FHR-8-300 (11-78)

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

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

1. Name

historic: Meier & Frank Building

and/or common: Meier & Frank Building

2. Location

street & number: 621 S. W. 5th Avenue — n/a not for publication

city, town: Portland — n/a vicinity of — congressional district: Third

state: Oregon — code: 41 — county: Multnomah — code: 051

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	X commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	n/a in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	n/a being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
		___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name: The May Department Store Company

street & number: 611 Olive Street

city, town: St. Louis — n/a vicinity of — state: Missouri 63101

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.: Multnomah County Courthouse

street & number: 1021 S. W. 4th Avenue

city, town: Portland — state: Oregon 97204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: Portland Historic Resources Survey — has this property been determined elegible? X yes ___ no

date: 1981 — ___ federal ___ state ___ county X local

depository for survey records: Portland Bureau of Planning

city, town: Portland — state: Oregon 97205

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
X excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
___ good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date n/a
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Meier & Frank store building is a 15 story steel frame structure that occupies a full block (200' x 200') in the heart of Portland's retail district. Designed by Albert E. Doyle of Doyle & Patterson the white terra cotta clad structure is an example of the Commercial Style with classical ornamentation. Surrounding the store on three sides are other neo-classic buildings of the same era, three of which were also designed by Doyle - the Lipman & Wolfe store to the north, and the Selling and Northwest Bank buildings to the west. Across Morrison street to the south is the Pioneer Courthouse, a National Historic Landmark.

Though designed as a full block structure, it was actually built in three sections (see Sanborn Maps). The first unit, known as the Annex, was completed in 1909. Located in the northwest corner the 10 story wing had a 130' frontage on 6th Avenue and a 100' on Alder Street. The Annex connected with the main five story Meier & Frank building, an 1898 structure designed by Whidden & Lewis, that occupied the east half of the block. The second unit, completed in 1915, has 13 full stories with partial 14th and 15th floors. This wing replaced the 1898 half block store. In 1932 the final unit at the southwest corner was completed, also 13 - 15 stories. This section continued the original Doyle design for the exterior, however, the architect for this work was DeYoung, Moscowitz & Rosenberg of New York with Herman Brookman of Portland, Associate Architect.

STRUCTURE AND PLAN

The exterior structural grid of the completed building has nine bays on the east and west walls, and 10 bays on the north and south. Bays are equally spaced on each wall except the west where the odd property division between the 1909 and 1932 wings caused the bays of the 1932 unit to be approximately two feet wider than those of the 1909 unit. The interior column grid aligns with the exterior on east/west lines but only at the center in the north/south direction where there are 8 equally spaced interior bays opposed to the 10 exterior bays. Typical interior bays measure approximately 22' x 25'. In the 1915 unit the center north/south column line has been eliminated in the central seven bays thereby doubling the east/west spans to 50'.

1909 UNIT

Original entries in the Annex were at the corner of 6th and Alder and in the fifth bay along 6th Avenue near the center of the block. Four passenger elevators were situated along the south wall, and two freight elevators were located in the northeast corner with service from Alder Street. The lone stairway was in the southeast corner. The ground floor was one large open sales area with exterior display windows. Most other

floors, including the basement and sub-basement, were the same except the exterior perimeter housed stock and service areas. The 1909 Annex was a self sufficient entity with its own water well, steam plant, and emergency electrical generating plant. Cost of the 1909 wing was $500, 000.

1915 UNIT

The 1915 unit continued the same basic layout of open store space. Entries were in the center bays of each of the street fronts of the new structure. Ten passenger elevators were added along the west wall and three new freight elevators joined the original two on Alder Street. The sub-basement, basement, and the first through eight floors were used as general sales floors. A grocery, bakery, creamery, and delicatessen occupied all of the ninth floor. The tenth floor which was open in the center for two stories housed a restaurant and other special activities. A mezzanine surrounding the upper tenth level served as a gallery. Floors above were used for service and administration. A large cork lined fur vault occupies a full bay on the 12th floor. The 13th level featured an employees facility which included a kitchen, cafeteria, "hospital", recreation room, rest rooms, an "observatory", and a "girls silence room".

As was the custom of newspapers in 1915, voluminous statistics were published upon the opening of a major new building. In addition to the usual information on height, structure, materials, etc. the following data was prepared by the architects for the new Meier & Frank store:

- Floor area of 11 acres (includes 1909 unit).
- Total building weight of 650, 000, 000 lbs.
- 1, 100, 000 bricks as back-up for terra cotta.
- 2, 400, 000 lbs. of exterior terra cotta.
- 125 miles of structural steel.
- 7 miles of fire sprinkler cable.
- 8 miles of elevator cable.

The mechanical systems included three steam boilers, seven ventilation fans with water curtain air washers to provide fresh air for 10, 000 people, spiral type package conveyors, a central vacuum cleaning system, and an automatic fire sprinkler

system with 5000 sprinkler heads and 4 - 6000 gallon back-up pressure tanks located at the 13th and 14th levels.

Innovative features were the two escalators, the first on the Pacific Coast, located opposite the bank of elevators at the west wall. Escalators operated up and down to the basement and sub-basement, and up only to the fourth floor.

Cost of the 1915 wing was $1, 500, 000.

1932 UNIT

The final section at the southwest corner of the block continued the structural grid of the 1909 unit and matched the 15 stories of the 1915 wing. Also continued was the generally open sales floors of the earlier wings. A coffee shop was added to the Tea Room on the 10th floor and a "Women's Meeting and Writing Room" occupied a part of the 5th floor.

The five elevators added at the south wall replaced the original four in the 1909 wing. A new entry was located in the second bay east of 6th Avenue and the other entry on Morrison Street, in the 1915 wing, moved one bay east. The original corner entry at 6th and Alder (1909 unit) was eliminated and a new entrance was constructed in the second bay east of 6th and Alder Street. Other entrances remained making a total of six four-day entries for the entire block.

The $3. 5 million addition made the Meier & Frank Building, with 650, 000 square feet of floor space, the largest commercial structure in the State. It held that position until 1972 when the First National Bank Tower was erected.

INTERIOR FINISH

Little is known of the interior finishes and store fixture design of the 1909 unit other than the walls and ceilings were plaster and the floors were generally of maple. The ground floors may have had some classical decoration, but on the upper stories the sales spaces could best be described as utilitarian with plain painted wall surfaces and exposed plaster covered beams and girders. Any "decor" was contributed by the fixtures and the goods on display. Except for certain specialized areas the upper sales floors are the same today.

In 1915 according to newspaper accounts, the 1909 interior was remodeled to match the new wing. The only remaining evidence of the ground floor interior are the architectural drawings which detail the entrance vestibules in a classical manner - coffered plaster ceilings, marble walls and pilasters with modified Ionic capitals, medallions, bronze grilles with fleur-de-lis motif, and other classical elements. Though extant architectural drawings did not cover other interior details it is likely that the ground floor had some classical ornamentation. Drawings did indicate that walls and ceilings were plaster and floors were maple except for cork tile on the ground floor aisles, fir flooring at the 4th and 5th floors, tile and cement finishes at the 9th, and cement at the 10th.

As part of the 1932 project the entire ground floor, including the entrance vestibules, was remodeled in the Art Deco Style. Featured were plaster column capitals and ceiling ornament, wood paneling, travertine floors, stainless steel trim, and spun aluminum light fixtures. Most of the other 1932 interior work matched the simplicity of earlier counterparts. An exception was the restaurant facility on the 10th floor which occupied nearly half the floor along the west. Included were the Coffee Shop, the Pine Room - a men's dining area - the Georgian Room for private dining, and the main Tea Room. The latter two spaces had Georgian decor that included fluted wood columns and pilasters, beamed ceilings, eliptical arch windows and doorways, and a round arch doorway with a leaded fan light that opened to the Pine Room. Except for the Coffee Shop the dining rooms today are collectively known as the Georgian Room and are essentially as originally designed.

EXTERIOR

The original design for the Annex prepared by Doyle in 1907 was for an eight story structure that repeated the general design of the 1898 Whidden & Lewis unit facing 5th, a five story building clad in buff colored pressed roman brick with cream terra cotta trim (see drawing). In the spring of 1908, Meier & Frank president Sigmund Frank traveled to Chicago, New York and Boston to inspect the leading department stores. Frank was impressed with the new store designs in the East, particularly Louis Sullivan's Carson Pirie Scott Store in Chicago with its gleaming white terra cotta facades. Upon his return to Portland he directed the architect to redesign the exterior in white terra cotta, a material that became a trademark for department stores in Portland and throughout the country. Frank also directed the Doyle office to increase the height of the Annex to 10 stories.

The 1909 facade is divided vertically into five equal bays on Alder Street and six equal bays on 6th Avenue. Horizontal articulation includes continuous belt courses at the second and third floor lines, an architrave and minor cornice at the 10th floor, and a fully developed classical cornice and parapet at the roof.

Except at the entrances, ground floor bays were filled with display windows that featured a low base and a single sheet of plate glass up to the 10 foot level where a continuous iron, bronze, and glass canopy provided rain protection. (A portion of the original canopy remains along the loading area on Alder Street.) Above the canopy were three equally spaced transom lights. Fenestration in the second floor bays consists of a variation of the "Chicago Window" - three double hung wood sash, one light over one, fixed transoms, and the center window slightly wider than the side windows. Window treatment at the third through ninth floors is the same except there are no transoms. Tenth story windows vary from those on typical floors in that they are equal in width.

Except for granite pilaster bases, wood doors and sash, and bronze display window trim, the entire facade is clad with white glazed terra cotta, much of it with rich classical and Renaissance ornamentation. Ground floor pilasters are paneled and have simple undecorated moldings. At the second floor, pilaster and spandrel panels are infilled with a pattern of double-key Greek frets and rosettes. Window surrounds have leaf and lambs tongue ornament. Panelled mullions feature lambs tongue capitals. The belt course at the third floor line is faced with wave scroll decoration.

Pilasters from the third through ninth floors are continuous and have panels with a water leaf molding. Centered in the pilaster base is a stylized triglyph. Capitals consist of a square paneled element with geometric foliage infill topped with a lambs tongue molding, a cornice element, and small corner scroll brackets. Above, the three panel architrave features a beed and reel mold and a lambs tongue course under the plain cornice molding. The main cornice at the roof line consists of dentil and egg and dart courses, wide modillions, and a corona with a plain paneled face. Modillions align with the pilasters and the center window of each bay. The parapet above the cornice features vertically projecting cartouches that align with the modillions.

The vertical corner element above the first floor is treated as a quarter-round quirk miter and is terminated at the ninth level architrave with a cartouche. Above is a free round column extending to the main cornice which originally served as a flagpole base.

Typical bays have a surrounding cable mold. Window frames and mullions are edged in a simple fret pattern. Spandrel panels have a beed and reel molding and flat medallions at the mullion lines.

Exterior treatment of the 1915 wing is essentially the same as that of the 1909 Annex with the addition of two apparent stories and some minor modifications in ornamentation. While the building appears as a 12 story structure it has a full 13th floor that is hidden behind a balustrade. The cornice from the 1909 wing is continued around the 1915 structure. Above the cornice is a simple metal railing instead of the parapet and cartouches of the earlier wing. Paneled pilasters extend two stories from the cornice to the 13th level. Panels have a lambs tongue surround molding and arabesque infill. Pilaster capitals feature a central anthemion and corner volutes. Above is a plain architrave, a frieze with a running arabesque, a cornice with dentils and the crowning balustrade. Windows and window frames are similar to those on typical lower floors. The paneled spandrels at the 11th floor line have guilloche decoration with small cartouches at the window mullion lines. Guilloche paneling is also evident at the pilaster sides and the spandrel soffit of the original central entrance on 5th Avenue - now a display window.

Minor changes in exterior ornament in the 1915 unit include lambs tongue panel molding in the ground floor pilasters, and a simple base for upper story pilasters instead of the base with central triglyph seen in the 1909 wing.

The bronze and glass canopy of the Annex on Alder Street was extended eastward to cover the new entrance. The other entries of the 1915 wing had individual canopies of similar classical design.

The original design for the 1932 wing, prepared by architect Herman Brookman and published in 1929, continued the Doyle design of the 1915 section plus an additional two stories which were not built. (see photo). The only change in ornamentation was the use of the simple molding on the 1909 ground floor pilasters rather than the decorated molding of the 1915 wing.

ALTERATIONS SINCE 1932

INTERIOR

The earliest major alteration took place in the early 1950s when the bank of 10 elevators in the 1915 wing was replaced by a new escalator that traveled to the 12th floor.

While minor alterations occurred throughout the store during the years after 1932 the Art Deco design of the ground floor remained essentially intact until 1964 when a major rehabilitation program began. Work included a complete remodeling of the ground floor and some upper floors, a new heating and air conditioning system, and conversion of the five elevators in the 1932 wing to automatic operation. Some minor elements of the ground floor Art Deco design remain: stainless steel railings, air grills and door trim, and marble walls in the entrance vestibules; railings and travertine steps in basement stairways; and stainless steel elevator trim, floor directory, mail box, and the landmark center clock which has been a popular meeting place for two generations.

The ground floor was remodeled to its present appearance in 1977. Spatially it is still a large open sales area. Detail changes include carpeting and other floor coverings, suspended plaster ceiling, new lighting, and columns with mirrored surfaces at the beveled corners.

EXTERIOR

Changes to the exterior have been relatively minor. As part of the 1960s remodeling program the entrance doors were replaced with tempered glass "Herculite" doors. Granite bases at the display windows have been painted black. Since the 1960s when building codes required large store windows to be of tempered glass, the replacement windows have been installed in two or three pieces with thin aluminum mullions as tempered glass is not manufactured in a size large enough to fit the original openings. Eight of the single panel display windows remain.

In 1976 the central entries on 5th and 6th Avenues were converted to display windows. The formed brass side panels of the earlier doorways remain.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below				
___ prehistoric	___ archeology-prehistoric	___ community planning	___ landscape architecture	___ religion	
___ 1400–1499	___ archeology-historic	___ conservation	___ law	___ science	
___ 1500–1599	___ agriculture	___ economics	___ literature	___ sculpture	
___ 1600–1699	X architecture	___ education	___ military	___ social/ humanitarian	
___ 1700–1799	___ art	___ engineering	___ music	___ theater	
___ 1800–1899	X commerce	___ exploration/settlement	___ philosophy	___ transportation	
X 1900–	___ communications	___ industry	___ politics/government	___ other (specify)	
		___ invention			

Specific dates 1909, 1915, 1932 **Builder/Architect** 1909 - Doyle & Patterson
1915 - Doyle & Patterson
1932 - De Young, Moscowitz & Rosenberg, and Herman Brookman, Associate.

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Meier & Frank Building achieves significance as Oregon's earliest example of the white terra cotta Commercial Style department store, and as the first major commission for A. E. Doyle who went on to dominate the Portland architectural scene during the years 1907 - 1928. In addition the Meier & Frank store is the State's most significant example of the pioneer mercantile house that grew to prominence with the development of Portland and the Northwest. It meets National Register criteria a, b and c.

ARCHITECTURE

Prior to construction of the first unit of the present Meier & Frank Building the area along 5th and 6 th Avenues that would become Portland's retail core was in a state of transition. Nearly half the area was occupied by one and two story frame structures - some residential. A few major 19th-century were located nearby: the 1875 Pioneer Courthouse to the south; McKim, Mead & White's Portland Hotel to the southwest; and to the west, the Romanesque Revival Marquam and Oregonian buildings. And on the east half of the block, where the new store was to be erected, stood the five story, brick Meier & Frank Building designed by Whidden & Lewis in 1898. As previously noted, Doyle's original design for the Annex matched the form and materials of the earlier store building. However, at the direction of the client who had recently seen the completed Carson Pirie Scott store in Chicago the architect redesigned the new store in white terra cotta, a material that would become synonymous with department store design throughout the country. Doyle's Commercial Style design is richly decorated with classical and Renaissance ornament, a characteristic to be seen in virtually all of Doyle's later store and office buildings.

When the Annex opened in 1909 its white terra cotta surface and refined classical ornament was a sharp contrast to the dark stone and red brick of nearby major structures. But within a few years the classical Commercial Style of the new Meier & Frank store became the dominant architectural theme of the area. In 1910 Doyle designed the 10 story, half-block, Lipman & Wolfe store across Alder St. to the north, also clad in white terra cotta with classical ornament. That same year the full block, five story Olds, Wortman & King store (now the Galleria) was completed, again in white terra cotta. The Selling, Northwest Bank, and Morgan buildings, all by Doyle, and the Journal, Yeon, Failing, and Wilcox buildings were all erected prior to World War I.

During the following decade the neo-classical commercial center of Portland had essentially been completed. Most of the major structures were also Doyle designs: the U.S. Bank, Bank of California, and the Pacific and Public Services buildings.

To a remarkable degree the classical character of the 5th and 6th Avenue commercial corridor, started by the Meier & Frank Annex, has been retained to the present day. All of the buildings noted above, and others of the era, are still intact, and have been actively used and well maintained. In a 1970 review of Portland's new commercial architecture, Ada Louise Huxtable wrote in the New York Times:

> "Portland also has some of the most beautifully detailed and dignified early 20th-century classical revival buildings in the country which add Roman richness to the decimated streets."

ALBERT E. DOYLE

A. E. Doyle was born in California but moved to Portland at an early age where his father was a building contractor. Upon completion of the eighth grade in 1891 he apprenticed with Whidden & Lewis, Portland's most prominent architectural firm of the era. After twelve years Doyle went to New York where he pursued design and engineering studies at Columbia and worked in the office of Henry Bacon. In 1906 he received a traveling scholarship and spent most of the year on a "Grand Tour" in Europe.

Early in 1907 after his return to Portland, Doyle opened his office with a partner, construction supervisor William B. Patterson. Within a few months Doyle landed his first major commission, the Annex to the Meier & Frank store. How Doyle, at age 30 and his office open anly a few months, was able to secure such a major project is something of a mystery. It seems likely that he had worked on the 1898 Meier & Frank building while in the Whidden & Lewis office, and that those associations led to his being hired to design the new wing. The Annex design was apparently a great success with the client. Before construction was finished Sigmund Frank directed Doyle to expand the design to a full block store. (Photo #1)

By 1910 Doyle had the largest and most prestigeous architectural practice in Portland. His clients included the city's leading developers, many of whom had previously gone to Whidden & Lewis. The Doyle office's preeminence continued after his untimely death

in 1928 when senior staff members led by Pietro Belluschi carried on the practice. In addition to the downtown Portland buildings cited above the Doyle firm designed the Benson Hotel, Central Library, Reed College and the Broadway Theater, all in Portland, two bank buildings in Seattle, and a group of innovative beach houses on the Oregon and Washington coasts.

Doyle also did other designs for the Meier & Frank Co. and for members of both families. Included were the Meier & Frank Warehouse in northwest Portland, a monument for Sigmund Frank, a house in Portland Heights for Abe Meier, and the original house at Menucha, Julius Meier's summer estate on the Columbia River.

MEIER & FRANK COMPANY

The patriarch of the company, Aaron Meier, was born in Ellerstadt, Bavaria, Germany in 1831. After attending school and working in a brickyard for his uncle he emigrated to the United States in 1855 and joined his older brothers, Julius and Emanuel, in the dry goods business in Downieville, California.

In 1857 Meier went to Portland, a fledging river town only 13 years old, and opened his own store in partnership with a Mr. Mariholtz. The business did well and in 1864 Meier was able to return to Germany to visit his mother and receive his inheritance from his fathers estate - $14,000. During his visit he married Jeanette Hirsch whose brothers and other relatives would later come to Portland to work in the store and prosper in their own businesses (White Stag). Upon their return to Portland Meier discovered he no longer had a business. Mariholtz had suffered reverses and had been forced to sell. Undaunted, Meier established a new store in a 35' x 50' space at the southwest corner of Front and Taylor Streets.

During buying trips to San Francisco Meier became acquainted with Emil Frank, also a German native, who joined Meier as a clerk in 1870. Emil's younger brother Sigmund, who had emigrated to the United States that same year, joined the firm in 1872. A year later Aaron Meier made Emil Frank a partner and the Meier & Frank name was established. During these early years both Frank brothers lived in the Meier home on Third St.

In 1881 the store made its first expansion to an adjacent structure with an entrance on First St. A fire destroyed the store in 1884 and the dry goods company moved to temporary quarters on N. W. First while a new store was under construction. Also in 1884, Sigmund Frank became a partner in the firm.

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The new store building, completed the following year, was a two story masonry structure located on the block immediately west of the old store. The 50' x 200' site extended from First to Second Streets. As if to celebrate the new store Sigmund Frank married the Meier's only daughter, Fannie, that same year. Thus began the familial relationship that well served the business for many years, but in the 1960s would cause great bitterness and the ultimate sale of the largest department store west of Chicago.

In 1888 Emil Frank sold his interest in the business to his brother Sigmund and Aaron Meier. A year later Emil became a partner in a new firm, the Blumauer-Frank Drug Co. 1889 was also the year of two major events in Meier & Frank history: the doubling of the store's floor space to 40, 000 sq. ft. by acquisition of the adjacent Davenport Building at the corner of 2nd and Taylor, and the death of Aaron Meier at age 58.

Sigmund Frank became president of the company at age 39 and it was his dynamic leadership that guided the company through its greatest period of development. In 1891 the firm expanded into the two story building at the corner of 2nd and Yamhill (now the Thomas Mann Bldg.) which gave the store full block frontage on 2nd Street.

1893 saw the incorporation of the store with the stock held by the Meier, Frank, and Hirsch families. Abe Meier, Aaron's eldest son was vice-president and Leon Hirsch, Jeanette Meier's brother was Secretary Treasurer.

Ten years later Sigmund Frank made perhaps his boldest move. Against the advice of nearly everyone Frank pursuaded the company to buy the half-block on 5th Street between Alder and Morrison, at the time an area that was considered a "mercantile wilderness." Frank correctly anticipated the City's growth. When the new five floor store building opened in the fall of 1898 it was an immediate success. Other major stores soon followed and Portland's retail core was established.

Frank again foresaw Portland's growth potential when in 1903-04 the company bought additional property on the block that formed a 100' x 130' parcel adjacent to the 1898 store at the corner of 6th and Alder. The Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905 was a great success and a great stimulus to Portland's growth and economy. In five years the population went from 90, 000 to more than 200, 000. A building boom continued for a decade with the Meier & Frank Company a major participant. In 1907 the decision was made to proceed with the Annex and Doyle and Patterson were employed to design the eight story structure. When completed as a 10 story structure in 1909, planning for a full block expansion was already underway. Construction of the half-block addition which would replace the 1898 building was scheduled for 1910 but was delayed by the death of Sigmund Frank in October of that year.

Abe Meier became president of the company, and his younger brother Julius, trained as a lawyer, was appointed vice-president and general manager. Abe Meier, who never had a permanent desk, spent his time as a "greeter" on the sales floors, while Julius served as the administrator and prime decision maker.

Expansion plans went forward early in 1914 when the Failing Building, across 5th Street to the east, was leased as a temporary annex during demolition of the 1898 store and construction of the new wing. When it opened in the fall of 1915 the company proudly announced that 11 acres of floor space were available for the sale of goods from around the world.

The final parcel of property on the block was acquired in 1925 under a 99 year lease from the Stearns family. Demolition of the five story Stearns Building and construction of the new wing was announced in 1929. Construction began the following year and the new section of the store opened in 1932.

Abe Meier died in 1930 and Julius became president in title as well as fact. Aaron Frank, Sigmund's youngest son and nephew of Julius Meier was appointed vice-president and general manager. (Aaron's older brother Lloyd was something of a dilletante who never participated in store management.) Later that year Julius was thrown into the race for Governor when his close friend and former law partner, and Republican nominee, George Joseph suddenly died. Meier, pledged to Joseph's platform, ran as an Independent and after a bitter campaign and close election was elected Governor.

By most accounts Meier is considered to have been one of Oregon's better Governors. He formed the State Police, initiated free school textbooks, and developed conservation programs to reduce the exploitation and pollution of the State's forests, rivers, and beaches. In addition he was able to reduce state spending and property taxes. At the end of his four year term he was urged to run again for Governor or for U. S. Senator but he declined. Three years later Julius died at his country home on the Columbia River.

By the time Julius Meier became Governor Aaron Frank had achieved effective control of the store, largely through family trusts and stock that Julius Meier had put up as collateral for a loan to cover his losses in the Pacific Bancorporation. Upon Julius' death Aaron Frank became president of the company. Frank, a man of small stature, was described as smart, dedicated, shrewd, cold, arrogant and vindictive. He was at times all of these.

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He also maintained the store's leadership during the 27 years of his presidency, and his influence on City politics was unmatched by any. Frank also led the way in establishing branch stores, the first in Salem in 1955, and the Lloyd Center in 1960.

In 1964 Aaron Frank's position began to unravel. The instant cause was the end of the trusts of his brother Lloyd's children who with Julius' widow and other relatives who had long chafed under Aaron's imperious rule joined a palace revolt led by Jack Meier, only son of Julius. Aaron and his immediate family found themselves with slightly more than 20% of the company stock. To bolster his financial position Aaron sold his family's 200,000 shares to the Broadway-Hale Stores in the hope that they could acquire a controlling interest and keep Aaron in power. Jack Meier's group had a majority of the stock but not the two-thirds needed to effect a tax-free merger with May Department Stores with whom they had sold purchase rights. During 1965 a fierce battle took place to acquire the 20% of the stock that was held by the public, but neither side could break the stalemate.

However there were other internal matters to be dealt with. The majority holdings of the Meier group did allow them to remove Aaron and his son Gerry from the store's board of directors. Leon Harris in the "Merchant Princes" wrote of this incident:

> "In a sad imitation of Aarons own vengeful pettiness, his opponents took away his employee's discount card, his free parking space in the store's garage, and the keys to his handsomely paneled twelfth-floor office. All of this was reported in detail not only in the local press but a continent away in the New York Times, whose headlines announced: FAMILY WINGS WAGE BITTER BATTLE FOR STORE CONTROL."

The struggle for control continued through 1966 when suddenly Broadway-Hale sold the stock acquired from Aaron Frank two years earlier to the May Co. for a net profit of nearly $2.5 million. As Harris commented, "the fox's fury had cost him dear."

Aaron Frank died in 1968. A year later Jack Meier became chairman of the board, a position he held until retirement in 1972. The May Department Stores Co. has maintained the store's dominance in Oregon and has continued the branch expansion begun by Aaron Frank. Today there are six branch stores, a total of 1.83 million square feet of floor space and thousands of employees. The grand classical store in downtown Portland is still the headquarters and flagship of Oregon's largest retail business.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .92

Quadrangle name Portland, Oregon-Washington Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	10	525260	5040490
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Meier and Frank Building occupies Block 173 of the Plat of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

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

state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code
state	n/a	code	county	n/a	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title George A. McMath FAIA

organization Allen-McMath-Hawkins-Architects date December 30, 1981

street & number 213 S. W. Ash Street, # 210 telephone (503) 228-5154

city or town Portland state Oregon 97204

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date May 17, 1982

For HCRS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Oregon Historical Society, Photo File #1734, Doyle & Patterson construction photos, 21 each, 8 x 10, dated September 9, 1908 to July 7, 1909.

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Lockley, Fred, History of the Columbia River Valley from The Dalles to the Sea, Chicago, 1928. Vol. III - biographies on Aaron Meier, p. 715; Abraham Meier, p. 649; Julius L. Meier, p. 709; Sigmund Frank, p. 764; Aaron M. Frank, p. 767.

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Oregonian, June 12, 1929.

Oregonian, October 2, 1932.

Oregon Historical Society, Film Library, 8 reels (4 hours) of 16 mm film on construction of 6th and Morrison wing, 1930-1932.

Oregonian, March 31, 1957.

Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, Mss 3075 - 6, 6a, 6b - original architectural drawings on 1915 wing, ink on linen.

Syracuse University, The George Arents Library, Belluschi - Doyle Collection, architectural drawings for the 1909 wing, ink on linen.

Oregonian, April 16, 1964.

Meier & Frank Co., blue print, blue line or sepia copies of architectural drawings for all three wings; four scrapbooks; miscellaneous photographs.

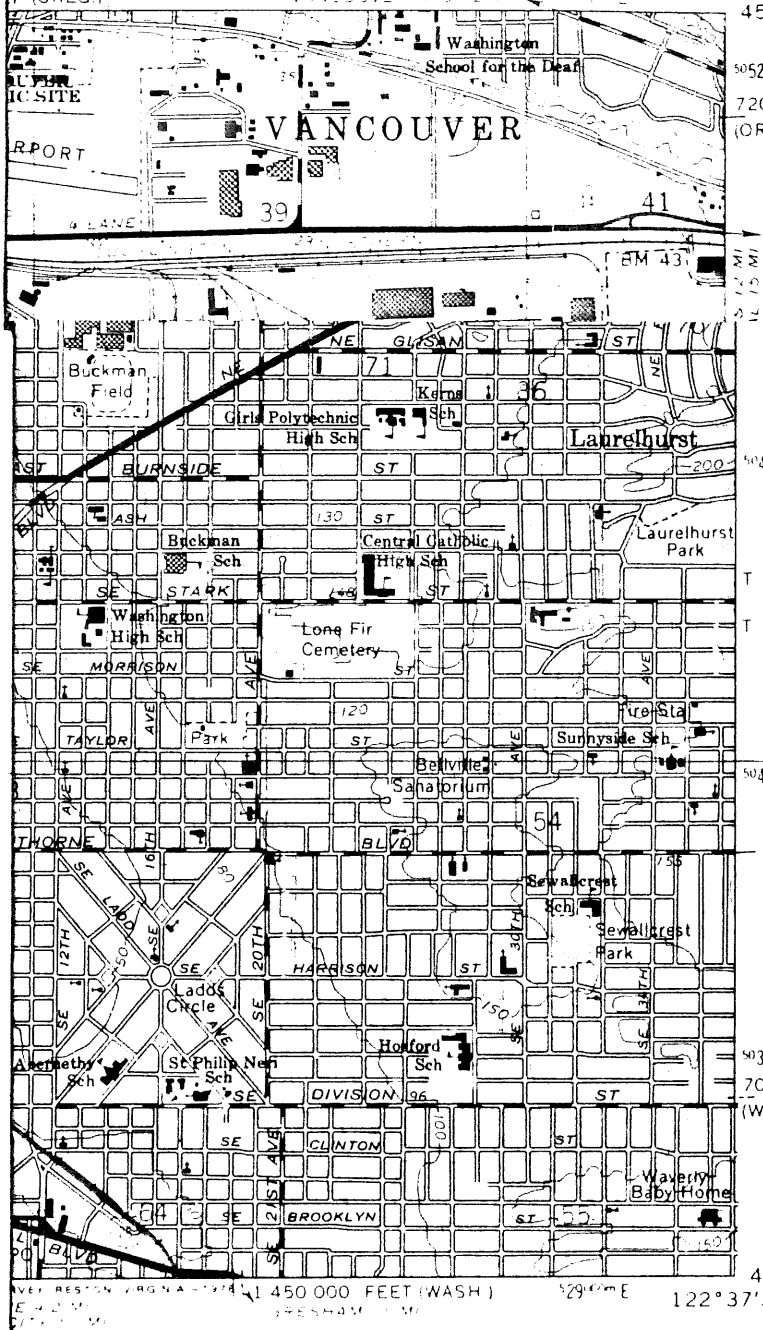
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Vaughan, Thomas, Editor, and Virginia Guest Ferriday, Associate Editor, Space, Style and Structure, Building in Northwest America, Portland, 1974, Vol. 1, p. 326, 327.

Harris, Leon, Merchant Princes, New York, 1979, p. 259-279.

PORTLAND QUADRANGLE
OREGON—WASHINGTON
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
SW 4 PORTLAND 15 QUADRANGLE

(1475 II NE ORCHARDS)



(GLADSTONE 1474 I NE)

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy duty ——— Light duty

Medium duty — — — Unimproved dirt

Interstate Route U S Route State Route

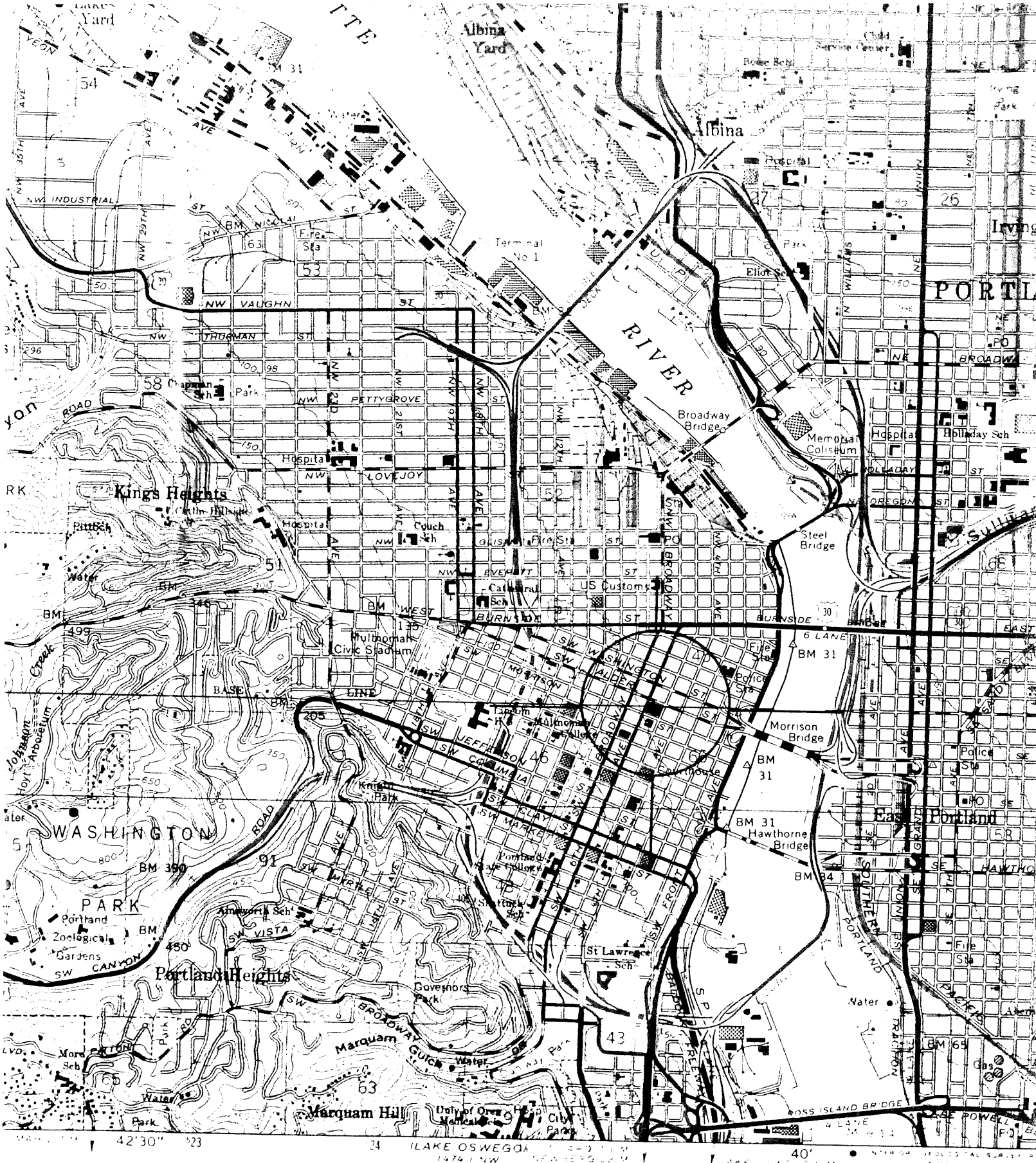
MEIER & FRANK BUILDING

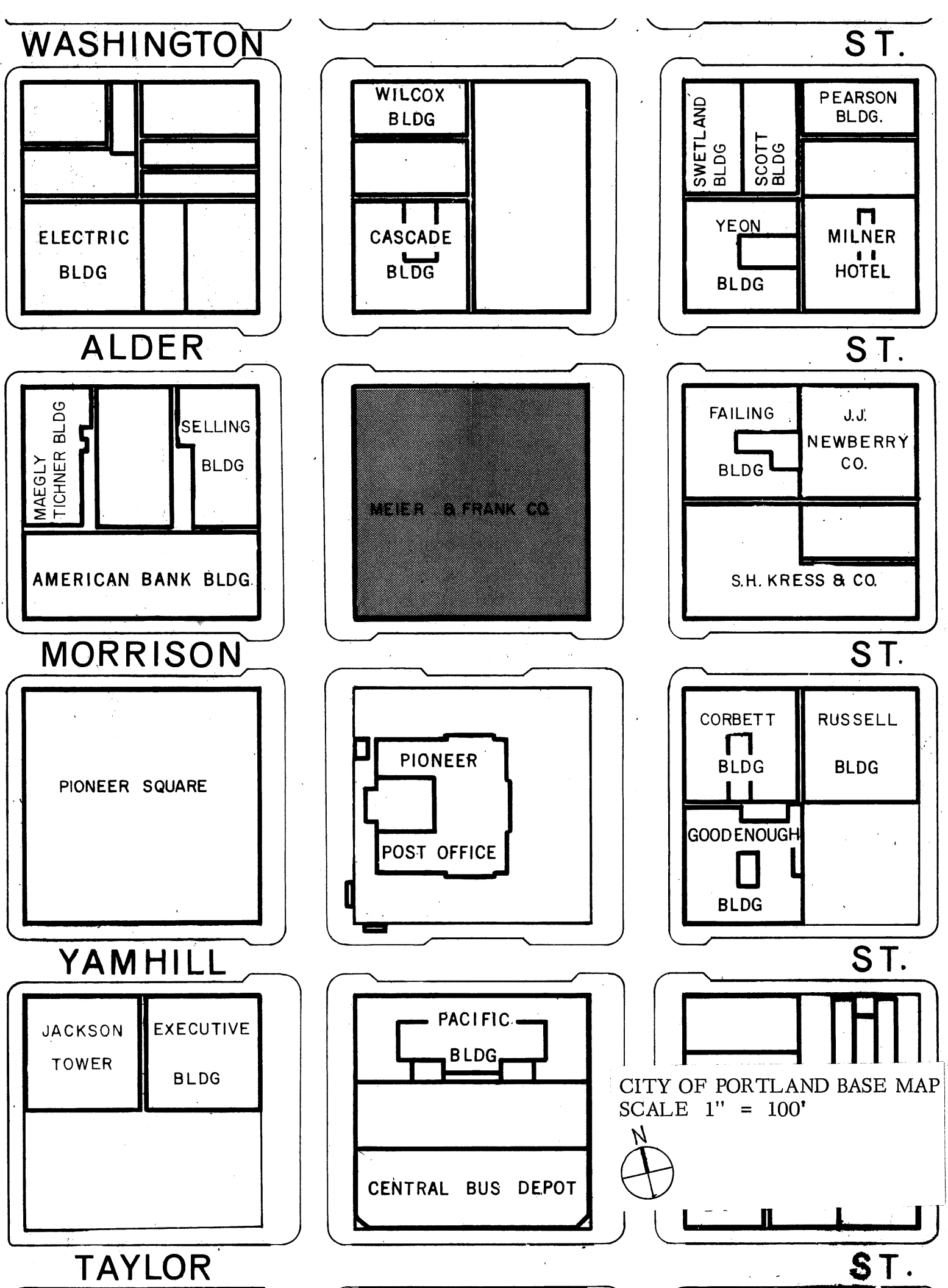
PORTLAND, OREG.—WASH.

SW 4 PORTLAND 15' QUADRANGLE
N4530—W12237 5/7 5

1961
PHOTOREVISED 1970 AND 1977
AMS 1475 II SW SERIES V892

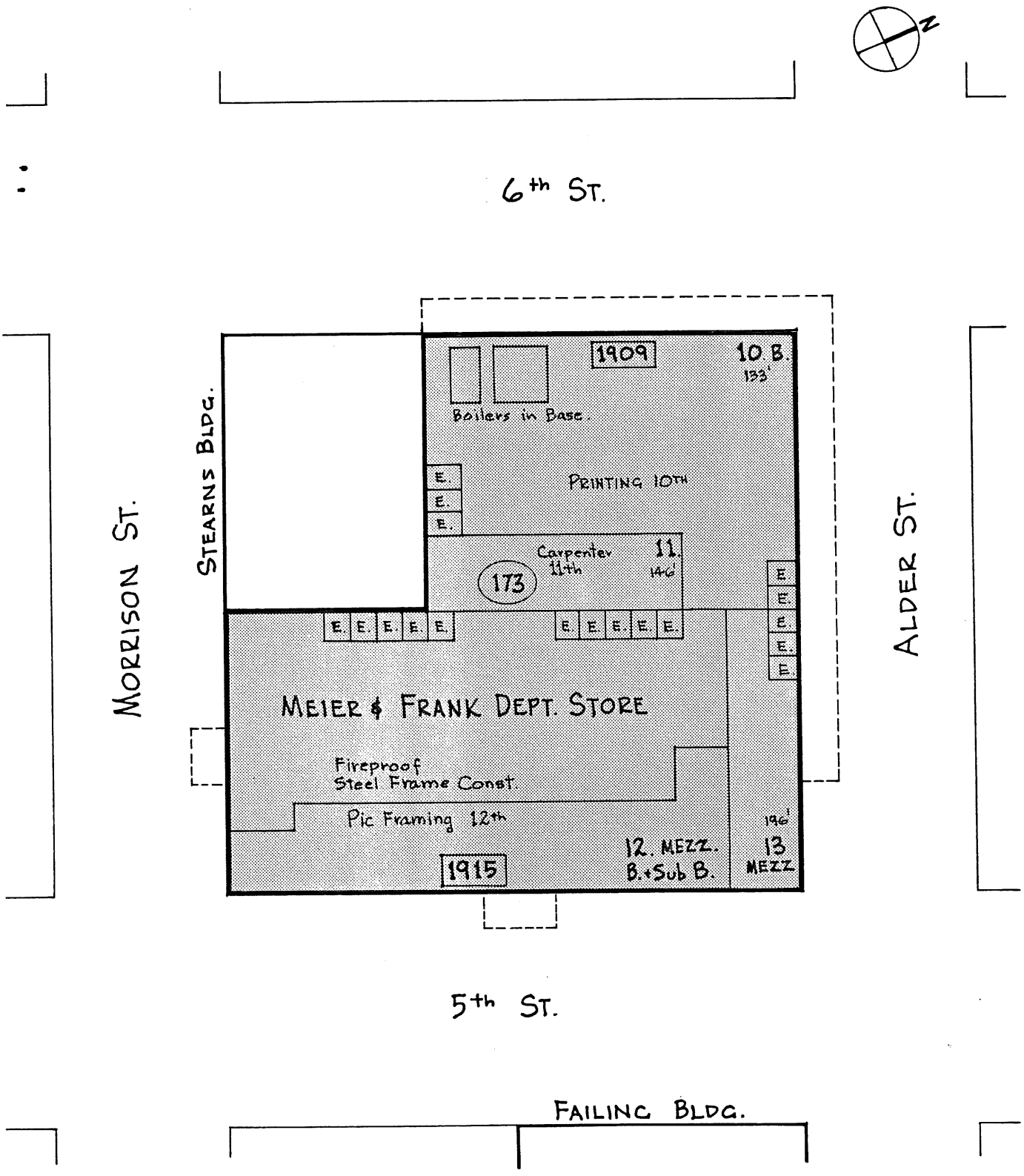
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Albina Yard
Albina
PORTL
RIVER
Broadway Bridge
Memorial Coliseum
Steel Bridge
Morrison Bridge
Hawthorne Bridge
Ross Island Bridge
King's Heights
Portland Heights
WASHINGTON PARK
Marquam Hill
East Portland
Multnomah Civic Stadium
Kings Hill
Governors Park
Marquam Gulch
Johnson Creek
Hoyt Arboretum
Portland Zoological Gardens
Terminal No 1
Fire Sta
Hospital
Police Sta
Courthouse
St Lawrence Sch
Holladay Sch
Couch Sch
Chapman Sch
Ainsworth Sch
Multnomah College
Portland State College
Univ of Ore Medical Sch
City Park
Water
BM 31
BM 390
BM 450
BM 499
BM 346
BM 205
BM 135
BM 64
NW VAUGHN ST
NW THURMAN ST
NW PETTYGROVE ST
NW LOVEJOY ST
NW INDUSTRIAL ST
BURNSIDE
SW MORRISON
SW JEFFERSON
SW CLAY
SW MARKET
SW VISTA
SW CANYON ROAD
BROADWAY
6 LANE
BASE LINE
42'30"
40'
SCALE 1 24 000
1 MILE
7000 FEET
1 KILOMETER
CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
OREGON


WASHINGTON
ST.
ELECTRIC BLDG
WILCOX BLDG
CASCADE BLDG
SWETLAND BLDG
SCOTT BLDG
PEARSON BLDG.
YEON BLDG
MILNER HOTEL
ALDER
ST.
MAEGLY TICHNER BLDG
SELLING BLDG
AMERICAN BANK BLDG
MEIER & FRANK CO.
FAILING BLDG
J.J. NEWBERRY CO.
S.H. KRESS & CO.
MORRISON
ST.
PIONEER SQUARE
PIONEER POST OFFICE
CORBETT BLDG
RUSSELL BLDG
GOODENOUGH BLDG
YAMHILL
ST.
JACKSON TOWER
EXECUTIVE BLDG
PACIFIC BLDG
CENTRAL BUS DEPOT
CITY OF PORTLAND BASE MAP
SCALE 1" = 100'
N
TAYLOR
ST.

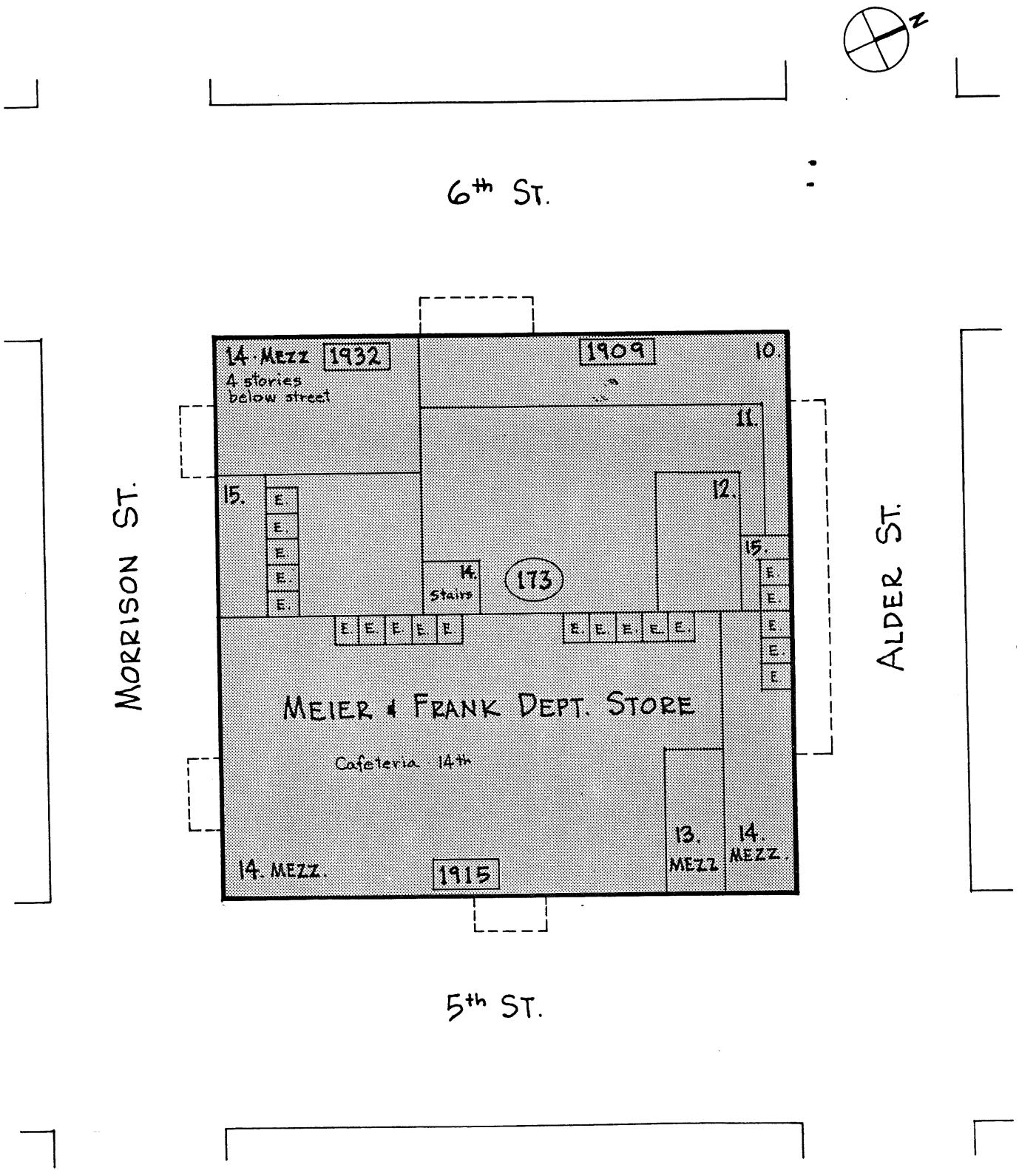
1926 · SANBORN MAP

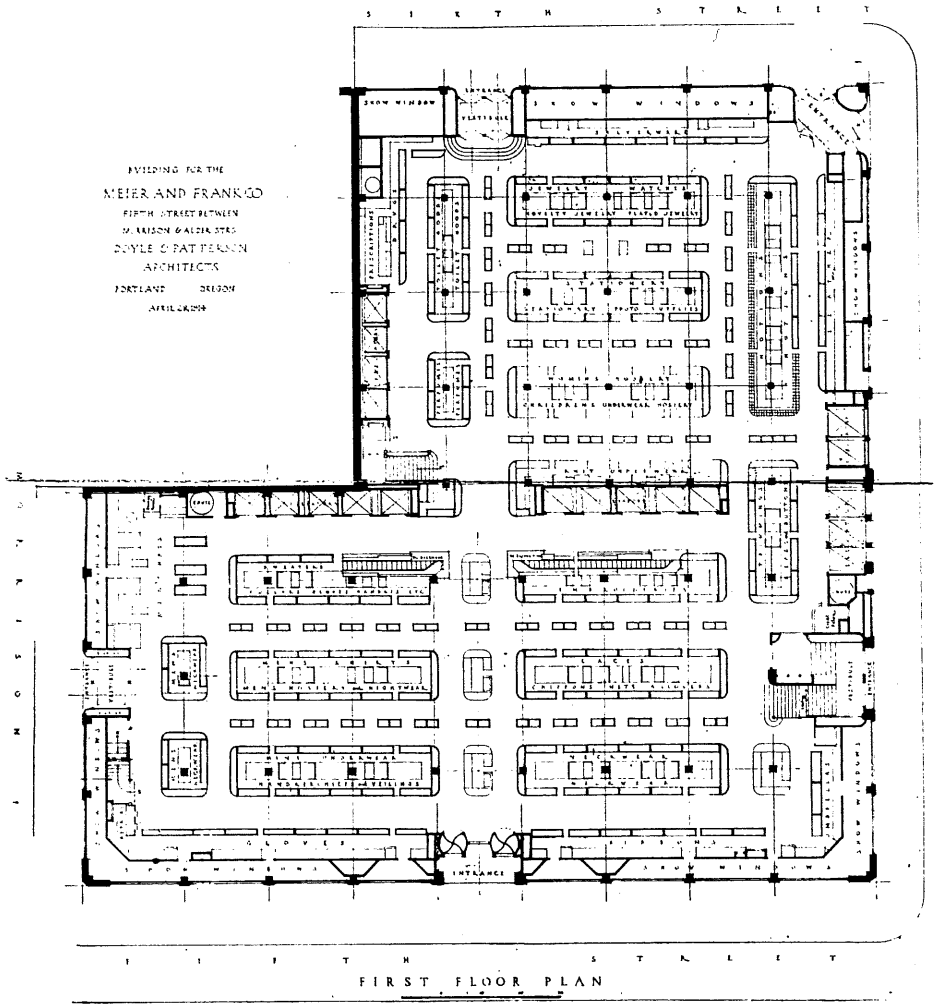
SCALE 1" = 50'



1932 · Sanborn Map

SCALE 1" = 50'

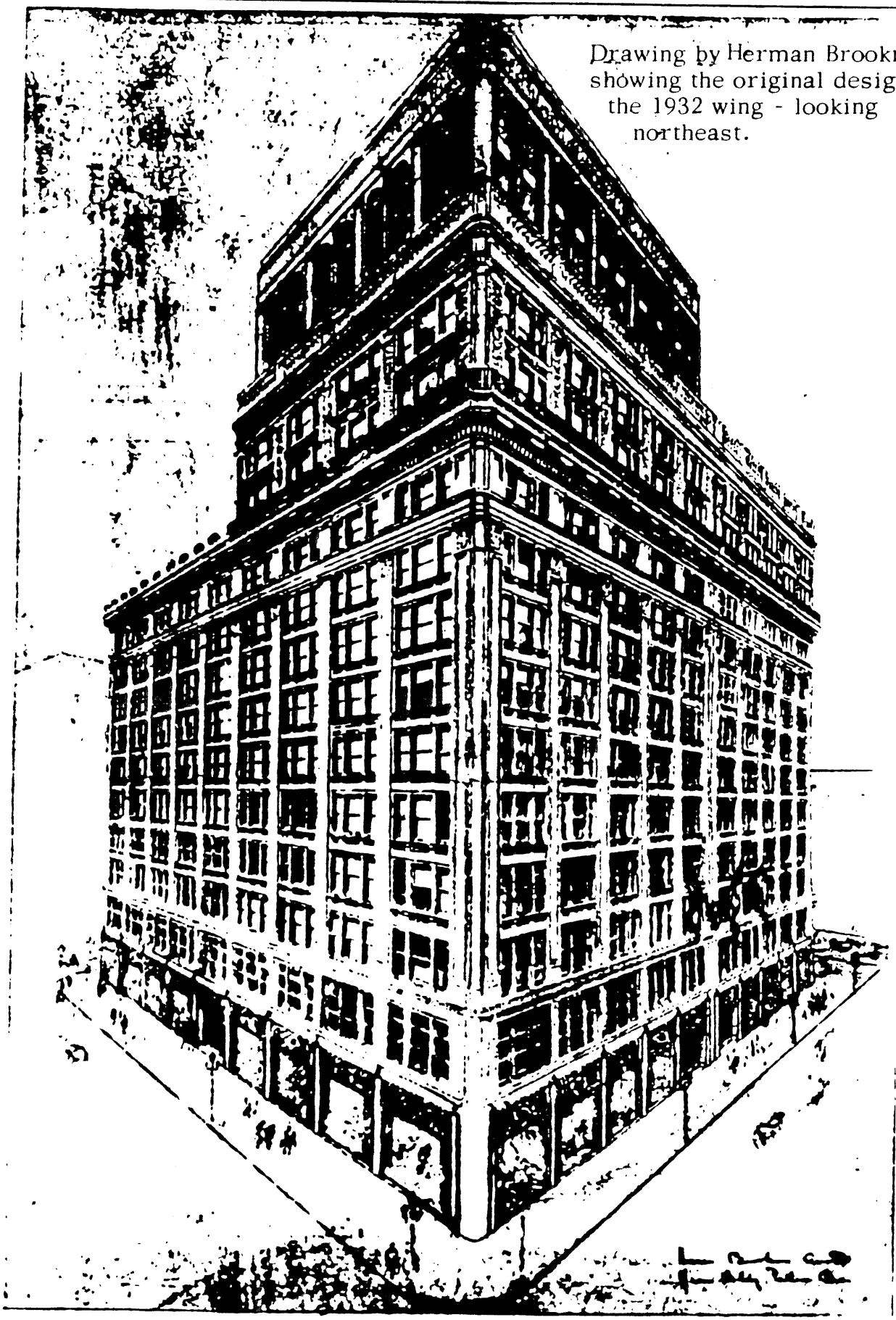




PLAN, MEIER & FRANK DEPARTMENT STORE
DOYLE & PATTERSON, ARCHITECTS

Great Portland Store Will Soon Grow Larger

6/12/29



Drawing by Herman Brookman showing the original design of the 1932 wing - looking northeast.

This is the way the Meier & Frank store will look from the South and Morrison corner in a few months. At a cost of about $2,000,000 the company will complete its huge store. The building will cover the corner now occupied by the Sherman, Clay building. The present calls for 14 stories and two basements.

Oregonian
6/12/29

Page from the 50th Anniversary Pamphlet
showing the original design of the "Annex"



Mr. Aaron Meier, founder of the Meier & Frank store, was born May 22, 1831. He came to Portland and opened the [illegible] in June, 1857, and immediately laid the foundation of what was to be the largest retail mercantile business west of Chicago. [illegible] August 16, 1889, while plans were being formulated for the removal of the business from First Street to the present quarters. Thousands upon thousands of the store's patrons remember Mr. Meier as a man and merchant with few equals. He was probably in closer touch with the store's patrons than any other merchant in America. He knew his trade and his trade knew him—a big, generous-hearted, successful business man, who left behind him a great and prosperous business and an army of friends in every section of the Pacific Northwest.

[illegible]ER & FRANK STORE

[illegible] soon to be erected

[illegible] erected during the next 18 months. Ground space 130 x 100 feet—either 8 or 10 stories high. The annex will join the main establishment, and altogether make a department store second to none in the land. Building will be of steel and concrete, costing about $350,000, affording much needed room for a rapidly growing business

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

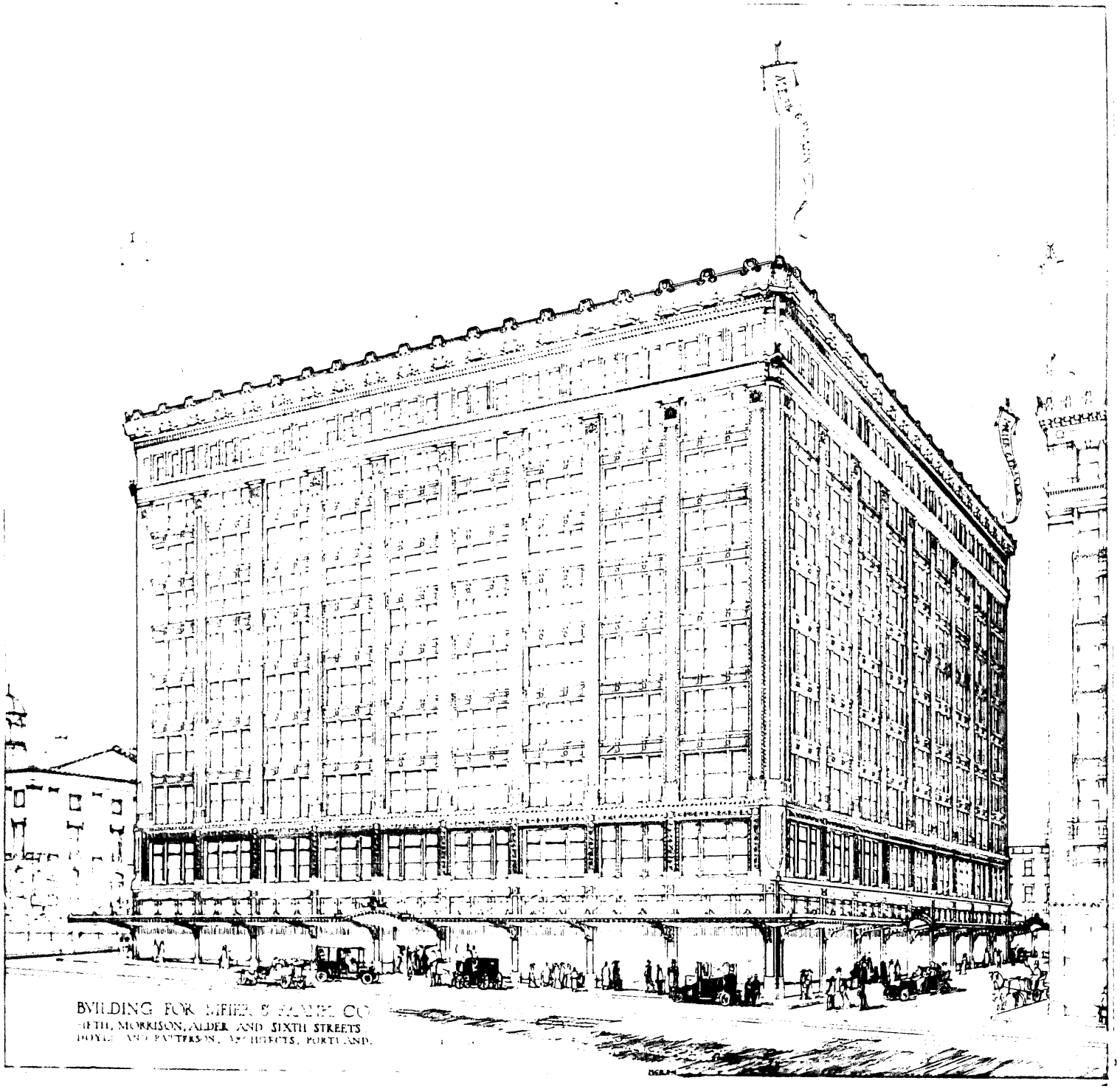
3. Uknown

4. December 1909

5. Oregon Hist. Soc.
Doyle/McMath Coll.

6. Architect's dwg.
looking southwest

7. #1.


BUILDING FOR MEIER & FRANK CO
FIFTH, MORRISON, ALDER AND SIXTH STREETS
DOYLE AND PATTERSON, ARCHITECTS, PORTLAND.

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. Uknown

4. Sep. 9, 1908

5. Ore. Hist. Soc. #12967

6. Excavation looking east.

7. #2. of 14



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

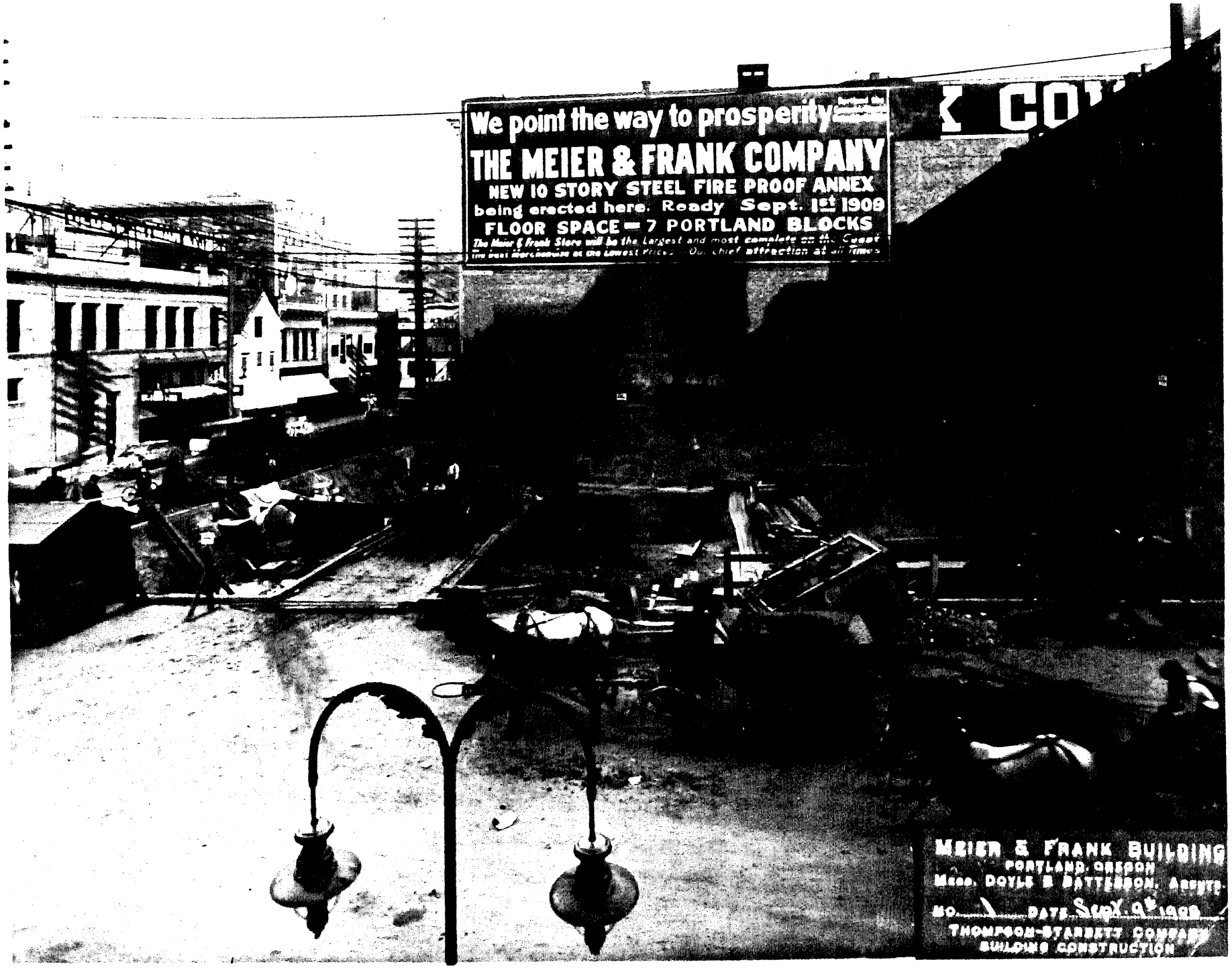
3. Uknown

4. Feb. 17, 1909

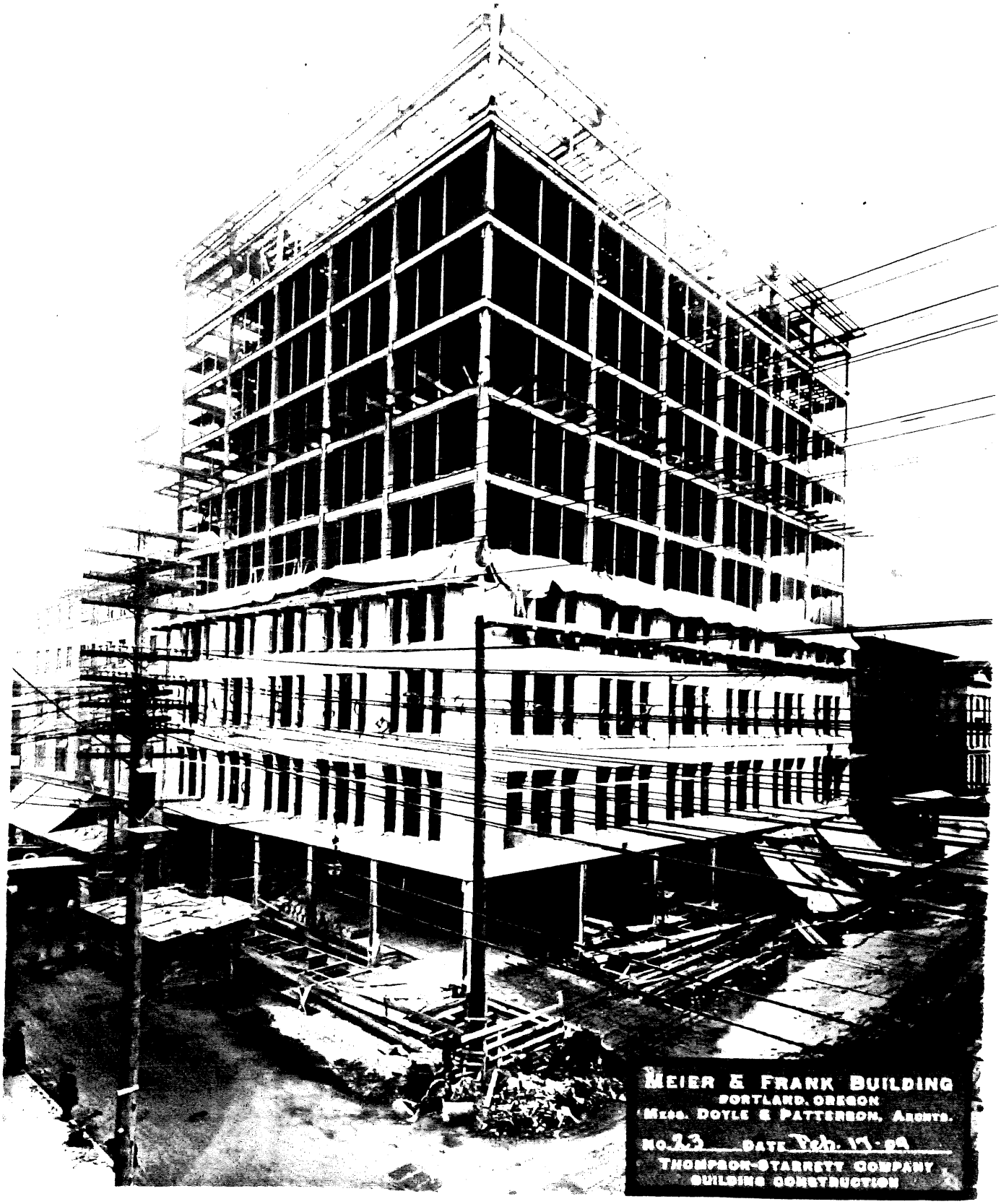
5. Ore. Hist. Soc.
#55697

6. 1909 wing under
const. - looking
southeast

7. #3. of 4


We point the way to prosperity
THE MEIER & FRANK COMPANY
NEW 10 STORY STEEL FIRE PROOF ANNEX
being erected here. Ready Sept. 1st 1909
FLOOR SPACE — 7 PORTLAND BLOCKS
MEIER & FRANK BUILDING
PORTLAND, OREGON
Mess. DOYLE & PATTERSON, Archts
NO. 1 DATE Sept. 9th 1909
THOMPSON-STARRETT COMPANY
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. Uknown
4. 1909
5. Ore. Hist. Soc.
   Doyle/McMath
   Collection
6. Completed 1909
   wing - looking
   southeast
7. #4. of 14


MEIER & FRANK BUILDING
PORTLAND, OREGON
MESS. DOYLE & PATTERSON, ARCHTS.
NO. 23 DATE Feb. 17-08
THOMPSON-STARRETT COMPANY
BUILDING CONSTRUCTION

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. Uknown

4. 1915

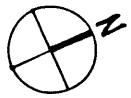
5. Cre. Hist. Soc.
#30013

6. Looking southwest

7. #5. OF 14

1909 · SANBORN MAP

SCALE 1" = 50'



6TH ST.

MORRISON ST.

STEARNS BLDG.

4.

10. B.
133'

Boilers in Base.

MEIER & FRANK DEPT. ST.

E.
E.
E.

11
146'

173

Carpntr. 11th

1909

ALDER ST.

5. B.

E. E.

Brick piers base.
Iron col's 1st
Wood posts above

Water power elev.
Base. Boilers · wood fuel

MEIER & FRANK DEPARTM'T STORE

Retail Dept. 1-2+3P. Whol. Dept. 4+5th

1898

5TH ST.



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. Uknown

4. March 13, 1931

5. Meier&Frank Co.

6. 1932 wing under construction - looking northeast

7. #6. of 14



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. Boychuk
4. 1932
5. Ore. Hist. Soc. #43819
6. Looking northwest
7. #7.



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. Boychuk
4. 1932
5. Meier&Frank Co.
6. Ground floor int.
7. #8.

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. Boychuk

4. 1932

5. Meier&Frank Co.

6. Ground floor int.

7. #9 of 10

ADDITION TO
MEIER & FRANK DEPARTMENT STORE
PORTLAND, OREGON

DE YOUNG, MOSCOWITZ & ROSENBERG, ARCHITECTS
HERMAN BROOKMAN, ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT
DINWIDDIE & HOFFMAN, CONTRACTORS

No 41

Dec. March 13 1931





1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. George McMath
4. October, 1981
5. George McMath
6. 6th Ave. looking north. I . to R. Pacific Bldg., Meier &Frank Bldg., Lipman&Wolfe Bldg. and Mead Bldg., all by A. E. Doyle.
7. #10.



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. George McMath

4. October, 1981

5. George McMath

6. Looking northeast - Northwest Bank Bldg. by A. E. Doyle on left.

7. #11.

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.

2. Portland OR

3. George McMath

4. October, 1981

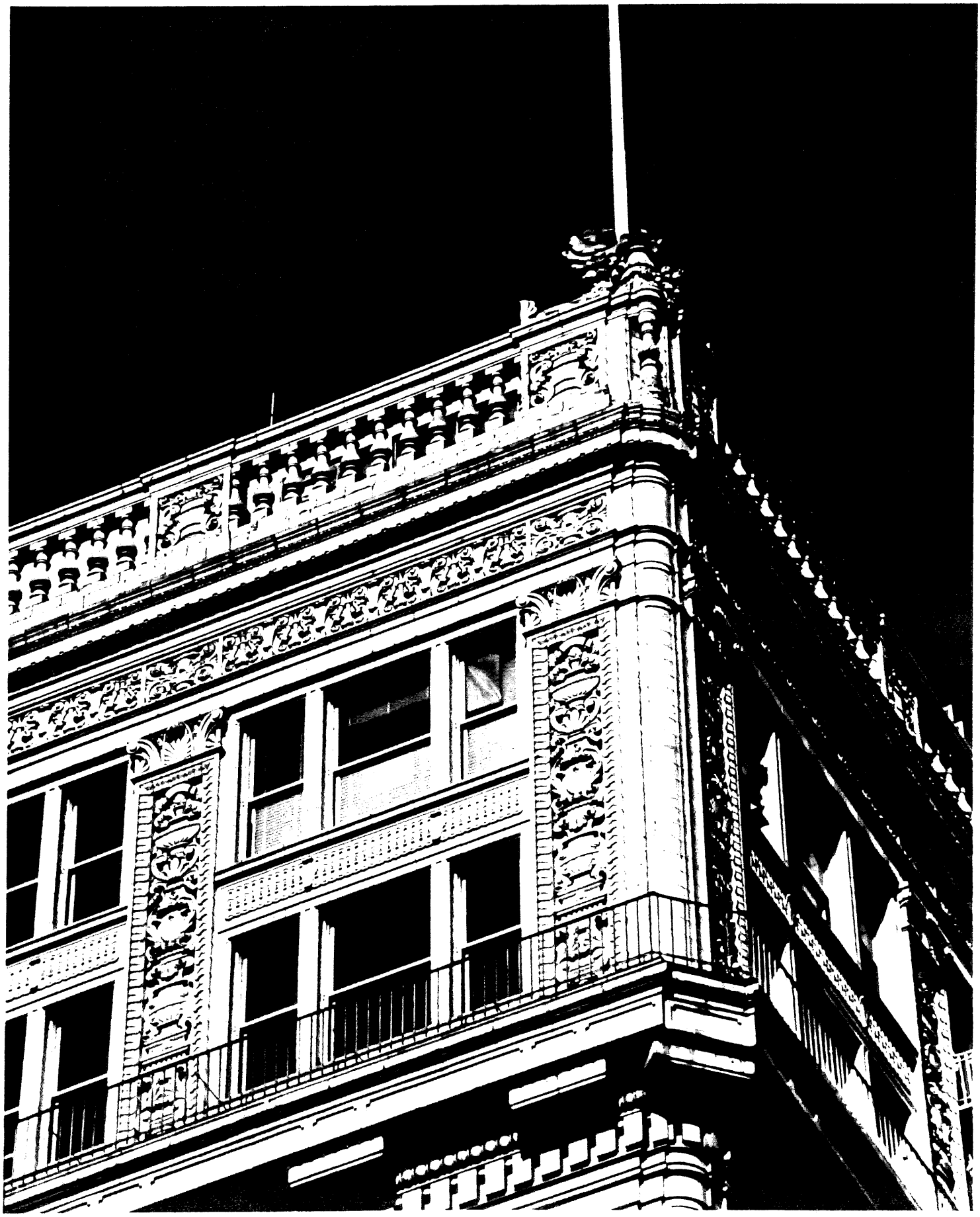
5. George McMath

6. Entry at the
southeast corner,

7. #12.

ELEVATOR
SHAFT

1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. George McMath
4. October, 1981
5. George McMath
6. North wall at center showing joint bet. 1909 and 1915 wings.
7. #13 OF 14



1. Meier&Frank Bldg.
2. Portland OR
3. George McMath
4. October, 1981
5. George McMath
6. Southeast corner detail.
7. #14 of 14