the fifth floor where they are grouped in fours. Also, all windows are rectangular, excepting those openings of the fourth level which have rounded heads. Below the upper halves of the fourth-floor's windows, the walls are recessed, and the piers ascending from the first level have a slight projection. The parapet on the north side has been diminished at two different levels. Also, corner pinnacles have been removed.

James M. Woolworth, (1829-1906) a prominent local lawyer and an investor in Omaha real estate and land companies, erected this building on the site of his former residence.

The building has had the greatest variety of type and number of businesses as any in the district. Manufacturing, wholesaling, retail and service-related firms have rented space in the building from the time of its construction in 1887 to the present. Manufacturers have included foundries, water-heater-makers, furniture-makers and manufacturers of paint and glass. The greatest number of firms were wholesalers doing business in paper, auto supplies, groceries, paint and glass, and floor coverings. The Carpenter Paper Company, wholesale paper, was one of the major firms occupying a large portion of the building before moving to their own building in 1907. In 1978 the tenants are furniture-makers, printers, wholesale giftware and a retail waterbed company.

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1-35. A. I. Root Building (1904; 1909), 1210-12-14-16 Howard St. (Photo #10)

A. I. Root, Inc., printers, erected the building at 1210-12 Howard Street in 1904 as their printing office according to the design of local architect, F. A. Henninger. In 1909 the building was doubled in size by the addition of an equal-size portion on the west at 1214-16 Howard. A printing office had occupied the store at 1210-12 until the 1970's when an antique store owner purchased the building. The store at 1214-16 Howard has been occupied by a number of firms including several printers, a casket manufacturer, and an elevator company.

This double-building of brick construction is three stories in height. The ground level's street facade is a cast-iron front, and small translucent panes fill the transoms of the large windows. A textural variety in the second and third levels is achieved through the incorporation of small recesses at the ends and between the building's halves. Also, the windows are treated with flat brick arches that have corbelled keystones. A molding is continuous along the sills of second-floor windows. Windows of the third floor have lintels with cornerblocks instead. There is a prominent metal cornice with modillions and enriched brackets at the apex of third level. Above the cornice is a plain parapet.

1-37. Morse-Coe Shoe Co. Bldg. (1894) 1119-23 Howard St. (Photos #1, 2).

1119-23 Howard Street, designed by Finley and Shields of Omaha, occupies a prominent location on the southeast corner of Howard and 12th streets. Construction is of brick and the building achieves a height of five stories. The main facade facing Howard has four principal divisions among massive masonry piers at the first level. Between these structural supports are display areas that have sections above filled with small translucent panes. All windows in the upper floors have segmental arches overhead, and the parapet is treated with machicolated brickwork.

Built as a boot and shoe factory for the Morse-Coe Shoe Company in 1894, the building has been used as factory and warehouse space by several firms. William V. Morse and C. A. Coe merged their separate wholesale boot and shoe firms in the early 1890's. The Coe offices in the Ames Block (1-30) were the office and salesroom and this building was the factory. The partnership was relatively short-lived and by 1900, Morse, as sole owner, had the wholesale boot business on the first three floors. The Byrne and Hammer Dry Goods Company next door (see 1-5) was utilizing the top three floors as a clothing factory.

Later manufacturers have used the building for the production of window shades, furniture and veterinarian supplies. Several wholesalers (groceries, coffee, draperies) have also occupied the building.

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1-38. George H. Lee Building (1903) 1115-17 Harney Street (Photo #6)

The George H. Lee Company, manufacturer and jobber of supplies and remedies for poultry and stock, built this four-story building in 1903. John Latenser, an Omaha architect, designed the building and the Lee Company occupied it until the 1960's.

The Lee Building has a 44-foot frontage on Harney Street and a depth of 124 feet. The street facade has suffered few alterations and conveys a utilitarian nature appropriate for a combination office/warehouse structure.

All openings are cleanly cut and there is nothing decidedly ornamental on the facade. Still, visual interest exists. Six evenly-spaced brick piers divide the ground floor into five bays of symmetrical arrangement. These piers are treated as pilasters and have stone capitals with stone blocks as bases. Above the capitals is a molded fascia. The second level's windows are all the same dimensions, but the outer ones are treated with keystone flat arches and the inner three are contained in a slight recess that continues upward. This treatment is repeated above, but the inner three windows of the third level have semi-circular heads. Windows of the fourth level are not half as wide as those openings below. The ones outside the recessed portion are separated by elements that recall the piers of the ground floor. Brickwork of the facade's apex indicates that the Lee Building originally had an entablature.

1-39. 1205-07 Harney Street (photo #5)

This turn-of-the-century building of brick construction has four stories and a basement. The ground level, though, is a cast-iron front filled with large windows that admit much light. Small knob-like projections frame the front's major openings. The three stories above are each handled differently. The second level's four windows are cleanly cut. Windows of the third level are contained within two recesses, have corbelling at their sills, and are separated and flanked by round-edged piers with stone capitals. Stone lintels are at the windows' sills instead of corbelling, and there are dentils at the height of their recesses. A metal cornice at the building's apex has been removed, but a row of large dentils remains.

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1-40. George Warren Smith Building (1880) 1213-15 Harney Street (Photo #5).

The Smith Building, constructed in 1880, is a narrow, four-story brick structure whose exterior alterations have mostly been confined to the ground level. A photo engraving printed eight years after the building's completion shows that an entrance to either side-end was elevated above the sidewalk's level, and that the basement was partially raised. This arrangement has been altered to an off-center recessed entrance and three large display windows.

A pilaster strip is on each end and in the center of the three upper levels. Window compositions are united by overhead lintels, and a narrow wooden cornice is at the apex.

1-43. 1113 Harney Street (ca. 1880), (Photos #6, 15).

In recent years a glass-faced penthouse has been added atop 1113 Harney Street, a diminutive building sandwiched between much larger neighbors. The original portion, though, reveals little exterior change when compared with an engraving in the 1888 publication, Omaha Illustrated. The basement is elevated and a flight of five stone steps leads to the centered entrance which is flanked by large display windows. A metal fascia separates the first and second levels, and the upper story contains three rectangular windows.

1-46. National Building (1915), 406 S. 12th Street, (Photo #5).

Significant to the history of Czechs in Nebraska, the National Building was built by the National Printing Company, previously known as the Pokrok Zapadu Printing Company, and publisher of the Hospodár (The Farmer), a highly successful agricultural magazine with a circulation across America and Canada. The National Printing Company supported many Czech activities and the Czech Historical Society of Nebraska and the Czecho-slovak consulate had space in the building during the 1920's. The majority of space in the building was rented to a variety of firms including brokers, typographers, engravers, and small manufacturers. The building was sold in 1946 to an engraving company.

The National Building is the only modern, fire-retardant structure in the district. Built in 1915, the structure is concrete frame throughout-- a feature amply expressed in the large window areas between each post. Modest stone decorations enhance the brick veneer of this building in a manner somewhat along Prairie style lines.

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2-38. Baker-Corey-McKenzie Building, (1919) 1120-24 Harney Street (Photo #7).

The corner five-story building was erected in 1919 and combines well with the two neighboring buildings to the east to produce an important grouping.

A heavy hood on consoles shelters the side entrance which is given a classical treatment. Windows of the street level were originally large openings separated by stone piers, but their dimensions have been altered. All openings in the upper floors are of a substantial size with numerous panes. Those windows of the fourth floor, however, have been shortened and their panes have been changed. A row of dentils and a projecting stone band with a guilloche carving wraps around the two facades. Above is a stone-coped parapet. This structure was designed by a prominent Omaha firm, John Latenser and Sons.

The Baker Brothers Engraving Company and the Corey-McKenzie Printing Company jointly erected the building for the use of their firms and with additional rental space. Many of the other businesses in the building were related to the printing field including a linotyping company, bindery, and printers' supplies.

2-39. P. E. Iler Block (1881) 1108-10-12 Harney (Photos #7, 28).

Wholesale dealers have occupied the Iler Block throughout its 97-year history. Peter E. Iler built this, the first Iler Block in the district (see also 1-5), to house his own wholesale liquor company in one store and to rent the other store. Iler's major business concern was the Willow Springs Distillery, one of the largest factories in Omaha. He was also a promoter of Omaha through the Omaha Board of Trade and an investor in local real estate and the South Omaha Land Syndicate which initiated the meat packing industry there.

The Iler and Company at 1112 Harney was a manufacturer and jobber of alcohol, whiskey and liquors with storage on the upper floors and offices on second. The first occupant of 1108-10 Harney was Lee, Fried and Company, wholesale hardware dealers, until their move in 1891 to 1219 Harney (see 1-15). After Iler and Company went out of business about 1910, Brinn and Jensen Company, wholesale paper dealers, moved into the store, and now occupy the entire building.

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2-39. Continued

The Iler Block is an exceptionally handsome building with a 66-foot frontage on Harney Street and a depth of 182 feet. When built in 1881, the structure was divided into two unequal stores which were expressed by three bays on the front facade. The ground level has a cast-iron front that originally contained large plates of glass between brick piers and metal pilasters--a double-door entrance being centered in each division. The dividing members are intact, but panels and glass blocks now fill the sections between.

Pilaster strips rise from the piers to continue the three-part division in the upper levels. Windows of the upper levels are recessed, allowing for a dramatic play of shadows. Stonework, both smooth and vermiculated, is segmentally arched over the heads of second and third-floor openings. Windows in the fourth floor are smaller and more numerous to create a sense of greater height, and smooth stone lintels unite their heads within their respective bays. A well-proportioned metal cornice is the crowning element. Below this cornice is a centered plaque bearing Iler's name and the date of erection.

Like many of the warehouses in the district, this Iler building features standard joist construction for the floors bearing into masonry walls. A row of columns separates the two easternmost bays with cast-iron used in the first three stories and wood posts on fourth floor.

2-40. Millard-Kirkendall and Jones Building (1887), 1102-06 Harney St. (Photo #29).

The five-story Millard-Kirkendall and Jones Building is constructed of brick with rough-cut stone trim. The first story's street facade is dressed with stone, and the center portion contains a Richardsonian entrance. Three large Diocletian windows on the facade's second floor repeat the arch of the entrance. These windows, and most others of the front, have three parts separated by cast-iron mullions. Variation is provided by an arcaded window arrangement on the fourth floor, which also appears on the exposed side. Above the top story is a rough stone band and brick corbelling. Aside from the cornice's absence and the placement of panels in first-floor openings, this building's exterior appears as it did when constructed in 1887.

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2-40. Continued

Ezra Millard, banker and investor, erected this building as office and warehouse space for the Omaha branch of the Kirkendall, Jones and Company. The sales and shipping operation of the boot and shoe wholesalers was managed in Omaha by Freeman P. Kirkendall. The manufacturing was done at Columbus, Ohio. The firm began business in the city in 1879 and carried out an extensive trade to the Pacific coast. In the late 1890's, Kirkendall re-organized the business and moved across the street to another Millard building (site 1-11).

The building was subsequently occupied by a variety of firms, the majority of which were wholesalers.

2-42. Omaha Crockery Building, (1918) 1116-20 Harney Street (Photo #7).

Sandwiched between two buildings of equal height, the Omaha Crockery Company Building is a structure in harmony with its immediate neighbors. The centered entrance and its sidelights are framed by Corinthian pilasters and there is a classical entablature with the company's name inscribed on the frieze. Upper-level openings are both single and three-part windows. Guilloche molding and the stone-coped parapet are akin to those same elements of 1114 Harney Street.

The Omaha Crockery Company was established in 1903 as a wholesale dealer in queensware and china, and three years later moved into a previous five-story building on this site. W. A. Maurer, a prominent crockery dealer from Council Bluffs (Iowa), purchased the company and in about 1917 and erected this building the following year to the designs of Council Bluffs architect J. Christ Jensen. The prestigious company remained in business here until 1965.

2-44. Smith Building (1877) 1113 Farnam Street (Photo #32).

Erected in 1877, one year after the Dewey and Stone Building immediately west, the Smith Building is treated much like an addition to its larger neighbor. Originally, a cast-iron front served as the ground level's facade, but the front has been replaced with contemporary elements. The second and third levels, which feature rectangular windows with distinctive stone trim, are unaltered but the metal entablature has been dismantled.

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2-44. Continued

Orchard and Bean, wholesale and retail carpet dealers, were the first occupants of this building which was erected by George Warren Smith as investment property. The successor firm of Orchard and Wilhelm became Omaha's prominent furniture store. A variety of wholesale and retail firms occupied the building after Orchard and Bean's removal to larger quarters in 1885.

2-53. Dewey and Stone Building (1876) 1115-17 Farnam Street (Photo #32).

The Dewey and Stone Building is a well-preserved High Victorian Italianate edifice that serves as a significant boundary element in the district's northernmost section. This 1876 four-story structure is divided into two equal parts with strictly symmetrical arrangements. A cast-iron front serves as the ground level's facade. This particularly attractive front of Grecian inspiration is composed of three piers and four colonnettes with Corinthian capitals and fluted lower halves, and a modillion entablature. Stone trim abounds around the windows of the three upper levels. Most notable are bands that fret around the heads of those openings in the second and third floors. The fourth floor's windows, however, have segmental heads that are emphasized by keystone rowlock courses and shaped stone blocks at the junction of spandrels. At the apex of the Dewey and Stone Building is a dramatic entablature of metal.

Dewey and Stone were Omaha's largest and earliest furniture dealers in the 19th century. The firm had been in business on the site since 1865. The building was used for showroom office and storage space. Additional warehouse space was required in the 1880's and two warehouses were built, one directly south of this building (no longer extant). An extensive wholesale business was carried on all the way to the Pacific coast. The company did their own upholstering, finishing and mattress making.

2-54. Clark and French Building (1879) 1119 Farnam Street (Photo #32).

The Clark and French Building, erected in 1879, is much akin to its larger neighbor, the Dewey and Stone Building, constructed three years earlier. In addition it is a virtual twin to the Smith Building which flanks the Dewey and Stone Building to the east. Although the ground-floor facade of this three-story structure has been greatly mutated in recent years, illustrations and photographs prior to the alterations show that this building, like its neighbors to the east, had a cast-iron front for the ground level. Fortunately, the exterior of the two upper floors remains intact. The fenestration with its stone trim duplicates that of the Dewey and Stone Building, and the metal entablature of heavy proportions has survived.

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2-54. Continued

Hugh G. Clark and J. B. French were prominent wholesale and retail grocers, having been in Omaha since 1865. Clark owned the building which was built in 1879, and the J. B. French and Company (Clark was a partner) occupied the structure for less than ten years. The Omaha Leather Company, wholesale and retail leather, used the building from 1913-1968.

Intrusions

The addresses of the intrusions into the historic district are as follows: 1007 Howard Street (#1-27), 1105 Farnam Street, 1121 Farnam Street, 1217 Harney Street, 413 S. 13th Street, 1121 Harney Street, 1118 Jackson Street, 1120 Jackson Street. These sites are marked on map #1 with a circle (●). All buildings which are not referred to as intrusions are felt to be contributory to the district. There are 50 buildings in the district.

Although the "Old Market" was historically a wholesale jobbing district, the four blocks centering on 11th and Howard streets have become a fashionable and prosperous retail shopping and restaurant area. In the mid-1960's, the Mercer family, who still owned a number of buildings in the district, sought a new use for the buildings after the decline of the food wholesaling businesses and the closing of the Public Market. The first retail shop opened in late 1967 and has been followed by art galleries, boutiques, restaurants, bars, bookstores and import shops. A mainstay of the district is the French Cafe (D009:1-25) which was started by the Mercer s and is one of Omaha's finest restaurants. The Mercer family through Mercer Management Co. is still actively involved in the development and revitalization of the district, carrying on the tradition of Samuel D. Mercer who erected several of the buildings in the late 19th century.

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 checked="" 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

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The "Old Market" Historic District is significant to the commercial development of Omaha as the wholesale jobbing area which mushroomed in the 1880's and continued well into the 20th century, serving as the distribution center for the variety of goods shipped on the Union Pacific Railroad and its branch lines all the way to the west coast. The light industrial and warehouse buildings extant in the district exist as substantial and representative structures of their type for the late nineteenth century, structurally, functionally, and aesthetically.

HISTORY

Omaha and all of Nebraska experienced a boom during the 1880's unparalleled in the early history of the state. The state's population doubled from 1880-1890. Omaha, the largest city in the state, took advantage of its unique position as the eastern terminus of the first trans-continental railroad to develop as a major distributing center for Nebraska and the states westward to the coast. The "Old Market" area developed at this time, encouraged by the Union Pacific Railroad's policy to promote traffic and the national revolution in mass marketing which the new efficient transportation and communication systems had made possible.

Wholesale jobbing as a business practice was first developed in this country in the 1850's because of the new transportation and communication systems - the railroad and the telegraph. With the reliability and speed in movement of goods, the jobber, who purchased the goods directly from the manufacturer and sold directly to the store owner, was able to operate, confident in the dependable transport and arrival of goods. By the 1870's nearly all wholesalers had become jobbers (Chandler, p. 215). Because of the railroad and telegraph it was no longer necessary for the jobber to be located on the East Coast near the importers and manufacturers. Jobbers moved west and located in Cincinnati, Chicago, and St. Louis as well as other cities from the 1850's to '70's. Jobbers created large buying and selling networks; traveling salesmen went to the retail store-keepers for orders and traveled over a wide area of the country. Wholesale jobbing began in Omaha about 1880 and the jobbers increased rapidly in number, building up a new section of downtown Omaha for wholesaling activities, i.e. the "Old Market" area.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheets

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Mr. Kidd 3.22.79 for ATM

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 17 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Omaha North, Nebr.--Iowa

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 5,0,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 2,6,0

B 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 5,0,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 1,0,0

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 6,0,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 1,0,0

D 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 6,2,0 | 4,5 | 7,0 | 9,4,0

E 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 3,9,0 | 4,5 | 7,0 | 9,4,0

F 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 3,8,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 0,4,0

G 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 2,7,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 0,4,0

H 1,5 | 2,5²⁵⁴3 | 2,8,0 | 4,5 | 7,1 | 2,7,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet

I 1,5 ²⁵⁴ ~~253~~ 3 9 0 4 5 7 1 1 6 0

J 1,5 ²⁵⁴ ~~253~~ 4 0 0 4 5 7 1 2 8 0

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Penelope Chatfield, Historian; Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian; D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Nebraska State Historical Society

January, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

1500 R Street

402/471-3270

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Lincoln

Nebraska

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

Marvin W. Knott 11/10/79

TITLE Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 3-23-79

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

William H. Braam 3-20-79

DATE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

The Board of Trade was established in 1877 to promote the commercial development of the city. Wholesaling and manufacturing were seen to be vital to the growth of Omaha. James F. Boyd, president of the Board, stated in his 1881 Annual Report, "We are endeavoring to make Omaha the great distributing point of the extreme west, and as far as possible the depot of purchases of the northwest and southwest sections (of the country). The railway facilities help us to accomplish this. Today more than half of Colorado and New Mexico trade is through Omaha. Oregon and Idaho railroads are placed so wholesale merchants of Omaha can supply those towns. Manufacturing of all kinds are encouraged." The secretary of the Board of Trade stated in the same report that future growth of Omaha was dependent on its being a distributing, manufacturing and wholesaling center for the areas to the west.

The Union Pacific purchased the Kansas Pacific in 1879 and embarked on a new policy of building or purchasing branch lines in order to develop local markets and increase traffic to support the railroad. The development of Omaha, the eastern terminus, as a distributing center was important to the railroad. Several of the major investors in the "Old Market" were connected with the Union Pacific, i.e., Frederick L. Ames, director and member of the Executive Committee; Samuel D. Mercer, M.D., chief surgeon; and Andrew J. Poppleton, general attorney. By 1883 the Union Pacific had twenty branch lines serving Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Oregon and Washington; the same states served by the jobbers.

The "Old Market" area is representative of the wholesaling aspect of the 1880's boom in the city, and to a smaller extent the early-20th-century development. The area changed from mainly a residential neighborhood adjacent to the main retail district on Farnam Street to a wholesaling area of new buildings. Wholesaling sales increased dramatically through the decade from \$11.2m in 1879 to \$24m. in 1884 and \$47.2m. in 1890 (Omaha Bee Annual Review, 1880, 1885, 1890). Building construction peaked in 1887, rising from just under \$1m. worth of construction in 1879 to \$12m. worth in 1887. Thirteen railroads served Omaha in 1887. The great majority of firms in the area were wholesaler jobbers specializing in various commodities, including dry goods, millinery, rubber goods, hardware, groceries, liquors, boots and shoes, produce, and fruits.

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A number of wholesalers moved to Omaha or opened branch houses there, testifying to the growing importance of Omaha as a distribution center. The greatest number moved across the river from Council Bluffs, Iowa. Although Council Bluffs had been named the eastern terminus of the transcontinental railroad, it had essentially lost that position to Omaha. M.E. Smith and Company, Steele and Johnson, Isaac Oberfelder and Z. T. Lindsey were all wholesalers who moved from Council Bluffs. Wholesalers from Kansas City; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Fremont, Nebraska; and Aurora, Nebraska moved or opened branch houses in Omaha.

Some of the oldest firms in Omaha were represented in the district. Tootle and Maul, wholesale dry goods, opened in 1854, the year Omaha was founded. The Baum Iron Company, which is still located in the district, was founded in 1888 and merged with the successor of the W. J. Broatch, heavy hardware business, founded in 1874. Dewey and Stone was organized in the early 1860's and expanded into the largest furniture store in the city in the 19th century handling both wholesale and retail sales.

Commission merchants handling mainly fruits or vegetables were concentrated along Howard Street from 10th to 11th and north and south from 11th and Howard. The fruit and produce dealers were adjacent to the Public Market (site D009: 1-29), from which the area derives its current name, the "Old Market."

There were a great many commission merchants who worked in the "Old Market" through the years. The firms were generally small and often family operations. Only a few, such as Ernest Meyer, Samuel Gilinsky, Peter Rocco, owned their own buildings; most rented store-fronts. The commission merchants provided a strong ethnic flavor to the "Old Market" by the concentration of Jewish and Italian merchants, particularly after the turn of the century when immigrants began working as peddlers or hucksters and wholesalers.

Only a few of the wholesalers were also manufacturers, as was typical nationally. Rarely did jobbers become involved in manufacturing the products they sold. Iler and Company (liquors), Kirkendall Boot Company, Morse-Coe Shoe Company and M. E. Smith and Company (dry goods) and a number of printing companies were the only manufacturers in the Old Market.

Retail and service firms were also scarce in the Old Market. Retail merchants were only located along Farnam Street, a major retail street, and were also active wholesalers. The Public Market was the largest retail center in the area. The hotels, fire house and small restaurants and saloons were the service businesses.

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The largest buildings in the district were in general owned by investors who rented space to both large and small wholesalers. Most of the investors were early settlers of Omaha who were very successful financially and who invested in real estate. Several had lived in houses on the property in the 1860's and '70's, then built commercial blocks there in the '80's. The major Omaha investors were Samuel D. Mercer, M.D. (see Mercer House, Omaha, NRHP), Peter E. Iler, Ezra Millard, and Andrew J. Poppleton. Other major investors were Frederick L. Ames and Joseph Gahm, both of Boston. These six people were responsible for thirteen of the largest buildings in the district.

The drouth and financial panic in the 1890's paralyzed businesses for a number of years. Few buildings were erected during the decade and none from 1895-1900. The Morse-Coe Shoe Company (site D009:1-37) and S. D. Mercer's hotel enterprise (D009:1-7), which constructed the largest buildings in the early 1890's, did not survive the decade.

By the turn of the century, Omaha business was reviving, sparked by the successful Trans-Mississippi Exposition of 1898; and another era of building construction began in the first decades of the century. Wholesaling and manufacturing were again booming and a number of buildings were erected in the "Old Market", although fewer in number than in the 1880's. Buildings for commission merchants or food brokers and printers were the most popular. The major wholesalers were in need of larger buildings and several companies moved into new buildings in the developing South 9th Street area, east of the Old Market.

ARCHITECTURE

The light industrial and warehouse buildings extant in the "Old Market" district exist as substantial and representative structures of their type for the late nineteenth century. The chief function of most of these buildings was either for the storage of raw materials and associated space for light manufacturing or they provided space for the storage and distribution of finished products. In some cases buildings served both factory and warehouse functions. The utilitarian nature of these buildings ultimately dictated their form along structural, functional and fire-retardant lines.

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The structures represented in the "Old Market" were essentially a new building type on the architectural scene, particularly from the local point of view. Warehouses once were common along the nation's major water-ways during the era of river transportation. The freighting firm of Russell, Majors and Waddell had warehouses in Nebraska City to which they shipped supplies up the river from St. Louis before freighting them across the plains in the 1860's. The completion of the trans-continental railroads, however, quickly supplanted river traffic. None of these early river-associated warehouses are extant in Nebraska and we know little of their construction aside from the fact that they were wood.

The new building type which emerged not only in Omaha but elsewhere in the late 1870's and early 1880's was the result of a rapidly expanding industrial economy based on mass production and an associated need to distribute and sell these goods over a large area. In Omaha the Union Pacific Railroad, aware of potential profits, was a prime mover in encouraging the establishment of these wholesale houses.

Architecturally the "Old Market" buildings can be seen as an early phase of development for the type, both structurally and aesthetically. The majority of the buildings are variations on standard masonry wall and light floor joist construction. Among this group are several which are multiple-store buildings composed of single spans between each masonry wall (see sites #D009:1-6, 1-18, 1-23). Other, larger buildings are multiple-store structures as well except that one or two rows of columns were introduced in place of a masonry wall creating small loft type spaces within each store. This larger variation of the multiple-store warehouse constitutes the majority of buildings in the districts (see sites D009:1-11, 1-30, 1-31, 1-32, 2-39). Within this group the use of wood posts prevails (D009:1-7, 1-11, 1-14, 1-23, 1-32) while the use of cast-iron columns appears to occur sporadically over the period of construction for the district (D009:1-30, 1-31, 2-39).

While the advantages of cast-iron are clear with respect to structure, it is somewhat surprising to see its use at this late date given its known susceptibility to heat. The known uses of cast-iron in this district are all associated with wood beam and light frame floor construction. Of these, only Van Brunt & Howe's Ames Block (D009:1-30) provided for the fire protection of the light floor joists.

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More sophisticated technology relative to structure and fire protection was not developed sufficiently to be incorporated into the repertoire of possibilities until around the turn of the century. Shallow masonry arch construction was available but its expense generally prevented its use in these utilitarian buildings. Only one isolated example is documented in the district (D009:1-23). The development of mill construction and the concrete frame, both of which made possible the great loft structures of the turn of the century (see for example: City of Omaha, Determination of Eligibility--the Nash Building and the Smith Building), are represented only in a few of the later structures in the district (sites #D009:1-5, 1-46).

Aesthetically, the "Old Market" exhibits some of the problems of appropriateness of expression which plagued architects of utilitarian structures in this period. Not surprisingly, architects turned to historicism in an attempt to create distinction in their street facades and utilized familiar forms such as those of the office and retail-commercial building to give architectural character to their buildings. Most often the large store-fronts were non-rational solutions to a problem which did not require and perhaps even preferred not to have them. Later, the store fronts and even the historicism gave way to what Sturgis called "Realistic" design (Burchard and Bush-Brown, p. 241) producing an appropriateness of form and style which is notable. Of the former one should note the Iler Block (2-39), the Morse-Coe Building (1-37) and particularly the second Millard Block (1-6). Of the latter, Van Brunt and Howe's Ames Block (1-30) begins to suggest the form which was to follow after 1900, primarily along south 9th street in Omaha.

Environmentally, the "Old Market" Historic District is a fine concentration of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century warehouse buildings--the structures retaining their integrity and the number of intrusive elements being low. Alterations have been mostly limited to first floors, although several buildings have full facades that are essentially intact.

The vast majority of buildings in the district are of brick construction, and all streets excepting Harney have bricked surfaces. The versatility of masonry is well evident in these warehouse buildings, for a good number incorporate machicolation, corbelling, rustication, and other brickwork forms. Other elements, however, contribute to the district's architectural flavor; cast-iron fronts, metal cornices, stone trim, and metal sidewalk shelters attached to several buildings around the turn of the century.

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Window treatments have a wide variation. Their numbers, sizes, and rhythmical arrangements enable the viewer to quickly distinguish the buildings as being commercial structures. Also, there are a few excellent groupings of buildings whose members are reciprocal and in harmony concerning height, dispersion of openings, and construction materials. Most buildings appear to have been influenced by commercial modes that were becoming prevalent in Chicago and further east about the same time. Individual architects utilized their own interpretations, though.

Many Omaha architects and firms are represented in the district, including; John Latenser and Sons, Fisher and Lawrie, Charles Cleeves and Brother, Isaac Hodgson and Son, Charles Beindorff, Henry Voss, Blake and Zander, Mendelssohn and Lawrie, F. A. Henninger, and others. Most of the firms were known locally, but several achieved regional prominence.

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Verbal Boundary
CONTINUATION SHEET Description ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Commencing at the center of the intersection of 12th and Farnam Streets, proceed east to the center of the 11th and Farnam Street intersection; then proceed directly south to the southern boundary of lots 1-4, Block 152; then proceed east along said boundary to the center of 10th Street; then proceed south along the center of 10th Street to the center of the 10th and Jackson street intersection; then proceed west to the center of the 12th and Jackson Street intersection; then proceed north to the center of the 12th and Howard Street intersection; then proceed west to the center of the 13th and Howard Street intersection; then proceed north to the center of the 13th and Harney Street intersection; then proceed east to the center of the 12th and Harney Street intersection; then proceed north to the point of beginning. The district comprises Blocks 135, 150, 151, 164, 165 and the south half of Block 152 in the Original Town Plat of Omaha, Nebraska.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Owner of
Property ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 2

OLD MARKET HISTORIC DISTRICT
OMAHA, NEBRASKA
LAND OWNERS, SEPTEMBER, 1977

The addresses are all "Omaha, Nebraska" unless otherwise indicated.

BLOCK 135

lot 1	Thomas L. Egan 1101 Farnam 68102	1101 Farnam
lot 1 (w 44') & lot 2	Enterprise Electric Co. 1103 Farnam 68102	1105 Farnam
lot 2, 3	Kenneth J. Schneiderwind 1531 Pinewood Dr. 68108	1111 Farnam
lot 3	Arthur R. Prouty 712 N. 72nd Ave. 68114 Artken, Inc. 1111 Farnam 68102	1113 Farnam 1115-7 Farnam
lot 4	Alfio Cantania 1121 Farnam 68102	1119 Farnam
lot 5	Weiner Auto & Home Supply Co. 923 Farnam 68102	1124 Harney
lot 6	W. John O'Brien 3332 Center 68105 Weiner Auto & Home Supply Co. 923 Farnam 68102	1114 Harney 1116-20 Harney
lot 7	Brinn & Jensen Co. 1110 Harney 68102	1110 Harney
lot 8	Enterprise Electric Co. 1105 Farnam 68102	314 S. 11/1102 Harney

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BLOCK 150

- | | | |
|-------------------|--|-----------------------|
| lot 1 | Orent Engraving Co.
406 S. 12th St. 68102 | 406 S. 12th |
| lot 2 | Eugene Braun
c/o Harland L. Mossman
1230 S. 120th St. 68144 | 1205 Harney |
| <i>16.25 1979</i> | Donna F. Long & Linda Griffith
1209 Harney 68102 | 1209 Harney |
| lot 3 | Thomas F. Rudloff
1211 Harney 68102 | 1211 Harney |
| lot 4 | Baum Iron Co.
1221 Harney 68102 | 1221 Harney |
| lot 5 | Leo R. Byrnes
417 S. 13th St. 68102 | 413-417 S. 13th |
| | Joseph Lazer
1314 N. 48th Ave. #329 68132 | 423 S. 13/1218 Howard |
| lot 6 | Leo R. Byrnes
417 S. 13th St. 68102 | 1218 Howard |
| lot 7 | John T. Ruggiero
1210 Howard 68102 | 1210-12 Howard |
| | Douglas E. Hiner
601 S. 31st Ave. #15 68105 | 416 S. 12/1208 Howard |
| lot 8 | E. Clifford Baker
416 S. 12th St. 68102 | 416-18 S. 12th |
| | First National Bank, Trustee
c/o Mercer Management
1016 Howard 68102 | 1202 Howard |

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BLOCK 151

lot 1 & 2	Rubin Distributing Co. 1101 Harney 68102	1101 Harney
lot 3	Michael J. Harrison 408 S. 40th St. 68131	1113 Harney
	Weiner Auto & Home Supply Co. 923 Farnam 68102	1115-7 Harney
lot 4	Star Realty & Const. Co. 1401 Rue-de-Calais, Bellevue, NE	1121 Harney
lot 5-6	Herman Weinsteins 1114 Howard 68102	1114 Howard
lot 7-8	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102	1102-1112 Howard \$ 442 S. 11th

BLOCK 152

lot 5	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102	413-423 S. 11th
lot 6	Edward Levison c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102	1014 Howard
lot 7 (e 70')	Bennie Eisenberg 418 S. 10th 68102	416-418 S. 10th
lot 7 & 8 (7-w 62')	Old Market Co. c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102	1010 Howard
lot 8 (e 70')	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102	1002-6 Howard

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CONTINUATION SHEET Owner of
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	Owner of Property	ITEM NUMBER 4	PAGE 5
BLOCK 164			
lot 1 & 2 (1-e 100')	Lucile A. Schaaf 507 S. 38th St. 68105		502 S. 10th
lot 1 & 2	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102		1009 Howard
lot 3	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102		1013-17 Howard
lot 4 (n 99')	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102		501-9 S. 11th & 1019 Howard
lot 4 (s 33')	First National Bank, Trustee c/o Mercer Management 1016 Howard 68102		511 S. 11th
lots 5,6,7	Marjorie M. Weiss 328 S. 70th Ave. 68132		519 S. 11th
lot 8	Julius Hornstein 3128 N. 58th St. 68104		520-24 S. 10th
BLOCK 165			
lot 1 & 2	Marcia L. Levine & Lucile Schaaf 507 S. 38th St. 68105		502-12 S. 11th & 1105-9 Howard
lot 3 & 4	Joseph J. Casio, Jr. 1113 Howard 68102		1113-5 Howard
lot 4 (n 89')	Jack E. Cohen 1123 Howard 68102		1123 Howard
lot 5	Eleven East Ltd. 1120 Jackson 68102		1120 Jackson
lot 6	Firehouse Dinner Theatre 1108 Jackson 68102 Richard C. Bolin 5044 Bedford 68104		1114 Jackson 1116-8 Jackson

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BLOCK 165 Continued

lot 7	Firehouse Dinner Theatre 1108 Jackson 68102	1106-8 Jackson
lot 8	Firehouse Dinner Theatre 1108 Jackson 68102	514 S. 11th



#1

2-5

1300

Photograph #1 *JAN 22 1919*
Old Market Historic District *Douglas County*
Omaha, Nebraska. D. Murphy,
Nebraska State Historical Society
April, 1977 (NSHS 7704/2:5)

MAR 23 1979

#2

9-23

127

Photograph #2 .JAN 24 1979
Old Market Historic District
Omaha, Nebraska. D. Murphy,
Nebraska State Historical Society
March, 1977 (NSHS 7703/9:23)
Looking west on Howard Street
from 11th & Howard MAR 23 1979
Douglas Co.