

A historical black and white photograph of a fire engine crew. The crew consists of several men in uniform standing in a line in front of a large building. To the left, a horse-drawn fire engine is visible, with several horses harnessed to it. The building behind them has two large windows and a sign that reads "B-F-D ENGINE CO".

# Grove Street History The Linen District

Jennifer Stevens and Aimee Steele, SHRA

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## Theme One: Light Industry

Multiple laundries dotted the landscape in the early years of the street; light industry began to dominate western Grove Street around the time of the WWI. As the automobile became ubiquitous, numerous businesses arose on Grove Street to cater to the new mode of transportation.



## Theme Two: Temporary Housing

The Linen Blocks were primarily residential during the earliest years for both blue-collar workers and white-collar professionals. Lodgers became the primary residents on the street over time, and by 1949, no single-family homes remained on either side of the street between 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street.



## Theme Three: Transportation Corridor

Grove Street acted as both a transportation corridor and a transition between Main and Front Streets. The railroad also brought goods into and out of downtown. The streetcar also enacted dramatic change on the makeup of Grove, and the car changed the economic base of the street.



## Theme Four: Immigrants & Working Class

Immigrants came from all over Europe, and Chinese immigrants contributed valuable services to the local economy. The Basques maintained a strong cultural presence on the western side of Grove.

# Findings—Four Themes

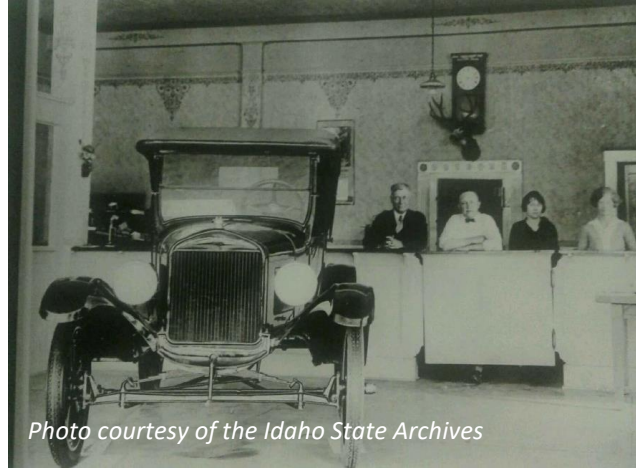


Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Archives



# Light Industry

Grove Street was historically home to a variety of light industry, such as:

- Tire Shops (top left, ca. 1920)
- Machine Shops
- Car Lots (top right, ca. 1900)
- Gas & Oil Stations
- Retail Shops
- Laundries (center right, ca. 1950)
- Auto Repairs (bottom right, ca. 1970)
- Blacksmith Shops

Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Archives

**A Handsome Domestic**

finish—to be sure it's the proper kind—machinery is a good deal for rough work for excellence there is no like a hand finish. We won the estimation of all who desire excellence in laundering. We employ only most skilled workers irrespective of cost, and the use of natural hot water adds and tone to the goods.

**American Laundry Co**  
 HISTORICAL  
 Fourteenth and Grove St.  
 Bell Phone 41. Ind. Phon.

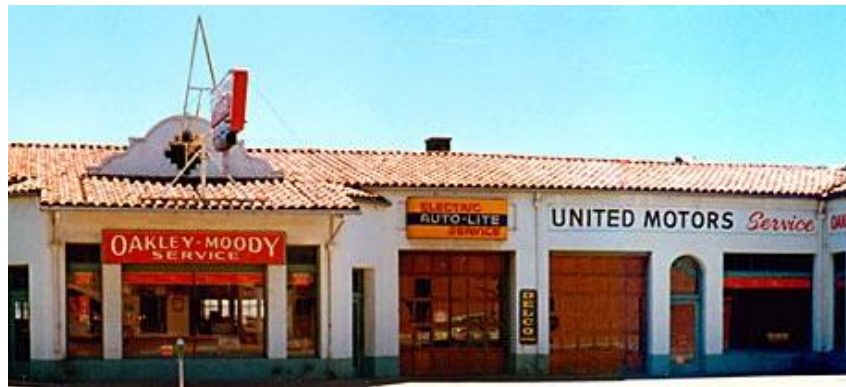
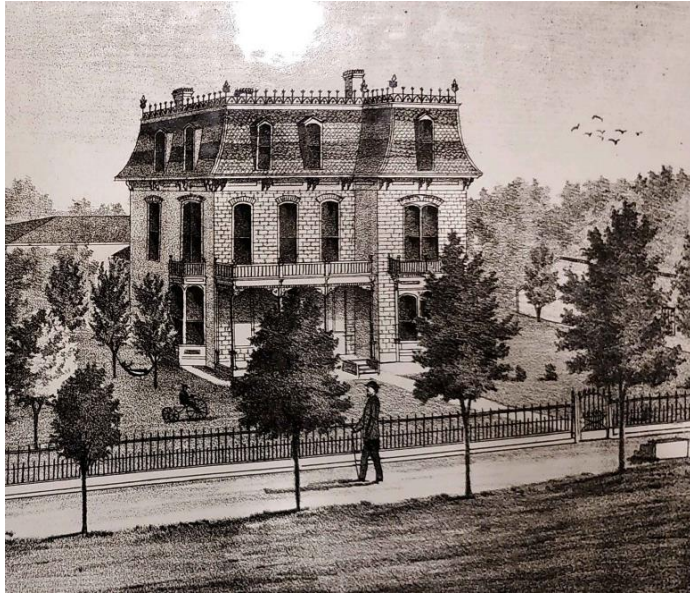


Photo courtesy of the Oakley Moody Collection  
 813 Grove Street 1947-1971



Photos courtesy of the Idaho State Archives

### **Basque Party**

The Basque Women's Sociale will sponsor a dance tonight in the Delamar hotel, Eighth and Grove streets, and another on New Year's night at the Royal hotel.



## Temporary Housing

- Large, stately mansions like the DeLamar (top left, drawing ca. 1890) were often transformed into boarding houses and hotels (top right, ca. 1950).
- Boardinghouses served as community spaces for the Basque Community until the early 1950s as well as for the growing female workforce

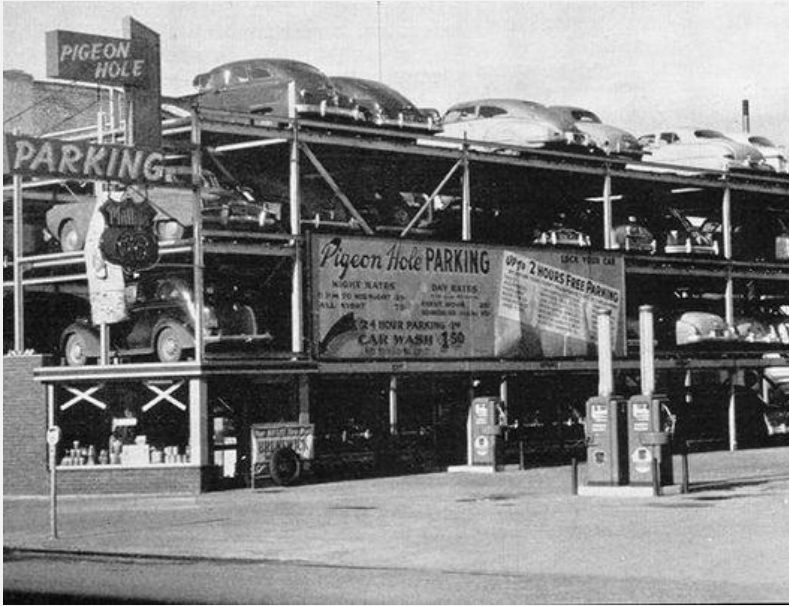


Photo courtesy of the Hugh Hartman Collection



Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Archives



Photo courtesy of the Library of Congress

## A Transportation Corridor

- Grove Street historically served as both a transition between Front and Main Streets and a transportation corridor through downtown Boise.
- The Oregon Short Line Railroad had a depot (top right) near Grove Street that moved goods and people into and out of downtown.
- The automobile (top left, top center) became ubiquitous and dominated the economic base of Grove Street from the midcentury onward.

# Immigrants & the Working Class

PERSONAL DESCRIPTION.							NATIVITY.		
DATE OF BIRTH.		Age at last birthday.	Whether single, married, widowed, or divorced.	Number of years married.	Mother of how many children.	Number of those children living.	Place of birth of each person and parents of each person enumerated. If born State, give the State or Territory; if of foreign birth, give the County.		
Year.	Month.						Place of birth of this Person.	Place of birth of FATHER of this person.	Place of birth of this
1824	6	60	8			Tennessee	Virginia	N. Car.	
1849	5	50	5			Alabama	S. Carolina	S. Car.	
1833	6	67	m	31		Germany	Germany	Ger.	
1847	5	53	m	31	5	2	Germany	Germany	Ger.
1874	2	25	5			Oregon	Germany	Ger.	
1877	2	22	5			Oregon	Germany	Ger.	
1883	1	16	8			Nebraska	England	Ch.	

Immigrants came to Boise from many European and Asian countries

- Norway, Sweden, Denmark
- Germany/Prussia
- England, Ireland, Scotland
- Spain, Italy
- “Asia Minor” (Turkey)
- China, Japan

The street became increasingly working class over time;

- In 1900: approximately 62% “working class”
- In 1949: approximately 99% “working class”



Photo courtesy of the Idaho State Archives

## Conclusion

- Public opinion of the area led to its large-scale destruction in the 1960s and 1970s (top, photo and headline ca. 1965)
- Local entrepreneurs have brought some life back into the Linen Blocks (bottom, David Hale revitalized the Linen Building in the early 2000s)
- Today, the Capital City Development Corporation is following in the street's long history of adaptive reuse and mixed use to breathe new life into the Linen District.



## *Motel Clerk Foils Try By Robber*

