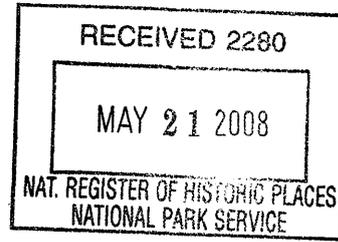


604

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any 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 Terrace Court  
Other names/site number DO09:0205-018

2. Location

Street & number 836, 840 and 842 Park Avenue Not for publication   
City or town Omaha Vicinity   
State Nebraska Code NE County Douglas Code 055 Zip code 68102

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Michael J. Hill  
Signature of certifying official

May 16, 2008  
Date

Director, Nebraska State 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 this property is:

- 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): \_\_\_\_\_

Edson H. Beall 7-2-08

for  
Signature of Keeper  
Date of Action

Terrace Court Apartments

Name of Property

Douglas County, Nebraska

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- X Private
Public-local
Public-state
Public-federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- X Building(s)
District
Site
Structure
Object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: Buildings (3, 0), Sites, Structures, Objects, Total (3, 0).

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic; Multiple Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Domestic; Multiple Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Late 19th and Early 20th Century American Movements;
Sullivan-esque

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Foundation Masonry

Walls Masonry

Roof Asphalt/EPDM

Other

Narrative Description

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

**Terrace Court Apartments**

Name of Property

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**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 a 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.)

Community Planning and Development

Transportation

Industry

**Period of Significance**

1920

**Significant Dates**

1920

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

B. Hene

Drake Realty and Construction Co

**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 for additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: Omaha Main Public Library

Terrace Court Apartments

Name of Property

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## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet).

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1.	15	252323	4570627	3.			
2.				4.			

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 Jennifer Honebrink, AIA, and Chris Jansen  
organization Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C. date Mar 2008  
street & number 1213 Jones St telephone 402-341-1544  
city or town Omaha state Nebraska zip code 68102

## 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 the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Omaha Social Capital 1 LLC  
street & number 12925 West Dodge Road telephone (308) 249-9065  
city or town Omaha state Nebraska zip code 68154

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determined 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, (15 USC 470 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the 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 Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Terrace Court Apartments**

Name of Property

**Douglas County, Nebraska**

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### Section 7: Narrative Description

(See Sanborn map on Continuation Sheet Section 7, page 2)

(See typical floor plan on Continuation Sheet Section 7, page 3)

(See historic photograph on Continuation Sheet Section 7, page 4)

#### Site:

The Terrace Court Apartments are part of a mixed single and multi-family residential area which was established along popular streetcar lines that became bus lines. The neighborhood has developed over time from upper-end single family residential buildings, to luxury apartments that appealed to those aspiring to the upper class, and finally to a level of construction that appealed more to the average middle class person. Both the scale of the buildings and the architectural style and integrity vary widely in the neighborhood. Immediately surrounding the Terrace Court Apartments are a grocery store to the North, row houses to the Southeast and a variety of single family homes.

#### Exterior:

The Terrace Court apartment complex is composed of three individual three-story, double Maltese cross buildings. The primary façade facing Park Avenue is the only façade to carry any ornament. Four dark brown brick piers equally spaced across the primary façade rise up the entire height of the building framed in Hydro-stone, a masonry product made by Drake Realty Construction. Sullivanesque brackets support a simple cornice which is a continuation of the cornice carried around the entire perimeter of the building. Sullivanesque ornament can also be seen in decorative Hydro-stone insets on either side of the entry door which is set at the head of a monumental stair. Above the door between the central piers are narrow windows set within brick spandrels and ornament that harkens to the early Prairie School idiom. The secondary facades are all finished with Hydro-stone with punched window openings. The windows in each façade are typically double hung, one over one units.

#### Interior:

On the interior, the double-loaded hallway is dominated by an open stair that connects all three levels. The walls of the long, dark, narrow hallway are broken by numerous doors and dark, wide wood trim. Studio apartments with living/dining rooms, kitchens, baths and walk-in closets line each side of the hallway. At the basement level, a corridor connects all three buildings.

#### Integrity:

Terrace Court has remained a hotel or apartment house throughout its lifetime with only minor modifications. The "bedroom" was a Murphy Bed that opened into the dining room. These beds have been removed. Originally on the front facade, a four foot wide flat visor roof projected out at the roof line below the parapet and was supported by large Sullivanesque brackets. The visor roof has been replaced by a simpler cornice matching the piece that extends around to the exposed sides of all buildings. Additionally, green fabric awnings have been placed over each entrance, obscuring the original brick window planter. In 1925, the Northern building changed its name to the Adelpia Hotel, and was used as a residential hotel with leases much shorter than an apartment, but longer than a hotel. In 1980, this portion of the building changed its name and was referred to as part of Terrace Court again.

These buildings have been vacant for the last 15 years. Over the last 10 years, they have been through a series of owners who have each intended to rehabilitate them. Each owner took his/her turn at cleaning out the abandoned furniture, clothing, toys, etc., then the garbage and then the perceived debris from the buildings. All kitchen cabinets and bathroom fixtures have been removed, but the interior walls, trim and unit layouts are in fair condition despite the vandals and itinerants. Overall the buildings have a fair level of integrity.



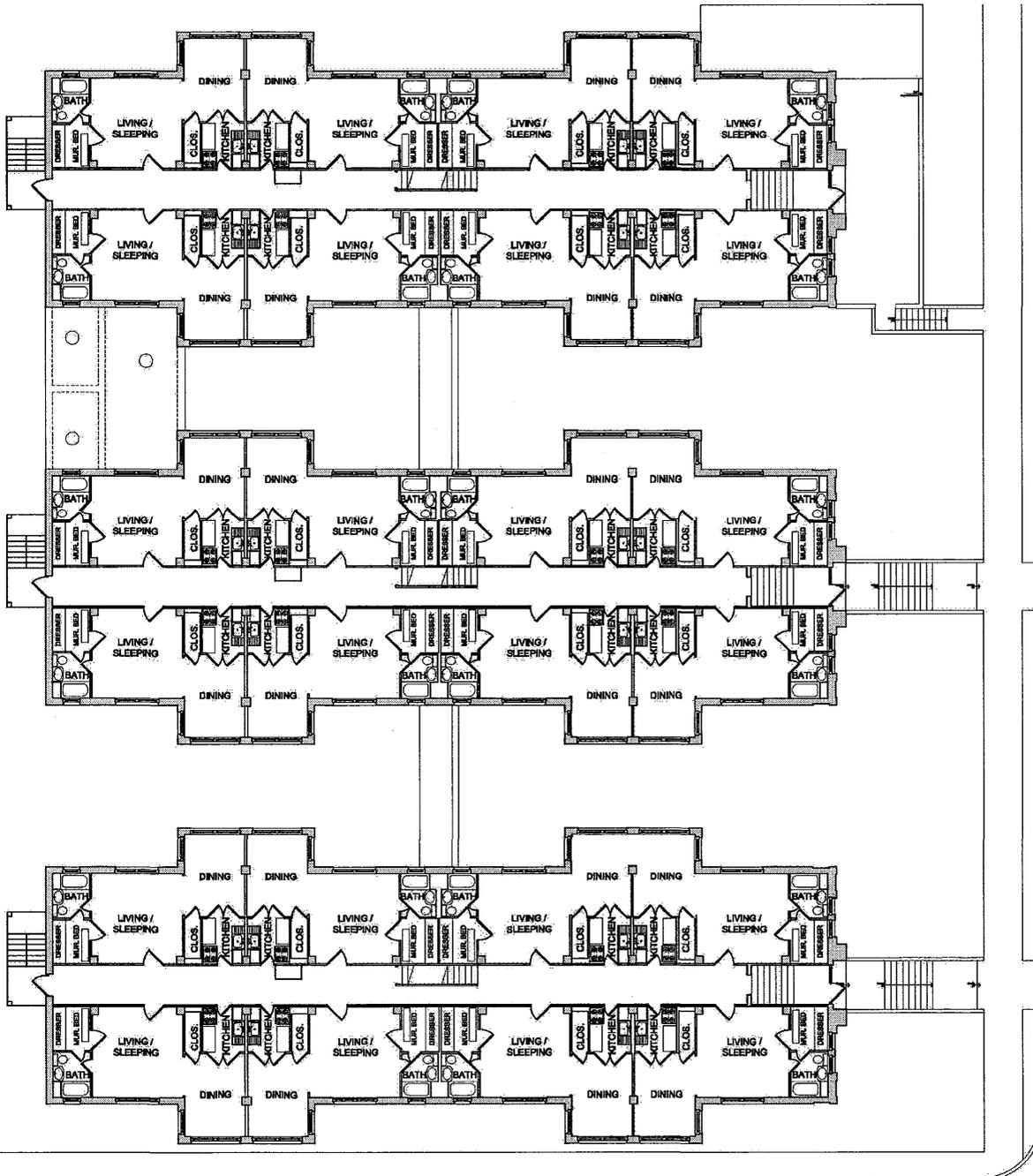
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Terrace Court Apartments  
Name of Property

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**MASON STREET**

2 Terrace Court First Floor Plan (Redrawn from Original Plans)

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3 Terrace Court October 9, 1930 from the Bostwick-Frohardt Collection at the Durham Western Heritage Museum

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Terrace Court Apartments

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### Section 8: Statement of Significance

#### Synopsis

The Terrace Court Apartments are significant under Criterion A for their association with transportation and the growth and success of streetcar lines in Omaha, Nebraska's only major metropolitan area. The proximity of these buildings to the streetcar lines and the number of units they provided built on and further strengthened the success and stability of both the streetcar lines and previous apartment developments in the neighborhood.

These apartments are also significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development for their association with the development of the apartment building housing type in Omaha. They are the first set of apartments Drake Realty and Construction Company built off of this set of plans which they used again in a near-by neighborhood. As such, they represent the aptitude of this construction company for efficiency and economy, while meeting local market demands.

Finally, they are significant under Criterion A in the area of industry for their contribution to the development of the local building industry. These buildings are a good example of Drake Realty and Construction Company's success and continued investment in the Omaha community. They are part of the first set of buildings Drake Realty constructed with Hydro-stone, which they manufactured themselves in their new Omaha plant.

#### Development of Streetcar Lines and Apartments across the United States

In most cities, the streetcar lines paved the way for residential development by providing access to popular suburbs. Streetcar lines generally developed in three stages. First, lines were developed to out-lying areas with infrequent service. "Most streetcar managers were more concerned with expanding the service area and keeping the fares low, than in the relationship between distance, cost and fare per ride."<sup>1</sup> During this period, homes of the upper-middle class would generally appear in lines parallel to the tracks. In the second stage, regular service would begin, bringing a jump in building that continued to follow the streetcar lines. These buildings were generally built by the central middle class. Finally, as these lots were filled in, development began behind them, within walking distance to the streetcar lines, encouraging development of additional near-by lines to handle the traffic. As development increased, it tended to mature into architecturally and economically homogeneous areas, as most home owners and developers sought safety in their investment by building to meet a narrow price range with a specific appeal.

At the same time streetcars were developing, a new building type began to emerge – the apartment building. The first structure to call itself an apartment building was introduced in New York in 1869 by William Morris Hunt. Apartment buildings quickly gained in popularity as many middle and upper class people began looking to them as an alternative to owning their own home for a wide variety of reasons. Before the 1930s home loan terms were short and expensive. Most people saved to pay for the major portion of their new home upon purchase. Public transportation also meant that they could live out in the more popular areas where they could not yet afford a house, but could afford a less expensive apartment. Additionally, apartments provided many amenities and new technology that most could not afford in a single family dwelling. Apartment buildings were often the first to own telephone lines, washers, dryers, electric stoves, and electric lights. Moreover, changes in building codes and new methods of concrete construction began allowing larger, fireproof structures, which in turn gave architects room to manipulate space and create luxurious residences.

<sup>1</sup> Sam B Warner Jr., *Streetcar Suburbs: The Process of Growth in Boston, 1870-1900*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962, p. 26.

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As streetcar systems grew, the apartment building type developed and diversified. The upper-class of apartments continued to be designed in consistent architectural styles while maintaining the feel of a high-end single-family residence. The more modest apartments became more efficient and less house-like. The focus of developers of these buildings changed from attracting aspiring upper-class tenants to providing housing for the middle class who now had reliable and timely transportation to the city core. This second class of apartments typically maintained exterior features that were icons of high-style architecture, while minimizing or eliminating some interior rooms and finishing the interior at the same level as an average house of the period. On the exterior, buildings of this class exhibit pieces of Sullivan-esque terra cotta, or an Arts and Crafts covered entry porch, or similar easily-recognized details that are associated with various architectural styles, while on the interior the kitchen may become a kitchenette, or a Murphy Bed may allow a dining room to double as a bedroom.

**Streetcar Line and Apartment Development in Omaha**

Omaha followed a development pattern very similar to these national models. "The horse railway, and later the cable and trolley lines, had extended service in the late 80s and 90s, enabling people to spread out to the North, South and West. The early sprawl and the real estate boom had helped to prevent the crowding that plagued larger cities."<sup>2</sup> By 1889 the streetcar lines covered most of the major Omaha streets and several apartments<sup>3</sup> began appearing along the major lines. More apartments appeared along rail lines between 1900 and 1909. The major boom however, was from 1909-1930, when an average of 6 apartment buildings were constructed per year. In the first half of the construction boom, most of the apartment buildings were constructed along the streetcar lines. In the early 1920s, apartments began filling the lots between the streetcar lines as the lots along the streetcar lines were no longer open and as cars began to detach people from their reliance on the streetcar for transportation.

Two of the Omaha streetcar's early investors were A.J. Hanscom and James G. Megeath, who donated 57 ½ acres to the City of Omaha in November of 1872 which become known as Hanscom Park.<sup>4</sup> The park became a popular destination for local residents. As soon as a streetcar line was established linking it to the downtown area, it became one of the most popular lines in the system, and a high-end, single-family residential neighborhood.

Like many streetcar suburbs across the United States, as streetcar schedules became more frequent, this upscale neighborhood on a popular destination route developed from high-end single family residences to multiple-dwellings for the upper-middle class to a wide variety of single and multiple dwelling types for the middle class. In 1902, the Barnard (Portland) was constructed at a streetcar intersection along the route through this neighborhood. It was a top-of-the line apartment building that provided a grand setting with a majestic entrance and well-appointed rooms that appealed to Omaha's upper-middle class. By 1920 when the Terrace Court Apartments were built further down the streetcar line, the neighborhood was filled with modest single family houses, duplexes, middle class apartment buildings and older upper class single family homes and apartments. The Terrace Court Apartments illustrate the more modest apartments constructed by builder/developers during this period. Iconic Sullivan-esque details decorate the front façade, while the remainder of the exterior is finished in Hydrostone, a cement block-like product, giving the effect of a false front building. On the interior, efficiency kitchens and Murphy beds allowed smaller, more affordable units.

<sup>2</sup> Howard P. Chudacoff, *Mobile Americans: Residential and Social Mobility in Omaha 1880-1920*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Apartments refer to multiple dwellings that are entered from an internal corridor system and are arranged as units within a larger structure.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Orr, *O&CB Streetcars of Omaha and Council Bluffs*, Omaha, NE: Richard Orr, 1996, p. 15.

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### National Trends in Community Planning and Development

While home builders have often taken the same plan and re-used it elsewhere, this recycling was less typical of apartment developers. Bank loans, city funding and other financial products commonly used in construction today were not available before 1930. Therefore, only a few apartment developers in the early 1900s were financially able to construct more than a handful of buildings. Those that did most often acted as both developer and contractor. They tended to build apartment buildings on unconnected lots separated throughout town. In rare cases they were able to create contiguous developments of multi-family housing units. And in very rare cases, they were able to develop larger blocks quickly enough that they maintained a homogeneous look.

Successful developers were also astute marketers. They kept track of which features appealed to residents and what people were looking for when they looked for places to rent. As their finances allowed, they then incorporated these features into each new project.

### Local Trends in Community Planning and Development

From 1900-1930, the Drake Realty and Construction Company was the largest apartment building developer in Omaha, Nebraska's only major metropolitan area. Over the course of the company's history, they constructed over 2,000 apartment units in a wide variety of multi-family housing types, including many apartment buildings, for themselves as well as other owners. Their work included a number of unique apartment plans, as well as several apartment buildings constructed from the same set of plans on various sites throughout town, and one large apartment complex of fairly consistent design and formal arrangement. By the late nineteen-twenties, the company had constructed so many apartment units in Omaha that it was actually in competition with itself for tenants. Many of their renters began to move from one Drake building to the next newer one, and fewer tenants moved into the older buildings in their place. In 1933, the company went bankrupt.

During 1920/1921, the company completed five apartment buildings from two sets of plans. The Turner Court Apartments 3106 Dodge Street and 113 N 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue, and the Terrace Court Apartments at 836, 840 and 842 Park Avenue utilized the same set of double Maltese cross plans, while the Hanscom Park Apartments at 1029 Park Avenue, the Palmer Apartments at 554 S 26<sup>th</sup> Street, and the Alhambra at 4902 Capitol Avenue were single Maltese cross style apartment buildings. Each set of plans was adjusted to fit its particular site, often resulting in changes to the number of basement level apartment units. These five buildings resulted in approximately 260 apartment units.

### History of Hydro-Stone

Cast stone materials were widely used in construction as early as 1868. A variety of formulas resulted in such patented products as Frear Stone and Coignet Stone. Rarely used for entire facades, cast stone of this era was more commonly used for trim and sculptural ornament and was widely accepted as an economical substitute for stone.

A lesser known cast stone material is Hydro-stone. It consisted of a mixture of gravel, crushed stone, sand and Portland cement moulded under pressure. It was essentially an early type of concrete block which could also be formed into decorative units. At least two companies in America produced products under this name.

Hydro-stone is probably best known as the main construction material in the Hydro-stone Historic District in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. A boat collision in 1917 caused an explosion which wiped out much of the town. When the area was rebuilt, Hydro-stone was a dominant construction material. George Ross was the lead architect on many of the reconstruction projects in the area. His "goal was to maximize the aesthetic qualities of the development and provide fire-

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resistant and sanitary buildings at a reasonable cost. He decided upon hydrostone for the exterior of the houses.”<sup>5</sup> Today, the consistent architectural style and City Beautiful planning of this district make it a popular tourist destination.

**Drake Construction as a Producer of and Builder with Hydro-stone**

In 1920 Drake Realty and Construction Company bought six acres of the Iler Distillery. They converted the barrel house into a warehouse, purchasing large quantities of materials for their apartment construction projects at wholesale prices and storing them until needed. They also erected a large building to use as offices, drafting rooms, a planning mill and a hydro-stone plant. The plant produced both decorative and structural hydro-stone elements.

During that first year the plant produced hydro-stone for four buildings the Drake Company constructed; the Turner Court, Terrace Court, Hanscom Park, and Palmer Apartments. All four buildings used both decorative and structural hydro-stone units. On the Hanscom Park and Palmer Apartments, decorative hydro-stone lintels highlight the top of each window. The structural hydro-stone on these buildings however, was covered with stucco on all sides. Each has several Spanish tile visor roofs and half-circle wall gables, giving them each a Spanish sense of style. The Turner and Terrace Court apartments however, exposed the structural hydro-stone. On the front façade of each building, both the structural and decorative hydro-stone are used to create visual interest and impart a Prairie School sense of style to the buildings. On the sides and rear of both buildings the structural hydro-stone was left exposed as the main finish material.

**Conclusion**

Altogether, the Terrance Court Apartment buildings are significant for their association with two broad patterns in our history, transportation and community planning and development. Traffic and construction trends seen across America were repeated in Omaha as streetcars enticed people out into the suburbs and began a cycle of increasing construction and residential density. Without the streetcars providing transportation to jobs in the downtown area, this would not have been such an ideal location for a collection of apartment buildings geared toward the middle class.

Additionally, the Terrace Court Apartments exemplify that portion of the development of Omaha which was due to successful apartment developers’ ability to efficiently use the same plans on a variety of sites across town. Although not common, the Drake’s success at adjusting the plans to fit each site and providing features and amenities that appealed to their target market, made a significant impact on Omaha’s built environment.

Finally, by making their own building materials, the industry created by Drake Realty and Construction Company added to the types of construction materials available locally and to the aesthetic quality of our built environment. It also provided an investment in the local economy by providing jobs and adding variety to the types of products produced in Omaha.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsarm/virtual/explosion/>

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- Chudacoff, Howard P. *Mobile Americans: Residential and Social Mobility in Omaha 1880-1920*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1972.
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**ARTICLES**

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- Omaha City Directories, 1902, 1904, 1906-1930.
- The Building Owner's and Manager's Association of Omaha*, Omaha NE, 1953.
- "Drake Building Flats Worth About Million," Sunday World Herald, Omaha NE, June 19, 1921, p. W.
- Gillan, J.M. "Industrial Notes," Omaha Chamber of Commerce Journal, April 10, 1920.
- National Park Service Preservation Brief #42

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**Verbal Boundary Description:**

Terrace Addition Block 0 Lots 5,6, 7 & 8; otherwise known as that area bound by Park Avenue on the East, Mason Street on the South, South 30<sup>th</sup> Street on the West and a line approximately 172' north of and parallel to Mason Street.

**Boundary Justification:**

This area includes all of the property historically associated with the Terrace Court Apartments.

**Photos**

All photographs were taken by Chris Jansen in January 2008. Negatives were retained by Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture P.C. at 1213 Jones Street Omaha NE 68102.

- 1) East (Front) Facade
- 2) East Façade of Southmost Buliding
- 3) West (Rear) Facade
- 4) Side Façade / Connecting link between 836 and 840 Park Ave
- 5) North (Side) Façade of 836 Park Ave
- 6) Second Floor Corridor Looking East in 840 Park Ave
- 7) Typical Apartment Interior