

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Nauvoo, Illinois

AND/OR COMMON Nauvoo, Illinois

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Nauvoo

STATE

Illinois

VICINITY OF
CODE

17

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

19th

COUNTY

Hancock

CODE

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY | OWNERSHIP | STATUS | PRESENT USE | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BOTH | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE | PUBLIC ACQUISITION | ACCESSIBLE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT | <input checked="" 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 |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> NO | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER: |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Mixed Public and private ownership HSS contact, Mayor, Nauvoo, Illinois/
Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated Joseph Smith Historic Center

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Hancock County Clerk and Recorder of Titles and Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Hancock County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Carthage

STATE

Illinois

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey (12 structures)

DATE

1934

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Div. of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress

CITY, TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

7 DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION | | CHECK ONE | CHECK ONE |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <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

During the seven year Mormon occupation, the location of the undeveloped towns of Commerce and Commerce City on the east bank of the Mississippi grew into the prosperous frontier city of Nauvoo, and with an estimated population of 12,000, it was for a time the largest city in Illinois. Hundreds of homes and commercial structures were built, a number of which are extant today. Several imposing public structures were erected in what was very much a frontier settlement through cooperative effort. Outstanding among these was the Nauvoo Temple, probably the largest and most expensive building in existence at that time in the West. The Temple, Concert Hall and Mormon Arsenal are no longer extant, however, other public buildings such as the Masonic Temple, the Mansion House, and Nauvoo House as well as a number of original residences still stand, although many of them have suffered major alterations due to subsequent uses or deterioration from long abandonment. Many more have been demolished and can only be identified through archeological investigation.

When the Mormons first arrived in the city of Commerce, there were probably fewer than 100 people in the whole area, compared with the estimated 12,000 by 1846. The earliest structures were undoubtedly of logs, in usual frontier manner. Most of the town was crowded on the flats, and the houses and shops were of a temporary nature, and most have since disappeared. An old wooden barn along the river's edge, believed to have been a store, is probably the oldest frame structure surviving from the Mormon period. By 1842 brick kilns had been constructed and better houses of brick and stone were built, usually farther uphill from the river. Limestone was available from a nearby island and at the quarry located at the west end of Main Street. Most Mormon houses remaining are simple rectangular two, or two and one-half story brick, without decoration, except for the stepped gable-ends on a few rooflines.

The city of Nauvoo was planned and laid out in a grid pattern, as seen on the enclosed 1841 map by Gustav Hill, but was never developed beyond a few streets in the central area. As seen in a 1845-46 photograph, structures of any permanent nature were fairly widely scattered and surrounded with many small frame structures and outbuildings even in the developed area. Each block was divided into four-one acre tracts. Each lot was expected to furnish the family with their vegetables and fruits. However, as the city grew, most of the lots in the settled area were subdivided and food was grown outside the city where many families operated their own farms and the community farm provided for poorer families and converts.

Mormon Nauvoo developed no business district during its six-year occupation, and the scattering of structures suggests there was no zoning, and the businesses were often located in the house of the owners. In their short stay there was little industrial development despite encouragement from the leaders. The town also lacked a railroad connection. Joseph Smith himself operated probably the most important and active general store, and meetings were often held on its second floor. The community purchased its own boat, the Maid of Iowa which it used mostly for excursions, and ferrying new arrivals, established its own University of Nauvoo, while younger children attended schools in private homes. There are several early cemeteries extant in Nauvoo. The earliest and most important Mormon cemetery is located just outside of the town line, at the south-east corner, and is called the Saints Cemetery.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900- | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | | |

SPECIFIC DATES 1839-1846 (Mormon Occupation) BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The city of Nauvoo, located on the east bank of the Mississippi River in Hancock County, Illinois, was the principal city of the Mormons, and the headquarters of the church from 1839 to 1846. First settled by church members after their flight from northwestern Missouri, Nauvoo was not considered to be the final home of the church. To Joseph Smith, the area around Independence, Missouri, was still the Zion, to which the church would return as soon as possible.

Beginning in May 1839, land was purchased by Mormons in and around the small town of Commerce, in an area of western Illinois that had demonstrated some sympathy for the trials of the church. The following year, the name of the community was officially changed to Nauvoo, a word meaning beautiful site or habitation. The original plan of the Mormons was to establish two new communities, one at Nauvoo and the other on the west bank of the Mississippi at Montrose, Iowa Territory. The latter town was the site of Brigham Young's first home in this area. Later, because of difficulties in proving land titles, the Mormons on the Iowa side were compelled to abandon their property and move into Nauvoo.

Located on a hill sloping down to the river, and bordered by the river on three sides, Nauvoo very soon became an imposing city. During the first year of the Mormon occupancy about two hundred and fifty houses were constructed. A malaria epidemic, resulting from the swampy character of the lowlands in the vicinity, swept the community during the first year, but in the end proved no deterrent to its growth. The city was laid out in a regular fashion, with broad streets intersecting one another at right angles. Homes of frame, brick and stone were constructed, each with its garden and orchard plot. In 1841, the cornerstones of the temple were laid on an eminence which commanded a view of the city.

The population of Nauvoo grew very rapidly, augmented by converts from Europe and the United States. By the end of 1841, the population approached from Europe and the United States. By the end of 1841, the population approached 10,000 and Nauvoo was soon to become the largest city in Illinois. The lowlands were drained and the city assumed a more healthful aspect. Industries were founded which contributed to the economic prosperity of the community, and the Illinois State legislature granted a liberal city charter to Smith which made Nauvoo virtually a self-governing entity.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Virginia S. Harrington and J.C. Harrington, Rediscovery of the Nauvoo Temple; Report on Archeological Excavations (Salt Lake City 1971).
- David E. Miller, "Westward Migration of the Mormons with Special Emphasis on the History of Nauvoo." N.P.S. report (University of Utah 1963).
- David E. Miller and Della S. Miller, Nauvoo: The City of Joseph (Salt Lake City, 1974).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approximately 3,850 acres
 UTM REFERENCES

- E. 15.637445.4486860
- F. 15. 634905.4489590
- G. 15.637540.4493350

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 5 | 638350 | 493350 | B | 5 | 640020 | 491790 |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C | 56 | 40030 | 488510 | D | 5 | 638350 | 486845 |
| | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING | | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary for the Nauvoo historic district are those as described in the Act incorporating the City of Nauvoo approved December 16, 1840 by the General Assembly of the State of Illinois and stated as follows:

...all that district of country embraced within the following boundaries, to wit; beginning at the north east corner of Section thirty-one in township seven

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Blanche Higgins Schroer, Landmark Review Project; Ray H. Mattison, 1959

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, NPS

DATE

3/27/76

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street NW

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

Landmark
 Designated: Jan 20, 1961

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 National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

George J. ... 9/20/77
 date

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

9/20/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

6-7-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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Nauvoo Temple By far the most outstanding building in the West at that time, the temple was 128 feet long, 88 feet wide, 60 feet high, with a tower reaching 157 1/2 feet in the air. The outside walls were ornamented by 30 columns, six on each end, and none on each side, at the base of each was a moonstone and at the top a sunstone, surmounted by a carved stone with 2 hands each holding a trumpet, then two additional stones, then a starstone. All the details of the design had been revealed to Joseph Smith in a vision.

When the basement was completed it was dedicated and put into immediate use in November 1841, as it houses a large baptismal font, of unusual design, it was reached by two stairways and was mounted on 12 carved wooden oxen. By 1846 the font had been executed in stone.

As the temple neared completion in 1846, the Mormons, acknowledging that they would be forced out of Illinois, unsuccessfully attempted to lease or sell the building. In 1848 the Church conveyed the lots and other property to a David T. LeBaron, who in 1849 conveyed the same tracts to Etienne Cabet, leader of the Icarian community. On October 9, 1848, the temple was burned and later a man named Agnew confessed to the arson.

The Icarians attempted to rebuild the structure but had not progressed far when in May 1850 a tornado toppled the weakened walls, save for the front facade which was leveled in 1865. After the tornado, temple stones were used for Icarian community buildings, several of which were located around the temple site, and were demolished during the 1960s when Nauvoo Restoration Inc. excavated the site.

During the late nineteenth century even the foundation stones were mined out of the site, the ground was leveled and converted into a vineyard, so that until the 1960s no one could definitely define the site or the dimension of the temple. Under Nauvoo Restoration Inc. project the archeological digs conducted 1962-1969 by Southern Illinois University and by J.C. and Virginia S. Harrington, revealed the location of the walls, the font drain, and the stairwells. The site has been landscaped and plans underway which call for some model of the temple, on a smaller scale to be built on the site.

Joseph Smith Homestead After arriving in Nauvoo, Joseph Smith at first lived in a log house which the Church bought from Hugh White and is maintained today by the Joseph Smith Historic Center. The home of the prophet was the scene of many religious, business and social events for the community and the church decided that it should supply the president with a new house. The log section of the Homestead into which Smith moved is probably the oldest house in Nauvoo, and the church added the other sections during Smith's occupancy.

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Mansion House On August 1843 the prophet and his family moved into the Mansion House located just across the street from the Homestead, which contained 22 rooms, 15 bedrooms, and a stable for 30 horses. It is a two story frame structure, probably the most elegant of the houses of Nauvoo, in a Greek Revival style, with four white pilasters across the front facade and a columned doorway, with decorative sidelights. The house became a place for boarding and entertaining guests so much so that in January 1844 Smith rented the management of the Mansion and stable to someone else, while he continued to live there with his family, occupying 6 rooms until his death in June 1844, after which his body was laid in state in the mansion. Before 1900 a major east wing was lost, due to extensive deterioration, for many years it has been maintained by the Joseph Smith Center.

The Nauvoo House Built based on specification and a heavenly command given to the prophet, it was to be a permanent hotel where the prophet and his family could have quarters and visitors could be entertained for extended periods. With efforts focussed on the Temple, Nauvoo House was never completed above the foundation walls and some brick work on the first story, when the exodus began in 1846. Located on the riverfront, at the foot of Main Street, a portion of the house was completed by Joseph Smith's widow's second husband, Louis C. Bedamon, and it is used today by the Joseph Smith Historic Center.

The Seventies Hall Primarily a meeting place for the priesthood Quorum of Seventies, and was also constructed by cooperative effort. Once damaged during its construction by heavy winds, it was totally rebuilt and finally dedicated December 1844. Eventually it was sold to the Presbyterian Church and later remodeled as a schoolhouse. Seventies Hall had completely disappeared by this century, but was rebuilt 1971-72 by the Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated.

Concert Hall No longer extant but was located one block north of the temple, and was a 30 by 50 foot building with arched 11 foot ceilings, used for musical productions as well as church services.

Masonic Temple Completed in 1844, also constructed with community support and used for a variety of activities, it originally had a third story.

One church structure planned but never completely executed, was a huge tent expected to accomodate huge crowds, 4,000-5,000 yards of canvas were purchased for it, and probably used as wagon covers and tents instead.

Among the other outstanding Mormon residences extant are the Brigham Young House, the Heber C. Kimball House, the Wilford Woodruff House, the Times & Seasons Building, and the Jonathan Browning Houses and Workshops, all open as museums and maintained by Nauvoo Restoration Inc.

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Nauvoo

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Nauvoo continued to flourish until 1845, when mob outbreaks against the Mormons, the martyrdom of Smith the year before, and the growing hostility of the State authorities forced the Mormons to consider another move. The following year, the city was abandoned, as the Saints began their long trek to the Salt Lake basin.

Post-1846

After 1846, under different leaders some Mormons left Nauvoo for Michigan, others went west to Utah and Texas, and a few, including the family of Joseph Smith who formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, remained in Nauvoo.

Following the Mormon exodus the city became almost a ghost town until the spring of 1849 when a small party of Frenchmen and Germans who called themselves the "Pioneers of Humanity" took possession of some of the many vacant houses for their communistic colony. Their leader was Etienne Cabet, a noted lawyer and French political figure. He authored several books including the story of an utopian community, "A Voyage in Icaria." This book gave the members of this community the name Icarians. In a few years they found the communistic idea unworkable and the colony broke up. Cabet and a few followers went to St. Louis, others joined a similar colony in Corning, Iowa, and a number remained in the vicinity of Nauvoo.

Today Nauvoo has less than 1,500 citizens, less than one-tenth the number estimated in 1845 to live there. Nauvoo State Park, acquired by the State in 1948 occupies 148 acres on the south edge of town, and much of the area of the town is still agricultural or undeveloped. The Icarians introduced wine and cheese making which are the towns most well-known industries. The town and the preservation groups are busily advertising Nauvoo as a tourist attraction famous for its historic background, beautiful scenery, and its wine and cheese. Several preservation groups representing descendents of different periods of Nauvoo history have been active in recent years, restoring, maintaining, interpreting, excavating and in some cases, reconstructing historic structures. Nauvoo Restoration Incorporated, funded by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, with headquarters in Salt Lake City, Utah, have since 1962 developed an extensive program which involves buying as much property within Nauvoo as possible, restoration, archeological investigation and reconstruction of historic sites, in order to rebuild Nauvoo to its ca. 1846 appearance, before the forced migration to Utah. This plan includes the removal of all post-1846 features and has caused the removal of a number of buildings significant in the post-Mormon period when the communistic Icarians lived in Nauvoo. The Icarians used much of the stone from the demolished temple to construct their public buildings, a number of which remain today. However, the Icarians dining halls and apartments which were located near the Temple site have been totally removed since Nauvoo Restoration Inc. began their archeological project there (see enclosed plan of Temple Square).

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Nauvoo Restoration Inc. presently owns in excess of 2000 acres in Nauvoo. Besides restoration, excavation and reconstruction of historic properties within the historic area according to a plan which calls for work on a certain number of sites per year, the group in 1971 dedicated a million dollar visitor center, a modern red brick structure on a 16 acre site located on the flats overlooking the river and just north of the concentration of their historic structures, used for interpretation and missionary work. They have also just completed a landscaped open-air amphitheater built into a hill at Inspiration Point, planned as a stage for huge pageants.

Joseph Smith's widow and family stayed in Nauvoo after his death and in 1860 his son formed the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints which has its own preservation program for maintaining several important structures from the Mormon period including the Joseph Smith Homestead, the Mansion House and Nauvoo House, all original and extant properties, as well as the graves of Joseph and Hyrum Smith and about 400 acres along the southern section of the historic district. Called the Joseph Smith Historic Center, they maintain these restored structures as well as some archeology sites which have been excavated and left identified.

A number of Nauvoo residents are descendants of the Icarians, and in recent years these people have become more interested in documenting the Icarian experience in Nauvoo. Although they do not maintain any historic structures, the town of Nauvoo, through the office of the mayor, has worked to develop tourist potential of the town and interpretation of the area which includes various periods of Nauvoo's history and the town recently backed the restoration of an Icarian stone bridge.

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Nauvoo Guide, American Guide Series of Federal Writers Project (Chicago 1939).

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north of range eight west of the fourth principal meridian, in the county of Hancock, and running thence west to the northwest corner of said section, thence north to the Mississippi River, thence west to the middle of the main channel of the said river, thence down the middle of said channel to a point due west of the south east corner of fractional Section No. twelve, in township six north of range nine west of the fourth principal meridian, thence east to the south east corner of said Section twelve, thence north on the range line between township six north and ranges eight and nine west, to the south west corner of Section six in township six north of range eight west, thence east to the south east corner of said Section, thence north to the place of beginning.

Also included within the landmark boundary, but not within the town boundary, is the oldest Mormon cemetery, a small rectangular plot located at the southeast corner of the district and labeled on the USGS map as Pioneer Saints Cemetery.

Within present day Nauvoo there are many modern structures, residential and commercial which are incompatible with the mid-nineteenth century character of the Mormon period, and these twentieth century features do not contribute to the national significance of the landmark. A great deal of Mormon Nauvoo is no longer visible but may be studied through archeological investigation of the historic sites, other extant features have been adapted for use by later residents, and no single unified area can be drawn to incorporate the most important structures and sites without modern intrusions. The Mormons did control and plan development of the whole town area as described in the 1840 act of incorporation, and the extant features of the original Mormon community are so scattered throughout the whole town area that the entire acreage plus the oldest cemetery is included within the boundary.

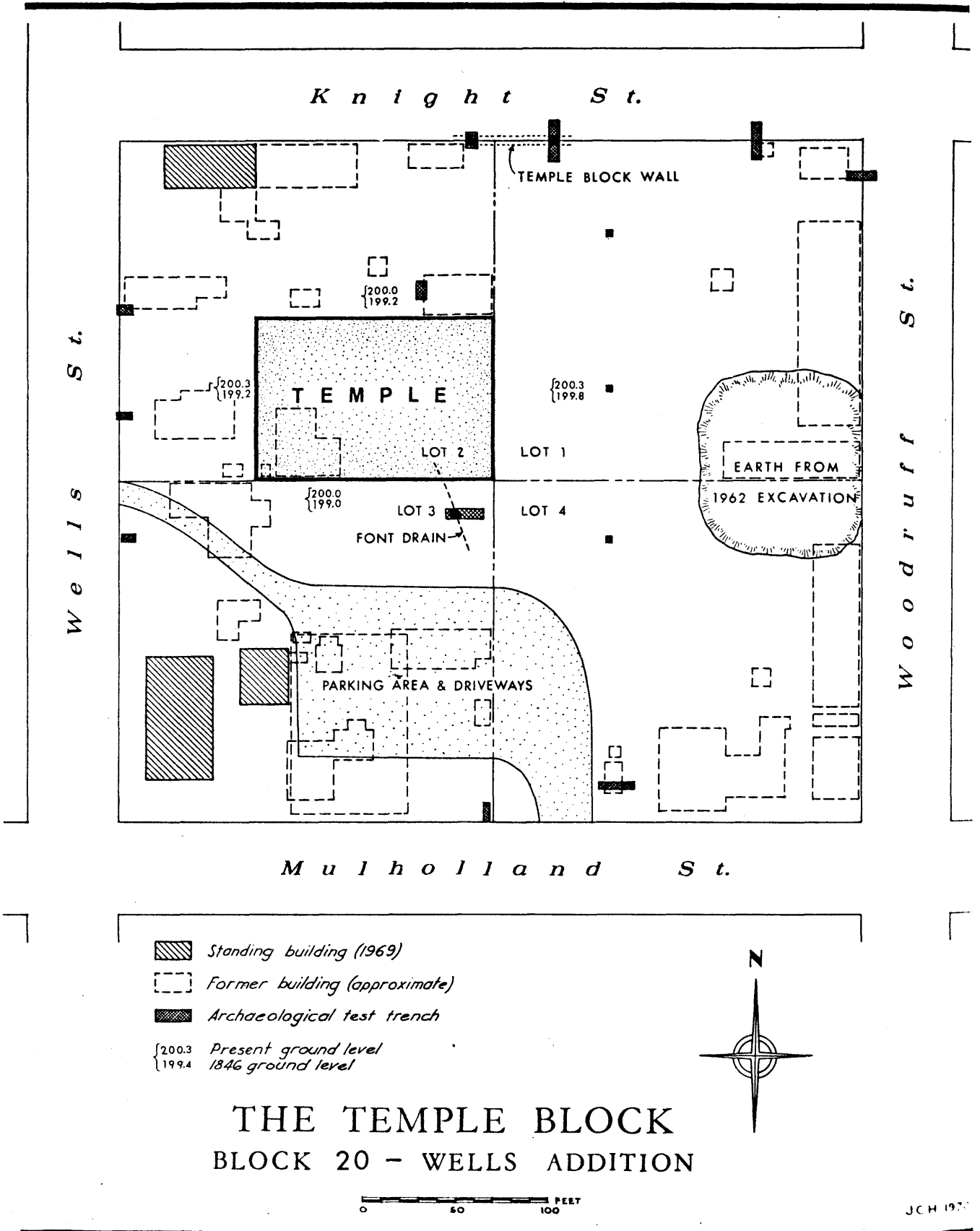


FIGURE 3. - PLOT PLAN OF TEMPLE BLOCK, including location of exploratory trenches and later buildings.