

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

Compiled by: Dr JJ Bruwer, 2002-07-29

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NAME OF PLACE: PARAMOUNT BUILDING (OK Bazaars Building: Joubert Street Branch)



Above, left: view of Kerk Street elevation of the *Paramount Building*; the *second Castle Mansions*, the Kerk Street neighbour of the former building, can be seen in the background. Above, right: Joubert Street – seen in this picture, in the left foreground, is the *second Manners Mansions*, and on its right, the *Paramount Building*. Bottom right: view of the Kerk Street façade of the *Paramount Building*.



Previous/alternative name/s : originally *Second Anstey's Building*;
: *Paramount Building*;
: *OK Bazaars Building*

LOCATION: Street : cnr Kerk, Joubert
Street number :
: [55, 57, 59 Kerk; 56, 58 Joubert]
Stand Number : 1101, 1102, 1103, 1104
Previous Stand Number: originally - 1353, 1354, 1355, 1356
Block number : AE
GIS reference :

ZONING: Current use/s :
Previous use/s :

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

Height :
Levels above street level : originally six
Levels below street level : basement and sub-basement
On-site parking :

Authors' note: A detailed architectural history of the building remains outstanding on account of its incomplete plans record. This is a common predisposition in the case of buildings designed by an eminent architect such as W. H. Stucke. It is also quite noticeable that only plans of 'lesser importance' have escaped the attention of the responsible wrongdoers.

The *second Anstey's Building* was designed as a six storey building with Basement, Sub-basement, double volume Ground Floor with a magnificent stair case, a Mezzanine; the First Floor with a concrete roofed dome and lantern lights over. Of interest is the '30 professional Rooms' included in the original design; these rooms, located on the Third and Fourth Floor, were flats with a bedroom, sitting room, bathroom and pantry with a balcony to each flat. Also included in the original design was a single lift for exclusive use by tenants; a 'lift to store', and a general lift.

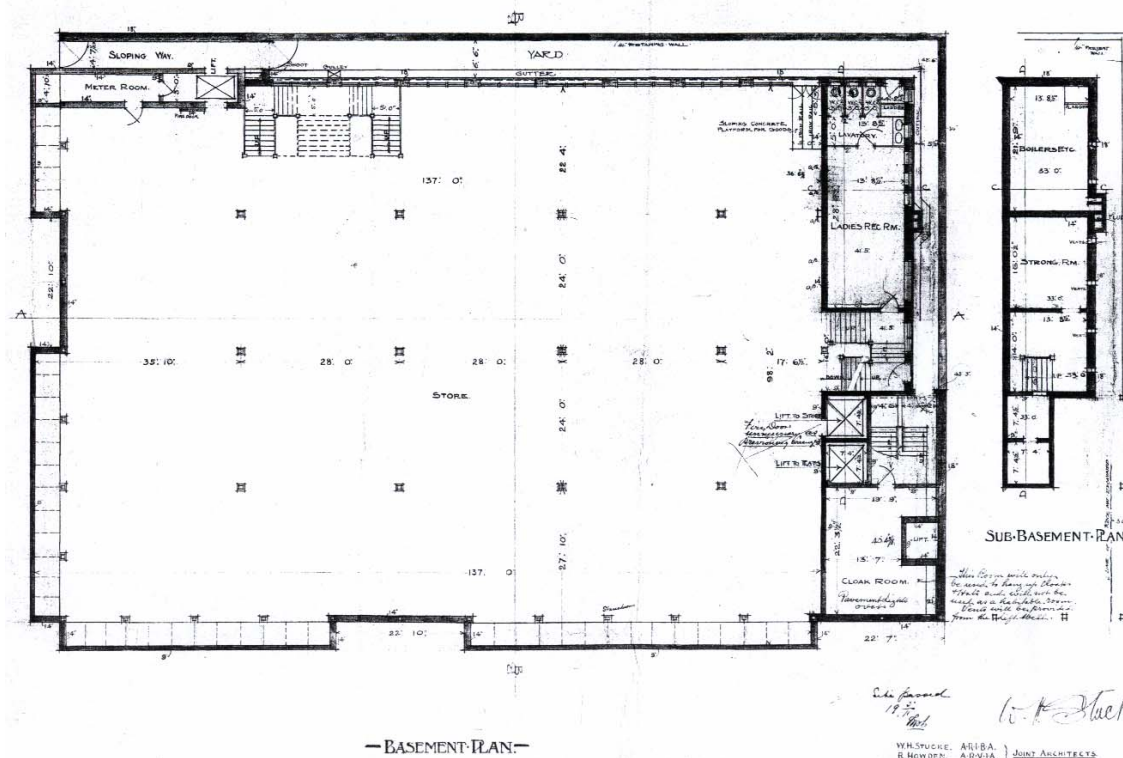
Right: circa 1913; copy of photograph sourced from SAHRA Archive File 3/1/3/Joh/154, Ansteys- & Manners Mansions, h/v Jeppe- & Joubertstr, Johannesburg).

The original individual balconies of the building were supported by ornamental brackets and topped with cast iron balustrade. This was unusual for the period 1900 to 1920. "During this period", according to Van Waal, "cast-iron verandahs on upper storeys were the exception rather than the rule, probably because it was instinctively felt that the articulated mass of solid building components more suitably expressed the spirit of the British Empire than semi transparent verandahs could have...There was also clear evidence of attempts at renewal in two other striking buildings from this period – the *Paramount Building* (1911), 55/7/9 Kerk Street, and *The Paint House (Herbert Evans Building)* (1914-5), 63/5/7 Kruis Street. In both instances, arches and balconies play an important role in the white facades. In the case of the *Paramount Building*, the various elements of form were experimentally detached from one another in the flush façade, but in the *Paint House* they were integrated. The tower-like jetties of the *Paramount Building* were deliberately designed asymmetrically with 'blocked' ornamentation, which reminds one of the Art Nouveau work of the Scot, C R Mackintosh. By contrast, The *Paint House's* prominent roof and unusual arcades were a reflection of the exotic Mediterranean building styles...While the commercial buildings were vertically orientated, especially in the upper portions of their facades, they did not entirely escape the force of the strong horizontal lines and planes of the display windows and pavement hoods. Verandahs with their pillars began to be replaced by cantilever pavement covers in the early 1930s, but such hoods were first used in the *Paramount Building* as early as 1911. In Johannesburg this change-over was more gradual than in Sydney, Australia, where new building regulations introduced in 1912 banned verandahs altogether...Initially, Johannesburg's hoods were fitted with bearer beams on the underside. Later however, beams were placed on the upper side of the hood to leave an uncluttered ceiling over the pavement. The effect of this practice was that the hoods, together with the long bands of display windows, reinforced the suggestion of horizontal movement in the smooth street and pavement surfaces." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

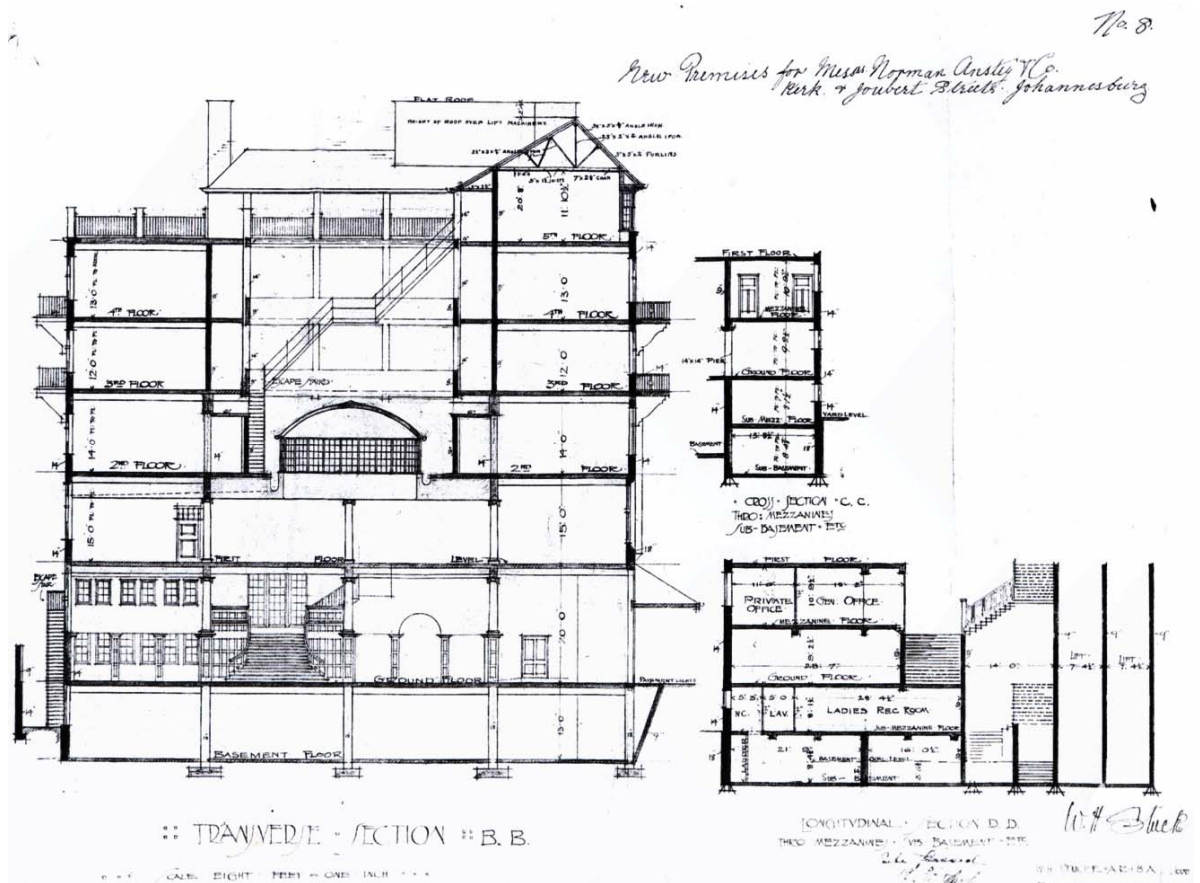


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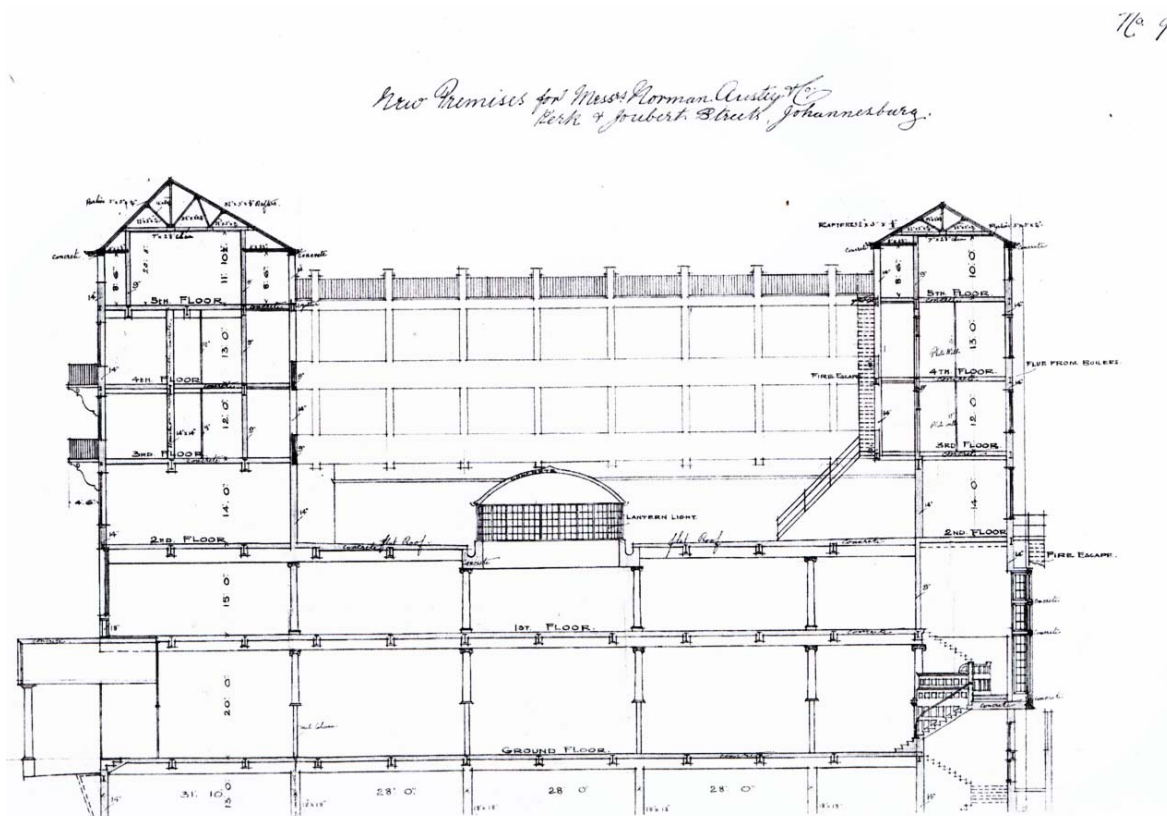
IN: 1.



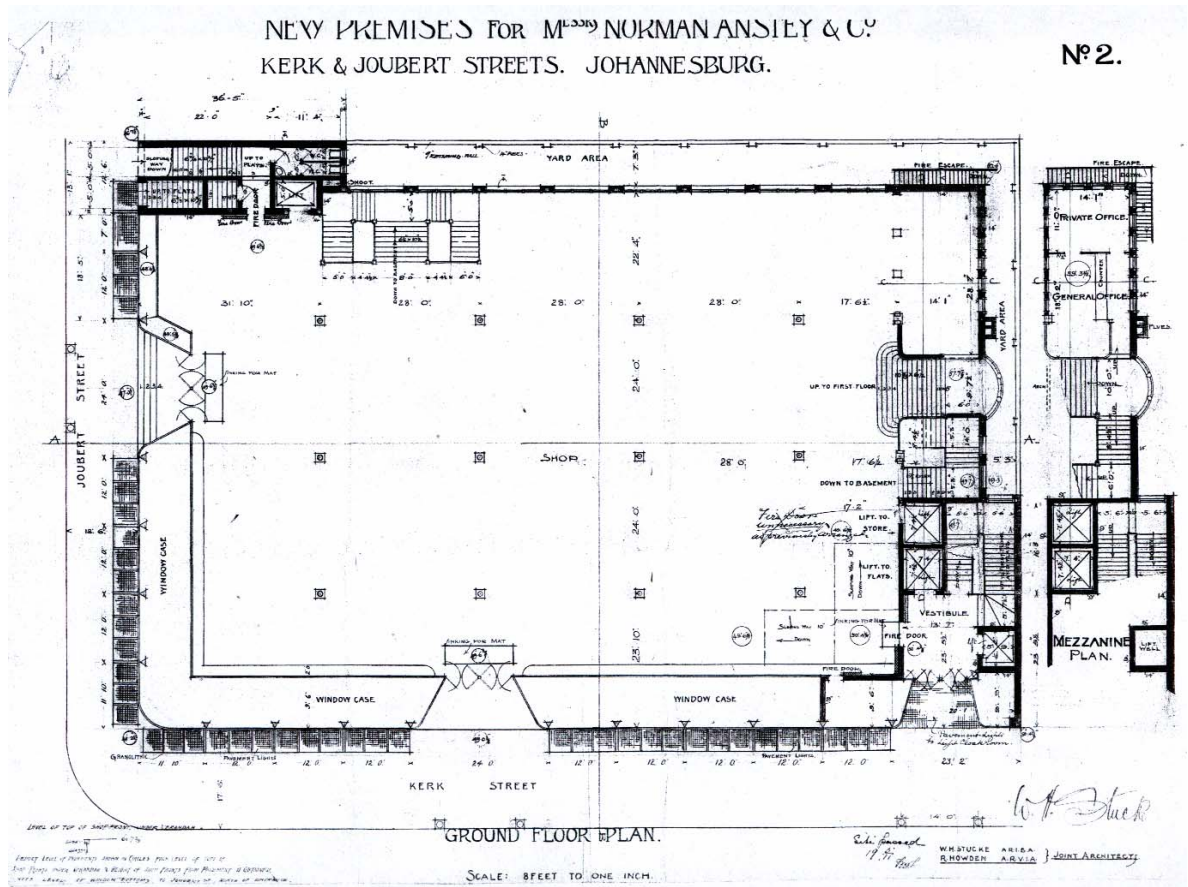
Below: copy of Transverse Section, Cross Section, and Longitudinal Section.



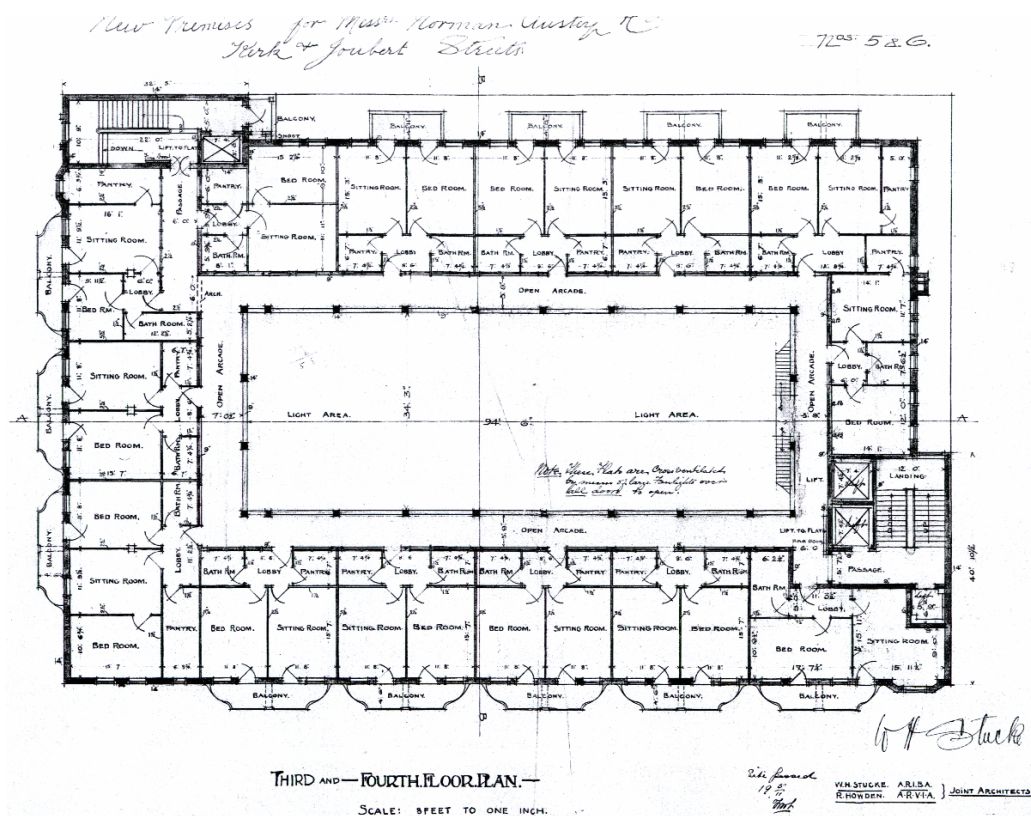
Below: copy of part of original Section.



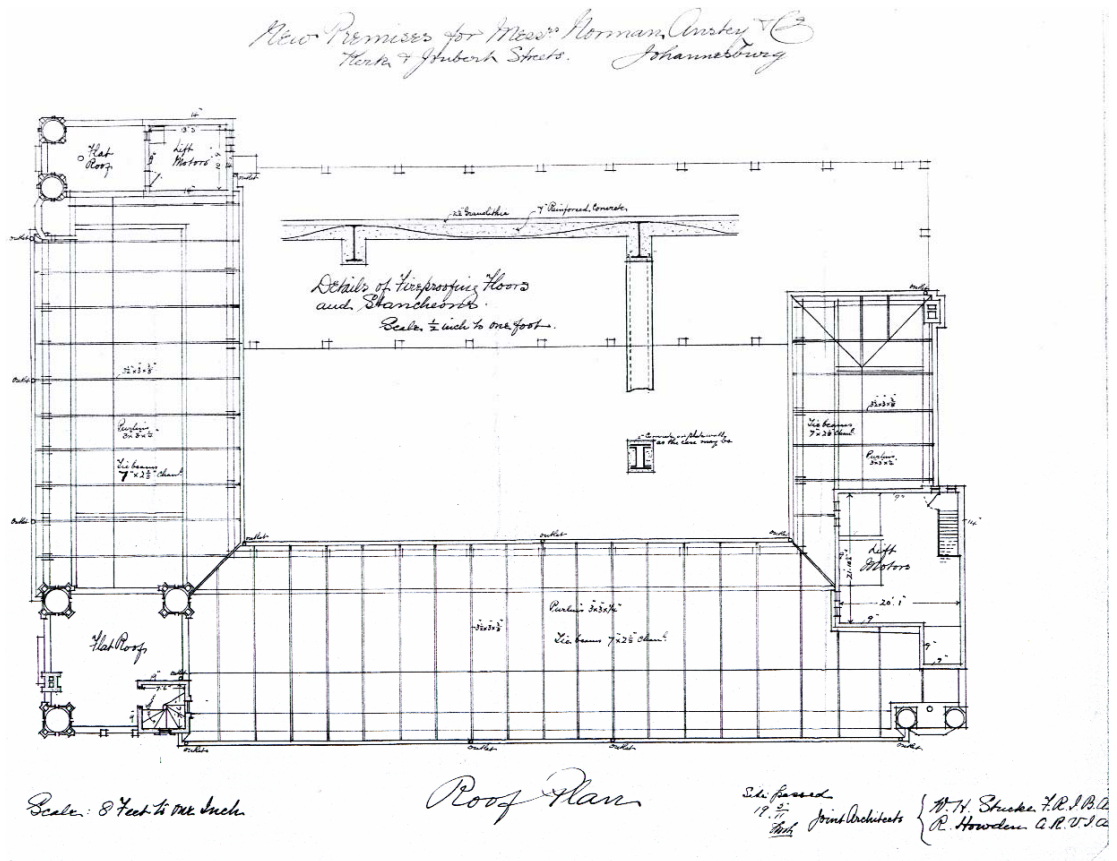
Below: copy of original Ground Floor Plan.



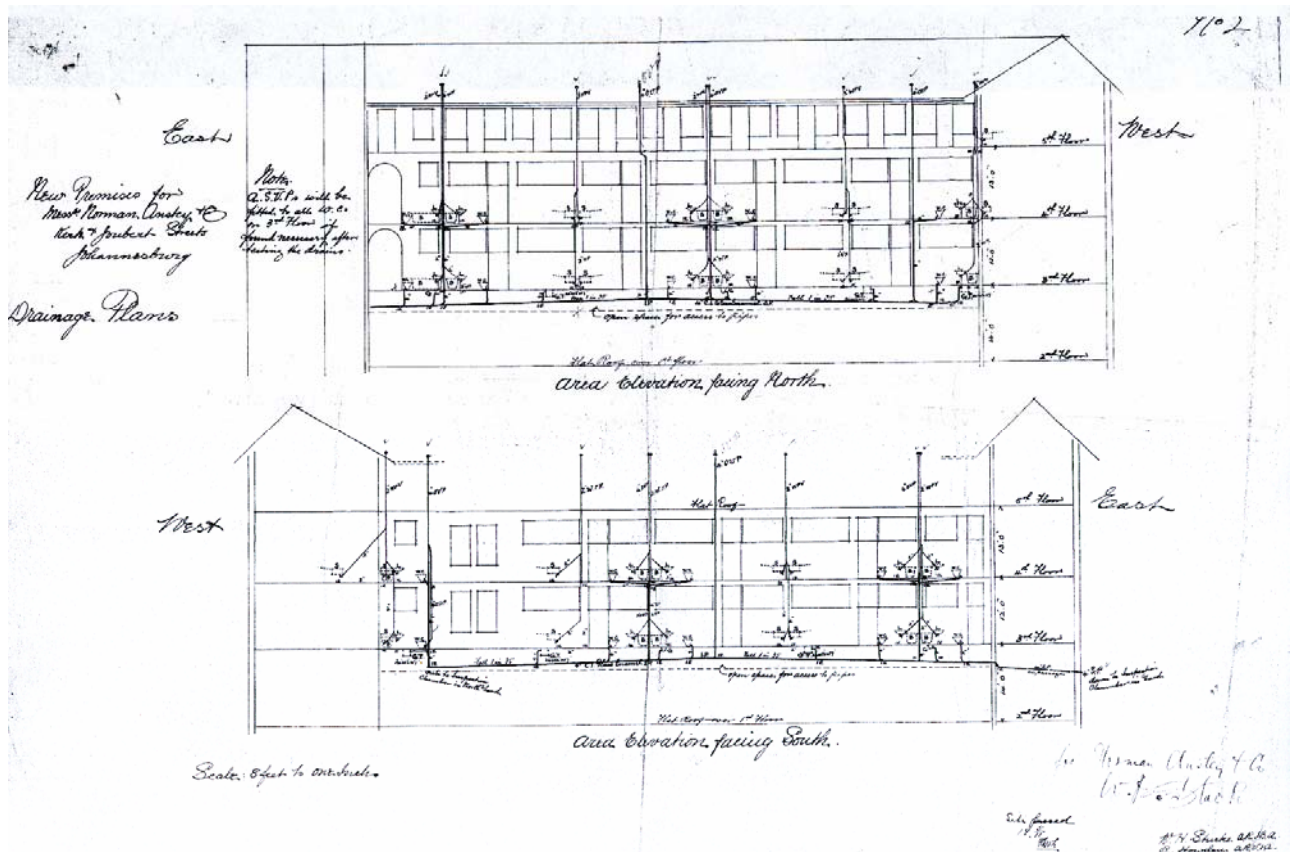
Below: copy of Third and Fourth Floor Plan.



Below: copy of original Roof Plan.



Below: copy of Drainage Plan, Area Elevation Facing South (note the corrugated iron roof).



[illegible]

New Premises for Messrs. Norman, Oakley & Co.
Kirk & Joubert Streets, Johannesburg.

SECTION OF PORCH.
KIRK AND JOUBERT STREETS.

SCALE 1/2 INCH TO ONE FOOT.

SECTION OF BACK BALCONY.
ON 3RD AND 4TH FLOORS.

SECTION OF FRONT BALCONY.
ON 3RD AND 4TH FLOORS.

Section of
Foundation to
Front right

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: structural steel work and plastered brick.

Roof: corrugated iron.

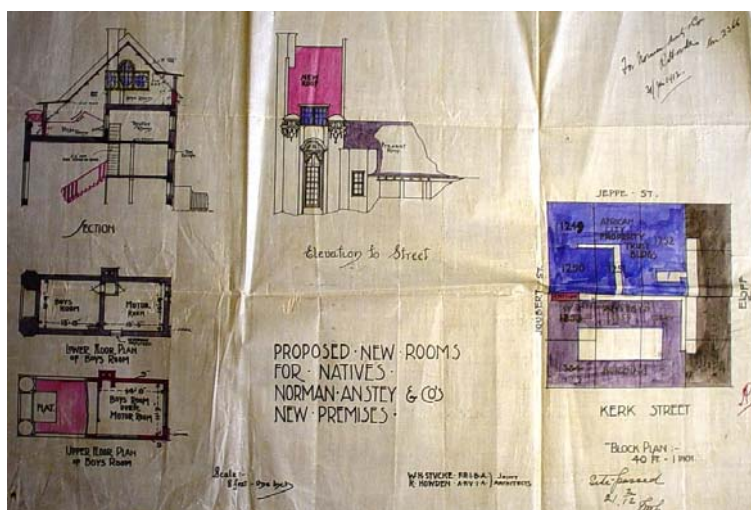
Windows: timber frame sash windows (cottage pane) with fanlights over.

SITE FEATURES:

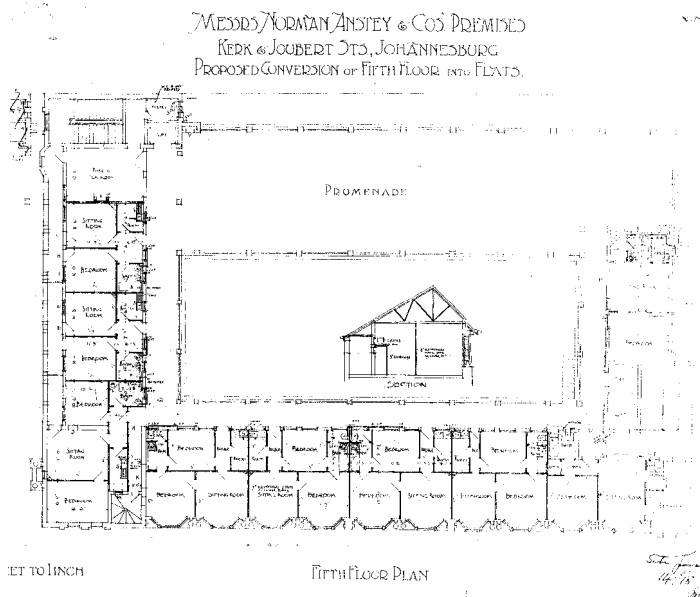
ALTERATIONS:

Below is a list showing the dates of approval of subsequent additions / alterations to the building, and the names of the responsible architects. This is not necessarily a complete record of the changes effected to the building since its completion, as the plans record of the building appears to be incomplete.

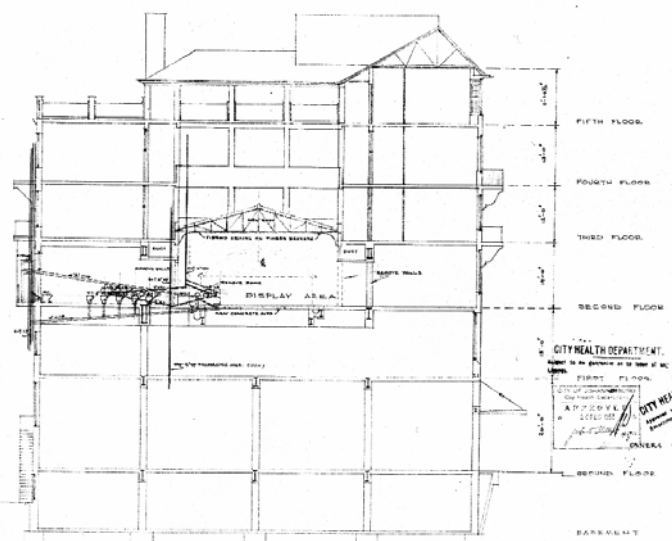
Date approved:	Architect/s:
1912	Joint architects - W. H. Stucke and R. Howden
27 May 1913	Joint architects - W. H. Stucke and R. Howden
1 July 1913	Joint architects - W. H. Stucke and R. Howden
27 March 1916	Howden & Stewart
29 September 1919	Joint architects - Howden & Stewart and Stucke & Harrison
5 March 1929	Robert Howden
10 March 1932	John B Fergusson
12 October 1932	Emley & Williamson
21 June 1936	Obel & Obel
26 November 1946	Van Gemert & Breedveld
9 August 1947	Stucke, Harrison & Smail
5 November 1948	Stucke, Harrison & Smail
30 November 1948	?
30 December 1948	Stucke, Harrison & Smail
23 August 1951	Stucke, Harrison & Smail
10 March 1953	Stucke, Harrison, Ritchie & Watson
30 March 1953	James Watson
9 September 1954	James Watson
27 June 1957	James Watson
30 April 1958	James Watson
9 October 1958	James Watson
13 October 1958	James Watson
October 1963	J. G. O. Watson
15 October 1964	James Watson
29 July 1965	L. R. Genlloud
15 April 1969	L. R. Genlloud
24 October 1969	L. R. Genlloud
17 November 1998	Jack Levin Architects



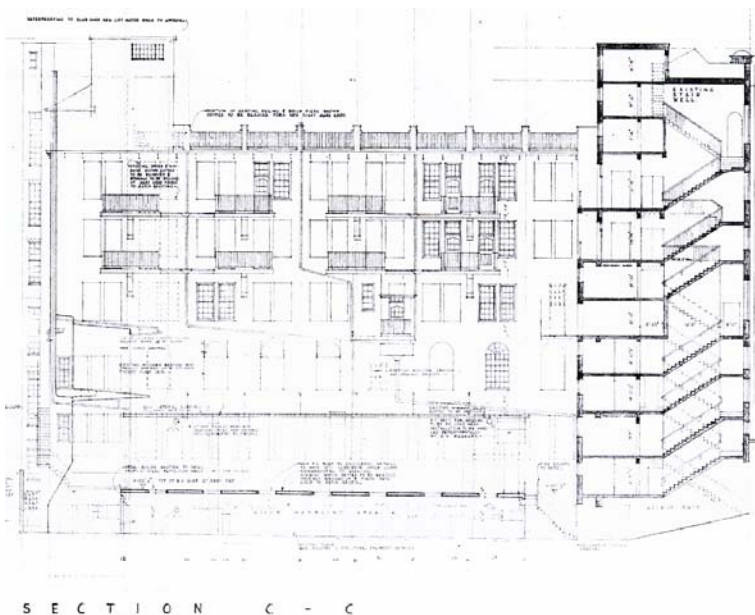
Left: copy of drawings of proposed new staff quarters to roof of building. Application for Approval of Plans form missing; site passed 21 February 1912; Joint architects: W. H. Stucke and R. Howden. See extract of plan left.



Left: copy of extract from drawings dated 1913 – proposed conversion of Fifth Floor to flats; date on plan – March 1913; approval of plans 27 May 1913; estimated cost – building £1 600. Joint architects: W. H. Stucke and R. Howden.



Left: copy of extract from plans dated 7 April 1952 - the concrete roofed dome and lantern lights over the first floor were removed and replaced with a roof, supported with empirical truss, to create a display area; new ablution block to second floor. Date on plan – 7 April 1952; approval of plans – 10 March 1953; estimated cost – building £950; drainage £100; architects - Stucke, Harrison, Ritchie & Watson.



Left: copy of extract from plans dated 30 April 1958 – proposed alterations: date on plan – 22 June 1957; approved - 30 April 1958; estimated cost – building £4 500; drainage £50; architect – James Watson.

INTEGRITY:

The record of changes effected to this building since its completion at the end of 1911, is astonishing. Externally, the building has during its 92 years of existence, been gradually stripped of its original design elements such as its prominent corner tower and balconies, and fine ornamental features. The final blow to the little that remained of its valuable features, came in 1998, when the building was 'modernized' at an estimated total cost of R1-million. This included the removal of the last of the historic fabric of the shop fronts and the cladding of possibly the most important feature of the building, i.e. one of the first cantilevered pavement hoods to be constructed in Johannesburg.

Any future work to the exterior of the building should consequently be closely monitored, in order to ensure that the pavement hood is not removed.

INSCRIPTION:

ARCHITECT:

Joint architects: W. H. Stucke (A.R.I.B.A.) and R. Howden (A.R.V.I.A.).

"The use of...cantilever hoods in Sydney, Australia, was brought to the attention of South African architects by R Howden in 1912 (African Architect, July 1912: 19). One of the first hoods was used in 1911 at the *Paramount Building*...Howden, together with Stucke and Stewart were the architects." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...). This statement by Van Der Waal is incorrect, as the original plans of the building were clearly executed by W. H. Stucke and R. Howden. See copy of relevant extract from one of the plans below.

LONGITUDINAL SECTION D. D.
THRO: MEZZANINE • SUB BASEMENT • ETC.
Site Passed
19.5.11
Moh

W. H. Stucke
W. H. STUCKE • A. R. I. B. A. } JOINT
R. HOWDEN • A. R. V. I. A. } ARCHITECTS

BUILDER:

J. Adams & Co.

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans : 1910
Site passed : 19 May 1911
Approval of plans : 5 May 1911
Completion date : 13 December 1911

BUILDING STYLE:

Scottish Art Nouveau.

According to Van Der Waal the building style of the *Paramount Building* is Scottish Art Nouveau: "The first *Anstey Building* (1907), 88 Eloff Street, and the *Bevern & Co Building* (1905-6), 138, 140 Market Street, were in a different category. Together with another single building, the *Paramount Building* (1911), 55/7/9/ Church Street, they represented Johannesburg's interpretation of the Scottish Art Nouveau. Also designed and built in white, they relied for their architectonic effect on incised windows and the expressive force of pointed gables without mouldings. It was no coincidence that F G McIntosh, who helped design the *Bevern Building*, was trained in Scotland.

There was another variation of the closed wall plane approach, which was set apart from the other in that the underlying grid structure of the face was sections (or pilasters) and string courses. All facades designed using this approach lacked the articulation of mass and the only punctuations were those of the roof silhouette – either gables or a corner turret. This implies that this group was closer to Late Victorian revival styles and may be regarded as a continuation of that mode." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

BUILDING TYPE:

This building was originally designed as a store (with large showrooms) and apartment building. By 1956, the building had been converted to accommodate the O.K. Bazaars with its Groceries Department in the Basement. The building is currently utilized as a shops (to street) and office building.

ENVIRONMENT:

Despite drastic changes to the façades, this building remains a striking element in the streetscape.

CONDITION:

Fair. The building does, however, require cosmetic repairs, e.g. peeling paint at corner.

URGENT ACTION:**SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:****PROTECTION STATUS:** (under National Heritage Resources Act, 1999)

General protection:	Section 34(1) structure/s	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Formal protection:	provincial heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	national heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	provisional protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
	heritage area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	listed in provincial heritage resources register	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

FORMER PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Monuments Act, 1969)**NOTES:**

It was previously recommended, i.e. by the former NMC, that the building should be declared as a national monument. This recommendation was never implemented.

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership: Norman Anstey & Co.
By 1956: O.K. Bazaars (1929) Ltd.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:VACANT STAND:

By February 1906, the 59 Kerk Street portion of the site of the current building, was still not developed. See copy of 1906 Block Plan below. This stand appears to have remained vacant till 1908.

LARGE WOOD AND IRON STRUCTURE:

By March 1906, a large wood and iron structure occupied the corner stand (i.e. at 55 Kerk Street and 56 Joubert Street). A single W.C., situated at the time on the Joubert Street frontage of this site (see Block Plan below), had been removed by 1908.

TWO BRICK STRUCTURES:

Two separate brick structures stood at 58 Joubert Street. This was in 1906 (see Block Plan below).

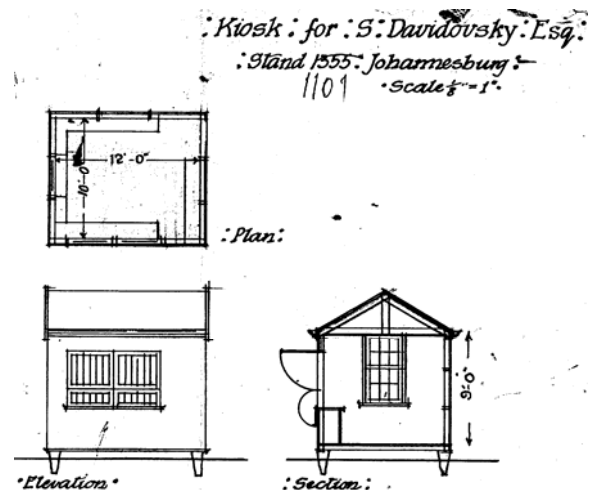
By 1908, a section was added to the rear to connect these structures.

S DAVIDOVSKY KIOSK:

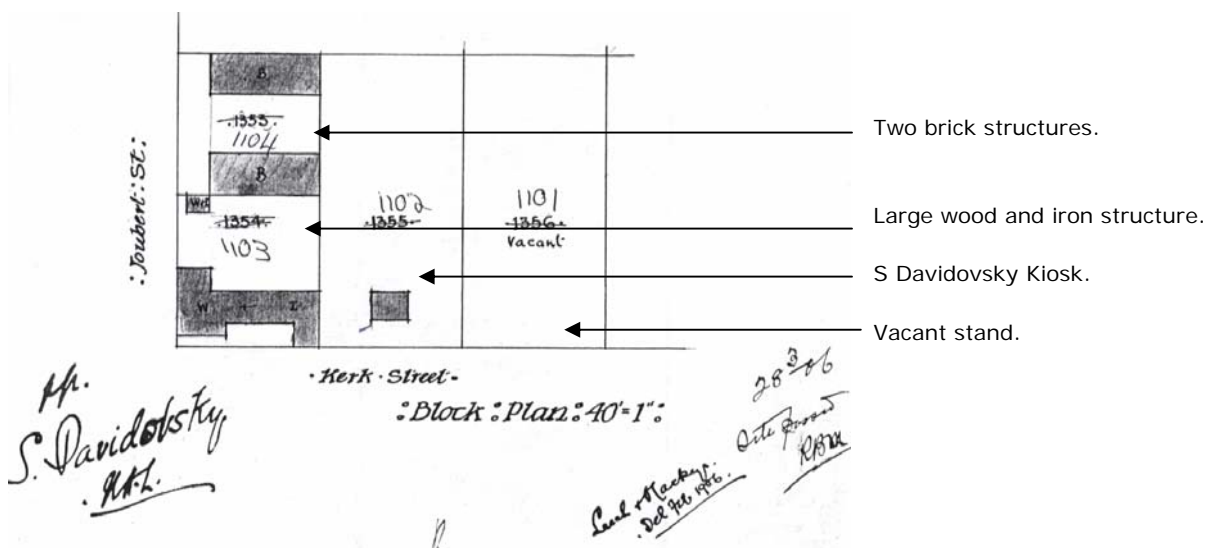
During February 1906, the architects Leech & Mackey designed a Kiosk for S Davidovsky Esq on the central front portion of the stand at 57 Kerk Street. This seems, so far, to have been the only building designed by this architectural firm in Johannesburg. The site was passed on 28 March 1906; plans were approved on 7 May 1906 and the estimated cost to erect the building was £20.

This wood and iron structure with gable roof, supported by king post trusses, was designed with a top hung serving hatch and counters. The Kiosk was not a permanent structure and was clearly designed to be relocated when necessary. See also Block Plan above.

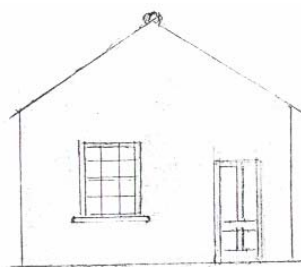
Right: extracts from the Leech & Mackey original submission drawings dated 1906.



Below: the site of the current *Paramount Building* as shown on an earlier Block Plan dated March 1906 by the architects Leech & Mackey:

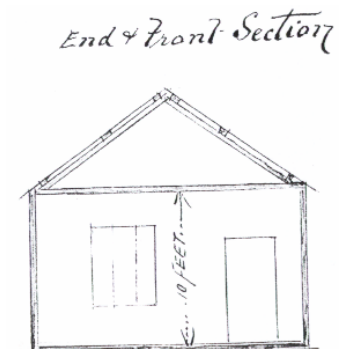


PRINTERS OFFICE:



Right and left: extracts from undated original submission drawing.

A 24' x 18' wood and iron structure with gable roof was erected during 1893 on the front of the eastern boundary of the 57 Kerk Street portion of the site (this stand was previously vacant). The plan is undated and the Author unknown (Application for Approval of Plans form received 28 April 1893). The original owner of this structure was J.W. Glover. The structure was at a later stage demolished to make way for the *Norman Anstey & Co. Staff Quarter Block*. Of interest is the simplicity of the drawings.



D. MC NEILAGE RESIDENCE:

An undated plan drawn by P. Terry, indicated the above *Printers Office* as existing, and provided for a proposed new house for D. Mc Neilage Esq., a plumber by trade (see Pre-History: AR-4). The Application for Approval of Plans form was received on 13 May 1893. This double storey (probably wood and iron building) with lean-to structure (situate on 57 Kerk Street), was erected prior to 1908, and was built adjacent to the *Printers Office*. The lay-out of the house was quite basic (no staircase was indicated to the top level) with two rooms to each floor of the double-storey building and a single room to the lean-to structure. Water was supplied to this dwelling by tank and the sewerage disposed by pail method. This is the only recorded building designed by P. Terry.



This dwelling and the wood and iron structure was demolished to make way for the *Norman Anstey & Co. Staff Quarter Block*.

Right: extract from undated (circa 1893) original submission drawing.

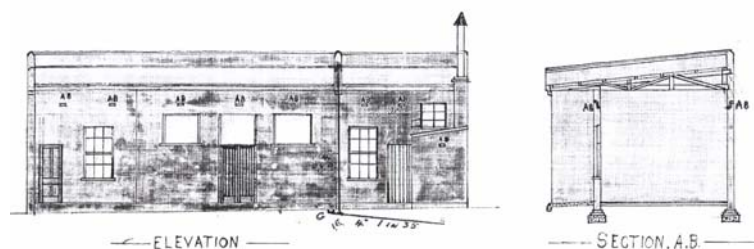
— Elevation.

NORMAN ANSTEY & CO. STAFF QUARTER BLOCK:

The *Norman Anstey & Co. Staff Quarter Block* stood at 57 Kerk Street. The site was passed in October 1908 and the Author is unknown. This double volume single storey brick and lean-to iron roofed structure with three rooms, a small verandah, two W.C.s and a shower, was situated on the rear of the stand. The plans were approved on 8 October 1908; estimated cost – building £150; drainage £30.

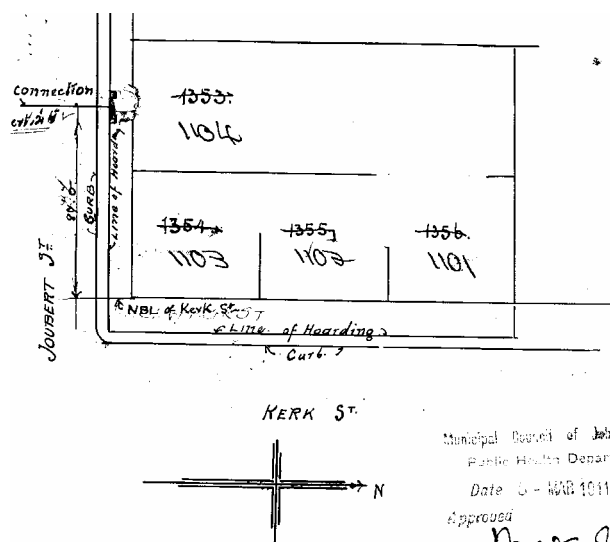
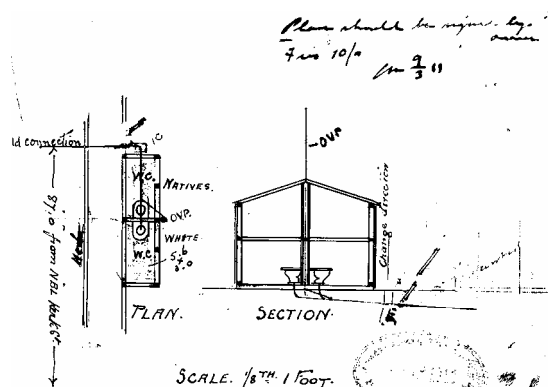
— Proposed Buildings on Stand 19¹¹⁵⁵ Johannesburg —

— for M^{ESSRS} NORMAN. ANSTEY & CO —



Right: extract from original submission drawings dated 1908.

HOARDING AND TEMPORARY TOILETS:



NEW PREMISES FOR MESS^{ERS} NORMAN AUSTEY. & CO.
PROPOSED TEMPORARY WORKMENS W.C.s.

MS Adams
J. M. Conley

J. M. Adams & Co.
BUILDERS
AND SHIPBUILDERS
NEW YORK
1887

Siti Lancer
8. 3.
11
M. L.

Municipal Council of Joliet
Public Health Department
Date 6 - MAR 1911
Approved _____
Medical Officer C. H. B.

Above: copies of some interesting plans showing the hoarding and temporary W.C.s to be erected in preparation of the construction of the proposed new premises for Messrs Norman Anstey & Co. These plans were approved on 21 March 1911 and the work was carried out at an estimated cost of £15.

HISTORY:

The spectacular development of the OK Bazaars into one of the biggest department stores in the country, started from humble beginnings. "The small O.K. Bazaar Store", according to Stark, "which opened on June 27th, 1927, in Store Brothers' Buildings in the then unfashionable part of Eloff Street, was the first tangible evidence in the faith of the founders, Messrs. Miller and Cohen, of going into business with the defined object of reducing the cost of goods to the consumer, by purchasing directly from the manufacturer and selling directly to the consumer with the minimum of intermediate handling. At first the business was run as a three-price store, stocking a variety of articles which sold at threepence, sixpence and a shilling, and due to its immediate success the initial restriction in the range of goods was abandoned and commencement was made with the gradual introduction of a greater variety, and O.K. Bazaars today stock practically every article in domestic use in South Africa. It was not long before this new venture in retailing had attracted the favourable notice of the public, not only in Johannesburg and the nearby gold-mining towns on the Reef, but in other centres far removed from the Witwatersrand, and it was perhaps inevitable that the activities of O.K. Bazaars in towns other than Johannesburg could not be long delayed. In 1929 it was accepted that expansion was essential and to provide for this and the additional capital required, a public company was formed to take over the undertaking of the original private company. In this larger enterprise the founders retained a substantial interest and became Joint Managing Directors, the offices which they hold today. By 1933 the original branch in Johannesburg had outgrown its premises, and at a purchase price which seemed enormous in those days, O.K. Bazaars acquired the old-established business of Chudleigh Brothers Limited (second Chudleigh Building, 78, 80, 82, 84 Eloff Street), which occupied a building with frontages totalling 400 feet on Eloff Street, Pritchard and President Streets, Johannesburg, and absorbed those members of Chudleigh's staff who wished to remain. Within a few years it was found necessary to extend the building (on Eloff Street) by adding further floors to it, and recently a further extension of eight floors, providing another 100,00 sq. ft. on the adjacent side, formerly occupied by Heath's Hotel, had been completed. Over the years from 1927 the growth of O.K. Bazaars has gone hand in hand with the rapid progress of South Africa, and today (i.e. in 1956) O.K. Bazaars operates forty-seven large departmental stores throughout the Union and Rhodesia. These are constantly being extended, and their number augmented to keep pace with the growth of the country itself." (Stark, F. [Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).

"The Claude Harris Leon Foundation is a charitable trust, resulting from a bequest by Claude Leon (1884 - 1972). A founder and managing director of the Elephant Trading Company, a wholesale business based in Johannesburg, Claude Leon also helped develop several well-known South African companies, including Edgars, OK Bazaars and the mining house Anglo Transvaal (later Anglovaal). He served for many years on the Council of the University of the Witwatersrand, which in 1971 awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Law." (Information sourced from <http://www.leonfoundation.co.za/foundation-history.html>)

Helen Grange in a most informative newspaper article titled "Graceful old stores have all gone" on department stores and the early history of Johannesburg writes as follows: "Of all the character changes which have left their mark on Johannesburg none has been more noticeable than the disappearance, in the 1970s, of the graceful old department stores. Its contemporaries – Ansteys, Belfast, Ackermans, Paramount and Stuttafords went too. So complete was the rout that Stuttaford's building in the city remained derelict for years. Some would even remember the firm of Blinman, Holwell and Islip – a department store with style and panache in the British manner in Eloff Street on the site now occupied by the OK. The OK was one of the stores which stayed – and flourished. Historically, these stores all stood relatively close to each other, in the city's prime spots. Their siting was considered to be of huge significance in terms of fashion appeal – and only very few streets were regarded as fashionable. These streets were all north of Commissioner Street – that part of the city which the Transvaal Republic auctioned to the public in 1886 when Johannesburg was born. South of that street on what historically mine-owned land, are the grandiose old mining and financial houses. John Orr's had been a pioneer department store. Stuttafords had also been a household name since early in the century. But when Sam Cohen launched the cash-and-carry store called OK Bazaars in 1927 he was told it would fail – it was, people said, on the 'wrong side of Eloff Street'. Not only did the Eloff Street store do a roaring trade, it triggered a new age of cash stores and remained a powerful force even when similar cash stores were foundering. Instalment credit Because large department stores occupying four to five floors presented management difficulties, speciality department stores emerged – and quickly grew. One of the earliest speciality stores to open its doors was Hepworths, a menswear [sic.] retailer launched in 1894 in Harrison Street [on the corner of Eloff Street]. Edworks, the country-wide shoe chain opened its first Johannesburg shop on the corner of Joubert and Pritchard streets in 1924 – Foschini's clothing outfitters started in 1925 (in Pritchard Street) and Truworhs opened soon afterwards in 1926 (on the corner of President and Eloff). But the most noteworthy speciality store was Edgars, which started in 1939 as a tiny business specialising in

giving instalment credit to typists and shop assistants when John Orr's was serving the upper end of the market. Since then, Edgars has established the largest and most successful speciality department store in Market Street (where the Belfast used to be) while also spreading its chain into shopping centres and other central areas nationwide. Its subsidiaries [sic.], Sales House and Jet Stores are major chains in their own right, each aiming at identifiable segments of the market. It was management difficulties which saw the closure of the old-timer, Greatermans, in 1982. The space vacated was promptly taken by Dions, a very successful speciality store dealing in furniture, sporting and photographic equipment and appliances....While some department stores went to the suburbs some, like Ansteys whose tall stepped building was the city's highest for years, and the bargain-basement shop, Paramount, simply disappeared. Ackermans, a giant in the 1920s, was bought out by Pep stores and today exists only as a supplement to Pep."

John Orr's had two buildings, the first (designed in 1904) was completed during 1906 at 73 Pritchard Street, and the second *John Orr's Building* (1935 – 1936), situated at 73, 75 Pritchard Street. Included in the article by Helen Grange, is a photograph of the first *John Orr's Building*: "John Orr's in 1923 – before the Supreme Court was built in the background. Fifty years later it was abandoned in the flight to the suburbs."

See also *Foschini Building* (Joubert Street), Document AC-9.

I remember collecting trousseau in Johannesburg during the 70s, and still posses some of the articles collected during those years; a wooden cutlery-holder bought at the *main OK Bazaars* as it was known then; pieces of a dinner-set from *Greatermans* with the words 'Microwave oven safe' printed on the bottom – keeping in mind that microwave ovens were not a household name in South-Africa in those days; a rose-pattern stainless steel kitchen utensil set from *John Orr's* at a sale price of R25.00 – remember the rose-pattern, it was on everything such as glasses, dinner sets, carving sets and cutlery. At Easter, a special stand was allocated for Easter eggs in *Greatermans*, at the entrance on Rissik Street. I remember the eggs being the size of an ostrich egg, hand decorated with icing sugar and by special request, a name was iced on the egg. The best place to have breakfast on a Saturday morning was at the restaurant located on one of the upper floors in *Greatermans* – their scrambled eggs and toast was well known. My first account was opened at *Edgars*, the manageress was a Mrs. Van Den Heever, and with her help the account was opened without the permission of my parents, keep in mind that during the 70s women had fewer rights than now! The amount I could buy for was a staggering thirty rand! *John Orr's* had a Jucy Lucy bar and it was very vogue to say 'O, I went to John Orr's today.' The clothes sold at *Foschini's* and *Truworhs* were more expensive but their window dressing was always very tasteful and nice shops to do window-shopping at. Catharina JM Bruwer.

Right: circa 1990 - building when it was still painted in neutral colours (SAHRA Archive File 3/1/3/Joh/A Johannesburg: General).



GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	: £57 784
Estimated cost of drainage	: £2 000
Accommodation approved	:
Phase One valuation	: £25 000 (7 June 1911)
Valuation at completion	: £40 000 (13 December 1911)
Additional valuation	: £15 000 (18 April 1912)
Occupied	: yes

By 1954, Paramount's was a departmental store with their motto being "The Family Store in Kerk Street"; PO Box 3204, telephone 011 22-0311, telegraphic address "Paramount".

"The high-rise buildings in Johannesburg were inspired by a number of factors. In the first place, they were symptomatic of the process of consolidation in commerce which was started in the 1890s and subsequently pursued on a larger scale. Larger buildings had to be put up for the major mining companies and commercial enterprises. These structures reflected the financial and commercial power of the companies – not only by their size but also by the use of an abstract white colour and heavy classicist building forms. This philosophy put a focus on the buildings which insulated them from the more personalised older buildings. This intensive land development was also related to the manner in which property was taxed in Johannesburg. Under the ZAR government the rating system for urban property was rather limited, partly because all community services were provided by concession. In fact, the separate tax on buildings and land introduced by Johannesburg's Health Committee in 1893 was the first efficient system in the Transvaal. This system of separate taxation for land and buildings was superseded by a combined tax system in 1902 which was applied until 1916, when a provincial ordinance decreed that land should be more heavily taxed than buildings, and gave town councils the option of abolishing tax on buildings altogether... In 1919 Johannesburg chose to abolish tax on buildings... Johannesburg's subsequent development may be partly attributed to the fact that the tax was levied on the market value of the property, not revenue from the property, as was the case in England. Valuation figures show that land was assessed at much higher values than the buildings...so that owners were obliged, for economic reasons, to put up larger and ever higher buildings. This also accelerated the 'turnover' of buildings. In view of the comparatively high land tax, smaller non-functional buildings could not readily show a profit. This system, reinforced in 1919 by the abolition of tax on buildings, is still the main reason for the intensive land development in the city. It also partly explains the never-ending process of demolition through which so many historical buildings have disappeared." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

COLLARD'S GYMNASIUM:

According to Leyds, the Collard's Gymnasium was situated in the second *Anstey's Building*: "At the corner of Harrison Street was Eakin's corner, later run as a ladies' outfitters by J. D. Sothern, a well-known Johannesburg figure who was keen on physical culture, and a patron of Collard's Gymnasium in the Old Anstey Building at the corner of Kerk and Joubert Streets. Poor Sothern was laid low by an incurable disease and died by his own hand in a Natal coastal resort in 1913." (Leyds, G.A.: A History of Johannesburg).

PREVIOUS TENANTS:

Original tenant: Norman Anstey & Co.

Paramount Stores.

By 1919: Collard's Gymnasium.

By 1948: E Roth.

By 1956: O.K. Bazaars, Joubert Street Branch.

CURRENT TENANT:

Ackermans.

Furniture City.

Price 'n Pride.

Gauteng Meat Market.

Below: copy of a letter dated 19 April 1956 addressed to the Johannesburg City Engineer.

O.K. BAZAARS (1929) LTD.
DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

TELEPHONE 22-7666
P.O. BOX 3171
TELEGRAMS: OKBAZ

In reply, please quote
PM/AGMI 115/2
All communications to be addressed to
Division and individuals.

O.K. BUILDINGS
ELOFF STREET
JOHANNESBURG

19th April, 1956.

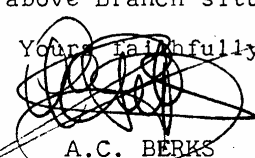
The City Engineer,
JOHANNESBURG.

Dear Sir.

PARAMOUNT STORES

We enclose herewith the sum of 5s.Od. and shall
be glad if you will please permit the bearer to study and
trace the plans of our above Branch situated in Kerk Street.

Yours faithfully,


A.C. BERKS
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER
(Store Design & Development.)

DIRECTORS: S. COHEN, M. MILLER (JOINT MANAGING DIRECTORS), J. CRANKO, I. HAYMAN, A. SCHWARTZ, STANLEY COHEN, L. M. MILLER

Below: photo copied from Smith, A.H.: Pictorial History of Johannesburg.



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Before the end of the 'nineties Johannesburg had become a noted shopping centre. Many wholesalers and retailers had made it their headquarters, and to-day anything available in South Africa can be purchased in Johannesburg. During the 'twenties department stores were becoming increasingly frequent, and shoppers were attracted from all over the country. Saturday was the great shopping day, and there was much controversy about early closing. Part of the interior of Messrs. Anstey's establishment is here depicted.

SOURCES:

For additional illustrative information, see relevant supplementary photo album in electronic format.

See SOURCES DOCUMENT for information on sources consulted with reference to this document.

NMC Conservation Survey Form, undated (Joubert Street Area and Joubert Street East Side).

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Historic Value:

- ☒ Associated with historic person, group or organisation
- ☐ Associated with historic event or activity

Architectural/Aesthetic value:

- ☒ Important example of building type
- ☒ Important example of a style or period
- ☐ Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics
- ☒ Work of a major architect or builder

Social/Spiritual/Linguistic value:

- ☐ Associated with social, spiritual, linguistic, economic or political activity
- ☐ Illustrates an historical period

Scientific/Technological value:

- ☐ Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement
- ☒ New, rare or experimental building techniques

RECORDED BY:

Heritage Resources Management team Johann J and Catharina JM Bruwer.
Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.

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