

437-441 Seventh St., NW (Commercial Building)
(Boyce & Lewis Shoes)
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC- 497

HABS
DC,
WASH,
349-

PHOTOGRAPH

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ADDITIONAL
FOLLOWS...

HABS
DC,
WASH,
349-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Located near the corner of Seventh and E Streets, this commercial building occupies the entirety of a rectangular lot whose dimensions are forty-nine feet wide by eighty-three feet deep. The building is four stories high (plus basement) with an internal structure consisting of three equal bays separated by brick bearing walls which run the full depth of the building. At each side of the building, the bearing walls are shared as party walls with adjacent neighbors.

The facade at sidewalk level reflects the three structural sections in its three evenly-spaced entrance recesses separated by projecting show windows under a single canopy metal roof. Above this, all upper floors of the facade are presently covered by a modern aluminum curtain wall featuring an overall textural treatment with no interior articulation. While the original facade remains a mystery, the interiors would seem to suggest the existence of a late-Nineteenth Century elevation behind the green-colored cladding.

Leased for many years by the same shoe establishment, the interior's three independent spaces have been functionally integrated by the opening of elliptical arches into the longitudinal bearing walls. All three rooms feature interesting wood cabinetry along the walls, with ceilings of pressed tin. The upper floors were not made accessible by the owner.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Typical of the larger commercial buildings prior to 1880, the characteristic brick bearing partitions determine the inflexible quality of the interior. After that date, iron and steel framing became progressively more favored for interior supports. The stylistic significance of the building is impossible to determine as the street facade has been covered by a modern curtain wall. It is not improbable that the hidden elevation consists of a thrice-repeated organization in brick executed in one of the traditional revival styles of the late Nineteenth Century. As it stands, however, the building clashes very strongly with its surroundings. The facade's color, texture, and most especially, its lack of articulation constitute a particularly insensitive example of contemporaneous architectural design. Together with the three similarly-treated adjacent buildings to the south, this entire row is in extreme discord with the character of the downtown area.

September 1979

Addendum to:
437-441 Seventh Street, NW
(Boyce and Lewis Shoes)
Washington
District of Columbia

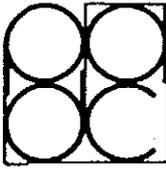
HABS No. DC-497

HABS
DC,
WASH,
349-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127



**PENNSYLVANIA
AVENUE
DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

425 13TH STREET, N.W.
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

GENERAL CONSULTANTS

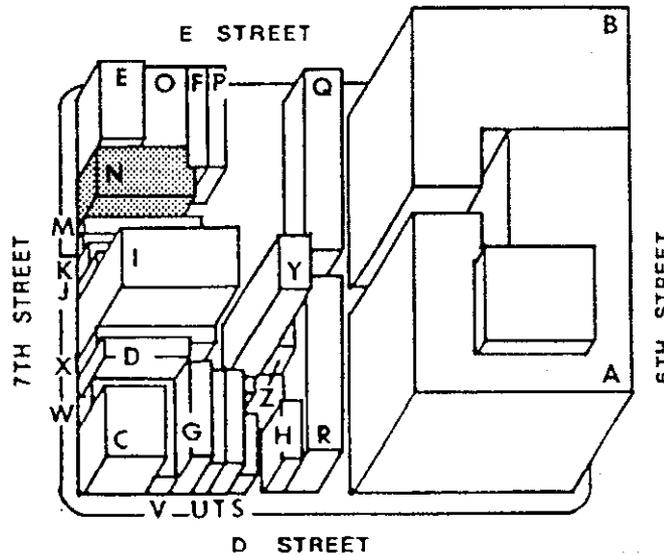
ANDERSON NOTTER / MARIANI
GENERAL PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
DEVROUX & FURNELL
ASSOCIATE ARCHITECTS
DAVID MCLAREN HART & ASSOCIATES
PRESERVATION & CONSERVATION CONSULTANT
MONK DUNSTONE ASSOCIATES
COST ESTIMATING CONSULTANT

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

437-441 SEVENTH STREET, NW
(Boyce and Lewis Shoes)
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HABS
DC
WASH.
349-

437 - 441 Seventh Street, NW
(Boyce and Lewis Shoes)
Lot 825



This documentation was produced for mitigation purposes by the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Additional documentation exists for Square 457, within which this structure stands. For photographs, historical, and descriptive data on Square 457, see HABS No. DC-597.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Located near the corner of Seventh and E Streets, this commercial building occupies the entirety of a rectangular lot whose dimensions are forty-nine feet wide by eighty-three feet deep. The building is four stories high (plus basement) with an internal structure consisting of three equal bays separated by brick bearing walls which run the full depth of the building. At each side of the building, the bearing walls are shared as party walls with adjacent neighbors.

The facade at sidewalk level reflects the three structural sections in its three evenly-spaced entrance recesses separated by projecting show windows under a single canopy metal roof. Above this, all upper floors of the facade are presently covered by a modern aluminum curtain wall featuring an overall textural treatment with no interior articulation. While the original facade remains a mystery, the interiors would seem to suggest the existence of a late-Nineteenth Century elevation behind the green-colored cladding.

Leased for many years by the same shoe establishment, the interior's three independent spaces have been functionally integrated by the opening of elliptical arches into the longitudinal bearing walls. All three rooms feature interesting wood cabinetry along the walls, with ceilings of pressed tin. The upper floors were not made accessible by the owner.

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Typical of the larger commercial buildings prior to 1880, the characteristic brick bearing partitions determine the inflexible quality of the interior. After that date, iron and steel framing became progressively more favored for interior supports. The stylistic significance of the building is impossible to determine as the street facade has been covered by a modern curtain wall. It is not improbable that the hidden elevation consists of a thrice-repeated organization in brick executed in one of the traditional revival styles of the late Nineteenth Century. As it stands, however, the building clashes very strongly with its surroundings. The facade's color, texture, and most especially, its lack of articulation constitute a particularly insensitive example of contemporaneous architectural design. Together with the three similarly-treated adjacent buildings to the south, this entire row is in extreme discord with the character of the downtown area.

September 1979



SEVENTH STREET (WEST) FACADE

Lot 14 (Sublots 825, 826)
437, 439, 441, 443 Seventh Street, NW

Lot 14 is situated at the northwest corner of Square 457, on the corner of Seventh Street and E Streets, N. W. The lot measures 75 feet along Seventh Street and close to 80 feet along its E Street side. Sometime between 1887 and 1903 the lot was subdivided into two sublots designated 825 and 826. The southern subplot, or Sublot 825 measured 50 feet along its Seventh Street side and 80 feet deep. This lot was further subdivided into three sublots identified as 437, 439, and 441 Seventh Street. Sublot 825 now houses the Boyce & Lewis Shoe store built in 1877. The northern subplot, or Sublot 826 is identified as 443 Seventh Street and measures 27 feet along its seventh Street side. The D. C. Space Building now occupies Sublot 826, and was also built in ca. 1877.

1819.....Lot 14 was assessed in the name of John R. Plater according to the District of Columbia Tax Records.

1829/33..Lot 14 was assessed \$2248.00 for the ground and \$3500.00 for the improvements to the property, in the name of Jimmy Pickering.

1844.....Lot 14 was assessed in the name of Rapheal Simmes for \$2249.00.

Lot 14 (Sublot 825)
437-441 Seventh Street

1855.....The City Directories listed Edward Shaw, a clerk, as a tenant of 437 Seventh Street. Other co-tenants of the building were J. P. Ellicott, A. Kendall, an officer, P.J. Steers, a merchant tailor; and an office of the Y.M.C.A.

1858.....The building continued to house a variety of tradesmen.

1858

to

1877.....The City Directories list the paper hanger and picture frames seller J. Markriter as the occupant of 439 Seventh Street.

1859.....Susan Ireland was assessed \$9219.00 for Lot 14.

1862

to

1873.....The City Directories lists Thomas T. Everett as the tenant of 437 Seventh Street.

1864

to

1878.....I.P. Libbey managed a watch and jewelry store at 437 Seventh Street.

1867

to

1869.....Samual R. Bond, a lawyer occupied an office in this building.

1870.....The southern portion of Lot 14 was assessed to Samual Fowler at \$7500.00.

1876

to

1886.....H.W. Beadle and Company operated a patent agency at 437 Seventh Street.

1877.....A building permit was issued on April 2nd which granted permission to make general repairs and to install three new windows (Permit No. 140; Builder: Daring & Joshua).

1878/79...The tax assessment records for this year indicate that the southern portion of Lot 14 was assessed to Jane Fowler at \$16,242.00.

1878

to

1889.....Isaac Ford, a lawyer, is listed intermittently in the City Directories as having an office at 437 Seventh Street.

1878

to

1891.....The partnership of Strauss and Marx is listed in the City Directories as operating a variety of businesses at 441 Seventh Street. The City Directories list a clothing store and a confectionary.

1879.....The entrepreneur Julius Lansburgh operated a carpet dealership at 439 Seventh Street.

1880.....A September 9th building permit authorized the installation of show windows for 437-441 Seventh Street (Permit No. 326).

1881

to

1897.....The Appleton and Company books and periodicals store leased space at 437 Seventh Street.

1881

to

1895.....Oliver P. Burdett leased a space in the building for fifteen years. The City Directory lists him as a shirt manufacturer, a men's furnishings seller, and a clothier.

1882

to

1888.....Thomas M. Talbott, a dentist, occupied an office at 437 Seventh Street for seven years.

1883

to

1897.....George N. Rider opened a book shop in 1883 and continued it through 1897 at 437 Seventh Street.

1883/84...Lot 14, still assessed to Jane S. Fowler, was valued at \$13, 289.00.

1884

to
1891.....J.H. and S.T. Turpin managed a variety store at 439 Seventh Street,
according to the City Directories.

1889

to
1897.....John S. Rich, a claim agent, was listed as a tenant of 437 Seventh
Street, according to the City Directories.

1893/94...Jane S. Fowler was assessed \$19,156.00 for the southern portion of
Lot 14. The improvements to the property were valued at \$8000.00.

1894

to
1911.....A lawyer, Charles D. Fowler, leased an office at 437 Seventh Street
according to the City Directories.

1895

to
1897.....Everett Rider joined George Rider in the book store business situated
at 437 Seventh Street.

1897.....A building permit was issued to 437-441 Seventh Street, N.W. on March 9
which authorized the alteration of the storefront (Permit No. 938;
Builder: J.E. Burden; Cost: \$1400.00).

1899/

1900.....Jane S. Fowler's assessment for Lot 14 was \$18,419.00 and the improve-
ments were valued at \$7,500.00.

1900

to
1910.....Asher C. Ryerson, a manufacturing agent, occupied a space in the building.

1900.....A building permit was issued on April 1st to make general repairs to
437-441 Seventh Street (Permit No. 2926; Architect: Appleton C. Clark,
Jr.; Builder: Piper Kenyon).

1903

to

1909.....The clothier Samuel Herman was a tenant of 441 Seventh Street according to the City Directories.

1903

to

1911.....John R. McChesney leased an office for use as a dental clinic at 437 Seventh Street.

1904

to

1913.....The City Directories list John Fegan, a general engraver, as an occupant of 437 Seventh Street.

1905

to

1927.....The Welsbach Company, a gas lamp and burner store, occupied space in the building for twenty-three years.

1907.....A building permit was issued on January 19th to rebuild the show windows (Permit No. 63626; Architect: Appleton P. Clark, Jr.).

1908.....An April 3rd building permit was issued to install a vault and new iron doors (Permit No. 70502).

On April 4th of the same year a permit was issued to construct a vault (Permit No. 2995; Architect: Appleton P. Clark, Jr; Cost: \$200.00).

1912.....A permit was issued of February 15 which authorized the replacement of the show windows (Permit No. 3550; Architect: Appleton P. Clark; Builder: M.F. Piper; Cost: \$1000.00).

1913.....A permit was issued to remodel the show windows, remove the stairway, and insert a metal ceiling (Permit No. 3854; Architect: Appleton P. Clark, Jr.; Cost: \$1200.00)

On March 9th of of the same year a permit was issued to remove the existing wooden skylight and insert galvanized iron (Permit No. 4787).

1915
to
1929/
1934

to
1937.....Max Needle and Company, a tailor shop, occupied space at 437 Seventh Street for nineteen years.

1934
to

1948.....Hugo Lehman and Hugo Percy leased space in the building for use as a dental clinic.

1934
to

1981.....The Boyce and Lew Shoe Company has occupied space in 437 to 441 Seventh Street for forty-eight years, and continues to occupy the space today.

SOURCES

Baist Real Estate Atlas

Bastert and Enthoffer Plat Maps

Boyd's City Directories

District of Columbia Building Permits

District of Columbia General Assessment Records

District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds

District of Columbia Surveyor's Office Records

District of Columbia Tax Records

Hopkins Real Estate Atlas

Polk's City Directories

Property Map for Downtown Urban Renewal Area for District of Columbia Redevelopment
Land Agency

Sanborn Insurance Map