

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

6/3/86

date entered

JUN 27 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 1301-1319 W. 35th Avenue n/a not for publication

city, town Denver, n/a vicinity of

state Colorado code 08 county Denver code 031

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Denver Revitalization Partnership III, Ltd. c/o Marvin Kelly

street & number 3401 Pecos Street

city, town Denver, Colorado n/a vicinity of state Colorado 80211

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds

street & number City & County of Denver, 1445 Cleveland Place

city, town Denver, state Colorado

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Colorado Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date Ongoing federal state county local

depository for survey records Colorado Historical Society

city, town Denver, state Colorado

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace is prominently sited on the northwest corner of West 35th Avenue and Lipan Street in a residential neighborhood of small, detached homes--an area historically known as North Denver. The Terrace is a rectangular, two-story brick building, facing south, with a flat roof. Constructed in 1891 and built on a slight incline, the structure is divided in the middle by a stepped cornice and roof porch which create two five-unit sections. The ten units were constructed as five duplexes, i.e., with alternating wood stud and masonry party walls. The building is distinguished by a row of segmentally arched windows on the second floor of the front facade. On the first floor, identical fenestration is repeated throughout, with each unit composed of a segmentally arched doorway and window. The openings are unified by raised brick belt courses on both stories which connect the impost blocks of the doors and windows. A continuous one-story porch extends across the two sections, interrupted by brick piers and railings that separate each unit. The effect of this symmetry gives the facade a pleasing and regular rhythm that is a major characteristic of the Denver Terrace Style.

The east side of the building faces Lipan Street and is therefore a public facade with windows and stone detailing matching that of the front. These bays too, are connected with raised brick belt courses at the stone impost blocks.

At the rear of the building or on the north wall, the exterior is faced with stucco which appears to be the original material. A single two-over-two, double hung wood sash window on the second floor is above the back door of each unit. Each wood back door is flanked by a single, very narrow one-over-one, double hung wood sash window to its east and a single two-over-two, double hung wood sash window to its west--matching the second floor window. As with the front facade, each door in the rear features a glass light and is topped by a transom. All bays are segmentally arched.

The variation of door and narrow and full window openings and the irregular placement of the openings, i.e., one-over-three in each unit, forms a repetitious pattern and syncopated rhythm across the rear wall. This forms an interesting contrast to the more usual and regular rhythm created on the front facade, with its two-over-two openings in each unit.

The exterior is essentially intact except for the brick front porch, added in 1923 to replace the original frame porch. The porch roof, however, appears original and has a denticulated cornice, a beaded board ceiling and scrolled brackets with fleur-de-lis detailing. Other alterations are seen in the removal of the cornice across the front and east walls and the painting of the exterior face brick. The interiors of the units generally have been preserved. They feature beaded board wainscoting along the east wall of the kitchen, plaster walls, and wood baseboards and door and window trim with a decorative profile. The first floor contains the living room and kitchen and a closed stairway to the bedrooms on the second floor. A second stairway, located directly under the first, provides access to a small cellar.

The long narrow backyards have several mature trees, small vegetable or flower garden spaces and double coal houses at the extreme rear. The five coal houses, constructed of ribbed terra cotta faced in stucco, are of significance since few remain intact in Denver. Each coal house has two doors on the south side and two windows on the north rear through which coal was delivered.

(Enclosed photos show the building in its previous condition and current (May, 1986) state of rehabilitation. The cornice shown in the most recent photos is representative of the style used in terraces at the time the building was constructed.)

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 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 1891

Builder/Architect Isaac Percival

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace is historically significant due to 1) its reflection of the unique history, culture and life-style of North Denver, the only Denver neighborhood that was settled and inhabited by successive waves of immigrants; 2) its use as the first home of many immigrants upon arriving in Denver; and 3) its intactness, the building has been only moderately altered over the 95 years since its construction.

From its founding until after World War II, North Denver welcomed first the Irish, then Italian and finally the Hispanic immigrant. This area just across the Platte River from downtown became Denver's one "ethnic" neighborhood for a variety of reasons: its central location near major employers; its ethnic Catholic Churches; and its unusually dense and inexpensive housing stock, particularly its terraces.

Unlike Eastern and Midwestern cities with their multi-storied, crowded walk-ups, Denver tended, even in early days, to spread out across the vast plains. For its poor and working classes however, Denver offered the "Denver Terrace," a tenement row house of modest proportions, frequently built on an incline, with separate garden spaces and economical "duplex" construction (see #7 "Description").

In North Denver, the immigrants' point of embarkation, the terrace took on a unique character. It provided housing for the newcomers flocking to the new mining and transportation capital, and it became a communal support structure for large immigrant families whose fathers were absent working in the mines or laying tracks for Denver's growing railroads. Just as the lives of the immigrants were affected by their noisy, crowded quarters, so the immigrants left their marks on the terraces--in the bright coats of paint, the well-kept gardens, the outdoor ovens and even the bootleg stockpiles.

Today in North Denver, only four (one significantly altered) terraces remain of the sixteen which brought to Denver, sheltered and acted as a springboard into the larger society, the immigrant groups who helped build a small town into a city.

Background

Denver City was founded in 1858 by Gen. William Larimer. At the same time Larimer staked his claim on Denver City, he waded across the frigid Platte River to also stake a claim on what he called Highland, the gentle slope from the bank of the Platte to a hilly, high area to the north.¹ However, in order for Highland to develop and prosper, a channel for passage from the larger city of Denver had to be established. Therefore, in 1859 a passenger ferry across the Platte River began operations. It was replaced in 1860 with the first bridge spanning the Platte and linking Highland with the rest of the City.² 1859 marked an important year in the history of Highland for another reason as well. In 1859 when the merger of Denver City and Auraria took place, Highland was included and became an official part of the "new" larger City of Denver. As a part of the new city of Denver, Highland officially became known as "North Denver".³

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Attachment

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 0.3587

Quadrangle name Arvada, CO

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	3	4	9	9	7	2	0	4	4	0	1	5	6	5
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

Zone			Easting				Northing							

D

Zone			Easting				Northing							

E

Zone			Easting				Northing							

F

Zone			Easting				Northing							

G

Zone			Easting				Northing							

H

Zone			Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20, Block 70, Viaduct Addition to Denver, according to the recorded plat thereof, City and County of Denver, State of Colorado.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Marvin Kelly, President

organization Thirty-Fifth Avenue Corporation, General Partner
Denver Revitalization Partnership III, Ltd. date May 29, 1986

street & number 3401 Pecos Street telephone (303) 433-0924

city or town Denver, state Colorado

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Barbara Sudler

title State Historic Preservation Officer date May 29, 1986

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

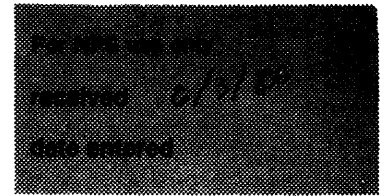
William B. Bushong date 6/27/86
for Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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In 1870, Denver became the link for two major rail lines connecting both coasts, the Great Lakes Region, and the Mississippi and Missouri heartlands.⁴ With the coming of the railroads to Denver, the city experienced tremendous growth. The railroad afforded easy access to the city for tourists, for people seeking a healthy climate with clean air and for a new class of working people--the immigrants.

At the same time that Denver was experiencing an industrial boom, North Denver continued to develop. As Gen. Larimer had predicted, Highland was becoming a highly desirable place in which to live. The Denver Daily Tribune of October 29, 1873, called it "...what is soon to be the very heart of a populous and prosperous part of Denver. The high handsomely located grounds would be of ready sale and eagerly caught up for building purposes."

Although North Denver first attracted the elite,⁵ as industry grew, it began to attract a different group of residents--the immigrants who were drawn to the area by the promise of work in the nearby rail yards and smelters. First came the Irish. To them, North Denver seemed a logical place to settle. Very early, St. Patrick's, (Irish) Catholic Church, was established and also attracted more Irish to the area. Equally important as nearby work and church, however, was the modest and inexpensive housing being built in North Denver.

The Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace

In 1891, in the midst of the immigration population boom, Thomas Niblock, an Irish immigrant who came to Denver ca. 1880 and worked as a grocer and stock grower, built the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace. He chose its location to be close to St. Patrick's Church and the Denver rail yards located only blocks away in the Central Platte River Valley. The contractor for the building was Isaac Percival, a carpenter, who also built several of the small residences in the immediate area.⁶

By 1890, North Denver was predominantly Irish, and a look through the names of people residing at the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace at the turn of the century reveals that the building had a substantial showing of English and Irish immigrants: miner Charles Rose, immigrant Mary Sullivan and her 6 children, rail engineer Joseph Higginson, Patrick McGinnity, who lived with his wife and five children and worked as a fireman at the Denver Gas and Electric Co. and Frank Monahan who immigrated to the United States from Ireland at age 18, and moved to Denver in 1905 to work the rail yards.⁷

Little Italy

Close on the heels of the Irish, came the Italian immigrants, some of whom were brought specifically to work for the railroads. Italian immigrants came from both Northern and Southern Italy, and their experience varied depending on which area of Italy had been their home. Northern Italians, who tended to have an industrial background, generally found jobs in mining or in the nearby Argo and Globeville smelters. Many of the miners, who would be away from their homes and families all week working out of town, returned home on Saturday evenings for a few short hours of rest before leaving again.⁸ Southern Italians, whose life's work had usually been farming, were attracted to North Denver due to its proximity to the fertile Platte River Valley and its environmental similarity to their homes in Italy.⁹ They established lush truck farms along the banks of the Platte.

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In 1894, the Italians built their own Catholic Church, Our Lady of Mount Carmel. During the subsequent years they developed businesses to serve their own population. These included barber shops, restaurants, imported food stores, green grocers, etc.¹⁰ By the 1920's, Italians replaced the Irish as the predominate ethnic group in North Denver. Soon North Denver became known as Denver's "Little Italy."

The Italian influence is seen in the ownership and occupancy of the Terrace beginning when the building was bought by Berardino Yacovetta in September, 1917.¹¹ Yacovetta had been brought to Denver by his cousin, Sal Lombardi. Yacovetta, in turn, sponsored many family members and other immigrants. This sponsorship in which a family or extended family member provided employment, housing and other assistance to new arrivals (often for a fee or a percentage of wages) was known as the "patron system." Another unique characteristic of the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace is that during its thirty year ownership by Berardino Yacovetta, it housed many of the immigrants Yacovetta sponsored.¹²

Long-time residents of the Terrace during Yacovetta's ownership (until 1947) were Anthony Longo, Joseph Lombardi, Frank Barella, Phil Longo and Dominic Troilo. Phil Longo worked in North Denver as a boilermaker while living in the terrace in the early 1920's and later went on to own his own iron works and iron foundry, "Longaro's Sheetmetal and Iron Foundry." Similarly, Troilo went on to own his own construction business and built many of the larger and more elegant homes throughout North Denver.¹³

Whether Southern or Northern Italian, miner or green grocer these settlers were first and foremost Italian and intent upon retaining their very important past and identity. "Little Italy" became a close knit community, an area where the native tongue was spoken and homeland customs, such as baking bread in outdoor ovens, were preserved.

Susie Capra, who grew up on Lipan Street in the house just north of the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace, remembers residents of the terrace lining up at her mother's outdoor oven for samples of freshly baked bread. During Yacovetta's ownership of the building, the country was "suffering" under prohibition, and North Denver gained the reputation as being "bootlegger's heaven." Capra remembers a police raid at the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace which "opened up a huge operation."¹⁴ Mrs. Virginia Mancinelli, whose family has operated an Italian market in North Denver since 1921, is quick to point out that "everyone" was involved in bootlegging during this period and that no social stigma was attached. She also remembers Italian families who lived in the Terrace making use of the large rear yards for lush flower and vegetable gardens¹⁵.

By the beginning of World War II, through generations of hard work, the Italians had bettered themselves economically and the descendants of the original Italian families settled in more affluent parts of town. North Denver (and the Terrace) had served its purpose as a springboard to a more affluent lifestyle.

The Hispanic Influence

At this same time, Denver was becoming the winter headquarters for many Hispanics who worked in the beet fields to the north. However, the Hispanic influx of immigrants differed from the Italian movement into North Denver because the individual people were from backgrounds which were more culturally diverse. Some Hispanic immigrants were Mexican and some were Spanish, and some part Native American. Because of their cultural

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differences, the Hispanic people coming into Denver did not draw together geographically as dramatically as did the Irish and Italians.¹⁶ However, a strong working class Hispanic community did begin to evolve in North Denver, and steadily, the Italians were replaced by Hispanic families as the third major ethnic group to live in the neighborhood and in the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace. They were attracted by Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, built in 1947, and again by the supply of inexpensive and available housing.

The Terrace Style

One of the basic forms of this inexpensive worker or tenement housing in Denver is the Denver Terrace. According to the Colorado Historical Society's Guide to Colorado Architecture this Terrace Style architecture is characterized as one or two-story brick buildings with flat roofs and corbelled or separate bracketed cornices.¹⁷ The Terrace Style was used throughout Denver and often as housing for the working class; however, the terraces in North Denver including the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace were unique in that they served an immigrant population. For instance, a survey of the residents of the Hanigan Terrace, one of the other remaining pre-1893 Terrace apartment buildings in North Denver, shows a similar immigrant occupancy pattern: Irish immigrants followed by Italian followed by Hispanic. This has been confirmed by long-time residents who remember that the speculative rental units in North Denver were primarily occupied by immigrant families as their "first-stop" housing.¹⁸

This is also reflected in the modest design and construction of the units. In addition, since there are few alterations, the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace preserves a strong sense of the living conditions of working men and women: The small two bedroom units with coal houses in the large individual rear yards and separate front and rear entrances for each unit were only minutes from Denver's busy rail yards.

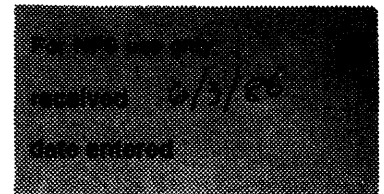
According to the Sanborn (Insurance) Maps more than sixteen large Terrace Style tenement buildings had been constructed in North Denver prior to the Silver Crash of 1893. After the Depression initiated by the Silver Crash, very few large speculative apartment buildings were constructed, and the Terrace Style was manifested in duplex or triplex units.

The early examples of the Terrace Style in North Denver were, for the most part, all multi-unit buildings--none more prominent than the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace. It is unique in that it is the largest example in square footage, number of units and the size of its site, more than 15,000 square feet. Of the three remaining terraces that have not been significantly altered, the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace is both on the exterior and interior in far superior condition. It is also apparent that the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace had an important influence on the developing domestic architecture in North Denver. This is seen in the design and construction of the multitude of Terrace Style duplex and single family detached homes that were built after 1893, following the construction of the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace.

For the most part, the people who lived in the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace were not wealthy or important leaders, they were, however, vital links in the growth and development of Denver. For it was these people who built the railroads, farmed the valley, mined gold, silver and coal, worked the smelters and implemented the ideas that led Denver to realize its potential as a city.

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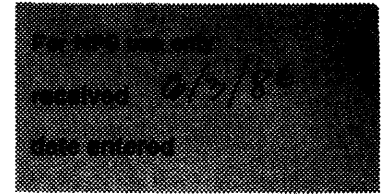
There are many factors that brought and kept the various immigrant groups to North Denver. These include the closeness of North Denver to jobs provided by the rail yards and the river bed, and also the Catholic Churches which provided immigrants with a link to their native cultures. In addition, however, is the very important fact that in North Denver immigrants found inexpensive housing like the Niblock-Yacovetta Terrace, that was both affordable and available.

Footnotes

- 1 Ruth E. Wiberg, Rediscovering Northwest Denver (Denver: Bradford Printing Company, 1976), p. 7.
- 2 Wiberg, p. 7.
- 3 Wiberg, p. 8.
- 4 Lyle Dorsett, The Queen City: A History of Denver (Boulder: Pruett Publishing Company, 1977), p. 21 - 23.
- 5 Wiberg, p. 10 - 13.
- 6 Building Permit Application #361, March 31, 1891.
- 7 Denver City Directory, 1898-1905; 1909-1911.
- 8 U.S. Census, 1900 and 1910.
- 9 Wiberg, p. 44.
- 10 Interview: Anthony Capiloupo, 7 May, 1986.
- 11 Dorsett, p. 175.
- 12 Master Property Books, Denver Tax Assessor's Office
- 13 Interview: Capiloupo
- 14 Denver City Directory, 1910-1912; 1920-1929
- 15 Householders Directory, 1926-1950
- 16 Householders Directory, 1926-1950
- 17 Interview: Susie Capra, 27 June, 1985.
- 18 Interview, Virginia Mancinelli, 8 May, 1986.
- 19 Wiberg, p. 46-49.

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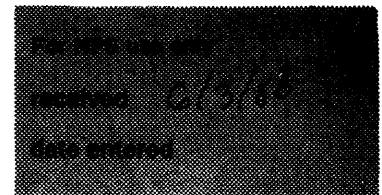
Sarah J. Pearce and Merrill A. Wilson, Guide to Colorado Architecture (Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1983), p. 31-31.

18

Sanborn Maps, 1887, 1890, 1893 and 1920.

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Pearce, Sarah J. and Wilson, Merrill A., Guide to Colorado Architecture. Denver: Colorado Historical Society, 1983.

Turk, Gayle, Trial and Triumph Colorado Springs: Little London Press, 1978.

Wiberg, Ruth E., Rediscovering Northwest Denver. Denver: Bradford Printing Company, 1976.

Building Permit Application #361, March 31, 1891.

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Denver Householders Directory, 1923-1956.

Master Property Books, Denver Tax Assessors Office.

Sanborn Maps - 1887, 1890, 1893 and 1920.

U.S. Census - 1880, 1900, 1910

Interviews:

Capiloupo, Mr. Anthony, North Denver resident, 5 May, 1986.

Capra, Ms. Susie, North Denver resident, 27 June, 1985.

Gallagher, Senator Dennis, State Senator, 24 September, 1985,

Mancinelli, Ms. Virginia, North Denver resident, 8 May, 1986.

Wiberg, Ms. Ruth Eloise, author, 13 August, 1985.

Zambelli, Mr. Ernest, North Denver resident, 7 May, 1986.