

ARIZONA STATE HISTORIC PROPERTY INVENTORY

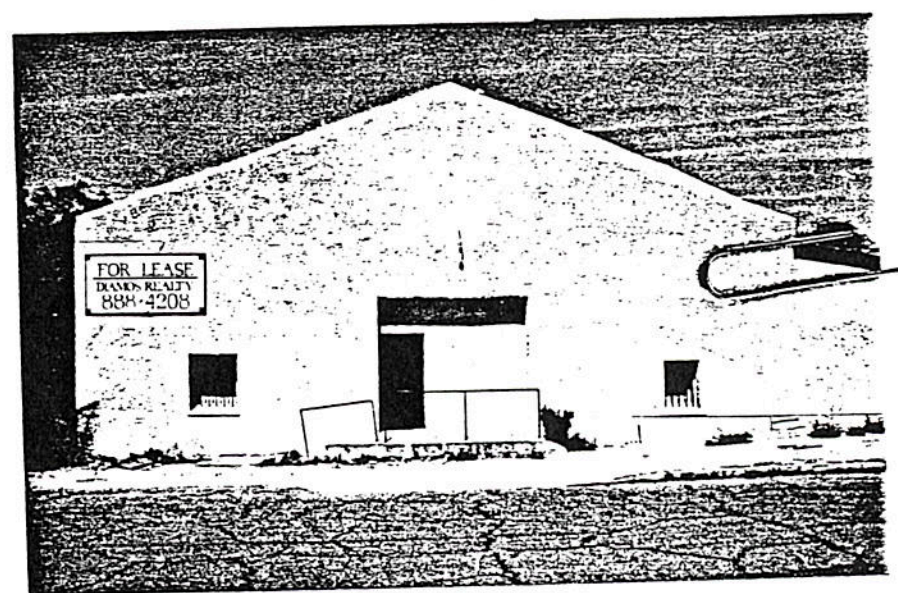
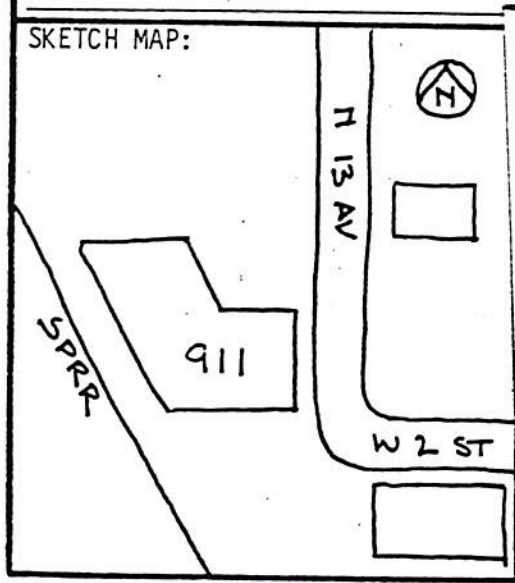
IDENTIFICATION
 SURVEY AREA NAME: John Spring Neighborhood Mountain View Addition
 HISTORIC NAME: Ronstadt-Sims Warehouse
 ADDRESS/LOCATION: 911 N 13 Av
 CITY/TOWN: Tucson AZ
 TAX PARCEL NUMBER: 116-16-2690
 OWNER: Pappadeas Constantino M
 OWNER ADDRESS: 237 Sierra Vista Dr
Tucson AZ
 HISTORIC USE: commercial
 PRESENT USE: commercial
 BUILDING TYPE: warehouse/office
 STYLE: industrial vernacular (Anglo-Hispanic)
 CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1920
 ARCHITECT/BUILDER: unknown
 INTEGRITY: altered minor
 CONDITION: good

COUNTY: Pima SURVEY SITE: 78
 USGS QUAD: Tucson
 T 14 R 13 S 11 / NE ¼ OF THE NE ¼
 UTM zone 12 (e)501980 (n)3565100

Description (contd.)
 ROOF TYPE: gable & shed
 ROOF SHEATHING: corrugated iron & rolled asphalt
 EAVES TREATMENT: _____
 WINDOWS: originally 1 casement in office area
 ENTRY: E & N sides
 PORCHES: N/A
 STOREFRONTS: N/A

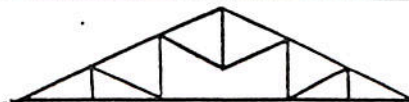
DESCRIPTION
 STORIES: 1.0 DIMENSIONS: (l) 109(w) 92
 STRUCTURAL MATERIAL: adobe
 FOUNDATION MATERIAL: concrete
 WALL SHEATHING: plaster
 APPLIED ORNAMENT: _____

NOTABLE INTERIOR: exceptionally open. column free interior w/18' high walls
 OUTBUILDINGS: _____
 ALTERATIONS: warehouse "hut." 1947; shelter, 1950
 PHOTOGRAPH 78c
 PHOTOGRAPHER: E. Husband



ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTION/ANALYSIS (annotated form):

Building's roof structure uses long-span
timber Howe trusses:



SEE ATTACHED NARRATIVE PAGES FOR DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE.

SIGNIFICANCE:

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: COMMERCE X COMMUNITY PLANNING _____ ECONOMICS _____
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT _____ GOVERNMENTAL _____ MILITARY _____ RELIGION _____ SCIENCE _____
THEATRE _____ TRANSPORTATION _____ TOURISM _____ OTHER(specify) _____ AGRICULTURE _____

HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS (be concise):

Built by Richard Ronstadt as expansion of
agricultural implement business; used by
Borderlands Construction Co. when many

PROMINENT OCCUPANT/HISTORIC ASSOCIATION(S) Tucson streets being paved; Works Progress Administration circa 1940-1944

RELATIONSHIP TO LOCAL DEVELOPMENT World War I era demand for so. Az. agri. products

CULTURAL AFFILIATIONS pioneer German-Hispanic and later Anglo business community

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE industrial vernacular, Anglo-Hispanic hybrid type

MAJOR ARCH. FORM/MATERIAL N/A

ENGINEERING/STRUCTURAL 18' high adobe walls w/roof of long-span timber Howe trusses

DISTRICT/STREETSCAPE CONTRIBUTION part of "railroad corridor" historic
commercial landscape

DISCUSSION AS REQUIRED:

Exceptional example of post World War I warehouse construction, both an
engineering feat of its time and an unusual application of mixed Anglo and
Sonoran forms to commercial building. Now unique in Tucson.

CONTEXT: ISOLATED/RURAL _____ RESIDENTIAL STREET _____ COMMERCIAL _____ CENTRAL SQUARE _____
CBD: _____ OTHER: mixed use residential/commercial street

BIBLIOGRAPHY/SOURCES:

SEE ATTACHED SHEET FOR BIBLIOGRAPHY.

LISTING IN OTHER SURVEYS: none

NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS:

LISTED _____ DETERMINED ELIGIBLE _____ DETERMINED NOT ELIGIBLE _____ NOT EVALUATED _____

COMMENTS/DEVELOPMENT PLANS/THREATS:

Possible demolition by heirs of elderly owner.

SURVEYOR Eliza Husband SURVEY DATE 6/85 DATE FORM COMPLETED 5/85;
rev. 9/87

John Spring Neighborhood Multiple Resource Area
National Register Nomination
RONSTADT-SIMS ADOBE WAREHOUSE
Narrative Pages for Survey Form JSN-78

DESCRIPTION

Summary Statement

The Ronstadt-Sims Adobe Warehouse (1920, JSN-78*) is an individually nominated site within the John Spring Multiple Resource Area in Tucson, Arizona. The warehouse is an L-shaped adobe structure, on concrete foundations, approximately 9000 square feet in area, with 18-foot-high walls. The main, gabled roof makes use of long-span timber Howe trusses to achieve a large, open interior; and the trusses are visible from inside the building. The building's condition is good. Changes from the original include a shed-roofed wing addition (1950); closing-in of the original loading door, still visible, on the east side (date unknown); and recent replastering in a modern texture. The historic interior is largely intact, and the facade retains its original small window into the office area. The building, now vacant and advertised for lease, has been used mostly as a warehouse by various firms. It is located across from a modest residential block at the west end of West Second Street and the Southern Pacific railroad alignment. It stands at the front edge of a double lot intended as part of a residential subdivision-- Mountain View Addition, platted 1903.

Boundary Description

The legal boundary of the Ronstadt-Sims Warehouse individual nomination coincides with the outer edge of the building lot. This lot is City of Tucson tax parcel 116-16-2690.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ronstadt-Sims Adobe Warehouse, a landmark of Tucson commercial expansion built in 1920, is notable for its mixture of Sonoran and Anglo architectural influence, its unusual size, and its engineering. It forms part of a World War I era commercial landscape along the railroad corridor at the edge of a historic residential area, John Spring neighborhood. The Ronstadt-Sims warehouse is eligible for the National Register under criterion A, as a building associated with southern Arizona's post-railroad agricultural development, and with Tucson's early commercial growth; and under criterion C, as an unusual example of the post-railroad architectural fusion of Sonoran forms with imported technology.

The building was first a warehouse for the Ronstadt Grain and Implement Company. Its owner, Richard Ronstadt, belonged to a pioneer Tucson family of successful Hispanic-German merchants. Ronstadt expanded operations from city center to this location near the railroad track during Tucson's World War I prosperity and population growth, when

*John Spring Historical Survey site number.

demand for the region's agricultural products stimulated expansion of agriculture-related businesses. After Ronstadt's death in 1925, the warehouse was bought by W. P. Sims, a Bisbee dentist, member of Arizona's first state Senate, and later president of the Arizona Corporation Commission. Sims's son, a paving contractor, used the warehouse in connection with his firm, Borderland Construction. Much of Tucson was being paved during this period, and the firm kept the warehouse until 1939. At the end of the Depression, the warehouse was taken over 1940-1944 by the Works Progress Administration. Subsequently it was leased to Montgomery Ward.

The Ronstadt-Sims Adobe Warehouse is a commercial example of the Sonoran building form modified by imported engineering technology, the long-span timber Howe truss. As a 9000 square-foot adobe warehouse, the Ronstadt-Sims example is now unique in Tucson. It had an earlier counterpart in the Tucson Farms Company's adobe warehouse (circa 1917) of about the same size. This building was also a product of World War I agricultural expansion. Now demolished, the Tucson Farms warehouse stood at 850 South Ninth Avenue. Since both Ronstadt and Tucson Farms sold farm equipment, and the two buildings are close in date as well as size and material, Ronstadt's warehouse may represent an imitation of, or competitive challenge to, the other firm.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Arizona Daily Star*. 1951. Obituary of William P. Sims 4/18/21.
- Arizona Republic*. 1948. Obituary of Mrs. William P. Sims 9/22/48.
- Bufkin, D. 1981. From mud village to metropolis: the urbanization of Tucson. *Journal of Arizona History* 22:63-98.
- Pima County Assessor's records, various years.
- Pima County Recorder's records, various years.
- Sanborn Fire Map of Tucson. 1922.
- Tucson Citizen*. 1925. Obituary of Richard R. Ronstadt 12/8/25.
- Tucson city directories, various years.