



## Memorandum

**TO:** Roxanne Tanemori, City of Santa Monica  
**CC:**  
**FROM:** Jon L. Wilson, LEED AP, M.Arch., Architectural Historian  
**RE:** **Preliminary Historic Assessment: 829 Broadway (APN 4282-027-030)**

DATE: October 3, 2007

As requested by City's staff, PCR has conducted a site visit of 829 Broadway, the subject property, and has also reviewed archival data relevant to the two attached Quonset huts that occupy the site. The legal description of the subject property is the Santa Monica Tract, Block 166, Lots J, K, and L. The two one-story Quonset huts have not been identified in the existing City's Historic Resources Inventory, although they have been designated as eligible for Structure of Merit in the City of Santa Monica in a preliminary draft of the 2006-2007 Citywide Historic Resources Inventory Update.

The two Quonset huts located at 829 Broadway are examples of a rapidly vanishing historic resource type that was once plentiful in Southern California and in the nation. The name "Quonset hut" refers to the Quonset Point Naval Air Station near Davisville, Rhode Island, where it was originally designed in 1941. The intent of the Quonset hut's design was to provide a mobile building that could serve as a temporary advance military facility.<sup>1</sup> The Quonset hut's structure consists of a series of internal steel arches skinned with corrugated metal. During World War II, between 150,000-170,000 Quonset huts were manufactured and shipped around the world. After the war, the Quonset huts were sold to the public for around \$1,000 each.<sup>2</sup> In some places, groups of Quonset huts were assembled to function together. Griffith Park was home to many hut groupings, as well as Santa Monica. Along Broadway, they were utilized by the aviation industry to store airplane parts and components.<sup>3</sup> Once commonplace, the Quonset hut is an important military building type that was used during World War II and in the post-war years, which is now becoming relatively scarce in Southern California and Santa Monica.

The subject property is bordered by a one-story commercial building to the west, surface parking to the east, and a vacant lot to the north. The Quonset huts are on the north side of Broadway, originally called Utah Avenue, between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street. The neighborhood surrounding the Quonset huts has a diversity of building types and uses. Broadway is largely a commercial street west of Lincoln Boulevard. East of Lincoln Boulevard, in the area of the subject property, there is a mix of residential and commercial buildings. The residential properties along Broadway are mostly multi-family, however there are some single-family residences.

<sup>1</sup> Erik Carlson and Erica Carpenter. 'BASE Advancing A Post-Military Landscape: The Quonset Hut'. (2000). [http://quonsetpoint.artinruins.com/quonset\\_hut.htm](http://quonsetpoint.artinruins.com/quonset_hut.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Seabee Museum & Memorial Park, Davisville, 'Quonset Huts'. [http://www.seabeesmuseum.com/Quonset\\_Huts.html](http://www.seabeesmuseum.com/Quonset_Huts.html)

<sup>3</sup> Griffith Park Memories. Roger Young Park, Oral Histories Documents. <http://english.glendale.cc.ca.us/mems.html>  
Concrete Masonry Association of California and Nevada: Publications. Review of Innovative Artists + Talent Agency. (2004). <http://www.emacn.org/publications/profiles/july2004/page8.htm>

## Memorandum

RE: **PRELIMINARY HISTORIC ASSESSMENT: 829 BROADWAY  
(APN 4282-027-030)**



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On November 4, 1946, a building permit application for 829 Broadway was filed with the City of Santa Monica. N.C. Wexler was described as the owner of the lot. There was no general contractor or architect listed on the permit for the building, which was described as a “store.” Upon inspection of the property, it appears that the subject property has two existing Quonset huts that were probably placed on the site in 1946. As mentioned above, the Quonset huts were temporary prefabricated buildings that were designed for easy moving and assembling. The west Quonset hut on the lot retains many of its character-defining features, including its original arched steel structural members and its corrugated surface. There are two heavily tinted windows on the primary elevation that were later additions to the building. The front façade surface is made with painted stucco. On the front façade, faded painted signage says “Quonset Trading Post.”

The east Quonset hut has lost much of its architectural integrity and does not retain sufficient character defining features to convey its significance as a Quonset Hut building type. The east Quonset hut is wider and sits on the lot perpendicular to the west Quonset hut. The structural members were cut and two pairs of heavily tinted sliding glass doors were placed into the side of the Quonset hut.

### CONCLUSION

Based upon the results of the preliminary historic assessment, the west Quonset hut at 829 Broadway is recommended eligible for further consideration as a City Landmark. According to the City’s significance criteria for individual recognition as a potential City of Santa Monica Landmark the west Quonset hut at 829 Broadway appears to rise to the threshold of significance for Landmark designation. The Quonset hut was constructed to serve as prefabricated temporary housing and storage during World War II. The Quonset hut was meant to be easily moveable and easy to assemble. After the war, the Quonset huts were sold to the public who used them for housing, storage, industrial and commercial uses. There were once many Quonset huts in Santa Monica; however, they are now a rare and rapidly vanishing building type. The integrity of the west Quonset hut is substantially intact and it is a good surviving representative example of a Quonset hut. In addition, it is important for its historical association with military architecture as well as post-war industrial and commercial development in the nation and in Santa Monica.



**ATTACHMENTS**

**Assessors Map**

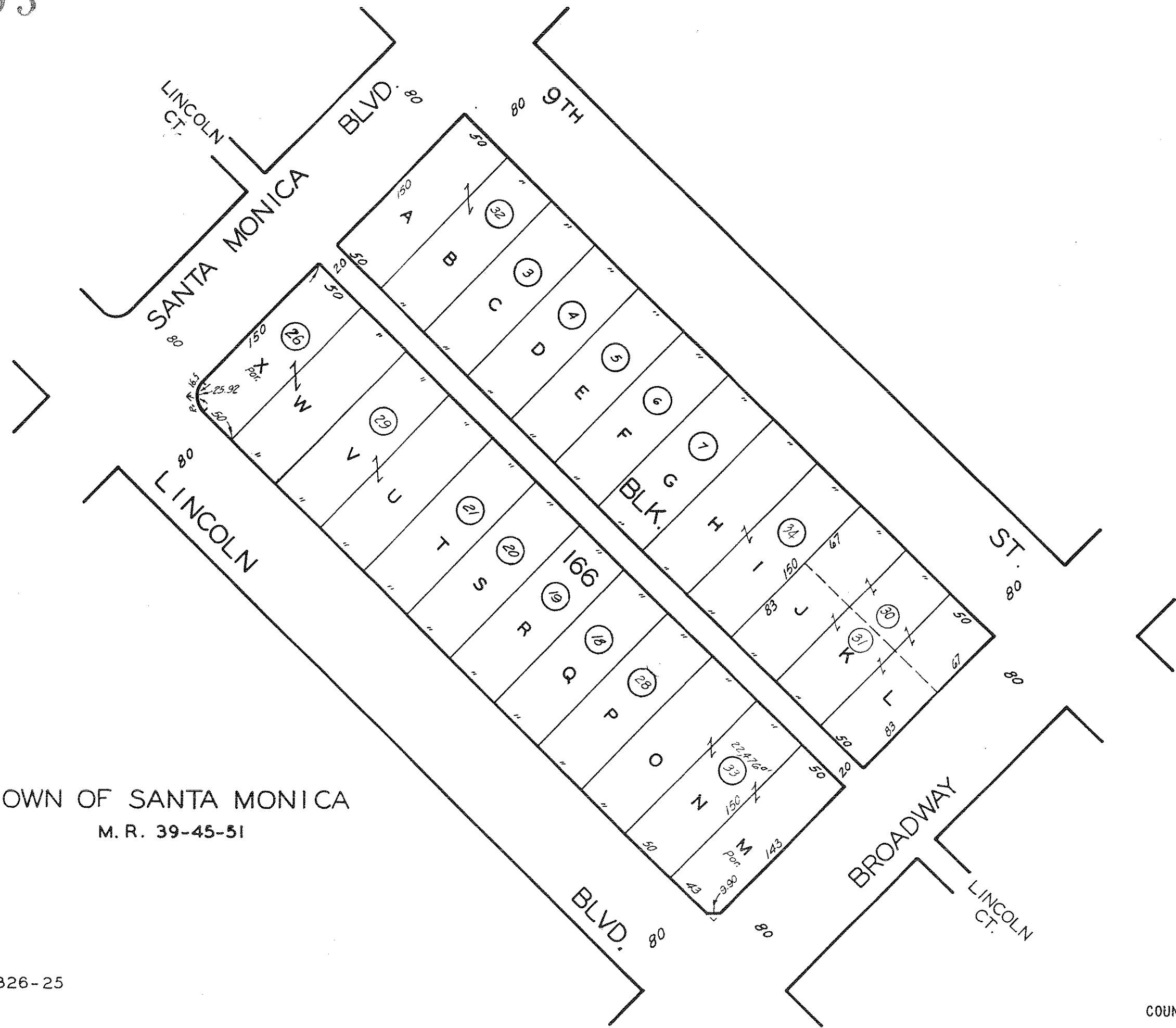
**Sanborn Map 1918**

**Sanborn Map, paste-up 1950**

**Photographs**

1995

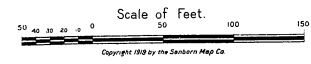
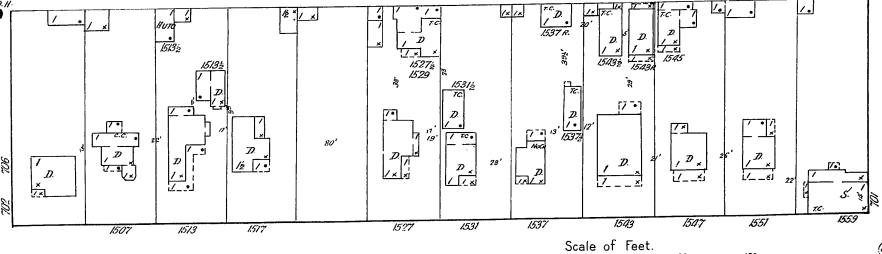
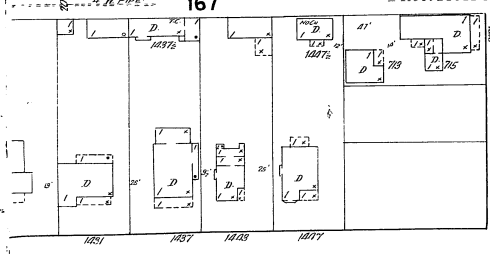
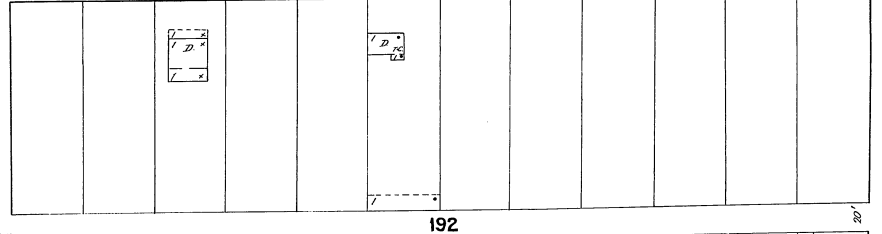
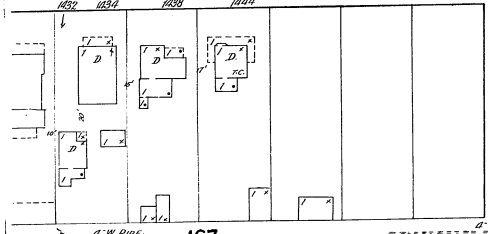
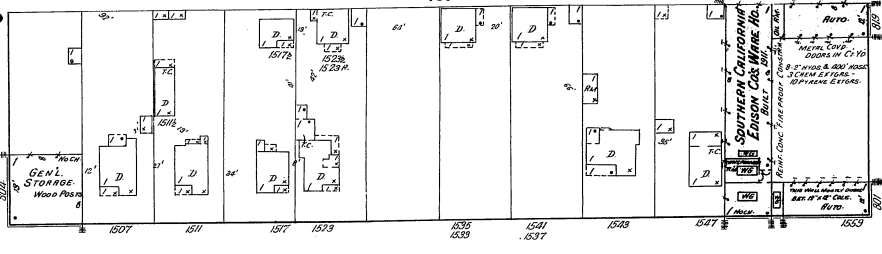
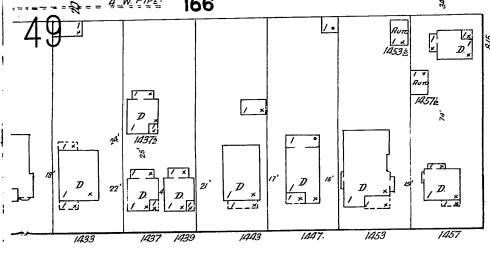
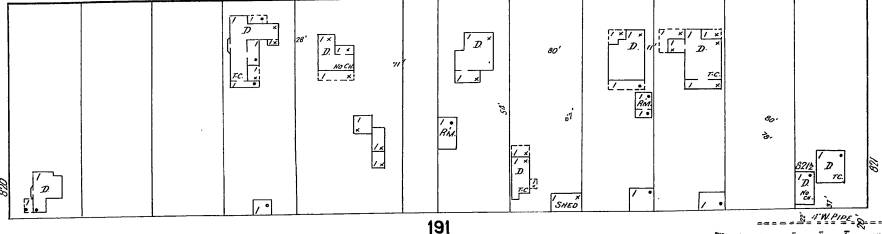
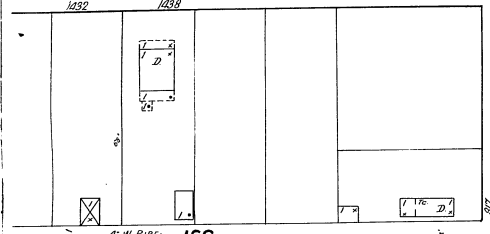
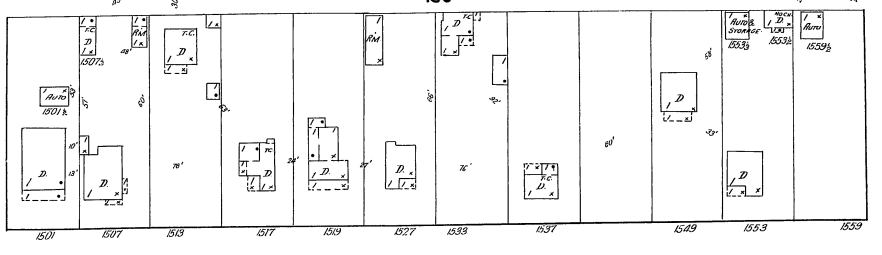
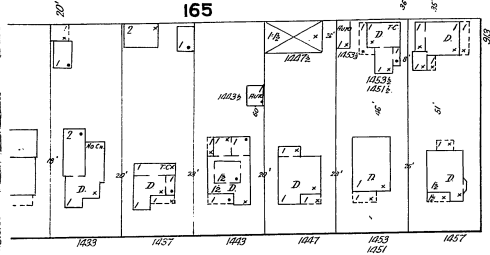
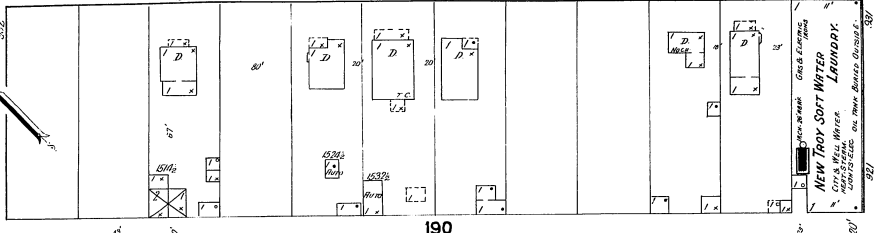
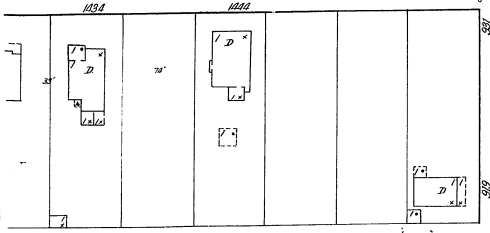
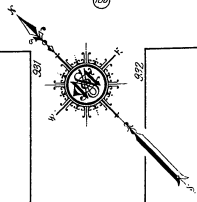
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TOWN OF SANTA MONICA  
M. R. 39-45-51

CODE  
8004

FOR PREV. ASSM'T. SEE: 326-25



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UTAH AV.

COLORADO AV.

NEW IRON SORT WARE  
LAUNDRY  
CASH & CARRY  
CORNER 10TH ST.  
SANTA MONICA, CAL.

SPRINGER CONCRETE  
DISCOW CO. WARE HO.  
SANTA MONICA, CAL.

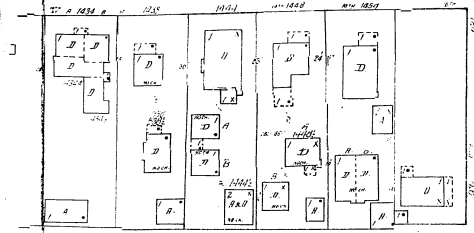
GEN'L  
STORE  
Woods Bros  
SANTA MONICA, CAL.

10TH 54 ST.

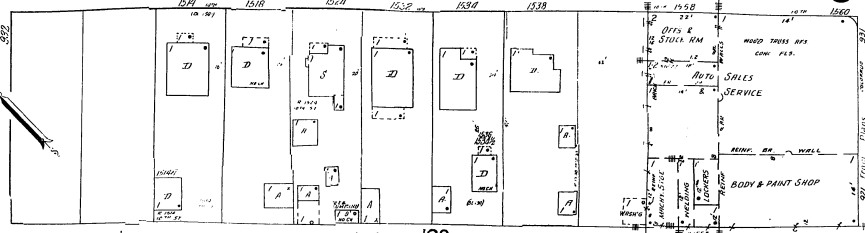
CLAY 1'00"

SANTA MONICA CAL

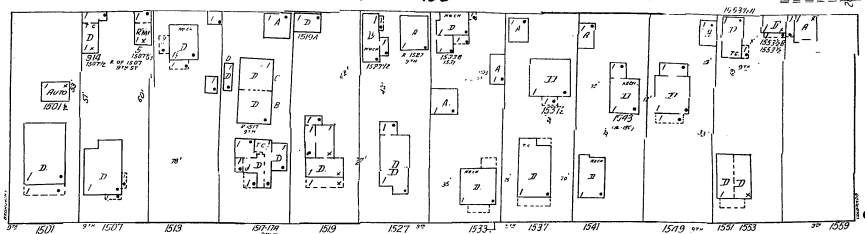
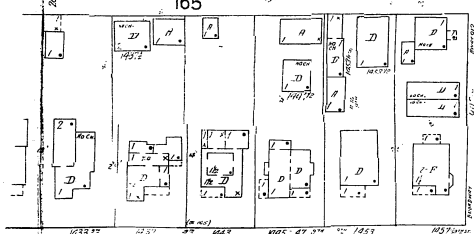
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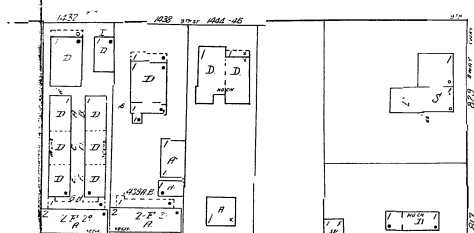
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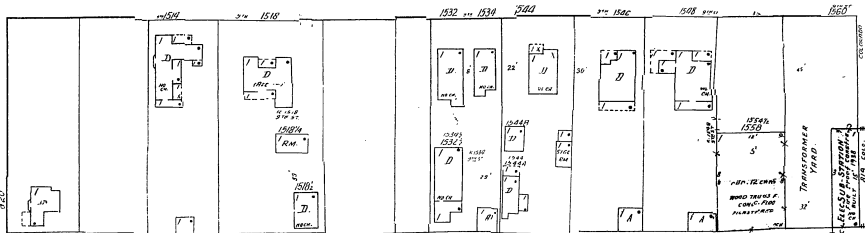
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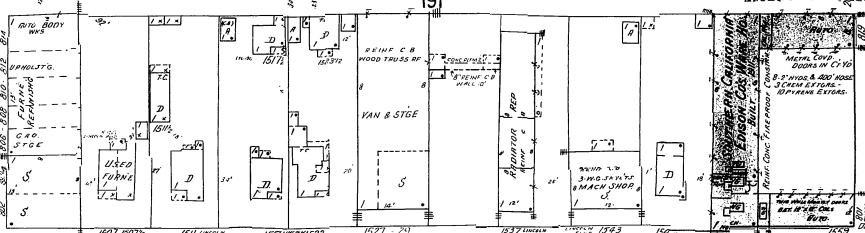
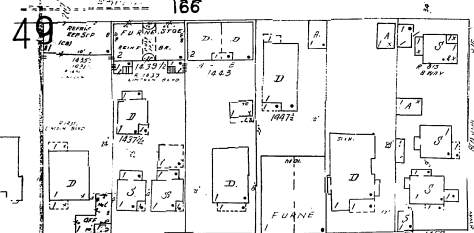
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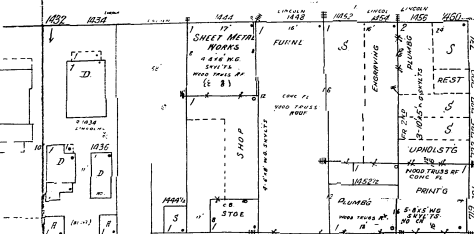
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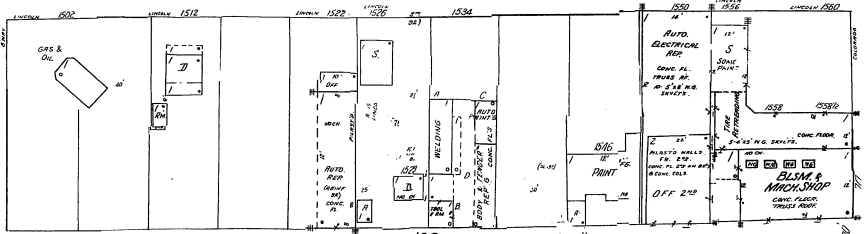
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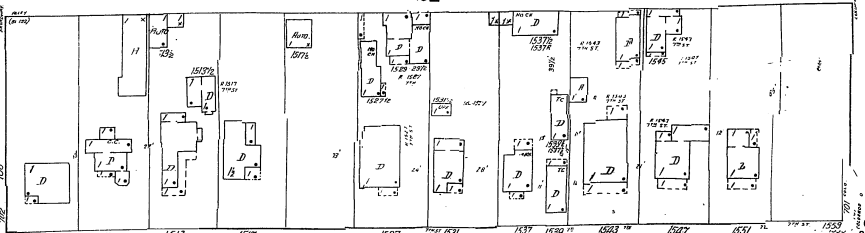
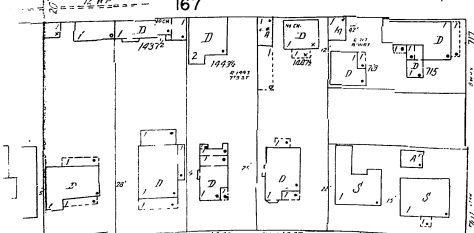
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167

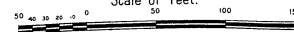


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7TH 38 ST.

Scale of Feet.



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BROADWAY (UTAH BLV.)

COLORADO AV.



General Property Setting, View North.





Front (South) Elevation, View North.





West Quonset Hut South Elevation, View North.



East Quonset Hut South Elevation, View North.





East Elevation, View West.



West Quonset Hut Rear North Elevation, View Southwest.