Equitable Building and Investment Co. Building
360 Lambton Quay

Summary of heritage significance

• The building at 360 Lambton Quay is the oldest commercial building on Lambton Quay and one of the oldest masonry buildings remaining in Wellington.
• The building has a carefully designed and detailed rendered (or possibly painted Oamaru stone) façade in a simple but elegant Classical composition of building elements and is sympathetic in scale and detail to the neighbouring Stewart Dawson’s building.
• The building is part of a group three of late Victorian / Edwardian buildings that are now collectively thought of as Stewart Dawson’s corner (although only the central building has a historic association with the jeweller). Stewart Dawson’s corner is a prominent landmark that marks the key intersection between Willis and Lambton Quay in Wellington’s CBD.
• The building’s façade has remained (relatively) unaltered for over 100 years and makes a strong positive contribution to the sense of place and continuity of the BNZ /Head Office Heritage Area.

Photo: Charles Collins, 2015
District Plan: Map 17, Symbol 191/1
Legal Description: Lot 1 DP 32520 Lot 2 DP 54193 Pt Secs512 513
Heritage Area: BNZ /Head Office Heritage Area
HPT Listed: Historic Place - Category II ref 3620
South Lambton Quay Historic Area ref 7041
Archaeological Site: Pre 1900 building
Equitable Building and Investment Co. (EBI)
Berman’s Building
United Fruit Building
Poy’s Building
Lambton Quay No.366
Stewart Dawson Chambers
1887 construction
Key physical dates: 1904/5 additional floor
1996 No.360 Lambton Quay amalgamated with adjacent buildings at Stewart Dawson’s corner
Architect / Builder: Architect: Guido Schwartz
Builder: James Wilson (£2374)
Former uses: Building Society office
Retail at ground floors, commercial / offices above
Current uses: Retail at ground floors, commercial / offices above (now serviced from Stewart Dawson corner)
Earthquake Prone Status: SR170174 Bdg StrengthInv notice posted 28/02/2012

Extent: Cityview GIS 2012
1.0 Outline History

1.1 History

The Equitable Building and Investment Co. building is the oldest surviving commercial building on Lambton Quay and one of the city’s oldest masonry buildings. It was erected in 1887 for the Equitable Building and Investment Co. Ltd (EBI Co.), and prior to this the site was occupied by a two-storied timber building owned by Joe Dransfield, Wellington’s first mayor, and Isaac Phillips, both merchants. They sold the property to the EBI Co. in 1883. The EBI Co. was formed in Wellington in 1877 and its name can still be seen in relief on the building facade. Its main business was real estate investment and, although a modest concern, the company did reasonably well, paying a dividend every year from 1877 to near the turn of the century. It had a paid up capital of £100,000. The leading light in the company was G.M. Kebbell, a former seaman and ship-owner, who became managing director and chairman in 1883 and remained there for several decades.

The building was designed by architect Guido Schwartz and constructed by James Wilson for the sum of £2374 on the “now vacant site between Mr McDowell’s clothing establishment and Mr Amos’ fruit depot on Lambton Quay.” The original plans show a two storey...

“...edifice having a highly ornamental front, which is to be faced with Oamaru Stone. On the ground floor, which will be used as the Company’s offices, are to be the public office, 17ft gin by 14ft 3in, the board room, 13ft 3in by lift 3in, a strong room, two back offices (one 18ft by 1ft 3in, and the other 13ft by 10ft in), lavatories, &c, and a hall 6ft in wide. On the upper story are to be six offices, a strong room, with lavatory and other conveniences. This floor has already been taken by the legal firm of Messrs. Ollivier and Brown. The building when finished will constitute an important addition to our street architecture. The Equitable has long enjoyed the reputation of being one of the soundest and best of our building societies, and we are glad to hear that it is securing premises worthy of the substantial character of its business. The work of erection is to be begun immediately.”

Guido Schwartz was the brother of J H Otto Schwartz, who was the company secretary for EBI at the time of construction, and continued in that role until 1907.

In 1896 the building was valued at £5000. In 1904 or early 1905 another storey was added to this building; street directories confirming an influx of tenants after this date. The new addition brought the height of the building up to that of the recently

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1 The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3; Photo 19368½, Photographic Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.
2 Land Titles Office, CT 29/199
3 New Zealand Cyclopaedia Co. 1897, New Zealand Cyclopaedia Vol.1, NZC Co. Wellington p.646
4 The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3
5 The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3
7 Ibid.
8 Wises Street Directories 1900-1910
erected Stewart Dawson’s building and others nearby. In 1921 the EBI Co. Ltd. building was sold to Myer Berman and shortly thereafter the company itself ceased occupying an office in the building they gave their name to. It is not known when the company stopped trading. Berman’s association with the building lasted until the late 1950s. Berman made substantial changes to several floors in the same year that he bought the building. The architect for the additions was G.G. Schwartz, who by then also had offices in the building.

In 1958 the building was bought by J.H. Poy who made £400 worth of alterations to the ground floor to convert it to a fruit shop. In 1962 the United Fruit Co., J.H. Poy’s business, made further alterations to the shop. Poy was one of many Chinese fruiterers / grocers operating from Lambton Quay in the early to mid twentieth century.

The building at 360 Lambton Quay was sold to Renouf Property Investments Limited in 1987. Stewart Dawson’s, Fletcher’s and Poy’s buildings were accumulated on the one title by investment company Lambton Quay No.366 Ltd. in 1988. The buildings have since been refurbished (1997) with considerable loss of older fabric.

1905 Muir and Moodie photograph of Byko corner (now Stewart Dawson’s Corner). “Photograph of Byko Corner (latterly Stewart Dawson’s corner), Wellington, taken circa 20 April 1905 by Muir and Moodie. Looks along the southern end of Lambton Quay, towards its intersection with Willis Street. Shows a King’s Chambers (centre) and other city buildings. Signs on buildings on the right advertise Juno Tobacco, and, hairdresser and tobacconist A Berman. Signs on King’s Chambers advertise Tailoring rooms of Bradford Woollen Company, and Aylmers millinery.” Image: Muir and Moodie ATL ID: PA7-19-42.

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9 Land Titles Office, CT 43/148. Note Berman is also noted as J.H. Berman on building permits in 1926 & 1927, with a builder named ass J H Meyer
10 It is interesting to note that Wong Poy, a market gardener leased land from the Sisters of Compassion in Island Bay in 1922 – 1923, and that Sister Aubert wrote a reference for Wong Poy when he sought bring his brother in law Lan Ho Luan to New Zealand in 1924. Jessie Munro, Letters on the Go: The Correspondence of Suzanne Aubert, Bridget Williams Books, 2010
11 WCC Building Permit File, Poy's Building, 360 Lambton Quay
Enlargement of part of the 1905 photograph shows that A. Berman hairdresser and tobacconist occupied part of the ground floor of 360 Lambton Quay before the second floor was added. Myer Berman later purchased the building in 1921.

1.2 Timeline of modifications

1857 – 63 C.R. Carter reclamation to the east side of Lambton Quay
1877 Equitable Building and Investment Co. Ltd (EBI) formed
1883 Original two storied timber building that had been owned by Joe Dransfield and Isaac Phillips was sold to the EBI
1887 The EBI constructed a new masonry building on the site
1904/5 Addition of the 2nd floor (designed by G Schwartz) for the EBI
1921 Further alterations designed by Schwartz for the new owner Myer Berman (a tobacconist)
1952 The building was noted as a Historic Building by the WCC and all permit applications were sent to the City Planner12
1958 Purchased by J.H. Poy for use by the United Fruit Co. as a shop
1962 Alterations to the shop
1987 Purchased by Renouf Property Investments Ltd
1988 Stewart Dawson’s, Fletchers and Poy’s/United Fruit Co. buildings and site amalgamated onto one property title by the investment company Lambton Quay no.366.
1997 Extensive refurbishment with the substantial loss of older building fabric

12 SR B33210
1921 scheme for M. Berman altered the ground floor plan to provide a larger shop and showroom (including the infill of a light-well at ground floor level), removed the original stair from ground to first. Image: WCC Archives ref 00053_0_11439

1921 scheme for M Berman with alterations to the original shopfront. Image: WCC Archives ref 00053_0_11439
1995 proposed site plan showing 360 Lambton Quay (United Fruit / EBI), 366 Lambton Quay (Stewart Dawson’s) and 2-4 Willis Street (Fletchers / City Meat).

Image: WCC Archives ref 00061_171_15462

1995 proposed ground, first and second floor plans to amalgamate the buildings at 360 Lambton Quay (United Fruit / EBI), 366 Lambton Quay (Stewart Dawson’s) and 2-4 Willis Street (Fletchers / City Meat). Note the removal of all the internal partitions, and of the internal stairs at 360 & 366 Lambton Quay. Image: WCC Archives ref 00061_171_15462
1996 proposed elevation. Image: WCC Archives ref 0061_258_16509

1996 existing and proposed details. Image: WCC Archives ref 0061_258_16509
1.3 Architect

Guido Schwartz (25 Nov 1853 - 1926)

Guido Schwartz was articled to Theo Necker of Hamburg, Germany in 1871, attended the Hamburg and Stuttgart Technical Schools, and went on to work as an assistant in offices in Hamburg, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt, Saarbrucken, and Stuttgart in Germany. He moved to New Zealand in 1879\(^{13}\) to join his brother J.H. Otto Schwartz who was employed as an actuary for the Government Life Insurance Department, Otto later became the company secretary for Equitable Building Society, whose building on Lambton Quay Schwartz later designed. Both Otto and Guido were keen musicians and who both later helped found the Wellington Orchestral Society. \(^{14}\)

Guido Schwartz worked in offices in Timaru and Christchurch, \(^{15}\) until he moved to Wellington in circa 1886. \(^{16}\) Schwartz is listed in the 1897 The Cyclopedia of New Zealand [Wellington Provincial District] as working from Lambton Quay with a private address of Hawker Street, and in the RIBA Directory of British Architects 1834 – 1914 with an address of 360 Lambton Quay in 1912, and Waterloo Road in Lower Hutt.

Schwartz is said to have established a private architectural practice in 1896 (although the building at 360 Lambton Quay predates this by ten years), and was proposed for membership of the RIBA in 1912 by A. Atkins, R. Bacon and F de Clere. \(^{17}\) Other buildings by Schwartz on the WCC Heritage Inventory include a row of cottages at 2-8 Footscray Street, he also designed a fine house at 23 Pat Lawlor Close and several Wellington hotels.\(^{18}\)

2.0 Physical description

2.1 Architecture

The Equitable Building and Investment Co. building is a commercial building designed in a Classical style that is sympathetic in scale and detail to the neighbouring Stewart Dawson’s building. \(^{19}\) The building is three storeys in height, with a comparatively narrow street frontage. The construction is load-bearing brick masonry on concrete foundations and piles, although the early newspaper reports suggest that the building may be faced in Oamaru stone\(^{20}\) (now concealed by paint coatings). Floor and ceiling members are timber and the roof is clad in corrugated iron.

\(^{13}\) PERSONAL MATTERS. Evening Post, Volume CXI, Issue 123, 25 May 1926, Page 9
\(^{14}\) OBITUARY. Evening Post, Volume CXIII, Issue 108, 9 May 1932, Page 9
\(^{15}\) RIBA Directory of British Architects 1834-1914: L-Z By Antonia Brodie, British Architectural Library, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2001
\(^{16}\) The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3
\(^{17}\) RIBA Directory of British Architects 1834-1914: L-Z By Antonia Brodie, British Architectural Library, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2001
\(^{18}\) Michael Kelly, 2 Footscray Ave report 17/04/07.
\(^{19}\) All sourced from the WCC Heritage Building Inventory 2001 ref Lamb 16 unless otherwise noted
\(^{20}\) The Equitable Building Society's Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3
The building has a carefully designed and detailed rendered (or possibly painted Oamaru stone) façade with a simple but elegant Classical composition that is divided into three vertical bays, each with round-headed windows, with the emphasis on the central bay where the windows are paired. The first floor features Corinthian motifs in the pilasters and mouldings, and is notable for the scallop infill panels to the heads of the deeply-recessed arched windows. The second floor is more plainly dressed in a Tuscan order. Prominent string course lines delineate the principal floor levels and the building is capped with a simple Doric entablature springing off a small but prominent cornice supported on consoles and which has a simple arched pediment in the centre, topped with an acanthus-motif acroterion and backed up by a simple horizontal parapet. The roof-line is concealed behind the parapet.

Beneath the modern suspended flat verandah, some of the original building fabric remains at street level but little remains behind the façade.

2.2 Materials

- Possible Oamaru stone facings on street elevation
- Brick masonry
- Timber floors and roof structure
- Corrugated iron (or mild steel) roof

2.3 Setting

Lambton Quay has developed over time to become Wellington City CBD’s “golden mile” of retail and commercial office buildings where banks, department stores and company head offices have traditionally built their highest quality buildings. This area has a high pedestrian ‘foot-count’ and is the key inner city retail shopping precinct. The street is characterised by the mix of modern office buildings and older heritage buildings, and many of the (modern) office buildings on the west side of Lambton Quay also have a street frontage or access to The Terrace commercial/office precinct. The heritage buildings make a fine contribution to a, sometimes bland, modern streetscape along Lambton Quay.

The Equitable Building and Investment Co. Building is part of a small group of late Victorian / Edwardian Buildings that includes 360 Lambton Quay, the Stewart Dawson Building at 366 Lambton and the Fletcher’s building at 2-4 Willis Street. These buildings have been known collectively as Stewart Dawson’s Corner (SR 16509) since 1996 when the buildings were redeveloped, although Stewart Dawson jewellers are only associated with the building at 360 Lambton Quay. The Victorian / Edwardian precinct around the corner of Willis Street, Lambton Quay and Customhouse Quay also includes the group of fine Edwardian BNZ buildings on the opposite side of Lambton Quay from Stewart Dawson’s corner.

The Stewart Dawson’s corner buildings conceal the cliff face of Clay Point, an early Wellington landmark, and most of the flat land in the immediate vicinity of Clay Point was reclaimed by C.R Carter in 1857 – 63. Lambton Quay is an early road that marks the original extent of the flat land above the high water mark on the Port Nicholson foreshore, and in the early years of European settlement houses, shops and warehouses lined the western side of Lambton Quay, with the sea and beach to the east. The earthquakes of 1848 and 1855 led to the early settler’s preference for timber construction, but the city’s many major fires in the later years of the nineteenth century saw the popularity of (fire resistant) brick and masonry buildings increase.21

21 BUILDING REGULATIONS. Evening Post, Volume XXVIII, Issue 15, 17 July 1884, Page 2
The WCC Old Shoreline Heritage Trail notes that “by the 1920s, this street [Lambton Quay] had some of the city’s finest buildings in an unbroken Victorian/Edwardian streetscape.”

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22 WCC Old Shoreline Heritage Trail 1996 (2nd ed. 2005)
3.0 References

- Photographic Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.
- Land Titles Office, CT 29/199 and Land Titles Office, CT 43/148.
- Wises Street Directories 1900-1910
- Jessie Munro, Letters on the Go: The Correspondence of Suzanne Aubert, Bridget Williams Books, 2010
- WCC Building Permit File, Poy’s Building, 360 Lambton Quay
- Michael Kelly, 2 Footscray Ave report 17/04/07.
- WCC Heritage Building Inventory 2001 ref Lamb 16
- WCC Old Shoreline Heritage Trail 1996 (2nd ed. 2005)

Websites


Newspaper articles

- The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices. Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3;
- DEATH. Evening Post, Volume XLV, Issue 149, 27 June 1893, Page 2;
- PERSONAL MATTERS. Evening Post, Volume LXXIII, Issue 4, 5 January 1907, Page 5
- PERSONAL MATTERS. Evening Post, Volume CXI, Issue 123, 25 May 1926, Page 9
Criteria for assessing cultural heritage significance

Cultural heritage values

Aesthetic Value:
Architectural: Does the item have architectural or artistic value for characteristics that may include its design, style, era, form, scale, materials, colour, texture, patina of age, quality of space, craftsmanship, smells, and sounds?

The building at 360 Lambton Quay is the oldest commercial building on Lambton Quay and one of the oldest masonry buildings remaining in Wellington. The building has a carefully designed and detailed rendered (or possibly painted Oamaru stone) façade in a simple but elegant Classical composition of building elements and is sympathetic in scale and detail to the neighbouring Stewart Dawson’s building.

Townscape: Does the item have townscape value for the part it plays in defining a space or street; providing visual interest; its role as a landmark; or the contribution it makes to the character and sense of place of Wellington?

The building is part of a group of three late Victorian / Edwardian buildings that are now thought of collectively as Stewart Dawson’s corner (although only the central building has a historic association with the jeweller). Stewart Dawson’s corner is a prominent landmark that marks the key intersection between Willis and Lambton Quay in Wellington’s CBD.

Group: Is the item part of a group of buildings, structures, or sites that taken together have coherence because of their age, history, style, scale, materials, or use?

The building is part of a group three of late Victorian / Edwardian buildings that are of a consistent scale and degree of ornamentation, and that effectively ‘turn-the-corner’ between Lambton Quay and Willis Street. The building façade makes a strong positive contribution to the BNZ /Head Office Heritage Area.

Historic Value:
Association: Is the item associated with an important person, group, or organisation?

The building has some historic value for its association with the Equitable Building and Investment Co. a now obscure but once successful early local investment company.

Association: Is the item associated with an important historic event, theme, pattern, phase, or activity?

The building has significant historic value as the oldest commercial building on Lambton Quay.

The building has some historic value for its association with Wellington’s Chinese community – although further research is required.

Scientific Value:
Archaeological: Does the item have archaeological value for its ability to provide scientific information about past human activity?

Educational: Does the item have educational value for what it can demonstrate
about aspects of the past?

**Technological:** Does the item have technological value for its innovative or important construction methods or use of materials?

**Social Value:**
**Public esteem:** Is the item held in high public esteem?

**Symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual:** Does the item have symbolic, commemorative, traditional, spiritual or other cultural value for the community who has used and continues to use it?

**Identity/Sense of place/Continuity:**
Is the item a focus of community, regional, or national identity? Does the item contribute to sense of place or continuity?

The building façade has remained (relatively) unaltered for over 100 years and makes a strong positive contribution to the sense of place and continuity of the BNZ /Head Office Heritage Area.

**Sentiment/Connection:** Is the item a focus of community sentiment and connection?

**Level of cultural heritage significance**

**Rare:** Is the item rare, unique, unusual, seminal, influential, or outstanding?

The building is a rare surviving example of a Victorian masonry building in Wellington’s CBD.

**Representative:** Is the item a good example of the class it represents?

The building façade is a good representative example of a Victorian commercial building.

**Authentic:** Does the item have authenticity or integrity because it retains significant fabric from the time of its construction or from later periods when important additions or modifications were carried out?

The building façade has had relatively few intrusive modern alterations and retains substantial areas of original building fabric.

**Local/Regional/National/International**
Is the item important for any of the above characteristics at a local, regional, national, or international level?
## 4.0 Appendix

### Background research

#### 4.1 Additional photographs and ephemera

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of a new inter-tenancy wall. AKA 360 - 366 Lambton Quay.

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4.2 Summary of newspaper articles from paperspast

The Equitable Building and Investment Company (Ld). Evening Post, Volume XXXI, Issue 27, 3 February 1886, Page 3

- Report of eighth annual meeting.
- Mr. A. Boardman, was the managing director
- Motion to adopt the report was seconded by Mr. W. R. E. Brown & Mr. G. Allen, other (presumably) shareholders mentioned were a Mr. Richardson & Dr. Kemp
- Messrs. Oliver & Brown, were the solicitors to the company
- The retiring directors, Messrs, A. Boardman, R. Greenfield, and G. M. Kebbell, were re-elected
- Mr. D. Anderson, Jun., was appointed a director in the stead of Mr. A. McTavish, resigned. Messrs. D. T. Stuart and S. Carroll were elected to fill the position of auditors during the current year. Mr. J. H. O. Schwartz, was the secretary.
The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices.

The Equitable Building and Investment Company of Wellington have accepted the tender of Mr. James Wilson for the erection of offices, to which the business of the company is to be transferred as soon as they are complete. The contract price is £2025, and the building will occupy the now vacant site between Mr. McDowell’s clothing establishment and Mr. Amos fruit depot on Lambton-quay. The plans, which have been submitted to our inspection, provide for a twostory edifice having a highly-ornamental front, which is to be faced with Cimmeria stone. On the ground floor, which will be used as the Company’s offices, are to be the public office, 17ft 6in by 14ft 5in, the board room, 13ft 3in by 11ft 3in, a strong room, two back offices (one 16ft by 11ft 3in, and the other 13ft by 10ft 8in), lavatories, &c., and a hall 6ft 6in wide. On the upper story are to be six offices, a strong room, with lavatory and other conveniences. This floor has already been taken by the legal firm of Messrs. Olivier and Brown. The building when finished will constitute an important addition to our street architecture. The architect is Mr. Guido Schwartz, late of Timaru and Christchurch, but now of this city. The Equitable has long enjoyed the reputation of being one of the soundest and best of our building societies, and we are glad to hear that it is securing premises worthy of the substantial character of its business. The work of erection is to be begun immediately.

The Equitable Building Society’s Permanent Offices.
Evening Post, Volume XXXII, Issue 192, 31 December 1886, Page 3

THE MAN WHO DRINKS ON SUNDAY.
Evening Post, Volume LXVIII, Issue 99, 24 October 1904, Page 6

- article notes the death of Robert Miller, early Wellington settler (from 1840) and director of the Equitable Building and Investment Co

DEATH Evening Post, Volume XLV, Issue 149, 27 June 1893, Page 2
Schwartz, George Guido, b. 1853

Date of birth: 25 Nov 1853

Address:
360 Lambton Quay, Wellington, New Zealand (1912)
Waterloo Road, Lower Hutt, Wellington (1912)

Education and training:
Articled to Theo Necker of Hamburg, Germany 1871.
Attended Hamburg and Stuttgart Technical Schools.
Assistant in Hamburg, Wiesbaden, Frankfurt,
Saarbrucken, and Stuttgart offices in Germany, and
in Wellington, Christchurch and Timaru offices in
New Zealand.

Professional qualifications:
LRIBA 24 June 1912: proposed by A Atkins, R Bacon,
F de J Clere.

Professional and practice information:
Commenced independent practice 1895 in Wellington,
New Zealand.

Works:
List in RIBA Licentiates' Nomination Papers
RIBA Nomination Papers I v25 no.2667

## Research checklist (desktop)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Y/N</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995 Heritage Inventory</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCC Records – building file</td>
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<tr>
<td>WCC Records – grant files (earthquake strengthening, enhancement of heritage values)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research notes from 2001 Non-Residential heritage Inventory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan change?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Heritage Area Report</td>
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<td>Heritage Area Spreadsheet</td>
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<td>Heritage items folder (electronic)</td>
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<td>HPT website</td>
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<td>HPT files</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Searched Heritage Library (CAB 2)</td>
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