

NOMINATION FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

MURPHY HOUSE

2207 - 2209 Seventh Avenue
Rock Island, Illinois

Draft

Legal Description: Outlot 22, Section 35, Lots 7 and 8 of Keator's Subdivision in the City of Rock Island, County of Rock Island, Illinois.

NOMINATION CRITERIA

The applicant believes the Murphy House meets the following criteria as set forth in Section 6-B. of the Rock Island Preservation Ordinance:

Representative of the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural and/or landscape type inherently valuable for the study of a period, style, craftsmanship, method of construction or use of indigenous materials and which retains a high degree of integrity.

Identifiable as an established and familiar visual feature in the community owing to its unique location or physical characteristics.

HISTORY OF PROPERTY

On 8 June 1836, Roswell Spencer obtained from the town of Stephenson 126 acres for \$1000. Parts of the section passed through the ownerships of C. C. Webber, Edward Lambert, Adolph Rusch, Cornelius Lynde and Lynde & Mitchell. Two and 6/100 acres were purchased by John S. Gorton from Lynde & Mitchell on 16 April 1869 for \$6000. Jerman S. Keator bought Outlot 22, Section 35 for \$7000 from John S. Gorton on 4 April 1872. The outlot was platted 13 March 1872 and recorded on 2 August 1872. The plat had lots 1 through 6 on Sixth Avenue with lots 7 through 12 on Seventh Avenue between 22nd and 23rd Streets. Keator's Subdivision began in 1876. Anastasia Ciolina Murphy purchased lots 7 and 8 from J. S. and Sarah Keator on 6 August 1877, date of deed, for \$2000. Mrs. Murphy also owned many other pieces of property in her own name.

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Anastasia Murphy mortgaged lots 7 and 8 to her mother, Josephine Ciolina, a widow, for \$6,450 on 1 February 1879, Mortgage Book 37, page 508. The papers state the lots were occupied with 2 brick houses and outbuildings. Anastasia Murphy's residence was given as Lot 6, Block 4 of Bailey and Boyle's Addition - the Fourth Avenue Hotel.

With the information above, it can accurately be stated th structure located at 2207 - 2209 Seventh Avenue was built between 6 August 1877 and 1 February 1879.

CRITERIA 3)

The Victorian era is constituted by the reign, from 1837 to 1901, of Queen Victoria of Britain. Architecturally, however the general classification of Victorian houses in America were popular circa 1860 to 1900, the latter part of her reign. During this time, the rapid industrialization and development of the railroads caused many exciting changes in American design and construction of houses.

Balloon framing (the studs extend in one piece from the top of the foundation sill plate to the top plate; floor joists are nailed to the studs which are supported by horizontal or ledger boards) was quickly replacing timber framing (timbers used as the structural elements; ranging in size from 4x4s to 9x15s) as the chosen method because of ease in construction and lower costs. These factors released the designer from the traditional box shape. Integral parts could be mass produced and shipped for reasonable cost on the railroads. Before, the intricate details and shapes were limited to costly structures.

The Sec d Emp re was the earliest of six styles, dating about 1 5 to 885/1890. Following were the Stick, Queen Anne, S ngle, Richardson an Romanesque and Folk Victorian nomencl ures.

The dominant style for American houses built between 1860 and 1880 was the Second Empire. The style was most popular in the northeastern and midwestern states. It is less common on the Pacific Coast and relatively rare in the southern states, although there are scattered examples in all regions settled before 1880. Early models were in the 1850's and late ones were not uncommon in the 1880's. The style fell from fashion after the panic of 1873 and the depression which followed.

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The distinctive roof was named for the 17th century French architect François Mansart. Its use was widely revived in France during the reign of Napoleon III (1852-1870), France's Second Empire. It spread to England after Paris exhibitions in 1855 and 1867 and then to the United States. The box-like roof line was considered quite functional because it permitted a full upper storey of usable attic space. And for that reason, the mansard roof was also popular for remodeling. During the Grant administration (1869-1877) the Second Empire style was used for many public buildings and was facetiously called the General Grant style.

The style is characterized principally by its roof. There are five main silhouettes with straight, straight with flare and concave the most common. Convex and S-curves are the most unusual shapes. Common in the roofing materials are the decorative patterns of texture or color as is iron cresting above the upper cornice. Dormers and dormer windows appear in an assortment of styles. Second Empire houses, under the roof line, have similar details to those of the Italianate style, such as brackets at the cornice line, detailing of windows, doors and porches. However, unadorned arched windows are common in Second Empire but rare in Italianate examples. Other characteristics are bracketed and pedimented slender windows, two or three storeys, arched double doors and oftentimes porches or projecting pavillions. The pavillions may be either outbuildings or a projecting element on an exterior wall at the center or at each end of a building which suggests a tower or the like.

One of the principal subtypes of Second Empire is towered. About 30 percent of these houses have rectangular or square towers which are often located where the wing joins the main section of an L-plan house but are usually centered on the front facade. It is typical for the tower to have the mansard roof with small dormer windows.

The two projecting bays on the symmetrical front facade of the brick double house are suggestive of the towered subtype. The triangular shaped windows on the front bays are reminiscent of dormer windows often found on the tower.

Window bays in the town house subtype were commonly centered on the front facade and in this structure, the front bays are featured as towers. While the east and west side facing bays are an unusual feature of a town house.

The double house has all the style components of Second Empire, however, it was designed in a simplified fashion. The denticulated cornices are not as typical as brackets. An uncommon feature of the one over one windows is the lack of scrolls or other ornamentation at the base of the surround. The upper brick surround does protrude from the exterior brickwork in stretcher bond. The north facade windows have a simpler header than the other three sides.

The front porch, a.k.a. calamity, is hiding a wonderful English basement. The two projecting bays of the front facade extend to the ground level. A pair of entrance doors are in line with the doors above. At the ground level, there is a pair of limestone stairs leading down to the two entries. The five steps, approximately 3 feet wide, are laid in an arc towards the stoop.

The mansard roof with its hipped section is original. The upper ends of the wood shingles extend under the edge of the hipped roof. There are some hipped roof Second Empire houses shown in A Field Guide to American Houses. This property's roof silhouette is only visible from a distance.

The approximately 16 foot deep addition on the north side of the structure is not original. It was added sometime after 1906. This part of the structure does not show on the Sanborn Maps for the City of Rock Island dated 1906. The coal doors used have the patent date of 1903 by the Sterling Foundry in Sterling, Illinois. The brickwork and tuck pointing are similar to the original building but not the same. The second storey roof of the porch has 4 pillars supporting it which could have been used when the porch was constructed. The other pillars have been replaced. Matching pillars to those on the second floor porch can be found under the front porch and have been used for supporting the concrete porch floor.

The addition also enlarged the basement, as well as the first and second storeys, with more rooms and storage space. Entering from the south, there is a large room with two closets and then a kitchen. In the east house, this room is largely original with wood wainscoting, plastered walls and decorative wood corner beads. There is also a dumbwaiter for sending food and whatever up and down to the first floor. Beyond the kitchen is a typical furnace room.

here long, narrow entrance hall with the single staircase

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running from the basement to the attic along one wall. It has the same balustrade and newel posts from the first floor to the attic. Opposite the staircase is a large front parlor with a fireplace that has a cast iron mantel and surround. Through a double wide doorway is a room probably used as the family parlor. Beyond this room is the dining room directly above the original basement kitchen. After these three rooms, the addition begins with a passageway through the original 16 inch thick exterior wall. A rather small full bathroom is on one side of the hall and there is a narrow, long cupboard opposite. Beyond, there is a kitchen using the whole width. Adjacent to the door to the wooden back porch, there is an ice door. All the door and window trim is quite different from the original house and glass transoms have been used over the passageway doors.

In the city directories for Rock Island from the date of the structure through 1919, only the addresses of 2207 and 2209 appear with one surname per address. In 1920, a third address of 2209½ began. From then on, only the three addresses appear through 1985. Yet, there are four bathrooms and four kitchens in the addition, two of each on the first and second storeys.

Resembling the room arrangement of the first floor, there are three rooms in a row on the second floor. The original plans could possibly have called for a sitting room and two bedrooms. The location of the original bathroom cannot be determined. The floor plans of the double house are reversed.

The attic area is completely finished with plaster, baseboard and trim around the windows and doors. There are two small rooms opposite the stairway with no closets. The front area of the attic is one large room. On this floor, two sides of the bay have been walled in to form a small dormer with a triangular window.

There are radiators, with what appears to be the original paint, in two of the small attic rooms in the west house and evidence of heating stoves connected to the chimney on the other side. These rooms could have served as quarters for the servants - two bedrooms or a servant area with a bedroom and sitting room.

CRITERIA 5)

The brick double house, 2207 - 2209 Seventh Avenue, on the northeast corner of 22nd Street, is located on one of the most traveled east - west corridors of the city. It is one of only 4 remaining Second Empire structures on the List of Significant Structures in the City of Rock Island, all are graded A. Until one reaches the eastern boundary at Augustana College with the Old Main, House on the Hill and Denkmann Library, the area along Seventh Avenue between 19th and 22nd Streets has its own collection of visible, historic and architecturally interesting buildings. There are some Rock Island Landmarks as well as ones listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Included in this distinctive group are the Potter House, Victorian Inn (Connor-Parker House), First Church of Christ Scientist, Buford Mansion, Rosenfield House, Spencer House, Larson Funeral Home and Old Lincoln School. In company such as this, the nominated property should be recognized as a structure identifiable in the community owing to its unique location.

Using the date of construction as between August 1877 and February 1879, it has been a highly visible and long established feature in the community for 116 or 114 years.

BUILDER

The constructor of the brick double house is not known. However, it is within the realm of possibility that it could have been the subdivider of the property, Jerman S. Keator. He began a lumber mill in 1870 called Keator & Wilson's. Their first year's report gave the capital investment as \$75,000, sales of \$140,00, 65 employees costing \$60,000 for wages and approximately 6,500,000 feet of lumber, 3,000,000 lath and 3,000,000 shingles cut in six months. In April of 1877, it was stated that the mill was cutting 75,000 feet of lumber daily. Is it not logical to assume the owner of a subdivision and lumber yard might have built the houses on the lots he sold or on the unsold lots? In the city directory of 1878/81, the secretary and treasurer of Rock Island Lumber and Manufacturing Co. (Keator and Wilson's became part of it) Samuel J. Keator, lived at 2225 Seventh Avenue. During the following year, he was listed as vice president. Jerman S. Keator lived in Moline.

One of the tenants of 2209 was William F. Gillmore and his wife, Mary Jane, who lived there during the early 1900's. When Mrs. Gillmore died in 1928, age 76, 2225 Seventh Avenue was her residence.

All the structures, except for the Murphy's brick double house, were frame. This data comes from the 1886 Sanborn Maps which on the sheet lists 5 frame dwellings, 1 brick dwelling, 8 frame barns and 1 frame cooper shop for Keator Subdivision.

OWNERS

Anastasia Murphy was the daughter of Josephine and Francis Ciolina and born in Cincinnati, Ohio on 20 December 1847. The city directory of 1858/59 lists Josephine Ciolina as a teacher of music at Illinois (2nd Avenue) between Jefferson (19th Street) and Madison (20th Street). Francis Ciolina, physician, at the same address. Later there is a separate office listing. The doctor was born in Nierstadt, Bavaria in 1817 and received his doctorate of medicine from the University of Berne, arriving in America in 1838. He edited for one year, 1857, the life of the first newspaper printed in German in Rock Island, The Beobachter am Mississipian. Mrs. Josephine Ciolina, now a widow, and Miss Anastasia, music teacher, resided on the north side of Rock River (4th Avenue) at the second house east of Adams (21st Street) from 1867 to 1873. In 1876 she was still listed as a music teacher, however boarding with M. J. Murphy.

Michael Joseph Murphy and Anastasia Ciolina were married in 1874. A conclusion from the directories of 1876 through 1882/85 is that the Murphys resided at the Fourth Avenue Hotel which Mr. Murphy owned. They are not listed at 2207 Seventh Avenue until the 1899/1900 issue. He dealt in pianos and organs and she taught music - there's one common bond. As of 1901/02, his store was still in or adjacent to the hotel.

Mrs. Murphy, according to her obituary 15 November 1921, was "one of the best known women in this community" and "gifted with considerable talent as artist, pianist and vocalist". The article went on to state "an artist of real talent and many of her huge oil paintings have been preserved in her home. Among her memberships were St. Joseph's Church, the Villa Guild, Rock Island Woman's Club and the Rock Island Musical Club. Her husband preceded her in death on 25 November 1917. Survivors included a daughter, Naomi, and some cousins in Cincinnati.

Naomi Murphy remained living at home until 15 April 1925 when she married Arthur H. Williams. He began working for The Argus as a cub reporter in 1920 and rose to managing editor. For 31 years he held the position of retail advertising manager. During the turbulent days of racketeer and vice lord John Looney, he was covering the police beat. After 15 years serving as president of Black Hawk Federal Savings and Loan Association, he was named chairman of the board. Mr. Williams died 28 August 1972 survived by his widow, a daughter and two sons. Mrs. Williams resided at 2207 Seventh Avenue, with the exception of a few years at the time of her marriage, until 1984 according to the city directories.

Ironic to Bonnie and Chris Larson, the owners of the double house, one tenant of 2209 worked as an embalmer for Wheelan Funeral Home.

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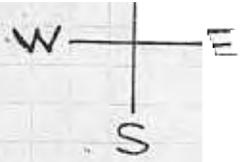
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The Milan Independent

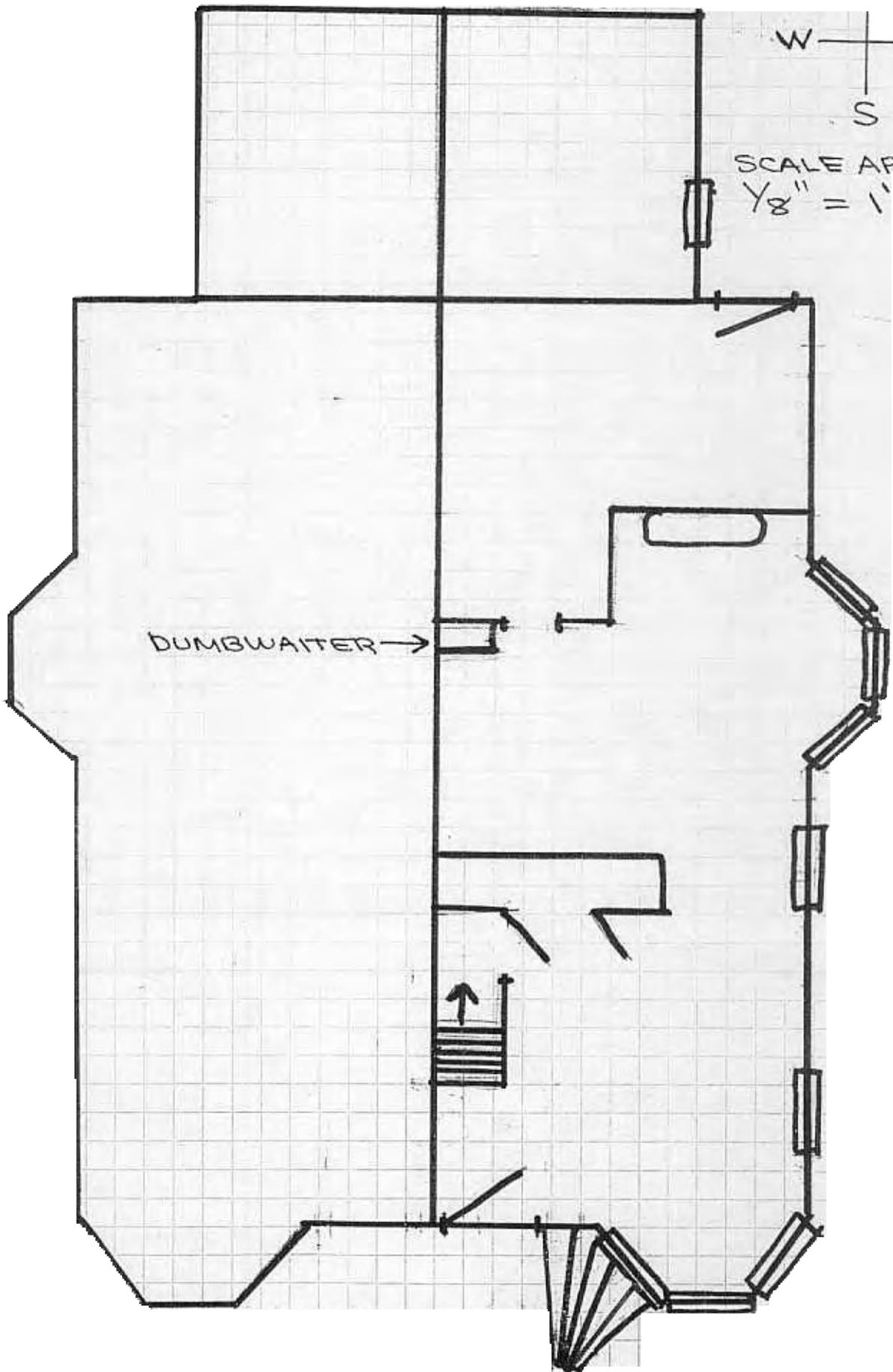
Anastasia Murphy Obituary, 7 November 921

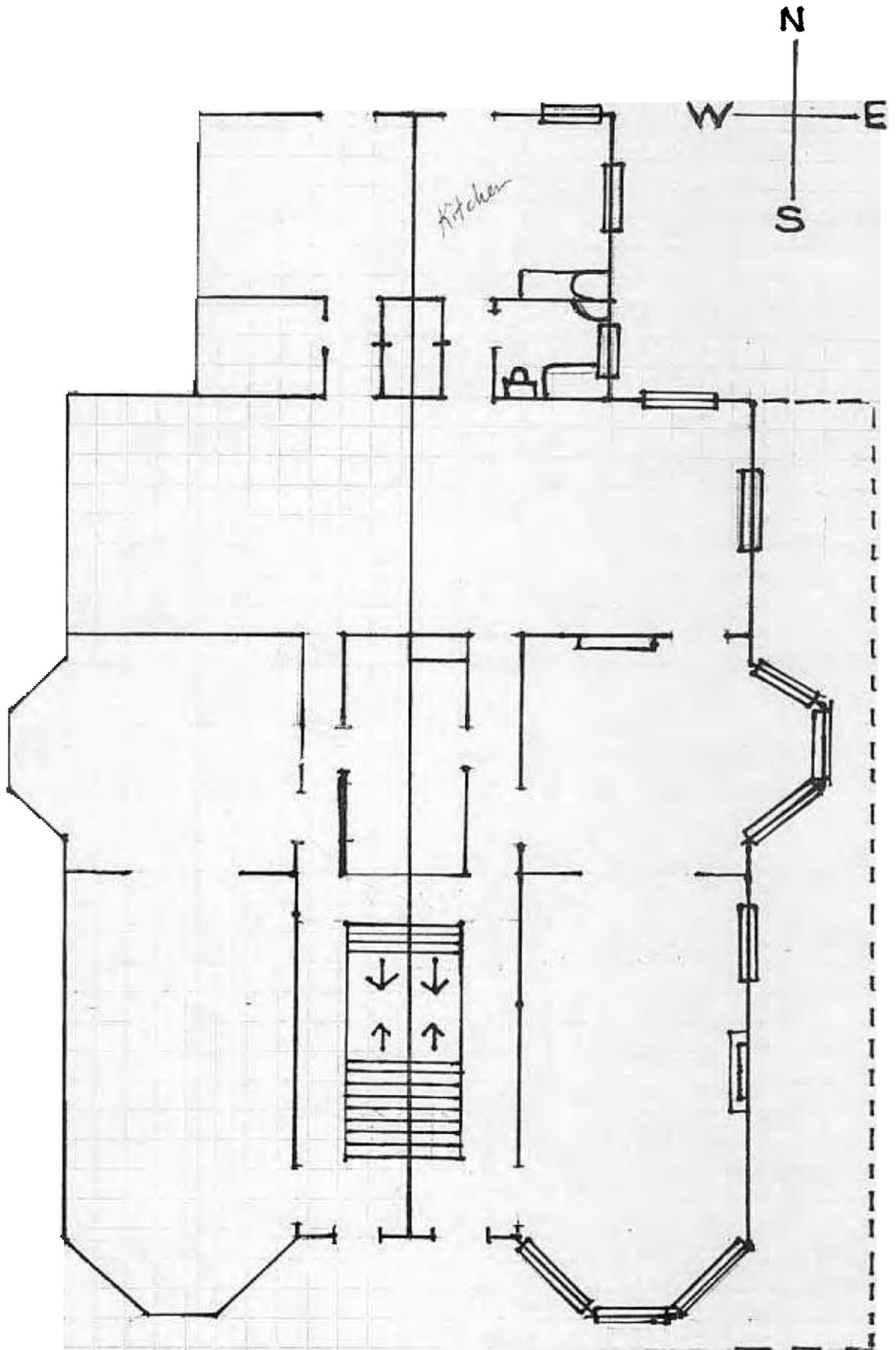
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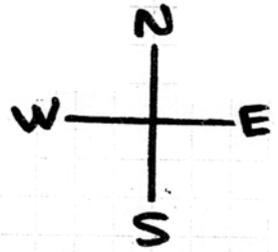
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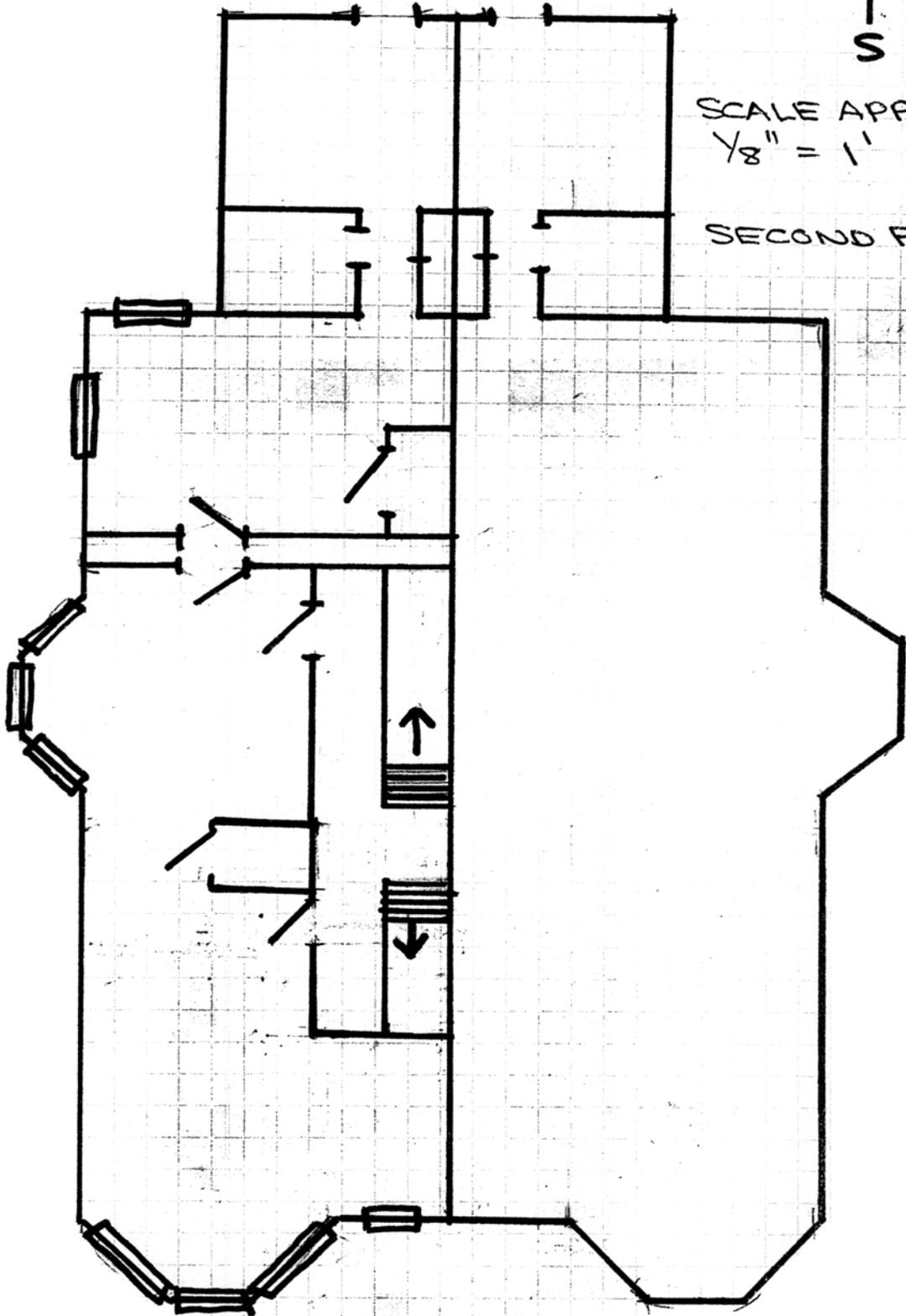
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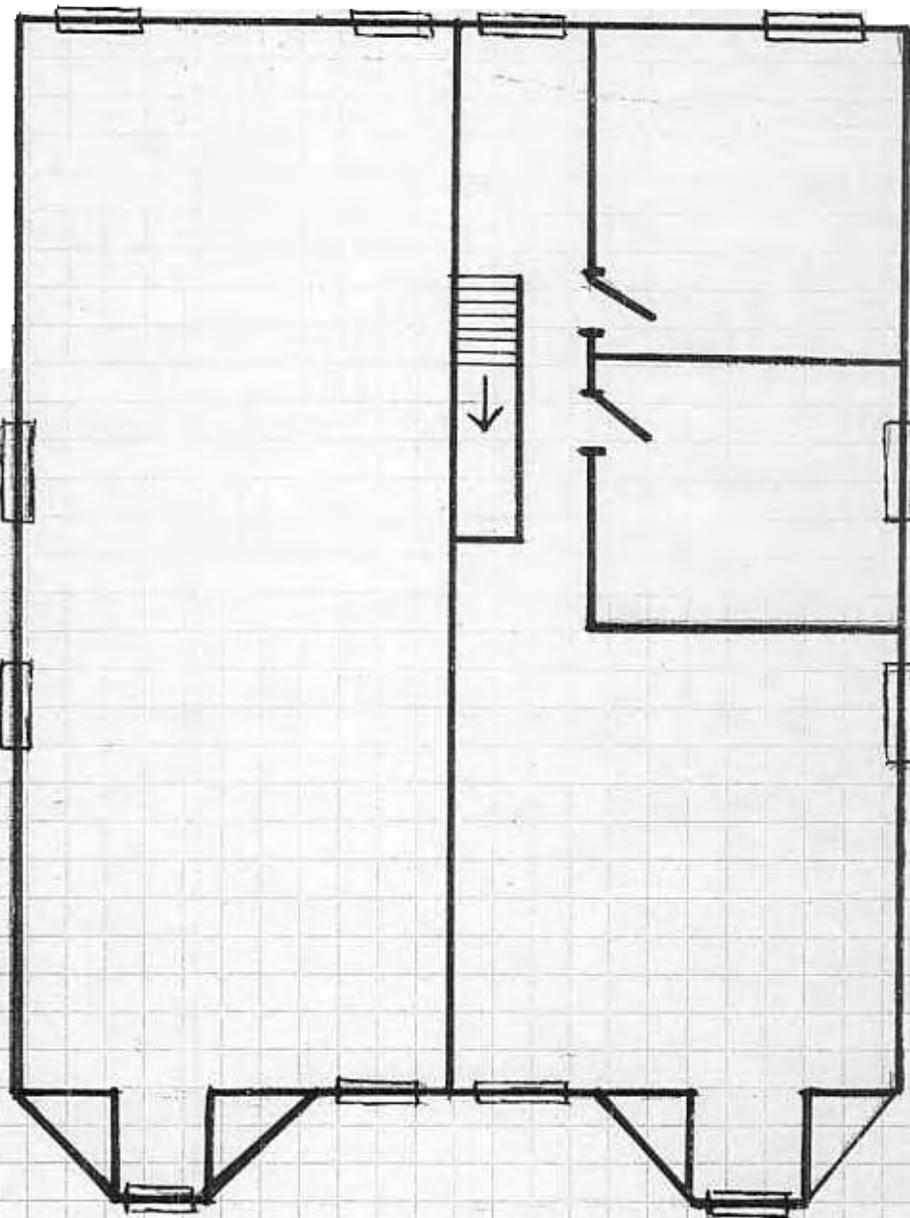
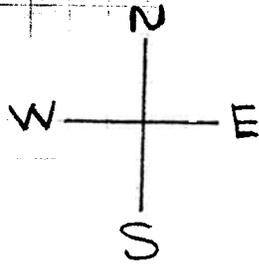
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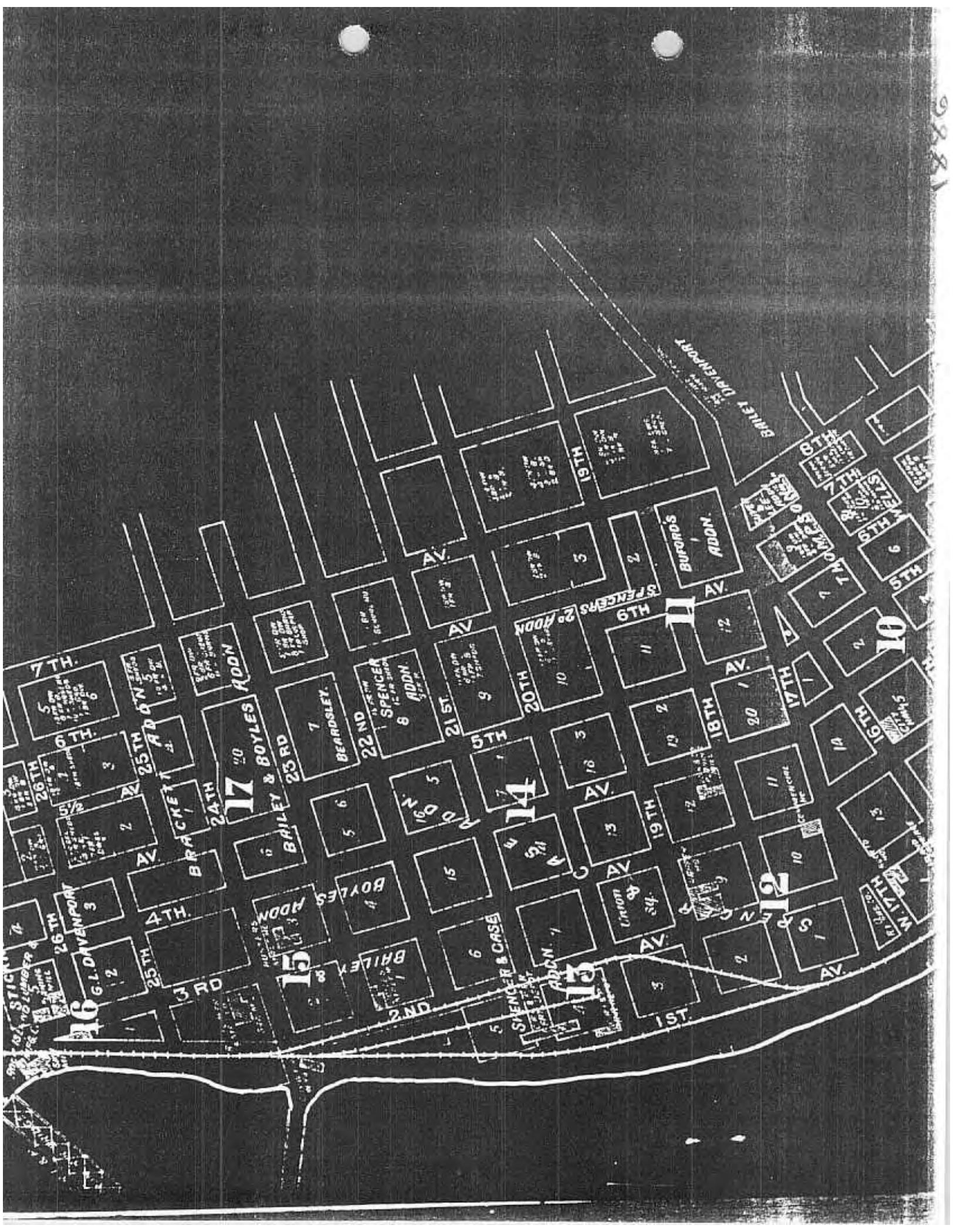
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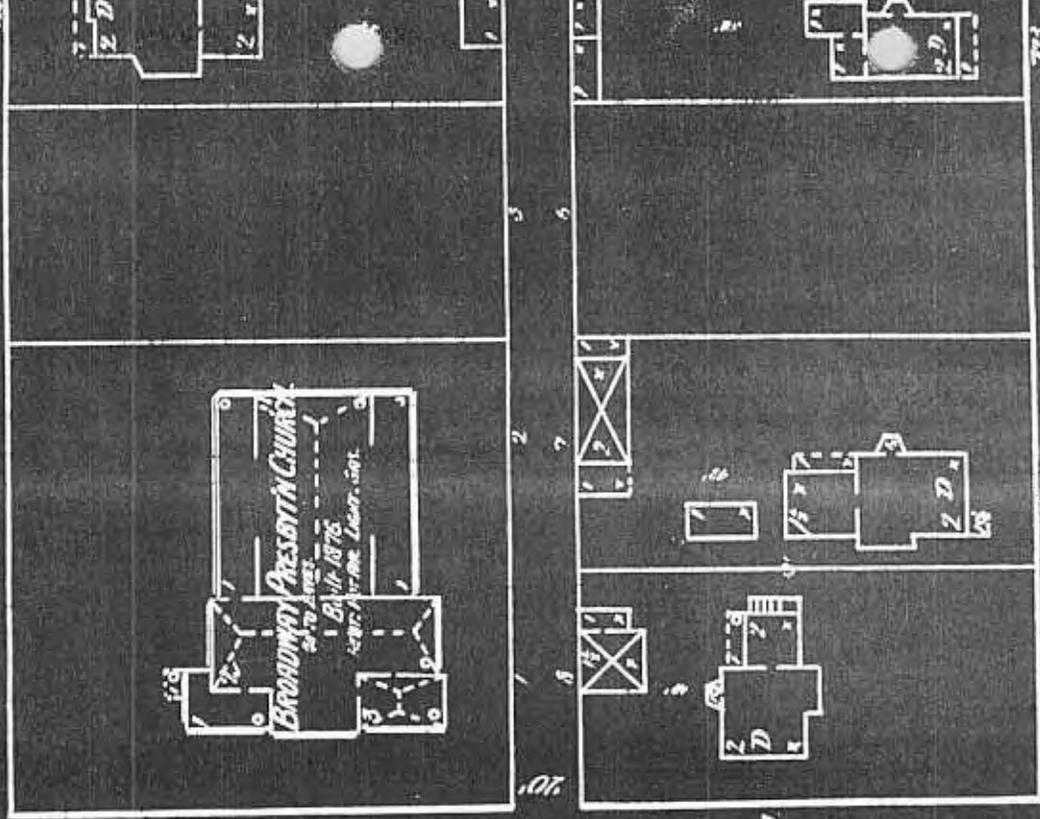
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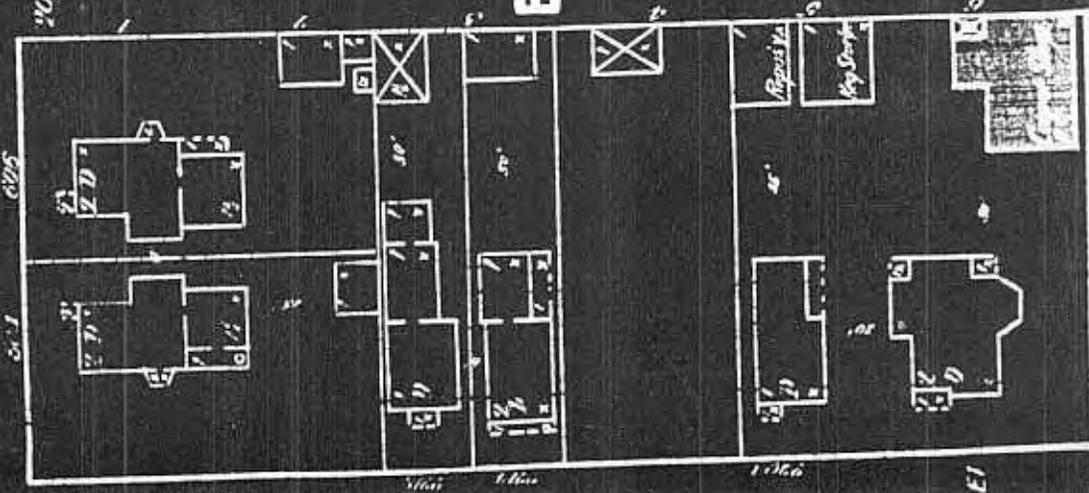
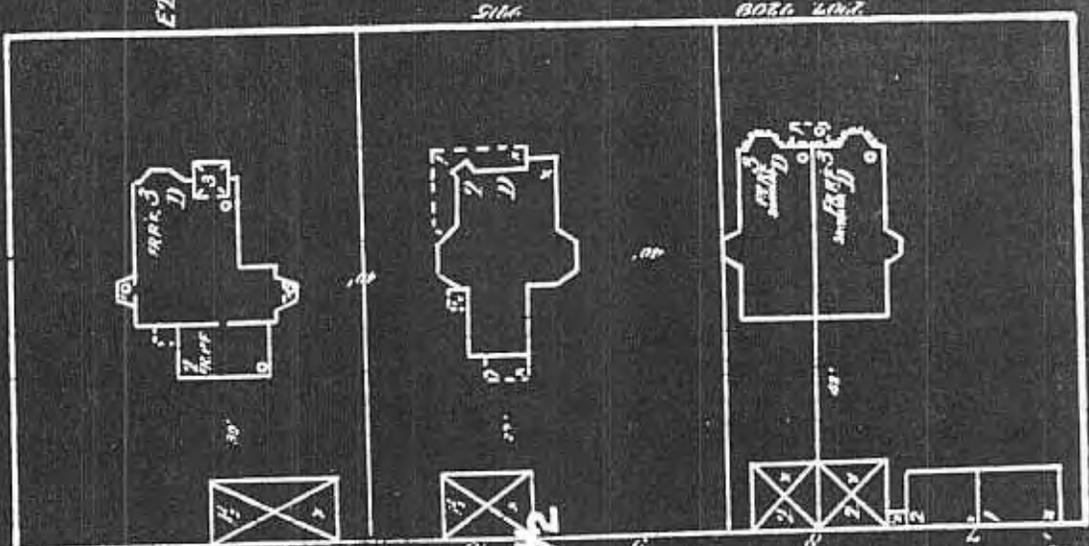


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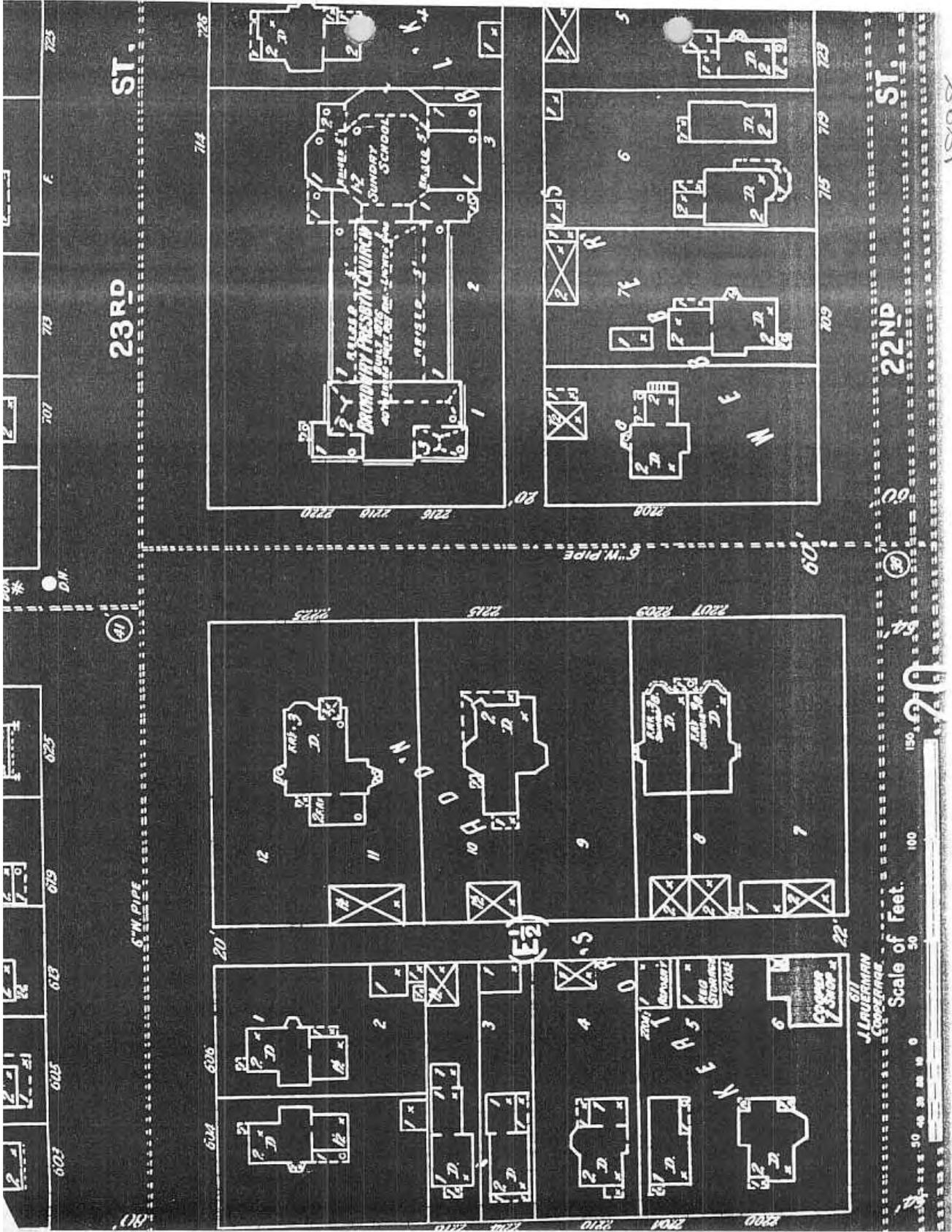
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