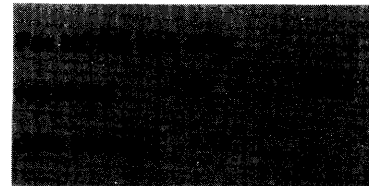


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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

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



RECEIVED

AUG 06 1982

1. Name

historic Paige Motor Car Company Building

OHP

and/or common n/a

2. Location

street & number 1699 Van Ness Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of congressional district 5

state CA code 06 county San Francisco code 075

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" 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
	XX n/a	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name The Bransten Trust, William & Edward Bransten Trustees

street & number c/o MJB Company, 665 Third Street

city, town San Francisco n/a vicinity of state CA 94107

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder's Office

street & number City Hall

city, town San Francisco state CA 94102

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title (See Continuation Page 1.) has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

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	n/a
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" 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 Paige Motor Car Company Building is an auto showroom with offices, storage and repair space above in a nearly square, four-story-and-mezzanine concrete structure 56 feet tall, at the southwest corner of Van Ness Avenue and Sacramento Street. Like all the buildings on this part of six-lane-wide Van Ness Avenue, it occupies the entire lot and adjoins but does not share wall with its neighbors. Along the other facade Sacramento Street climbs a fairly steep hill. The two facades are as alike as the hill permits, each organized in two divisions: the lower is a five-bay arcade with segment arches enclosing giant windows on a twenty-foot module; the upper continues the five bays, filling each with nine pairs of casement windows mullioned to look like three small ones over three large. The roof is not visible; instead the building is topped with a consoled cornice above which is a rail on simple pedestals at the divisions of the five bays. The second and fourth floors can be seen behind the glass, as their vertical placement does not relate to any facade features. This independence of the structural floors from the decorative exterior or curtain wall is original, as can be seen from autos visible on the second floor in the 1919 rendering and the 1924 photograph.

Structurally the building is two parts: the northern three bays, occupying the first 60 feet south of Sacramento, constructed in 1919; and the two southern bays, extending the building another 42 feet and constructed in 1922. Today's Sanborn map shows two sections, the northern one "fireproof", the southern of masonry or concrete construction with reinforced concrete floors and wood roof. Originally the building was planned to carry an additional story at some future date. The southern addition is a single design with the original structure, as the owners bought the second lot three months before 1919 publication of the original rendering. Since the addition is two feet greater than two 20-foot modules, the architect fit in the extra width inconspicuously by widening the end treatment and by adding an extra subordinate unit to the piers at the fourth bay.

The exterior finish was announced in 1919 as "granolithic"; it appears to be painted stucco. The pilasters, soffits and fascia are decorated with moldings and round and diamond medallions. A string course with pedestals at the piers separates the two main facade divisions. An auto entrance to upper floors is up the hill on Sacramento. The showroom has original moldings as paneling on the walls and as capitals for the large piers.

The only apparent exterior alterations are a bulkhead cover and the disappearance of the original roofline balustrade and entry lamps.

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/
<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 type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1919, 1922 **Builder/Architect** Sylvain Schnaittacher

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Paige Motor Car Company Building is significant as a nearly intact, 60-year-old automobile showroom; as one of the half-dozen grandest buildings of San Francisco's "Auto Row," Van Ness Avenue; as the property now and for over 60 years of the Edward Bransten family, important figures in San Francisco's business, charitable and architectural life; and as an important work by Sylvain Schnaittacher, an architect who served the American Institute of Architects for many years as chapter officer and president, and as Western States director.

The building has been an auto showroom since its inception: for Max Arnold's "high grade automobiles" in the original phase of the structure, 1919-1921; for the Paige Company and later Graham-Paige 1923 well into the 1930s. The Paige Motor Car Company of Detroit (1908-1927) was best known for its Datona roadster (1922-1926), a sporty six-cylinder with a pull-out third seat over the right running board. Jewett cars (1923-1927) were Paige's economy line. The Graham brothers bought the Paige concern and produced Graham-Paige cars (1927-1931) and then Gramhams (1931-1941), including the 1932 "Blue Streak" immortalized as a children's "Tootsie Toy." Then the building served as an adjunct to Howard Buick Company at 1601 Van Ness in 1939-1940, for J.L. Glikbarg Company's cars in the early 1950s, followed successively by Borgward, Van Ness Dodge, British Motors used and California Porsche Audi used cars. However the owners have never used change of tenant or brand as an excuse to change the building. They have kept it intact over the years, making exterior changes only for maintenance: refacing of the bulkhead,

and removal of the roofline balustrade, which probably had weathered badly from water retention. The pedestals above the cornice are probably remains of the balustrade, which can be reconstructed.

The 1919 real estate news story announcing construction of the Paige Building's first phase used the still-current term "auto row" to describe Van Ness Avenue. For some time the street had been developing as the best location for auto showrooms, a natural progression for the wide street spared in part by the 1906 earthquake and fire, used immediately thereafter as temporary location for many businesses, and then deserted as the stores, etc., moved back to their rebuilt downtown locations. Both the availability of space and the wide street good for demonstration rides and perspective viewing pointed to showrooms for the new commerce in automobiles. The first showrooms on Van Ness appear to have been one-story industrial buildings, often with parapets decorated in Classical or Mission Revival styles. Then owners decided to construct upper floors for more intense land use and, proud of their new buildings, had them decorated usually with simple pilasters and Classical Revival cornices, keeping the

(See Continuation Page 1.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(See Continuation Page 2.)

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.2

Quadrangle name San Francisco North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

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

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

C | | | | | | | | | | | |

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Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies lot 1 of city block 642 and is roughly 102.7' by 100' in size. Boundaries are the lot lines which encompass the historic resource.

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 Anne Bloomfield

organization n/a

date 3 August 1982

street & number 2229 Webster Street

telephone (415) 922-1063

city or town San Francisco

state CA 94115

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 State Historic Preservation Officer

date 1/17/83

For HCRS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

date 2/24/83

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

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received
date entered

Paige Motor Car Company
Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 6

Page 1

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Architectural Survey, San Francisco Department of City Planning

1976 -- county

Department of City Planning, 450 McAllister St., San Francisco CA 94102

Heritage Survey (Splendid Survivors, see Bibliography)

1979 -- local

Heritage, 2007 Franklin St., San Francisco, CA 94109

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received

date entered

Paige Motor Car Company
Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 8

Page 2

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

wide areas of glass and entry on the ground floor. A few of the Auto Row buildings were grander still, and of these perhaps five remain, most notably the Don Lee Cadillac Building at 1000 Van Ness, by Weeks & Day in 1921 with sculpture by Jo Mora; and the Earl Anthony Packard Building at 901 Van Ness, by Maybeck in 1927. The Paige Motor Car Company Building, or at least its conception and earlier three-bay phase of 1919, predates both of these. The other two of the five surviving grandest Auto Row showrooms, 1400 and 1415 Van Ness, are smaller and earlier than the Paige Building. Of all the auto showrooms and former auto showrooms on Van Ness Avenue, only Paige Motor Cars and No. 700, which is not intact, span the big show windows with arches; on all the others the openings are rectangular. The Paige Building is significant as an early essay in commissioning a name architect to aggrandize the design of the open span required to display automobiles.

The "name" architect here was Sylvain Schnaittacher (1874-1926), director of the San Francisco chapter of the American Institute of Architects 1906-1922, its president 1918-1920, and regional Director for the national A.I.A. 1923-1926. He also served on the California State Board of Architecture 1910-1926. Born in San Francisco and educated at its schools including the Mark Hopkins Institute of Art (now the San Francisco Art Institute), Schnaittacher received practical training in the office of A. Page Brown 1891-1896 as that architect was working on the Ferry Building. After Brown's death he worked for and became partner with Frank Van Trees, did a few industrial buildings south of Market Street, traveled in Europe 1900-1901, and then settled down to his own practice. In addition to the Paige Motor Car Company Building, he designed the Argonaut Club, the Beresford Country Club, residences and apartment houses, Mt. Zion Nurses' Home on Sutter, and Temple Emanu-El, the last in cooperation with Bakewell & Brown, who also finished the building after Schnaittacher's death. An Emanu-El congregant as were the Branstens, Schnaittacher was especially responsible for the Temple House building and the cloistered court. His name was published as architect of the Paige Motor Car Building in the accounts of both its phases, 1919 and 1922. Indeed the design itself is a single conception.

Shortly after the 1919 part of the building opened, the property was acquired by the Florined Company of Florine and Edward Bransten. This ownership continued until 1973, when the property passed to the Bransten Trust, which benefits their children William Haas Bransten, Edward Bransten Junior, Alice Bransten Block and Frances Bransten Rothman. Seller to Florined was the Warbur Company, of which Max

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Paige Motor Car Company
Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 8

Page 3

8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont.)

Joseph Bransten was president. Edward Bransten (senior) (1870-1948), tea expert with his older brother Max Joseph Bransten's MJB Coffee Company, was one of the ten children of Joseph Brandenstein, merchant who came to San Francisco from near Cassel, Germany, in 1855. Father, brothers, sisters and the next generations have all been active in various San Francisco organizations, most notably Temple Emanu-El, the Panama Pacific International Exposition of 1915, German (now Ralph K. Davies) Hospital, Mt. Zion Hospital, the Federation of Jewish Charities and other Jewish organizations. Florine Bransten nee Haas (1881-1973) came from a family similarly involved in San Francisco's history, and she had grown up in what is now called the Haas-Lilienthal House at 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco Landmark #69 and on the National Register of Historic Places, home of the Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage ("Heritage"). After their marriage in 1903, the Branstens moved into 1735 Franklin, San Francisco Landmark #126, where they stayed the rest of their lives, only a block and a half from their property at Van Ness and Sacramento, the Paige Motor Car Company Building.

This building is now proposed for adaptive reuse as offices. The owners intend to restore and freshen the facade, restore the Balustrade, keep most of the ground floor as showrooms, provide parking on the second floor (which will retain the original appearance), and convert mezzanine, third and fourth floors to offices.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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received
date entered

Paige Motor Car Company

Continuation sheet Building, San Francisco Item number 9 Page 4

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES.

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80-81, 170.

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1 & 2: 29 May 1913; 28 July 1919; 14 May 1973; 7 Oct 1975.

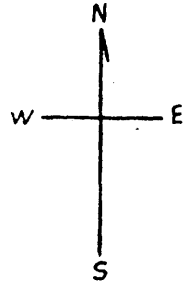
Snyder, John William, "A Partial Index to The California Architect &
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University of California, Davis, undated (ca. 1976): 459.

W A BLK. 88

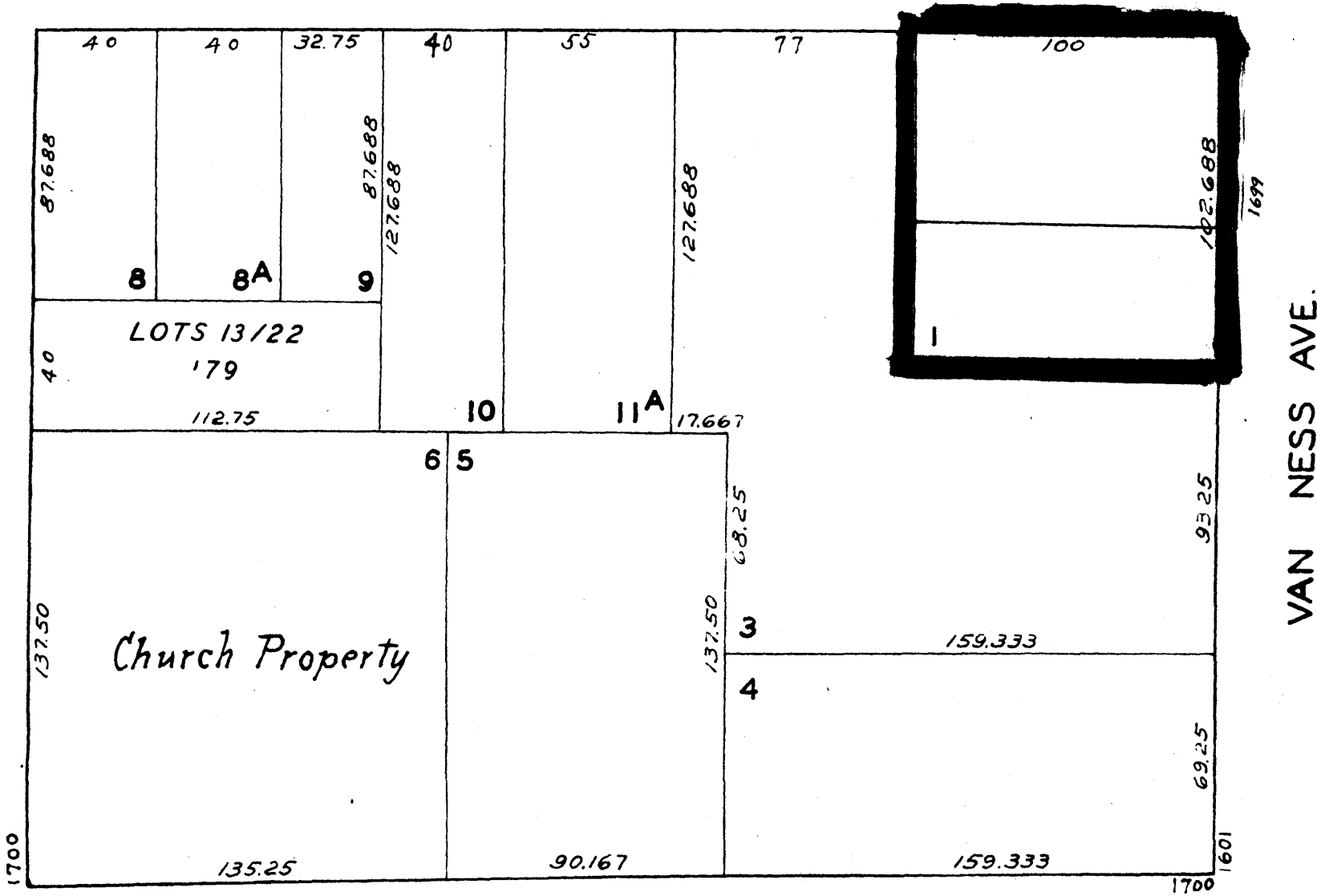
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 118&12 " " " 3 '1926'
 2 " " " 1 '1953'

PAIGE MOTOR CAR COMPANY BUILDING
 SAN FRANCISCO, CA



SACRAMENTO



VAN NESS AVE.

CALIFORNIA

THE FRANKLIN
 A CONDOMINIUM

LOT NO.	UNIT NO.	% COMMON AREA
13	1	1/10
14	2	1/10
15	3	1/10
16	4	1/10
17	5	1/10
18	6	1/10
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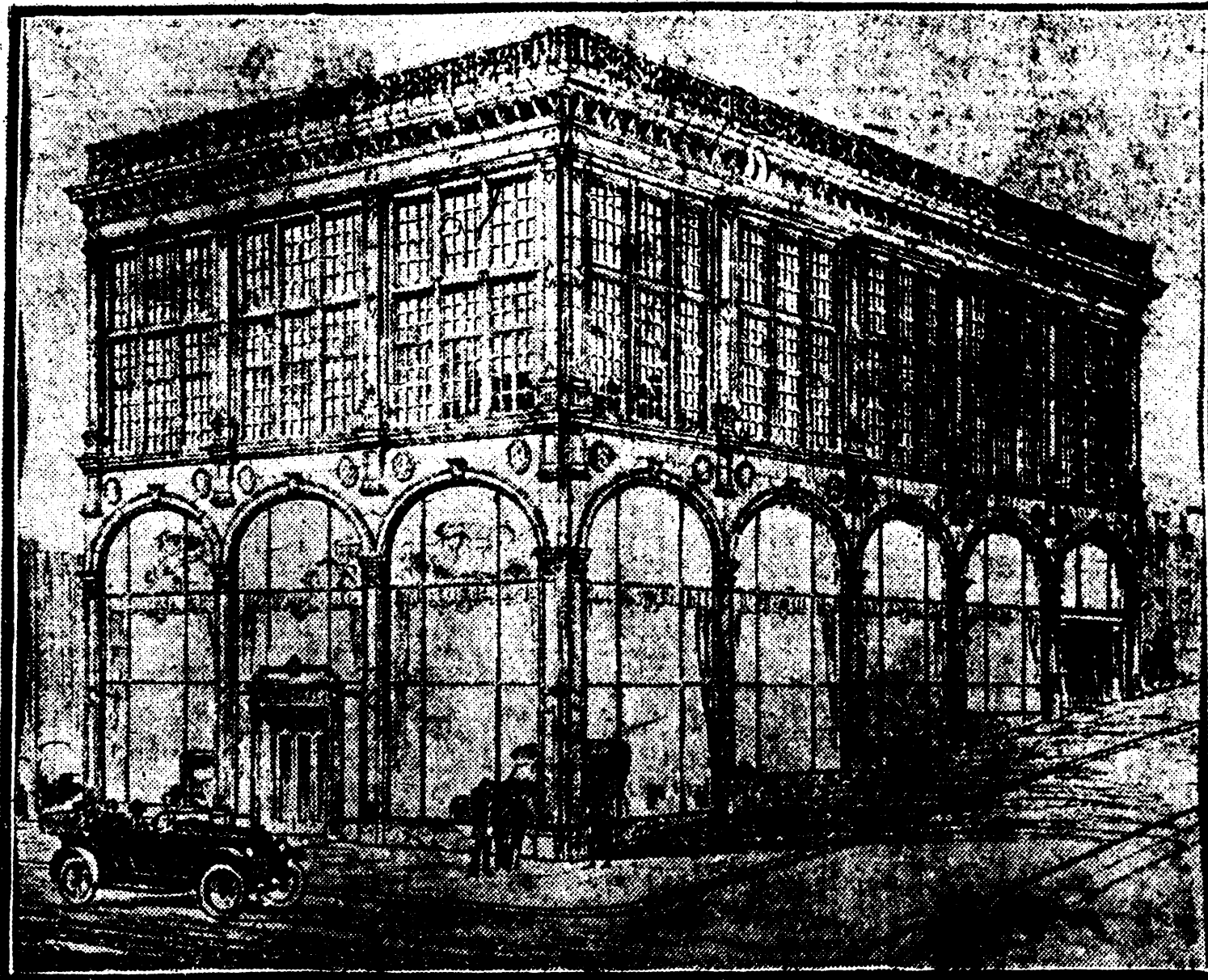
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A CLASS 'A' AUTOMOBILE SALESROOM BUILDING SOON TO GO UP at the corner of Van Ness avenue and Sacramento street. The structure has been leased to Max Arnold by Alanson Bros. & Co.



shelf, the living-room and dining-room being finished in natural California oak with

Four-Story Auto

automobile sales establishments in San Francisco.

The first and second floors will be

BUILDING TAX MO FACILIT

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The committee s

Paige Motor Car Co. Building
San Francisco, CA
rendering reproduced from San Fran-
cisco Chronicle, 25 Oct. 1919, p.
12R

view from northeast corner of Van
Ness Avenue & Sacramento Street