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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

SEP 14 2004

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determination for individual properties and districts. See instruction 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 Sherman Street Historic District

other names/site number Iliff Estate; Poets' Rows; 5DV.9154

2. Location

street & number Approximately 1000 to 1099 Sherman Street [N/A] not for publication

city or town Denver [N/A] vicinity

state Colorado code CO county Denver code 031 zip code 80203

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant [] nationally [] statewide [X] locally. ([] See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark Wolfe Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer 8/27/04
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, Colorado Historical Society
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
 See continuation sheet.

Sherman Street Historic District
Name of Property

Denver County, Colorado
County/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 count previously listed resources.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
11	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
11	0	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)

Multiple dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art Deco

Moderne

International

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concrete
walls Brick
roof Asphalt
Ceramic Tile
other Terra Cotta

Narrative Description

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

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet****United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**Sherman Street
Historic District

Denver County, Colorado

Section number 7 Page 1**DESCRIPTION**

The Sherman Street Historic District is a historic residential neighborhood of three-story brick apartments fronting the 1000 block of Sherman Street, between 10th and 11th avenues. Located southeast of downtown, the district includes all of the west side of Sherman Street and the southern third of the east side. The district consists of eleven, three-story walk-up apartment buildings. All eleven buildings are contributing resources.

The defining characteristics of the historic district are:

- All apartment buildings
- Similar size and massing, three stories each
- Rectangular buildings without inner courtyards
- Twentieth-century modern designs utilizing features from Art Deco, Art Moderne, and International styles.

The district has the appearance of an established middle and working class neighborhood. Many mature trees line the streets along with landscaped lawns and shrubs. All of the apartments in the district are composed of brick, with terra cotta door surrounds and trim. Many of the windows in these buildings are the original wooden casements. The subtlety of decorations focuses attention on the entrances to these buildings. As Sherman Street leads directly north to the capitol building, all of the buildings in the historic district share a wonderful view of the state capitol, two blocks to the north.

This block of Sherman Street has long been known to Denver residents as "Poets Row." The originator of the Poet's Row names is not known, however, the major architect of the historic district, Charles Strong, was quite fond of literature and might have provided some names himself.

The buildings designated in the historic district are all the first generation of construction. No earlier structures had been built on this block of Sherman Street.

Robert Frost Apartments (originally Casa Bonita)

1001 Sherman Street

1929

Andrew B. Willison architect

Modernist interpretation of Spanish Colonial Revival

This three-story brick apartment building without a courtyard, on the southwest corner of Sherman Street and 10th Avenue was the earliest built on Block 1 of Iliff Place Addition, in 1929. The symmetrical façade features a central entry with an arched terra cotta surround with keystone set in a brown brick pier that continues to the roof and contains the second and third floor center windows. Several steps lead up to the small entry porch. The second floor center window has a rounded terra cotta arch with keystone surrounding double six-over-six sash lights, with a decorative metal railing characteristic of Spanish Colonial Revival designs. The other façade windows on all three floors are set in a buff brick, and are double six-over-six sash lights with stone lintels and brick sills. Between the floors are dark brick rectangular spandrels enclosing two diamond shaped blue terra cotta panels. The façade corners have

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National Park Service**

 Sherman Street
Historic District

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dark brown brick piers continuing above the roofline, with tapering stepped shapes at the tops, and white terra cotta panels placed evenly between floors. The south facade of this building continues the decorations of the main facade. The faux-hipped roof uses red tiles between the corner piers and above the sidewalks. The central brown brick pier continues above the roof to form a low wall containing four white terra cotta carved panels, above which is a separate hipped roof. The terra cotta panels feature symmetrical designs that can be considered Art Deco. The blue panels set in rectangular bricks continue on the 10th Avenue side, but not on the north side. The rear and north side are undecorated. The roof becomes flat about 20 feet behind the façade. The grounds outside the façade are landscaped and terraced, and large evergreen trees grow near the corners.

Emily Dickinson Apartments (originally Constellation)

1015 Sherman Street

1956

Architect unknown

The three-story Emily Dickinson is a subdued International style building. The centered entry is protected by a thin flat canopy trimmed in metal. Though narrower in plan than the other buildings in the district, it is similar in design to those built in the later stages of the district's development. No glass blocks are used and the brickwork is simple.

Louisa May Alcott Apartments (originally Casa La Vista)

1025 Sherman Street

1931

Andrew B. Willison architect (attributed)

Modernist interpretation of Spanish Colonial Revival

This three-story apartment building is nearly the exact duplicate of the Robert Frost. The central entry and the two windows above it are not recessed to the same extent as on the Frost, and the north and south side decorations do not occur since the Alcott is an interior building on Block 1, Iliff Place Addition. The other features are the same, as are the size, the lack of a courtyard, and presence of landscaped façade grounds. It has a brick and stone foundation. The alley side is similar to the Frost.

Mark Twain Apartments

1035 Sherman Street

1937

Charles D. Strong architect

Art Deco/Art Moderne

This three-story building constructed adjacent to the Alcott features a similar plan and massing to the others in this district. Designed the same year as the Browning, it appears much more modern. It is the only building in the historic district with an off-center entry, on the north side of the façade, and one of only two buildings utilizing rounded corners. The entry features "projecting, rectangular surrounds of dark ceramic brick with a high glaze," (Noel & Norgren, p. 88), inset with alternating rectangular yellow panels that frame the three entry doors, and a metal medallion on the south side of the entry. The name "Mark Twain" appears above the entry in bold Art Deco lettering. The buff brick façade features rounded corners and two-part symmetry with the entry bay projecting only a few inches in front of the second bay. The line joining the two bays is the midpoint of the facade, and two steel casement windows connected by a panel of glass blocks occur on each side of the midpoint. A streamlined vertical feature

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of a "stepped brick spire" at the roofline is centrally located over the entry (Widmann, see black & white photo). The beige brick façade is detailed by five red brick horizontal bands beneath each window. The nearly square casements connected by panels of glass block along with the red brick bands below each window add an Art Moderne horizontality to the façade.

Nathaniel Hawthorne Apartments1045 Sherman Street
Art Deco/Art Moderne

1938

Charles D. Strong architect

This three-story apartment features similarities to the Twain in the use of beige brick, rounded corners, and panels of glass bricks between steel casement windows. It is different in the centered entry featuring a dark round or oval overhang, similar to those found in 1930s movie theatres, on which the name Nathaniel Hawthorne is placed in stylized Art Deco lettering. The side lights are made of glass block. Vertical brick piers form a central bay and extend from the entry to the roof, creating a stepped parapet. The horizontal banding is confined to sill bands instead of the five rows found in the Twain. The glass brick panels are narrower than in the Twain and do not completely connect the windows. The north, south and alley sides of the building feature sash lights and sill courses. The grounds are landscaped.

Eugene Field Apartments1055 Sherman Street
Art Deco/Art Moderne

1939

Charles D. Strong architect

This three-story apartment features the same massing as the Hawthorne and Twain, and a similar use of beige brick. The central entry is unique in using glass blocks to surround the black paneled entry and extend upward to the top of the third story windows, creating a "cathedral" type of entry as seen from the street. However, the interior is not open to all three stories (see description below). The black paneled entry is offset by two decorative metal light fixtures, and the name "Eugene Field" (and the address) in stylized letters. The wide windows on each side of the center projection are steel casement with a large central light replacing the glass blocks found in the Hawthorne and Field. The wide windows, plus sill and lintel courses in the same beige brick give the facade a horizontality. The building corners are not rounded. A black central spire of streamlined design connects the entry to the roof between a large central panel of glass blocks, described as, "the giant portal-like center element infilled with a plane of glass block and punctuated with a black faceted spire" (David Lynn Wise AIA, as quoted in Widmann). The spire forms a narrow step pattern above the roofline. Simple sash lights, and sill and lintel courses are seen on the north, south, and alley sides of the building. The front is landscaped.

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Section number 7 Page 4**Panama Apartments**1075 Sherman Street
Art Deco

1942

Charles D. Strong architect

This three-story building reflects a more subdued Art Deco/Art Moderne with International elements, as would have been typical for the World War II era. A beige brick similar to the Field is utilized in the exterior which features a central entry with side lights and side glass blocks. The name "Panama" is spelled in large block letters above the rounded entry overhang. The central bay is about the same width as in the Field, but the glass brick three story panel has been narrowed and is sided by beveled or stepped bricks. There is no central spire on the façade. The wide facade windows feature steel casements on either side of a central light with transom lights above. One set of these wide windows occurs on either side of the central bay, and gives the Panama an Art Moderne horizontality, along with the sill and lintel courses. The literary references were dropped in the naming of this apartment and the adjacent Sherman Arms. This Strong design departs from the straight rectangular footprint by featuring an I-shaped plan that creates two small light courts on each side of the building. Otherwise, the scale of the building is in keeping with the others discussed above. The north, south, and alley sides continue the steel casements, and sill and lintel courses. There are no steps leading to the entry, simply the sidewalk.

Sherman Arms Apartments1085 Sherman Street
Art Moderne/International

1950

Charles D. Strong architect (possibly)

The three-story Sherman Arms is similar to the other apartments on the west side of Sherman Street in terms of plan and massing. It contains a similar I-shaped plan and two side light courts as found in the adjacent Panama Apartments, and the façade is similar. The Sherman Arms facade features an asymmetrical treatment of the windows from south to north. On the south the windows are identical to the wide steel casements in the Panama. Then, a bay contains a panel of glass bricks wider than in the Panama, and extending to the top of the third floor windows. The entry features a rust-colored surround similar to that found in the Field, Art Deco light fixtures, and the name "Sherman Arms" in stylized letters above the door. The glass door and glass sidelights are recessed in a beige tile framework within the rust surround. On the north of the entry, the windows are smaller multi-pane steel casements with brick sills separated by exterior bricks. To the north, an additional bay features the same wide horizontal casements as on the south end of the façade. This additional width makes the Sherman Arms asymmetrical and larger than the other apartments. This building is on the corner of Sherman Street and 11th Avenue. The steel casements continue on the north, south, and alley sides, and several of the lights are glass blocks. The brick sills are angled downward, a feature of post-World War II construction. Subtle horizontal sill courses are formed by small differences in relief of the bricks. The Sherman Arms features the International style elements of lack of decoration, attention to horizontality and function, and an asymmetrical facade. However, a mixture of Deco and Moderne elements can be seen in the window treatments, glass blocks, and entry surrounds.

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Section number 7 Page 5**James Russell Lowell Apartments**1020 Sherman Street 1936 Charles D. Strong architect
Twentieth-century modern/Art Deco

The three-story Lowell Apartment was the first building on Sherman Street named for a literary figure. It has a similar size and plan as the two other east side apartments, the Browning and Carlyle, and clearly features Art Deco/Art Moderne styling. The symmetrical façade features a center projection with brick corners that rises to the top of the flat roof and gives a step-like appearance to the roof. This center bay contains an unusual three-sided arched central entry with decorative terra cotta surrounds and the name "James Russell Lowell" above the door. Brick piers on either side of the entry hold stylized light fixtures and rise to the roofline, accentuating the vertical elements. Above the entry are second and third floor three-part narrow single pane lights separated by narrow brick mullions. Between the floors terra cotta panels and carved sills occur. These lights are placed slightly lower in the facade than the second and third floor windows. Above the third floor narrow lights are terra cotta panels with stylized terra cotta tassels below carved terra cotta stepped parapets. The entire façade roofline is capped by rectangular terra cotta brick coping. Within the central bay are first, second and third floor double casements with terra cotta panels between floors. On the north and south sides of the façade are three-part casement windows with brick lintels and sills set close to the building corners. On the north and south sides of the building are duplicate windows also set close to the corners. Contrasting brick bands at both of the corners lend a quoin-like effect, but continue horizontally to the junction with the central bay. Among the three apartment buildings on the east side of Sherman Street, the Lowell features the most terra cotta façade elements, Art Deco features, and horizontal brick banding, Art Moderne features.

Thomas Carlyle Apartments1010 Sherman Street 1936 Charles D. Strong architect
Art Deco/Art Moderne

The Carlyle Apartment is both similar to the adjacent Lowell and different. It is similar in the buff brick façade, vertical piers, the general size and number of windows, and central entry terra cotta door surround. It is distinct in the use of the stepped piers that rise from the entrance to form a parapet of brick and stone. The name "Thomas Carlyle" appears in Large capital letters on terra cotta panels above the door. The door is framed by two brick piers with terra cotta caps that reach to the second floor and feature Art Deco light fixtures. The columns of two narrow casements above the door are similar to those above the entry of the Lowell, while the other windows are double casements with transoms, and the outer windows (nearest the façade corners) are triple casements with transoms. Darker panels between the floors emphasize the horizontal while giving the impression that the building is structurally supported by the vertical piers. On the south side of the building, these panels feature carved wood overlays in geometric designs, as discussed below. They probably covered the facade originally but have been removed. Square corners are used in this building above a brick and stone foundation. There is no courtyard. The grounds are landscaped with shrubs, grass, and a narrow driveway leads on the south side of the Carlyle to the rear alley.

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Section number 7 Page 6**Robert Browning Apartments**1000 Sherman Street
Art Deco/Art Moderne

1937

Charles D. Strong architect

This three-story building without a courtyard features the same plan and massing as the Carlyle and utilizes a similar color buff brick. The contrasting brick is slightly darker than that used in the Carlyle. It is used in the roofline coping and appears in the brick spandrels between the floors. The brick piers of the façade form a central flat parapet extending about halfway along the top of the roof. Narrower piers or mullions rise between the interior windows of the central bay. Again, the central entry is the focus of the façade. This entry features a clothed-over canopy supported by metal poles. Terra Cotta panels surround the door and sidelights and continue above it using decorative curved panels. The name "Robert Browning" is set within a decorative inner panel in block letters. The windows of the Browning use single one-over-one sash with three-part transom within the interior of the façade, and double one-over-one sash lights with three-part transom on the outer windows of all three stories. Above the third floor mullion caps on the central bay are three terra cotta spiral medallions. The north, south and rear sides of the building feature similar ransomed windows with contrasting spandrels. The corner building grounds are landscaped with grass and shrubs.

Sherman Street Historic District
Name of Property

Denver County, Colorado
County/State

8. Statement of Significance

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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Periods of Significance

1929-1956

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person(s)

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Strong, Charles Dunwoody

Willison, Andrew B.

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:

Colorado Historical Society

Sherman Street Historic District

Name of Property

Denver County, Colorado

County/State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 4 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1. 13 501344 4397899 (NAD27)
Zone Easting Northing

2. Zone Easting Northing

3. Zone Easting Northing

4. Zone Easting Northing [] See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rebecca C. Dorward

organization Dorward Historical Research

date February 20, 2004

street & number 11909 E. Iowa Ave.

telephone 303-745-0746

city or town Aurora

state CO

zip code 80012

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

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name see continuation sheet

street & number _____

telephone _____

city or town _____

state _____

zip code _____

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.

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Denver County, Colorado

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SIGNIFICANCE

The Sherman Street Historic District is significant under Criterion A, in the area of *Community Planning and Development*, as an integral part of the development of the urban apartment in Denver. In particular, the district consists of an intact collection three-story walk-up apartments built during the period 1929 to 1950. With the population boom of the post-World War I era, the city experienced a growing need for scaled-down apartments for families and singles working in downtown Denver, and apartment designs were simplified. Efficient use of the building space became popular with less attention given to ornate lobbies with staff, courtyards, and elevators. In these "modern" apartments, most of the building space was reserved for individual units, and the entry lobbies became small spaces where residents could retrieve their mail from small mail boxes set in the wall. The new "modern" apartment buildings resulted in more families being accommodated while providing a middle class lifestyle. This historic district contains the "first generation" of apartments constructed on this land, platted as Blocks 1 and 2 of the Iliff Place Addition. No earlier construction has been identified.

The district is also significant under Criterion C because at least seven, and possibly eight, of the apartment buildings in the 1000 block of Sherman Street were designed by prominent local architect Charles Dunwoody Strong. Though relatively unrecognized in the ranks of Denver's modernist architects, Strong's body of work includes important contributions to the city's evolving modernist interpretations of Art Deco, Art Modern and International Style architecture. Strong stands tall among Denver's best mid-century architects and may be considered a master in his field. The buildings in the Sherman Street Historic District exhibit Charles Strong's progression from the Art Deco to International Style of modernism from 1936 to 1950.

The overall period of significance is 1929-1956, representing the range of construction dates for the eleven buildings which contribute to the significance of the district. The period of significance extends two years into the less-than-fifty-year period which requires the district to meet Criteria Consideration G. The district meets the requirements because the vast majority of the period of significance (twenty-five years) is over fifty-years-of-age. The year 1956 is a logical point at which to end the period of significance as this represents the completion of the last of the modern three-story walk-up apartments in the district, the Constellation (now Emily Dickinson). The scale, massing and style of the Constellation is fully compatible with that of the other buildings in the district.

The Development of Urban Apartments in Early Twentieth-Century Denver

The original owner of the Sherman Street land between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, and between Lincoln and Grant Streets, was John Wesley Iliff, one of the front range pioneers of 1859 (Nancy Widmann, Sherman-Grant Historic District Application, draft, p.6, and Ubbelohde, Benson, and Smith, *Colorado History* p.169, 1995). He purchased the land as a country estate sometime before 1878 but did not build on it. After his death, his wife, Mrs. Elizabeth Iliff, inherited the land. She remarried Henry White Warren, a Methodist Bishop, in

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1883, and the family moved out of downtown Denver to the University Park neighborhood. In 1898, Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show camped on the land.

Mrs. Warren did not plat the land until 1900, at which time Sherman Street was completed between East Tenth Ave. and East Eleventh Ave. Mrs. Warren intended to design a neighborhood named the Liff Place, a locale of "first-class residences" along the 1000 block of Sherman and Grant Streets (Widmann, p.7).

North of Liff Place, Henry C. Brown platted Brown's Second Addition in 1877, and to the south stood the First Addition to Arlington Heights, platted in 1893 by Emma Whitsitt Sleyden, widow of early real estate investor Richard E. Whitsitt (Widmann, p. 6). Gradually, this area became known as Capitol Hill, and several of Denver's elite residents built mansions here. Three mansions remain today as designated Denver landmarks, the Victorian-era Sheedy Mansion at 1115 Grant Street, built in 1892, the Crawford Hill House, a French Renaissance Revival mansion at 150 E. Tenth Avenue, built in 1906, and the Henry Miller Porter House, 975 Grant, built in 1913 in the Georgian Revival style.

The surrounding Capitol Hill streets were developed into homes and apartments. By 1892 an electric line served East Eleventh Avenue and apartments began to appear along this route. Urban apartments had first appeared in Denver in the late 1800s as row houses and "flats." By 1900, luxury apartments became available for the urban middle and upper class residents with small families. These residences featured elevators, lobby with staff, attended garages, and nicely appointed rooms. Such apartments as the Perrenoud and the Altamaha were conveniently located to transportation.

In the 1920s, Denver experienced a population boom that increased the need for housing. With the population boom of the post-World War I era, there was a greater need for scaled down apartments for families and singles who worked in downtown Denver, and apartment designs were simplified. More efficient use of the building space became popular with less attention given to ornate lobbies with staff, courtyards, and elevators. In these "modern" apartments, most of the building space was reserved for individual units, and the entry lobbies became small spaces where residents could retrieve their mail from small mailboxes set in the wall. The new "modern" apartment buildings resulted in more families being accommodated while providing a middle class lifestyle.

In 1923, the first construction on Liff Place occurred with the four story Belmont Apartments and Buckingham Apartments, designed in the Mission Revival style by architect William Norman Bowman (not included in the historic district). The earliest apartment to be constructed in the Sherman Street Historic District was the three story 1929 Casa Bonita Apartment at 1001 Sherman Street, designed by architect Andrew Brundel Willison. In the late 1930s, the apartment name was changed to the Robert Frost (Widmann, p.15). This apartment features a mixture of Spanish Colonial Revival and Modernist elements. The façade trim continues along the Tenth Avenue side, where the original name of "Casa Bonita" can still be seen in an interior bay above an arched terra cotta light surround.

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The second apartment building constructed in the historic district was the 1931 Casa La Vista, 1025 Sherman, constructed adjacent to the Casa Bonita Apartments. This three-story building is nearly an exact twin of the Casa Bonita, and was probably designed by the same architect, A.B. Willison, though no name was listed on the building permit. The Casa La Vista was renamed the Louisa May Alcott at a later date.

On the east side of Sherman Street, Charles D. Strong designed the James Russell Lowell (1936), at 1020 Sherman, the Thomas Carlyle (1936) at 1010 Sherman, and the Robert Browning (1937) at 1000 Sherman. These three buildings show similarities in massing, facade elements, and even the brick colors. With little ornamentation, these apartments emphasize vertical piers and detailed entries.

The Mark Twain, located at 1035 Sherman, was also designed by Charles D. Strong and completed about the same time as the Browning, in 1937. In the Twain, architect Strong presents quite modern details, classic Art Moderne. The three story brick building has rounded corners, off-center entry, glass block panels, and a streamlined vertical feature, a "stepped brick spire" at the top of the façade centrally located over the entry (Widmann, see black & white photo).

Charles D. Strong designed the Nathaniel Hawthorne, at 1045 Sherman Street, in 1938. It features similarities to the Twain in the use of beige brick, rounded corners, red brick horizontal bands, and panels of glass bricks between steel sash windows.

North of the Hawthorne, Charles D. Strong designed the Eugene Field, at 1055 Sherman Street, in 1939. Century Builders owned and contracted this building as well as the Hawthorne and the Twain. The Field is similar to the Hawthorne in color of bricks, in massing and in the central entry.

North of the Field, is the Panama Apartments, 1075 Sherman Street, designed by Charles Strong in 1942. The scale of the building is in keeping with the others discussed above, except that the Panama was designed in an I-shaped plan. The color of the bricks is similar, the windows express horizontality, the centered entry with glass block surrounds and vertical panel are the focus of the façade.

The Sherman Arms, built in 1950, at 1085 Sherman Street, is probably the design of Charles D. Strong, although the documentation is lacking. The scale and the I-shaped plan, is similar to the Panama.

The three-story Emily Dickinson, built in 1956 at 1015 Sherman Street, was squeezed in between the two Spanish Colonial Revival apartment buildings, the Frost and the Alcott. It was originally named the Constellation, and was designed by an unknown architect in a subdued International style. The entry is centered, with an overhang trimmed in metal, and the size, although smaller than the other buildings, is similar to the other modern buildings. No glass blocks are used and the brickwork is simple.

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The eleven contributing three-story apartment buildings in the district provide views of Sherman Street or the Rocky Mountains to most of the residents and have simple lobbies in the modern tradition of the day. As such, they represent a hybrid between middle- and working-class apartment houses that were larger than tenement apartment houses, but with windows facing narrow courts or alleys, and the more elaborate luxury walk-up apartment house with gracious common entry lobbies and two sets of interior stairs, one for residents and one for servants. (Hunter, p. 233-237 for a general description of early walk-up apartments)

The apartment interiors in the district provided efficient use of space for a single person or a small family. Many of the units on Sherman Street are in fact studios, combining a living room with a bedroom, a small eat-in kitchen and a bathroom off the entry hall. As convenience was important, each apartment unit was provided main hallway access to a cabinet where deliveries could be placed, and retrieved from inside the apartment. Many of the units undoubtedly contained Murphy beds, which have since been turned into wide closets. The hallways in these apartment buildings are unadorned, not overly wide, and the staircases are strictly functional.

A one-bedroom apartment in the Eugene Field featured a similar entry hall, a good sized living room, again with a wide closet that might have held a Murphy bed, a small dining area with a glass brick wall, a similarly sized kitchen as in the studio, a bath off the entryway, and a small bedroom. The glass bricks are structural and part of the central facade bay of the Field.

The rare occurrence in a single block of Sherman Street of the apartments discussed above presents an excellent opportunity to study the eclectic and subdued architectural interpretations of Modernist styles constructed in Denver between 1929 and 1950.

Charles D. Strong, Architect

The Sherman Street Historic District is also significant because at least six, and perhaps eight, of the buildings in the district were designed by Charles Dunwoody Strong. Born in Columbus, Ohio, 1895, Charles Strong studied architecture at Georgia School of Technology and graduated in 1917. After serving as a second lieutenant in the army in World War I, he worked for the Georgia State Highway Dept. for two years. His wife contracted tuberculosis, so for her health they moved to Denver in 1922. Strong initially worked as a draftsman for architect John J. Huddart, then for the firm of Harry W. J. Edbrooke from 1923-26. Both Huddart and Edbrooke were among Denver's most noteworthy and influential architects. In 1927, Strong began his own architectural practice. His wife died in 1929, and as the Depression began his business folded.

Strong organized the Unemployed Citizens League of Denver in 1932 to attack the unemployment problems. By becoming a civic activist, Strong helped to buy food, tents for housing, and find work for its members. The league was successful before New Deal programs were instituted in 1933.

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Strong became the head of the Subsistence Homestead Survey of Colorado in 1933 and also served as Assistant Regional architect for the Resettlement Administration. He started-up his architectural firm again in 1936, and in 1937-8 he served on the Governor's Housing Committee. In 1938, he remarried and moved to 1569 Eudora Street. The couple had two children, James E. Strong and Marilyn Strong Worthington.

In 1939, Strong was elected to the Colorado State Legislature representing Denver. He served one active term, during which time he introduced legislation on wide-ranging topics, such as water conservation, slum clearance, creation of a housing authority, building safety regulations, funding a state printing office, and education (Widmann, p. 21-24).

At the end of his term of office, he returned full time to his architectural practice. Before being elected to the state legislature, Strong designed the first Moderne apartments on Sherman Street, beginning with the Thomas Carlyle at 1010 Sherman Street. He had a long and varied career as an architect, designing many Denver homes, apartments, office buildings, shopping centers, stores, theaters, and university buildings. Apartment buildings, however, became his specialty. He also designed student apartments at the University of Denver, faculty dormitories at Colorado State University, the University of Denver Student Union, and the Modernist 1957 Petroleum Club Building on 16th Street in downtown Denver. His work spanned almost fifty years and extended from southern Colorado in Trinidad, Colorado (Parochial School) north to Casper, Wyoming (Standard Oil Building) and east to Sidney, Nebraska (Fox Theater). Charles Strong was a lover of literature and poetry. Perhaps that is the reason why he named some of his apartments after literary figures. He died on December 2, 1974.

Strong's work in the Sherman Street Historic District is representative of the nationwide trend in the middle of the twentieth century toward a stripped-down modern style of architecture. In this regard, apartment buildings often had more in common with office buildings, schools, stores and city halls, than with single family houses. (Hunter, 220). An comparison of the Art Deco style of Strong's design at 1020 Sherman Street with the International Style of 1085 Sherman Street (most likely designed by Strong) indicates this trend toward less exterior ornamentation and less use of architectural device.

From his initial Art Deco buildings, Strong evolved from Art Deco through Art Moderne to a combination of Moderne and International elements. Strong's designs are subdued in comparison to more ornate Art Deco, Art Moderne and International styles found on the east and west coasts. He utilized few common elements of the styles, such as zigzags, sculptures, painted stucco, geometrical ornament, and Native American or Mayan motifs, metal or smooth exterior walls. Charles D. Strong designed for conservative Denverites, and his modern styling is evident in six to eight apartment buildings on Sherman Street.

An illustrative transition in Strong's designs can be seen and studied along the 1000 block of Sherman Street from east to west and south to north. In fact, his later works, found throughout the city, allude to a continued interest and progression in modern styling. His 1936 Washington Irving Apartment at 1029 Pennsylvania Street is similar to his early work with the Lowell, while the 1949 Aurora Fox Theater is very Art Moderne in comparison, and the 1950

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Mayfair Shopping Center at 13th Avenue and Krameria Street in east Denver is most progressive. Strong's design of the 1954-57 Petroleum Club Building at 110 16th Street, Denver, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

The district is a microcosm of the development of Strong's style. Beginning with the Lowell and Carlyle built in 1936, the evolution of his designs can clearly be seen. From the emphasis on verticality on the east side of Sherman Street, to the emphasis on horizontality on the west side, the apartments seem to borrow elements from each previous building and add originality. From the off-center entry, small roofline spire, and rounded corners of the Twain, the next design, the Hawthorne, 1938, continues the rounded corners but moves the entry to the center of the façade and makes the central projection reach to a roofline stepped parapet. Glass blocks are introduced as part of the exterior walls between windows. The Eugene Field, 1939, returns to the rectangular corners of his earlier works across the street. The panels of glass blocks found in the Hawthorne have been consolidated into a single massive panel of glass blocks in the central projection around and above the entry of the Field. A spire similar to that found in the Twain now reaches from the entry surround to the roofline. The windows in the Field take on a horizontality that replaces the brick bands of the Twain and Hawthorne. Adjacent to the Field, the Panama, 1942, retains the horizontality of the windows and the proportions of the façade, but uses a narrower panel of glass blocks in the central projection. The Sherman Arms, 1950, combines an entry surround similar to the Twain and Field, with glass block panels in the central projection as found in the Field and Panama, but it departs from the other apartments with a north bay that fills the space to the corner.

Of the apartments Strong designed on Sherman Street between 10th and 11th Avenues, an evolution can be seen between the earlier Art Deco Carlyle, Lowell and Browning on the east side of Sherman, the Art Moderne Twain, Hawthorne and Field along the west side of Sherman Street, and the more International-styled Panama and Sherman Arms Apartments on the west near 11th Avenue.

Strong emphasized the vertical in the Lowell (1936), Carlyle (1936) and the Browning (1937), giving symmetry to the facades, and focusing interest on the street-level entries. The terra cotta door surrounds are finely sculpted though subdued by comparison to more elaborate examples. All the facades feature an attention to verticality in the central bay and narrow piers. However, they also feature the horizontal element of the spandrels, and their rectangular shapes are more wide than tall, giving them another horizontal feature.

The James Russell Lowell, 1020 Sherman Street, features the greatest surface area of terra cotta panels of the three apartments on the east side of Sherman. These panels are found as spandrels in the central bay and at the roofline where they form three small parapetted ornaments in a "stylized tassel" design. While the central bay and the narrow casements provide verticality, the contrasting brickwork seen in the rollock bands and the quoin-like bands that merge into the rollocks provide horizontality and contrast with the vertical central bay. This apartment is truly a mixture of conservative Art Deco and Art Moderne.

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The Carlyle's central stepped terra cotta parapet can be considered Art Deco, along with the terra cotta door surround and stylized name sign. The original Art Deco carved wood spandrels can still be found on the south side of the Carlyle. These carvings feature geometrical spirals on each side of stylized X's in the center of the carving. They were probably placed over the facade spandrels but have since been removed so that the darker brick is now showing. These contrasting bricks allude to a conflict between the vertical and horizontal elements, which often happened in "Moderne" buildings.

The Browning features Art Deco carvings surrounding the stylized name sign, a nicely carved terra cotta door surround and three terra cotta spirals near the roofline. The spiral motif is found on both the Carlyle wood carvings and the Browning terra cottas. The sash lights have less height than in the Carlyle or Lowell. The brick piers suggest verticality, however, the brickwork patterns and the contrasting colored spandrels points to horizontality.

Browning and the Twain were constructed during the same year, 1937, yet they are quite different in their styles. The Art Moderne Twain utilizes the rounded corners so characteristic of the style and emphasizes the horizontal in its use of glass blocks between casement windows and contrasting brickwork spandrels. The asymmetrical building features an off-center entrance with black terra cotta paneling raised from the wall surface, and contrasting yellow panels in the side transitions to the four-part door. The stylized letters "MARK TWAIN" are boldly spelled above the entry. A simple contrasting circle is set to the south of the entry in the black panels. A contrasting Art Deco element is the stepped spire at the roofline directly above the entry.

Immediately to the north of the Twain, the Hawthorne also features rounded corners, but contains a symmetrical facade with a central entry bay. The entrance features glass block side lights and a rounded theater marquis-type of entry cover with the name "NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE" spelled in Moderne styling. Similar to the Twain, yet with subtle differences, the Hawthorne features more horizontal emphasis with the contrasting sill courses and narrower glass block panels between casement windows. The step parapet at the roofline refers to the Art Deco style.

With the Eugene Field, Strong used wide Chicago-styled three-part windows with side double casements and a central light that takes the place of the glass blocks found in the Twain and Hawthorne. In the Field, the glass blocks have been moved from a dividing feature between lights to the central bay to create a large panel above and to the sides of the entry. The entrance features black terra cotta surrounds with art deco light fixtures, similar to that found in the Twain. The wide glass blocks on the facade are divided by a decorative long black spire reminiscent of the short spire at the top of the Twain. This spire brings verticality, while the casement windows and glass blocks add horizontality. Inside the building the glass blocks occur not in a wide three-story entry hall, but within the separate apartment units. Unit 309 features glass blocks in the eat-in kitchen.

Both the Panama and Sherman Arms apartment buildings have elements in common with the International style: lack of decor, square corners, horizontality expressed in the Chicago-styled

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casements, and glass blocks. The name "Panama" is spelled in raised block letters not reminiscent of Art Deco/Art Moderne. The Sherman Arms features a terra cotta surround for the entrance similar to the Field and the Twain, with the stylized letters "Sherman Arms." Although the Sherman Arms is quite similar to the Panama on the south side, it includes an additional flat facade bay to the north. The sills of the Sherman Arms are angled downward, a feature not common until after World War II.

In general, the architecture in the Sherman Street Historic District also displays a progression of Modernist styles, from decorative to spare, from Art Deco to International Style. "It is sometimes said that Art Deco's most important function was to mediate between past and future; between the traditional - hence respectable - forms of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries [the Spanish Revival buildings at 1001 and 1025 Sherman Street] and the new design vocabulary that was being created out of Modernism in the first three or four decades of the twentieth [the more International-flavored building at 1085 Sherman Street]," (Tinniswood, Adrian, p. 52.)

This single block of Sherman Street is also a microcosm of the distinguishing characteristics of the Art Deco/Art Moderne and International styles as interpreted by Denver's eclectic architects. In fact, Denver's Modernist styles appear quite spare by standards found in cities on the east and west coasts. The styles constructed in Denver depended on the eclectic tastes of the architects and the popularity of the styles.

On Sherman Street, two apartment buildings typify this conflict between old and new. Described as having a "lack of definable style," (Noel and Norgren, p. 88), the Robert Frost at 1001 Sherman Street and the Louisa May Alcott at 1025 Sherman Street are nearly identical three story walk-up apartments. They feature tan brick walls with darker brick corners that emulate towers and end in stepped elements, a faux-hipped roof in red tiles, a center low relief bay with terra cotta panels near the roofline, and combining blue terra cotta diamond panels in spandrels with two round-arched sash windows with terra cotta surrounds, these two buildings are enigmatic. They were designed by Andrew B. Willison and may carry a Revivalist flare due to his earlier work on St. Cajetan's Church.

These early twentieth century buildings feature common elements with the Art Deco/Art Moderne buildings:

- all brick exteriors
- the use of terra cotta in door and window surrounds and small wall panels
- prominent central entry
- a central façade low relief bay or element that extends vertically to the top of the roofline
- horizontal brick banding
- vertical corner towers extending to the roofline express a vertical element
- step design at chimney tops or in roofline parapets
- symmetrical or nearly symmetrical facades
- rectangular footprints with no courtyards
- absence of a cornice
- use of decorative terra cotta panels above the top floor of the facade

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The elements of these two buildings that point to an earlier Revival style include:

- the red tile hipped roof **Sections** that merge with the flat roof
- the round-arched entry surround and arched light above the entry
- the use of iron railing decorations on the center facade windows

Since most architects of the Modern movement were grounded in earlier styles, mixtures of styles were commonly found:

Thus the typical Art Deco building represented a bringing up to date, a modernization, of one or another of the architectural traditions. For this reason, it is sometimes difficult to separate the buildings that represent a slowly evolving phase of a particular historical language from those that were consciously intended to be responded to as Moderne. (Gebhard, p.5)

The transitional apartment buildings designed by Andrew B. Willison are more than late examples of Spanish Colonial Revival style. They are rather combinations of the earlier style with Modernist elements: flat facade, simple rectangular spandrels containing blue terra cotta diamonds, stepped brickwork in the corner towers, ornate white terra cotta panels, a terra cotta entry surround outside a black enameled or terra cotta infill for the metal entry. The facades show the same conflict between verticality and horizontality that is found in Charles D. Strong's designs.

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

The historic district includes Lots 24-46, Block 1, and Lots 16-23, Block 2, and the area of Sherman Street between 10th Avenue and the line extending the north property boundary between Lots 15 & 16 of Block 2 across the street to join Lot 32, Block 1, of the Iliff Place Addition, Denver City and County, Colorado.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The historic district is formed by the boundaries of the eleven apartment buildings included in the district. These buildings are located on Sherman Street between 10th and 11th avenues and includes the land historically owned in association with these buildings.

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PROPERTY OWNERS

Robert W. Murray, Jr.
43 Coral Pl.
Greenwood Village, CO 80111

Robert Browning Apartments
1000 Sherman Street

Sarah and John Ferguson
Bulkley Family Limited Partnership
Phillip Ishimaru Family Trust
Jean Ishimaru Family Trust
3632 Sacramento St.
San Francisco, CA 94118

Thomas Carlyle Apartments,
1010 Sherman Street

Triton Holdings, Inc.
c/o Don Bailey
1490 Lafayette Street
Denver, CO 80218

Robert Frost Apartments
1001 Sherman Street

Emily Dickinson Apartments
1015 Sherman Street

Louisa May Alcott Apartments
1025 Sherman Street

Mark Twain Apartments
1035 Sherman Street

Nathaniel Hawthorne Apartments
1045 Sherman Street

Eugene Field Apartments
1055 Sherman Street

Charles R. Anderson
550 E. 12th Ave. #408
Denver, CO 80203

James Russell Lowell Apartments,
1020 Sherman Street

1085 Corp.
930 Sherman St. #101
Denver, CO 80203

Panama Apartments,
1075 Sherman Street

Sherman Arms Apartments
1085 Sherman Street

City and County of Denver
1437 Bannock St.
Denver, CO 80202

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PHOTOGRAPH LOG

The following information pertains to photograph numbers 1-32, except as noted:

Name of Property: Sherman Street Historic District
 Location: Denver County, CO
 Photographer: Rebecca Dorward
 Date of Photographs: March 2004
 Negatives: Possession of the photographer

Photo No.	Photographic Information
1	Robert Frost Apartments, facade(east elevation); view to the northwest.
2	Robert Frost Apartments, south elevation showing plaque with original Casa Bonita name; view to the northwest.
3	Emily Dickinson Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
4	Emily Dickinson Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the southwest.
5	Louisa May Alcott Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
6	Louisa May Alcott Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the southwest.
7	Louisa May Alcott Apartments, facade entry; view to the west.
8	Mark Twain and Louisa May Alcott apartments, facades; view to the southwest.
9	Mark Twain Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
10	Mark Twain Apartments, facade entry; view to the northwest.
11	Nathaniel Hawthorne Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
12	Eugene Field Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
13	Eugene Field Apartments, facade entry; view to the west.
14	Panama Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the west.
15	Panama Apartments, facade and south elevation; view to the northwest.
16	Panama Apartments, facade entry; view to the west.
17	Sherman Arms Apartments, facade (east elevation); view to the northwest.
18	Sherman Arms Apartments, facade entry; view to the west.
19	James Russell Lowell Apartments, facade (west) and north elevation; view to the southeast.
20	James Russell Lowell Apartments, facade; view to the east.
21	James Russell Lowell Apartments, facade entry; view to the east.
22	Thomas Carlyle and Robert Browning apartments, facades (west elevations); view to the southeast.
23	Thomas Carlyle Apartments, facade; view to the east.
24	Robert Browning Apartments, facade (west elevation); view to the northeast.
25	Robert Browning Apartments, facade entry detail; view to the northeast.
26	Nathaniel Hawthorne Apartments interior; doors covering a Murphy bed.
27	Emily Dickinson Apartments interior; staircase balustrade. Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.
28	Louisa May Alcott Apartments interior; telephone niche in studio apartment. Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.

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-
- 29 Louisa May Alcott Apartments interior; tile floor in bathroom of studio apartment.
Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.
- 30 Louisa May Alcott Apartments interior; entry door inside of studio apartment.
Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.
- 31 Nathaniel Hawthorne Apartments interior; entry door inside one-bedroom
apartment. Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.
- 32 Nathaniel Hawthorne interior; original doorknob inside one-bedroom apartment.
Date of photographs: 6/22/2004.

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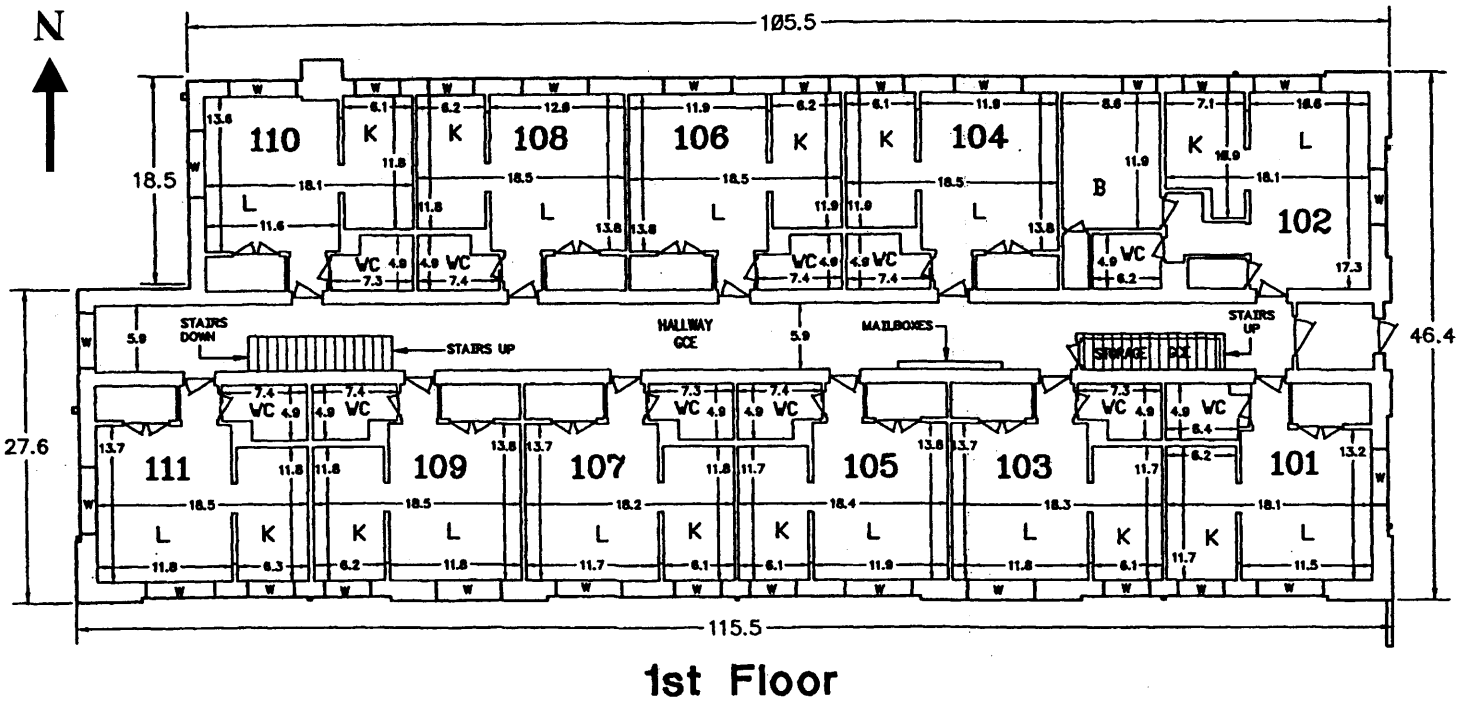
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Robert Frost
(Casa Bonita)
First-Floor Plan
Source: Triton Properties, 2004



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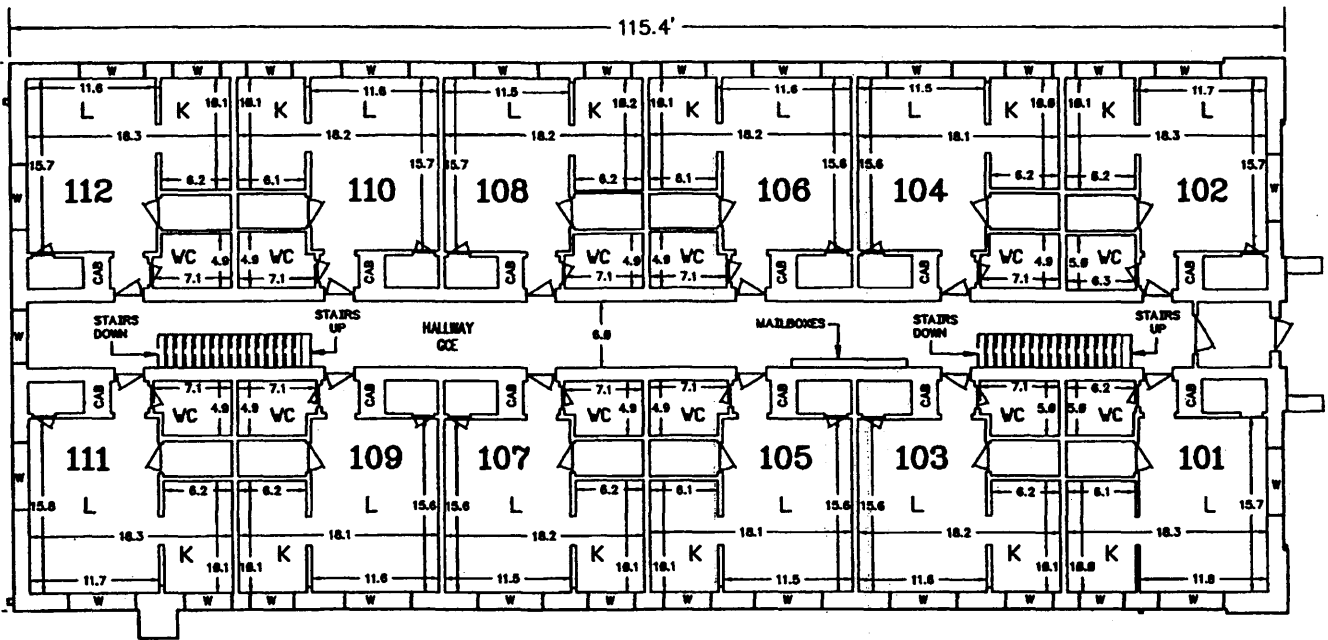
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Louisa May Alcott
(Casa La Vista)

First-Floor Plan

Source: Triton Properties, 2004



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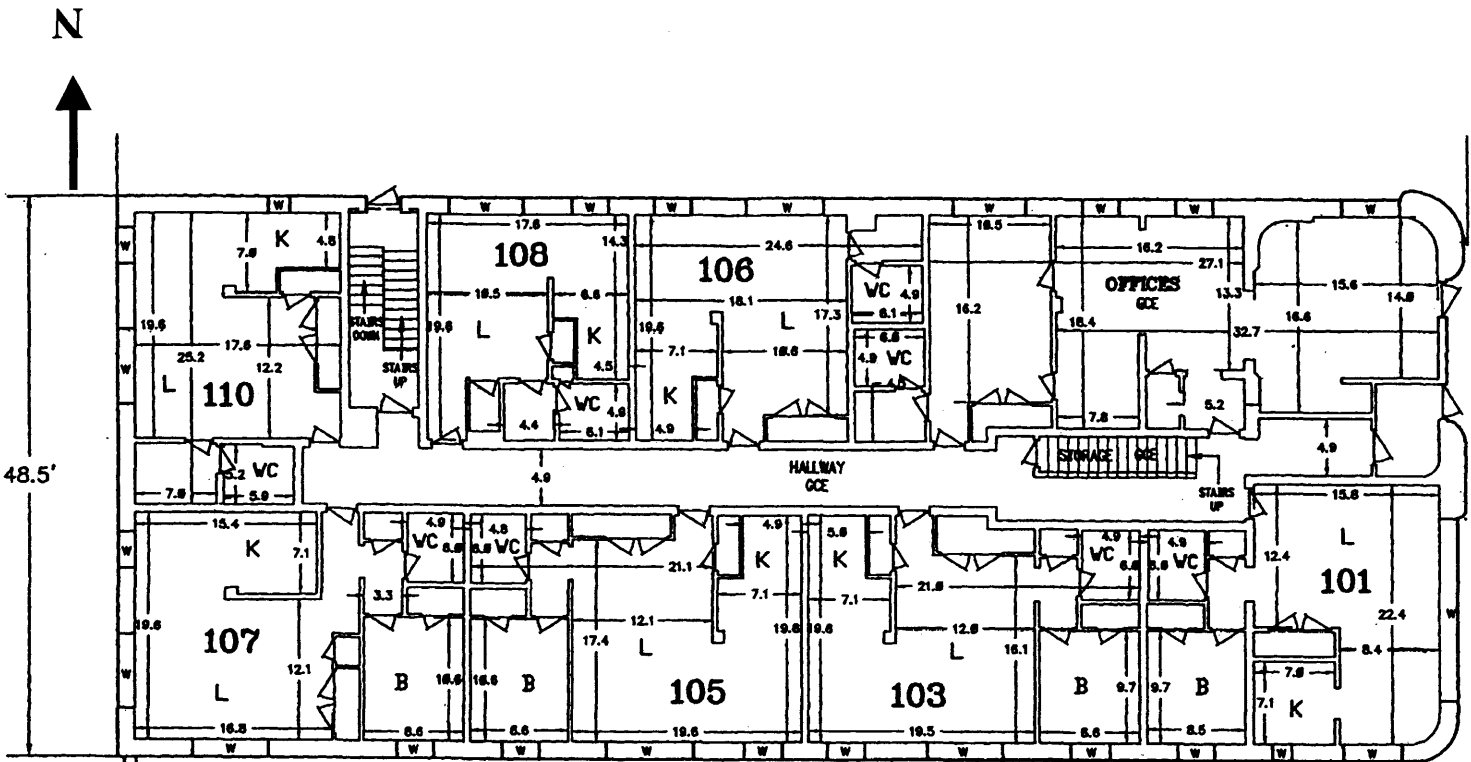
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Mark Twain
First-Floor Plan
Source: Triton Properties, 2004



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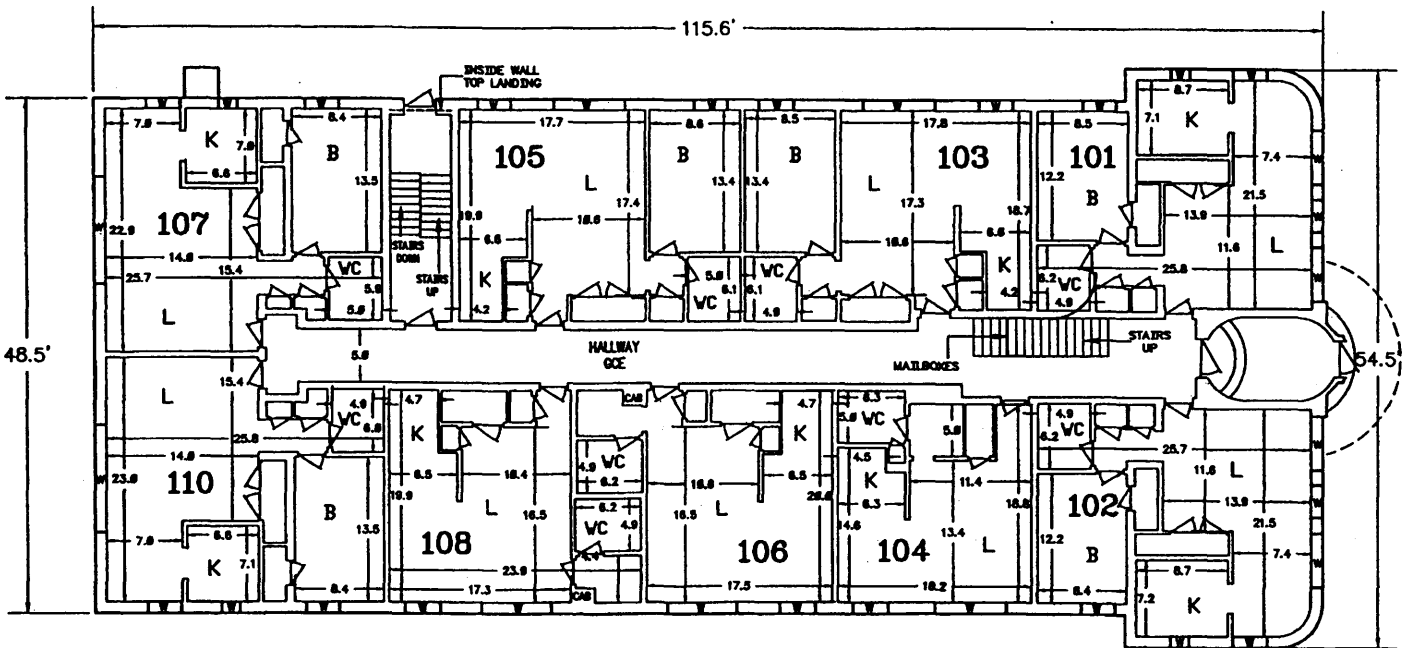
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Nathaniel Hawthorne
First-Floor Plan
Source: Triton Properties, 2004



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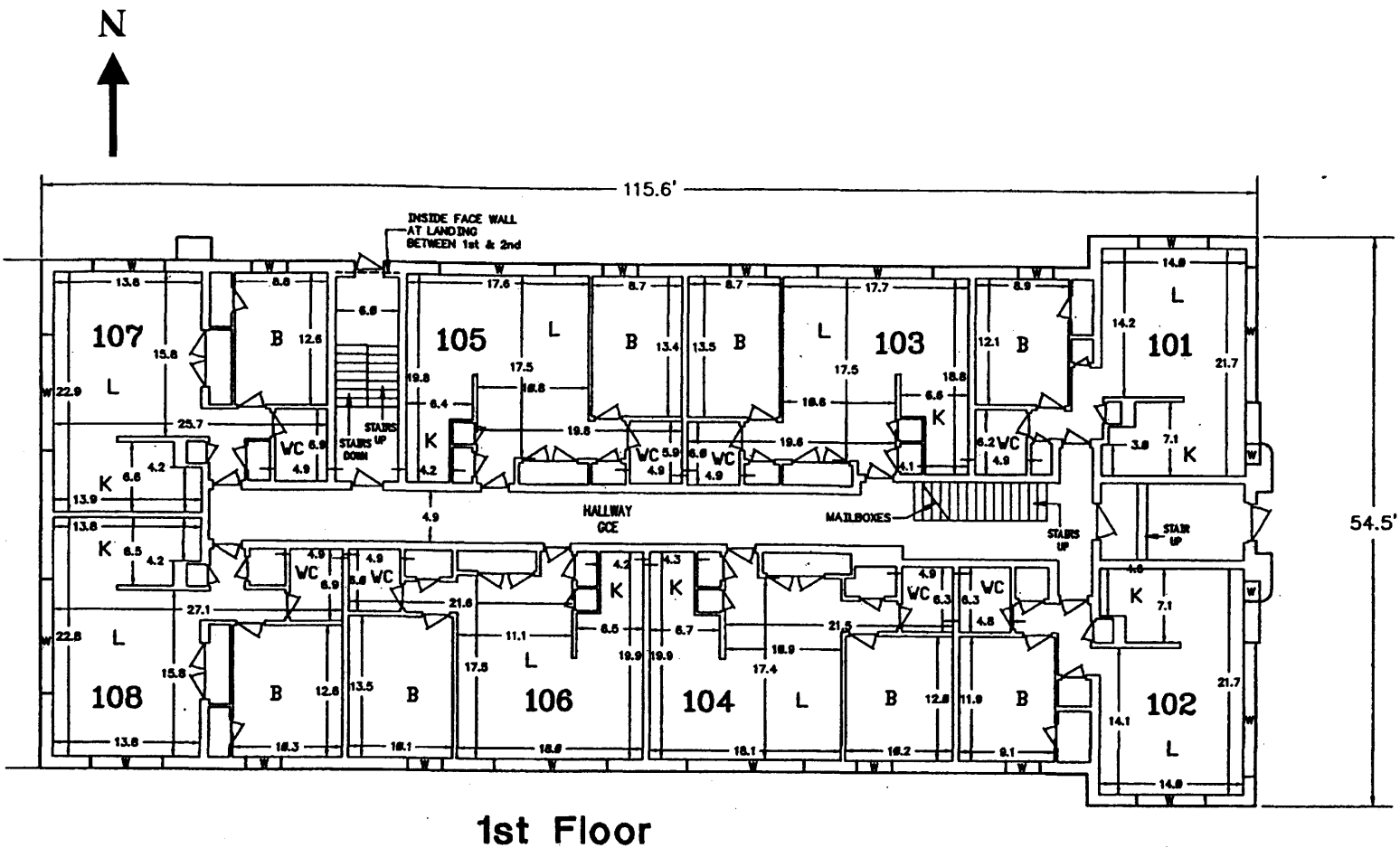
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Eugene Field
First-Floor Plan
Source: Triton Properties, 2004



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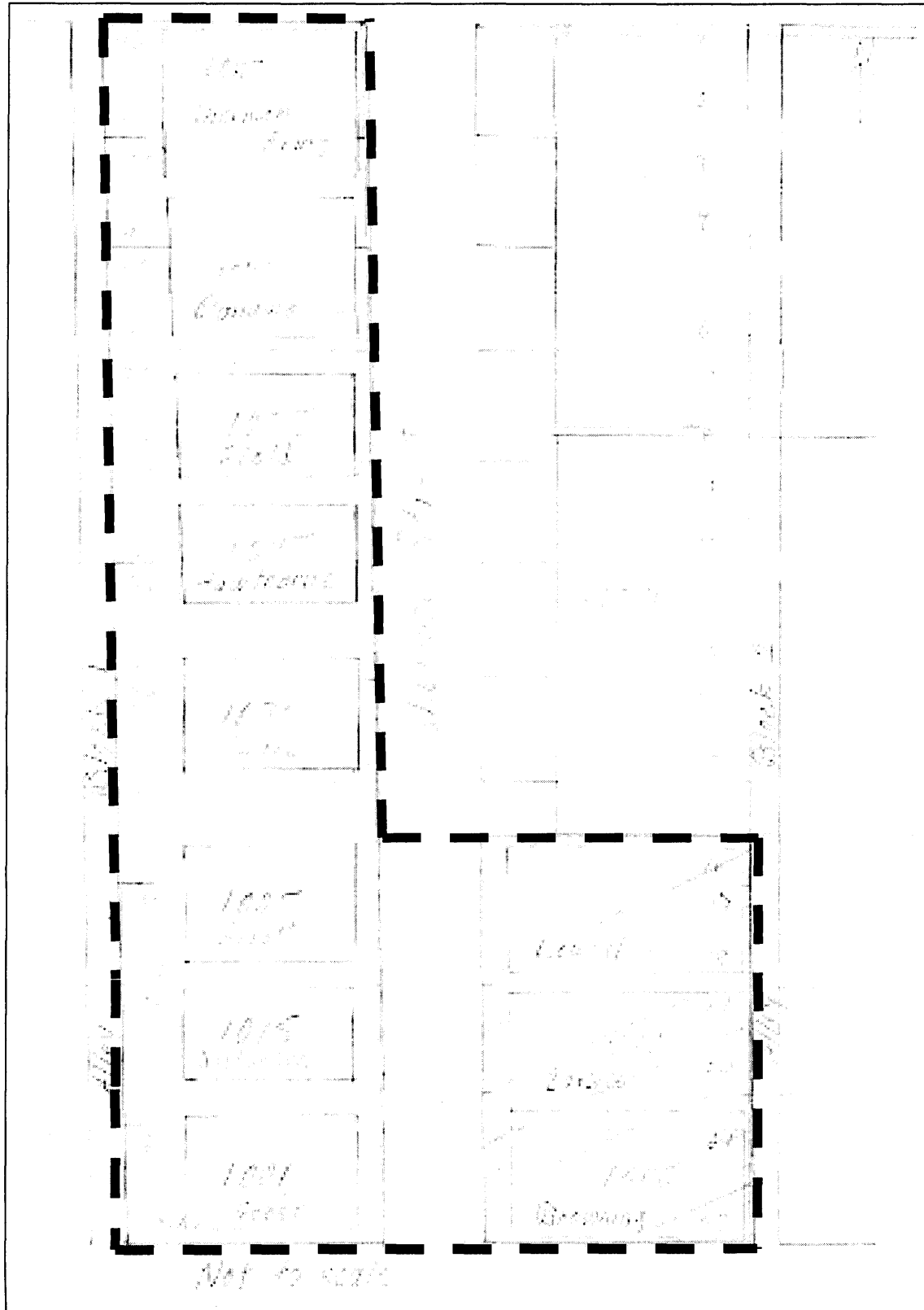
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DISTRICT MAP (   approximate boundaries)



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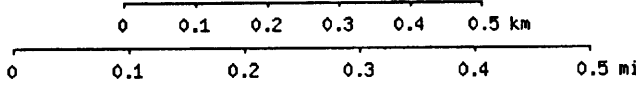
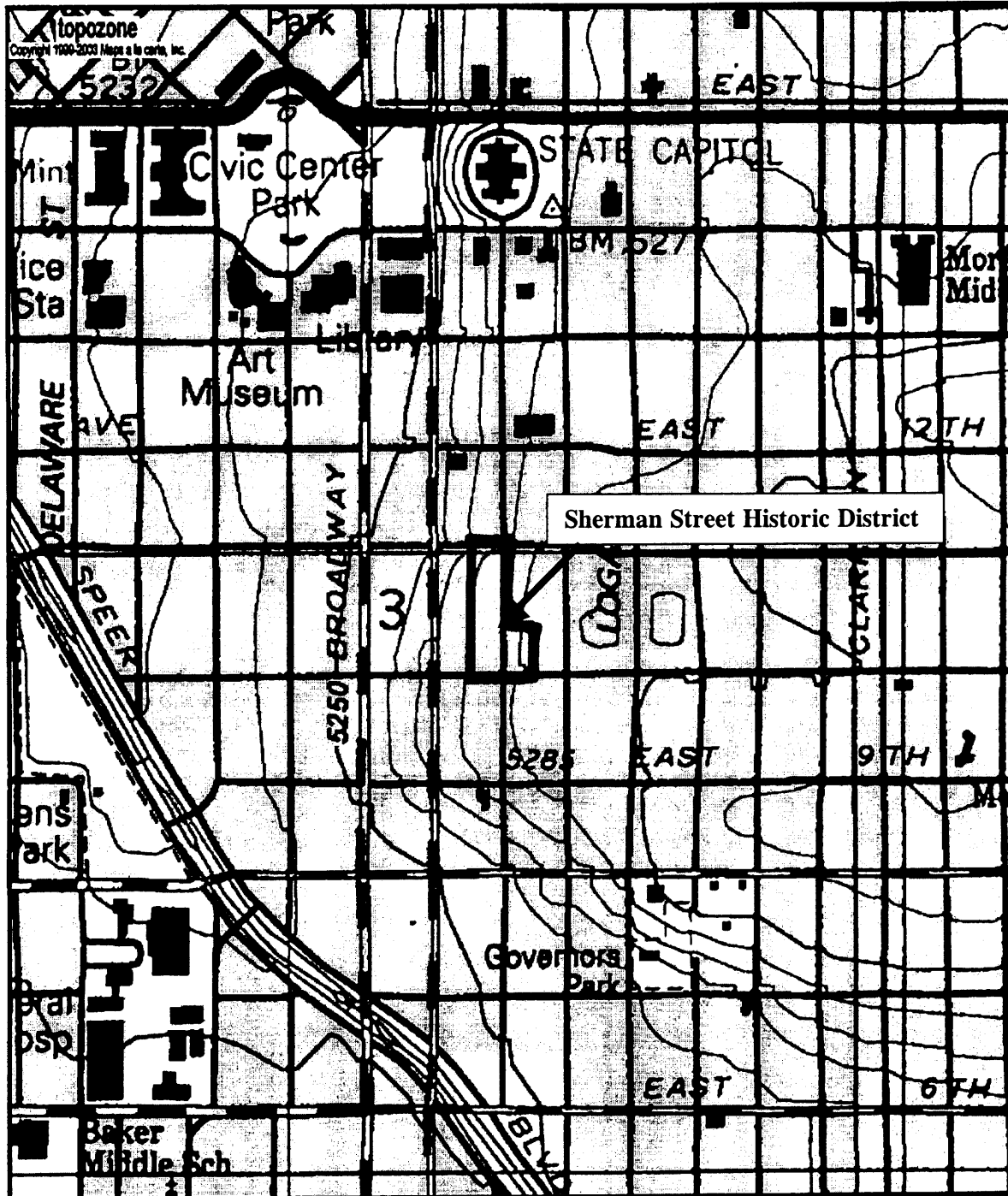
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USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAP
Englewood Quadrangle, Colorado
7.5 Minute Series (enlarged)

UTM Reference: 13 / 501344E / 4397899N
PLSS: 6th PM, T4S, R68W, Sec. 3, SW¹/₄ SW¹/₄ NE¹/₄
N¹/₂ NW¹/₄ SE¹/₄
Elevation: 5,280 feet Site Number 5DV.9154



Map center is UTM 13 501361E 4397918N (NAD27)

Englewood quadrangle

Projection is UTM Zone 13 NAD83 Datum

* M
G
M=10.066
G=0.01