

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 94000072

Date Listed: 3/11/94

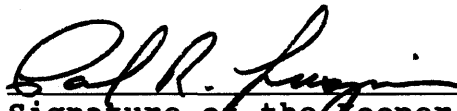
Oasis Court  
Property Name

Cochise  
County

AZ  
State

Historic Architectural Properties in Benson, Arizona MPS  
Multiple Name

-----  
This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
Signature of the Keeper

3/11/94  
Date of Action

=====  
Amended Items in Nomination:

**Function:**

The Historic Function is revised to read: Domestic - Hotel;  
Other - Auto Court. Current Function is revised to read:  
Domestic - Multiple Dwelling and Commerce - Specialty Store;  
Professional. [The function citations must include both a main category and a subcategory from the list provided in Bulletin 16A].

**Architectural Classification:**

The architectural classification for the resource is amended to read: Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals: Pueblo. [This is based on the nomination text.]

**Materials:**

Stucco is added as a wall material based on the narrative text.

continued

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 94000072

Date Listed: 3/11/94

Oasis Court  
Property Name

Cochise  
County

AZ  
State

Historic Architectural Properties in Benson, Arizona MPS  
Multiple Name

-----  
=====

Amended Items in Nomination:

(continued)

**Classification:**

The resource count is revised to read three (3) contributing buildings. [The narrative text and sketch map describe three separate buildings in the court complex].

**Significance:**

The period of significance is revised to read: 1930-1942. [This better reflects the likely construction era for the nominated resources, as outlined in the narrative text.]

These elements were discussed with Reba Grandrud of the AZ SHPO.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

National Register property file  
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)

RECEIVED

JAN 27 1994

NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 Oasis Court

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 363 West 4th Street

not for publication

city, town Benson

vicinity

state Arizona

code

AZ

county Cochise

code 003

zip code 85602

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)

district

site

structure

object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

Noncontributing

1

\_\_\_\_\_ buildings

\_\_\_\_\_ sites

\_\_\_\_\_ structures

\_\_\_\_\_ objects

1

\_\_\_\_\_ 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.

James G. ...  
Signature of certifying official

1/6/94  
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. Lynn  
Signature of the Keeper

3/11/94  
Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Hotel - auto camp  
auto court

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Multiple dwelling, specialty  
store, professional

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Other

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls wood

roof rolled composition, metal

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

**Summary:** The Oasis Court is a local example of an auto court, a popular property type during the time Benson was becoming a major junction point in the national and state highway system. As typical in the evolution of auto courts, it probably began as an auto campground in the 1920s, adding sleeping units and other buildings in the 1930s. A typical auto court, the Oasis Court featured buildings set back from the access road and spread out over several lots to accommodate the automobile.

**Location & Setting:** Located at 363 West 4th Street, on the south side, the Oasis Court occupies its original six lots in Block 9 of Bryan's Addition. Building configuration is a modified U. Buildings surround a large open space which is used for parking. Large signs, including one of neon, identify the property from the street. Landscaping includes some trees and annuals.

**Construction:** The walls are stuccoed wood frame on concrete footings. Floors are slab on grade. Roofs are flat and of rolled composition on two of the buildings. The main structure, with the sleeping rooms, has a foam covered, corrugated metal roof.

**Original Appearance:** The U-shaped auto court featured three separate one-story buildings built on the tradition of the Pueblo Revival Style. The buildings had parapeted walls with irregular, rounded edges and stucco wall surfaces characteristic of this style. To the south a basically U-shaped building with sculptured parapet walls on three sides housed the individual sleeping units, with covered carports integrated into the building. There was no parapet wall to the rear, to allow the sloped roof to drain. Doors to the individual sleeping rooms were readily accessible to the automobile. Windows were nine light wood casement in front and one-over-one light double hung in the rear. The parapet walled building to the northeast of the site, near 4th Street, included a gift shop and residential quarters for the owners. To the west, a small parapet walled utility building was located.

**Current Appearance:** Much of the interior and exterior of the auto court has been restored over the years. The original residential quarters/gift shop now houses Benson's Chamber of Commerce office and a gospel supply shop. The U-shaped sleeping room building is no longer used for overnight accommodations but has been converted to apartments, an office, and a gift shop. The mission tile roofed ramada at the north end of this gift shop is a recent addition. The buildings have been restuccoed, reroofed, and repainted. The color is now beige with dark brown trim. The driveway/parking area has been graveled, some of the original wooden casement windows have been replaced by metal casements, some awnings have been added, and a wrought iron ramada has been installed recently on the west side of the Chamber of Commerce office.

**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

1921-1942

Significant Dates

+1930

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:** The Oasis Court, which is located along today's State Route 80 (formerly U.S. 80), is locally significant under National Register Criterion C as an excellent example of an American auto court. It was probably constructed in 1930 or earlier (exact date unknown), when Benson was becoming an important junction point within the national and state highway system due to an increase in automobile use and road improvements. Characteristic of a building type which was just beginning to emerge across the nation, the Oasis Court reflects the automobile's impact on land use. This is evident through such features as the site layout with buildings spread over several lots; the considerable setback of the buildings from the road and the integration of carports, adjacent to the individual sleeping units, into the buildings. The inclusion of other amenities, such as the shops and separate laundry room is typical of this property type as well. With a high degree of architectural integrity, the Oasis Court is in good condition.

**Chain of Occupancy:** The original builders of the Oasis Court were Charles and Minnie Gardner. A former owner was Lyndon L. Hargrave, an archaeologist and ornithologist, who purchased half interest in the block where the Oasis Court is located in 1940. In the mid 1940s, Mr. Hargrave and his wife purchased the entire block and made improvements to the property. They commissioned noted Western artist, Vern Parker, to paint the signs. Huge kachinas and totem poles adorned the property. The buildings were at that time painted a deep Venetian red. The shop featured Native American and Mexican crafts. The name "Oasis Court," the vivid color of the buildings, the Pueblo Revival Style influences in the style, totem poles and the theme shop were tourist-attracting characteristics typical of this property type throughout the southwest. The Oasis Court is now owned and operated by Lyndon Hargrave's niece and her husband as a unit of apartments and shops, no longer accommodating overnight visitors.

**Integrity:** Although there have been some exterior and interior modifications to the buildings and overnight visitors are no longer accommodated, the alterations over time have not appreciably changed the appearance of the Oasis Court. It conveys the dominant design characteristics of the auto court property type.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Belasco, Warren James. Americans on the Road. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1979.

"Benson Citizen Noted Scientist," Arizona Police, April 1949, pp. 8 & 10.

Garrison, James. The Arizona State Historic Preservation Office. "The Architecture of Benson, Arizona," a survey report, 1991.

"Lyndon Hargrave is Listed in Men of Science," San Pedro Valley News, May 5, 1944.

Interview with Betsey Browning, niece of Lyndon Hargrave and 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 1.02 acres

UTM References:

A 

12	5	6	1	0	0
Zone	Easting		Northing		

3	5	3	7	0	4	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B 

Zone	Easting		Northing			

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Boundaries are the same as those of tax parcel number 123-20-060, further described as lot 11 less 4', and all of lots 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16 of Blk. 9, Bryans Addition. 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

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 1

---

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

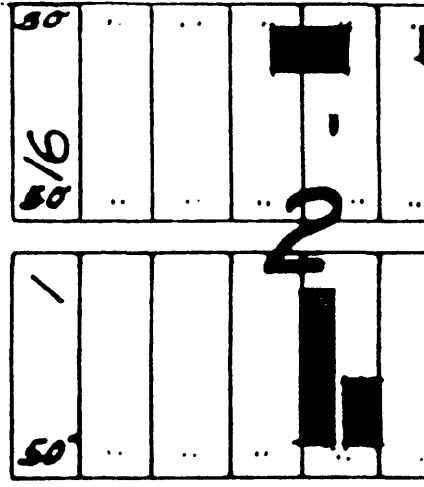
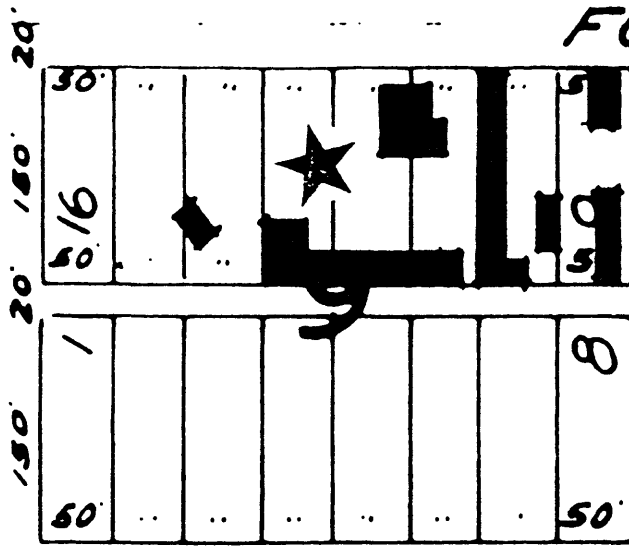
- 1). Oasis Court
- 2). Benson, Arizona
- 3). Janet Gibson
- 5). Johns & Strittmatter Inc.

INFORMATION FOR INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHS:

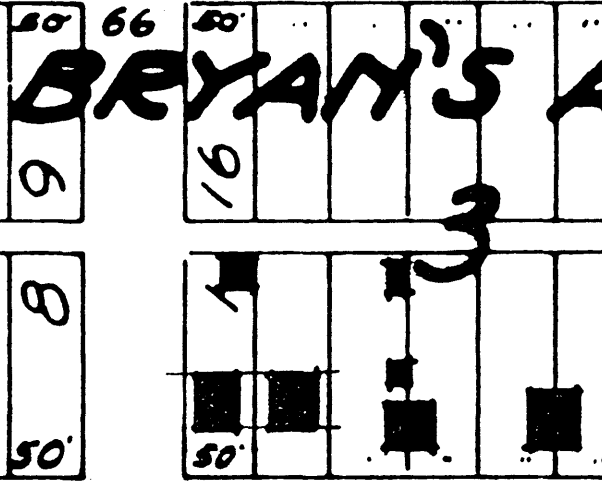
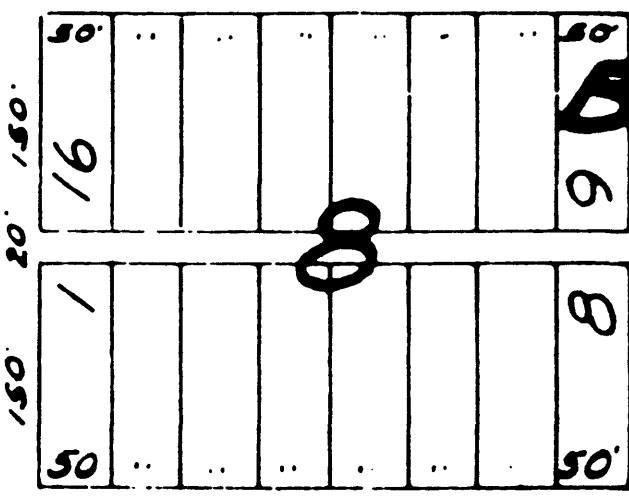
- 4). March 5, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing southeast, of entrance
- 7). #1
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). View facing south, of sleeping units
- 7). #2
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing southwest, of shop
- 7). #3
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing southwest, of west wing
- 7). #4
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing northeast, of west facade
- 7). #5
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing northwest, of utility building
- 7). #6
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). 3/4 view, facing northwest, of rear sleeping unit
- 7). #7
  
- 4). April 3, 1992
- 6). View facing northwest, of wood casement detail
- 7). #8

CORPORATION LINE (2640')

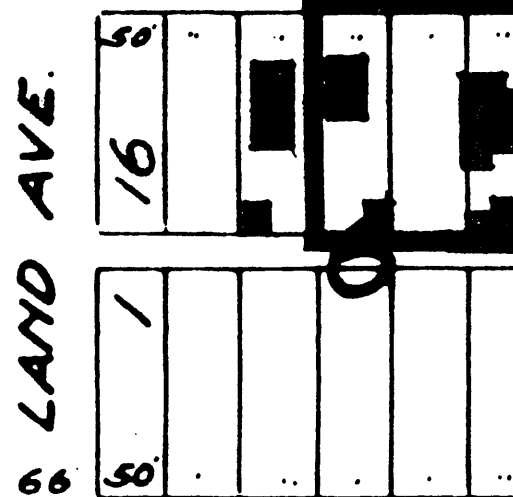
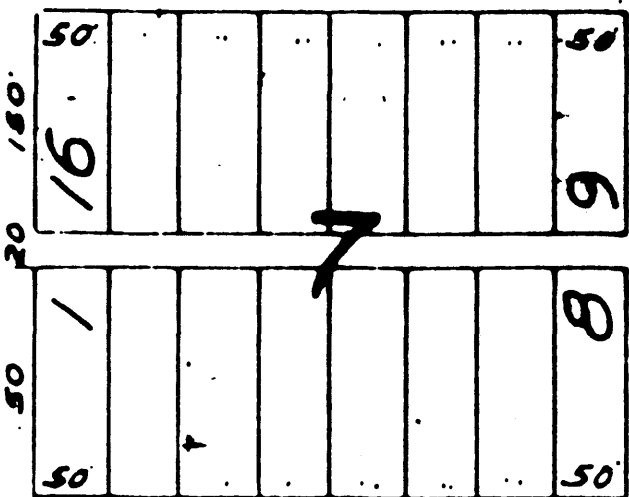
FOURTH ST.



FIFTH ST.



SIXTH ST.

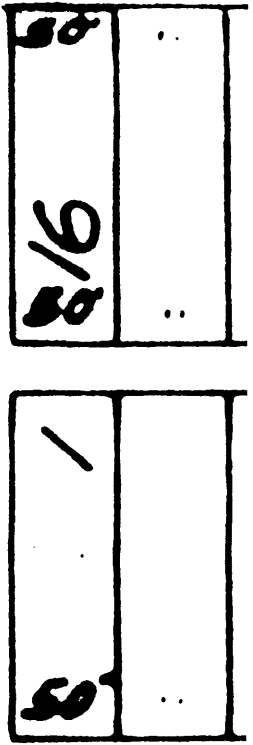
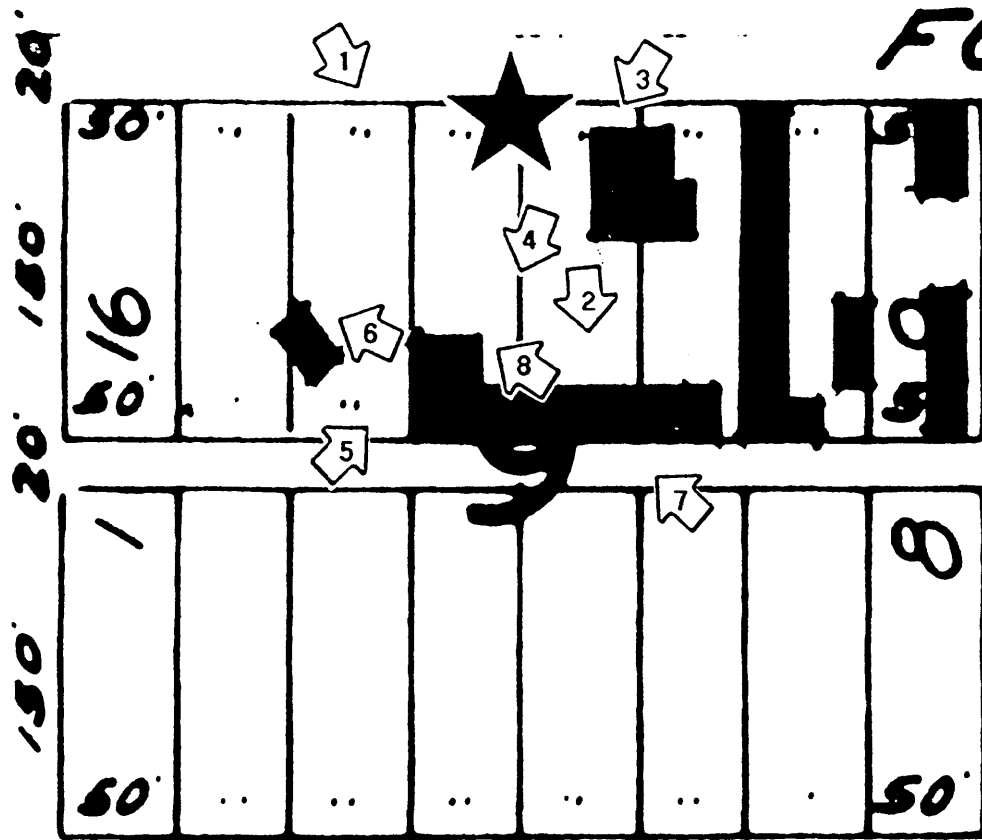


★ Oasis Court  
 363 West 4th Street  
 Benson, Arizona

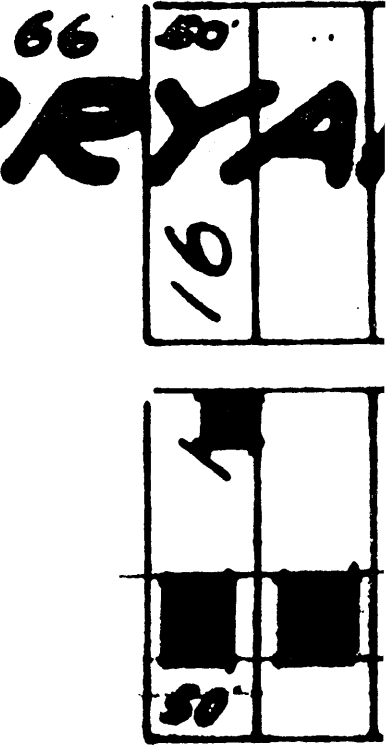
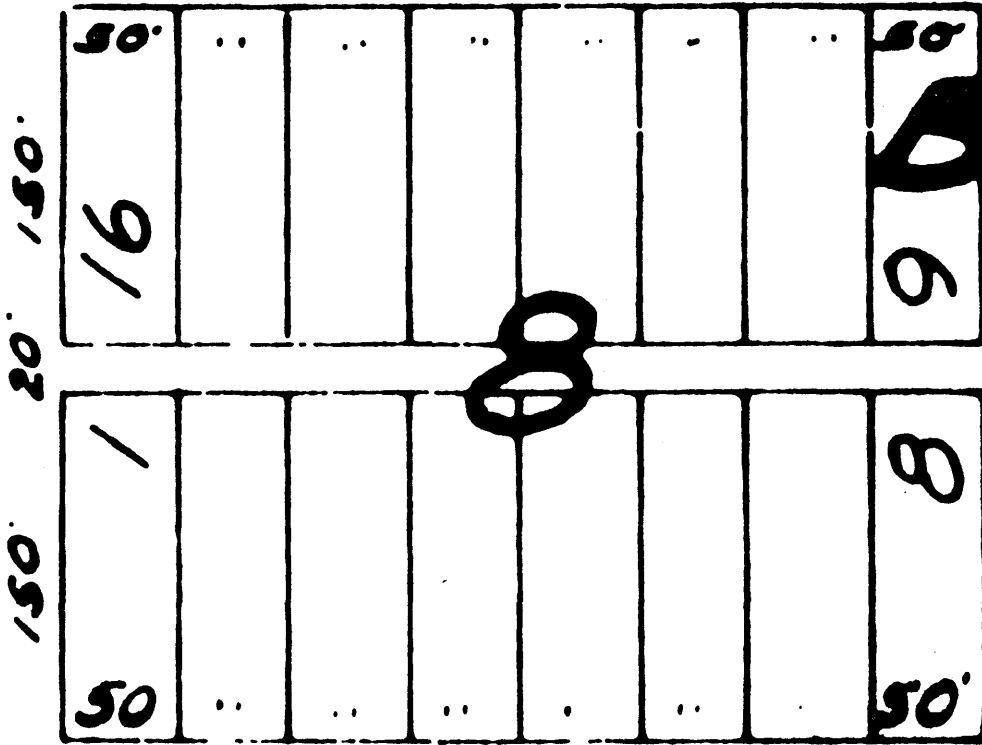




# FOURTH S



# FIFTH S



Oasis Court  
363 West 4th Street  
Benson, Arizona



Photographic Views