

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

For HCRS use only

received JUL 26 1982

Date entered

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

1. Name

historic Wilkinson, E. H., Building

and/or common Wilkinson-Swem Building (preferred)

2. Location

street & number 217 East Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Medford N/A vicinity of congressional district Second

state Oregon code 41 county Jackson code 029

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Cliff Bryden

street & number 1058 SE Kane

city, town Roseburg N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97470

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Jackson County Courthouse

street & number Eighth and Oakdale Streets

city, town Medford state Oregon 97501

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Statewide Inventory of Historic Properties has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wilkinson-Swem Building is a two-story brick structure in the commercial Eastlake Style. Constructed in 1895 with an extension of 53 feet from the rear of the building to the alleyway, in 1896 it measured 20 feet by 140 feet. The architect was W. J. Bennet, and the builder was Joe Shone; both gentlemen remained briefly in Medford, yet had a substantial impact on the area architecturally during the last decade of the 19th century. Located within the central business district, originally it was built to provide space for the meat market of Edward H. Wilkinson, Sr., and a five room dwelling above the shop for the Wilkinson family. The building is in good condition, and is presently being renovated by its new owner/occupants to house their popular business, Bryden's Store.

The Wilkinson-Swem Building is located in Township 37 South, Range 1 West, of the Willamette Meridian in Section 30 (30BC), Tax Lot 900. (The building is situated on Lot 14, Block 13 of the Original Town of Medford.) The structure makes complete lot coverage (20 feet by 140 feet) to the public alleyway.⁽¹⁾

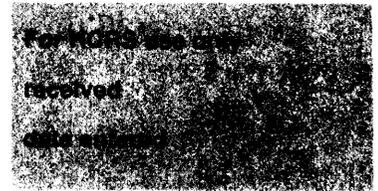
The 20-foot wide facade fronts on East Main Street, and is oriented to the southeast. The 20-foot wide, paved, public alley runs parallel to the northwest (rear) elevation of the building. The rear 53 feet of the southwest wall is a party wall shared by the neighboring brick, two-story structure constructed in 1896. Adjoining the Wilkinson-Swem Building on the northeast is the Phipps Building of 1909. In addition to the fore-mentioned adjacent buildings, the Wilkinson-Swem Building shares the block with two-story brick, stone or concrete structures built over a thirty-year period between 1896 and 1926.^(2,3) These buildings once reflected the rich architectural diversity of a turn-of-the-century American main street. The Wilkinson-Swem and Phipps Buildings are the only structures in Block 13 to have escaped excessive facade remodelings in the middle decades of the 20th century. The block's commercial mix consists of jewelers, bookstores, shoe retailers, a postal substation, offices, investment firms, and a department store. Surrounding blocks have structures of various ages, commercial uses, and states of architectural integrity. Two blocks to the west is the Siskiyou line of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The same distance north is the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Building, which was determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register in 1982. Within three blocks to the east flows Bear Creek, a tributary to the Rogue River.

The Wilkinson-Swem Building is one of several early brick commercial buildings built along East Seventh Street (later re-named Main Street) between the railroad and Bear Creek, an area which developed rapidly following completion of the Oregon and California Railroad and the platting of the Medford townsite. In the winter of 1883-1884, forty wooden buildings were put up east of the railroad, and for the first few years they made up the commercial district.⁽⁴⁾

The Wilkinson-Swem Building is rectangular in shape, measuring 20 feet by 140 feet. It is two-stories high, constructed of locally-fired brick laid in a common bond with a header course every eighth row. The foundation is of native sandstone, quarried in the Griffin Creek district southwest of Medford. W. J. Bennet, the architect, designed the structure in the Eastlake Style. Joe Shone was the builder/carpenter, and much of his fine finish work is still evident on the interior and exterior of the structure.

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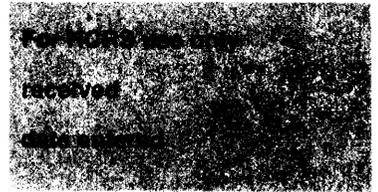
The roof on the front 87 feet of the main structure is a medium-pitch gable. Original copper sheathing on the roof of the main block and the curved roof of the front bay window is intact, but has been painted grey and patched many times during the past 80-plus years. A parapet two feet high caps the wall and extends around the perimeter of the main block, and three skylights are in this section. Two of the skylights, nearest East Main Street, originally provided natural light into the interior rooms of the Wilkinson apartment suite. The roof of the rear 53 feet, referred to as the "brick barn," is a steep-pitched gable which has been sheathed with dark brown composition shingles and does not have a parapet.

On the southeast (facade) elevation, fronting on East Main Street, a large oriel, or projecting bay window is cantilevered 4-1/2 feet from the main wall plane. Although the facade has undergone several remodelings in the early 20th century, the retention and maintenance of the bay window, a prominent visual feature of the street, gives the appearance that the building has not changed since construction. Below the window's curved metal roof is a cornice molding. Eight corbels, or brackets, support the cornice; four are located on the front elevation, and two each are on the side elevations. A dentil course is below the cornice. Each of the brackets is placed at the top of a wooden pilaster. The pilasters divide the facade of the bay into three sections, containing one-over-one, double-hung, wooden sash windows on either side of a large, double-hung window with multi-colored lights bordering clear central glass panels. The glass in upper sections of the flanking windows has been replaced with louvered units. Windows inside elevations of the bay also are one-over-one, double-hung sash. Above and below the windows are recessed wooden spandrel panels. An electrically-lighted advertising sign projecting from the facade has been removed and will not be replaced with a like sign. Wrapping around the base of the bay window is a sheet metal and neon signboard which conceals a corbeled base and molding similar to that of the cornice. This signage of the 1930s most likely will be removed following exploration to see if the original materials are still in place. Two-story masonry piers, or corner pilasters define the outer edges of the building. Originally, the corner pilasters were of exposed brick-work, and the corbeled tops were capped by bulky cast-iron finials. The roofline above the bay was once highlighted with cast-iron cresting. An architectural redesign of the early 1930s called for a stuccoed surface on the corner pilasters with fluted shafts in the Modernistic vein. Similar architectural treatments were repeated on the neighboring Lindley Building, Hubbard Bros. Hardware (335 East Main Street), and the most westerly half of the Hamlin Building while, in 1933, it was serving as the home of Jackson County Building and Loan Association (126 East Main Street). (5)

A doorway to the left of the west pilaster base opens to a flight of stairs that served as an entrance to the Wilkinson apartment suite on the second story. The narrow lot did not provide enough room to house an interior staircase, so an exterior stairway was built on the building's southwest wall. It was enclosed during the construction of the adjoining Lindley building in 1896, and a deed agreement was reached. The original configuration of the store front was that of a typical commercial building of the late 19th century, with a narrow, recessed central doorway with a transom. This was flanked by two large plate glass display windows flush with the main facade plane. Cast-iron pilasters supported the store front structurally, and marked the entrance to the business house as well. All ornamental ironwork was locally manufactured by the Ashland Iron Works. Elements of the Victorian store front

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remained intact until the late 1910s and early 1930s. Despite personal accounts of people associated with the building and photographs of the period, it is unclear to what extent the store front was changed in the 1910s. One feature added during that period was a multi-paned transom light across the full front just below the bay window.

The existing store front has a recessed central entrance, plate glass display windows void of obvious structural support, and bulkheads faced with ceramic tiles. This redesign of the early 1930s followed damage caused by an automobile plunging into the building.⁽⁶⁾

A chimney projecting above the southwest wall near the facade vents the fireplace in the former front parlor.

The northwest (rear) elevation and an exposed section of the northeast side are of brick construction. A shadow line on the northeast elevation, approximately 9 feet above the ground, was left by a frame woodshed structure for the Phipps Building.⁽⁷⁾ The northwest (rear) elevation was originally the entrance to the Wilkinson stable and meat processing area.⁽⁸⁾ The gable end is sheathed in asbestos shingles that replaced clapboard siding in response to city fire codes of the 1940s. The second floor is one bay wide with a metal sash window in the former location of the hay mow to the loft area above the stables. The hay mow was filled in to reduce the opening for the present window. On the ground floor a steel I-beam was inserted into the brick wall as a lintel over the present swinging doorway and a small single-light casement display window. The entrance and display window replaced the barn doors. This occurred in the late 1940s, and has since been referred to as the "Carriage Entrance". A raised brick planter box to the left of the entrance contains English Ivy, the only landscaping on the site.

The exposed portion of the northeast elevation is three bays wide on the second floor. The two windows nearest the alley have had brick infill to reduce the opening for the metal sash windows. The section of relatively new brick work, which contains the third window, was the rebuilt smoke house of the meat market. A brick chimney flush with the wall plane rises 7-1/2 feet above the eave of the roof, and is non-functioning. It once served the blacksmith unit in the former stable.⁽⁹⁾ All openings on the ground floor have been filled in.

The stuccoed exterior rear wall of the main block has small window openings, one on either side above the gable roof of the rear section. This wall was rebuilt in the mid-20th century to enclose and replace the two-story open back porch and household woodshed structure. The second level of the porch was reached by an outside staircase. A third skylight was added over the newly enclosed space.

The first floor in the interior of the Wilkinson-Swem Building has almost no partitioning of internal space. The brick wall surfaces are presently exposed. Three stove-pipe flues are on the northeast wall. The ceiling height in the front section is 12 feet. The ceiling in the rear portion is approximately 8-1/2 feet. The major architectural feature of the street level is the curved staircase from the first floor to the mezzanine level which was added in 1953 as part of an extensive remodeling program that included the demolition of the open wooden back porch. The

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curved stairway and mezzanine were constructed in space formerly occupied by the back porch. The extension of the floor plane in the former hay loft created the mezzanine or balcony level. The architect for the 1953 remodeling was Ben H. Todd. The wrought iron stair and balcony railings with the monogrammed "S" for Swem were hand-forged by Cecil Watson of Phoenix, Oregon. A "rustic" shingled sales counter of very recent vintage to the right of the base of the stairs has been removed.

The Wilkinson Meat Market originally located at the front of the building's ground floor, was completed in November, 1895. The retail and work space was heated by wood-burning stoves. The 12-foot ceiling of beaded lumber was varnished, and the electrical wiring for the lighting was exposed on the ceiling. A terra cotta tile floor was used in the retail section, while plank flooring with a thick layer of sawdust was used in the work areas. The cabinet work for the cases, counters and walk-in refrigerator was crafted by the firm of John Weeks and Sons, furniture factory in Phoenix, Oregon. The marble-topped counters were of birdseye ash and black oak. (10)

In the first floor of the "brick barn" section, is a small enclosed storage room in the west corner. This room, just to the right of the "carriage entrance", was the darkroom for the Swem's Photo Studio from 1919 to 1949, at which time the darkroom was relocated in the loft area. A flight of stairs to the loft is on the northeast wall.

The loft area, once used for storage of hay, had been one rectangular open space within the pitch of the gable roof. In 1949, a partition was added down the center of the room. The newly enclosed space on the southwest wall was further subdivided into three compartments to serve as the darkroom, processing and drying areas for the photography business. A fir floor was placed over the rough-cut plank floor, and the ceiling was lowered. Recent work by the present owners, including removal of the partitions, has returned the space to its original proportions as the hay loft. Between the loft and mezzanine on the northeast side of the building is a small 8 by 7-foot enclosed office. Opposite the office, on the southwest wall, is another smaller enclosed room. Next to this is the location of a restroom, added in 1949. Doors and hardware to both enclosed rooms are original materials once used in the residential section of the building. The doors have two recessed panels in the lower half, and a single glazed panel above. The hinges, doorknobs and curtain rod holders are of bronze with elaborate stamped decoration.

The second floor is reached by a stairway from the mezzanine. The former apartment suite was completely opened by present owners in 1981 and now measures approximately 65 feet by 18 feet. The space had been revised substantially for storage purposes in 1953. Portions of the walls and shelving in the storage area were from the original kitchen pantry. On the southeast end of the room is the 4 by 15-foot bay window. Beaded window casing and baseboards surround the five window fixtures of the bay. Spandrel panels, like those on the exterior of the bay, are below each window, and corner rosette blocks mark the upper corners. The ceiling of the bay window is 11 feet high. The most dominant architectural feature remaining beside the front window is the impressive golden oak and ash fireplace mantel crafted by John Weeks and Sons. The overmantel with a plate glass mirror and side shelves, is 5 feet in

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width, and 7 feet in height. It is embellished with richly carved and turned ornamentation. Surrounding the brick firebox is a protective iron frame and embossed ceramic tiles in an "English Ivy" pattern. The hearth tiles and the substructure have been damaged and will be repaired.

On the southwest wall is a doorway with the same beaded frame and rosette blocks. It opens onto an enclosed landing at the head of a double flight of stairs leading to East Main Street. The stairway has wainscoting on both walls.

The linoleum tile flooring of 1953 has been removed to expose the original tongue-and-groove fir floors. Sanding has revealed locations of the old interior partitions. The dwelling contained five rooms, a long hallway along the southwest wall, and a bathroom complete with a sink, bathtub and pull-chain toilet. In January, 1896, and Medford Mail, a local newspaper, reported that "Ed Wilkinson has moved his family to his new palace home over his meat market." The reader was then taken on a tour "... through the upstairs rooms of the building." The parlor, with the building's only fireplace, occupied the front room with the bay window "... overlooking as it does the principal street of our busy city..." The hallway entered the parlor on the southwest side of the room. Sliding doors opened from the parlor into a sleeping room (evidence on the floor shows double wall construction at this location). Opening off this room was the children's sleeping apartment and adjoining the two rooms was "a bathroom which is fitted with all up-to-date appliances." The dining room and kitchen were to the rear of the dwelling, and between them was a large glass-doored cabinet that opened into each of the rooms. The pantry with its hand pump, water pipes and cupboards, was off of the kitchen on the northeast wall. The porch and woodshed were off the back of the building. All of the rooms opened into the long hallway. Skylights, transoms and glass panels in all interior doors helped in providing natural light. With the exception of the kitchen and pantry, all rooms were papered with an ingrain paper. Builder Joe Shone made extensive use of natural wood--cedar, redwood, larch, pine, oak, and ash--throughout the dwelling. (11)

Since October, 1981, Bruce and Vicki Anne Bryden, and Cliff Bryden, the owner, have been involved in the intensive tasks of renovating the late 19th century Wilkinson-Swem Building. Bryden's Store, which has been owned and operated by Bruce and Vicki Bryden at 32 South Bartlett Street since 1974, is scheduled to open at 217 East Main Street in February, 1982. It will be the seventh business housed in the building since 1895. Their plans are for complete use of the building for the diverse services of their business. The street floor will be used for the retail gift emporium. The loft/mezzanine level will provide the workshop and classroom space, along will sales room for supplies of Bryden's stained glass business. The former Wilkinson apartment suite will be the setting for Vicki Bryden's cooking school. With the assistance of descendents of the Weeks family, the Brydens may attempt to have display cases and counters designed along the lines of the cabinetwork of John Weeks and Sons.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1895–1896 **Builder/Architect** W. J. Bennet, Architect
Joe Shone, Builder/Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The two-story brick masonry commercial building at 217 East Main Street in Medford was built in 1895 as a butcher shop and residence for English emigre Edward H. Wilkinson. A second section was added to the rear in 1896. The original volume, measuring 20 x 87 feet, was designed by W. J. Bennet, whose architectural practice in Medford was short-lived but noteworthy as the earliest of record in the city. The building's bay window with curved metal roof, stylized wood trim and central window sash with colored border lights, and the elaborate, variegated chimneypiece in the upstairs parlor embody the distinctive characteristics of the Eastlake Style. The building is significant as one of the earliest brick commercial buildings built along the thoroughfare to displace the hastily-built wooden structures which anticipated completion of the Oregon and California Railroad in 1887. The building's oriel window is unique in downtown Medford today. In fact, the Wilkinson Meat Market building, later occupied by Swem's portrait studio and book and gift store, beginning in 1919, and its neighbor, the Phipps Building of 1909, are the only buildings in their block on Main Street to have escaped the comprehensive facade remodeling prevalent in Medford in the Post War era. The original cast iron ground story shop front of the Wilkinson-Swem Building was remodeled twice, and iron cresting is missing from the parapet. Outer piers of the facade were stuccoed in the 1930s and decorated with inconspicuous Modernistic motifs in relief. Access to the second story apartment suite was originally provided by an outside stairway on the southwest wall. The ground story interior was comprehensively remodeled in 1953, at which time a curved interior stairway to a mezzanine was added. The second story is now completely open, following removal of partitions in 1953. However, the bay window is unaltered, as is the golden oak parlor chimneypiece with its plate glass overmantel, the tongue and groove fir flooring, and most of the wood trim on bearing walls--all of which is evidence of high quality workmanship by local builder Joe Shone and Phoenix, Oregon cabinetmakers John Weeks and Sons. Over the past year, the building has been rehabilitated by the current owner for continued commercial use, and many of the misguided improvements of more recent years have been reversed. The Wilkinson-Swem Building possesses integrity of location, design, setting and feeling, and sufficient integrity of materials and workmanship to meet the criteria of the National Register. The building is significant for its uniqueness in the downtown core and for its association with the commercial life of Medford since 1895. Medford was incorporated in 1901.

In Oakland, California, during the year of 1883, Edward H. Wilkinson boarded a northbound trail and set out for the Rogue Valley of southwestern Oregon. (12) He rode as far as Redding, temporary terminus for the California and Oregon Railroad. From this point his journey was by overland stage through the towns of northeastern California, over the Siskiyou Mountains, and down into the valley he would call home for the next 58 years. He may have noticed, before the stage pulled into Jacksonville, the construction activity on the Oregon and California Railroad line in the vicinity of the future town of Medford. By the time of his arrival, twenty-three years of his life had passed, but he lived long enough to see Medford grow from a dusty railroad town to a progressive,

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one

Quadrangle name Medford, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UMT References

A

1	0	5	1	1	6	1	5	1	0	4	1	6	8	1	5	9	1	0	1	0
Zone			Easting						Northing											

B

Zone			Easting						Northing											

C

Zone			Easting						Northing											

D

Zone			Easting						Northing											

E

Zone			Easting						Northing											

F

Zone			Easting						Northing											

G

Zone			Easting						Northing											

H

Zone			Easting						Northing											

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Wilkinson-Swem building occupies Lot 14 of Block 13, Original Town of Medford, Jackson County, Oregon. The lot measures 20' by 140' and is bounded by East Main Street and a public alleyway. It is also described as Tax Lot 900, map reference 37 1W 30BC.

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

state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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state	N/A	code	county	N/A	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title L. Scott Clay

organization N/A

date January 20, 1982

street & number 4199 Cherry Lane

telephone 503/772-7789

city or town Medford

state Oregon 97501

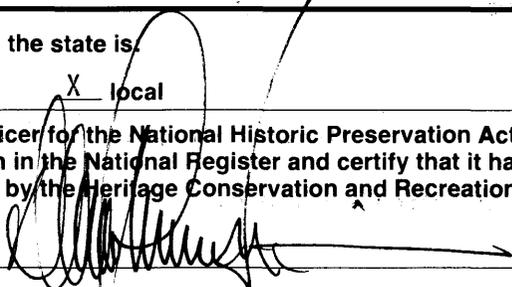
12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

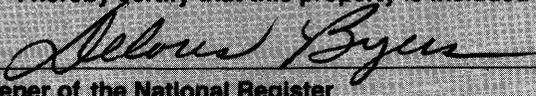


title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date June 29, 1982

For HCRS use only

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



Entered in the
National Register

date

8/26/82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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prosperous, 20th century city.

Born in Nuffiton, England, on January 14, 1860, Wilkinson came to the United States at the age of twenty-one. He had lived with and worked for an uncle in McDermitt, Nevada, before striking out for California, then Oregon.⁽¹³⁾ Once in Jacksonville, he was soon in the employment of the pioneer meat market of John Orth, Sr., on South Oregon Street. By December, 1883, the townsite of Medford had been surveyed and lots in the new town were being advertised in Jacksonville's Oregon Sentinel.⁽¹⁴⁾ The shift of population and commerce from the old town to the community on the railroad line began at this point. Jacksonville merchants hurriedly rushed the completion of the new county courthouse in hopes of retaining their position as county seat, which the town had held since 1852. The plan would work for another forty years. Wilkinson was no doubt influenced by the promised opportunities of the boom town's economy, and the chance to put down roots. But Medford was not his first stop following his marriage on June 23, 1886 to Flora Orth, eldest daughter of Wilkinson's employer. After a wedding ceremony in the Orth family home in Jacksonville, the pair set out for Eastern Oregon.⁽¹⁵⁾ By 1888, the young couple had returned to the valley from San Mateo, California, with a son, John Joseph Wilkinson.⁽¹⁶⁾ The small family was living in Medford, and Edward Wilkinson opened his meat market in a single story, wood frame, false front building on Lot 14 of Block 13 on the north side of East Seventh Street, (later renamed Main Street) between B and C Streets.^(17,18)

In 1889, he entered into a business partnership with Mary Harris Hanley, wife of Medford businessman John A. Hanley, of the Jacksonville ranching family. The business at hand was the purchase of Wilkinson's commercial location for \$900.⁽¹⁹⁾ Civic improvements in 1889 were construction of a public water system, an open ditch from Bear Creek to a gravity-flow water tower, (now the location of the Carnegie Library); the town's first flour mill, and the Angle Opera House.⁽²⁰⁾ In 1890, John Orth Sr., died in Jacksonville, Edward H. Wilkinson, Jr. was born in Medford,⁽²¹⁾ and the population of the town reached 1,791.

On May 5, 1891, the papers were signed and Wilkinson was sole owner of the 20 foot by 140 foot lot and building.⁽²²⁾ The valley's first harvest of fruit orchards was shipped out of the valley on the Southern Pacific Railroad. It was the eve of the orchard boom.

The spring and summer of 1892 saw several substantial purchases of beef cattle from valley ranchers, such as the Barneburg ranch east of Medford,⁽²³⁾ and the Terrill operation in the Brownsboro district near Eagle Point, northeast of Medford.⁽²⁴⁾ Medford's only meat market continued to prosper, as did the town. A new bridge over Bear Creek replaced the old ford; a county road was surveyed and built east from the bridge through a large cattle ranching area and south into Phoenix. Residential development was occurring east of the creek in what would become Medford's prestigious eastside neighborhood.

In 1893 the Phoenix business firm of John Weeks and Sons, Furniture Factory, had been in operation for three years, and announced plans to open a Medford furniture store.⁽²⁵⁾ A telephone line was installed between Dr. Pickel's home and office, and the R. H. Halley Building (26-44 South Central Avenue) was completed. Ed Wilkinson, "the

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Seventh Street Market man, was adding great convenience to his place of business with the addition of a refrigerator and a coat of paint applied to the old store front." (26)

The Wilkinson Meat Market entered the new year of 1894 with a profit of \$5,000. (27) An electric plant was built at the base of the water tower, a city telephone system was installed, the Barnum and McAndrew brick building was built in the block east of the meat market, and more homes were built in the Oakdale neighborhood (South Oakdale Historic District, National Register District, 1979). A notice appeared in the Medford Mail in December, 1894, of "elaborate plans" for an enlarged and rebuilt Hotel Medford that would reopen as Hotel Nash. The architect, who had just arrived, was W. J. Bennet. (28)

Work on the hotel commenced early in 1895. The Nash would serve as the town's social center through the orchard boom of the ^{early} 1900s. It was the first of four major commercial buildings designed by Bennet and built on East Seventh Street during 1895. This building boom would include the second Wilkinson Meat Market.

W. J. Bennet opened his Medford practice in the Hamlin Building. (29) Under his employ were three draftsmen, I. A. Palmer, D. W. Terwilliger, and George Gove. (30) Palmer and Terwilliger were formerly of Portland. Medford's first architectural office was kept busy with the designing of numerous domestic and commercial plans in and around the town of Medford. In May, 1895, the firm's offices were moved around the corner to the Halley Building on South C Street (26-44 South Central Avenue). Between 1894 and 1896 the Medford Mail credited Bennet's office with the designing of over thirty residential, commercial and institutional buildings in the southern Oregon and northern California region. These included dwellings in Roseburg, and, in Medford, the Hotel Nash, the Presbyterian Church, J. C. Ferguson House (34 Crater Lake Avenue), Joe Shone House (305 North Grape Street), Washington School (the first brick schoolhouse, on the present site of the Jackson County Courthouse of 1932), L. B. Warner House (518 South Oakdale Avenue), commercial blocks in Sisson (Mt. Shasta) California, and dwellings and additions to the Siskiyou County Courthouse in Yreka, California.

Bennet's buildings of masonry, frame and cast iron construction included most styles popular in the late Victorian age, such as Italianate, Queen Anne, Eastlake, and Colonial Revival Styles. Construction bids for his executed designs ranged from \$800 (Shone House--Shone did his own construction, and buildings supplies were from his own planing mill) to \$12,000 (10-room Washington School).

Other than reported items in the local newspapers, little is known of Bennet's architectural training or his life before his arrival in late 1894. In January 1895, his family joined him and set up temporary housekeeping in the Halley Building. Although the railroad did have a tremendous impact in opening the valley to the outside world, the area remained somewhat isolated. This apparently did not prevent architect Bennet from learning of a design competition for a library buildings in Auburn, New York. The winner of the competition would be awarded the contract for designing the \$25,000 project. In April, 1896, he was engaged in the specifications and plans for his "Egyptian" style library. (31) Several times during the spring of 1896, the Medford Mail reported on his architectural work in Sisson and Yreka,

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California. He apparently was living in Yreka when the Yreka Journal reported that "Architect W. J. Bennet, formerly of (Medford) ; (32) was thrown from the carriage and holding to the lines, was dragged several feet." (32) He survived the mishap, returned to Medford, and oversaw the completion of the G. P. Lindley Building, and the addition to Wilkinson's meat market. During 1896, I. A. Palmer started his own office, which took offices in the Lindley Building; D. W. Terwilliger moved to Pasadena, California, and George Gove settled in the Prospect area northeast of Medford in the Cascade Mountains. Whether these moves were due to a local economic downturn or simply better opportunities elsewhere, none of the above-mentioned architects and draftsman were in the community at the turn of the century. (33)

The Wilkinson-Swem Building was the third of four major commercial buildings to be constructed in Medford during 1895. On February 22, 1895, the editor of the Medford Mail exclaimed, "...never before in the history of Medford has there been such promise of building activity as is present right now. The construction of numerous brick blocks is assured for next summer, and others are contemplated." (34) In December, 1895 the Medford Mail reported on the completion of all four of the buildings and the pending construction of the Lindley Building. (35)

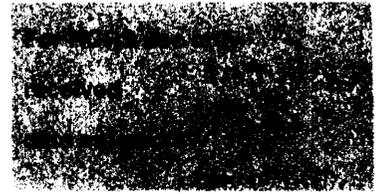
The first mention of the actual construction of the future meat market was on August 23, 1895, in relation to the Griffin Creek district ranch of Dr. E. P. Geary, where "...several men are at work getting out rock (sandstone) for the new Wilkinson block in Medford." (36) In the same issue of the Medford Mail, Ed Wilkinson had "moved his family to the living rooms at the rear of Childer's grocery store (Halley Building) and will move his market to the Elder building on the corner of B and Seventh Streets, until the new structure is completed." (37) By late September, the brick work by Spencer Childers was nearing completion on what promised to be the "gem of all the buildings." (38) Childers was the owner of one of two brick yards in the town. During the same week the Ashland Iron Works turned out a large casting order of columns, cresting and other architectural details to be used in the cast-iron store front and embellishment of the facade parapet. (39)

Joe Shone, the builder/carpenter for the building, had purchased an interest in W. S. Barnum's lumber and planing mill and sash and door factory on the west bank of Bear Creek in 1894. (40) Though unstated in local accounts, it is probable that the lumber and millwork that Shone used in the construction and finish work of the Wilkinson's meat market and apartment suite was from his mill. Shone, a carpenter by trade, had been working in the Medford area since August, 1894, when he was employed in installing skylights and constructing interior partitions in the new Barnum and McAndrew Building (315-319 East Main Street). (41) With the completion of the Wilkinson Building, Shone turned his attention to building the five room "cottage" on North G Street (305 North Grape Street) that W. J. Bennet had designed for him. (42)

In line with general improvements in the city, and with the approval of the newly created Board of Trade, overhead electric lines and street lights extended down Seventh Street from the electric plant near the city park to the new business blocks east of the railroad line. Designed to be as up-to-date as possible, the Wilkinson building was wired for electric lighting by J. C. Baird. (43) Baird had just completed the task of wiring the 70-room Hotel Nash. Wilkinson's electrical service system consisted of

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surface-mounted wiring across the ceilings with bare hanging light bulbs down the center of the market.

A newspaper progress report on November 1, 1895 noted that Bennet's original plan had been modified only slightly. "The original plan has been changed to some extent, and the stairs will not go up from the front [the stairway to the dwelling was placed on the exterior of the southwest wall until the construction of the Lindley Building in 1896, at which time they were enclosed and an agreement between property owners was reached] and the [shop] entrance will be in the center of the building with plate glass windows on either side."⁽⁴⁴⁾ Following R. W. Richardson's completion of the tile floor in the market, Ed Wilkinson had moved into his new shop by November 15. "We are safe in saying that he now has one of the neatest meat markets in the state ... the walls have been frescoed and ceiling handsomely decorated, and by the addition of new blocks and counters, the shop presents a very neat appearance." Attention then turned to the dwelling: "Plasterers and carpenters are now working on the upper story, and it will soon be ready for occupancy. The painting on the building was done by [J. H.] Butler and A. P. Green, as was the decorating on the walls and ceiling of the shop."⁽⁴⁵⁾

The finish work of Wilkinson's apartment suite included the installation of the turned and handcarved chimney piece and overmantel from the cabinet works and furniture factory of John Weeks and Sons.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Prior to settling in the Rogue Valley in 1887, the Weeks family had lived and learned their trade in Woodstock, Canada. In 1890 they opened the manufactory at Phoenix in the Bear Creek Valley south of Medford.⁽⁴⁷⁾ A Medford sales outlet was opened in 1893 and continues today as Weeks and Orr Furniture (114 West Main Street).⁽⁴⁸⁾ The Wilkinson Meat Market counters were representative of the fine craftsmanship they supplied to the homes and businesses throughout southern Oregon and northern California from 1890 into the 1910s. The chimney piece in the Wilkinson-Swem Building is similar to the Weeks and Sons chimney pieces in the Jeremiah Nunan house of Jacksonville, completed in the fall of 1892. Nunan's neighbor, Dr. James W. Robinson, whose dwelling was of similar design (both Nunan and Robinson houses were from designs of George Barber of Knoxville, Tennessee), also had chimney pieces by Weeks and Sons. The Southern Oregon Mail, in April, 1892, noted "The Weeks Bros, of Phoenix, has just finished putting in two elegant mantels in the residence of Dr. Robinson of Jacksonville."⁽⁴⁹⁾ The firm's production was not limited to fireplace embellishments. They did front and back bars (Mon Desir Dining Inn, Central Point), gun display cases, "Bishops" chairs for the new Presbyterian church in Medford, a dining room set for the Nunan family, and a variety of other types of furniture.

The Wilkinsons occupied their newly-finished home at the first of the new year, and on January 24, 1896, a full description of "Ed Wilkinson's palace home" appeared in the Medford Mail.⁽⁵⁰⁾

In the summer of 1896, George P. Lindley, who had purchased the lot to the west of the Wilkinson Building, had workmen demolish the old frame building on the site to clear the way for construction of his two-story brick building. His would be 25 feet by 140 feet, 53 feet longer than that of his neighbor.⁽⁵¹⁾ It was during the final stages of construction of the Lindley Building that Ed Wilkinson made the decision to tear down the old frame structures on the alley that had served as his stables and smoke house and replace them with a "fireproof" brick barn.⁽⁵²⁾ Wilkinson payed \$100 for a half interest

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in a 53-foot long by 18-foot high section of Lindley's northeast wall.⁽⁵³⁾ Brick mason Spencer Childers, when he was finished with the Lindley Building, built the barn. A two-story service porch connected Wilkinson's main building with the barn, thus utilizing the full 140 foot depth of the lot.

The Wilkinson-Swem Building remained in the ownership of the Wilkinson family until 1977. Soon after the turn of the century, Edward Wilkinson, Sr., retired from the meat market trade. The business continued under the name of the "City Meat Market," managed by Chris Arnold and Harry W. Barneburg.⁽⁵⁴⁾ Barneburg had worked for Wilkinson in the meat market several years earlier. By 1906, a shoe store had replaced the City Meat Market.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The Wilkinsons continued to live upstairs. John Wilkinson, at the age of twenty, had also quit the meat business, and was now a bookkeeper for the Medford Bank, four doors to the east in the turreted J. H. Stewart Building. Medford and the Rogue River Valley were on the verge of a second surge in population. The Wilkinson Building and fifteen other brick and stone structures were soon joined by an extensive array of two, three and four-story brick and concrete structures built by well-to-do newcomers from the east coast and midwest. The physical and economic growth in the city coincided with the acres upon acres of newly planted fruit ranches throughout the Rogue Valley. With the additional agricultural and rural residential development in the outlying areas, transportation needs increased. Livery operations such as the West Side Feed and Sale Stable (South Grape Street) were built to help meet the need, but plans were already being formulated for an interurban line and a street car line to climb up into eastside Medford's Siskiyou Heights.⁽⁵⁶⁾ This eastside loop did materialize in March, 1914, as the Southern Oregon Traction Company.

On August 8, 1908, Mrs. Flora Wilkinson died on the Southern Pacific train while returning home from the seaside resort town of Newport, Oregon. She was buried in the Orth plot in the Jacksonville Cemetary.⁽⁵⁷⁾

Following City Council approval, East Seventh Street became East Main Street, and all alphabetized streets were renamed to commemorate the local fruit industry. Where the Wilkinson listing had been the "northside of Seventh Street, between B and C", it now read: "215 (2nd floor) East Main Street between Bartlett and Comice [now Central Avenue] Streets."

In May, 1909, W. I. Phipps and A. C. Allen let the contract for a two-story brick business block adjoining the Wilkinson Building on the east.⁽⁵⁸⁾ A Commercial tyle building soon displaced the two false-front structures on the site. C. M. Kidd, who started his shoe store one door east of the meat market in 1904, reoccupied his former location in the new Phipps Building after its completion. Eight modern office suites upstairs provided space for the town's business and professional men, including the dental office of Dr. I. A. Phipps, and for the medical practice of Drs. Clancy and Conroy.⁽⁵⁹⁾ Two-story, masonry business buildings on both sides of the Wilkinson-Swem Building now formed a continuous commercial wall along East Main Street the length of Block 13, and Ed Wilkinson and his sons moved out of their home with the bay window overlooking the principal street of the busy city" to live with Wilkinson's brother-in-law, John Orth, Jr. In 1910 the former Wilkinson apartment suite served as temporary quarters for the Medford Commercial Club, which had been the Board of Trade prior to a name

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change and a redefinition of purpose in 1902.⁽⁶⁰⁾ Serving as a community booster club, the Commercial Club worked at attracting new business people, such as recent St. Paul, Minnesota arrivals, Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Swem and their three children. Swem, a portrait photographer, came to the area in 1911, and soon opened Swem's Photo Studio at 222 West Main Street in a portion of the St. Marks - California and Oregon Power Company Building.⁽⁶¹⁾ The studio was near the new Carnegie Library, and the soon-to-be-completed Hotel Medford, designed by Frank C. Clark, which foreshadowed the decline of the Nash. The Rogue River Valley University Club had been founded by this time and had club rooms in the Tribune Building; J. C. Mann's Department Store opened on North Central Avenue, and the Medford Bank was now the Medford National Bank on the corner of Main and Central.

For a brief time in 1912, John Wilkinson again lived in the old family home, but after his marriage to Geraldine Marie Miksche in 1913, the apartment suite would never again serve a domestic purpose. In 1913, the partnership of Drs. R. W. Clancy and R. J. Conroy, neighbors on Knob Hill in Siskiyou Heights, dissolved, and from 1913 to 1917 Dr. Conroy's practice was located at 215 East Main Street in the old Wilkinson place.⁽⁶²⁾ Downstairs at 217 East Main, R. N. Foster had opened The Palace of Sweets confectionery, with advertisements that read, "We serve a dandy noon day lunch", or "open after the show."⁽⁶³⁾ The shows were in the new Page Theatre on East Main Street, next to the new bridge over Bear Creek. The theater, designed by Frank C. Clark and C. O. Power, played to host to top line entertainment from silent films to traveling Broadway productions and concerts.

Mr. Foster sold The Palace to the Pipgras family by 1915, and the business continued as The Shasta. The Shasta served lunch, dinner, and had a full fountain service, complete with "Colestin Natural Mineral Water," bottled at Colestin Springs in Siskiyou Mountains near Ashland. In the shop the fountain was on the northeast wall, and the candy counter was opposite on the southwest wall. The tile floors had been replaced by linoleum, and booths lined both walls with tables in the center.

The kitchen space had been created out of a section of the old barn. A Chinese cook named Lee presided over the meals. Miss Myrta Otterdale, who worked at The Shasta the summer after her graduation from high school in 1918, remembers Mrs. Pipgras working alongside her husband in large hats fashionable at the time.⁽⁶⁴⁾

On April 10, 1918, John Orth, Jr. received a telegram from Tucson, Arizona, telling of the death of Eddy Wilkinson, Jr. He had died at the age of twenty-seven of tuberculosis, from which he had suffered for the past five years. For one season he had played ball with the New York Giants in the National League, before retiring due to poor health.⁽⁶⁵⁾

In the spring of 1919, the Jackson County Board of Health forced the closure of The Shasta due to reported unsanitary conditions found in the kitchen (one report stated that rats and material from the old hay loft falling into the food, were the reasons for closure).⁽⁶⁶⁾ Saturday night, April 26, 1919, The Shasta reopened in "new and greatly enlarged quarters", and all were "invited to call and inspect this up-to-minute establishment" at 212 East Main Street, directly across from the old location.⁽⁶⁷⁾

After extensive cleaning and necessary repairs to the former Wilkinson Building, Swem's

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Photo Studio moved from the west side of the tracks and into the building with quaint Victorian shop front at 217 East Main Street, a location where it would remain for close to sixty years.⁽⁶⁸⁾ Rent for the entire building was \$140 a month. The old Wilkinson parlor, with only slight repairs and general cleaning, now served as the portrait studio, replete with large box cameras and stacks of glass plate negatives. Little, if anything, had changed in the apartment, but this was not so downstairs. The kitchen of The Shasta was remodeled into a dark room. The front area of the shop was transformed into a gift store, while the rear section was the book sales area. The family-owned business branched out into retail sales and, over the years, less and less would be done in the photographic line other than the developing of customer's snapshots, as suggested by the following advertisement: "Careful, experienced workmen develop your films--the negatives free of stains and scratches naturally yield better, clean, 'full of detail' prints -- Swem's Things Photographic."⁽⁶⁹⁾ The ad certainly did not catch on as a snappy jingle, but the brief eight word slogan of the 1920s, "Swems Store of a Thousand Thoughtful Gifts", did and continued in use into the 1970s.

In the 1930s, John "Jack" Swem, son of the proprietor, took over the management. The portrait studio was phased out, a line of Hallmark cards was added, and memberships were sold in Swem's Book Club.⁽⁷⁰⁾ The present display window front was the result of automobile damage to the old storefront. The "new storefront" is compatible in style with the 1932 redesign of the neighboring C. M. Kidd Shoe Store (on the east), which had been purchased by a former stock boy, Aubrey Norris, and Harry J. Fields. It was known as Norfield's until 1964, when Norris became the sole owner of Norris Family Shoe Store. The store remains in family ownership.⁽⁷¹⁾

On January 20, 1941, six days after his eight-first birthday, Edward H. Wilkinson died in the Sacred Heart Hospital on Knob Hill in Siskiyou Heights.⁽⁷²⁾ The construction of Camp White, north of Medford in 1941, ushered in a new era of prosperity to the depressed economy of the valley. It also brought several thousands of officers and enlisted men. With housing at the Camp in short supply, many of the officers lived in town. During the war, most of the rooms in the Hotel Medford were turned over to the Army for housing. It was at this time that Phoebe Swem and Otto Ewaldsen, a Captain of Engineers at Camp White, met. They were married in January, 1943. In November, 1945, Otto Ewaldsen joined the firm and formed a partnership with Jack Swem.⁽⁷³⁾ The Ewaldsens later purchased the business. In 1949, the first of two major remodelings was undertaken. The photo lab was relocated from the first floor into the loft area (the photo lab was discontinued in 1955), windows in the loft area were filled in and replaced with metal sash windows. The "carriage entrance" at the rear of the old barn was created. The final remodeling in 1953 resulted in the removal of interior walls in the former apartment suite and replacement of the old wooden service porch with a curved staircase with hand-wrought iron railings.⁽⁷⁴⁾ The architect for the redesign was Ben H. Todd. Todd was also the architect for the 1954 annex addition to the Jackson County Courthouse. The wrought-iron railings with the monogrammed "S" were crafted by Cecil Watson, owner of the Pacific Forge and Iron Works in Phoenix, Oregon. All remodeling expenses were paid for by John Wilkinson. John Joseph Wilkinson, the last member of the family which originally occupied the building, died May 6, 1954.

Swem's Book and Gift Store, one of the Rogue Valley's oldest commercial businesses, was

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sold November, 1977, to David Michaels of Astoria, Oregon. Later that year, the Michaels purchased from the grandchildren of Edward H. Wilkinson, the Eastlake Style building built in 1895 and 1896, as a meat market and apartment.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The Michaels continued the Swem name and did some remodeling, which has since been reversed. The closure of the Swem's business in the spring of 1980 was followed by a public auction in June of remaining stock, furnishings, and Swem memorabilia.

In October, 1981, the Wilkinson-Swem building was purchased by Cliff Bryden in a business agreement with his son and daughter-in-law, Bruce and Vicki Bryden. The renovation of the interior has emphasized removal of poorly designed and constructed additions of the last thirty years. Original features or later architectural elements that reflect the continued use of the building and help to show the evolution of the interior spaces will be preserved.

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