

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Snell Arcade

AND/OR COMMON

Rutland Building

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

405 Central Avenue

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

St. Petersburg

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

N/A VICINITY OF

6

STATE

Florida

CODE

12

COUNTY

Pinellas

CODE

103

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED
- N/A

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

John William Galbraith, Securities Fund Management, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

405 Central Avenue

CITY, TOWN

St. Petersburg

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

Florida

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Pinellas County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

315 Court Street

CITY, TOWN

Clearwater

STATE

Florida

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

This property has not been determined eligible.

TITLE

DATE

N/A

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT DETERIORATED
 GOOD RUINS
 FAIR UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Snell Arcade is a fine example of Mediterranean Revival architecture which has virtually the same footprint and form it had when built in 1928. It makes full use of the site up to the third floor. A tower rises from the fourth to the ninth floor. The building has recently undergone a thoroughly planned and carefully executed rehabilitation which has mitigated the harmful impact of alterations made from the 1930s to the 1970s. Significant exterior features include the polychromatic architectural terra cotta, the copper canopy which shades the first floor, and the use of Florida keystone as an exterior fabric. Significant interior features include the arcaded retail space, the use of mosaic and tile decorations, and elaborate stone and iron work; each of which reflect Mediterranean Revival influences characteristic of Florida construction in the 1920s and the personal taste of the first owner, C. Perry Snell.

The Snell Arcade is on the northwest corner of Fourth Street and Central Avenue in the heart of St. Petersburg's downtown central business district. It completely fills the 100' x 130' site. The basement actually encroaches on city property by 12'-6" on the east, and in one place 17' on the south, by being built underneath the sidewalk. (See appendix G).

The buildings on all sides predate the Snell and, but for the Post Office, have been covered with new facades. The Post Office, which is on the National Register for Historic Places, is Mediterranean revival also. Florida Federal Savings and Loan to the east and Century First National Bank covered their facades in the sixties. Both of these buildings are larger than the Snell but obscure it from view only from the east and due south. The new interstate downtown connectors, which approach from the west, gives one a good view of its tower when entering the city. And especially from the north, when one turns onto Fourth Street heading south, he can see the Snell in the background behind the Post Office. Fourth Street is one-way going south so one's back is turned after passing the Snell. It is just as well because Century First National Bank obscures this view from the south. When approaching from the east along Central, which is two-way traffic, one cannot see the Snell until he gets within one block because Florida Federal ("Big Blue") blocks the view. One can see the Snell from the west and it contrasts mightily to Florida Federal in the background.

The building's footprint and basic form has not changed from the original plan.¹ The exterior alterations, which will be discussed in detail later in this paper, are as follows:

1. Extensive remodeling of retail shop store fronts at first level starting in 1931 and continuing through 1974. In 1981, restoration of the lower facade began.
2. The copper canopy and store front under the canopy was painted many times.
3. Constructed kitchen on west terrace of Penthouse in 1947.
4. Added stainless steel and glass enclosures on east and south terraces of Penthouse in 1950.
5. Removed arch which was the south entry to the Arcade and extended copper canopy in 1950.
6. Installed a cooling tower on third floor terrace in 1952.
7. Removed 148 steel projected windows and installed aluminum horizontal slider at different times starting in 1971.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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There have been too many interior modifications to list them all, but below are the major changes that made the greatest impact.

1. Installed a floor at the mid-point of the Arcade at the mezzanine level and destroyed all the original detailing except for a few columns, pilasters, mosaic and multifoiled arch at Arcade two in 1950.
2. Changed stairs to basement from Central Avenue and from Arcade number two.
3. Construction of Ruth's Dress Shop in basement.
4. Ill-planned modification to offices on second floor.

Snell had the building originally designed for expansion. Another tower was to be built on the northeast corner identical in form to the first one but 30 feet taller. There was to be expansion from the third floor to six floors that would wrap around the skylights on the north and south and connect the two towers on the east. This expansion as shown in appendix Q would cover the full 100 feet along Fourth Street but only 90 feet along Central Avenue. The foundation was constructed to support the expansion and two additional elevator pits were installed.

The building makes full use of the site up to the third floor. The west forty feet of the building, hereinafter referred to as "West 40," has the same front material but the construction is different. It is steel supporting wood making it type V construction. There is a small 30' x 60' basement that Walgreen's built in 1937.⁴ The second floor covers only the front 40' (south). At the third floor the 40' x 42'-6" square tower begins. On the east and north, a Spanish Village type restaurant was constructed around an interior courtyard. The elevator tower was designed as an appendage so the two future elevators could be attached and provide the connection between the existing and future tower. The tower is Gothic in character with its accentuated verticality that is reinforced by the stepping at the seventh floor reduction to a spire type of construction at the penthouse and crowned with a windowed octagonally-shaped, copper covered cupola with a copper finial.

The tower appears symmetrical with the south facade being 2'-6" wider than the east. The elevator tower is the only element that would depart from symmetry. The future tower would have created an asymmetrical building in the Italian Romanesque style of having two towers of unequal height on cathedrals. However, each tower would be symmetrical within itself.

Window placement is regular and each window is rectangular with a vertical mullion to accentuate the verticality of the building. The windows in the stairwell on the north facade are not in line with the others.

The exterior skin is Florida keystone up to the floor line of the second floor and cream colored glazed terra-cotta on the remainder. The ornate detail is glazed terra-cotta with cobalt blue and yellow colors.

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The original plans called for ten stores along Fourth Street and Central Avenue with another four along the alley Arcade. The alley stores were closed probably in the thirties and the openings to the Arcade filled with keystone. Presently, the alley keystone and terra-cotta has been repaired and cleaned. The store fronts on Central and Fourth had pink Georgia etowah marble bulkhead under the store front and the remainder of the facade is keystone. Walgreen's covered the marble with ceramic tile in the thirties from the Arcade entry west. Rutland covered the ceramic tile with lath and plaster andpainted all the other marble, keystone and terra-cotta on each side of the Arcade entry.

When restoration was begun in November of 1980, many tests were conducted to determine the best method for removing the materials. All methods were found unsatisfactory so the entire lower facade on Fourth Street and Central Avenue was replaced with new keystone and glass store fronts. See also plan in appendix H. New stores are planned now with Chet's Cigar Store remaining.

The copper canopy had beenpainted an estimated ten times. Tests were conducted to determine how to remove the paint and in November 1980 this work began, coming to a successful conclusion in April 1981. The ornately designed 10' wide copper canopy covers the entire south and east facades. No canopy was at the original Arcade entry, however; it was extended in 1950. The copper detail occurs between lights running perpendicular to the building which also served as back-lighted signs.

The terra-cotta sking begins at the second floor with a band of detailing that includes Italianate roundels with a foliated design on each side to the window sill. Windows on the south, east and north (not the tower, however) are paired with a twisted column pilaster and foliated capital between. There are three windows with two pilasters between them above the Arcade entry on Central and the alley.

On the tower, there are four vertical elements that project in front of the building plane with windows located between them. This thickened wall distinguishes the tower area from the remainder of the building. Below the window sill at the third floor, there is a bas-relief detail that is continued on all three sides of the building interrupted only by the thickened wall of the tower. This same detail is repeated on the copper canopy fascia.

On each side, above the south Arcade entry are terra-cotta pilasters that further reinforce and celebrate the entry. All this is topped off with an ornately designed parapet in blues and yellows and finials in blue and yellow. The smaller of these finials are repeated on the parapet along the remaining south facade. The

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arch that was removed from this Arcade entry in 1950 was identical to the one on the alley. In the plain band directly above the keystone and directly below the three windows was the location of glazed high relief blue terra-cotta letters on a yellow background spelling "Snell Arcade." See appendix D.

Above three of the windows, on the east and south tower facade, at the second floor is a bas-relief arch. Above the arch is a foliated alge with the yellow background color and below the arch is a flat surface in cobalt blue. The arches above these windows are similar in shape to the Arcade entry arch.

There is an apparent difference in the plans and what was actually built at the third floor terrace on the east and north. The plans show the three northernmost larger windows on the east facade as being openings with handrails across them. Upon close inspection, however, one can see that the windows were actually installed in the original construction and do show as windows in the older photos. Above these openings are concrete beams that were formed with wood that left the grain imprint so these beams simulate wood.

Classical design approach to towers of this period are in three elements--base, shaft and capital as in a column design. The base we have discussed. The shaft of the tower is repetitive in the placement of windows and the glazed terra-cotta on yellow field spandrel panel or alge of bas-relief between.

The top of the tower of "column capital" is celebrated with high-relief Italianate roundels above multifoiled moorish arches above each of the three windows on each facade (east, south and west). There are only two of these on the north facade due to the placement of the elevator.

There are four high-relief column pilasters with foliated decorations draping off at the top. This is classical again in the approach to repetitive columns and openings. There are an even number of columns (4) leaving an odd number of spaces (3) for fenestrations.

Topping off the pilasters, of which there are 25, are finials sitting atop the parapet wall. The basic colors are yellow and cobalt blue, both alternating in providing background and outer plane detail highlighting.

Topping off the building, much like a large finial, is the square two-story Penthouse with an octagonal cupola. The cupola has four arched windows, copper roof and a copper finial.

Most of the original windows were center hinged outward opening steel frame which have rusted.

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The windows from the mezzanine up were composed of the following:

- 7 existing original badly rusted steel center hinged outward openings. They are remaining to be either repaired or changed.
- 9 existing original steel repainted and broken glass replaced in toilets and stair.
- 4 existing original quatrefoil steel at mezzanine level to remain.
- 138 existing horizontal sliders in natural finish which Rutland started replacing in 1971c.⁵
- 10 existing aluminum awning in Penthouse replaced in 1982.
- 50 new aluminum horizontal sliders installed in 1982 in place of the rusted, beyond repair steel windows. Aluminum sliders were used to match the other 138 existing aluminum windows.
- 13 new fixed glass in aluminum frames with mullions to match original configuration at mezzanine level installed in 1982. These also match the aluminum mezzanine windows that were existing.

231 total windows

The third floor terrace was originally used as a restaurant. Appendix F and K. When Mr. Rutland took over the building, he began using it for air conditioning equipment in 1952.⁶ The interior of these northern rooms have quarry tile floors with ceramic tile inlays and ceramic tile base. There are terra-cotta window sills, plaster walls and concrete roof structure formed and painted to simulate wood. All the walls and ceilings have been repainted so practically all detail is gone. On the exterior, sheds and lean-tos were added but have since been removed in 1982 to find the exterior walls had been painted and some detail damaged. The original terrazzo floor has deteriorated so badly and so much water damage to the second floor below has caused us to install a new Dex-o-tex floor covering for waterproofing. The walls which were repainted by Rutland are being repainted in 1982 to match the original paint which was found after close inspection.

The roof is of tapered mission tile and some small areas of tar and gravel. Most all original detail is intact. There are cast stone inlays and finials (one of which has Snell's name), Ceramic Tile inlays, Battlements and Amortizements, wrought iron on rectangular and round windows, and cast stone columns holding concrete beams to simulate wood.

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There is a musicians' loggia at the fourth floor level overlooking the courtyard. A wall with an opening with iron gates separates terrace one from terrace two which can be seen on the floor plan, appendix K.

The Penthouse terraces were enclosed in 1947 and 1950 by Mr. Rutland. The exterior terra-cotta walls were destroyed during this time but are being restored with a simulated terra-cotta in stucco. The original ceramic tile base and stair risers were covered with carpet ruining the first flight to the second level, but the second flight was salvaged. The quarry tile floor was covered with carpet in 1950 and removed in 1982. The west exterior wall and windows were destroyed when a kitchen was built on the west terrace in 1947. The south and east walls and windows were destroyed in 1950 when these two terraces were enclosed.

The basement was a restaurant originally. A stair to the basement from Central Avenue (appendix H) was located in the lease number one area generally in the same areas as the one shown in the plan added in 1982 to comply with fire codes. The original stair was removed perhaps as early as 1930 according to building permits, but this is not certain. Another stair to the basement was from the north side of Arcade two in the area of the basement west of lobby (appendix G). This stair also went up to a mezzanine over what is now noted as mail room, and up eventually to the second floor just west of the second floor loggia (appendix J). It is not clear when this stair was removed, but according to Archie Parish's drawing, it was 1930 when a new stair was cut into the center of the Arcade. This stair was then removed in 1950 when another stair was cut to the basement in the area just north of the existing elevator. This stair was removed in 1982 to provide for a new elevator on the north side of the existing elevator in an existing elevator pit. See Plan appendix G, H.

Almost all of the original detailing in the basement was either covered with flocked wall paper, enclosed in walls, hidden above dropped ceilings, or painted over. Only the beams and a few arches remained visible. In 1981 new demolition uncovered arches, columns and wrought iron, original Spanish ceramic tile above a flat arch, terra-cotta arabesques that were restored and four new ones made, ceramic tile dishes and other inlays, and subway glass in the sidewalk.

Information on the transformation of the basement is sketchy. According to the drawings of Kiehnel and Elliot, however, the basic form and space has not changed except for the stairs that came and went. Only the eastern half of the basement had significant detailing. Theremainder from the west side of the Arcade to the West 40

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was storage, toilet rooms, and the kitchen for the restaurant. A set of plans which are not dated show that the 30 x 60 basement under the West 40 was not in the original. We believe this work was done by Walgreen in 1937, according to building records.

The current owner has restored the space and detailing as closely as possible to the original. Because the original basement floor is two feet below the water table, many moisture problems were encountered over the years. Well points and sump pumps were installed to keep water seepage out or down to a minimum. An engineering analysis was conducted in 1981 to determine the most realistic approach to this problem. It was found that the entire basement floor had to be raised 12" and a french drain water collection system installed. Forms were taken of all column bases and were rebuilt at the new floor level. A ceramic tile base, a random patterned terrazzo floor and a small area of marble floor had to be covered.

As pointed out in the Statement of Significance, this water problem was first found when the basement was excavated. At that time it was thought to be a spring. What it was in reality was the ground water table which has come back to haunt the old building. Currently, the owner has his computer center in the basement which requires absolute dry conditions.

The single most item of change to this building occurred in 1950 when Mr. Rutland hired Parish and Crowe to demolish the Arcade and install a new floor at the mid-point. Appendix E shows the original Arcade which went from Central Avenue to the alley opposite the Post Office. Appendix H, I, J, K show the plans for restoration of the Arcade. By 1981 when work began, small offices and storage rooms had been built where brightly painted cast iron columns were. In 1981 the new owner began restoring this space. The doors were removed from Central Avenue and wrought iron gates installed. Yellow linoleum covered quarry tile floors which have been repaired. This floor also has ceramic inlaid tile such as the addorsed dolphins and the cross. The original handmade Spanish tile bulkheads and columns were destroyed. These are being rebuilt with new tile; the only remaining original tile is on the elevator wall. A brass mailbox and mailchute still exist. The arch between Arcade one and Arcade two was salvaged from a storage room. The Italian mosaic tile mural which was in a storage room was carefully protected during demolition. A few border tiles came loose and will be replaced. New pilasters were made using the originals according to the original plans. The second floor loggia became a toilet room, but it is not clear when. In 1980 when the new owner, John Galgraith, moved into the second floor, careful demolition began to find what could be salvaged of the original. The original

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loggia was buried inside drywall and plaster and was opened up on one side in anticipation of the future work. Care was taken all around the loggia at that time to preserve the detailing.

The toilet room facilities were greater in number on this floor because it has a greater occupancy. Floors were ceramic tile, walls were ceramic tile to the door height, and the partitions around the water closets are marble. All tile and marble partitions have been salvaged. The West 40 has an attic area vented to the outside. Because no maintenance plan was followed, pigeons came in through the vents and lived for many years. It was necessary to remove the entire roof and shovel out the pigeon dung which amounted to 2,700 pounds. It was then completely disinfected and the roof replaced. That area is habitable now and used for offices.

The remaining floors are devoid of detailing other than the tin cornice in the corridor which, in some cases such as the seventh floor, has been removed. The seventh floor has been gutted presently to allow for future offices.

Toilet rooms on the upper floor are similar in detailing to the second floor. Marble toilet stalls, ceramic tile floor and walls and plaster ceilings. All plumbing fixtures were replaced to comply with codes.

Air conditioning for all the building is being provided by a central area with a capacity of 120 tons now and a future 40 tons. All original electrical service is being abandoned. Over the years the electrical service has grown without any master planning and was in conflict with many codes. A new electrical room, including telephone service, was installed in the basement adjacent to a transformer vault located in the alley.

Fire egress from this building has been a problem since the first stair was changed. The basement changes never seemed to consider fire egress and when restoration began in 1981, all new stairs had to be constructed to provide for safe egress from all floors including the basement through to the third floor. Originally, the stair from the tower terminated at the second floor loggia and one had to travel around the loggia and eventually to Arcade number two. Later another stair was installed north of the elevator which alleviated this routing and the original stair was removed.

Restoration plans called for continuation of the stair from the tower on to the first floor Arcade.

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Footnotes

- ¹Original constructions documents, Kiehnel & Elliott, 1928.
- ²Ibid.
- ³Ibid.
- ⁴City of St. Petersburg Building Department, Building Records, Card Index 3, 1937.
- ⁵Ibid., Card 7, 1971.
- ⁶Ibid., Card 5, 1952.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1928

BUILDER/ARCHITECT A: Kiehnel & Elliott (Miami)
B: E.B. Ring (St. Petersburg)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Snell Arcade is a nine story commercial building in downtown St. Petersburg. It is an example of eclectic architecture from the late 1920s which incorporates features from a number of Mediterranean Revival styles, designed by Richard Kiehnel and M. Leo Elliott for C. Perry Snell, the building reflects traditional design concepts while incorporating new attitudes toward style. It is notable for its use of ornamental terra cotta. Mr. Snell was instrumental in the development of St. Petersburg during the boom years of the 1920s and this building was the last significant structure built in the city before the boom tapered off.

During St. Petersburg's boom times of the 1920s, its population swelled by three and one-half times.¹ The 1925 building permits issued for St. Petersburg totaled \$25,005,000, and a year later fell to \$15,720,000, the second highest total in the history of the city.² Ten big hotels were built in the span of five years, the "Million Dollar Pier" was constructed and a fellow by the name of Doc Webb started a little drug store that would become "The World's Most Unusual Drug Store".

At the same time, another druggist was making his mark in St. Petersburg, C. Perry Snell. He was born in Kentucky in 1869, and during a vacation to St. Petersburg, he purchased some property. By 1904, he returned to the city to live, and entered his second profession as real estate developer in 1905.³ For thirty-seven years, from 1905 to 1942, Snell improved the dollar value of more property on the Pinellas Peninsula than any other individual or group.⁴ Snell's list of development in St. Petersburg are indeed impressive. Generally, he developed most of the property east of Fourth Street from Fifth Avenue North to the northern limit of Snell Isle. In addition, he and his associates developed much of the land around Mirror Lake and Crescent Lake.

Quickly establishing his properties as premier status residential areas, he gave them prestigious names such as Bayfront, North Shore and Granada Terrace. In 1925, amidst the boom period, he formulated one of his greatest developments in St. Petersburg, Snell Isle, a prestigious series of homes in Spanish and Italian architectural style; which still holds a reputation as a fine residential community.⁵

Mr. Snell was an extensive world traveler. He toured Europe, gathering bits and pieces of both ideas and artifacts for use in buildings in St. Petersburg. His personal estate on Snell Isle contained a spectacular gallery of miniature paintings he collected while traveling.⁶

Snell employed Kiehnel and Elliott to design the last significant structure in St. Petersburg while the building boom began tapering off.

(See Continuation Sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See Continuation Sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less Than One

UTM REFERENCES

A | 17 | 338510 | 3072760 |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 C | | | | | | | | | |

B | | | | | | | | | |
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING
 D | | | | | | | | | |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Lot 19. Less the West 0.4 feet thereof. All of Lots 20 and B, Block 27, Revised Map of the City of St. Petersburg, as recorded in Plat Book 1, page 49, Records of Hillsborough County, Florida, of which Pinellas County was formerly a part. St. Petersburg, Florida.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charles S. Canerday/Larry S. Paarlberg

ORGANIZATION
 Division of Archives, History & Records Management
 Department of State

DATE

August 13, 1982

STREET & NUMBER
 The Capitol

TELEPHONE

(904) 487-2333

CITY OR TOWN
 Tallahassee

STATE

Florida

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

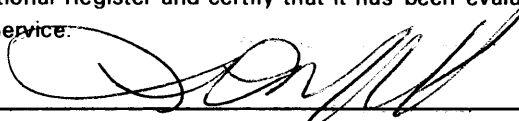
NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE L. Ross Morrell, State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

September 29, 1982

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Entered in the
 National Register

DATE

11/4/82

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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"The firm of Kiehnel and Elliott was formed in Pittsburg, Penn., in 1906, with Richard Kiehnel as the designer. The first commission for Florida work was received in the early spring of 1917. In the beginning, a small branch office only was established, but in 1922 a permanent office was opened, with Mr. Kiehnel in charge. During the period of Florida's rapid growth, branch offices were maintained in Miami Beach and St. Petersburg. In 1926, certain changes in the partnership agreement were made, and in 1930 Mr. Kiehnel, personally, took over the entire Florida interests of the firm. In 1934, George H. Spohn, who had for many years been connected with the Miami office, and Henry P. Whitworth became associated with the firm."⁷

It was fitting that Mr. Snell should hire Richard Kiehnel to design his "Edifice". Mr. Snell, as a world traveler, was particularly interested in Spanish Architecture. Mr. Kiehnel had already made his reputation locally by designing the Rolvat Hotel, later to become Stetson University of Law, for A.M. Taylor, a railroad man, and enjoyed a statewide reputation and somewhat of a reputation nationally for his Spanish influence on American Architecture. His work was featured in a book called "Spanish Influence on American Architecture and Decoration" by R.W. Sexton.

While a nation was struggling to emerge from an eclectic period of Architecture which featured all the different "influences" on American Architecture Mr. Kiehnel clung to the old standby traditional concepts. Louis Sullivan created the skyscraper so Mr. Kiehnel could tack on his Spanish influence. Every work of Architecture has to be categorized so we will call the style of the Snell Building - for the sake of this essay - Mediterranean Revival with a mostly Spanish Colonial Influence.

It could even be said that through Mr. Kiehnel's influence, this became a characteristic style of the early part of the century in Central and South Florida. Other significant projects of his were Rollins College, Orlando, Miami High School and other schools in Dade County.

Mr. Kiehnel was an active member of architectural organizations to which it is said he contributed most generously of his time and efforts. In 1904, he became a member of the Pittsburg Architectural Club and since that time acted for two terms as its president then became a member of the Pittsburg Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1906 and a member of the national body of the American Institute of Architects in 1913. He was a charter member of the Florida South Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and was honored as its president in 1930-31 and then became the Florida Association of Architects President in 1932-33.⁸

While the Florida boom was making a success of many men in many endeavors, Mr. Kiehnel found his niche.

It is ironic that the very things that made the Spanish style evolve in Spain are ignored in the U.S. The Spanish Architectural style in this country was described by R.W. Sexton in his book Spanish Influence on American Architecture and Decoration this way:⁹ "There is an absence of sham and meaningless applied ornament. Decorations are purely structural in character, frequently elaborate and rich in color. There is, too, a scarcity of movables. Everything seems to serve a purpose. Spanish architectural and decorative design, both exterior and interior, is based first on that fundamental principle of architecture that form arises from structure and that

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decoration is the means of lending interest to that form thus attained. It is ever characterized by sincerity and honesty of purpose, which its visible construction proves. It is, in fact, this sincerity and honesty in design, which amounts to simplicity and austerity, that the Spanish so enjoy."

All ornamentation in Mr. Kiehnel's design of The Snell is purely decoration with no structural integrity. It is a structural steel building holding up building blocks that appear to be bearing walls, concrete beams painted to simulate wood and arches made of plaster. In no way was this form derived from structure. There is no "simplicity and austerity" in this building. There is a nightmare of structural gymnastics to create what is "elaborate and rich in color." There is no consideration of the building materials indigenous to this area and the solar orientation and fenestrations ignore our climatic conditions even though the Spanish building's suitability lies in the considerations of site, exposure and vegetation. This was typical of the period and of Mr. Kiehnel's other works in Coral Gables, Coconut Grove and the Miami area. He was predominately a residence designer and in most of his works, it appears that he holds a theme and use of materials fairly consistently throughout.

Here there must have been a battle or two with C. Perry Snell. At every corner in the building's interior, the material changes. In the Arcade alone, there must have been twenty-five different tile designs used. Snell brought from Europe many, many different tiles and these were mixed and matched without any sense of order or plan - simply decoration. This building epitomizes the highly ornate Spanish style of Mr. Kiehnel and the improvidence of Mr. Snell.

This building contains probably every Architectonic detail that Spanish Architecture ever contained. It has ancons supporting quadrafoiled arches, bar tracery and arabesques, ornate wrought iron, moorish gothic windows, hand made ceramic tiles from Spain and mosaics from Italy.

The pink etowah marble is from Georgia, the keystone from the Florida Keys and it is interesting to note that the man who started a company that did the marble in the original building has come out of retirement to again work on the exterior facade restoration. His name is John Maugle of Steward Mellon in Tampa. Fred Lopez, the son of the original ceramic tile installer, is doing the ceramic tile for us now.

Mr. Kiehnel had favorite detailing that he used in his buildings. On the third floor there is a courtyard that contains battlement details with similar embrasures and merlons as in many of his other works. In the upper detailing of the arch that was the northern entrance to the Arcade, there is a yellow terra-cotta "S" on a blue background. This same detail is above an exterior door to the residence of Mr. Francis of Miami, Florida. The peculiar thing there, though, it is in a broken pediment, which is not Spanish at all. It was first thought that the "S" was for Snell, but now we wonder. And the same antics or simulated gargoyles used to decorate the tower at the Rolyat Hotel are used in the third floor courtyard.

(See Continuation Sheet)

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The most remarkable material used in this building is the terra-cotta. Few other buildings in St. Petersburg used terra-cotta as the skin of the building. Because of our climate, it has not suffered like some of the northern buildings which are subjected to freezing.

There was a two-story wooden structure on the property originally and in 1920, Mr. Snell bought it for \$100,000.00.¹⁰ The original plans called for two towers; the second one being for future development. The foundation was designed with this in mind and there exists now two additional elevator pits adjacent to the single existing elevator. One of these is being used for a new elevator now being installed. The second tower was never built because of the onset of the Depression.¹¹

Construction was started in late Spring of 1928,¹² and the push was on to have the building complete for the tourist season in the coming Fall. The following account of an incident during construction is from Archie Parish, Architect:

"When the basement was excavated, workers tapped into an underground spring which flooded the excavation. The contractor immediately called me at 3:00 a.m. for assistance. We requested hydraulic cement, sized with straw, to fill the spring. The cement was easily obtained, but straw was a rare item to find. I, however, recalled that a personal friend, Joe Droll, had a warehouse filled with straw which had been used for packing bricks. Mr. Droll was awakened at 5:00 a.m. by me, with a desperate plea to send his straw to the site of the Snell Building immediately. By 8:00 a.m., the spring was choked off, and construction resumed."

Although there were no other major catastrophies during construction, workers faced a deadline and worked several shifts in order to meet the completion date. On October 14, 1928, the St. Petersburg Times reported that "large crews of skilled workmen are now working night and day shifts encasing the steel in reinforced concrete and pouring the concrete floors." The article continued, discussing details of construction, mentioning that the building was absolutely fireproof and no regular fire insurance would be carried since no wood was used in the structure.¹³

Building Department records show that the first alterations began in 1937 when the building was purchased by Walgreen and Company for \$500,000.¹⁴ They chiselled off the terra-cotta "Snell Arcade" name over the Arcade entrance and installed the name "Walgreen Arcade" in ceramic tile. An additional \$100,000 was spent in equipment and structural changes. The general contractor in charge of remodeling was a local St. Petersburg contractor, John H. Bull. During remodeling, employment was furnished for over 150 men during a fifty day period in which approximately \$28,000 in wages were paid. The Bull Company handled the entire job with the exception of the electrical fixtures and plumbing which were installed by Knuet Vika, Walgreen superintendent. Bull also excavated the remaining basement area measuring 30 x 60 feet.

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Space on the first floor west of the arcade facing Central Avenue, was converted into one large room by eliminating room divisions. It was completely air conditioned to provide "a cool oasis" for patrons. A highlight of the remodeling was the addition of a seventy foot streamlined fountain extending along the entire west wall of the store's first floor, which could serve 150 persons at one time. The basement was converted into a coffee shop and tea room, seating 325 people, with entrances from both the interior of the store and from the arcade. A kitchen was installed at a cost of over \$5,000.¹⁵ Walgreen remained owners until 1943, when Hubert Rutland purchased the building.¹⁶

In 1950, Rutland extensively altered the exterior of the first floor by painting over the original keystone facade and the copper canopy. He also removed the South Arched Entry to the arcade and destroyed all detail by installing a floor through mid-point of the two-story space. An additional alteration was made by Mr. Rutland in 1950 when he enclosed the penthouse terraces with stainless steel and glass.¹⁷ During the destruction of the Arcade, Mr. Rutland painted over the name "Walgreen Arcade."

Even though Hubert Rutland provided no maintenance on the building, it has not suffered the fate of two buildings across the street that pre-date the Snell - Florida Federal to the east and Century First National Bank to the south. Both of the buildings across the street were covered with new facades in the early sixties because it was fashionable to look "new." Still, Mr. Rutland was responsible for more destructive alterations to the building than any other owner, removing all the decorative arcade and closing the Central Avenue arched opening.

Rutland Bank is one of only two locally owned Banks and still enjoys a large share of the banking market through the many banking changes going on today. Mr. Rutland sold an option on the Rutland Building in 1980 to a group of investors headed by Robert B. Roberts, Jr. who, in turn, sold the option to John Wm. Galbraith of Securities Fund Management, Inc. in the same year. Mr. Galbraith, who renamed the building Snell Arcade, is in the process of restoring the building at a cost of approximately \$2.5 million. Mr. Galbraith employs at this writing 125 employees and occupies 60% of the building. The final completion is expected July 1, 1982.

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Footnotes

- ¹ Hampton Dunn, Yesterday's St. Petersburg, 1973, p. 31.
- ² Karl H. Grismer, The Story of St. Petersburg, 1948, p. 148.
- ³ Hampton Dunn, Yesterday's St. Petersburg, 1973, p. 99.
- ⁴ Karl H. Grismer, The Story of St. Petersburg, 1948, p. 307.
- ⁵ St. Petersburg Independent, December, 1975.
- ⁶ Rosemary Brown, Wally Bishop Residence formerly C. Perry Snell Home, 1979, p. 1.
- ⁷ George H. Spohn & Henry P. Whitworth, A Monograph of the Florida Work of Kiehnel & Elliott Architects, 1938, p. 1.
- ⁸ Ibid., p. 1.
- ⁹ Ibid., p. 11.
- ¹⁰ St. Petersburg Times, January 26, 1928.
- ¹¹ Interview: Parish by Westfall, St. Petersburg, Florida, 27 June 1980.
- ¹² City of St. Petersburg Building Department, Building Records, card index 1, 1928.
- ¹³ St. Petersburg Times, October 26, 1928.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., December 4, 1937.
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Deed 935, Pinellas County, pp. 114-115.
- ¹⁷ City of St. Petersburg Building Department, Building Records, card index 3, 1950.

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Ballo, George. "Historic Preservation Project untitled." Tampa: unpublished manuscript, 1979.

Brown, Rosemary. Wally Bishop Residence formerly C. Perry Snell Home. St. Petersburg: unpublished manuscript, 1979.

Dunn, Hampton. Yesterday's St. Petersburg. Miami: E. A. Seeman Publishing Company, Inc., 1973.

Fuller, Walter P. St. Petersburg and Its People. St. Petersburg: Great Outdoors Publishing Company, 1972.

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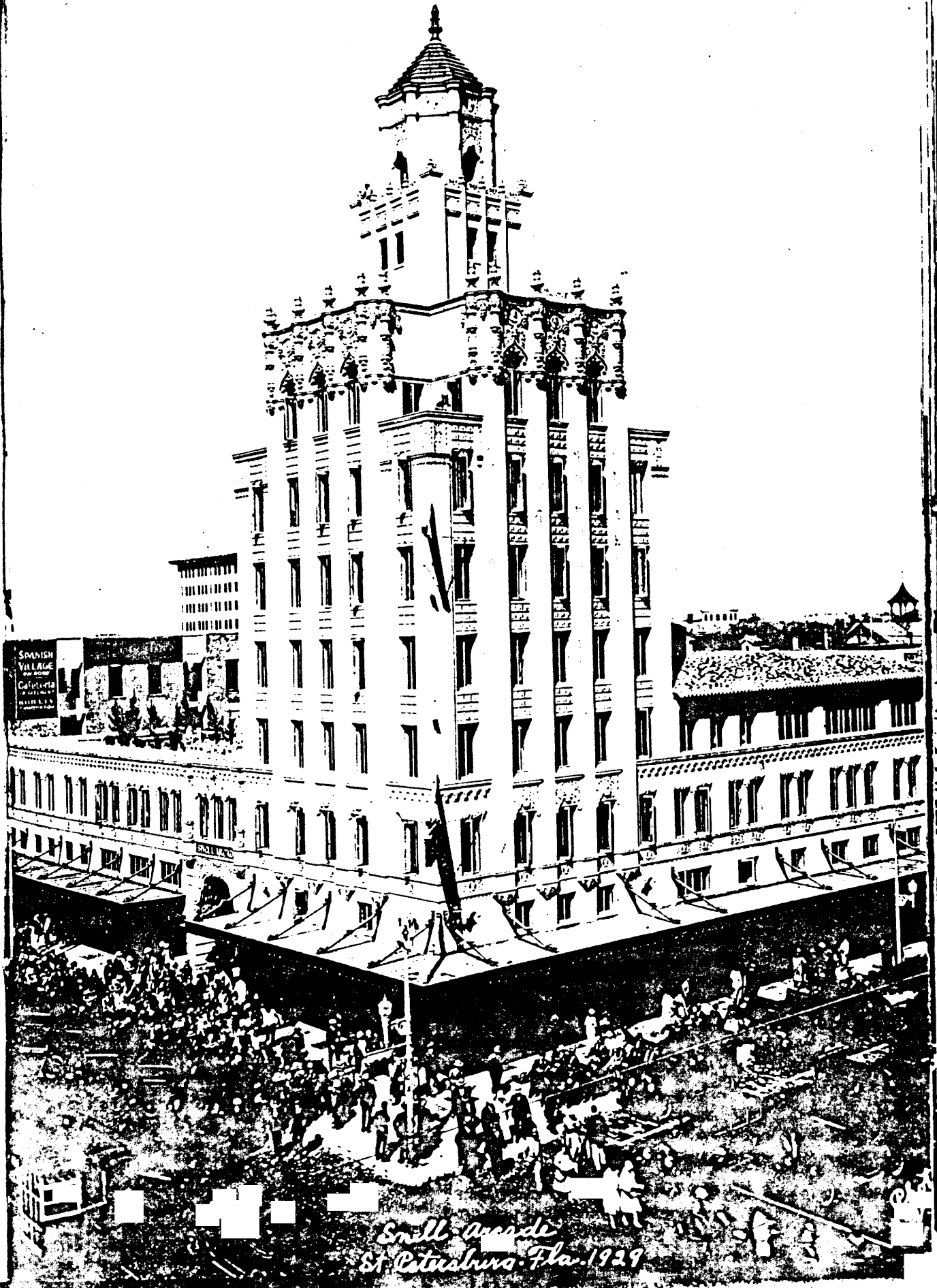
Kiehnel and Elliott. A Monograph of the Florida Work of Kiehnel and Elliott. Miami: Miami Post Publishing Company, 1938.

Pinellas County, Florida. Deed Book, Deed 935, pp. 114-115.

Sexton, R. W. Spanish Influence on American Architecture and Decoration. New York: Brentano's, 1927.

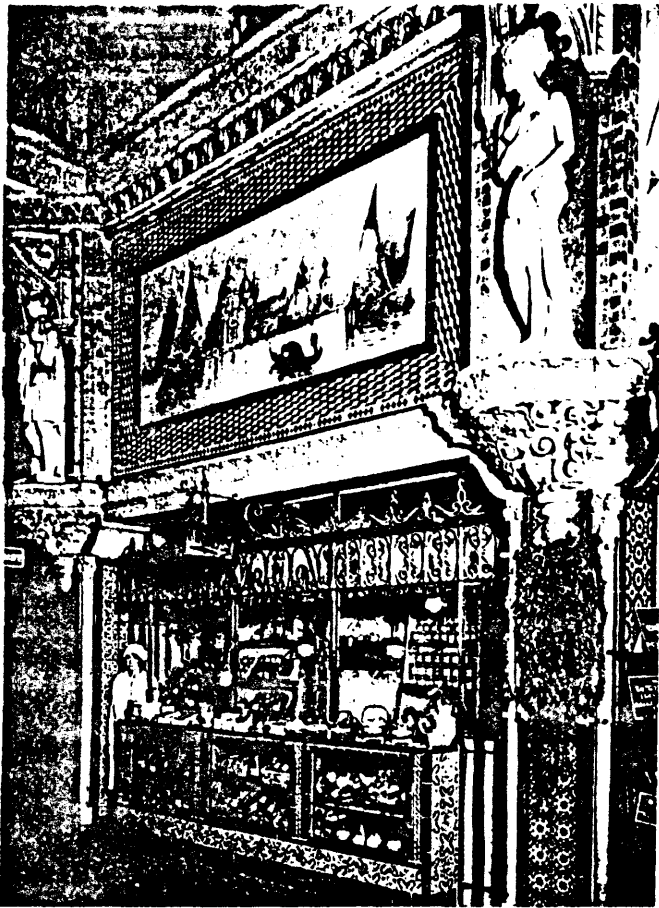
St. Petersburg Building Department. Building Permit Records. 405 Central Avenue, 1925 through 1980. Card index #1 through #12.

St. Petersburg City Directory. Jacksonville and Richmond: R. L. Polk and Company, 1926-1978.

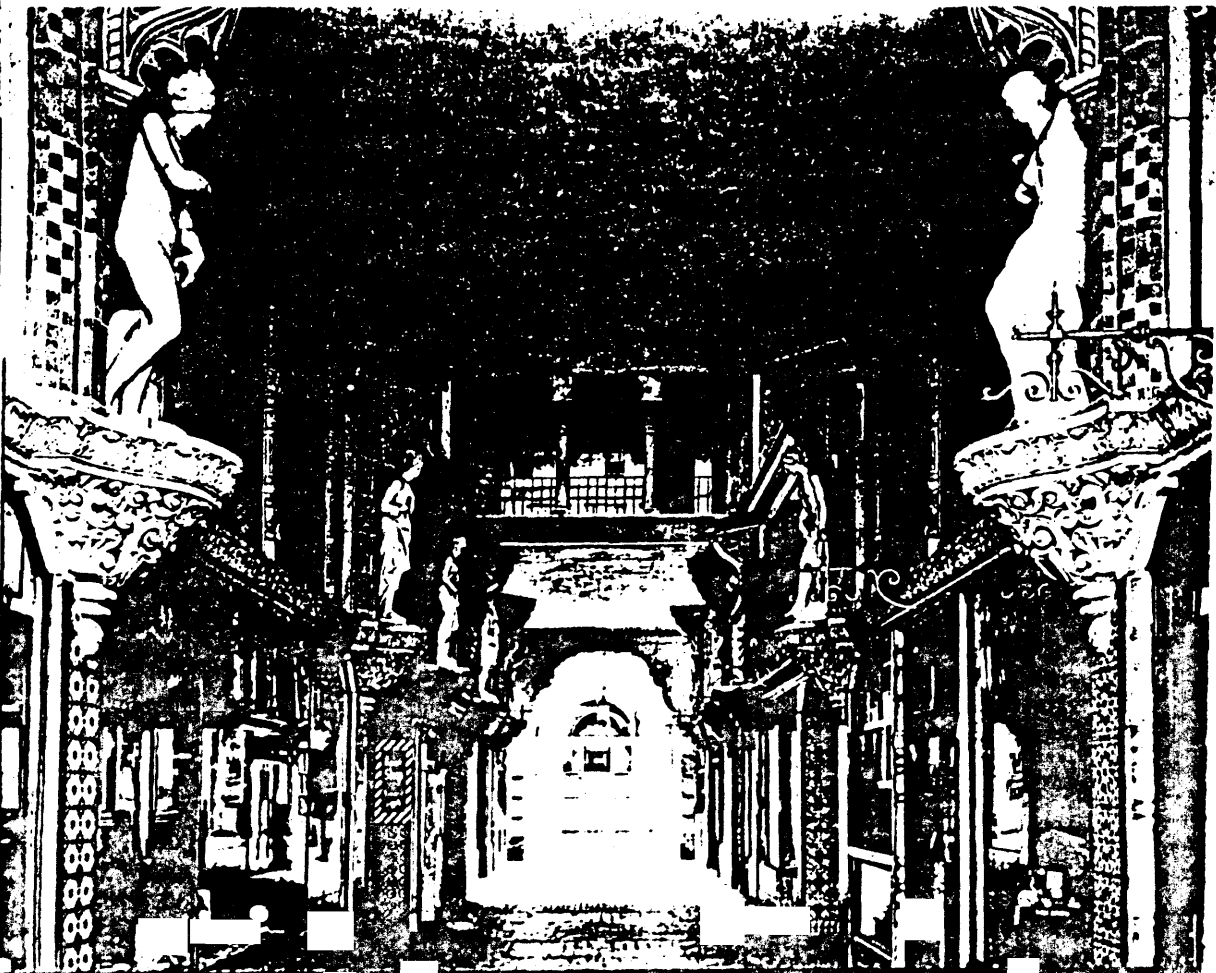


*Snell Avenue
St. Petersburg, Fla. 1929*

D



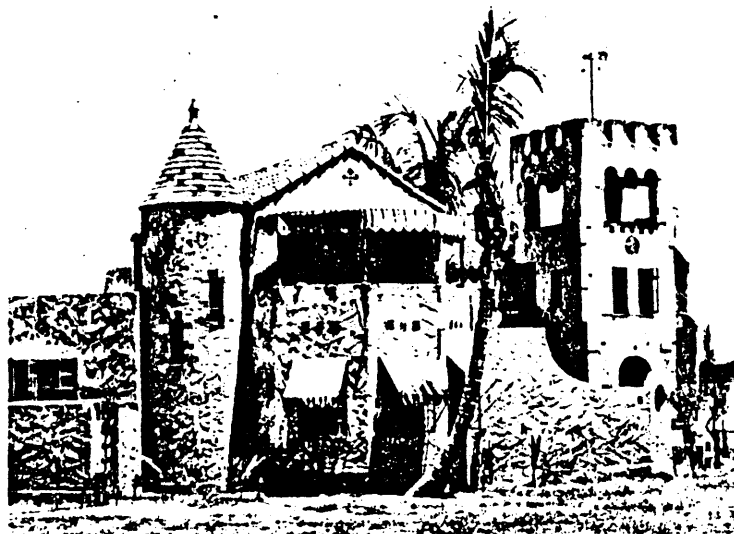
THE OFFICE OF SNELL ISLE INC. was the striking Snell Arcade building downtown at Fourth Street North and Central Avenue, now the Rutland Building (*preceding page*). Exquisite tile, Italian mosaics, and statuary dressed up Snell Arcade to attract the public to its fancy shops. Among the figures were Thorwaldsen's Hebe, Gaby's Diana, Canova's Venus, Venus Danzatrice, Venus de Medici, Venus de Milo, Venus Falconnet, etc. (Fuller-Green)





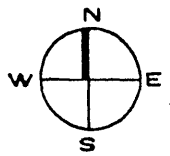
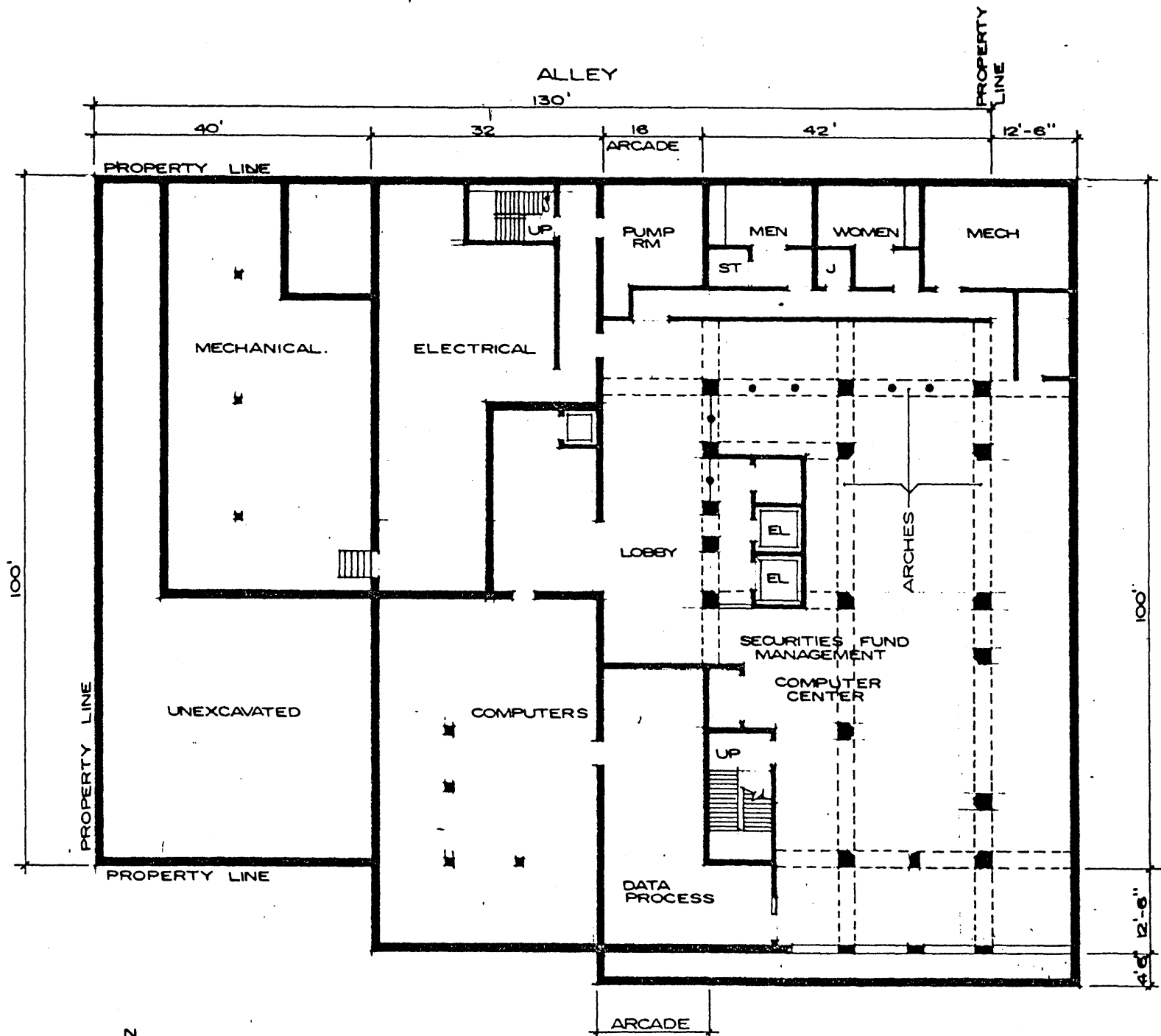
LIVELY SPANISH DANCERS used to perform on the roof garden atop Snell Arcade. (Green)

[103]

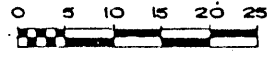


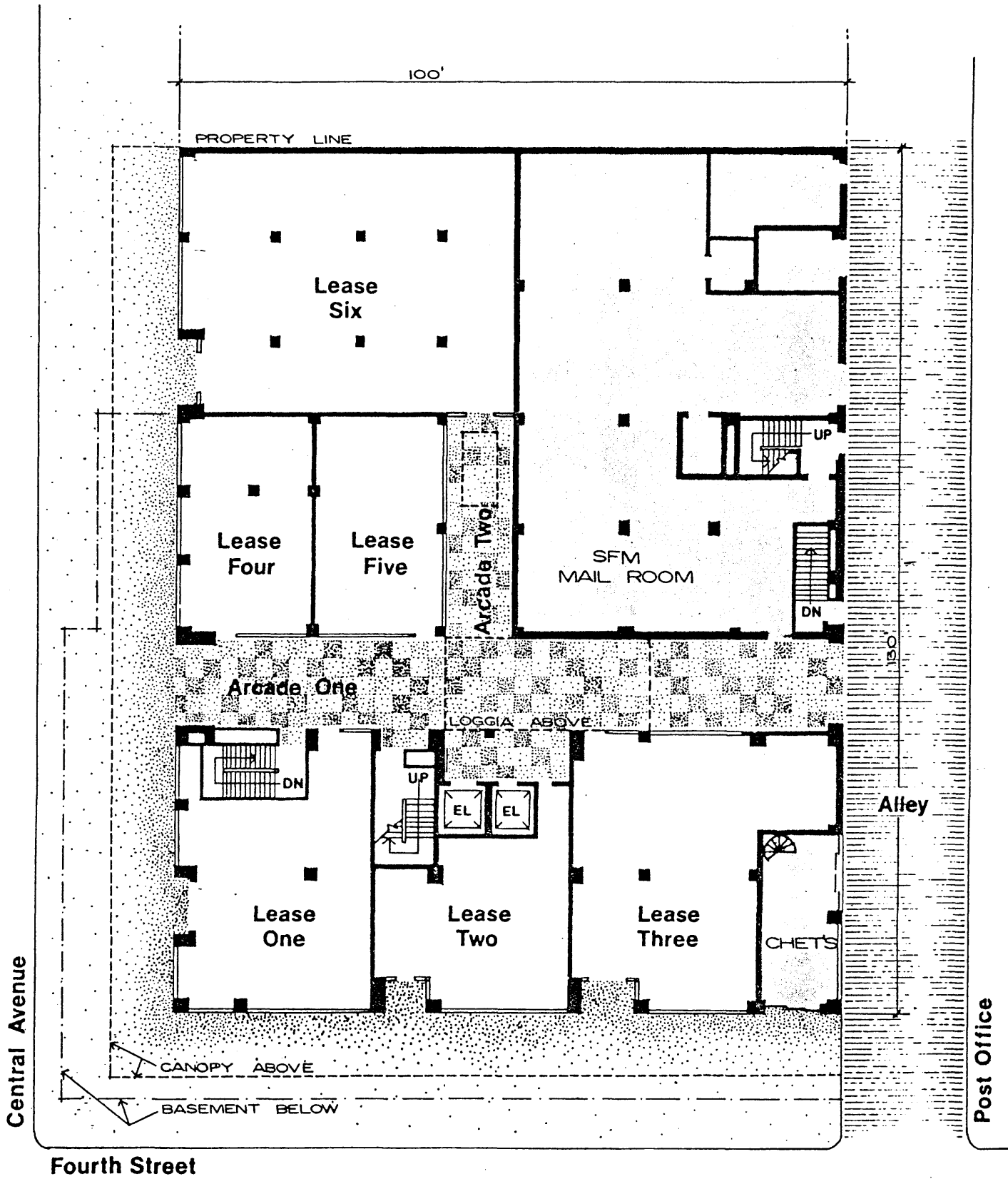
ANOTHER C. PERRY SNELL project was the boom-time development of the North shore section called Granada Terrace. It was a highly restricted, exclusive section for Spanish and Italian stucco homes. Not only the type of house, but also the exterior, the color scheme, and the landscaping of the grounds were controlled in the restrictions. (Burgert)



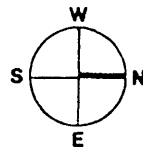


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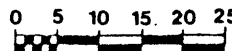


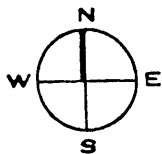
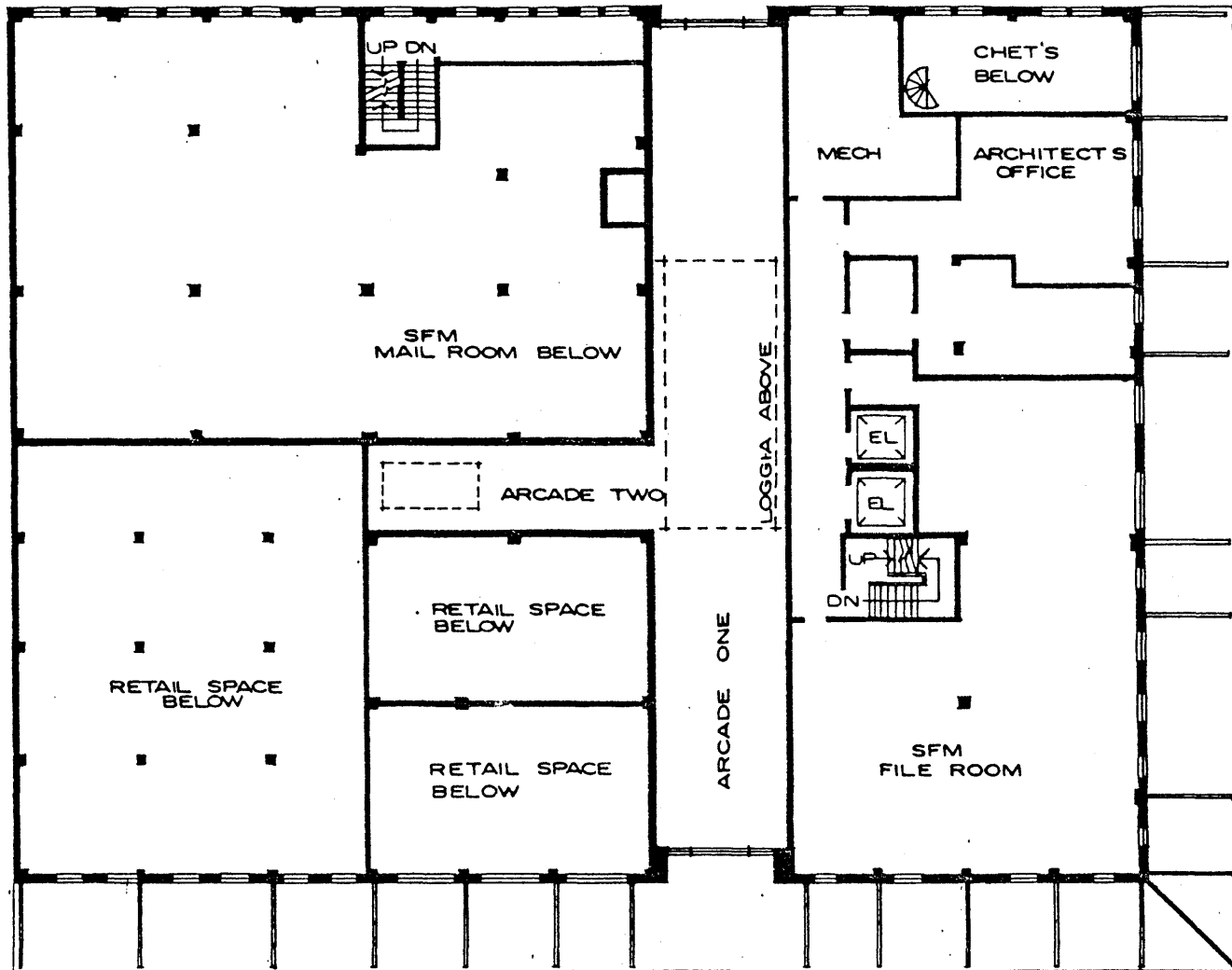


The Snell Arcade

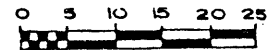


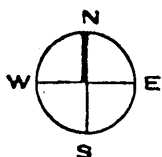
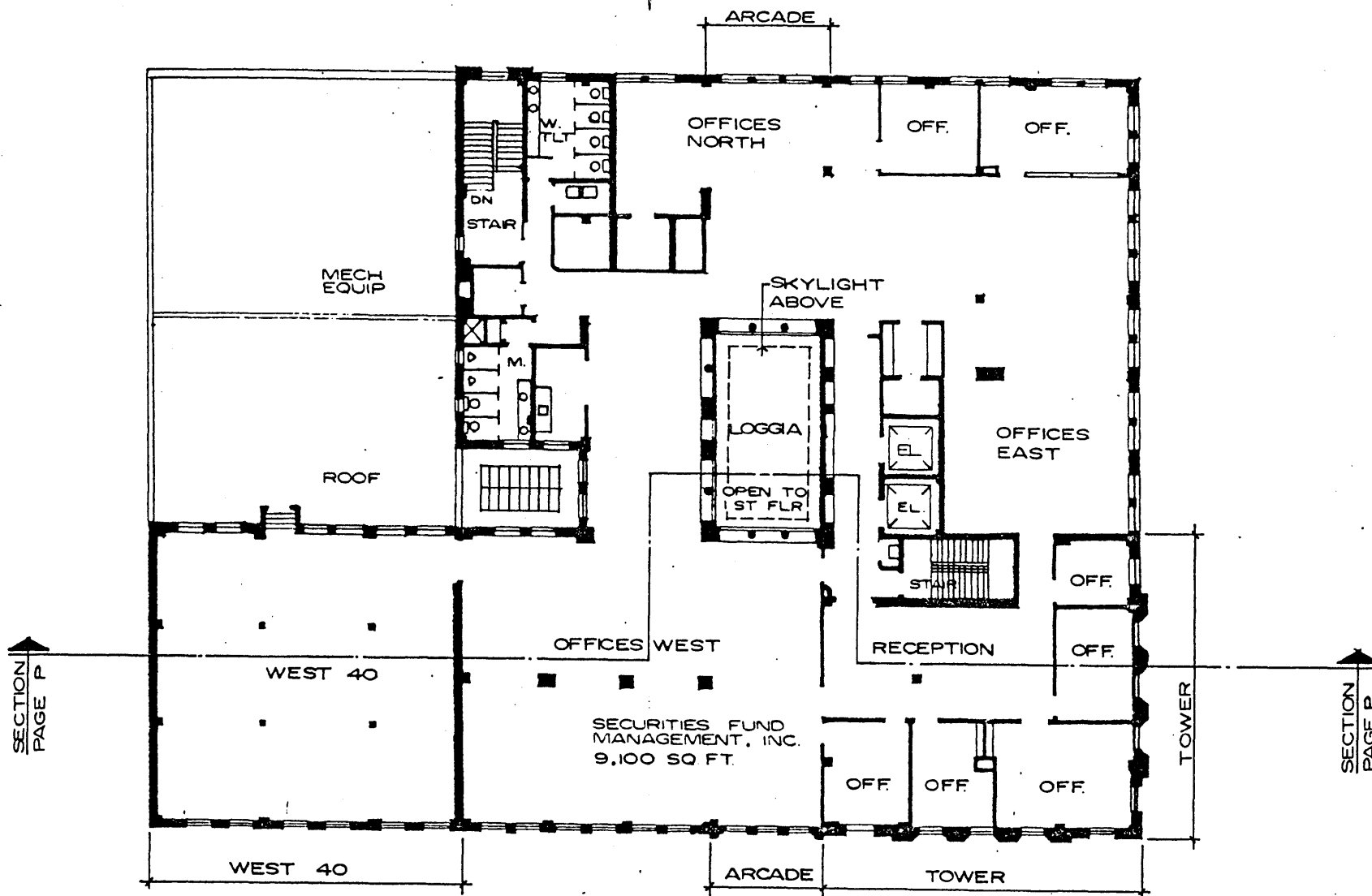
FIRST FLOOR PLAN



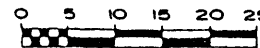


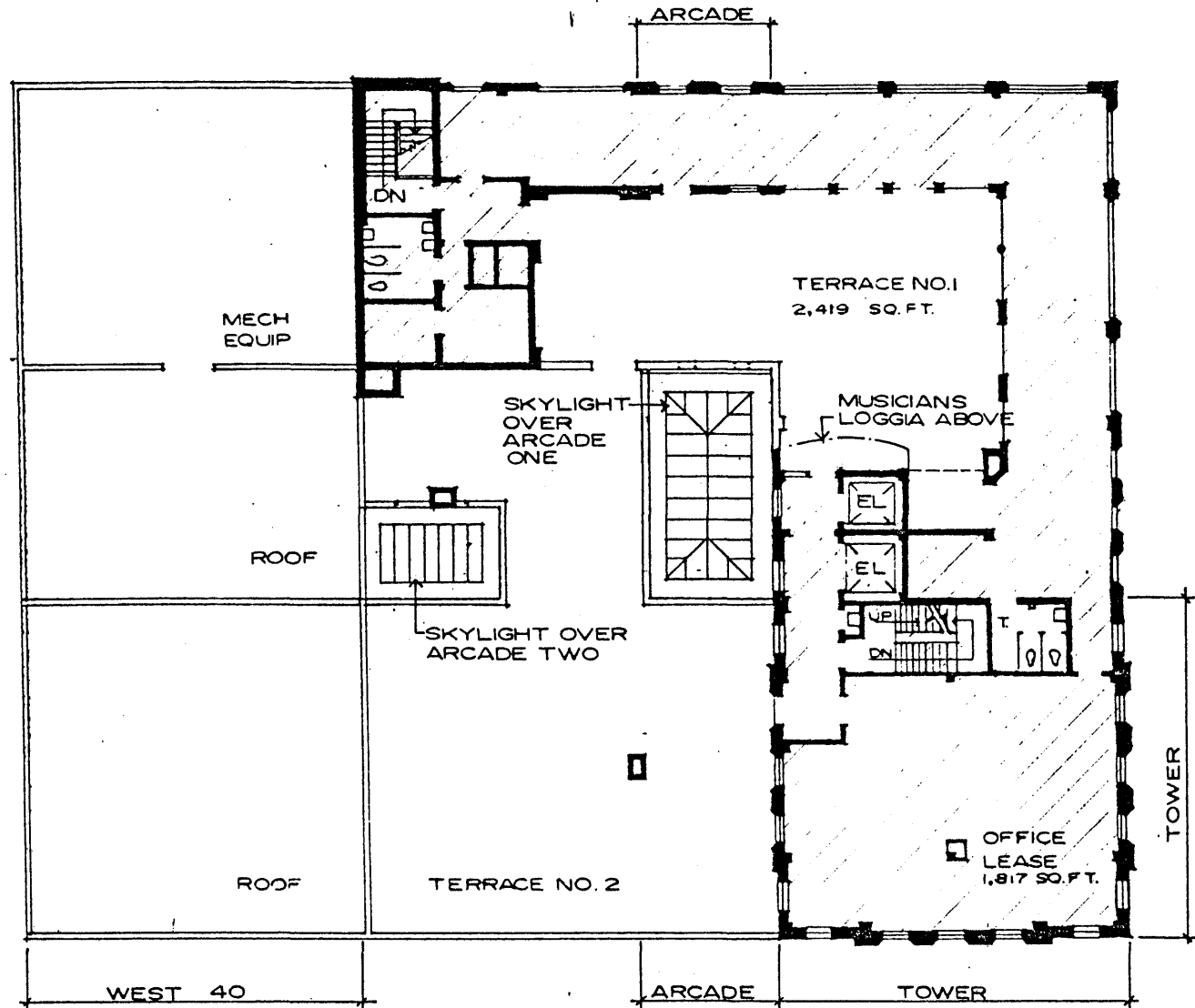
MEZZANINE
5,750 SQ. FT.



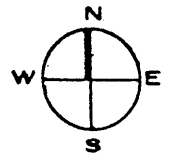


2nd FLR
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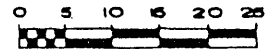


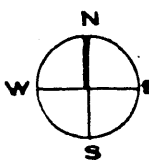
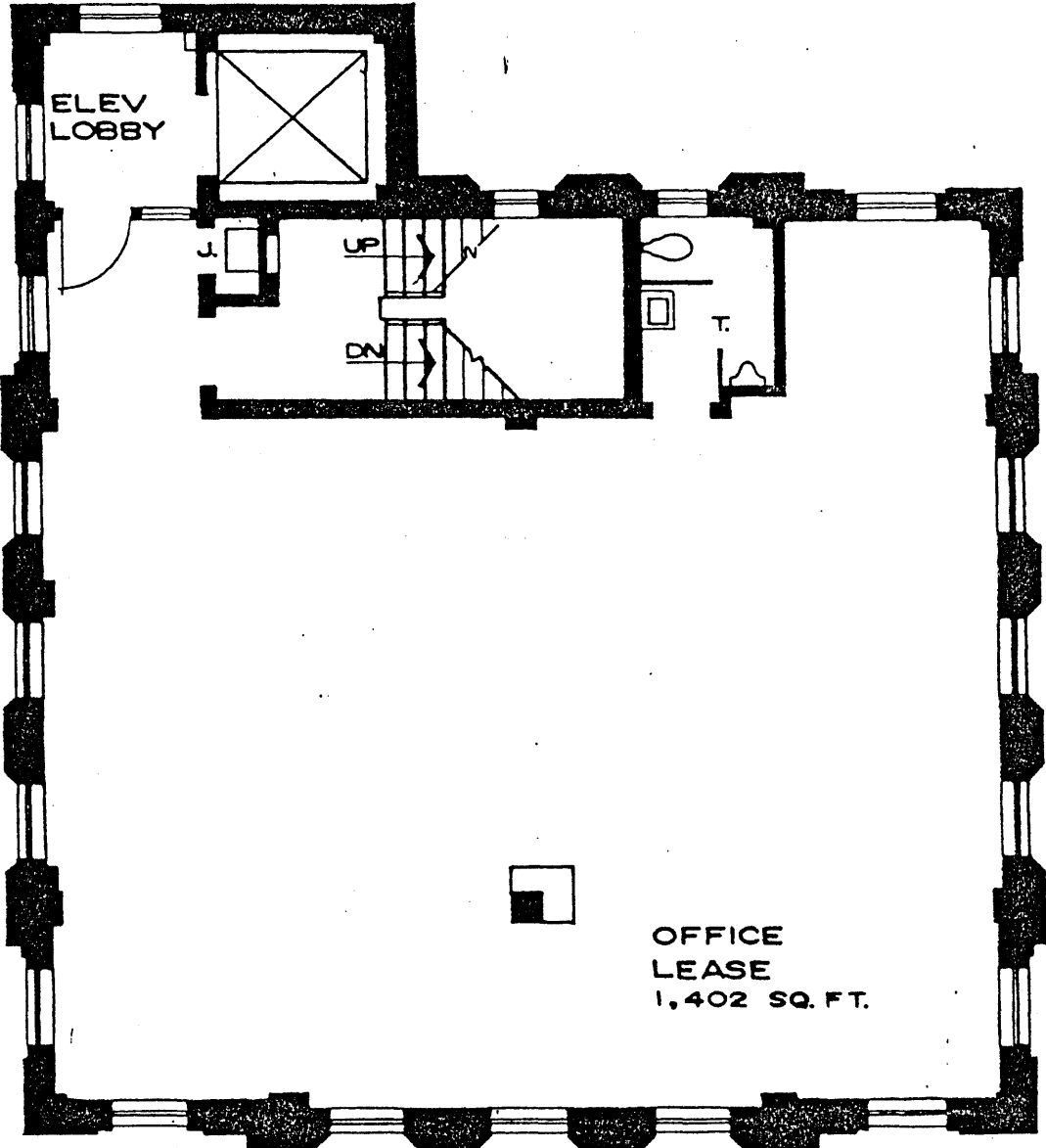


SHADED AREA INDICATES ENCLOSED AREA

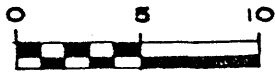


3rd FLR
4,236 SQ. FT



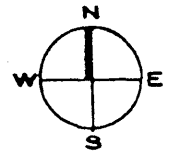
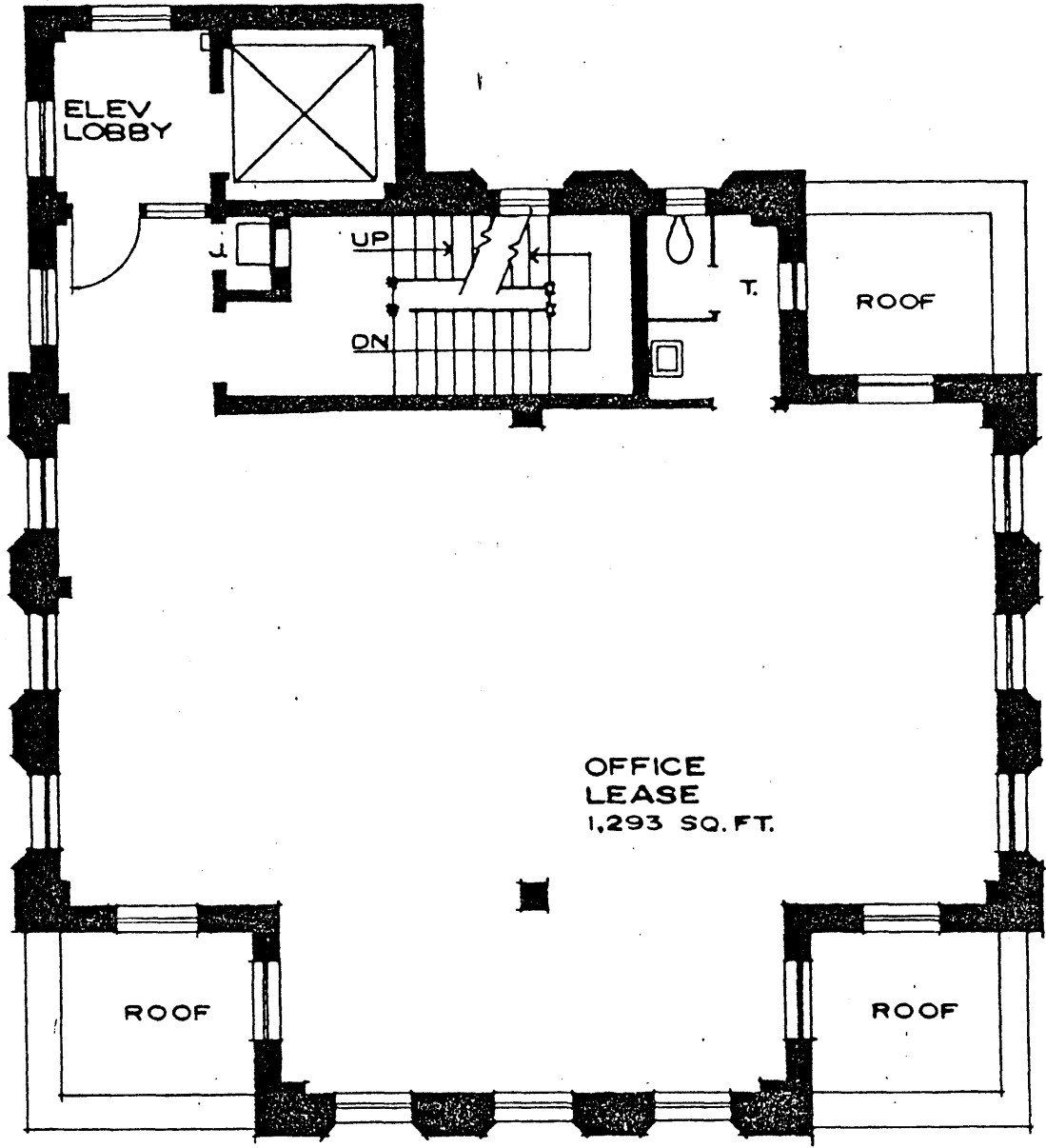


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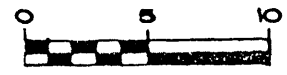




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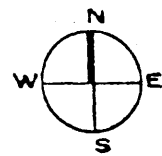
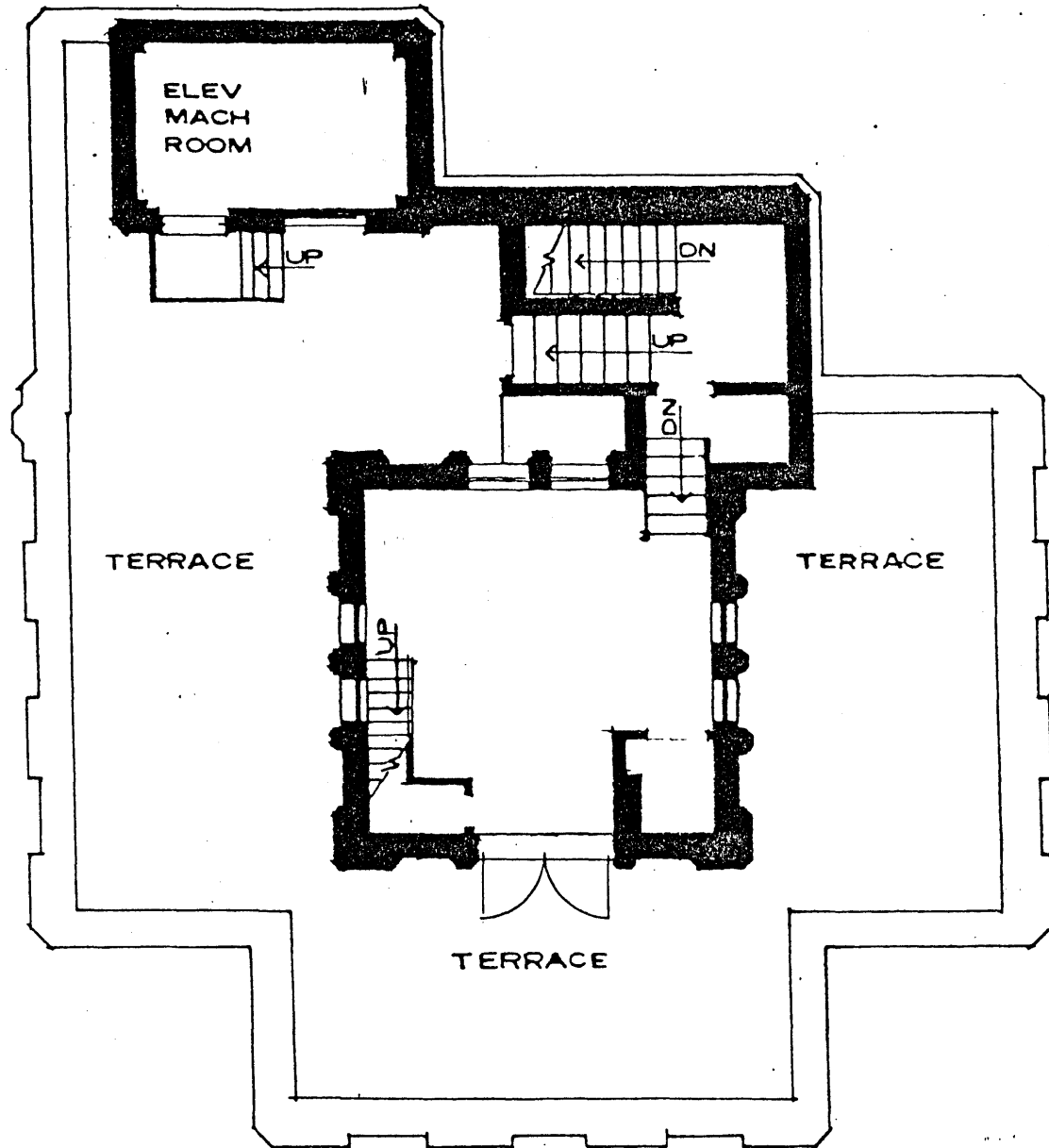


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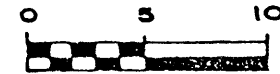


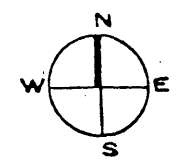
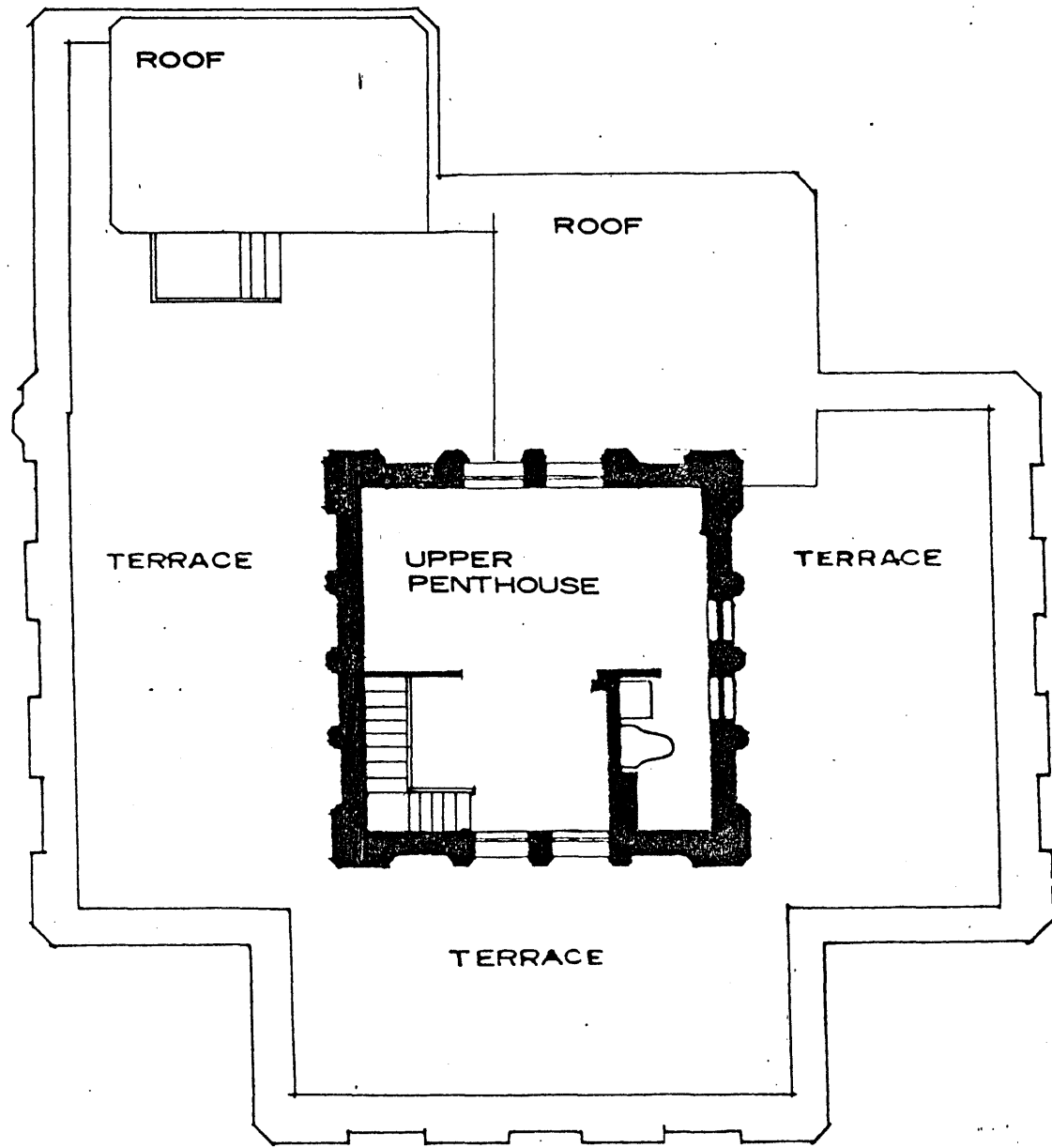


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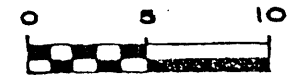


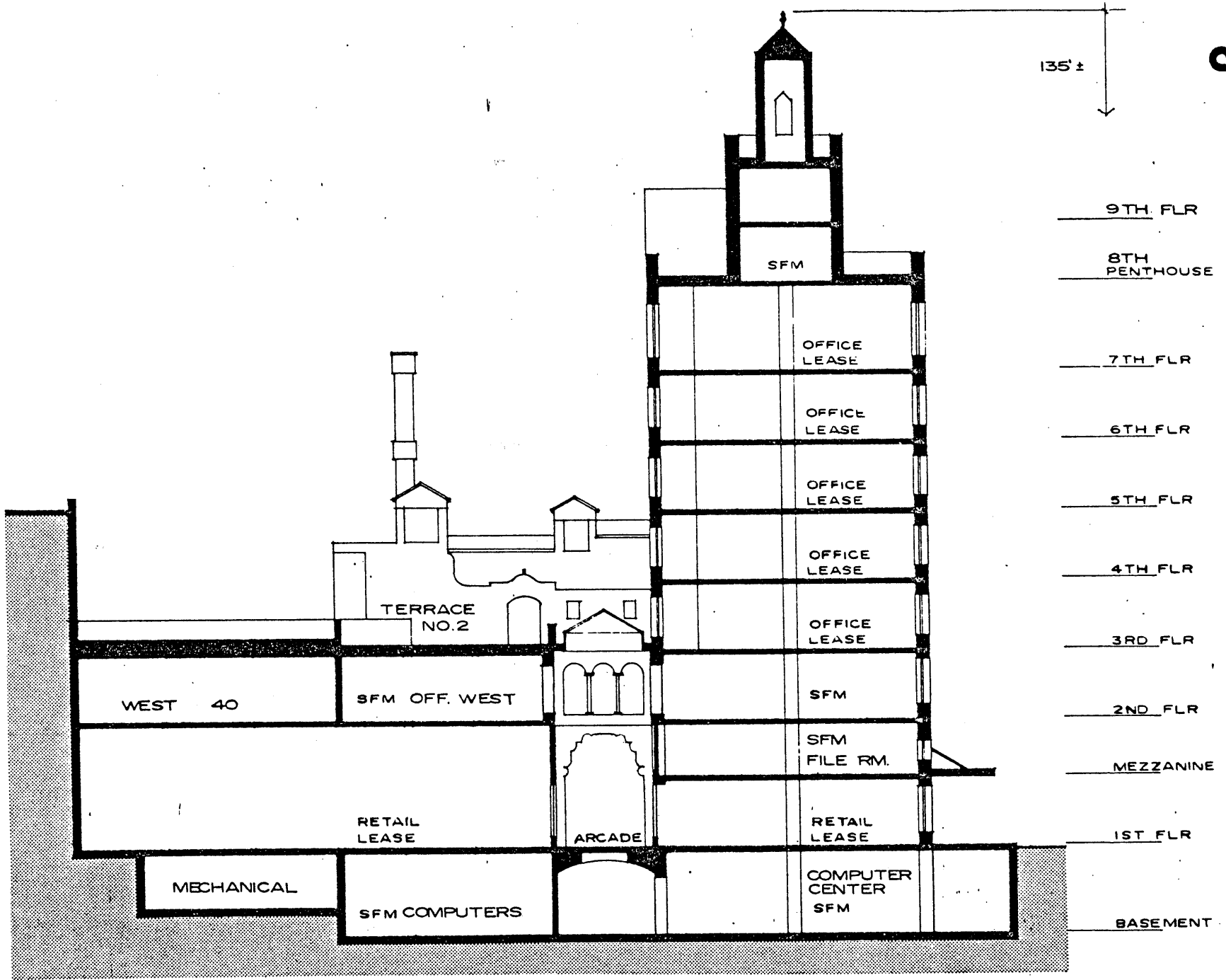
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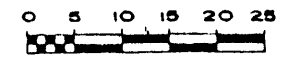


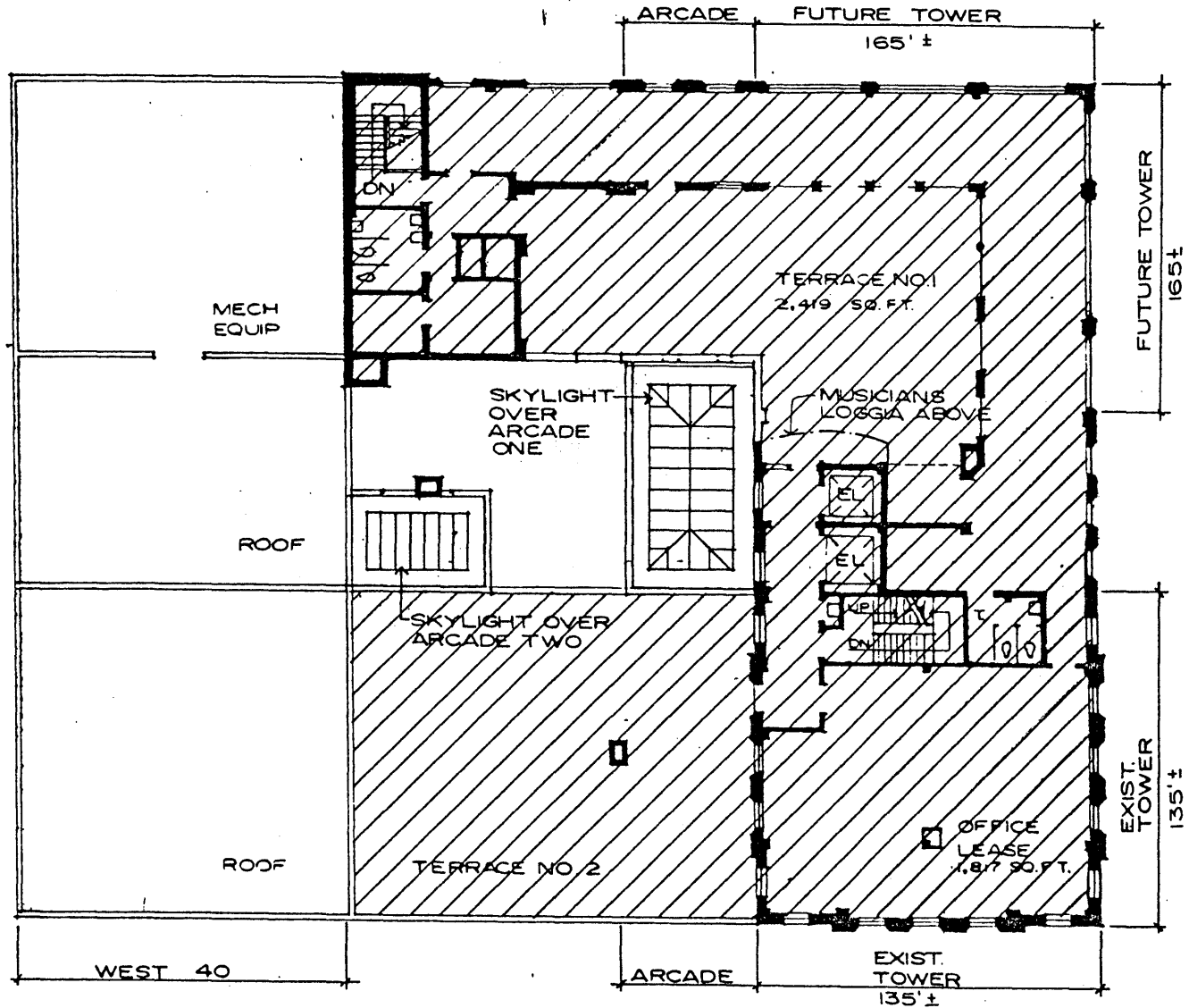
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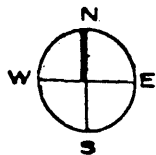


SECTION





SHADED AREA INDICATES
ENCLOSED AREA OF
FUTURE BUILDING.



3rd FLR
4,236 SQ. FT

