

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received OCT 1 1986
date entered NOV 6 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Belle Court Apartments Number of contributing resources: 1
and/or common Same Number of non-contributing resources: 0

2. Location

street & number 120 NW Trinity Place N/A not for publication
city, town Portland N/A vicinity of First Congressional District
state Oregon code 41 county Multnomah code 051

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Apartments

4. Owner of Property

name Jonathan Bulkley
street & number 1154 Clement Street
city, town San Francisco N/A vicinity of state California 94008

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Multnomah County Courthouse
street & number 610 SW Alder
city, town Portland state Oregon 97205

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title City of Portland
Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1982 federal state county local
depository for survey records Portland Bureau of Planning, 1120 SW 5th Avenue
city, town Portland state Oregon 97204

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Belle Court Apartment Building was built in 1912. It was designed in the Jacobethan style by noted Oregon architect Ellis Fuller Lawrence. The building is constructed of brick and hollow tile and rises four stories in height atop a full basement. The building is symmetrically composed in its elevations and its mass is essentially a U-shaped configuration having its central entry in the recess, which is planted as a forecourt. The building is finely detailed and features an elaborately framed entrance, oriels, or projecting window bays, thick stone mullions, tapestry brick exterior facing, and cast stone ornament and stone moldings which provide contrasting accents against the red brick.

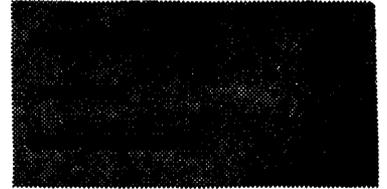
Belle Court was one of several first class apartment buildings constructed in the Nob Hill district of Northwest Portland. Such buildings were designed for the affluent city-dweller and were constructed using the most up-to-date fire-proofing innovations and modern conveniences. The Belle Court has served its original purpose to the present day in good repair, and the building has retained its integrity to a remarkable degree.

The building is located in the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 33, T. 1N., R. 1E., W. M., and it occupies Lots 8 through 11, Block 277, Couch's Addition to Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. Situated on a rise of land, the building faces south, with its long axis oriented east/west. It is enhanced by a well-tended lawn which is defined by a laurel hedge on the west, a wooden fence on the east, and a row of poplars at the lower, southerly end of the property.

When the immediate neighborhood was platted, the block occupied by Belle Court and several blocks to the west were made double-sized blocks measuring 200' x 400' to "provide a spacious setting for noble and patrician residences." (Portland Names, pg. 26) Some of Portland's finest old mansions are located in the district. Burnside Street is the closest major arterial, and it is less than one block south of Belle Court. Trinity Episcopal Church is the centerpiece of the neighborhood. It was "the city's most socially prominent house of worship." (E. Kimbark MacColl, 1976, p. 29) Trinity Episcopal Church is located on the same block as that which the Belle Court Apartment Building occupies. The church is on the adjoining parcel to the north. In fact, it was Trinity Episcopal Church which sold the lots which Belle Court now occupies to developers in 1910.

Basic Shape

The basic configuration of the building is U-shaped. The wings project southward to create the entry forecourt. Perimeter dimensions measured from the north and east elevations are 92 by 79 feet. The wings of the south facade measure 27' 4" in width, and the forecourt measures 35 ft. Rising to a height of approximately 50 feet to the top of the parapet, the building encloses four stories as well as a basement. Apparently, an identical, four-story volume was to have been constructed in mirror-image fashion directly south of the existing building, on the undeveloped portion of the property, but the planned second phase was never realized.

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Structure

A continuous reinforced concrete base supports the "structural tile" wall construction. The exterior, ground level wall of concrete is finished with vertically striated "Sterling Stone" made by Timos-Crese & Co. The south and west elevations, i.e. the facade and street elevations, are faced with the "best selected, common red brick" with a raked joint according to the architects specifications. Common brick is used on the north and east elevations which were obscured from view by neighboring buildings when the apartments were first constructed. It is also found in the behind the brick facing, in the walls, and in all chimney flues.

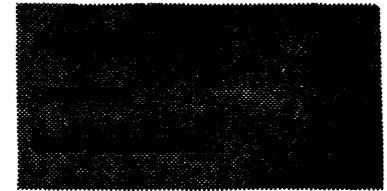
Exterior brick walls provide the support for the interior wood-joint floor system composed primarily of 2 x 14 joists placed ten inches on center varying to 12 to 14 inches on center on the upper floors. The joist system is internally supported by a grid of columns. Window lintels are made of concrete using metal hangers to attach the cast-stone trim.

Concealed from the ground level by a castellated brick parapet, the apartment roof is basically flat with a system of valleys and ridges to channel water into drains. A bathroom ventilation shaft provides air to the windowless bathroom units in the northeast section of the building.

EXTERIOR

The basic organization of the exterior walls intended the south and west facades to be viewed publicly. These two elevations are finely articulated and ornamented in the Jacobethan style; the north and east elevations are plain and faced with common brick.

The south and west public facades make full use of the Jacobethan style, implementing characteristic elements such as oriel bays, polygonal bay windows, bays using stone mullions, and the body of the building consisting of rough "tapestry brick" trimmed by a light colored cast-stone. Various brick bonds are used to break the facade horizontally: Flemish bond on the first level interrupted by cast stone drip mold; the second and third floors continue in the common bond; a drip mold is again incorporated below a flemish diagonal pattern of the fourth floor, somewhat in the manner used by Lawrence later on the museum at the University of Oregon. The parapet ends in the common bond. Its relief broken by ballustrades with a slight castellation.

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The south facade is virtually symmetrical with the exception of some variation of window types on the recessed wall. Polygonal bays are strong vertical features in the horizontal composition, and verticality is further emphasized by grouped windows consisting of a larger central window with side lights. Single openings appear on the diagonal walls. Adjacent to the bays are paired windows finishing this symmetrical pattern. The central entry features a round arched portico with a broken pediment adorned by a cartouche above fruit laden cornucopia. Grouped windows of three further emphasize the entry's central placement. Crenellation, castellation, and a ballustrade on the brick parapet correspond to each series of bays. The central ballustrade is further adorned by a cast-stone seal of arms.

The west facade oriented towards Trinity Place is ornamented by paired oriel windows extending from the second and third floors providing a balcony on the fourth. They are framed in wood and sheathed in galvanized sheet metal. The metal is formed into gothic motifs consisting of pointed arched panels, quatre-foil patterns and castellation articulating the parapet.

No significant alterations impair the integrity of the exterior facades. Fenestration replacement has fortunately occurred only on the north and east elevations, some of the multi-pane over single lights replaced by 2/1, 1/1 or single-light casements, and the balconies have been enclosed with windows. The street stairs and entry are currently in disrepair. The banister from the walk has been removed leaving only the concrete piers in place. Lights at the top of the piers have been replaced by less robust posts and lights although retaining the original bases. The parapet has been altered. The original intermittent cast stone balustrades have been removed from the parapet, and resulting space has been partially filled in, creating the castellated effect that currently appears.

Interior

Floor plans of the apartment units are composed in seven basic configurations. The most elaborate (two-bedroom units) occupy the front end of the south wings. Proceeding through the central foyer, one enters the east-west leg of the 'U' shaped corridors; all four floors correspond in this same circulation pattern. Stair wells are located at both ends of the east-west corridor accessing a ground level entry and continuing into the basement. All four floors were originally fairly consistent in plan, allowing for the requirements for an entry on the first floor. Each corner houses a unit which is consistent on each level. The wings of the 'U' housed the two bedroom units with formal dining rooms. The polygonal bays were

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used as the second sleeping quarters, many of these act as alcoves at present. Three units making up the northern wall once had open Tudor-arched balconies which have been fenestrated and opened to the interior. These units contain one bedroom with living and dining spaces. Central and northeast units lack a dining room. Units adjacent to the lobby are studio apartments with a kitchenette. The upper recessed units were originally one bedroom apartments, but have since been divided into studio and one bedroom units. All the southern units feature a formal dining room panelled to the plate rail. In contrast the northwest units with dining rooms more modestly panelled with a dado panel.

Interior finishes have in part been altered over the years. The only unit to be massively altered is the southwest unit of the fourth floor. Longtime owner, Isabella Kaufmann, occupied this space. It was modernized in the 1960's and opened to the adjacent studio apartment, which was occupied by her daughter.

The lobby originally had panelling that has been removed and replaced by a rough textured stucco. The mahogany entry door consists of multiple lights and displays side lights and fan lights. The vestibule and lobby floor are faced with a terra cotta colored tile. A modillioned cornice enhances the lobby ceiling.

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 checked="" 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 1912 **Builder/Architect** Ellis Fuller Lawrence, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Belle Court Apartment Building, located in the Nob Hill section of Portland, Oregon, was built in 1912. It is locally significant under National Register criterion "c" because it embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Jacobethan style and exemplifies the trend of the period toward large, first-class apartment buildings designed for the affluent city dweller. Nob Hill was rapidly developing in the early 1900s as an exclusive apartment district. The developers of the nominated property were Fred A. Jacobs and Harry Beckwith, both of whom came to Portland from San Francisco following the disastrous earthquake and fire of 1906. The two men combined their talents and capitalized on the development boom prompted in part by promotion of the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition of 1905. Their company, the Fred A. Jacobs Company, became a leading Portland real estate firm. The nominated property was developed by the Metropolitan Investment and Improvement Company organized by the Fred A. Jacobs Company. Belle Court, not coincidentally, was built with the latest fire-proofing innovations. It was designed by the noted Oregon architect and educator, Ellis Fuller Lawrence, who, in 1914, became first dean of the School of Architecture and Allied Arts at the University of Oregon, in Eugene. The Belle Court Apartment Building is one of the limited number of Jacobethan style buildings in the city, and it clearly is among the best designed of its type.

The building's classically-framed entrance, its oriels, or projecting window bays, its heavily-mullioned windows, its red brick exterior face brick accented by stone and cast stone embellishments, and its formal facade organization and massing are characteristic elements of the Jacobethan style, which is one of the less commonly represented of historic period styles in Portland. The style is represented by 18 buildings in the City of Portland Historic Resources Inventory. Of these, the majority are educational buildings or apartment buildings. However, a private club building, the University Club (1913), designed by Whitehouse and Fouilhoux, is undoubtedly the most widely-known example.

Two waves of architectural design in the Jacobethan style are apparent from comparative analysis of the City's inventory. The earlier buildings date from about 1909 to 1913; the later ones were built after the First World War into the early 1930s. Most of the apartment buildings--five of them, were built in the earlier period. The most notable apartment buildings executed in the Jacobethan style were the Belle Court Apartments and the Trinity Place Apartments (1910), designed by William C. Knighton. The latter stands across the street (Trinity Place) from the nominated property. In plan and formal organization of facades, the two complementary features are similar, but Knighton's building is somewhat larger, in that it accommodates a greater number of units, and its elevations are busier, being generously embellished with quoins and balconies.

Belle Court exemplifies the trend of the period to construct commodious and grandly-appointed apartment houses for the affluent city dweller. The large apartment building was a relatively new type on the scene. In 1913, the city's leading newspaper reported the trend. "In high-class apartment building, the records of the Building Inspector's office show not only that there were more costly structures erected but also there were more fire-proof, or semi-fireproof apartment houses built in 1912 than in any previous year... Another attractive apartment house is being completed at Trinity Place for the Metropolitan

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one
Quadrangle name Portland, Oregon-Washington

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	0	5	2	4	2	3	0	5	0	4	1	0	0	0
Zone	Easting			Northing										

B

Zone	Easting			Northing										

C

Zone	Easting			Northing										

D

Zone	Easting			Northing										

E

Zone	Easting			Northing										

F

Zone	Easting			Northing										

G

Zone	Easting			Northing										

H

Zone	Easting			Northing										

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property occupies Lots 8 through 11 of Block 277, Couch's Addition to Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon. The area encompassed measures 100' x 200'.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Elizabeth J. O'Brien and Melissa J. Darby, Historic Preservation Consultants

organization N/A date March 15, 1986

street & number 912 East Third Street telephone 503/243-1923

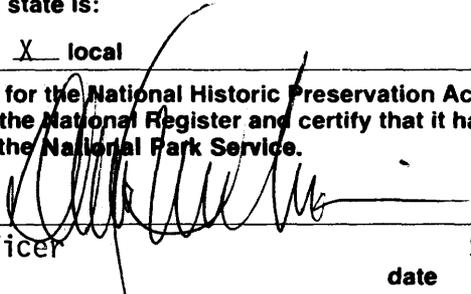
city or town Newberg state Oregon 97132

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 
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer title September 26, 1986 date

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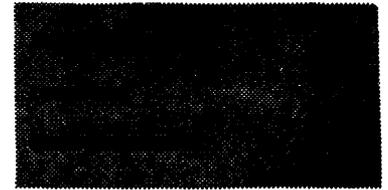
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.


Keeper of the National Register Entered in the National Register date 11-6-86

Attest: Chief of Registration title date

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Investment and Improvement Company organized by the Fred A. Jacobs Company. The building contains four floors and is semi-fireproof, equipped with all modern conveniences." (The Oregonian, January 1, 1913, page 2.) Belle Court was constructed at a cost of \$85,000.

The modern conveniences of the time included an elevator and seven electric dumb waiters. The dumb waiters are no longer in operation. When they were installed they each had a 100 pound capacity, with a speed of 100' per minute. They ran on 220 volt, 60 cycle, 1/2 horsepower engines, and operated from the basement to the kitchens. Their main function may have been to deliver fire wood for the wood cook stoves which were installed in each kitchen.

The bathrooms featured tiled surfaces and vitro-ware fixtures. The bowl was syphon action. Passive vents with outlets on the roof were located in the windowless bathrooms.

There were twelve 'disappearing beds' called for in the specifications that were ventilated as well. "Each of the 12 disappearing beds (not wall beds) shall be provided with ventilation. The arrangement in general as follows: Place a 6 x 8 brass plated register face in the panel on the bed enclosure for the intake of air. Run vents of standard asbestos covered heater pipe from the top of the bed casing to the outside or the attic space." (Specifications for Belle Court Apartments, City of Portland Building Bureau Microfilm Files).

The fire-proofing precautions included tin clad fire doors, and tin flashed fire walls. The ceilings of the elevator and the ceiling of the whole basement were metal lined. The elevator shafts, dumb waiter shafts and the ventilation shafts were lined with galvanized iron. Fire doors were installed for all the openings into the boiler room and elevator and interior openings in stair halls, and at all openings in the dividing wall. The specifications for the boiler were as follows: "The boiler shall be lined with 4" standard fire brick laid in fireclay, for a height of 18', commencing two feet below the smoke inlet. The smoke inlet shall have a 4" ring of firebrick, All flues, except where lined with firebrick, shall be plastered smooth inside their full height." (City of Portland Buildings Bureau microfilm and card files.)

At the time Belle Court was constructed, the Nob Hill area was experiencing a period of growth, from a exclusive district of large mansions and landscaped gardens to a more densely populated neighborhood with high class four story brick apartments. One of the finest and earliest of these grand apartment dwellings is Trinity Place, located across the street from Belle Court. It is

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also Jacobe than in style, and was built in 1910. By 1912 this area was considered an apartment district. The Oregonian of January 1, 1913. pg. 2 states "During this year there was a notable expansion of the apartment house district on the west side which Trinity Place is about the center." The article recognizes Belle Court as one of the finest built that year.

Trinity Episcopal Church had relocated to the Nob Hill area, on the lots just north of Belle Court in 1907, and was the benefactor of the wealthy residents of the neighborhood. E.K. MacColl states that "by 1900 Trinity Episcopal Church was Portland's most socially prominent house of worship." (pg. 29). On page 176 he states "If the Arlington Club provided the social cement for Portland's gentile elite, Trinity Episcopal Church furnished the religious ties that bound them even more closely together." Not surprisingly, Harry Beckwith, one of the developers of Belle Court, was a member of Trinity Episcopal.

Belle Court is significant due to its association with Fred Jacobs and Harry Beckwith. The story of their success illustrates the entrepreneurial spirit of pre-war America. Portland's population had experienced an 80% increase in the years between 1905 and 1907. (MacColl, 1976, pg. 389.) Harry Beckwith and Fred Jacobs capitalized on the new growth and development Portland was experiencing. According to their advertisement in Polk's 1909 Portland Directory, the Fred A. Jacobs Co. was the "Largest Realty Operator in the Pacific Northwest." (p.72). They put their first property, Belle Crest, on the market in 1909. (Joseph Gaston, Portland, Its History and Builders, S.J. Clark Publishing Co., 1911. Vol. 2, p. 118.) By 1911 they had handled fifteen subdivisions encompassing over one thousand acres. In 1913 they constructed the Errol Heights Railway Company. It was built to service a sub division they were developing. They had hoped to sell the line to the Railway Light & Power Company once it was established, but the company refused all attempts by the developers to sell them the line. The Fred Jacobs Co. assumed all costs and no fare was charged the passengers. The line operated until 1929. (John T. Labbe, 1980, pg. 158-159).

Fred Jacobs was a manager of the Germania Life Insurance Company in San Francisco. He was the youngest man in the company to attain a managerial position. After the earthquake in 1906 he left San Francisco and moved to Portland. He worked in the insurance business for about a year and then with Oliver Stine went into the real estate business. In 1908 Harry Beckwith bought out Oliver Stine's share of the business. From that point on the company's success was phenomenal. Harry Beckwith's business sense

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and salesmanship skills catapulted the business within three years to one of the largest real-estate firms in Portland.

Harry Beckwith learned his salesmanship skills selling dictionaries for the John Wanamaker Century Dictionary campaign. He worked in New York from 1900 to 1903, when he came west with the field force of the John Wanamaker Company and was on the road selling dictionaries until 1906. He settled in San Francisco, but lost all his belongings in the major earthquake and subsequent fire in April of that year. Several days later he arrived in Portland, nearly penniless. He was associated with several business enterprises before he entered into the real-estate business with Fred Jacobs in 1908. The company grew rapidly, due in part to their salesmen. "They have without a doubt the finest sales organization on the coast, including over fifty men, many of whom were old Wanamaker salesmen." (Joseph Gaston, *Portland, Oregon, Its History and Builders*, S.J. Clark Publishing Co., 1911, Vol. II, pg. 118.)

Harry Beckwith was a native of Quebec, Canada. He was born June 16, 1878. His father was in the publishing business, and his mother was English and the daughter of a ship owner. He attended Upper Canada College and McGill University. Athletics was his main interest in school. He was captain of the football team, and played on the school cricket and baseball teams, and played on the Montreal football team which won the championship of Canada. He was on the crew of the rowing club of Toronto which won the championship of Ontario. He was a member of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club of Toronto and in numerous other boating clubs.

The property is significant for its associations with architect and educator Ellis Fuller Lawrence. "Important buildings of his design are found in many Pacific Coast cities, and the quality of his work has won for him a notable professional reputation." (Encyclopedia of Northwest Biography, The American Historical Co., New York, 1941. Vol. 2, pp. 217-218). Among his accomplishments are the founding of the School of Architecture and allied Arts at the University of Oregon in 1914. He conceived the master plan of the campus, and designed all the major buildings constructed as part of the master plan.

He was a prolific architect, knowledgeable in several styles including Arts and Crafts, 20th Century Gothic, 20th Century Italian Renaissance, 20th Century Georgian and English Cottage. Belle Court is the only example in Portland of a Jacobethan style building which he designed. It is also the only apartment building in the City of Portland Inventory which he designed. He

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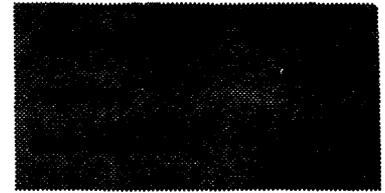
was thirty three when Belle Court was built. It represents one of his early buildings. However, his talent was well developed at this time. He had already designed at least seven buildings in the Portland area, including a church and the Albina Library.

Lawrence was educated at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He received a Bachelors of Science degree in 1901, and a Master of Science degree in 1902. After finishing his degrees he spent a year in France and apprenticed in several offices on the east coast. In 1906 Lawrence planned to pursue his career in San Francisco, but the earthquake of that year altered his plans. Instead he came to Portland and joined the firm of MacNaughton, Raymond and Lawrence. For several years he practised alone at which time he designed Belle Court. He later formed a partnership with Mr. Holford. This partnership lasted for many years.

The Metropolitan Investment and Improvement Company, under the ownership of the Fred A. Jacobs Company, sold Belle Court in 1928 to C. M. nad Lisa Christenson.

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Oregonian, Saturday January 1, 1910. p. 3.

Oregonian, January 1, 1913, p. 2.

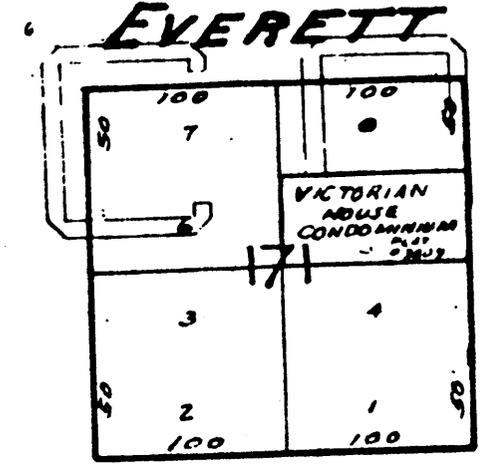
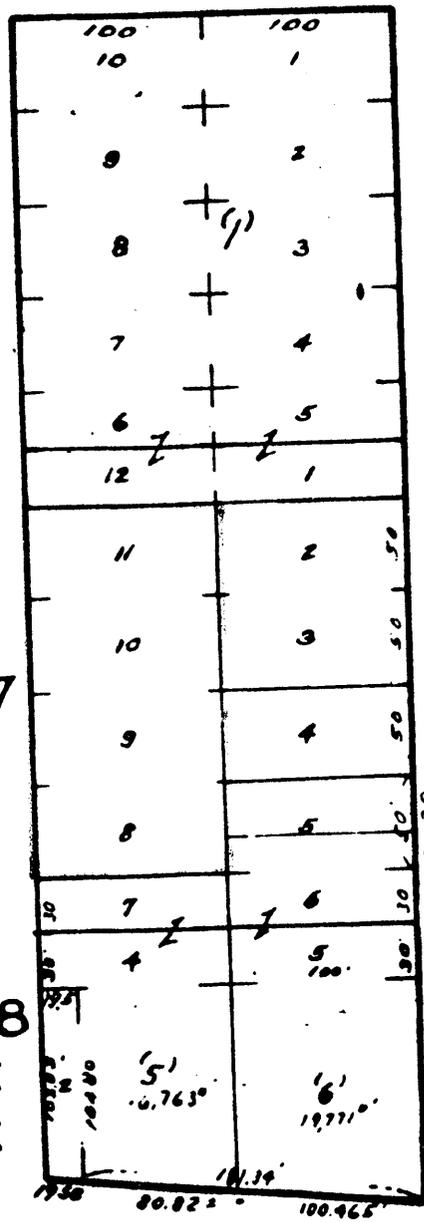
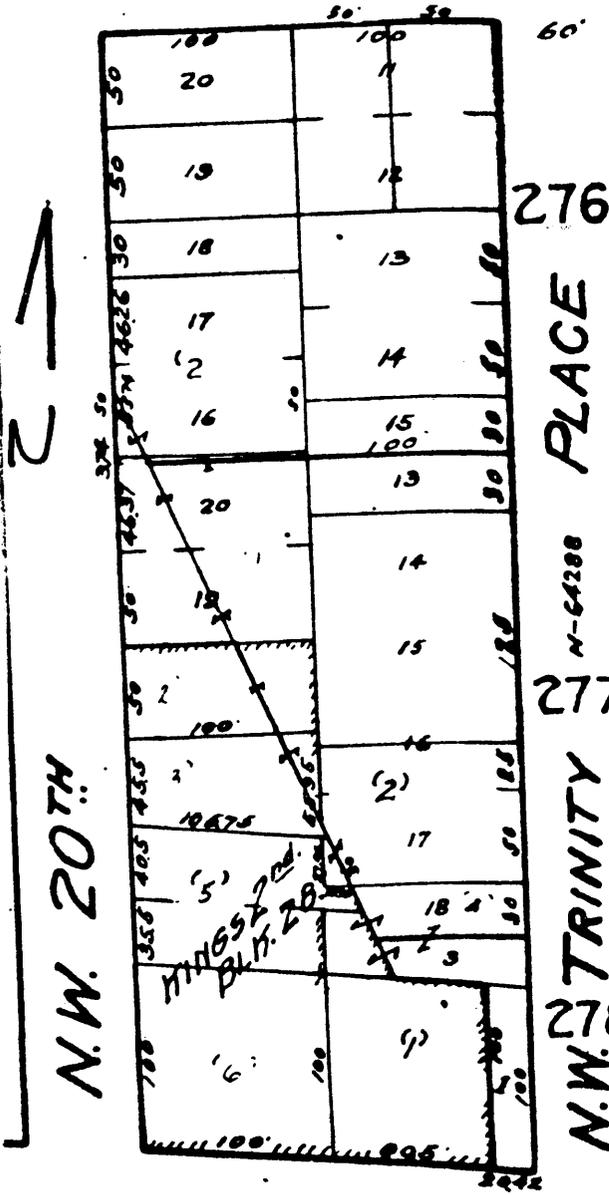
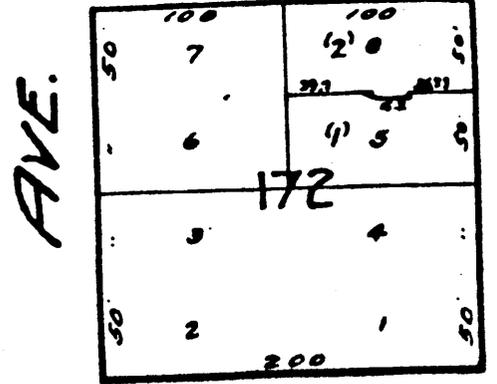
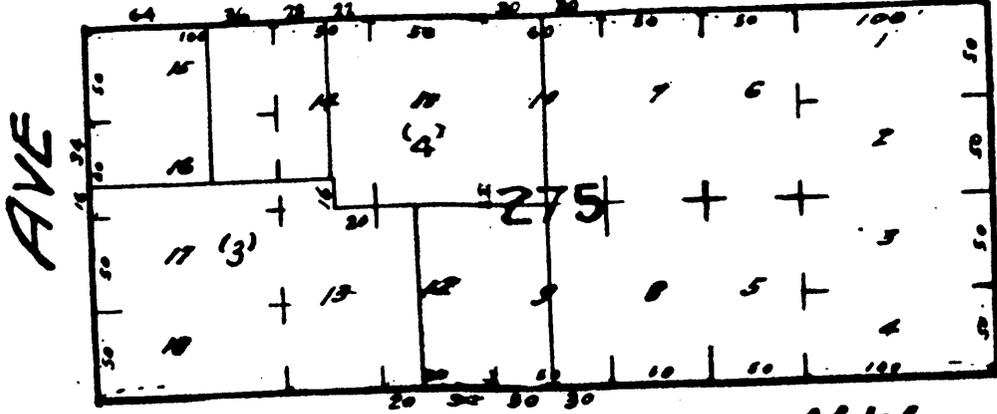
Polk, R.L. Portland City Directory, R.L. Polk and Co. Publishers; 1909.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, Portland 1928.

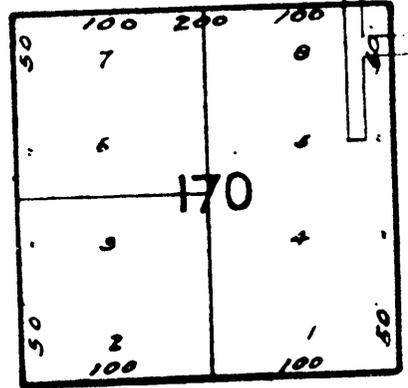
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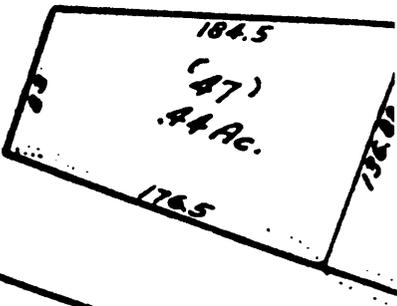
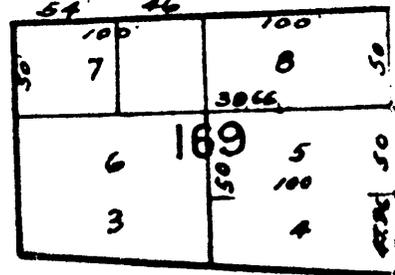
Belle Court Apartments Specifications, E.F. Lawrence 1912. City of Portland Building Bureau Microfilm Files.



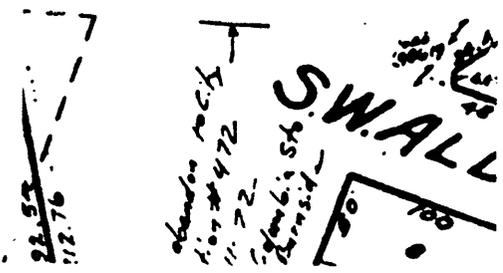
N.W. DAVIS



N.W. COUCH



Multnomah County Tax Map
3028, 1985
SE 1/4 Sec. 33 1N 1E

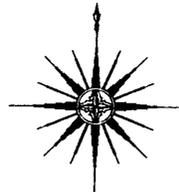


Trinity Place

Belle Court Apartments
existing

Second Phase
never constructed

parking



PLOT PLAN