

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 11 1980

DATE ENTERED

SEP 2 1980

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

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Staacke Brothers Building

AND/OR COMMON

Staacke Building, Exchange Furniture Store

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

309 E. Commerce St.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

20th

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

CODE

048

COUNTY

Bexar

CODE

029

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

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

OWNERSHIP

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

STATUS

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

PRESENT USE

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Staacke 1894: Mrs. Joan Schilo Moore, Mrs. Janice Schilo Moore, Mr. Thomas M. Porter, Mr. Huard H. Eldridge

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Drawer 32609

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas 78216

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bexar County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

STATE

Texas 78285

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

San Antonio Historic Survey

DATE

1972

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Office of the City Historic Preservation Officer

CITY, TOWN

San Antonio

STATE

Texas 78285

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Staacke Brothers Building, located at 309 E. Commerce Street, was built to house the successful carriage business of A. F. Staacke. The narrow, rectangular building fronts 42 feet on E. Commerce Street and originally extended 300 feet to W. Crockett Street. The three-story, commercial structure with a basement is distinguished by a stone facade which exhibits Renaissance Revival details. The east and west walls, architecturally less significant, are constructed of tan brick and rubble stone. The north wall, which no longer remains standing, was constructed of brick.

The facades of the 1890's buildings on Commerce Street created a business block that was an expression of commercial success. The Staacke Building, as well as the adjoining Stevens Building, were designed by the local architect, James Riely Gordon, who was partially responsible for the movement toward more progressive architecture.

Borrowing details from the Renaissance architecture of Italy and France, the facade of the Staacke Building conveyed an appearance appropriate for a prosperous merchant. The Classical elements provided a grand composition of form for which the enterprising merchants and businessmen of the late nineteenth century were striving while the ornamental details provided a frivolous quality reminiscent of the Victorian period.

The combination of red sandstone and pink granite created a colorful, impressive and expensive facade. The facade of the building, presently painted off-white, is highlighted by three, two-story semi-circular arches for window and door openings. The arches are supported by granite Corinthian columns which stand on rectangular sandstone bases ornamented with bow and ribbon patterns. Each floor is articulated differently which is indicative of the Renaissance Revival style. A particular Classical Order is used on the lower floor while a different order is used on the upper floor. A plate glass window on either side of a recessed entry way decorate the street floor. Semi-circular windows with stone mullions complete the second floor. Classical elements reappear on the third floor in the granite Ionic columns and sandstone balustrade of the balcony. Inset bowed windows with stone mullions complete the decoration. A handsome metal entablature, consisting of a frieze, a bracketed cornice and a balustrade with a swan-neck pediment, dominates the roof. A finial originally extended from the center of the pediment. The name of the firm, Staacke Bros., is stamped in a metal panel which is located in the center of the roof balustrade. Also, the date of construction, 1894, is carved in a spandrel of one of the arches. A granite step leads to the entrance of the building and the recessed entry way has a pressed tin ceiling.

The interior of the building consisted of one large open space on each floor. The walls were plastered and the building was fitted with wood flooring and pressed tin ceilings. Three rectangular skylights were incorporated into the roof of the building. Glass bricks, set in panels the approximate dimensions of the skylights, were located in the floor of the second and third stories directly under the skylights. This provided a source of natural light from the roof to the first floor. Eighteen cast iron columns with Corinthian capitals were situated throughout the first floor.

The first floor was used as a showroom for the various types of wagons and carriages kept in stock. The items were placed in neat lines which ran the length of the building (see photo, 1907). Two large plate glass windows in the front of

(continued)

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CONTINUATION SHEET

1

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the building often displayed a life-size replica of a horse hitched to one of the wagons offered for sale. The second floor was used for storage of unassembled wagons and vehicles. A work area where vehicles were assembled and painted and where wheels were mounted occupied the third floor. Later, when automobiles became popular, the second floor was used as an auto repair shop. A newer, larger elevator to accommodate the heavier weight of automobiles replaced the original one.

In November, 1978, it became evident that the Staacke Building and the adjoining Stevens Building were in danger of being demolished by the owner, the Nix Hospital Trust, for a surface parking lot. During the summer of 1979, after many months of negotiations, the San Antonio Conservation Society reached an agreement with the Trust. The Society purchased two adjoining pieces of property, the Groos and Stern properties, and then exchanged a portion of the Groos property and the entire Stern property for the front 97.5 feet of the Staacke and Stevens property. The agreement stipulated that the rear portions of the buildings be demolished in order that the Nix Hospital Trust could use that portion of the site for a parking lot. Before demolition, the Staacke Building extended 269.90 feet to West Crockett Street. It presently measures 42 feet in width and 97.5 feet in depth. Each floor contains 4,000 square feet.

When the rear of the building was destroyed, two of the three skylights were removed as were several of the interior iron columns. The remaining skylight is still in place; however, it is not visible. It has been covered by a built-up roof and concealed on the interior by a third floor ceiling. The original tin roof was replaced earlier. Although the rear of the Staacke Building has been removed and the existing structure is in a deteriorated condition, the facade and remaining structure is essentially intact and unaltered.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) merchandising
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1894

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Fred Dingel/James Riely Gordon

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Staacke Brothers Building is significant not only because it was designed by one of San Antonio's and Texas' most noted architects, James Riely Gordon, but because it is an excellent example of the architecture of the developing commercial society. It is one of Gordon's finest remaining buildings. Gordon combined new technology with changing attitudes and adapted Renaissance details of the Italian street architecture to meet the needs of his successful client. In San Antonio and in other trading centers of the state during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, it was becoming increasingly typical for a thriving enterprise to occupy a large, decorative commercial building. The successful merchants demanded buildings with distinction, particularly since illustrations of buildings often appeared with advertisements in newspapers thus presenting an identifying image to the public. The Staacke Building housed the largest carriage firm in the city known as Staacke Bros. The firm was established as a general merchandising business in 1849 by August F. Staacke, a German immigrant, who became one of the pioneer businessmen of Western Texas. The growth of the firm kept pace with that of the city and by 1894 Staacke Bros. occupied one of the most prominent buildings situated in the center of trade on E. Commerce Street. The highest priced business property was that along Commerce and Houston Streets.

James Riely Gordon (1864-1937), a native of Winchester, Virginia, had no formal education in architecture. At age eighteen, he began his career by an apprenticeship with W. C. Dodson. In 1883, he went to Washington, D.C. and worked under the supervising architect of the Treasury. A few years later he opened an office in San Antonio (Robinson, Texas Public Buildings, pp. 107-108). By 1887, Gordon began to receive the majority of important local and area contracts. He maintained the position until 1900 when he moved to the East. In addition to sixteen Texas county courthouses and numerous residential and commercial structures, Gordon designed the Texas Building for the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 (Jutson, Alfred Giles, p. 12). One of Gordon's most noted San Antonio buildings was the Bexar County Courthouse, built in 1892.

Gordon, one of the most respected architects in Texas in the late nineteenth century, stated in 1894 that his office was designing finer and better constructed buildings with more artistic designs than ever before. He included the Staacke Bros. Building in this category. He remarked, "The people of Texas know what art is and are rapidly becoming more progressive" (San Antonio Daily Express, Aug. 19, 1894).

August Frederick Staacke came to San Antonio in 1894 from Hanover, Germany. He began his general merchandising business on Soledad Street and expanded to include mowers, reapers, carriages and buggies of all kinds in addition to the famous
(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Deed Records, Bexar County Courthouse, San Antonio, Texas.
 Gordon, James Riely. Sketches From the Portfolio of James Riely Gordon, Architect, San Antonio, Texas. St. Louis: A.B. Benesch Publishing Co., 1896.
 Jutson, Mary Carolyn. Alfred Giles: An English Architect in Texas and Mexico. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1972. (continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

UTM NOT VERIFIED
ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one
 QUADRANGLE NAME San Antonio East QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,4</u>	<u>5,49</u>	<u>5,3,2</u>	<u>3,2</u>	<u>5,4</u>	<u>8,9,3</u>	B					
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING					ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		
C							D					
E							F					
G							H					

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes that part of Block 148, Lot 10 that extends from West Commerce Street 97.5' to the north. Therefore, the lot includes the existing structure only and measures 42' x 97.5'.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Lynn Osborne Bobbitt

ORGANIZATION Consultant DATE 1/15/80

STREET & NUMBER 410 King William TELEPHONE (512) 227-7804

CITY OR TOWN San Antonio STATE Texas ZIP 78204

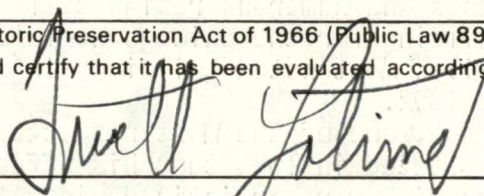
12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer DATE May 28, 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER
 ATTEST: Kristin J. O'Connell
 CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 9-2-80
 DATE 8/29/80

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Studebaker wagons. Mr. Staacke had a reputation for "first-class, sterling integrity and square dealing." His trade, estimated at \$125,000 annually, extended through Texas and into Mexico (Historical and Descriptive Review, p. 83).

Mr. Staacke acquired the lot fronting 42 feet on the north side of E. Commerce Street in 1869. The lot originally was the site of the First Presbyterian Church, an adobe structure. In 1874, J. H. Kampmann, a San Antonio builder, contracted to build on the lot a large stone building 42 feet by 90 feet to be used as a storehouse. Mr. Staacke sold the carriage business to his three sons, August E., Rudolph and Herman, in 1889 and the firm became known as Staacke Bros. The following year James Riely Gordon was commissioned to erect a brick store building 42 feet by 129 feet on Commerce and Crockett Streets. (San Antonio Daily Express, Jan. 12, 1890). On August 19, 1894, Staacke Bros. advertised that plans were being prepared for a new three-story building and they had to vacate part of their premises. The same day the Daily Express carried the account that Architect Gordon had let the contract for the magnificent building for Staacke Bros. on Commerce Street running through to Crockett Street. The article stated that the front would be red Pecos sandstone, polished granite and plate glass. Architectural investigations may reveal that portion of the earlier buildings were incorporated into the 1894 structure.

In 1903, Staacke Bros. advertised an office at 133 Commerce Street and a repository at 133 and 135 Commerce Street extending through 300 feet to 114 and 116 Crockett Street. A warehouse was located directly across Crockett Street and on Main Avenue. The business continued to grow. Staacke Bros. is credited with bringing the first auto to San Antonio in 1905 (Unidentified Newspaper article, Nov. 28, 1909). The carriage business developed into an important automobile agency and stocked models of the Studebaker, the Stevens-Duryea, the Cadillac and others.

Mr. Staacke died on July 6, 1909 and the Staacke family incorporated the business under the name of Staacke Improvement Corporation in 1916. Staacke Bros. operated on Commerce Street until the 1920's. They sold the property in 1924 and moved to another location more suitable for an automobile agency. Sherwin-Williams Paint Company occupied the building from 1924 until about 1964. It then became the home of Exchange Furniture Company who occupied the building until it was vacated in 1978.

In January, 1980, the Staacke Building was purchased by a partnership composed of local investors. Future plans include the restoration of the facade and the adaptive reuse of the interior. The first floor will house the well known San Antonio restaurant, Schilo's. The second and third floors will be adapted for office space. The Staacke and Stevens Buildings are the only two structures still standing in the three hundred block of the north side of Commerce Street.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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PAGE 2

Land and Thompson, publishers. Historical and Descriptive Review of the Industries of San Antonio. San Antonio: 1885.

Robinson, Willard B. Texas Public Buildings of the Nineteenth Century. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1974.

San Antonio City Directories.

San Antonio Daily Express.

San Antonio Traction Co. Souvenir of The Picturesque Alamo City. San Antonio: Ebers and Wurtz, 1907.

"Staacke Building full of Memories," River City Free Press, January 12, 1979.

Property

Stracke Brothers Building

State

IL, Bexar

Working Number

6.11.80.1565

Ref # 80004079

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos

5

Maps

1

HISTORIAN

Handsome application of Renaissance Revival detailing to a commercial facade - architecturally valuable, for intrinsic merit + as work of noted local architect James Pichy Gordon, + also of interest as home of largest carriage firm in city at end of 19th century. Rear portion of bldg has been demolished, but facade + front 1/3 remain intact, are to be rehabilitated.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

*Accept
O'Connell
2/29/80*

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____

Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

BRANCH CHIEF

- RETURN TO REVIEWER TO REQUEST PHOTO AND DESCRIPTION OF REAR FACADE. ~~ALSO REVIEWER SHOULD FILL OUT (LWD) FILE~~
- SEE 9.2.80 PHOTO REPORT - REAR ELEVATION NOT AS SIGNIFICANT AS FRONT WHICH REMAINS.

*ACCEPT
MK DOWK
9.2.80*

KEEPER

National Register Write-up

2.3.81

Send-back

Entered

SEP 2 1980

Federal Register Entry

Re-submit



STAACKE BUILDING,
SAN ANTONIO, TEX.

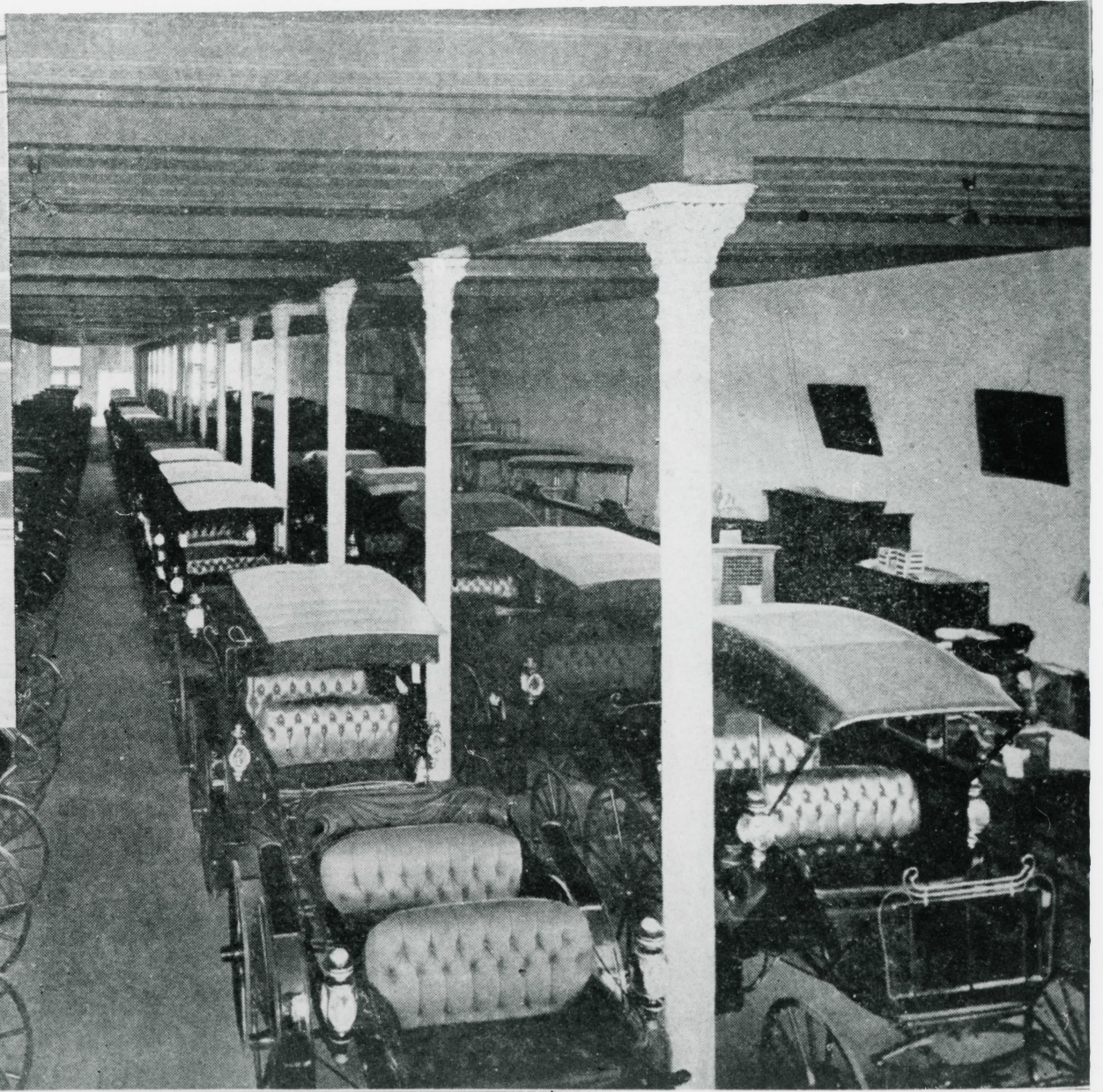
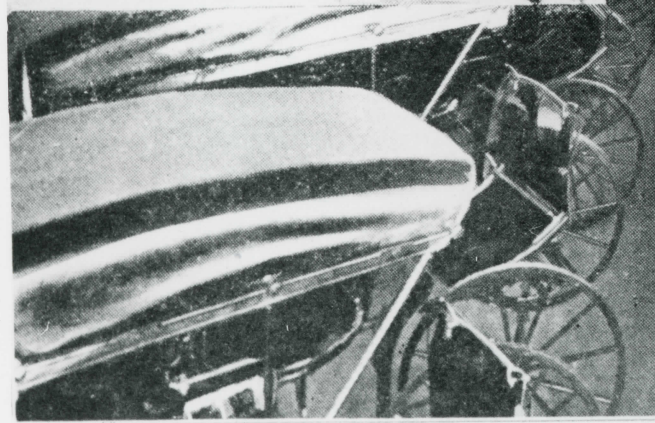
Staacke Brothers Building
309 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo: Original in Library of Daughters of
the Republic of Texas, date unknown;
Copy courtesy of San Antonio Conser-
vation Society, Copy negative on
file at SACS

South Elevation, camera facing north
Photo # 1 of 5

SEP 2 1980

JUN 1 1980



Staacke Brothers Building
309 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

JUN 11 1990

Photo: Copied from Souvenir of the Picturesque
Alamo City in the Library of Daughters
of the Republic of Texas;

Negative on file at DRT Library

Interior View with inset of south elevation

Photo # 2 of 5

SEP 2 1980



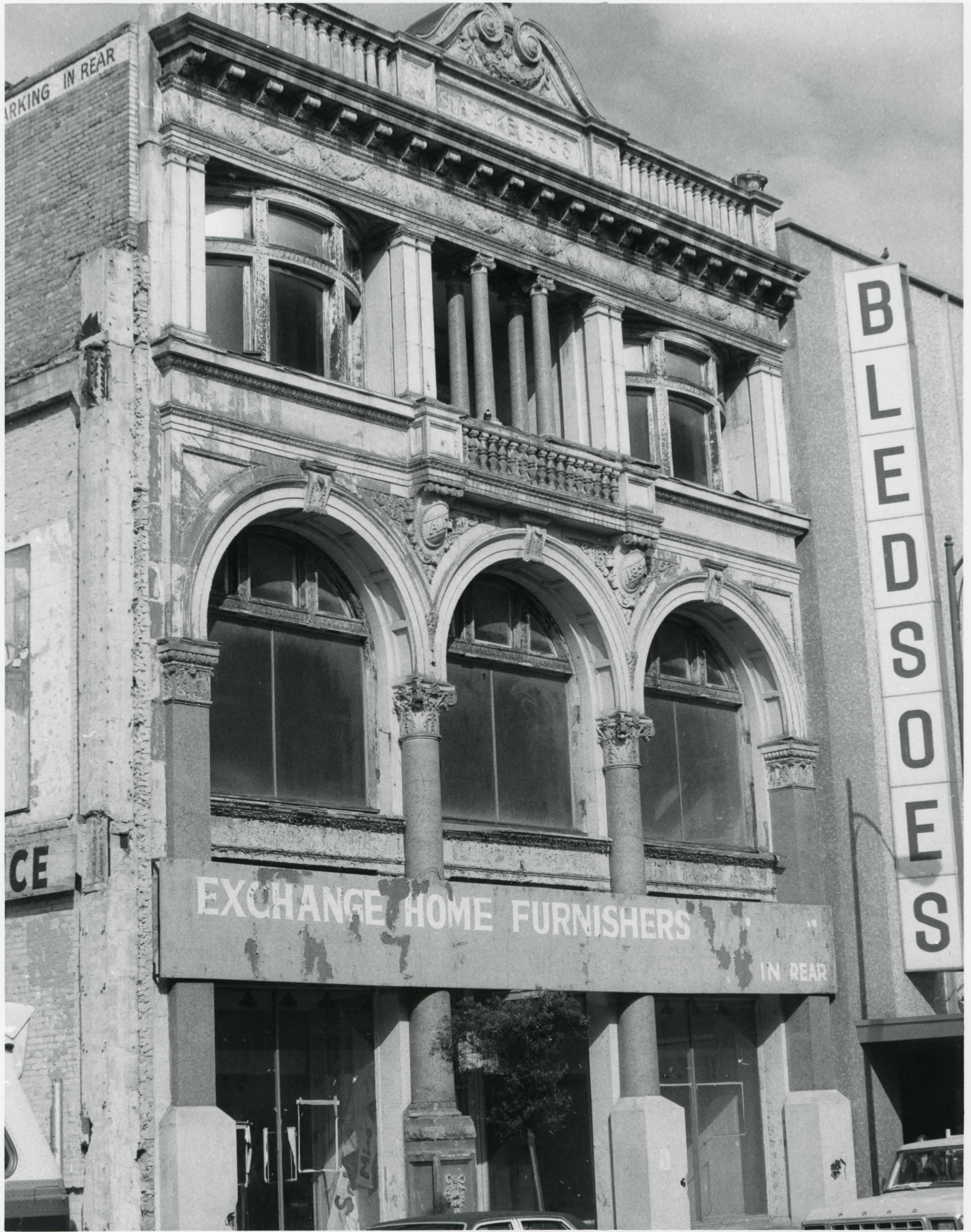
SACS

5-1929

Staacke Brothers Building
309 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas
Photo: Sherwood Inkley, May, 1979
Original slide on file at SACS
Southwest Oblique, camera facing northeast
Photo # 3 of 5

SEP 2 1980

JUN 11 1980



PARKING IN REAR

SINCE 1870

B
L
E
D
S
O
E
S

CE

EXCHANGE HOME FURNISHERS

IN REAR

Staacke Brothers Building
309 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas

Photo: Stan Klein, 10/30/79

Negative on file at Texas Historical
Commission

Southwest Oblique, camera facing northeast
Photo # 4 of 5

0861 I T NHC

SEP 2 1980



Staacke Brothers Building
309 E. Commerce Street
San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas
Photo: Stan Klein, 10/30/79
Negative on file at Texas Historical
Commission
Northwest Oblique, camera facing southeast
Photo # 5 of 5

SEP 2 1980

JUN 11 1980

DATE

9/2/80

TELEPHONE REPORT

TIME OF CALL

AM
PM

1. CALL TO: FROM (Name)

Cissa Anderson

2. ADDRESS (Tel. No. if needed)

Texas SHPO

3. SUBJECT, PROJECT NO., ETC.

Staacke Brothers Building - Bexar county

4. DETAILS OF DISCUSSION

I asked her about the rear facade. She does not have a photo, but she spoke to someone on the staff who is familiar with the building - the rear facade was a typical, unadorned, plain, brick facade.

NAME OF PERSON PLACING/RECEIVING CALL

TITLE

OFFICE

Patrick Anders

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE TEXAS

Date Entered SEP 2 1980

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Staacke Brothers Building	San Antonio Bexar County
de la Pena, Silverio, Drugstore and Post Office	Rio Grande City Starr County
Durazno Plantation	Jones Creek Brazoria County

Also Notified

Honorable John G. Tower
Honorable Lloyd Bentsen
Honorable Henry B. Gonzalez
Honorable E. (Kika) de la Garza
Honorable Ronald E. Paul

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Truett Latimer
Executive Director
Texas State Historical
Commission
P.O. Box 12276, Capitol Station
Austin, Texas 78711

NR

Byers/msd 9/17/80

For further information, please call the National Register at (202)343-6401.