

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received AUG 14 1984
date entered SEP 13 1984

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

1. Name

historic Fountain-Tallman Soda Works

and/or common El Dorado County Historical Society Museum

2. Location

street & number 524 Main Street N/A not for publication

city, town Placerville N/A vicinity of

state California code 06 county El Dorado code 017

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name El Dorado County Historical Society

street & number P.O. Box 885

city, town Placerville N/A vicinity of state California 95667

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. El Dorado County Recorders Office

street & number 360 Fair Lane

city, town Placerville state Calif. 95667

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Survey of Building Structures of
title the Sierra Gold Belt, 1848-70 has this property been determined eligible? yes no
by Rogert F. Heizer and Franklin Fenenga (published in Division of Mines
date Bulletin 141) 1948 federal state county local

depository for survey records California Division of Mines and Geology, Ferry Building

city, town San Francisco state CA 94111

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date _____ N/A _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fountain-Tallman building, a thirty by twenty foot two-story rectangular structure, encompasses the entire parcel. The building lies on the south side of Main Street and is a designated historical structure by the City of Placerville. The building is massed between two contemporary brick structures, and is oriented to the north. The building is characterized by its vernacular design; unique in its use of brick and native stone (slate, serpentine), quarried from the hillslope directly behind the building. Bricks were used to dress the outline of the doors and windows, and inset below the eaves of the roof to form a row of dentils. Integrity remains relatively high.

Documentary evidence in the form of title deeds, mortgages, and newspaper advertisements, suggest the construction of the building began between 1853 and 1854, financed by John Fountain and/or Benjamin Tallman, who relocated their soda factory from across the street. Having a fieldstone floor, underneath the present wood floor, and walls which are more than two feet thick, the building could easily have provided the necessary insulation for the storage of ice and served as a factory for the manufacturing of soda pop. The Fountain-Tallman building is one of the earliest documented standing structures in Placerville, having survived the devastating fires of the mid-1850's.

The front facade of the Fountain-Tallman building remains virtually unchanged, with its radiating arched head area around the front door entrance. The only contemporary addition to the front facade is a bronze plaque placed to the right of the door by the Native Daughters of the Golden West, dedicating the building as a significant historic structure related to the Gold Rush Era.

Other alterations include a skylight placed on the peak of the roof during the 1920's, the rocking over of a window on the western flank of the building, and a door in the rear of the building. These alterations are believed to have taken place after 1929, when the attached brick structure (western flank) was constructed by Pacific Gas and Electric Company.

During the past year the El Dorado County Historical Society completed a remodeling project in the interior of the building, which included the addition of a sixteen square foot enclosed restroom done in cedar, new electrical wiring, a heat pump, and interpretive displays which house artifacts related to the history of Placerville. The rear of the building, not visible from the streetscape, is painted yellow and connects with the upper floor by a catwalk, which adjoins the hillslope above. In addition two metal sided structures have common walls on the east half and lower story of the back side of the building. The building presently is open to the general public as a museum. Beyond these alterations the building's exterior and interior retains much of its original integrity, reflecting mid to late nineteenth century artisanship and evokes the feeling of a Gold Rush Era building.

8. Significance

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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1853-54 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The significance of the Fountain-Tallman Soda Works lies not only in the period of its construction, between 1853-1854, the peak of the Gold Rush, but also in the architectural form of the building, and the relationship of the soda works to the rise of mercantilism in Placerville. Chiefly, the building represents a period in the history of Placerville, the nation, and the world, which had a marked impact on those groups of individuals who participated in the exodus to the Mother Lode. Architecturally the building is the earliest documented stone masonry structure in Placerville, and is thought to be one of the oldest surviving structures in the city.

Although the precise date in which the building was constructed has not as yet been verified, documentary evidence strongly suggests the building was begun in 1853 and in use as a soda works by 1854, under the proprietorship of John Fountain and Benjamin Tallman. By 1855 Tallman sold his interest in the soda works and opened his own business in Georgetown, California, later opening an office in Sacramento where he distributed ice. In 1857 Fountain's property, including the soda works, was placed on the delinquent tax list. In 1858 the building was sold at Sheriffs auction to Dennis Conway, who himself quickly disposed of the building to Samuel T. Weston. The soda works changed hands once again in 1862 to James A. Taggard, who sold the building eleven years later to George Nuss and Henry Wagner. By this time the building had seen a variety of uses.

By 1874 the building had changed hands once again to John Limpinsel, who owned the building to 1889 when it was sold to the El Dorado Water and Deep Gravel Mining Company, who used the building as a storage area (See attached copy of Sanborn-Perris Map 1891). In 1908 the E.W.D.G.M. Co. transferred their interest to the Sierra Water Supply Company, who sold its interests in the property along with its water systems to the Western States Gas and Electric Company. In 1928 this power company exchanged all its interests to the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. In 1960 the building was conveyed to Roger Darrow and his wife, with the agreement the building would be maintained as an historical landmark. On February 2, 1981 the building was transferred to the El Dorado County Historical Society, who presently maintain the building as a city museum.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Robert F. Heizer and Franklin Fenenga, "Survey of Building Structure of the Sierran Gold Belt, 1848-70," in Bulletin 141: The Mother Lode Country, San Francisco, California Division of Mines, 1948.

Paolo Sioli, Historical Souvenir of El Dorado County, California, Oakland, Paolo Siolo, 1883

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .013 acre

Quadrangle name Placerville, Calif.

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References Note: This quadrangle map is not available with UTM references. The geographic coordinates are given in latitude and longitude: $38^{\circ} 43' 44''$ N, $120^{\circ} 47' 50''$ W.

A

1	0	6	9	1	4	8	0	4	2	8	8	8	4	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification Parcel 1, Lot 19, being a portion of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of of Section 7, T.10N., R.11E. MDM, also portions of lots 14 and 15, Block 21 of the original townsite of Placerville, filed December 17, 1980 in the office of the County Recorder of said County, Book 28 of Parcel Map at page 40. Boundaries encompass the building,

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries on its 20'x31' (approximate Lot.

state	code	county	code
N/A		N/A	

state	code	county	code
N/A		N/A	

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dana E. Supernowicz, Beverly Cola, and Walter Haefle

organization El Dorado County Historical Society date 1-12-84

street & number P.O. Box 885 telephone (916) 622-2250

city or town Placerville state Calif. 95667

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 *Melvin Mitchell-Alben*

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

date 6/18/84

For NPS use only

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

J. Alvares Byers Entered in the National Register
Keeper of the National Register

date 9-13-84

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

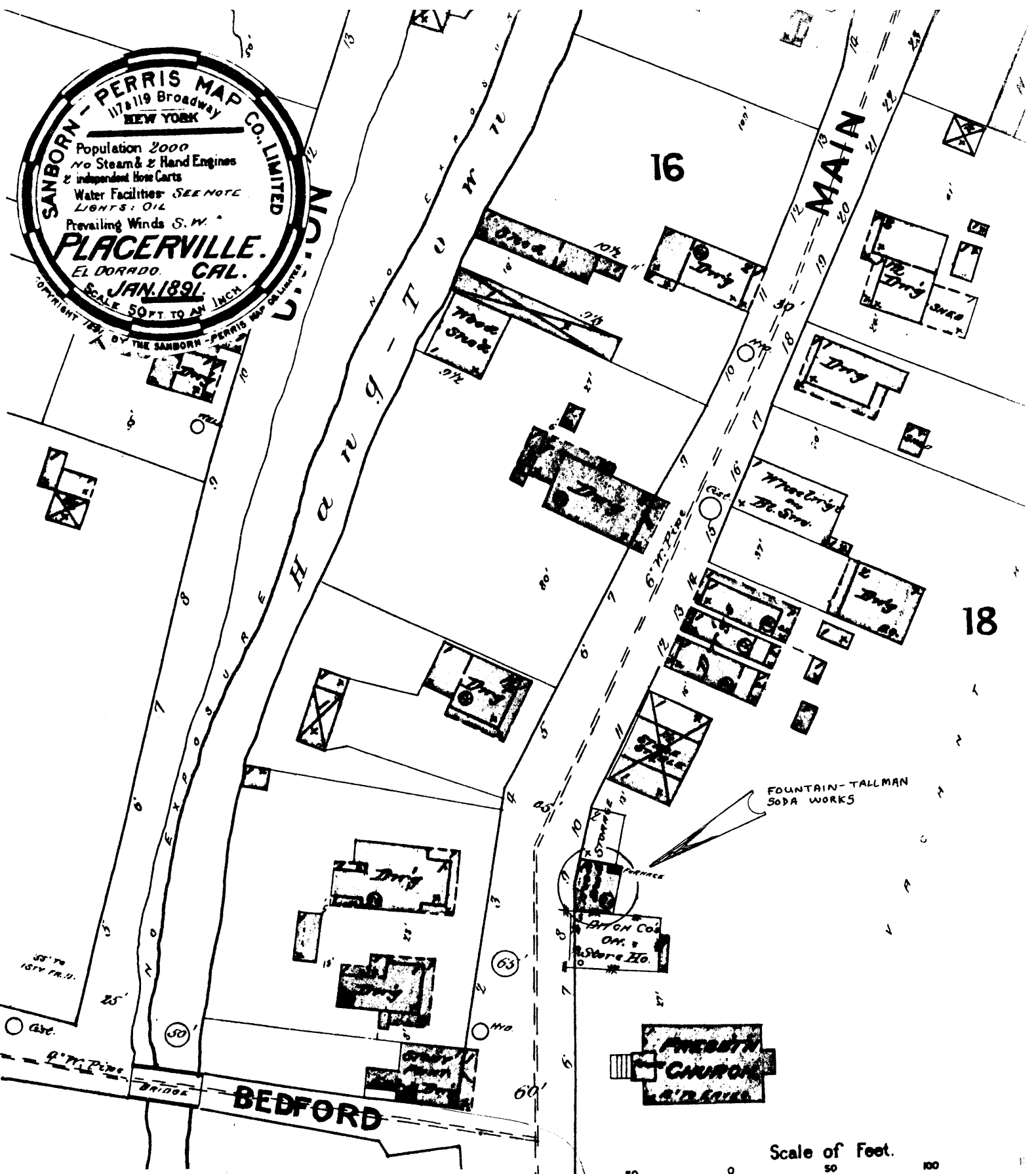
SANBORN - PERRIS MAP CO. LIMITED
 117 & 119 Broadway
 NEW YORK

Population 2000
 No Steam & 2 Hand Engines
 & independent Horse Carts
 Water Facilities - SEE NOTE
 LIGHTS: OIL
 Prevailing Winds S.W.

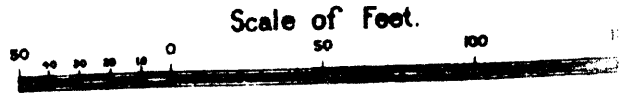
PLACERVILLE.
 EL DORADO. CAL.
 JAN. 1891.

SCALE 50 FT. TO AN INCH

COPYRIGHT 1891 BY THE SANBORN - PERRIS MAP CO. LIMITED

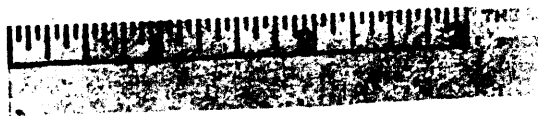


FOUNTAIN TALLMAN SODA WORKS
 524 Main Street
 Placerville, El Dorado County, CA



SHEET

No 2

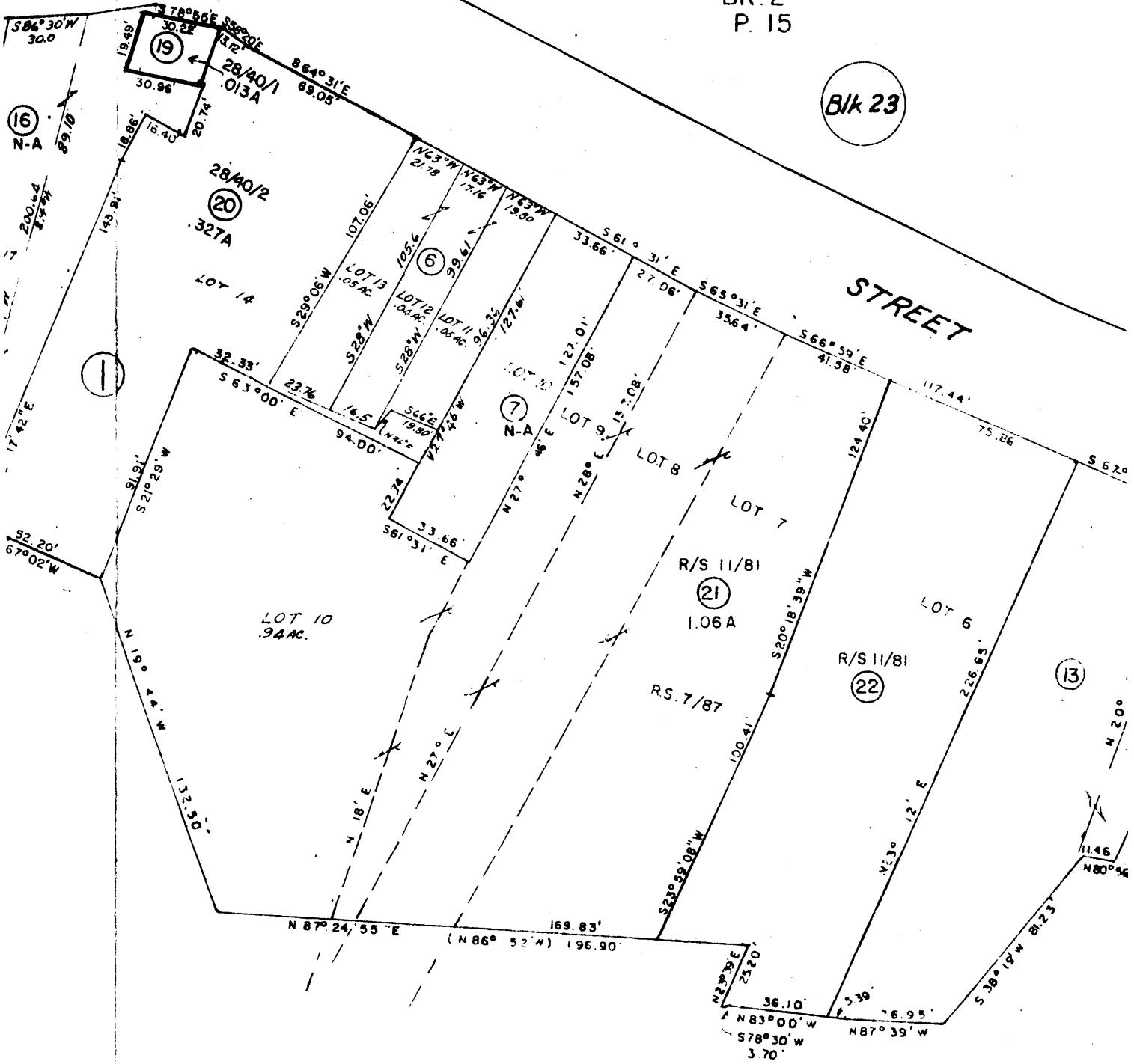


BLOCK 21 LOTS 6 TO 20.
CITY OF PLACERVILLE

Sheet 2
of
2 Sheets

BK. 2
P. 15

Blk 23



FOUNTAIN TALLMAN SODA WORKS
524 Main Street
Placerville, El Dorado County, CA

Assessor's Map
County of El Dorado, Cal