

Scandia Hotel
225 1st Street
Eureka
Humboldt County
California

HABS No. CA-2685

HABS
CAL
12-EUR,
8-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

**Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
San Francisco, California**

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SCANDIA HOTEL

HABS No. CA-2685

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Location: 225 1st Street, Eureka, Humboldt County, California.
UTM coordinates: 10.400470.4517570.

Significance: Dating from the mid-1860s, the Scandia Hotel is one of the oldest extant buildings in Eureka. Major alterations have so diminished its integrity, however, as to preclude its meeting National Register criteria.

Description: Exterior: The former Scandia Hotel building is a two-story, balloon-framed, end-gable commercial building. Stylistically, it exhibits elements of the Greek Revival style and the later Italianate style. Its gable roof, currently clad in several layers of asphalt shingles, has boxed eaves. The original exterior siding was drop-rustic. The building's balloon frame uses redwood 2x6 studs and 6x6 corner posts, into which longitudinal girders have been channeled; these carry very heavy transverse floor joists for the second floor.

Historical photographic evidence indicates that windows along the sides were 6/6 double-hung in wood sash (at least one remains extant and visible). Physical evidence in the form of "ghosts" in the exterior paint indicates that these originally had slightly pedimented cornices--long since removed during the course of many alterations. Various additions to the east side of the building have resulted in the ground floor windows and doors being heavily modified: windows and doors removed and a sliding door inserted.

The front (south façade) of the building to second story height has been re-sided in v-rustic, all of which is fastened with round wire nails and more lately with deck screws. The front of the building is three bays wide, with large boarded-up window openings at ground level, and a single door located at the east corner. The gable end of this principal façade is now clad in semi-octagonal shingles, and there are paired Italianate-style brackets below the eaves; the eaves feature short gable returns. There are frieze and architrave mouldings below the eaves, and barge mouldings on the gable ends.

The rear (north end) of the building appears to have had two windows in the first story, with a single opening centered in the second story. This latter appears to have been a door, since "ghosts" in the exterior paint indicate a stairway from that location to the northeast corner of the building.

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A concrete pad abuts the east side of the building, and remnants of flashing on the east wall evidence a former addition, now removed. Charred siding and a scorched window at second story level give evidence of fire.

Interior: The building's interior is virtually gutted, and now serves as a storage or disposal area for appliances. The first floor is completely open. The second floor is currently inaccessible, but also appears to be open and partitionless. Interior side and end walls are sheathed in wide, circular-sawn planks placed horizontally on the studs. Any original finish (cloth and paper, paper, etc.) has long since vanished. Remnants of painted paper hang from the plank ceiling. The building also has a simple plank floor. Remnants of vertical wainscot and evidence of a chair rail are visible on the west wall of the first floor. Access to second floor was originally by stairs along the east wall; these are now gone, leaving only the opening in the second floor as evidence of their location. First floor height is presently approximately six inches below grade of the adjacent sidewalk.

General: The former Scandia Hotel building appears to be in very poor condition at this time--badly hogged and wracked. The rear has settled considerably due to foundation failure. The building has many active leaks that extend through the structure to the first floor. Assessed in terms of the criteria of the National Register of Historic Places, it has poor overall exterior integrity of design, materials, and workmanship. On the exterior, the principal original or early elements extant are confined to the remaining drop rustic siding, the gable end shingling (a good bit of which is missing), the Italianate brackets, and the various moulding elements present on the south and north ends of the building; the cupola added in the late 1880s is missing. On the interior, the plank side walls, floors and ceiling remain, but no original cross walls, or other surface materials or finishes are present. In places even the planks have been removed to reveal the bare studs. The building retains perhaps 60% of its original, character-defining exterior materials, and less than 25% of any character-defining interior materials.

Historical Context: Research reveals that this building is somewhat older than previously thought. By the mid-1860s, 1st Street was Eureka's principal commercial and mercantile street, and 2nd street was scarcely built up. It was at about this time that R.M. Williams built both this building and the near-twin Greek Revival style structure at the corner of 1st and D streets that later became the L'Tosca Hotel (no longer extant). In 1866 Williams owned the Humboldt Stables located at the corner of

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2nd and G streets and also had interest in Russ & Williams' Eureka Meat and Vegetable Market, dealing in meats, vegetables, stock cattle, work oxen, and horses. He sold his interest in the latter business that year, but by 1871 was back in the wholesale grocery business. Williams owned the property on 1st Street from 1868 until his death in 1879, and thus it is likely that he built both buildings ca.1868-9. Local historian, Norton Steenfott judged that the Scandia was built sometime after 1870, based on a photo taken that year that appeared to show only the L'Tosca building in place. However, on close examination this photo, a xerox copy of which is located in the Steenfott Collection in the Humboldt Room of the Humboldt County Library, reveals that *both* buildings were in place by 1870; the distinctive porch of the L'Tosca can be seen to be *behind* the Scandia building nearest the camera position. An abbreviated chronology of alterations to the building follows, based on Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.

In 1886 (the earliest Sanborn map available for Eureka) the building shows as 2 stories, with a full-width porch at the rear, and a fairly large outhouse behind the building adjacent to the northwest corner. The building's use is indicated as Saloon and Lodgings.

By 1889 the rear porch was largely enclosed except for a portion left as a much smaller half-width porch. The building had also been altered with a square cupola to third story height, centered on the roof ridge toward the front of the building. The outhouse had either been removed or altered to woodshed use, as there is a woodshed of similar dimensions where the outhouse had been located three years earlier.

The 1892 Sanborn showed the building had been named "Scandia Hotel," and was being used as a "Saloon and Boarding" facility.

By 1900 the building had again been altered, this time with a pair of irregular one-story additions on the east side, and large side door cut into east wall.

By 1920 the third story cupola was gone, as was the remnant of the rear porch. In place of the one-story additions on the east side of the building, a two-story addition with a one-story rear lean-to connected the east side of the Scandia building to the L'Tosca Hotel building (by this time used as a warehouse and wine storage). The building was no longer named Scandia on the 1920 map, but is still shown as a boarding house and saloon. A one story building of unidentified use was still in the location of former outhouse/wood shed.

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By 1949 the building had assumed its present configuration, and was connected to the former L'Tosca by a one-story infill nearly as deep as the Scandia, the whole being used as a wholesale liquor & beer warehouse. The notation of 12" crib construction for both of the former hotel buildings seems to indicate alteration and strengthening of floor systems for such use. This construction is still visible on the second floor of the Scandia.

Sources:

Architectural Resources Group. *Eureka: An Architectural View*. Eureka: Eureka Heritage Society, 1987.

Eureka Heritage Society. "Eureka 'Old Town' Historic District". Unpublished National Register nomination, November 1990.

Eureka Heritage Society. Survey notes, Roll No. 1, microfilm on file at Humboldt County Library, Eureka.

Fountain, Susie Baker. Notebooks. Humboldt Room, Humboldt County Library, Eureka. Vol. 14, p.90; vol. 19, p.215; vol. 22, p.148, 168; vol. 29, p.123; vol. 30, p.177, 270; vol. 31, p.37.

History of Humboldt County, California. San Francisco: Wallace W. Elliott & Co., 1881.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps of Eureka, California, 1886, 1889, 1892, 1900, 1920, 1949.

Steenfott, Norton. Photograph album, Humboldt Room, Humboldt County Library, Eureka.

Project Information: The Scandia Hotel building is to be demolished in connection with a redevelopment project in the west end of the Eureka Old Town. This documentation, to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) Architectural Data Form (formerly Level III), has been prepared as mitigation for the demolition of the building, in accordance with professional recommendations.

FLOOR PLAN

