

ORDINANCE NO. 28594

AN ORDINANCE to designate the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments, located at 20th to 23rd and Jones Street as a Landmark Heritage District pursuant to the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

Section 1. That the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments are located at 20th to 23rd and Jones Street, which is legally described as follows:

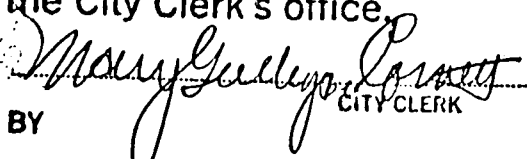
Beginning at the Northwest corner of Lot 7 of Clarkson Place Addition, an addition to the City of Omaha as surveyed, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska, thence Easterly 310.59 feet along the North lines of Lots 7 through 12 of said Clarkson Place, thence Southerly along the West right-of-way line of 20th Street a distance of 361.23 feet, thence West along a line 153.56 feet North of and parallel to the North line of Leavenworth Street to the East right-of-way line of 22nd Street, thence South along said right-of-way line a distance of 55.06 feet, thence West along a line 103.5 feet North of and parallel to the North line of Leavenworth Street a distance of 313.5 feet, thence North to the Southeast corner of Lot 5 of Hillcrest Addition, an addition to the City of Omaha as surveyed, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska, thence East 247 feet to the West right-of-way line of 22nd Street, thence North 40.62 feet, thence East 367.85 feet, thence North to the point of beginning.

Section 2. That for the reasons recited in Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission Resolution attached hereto as Exhibit I, and made a part hereof as if fully set forth herein, the architectural characteristics of the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments are hereby deemed significant and worthy of preservation.

Section 3. That the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments are hereby designated pursuant to Section 4.16.080 of the Omaha Municipal Code, and hereby subject to all of the provisions of the Landmark Heritage Preservation Ordinance of the City of Omaha.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the original document now on file in the City Clerk's office.

BY


  
CITY CLERK

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
PAGE 2

Section 4. That this Ordinance shall be in full force and take effect fifteen (15) days from and after the date of its passage.

INTRODUCED BY COUNCILMEMBER

*Steve Rosenblatt*

APPROVED:

*Lee Veng*

12-21-78

MAYOR OF THE CITY OF OMAHA DATE

PASSED DEC 19 1978

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

*Laurie M. Benis*  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK OF THE CITY OF OMAHA

*Ken S. ...*  
ASST CITY ATTORNEY

599/3

RESOLUTION - EXHIBIT I  
DRAKE COURT LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION  
LANDMARK HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

RESOLVED BY THE LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

WHEREAS, Theodore Hazer and Robert Rulis are the owners of the Drake Court and the Dartmore Apartments; and,

WHEREAS, these owners, on September 9, 1978, requested that the Drake Court and the Dartmore Apartments be designated as a Landmark Heritage District under the City of Omaha's Landmarks Heritage Preservation Ordinance; and,

WHEREAS, the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments were designed, financed and constructed by William B. Drake's Drake Realty Construction Company from 1916 to 1921; and,

WHEREAS, the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments represent a total investigation of the popular domestic Georgian Revival style of architecture; and,

WHEREAS, the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments are historically related with William B. Drake, Omaha's "Apartment House King" who was once landlord to over 1,000 Omaha families.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LANDMARKS HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF OMAHA:

THAT, the Drake Court Apartments, 2005 to 2046 Jones Street, together with the Dartmore Apartments, 2201 to 2211 Jones Street, be designated as a Landmark Heritage District of the City of Omaha.

Landmarks Heritage Preservation Commission

APPLICATION FOR LANDMARK OR LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION

NAME OF STRUCTURE

Historic Drake Court Apartments and the Duitmore Apartments  
and/or Common  
Drake Court Apartments and the Drake Court Annex

LOCATION

Street and Number 2005, 06, 11, 12, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 39, 40, 45 & 46 Jones Street; 2201, 03, 05, 07, 09 & 11 Jones Street

CLASSIFICATION

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District	Public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied	Agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> Building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private	<input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied	Commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Work in Progress	Educational
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	Public Acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> Accessible	Entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> Object	In Process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: Restricted	Government
		<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Unrestricted	Industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> No	Military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other
			Apartments

OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name Dracor Inc.; Robert A. Rulis Phone Number 342-2805; 345-3320

Street and Number 701 South 22nd Street; 12815 Dewey Street

City, State and Zip Code Omaha, NE 68102; Omaha, NE 68154

Representative Theodore Hazer; same Phone Number 342-2805

Street and Number 701 South 22nd Street; same

City, State and Zip Code Omaha, NE 68102; same

LEGAL DESCRIPTION Beginning at the northwest corner of Lot 7 of Clarkson Place Addition, an addition to the City of Omaha as surveyed, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska, thence easterly 310.59 feet along the north lines of Lots 7 thru 12 of said Clarkson Place, thence southerly along the west right-of-way line of 20th Street a distance of 361.23 feet, thence west along a line 153.56 feet north of and parallel to the north line of Leavenworth Street to the east right-of-way line of 22nd Street, thence south along said right-of-way line a distance of 55.06 feet, thence west along a line 103.5 feet north of and parallel to the north line of Leavenworth Street a distance of 313.5 feet, thence north to the southeast corner of Lot 5 of Hillcrest Addition, an addition to the City of Omaha as surveyed, platted and recorded in Douglas County, Nebraska, thence east 247 feet to the west right-of-way line of 22nd Street, thence north 40.62 feet, thence east 367.85 feet, thence north to the point of beginning.

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

Title Omaha City Architecture, Landmarks Inc.

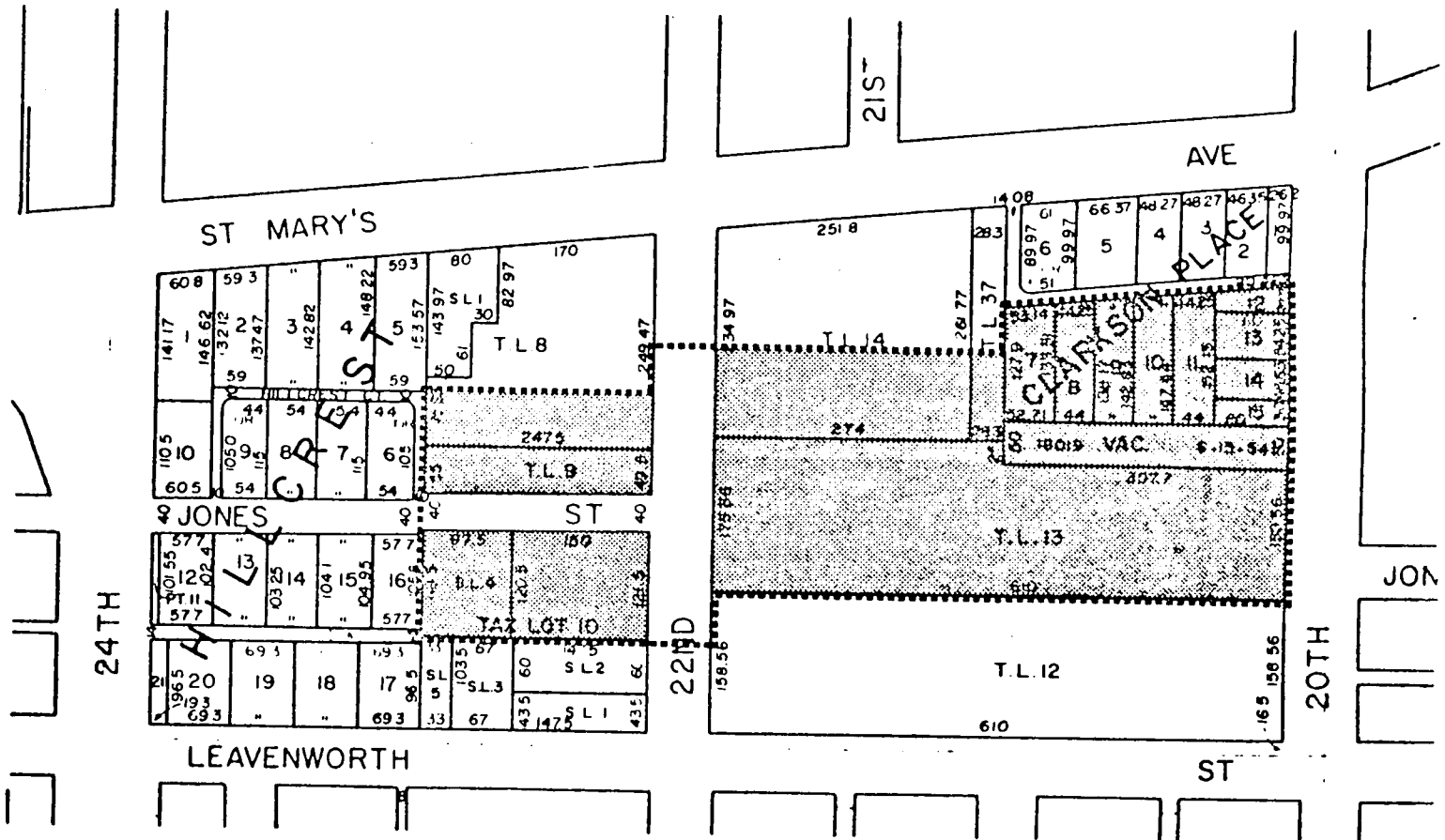
Date 1977 Federal State County  Local

Title: Omaha City Planning Department Historic Structure Survey

Date: 1978

  X   Local

LHPC Case No. H2-78-8, APPLICANT Hazer and Rulis request LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT DESIGNATION for 20TH to 23RD and Jones Street (Drake Court and Drake Court Annex). Area to be designated is within dotted line.



SCALE: 1" = 200'

THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY PETITION THE CITY COUNCIL  
 OF THE CITY OF OMAHA TO BE INCLUDED WITHIN A  
 LANDMARK HERITAGE DISTRICT TO BE CREATED PURSUANT  
 TO SECTION 4.16.080 OF THE OMAHA MUNICIPAL CODE

Name

Date

Property & Ownership  
 Interest

*(Signature)*  
 Pres.  
*(Signature)*

9-12-78

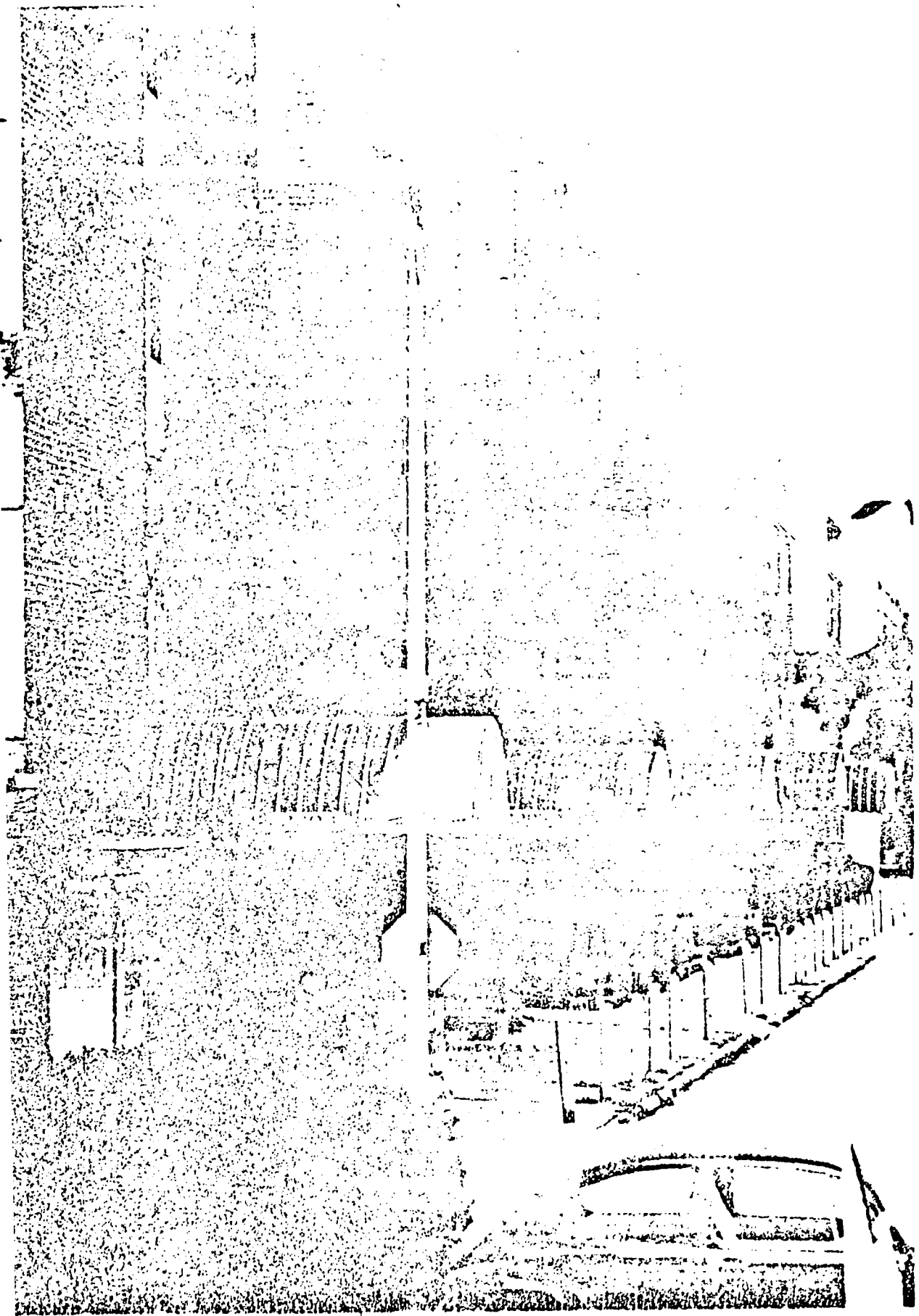
Wrahe Court - Drexman  
 Corp

9-12-78

EASTRIDGE APARTMENTS  
 ROBERT A. POLI.  
 (SOLE-OWNER)

POOR INSTRUMENT FILED

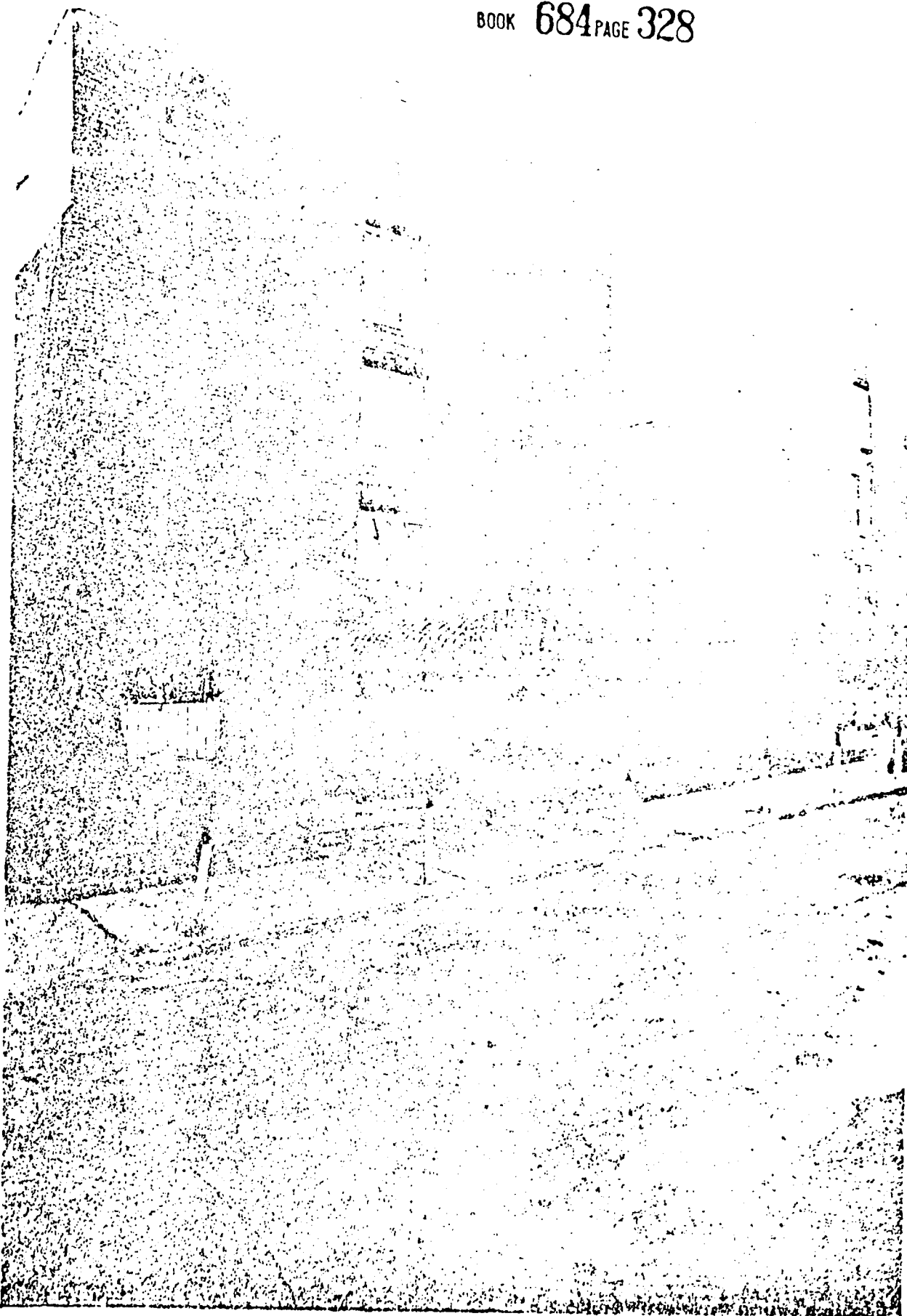
BOOK 684 PAGE 327





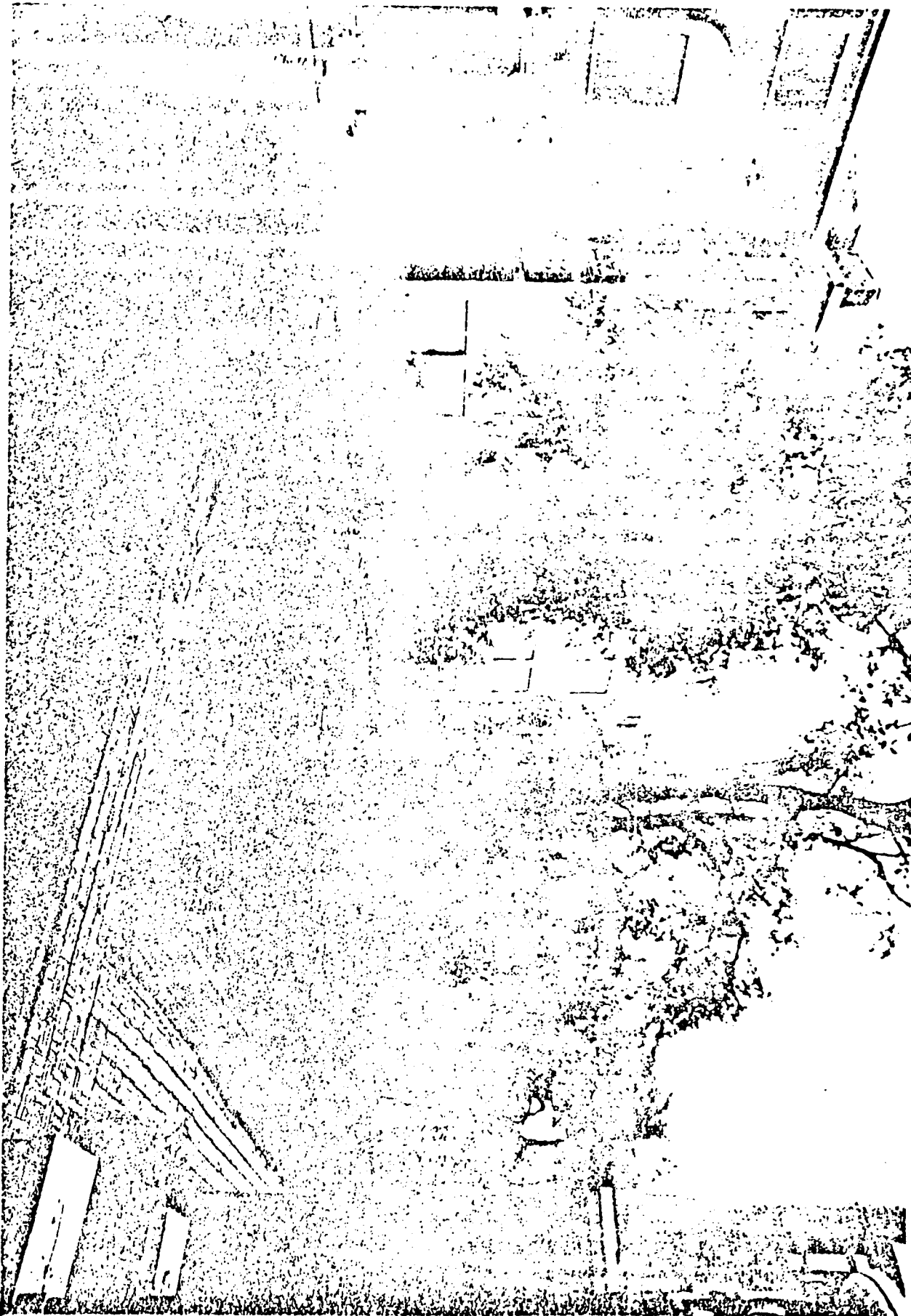
**POOR INSTRUMENT FILED**

BOOK 684 PAGE 328



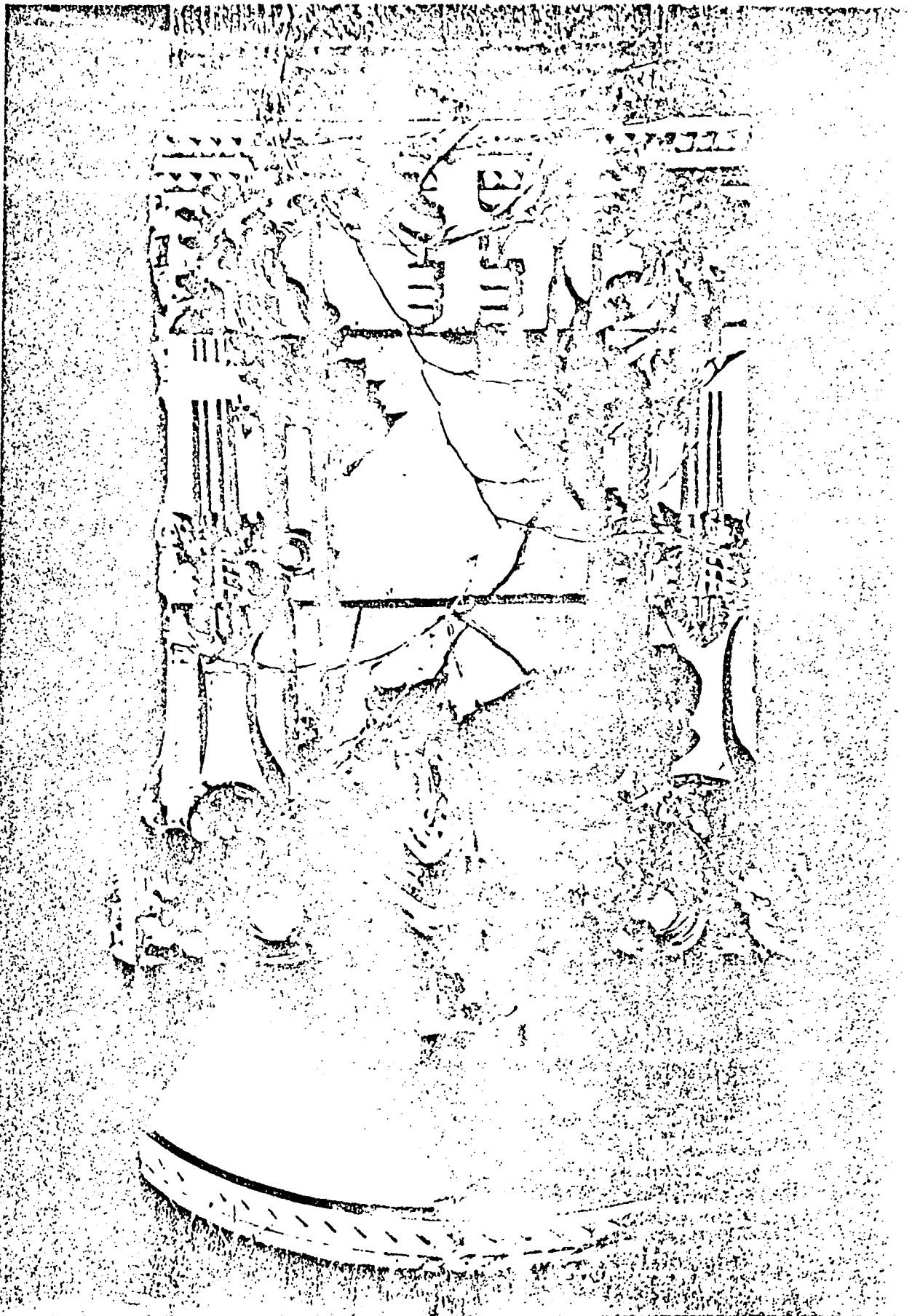
POOR INSTRUMENT FILED

BOOK 684 PAGE 329



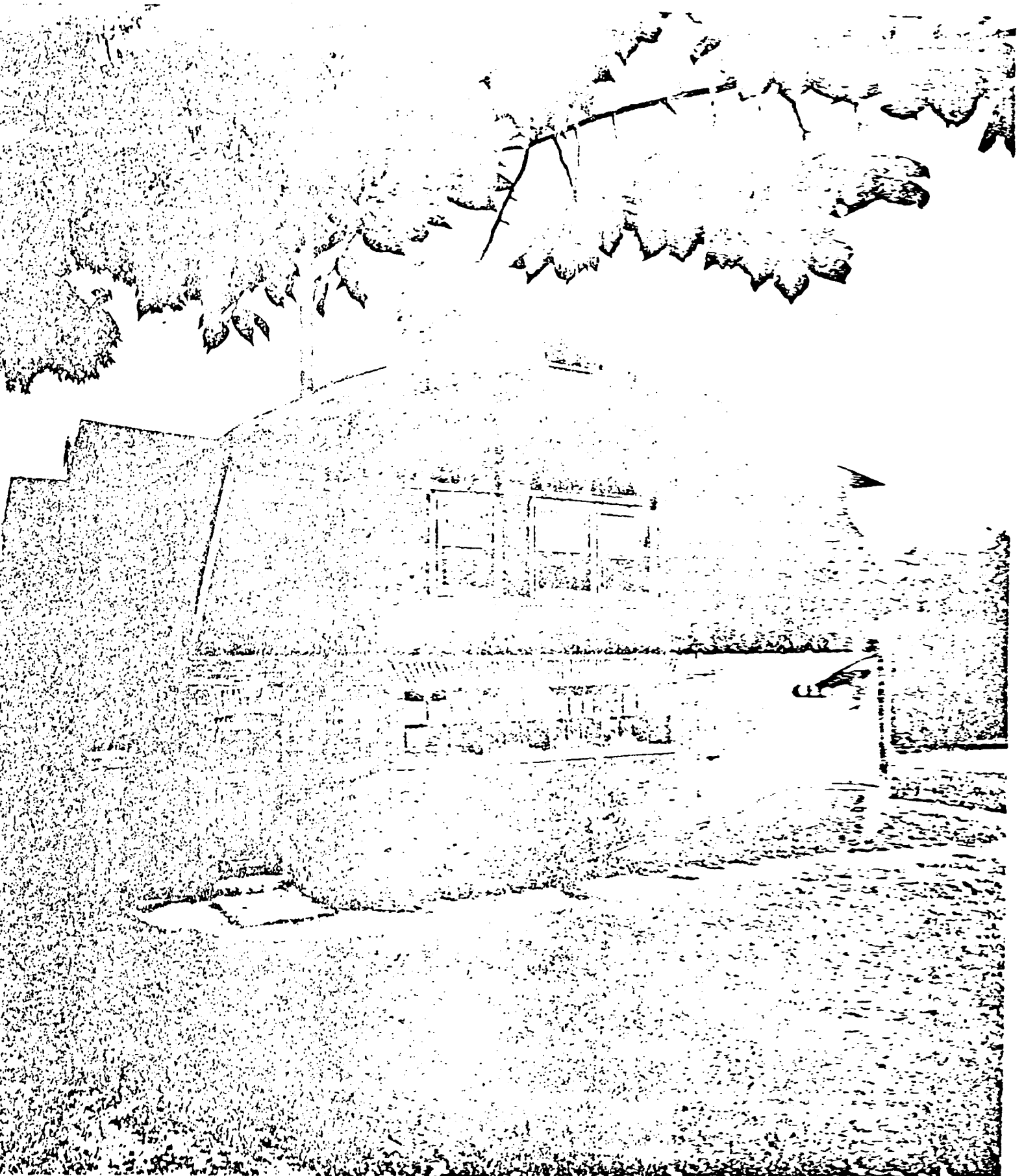
POOR INSTRUMENT FILE

BOOK 684 PAGE 330



# POOR INSTRUMENT FILED

BOOK 684 PAGE 331



# POOR INSTRUMENT FILE

BOOK 684 PAGE 332

## DESCRIPTION

Constructed over a five year period, 1916 to 1921, the complex of nineteen apartment buildings which comprise the Drake Court and Dartmore Apartments constitutes the last consistent street architecture that Omaha has had. Designed, financed and constructed by William B. Drake's Drake Realty Construction Company at a total cost of \$810,000, the unified arrangement of these residential structures around landscaped pedestrian areas represents a total investigation of the popular domestic Georgian Revival style of architecture. The district's Georgian Revival plan is marked by regularity and exaggerated symmetry and successfully fulfills the developer's requirement to produce a cohesive and identifiable unit from the various facades.

Initial construction during 1916 and 1917 centered at 22nd and Jones Streets. There, six three-story over raised basement concrete apartment buildings were erected at a cost of \$150,000 and were arranged so that three structures aligned with the northern right-of-way of Jones Street and three with the southern. Between the red brick faced structures, a gateway filled with wrought iron and flanked by well-proportioned piers of brick allowed access to a small landscaped formal garden complete with two gazebos. The facades terminate in a well-designed white terra-cotta cornice and brick parapet which, in conjunction with the white flat-headed window frames, give pleasant relief to the red brickwork. The main central Georgian doorway is the special feature of the facade -- brick pilasters support a keystone, round arch opening above which is located a double arched window surrounded by a round brick architecture.

By mid 1917, the corporation had initiated the second phase of construction -- two facing four-story over-raised basement apartment complexes located directly to the east of the original units. Erected at a cost of \$150,000, a large terraced formal garden separates the two continuous red brick facades. Terra-cotta embellishments are concentrated to the sun porches which encroach upon the gardens and break the smooth regularity of the facade. Again, the central doorways of the three-part facade is the major feature. Brick columns, capped with mildly Prairie Style terra-cotta, rise  $1\frac{1}{2}$  stories on either side of the entrance, above which is located a tripartite stained glass transom. Between the second and third stories, a Palladian terra-cotta window reflects the Georgian influence and on the fourth floor the tripartite stained glass transom is repeated in window form. The building terminates in a white terra-cotta cornice and brick parapet, which echoes the white tones of the flat-headed window frames.

During the early months of 1918, work had commenced on the construction of six additional structures to the east. Similar in arrangement and detailing to the apartments of the first phase, these structures were of four stories and contained a main central arched doorway supported by terra-cotta faced columns. Located directly above is a double arched window with a central terra-cotta column. Terraces and brick stairs occupy the public gardens between the apartments.

In May of 1919, construction of the Dartmore Apartments began on Jones Street between 22nd and 23rd Streets. This location, west of the original complex but in line with the Drake Court structures, produced the opportunity to expand the Drake Court Complex in a westerly direction. The five four-story brick-faced structures (the Ames, Bedford, Colfax, Dupont and Emerson) employ a structural concrete floor supported by concrete block bearing walls. The main symmetrical facades contain a central vertical row of double-hung windows

flanked on either side by pairs of vertical "slit" windows. The central rectangular entrance, unlike previous ones, is void of ornamentation but projecting arched canopies provide a repetitive focal point which enhances the street-scape.

One additional structure, not related to the development of Drake Court but located within the district boundaries, is a two story carriage house designed by John Latenser and constructed by McGowan & Jacobberger in 1907. The Shingle Style structure, originally part of the Fred Davis Estate at 20th & Jones Streets, is clad in a uniform covering of unpainted wood shingles from the Swedish gambrel roof to the brick first story walls. The eaves of the roof are close to the walls so as not to distract from the homogeneous and monochromatic shingle covering. The sash windows located on all facades are generally small and are grouped into twos and threes.

SIGNIFICANCE

The first of all apartment houses constructed in Omaha was the "Mengedohit" built in 1892 at 816 So. 22nd Street, a four-story brick building of 34 units owned by Fred Mengedohit. He later built the Lorraine Apartments in 1894. Prior to the building of the Mengedohit, nearly all so-called apartments in Omaha were flats above stores, or St. Louis flats. The increasing demand for apartments produced the Sherman, Winona, Normandy and Clarinda prior to 1900 and the Colbert about 1905.

The Trans-Mississippi Exposition in Omaha in 1898 brought R.C. Strehlow who constructed a number of the exposition buildings. Mr. Strehlow later purchased a large tract of land between 16th and 18th Streets, north of Grace Street, and in 1907 started to construct a number of buildings on the beautiful grounds -- the Majestic of 28 units, the Strehlow in 1909, the Roland in 1910, the Margaret in 1916 and the Strehlow Annex in 1918, a total of 128 apartments.

Traver Brothers, contractors and real estate operators, erected a number of apartments starting with the St. Mary, 23 units in 1909; the Alsation, 12 units in 1910; the Nodway, 24 units in 1913; the Marley, 18 units in 1921; Bretner Court, 18 units in 1924; the Boulevard, 25 units in 1926; the Roycroft, 12 units in 1927; the Radcliff, 18 units in 1927; Tudor Arms, 22 units in 1929; and many smaller units. In all, nearly 200 apartment units were built by the Traver Brothers.

About 1910, V. P. Chiode built the Leone Apartments, and during the next few years the Carpathia, the Florentine and the Chiode (now renamed the Lancaster) for a total of 89 apartments in four buildings.



# POOR INSTRUMENT FILED

BOOK 684 PAGE 336

Hastings and Heyden built the Dewey, Idalia, Victoria, Milton, Harney, Fairview and Melrose, a total of 81 apartment units. Edward Johnson, an early builder, constructed the Clula Vista, Dwight and Knickerbocker of 12 apartments each.

While still a mechanical engineering student at Ames, Iowa, young William B. Drake dreamed of being the biggest apartment house king of the world. He and his brother George came to Omaha in about 1915 and built three houses on 28th and Farnam Streets and the Ekard Apartments on 29th and Jackson. With their profits, they organized the Drake Realty Construction Company in 1916 and purchased the S. S. Caldwell property located between 20th and 22nd Streets about 300 feet north of Leavenworth. Here they started construction in 1916 of the first building of their masterpiece, the Drake Court, and in the next three years finished the fourteen buildings which contained 216 apartment units. In late 1919, the company began construction of the Dartmore Apartments, now Drake Court Annex, on Jones Street between 22nd and 23rd Streets. Composed of five buildings, each structure contained 36 one room and bath apartments.

In 1920, William Drake was the central figure in a tenant's war which attracted nationwide attention when occupants of Drake Court organized to combat a boost in the \$35 per month rent.

Employing the same plan, William Drake then built the Ainsworth, Beverly, and Windsor Arms, eleven buildings with a total 396 apartments. He next changed to the plan of a cross and built the Hanscom, four stories, and the Alhambra and Palmer, three stories, for a total of 149 apartments. Another plan built Terrace Court and Turner Court with 120 units and later a slightly larger plan produced the Austin and Carberry with 90 units. In 1922, the Drake Company was erecting apartments at the rate of one floor a week.

# POOR INSTRUMENT FILED

BOOK 684 PAGE 337

In addition, Drake also built for other owners the Coronado, the Elwood, Kingsborough, Ekart Court, the LaSalle and Brandon Apartments. During the ten years 1918 to 1928, this one company erected more than 1,100 apartment units of fireproof construction.

In 1925, Drake's holdings in Omaha were estimated as high as four million dollars, but in quickly erecting such a large number of apartments, he soon began to compete with himself. Financial trouble, brought on by this overbuilding, forced Drake to file for bankruptcy in 1925 and turn everything over to his creditors, including the Drake Court Apartments which he financed built and named after the family. William B. Drake, who made and lost a fortune before he was 33 years old, died on July 27, 1935 after managing one of the smaller of his former apartments, the Brandon.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Building Owner's and Manager's Association of Omaha, 1953, pp. 7-10.

Fletcher, Sir Banister. A History of Architecture on the Comparative Method,  
N.Y.: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1963

Omaha Bee-News. July 28, 1935, page 4.

"W. B. Drake Drops Dead," Omaha World Herald, July 27, 1935, page 1.

Palmer, Walter J., Auditor for Drake Realty Construction Company 1918-23,  
Interview, October 8, 1978.

Palmer, Walter J., Photographic Portfolio of Drake Realty Construction Company.

Whitten, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780, A Guide to the Styles,  
Mass: MIT Press 1969.

28 Misc

RECEIVED  
1983 FEB 28 AM 10:21  
1983 FEB 28 AM 10:21  
LIBRARY OF ARCHITECTURE  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN LIBRARY

Book 684  
Page 320  
of Misc

Fee 59.50  
Index [initials]  
Comped [initials]  
22-15-13  
11-125