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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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NATIONAL
REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile
other names/site number H. W. Etz & Co., K & H Mercantile

2. Location

street & number 305 East 4th Street NA not for publication
city, town Benson NA vicinity
state Arizona code AZ county Cochise code 003 zip code 85602

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	_____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Historic Architectural Properties in the Benson, Arizona Survey Area
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Jimmy Garrison ASHP 1/6/94
Signature of certifying official Date
ARIZONA STATE PARKS
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain: _____)

Paul R. Ferguson 3/11/94

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Department Store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Department Store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

No style

Commercial

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof laid composition

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Summary: Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile is a local example of a commercial building which was part of Benson, Arizona's commercial strip, the focus of commercial development since the railroad era (1880-1910). Built before the turn of the century (exact date unknown) during the railroad era, the building has remained important in the city's development through the automobile era as well. It has been preserved, and where necessary, sensitively restored by its current owners, Wallace and Iris Zearing.

Location and Setting: Located at 305 East 4th Street, between San Pedro and Gila Streets, facing the railroad tracks, Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile occupies its original lot. The building abuts the sidewalk and the walls of the two adjacent buildings.

Construction: The building is of double brick bearing wall construction. The foundation is concrete. According to the present owner, bricks were made and fired on site and the cement was also made on site. Heavy, hand-hewn timbers support the slightly pitched roof which is of laid composition.

Original Appearance: The rectangular building featured a symmetrical brick and stucco facade from the street, and a large two-story space inside with a small office, bathroom and loading zone to the rear. A parapet stepped above those of the adjacent buildings. The centrally placed, one-light wooden door had a transom above and wood storefront windows on either side. There was a clerestory directly above, which consisted of a row of three six-light fixed windows. Inside, a large wood frame loft at the south end of the store allowed for additional storage. The interior walls were plastered and the ceiling was of pressed metal. Wood shelves and cabinets with solid oak counters were featured. Ornamental crown molding, characteristic of the era, was employed at the ceiling and above the shelves.

Current Appearance: Most of the exterior and interior of the building is original. A sign above the clerestory, on a plastered portion of the parapet wall in the traditional location, identifies the store as "Zearing's Mercantile". The front wall surface below the windows is black tile, probably dating from the 1950s. The original door and clerestory windows remain but the storefront windows have been replaced with aluminum windows. Double metal security doors have also been added recently. A replica of the deteriorated interior loft has been created and is used for storage and display. The original wood shelving and molding have been preserved and restored in a few places, as needed. Objects relating to Benson's history adorn the interior walls, cabinets, shelves, and loft and comprise the merchandise which is currently sold there.

See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1880-1942

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

Significance: Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile is locally significant under National Register Criterion C as an excellent example of a strip commercial building relating to Benson's railroad and automobile eras. Serving as a general merchandise store, it was incorporated (before the turn of the century, according to its present owner) into the commercial strip which developed along 4th Street, Benson's "Main Street" and focus of commercial development since the platting of the original townsite. Being parallel to the railroad tracks, this strip was totally railroad related from 1880 to 1910. With improvements to Route 80 in the early 1920s, which was one and the same as 4th Street in Benson, the highway served as an essential spine for Benson's commercial development. Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile is typical of the facade-focused, densely situated commercial buildings with shared party walls which lined "Main Streets" nationwide. As is characteristic, Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile is not conceived as a free-standing object, but is identified by its facade which distinguishes it from the adjacent buildings. Also typical, the building nearly fills its lot, with a small yard and service access from the alley behind. Its facade, with its parapet stepped above those of adjacent buildings, identification sign, symmetrically placed storefront windows on either side of its door and row of clerestory windows above is characteristic of a general merchandise store, the building's historic, as well as current trade. The merchandise currently sold at Zearing's Mercantile ranges from rifles to penny candy. The building has, from its inception, been a commercially viable, important contributor to Benson's 4th Street commercial strip.

Chain of Occupancy: Early uses of the building included H. W. Etz & Co., the Territorial Mercantile and Max Treu Territorial Meat Company (which sold meat to the mines). George Kempf purchased the building in 1906 and operated it with Mr. Holcomb as "K & H", a mercantile store which sold rifles and guns among other items. The current owners, Wallace and Iris Zearing, purchased the building in the 1970s, rented it to Western Auto for a few years, then restored and converted it to its present use.

See continuation sheet

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Section number 8 Page 2

Integrity: Even though the ownership and use has changed a few times since the original construction, there have been relatively few alterations to Max Treu Territorial Meat Company/Zearing's Mercantile and these are reversible. The building serves as an excellent example of an historic commercial building, significant in the history of Benson, Arizona.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview with Wallace Zearing, owner, March 5, 1992.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: S. Pedro Arts & Hist. Soc. Museum, Benson & Az. Hist. Soc. Library, Tucson

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property .086 acres

UTM References

A

1	2
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5	6	6	7	0	0
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3	5	3	6	9	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are the same as those of tax parcel number 123-23-164C, further described as lot 30, Blk. 19, Benson. See accompanying Historic Resource Map.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See accompanying Historic Resource Map.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Janet S. Gibson (Associate) & Janet H. Strittmatter (Partner)
 organization Johns & Strittmatter Inc. date August 16, 1993
 street & number 2960 N. Swan, #217 telephone (602) 325-2591
 city or town Tucson state Arizona zip code 85712

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Section number Photos Page 1

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS THE SAME FOR ALL PHOTOGRAPHS
ACCOMPANYING THIS NOMINATION:

- 1). Max Treu Territorial Meat Co./Zearing's Mercantile
- 2). Benson, Arizona
- 3). Janet Gibson
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 5). Johns & Strittmatter

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

- 6). Front view, facing south, of north facade
- 7). #1

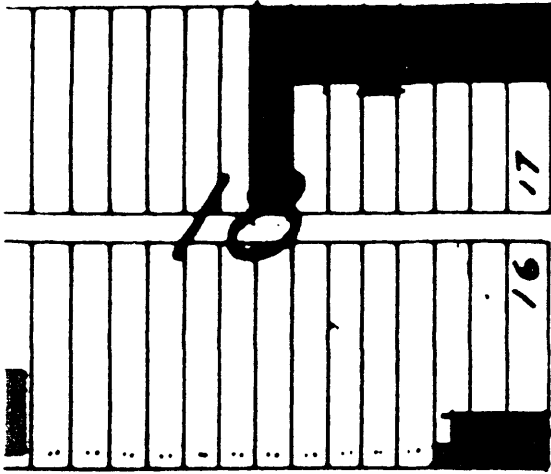
- 6). Rear view, facing north, of south facade
- 7). #2

- 6). View facing southeast, of main entry
- 7). #3

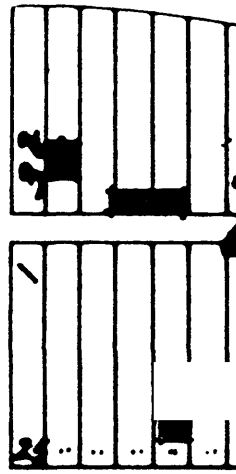
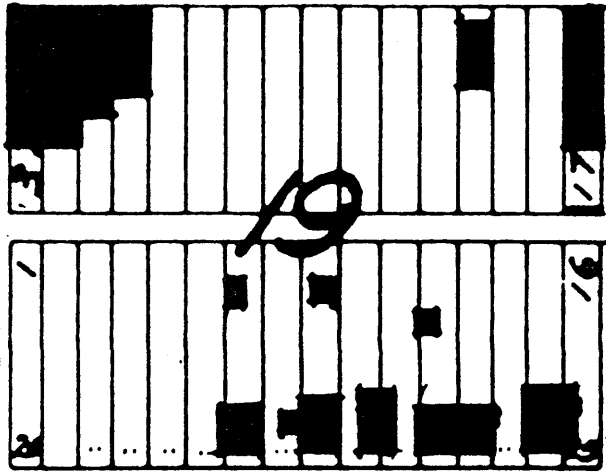
- 6). Interior view, facing south, of mercantile space
- 7). #4

- 6). Interior view, of ceiling
- 7). #5

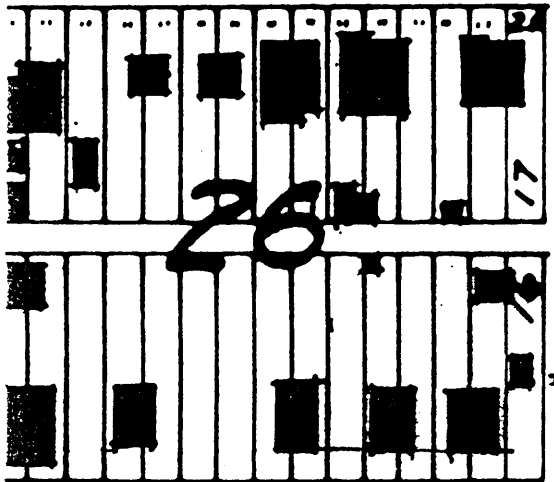
FOURTH ST.



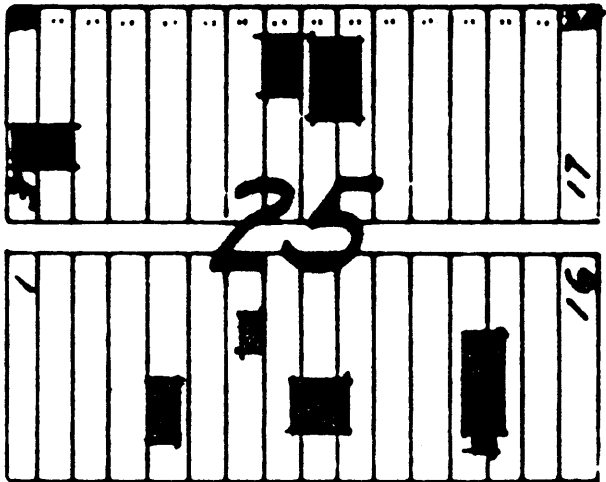
50' ★
150' 20' 150' 66'



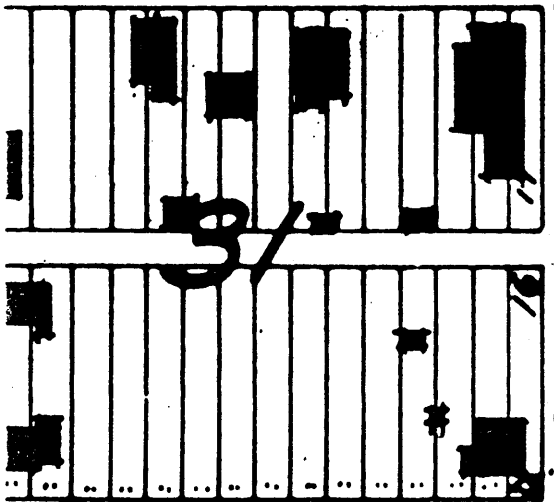
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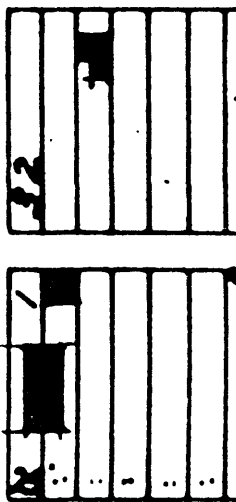
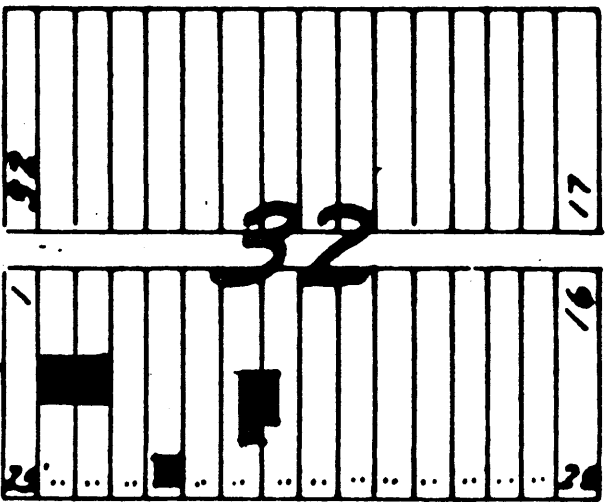
0' 150' 20' 150' 66'



SIXTH ST.



0' SAN PEDRO ST. 150' 20' 150' 66'



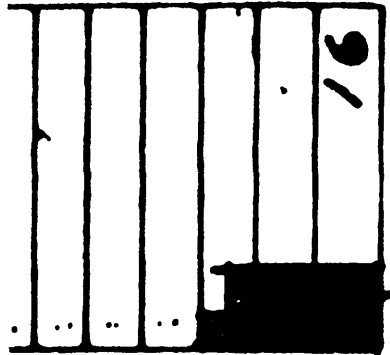
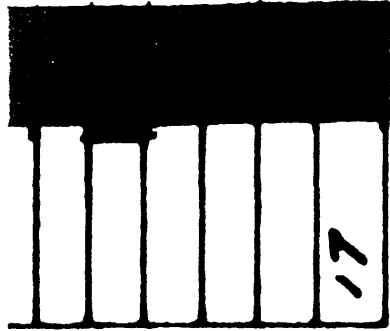
GILA ST.



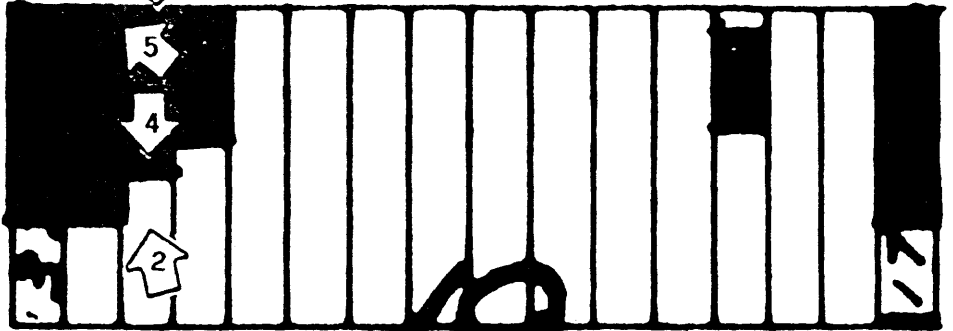
Max Treu Territorial Meat Co./Zearing's Mercantile
305 East 4th Street
Benson, Arizona



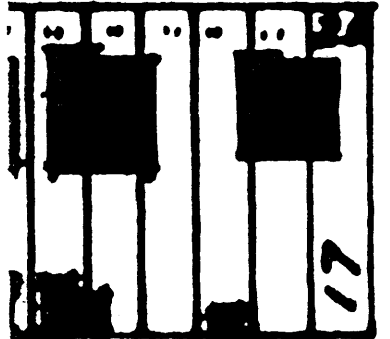
FOURTH ST.



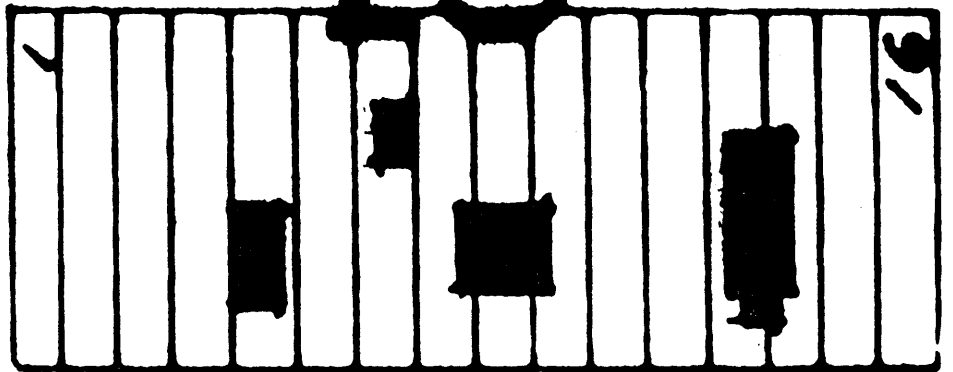
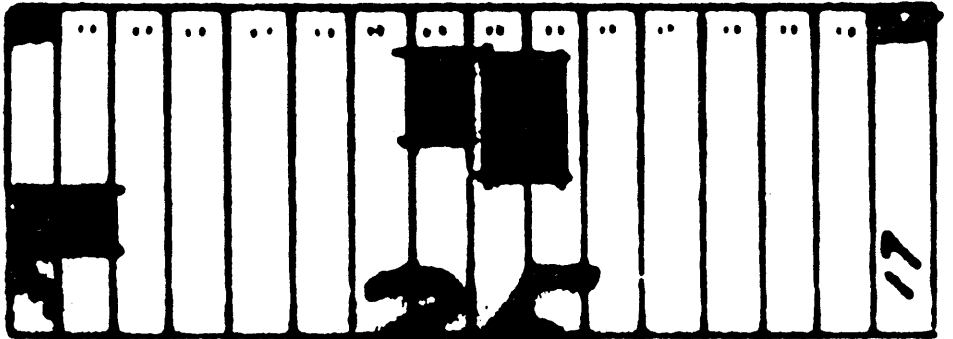
66' 150' 20' 150' 50'



FIFTH ST.



66' 150' 20' 150' 50'



Max Treu Territorial Meat Co./Zearing's Mercantile
305 East 4th Street
Benson, Arizona



Photographic Views