

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

**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** Hamley and Company Leather Goods Store

historic Renn, B. F., Building

and/or common Hamley and Company Leather Goods Store (preferred)

**2. Location**

street & number 30 SE Court Street N/A not for publication

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

state Oregon code 41 county Umatilla code 059

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<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 John L. Rian and Janice Rian

street & number 720 SW Washington Street, Suite 315

city, town Portland N/A vicinity of state Oregon 97205

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Umatilla County Courthouse

street & number 216 SE 4th Street

city, town Pendleton state Oregon 97801

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

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

date 1981  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Salem state Oregon 97310

# 7. Description

**Condition**  
 excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**  
 unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**  
 original site  
 moved

date N/A

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

In 1900 B. F. Renn commissioned construction of the two adjoining brick buildings at the SW corner of SE Court and SE 1st Streets in Pendleton. The two story building has a ground plan of 50' x 100' and the one story building measures 25' x 80'. They share a common wall 16 inches thick. The architect and the builder are unknown. Stylistically, the buildings are typical of commercial architecture throughout the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the century. Above ground story shop fronts, the facades are organized in the classical manner characteristic of the Italianate style, with corbeled cornices and crested parapets. Tall second story windows in the main block have segmental arch heads which are framed with similarly arched architrave molding. The upper facade of the main block is divided into two equal three-bay sections by strip pilasters. The parapet is simply adorned with rectangular recessed panels and small pedimented crests centered over either section to bear the name of the proprietor and date of construction. An unusual feature of either principal facade was the use of contrasting colors of face brick. The main wall planes are white, the trim is red. Second story treatment of the secondary street facade of the main block is similar in design.

The two story building has a 16' high ceiling on the 1st floor, a 12' high ceiling on the 2nd floor, and a basement with 6' to 7' head clearance. The one story building has a 16' high ceiling, no 2nd floor, and no basement. Both buildings have concrete footings, 20" thick basalt rock foundation walls, and 16" thick brick bearing walls at the 1st floor. The two story building has 12" thick brick walls at the 2nd floor. The two story building has heavy posts and girders at the center of the 50' space for supporting cross beams at both floors. Both buildings have wood trusses with a flat top member for the roof structures. The trusses are each a different size to create a continuous slope for the roof drainage.

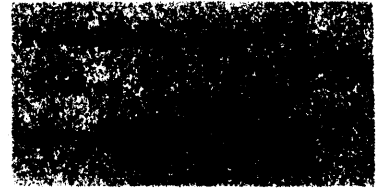
The majority of the brick used in construction of the B. F. Renn Building is a red clay brick manufactured in the near-by Umatilla County town of Weston. It was a porous utility brick intended to be painted or plastered. The east or SE First Street facade of the main block was painted white to match the off-white face brick of the north, or principal facade which was a high quality, dense brick set in 1/8" red mortar joints instead of the standard 3/8" sand color joints used with the common red brick trim. The pilasters appear to have been faced with pressed brick also, although red in color.

The exterior remained essentially unchanged until 1952, when Hamley and Company remodeled to create a "western appearance." A few windows had been bricked in, a chimney on the south, or rear elevation was added for a boiler in the basement, and a storage building was added at the back of the one story building. These alterations all occurred at unknown dates. The alterations of 1952 consisted of replacing the old store front windows on the ground story of either building, adding a light-colored rock-faced sandstone to the new storefronts, adding a wooden canopy over the entire ground story facade and north east corner which has a steel frame secured to the brick pilasters with steel cables, replacing a band of windows in the upper level of the ground story facade with a cast iron beam and wooden filler panels, and painting all of the Weston utility brick a brown color to coordinate with the new store front scheme.

The building interiors have been modified over the years to accommodate different users of the spaces. The back work rooms and storage rooms retain their original character, having exposed brick walls, wooden floors and wooden ceilings. The 2nd floor remains much as it was when occupied by the Elks Lodge from 1909 to 1919, with plastered brick walls, plastered

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ceilings, and a hardwood dance floor. In 1919, when Hamley and Company bought the buildings, an opening was cut through the common brick wall that joined the two volumes. Since that time, the high-ceilinged retail areas of both buildings have been modified to create a mezzanine. The ceiling heights are presently 7'8" on the ground story and vary from 7'3" to 6'5" at the mezzanine level. Some of the plaster has been removed from the walls to expose the brick. Other additions include redwood paneling, hardwood flooring, HVAC systems, and lighting.

Some reversal of Post-War remodeling already has been undertaken by the present owner, who acquired the property in 1981. Paint has been carefully removed by chemical washing from the red Weston brick and the entire exterior has been cleaned and tuck-pointed. The building is structurally sound, having received but routine maintenance and minor repairs over the years. The new owner plans to renovate the interior in his effort to recapture a measure of Hamely and Company's original character.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1900 Builder/Architect Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The B. F. Renn Building, erected of brick masonry in 1900, is located at the SW corner of SE Court Street and SE 1st Street in the heart of Pendleton, the governmental seat of Umatilla County in the wheat-growing and cattle range country of Oregon's Columbia Plateau. The main two-story volume measures 50 x 100 feet and presents its major frontage along SE 1st Street. A single-story volume measuring 25 x 80 feet adjoins the main block on the west. Brick used in wall construction was manufactured locally at a plant in nearby Weston. A distinctive feature of the facade is the white face brick accented by red brick trim. With its segmental-arched second story windows, its strip pilasters dividing the Court Street facade into two major sections, its corbeled cornice, paneled parapet and two small, formally-placed pedimented crests containing the building name and date, the B. F. Renn Building embodies the distinctive characteristics of late Italianate commercial architecture typical of small towns and large in the American West in the years preceeding the First World War. The building is significant historically as the home of Hamley and Company Leather Goods since 1905. The renowned saddlery has shipped its quality merchandise all over the world. Expansion of the business over the years brought certain changes to the building, the first being the interior opening between two-story and single-story volumes when J. J. Hamley purchased both structures in 1919. The only major exterior change occurred in 1952 when the ground story fronts were remodeled with rock-faced sandstone and a shingle wooden canopy. The second story of the main block was originally operated as a boarding house but was subsequently remodeled and occupied by the Pendleton Elks Lodge, owner of the building from 1909 to 1919. An intact example of its type and style, the B. F. Renn Building possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association with a distinguished, long-lived Pendleton industry.

For over 75 years, the Renn Building housed one of the finest saddleries in the West. The building erected by B. F. Renn as an investment in 1900 was occupied for five years by a general store with lodgings on the second floor. When J. J. Hamley opened his leather shop in 1905, he gave the building a new identity as a manufactory and sales outlet for fine saddles, harnesses, and leather goods. Hamley and Company came to be known throughout the world and patronized by cowboys and horsemen from all over the United States.

Benjamin F. Renn had been the proprietor of a feed yard and a hotel in Pendleton since at least 1888. In 1900, he erected the Renn Building on the block of property which he had acquired from Umatilla County and which had originally been designated as the site of the county courthouse. He let his new building to a general store operator and rented the second floor rooms to lodgers. By 1905 he had partitioned the ground floor and let one half to Guernsey Music Company and the other to a newcomer, J. J. Hamley, as a saddlery and harness shop. The Pendleton Elks Lodge purchased the building from Renn in 1909 and continued to rent part of the ground floor to Hamley and Company, but the upper rooms were taken over for a lodge hall. In 1919, Hamley and Company purchased the property from the Elks Lodge and bought also the single-story adjoining building on the west, thus expanding to occupy two buildings as it does today. Although the property recently changed hands, Hamley and Company remains and the new owner intends to maintain and revive Hamley and Company's traditional craft and service standards.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Searcey, Mildred, in cooperation with David Hamley, "Hamley & Co., Makers of Fine Saddles since 1883," Persimmon Hill, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Fall 1981), 22-31. Persimmon Hill, is the quarterly publication of the National Cowboy Hall of Fame and Western Heritage Center, Oklahoma City.

Olmos, Bob, "Portlander Gives Pendleton Landmark Store New Look," The Oregonian (Oct. 1, 1981)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Pendleton, Oregon

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	1	3	6	0	9	3	0	5	0	5	9	0	2	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 B. F. Renn Building occupies city tax lots 3200, 3400, and 3500, in Pendleton, Umatilla County, Oregon. The three adjoining lots measure roughly 150' x 75'. The area is legally described as Lot 1, the east 25' of Lot 2, and the east 75' of Lot 3 of Block 4 of the original town of Pendleton.

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

state N/A code county N/A code

state N/A code county N/A code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Gary Peterson and Gary Reddick with Janice W. Rutherford

organization Sheldon Eggleston Reddick Associates date August 17, 1981

street & number 123 NW Second Avenue telephone (503) 228-6444

city or town Portland state Oregon, 97204

## 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 March 25, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

*Janice Marie Orzabal*  
Keeper of the National Register date 6-9-82

Attest: *Emma Jane Saye*  
Chief of Registration date 6-7-82

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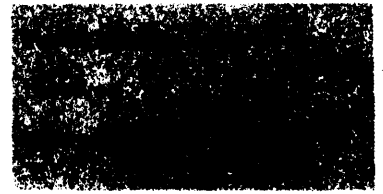
William Hamley, son of a riding goods manufacturer in England, came to the United States in 1840 and opened a leather goods shop in Ripon, Wisconsin. Hamley's sons, John James and Henry, learned their father's trade and moved west to open their own business in South Dakota. From there they emigrated into Idaho, where their business suffered from fire, debts, and ruin, and where Henry died. After starting over and being burned out a second time, John James (known by then as J.J.) trekked westward once more and began anew in Pendleton, Oregon in 1905.

When J. J. Hamley founded Hamley and Company in the Renn Building, Pendleton had grown from a small settlement of 700 in 1880 into a thriving city of 7000. The county seat of Umatilla County, Pendleton was served by two railroads, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company Railroad and the Washington and California Railroad. It boasted two flour mills, four hotels, three banks, six schools, two newspapers, and a growing woolen industry. It was an excellent choice as Hamley's new field of operation.

Hamley's success and reputation were earned through consistently good quality and service. Hamley had a tradition of developing new and better leather products: In 1876, William Hamley took out a patent on a horse collar he christened the "Hamley Patent Centennial Peculiar-Shaped Anti-Galling Horse Collar." Now called the Sweeney Collar, it is still in use. In the same spirit of invention, J. J. Hamley and his son, Lester, continued to innovate. In 1919, they collaborated with a professional cowboy association to develop a new saddle tree for use in competitive rodeo events. The tree is still in use. Custom saddles, exclusive tree designs, and excellent craftsmanship were commodities sought by early cowhands, and in the early years Hamley and Company advertised these commodities by word of mouth. But in 1909, the company began publishing a catalog which was distributed worldwide. Until 1968, when it was discontinued, the catalog continued to draw international business. Hamley has shipped saddles to Canada, Europe, New Zealand, Australia, and even to Saudi Arabia. For decades, well-known personalities have patronized Hamley and Company. Past owners of the famous Hamley saddles include Hoot Gibson, William S. Hart, Bing Crosby, and Justice William O. Douglas who bought a custom Hamley saddle for each of his wives. In the 1920s, Hamley and Company expanded its saddle and harness manufacturing to include belts, leather kits, holsters, bits, spurs, ornaments and tools.

Hamley and Company has played an important role in Pendleton's social life for many years. In the days when the manufacture of saddles could be watched by passersby in the back of the store, people came by to look on, pass the time, and chat with one another. Hamley and Company contributed to the sustenance of Pendleton's Indian culture as well. The saddlery served as a gathering place for members of the Umatilla, Cayuse, Walla Walla, Nez Perce, and Warm Springs tribes who would come to town to congregate and visit on the benches provided in Hamley and Company's store. For many years, from 1905 until the 1920s, Hamley and Company gave a Christmas party for the Indians each year. Older Indian residents of today still recall enjoying these parties as children.

An integral part of Pendleton's commercial and social development, a significant contributor to the cowboy aesthetic, and a friendly influence toward the maintenance of Umatilla County's Indian culture, Hamley and Company has played an important role in the area's history. In addition, the company became world renowned as a saddlery

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and leather goods manufacturer. The company has occupied the same building since its beginnings in Pendleton in 1905 and has thus made the building an important landmark in Pendleton's historic built environment. Although the building itself has passed from the ownership of the Hamley family, the present owner intends to continue the Hamley and Company operation under the management of J. J. Hamley's grandson, David, head of the current generation of Hamleys. Plans are being made to reinstate the catalog, to once again manufacture saddles on site, and to recapture the flavor of early Hamley and Company merchandise.

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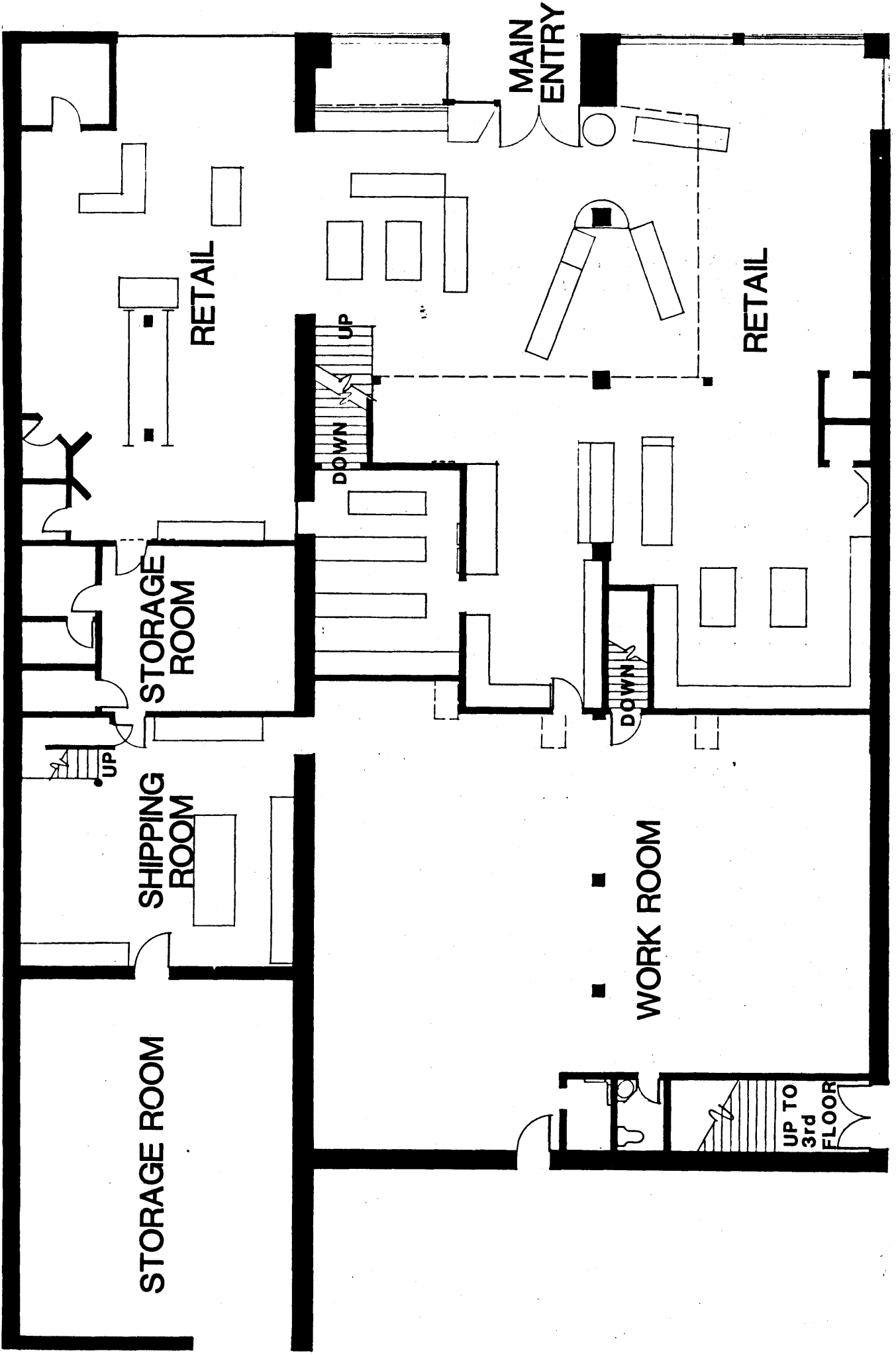
Item number 10

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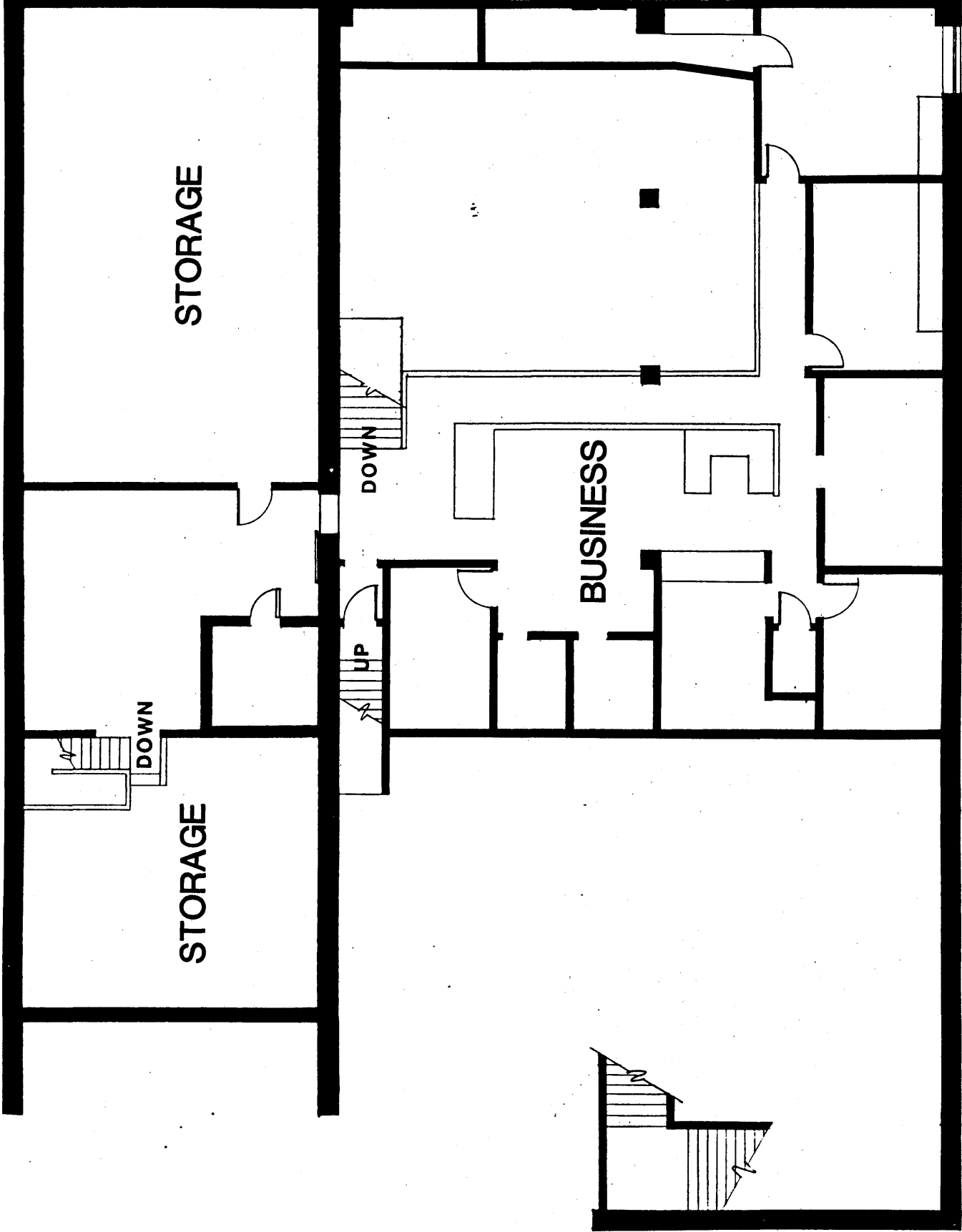
Renn, B. F., Building  
(Hamley and Company Leather Goods Store)  
30 SE Court Street  
Pendleton  
Umatilla County  
Oregon

The westerly half of the single story volume, which measures 50 x 80 feet overall, was split off into separate ownership on or before August 23, 1919, at which time J. J. Hamley acquired Lot 1 (the two story volume) and the easterly 25 feet of Lot 2, Block 4 of the Original Town of Pendleton, from Pendleton Elks Lodge No. 288. Because it was never occupied by the Hamley Company, the westerly 25-foot section of the single-story volume is not included in the nomination. The facade of the excluded portion has been remodeled with the result that it is no longer visually integrated with the whole.

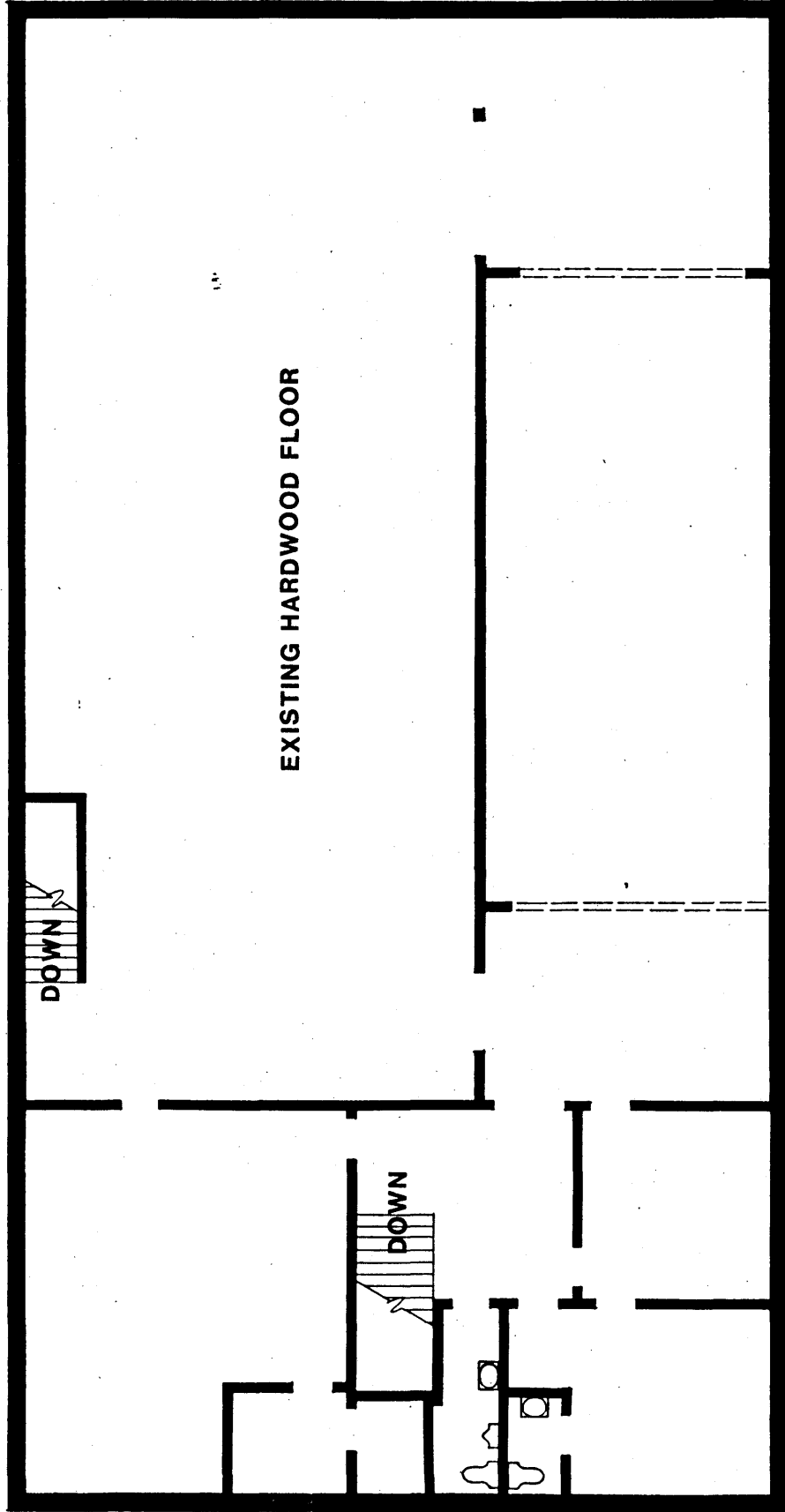




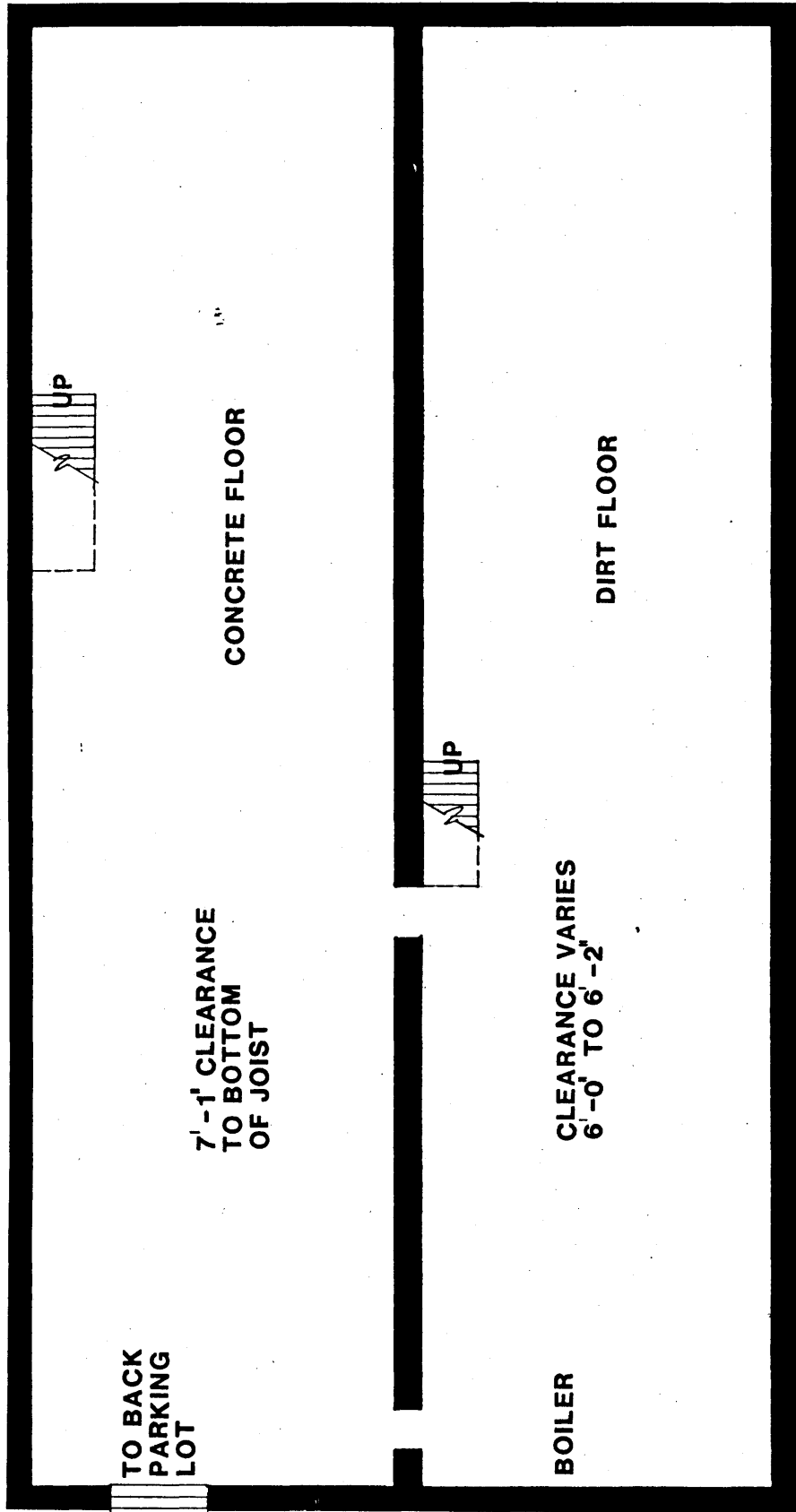
**EXISTING MAIN FLOOR**



**EXISTING SECOND FLOOR  
AND MEZZANINE**



# EXISTING THIRD FLOOR



# EXISTING BASEMENT