NPS Form 10-900
(Oct. 1990)

OMB No. 10024-0018

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

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Chatham Hotel

other name/site number Chatham Apartments

## 2. Location

street & town 3701 Broadway N/A not for publication

city or town Kansas City N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Jackson code 095 zip code 64111

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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

Mark A. Miles MAY 09, 2008

Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
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 the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
☐ removed from the National Register.
☐ other, (explain:)

Chatham Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
County and State

## 5. Classification

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

- ☒ private
- ☐ public-local
- ☐ public-State
- ☐ public-Federal

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

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

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

| Contributing | Noncontributing | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | | buildings |
| | | sites |
| | | structures |
| | | objects |
| 1 | | Total |

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

N/A

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

0

## 6. Function or Use

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

DOMESTIC/hotel

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

DOMESTIC/multiple dwelling

## 7. Description

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

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS

**Materials**
(Enter categories from instructions)

**foundation** brick
**walls** brick
**roof**
**other** terra cotta

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

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Chatham Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
County and State

## 8. Description

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

☐ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

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

Property is:

☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ **B** removed from its original location.

☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.

☐ **D** a cemetery.

☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ **F** a commemorative property.

☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance
(enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance
1923

### Significant Dates

N/A

### Significant Persons
(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder
Reyburn Engineering & Construction

### Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

## 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:

Kansas City Public Library

☒ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Chatham Hotel
Name of Property

Jackson County, MO
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

**UTM References**
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

| | Zone | Easting | Northing |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1/5 | 3/6/2/3/4/0 | 4/3/2/4/7/1/0 |
| 2 | / | / / / / / | / / / / / / |
| 3 | / | / / / / / | / / / / / / |
| 4 | / | / / / / / | / / / / / / |

**Verbal Boundary Description**
(Describe the boundaries of the property.)
Hyde Park Addition Lot 2, Block 24, Kansas City, Jackson County, MO

Property Tax No. 30-220-22-21-00-0-00-000

**Boundary** Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)
Boundary includes all the land historically associated with the Chatham Hotel development.

☐ See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Tony Gardner
organization Gardner Historic Property Consultants Inc. date 10-7-07
street & number 3000 DeGroff Way telephone 816-262-2515
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

## 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/title Chatham Investors LLC
street & number 1819 Baltimore Ave. #403 telephone 816-214-5404
city or town Kansas City state MO zip code 64108

**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. 470 *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, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

## Summary

The Chatham Hotel is located at 3701 Broadway in Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri. Constructed in 1923 by Reyburn Construction and Engineering under a contract with the owner, Mrs. Nellie F. Graves, the Chatham was built as a hotel in a style and design consistent with the apartment/hotel concept popularized in the 1920s. Situated on a corner parcel located at the southeast intersection of Broadway and 37th Street, the Chatham rises six stories in height. It is configured in an irregular T-shape, with a frontage of 97 feet, an east-west depth of 41 feet, secondary rear elevations measuring 37 feet on the north and 10 feet on the south, secondary side elevations measuring 70 feet, and a far rear elevation measuring 48 feet. The Chatham is clad with brick and is distinguished by terra cotta lintels, sills, belt courses and cornice. Classical elements, particularly along the cornice, help define the Chatham as an example of the Georgian Revival architectural style. The Chatham Hotel building is in good condition and retains many character-defining features of the 1920s apartment hotel building type. Its period of significance is 1923, its date of construction. The Chatham exhibits integrity in its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and its association with apartment hotels of its era, both locally and throughout the United States.

## Exterior

The front facade of the Chatham Hotel building is divided vertically by three distinct bays. The north and south bays project and contain two sets of paired windows on each of the six floors. The windows, all of uniform size, are framed by terra cotta lintels and sills. The paired wood double hung windows feature a 3/1 configuration. The central bay features four columns of windows. The two columns on the outer edge of the bay are small, paired windows, with terra cotta lintels and sills and a 3/1 double hung pane configuration. The middle two columns are larger paired windows, also with terra cotta lintels and sills and a 3/1 window configuration. Both of the front corners of the Chatham feature a brick quoin pattern. The structure is divided horizontally with three terra cotta string courses, one between the first and second floors one between the fifth and sixth floors, and one atop the sixth floor to act as a base for the pediment. The front façade is crowned by three stepped pediments, one over each of the bays. Each of the pediments features classical details rendered in terra cotta, with balustrades flanking a lozenge depicting a Grecian Urn and garland. At the ground level, there is a large porch with three brick piers upholding a roof distinguished with dentils. The front porch is wrapped with a brick wall. On the north and south corners of the brick wall sit terra cotta urns designed to function as flower pots.

The north side elevation "turns the corner" stylistically by maintaining the pediment roofline, and the terra cotta string courses, lintels and sills. The secondary rear and secondary north side elevations are less ornate, with no lentils and sills, only paired windows with the familiar 3/1

configuration.

The primary rear elevation, which looks out over Central Street in the residential enclave of Old Hyde Park, also lacks ornamentation. It features two columns of paired 3/1 double hung windows on either side of a column of doors, which lead out onto a cast iron fire escape.

The south side elevation is also comparatively plain, though it is distinguished by a grid pattern of lighter colored brick framing the paired 3/1 double hung windows. A large smokestack marks the rear portion of the south side elevation. This side of the Chatham is obscured on the first two floors by the modern building which closely abuts it.

**Interior**

The first floor interior of the Chatham features a large common area. The floors and ceilings are concrete. The walls are primarily plaster that appears in fair to good condition. Several square columns with wood caps run from floor to ceiling. The capped columns culminate with dentilled molding. These structural components are mirrored by plaster pilasters which extend from the near interior wall. The left, or north, portion of the first floor interior is set aside from the lobby and functions as a smaller space. Rooms to the south are set off by doorways featuring simple woodwork and ¾ sidelights. A corridor leading to the middle and rear areas of the building features woodwork around the doorways and six-light transoms atop.

The right rear area of the lobby is marked by a staircase. The first set of stairs has deteriorated to broken concrete and the posts and balustrade are missing. The first and second landings however are intact and feature hexagonal tile. The second set of stairs is also concrete, flanked by a square newel post, turned balusters and beveled handrails.

Immediately off the lobby are two bathrooms and two game rooms. Beyond the lobby area, the rest of the first floor interior is dominated by three large rooms. One once served as the kitchen, the other two were dining rooms. The larger dining room was designed to seat up to 150 guests. The smaller dining room was set-aside for private dinner parties and accommodated 18-20 guests. There is also a large double suite that once hosted the manager's living quarters. Aside from the linoleum and the location of gas lines and ventilation ducts, very little architectural material remains to indicate the original purpose and use of these rooms.

Access to the upper floors is also served by a small passenger elevator. The elevator doors are framed with woodwork and feature ¾ length hexagonal safety glass panels, some of which are broken.

The upper floors were originally configured to house 90 sleeping units as well as 13 two-room

suites. A handful of the double units featured enclosed sleeping porches. Over time, the residential units were reconfigured, based no doubt on fluctuating marketing demands. In the late 20s, the owners expanded the number of two-room suites and diminished the number of smaller rooms. Later, in the Depression-era 1930s and into 1940, some of the rooms were downsized to serve more modest means, All units always featured private baths, which helped the Chatham Hotel retain its identity as at least a middle-class hotel.

According to a 1940 Property Brief, the Chatham's residential units were described as follows:

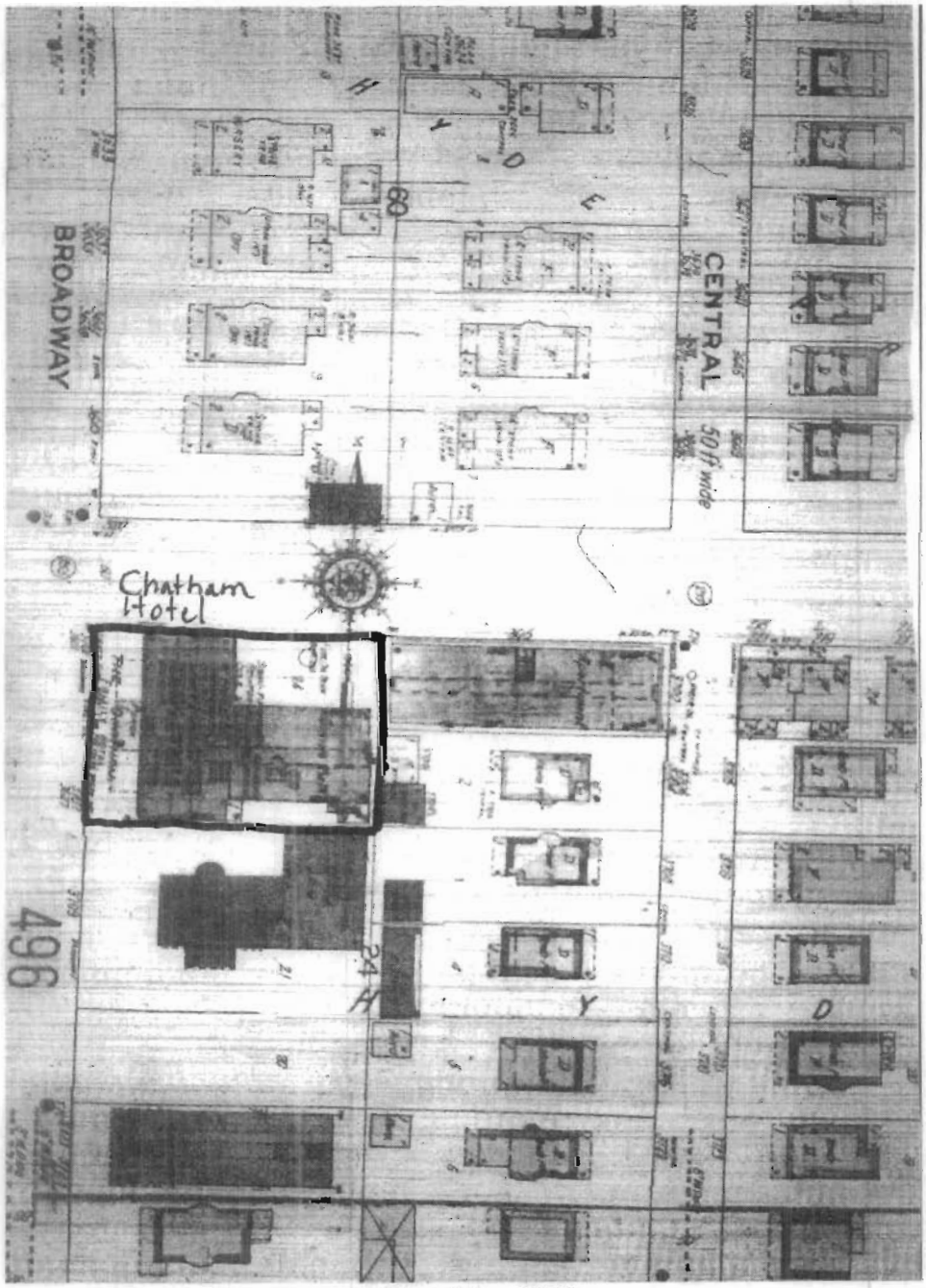
- 16 Doubles
- 5 Enclosed Sleeping Porch Doubles
- 55 Standard Single Rooms
- 5 Studio Rooms (Rol-Away Beds)

On the upper floor corridors, the walls and ceilings are composed of gyp board. Unit doors are framed in simple banded woodwork and single-panel wood transoms. The units themselves are marked by simple woodwork in the baseboards and door and window casings.

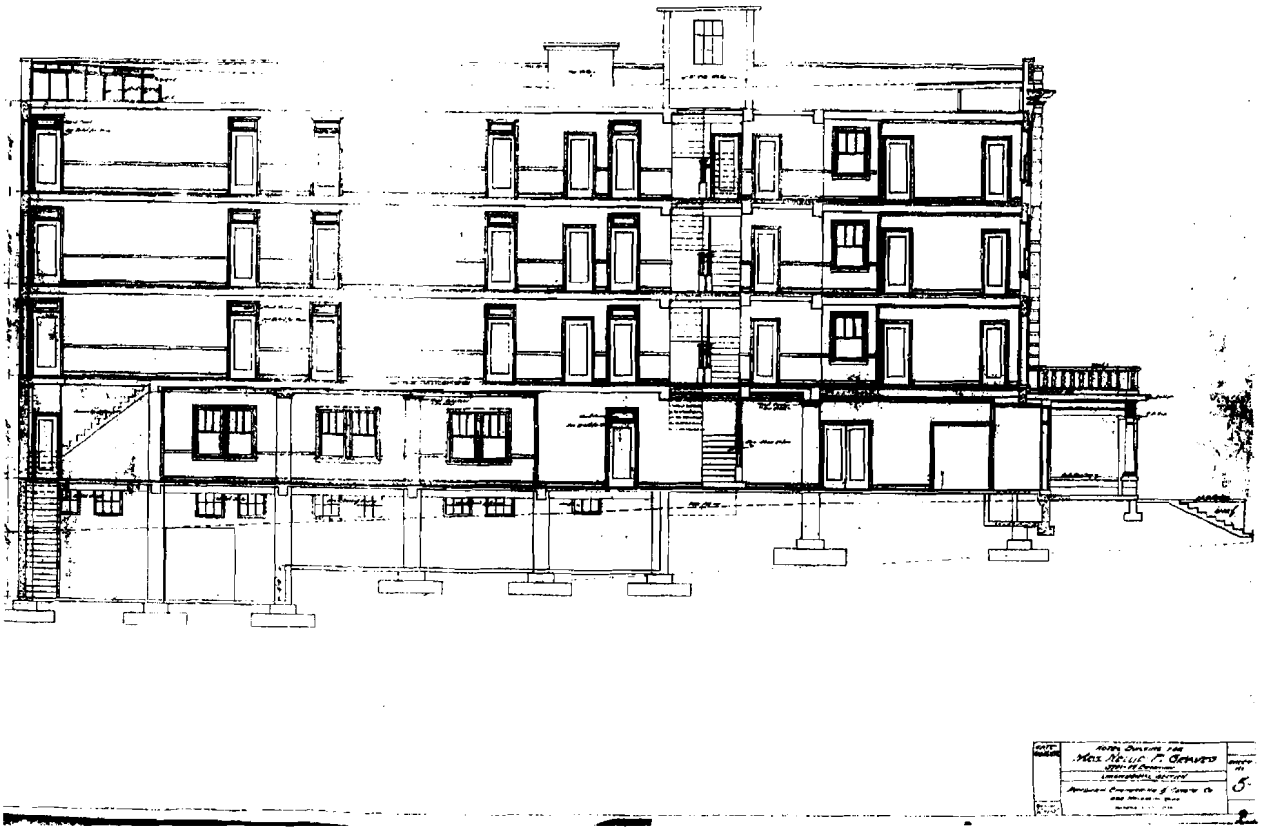
The interior of the Chatham Hotel building exhibits its original open floor plan and displays much the same level of finish that it did in 1923.

**Setting**

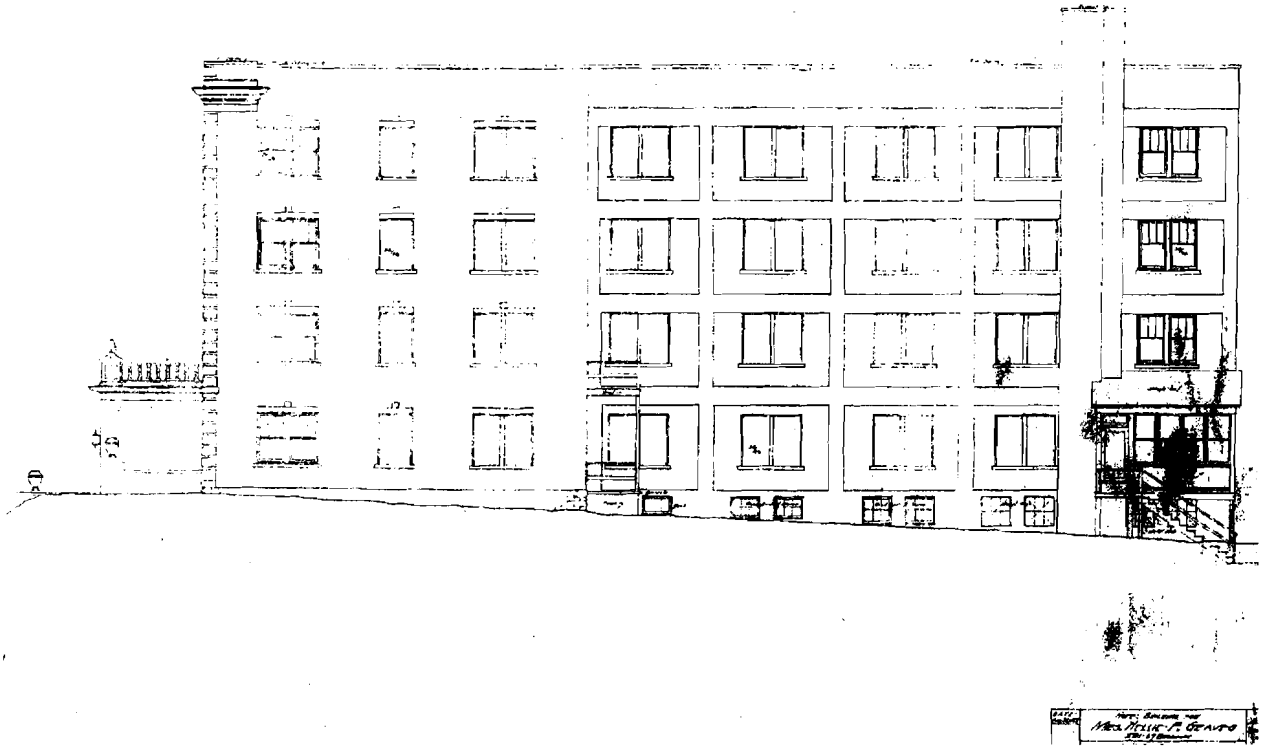
The Chatham Hotel building, located at 3701 Broadway in Kansas City, MO, is situated just southwest of downtown, on one of the city's primary north-south thoroughfares. Though the Broadway corridor is largely commercial, both currently and historically, the Chatham is one of several 1920s-era apartment/hotel properties in a three block stretch. The Chatham is located directly across the street from the Valentine Hotel Apartments, constructed in 1927. The Ambassador Hotel, built in 1924, is located a block to the north. The Hyde Park Hotel, at 3549 Broadway, is also just a block away. These 6-8 story masonry buildings lend Broadway a strong association with the 1920s, despite the incursion of non-historic infill, chain restaurants and gas stations.



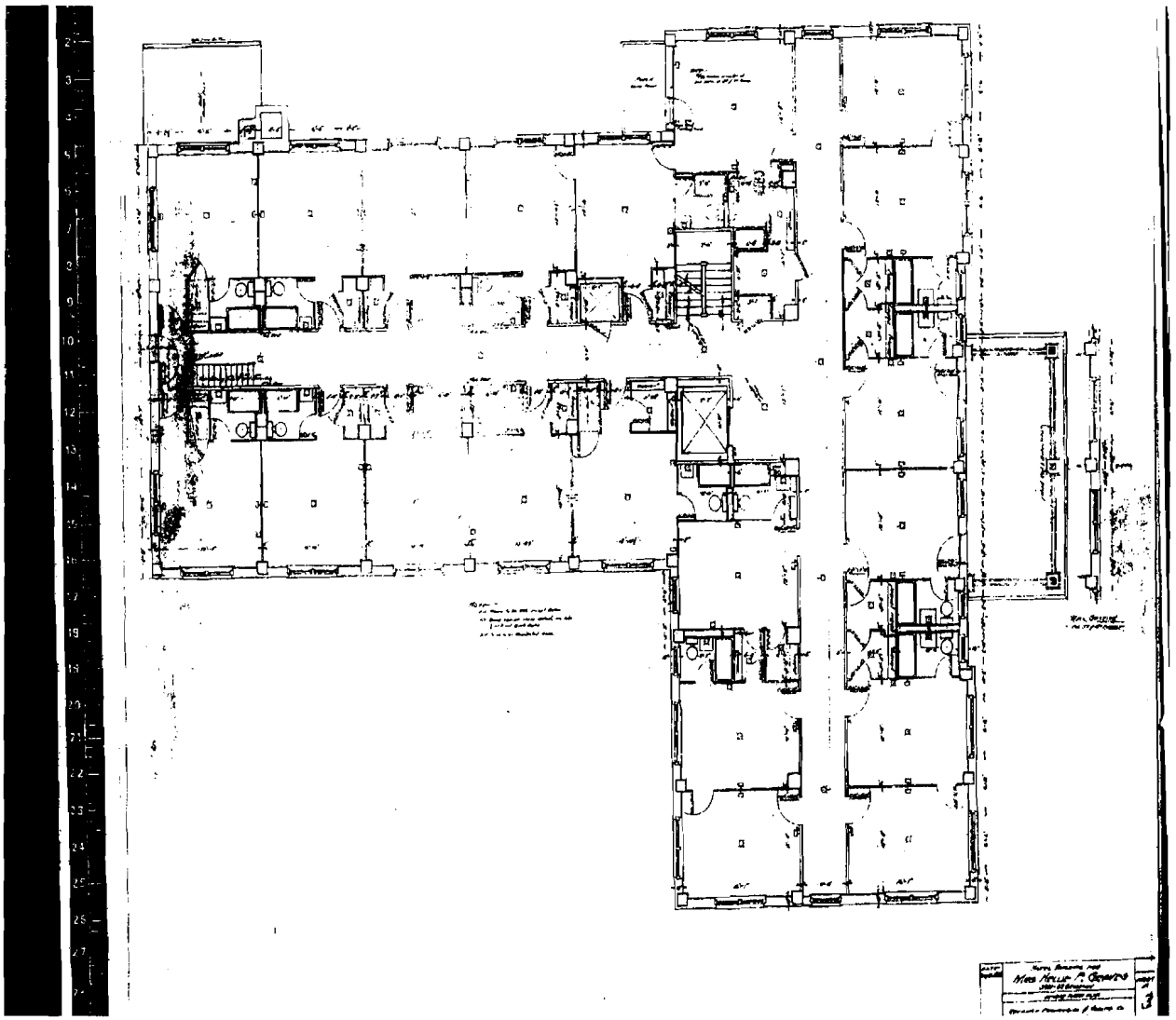

Sanborn Map, 1930s



Original Elevation, North side, circa 1922
Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City

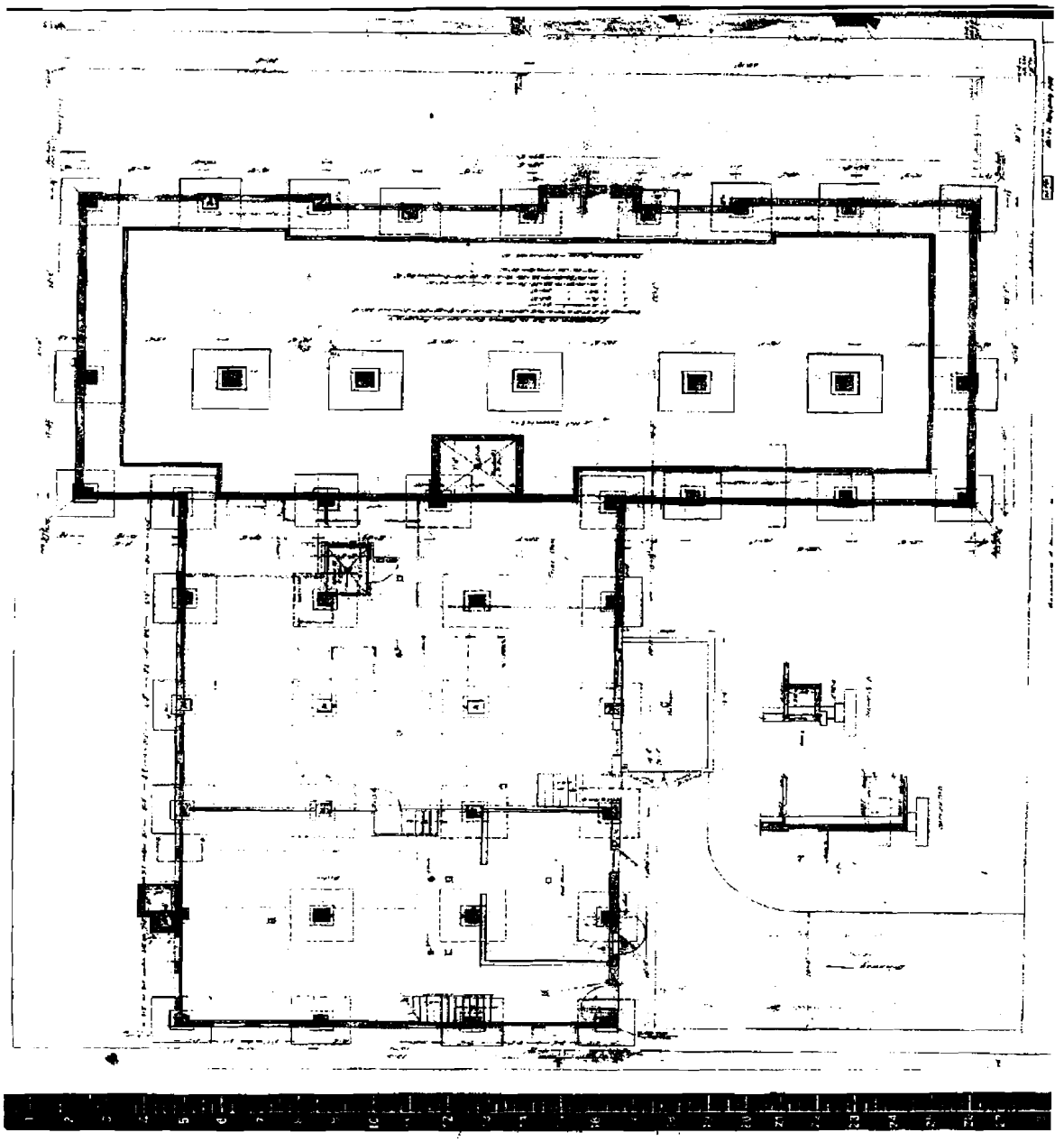


Original Elevation, South side, circa 1922
Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City



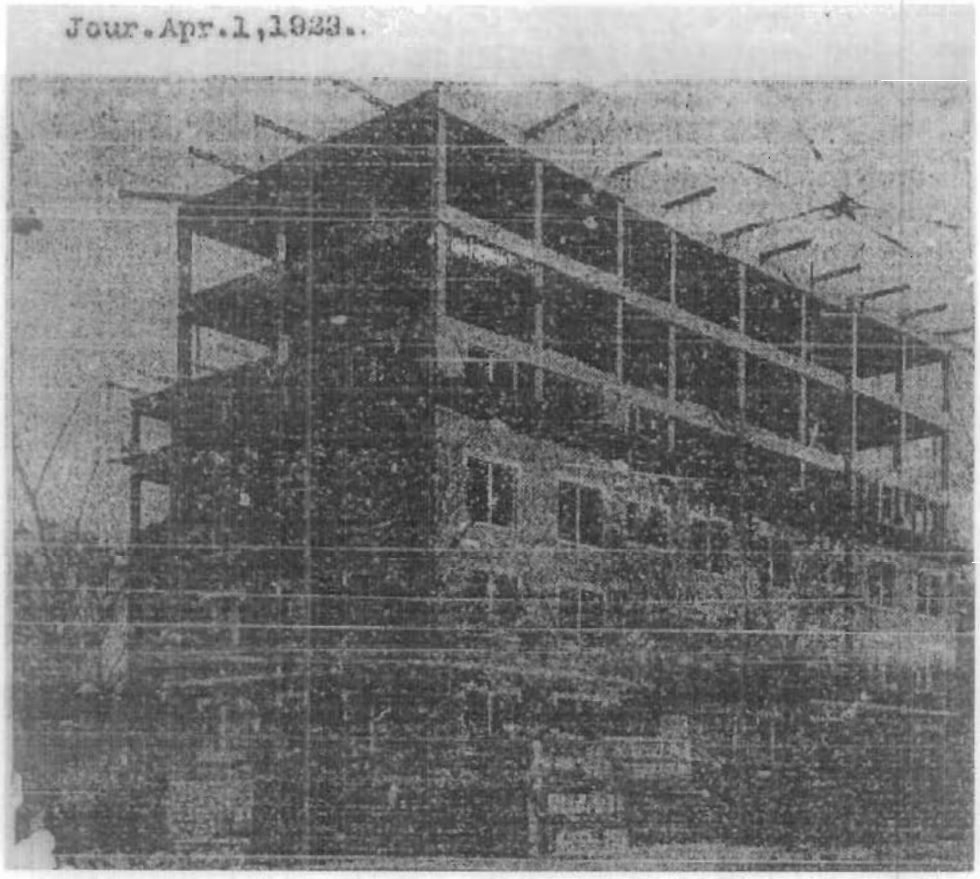
↓
**North**

Original floor plan, second floor, circa 1922
Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City



→
**North**

Original floor plan, basement, circa 1922
Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City




Chatham Hotel under construction, April 1923
Courtesy of Western Historical Manuscripts Collection, University of Missouri-Kansas City

Tax Assessor photograph, circa 1940
Courtesy of Kansas City, MO Landmarks Office

**Summary**

The Chatham Hotel, located at 3701 Broadway, Kansas City, Jackson County, Missouri, is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C, with local significance in the area of ARCHITECTURE. The period of significance is 1923, which is the date of construction. The Chatham stands as an excellent example of middle-class apartment hotel architecture, which flourished in urban centers throughout the United States in the 1920s. Unlike its more opulent forbears that were built in New York, Chicago and San Francisco to provide luxury housing to very wealthy residents, the Chatham was one of many dozens of apartment hotels that featured Classical Revival architecture and many amenities, but attracted a more modest, middle-class, upwardly mobile clientele who swarmed to the cities after World War I. In Kansas City, the apartment hotel trend was exemplified by several properties that were built near the Chatham, including the Valentine Hotel almost directly across Broadway, the Ambassador just two blocks to the north, and the Hyde Park Hotel, also two blocks north. Unlike many similar middle class apartment hotels in Kansas City and around the country, the Chatham has survived its transformation into a more downscale dwelling, which often suffer irreversible alterations, and retains, both on the exterior and interior, most of its original features and materials.

**Elaboration**

The Chatham Hotel is significant as a historic property type, the apartment hotel and its characteristics are clearly displayed in its location and overall design. Though not well studied in Kansas City, this property type has been recognized as significant in other cities across the country. The description of this property type is borrowed from criteria set forth in "Hyde Park Apartment Hotels in Chicago, Illinois," a National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form approved in 1986. The document sets forth three criteria, all of which characterize the Chatham Hotel.

1. Contain characteristics exemplifying the apartment hotel (i.e. a building often containing straight hotel rooms as well as kitchenette apartments and larger housekeeping suites; and one that offered the status and service of hotels; had daily maid service for both hotel rooms and apartments, a central lobby, and sometimes other public rooms, restaurants and shops; were built near exclusive residential districts but also at the center of important transportation intersections. These buildings often offered a wide range of services such as being totally furnished, complete to the utensils and toasters. Typically they offered both rental and lease units to allow the freedom and flexibility that was their hallmark.

2. Exhibit a high degree of integrity in the exterior;

3. Exhibit a high degree of design quality in terms of detailing, craftsmanship, and site planning.[1]

It is unclear whether the Chatham Hotel offered "straight hotel rooms," in its earlier days, though by 1942, its proprietor did cater to the transient trade. According to the documentary evidence uncovered for this nomination, the Chatham certainly met the other criteria set forth in the Chicago nomination.

The Chatham's most prominent character-defining physical feature is the use of terra cotta ornamentation throughout the front and north side elevations, particularly along the cornice, where the roof pediments are marked by lozenges depicting Grecian urns and garlands, which are flanked by balustrades in the Georgian Revival style. Terra cotta also composes the three stringcourses as well as the lintels and sills framing the windows. The Chatham is further distinguished by quoins on the front corners of the building and a square brick column front porch topped with a dentil roof. The Chatham provides a physical record of both the aesthetic and practical elements of design that informed 1920s apartment hotel architecture. These aesthetic design elements classify The Chatham as an example of Late 19th and Early 20th Century Revivals.

**Elaboration**

Research on the Chatham yielded no book-length architectural history on Kansas City apartment hotels. Indeed, even on a national level, very few full-length books have been published on this general topic. Of course, there are many books that focus on some of the renowned "palace-style" hotels, particularly in New York City, Chicago and San Francisco, which catered to the rich and offered, in addition to typical transient guest rooms, semi-permanent and permanent apartments that boasted size, scale and luxurious amenities. Early examples of these ornate apartment hotels appeared in the 1870s and were often family owned. Both hotel and apartment construction proliferated after World War I and the forms combined, taking shape in skyscrapers and eventually diminishing again to a more humble, but still artful, scale which appealed to a broader cross-section of the population.

Grand Hotels of the Jazz Agel describes the early partnership of famous hotel architects Leonard Schultze and S. Fullerton Weaver, who in 1922 built the Park Lane, located at Park Avenue between 48th and 49th Street in New York City. According to a *New York Times* article shortly after its opening, the Park Lane had become a nexus for New York's socially elite, which had recently expanded to encompass self-made industrialists. Weaver stated that management had

[1] Peter Rathbun and Charles Kirchner. "Hyde Park Apartment Hotels, Chicago, Illinois." National Register of Historic Places Thematic Resource Nomination,1986, Section 7, pp. 1-2

filled it with "eligible acceptable families." Weaver himself was a charter member, along with notables such as C.H. Duell, a former Chairman of the New York Republican Party; Clarence Wooley, president of the American Radiator Corporation; and D. Rait Richardson, president of a large heating and air conditioning manufacturer. [2]

Schultze and Weaver went on to build or expand upon three of the most elegant and luxurious hostelries in the country: the Sherry-Netherland, the Pierre, and the Waldorf-Astoria. All three of the hotels were "designed for the upper echelons of the market and rented apartments to long-term guests." The Waldorf-Astoria also had many rooms for transient guests. The firm later established a fourth hotel, the Lexington, which was slightly more modest, offering nightly rates as low as $4, as well as permanent apartments.[3]

By the early 1930s, Lamonaca and Mogul estimates there were nearly 130 apartment hotels in New York City. Lucious Boomer, one of the city's leading hoteliers, wrote a textbook on hotel management in which he wrote that hotels were "a better machinery of city living," and might eventually "supplant the remaining private city homes...because of the obvious economic advantages of no investment, no long-term financial obligations, no housekeeping problems, and a minimum of domestic care."[4]

Similar patterns emerged in other large cities. In Chicago, the Ambassador East and the Palmer House were highly fashionable addresses. San Francisco's most notable apartment hotels of the early 20th Century were the Palace, the Mark Hopkins and the St. Francis.

Most of the information on the smaller-scale apartment hotels like the Chatham is available through the National Register nominations written for individual properties and for apartment hotels in specific geographical areas.

The heady, optimistic era of the 1920s Jazz Age manifested itself in the more elaborate structures geared toward the upper crust. But the ethos of the 20s also extended to the upwardly mobile middle-class. The 1929 stock market crash and the subsequent Depression, which lasted roughly until the United States entered the Second World War, saw construction of apartment hotels trend toward the middle and working classes. This seismic shift in the economic landscape manifested itself not only in general construction trends, but also in the way individual apartment hotels targeted tenants, and the physical alterations the properties underwent to cut costs and serve more utilitarian purposes. After World War II, when suburban housing began to boom, apartment hotels shifted further downscale to serve the lower-middle class. 1960s "urban

[2] Marianne Lamonaca and Jonathan Mogul, eds. *Grand Hotels of the Jazz Age: The Architecture of Schultze and Weaver*. Cambridge: Princeton Architectural Press, 2005, p. 24.
[3] Ibid., p. 25.
[4] Ibid.

renewal" caused many wrecking balls to claim formerly grand buildings in many cities. By the end of the 20th Century, most apartment hotels were generally associated with the poor, elderly and those on the margins of society.

The apex of apartment hotel development came in the mid-1920s, when demand arose from a rising professional class of workers, typically single men and women, who flocked to the cities seeking self-improvement. These tenants sought housing that was proximate to downtown, easily accessible by streetcar, and that provided such amenities as kitchenettes, on-site dining rooms, daily maid service, laundry service and common areas that were conducive to socializing. They also wanted the flexibility of short-term or monthly leases so they could follow their career path as change dictated. In terms of aesthetics, apartment hotels of that era were often handsome structures that drew from a rich architectural vocabulary. Revival-style architecture was all the rage at the time, with Georgian, Tudor, Spanish Colonial, English Gothic, and Italian Renaissance elements providing echoes of European style and sensibility to smaller scale American buildings.

The Chatham and its date of construction strongly coincide with a surge in Kansas City's population as well as the high-water mark of apartment construction, particularly apartment hotel buildings. Between 1910 and 1930, the city's population increased by 150,000, to nearly 400,000 residents. To meet the needs of these new residents, builders began constructing multi-family dwellings. From 1920 to 1929, 15,152 new apartment units and 1,092 new duplex units came on the market. The peak of this construction boom came during the year 1923, when 299 apartment buildings were built, providing more than 3,200 units[5]. This surge saw dramatic development in the neighborhoods located south of downtown Kansas City, particularly along the north-south corridors of Main Street and Broadway. These important thoroughfares combined commercial, residential and mixed-use buildings and served to hem in the residential neighborhood of Old Hyde Park.

The Chatham Hotel made its premier during the peak year of 1923, when property owner Nellie F. Graves and Reyburn Engineering and Construction, the architect of record, determined the corner lot located at 3701 Broadway in Kansas City to be the site of an "Apt. Hotel." Not yet named, the planned building was designed to stand six stories, would be composed of "Br. Stone Re. Conc. And Compo rf" (likely referring to brick and stone, reinforced concrete and composition roof) and would cost an estimated $150,000[6].

By April 1, 1923, construction was well under way. An untitled article from a local paper features a photograph of the building showing it already half complete. Referring to the Hotel

[5] Schwenk, Sally F. "Working-Class and Middle-Income Apartment Buildings in Kansas City, MO," National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form, September 2007.
[6] Kansas City Landmarks Office, Building Permit #13486, March 5, 1923.

Chatham, the article identifies the owner as Nellie F. Graves, "of wide hotel experience," who had formerly operated three other properties. It projects a completion date of June 15, refers to the budget as $400,000, which will provide "the most modern structural features known to construction engineers." The article also states that the Chatham will comprise 110 rooms, including 15 two-room suites, a "spacious and handsomely furnished lobby," and a dining room seating 150 guests[7].

Five weeks later, on May 8, 1923, the *Kansas City Star* reported that the building was near completion. A photograph shows the front and north facades finished, but the windows not yet installed. The story describes the property as a "family hotel" and reveals that the name will be The Chatham, homage to Mrs. Graves' English family. The article also provides a profile of Mrs. Graves. It describes how her husband's death "required her to enter activities outside of her home," which challenged her belief, "somewhat popular then, that feminine occupations should be confined to the home or the schoolroom." After a brief attempt at teaching school, Mrs. Graves decided to "keep house, but on an extensive scale," which launched her career in the hotel business. According to the story, Mrs. Graves designed and commissioned her first property in 1909, an unnamed hotel located on Admiral Boulevard. In 1912, she completed Rockhill Manor, located at 4233 Locust Street, which is still standing. In 1917, she followed with the Southland Hotel, located at 3517 Main Street.

In terms of style, the Chatham was a striking example of the Georgian Revival style. The red brick was contrasted with substantial use of terra cotta, which appeared on the balustrades marking the cornice, in the lozenges depicting Grecian urns and garlands, in the three stringcourses dividing the building, and in the lintels and sills framing the windows. Quoins on the front corners of the building and a square brick column front porch with a dentil roof added symmetry to the design.

The Revival aspects of the Chatham also established a stylistic context within the Broadway corridor. In 1924, architect Nelle E. Peters and builder Charles Phillips constructed the Ambassador Hotel at 3600 Broadway. Also considered a Mid-Rise building at 8 stories and more than 100 rooms, the Ambassador featured an elaborate Spanish Revival style composed of buff brick, terra cotta quoins and a tiled roof. By 1927, the Valentine Hotel Apartments was completed almost directly across the street from the Chatham. Another product of the Nelle Peters, Charles Phillips collaboration, the Valentine was also composed in the Spanish Revival mode and fit within the parameters of a mid-rise apartment building.

These apartment hotel properties caught the attention of real-estate speculators. The Chatham enjoyed good press. Its status was portrayed in newspaper accounts and in letters exchanged

[7] *Kansas City Journal,* Untitled Article, April 1, 1923.

between buyers as a premiere property. The Chatham boasted kitchenettes and larger, double rooms. It also offered a complete array of services on par with fine hotels. The Chatham featured a large central lobby and game rooms. Though it had no storefront restaurant or shops, the building did feature a large dining room and a smaller area for private dining. It was built between the upscale Old Hyde Park and Valentine/Roanoke residential areas, and was located on Broadway, a major north-south corridor connecting downtown to newer neighborhoods and commercial buildings to the south.

A 1941 "Property Brief" written for prospective buyers elaborates on many of these points:

> "Shopping and amusement centers are within one to two blocks...Public transportation, both bus and street car, is in front of the hotel...The lobby is exceptionally spacious and a well equipped powder room, two game rooms and the Manager's offices are located directly off the lobby...A large dining room (seating capacity 110 people) as well as a private dining room capable of serving 18 people, is immediately to the rear of the lobby. A fully equipped kitchen extends across the east side of the building.

The brief also provides evidence that the units were fully furnished by elaborating on a $30,000 expenditure made by the owners to buy "new furniture, carpets and equipment." However, that sum did not include "annual expenditures made for papering and painting, furniture covering..." The full-service aspect of the Chatham is illustrated by the Profit and Loss Statement portion of the brief, which establishes that more than $8,000 was spent on janitors and maids.

In terms of the chain of title, Mrs. Graves' ownership of the Chatham was short-lived. In January 1925, she sold the Chatham to the Cordsen Brothers real estate firm in exchange for the titles to five residences and two apartment complexes. Throughout the 1930s, the property was upscale. Its residents included Charles Keith, president of the Central Coal and Coke Company, who served a brief tenure as Kansas City mayor in 1939.

By 1941, the Chatham had drawn the attention of a group of St. Louis investors. A series of letters provides insight into the value of the Chatham. In a letter dated December 5, 1941, Colonel Isaac A. Hedges, writing under the letterhead of Washington University in St. Louis, replied to a lawyer named Barat A. Guignon regarding his client's request for a loan of $85,000 to buy the Chatham. Alluding to another real estate deal that evidently went sour, a skeptical Hedges says, "After my experience with the LaSalle, I should say that to borrow $85,000 on the Chatham Hotel is a far, far cry."

A few days later, Barat Guignon replied to Hedges. Citing a meeting with an expert on the Kansas City real estate market, Guignon writes "Shutz agrees that a competent owner could easily afford to pay $125,000 for the Chatham and operate it so as to make money on such

valuation." Guignon elaborates by saying that the Chatham "is a good building on a prominent thoroughfare...and has always enjoyed a first class reputation and caters to many permanent guests with substantial means."

In March of 1942, the Chatham was acquired by Morris Steimbaum and associates of St. Louis. In November of 1942, Steimbaum and associates sold the Chatham to Mrs. Opal Brady of Kansas City. Mrs. Brady and her parents Mr. and Mrs. J.B. Bray, had been involved in other hotel operations, including the Gotham, the Rockhill Manor (any association with Nellie Graves is unknown), the Phillips and the Ambassador, also located on Broadway. It was Mrs. Brady who broadened the Chatham's marketing strategy by offering nightly rooms for the transient trade.

The Chatham remained under ownership of Mrs. Brady, who later remarried and became known as Mrs. Opal Currie, until her death. Her heirs, Mrs. Lucille Martin of Midland, Texas, and her son, James R. Martin, owned the property for many years, selling it in 1967 to a group of six buyers, including Robert M. Newton.

Soon after his acquisition of the property, Newton and his partners leased the Chatham to a company called Kansas City Student Housing. That organization converted the Chatham into a dormitory-style residence for young women attending the Weaver Airline Personnel School. Rechristened Chatham Hall, the building was home to stewardesses in training, most of whom went to work for Trans World Airlines, also known as TWA, which maintained its headquarters in Kansas City. By 1973, the Weaver Airline Personnel School was ordered closed by an injunction charging it with false advertising.

This initiated a slow and steady decline. The Chatham went from a fashionable, upscale apartment hotel to a transient hotel over the next decade. Still, it's character-defining features and materials stayed largely in place. The change in the Chatham's fortunes coincided with the transition of real estate investment from the urban center to the suburbs. As Broadway struggled through these changes, so did its major commercial and residential properties, including other neighboring apartment hotels such as the Ambassador, the Hyde Park and the Valentine.

The Chatham Hotel stands vacant today, but the building retains architectural integrity and exhibits the design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association with 1920s apartment hotel architecture necessary to merit inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

Hyde Park Addition, Lot 2, Block 24, Kansas City, Jackson County, MO

**Boundary Justification**

Boundary includes all the land historically associated with the Chatham Hotel development.

**Key to Photographs**

Tony Gardner, Photographer. September 2007. Negatives on file with Gardner Historic Property Consultants, Kansas City, MO.

1. Front (West) Elevation, and North Side Elevation, Facing East
2. North Side Elevation, Facing Southwest
3. Rear (East) Elevations, Facing West
4. Rear (East) Elevation, Facing West
5. South Side Elevation, Facing North
6. Front Porch, Facing Northeast
7. Front Façade Cornice Detail, Facing East
8. Northwest Corner Detail, Facing Southeast
9. Streetscape from Central Street, Facing West
10. First Floor Interior, Facing Southeast
11. First Floor Corridor, Facing East
12. Elevator Doors, Facing East
13. Staircase Looking Down, Facing South
14. Typical Upstairs Corridor, Facing North
15. Typical Unit Entry, Facing West

Chatham
HOTEL
Jackson Co. MO.
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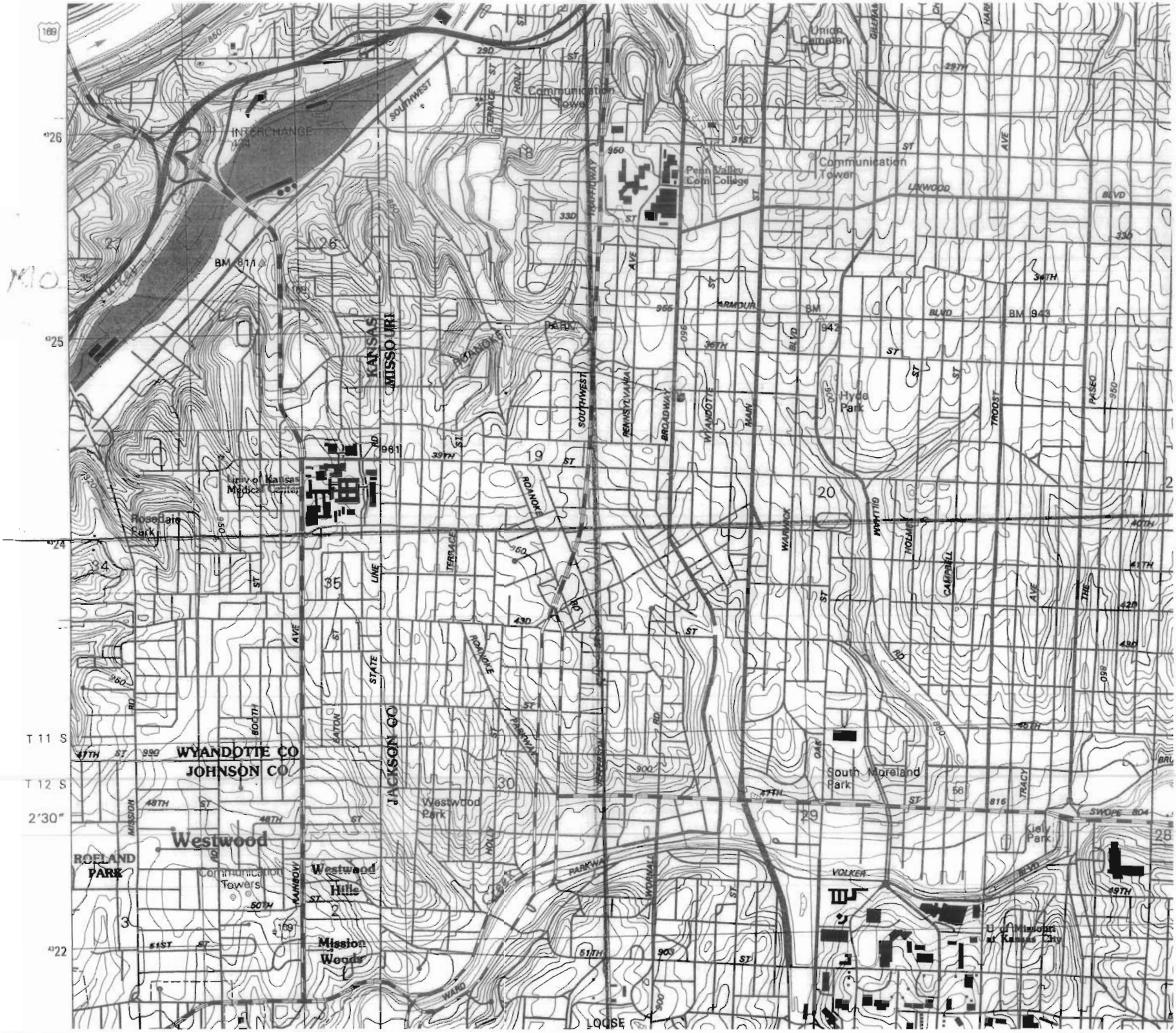
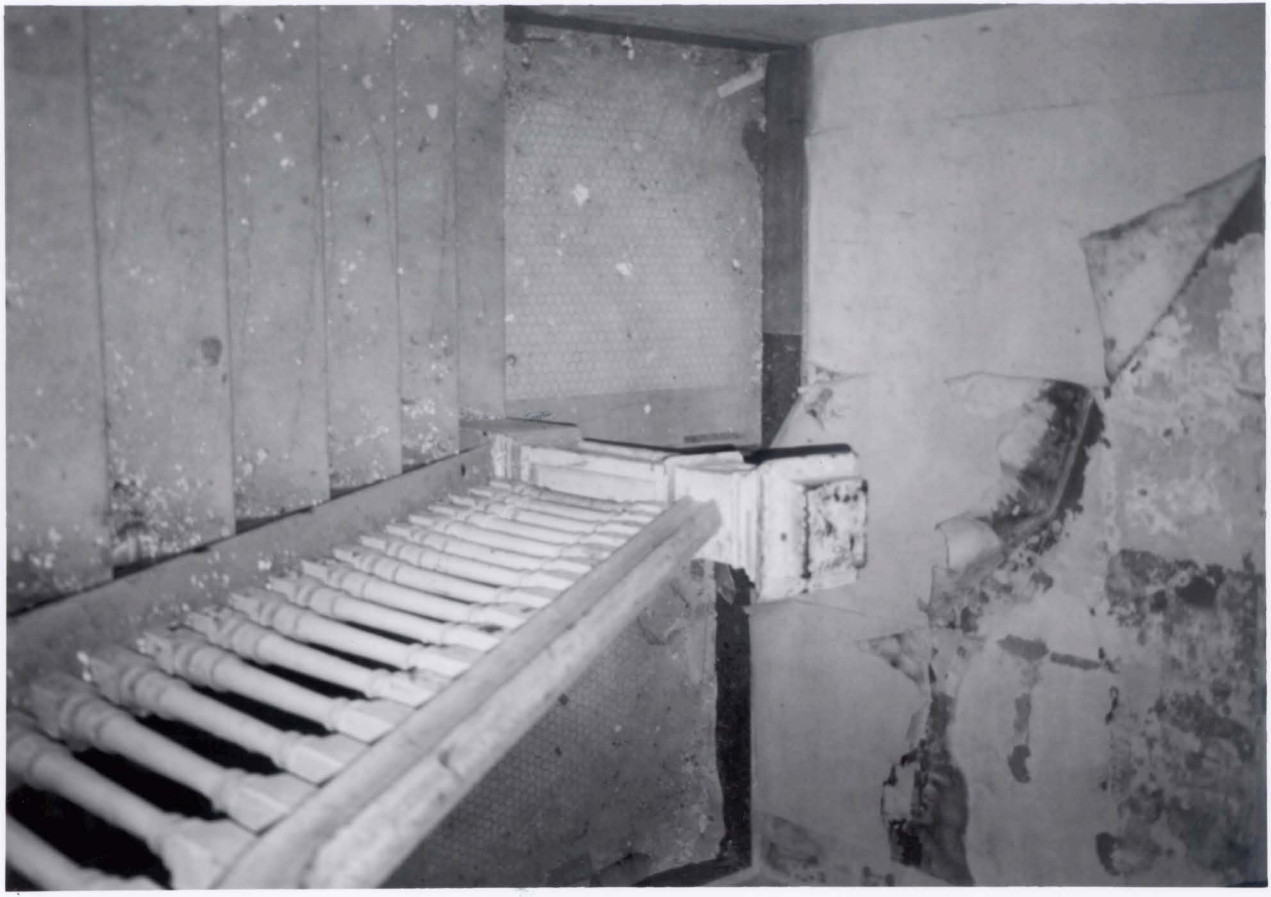


Plasma
Services

MARY T. CY
ARCHITECT

BUD
LIGHT



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