#### State of Washington HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY FORM Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation 111 W. 21st Ave. KL-11 HD 31-580 IDENTIFICATION SECTION Olympia, WA 98504 LOCATION SECTION (206) 753-5010 Site No. HOW.14.N Street Number N. 14 Howard St. SZ3- 5ZZ RIVERLIDE W. The Rookery Site Name: Historic The Rookery Zip Code 99201 Common City/Town Field Recorder: 4 County Date Recorded: Tax No./Parcel No. 18534-2706 Owner's Name: Wendall K. Reugh UTM References \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_ Easting Northing Reugh Construction-Rokkery Bldg. Legal Description: City/Town Spo 81 Resurvey and Addition to Spokane Falls County Ptn of Lts 4 and 5, Bk 20 Zip Code E1 and N120 Ft of W1 of Lt 4. N 120 Ft of LT 5 Status: National Register State Register Z Survey/Inventory **Determined Eligible** PHOTOGRAPHY Other (NHL, HABS, HAER) Indicate Photography Neg. No.: \_ Date: Classification (Roll No. + Frame No.) District View: \_ Site Date: \_ X Building Structure Object **DESCRIPTION SECTION** Style/Form: (Check one or more of the following) Materials & Features/Structural Types: **Dutch Colonial** Foundation: Pioneer/Homestead Roof Material: Roof Type: П Spanish Colonial Greek Revival Hip Wood Shingle Gable Log English Revival 囟 Gothic Revival Post & Pier Flat Pyramid Asbestos/Asphalt Shingle Bungalow Italianate Monitor Sawtooth Stone State × Other (specify) Craftsman Second Empire Gambrel Concrete Tar $\square$ Stick/Eastlake American Foursquare/ □steel\_truss Block Shed Metal (specify) . $\Box$ Classic Box Other (specify)Composition Poured Queen Anne crenalated parapet Prairie Style **Brick** Shinale Style Ø Art Deco/Moderne Richardsonian Romanesque Other (specify). Commercial Vernacular Chicago School/ Cladding (Exterior Wall Surfaces): Vernacular Height/No. of Stories: Sullivanesque Log Other (specify) One Beau Arts Classicism Rustic/Novelty Horizontal Wood Siding One and one-half Princess Anne Clapboard Two Neo-Colonial Two and one-half Split Shakes × Three Re-sawn П Wood Shingle Other (specify). Machine Shingle [ Slight Moderate Excessive (include detailed description in Asbestos/Asphalt Shingle Integrity: 'Additional Description' section) **Brick Masonry** $\boxtimes$ Stone Masonry, somegranite الالالال Additions to house plan.......

Other (specify).....

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Stucco

Terra Cotta

Carrara Glass

Other (specify)

VinvI/Aluminum Siding

#### NARRATIVE SECTION

Agriculture		Conservation		Military	l
Architecture/Landscape Architecture	<b>X</b>	Education		Politics/Government/Law	[
Arts		Entertainment/Recreation		Religion	l
Commerce	⊠.	Ethnic Heritage (specify)		Science & Engineering	
Communications	· 🗀	Health/Medicine		Social Movements/Organizations	1
Community Planning/Development		Manufacturing / Industry	<b>⊠</b>	Transportation	
				Other (Specify)	[

Date of Construction:
Architect/Builder:
Historical Significance:

Areas of Significance/Study Unit Themes: (check one or more of the following)

The current building was erected in 1933, replacing a previous Rookery Building made up of five separate buildings. (Note: The Sprague Avenue Extension of the previous Rookery Building is still standing.) The original buildings were owned by Charles Sweeny, a prominent Spokane resident and builder of the Empire State Building (Spokane), who made his fortune in the Coeur d'Alene mines. At the time of construction of this building, Sweeny was deceased, but his company, the Sweeny Investment Company owned the property, and did so until 1967. The contrcters of this building made use of local materials; the terra cotta was from the Washington Brick and Lime Company, located in Clayton, WA. Prominent residents of the Rookery included the Joyner Drug Store (1933-1947), and Dodson's Jewelry, which although located in the Mohawk Building next east, expanded into the Rookery Building where it remains today.

Additional Descripton of Physical Appearance & Significant Architectural Features: (Architectural significance; can include interior & site features; address integrity issues specifically)

Ornate spandrels and relief patterns make this white terra cotta building the most decorated Art Deco example in the district. The first story retains original bays though some remodeling has occured. Rectangular panels with quarter starburst accents produce a frieze at the second story. Windows in the upper two stories contain gold colored spandrels with geometric motifs and are flanked by piers. The topmost spandrels have highly ornate panels depicting conventionalized motifs in geometric relief. The center massing contains additional projections at the papyrus piers, giving a crenalated effect in the parapet.

Major Bibliographic References: (Include books, periodicals, manuscripts, newspapers, legal documents, maps, photos, oral sources, etc.)

Hyslop, Robert B. Spokane's Building Blocks. Spokane, WA: By the author, 1983. Spokane City Directory. R. L. Polk & Co. Spokesman Review. (Spokane, WA). Apr. 21, 1929.

Ticor Title Co. Spokane, WA.

### T25N R43E

NPS Form 10-900 OMS No. 1024-0018 (Rev. 10/90)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

32-00580

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

23385

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

historic name The Rookery			
other names/site number			
street & number 14 N. Howard	no	t for publication	_
city or town Spokane		vicinity	
	ty Spokane	code 063	zip code 99201
As the designated authority under the National Hist X nomination request for determination of elsin the National Register of Historic Places and mee Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets I recommend that this property be considered signifished for additional comments.)  Signature of certifying official  Mary Thompson, State Historic Preservation Office State or Federal agency and bureau  In my opinion, the property meets does not additional comments.)	igibility meets the documentation states the procedural and professional reduces not meet the National Registericantnationallystatewidel	andards for registed equirements set for er criteria. Locally. ( See	ring properties th in 36 CFR continuation
Signature of commenting or other official  State or Federal agency and bureau  I, hereby, certify that this property is:  entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet  determined eligible for the National     Register See continuation sheet  determined not eligible for the     National Register.  removed from the National Register.  other, (explain:)	Date		
	Signature of Keeper	Da	te of Action

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form			
Property Name Rookery		_	
County and State Spokane, WA		Page 2	! <u> </u>
Ownership of Property	Category of Property x building(s)	No. of Resources within Property	noncontributing
x_private public-local	duriding(s)		buildings
public-State	site		sites
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Name of related multiple property li (Enter "N/A" if property is not part multiple property listing.)  NA		No. of contributing relisted in the National	
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Historic Functions		Current Functions	
(Enter categories from instructions.	) '	(Enter categories from instruct	cions.)
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Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions.	) (Enter o	Materials categories from instructions.)	
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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form		
Property Name Rookery	_	
County and State Spokane, WA	Page 3	-
8. Statement of Significance		
National Register listing.)		
A Property is associated with events that have made a	significant contribution to the broad ;	patterns of
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant	gnificant in our past.	
x C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of or represents the work of a master, or possesses hig and distinguishable entity whose components lack inc	h artistic values, or represents a sig	
D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, informa	ation important in prehistory or histor	<b>CY</b> -
Criteria Considerations (Mark "x" in all the boxes that appl	ly.)	
A owned by a religious institution or used for religion	ous purposes.	
B removed from its original location.		
C a birthplace or a grave.		
D a cemetery.		
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.		
F a commemorative property.		
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance w	vithin the past 50 years.	
Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions.)	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Architecture	1933-1953	1933-34
	1934-1953	103V
	Cultural Affiliation	
	-	
Significant Person	Architect/Builder	
	Architect: G.A. Pehrson/Builder: F.E	. Martin

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form	
Property Name Rookery	
County and State Spokane, WA	Page <u>4</u>
9. Major Bibliographical References	
Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this fo	orm on one or more continuation sheets.)
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	Primary location of additional data:
preliminary determination of individual listing	State Historic Preservation Office
(36 CFR 67) has been requested	Other State agency
_ previously listed in the National Register	Federal agency
_ previously determined eligible by the National Register	x Local government
designated a National Historic Landmark	University
recorded by Historic American Buildings	x Other
Survey #	Specify repository:
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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 1 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

The Rookery's horizontal emphasis, polychromatic contrast, and stylistic design elements, including floral patterns, starbursts, chevrons, fans, and other motifs clearly establish it as an Art Deco building. This style was popular during the interwar years and was a part of the Modernistic Movement in architecture, and artistic expression in general, which was characterized by a rejection of historical styles in favor of streamlined expressions of modernity.

The style was particularly popular in designs for theaters (as with Spokane's Fox Theater), schools (as with Spokane's Rogers High School) and "skyscrapers" (as with Spokane's Paulsen Medical and Dental Building). While thousands of simple commercial buildings were designed with Art Deco detailing, high style Art Deco commercial buildings like the Rookery are relatively rare in Spokane.

#### Setting

The Rookery Block is located in the heart of the central business district of downtown Spokane, Washington, at the southeast corner of the intersection of Riverside Avenue and Howard Street. It fronts both streets and anchors a block that features one of the more intact historic streetscapes in the city. On the east it abuts the historic Mohawk Building, designed by Spokane architect John K. Dow. Next east, on a corner lot, is the 1890 Fernwell Building, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Across the street, on the north side of Riverside, three historic buildings occupy the center of the block. The Sherwood Building, a Gothic Revival style landmark with terra cotta detailing rendered by Spokane's famed architect Kirtland K. Cutter, is the most prominent of these. The Art Deco style Green Building, next west, is the current home of Dodson's Jewelers, a long-time fixture on this block. The Dodson's sidewalk clock became a landmark in the many years it stood in front of the Mohawk Building; it has since been relocated in front of the Green Building. To the west of the Green Building is another National Register property, the 1890 Hill Brothers Building. To the south, the Rookery rises

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Chambers, S. Allen et al., What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1983), 88-91; McAlester, Virginia, and McAlester, Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses (New Work: Alfred A. Knofpt, 1993), 465-67; Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), 235-40.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

Page 2 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

As such

### **Narrative Description:**

slightly with the grade on Howard Street to abut the 1890 Hazel/Merton Block, which, like the Fernwell, was designed by Herman Preusse, one of the first, if not the first, formally trained architects to practice in Spokane. Preusse rendered the Richardson Romanesque-influenced Hazel during the busiest time in his career, when Spokane was rebuilding after the Great Fire of 1889. The Rookery, there, is part of a larger fabric of historic structures that compose the historic landscape of the city block, but it is also significant in its own right as perhaps the best example of the Art Deco style of architecture in a general commercial structure in downtown Spokane.

#### The Rookery: Exterior

The Rookery is a three-story brick and steel frame structure with a concrete block foundation and a flat roof. It is clad on the upper floors in terra cotta from the famed Washington Brick & Lime Co. of Clayton, Washington (see statement of significance) and on the ground level with steel, glass, granite and marble.

The treatment of the storefronts on the ground level is not original, although the basic configuration remains: piers divide each elevation into commercial partitions. Originally the piers were of terra cotta with granite bases. The most pronounced piers were those on either end of central crenellated portions of the parapet wall on each elevation. Together with smaller piers, these divided the north façade into four bays, alternating smaller and larger, and seven bays on the west façade. Grayson's Department Store, with its deeply recessed entrance, and Joyner's Drugs were early and long-time occupants of the large storefronts on the north elevation, with Grayson's next to easternmost and Joyner's on the west end at the corner. Joyner's also occupied all four bays on the west elevation between the corner and the entrance. To the south of the entrance there was a small bay next to the entrance and then two larger ones to the south. The entrance was one of the most striking features of the building. Terra cotta piers on tall granite bases with concave rounded edges on the insides framed the entrance, which appeared to be arched even though it had a flat head because of a pronounced stylized projecting keystone. and also because there was a semicircular concave space below the head adorned with an Art Deco shell motif arrayed above lettering identifying the building. Storefronts were composed of large plate glass windows above Mother of Pearl Granite and tile bases.

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**United States Department of the Interior National Park Service** 

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 3 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

CLESTONY

Band windows spanned above terra cotta bands advertising the names of tenants occupying the storefronts. MODKERY HAS UNDERGOVE CHANGES TO 175

MANY COMMENTAL BURDS. THE ROOKEN HAS UNDER GOVE CHANGES

STONE FROMS OVER THE YEARS.

WE The current entrance consists of a large dark Opalescent Granite surround framing a light "Texas Pink" granite facing with "Rookery" spelled out in the space above the door in Mac. the same dark granite that is used in the surround. The light granite facing continues around the corner of the building, covering the old Joyner's space. The remodel of the entrance dates to the 1950s—a photograph from the Libby Collection at the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture dated 1959 shows the current entrance.<sup>3</sup> The building underwent another remodel in 1967, when architect Thomas-Adkinson drew plans for a \$25,000 project to reface the front in glass and granite. These projects also resulted in the application of broad sheets of granite that obscure the upper portions of the original corner storefronts, providing a consistent appearance. Many of the terra cotta piers were also refaced in granite, although there are original terra cotta piers evident on both elevations, and the ones that framed the entrance are partially visible behind the granite surround. Slender bands of granite descend to the sidewalk, partitioning the original storefront window spaces. Mullion & Eparation window spaces. Mullion & WHICH NIET OF SHAMOW

To the south of the main entrance, storefronts are obscured at tap by an awning that extends to the end of the building. The awning is yellow at the north end, light green at center, and dark green to the south, delineating the storefront divisions below. Original terra cotta piers remain at this storefront.

On the north-facing elevation, to the east of the corner space, original terra cotta piers frame a large central modern storefront of steel and glass. Modern infill obscures the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The original granite used in the base was quarried in British Columbia. "Texas Pink" granite is also known as "Sunset Red." Geologically, it is known as Town Mountain Granite. It has been quarried at Marble Falls, Texas since the late 19th century. The "Opalescent Granite" used on the entrance surround is from Cold Springs, Minnesota. Northwest Mining Association, Cornerstones of Spokane: A Guidebook to the Building Stones of Downtown Spokane, 1981, 30. Spokane Public Library Northwest Room, R721.0441.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Libby Photograph Collection, L87-1.596-59.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Building Permits, Rookery Building, 525-27 W. Riverside, Spokane City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Building Department records (microfiche).

**United States Department of the Interior National Park Service** 

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 4 of 7

**Rookery Building** Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

CLESTONY AMEA

upper portion, at a level consistent with the granite-faced corner storefront to the east. The easternmost storefront on the north elevation has also been extensively altered. It consists of a modern entrance at west and a large modern picture window at east, probably dating to 1968, when Dodson's Jewelers expanded into this space from the Mohawk Building to the east.

A broad glazed terra cotta belt course articulates the break between the ground floor commercial spaces and the office spaces on the floors above. It consists of rectangular panels that produce a frieze adorned with quarter starburst accents. Above, the upper floors are divided into fourteen bays of original 1/1 double hung wood-sash windows on each elevation by vertically fluted terra cotta piers. These are truly unique because the terra cotta blocks were installed upside down. Robert Hyslop, a leading authority on the architecture and history of the built environment in downtown Spokane and an

architectural draftsman for Pehrson, sexplains:

I remember an emergency re-design of the top terminations of the piers, which featured stalks of that "snake grass" or "horse tail" which pulls apart in sections, with a fringed socket at each joint. The terra-cotta blocks at the bases of the piers, and many courses above, had been installed upside down, and by the time it was discovered it was too late to change, with any reasonable expense or delay. The effect at the bottom and up the sides was...not too disturbing, but the final closing bud at the top wasn't going to fit at all. The Washington Brick & Lime Co. had the job...and with the same clay and glazes was able to model and fire a few re-designed blocks in time for the masons when they reached the top.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Hyslop, the son of Spokane architect W. W. Hyslop, graduated from Washington State University before returning to Spokane, where he worked as an architectural draftsman for G. A. Pehrson and the architectural firm of Rigg & Vantyne. From 1936 to 1964 he was a structural engineer for Whitehouse & Price, architects. During World War II, he served as a structural engineer at northern Idaho's Farragut Naval Station, at the Velox Naval Supply Depot in the Spokane Valley, and at the Galena Army Air Depot (now Fairchild Air Force Base). After 1964, Hyslop was with Hahn & Campbell, consulting engineers. In 1983, Standard Blueprint published Hyslop's Spokane's Building Blocks, an architectural history of downtown Spokane that is an invaluable tool for preservationists and historians. Robert Hyslop obituary, Spokesman-Review, April 18, 2002.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Robert Hyslop, Spokane's Building Blocks (Spokane: Standard Blueprint Co., 1983), 254.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 5 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

Central piers project above the roofline at both primary elevations, creating the aforementioned crenellated parapet walls. Typical of the Art Deco style, the piers are largely devoid of ornamentation except at the top, where they are sculpted with geometric motifs. Spandrels separating the second and third story windows are a prominent yellow, giving a polychromatic effect characteristic of Art Deco design. Each is adorned with a centrally located stylized floral pattern. The spandrels at the cornice are even more elaborate. Here, design motifs include floral and sunrise patterns, starbursts, fans, and chevrons, all quintessentially Art Deco.

A portion of the original Rookery Block, which this building replaced, still exists, though it has been reduced from five stories to only two. The façade of this building, which fronts Sprague Avenue, has been entirely covered, further compromising its historic integrity. While it is a part of the same parcel as the later Rookery Building, it is not part of the building and is not included in this nomination, as per instructions in the OAHP technical guide which specify "boundaries should not include acreage historically associated with the property if that acreage has lost its integrity due to subdivision or developmental changes."

### The Rookery: Interior

While the Rookery Building retains its basic original configuration with commercial space on the ground floor and office space above, it has undergone a series of interior alteration projects, the most significant probably being one undertaken in 1968 that allowed Dodson's Jewelers to expand its commercial space at W. 515-17 Riverside in the Mohawk Building to the east, into the Rookery Building on the basement and first floor levels (this project was separate from the overhaul of the corner storefronts undertaken in the previous year). The architectural firm of Walker & McGough drew the plans for the project; Teeples and Thatcher were the contractors that completed the \$35,000 remodel.

<sup>7</sup> OAHP, Washington State National Register Technical Guide, 25.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Building Permits, Mohawk Building, 515-25 W. Riverside (1 of 2), Spokane City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Building Department records (microfiche).

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 6 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

Sweeny Investments, the building's owner (see narrative statement of significance), made a series of interior alterations to accommodate various tenants during the 1940s. Other major changes included a \$17,000 project for Grayson's, Inc. in 1948, and a \$60,000 project to remodel the basement and ground floor in 1964. The only exterior sign of interior alterations is at the storefront level.

The main entrance on Howard Street opens to a small foyer that provides access to the elevator and the staircase that wraps around it as it ascends. Original features in the foyer include a letterbox, building directory, and a chrome nickel-plated banister all featuring Art Deco design elements. Hallways on the upper floors are J-shaped; the stairwell and elevator open into the main hallway, which runs north and south, and intersects with a perpendicular hall on the north and another, longer perpendicular hall on the south. Doors line both sides of the halls with office spaces overlooking the street on one side and an interior light well on the other. The halls and rooms have all been remodeled over the years, but original Tennessee Marble paneling in the main hallway remains. Original doors were solid oak with glass panels. These remain but they have been altered with the application of wood veneer so that they appear to be solid panel doors. One office space at the southeast corner of the second floor has solid wood paneling that is either original or was applied relatively soon after the building was built, but all of the other interior office spaces were altered with the application of wood veneer paneling that appears to date to the late 1960s or 1970s. Original double-hung-wood-sash windows, however, are still in place. Some portions of the building have seen deterioration resulting fromweather and resident pigeons, but on the whole the interior of the Rookery is in good condition:

#### Integrity

Despite the alterations to the interior, several original features of the building remain. The lobby inside the main entrance on Howard Street in particular retains several Art Deco elements including a building directory and letterbox on the north wall and an embellished steel handrail on the stairway opposite. Tennessee marble paneling is still intact throughout the main hallways on the second and third floors.

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7

**Page** 7 of 7

Rookery Building Spokane WA

### **Narrative Description:**

The storefronts of the Rookery Building's exterior have seen extensive alteration, but such changes are to be expected in a building of its age and type. It is possible, moreover, that some original design elements remain beneath the modern materials that have been applied to the ground level facades over the years. The exterior of the upper floors of the building retains excellent integrity of materials and appearance. Original windows, remarkably, are still in place. The terra cotta decorative elements, which are the primary character-defining features of the structure, remain intact. The Rookery Building, in sum, is one of the premier examples of the Art Deco style of architecture in Spokane, and stands as a testament to the artistry of master architect Gustav Albin Pehrson, and the terra cotta work of the Washington Brick & Lime Co.

- MOVE STABIS

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### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

Page 1 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

The Rookery Building possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C (architecture), because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Art Deco style of architecture, possesses high artistic values in its terra cotta detailing produced by the Washington Brick, Lime & Mfg. Co., and represents master architect Gustav Albin Perhson's expression of Modernistic commercial design.

The Rookery Building, completed in 1934, is named for an earlier complex of four buildings—the Rookery/White House, Riverside, Harrington, and Spokane National Bank buildings—that it replaced at the site. The derivation of the name remains unclear. The four earlier buildings operated as a single property known as the Rookery Block from 1904, when mining magnate Charles Sweeny purchased them, until they were demolished in 1933. Together, the interconnected structures formed a warren of corridors and rooms making the moniker appropriate to the definition of a rookery as a "group of buildings that are old and dilapidated." However, one of the four buildings was known as the Rookery as early as the 1890s, raising the alternate possibility that this building was named for the famed Rookery Building in Chicago (which it resembled), designed by the renowned architects, Daniel Burnham and John Root, who led the development of the "Chicago School" of architecture.<sup>2</sup> In any case, the buildings that comprised the Spokane Rookery had become "Landmarks of the downtown district" by the time the Sweeny Investment Co. first proposed plans to replace them with a new structure in 1929. All four of the buildings dated to the rebuilding effort that followed Spokane's Great Fire of 1889. An article in *The Spokesman-Review* reporting on the proposed demolition, noted that the "four structures remain today virtually the same as when they were built." When the first Rookery Block was razed to make way for the present structure in 1933 it was a foregone conclusion that the name would be retained.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Webster's New World Dictionary, College Edition

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Burham and Root were leading architects of the Chicago School of Architecture, or the Commercial Style. Their Rookery Building was named for a pre-existing structure and water tower that were a favorite roosting place for pigeons. The Chicago Rookery was renowned not only for Burnham and Root's design but also because Frank Lloyd Wright remodeled the lobby in 1905, introducing elements of his Prairie School designs. See <a href="https://www.ci.chi.il.us/Landmarks/R/RookeryBuilding.html">www.ci.chi.il.us/Landmarks/R/RookeryBuilding.html</a> (viewed 3/18/2002).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Spokesman-Review, April 21, 1929, IV 1: 1-6.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The small section that projects south from the primary footprint to face Sprague Avenue remains. Its two-story façade is non-descript, having been faced in modern cladding that compromises its integrity.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

**Page** 2 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

"The Rookery, famous old name of the building which stood for years as a landmark at Howard and Riverside," *The Spokesman* intoned, "is to be retained as the name of the new three-story, class A building that is to rise on the same site. No change in the name, so widely known throughout the Inland Empire since the old structure was built just after the Spokane fire of 1889, ever has been contemplated." General contractor Frank E. Martin erected the current Rookery Building for the Sweeny Investment Co., a real estate management company incorporated in 1905 to oversee Charles Sweeny's growing real estate empire.

Charles Sweeny and the Sweeny Investment Co.

Charles Sweeny was born in New York City on January 20, 1849. In January 1864 at the age of 15 he joined the 3<sup>rd</sup> New Jersey Cavalry and emerged unscathed from several Civil War battles. After the war, Sweeny's regiment was sent to Mexico to help expel the French and their would-be emperor of Mexico, Maximillian, of the house of Hapsburg, though U.S. forces stationed at Vera Cruz turned them away. Afterward, Sweeny, like many of his comrades in arms, found his way to California, and then to Virginia City, New Mexico, where he was involved in the Comstock & Belcher mines. After being injured in the great Belcher fire of 1874, Sweeny moved to Portland, Oregon, where he was associated with the Knapp-Burrell Hardware Co. From Portland, Sweeny moved to Spokane in 1883 to establish himself in the mercantile business, which eventually took him to the Coeur D'Alenes, where he would make his fortune. Sweeny gained an interest in the Empire-State Mine, which grew to become the Federal Mining & Smelting Co., a mining empire that catapulted him to national prominence, and put him in the same social circle with the likes of John D. Rockefeller.<sup>6</sup>

Having amassed a fortune, Sweeny purchased the former mansion of Spokane founder James Glover, made an unsuccessful run for the U.S. Senate in 1905, and established a real estate empire in Spokane and Portland. Sweeny's real estate investments began with a four-year partnership with F. Lewis Clark from 1896 to 1900, during which time they

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The Spokesman-Review, February 7, 1934, included in G. A. Pehrson's Scrapbook of His Architectural Work, Vol. 2 of 2, donated by Betsy Eldenburg to the Spokane Public Library Northwest Room (OS Biography, Pehrson, G. A.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Spokane Daily Chronicle, May 30, 1916, 1; Spokesman-Review, July 23, 1916, 1.

**United States Department of the Interior National Park Service** 

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES **CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8

**Page** 3 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

invested over \$300,000 in Spokane real estate. Meanwhile, Sweeny's wife Emaline was developing her own skills as a real estate investor, and after the partnership with Clark ended the husband and wife team continued to invest in real estate; between 1904 and 1906 the Sweeny real estate holdings, in both Spokane and Portland, reached their apex. It was during this time that Sweeny established the Sweeny Investment Co., with more than \$2 million in holdings. The most noteworthy of these holdings in Spokane were the two corners he purchased at the intersection of Howard and Riverside, the most valued location in downtown at the time after the intersection of Riverside and Washington—the "million dollar corner" two blocks distant. Sweeny's acquisition of the southeast corner of this intersection in December 1904, where the Rookery now stands, was particularly noteworthy. At the time, as the Spokesman-Review noted, the transaction was "the largest real estate deal ever consummated in Spokane; the only other one approaching it was when Sweeny dissolved his partnership with F. Lewis Clark and sold Clark his interests." Moreover, according to the Spokesman, the deal marked the end of the era when the Dutch "owned Spokane" after the Panic of 1893:

"Through the sale of property at Riverside and Howard to Charles Sweeny...the Hypotheek Bank, which formerly owned nearly all of the big business blocks here under mortgage foreclosure, sold out the last of its buildings on Riverside Avenue. Sweeny, millionaire mine owner, real estate holder, and a candidate for the United State Senate, signed the contract yesterday morning to buy the Rookery Building, the Spokane National Bank Building, the Rookery Annex, and the Riverside Building. 4

From its inception in 1905, shares of the Sweeny Investment Co. were divided between Sweeny, his wife, Emaline, and his son-in-law Francis J. Finucane. After Sweeny's death in 1916, the company continued to operate under the leadership of the Finucane branch of the family. Frank F. Finucane was the president of the company who oversaw the erection of the new Rookery Building for the Sweeny Investment Co. in 1933-34.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 139.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> John Fahey, The Ballyhoo Bonanza: Charles Sweeny and the Idaho Mines (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1971), 133-38.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Fahey, The Ballyhoo Bonanza, 142; The Spokane Daily Chronicle, May 30, 1916, 1; miscellaneous articles, Pehrson Scrapbook.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

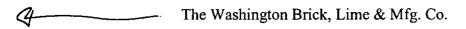
Section 8

**Page** 4 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

The design was based on plans drawn by prominent Spokane architect Gustav Albin Pehrson in the popular Art Deco style of the day. 10 Because of the building's unique design and prominent location, and due to the fact that it was built in the midst of the Great Depression, the new Rookery created quite a stir. Newspaper articles closely monitored construction progress. As the Rookery neared completion, the Spokesman ran a large photograph with an accompanying article extolling its many virtues, including building materials that included pearl granite brought in from British Columbia for the base of the exterior and Tennessee marble for paneling the interior corridors. 11 A later article announcing the impending grand opening of the Rookery ran a headline that revealed the building's price tag of over \$200,000—a substantial sum during the Depression—and proclaimed the "Finish Is Beautiful." "Special attention has been paid to the lighting advantages," the Spokesman explained, "with an oversized court faced with cream colored brick ...there is not a dark office in the building. Rather each office has almost as much daylight as a sun porch." The article went on to describe the tropical mahogany "capable of a mirror finish" used for trim, the chrome nickel-plated elevator, and the "striking design" of the entrances. "That from Howard," according to the article, "surmounted by ornamental plaster and stucco work, with marble lining, is especially artistic." The terra cotta exterior cladding came from a local source: the Washington Brick & Lime Co. 12



In the wake of the Great Spokane Fire of 1889 the city council passed an ordinance requiring that new buildings erected in the central business district be built of brick. The resulting increase in demand for brick helped to establish the Washington Brick, Lime & Mfg. Co., started in 1888 and incorporated the following year, as a premier building materials supplier in the Inland Northwest. For a time, the company produced some 20 million bricks a year, and when the plans were being drawn for the Rookery, Washington Brick & Lime was known not only for its quality products, but for its artistry as well.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> The Spokesman-Review, August 27, 1934, The Spokesman-Review, February 7, 1934, included in G. A. Pehrson's Scrapbook of His Architectural Work, Vol. 2 of 2, donated by Betsy Eldenburg to the Spokane Public Library Northwest Room (OS Biography, Pehrson, G. A.).

<sup>11</sup> The Spokesman-Review, July 18, 1934, Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> The Spokesman-Review, August 27, 1934, Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

Page 5 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### Narrative Statement of Significance:

The company had fashioned the 6,000-pound terra cotta eagle that perched atop the State Armory, and also created the gargoyles for the Chronicle Building. The Davenport Hotel, Crescent Building, Paulsen Medical Building, Spokane County Courthouse, and Gonzaga University Administration Building were among the many local landmarks built of brick produced by the Washington Brick & Lime Co. The company devised a special "varsity brick" used at the University of Washington; cross-state rival Washington State also used Washington Brick & Lime products. It is no surprise, then, that Washington Brick & Lime was selected to fashion the terra cotta for the Rookery. The project presented special challenges. The terra cotta blocks designed for the piers were installed upside down. When masons approached the top termination of the piers they realized their mistake but it was irreversible, and the cap pieces, which featured a "snake grass" or "horse tail" stalk motif were not going to fit. Washington Brick & Lime rushed to model re-designed blocks for the top, which allowed the project to continue without delay. The formal opening, on September 1, 1934 inaugurated a new landmark Rookery Building, in a new architectural style.

4

The Art Deco Style of Architecture

The term Art Deco is derived from the 1925 Paris Exposition Internationale des Arts Decoratifs et Industriels Moderne, a celebration of futuristic artistic expression that gave rise to the Modernistic movement in architecture. The term Art Deco was not used while the style was in vogue during the interwar years; it was coined by British art critic and historian Bevis Hillier in the 1960s and became widely used and accepted during the 1970s. <sup>16</sup> Contemporaries referred to the Art Deco style as Modernistic or Style Moderne, but later architectural historians can discern different phases within the Modernistic movement in architecture. In terms of American commercial architecture, Art Deco became chic largely as a result of the influence of the Finnish architect Eliel Saarinen,

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> Tony Bamonte, Spokane and the Inland Northwest: Historical Images (Spokane: Tornado Creek Publishing, 1999), 89; Spokane Daily Chronicle, September 8, 1965, 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Robert Hyslop, Spokane's Building Blocks (Spokane: Standard Blue Print Co., 1983), 254.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> The Spokesman-Review, August 27, 1934, included in G. A. Pehrson's Scrapbook of His Architectural Work, Vol. 2 of 2, donated by Betsy Eldenburg to the Spokane Public Library Northwest Room (OS Biography, Pehrson, G. A.).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> www.astoriaartdeco.com/history.htl (viewed 3/24/2003).

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

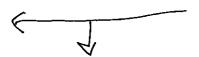
Page 6 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

whose Art Deco design won second prize in a worldwide competition for a headquarters building for the *Chicago Tribune*. While first prize was awarded to a Gothic design, Saarinen's design was widely publicized and many in the profession felt that he deserved to win; Art Deco, consequently, quickly became the latest architectural fashion. Art Deco's popularity lasted through the 1920s into the 1930s, when it evolved into a later Modernistic style, Art Moderne, which remained popular into the 1940s. The earlier Art Deco style is characterized by a horizontal emphasis and by stylized and geometric motifs such as chevrons and zigzags that occur as decorative façade elements. Piers are typically devoid of adornment, except in cases at the top, while spandrels are often offset with their ornamentation and through contrasting colors to achieve a polychromatic effect. Art Deco and the Modernistic movement in general were characterized by a deliberate rejection of historical styles in favor of expressions of modernity, of an emphasis on the future.<sup>17</sup>

The Art Deco style is fairly well represented in downtown Spokane, but the high-style Rookery Building stands out as a particularly significant example. Most of the historic buildings in the downtown core date to the decades around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the city experienced a period of sustained population growth and a coincident building boom; construction thereafter was relatively sporadic, especially during the interwar years when Spokane, like the nation in general, weathered the Great Depression. In addition to the Rookery Building, notable examples of Art Deco design or influence in the central business district include the Montgomery Ward Building (now City Hall) designed and built by the Montgomery Ward Company, the Fox Theater and the City Ramp Garage, both designed by the noted firm of Whitehouse & Price, and the Paulsen Medical Center which, like the Rookery, was designed by one of the more accomplished practitioners of the Modernistic style of architecture in the area: Gustav Albin Pehrson.



Gustav Albin Pehrson, 1883-1968

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Chambers, S. Allen et al., What Style Is It? A Guide to American Architecture (Washington: The Preservation Press, 1983), 88-91; McAlester, Virginia, and McAlester, Lee, A Field Guide to American Houses (New Work: Alfred A. Knofpt, 1993), 465-67; Whiffen, Marcus, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1969), 235-40.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

**Page** 7 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

Gustav Albin Pehrson was born in 1883 in Sweden, where he graduated from Uppsala University before studying further at Oxford University and traveling in Europe to round out his architectural training. He immigrated to the United States in 1905 and worked as a draftsman in Chicago before coming to Spokane in 1913. Pehrson was employed by Cutter and Malmgren, Spokane's most celebrated firm of architects, before starting his own practice in 1916. He remained professionally active right up until his death at age 85 in 1968. In addition to the Art Deco structures noted above, Pehrson's noteworthy downtown designs include the Catholic Chancery Building and the Chronicle Building, which, when juxtaposed with the Rookery, demonstrate Pehrson's versatility as an architect, demonstrating his ability to converse in numerous styles ranging from Art Deco, to Italian Renaissance Revival, to English Gothic. The Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church to the north of downtown, that he designed in the Neoclassical Revival style in the same year he did the Rookery, further underscores Pehrson's flexibility as an architect. Pehrson also designed numerous residential structures. Two in particular, the Kirk Thompson House and the John J. Marischal House, speak to how accomplished Pehrson was in the Modernistic styles. These homes, designed in the Art Moderne style—the Modernistic successor to Art Deco—were built next door to one another during the 1930s on Overbluff Street and were much celebrated, especially the Thompson residence, which was featured in The Saturday Evening Post, Pacific Builder and Engineer, and in a display of the most beautiful homes in the nation hosted at the Chicago headquarters of the Portland Cement association. 19 The Rookery Building represents Pehrson's expression of Modernistic commercial design; it has been characterized as "the most decorated Art Deco building in town," and also deemed "the premier local example of terra cotta artistry employing Art Deco design elements," for its stylistic floral patterns, starbursts, fans, and chevrons.<sup>20</sup>

The Rookery Building's location remained just as strategic when the building opened, as it had been three decades earlier when Sweeny acquired the earlier properties at this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Hottell, William R., "G. A. Pehrson: Spokane's Swedish-Born Architect," (Spokane Public Library Northwest Room 720.979737 Hottell), 1.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Property files for Marischall and Thompson Houses, Spokane City-County Office of Historic Preservation.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Stephen Emerson, Archeological & Historical Services, Cheney, WA, survey form, September 2002, Rookery File Spokane City-County Office of Historic Preservation.

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8

**Page** 8 of 8

Rookery Building SPOKANE, WASHINGTON

### **Narrative Statement of Significance:**

corner of Riverside and Howard. The upper floors held offices for professionals: doctors, lawyers, architects, dentists, insurance agents, etc. Heavy pedestrian traffic made the commercial space on the ground floor a prime location. Joyner's Drugs, at the corner space, occupying four bays on Howard and one large bay on Riverside, enjoyed a thriving business until Densow's, another drug store, replaced it in 1948. Densow's remained until the 1960s, when the Equitable Savings and Loan Association moved in. The other large bay on Riverside housed Grayson's, a department store. The entrance was set in a deep reveal to increase display window space that drew customers from the street. Various business enterprises occupied the smaller commercial spaces on Riverside, and the three small bays on Howard south of the entrance, including an optical shop, boot shop, fabric shop, record store, shoe store, camera shop, and several food sellers. During the late 1960s, Dodson's Jewelers, a long-time occupant of the Mohawk Building to the east, expanded into the easternmost storefront on Riverside, remaining until it moved across the street in the late 1980s.<sup>21</sup>

The "new" Rookery Building has been standing now for longer than the landmark structures it replaced, and the "futuristic" design elements that define the Art Deco style have now assumed an historic significance. The exterior of the upper levels of the Rookery Building retain excellent integrity and clearly embody the distinctive characteristics of Art Deco architecture as rendered by the hand of master architect G. A. Pehrson. The terra cotta detail on the building reflects the high artistic values of the producer, the Washington Brick, Lime & Mfg. Co. Each of these individual qualities qualifies the Rookery as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria C. Together, they make an even stronger case for its significance, and mark it as a very unique building indeed.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Building Permits, Spokane City Hall; Hyslop, Spokane's Building Blocks, 254; Polk's City Directories, Spokane, WA, various years.

### United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9

**Page** 1 of 2

Rookery Building Spokane WA

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July 23, 1916, 1. April 21, 1929, IV 1: 1-6. February 7, 1934. July 18, 1934. August 27, 1934. April 18, 2002.

#### Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9

Page 2 of 2

Rookery Building Spokane WA

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Building Department, 3rd Floor

Building Permits (microfiche).

Historic Preservation Office, 6th Floor

Database.
Property Files.
Vertical Files.

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www.astoriaartdeco.com/history.htl (viewed 3/24/2003). www.ci.chi.il.us/Landmarks/R/RookeryBuilding.html (viewed 3/18/2002).

### United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section

**Page** 1 of 2

Rookery Spokane WA

#### **Additional Documentation**

#### Maps

- 1. Assessor's Plat Map
- 2. Sketch Site Map
- 3. USGS Quad
- 4. Full size US Geological Survey Topographic

### **Photographs**

#### **Historic**

- 1. 1934 Libby photo, Joyner, NW MAC
- 2. 1934 Libby photo, Grayson, NW MAC
- 3. 1937 photo, exterior, NW MAC
- 4. 1937 Libby photo, NW MAC
- 5. 1937 Libby photo, north elevation, NW MAC
- 6. 1941 Gamble photo, NW MAC
- 7. 1952 photo, NW MAC
- 8. 1953 Libby photo, Grayson, NW MAC
- 9. 1954 Libby photo, NW MAC
- 10. 1959 Libby photo, NW MAC

#### **Contemporary**

- 1. North elevation, looking west
- 2. West elevation, looking north
- 3. West elevation, looking south
- 4. South elevation, earlier building not included
- 5. Looking east at light well
- 6. Letter box in Lobby
- 7. Stairs in lobby
- 8. Main hall 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, looking north
- 9. 3<sup>rd</sup> floor hall
- 10. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor office, looking southwest

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section

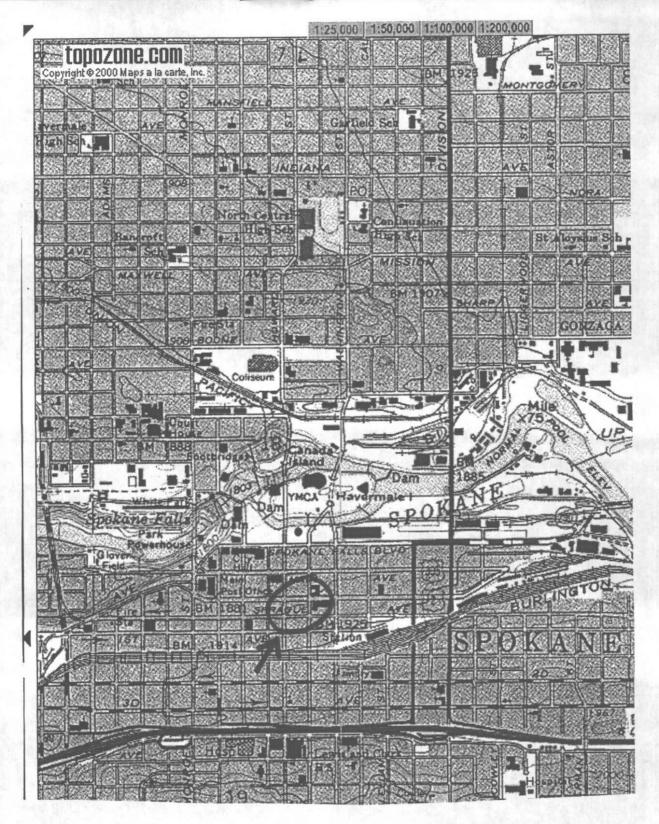
Page 2 of 2

Rookery Spokane WA

### **Slides**

- 1. North elevation, looking east
- 2. North elevation, looking west
- 3. West elevation, facing north
- 4. West elevation, facing south
- 5. Terra cotta detail
- 6. Storefront door, west elevation
- 7. South elevation, not included in nomination
- 8. Lobby stairs
- 9. Lobby letter box

Disk containing nomination

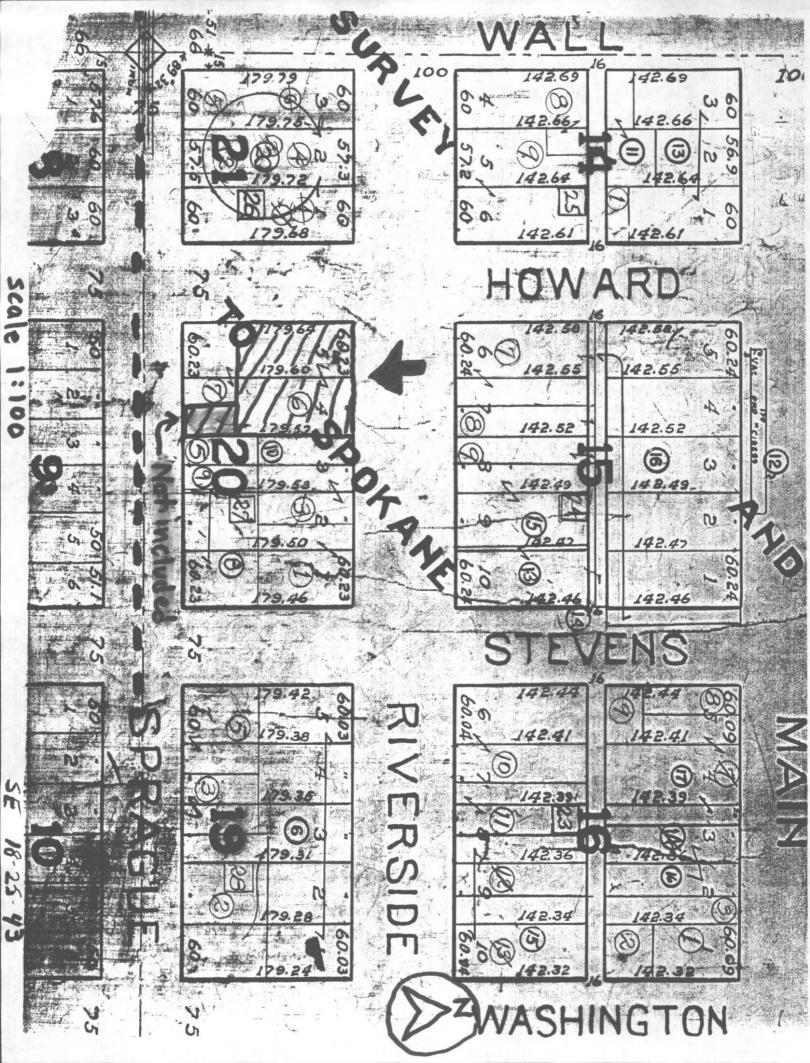


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### **Rookery Block**

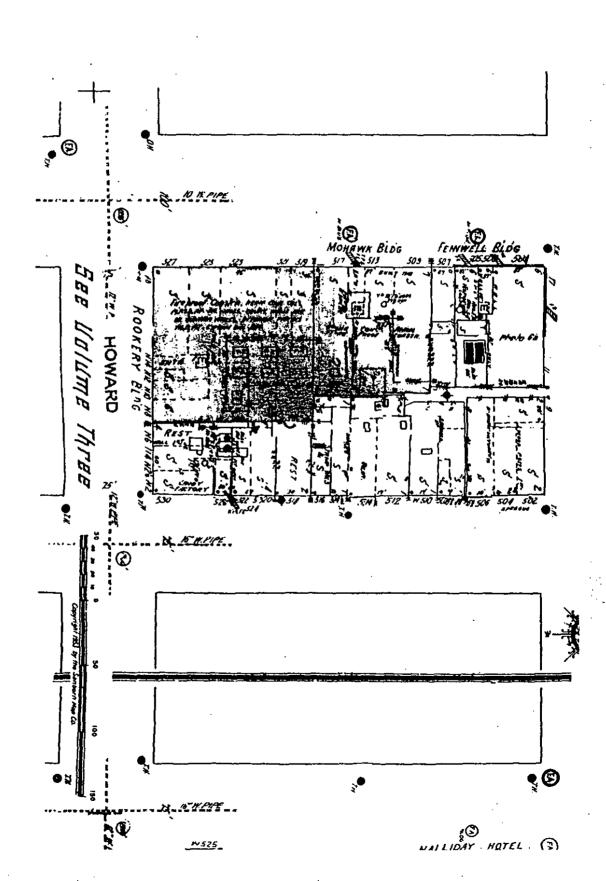
Source: USGS 7.5' series Spokane NW Quadrangle Washington – Spokane County

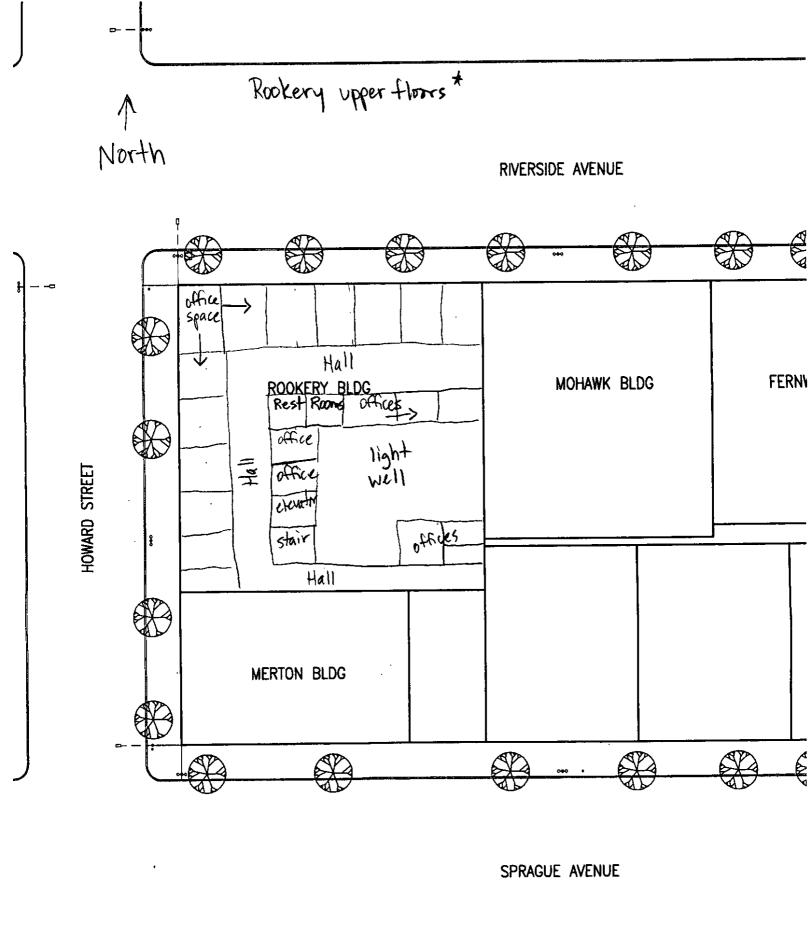




North

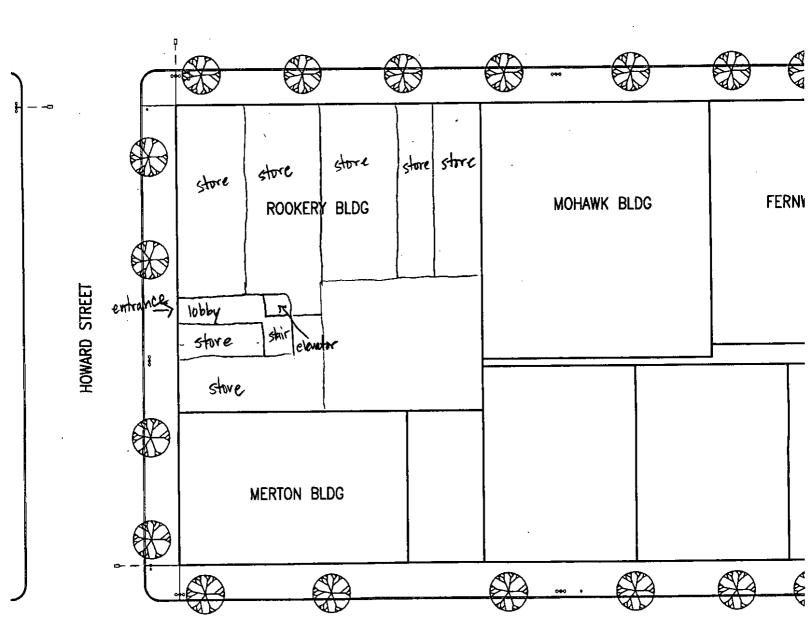
1952 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map Spokane, WA





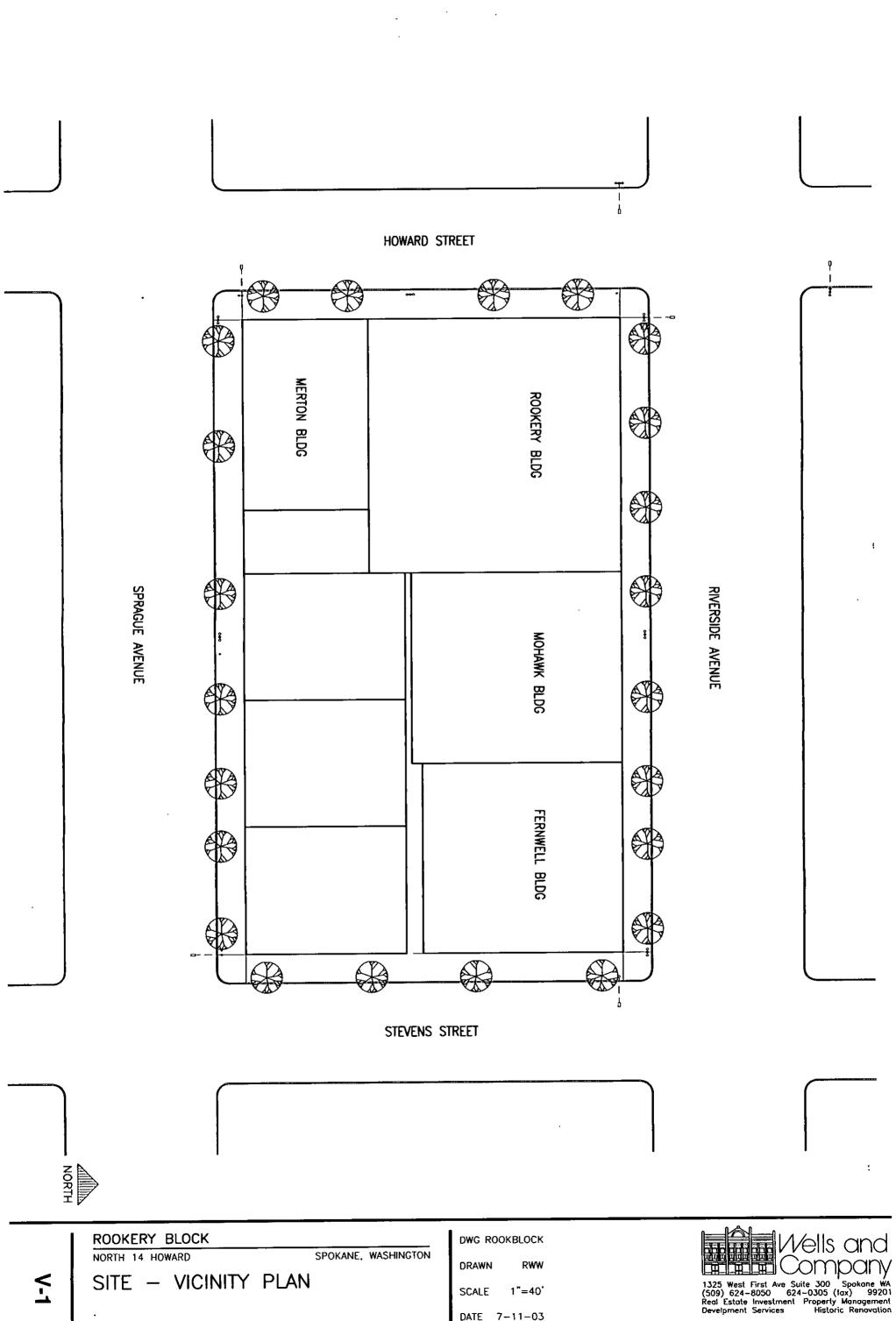
\* Drawn from memory -- no access available

### RIVERSIDE AVENUE



SPRAGUE AVENUE

\* Drawn from memory -- no access available



1"=40'

DATE 7-11-03

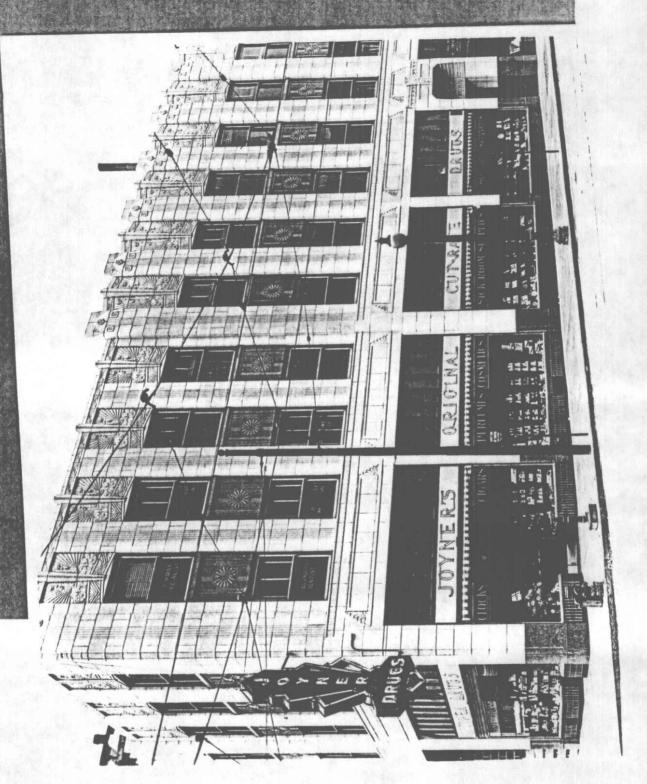
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SITE - VICINITY PLAN

RIVERSIDE, WEST-500-(STEVENS TO HOWARD)

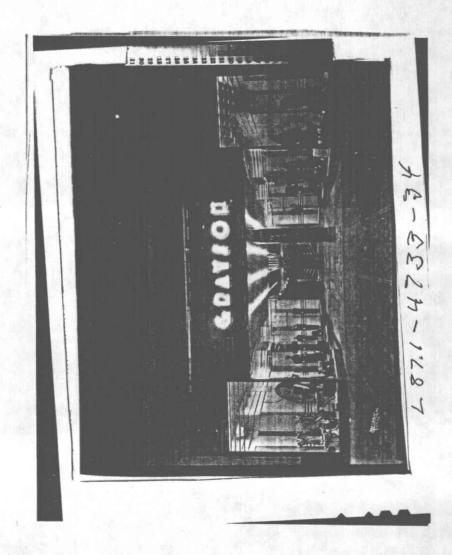
Joyner Drug Store, 1934, ground floor of Rookery Bldg, southeast corner of Howard & Riverside.

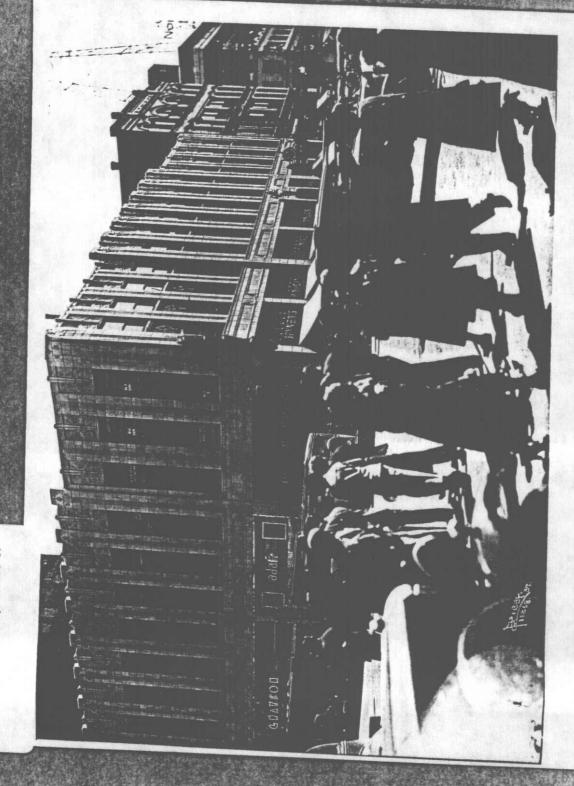
Photographer: Libby #4670-34



Grayson, Women's Dresses & Coats, 1934 523 West Riverside 4x5 A/P / 4x5 Poly CN 4x5 Interpositive 8x10 NN or SFM

> Photographer: Libby Studio Collection: Libby Studio

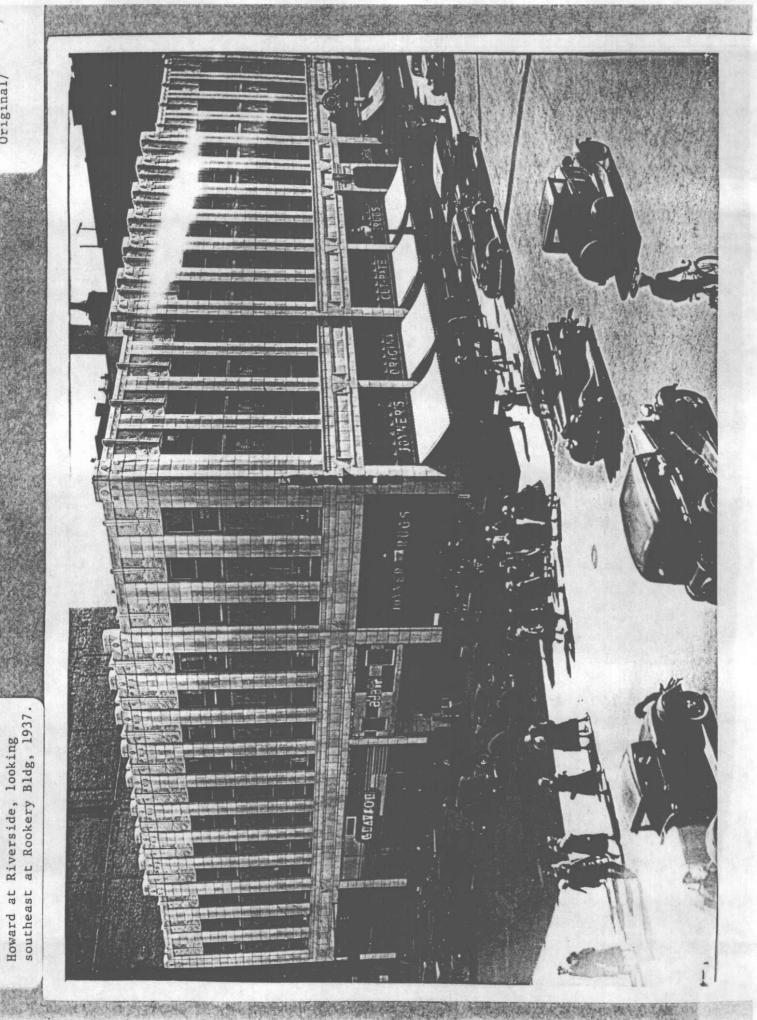




Pedestrian & auto traffic on

MAYENDINE, WEST JOU (SIEN ROOKERY

HOWARD)

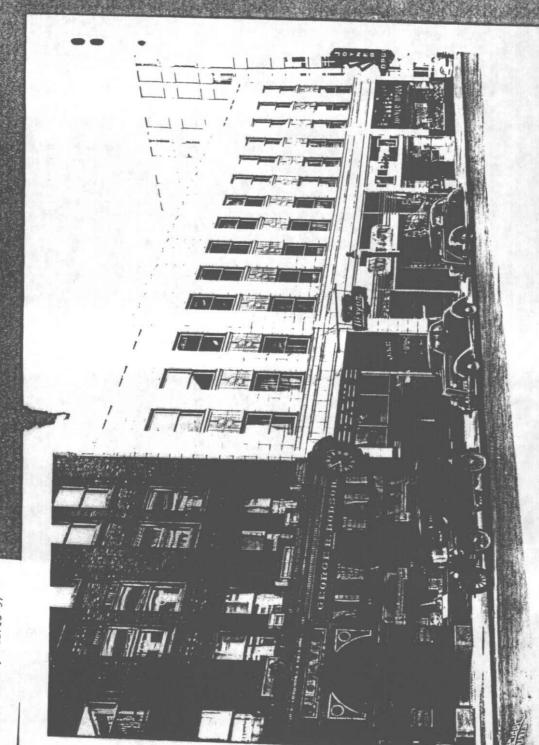


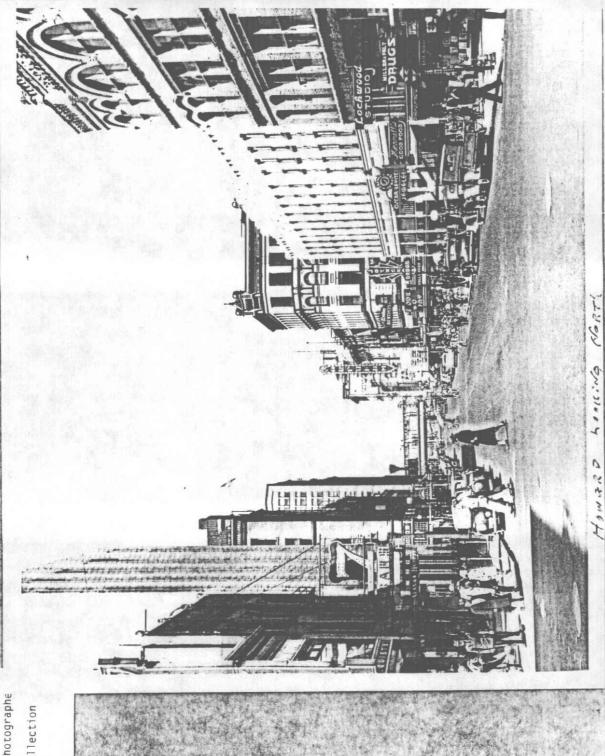
Southside of Riverside between Howard & Stevens, 1937-Mohawk Bldg entrance at left, Rookery Bldg at

HOWARD)

right (entrance on Howard.

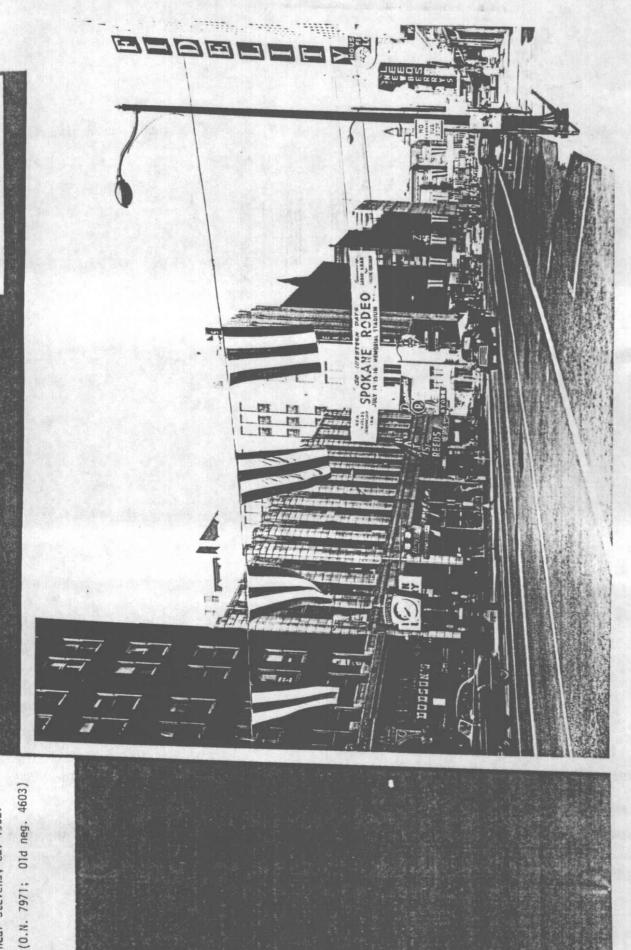
Photographer: Libby #11713-37





Looking north on Howard from Sprague, 1941.

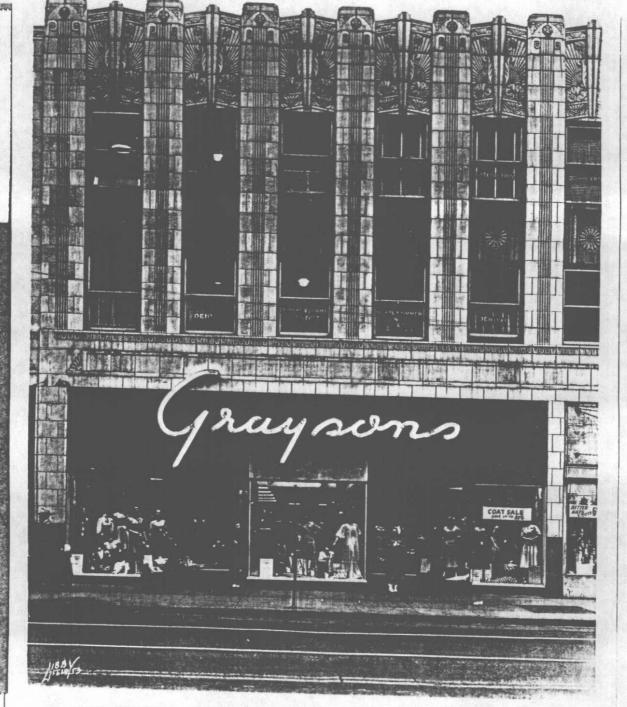
Wallace Gamble, photographe #192 Wallace Gamble Collection



RIVERSIDE, WEST-500-(STEVENS TO HOWARD)

Looking west on Riverside from near Stevens, ca. 1952.

Original/ 8 X 10 SFN L87-1.75604-53



Grayson's, Women's Clothing, West 523 Riverside, 1953.

Photographer: Libby Studio

RIVERSIDE, WEST-500- (STEVENS TO HOWARD)

L87. - 1.78770-54 8x10 orig. /8x10 SFN

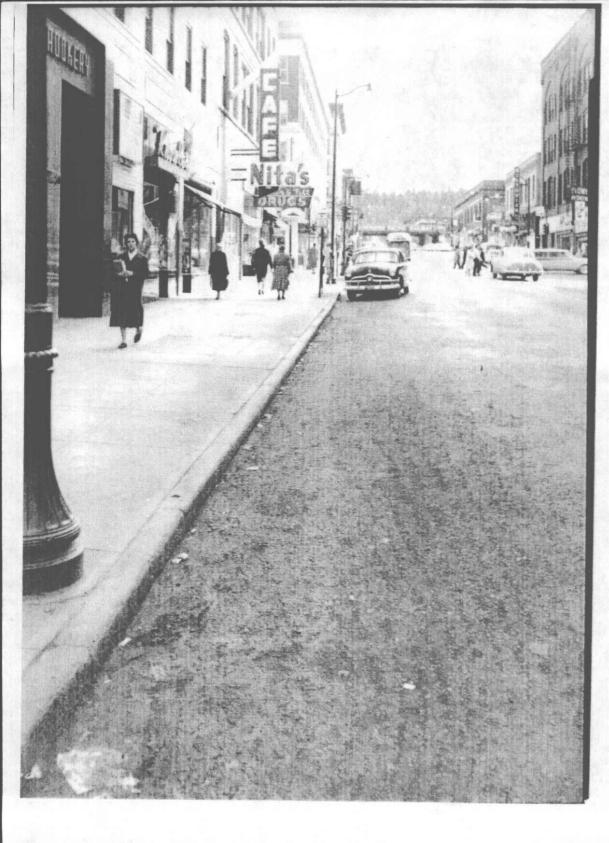
1954. Rookery Building entrance showing Art Deco features.

Photographer: Libby Studio Collection: Libby Studio



1959 Howard Street looking South from just South of intersection with Riverside.

HOWARD, NORTH-00



L87-1.596-59

8x10 orig./8x10 SFN

Photographer: Libby

Collection: Libby

Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
North elevation, looking west
1 of 10

Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
West elevation, looking north
2 of 10

Charles Carlotte Carrier Carlotte grade and an artifact of the contract of the





Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
West elevation, looking south
3 of 10

Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
South elevation, looking northwest
at remaining portion of an earlier
building not included in nomination
H of 10





Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John: Mann May 13, 2003
looking east at light well
5 of 10

Rookery 14 N. Howard Spokane, Spokane County, WA John Mann May 13, 2003 Letter box in lobby 6 of 10





Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
Stairs in lobby
7 of 10

Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
Main hall 2nd floor, looking
North

8 of 10





Rookery 14 N. Howard Spokane, Spokane County, WA John Mann May 13, 2003 3rd floor hall

9 of 10

Rookery 14 N. Howard
Spokane, Spokane County, WA
John Mann May 13, 2003
2nd floor office, looking southwest
10 of 10



