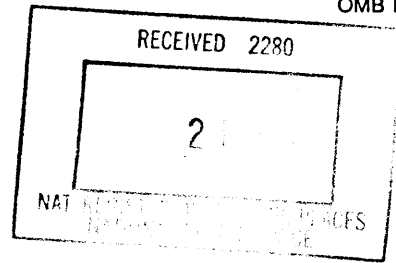


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

### National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

#### 1. Name of Property

historic name Olympic Apartment Building

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2. Location

street & number 707 NW 19th Avenue N/A not for publication

city or town Portland N/A vicinity

state Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97210

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Jana Samuels January 15, 1997  
Signature of certifying official/Title Deputy SHPO Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the property is:
- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
  - determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
  - determined not eligible for the National Register.
  - removed from the National Register.
  - other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall 2/21/97  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**OLYMPIC APARTMENT BUILDING (1928)**

707 NW Nineteenth Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon

**COMMENTS OF THE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**

The Olympic Apartment Building occupies a 100-foot square lot at the northwest corner of Nineteenth Avenue and Irving Street in the Nob Hill neighborhood of northwest Portland. Designed by Elmer Feig for developer S. E. Henderson and constructed in 1928, the building is an excellent example of the northwest Portland paradigm in fashionable multiple housing. It is a three-story block of flats relieved by a narrow central court that is both light well and atmospheric entryway. Characteristically, the decorative program evokes a historical theme that is sustained throughout. The style is Spanish Colonial Revival, and the program includes Moorish and Plateresque imagery from the late Middle Ages and from the Spanish Renaissance.

The building is constructed of stucco-clad concrete. It rises as a three-story U-shaped volume having double-loaded corridors. It contains 27 living units. The building is taut and straight from foundation to roof line except for a parapet molding and fluted strip pilasters which divide the structural bays of the two facade sections. Street elevations are terminated with central curvilinear and stepped false gables. Facade fenestration is organized in skyscraper fashion as continuous three-story units framed by barley twist molding, and surmounted with pediments and pinnacles. Spandrels and gables are accented with cartouches and roundels.

At the head of the entrance court is a three-story loggia with Hispano-Moresque arcades, the upper two of which are now glazed to meet code and energy conservation requirements. The street entrance to the court is framed by a fine semi-circular arched gate of wrought iron filigree. Since fountains were integral to the archetypical courtyards of Spain and New Spain, Feig's design called for a water focal feature and rockery areas for leafy plantings. They are intact.

As was characteristic of the well-crafted apartment buildings by such designers as Feig and Claussen and Claussen, the atmospheric themes evoked by exterior ornament are carried into the foyer and lobby spaces, even into primary rooms of the flats -- here in the form of wrought iron grillework and stair railings, and tapering, plaster-clad chimneypieces with low, semi-circular arched firebox openings in the Renaissance tradition. In some units, kitchens are still equipped with original tiled countertops and built-in cabinetry. The Olympic and buildings of its type in

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Nob Hill were finished with materials and fixtures of quality. For a genteel market, they offered affordable living spaces that were both dignified and efficient.

The Olympic Apartments meet Criterion C in the area of architecture as a well-preserved and finely crafted example of apartment house design by one of the leading designers of multi-family housing in Portland in the early 20th century. Over 81 apartment houses have been attributed to Elmer Feig in the period 1925 to 1931. His remarkable record was interrupted by a declining market for such projects with the onset of the Great Depression. This documentation fills in welcome biographical information on the prolific apartment house designer.

Olympic Apartment Building  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

-0-

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC--Multiple Dwelling

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC--Multiple Dwelling

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS  
--Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete  
walls Concrete  
roof Asphalt  
other

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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### SETTING

The Olympic Apartment Building is located on the northwest corner of 19th Avenue and Irving Street in northwest Portland. It faces onto 19th, which is one-way southbound and a major neighborhood traffic artery. A secondary facade runs along Irving Street.

The building is located in the Nob Hill neighborhood. Once the fashionable home of Portland's well-heeled, the area became a major concentration of apartment development in the first part of the 20th century. Today, the apartment building is at the edge between residential and commercial development. The 19th Avenue corridor is increasingly commercial, with many of the older homes being adapted for office or retail use. Slightly to the north is the industrial area of Slabtown. To the east, the neighborhood is a mixture of residential with commercial paralleling I-405 four blocks away. To the south and west, the blocks are filled primarily with apartment buildings.

### SITE

The Olympic Apartment Building is located on a 100 by 102 foot parcel at the southeast corner of Block 271. Until the late 1920s this block, which measures 200 by 400 feet, was occupied by the Rodney Glisan House. At that time, the block rose slightly and the house was placed on the knoll. It was well landscaped and included an elaborate carriage entrance both from the east at the corner of 19th Avenue and Irving and from the west off 20th Avenue and a stone wall around the perimeter capped by a wrought iron fence and gate. The site featured numerous mature evergreens and deciduous trees.

When developer S. Earl Henderson acquired the site in the late 1920s, he demolished the Glisan House and graded the block flat. Any indigenous or extant plants at that time were removed.

Today, the building occupies the entirety of lots 3 and 4 and eastern 2 feet of lot 5, excepting a 10 foot set back at the west and north which is largely lawn but overgrown in areas. Of particular note is the courtyard which features rockeries and a fountain. These are planting beds surrounded by large basalt stones. They are placed such to create a serpentine-like entry. These are features original to the building and were promoted to potential tenants as special features. Surrounding the building are foundation plantings and shrubbery which is compatible but not original.

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### EXTERIOR

The Olympic Apartment Building is a three story front-facing "U" shaped reinforced concrete building with partial basement. The primary facade runs along 19th Avenue with a secondary facade on Irving.

The front facade is comprised of the east ends of the legs of the "U." Feig used a strong sense of symmetry and balance combined with a heavy use of Spanish Colonial decorative applique. The street facade is symmetrical with two legs of 42 feet divided by a courtyard entry. Each leg of the street elevation is divided vertically into three bays through the use of fluted pilasters running the height of the building from the water table to a pronounced coping and surmounted by decorative cast stone urns. The two outside bays on each leg are identical, 10 feet wide. Each is tied together visually with a scroll pilaster framing the windows and topped by a curved cornice window head. Window openings are generally 36 by 42 with one over one double hung metal frame energy efficient windows. Between each floor is a rectangular cartouche featuring an urn in relief.

The central bay of each leg, 22 feet wide, used four fluted pilasters to tie together two smaller windows and the fire exit. The fire exit is off the central hallway of each wing with a sash window. This ensemble is topped by a cornice window head repeating that of the outside bays and sandwiched by two rectilinear window heads with a design in relief. The entire bay is then topped by a curved parapet patterned after that of the Mission San Antonio de Valero. A wrought iron fire escape covers most of this bay on each side.

The central bay is 12 feet wide and 60 feet deep. At the street is a wrought iron round arch entrance decorated with logarithmic spirals and a wrought iron lantern light fixture. It opens to a recessed entryway with rockeries and fountain. The building's entrance is arcaded with three Islamic arches opening to a tripartite oak doorway. The door is single full beveled glass, flanked by full fixed pane beveled glass in oak covered with a decorative wrought iron grill. The entry floor is clay tile with ceramic accents. This arcaded pattern is repeated on the second and third floors with three large fixed sash windows each with pronounced Islamic surrounds. The entryway is then topped with an elaborate parapet with pronounced coping and a central decorative finial.

The secondary facade runs along Irving Street. Feig treated it as a single face with a pronounced coping defining a typical mission-style curved parapet. Pattern is created with window cutouts. Excepting the primary facade, fenestration throughout the building is consistent from floor to floor,

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but not symmetrical along a vertical axis. Most windows are paired on concrete sill. Kitchen windows generally are single, and bathroom windows are single and smaller, many with frosted glass. Original windows, likely one over one double hung wood sash, have been replaced with double hung one over one energy efficient metal sash. Above the third floor windows at the parapet, Feig has placed a central cast stone cartouche with garlands. Balancing this on each side is an elaborate circular cast stone ornament.

The building on the two facades which front the streets has a cement plaster exterior with what is known in the trade as a Spanish finish. The facades on the north and west are left unfinished concrete. The building has been painted beige with Spanish white on the coping and decorative applique.

### **INTERIOR**

The Olympic Apartment Building has 9 apartments each on three levels served by a double loaded "U" shaped corridor with a lobby on each floor. Each floor is identical in plan. Each has six one bedroom units, two studios and one two bedroom. The two studios are located at the southeast corner of the north wing facing the courtyard; the two bedroom unit is located across the courtyard at the northeast corner of the south wing. The two one bedroom units at the west have fire places. These are mission in style with a round arch opening, tile surround and tile hearth. Otherwise, apartment floor plans are identical or mirror images.

Public Spaces: The building is accessed through the central courtyard. It opens to the foyer. This space has a mosaic tile floor. Window trim and baseboards are oak. Walls and ceilings are painted textured plaster. Opposite the entry doors is a mirror flanked by sconces with a pier table below. These features are thought to be original. There is a wrought iron chandelier, which although not original, is sympathetic.

From the foyer, visitors may turn left or right and proceed up two steps with wrought iron railing through an arched doorway. There is not an elevator. Access to the upper floors is via enclosed stairways with wrought iron railings located at the interior corners of each wing.

Each floor has a double loaded hallway with a central lobby providing access to the apartments. The lobby features a tripartite fixed wood sash window with decorative garlands sandblasted into the glass. A mission-style table, original to the building, is located along the wall with two light sconces

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above. At the north end of these lobbies on the second and third floor are two recessed fire doors. The first floor has fire doors at the beginning of each wing.

All public spaces feature painted textured plaster walls and cove ceilings with painted wood baseboards, painted wood picture molding, and wood milk doors at each apartment. The floors are covered with wall-to-wall carpeting. Each hallway has two light fixtures; these appear to be original. They also feature recessed lights at the outside wall of each hallway.

Apartments: Apartments are consistent in form and finishes.

The entry doors are original. These have three equal recessed panels with bulls-eyes in each panel. The door knob and plate are brass, as is the knocker. Hardware is original.

The overall design is simple and efficient. The front door opens to the living room, which measures approximately 15 by 21 feet. A hallway with arched openings leads to the bedroom (generally 12 feet square), bathroom and dining alcove. The kitchen is located off the dining alcove. Windows are numerous and large. Many wall corners are rounded in the hallway. The hallway also includes floor to ceiling built-in cabinets with drawers and paneled closet doors. Pulls are glass and original.

Floors in the living room, dining alcove, bedroom and apartment hallway are tongue-in-groove wood. Many of these have been refinished while others are covered with wall-to-wall carpet. It is the owner's intent to remove the carpeting and refinish the floors. Walls and cove ceilings are textured plaster, painted white. Trim is wood, painted white, and includes window and door surrounds, picture molding and baseboards. Most light fixtures remain. These are stock metal one or two bulb fixtures from the period. Still, many of the dining room and living room fixtures have been replaced.

As built, the kitchens were defined from the dining alcove by a pair of leaded glass fronted cabinets built into the floor and an arched opening. The space was compact (6 x 15 feet) and efficient. Typically, the kitchen had a linoleum floor with extensive built-in cabinets on the far wall and next to the sink. This second set would also include a built-in refrigerator. The sink was enamel with decorative tile counters and splash. The walls and ceiling are plaster. All kitchen light fixtures were replaced with modern fluorescent boxes. In the 1950s, a large number of kitchens were modernized. The kitchen cabinets were removed, all or in part, and replaced by streamlined metal cabinets. Although quite separate from the design of the building, these cabinets, which in one apartment include a dish washer, are a noteworthy facet in their own right.

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Many of the bathrooms also have been modernized. As built, they were compact units with a small sink, toilet and bath. The wainscot and bath splash were tile, the walls and ceiling plaster. Virtually all of the bath splashes have been replaced. Many of the wainscots were also removed. Many of the sinks and toilets have also been replaced. The floors, originally tile, have been covered over with linoleum. Still, a surprising number of units still contain original faucets in the baths and in the sink. Bathrooms also featured a medicine cabinet with tile surround (all but one is gone), and cubbyhole for tissues.

Roof: The roof is accessed via the south stairs. It is a formal staircase with textured walls and half-glass wood door, suggesting that perhaps the architect intended the roof to be used by tenants.

Basement: The basement is partial, under the north wing. It is broken into several rooms, with a laundry room (including lead-glass fronted cabinets salvaged from apartments), storage lockers with original doors, and a boiler room. The building is heated by a hot water radiator system. The original boiler, though not in use, is still located in the basement. Also found in the basement are the original electric panels with individual meters for each apartment.

### MAJOR ALTERATIONS

The Olympic Apartment Building has a high degree of integrity. The exterior is essentially intact, including the original doorway, rockeries, and fixtures. The only significant alteration was the removal of original windows and installation of energy conserving thermal pane windows.

On the interior, there have been few systematic changes. Floors, walls, ceilings, and fixtures are largely intact. This includes telephone intercoms, kitchen tile splashes, kitchen cabinets, light fixtures and more. Selected units still have the original refrigerator and selected units still have the original faucets. There have been only three systematic interior changes:

- \* Kitchen floors and light fixtures have been replaced with modern;
- \* In the 1950s, a large number of kitchens have had the original cabinets removed in part or in total and replaced with modern. These have taken on a character unto themselves.
- \* Bathroom floors have been replaced with modern.

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The remaining alterations are the result of needed repairs, nearly exclusively in the kitchen and bathroom. These include cabinet repairs in part or in total, and bathroom vanities and splashes in selected units. In addition, selected light fixtures in the living rooms have been replaced.

Olympic Apartment Building  
Name of Property

Multnomah, OR  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

#### Period of Significance

1928

#### Significant Dates

1928

#### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Elmer Feig

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Oregon Historical Society

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The 1928 Olympic Apartment Building is located at 707 NW 19th Avenue at the northwest corner of 19th Avenue and Irving Street. Specifically, it is located on lots 3 and 4 and the eastern 2 feet of Block 271, Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. The three story reinforced concrete building was designed by Portland architect Elmer Feig for developer S. E. Henderson.

The building may be categorized as LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS--Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style of architecture. It is eligible for listing in the National Register for Historic Places under criterion "C" as a superior example in the body of work by Elmer Feig and a good example of a large scale apartment complex designed in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The building is listed in the Historic Resources Inventory of Portland and is considered a primary structure in the 1991 Inventory update by Donovan & Associates/Prohaska & Associates.

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### **HISTORY OF THE BUILDING**

The Olympic Apartment Building is located on the site of the Rodney Glisan House. Built around 1855, it occupied the entire double block bounded by 19th, 20th, Irving and Johnson. It was a two and half story Eastlake Victorian with a large wraparound porch and multiple-gabled roof.

Dr. Glisan came to Oregon as an army surgeon in 1855, having just graduated from the University of Maryland. Glisan resigned his army commission in 1861 and came to Portland to establish a practice. For many years he was professor of obstetrics at the medical school and was always a leader in the state medical society. In 1863, he married Elizabeth Couch, the daughter of prominent Portlander, Captain Couch.

The first listing of the house in city directories comes in 1855, very soon after the area was subdivided. Subsequent to Dr. Glisan's death, his children, Caroline, Florence (Mrs. Arthur Minott), Dr. Clarence and Rodney occupied the house until it was torn down.

In the late 1920s, the Glisan family began selling off portions of the double block. Developer J. C. Meyer acquired three 50 foot wide plots from the family mid-block along Johnson Street and had developed a three-story walk up on each. In 1927, S. Earl Henderson acquired the remaining portions. The following year, he hired Elmer Feig to build the Estelle Court at 730 NW 20th. From there Henderson and Feig began a three-year association which resulted in nine apartment buildings, with seven on the Glisan property.

The Olympic was Henderson's last structure on the Glisan property. Construction began in the spring of 1928 and the apartment was completed by September. It was built at a cost of \$150,000 and featured technological innovations as electric ranges, electric refrigerators, and radio connections. Fronting along the streetcar line, the Olympic was also quite centrally located for the city. Developed at a time when vacancy rates were low, the Olympic was immediate success. It has remained a popular residence throughout its nearly seven decade history.

### **NOB HILL AND THE ADVENT OF THE APARTMENT HOUSES IN PORTLAND**

The 1928 Olympic Apartment Building is located in the Nob Hill neighborhood in Portland in an area once part of Capt. John H. Couch's land claim. Couch was a Massachusetts seaman who first came to Oregon in 1840. Portland was not much more than a simple clearing in the wilderness at that time.

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He returned to the area in 1845 and claimed an area of land bounded by the Willamette River and NW Twenty-first, Ankeny and Thurman-Donation land Claim #52. Couch chose this territory because he felt it had the greatest potential for the shipping and commercial industries. The total claim was perfected in 1849 to include 640 acres. In 1850, Couch sold one-half his interest in the claim to George Flanders.

The Couch family settled in the claimed area setting aside 13 acres for the Couch estate and orchard. The first residential houses were built north of A and B streets. The commercial district was near the water in the 1850's and was expanding northward. The first residential district was centered along 4th and 5th streets. Couch decided to move north as the city began to grow. Large, double blocks, such as the Glisan block, were given to the Couch children and the area between 16th and 26th began to develop into an area of elegant homes. People moving into the area were the successful merchants, doctors, and other professionals who had taken advantage of the opportunities that existed in the young city of Portland. The Nob Hill area was an isolated area of the city with the Couch family creating their own New England style niche in the neighborhood.

The early years of the 20th century were a time of rapid growth and development in Portland. The city's population more than doubled between the years 1900 and 1910 from 90,000 to 212,000. This growth surge was due in part to the 1905 Lewis and Clark World's Fair, which gave the city international exposure it had not previously known. Much of the population growth in Portland was absorbed in Nob Hill, where expensive homes gave way to apartment buildings. Newspaper articles from the period testify to the apartment house boom which occurred in Portland and which was focused in Nob Hill. These articles also speak of a growing sophistication on the part of the public, which expected a high degree of quality in apartments.

Apartment buildings were virtually nonexistent before 1904. W.L. Morgan, Portland architect and contractor, built what was reported to be the first apartment building in the city in 1904 at what was then the southeast corner of 16th and Jefferson. Morgan built two other apartment buildings at northwest 15th and Everett and the apartments rented immediately. In 1905 there were only three or four frame apartment houses in Portland. In the Nob Hill area, apartment buildings sprang up around the streetcar lines on 19th and Twenty-first avenues. This area became the most densely populated district in the state. By 1910, an article in the Oregonian reported that Nob Hill was an area where "the building is most marked" and was "being built up with fine apartment structures."

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### **ELMER E. FEIG**

Elmer E. Feig designed the Olympic Apartment Building in 1928.

He was born May 9, 1897, in Atwater, Minnesota. He came to Portland in 1910 at the age of 13. From 1914 to 1916, Feig was a draftsman at Fenner Redicut Homes. From there, as America prepared for World War I, he worked in the engineering department of G.M. Standifer Construction Company, a Portland shipbuilding firm. In 1921, he returned to Fenner Redicut, again working as a draftsman.

From 1924 to 1927 Feig was consecutively a clerk, deputy inspector and assistant examiner for the City of Portland Bureau of Buildings. In February 1927, he started the Architectural Services Bureau, located in the Western Bond and Mortgage Company Building. Feig announced that the firm specialized in plan supervising, the construction of homes and advice on government regulations. There is no evidence, however, that he ever was licensed as an architect.

Feig did have a contractor's license, however. In this connection, he faced several legal battles with the City Planning Commission, whereby his license was suspended. He was charged in 1929 by the Bureau of Buildings with lending his license to others for projects which he did not himself construct. Feig appealed the matter to the City Council and his license was reinstated.

Feig was prolific. He designed over 81 apartment houses in Portland during the period 1925-31, working for developers such as J. C. Meyer, S. E. Henderson and Harry Mittleman. Typically, he had between 3 and 5 buildings under construction in a single season. The Great Depression and a local bricklayers strike in 1931 resulted in the bankruptcy of some of the developers Feig worked with and his production slowed. By 1932, Feig's only work under construction was a remodel for the school building on Sauvies Island.

For most of his adult life, Feig lived on southwest Corbett Avenue with his wife Gladys. In 1934, however, they were listed at separate addresses, with Elmer's mail going to the home of other Feig family members in Northeast Portland. In his last listing, in 1937, Feig is listed as living with a new wife (Dora) at 2142 NW Thurman Street. By 1947, Feig--at the age of 50--was living in Orlando, Florida. In 1965, he returned to the Portland area and died on October 20, 1968 in Yamhill County.

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### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WORKS BY ELMER FEIG

As an apartment designer, Feig was prolific with the majority of his designs in the Nob Hill neighborhood. In a ten-year period, from 1928 when he first started his architectural practice to 1937 when he disappeared from the City Directory, Feig is said to have designed over 81 apartment buildings in Portland. The Historic Resources of Portland, completed in 1984, identifies 27 apartment buildings. Most of those works date from the rush of apartment building construction between 1928 and 1931.

With varying levels of success, Feig explored virtually every concept being explored by apartment designers of the era. These concepts included front courtyard, garden-style, bungalow court, U-shaped and L-shaped. They also included many small apartments squeezed into 50 x 100 foot lots. Stylistically, Feig's works often were typical commercial apartments with exotic appliques. Motifs included virtually every style of the era, often Spanish Colonial, but he also designed in the Mediterranean Revival, Tudor Revival, Egyptian Revival and Art Deco Styles.

In this body of work, the Olympic stands out as a critical intact outstanding example. Built in 1928, it represents an early and Feig's first major attempt to move beyond simple applique of exotic detailing. His success with the Olympic then forms the basis for some of his subsequent superior works.

His first known work is a massive English Cottage residential design at 3028 NE Alameda designed in 1924. Three years later, Feig designed the Volunteers of America Building at 524 SE Ash. It is a simple two-story streetcar commercial structure with standard period storefront and one-over-one wood sash second story windows.

It was during this period in the mid-1920s that apartment developers began to build a common style apartment building. Developers include J. C. Meyer, S. E. Henderson, Harry Middleman and others. The building consisted of a 3-story walk up with a double loaded central corridor perpendicular to the street. Examples include the 1926 Harvard Apartments (2076 Johnson) and the 1927 Georgian Apartments (1954 NW Johnson) developed by Meyer.

In 1927-28, Feig tapped into this market by offering buildings of comparable form but with exotic detailing. The most clear-cut demonstration of Feig's contribution to this genre is Teshnor Manor (1944 NW Johnson) developed for Meyer next door to the Georgian Apartments. With the addition

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of detailing on the front facade, Feig delivers a substantially more marketable product at little additional cost. Of the buildings listed in the Portland Historic Resources Inventory, seven fit this pattern, built in 1928-29 and mostly for S. E. Henderson.

Slightly later, Feig was developing designs of a more substantial size for developers as Middleman, E. M. Rasmussen and G. R. Bennett. Typically, these were "L" shaped and rose 4-6 stories and were built in 1929 and 1930. Here, Feig again relied heavily upon applique of cast stone detailing. Examples include the Santa Barbara (2052 SE Hawthorne), the Bennett Apartments (1620 NE 24th), and Arenson Court (2533 NW Marshall).

With this backdrop, the Olympic--completed in 1928--is one of Feig's strongest and earliest works. It is the first time he employs a "U" form, which he uses to create a three-story loggia with Hispano-Moresque arcades. Throughout, with the Olympic, Feig offered numerous special touches. His use of the Mission/Spanish Revival style gave the building an exotic, in vogue appearance on the interior as well as exterior. The oak trimmed lobby with mosaic tile floor created a stunning entry. Hallways and room interiors featured textured plaster walls with cove ceilings were distinctive. Electric ranges, electric refrigerators, door buzzers, radio connectors, leaded glass cabinets, tile kitchen counters, tile baths--the full statement is impressive.

It is interesting to compare the Olympic with the Worthington (708 NW 19th Avenue). Build upon the completion of the Olympic and located across the street, the Worthington pales in its exterior treatment to the Olympic. Although of similar materials and style, the Worthington appears much more massive and offers only applique details to distinguish its square box form.

The Olympic is certainly one of Feig's strongest works. The success he found in that design formed the basis for much of his succeeding work with S. E. Henderson. In particular, the Olympic formed a design basis for the Zenabe (708 NW 20th) in 1929 and the Eugene (2030 NW Flanders) in 1930. Both buildings feature similar form and Spanish Colonial Revival treatments.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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### SPANISH COLONIAL REVIVAL IN PORTLAND

In the 1991 update of the northwest portion of the Historic Resources Inventory of Portland, Donovan and Prohaska cite the Olympic Apartment Building as a good example of a large scale apartment design in the Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival style.

The American roots of that revival style date to the Panama-California Exposition in San Diego which celebrated the opening of the Panama Canal. Certainly, predecessors in the Spanish or Mission style can be found throughout the west, however, the exhibition turned what had been individual experiments into a movement around 1915 and finally a "craze" by 1925.

The style is characterized by applique details, such as tile bulkheads, and signature red-tile roof. Other features include flat roofs surrounded by parapets, arches, plastered walls, doorways flanked by pilasters and window grills. Balconies with railings of wrought iron are also common. Windows often vary in size.

The exotic style adapted to commercial use in the 1920's quite well. Its foreign flavor gave stores and shops a sense of flair or flamboyancy. In Portland, that desire for flair can be seen in the extreme in the Hollywood Moving Picture and Vaudeville Theater. On a more restrained basis, the Mediterranean and Spanish Revival is found in a multitude of one-story strip-type commercial structures along main thoroughfares such as Broadway and Grand on the east side.

The style also lent itself to residential structures. Apart from simply being in vogue, the Spanish Revival styles gave a sense of nouveau and worldliness. Upscale Nob Hill apartments featured the style, such as Feig's design for the Olympic or Carl Linde's design for the prominently sited Envoy. New residences of the era in upscale neighborhood can be seen in the contemporary developments in the west hills and on a lesser scale on the east side in neighborhood like Ladd's Addition and Laurelhurst.

The Olympic is a wonderful full expression of the style. The exterior is finished with Spanish plaster, while the primary roof lines feature a Mission-style parapet and pronounced coping. Appliques design elements include decorative stylistic panels, cast stone and scrolling. The entry has the effect of a terraced arcade three stories tall capped by a tall multifoil parapet. Wrought iron decoration is extensive, from the entry to the interior. Feig extended the exotic feel through the interior with a mosaic tile lobby, mission-style furniture, textured plaster walls, cove ceilings and wrought iron

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railings. He even extended the flavor through the apartment interiors, with mission style fireplaces, kitchen tile colors and a continuation of the floor, wall and ceiling finishes.

### **STEVEN EARL HENDERSON**

The Olympic was built and owned by S. E. Henderson, Inc. It was the brainchild of S. Earl Henderson who ran the company for over two decades. Little is known of the company or the man except what can be gleaned from the city directories.

The first listing of Henderson was in the 1926 directory. Nothing is known of where he came from or what his position was previously. In 1926, Henderson listed as a realtor. His office was located on the third floor of the Western Bond and Mortgage Building at Broadway and Oak. He lived with his wife, Georgia, in an apartment at 668 (now 2076) NW Johnson--a building Henderson built and owned. Successful with the Johnson Street venture, Henderson moved across the street to live in the more luxurious and upscale American Apartments in 1927. He also incorporated his business and hired William O. Azling to serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the firm. Azling also lived in the American Apartments.

Around this time, Henderson acquired the remaining land from the Rodney Glisan estate, which was bounded by 19th and 20th, Irving and Johnson. From there, he went on to develop nearly twenty buildings in Northwest Portland. He worked with Feig often, but also L. R. Cooke and G. M. Post.

Henderson wanted his buildings to have style. He was preferential to the Spanish and Mediterranean revival. He wanted them to be ample in size. And he wanted them to be modern. As an Oregonian advertisement for one of his developments states: "The most modern place in town . . . Everything that is desirable . . . Soundproofing, Frigidaire, Pembroke tubs with showers." Another advertisement spoke of tiled baths, concealed radiators, fireplaces and carpeting.

Within two years of building the Olympic, Henderson went through a period of financial and personal upheaval. In 1931, he laid off Azling, who eventually went to work for Alliance Personal Loan. He lived in a series of apartments with no long-term fixed address. And he eventually became involved with and in 1933 married Dorothy Kellogg. In 1935, his company was the defendant in a bankruptcy suit. The complaint was filed by Herbert Gordon, a trust in the bankruptcy of Prudential Bank Corporation. This led to the foreclosure of twenty parcels of Henderson's real estate. Given Henderson's strategy of holding apartments, he most likely faced ever increasing vacancies in the

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

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depression years, which in turn caused his personal and business financial troubles.

When things looked bleakest, Henderson's fortune reversed once again. With Luke Walker of the Slate Manufacturing Company, he shrewdly formed Henderson & Walker. The company bought and sold receivables, warrants, pass books and loans. Already brimming with receivables, the duo were able to acquire more for cents on the dollar as America was getting back to work. Within a year, he had revived his financial state to restart S. E. Henderson, Inc. and to move into beautiful home in Riverwood. The new company included Kenneth Eckert as Vice President and Vernal D. McMullen as Secretary/Treasurer. Walker continued the receivables company, renaming it the Northern Liquidation and Union Acceptance Company. Henderson remained in Riverwood, working in real estate development and managing his apartment buildings until 1953. In that year, he sold his assets and left the city.



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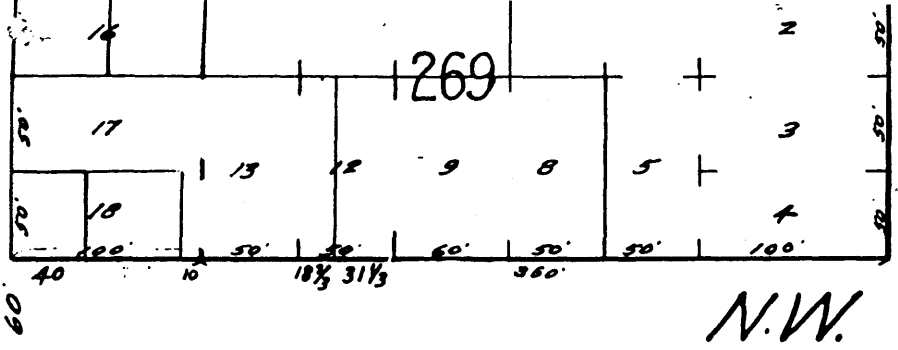
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### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

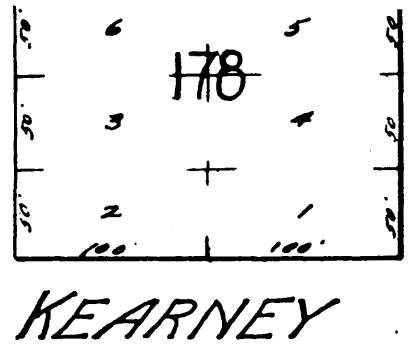
The Olympic Apartment Building is located on Lots 3- 4 and the eastern 2 feet of Lot 5 of Block 271, Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

### BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

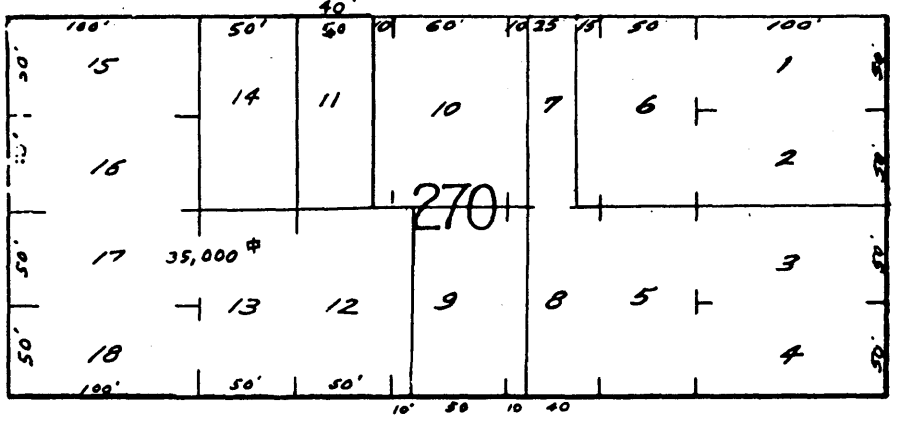
The boundary is the legally recorded boundary lines for the building for which National Register status is being requested.



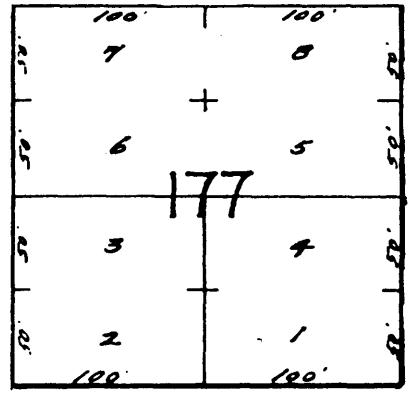
N.W.



KEARNEY

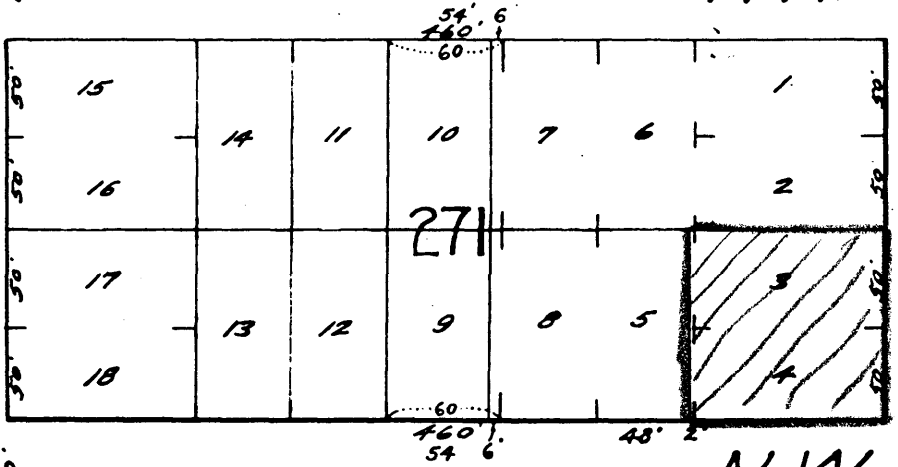


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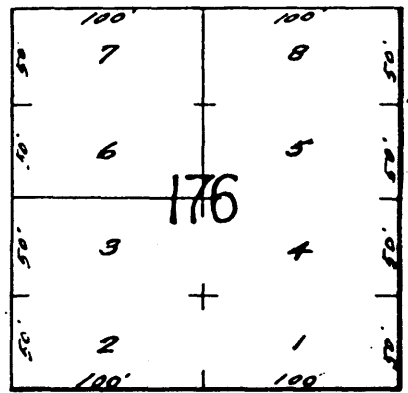


JOHNSON

20 TH

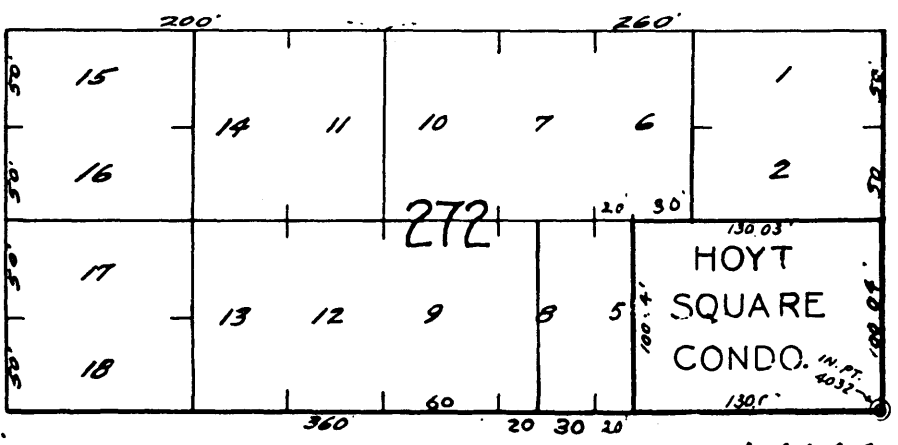


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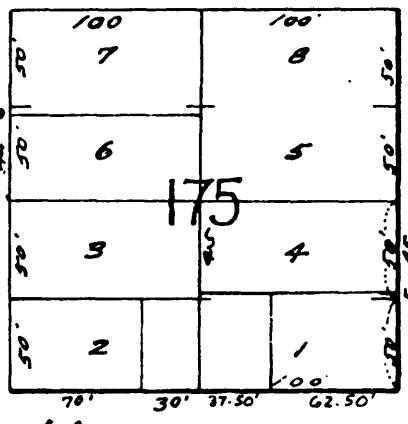


IRVING

N.W.

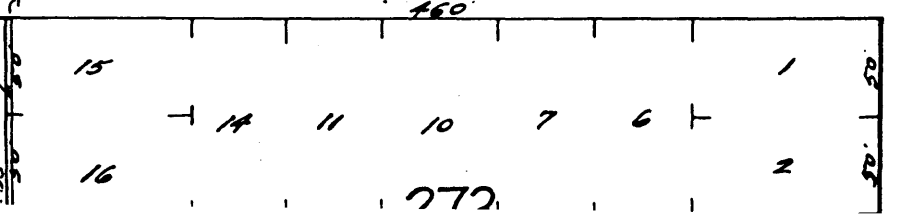


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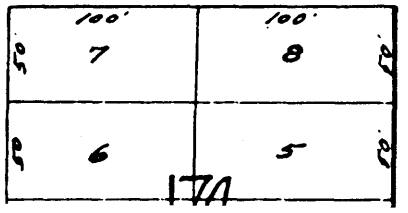


HOYT

19 TH



N.W.



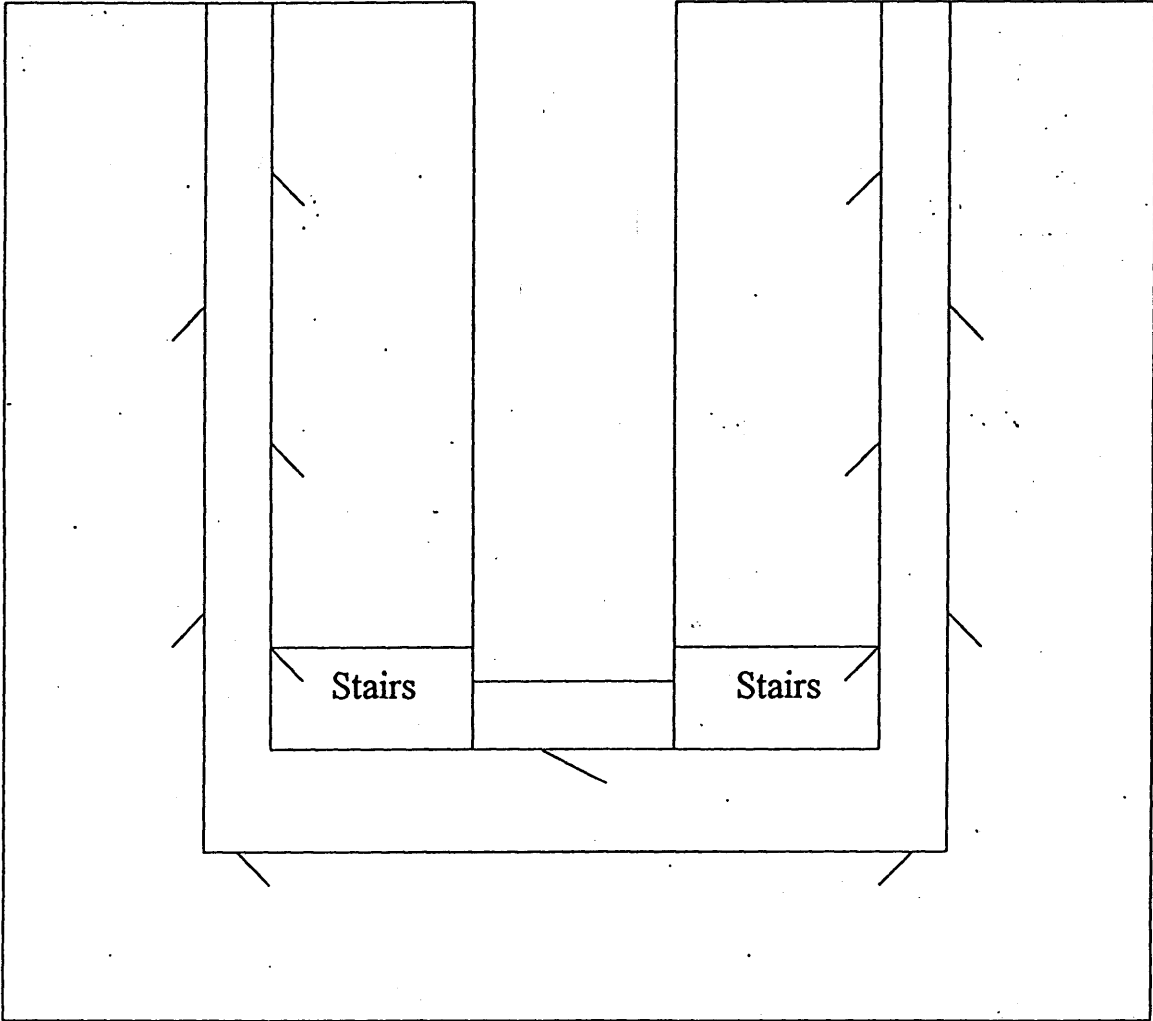
N.W.

18 TH

N.W.

**THE OLYMPIC APARTMENT BUILDING**

707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, OR

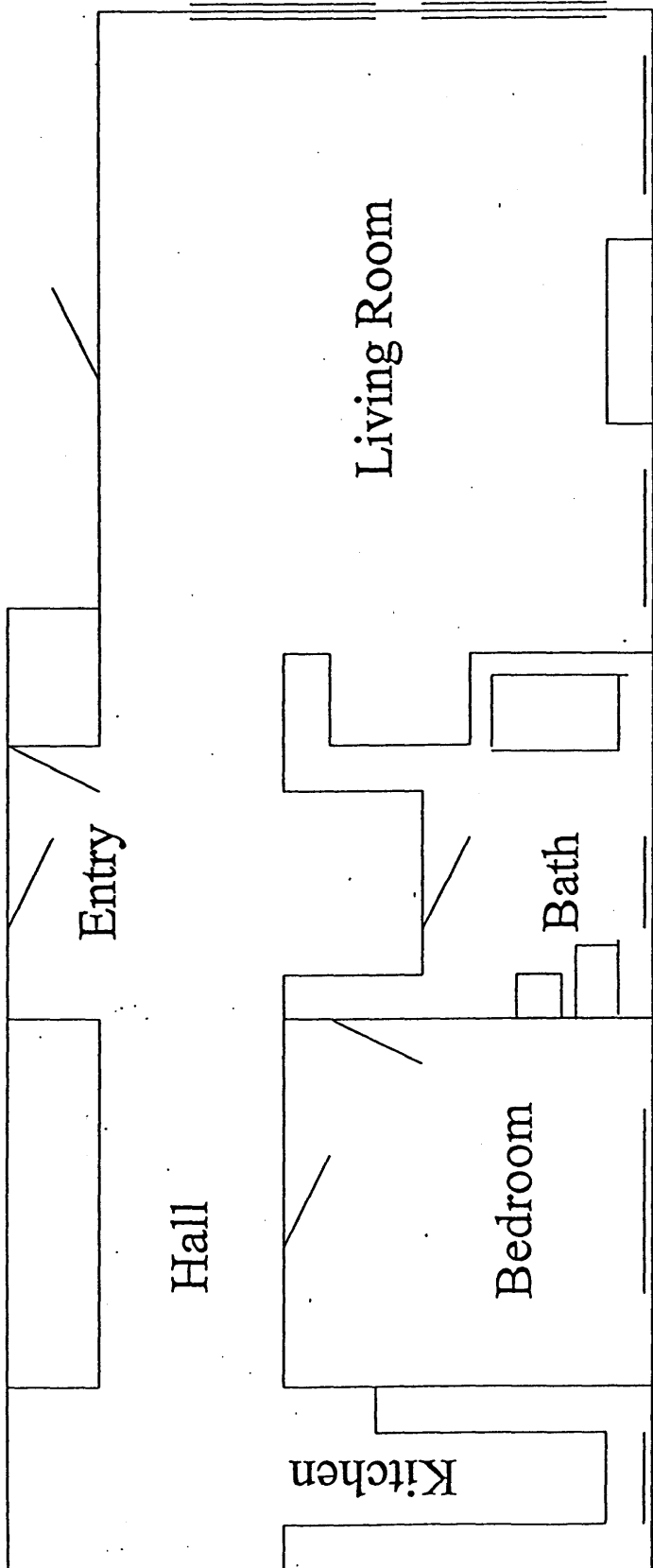


1/16" = 1'



# THE OLYMPIC APARTMENT BUILDING

707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, OR



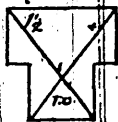
Typical Floor Plan

1/2" = 1'

N. NINETEENTH

10 in Pipe

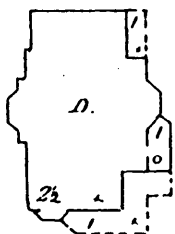
102



Sanborn - 1889

I. STREET

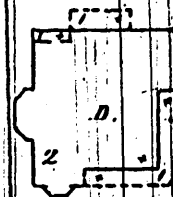
393



105

J. STREET

394



105

N. EIGHTEENTH

20

508

N. 20<sup>TH</sup>

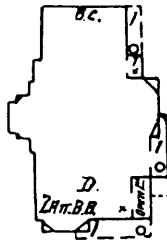
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Sanborn - 1901

IRVING

393

39



163

183

80

75

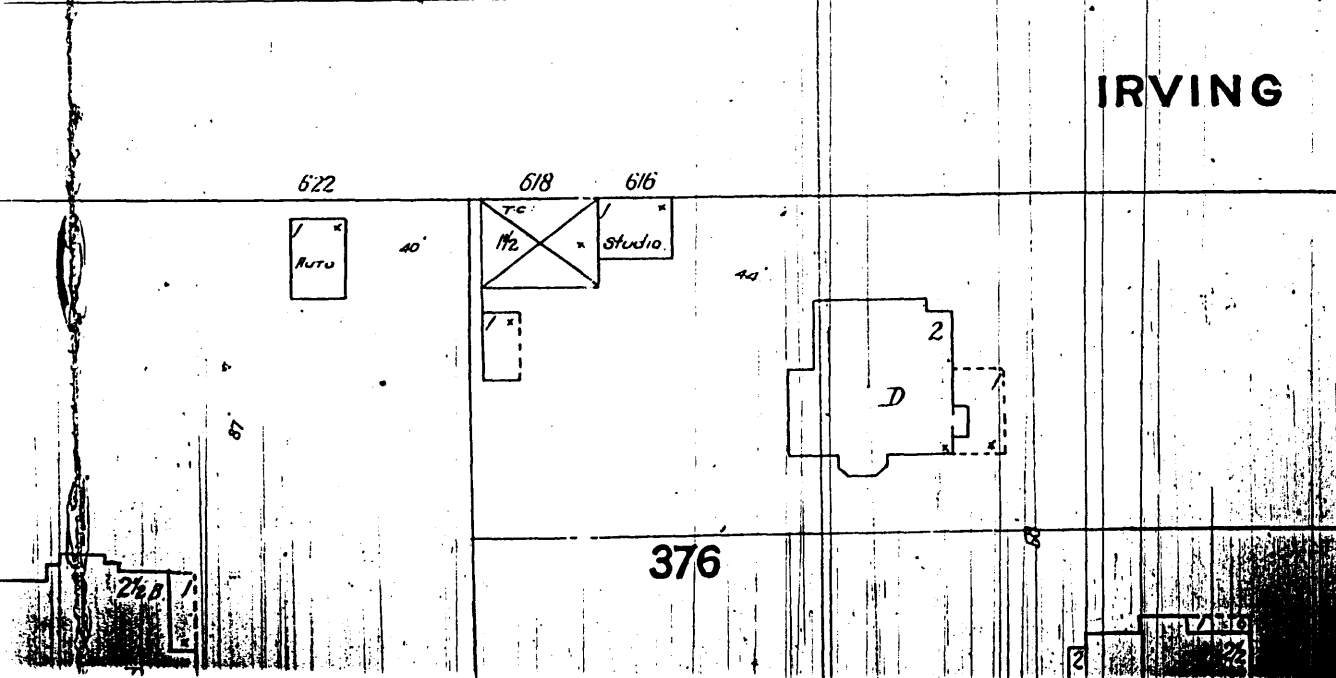
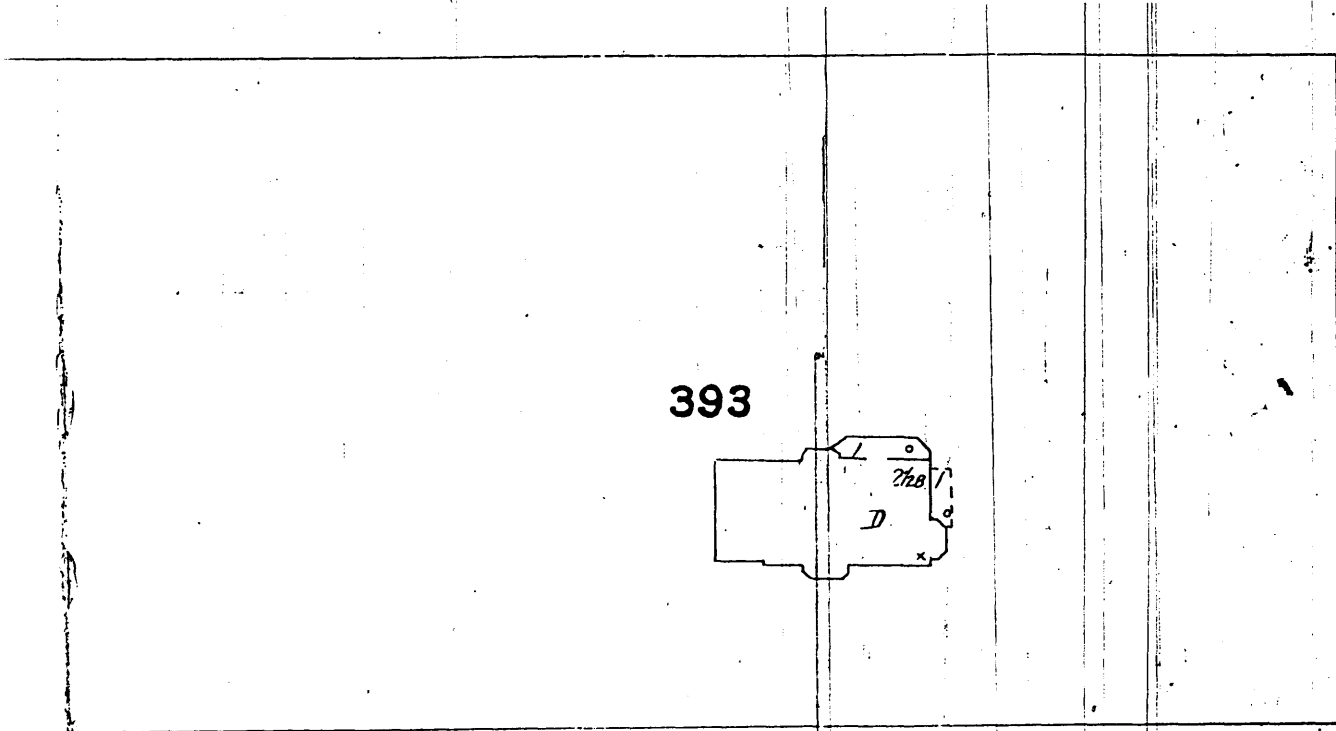
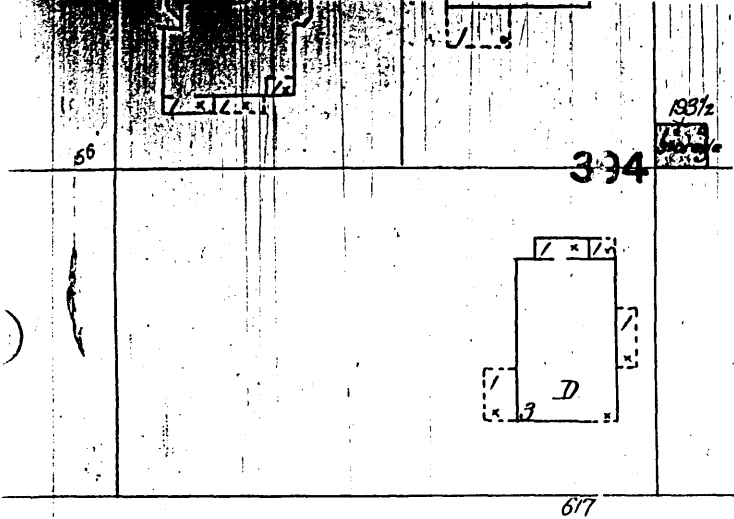
150

N. 19<sup>TH</sup>

ST.

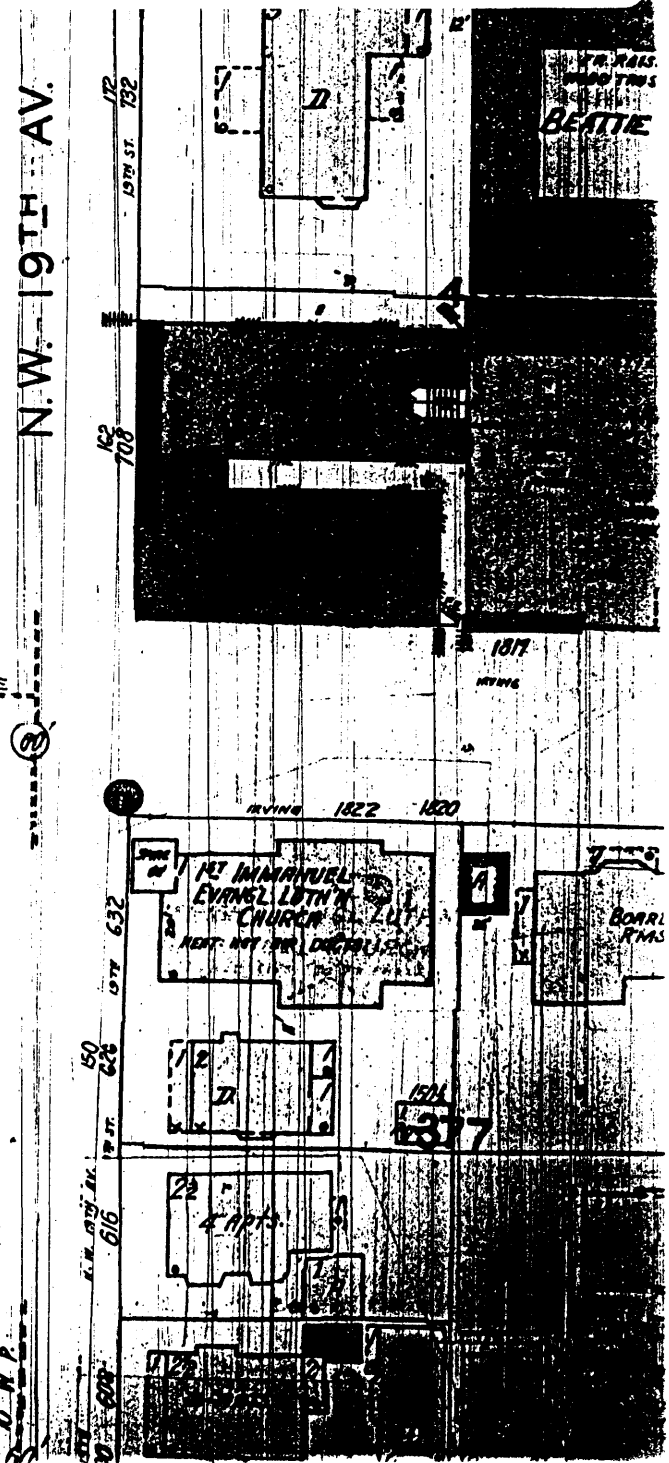
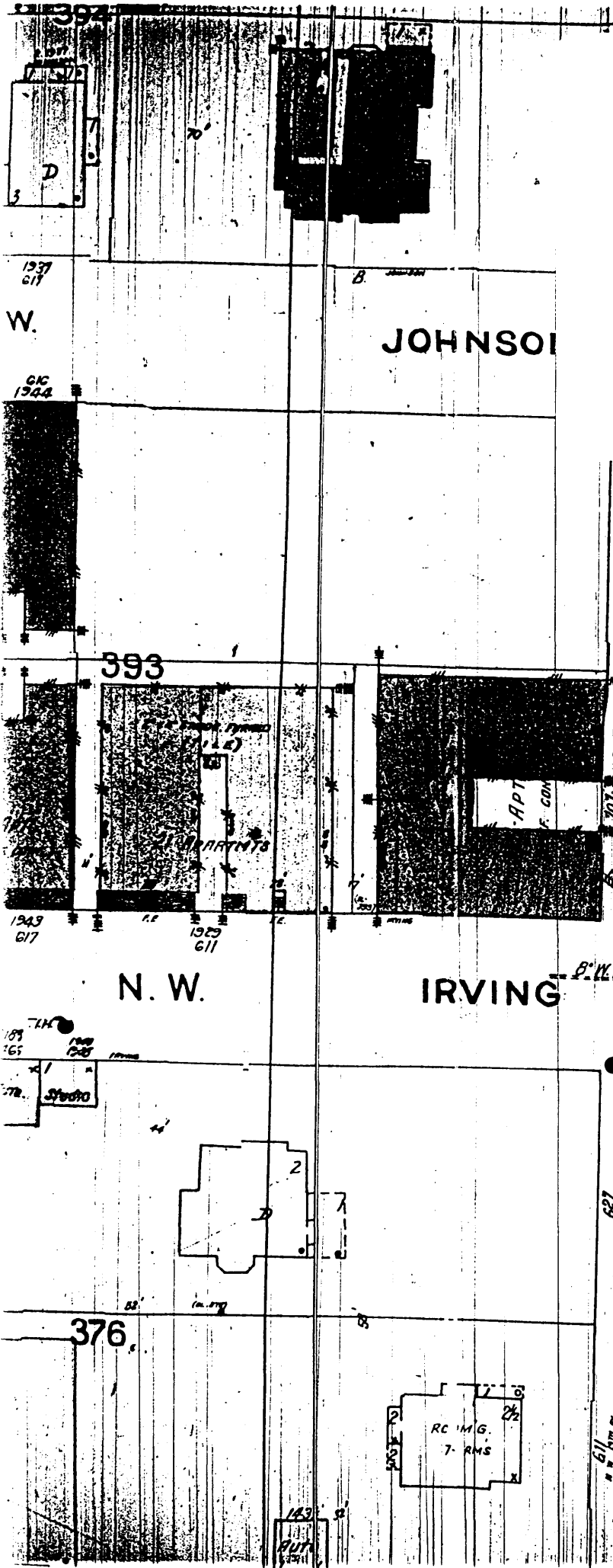
D.H.

196

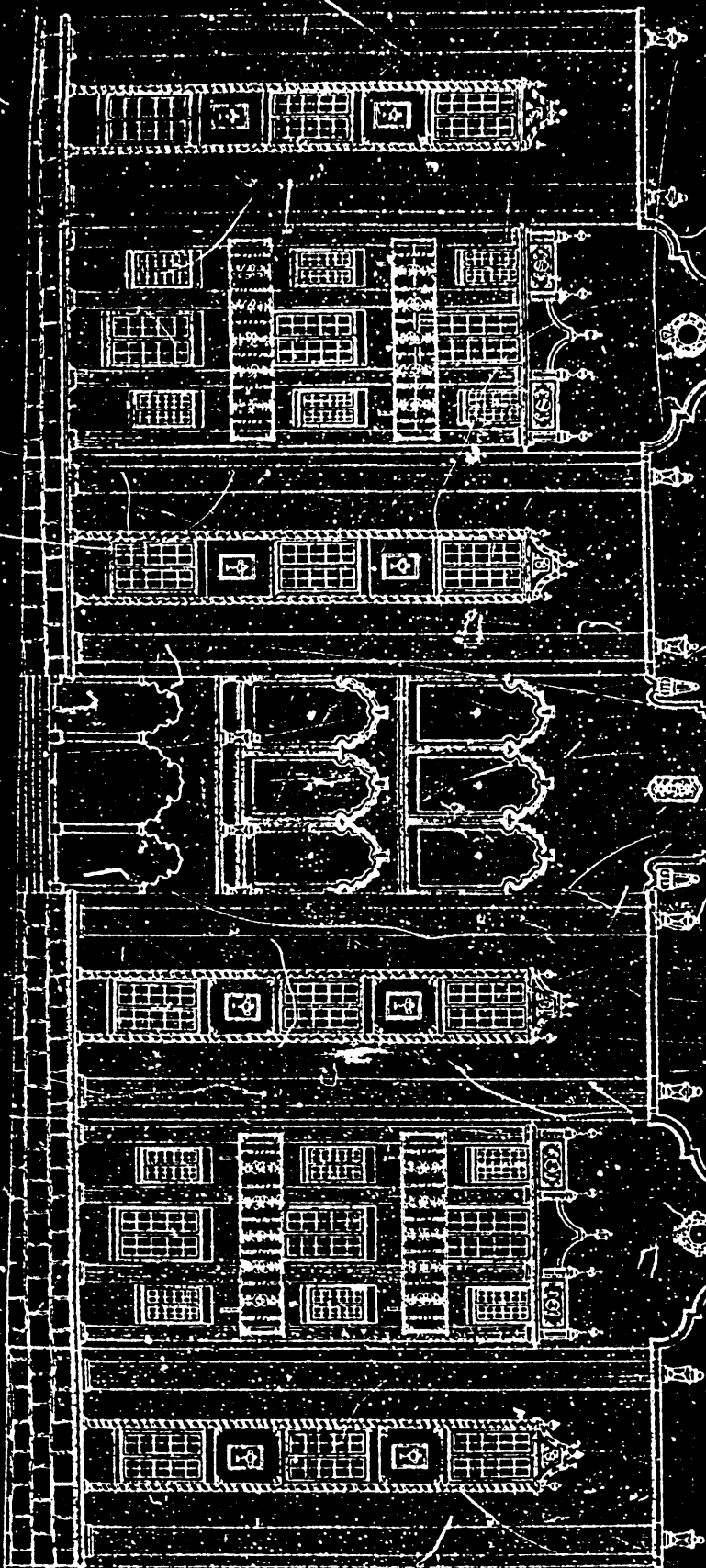


19TH ST.

Sanborn - 1950



FRONT ELEVATION  
333 0

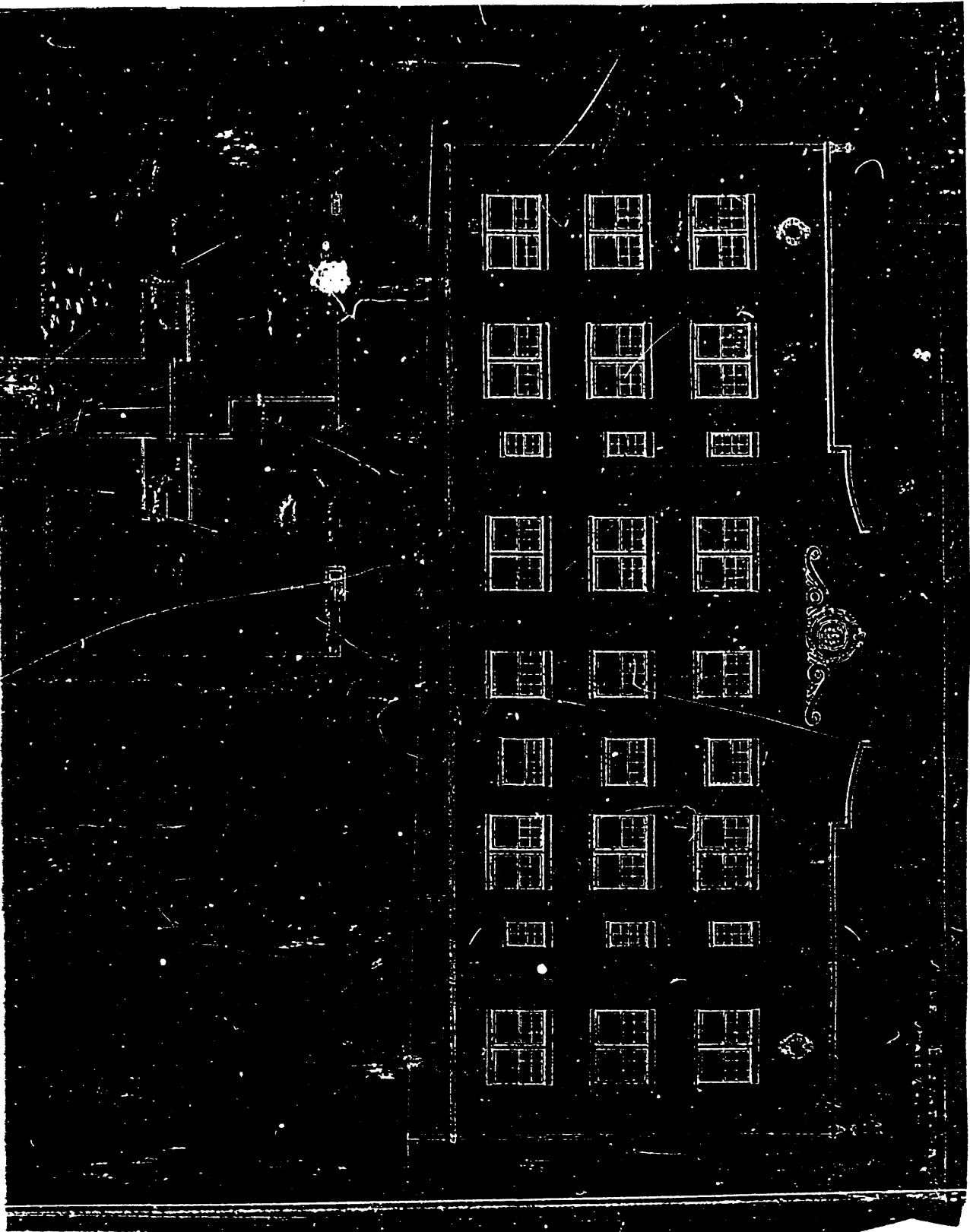


FRONT ELEVATION

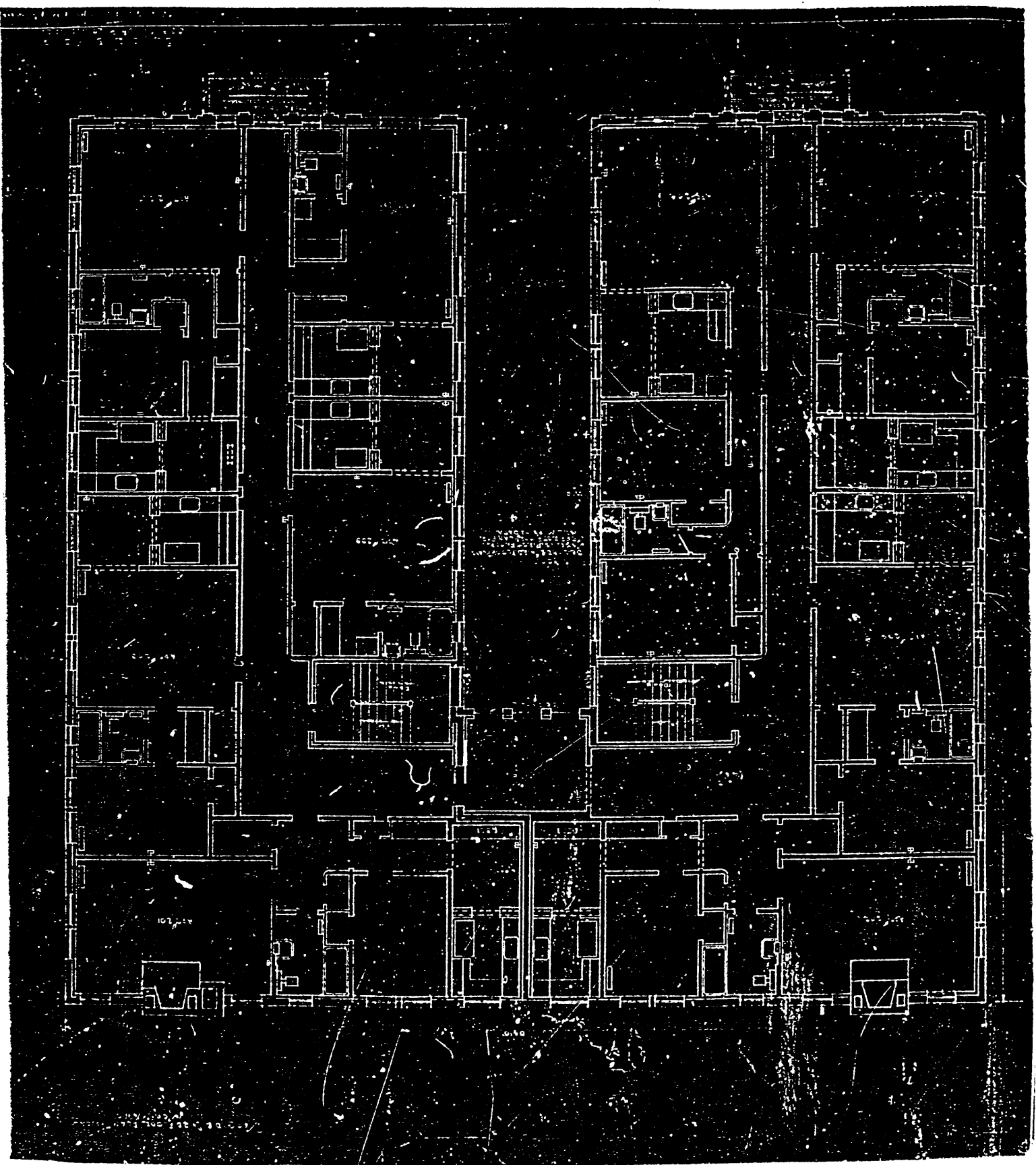
707 NW 19TH AVE.

193822 21-12

MICROFILMED  
APR 13 1987







MICROFILMED

707 NW 19TH AVE.  
193822 21-12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior View, looking NW  
at E facade

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 1 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior View, looking NW  
at S facade

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 2 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior View, looking N  
at W facade

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 3 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior View, looking SW  
at N facade

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

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PHOTO 4 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior Detail, looking SW  
at E facade, front facade, N wing

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

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PHOTO 5 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Exterior Detail, looking W  
at E facade, Courtyard

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 6 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Lobby

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 7 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Typical  
Living Room w/ fireplace

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 8 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Typical  
Living Room

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 9 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Typical  
Kitchen

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 10 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Typical  
Remodeled Kitchen

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 11 of 12



Olympic Apartment Building  
707 NW 19th Avenue  
Portland, Multnomah County, OR

Description: Interior View, Typical  
Bathroom

HERITAGE INVESTMENT CORPORATION  
123 NW SECOND AVENUE, SUITE 200  
PORTLAND, OR 97209

Heritage Investment Photo - 1996

PHOTO 12 of 12