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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 J.S. Graham Store
other names/site number Doyle Building

2. Location

street & number 119 Pine Street
city, town Seattle
state Washington code WA county King code 033 zip code 98101

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private (checked)
Category of Property: building(s) (checked)
Number of Resources within Property: Contributing 1, Noncontributing 0

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

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 (checked) does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.
Signature of certifying official: Jacob E. Iron
Date: 10/26/89
Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

In my opinion, the property meets (unchecked) 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. (checked)
determined eligible for the National Register. (unchecked)
determined not eligible for the National Register. (unchecked)
removed from the National Register. (unchecked)
other, (explain):

Entered in the National Register: Mark L. Baker 7 December 1989

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: Department store

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Italian Renaissance Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls terra cotta

roof woodother

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Built in 1919, the J.S. Graham Store is a four-story, Renaissance Revival commercial building, constructed of a reinforced concrete frame and ornamented with an elaborate terra cotta facade. The building is located on the southwest corner of Second Avenue and Pine Street near the heart of downtown Seattle's historic retail core. The building is abutted on the south by a three story building and on the west by an alley.

Measuring approximately 108 feet along Pine Street and 83 feet along Second Avenue, the frame of the rectangular building is composed of reinforced concrete columns supporting concrete girders. The girders span 19 feet, run in a north-south direction, and support concrete pan floor joists spaced 21 feet in an east-west direction. The roof structure is a sloping wood frame supported on a pan joist floor slab intended to serve as a fifth floor when the structure was first built. A parapet rises above the sloping roof. The building rests on a basement level, composed of a concrete slab on grade with perimeter reinforced concrete foundation walls. The foundation support is provided by pad footings at the interior column locations and a continuous foot at the property line curb.

The street facades of the building are faced in glazed tan-colored terra cotta over masonry, and the building's composition and detail reflect the Italian Renaissance style, reminiscent of the palazzos of Venetian merchant princes. The building is composed of a street level base story with retail bays, three upper stories unified by continuous piers which rise to form an arcade of arched window bays, and a full entablature with projecting cornice and parapet.

The base level is divided into large plate glass storefront bays separated by structural piers and crowned by an elaborate entablature ornamented with floral motives. The Pine Street facade includes a recessed central entry, sheltered by a bronze and translucent glass canopy, and flanked by two storefront display window bays on either side. On Second Avenue, the center entry bay has been altered but still is sheltered by the original canopy and flanked on either side by large display window bays. In recent years, the original storefront glazing has been replaced, and a new recessed entry has been created in the northeast corner bay. But the original framing elements of the bays remain intact.

Above the ground floor, the structural piers and, between them, non- structural piers, rise to the top floor where they are joined in a arcade of round arches. The structural piers are treated as panelled pilasters; the nonstructural piers are ornamented as thin, paired pilasters. Between each set of piers are paired windows, separated by mullions ornamented with spiral colonettes. A similar spiral rises on each corner pier. The Pine Street facade

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has ten bays of paired windows; the Second Avenue facade has eight bays. All windows contain the original tall and narrow double-hung wood sash windows with transoms. The transoms above the fourth floor windows are rounded and set within arched frames with rosettes in the tympanum of the arches and shields in spandrels between each arch. Recessed spandrels at each floor level are enriched with floriated ornament.

The building is crowned by an elaborate entablature ornamented with acroterion and shields on the parapet; an egg and dart course on the projecting cornice, underscored by a dentil course; and a frieze ornamented with a floral motif and griffin-like figures in bas-relief at each corner. The parapet encircles the entire building, but the south and west facades are faced in stucco over masonry.

The interior of the structure, which originally included marble floors and classical columns, was completely altered in the 1960s, at which time the interior was gutted and new partition walls and suspended ceilings installed. No significant interior features have survived. However, the exterior was carefully cleaned and restored in 1973 and again in 1987.

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

1919

Significant Dates

1919

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

A.B. Doyle (in association with
C.F. Merriam)

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

The J.S. Graham Store is an architecturally significant landmark in downtown Seattle, distinguished by a Renaissance Revival design, an ornate terra cotta facade, and an association with master architect A.B. Doyle. Built in 1919, the structure was among the most elaborate commercial buildings in the city, and an important element in the shift of retail activity northward from Pioneer Square to an emerging district around Pike and Pine streets. The building continues to retain outstanding exterior integrity and is one of the preeminent examples of the Renaissance Revival in the state.

Historical Background: The Graham building originally housed J.S. Graham, Incorporated, a leading Seattle women's apparel store. Graham came to Seattle from Sacramento, California, in 1889, arriving in the city shortly after the fire of that year. Graham set up his first shop in a tent in burned-out Pioneer Square. In 1901, Graham purchased the nominated property, site of the Griffin House, and made plans to build a residence at the location, an area well north of most commercial activity.

Before long, however, Seattle's commercial center began to expand northward. Following the regrading of Second Avenue in 1903, merchants increasingly located along the avenue near Union, Pike and Pine streets. For example, the McDermont Building, which housed the Bon Marche department store, was completed in 1912 at Second and Union, and in 1914, Frederick and Nelson announced plans to build a new store at Fifth Avenue and Pine Streets (completed in 1918). That move was first greeted with skepticism but it precipitated the movement of other merchants.

In 1919, Graham decided to follow suit, choosing to construct an elaborate new store on the site of his own home. The Seattle Times that year noted that "no announcement has created more interest in real estate circles than the moving of J.S. Graham, Inc., to the Pine Street location, and it is pointed out that this is another indication that the district in the vicinity of Pine and Pike streets is destined to be a leading retail district in the city."

The decision by Graham to select a northern site for his building made good business sense. The selection of architect and design, however, seemed even more inspired. The Italian Renaissance design appears to have been a last minute effort to outshine the competition. The original sketch of the building published in the Times in 1919 showed a more

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Pacific Building and Engineer, May 18, 1919; May 30, 1919.
"Landmark on Second Avenue", Seattle Times, September 23, 1973.
"J.S. Graham Company Store", Landmark Nomination Form, City of Seattle Office of Urban Conservation, 1986.
McMath, George. "Lewis and Clark Exposition" and "After the Fair", in Space, Style and Structure: Building in Northwest America (Oregon Historical Society: Portland, 1974), pp. 324-340.
Impressions of Imagination: Terra Cotta Seattle, (Allied Arts: Seattle, 1986).

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 2, 3; Block 26; Denny's 3rd Addition, City of Seattle.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the entire parcel historically associated with the J.S. Graham Store.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Edited by Leonard Garfield from information prepared by James Daly and the Seattle OUC
organization 111 West 21st Avenue, KL-11 date August 1989
street & number Office of Archaeology and Hist. Pres. telephone (206) 753-4011
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straightforward Chicago Style commercial building, with rectangular windows and a restrained cornice, similar to the McDermott and Frederick and Nelson buildings. The changes to this original design--including paired and arched windows and an elaborately ornamental entablature--distinguished the structure from its rivals, and may have been an inspiration for several later retail buildings in the city (notably the Ranke Building of 1926, now encased in the Nordstrom complex at Fifth Avenue and Pine Streets).

Architectural Significance: In selecting Doyle, Graham had retained the services of one of the Northwest's most prolific and talented designers, and a man well versed in the popular Renaissance idioms of the age. Albert E. Doyle was born in 1877, grew up in Portland, Oregon, and was apprenticed to the firm of Whidden and Lewis in the late 19th century. William Whidden, who had come to Portland as a representative of McKim, Mead, and White during construction of Henry Villard's Portland Hotel, and his partner Ion Lewis dominated Portland architecture through the early 20th century. The firm was particularly noted for its Renaissance Revival work, including such notable commissions as the Portland City Hall, the Portland Public Library, and most of the Renaissance styled structures at the Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905.

After 12 years with the firm, Doyle left Whidden and Lewis in 1903, worked with Lewis on the design of buildings for the fair, then went to New York City to study architecture at Columbia University. While in New York, Doyle worked in the office of Henry Bacon, one of the nations' preeminent Neoclassicist (and architect of the Lincoln Memorial). In the spring of 1906, Doyle sailed for Europe where he studied at the American School of Architecture in Athens. During his studies abroad, Doyle toured throughout the region studying the structures of classical Greece and Rome, and of the Italian Renaissance.

When Doyle returned to Portland in 1907, he established his own firm and designed structures that combined the structural program of the Chicago School of commercial architecture with the traditional styles of which he was a master. From 1909, when he received his first major commission (a ten story addition to the Meier and Frank Department Store) to the late 1920s, Doyle produced a remarkable number of high quality commercial and office buildings in his native city. His commissions included the Lipman Wolfe and Company store (1909), the Selling Building (1910), the Benson Hotel (1913), the Central Public Library (1913), and the United States National Bank (1917), all in Portland. In the 1920s, Doyle remained busy with new offices and stores, mostly executed in the Italian Renaissance mode.

Doyle's practice outside Portland, however, was not extensive, and he is believed to have practiced in Seattle only in 1919 and 1920. According to 1919 editions of Pacific Builder and Engineer and the Seattle Times, Doyle opened a temporary Seattle office (in association with C.F. Merriam) while he worked on the Graham building and supervised remodelling of the Baillargeon department store at the southwest corner of Spring and Second for the National Bank of Commerce.

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Although the Graham Building was Doyle's only major commission in Seattle, it proved to be a work of lasting significance. Considered by many to be the finest example of its style in Seattle, the building is characterized by graceful proportions, ornate terra cotta embellishments, an arcade of arched windows, and a projecting cornice that all recall the elegant palazzos of Venetian merchants in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Doyle's work perfectly expressed, in architectural terms, the notion that the department store magnate was a modern-day Medici. If that message is not so easily "read" today, the beauty of the design is still attracting attention. According to architect and critic Robert Venturi, "the graceful and sophisticated classicism" of the Graham Building places it among the outstanding examples of terra cotta commercial architecture in the region.

The Graham Store remained at the location through the 1920s, but closed its doors with the advent of the Great Depression in 1929. Later tenants including offices, banks, and the Boeing Company, and in recent years the interior was completely gutted. In 1973, the building underwent an extensive renovation by architect Ibsen Nelson, which maintained the exterior in nearly original condition. With the exception of some alterations to the original storefront and entry bays, the building continues to retain excellent exterior integrity. It was designated a City of Seattle landmark in 1986.