

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0680559

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	JUL 31 1978
DATE ENTERED	NOV 1978

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Clay Building

AND/OR COMMON

The Clay Building

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

1001 - 1007 Clay Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Oakland

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

87th

STATE

California

CODE

06

COUNTY

Alameda

CODE

001

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Spencer and Roberta Kaitz

STREET & NUMBER

6301 Wood Drive

CITY, TOWN

Oakland

— VICINITY OF

STATE

California

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Alameda County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

1225 Fallon Street

CITY, TOWN

Oakland

STATE

California

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None known

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Clay Building is a three story turn-of-the-century venacular commercial brick building embellished with simple classic detailing. Brick pilasters, segmental arched windows, and a classic denticulated cornice delineate the otherwise plain facade. Originally a balustrade system defined the streetside roofline. The ground floor facade remains remarkably unchanged.

The interior is of heavy timber construction, post and beam. Roof trusses, open to view on the third floor, span 48 feet. Girders measuring 8" by 14", standing on edge on posts, hold up the third floor. Some of the girders run an unusual 45 feet in length as a single piece, though supported by several posts.

Reflecting its design as a plant for light industry, the upper floors are built as expansive, wide-open spaces, broken only by intermittent posts without partitions. It appears that nothing is changed from the original construction.

The original work area on the third floor is bathed in light coming in through 10 large skylights and 30 window openings to the street. The second floor also, at one time, received skylight through three large cutouts in the ceiling which have since been covered.

Running along the window walls of the second floor is a 16-foot wide band of "improved" space which suggests that this area was used as office space for clerical workers; but it appears that no partitions were erected which might have blocked off light to the production area.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) ethnic history
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1901 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### Architecture:

The Clay Building is architecturally significant as the only surviving structure built to house light industry on its upper floors in Oakland's historic commercial district. It is important as a fine example of a venacular commercial brick building which employed post and beam and load-bearing wall construction techniques in an age when steel-reinforced industrial architecture had become commonplace.

The upper floors, with their wide-open spaces and generous natural skylighting, reveal much about turn-of-the-century industrial architecture. Each floor also has 30 windows admitting light from the street sides. The surviving electrical wiring indicates that sewing stations were scattered about the open floor.

The building has a full basement extending through vaulted brick arches under the sidewalk--typical of Oakland's substantial brick blocks after 1875. The under-sidewalk allowed for delivery of stored merchandise.

Because it was an industrial building, the entry to the upstairs is located at the least valuable corner of the building, not on valuable store frontage. Most other brick blocks of the period had upstairs devoted to hotels and offices, and their entry stairs were on prime frontage.

### Commerce:

This building was built around the time that Clay and Washington Streets began to become the prime commercial streets of Oakland. Clay Street had the large furniture stores, and this building was built with spacious stores, with mezzanines, to take advantage of this boom. After 1925, the vital shopping district moved even further north, and Clay Street began a precipitous decline. At numerous intervals, the building was used for furniture-related activities. After demolition is completed for redevelopment, the stores in this building will be the only surviving reminders of the earlier era.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps of Oakland, 1889, correct to 1901 (Vol. I, p. 15)
- Sanborn Map Co., Insurance Maps of Oakland, 1902 (Vol. I, p. 6)
- Polk's Oakland Directory, 1911 (Oakland, 1911)
- Polk's Oakland Directory, 1926 (Oakland, 1926)
- Rosenbaum, Fred. Free to Choose: Making of a Jewish Community in the American West (1976)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 1/4 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME _____			QUADRANGLE SCALE _____		
UTM REFERENCES					
A	10	563900	4184000	B	
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C				D	
E				F	
G				H	

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See Continuation Sheet, Item 10.

## 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

Thomas M. Wolf

ORGANIZATION

Historian, Laney College

DATE

5/7/78

STREET & NUMBER

5449 Thomas Avenue

TELEPHONE

415-655-7384

CITY OR TOWN

Oakland

STATE

California

# 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

*Kroy Mellon*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 7/10/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11.20.78

ATTEST:

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 11.17.78

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 1

Ethnic history:

A door leading to the third floor announces the Eliopoulos Hellenic Company, Manufacturers of Egyptian Cigars. Oakland had numerous ethnic colonies after 1890, one of which was made up of Greek immigrants, whose life centered in nearby West Oakland, and in the Greek Church on nearby Brush Street. Many Greeks opened confectionary shops. Theodore Eliopolous, who came to Oakland as a confectioner, then started the cigarette company in 1909. He had earlier worked in a cigarette factory in New York City. The new company soon was overwhelmed by the Oakland Tobacco Company (whose sign appears in the enclosed 1912 photo). In 1911 the company was owned by one John Fisher, and it soon moved, without Eliopoulos, to Webster Street.

Oakland had a significant Jewish community dating back to the Gold Rush. Most of the early Jews became prominent clothiers. But the Jews who arrived with the larger immigration from Russia after 1890 found opportunities mainly in the used-goods business. Many of these became prominent merchants--Clar, Kushin, Ed Bercovich. A relative of Bercovich, David Bercovich, operated as an auctioneer in the Clay Building after 1926, after working for a junk dealer on 4th Street.

Industry:

Of great importance, the building was the temporary headquarters of the Levi Strauss Company of San Francisco, then a manufacturer of riveted clothing for the wholesale trade. When the Strauss plant was damaged in the 1906 earthquake, the company moved its executives, staff and operatives into the Clay Building. They stayed there from April through September, then returned to San Francisco. The quake was an extremely important factor in the meteoric growth of Oakland in the following decade.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE

Portion of Block 146, as said block is shown on Boardman's Map of Oakland, filed April 23, 1883, Map Book 17, Page 14, Alameda County Records, described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the northeastern line of 10th Street, with the northwestern line of Clay Street; running thence along said line of 10th Street, northwesterly 80 feet; thence at right angles northeasterly, 118 feet; thence at right angles southeasterly, 80 feet to said line of Clay Street; thence along the last named line, southwesterly 118 feet to the point of beginning.



OAKLAND, CA.

147

1902

JEFFERSON ST.

6" W. Pipe

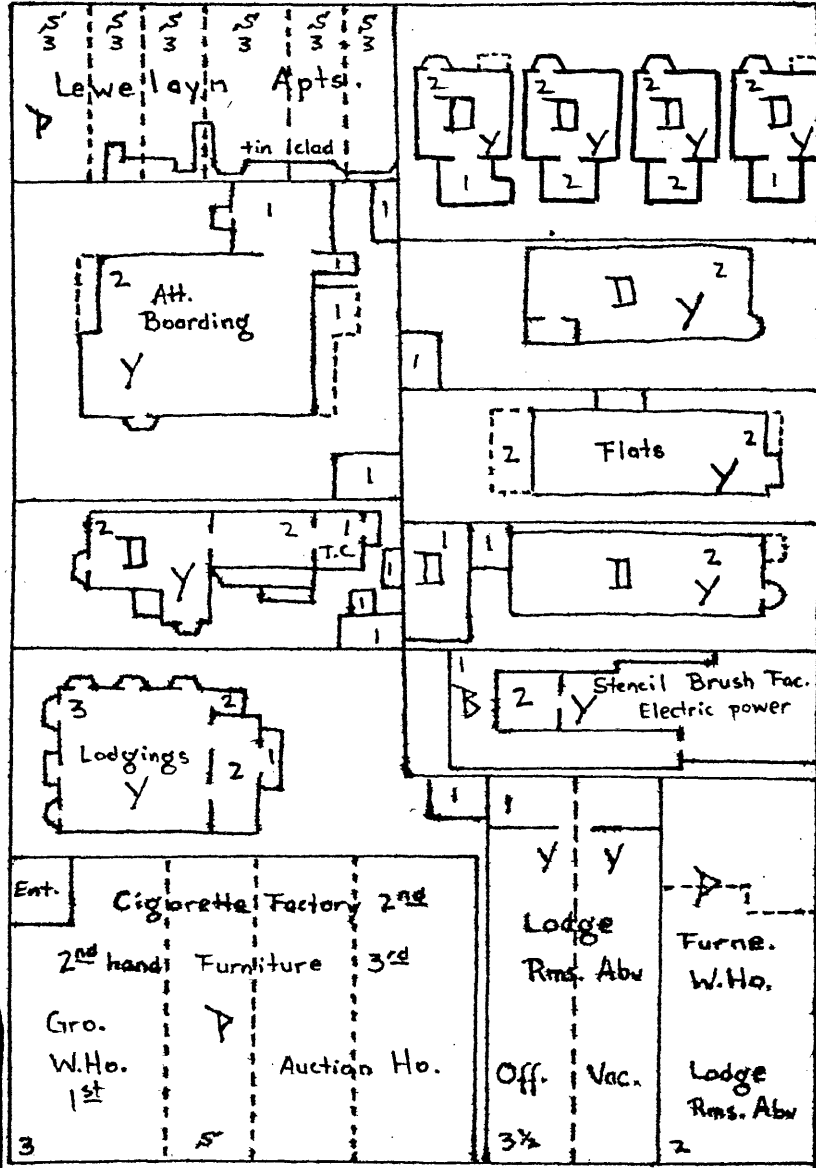
4" W. Pipe

10TH ST.

4" W. Pipe

8" W. Pipe

1902 →



15TH ST.

4" W. Pipe

4" W. Pipe

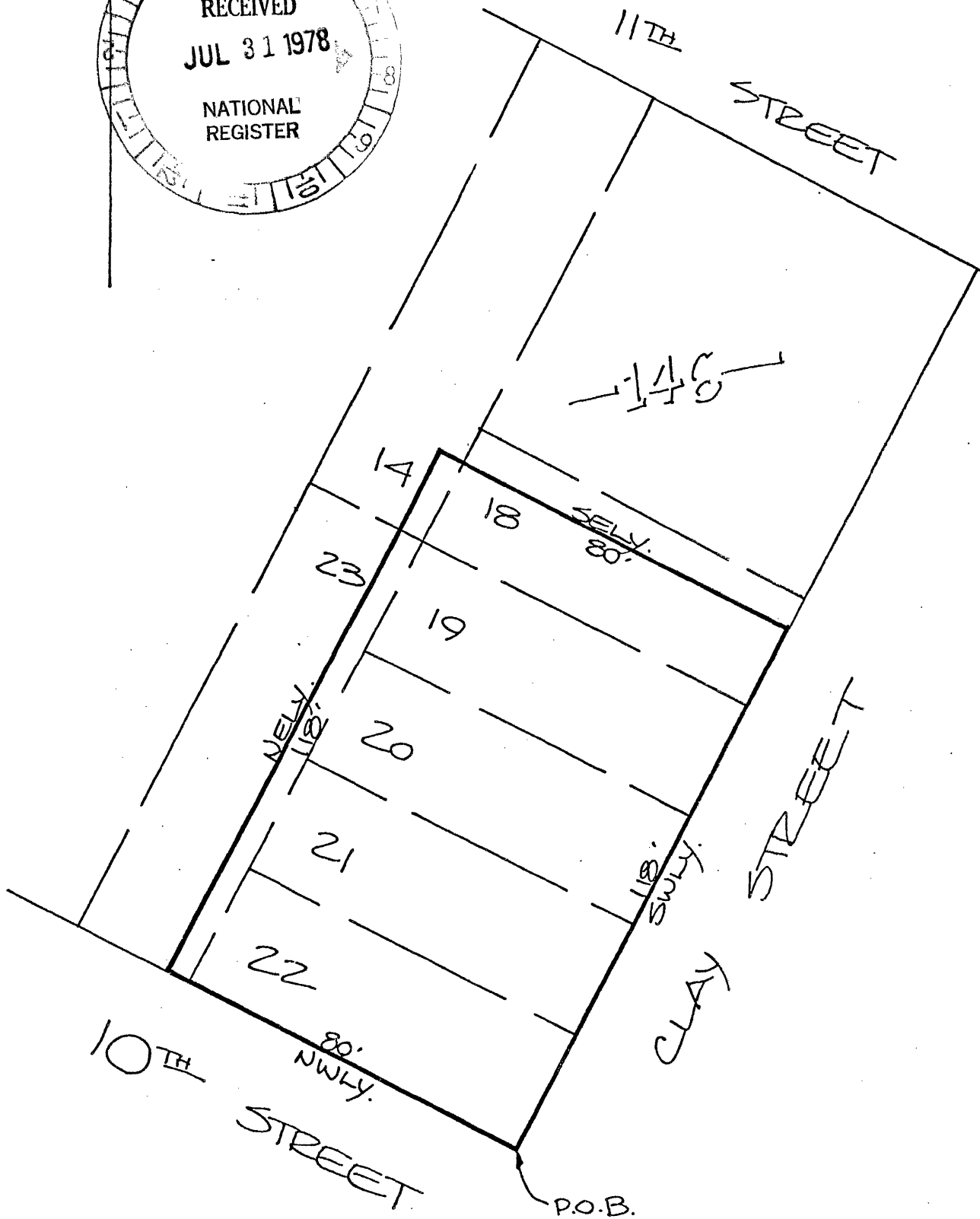
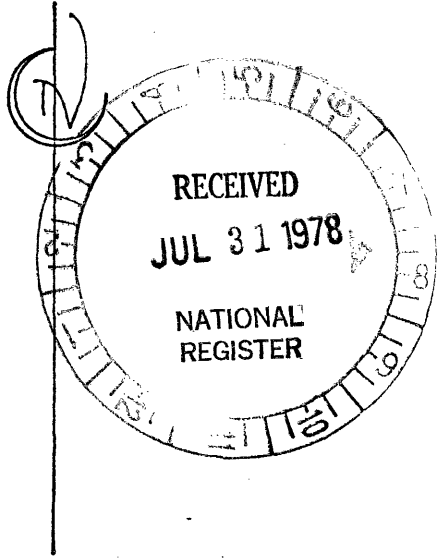
CLAY ST.

4" W. Pipe

6" W. Pipe



504433  
KELLERBERGER'S  
OAKLAND



FORM 4119

THIS PLAT IS NOT A SURVEY OF THE LAND BUT IS  
COMPILED FOR INFORMATION ONLY BY FIRST AMERICAN TITLE COMPANY  
FROM DATA SHOWN BY THE OFFICIAL RECORDS.