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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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AUG 8 1988

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 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 Anthony, John, HUse (preferred) other names/site number Anson, William, House

2. Location

street & number 1606 Sixth Street city, town La Grande state Oregon code OR county Union code 061 zip code 97850

3. Classification

Table with 3 columns: Ownership of Property, Category of Property, and Number of Resources within Property. Includes checkboxes for private/public ownership and building/site/structure/object categories.

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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. Signature of certifying official Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date August 5, 1988

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. determined eligible for the National Register. determined not eligible for the National Register. removed from the National Register. other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic/single dwelling  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Work in progress  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Eastlake  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone/coursed ashlar  
walls wood/weatherboard  
roof asphalt/shingles  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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The Old Oregon Trail, or Great Emigrant Road (1843-1884), crossed the southwestern part of Grande Ronde Valley, in eastern Oregon, on its way to the Willamette Valley. Although the pioneers were impressed by the beauty of this valley and recognized its agricultural potential, its isolation was a deterrent to settlement; the first permanent settlers did not arrive until the fall of 1861. In the spring of 1862 they established a town on the Oregon Trail, at the point where it left the valley. This community was first known as Grande Ronde City, but the name was soon changed to La Grande.

In 1869 Henry Villard, pioneer Oregon railroad builder, organized the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company and began to extend a line eastward from Portland along the south bank of the Columbia River. Its purpose was to intercept northern transcontinental lines then under construction. He later arranged for a link with Union Pacific, branching off at Hermiston to cross the Blue Mountains. Construction was undertaken by both companies and the rails were joined at Huntington in the fall of 1884.

When railroad construction reached the valley that summer, following the Grande Ronde River, La Grande chose to relocate at trackside. This involved a move of approximately 1.4 miles. Daniel Chaplin (1823-1888), one of the community's most progressive citizens and a major landholder, donated 105 acres of land to the railroad for marshalling yards, shops, roundhouse and the other facilities necessary to establish and maintain a division point. He and C.H. Prescott then platted the new town; this area is now known as Chaplin's Addition to the City of La Grande. Five avenues parallel the main line, which is aligned northwest-southeast; two of these, Madison and Monroe, are north of the line. Those south of it -- Washington, Adams and Jefferson -- became, with their associated cross streets, the new business district. Of the three, Jefferson is nearest the line; Adams was developed as the principal commercial thoroughfare. Other streets in the city are aligned with the cardinal points of the compass.

**History of the Site**

C. H. Prescott, of Portland, acted as trustee for Chaplin and was responsible for land sales. It appears that there was also an arrangement with Union Pacific, who evidently also effected sales of lots and other property through the trusteeship. Daniel and Hannah J. Chaplin deeded a substantial amount of the property in Chaplin's Addition to Robert E. O'Brien, trustee (Portland) on July 14, 1883. O'Brien in turn transferred these holdings, together with others in Oregon and Washington, to Prescott on July 2, 1884. On June 24, 1887 Prescott transferred them to another trustee, Theodore Wygant, who in turn transferred them to trustee C. F. Holcomb. On May 20, 1890, Holcomb transferred them to a Boston firm, Henry R. Reed and James G. Harris. Shortly after this date Reed and Harris sold Lots 7 and 8, Block 98, Chaplin's Addition, to William and Ella Anson. This was a Union Pacific Railway Company contract transaction and was not recorded in the Registry of Deeds at the Union County Courthouse until 1947 -- probably due to an oversight. The Ansons also built the present house in 1890. On March 28, 1892 Ella sold the two lots to Henry Anson (the deed was rewritten on May 6 to include the name of her husband William). Henry Anson died June 22, 1892; his widow Esther M. Anson, to whom he left his property, sold the subject lots to John Anthony Koelbener March 28, 1895. The latter, who officially changed his name.

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to John Anthony in 1898, also purchased Lots 9 and 10, taking in the corner of Sixth Street and what is now Penn Avenue. These were acquired from Jesse and M.C. Failing and O. and E.E. Ralston on May 23, 1901. It should be noted here that these are narrow lots with thirty-foot frontage, indicating that this part of Sixth Street was originally envisioned as commercial rather than residential property. In 1902 Anthony built a new house on Lots 9 and 10, which he handled as rental property (the Anthony-Buckley House, entered in the National Register of Historic Places February 28, 1985). The two houses share a broad expanse of lawn and a handsome stone retaining wall with iron and woven-wire fence, which he added soon after. On January 29, 1904 John Anthony deeded the house on Lots 7 and 8 (1606 Sixth Street) over to his wife Mathilde; in December 1906 the couple were divorced; and, in March 1907, Anthony also deeded over the house on Lots 9 and 10 (1602 Sixth Street) to Mathilde. Mathilde sold the house at 1602 Sixth Street to Margaret Buckley on February 4, 1914, but she retained ownership of her own home and continued to live in it until her death on November 19, 1941. Her daughter Hilda, who had lived with Mathilde and operated a piano studio in the home, inherited the property. She sold it to Harry J. Giese and wife on September 14, 1946. In order for Hilda to gain a clear title and insure it, she had to obtain a quitclaim deed from the railroad for the 1890 contract that had never been recorded as a deed. Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company provided the requisite document (Tax & R/W Dept. Deed No. 10866) on February 5, 1947. Harry J. Giese and wife sold Lots 7 and 8 to Marjorie Wagner September 3, 1954. Marjorie Wagner Keefer and her husband sold the property to Robert and Sandra Kern on May 9, 1963. Sandra sold her interest to Robert on September 22, 1964, and he then sold the property to Leo and Pearl Westenskow on October 13 of the same year. Westenskow sold the property to W.J. Hunter November 17, 1969. Upon the death of Hunter it passed to his widow and, upon her death, to Eddie M. Nichols (April 26, 1976) it became, in turn, a part of the Nichols Estate August 26, 1987. On October 5, 1987, it was acquired by the current owners, D. Dale and Virginia L. Mammen.

Note

The foregoing references to railroads will be confusing without a note of explanation. Henry Villard (1835-1900) had originally hoped to effect a transportation monopoly in the Pacific Northwest, and the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company was one of two major ventures toward that end. In 1881 he purchased a controlling interest in Northern Pacific, became its president, and completed its northern transcontinental line in 1883. At the same time, as noted above, he extended the O.R. & N. to meet the Oregon Short Line, a branch created by Union Pacific to effect the link with Villard's operation. The associated cost overruns of these ventures proved financially disastrous to Villard; he was forced out of the Northern Pacific Presidency and lost much of his fortune. Control of the O.R. & N. passed to Union Pacific, although Villard remained with the company for a time. He obtained financial backing from German interests in 1886, enabling him to regain some of his holdings and re-enter Northern Pacific as a board member. He retired from the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company in 1891, continuing as chairman of the board for Northern Pacific until that company went into receivership in 1893 and his

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railway career came to an end. The O.R. & N. was absorbed by Union Pacific, becoming a wholly-owned subsidiary of that company, although it retained its original name for many years thereafter. By the 1930's the name had altered slightly, to Oregon-Washington Railway and Navigation Company.

### Description of the Site

The property is located at the lower extremity of an alluvial fan and slopes very gently to the east, hence the low retaining wall on the east and south boundaries of the four lots once owned by John Anthony.

### The Building

The house at 1606 Sixth Street is a one-story, double-bay-front, stick-Eastlake cottage of pleasing proportions that embodies some unusual design features. It faces east and its roof ridge is transverse (aligned north and south); the north and south gables are hipped, and the walls immediately below these hip eaves are rolled outward (quarter-circle in cross section). These are fitted with flush-mounted curved brackets. The roof ridge terminates in false gables that are set well back from the outer wall perpendiculars, providing decorative accents above the hipped gables. A complex hipped extension of the front roof slope provides a common roof for the two bays and the connecting porch; the front elevation of the porch is gabled. These relatively complex roof massings make the roof pitch, which is moderate, appear lower than it really is. The symmetrical design of the building and its double-bay configuration suggest that it embodies a transition from the Italianate designs of a few years earlier and bridges the change, locally, to the Queen Anne and related designs of the 1890's. Exterior trim, particularly on the facade (east elevation) embodies a number of stick elements. Trim boards casing the tops and bottoms of the bay windows are extended across adjoining walls to the corner boards, and between the bays, forming a series of panels above, below, and beside the window line. Those above the window line are finished in vertically laid wainscot stock (3½" center match with v-groove at the joint); those below the window line are finished in the same material laid diagonally; and those beside the windows are finished in standard drop siding with lap joint and drip groove. The latter siding is used on both sidewalls, which do not have any of the decorative elements used on the facade. Stick elements, in the form of panelwork, are employed in the two false gables. Eaves are boxed and fitted with crown mouldings. Simple brackets are used on the facade. The ceiling of the gabled porch is at eave height, providing ample space for decoration. The two turned columns (whose bases have been ingeniously modified to a triangular cross section for proper alignment with railings) support a series of decorative elements: an arch with graduated spindles in the spandrels, surmounted by a grille composed of spindles and pierced panels. The gable ornament above is a simple crossbar with pierced and scrolled brackets. Side angles of the upper trim continue the grille, which is supported by built-up scrolled brackets.

Porch railings consist of moulded handrail on a pierced panel, with spindle course and base below. In spite of its relatively restrained decoration, the house has

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a lacy appearance and seems more elaborate than it is. It possesses a great deal of charm. With a few exceptions noted elsewhere, all windows are double-hung, one-over-one plain sash. Construction is conventional balloon frame of the period, with 2" x 4" rough studs and 2" x 6" rough ceiling joists, both on 16" centers; rafters are rough 2" x 4" lumber, on 24" centers; floor joists are rough 2" x 10" on 16" centers. Flooring is 3½" center-matched pine, and most of the other lumber appears to be pine as well. Interior walls were finished in lath and plaster. The two parlors, with their half-octagonal bays, are light and airy and are separated by a pair of sliding doors; these are cedar as are some of the other interior doors, and are fitted with handsome cast brass hardware. The dining room is particularly well lighted, with its triple window, and it is separated from the south parlor by a broad square archway. Window and door trim is built up, consisting of a plain board with beveled inside edge, a bullnose backband, and a panel moulding at the joint. Window stools are 1-1/8" bullnose with plain trim board below; the support moulding is the same panel moulding used on casings. This design, and the fact that all interior woodwork was always painted (apparently white from the beginning) is another carryover from the Italianate style of a few years earlier. There is a small partial basement under the dining room and accessed by stair from the kitchen. There is no interior access to the attic. Foundation walls are of local stone, rock-faced ashlar.

Additions and Modifications

The kitchen was originally a leanto structure on the rear (west) wall of the house, measuring nine by twelve feet. It opened onto a small porch in the angle formed by the north wall of the kitchen and the west wall of the house proper. The porch was later extended northward and at least partially enclosed; a bathroom was installed in the north portion of it. Still later, the addition was further enlarged to square up the floor plan, with the added space becoming a small dining area and a laundry facility with second bath (toilet, sink, and shower--the latter facility, together with a small makeshift enclosed porch, appears to have been incorporated in the late 1930's). In the present restoration, the floorplan remains essentially unchanged but most of the underlying structure has been renewed and various makeshifts either removed or corrected. The only interior structural addition is the partition separating the bathroom entrances from the kitchen area. The kitchen is a modern facility. The leanto roof was replaced at some point in the past, probably c.1930, by a gabled roof that looks much more appropriate to the overall design, and the cumulative addition was sided with clapboard (bevel) siding.

At some point in its history the house was damaged by fire and it appears that the damage was fairly extensive. Most of the evidence is visible in the attic, where many rafters and roof boards have been reinforced, and under the house near the central chimney. When the house was repaired, or at about that time, several changes occurred. The ceilings and probably some of the walls were replastered; these were later papered, and still later the ceilings were lowered from their original height of twelve feet to their present height of 9' - 6". The new ceilings

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are very strong, being sheathed solidly with shiplap and subsequently finished with gypsum board. Patterns on wallpaper visible above the false ceiling suggest that these changes occurred during the 1920-1930 period. The exterior doors (front entrances and side entrance to kitchen) were replaced with nine-light Colonial Revival doors at about that time. One window in the kitchen is of the same period (double hung, 6 over 6). The window over the kitchen sink is a 28" x 48" double hung sash laid on its side, an arrangement probably dating from the same period. The small single bedroom was enlarged by a four-foot extension to the north at about the same time; it has a shed roof and exposed rafter ends, but care was taken to duplicate the original casings in the interior. Its north window probably dates from this addition and consists of a 28" x 70" horizontal opening with three 24" x 28" sliding sash. At some point the dining room's original width of nineteen feet was reduced to fifteen feet by adding a wall and turning the original access from north parlor to dining room into a hall. This was probably done to provide access to the bathroom during music lessons without sacrificing privacy. The hall was later fitted with a transverse wall and converted into closets. In the restoration, it is once more a hallway. The original pine floor probably suffered water damage as a result of the fire; at any rate, a new one was laid over the old and is still in excellent condition. There is evidence that the square arch between south parlor and dining room was originally provided with a colonnade of some description, but its nature has not been determined. Picture moulding had been removed and has been replaced in the restoration; cap mouldings removed from baseboards will be replaced as well. Light fixtures being installed are reproductions of period installations; wallpapers applied are not reproduction papers but are appropriate to the style and period of the house. Reproduction corner mouldings (plaster mould) have been installed at the corners of the bay window recesses. The doorway from the north parlor to the bedroom, which had been covered over, has been restored and its casings reproduced. Walls were finished with gypsum board at some point in the past; this has been repaired and supplemented with new material where necessary. It is hoped that a more appropriate pair of front entrance doors will eventually be found and installed. In the meantime, the modified steps at the side entrance (kitchen) required by codes will be fitted with baluster work duplicating that on the front porch; crown mouldings above the facade will be replaced where the originals are missing; the chimney will be built up to its original height and configuration, and the present exhaust system that utilizes it will be accordingly less obvious. The massive poured concrete structure that replaced the original front porch base should itself be replaced eventually, with something more appropriate and less obtrusive. This is a most attractive house and lends itself well to restoration; it is fortunate that its owners are dedicated to the principles of historic preservation and sensitive renovation practices.

Wiring, plumbing and climate control systems have all been modernized.

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## Exterior Finish

Exterior surfaces are in generally good condition, particularly on the original part of the building. It has been necessary, in the restoration, to renew some areas of clapboard siding on the addition. Sanding has revealed the original basic color scheme, which was pale gray on the sidewalls and a darker gray for the trim. There was probably a third accent color, but if so its use was not extensive. This color scheme is being readopted in the restoration.

The stone foundation was, unfortunately, painted by previous owners. Removal of the paint is not practical at the present time; the foundation is being repainted in a less obtrusive color, with removal of all paint layers from the foundation projected at some time in the future. The two bathrooms were originally fitted with single one-light, 24" x 24" sash; one of these has been replaced with a modern metal-framed sliding unit. These openings will eventually be provided with something more appropriate, perhaps matching leaded windows in stained glass.

## Adaptive Uses

The building lends itself well to various adaptive uses that will not compromise it architecturally or historically, since they will not affect it in either the structural or the design sense. Its first use will be as a small restaurant with four intimate dining areas and an elegant home atmosphere. It could serve equally well as an office-suite or as a private residence: no modification will exist to intrude upon that original purpose.



**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

1890-1902  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1890  
1902  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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

The house built for William Anson at 1606 Sixth Street in La Grande, Oregon in 1890 is significant as the most clear-cut and best-preserved example of a particular type of vernacular architecture in the Eastlake tradition in the city. As such, it meets National Register Criterion C. In form, it is locally distinctive as a single-story, or cottage-scale version of the symmetrical bracketed villa which is so closely associated with residential architecture in the High Victorian Italianate style. The building's facade detailing, however, with spindle and cut-cut decoration, panels of vertical and diagonal tongue-and-groove siding, spool-turned porch posts and gabled hip roof, marks the house as an Eastlake type. The chimney centered at the roof ridge has lost its characteristic corbelled cap, and the identical front doors are replacements. Otherwise, the street facade is little altered from its original state. The builder, architect or design source have not been identified to date. The paired central entrances suggest the house may have been patterned after a double house plan in one of the ubiquitous builders handbooks of the period.

The house is an historical companion, but by no means identical to the Queen Anne/Eastlake-style Anthony-Buckley House of 1902 which stands on the adjoining lot to the south. The Anthony-Buckley House was listed in the National Register in 1985. Both houses were occupied by John Anthony, an historical figure of note. Either house rests on a foundation of locally quarried rock-faced basalt, and the adjoining lots are circumscribed by a fence for which John Anthony undoubtedly was responsible. The fence, an improvement of about 1902, is composed of a coursed ashlar base with cast iron and woven wire railing and is so distinguished in its workmanship and combination of materials, it is counted a separately contributing feature. Well preserved examples of hand-crafted dooryard fences dating from the turn of the century are rarely found in eastern Oregon today. The building is being rehabilitated by its current owners for an adaptive use a yet undetermined.

Although not nominated under Criterion B, the house, along with its neighbor, certainly is noteworthy for its association with the entrepreneurial Swiss-born Anthony (1863-1927). Anthony acquired the former Anson property in 1895 and occupied it to about 1904, at which time he deeded the property to his wife,

See continuation sheet

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

### Primary location of additional data:

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

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one La Grande SE, Oregon 1:24000

### UTM References

A 

1	1	4	1	4	3	0	0	5	0	1	9	5	1	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

C 

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B 

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D 

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

See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is located on or near the section line dividing SW $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 5 and NW $\frac{1}{4}$  Section 8, Township 3S, Range 8E, Willamette Meridian, in La Grande, Union County, Oregon. It is legally described as Lots 7 and 8 of Block 98, Chaplin's Addition to La Grande, and is otherwise identified as Tax Lot 13200 at said location.

See continuation sheet

### Boundary Justification

The nominated area, measuring 60 x 110 feet, encompasses the entire parcel developed for William and Ella Anson in 1890 and subsequently owned by Henry Anson before it came under the ownership of John Anthony. It is Anthony's period of occupation (1895-1904) which is the strongest of the property's historical associations.

See continuation sheet

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John W. Evans

organization N/A date March 15, 1988

street & number 806 Main Avenue telephone (503) 963-4719

city or town La Grande state Oregon zip code 97850

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Mathilde. After the Anthonys were divorced in 1906, the neighboring house which Anthony had built as an investment in 1902 also was deeded to Mathilde Anthony. John Anthony remarried and became the proprietor of a hostel on the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company line at the junction of the Grand Ronde and Wallowa rivers, a place which Anthony named Rondowa. He never returned to the Sixth Street property in La Grande. His first wife, however, continued to occupy the property proposed for nomination until her death in 1941.

Architect and Builder

The names of the architect and builder are at present unknown. If the house was designed locally, the person responsible was in all probability Calvin R. Thornton. Thornton (1859-1909) is believed to have been La Grande's only resident architect from 1886 until his death. His wife's cousin Samuel R. Haworth may have built the house, as he often executed Thornton's designs; however, he was a stonemason and contractor and usually limited his work to brick and stone. If the design came from a plan book or a mail-order plan service, the builder may well have been John Lyman Slater (1867-1940). Slater, a contractor and builder, worked in La Grande from about 1889 until World War I. He was the son of James Harvey Slater, attorney, who came to eastern Oregon from Corvallis after having served in both the Oregon Territorial and State Legislatures; he was in Auburn from 1862 until coming to La Grande in 1866 and was later elected to the U.S. House of Representatives (1870) and the U.S. Senate (1878). John Slater's two brothers followed in their father's footsteps and entered the legal profession; he was the only one to enter the building trades.

It is hoped that a definite indication of the architect and/or builder will be determined eventually. "R. & T., La Grande, Or" is painted along the edge of one sliding door, but that addressee has not been identified.

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William and Ella Anson

William Anson was born in the Mt. Glen area, a few miles north of La Grande, on November 10, 1866. He was the son of Union County pioneer William Anson. On March 14, 1890 he and Ella Dial were married. She was the daughter of Thomas and Hannah (Charlton) Dial, and was born at Eldon, Iowa September 25, 1871. William and Ella purchased Lots 7 and 8, Block 98, Chaplin's Addition to the City of La Grande, on or about May 20, 1890 and the present house was built for them shortly thereafter. Two years later they decided to sell their home; perhaps there were financial difficulties. Henry Anson, whose relationship to William is unclear at this writing, purchased it from them in 1892. The amount he paid, \$1,500.00, is either the exact cost of the lots and the house or a very close approximation thereof; satisfaction of a loan may have been involved. Ella Anson died July 5, 1957; William survived her a little more than a month, dying August 22. Both are buried in La Grande.

Henry and Margaret Anson

Henry Anson was an early settler of Union County. He was born in Pennsylvania November 26, 1841; his parents had evidently migrated to this country shortly before then, as his brother Joseph, another early settler in the Grande Ronde Valley, was (according to the 1870 Census) born in England in 1837.

Esther Parker was born in Marion County, Iowa, November 11, 1841. She was the daughter of James and Marie (Walker) Parker, who were born in Pennsylvania and Hartford, Connecticut respectively. Shortly after Esther's birth her family moved to Quasqueton, Buchanan County, Iowa, where she spent her childhood. She and Henry Anson were married there in 1869.

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Mr. and Mrs. Anson moved to Oregon in the fall of 1874, making their home at first in Island City. After living in that community for a year, they moved to La Grande. Henry conducted the Pioneer Dry Goods Store in La Grande from 1874 until his death on June 22, 1892. Mrs. Anson was the pioneer milliner of La Grande. She died December 17, 1923.

Henry and Esther Anson did not live in the house at 1606 Sixth Street; Polk's Directory No. 1 (1893), for which the information was probably compiled in 1892, indicates that the Ansons had already established their home on Fourth Street (later numbered 1608). Esther lived in the Fourth Street house until her death.

John Anthony

John Anthony, whose family is most closely associated with this property, was also the most colorful of its owners. He was born Johann Anton Koelbener on April 8, 1863 in Appenzell, Switzerland; his parents were Johann Baptist and Magdalena (Strubley) Koelbener. When he was about seventeen he left his parents' farm to make his own way in the world. He spent several years in London, England; learning his trade of baker and confectioner. He emigrated to the United States in 1886, arriving in this country "broke" and with only a limited command of English but determined to succeed in the New World. His travels led him to The Dalles, Oregon, where he worked for a short time; he moved to La Grande in 1888. That he was an industrious and practical man is evident: in 1892 he erected a substantial brick store building on the south side of Adams Avenue (two doors west of Depot Street, according to one early directory), with a tablet above the entrance inscribed "Candy Factory and Bakery," together with the date. He also, according to the 1893 directory, lived on the premises. He had married Mathilde Eichenburger, who was also born in Switzerland, in 1888. She was the daughter of Jacob and Verena Lindeman (christened Lindenmann) Eichenburger. Mathilde was born January 16, 1866.

On February 27, 1894 John Anthony Koelbener became a naturalized citizen; during the same year he served on the city council. He bought the house at 1606 Sixth Street March 28, 1895. In 1898 he officially shortened his name to John Anthony. He said this was done because his actual surname was too difficult for people to pronounce, but he probably also wanted to "Americanize" his name. Like many other immigrants of his time, Anthony loved his adopted country and was intensely patriotic, flying the flag when such displays were appropriate and seldom speaking anything but the "American Language"--although he knew three others. By 1898 the Candy Factory and Bakery was also a grocery. At the turn of the century the one-bedroom house at 1606 Sixth Street was becoming crowded. A daughter, Hilda, had been born to the Anthonys in April, 1894; in 1900, according to the census, Mathilde's sister, Bertha Berger, was living with them. It is probable that the north parlor was made to serve as a separate bed-sitting room during that period. Bertha had shortened her last name, as did some other members of the Eichenburger family.

In 1901 John Anthony acquired the corner property adjoining his own home. In 1902

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he sold the Star Grocery for \$5,148.88--a very respectable sum at that time--and went into the lumber business on Graves Creek with Thomas Millspaugh. Their partnership was formed January 20, 1902. That summer, Anthony built the house at 1602 Sixth Street, on the corner lots he had purchased in 1901. Anthony and Millspaugh sold their mill on November 12 of the same year and their partnership was accordingly dissolved. Anthony is listed in Polk's Directory No.2, 1903, for which the information was probably gathered in 1902, as a lumberman. During the next few years he was involved in several other business ventures. On January 29, 1904 John Anthony deeded the house at 1606 Sixth Street to Mathilde and, in December 1906, the couple were divorced. In March 1907 he also deeded the house at 1602 Sixth Street to Mathilde, thus ending his connection with two of La Grande's more interesting examples of late Victorian domestic architecture.

Soon after its link with the Oregon Short Line was completed in 1884, the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company began to build a branch line to Elgin. The branch was completed to that point in 1891 and then extended to Joseph in 1908. In 1909 John Anthony established himself at the confluence of the Grande Ronde and Wallowa Rivers; in a meadow near the railroad bridge he constructed a large one-story frame building that included a restaurant, store, ten-bed hotel, and post office. The spot was originally known as River Junction but Anthony renamed it Rondowa. Names combining parts of other names were once popular; Anthony's example falls more sweetly on the ear than most of them. For the next several years passenger trains on the branch line made regular 25-minute stops there. John Anthony was appointed postmaster June 28, 1909. In addition to the main building and associated outbuildings, there was a large barn where Anthony milked 35 cows. During this period the George Palmer Lumber Company, a La Grande firm, logged extensively in the area near Palmer Junction and Rondowa; there were also numerous homesteaders from the surrounding plateaus and benches above the canyon who used Anthony's establishment for a post office and source of supplies. On August 13, 1910, John Anthony married Mrs. Estella Taylor, a widow with a young son, Wayne C. Two children were later born to this marriage: a daughter, Margaret E., and a son, John R.

John Anthony loved the wooded isolation of the river canyon and he also loved the Wallowa Mountains, whose rugged scenery reminded him of his ancestral homeland. In later years, when Anthony was once again in the restaurant business in La Grande, he was contacted by a group who were promoting Wallowa Lake. He suggested they advertise that area as "The Switzerland of America," and they did so. The characterization was highly appropriate and would still be so today.

Logging and settlement patterns changed in the Rondowa area and the post office was discontinued October 30, 1915. John Anthony returned to La Grande in 1917 and, together with his wife, opened the City Restaurant and Cafe. It was later renamed Anthony's Cafe and was located at 1117½ Adams Avenue. John Anthony died March 28, 1927 in Portland and is buried in La Grande. His widow continued to operate the cafe until 1931. She and her son Wayne C. Taylor both died in 1965.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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Barklow, Irene. The Old and the New: History of the Post Offices of Wallowa County.  
Enterprise, Oregon, 1982.

Registry of Deeds, Union County Courthouse, La Grande, Oregon.

Death and Burial Records of Union County, Oregon.

U.S. Census (Union County, Oregon), 1870, 1880, 1900

La Grande Gazette (1892)

La Grande Chronicle (1898)

La Grande Observer (1923, 1927, 1941, 1957)

Polk's Directory (eastern Oregon communities): No.1, 1893; No.2, 1903; No.3, 1905;  
No.4, 1908-09.

Eastern Oregon Directory, 1899-1900.

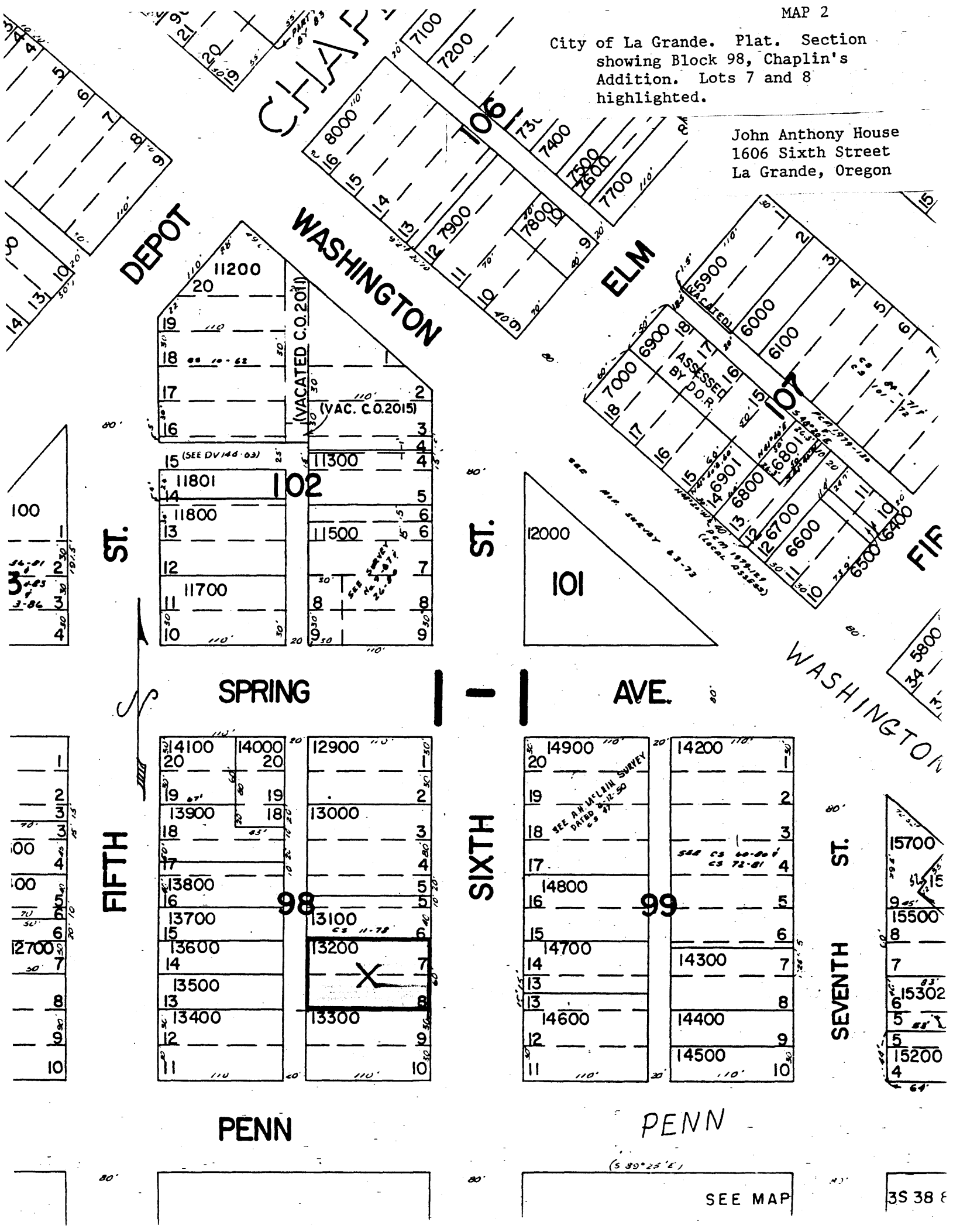
Letter, Margaret Couch to Elisabeth Potter, November 22, 1984.

Johnson, Lee Carroll, Brief History of Union County, Oregon (La Grande, Oregon, 1949).

Illustrated History of Union and Wallowa Counties, Oregon (Chicago: Western Historical  
Publishing Company, 1902).

City of La Grande. Plat. Section showing Block 98, Chaplin's Addition. Lots 7 and 8 highlighted.

John Anthony House  
1606 Sixth Street  
La Grande, Oregon



DEPOT

CHAPLIN'S

WASHINGTON

106

ELM

ST.

ST.

SPRING

AVE.

FIFTH

SIXTH

ST.

SEVENTH

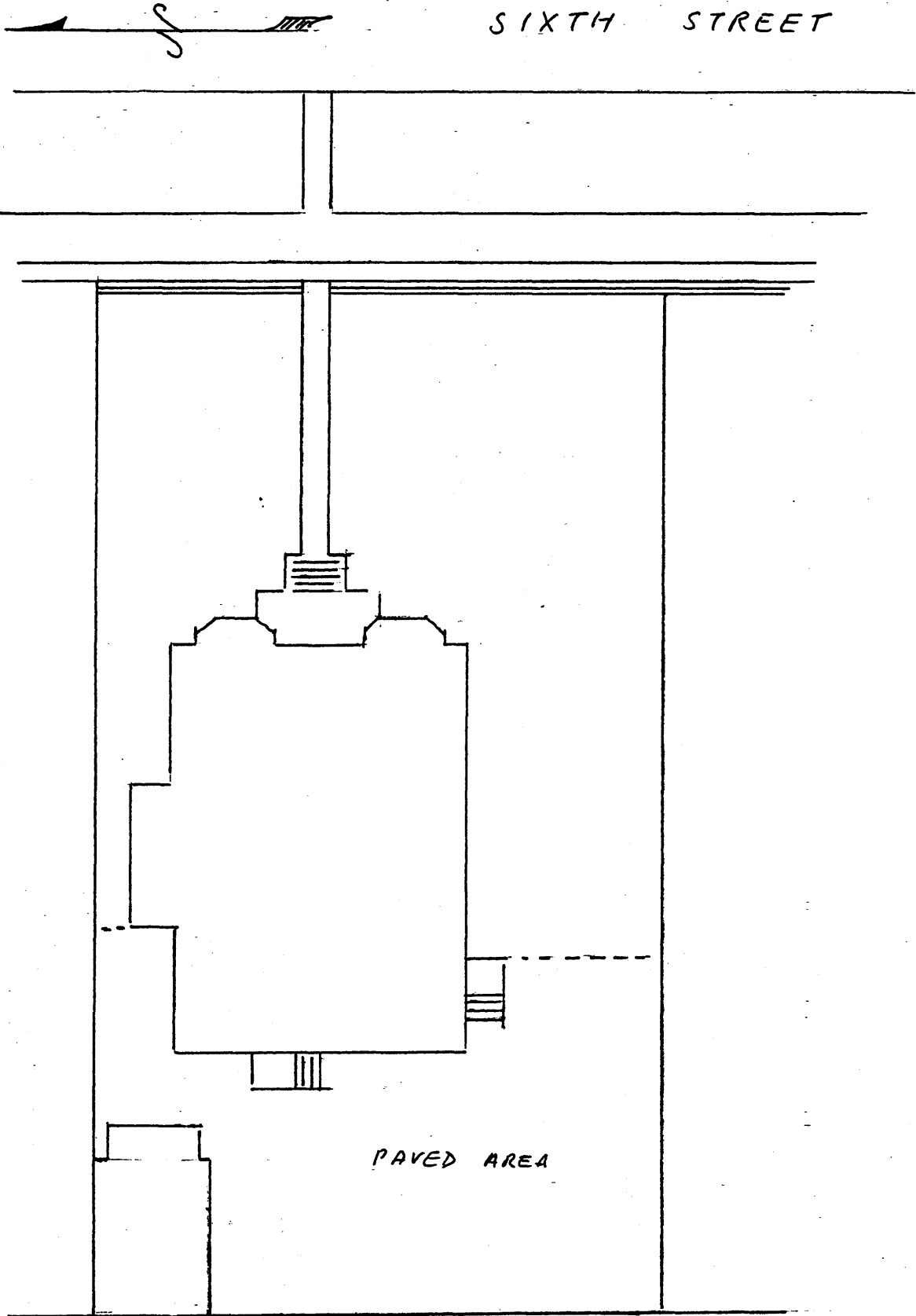
PENN

PENN

SEE MAP

3S 38 E





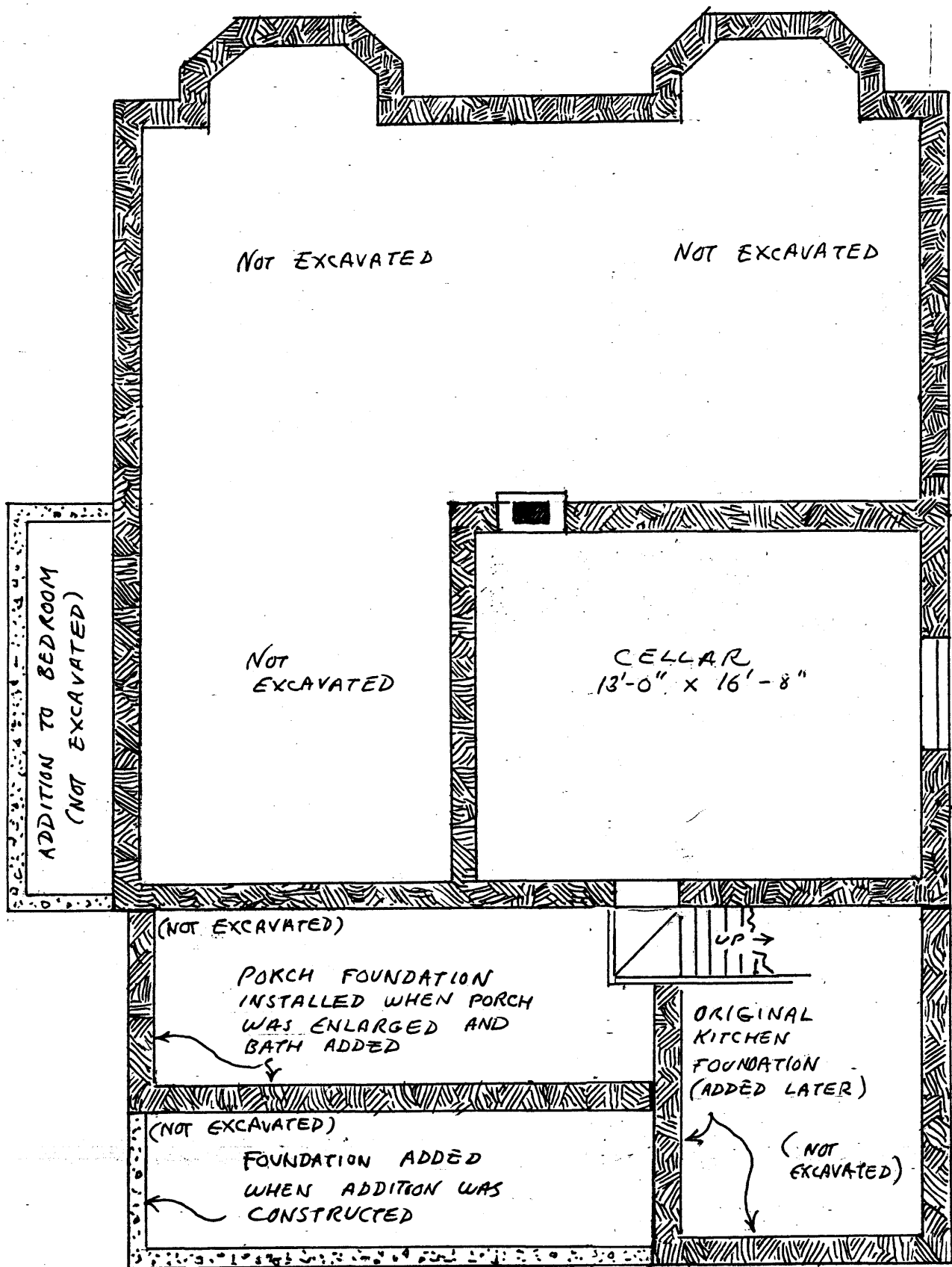
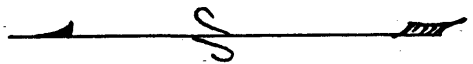
SIXTH STREET

PAVED AREA

ALLEY

JOHN ANTHONY HOUSE  
 1606 SIXTH STREET  
 LA GRANDE, OREGON  
 SITE PLAN  
 SCALE: 1/16" = 1'-0"

JOHN W. EVANS



JOHN ANTHONY HOUSE  
 1606 SIXTH STREET  
 LA GRANDE, OREGON

BASEMENT AND FOUNDATION PLAN  
 SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"