

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Date listed 09/09/2009
NRIS No. 09000706
Oregon SHPO

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 any 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 Hotel Alma

Other names/site number Hotel Tait; Hotel Georgian; Majestic Hotel

2. Location

street & number 1201-1217 SW Stark Street not for publication

city of town Portland vicinity

State Oregon code OR county Multnomah code 051 zip code 97205

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] _____ Date 7.21.09 _____
Signature of certifying official/Deputy SHPO Date

Oregon State Historic Preservation Office
State or 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 this property is:

<u> </u> entered in the National Register <u> </u> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined eligible for the National Register <u> </u> See continuation sheet	_____	_____
<u> </u> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<u> </u> other (explain:)	_____	_____

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	Non-Contributing	
1		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

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

Historic Resources in Downtow Portland, Oregon,
1906-1914

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: hotel

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY
AMERICAN MOVEMENTS: Commerical Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE
walls: BRICK
roof: ASPHALT
other:

Narrative Description

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

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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMUNITY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1911

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Hans Hanselman

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: Oregon Historical Society

Hotel Alma
Name of Property

Multnomah Co., Oregon
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.09 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	10	524819	5040872	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John M. Tess, President
organization Heritage Consulting Group date March 27, 2009; rev. July 2009
street & number 1120 NW Northrup Street telephone (503) 228-0272
city or town Portland state Oregon zip code 97209

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name Michael McMenam, McMenamins
street & number 430 N. Killingsworth telephone (503) 223-0109
city or town Portland state Oregon zip code 97217

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, PO Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY

The Hotel Alma is located at 1201-17 SW Stark Street in downtown, Portland. Specifically, it is located on the east 100 feet north of Stark Street on Block 107 of Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. The hotel was built in 1911, designed by architect Hans Hanselman for Henry J. Ottenheimer.

SETTING AND SITE

The building is located on the south side of Burnside between the Pearl District and downtown Portland. Burnside is the primary east-west surface street that runs from the West Hills across downtown to the east side and beyond. At this point, the street has two traffic lanes in each direction. With heavy traffic loads, it forms a distinctive barrier between downtown on the south from the Pearl District on the north. The Hotel Alma faces east onto 12th Avenue, which is one-way north. It also faces south onto Stark Street, which is one-way east. Both 12th Avenue and Stark Street may be considered non-arterial downtown surface streets.

In the late 1910s and 1920s, the area was considered part of "Auto Row" and remnants of that heritage help characterize the streetscape today, particularly north of Burnside. Most often, these buildings are one- and two-story unreinforced masonry structures on quarter-block parcels. The area south of Burnside is also characterized by buildings of a similar vintage, scale, and materials to that of the Alma – low-rise (3-5 story) unreinforced masonry buildings with ground floor retail. Almost entirely, these buildings are associated with the construction boom that followed the Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905. At the same time, the immediate area is the scene of considerable new construction with substantially larger heights, modern design and materials.

Directly to the south of the Hotel Alma, across Stark Street, is the 1911 Whitney-Gray Hotel (National Register-listed; 409 SW 12th Avenue), and adjacent 1913 Clayton Hotel (411 SW 12th). Both are four-story hotels adapted to affordable housing. Adjacent to these at the west and occupying most of the remaining block is a new 22-story mixed use tower under construction. Further to the west is the 1914 Crystal Ballroom (National Register-listed; 1332 W. Burnside). To the east of the Hotel Alma are the 1909 Kent Hotel (310 SW 12th Avenue) and the 1911 Blackstone Hotel (1103-1121 SW Stark Street), they are respectively a 3-story and 4-story hotel adapted for affordable housing.

Across Burnside to the north are the Brewery Blocks. This five-block, mixed-use development includes approximately 220,000 square feet of urban retail, 400,000 square feet of office space, and 1,200 underground parking spaces. As part of this development and across Burnside to the north is the one-time 1929 Smith Chevrolet building that now houses Whole Foods and Portland Energy Solutions. Also part of the Brewery Blocks, directly northeast, are the Weinhard Brew House and a 10-story office building with ground floor retail.

The block that contains the Hotel Alma is at the pinnacle of a pie-shaped wedge in the street grid created by Burnside and Stark Streets as these streets run west from the river and converge at 13th Avenue. That wedge reflects the transition of the downtown street grid, which runs slightly northeast-southwest, to the street grid of Couch's Addition, which runs a truer north-south; both grids run parallel to the Willamette River which bends northwest at Burnside Bridge.

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Located at the peak of the Stark/Burnside wedge, Block 170 is triangular in shape, framed by Stark Street on the south and Burnside on the north intersecting at an angle, and by 12th Avenue crossing both Stark Street and Burnside at the east to form the base. Even accommodating the triangular shape, the block is tiny compared to the 40,000 square foot Portland standard of 200 feet by 200 feet. Rather, Block 170 is only 4,475 square-feet, running 148.28 feet east and west, and at the base, 60.86 feet north and south at the base. The small block is dominated by the Hotel Alma; the only other building on the block is the adjacent two-story 1917 Flat Iron Building (National Register-listed; 1223-25 SW Stark Street), a former tire store which sits on a 466 square foot parcel.

The hotel is located on a 4,009 square foot trapezoidal parcel. On the north, it runs 100 feet; on the east it runs approximately 61 feet; on the south it runs approximately 116 feet and on the west it runs approximately 20 feet. The parcel is flat and the Alma is built to the lot line with no character-defining landscape features.

EXTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Alma is a four-story unreinforced masonry building with full basement with cast iron columns and steel girders to carry the brick walls above the first floor.

The building is a four-story, horizontally-articulated Streetcar-era Commercial-style building with a flat parapet roof. In form, the hotel exhibits a largely triangular footprint with three facades – 12th Avenue at the east, Stark Street on the south and Burnside on the north - all similar in design and materials both originally and for the most part today. The fourth facade is a utilitarian party wall which is exposed above the adjacent 2-story structure.

Facade materials on the three street fronts are consistent, with a buff-colored finish brick in a running bond with natural gray mortar. As originally built, the design at the ground level featured a traditional tripartite storefront with plate glass in wood-frame over a paneled-wood bulkhead surmounted by a multi-light transom. The storefront then was distinguished either with a recessed full-glass wood door or flush plate-glass at the center. Today, some remnants of these storefronts remain, but as often, the openings have been infilled with either painted concrete block or covered with wood and covered with stucco. Above the ground floor is a classically detailed painted sheet metal belt course. This design in painted sheet metal is repeated at the cornice. Upper floor windows are consistent, one-over-one, double-hung, wood-sash in wood-frame with painted brick sills. On the three street-facing building faces, the outside bays at the second and third floors feature paneled tripartite painted bay windows with one window per face. The fourth floor then features a brick panel between each window. At the fourth floor window head is a brick string course; between the stringcourse and the cornice are painted cast-stone medallions located above each brick panel. Above the cornice is a low-rise parapet.

As designed, the hotel entry was located at the second-most northern bay of the 12th Avenue facade, distinguished by a sheet metal marquee. That entry remains today. Other entrances today include a storefront entry in the center bay of the Stark Street facade, a corner entry at Stark and 12th framed by dog-tooth brick pilasters, and a storefront entry in the second westernmost bay of the Burnside facade.

Despite years of neglect and abuse, the building's exterior retains a good degree of integrity. In form, scale, and massing, the building is intact with no additions. The storefront bay structure has largely been retained hidden

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behind concrete block, plywood and stucco. Generally windows on the upper floor also are intact though many have been covered with plywood and some have broken glazing.

INTERIOR DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Alma is four stories with a full basement. The building is organized around a stairwell and elevator core located at the center east which ran the full height up but not to the basement. Access to the basement is provided by three stairs: one adjacent the stairwell/elevator core, one at the southeast corner, and one at the west.

As built, the basement featured utilitarian rentable space at the south, a hotel office at the east, and storage at the north. The basement extended under the sidewalk along Stark. Finishes were utilitarian with exposed brick walls, concrete floor, and simple wood partitions. Its most recent use was a bar/club for a single tenant. The basement today is essentially an open un-partitioned space. The utilitarian finishes are extant but generally have been painted.

As designed, the first floor was dominated by retail spaces. When built, each bay along the south and north facades was intended to be a separate lease space that ran through from Burnside to Stark Street. Shortly after construction, the retail spaces were consolidated into two and then one single tenant. This single ground-floor tenant use has remained constant over the years, though the space has been substantially modified. Today, the space essentially has an open floor plan without partitions, except for a small kitchen and toilet.

The hotel entry was and is off 12th Avenue at the east. As designed, the hotel doors led to a hallway/vestibule. At the entry, just to the south of the hall was a small hotel office with a stairwell to the basement. Continuing forward west, guests would then come to an elevator/stair core that would lead to the upper floors. Finishes were traditional with wood floors, plaster walls and plaster ceilings. The spaces were largely utilitarian with limited details as chair rails. Today, a painted gypsum wall has been constructed along the south of the entry and the basement stair removed. The elevator/stair core remains intact as do the finishes.

Floors 2 through 4 were built to be essentially identical, with approximately 19 rooms arranged at the perimeter of the building. Access to the upper floors was either via the elevator or the full height stair which was enclosed at each floor landing by a fire door. Both means of access opened directly to an east-west, single-loaded corridor providing access to rooms along the north. There was no traditional elevator core. At the far east, the corridor turned south to provide access to rooms on the east and at the southeast corner. At the west, the corridor turned approximately 315 degrees to the southeast to provide access to rooms along the south center. At the center were service rooms and shared baths. Corridor finishes and trim were traditional, with wood floors, painted plaster walls and ceiling. Trim included painted wood baseboard and chair rail. Room doors were wood paneled with transoms and classical surround. This configuration remains today as do, generally, the corridor finishes.

As built, guest rooms varied in size and shape to accommodate the irregular hallways but averaged about 12 feet deep and 12 feet across. Larger rooms were those located at the corners and featured bay windows with French doors. These larger rooms also offered a private bath; the remainder of the rooms only had access to common baths. Room finishes were traditional and consistent with wood floors with painted plaster walls and ceilings. Trim was painted wood and included baseboard and picture rail. Doors were wood paneled with transoms. Doors and windows featured a classical painted wood surround. As with the corridors, these floors, in general, are intact in form, detail and finish. Walls have been repainted, floors have modern carpeting, in select areas the baseboard or

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picture rail have been removed. Most of the ceilings have been dropped with acoustical tile units. Areas on the second floor at the west were adapted and consolidated into a communal spa/bath space, and select rooms were subdivided with wood framing and gypsum board to create short-term cubicles. Baths typically have been modernized over time with new fixtures.

ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS

As noted, the building carries a good and typical degree of integrity for a structure of its use and stature. The exterior of the building is largely intact but has been neglected over the years. Ground-floor storefronts have been covered and in some instances modified though working within the original bay structure. In general terms, the storefront with bulkhead, transom, and glazing have been covered with stucco, while the upper floor windows with frame, sash, and glazing have been covered with plywood.

The interior is largely intact in form, materials and finishes. Most changes have been additive, with materials covering features rather than the features being replaced. The primary change to the building was the consolidation of ground-floor retail spaces into a single restaurant user in the 1940s. On the upper floors, the two rooms at the second floor west have been consolidated into a bath/spa. Walls have been repainted. Floors have been carpeted and re-carpeted. And generally room ceilings have been covered with acoustical dropped tile ceilings tiles.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

Constructed in 1911, the 4-story Hotel Alma, located at 1217 SW Stark Street in Portland, was designed by architect Hans Hanselman for businessman Henry J. Ottenheimer. In the context of the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Resource of Downtown Portland, Oregon, 1906 - 1914," the building is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion A for Commerce and Community Development as part of a collection of buildings that redefined downtown Portland and meets the registration requirements of that MPD form. The building is listed in the City of Portland's Historic Resource Inventory and in June 2008, the National Park Service determined that the building was eligible for individual listing in the National Register.

HISTORY OF THE HOTEL ALMA

No event more clearly marked the transition of Portland, Oregon from a small, far-flung lumber city in the Pacific Northwest to a modern metropolis than the Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905. It was a defining event that put Portland on the map, enticing both people and money to migrate to the city. Portland's population grew by 96,000 in the five years following the fair, doubling the city's 1900 population. Employment outpaced population growth as the marketplace, fueled by outside capital and locally invested timber wealth, raced to build the houses, offices, and enterprises needed to serve this population. With such high demand, real estate proved to be a particularly wise investment. Property values advanced 30% between 1905 and 1906, and 100% by 1910. Land values reached \$5,000 per front foot in the heart of downtown, and all the while total rentable space grew from 900,000 square feet in 1900 to 2,000,000 in 1910.

This era was marked by the development of major landmarks, including dozens of modern skyscrapers such as the Wells Fargo Building, major department stores like Meier & Frank, grand hotels such as the Multnomah, and dramatic theater halls like the Heilig. Real estate investors, however, focused as much on smaller properties offering a mix of ground-floor retail and upper-floor hotel rooms. In the decade that followed the Expo, twenty-five of these buildings were constructed – all substantially similar with simple ground-floor retail spaces, simple entries, and small upper-floor rooms offering private, shared or common baths with no accommodation for on-site meals beyond the bar or restaurant that that might occupy the ground-floor retail spaces. A predominant number of these hotels were located in the area to the north and west of downtown where land was relatively cheaper compared to the downtown core and farther northwest upscale homes in the vicinity of 19th Avenue.

In light of the economic climate, it is not surprising that in 1910 a self-made businessman who was not a real estate developer, acquired land with the intent to develop a hotel with ground-floor retail. This was the vision of then 42-year old Henry J. Ottenheimer who acquired the trapezoidal-shaped parcel northwest of downtown. The oddly shaped block was created by the differences in platting between the City of Portland and Couch's Addition, which in turn were created by the bend in the Willamette River roughly at Burnside. Until just after the turn of the century, Stark Street ended at 12th Avenue and the block to the west was a super-block that ran from Washington to Burnside. By 1908, however, Stark Street was extended one block to 13th Avenue. This was accomplished by demolishing a number of one-story wood structures. This demolition left a single one-story wood dwelling that faced 12th framed by Burnside and Stark. The west end of the block then tapered to a point at Stark and Burnside, and ultimately was acquired by Ottenheimer.

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Ottenheimer was a successful businessman. He was born in San Francisco, California, in November 1868. After graduating from public high school, he was employed by Lillenthal & Sons of New York as a hop buyer; his territory was California and Oregon. In 1894, he located to Aurora, Oregon and bought a hop ranch outside Salem, Oregon. In 1906, Ottenheimer sold his ranch and moved to Portland where he associated with the Standard Box Company. Shortly after, he joined with his brother, Sigmund, to establish the Jones Cash Store, a successful general merchandising mail order business.¹ The Hotel Alma, as it was known upon opening, is Ottenheimer's only known real estate venture, though among his projects he was president and owner of Ottenheimer Realty and Investment Company. Later in life, Ottenheimer sold the Jones Cash Store to Montgomery Ward, and acquired the McBride Woolen Mills. In 1929, following months of ill health, Ottenheimer took his own life.²

The hotel architect was Hans Hanselman. Hanselman is a relatively little known architect who in his day produced solid hotel designs in the city in a narrow timeframe. Perhaps his grandest work is the Mallory Hotel (National Register-listed; 729 SW 15th Avenue), completed in 1912. Hanselman's other known works consist of two other hotels, both designed in 1911: the New Houston Hotel (now known as the Sally McCracken Apartments at 230 NW Sixth Avenue) and the Hoyt Hotel (now demolished). It is odd for an architect seemingly unknown in a city to secure four major commissions within one year, although it is also equally odd that with such a successful year, such an architect would relocate. Yet, by 1913, based on city directories, Hanselman had vanished from Portland. Efforts at locating Hanselman either before or after in California, Washington state or elsewhere in the country have been unsuccessful to date.³

Planning for the hotel commenced in spring 1911. Hanselman provided both plans and specifications to the city in July 1911. The estimated cost was \$50,000. The design featured a hotel entry off 12th Avenue with retail spaces along Stark Street and Burnside. These storefronts were a bay deep, and the four westernmost extended from street face to street face and include a single set of stairs to an open mezzanine. The second through fourth floors were identical with nineteen rooms per floor off a central triangular corridor. At the center was the elevator, stairs, toilets and closets. The rooms were a mix that included both private and communal baths. The small 57-room hotel, similar to those surrounding, did not target a specific clientele, nor advertise, although its clientele were typically single men, most likely traveling salesmen with calls to the surrounding automobile businesses and perhaps overflow from the more active larger hotels nearby such as the Clyde and Nortonia. The basement featured a large 3,700 square foot leasable space at the south, and storage areas at the north. While plans initially offered a store in each bay of the ground floor, from the start it appears these retail spaces were consolidated into two primary tenants: J. H. Myers Heating, and Portland Glove Works, both with entrances off Stark.⁴

By 1917, the Hotel Alma had been renamed the Hotel Georgian, and then the Hotel Tait in 1920. In 1926, Ottenheimer sold the property to Jennings & Co. Over the next several years, the property changed hands from

¹ Fred Lockley, *History of the Columbia River Valley from Dalles to the Sea* (Chicago, IL: S. J. Clark Publishing CO., 1928), pp. II-274-75; *Oregon Journal*, December 11, 1929, pp. 1, 23; *Oregonian*, December 12, 1929, p. 14.

² *Oregon Journal*, December 11, 1929, pp. 1, 23; *Oregonian*, December 12, 1929, p. 14.

³ Richard Ritz, *Architects of Oregon* (Portland, OR: Lair Hill Publishing, 2002), pp. 162-63; Heritage Consulting Group, *Mallory Hotel National Register Nomination*; Virginia Ferriday, et. al., *Historic Resources Inventory of Portland*. (Portland, OR: City of Portland, 1984).

⁴ City of Portland Office of Planning & Development Review microform and card files: 1201-17 SW Stark Street; Plans and Specifications for a Proposed Hotel Building for O. J. Ottenheimer, Esquire.

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Jennings to Hibernia to Progressive to New England Mutual. In 1930, the hotel was renamed Majestic and remained so until 1973.⁵

The building took on a particular local notoriety in the years following World War II when the ground floor was adapted into a single restaurant space. In 1949, Joseph Starvaggi opened the Club Mecca, a short-lived enterprise that closed in 1952 for nonpayment of taxes. This business was followed by the Desert Room. As described by Phil Stanford in his book, *Portland Confidential*, about sex, crime and corruption in Portland, the Desert Room was:

. . . one of the most fascinating nightclubs Portland has ever seen. On any night of the week, you could expect to find a good portion of the Portland underworld hanging out . . . The pimps and madams all made the scene every night, and there was always a contingent of safecrackers, who in those days were considered the princes of the rackets.⁶

The nightclub was run by Nathan Zusman, the self-proclaimed "Mark of Stark Street," who figured prominently in the McClellan Senate Racketeering subcommittee hearings held in Portland in 1957.⁷ Following that testimony, Portland City Council pushed to close the Desert Room, but Zusman successfully maneuvered to retain his liquor license. However, two years later in 1959, following additional complaints, Zusman's license for the Desert Room was revoked. New ownership re-opened a somewhat sanitized operation, and the club continued operations until the late 1960s when it became the Pied Piper, and then the Red Garter.

In 1973, the Hotel Majestic became the "Club Baths" and both the hotel and restaurant became openly homosexual enterprises.⁸ This publicly-acknowledged use was part of a major transformation in the city. Prior, Portland – like most cities across the United States - actively persecuted homosexuals with the active enforcement of laws that banned such behavior. A riot at the Stonewall Inn in New York City in June 1969 asserted gay opposition to this persecution and directly led to the modern gay rights movement. A proliferation of gay activism across the country immediately followed in the years after Stonewall. In Portland, one manifestation was the rise of gay-oriented businesses, such as the "Club Baths," and the area immediately surrounding became an entertainment district known as "the gay triangle." Over the next several years, gay rights became more consolidated such that by the 10th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots in 1979, Portland organized the city's first Gay Pride March and saw the formation of groups like the Portland Gay Men's Chorus. Although the "Club Baths" became the "Continental Hotel and Baths" in 1983 and then finally "Club Portland," the building remained a gay bathhouse and club from the 1970s until it closed in 2007. In 2008, the building was sold and vacated. Current ownership intends to return the hotel to its original use, redeveloping the property using state and federal historic preservation tax credits.

⁵ Polk's *Portland, Oregon City Directory*. (Portland, OR: Polks, 1911-1973; McMenamins Brothers, Club Portland Chain of Title.

⁶ Phil Stanford, *Portland Confidential* (Portland, OR: Westwind Press, 2007), p. 67

⁷ Phil Stanford, *Portland Confidential* (Portland, OR: Westwind Press, 2007), pp. 9-11, 67-69, 104-107, 165-168; *Oregonian*, March 7, 1957, p. 15; July 17, 1957, p. 3-4; July 25, 1957, p. 11; July 26, 1957, p. 1; July 28, 1957, p. 1, July 28, 1957, p. 8; August 31, 1957, p. 7, *Oregon Journal* March 15, 1957, p. 18; July 16, 1957, p. 1; December 25, 1959, p. 1; March 6, 1968, p. 4; City of Portland Office of Planning & Development Review microform and card files: 1226 W. Burnside: Alterations to the Majestic Hotel Building, Pietro Belluschi, Architect; City of Portland Office of Planning & Development Review microform and card files: Report of Inspector, July 13, 1946. City of Portland Office of Planning & Development Review microform and card files: 1226 W. Burnside : Desert Room Alterations, May 2, 1956.

⁸ *Ibid.*, *Polk's City Directories*, 1950-1973, *Willamette Week*, November 14, 1985, p. 18. May 8, 1975, p. 22; www.rubymredband.com/pages/history.html.

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MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM: HISTORIC RESOURCES IN DOWNTOWN PORTLAND, OREGON 1906-1914

The Hotel Alma is being nominated under the historic context statement presented in the Multiple Property Documentation Form, "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, Oregon 1906-1914," under Criterion A in the categories of Commerce and Community Development.

In mass, scale, material and design, Downtown Portland today is largely defined by two historic periods: The decade following the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition, and the expansive years of the 1920s. The first period is Portland-specific as the city was transformed physically by the influx of people and money attracted by the Exposition. The second period was more of a national trend, reflecting fundamental changes to financing real estate development.

The Hotel Alma belongs to the group of buildings in this first rapid period of development. As described by the *Oregonian* at that time, "The Lewis and Clark Exposition officially marked the end of the old and the beginning of the new Oregon." In the period 1906 to 1914, downtown Portland experienced an enormous construction boom. That boom added over five million square feet of building in nearly six-dozen buildings over a 60-block area. Almost all of these buildings were designed in the Commercial style of architecture, not in the sense necessarily that these were great monuments to commerce, but in the fundamental paradigm of being mixed-use, brick-clad structures built to the lot line often on a quarter-block parcel with ground-floor lease retail spaces and the upper-floors dedicated most often to office use, but also hotel and residential uses.

Today, nearly 60 buildings of this era remain in downtown Portland. Two-thirds are office buildings, which include distinctive buildings such as the Wells Fargo and Henry buildings, but also less distinct buildings like the Swetland and Beck. Hotels comprise the second largest collection of uses, and nearly one-quarter of the buildings are in this category, including grand hotels like the Multnomah and the New Imperial. More typically, these hotels are like the Hotel Alma, Hotel Alder, and Blackstone - relatively low-rise structures with simple lobbies and ground-floor retail. Most of the remaining buildings are apartments with a few, if substantial, retail and public structures. Approximately half are already listed in the National Register, including two that have been nominated under this Multiple Property Documentation Form.

The hotel category is particularly interesting. In simplest terms, a hotel responds to a community's need to accommodate visitors. The reasons people visit a community and their expectation of accommodations, however, reflects the breadth of society and economy. The demand range is broad and includes the new migrant looking to establish roots, a logger or seaman looking for a temporary off-season home, a traveling salesman looking for a temporary base of operations, the tourist on an adventure, and even the resident looking for a more or less permanent home but with the convenience of a hotel. The economic stratum for hotels is also broad, from barebones cheap to over-the-top opulent.

Collectively, developers in this era produced a matrix of hotel buildings that responded to the perceived niches of the market. Portland saw the construction of the grand dame Multnomah Hotel, modern competition to the top-of-the-line Portland and Perkins Hotels. It also saw construction of the elegant and modern New Imperial addition to the politically popular Imperial Hotel. Smaller versions of upscale hostelries included the Seward, Cornelius, and Willard. Portland also saw the appearance of the Mallory Hotel, perhaps the city's first true residential hotel, and the Arthur. The city also saw the creation of a hotel directed specifically toward the traveling businessman, the Hotel Alder, adjacent to the Southern Pacific rail station, offering guests "show rooms" for use. Then there is the "other"

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category - hotels that varied somewhat in quality and size but generally did not offer a vision as much as a room and a bath, sometimes private, sometimes shared, sometimes communal. The better of the class featured an attractive lobby or perhaps were associated with a ground-floor restaurant. These lesser hotels were little more than a walk-up yet most often with a small office/desk near the front door to control access. An example of the first would be the Clyde Hotel; the Hotel Alma fits the second category.

This last "other" group makes up the majority of the hotels built during this era and located in the area northwest of downtown:

- Lincoln Hotel (1019 SW Morrison St., 1904)
- Hotel Arminius (1022-38 SW Morrison St., 1904)
- Western Rooms (15-27 SW 2nd Ave., 1906)
- Hotel Rambo (1337 SW Washington St., 1906; Edgar Lazarus)
- Hotel Albion (932 SW 3rd Ave., 1906)
- Breslin Hotel (1110 SW Washington St; 1907; demolished)
- Gordon Hotel (732 SW 9th Ave., 1908; demolished)
- Belleville Hotel (310 SW 12th Ave., 1909)
- St. Nicholas Hotel (1117 SW Alder St., 1909)
- Drake Hotel (1229 SW Washington St., 1910)
- Whitney Gray Hotel (409 SW 12th Ave., 1911; Knighton & Root)
- Blackstone (1103-21 SW Stark St.; 1911; Whidden & Lewis)
- Clyde Hotel (1000-38 SW Stark St.; 1912)
- Treves Hotel (1035-39 SW Stark St.; 1912; Bennes & Hendricks)
- Washington Hotel (1129 SW Washington St., 1912; Lionel Deane)
- Palace Hotel (1218 SW Washington St., 1912; Hurley Mason Co.)
- Danmoore Hotel (1217 SW Morrison St., 1913; Carl Linde; demolished)
- Venable Hotel (1024 SW 3rd Ave., 1913, Bennes & Hendricks; demolished)
- Clayton Hotel (411 SW 12th Avenue., 1913; Goodrich & Goodrich)

Similar hotels are found north of Burnside in the Old Town district. Surprisingly, this genre of hotel building essentially disappears as new construction was replaced by residential hotels by World War I. Into the 1930s and beyond, this category of hotel lends itself to becoming market-driven, "single resident occupant" (SRO) housing and by the end of the century to becoming SRO housing under government or non-profit ownership.

As a building form, these structures are increasingly endangered. Typically, they are in poor condition with considerable deferred maintenance. They also are located on land parcels where development regulations allow significantly larger buildings. Thus, in recent years, the Danmoore Hotel was demolished by the First Presbyterian Church to create a plaza with below-grade parking; the Hamilton Hotel was demolished by the federal government to build an office building; the Breslin Hotel was demolished following a fire, and the Hotel Arminius was turned into law offices. Most recently, the Gordon Hotel was demolished to build a high-rise office building.

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Registration Requirements

The Hotel Alma is being proposed under the MPD form "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, Oregon, 1906-1914" under Criterion A for Commerce and Community Planning and Development. In order to be considered, a property must meet the registration requirements detailed in the MPD. Below is a synopsis of the relevant sections from that document, describing Criterion A, the seven aspects of integrity, general registration requirements, and additional registration requirements for the relevant associated building type. Recognizing constraints created by the odd block configuration and size, the Hotel Alma meets these registration requirements.

As it relates to Criterion A, the MPD states that "All buildings that meet the registration requirements and have sufficient integrity are significant under Criterion "A" under the categories of commerce and community development. Commerce relates to the collection of properties that convey the synergism and dynamics of commercial growth that emanated from the boosterism associated with the Lewis & Clark Exposition. Community Development relates to the resource's ability as a collection to reflect the shift in the downtown's epicenter, the vertical growth in the downtown, the emphasis of commercial over residential in the downtown, and the emphasis of ground-floor retail in the downtown."

As discussed above, the Hotel Alma belongs to a collection of buildings constructed during the real estate boom following the Lewis & Clark Exposition that came to redefine downtown Portland. In particular, it is an example of the over twenty lesser hotels that appeared in the city during this era, a form that was not readily built before or after this boom period. Collectively, these hotels occupied roughly six acres of the 60-block downtown core, or 10%, adding approximately 900,000 square feet of real estate to downtown, and creating retail space for approximately 175 businesses. Most of these buildings have survived today, being transitioned into SRO housing, first private then public. Because of their generally poor condition and land potential, they are also in danger of demolition.

These hotels played a critical role as the city's population doubled quickly, as they provided affordable and available commercial housing both on a temporary and transitional basis. These hotels also housed the necessary retail enterprises to serve a burgeoning population.

Assessment of Integrity

In addition to meeting the broad criteria of significance and the registration requirements, a property applying under the MPD must also have sufficient integrity to convey its historical values. The National Park Service evaluates integrity against seven specific aspects: Location, Design, Setting, Materials, Workmanship, Feeling, and Association. It is not necessary that a building fulfill all seven aspects. As detailed below, the Hotel Alma has sufficient integrity to convey its historic values.

- Location is the place where the historic property was constructed or the place where the historic event occurred. The Hotel Alma Hotel is in its original location and fulfills this aspect of integrity.
- Design is the combination of elements that create, form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. The Hotel Alma is largely intact in form, massing, structure and style. The only major change is at the ground-floor storefronts, which is not unusual for a downtown building with leased retail. The storefronts have been

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remodeled on several occasions but always within the existing bay structure. Notable features as floor plan, windows, interior and exterior decoration are largely original. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.

- Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. The Hotel Alma was built in a relatively dense and active downtown commercial environment located north and west of the core. That setting continues today with the hotel largely surrounded by buildings that were built at approximately the same time as the Alma. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.
- Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property . . . A property must retain the key exterior materials dating from the period of its historic significance. The Hotel Alma retains a substantial amount of original fabric both on the exterior and interior, including exterior windows, upper-floor corridors and partitions, details and trim. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.
- Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history or prehistory. The Hotel Alma was constructed in 1911 of workmanship common to that era and to the city. In this, the property does not display any evidence of a particular culture or people, but it is also not lacking in the sense that the state of workmanship today is any less. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.
- Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. To the passerby, although the storefronts have been covered, the building speaks to its era and original function. That is it surrounded by many buildings of comparable age and use reinforces this sense of time. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.
- Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to the observer. As part of that broad era that redefined downtown Portland, the Hotel Alma speaks to the era of the Lewis & Clark Exposition and the boom that followed. Again, as with feeling, surrounded by resources of comparable vintage and use, that association is strengthened. The Hotel Alma fulfills this aspect of integrity.

General Registration Requirements

To be considered under the MPD, a property must also meet the general registration requirements detailed in the MPD. Those registration requirements are listed below with a comparison to the Hotel Alma:

- Integrity: To be eligible for listing in the National Register under this multiple property context, a building must convey its sense of historical character by retaining sufficient exterior and interior integrity. Generally a resource will possess most of the following seven aspects of integrity: Association, Location, Setting, Feeling, Design, Materials and Workmanship. Generally, these tests are not especially critical for ground-floor retail or non-public upper-floor interior spaces; modernization of these spaces should not be a basis for disqualification. In addition, modernization of ground-floor exterior retail spaces should not be a basis for disqualification.

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As discussed above, the Hotel Alma maintains substantial integrity. As noted in the integrity description, the one area of greatest change for the Hotel Alma is at the ground-floor and it is noted that such change "should not be a basis for disqualification." Further, the building owners hope to renovate the building as a historic preservation tax act project with an approved rehabilitation plan. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

- Date of Construction: The structure must have been built as a hotel in the era of 1906 to 1914.

The Hotel Alma was built in 1911. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

- Geographic area: The structure must be located within the general downtown geographic area. As described in the boundary discussion, this area represents the highest concentration of historic resources related to the historic context.

The Hotel Alma is located within the downtown area, at the northwest corner along Burnside. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

- Use: In order to be listed, it is not critical that the building be retained in its original use.

The Hotel Alma currently is presently vacant but plans are being developed to adapt the building for ground-floor commercial and to return the upper-floors to hotel use. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

Specific Property Types Registration Requirements: Hotels in Downtown Portland, Oregon, 1906-1914

Finally, to be considered under the MPD, a property must also meet the additional registration requirements detailed in the MPD. Those registration requirements are listed below with a comparison to the Hotel Alma:

- Ground-floor: Ground-floor retail or restaurant space dominating the ground-floor with separate street entrances.

The ground-floor of the Hotel Alma is dominated by retail spaces with separate street entrances. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

- Upper-floor Plans: The upper-floors should have a double-loaded corridor with an "L" or "U" shape with a minimum of decoration.

The upper-floors of the Hotel Alma are in a modified "U" shape with only minimum decoration in the public spaces. The modified form is created by the trapezoidal shape of the land parcel. The Hotel Alma meets this registration requirement.

Hotel Alma
Name of Property

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CONCLUSION

The Hotel Alma is proposed for listing under the MPD "Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, Oregon, 1906 - 1914," under Criterion A for Commerce and Community Planning and Development. The Hotel Alma meets the general and specific associated building type registration requirements for listing in the National Register under the Multiple Property Documentation Form. The Hotel Alma belongs to that collection of buildings constructed during the real estate boom following the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition that came to redefine downtown. In particular, it is an example of the several lesser hotels that appeared in the city during this era, a form that was not readily built before or after the boom period. Collectively, these hotels occupied roughly 10% of downtown, and added approximately 900,000 square feet of real estate, and creating retail space for approximately 175 businesses. Although most of these buildings have survived today, they are also rapidly disappearing. Hotels like the Hotel Alma played a critical role as Portland's population doubled within a short period, providing affordable and available commercial housing both on a temporary and transitional basis, and also housing necessary retail enterprises to serve a growing population.

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Other Sources

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Heritage Consulting Group historic Portland research files.

Heritage Consulting Group, National Register Multiple Property Submission, *Historic Resources in Downtown Portland, 1906-1914*. Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.

Multnomah County Tax Assessor Records

Hotel Alma
Name of Property

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The Oregon Journal

The Oregonian

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Portland, Oregon.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Hotel Alma is located on the east 100 feet north of Stark Street on Block 107 of Couch's Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, Tax ID 1N1E33DD 400.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is the original and legally recorded boundary lines for the property for which National Register status is being requested and which has been historically associated with the Hotel Alma.

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DOCUMENTS

1. Tax map, 1 sheet
2. Sanborn maps, 1908, 1950, 1 sheet
3. Original building drawings, c. 1911, 11 sheets
4. Original floor plan, basement, ground, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors, 3 sheets, prepared by Heritage Consulting Group, May 2008
5. Existing floor plans, 2008, 4 sheets, prepared by Ankrom Mosian Associated Architects, May 2008
6. Historic photograph, 1911, from the November 19, 1911 *Oregon Journal*
7. Historic photograph as "Hotel Tait," 1925
8. Historic photograph as "Hotel Tait" with annex, 1925
9. Historic photograph as "The Desert Room," 1957

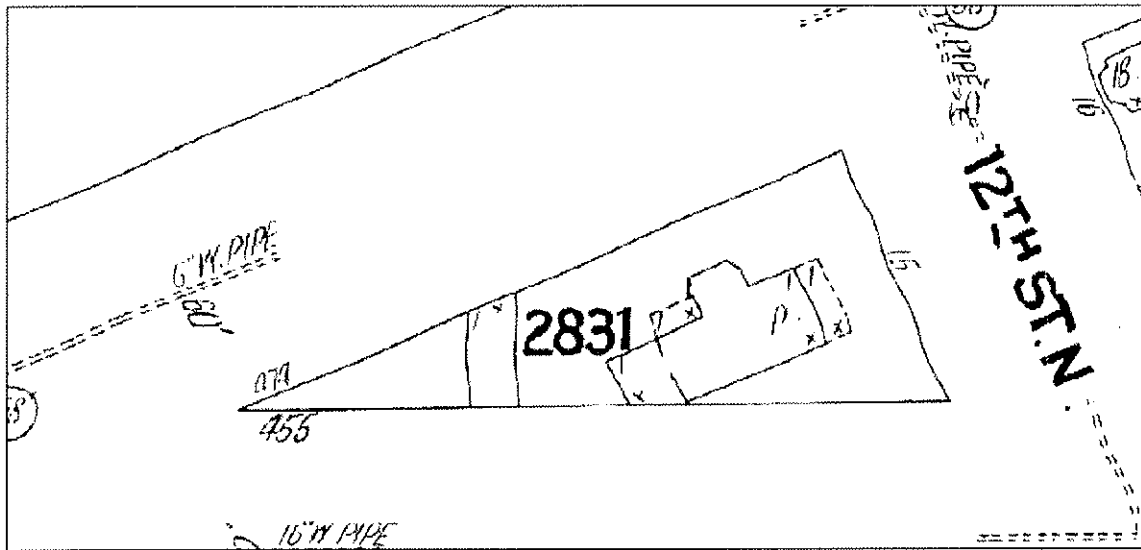
SEE MAP A. E. 130A

PLANNING
1960

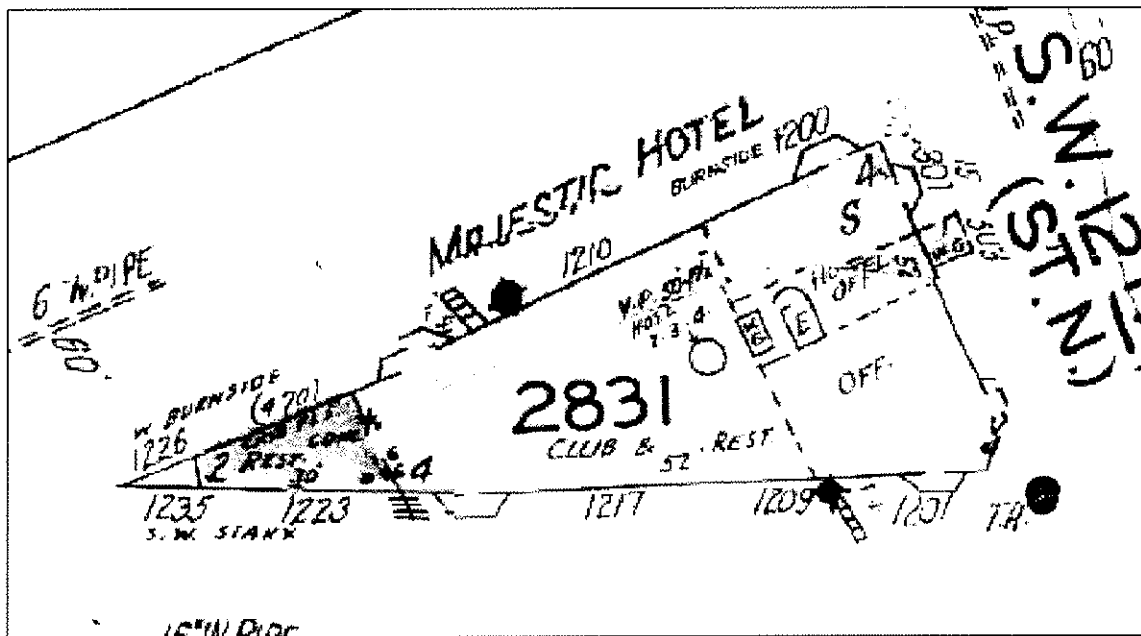
BURNS III



1. Tax map for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



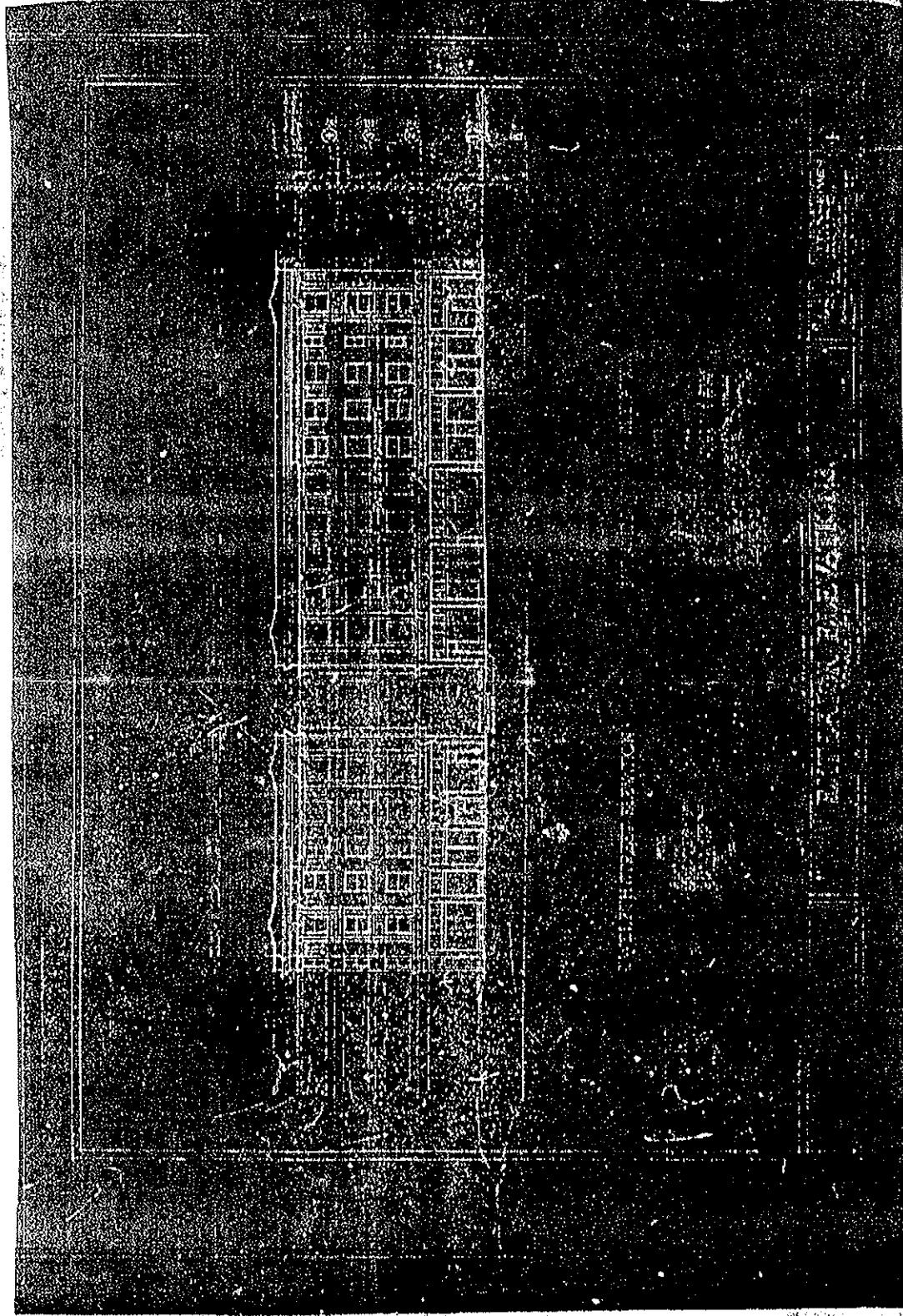
2. 1908 Sanborn map for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



2a. 1950 Sanborn map for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W. Burnside

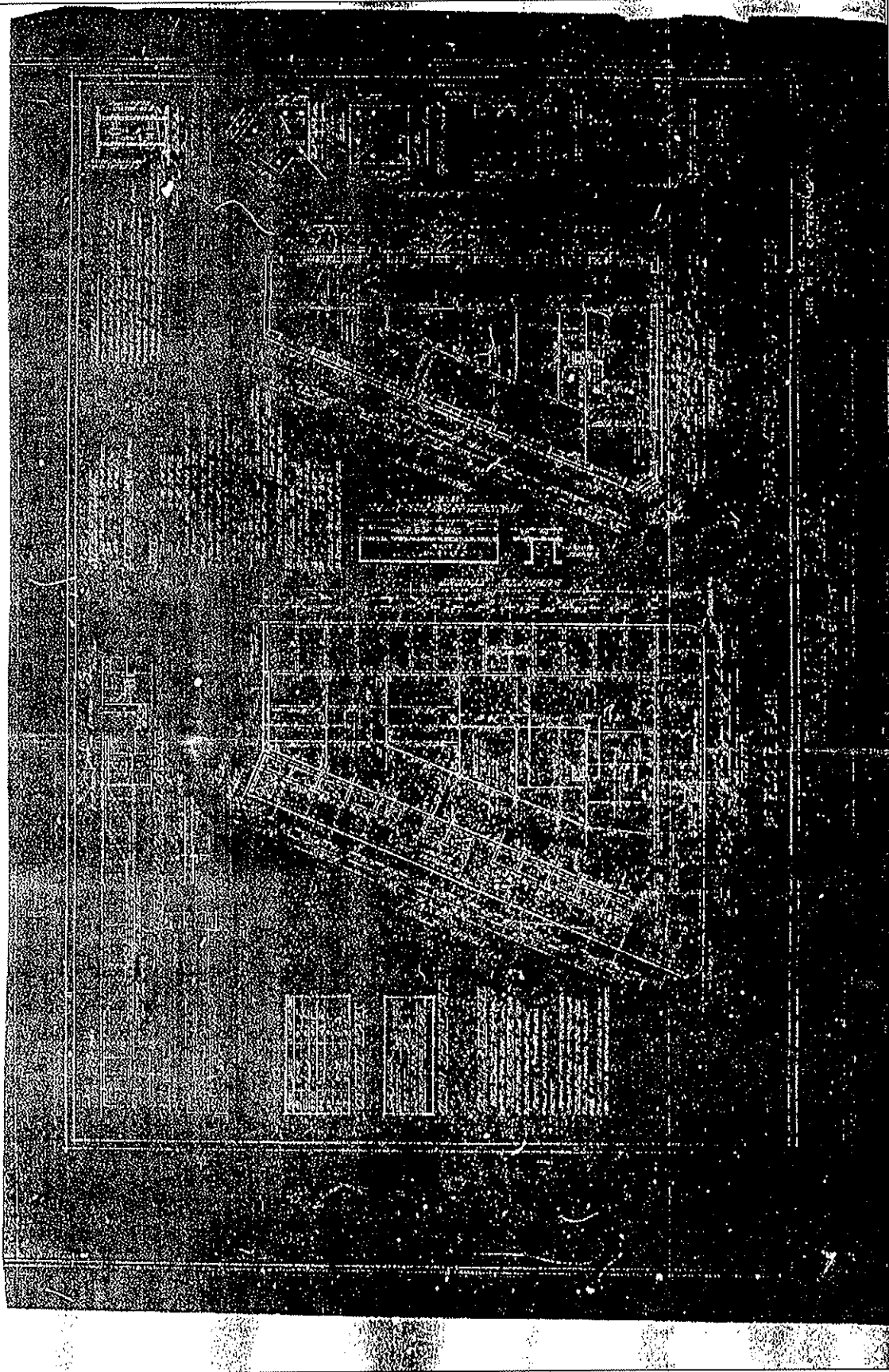
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3. Original building drawings, east and north facades, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W. Burnside

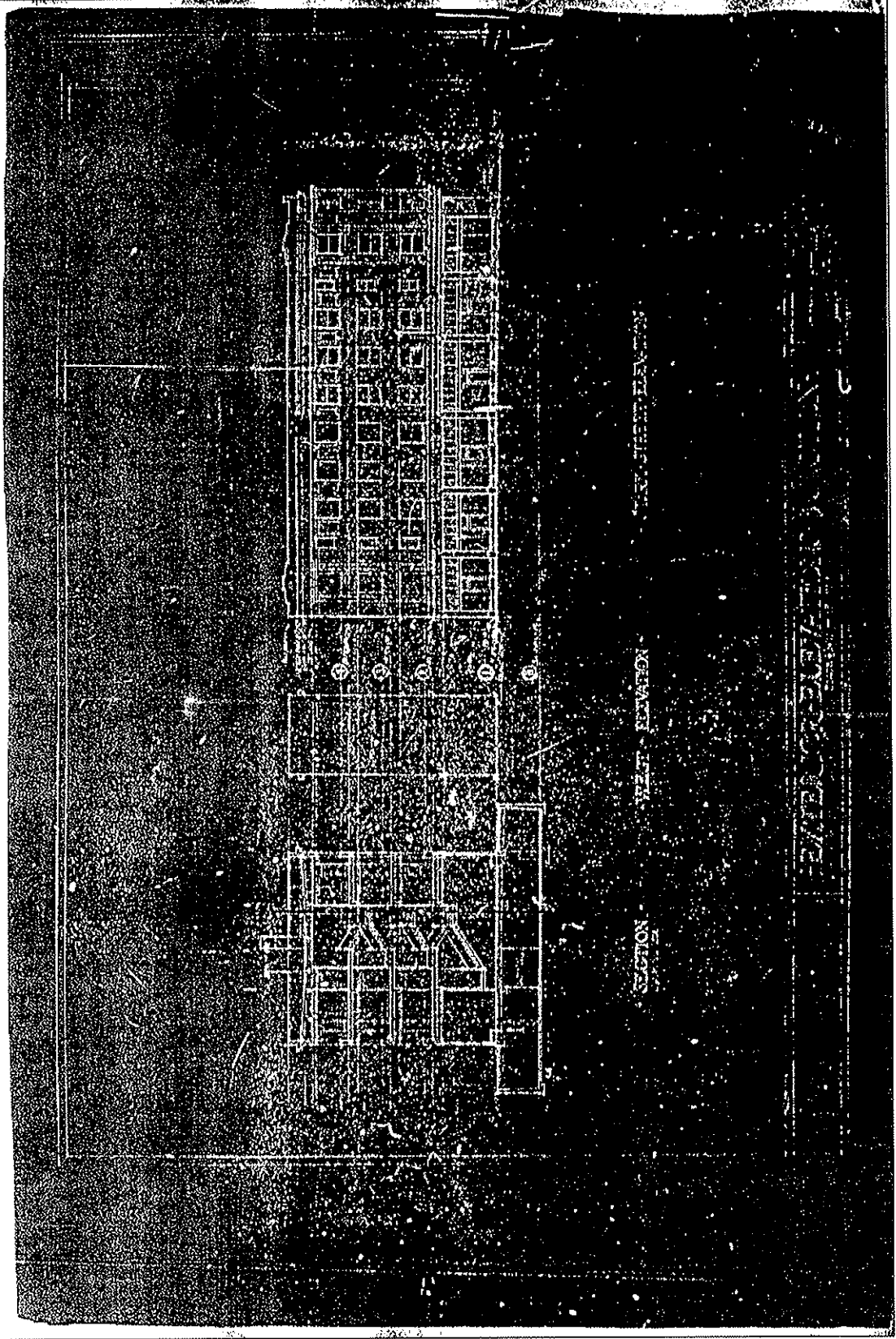
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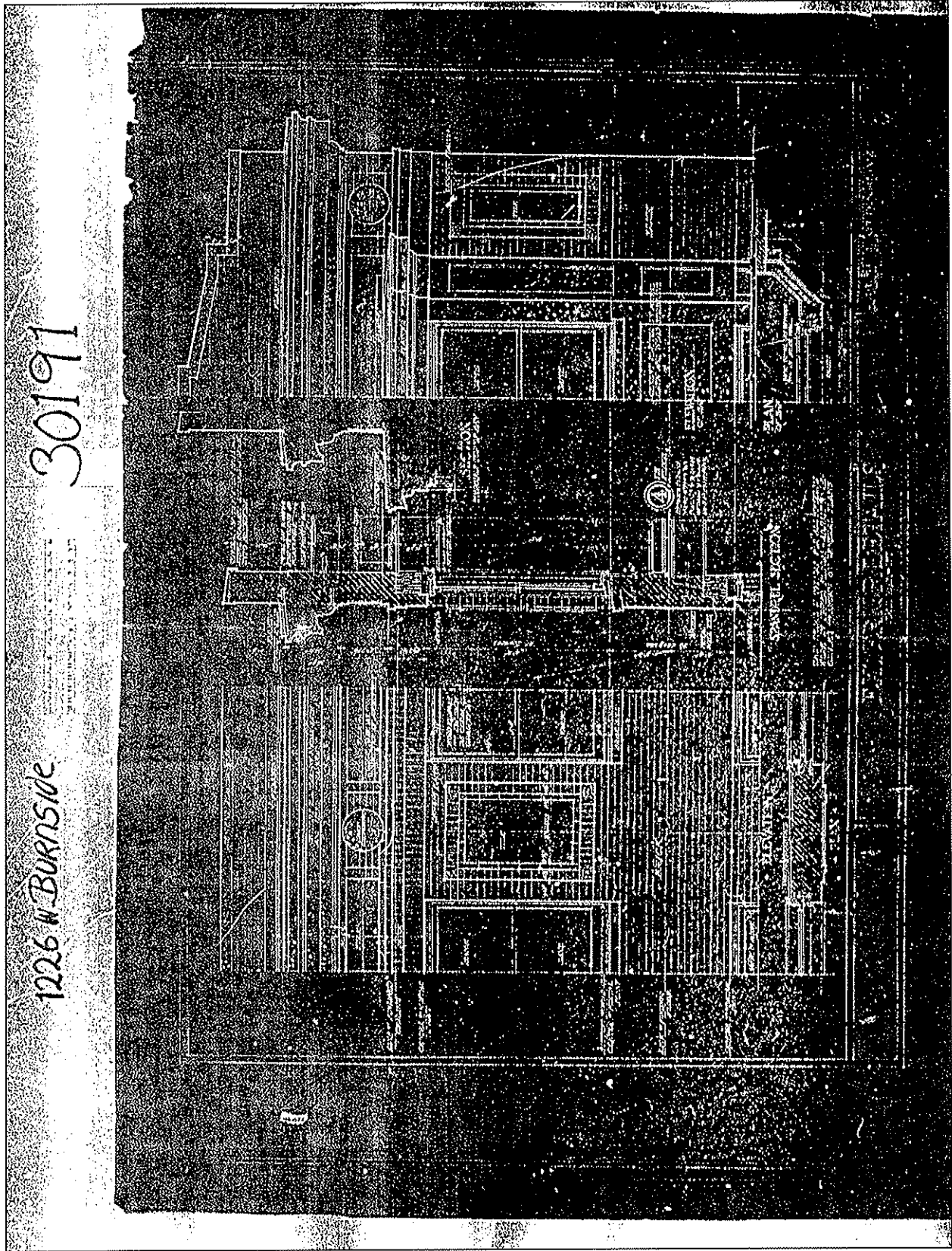
3-a. Original building drawings, 1st floor plan, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W. Burnside

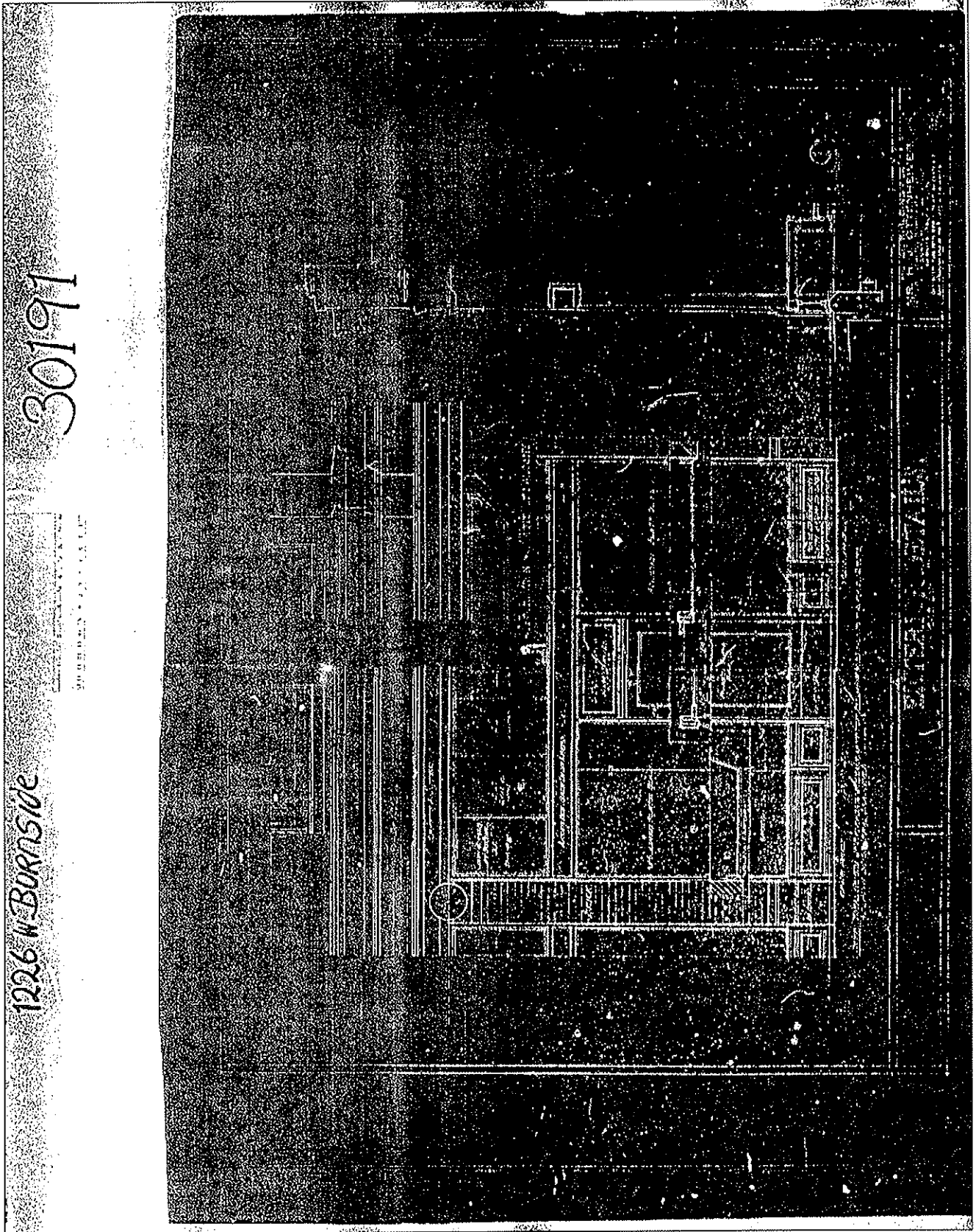
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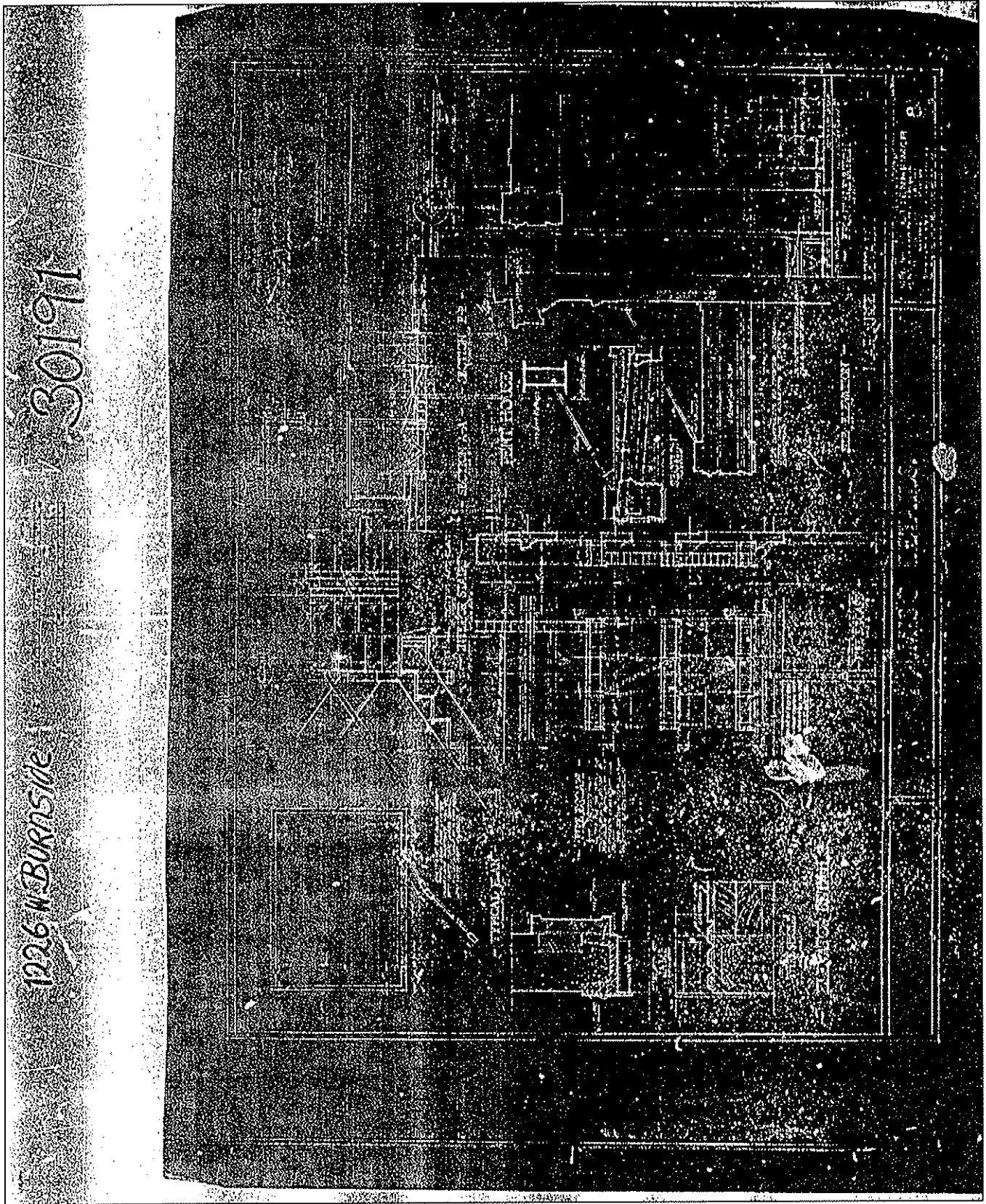
3-b. Original building drawings, Stark Street facade, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



3-c. Original building drawings, building details, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



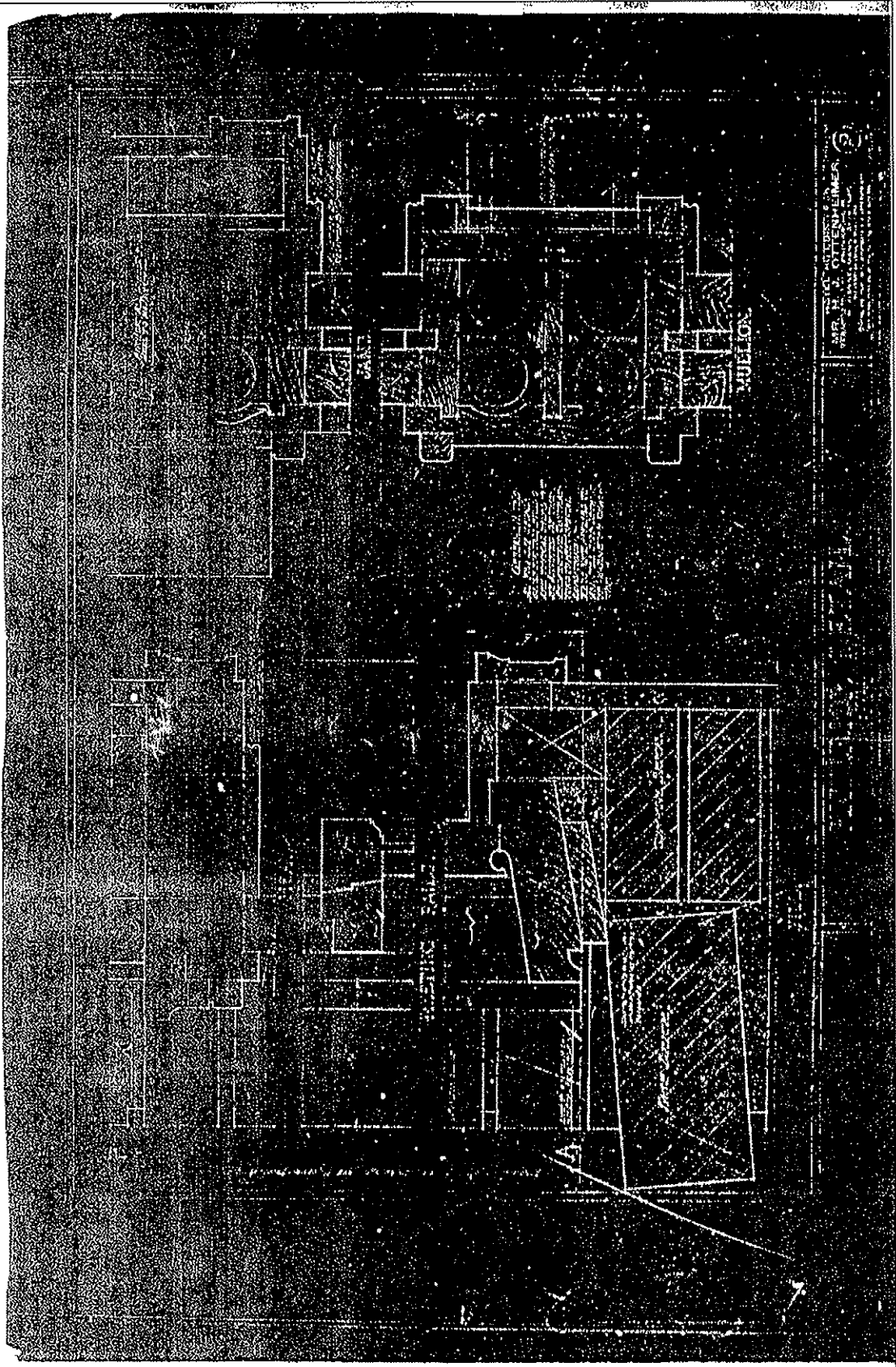
3-d. Original building drawings, storefront details, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



3-e. Original building drawings, miscellaneous details, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W. Burnside

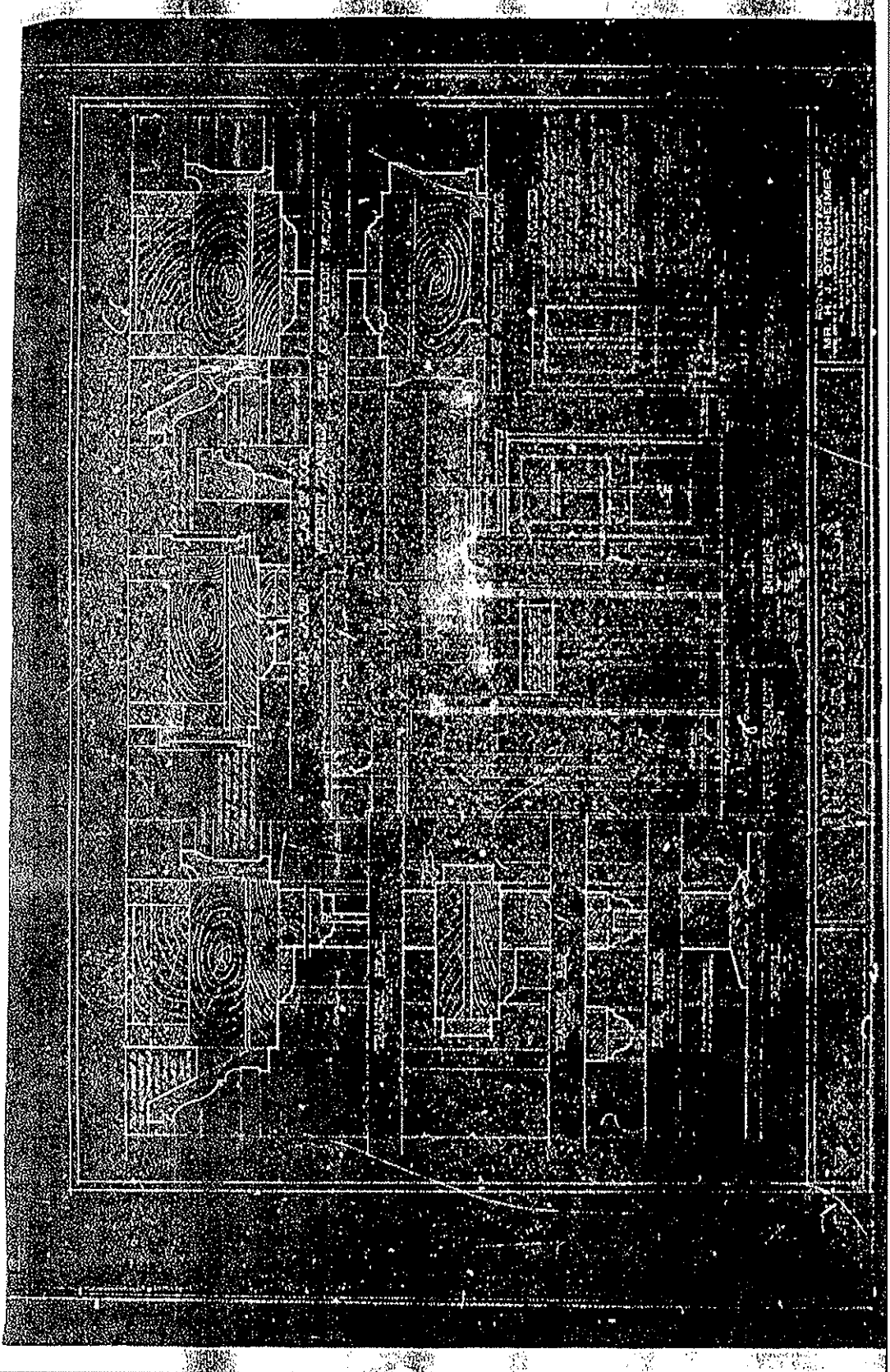
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3-f. Original building drawings, interior details, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

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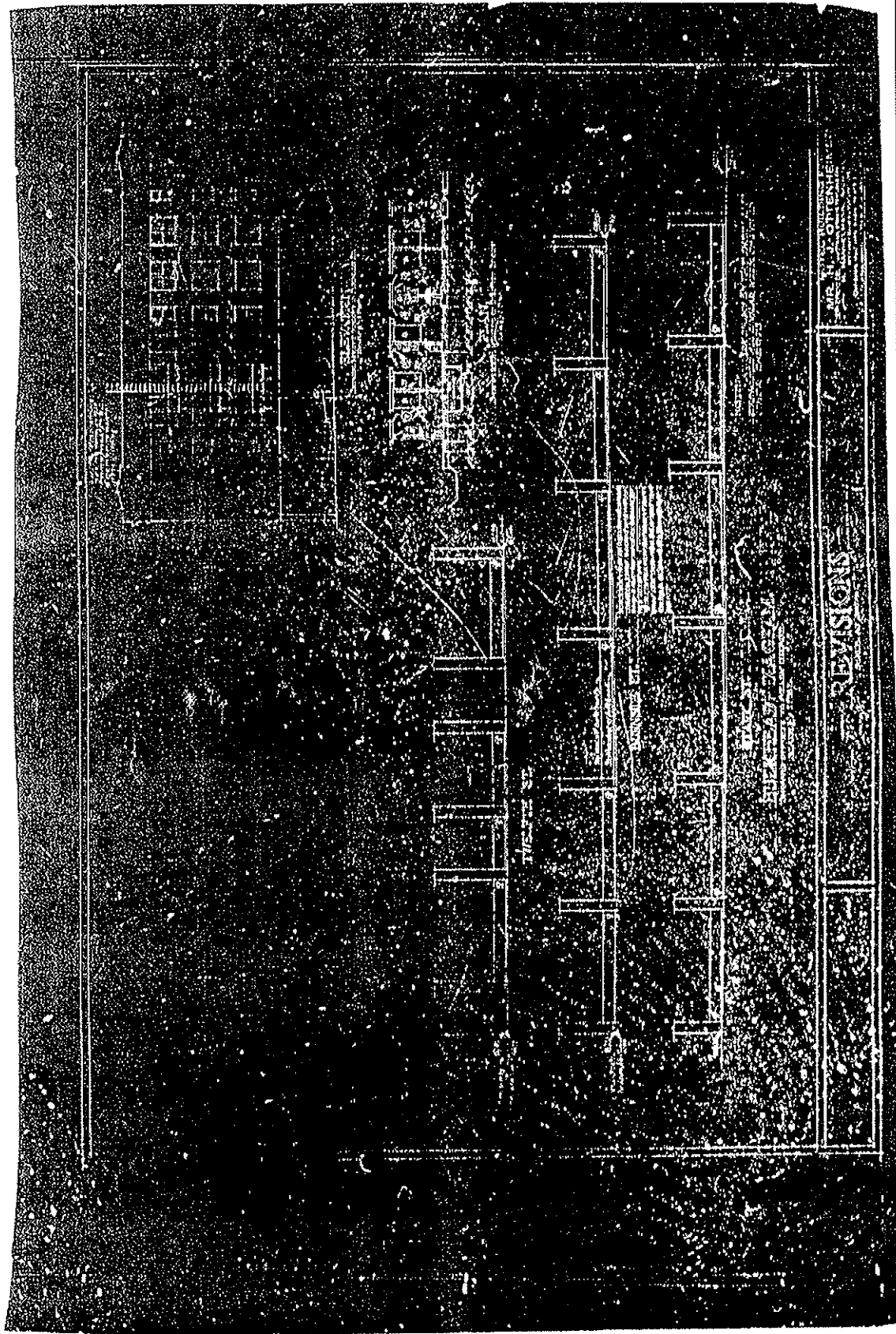
1226 W BURNSIDE



3-g. Original building drawings, interior details, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

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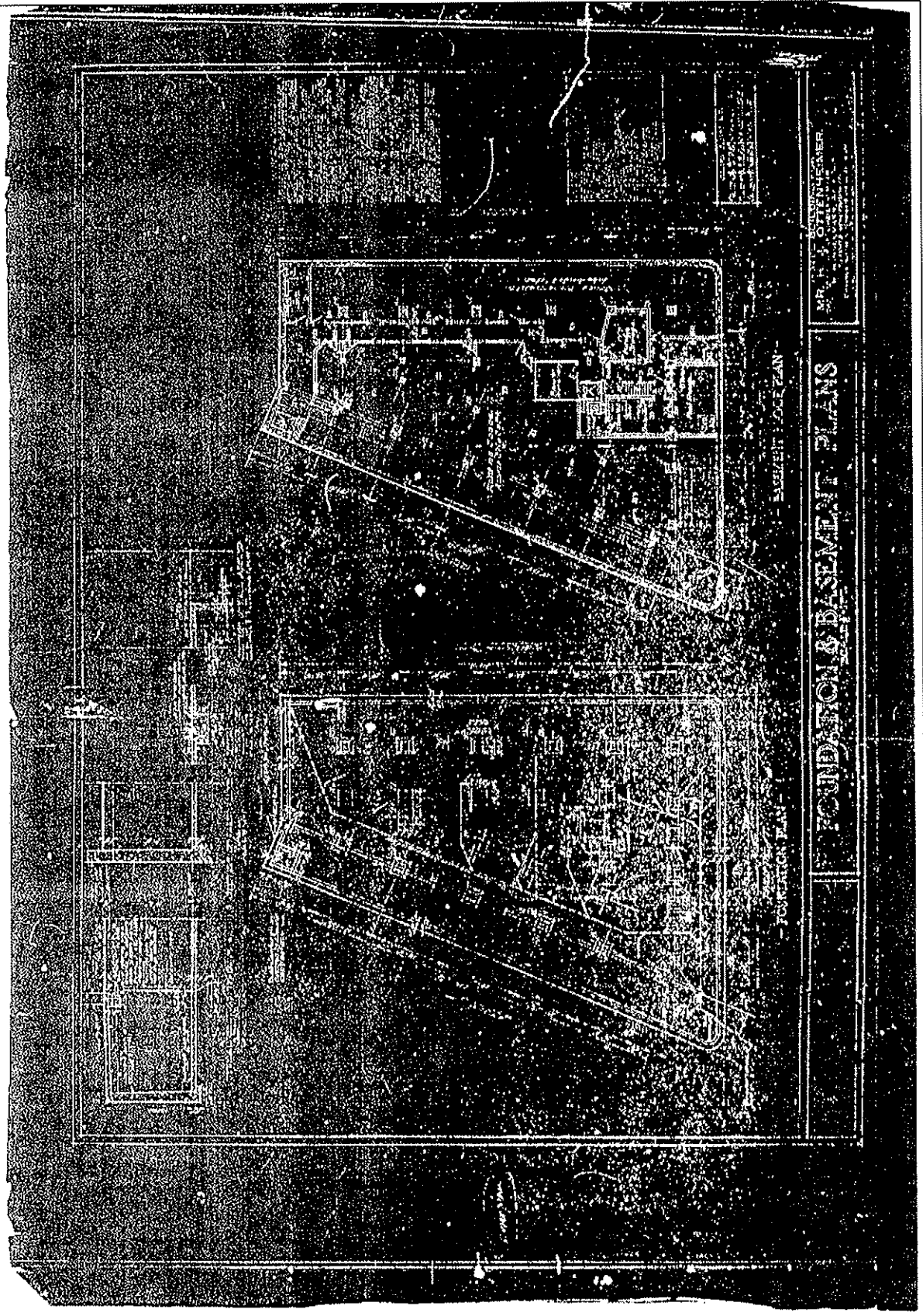
1226 W Burnside



3-h. Original building drawings, revisions, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W. Burnside

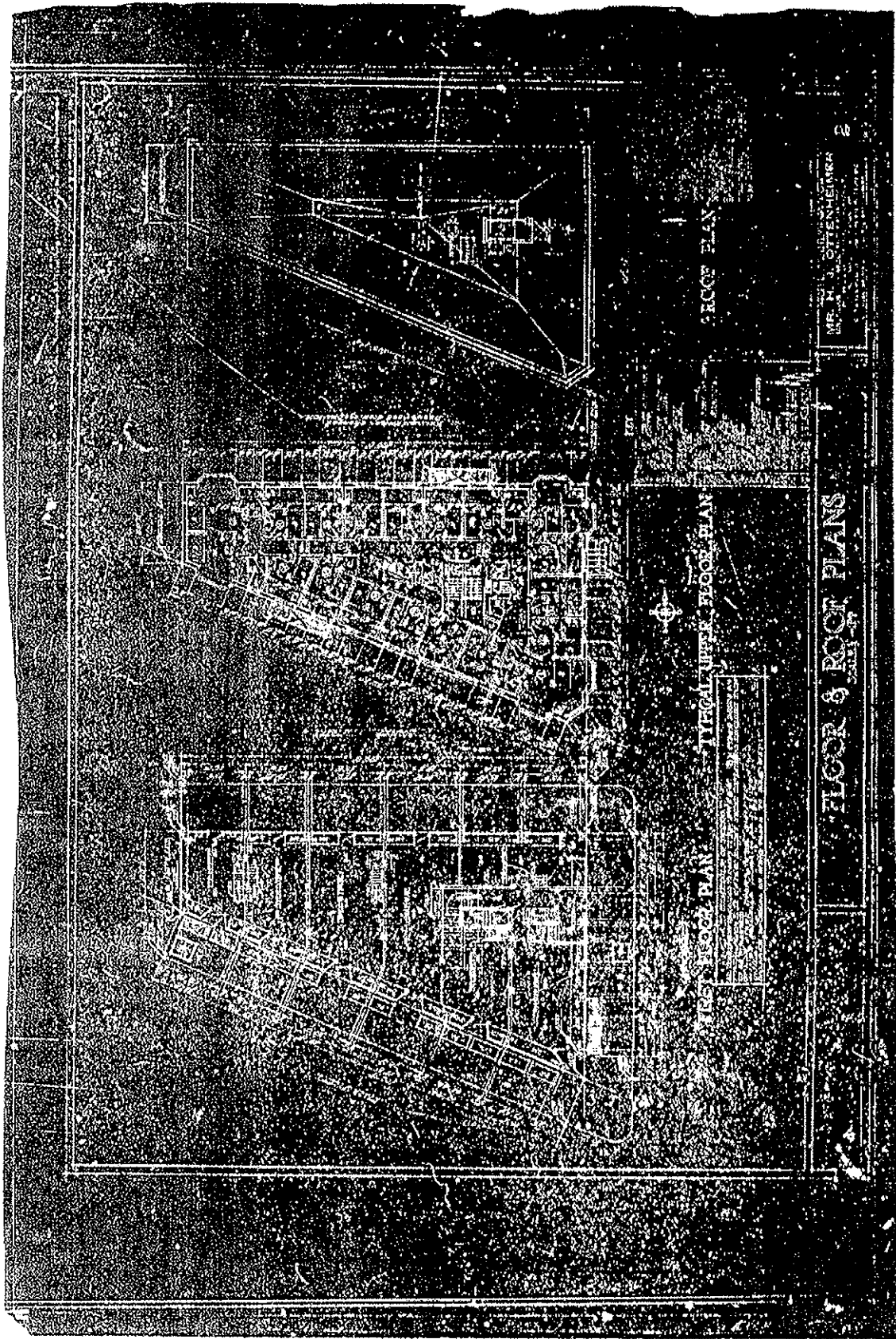
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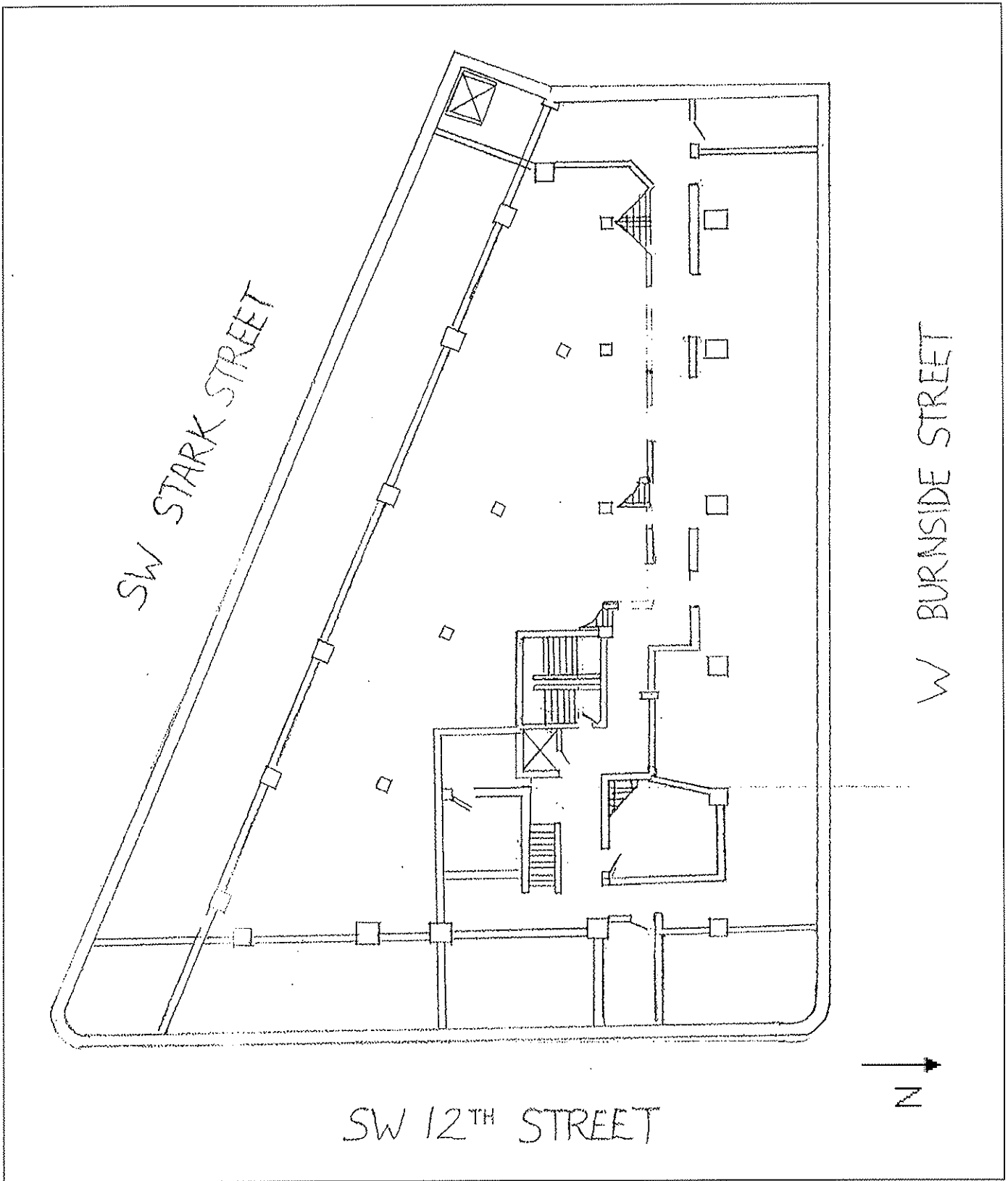
3-i. Original building drawings, foundation and basement plans, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

1226 W Burnside

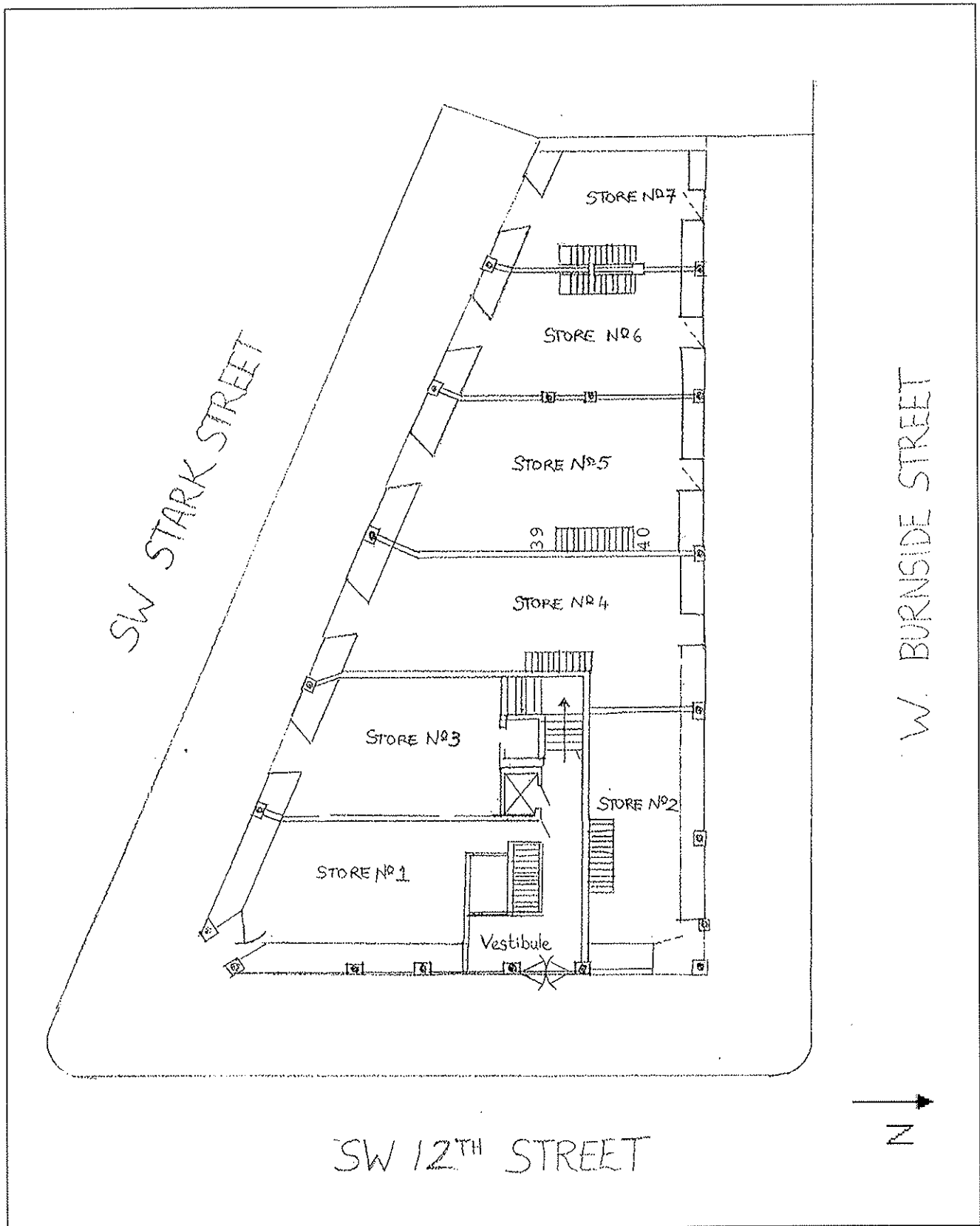
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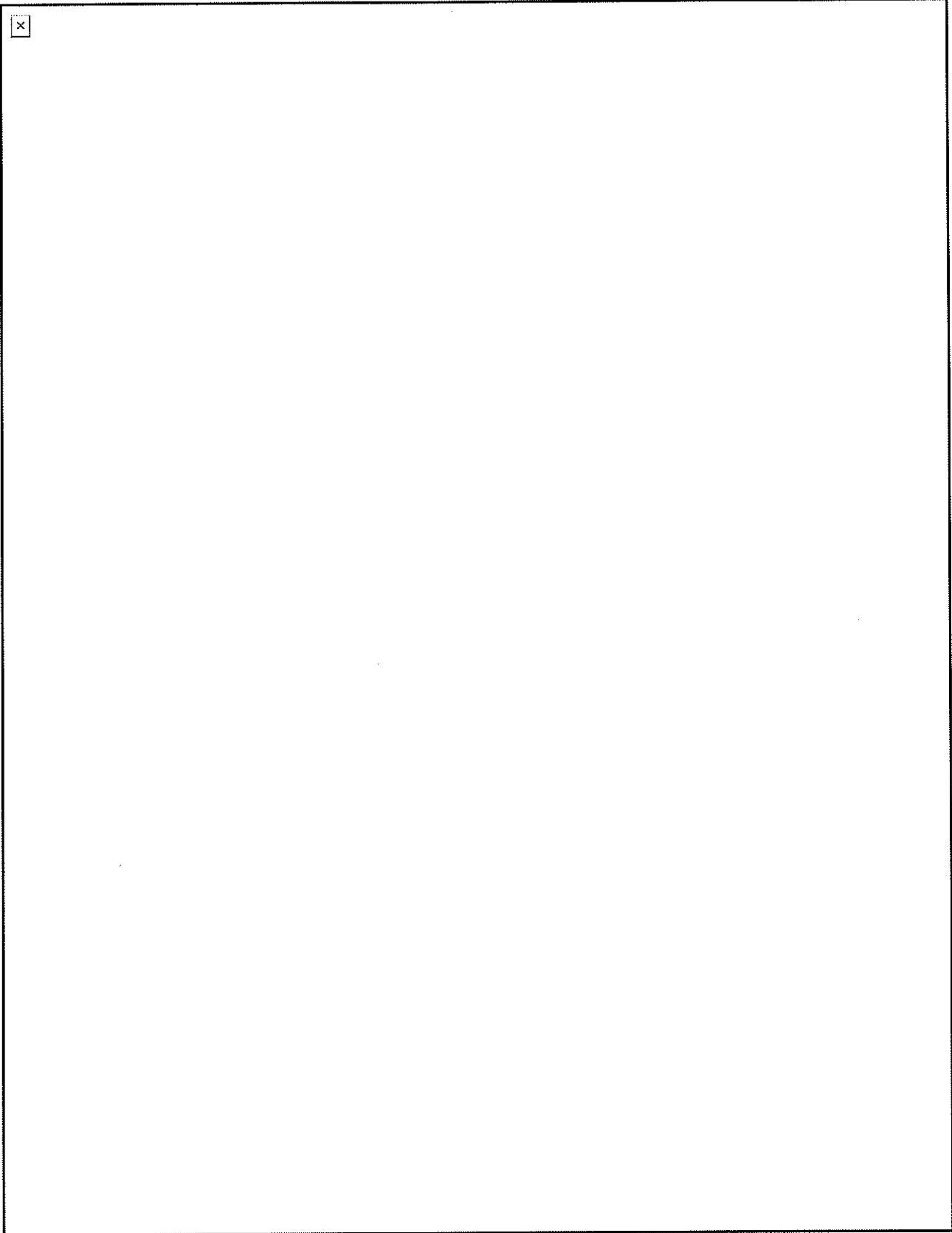
3-j. Original building drawings, floor and roof plans, c. 1911 for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



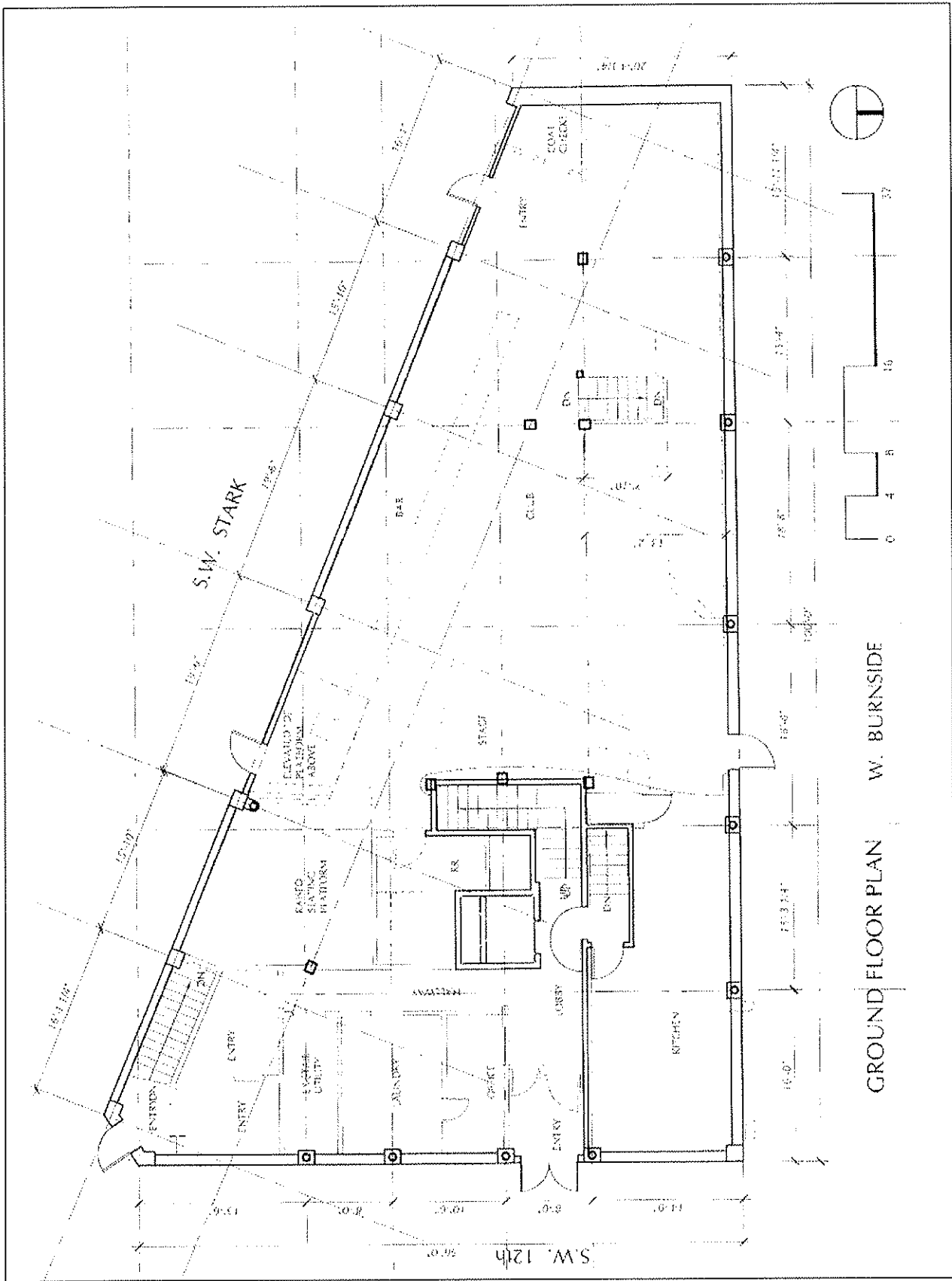
4. Original basement floor plan for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



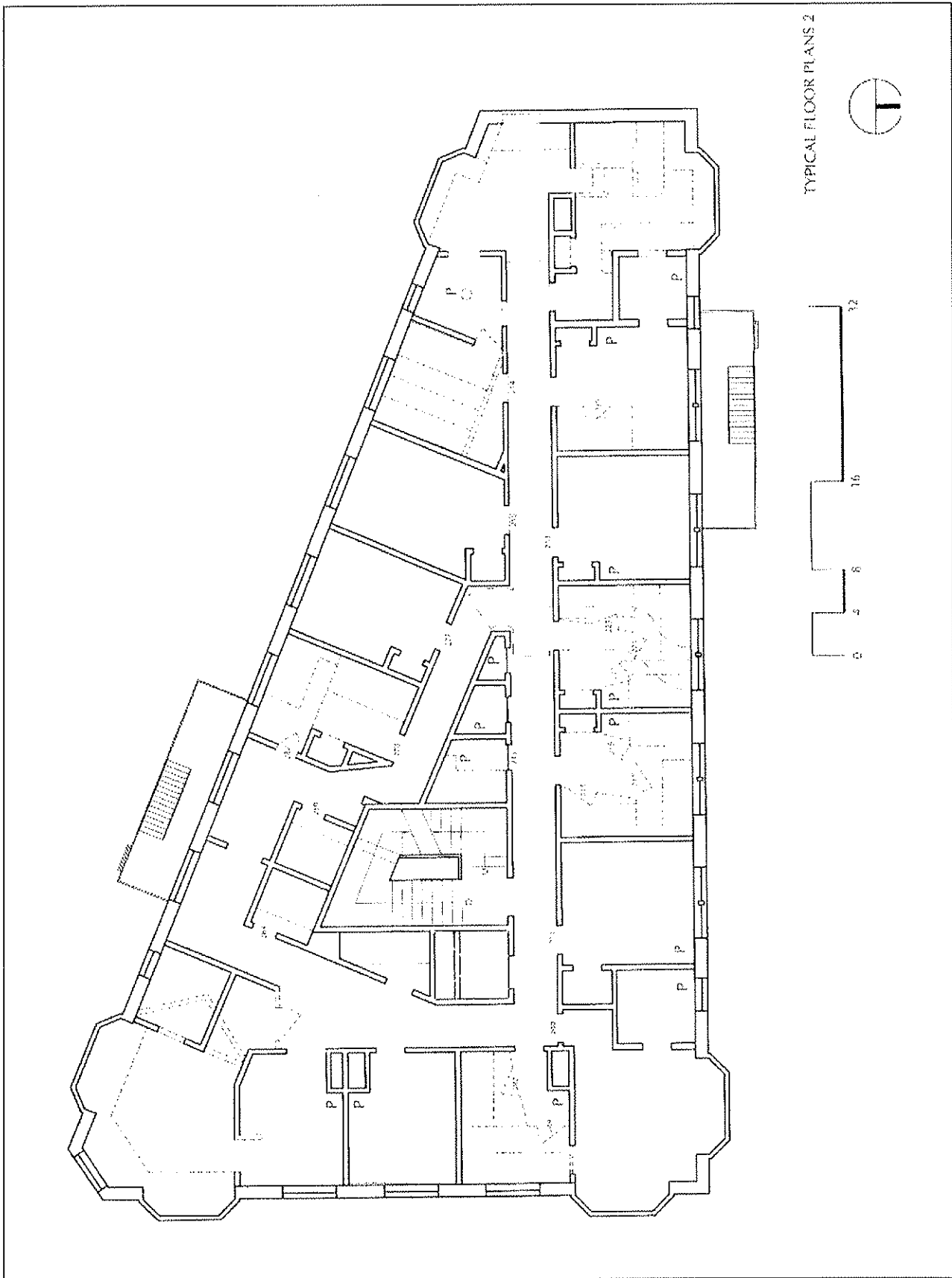
4-a. Original ground floor plan for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



4-b. Original 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floor plans for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



5. Existing floor plans for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



5-a. Existing floor plans for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



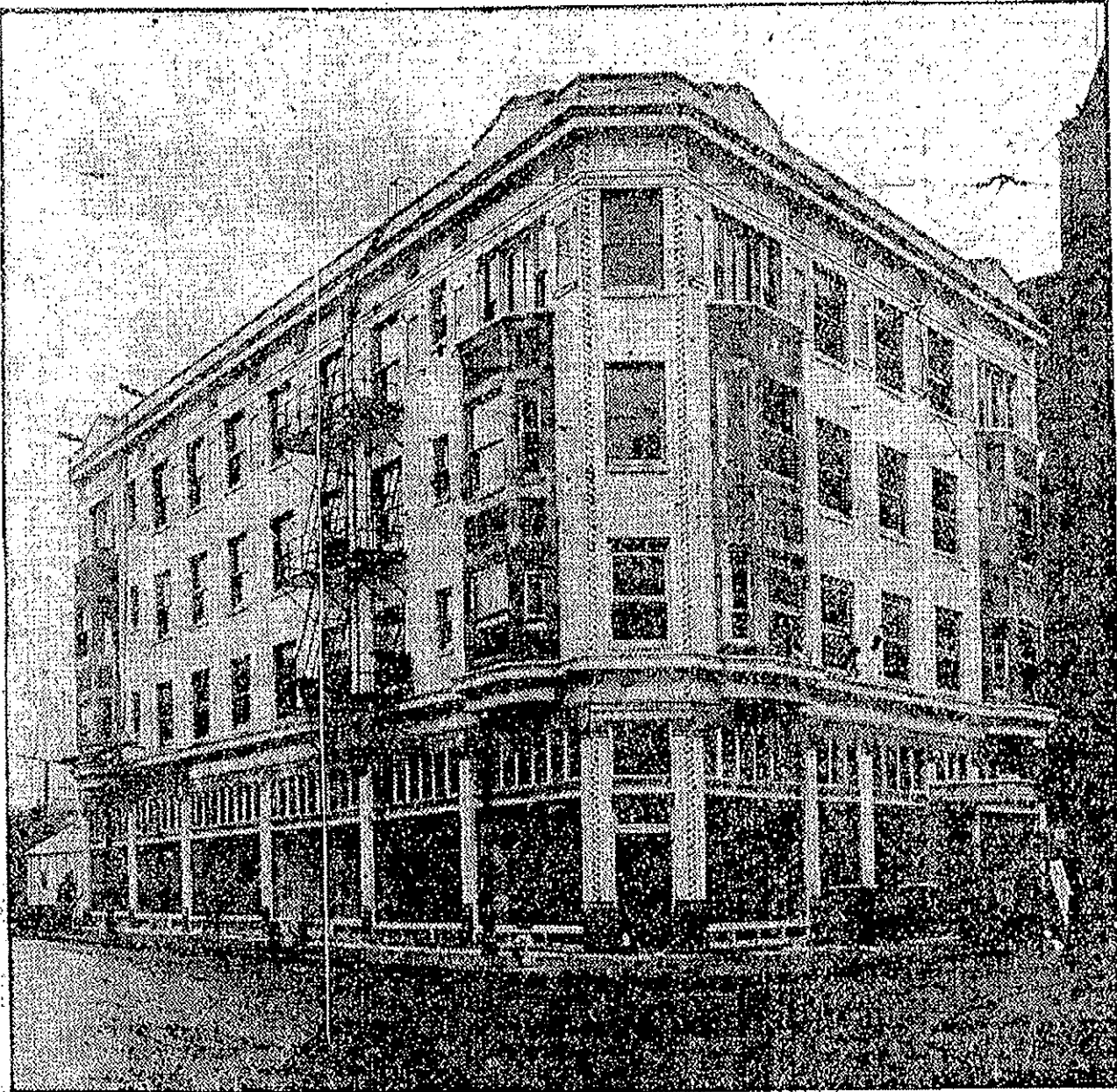
5-b. Existing floor plans for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



TYPICAL FLOOR PLANS

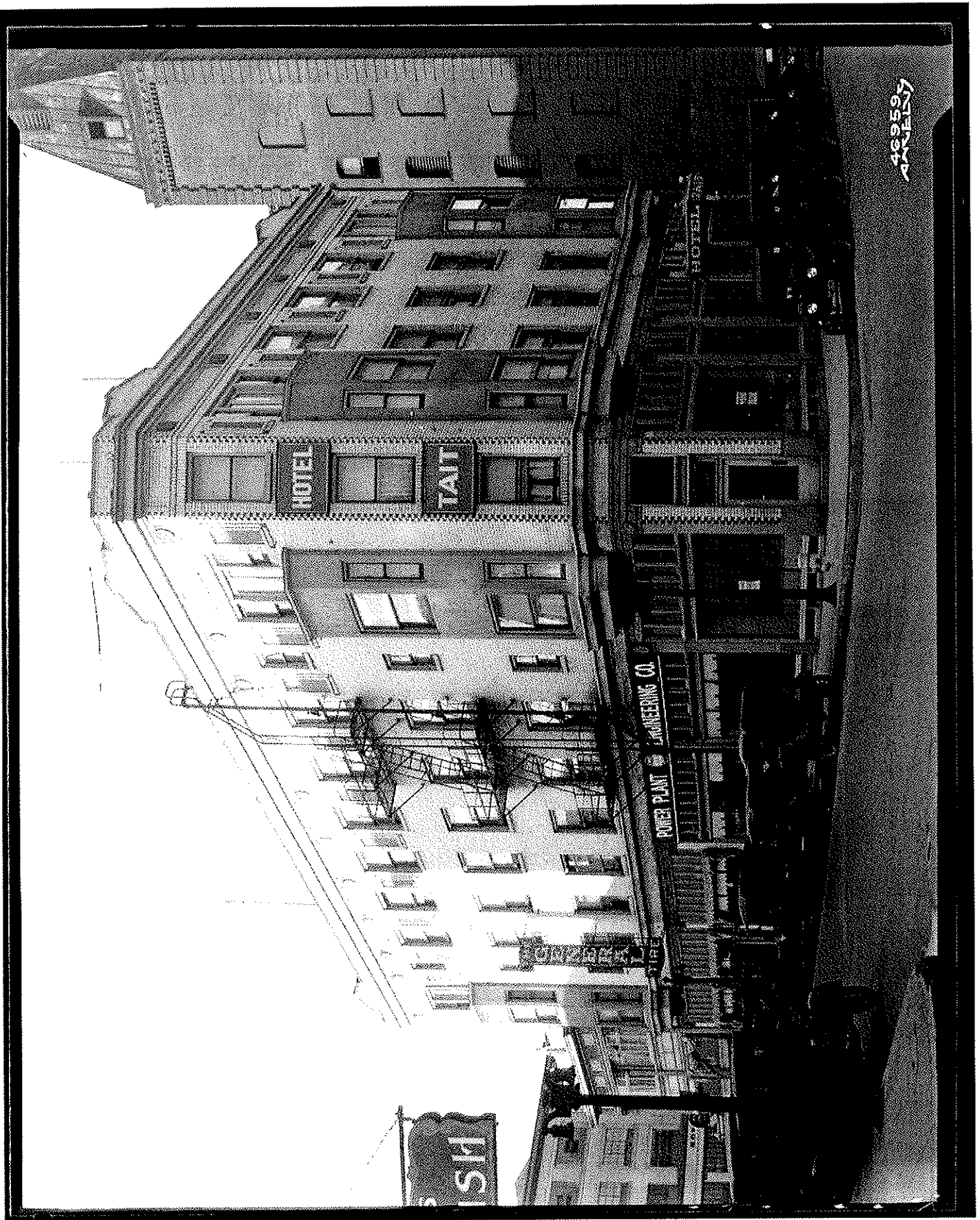
5-c. Existing floor plans for Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

TRIANGULAR SHAPED BUILDING RISES AT TWELFTH, STARK AND BURNSIDE STREETS.



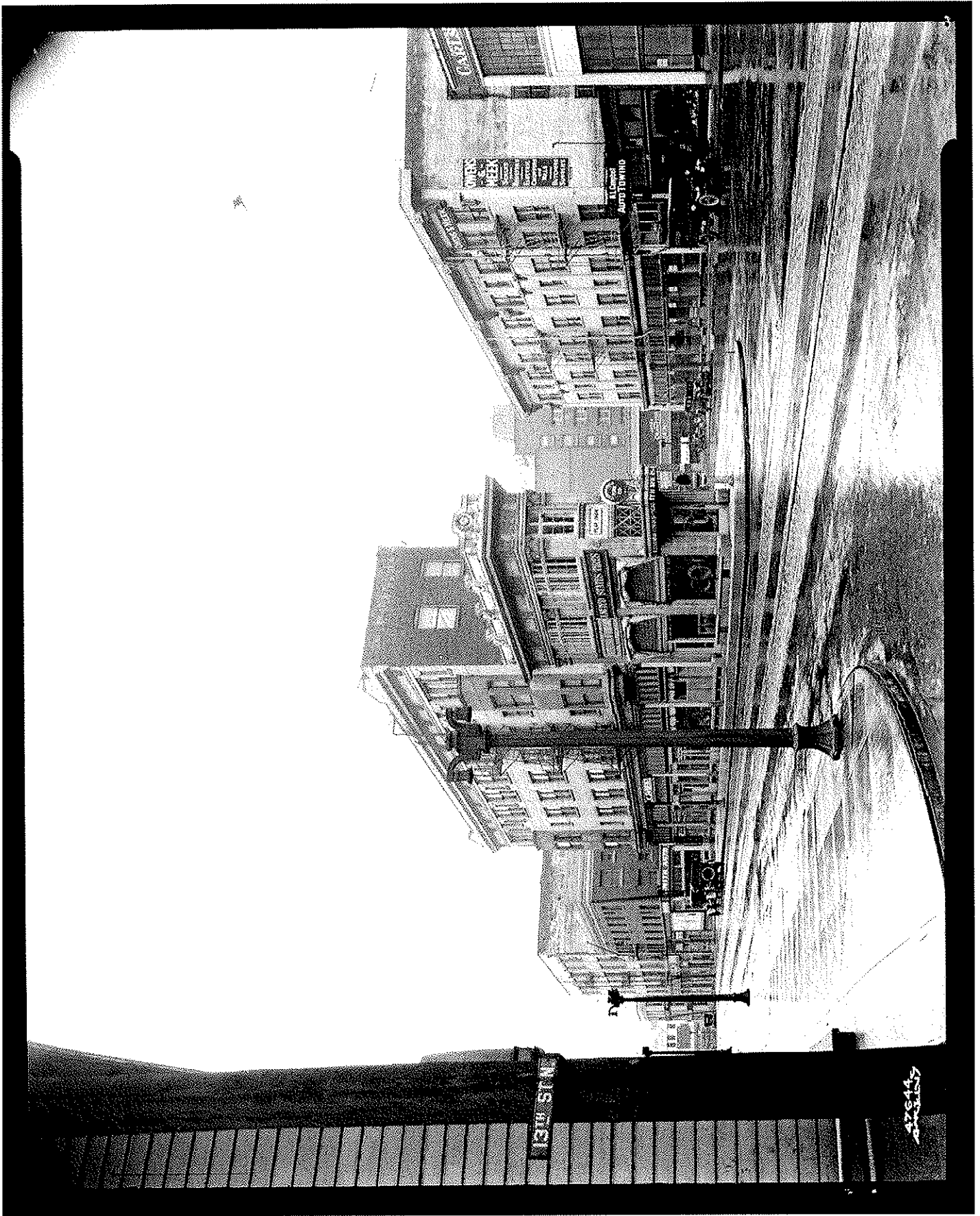
STRUCTURE TO BE OCCUPIED BY STORES AND HOTEL.

The four-story, triangular-shaped building rising at Twelfth, Stark and Burnside streets will be completed in the early part of December. The building is being constructed for H. J. Ottenheimer, and will cost about \$56,000. The ground floor will be occupied by stores and the upper stories will be used for hotel purposes. The building contains a full basement. The Leonard Construction Company is erecting the building.



46959
AMJELNY

7. 1925 photograph of Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



8. 1925 photograph of Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.



9. 1957 photograph of Hotel Alma, 1201-1217 SW Stark, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

Address: **Hotel Alma**
1201-1217 SW Stark Street
Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon 97205

Photographer: Heritage Consulting Group
1120 NW Northrup Street
Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon 97209

Date: March and April 2008

Ink and Paper: Epson Premium Glossy Paper with Epson Ultra Chrome K3 Pigmented Inks

Negative Location: Digital images, held by photographer and preparer

- 1 of 22: Exterior view: East and south facades, looking northwest.
- 2 of 22: Exterior view: East facade, looking west.
- 3 of 22: Exterior view: East facade, looking southwest
- 4 of 22: Exterior view: North and west facades, looking southeast.
- 5 of 22: Exterior view: South and west facades, looking east.
- 6 of 22: Exterior view: Southeast corner detail, looking northwest.
- 7 of 22: Exterior view: Southeast corner upper detail, looking northwest.
- 8 of 22: Exterior view: North facade, detail of typical window, looking south.
- 9 of 22: Interior view: Basement, looking northeast at west wall.
- 10 of 22: Interior view: Ground floor, looking southeast at west wall.
- 11 of 22: Interior view: Ground floor, looking northeast at southeast wall.
- 12 of 22: Interior view: Ground floor, looking west at stairs to upper floors.
- 13 of 22: Interior view: 2nd floor, looking west at north corridor.
- 14 of 22: Interior view: 2nd floor, looking northeast at northeast corner room.
- 15 of 22: Interior view: 2nd floor, looking into typical room.

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- 16 of 22: Interior view: 2nd floor, looking southwest at stairs to 3rd floor.
- 17 of 22: Interior view: 3rd floor, looking west at north corridor.
- 18 of 22: Interior view: 3rd floor, looking south into typical, north-side room.
- 19 of 22: Interior view: 3rd floor, looking into typical room entrance.
- 20 of 22: Interior view: Looking north on stairs between 3rd and 4th floors.
- 21 of 22: Interior view: 4th floor, looking west at north corridor.
- 22 of 22: Interior view: 4th floor, looking northeast into room at northeast corner.



01



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