



**6 ROSLYN ROAD**  
**LILLY APARTMENTS**

HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

29 September 1983

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Although this apartment contains nearly twenty suites in its present three storeys and basement, it was originally used as a duplex. For the interior space to evolve from two to twenty suites provides an interesting comment on the earlier lifestyle of the urban elite, the original tenants, compared to present demand for high-density housing in the Roslyn area.

When this duplex was erected in 1913, Roslyn Road was becoming the exclusive domain of the wealthy. While the western section of Roslyn from Osborne Street to the river contained the big mansions and estates, the eastern section was also graced by large and comfortable homes on spacious treed lots.

When W.R. Allan made his home at 15 Roslyn Road he built this duplex across the street to house his relatives and business partners. Allan was the son of the founder of the Allan Steamship Lines. He had worked for the family company in Montreal in his youth but opted for independence, moving to Winnipeg in 1883. Here he established a general financial and insurance firm which eventually became Allan, Killam and McKay.<sup>1</sup>

With W.R. Allan as its principal partner, Allan, Killam and McKay grew to be a large investment company. Housed in its own six-storey building at 364 Main Street, the firm brought investors and mortgages together, dealt in real estate and development, and represented many international insurance companies.<sup>2</sup> Having established itself early in Winnipeg, Allan Killam and McKay was able to withstand the vagaries of the prairie economy until it finally closed in 1977. During the wheat boom of 1900 to 1912, the company was comparable to Osler, Hammond and Nanton, although it confined its interests in Manitoba.

The first occupants of the new duplex were George K. Killam, a vice-president of Allan, Killam and McKay and stepson of W.R. Allan, and Herbert Pennock, owner of a local wholesale commission brokerage whose wife was a sister to George Killam.<sup>3</sup> In effect, both were the children of Allan's wife who had originally been married to the senior Killam and a close personal friend of W.R.

Allan.<sup>4</sup> The Pennocks and Killams remained at 6 Roslyn until 1928, a period of fourteen years.

For the next few years, another interesting pair occupied the large duplex. Edward H. Macklin, the general manager of the Manitoba Free Press shared the house with the family of David R. Finkelstein, the principal developer of Tuxedo suburb. Finkelstein had been a partner in an ambitious development scheme that foresaw Tuxedo as a "sylvan suburb" of wealthy homeowners in spacious estates, and used every possible means to maintain that status. To ensure a suitable buffer from the City, the group donated a 160-acre parcel next to Assiniboine Park for use as the University of Manitoba (the Agricultural College was already built and being used), but the decision was made in 1913 in favour of the Fort Garry campus.<sup>5</sup> Part of this acreage was then made into a golf-course. In order to follow through with his control over the project, Finkelstein ran for and was elected of Tuxedo, a position that he held for 36 of the first 39 years of its incorporation. He died in 1952.

Ed Macklin's contribution to the history of the Canadian west extends beyond his impact as manager of the Free Press. In the early decades of this century, the Free Press was a strong and influential paper, run by Macklin, owned by Sir Clifford Sifton with the famous John W. Dafoe as editor.<sup>7</sup> Local papers were all fiercely independent (although partisan) at this time, unrelated through press agencies and essentially at the mercy of telegraph companies to send and receive news. The telegraph wires were the fastest and best way to relay stories, with Canadian Pacific Railway Telegraph doing the lion's share of the business. When C.P. Telegraph announced a major price rise in July 1907, Macklin took charge. He organized an independent news service, operated co-operatively within the three Winnipeg papers, the Tribune, the Telegram and the Free Press. It was a news gathering and distributing network that started small but grew rapidly, with correspondents in Canadian cities and firm contacts with American news agencies. This early organization was called the Western Associated Press.<sup>8</sup>

C.P. Telegraph responded by further increasing its news rate. City papers could use other telegraph companies, but C.P. was virtually a monopoly in many towns in the west. The new W.A.P. pressured the government, which censured C.P. and forced it to reduce its rates. Meanwhile, most other newspapers throughout the west had joined the W.A.P., which continued to hold its weekly

meetings in Macklin's office.<sup>9</sup> When the idea of a union with a newly-formed eastern news agency was suggested, it was once again Macklin who orchestrated the move which resulted in the formation of the Canadian Press in 1917. Canadian Press presently collects and distributes national and international news for its 110 daily member papers.<sup>10</sup> Although frequently asked to head the C.P. empire, Macklin simply preferred to be a director for some twenty years. In tracing the founding of C.P., M.E. Nichols regarded E.H. Macklin as the "Father of The Canadian Press".<sup>11</sup>

Macklin continued to manage the Free Press for many years after, living at 6 Roslyn Road from ca.1927 to 1932. The duplex remained prestigious quarters through the 1940s but in 1951, it was divided into four suites by its new owner.<sup>12</sup> Another owner increased the number of apartments to approximately 14 from 1953 to 1955.<sup>13</sup> It now became the Lilly Apartments.

The duplex, built in 1914, was the work of Winnipeg architect Hugh G. Holman. Little is known about Holman because the bulk of his business was in rural Manitoba, where research material is scant. He was born and educated in Ontario, coming to Winnipeg in 1900. Here he trained with three notable architectural practices, firstly with George Brown, then J.H.G. Russell and finally with Samuel Hooper. He opened his own practice from an office in the Jordan Building in 1906. His business biography of 1913 described his "skill and proficiency" in the design of fine residences, a few businesses and the odd hotel.<sup>14</sup> From numerous designs offered in 1908 issues of the Western Municipal News, it is clear that Holman was geared for work in villages and towns.<sup>15</sup> He disappeared from Winnipeg in 1915 at the age of 34, which may indicate that he died in World War I.

A full set of plans, partially reproduced with this report, reveals the original façade and layout of the duplex. The plans are titled "Drawings of Duplex Residence for Mrs. W.R. Allan", the mother of the original occupants.

Despite its extensive interior alterations, the front elevation of the building is nearly original. The entrance, offset left, has a porch roof supported by ornamental wood brackets. The material of the duplex is a dark brown brick with warm red highlights. Within the brick are numerous designs of

geometric figures that sometimes crown longitudinal rectangles within the brick. The use of a single colour of brick makes this ornamentation very subtle. A gables dormer, set into the broad hip roof, has been altered to a shed roof, which accentuates the horizontal lines of the structure.

On the east elevation, there have been some changes, including the protrusion of a 1951 addition to the rear that is finished in insul-brick. The four-car garage, also faced in insul-brick, was added in 1952.<sup>16</sup> Alterations to the west side include the enclosing of the screened sleeping porches and partial filling of the left in the raised basement.

The original interior belonged to an era of live-in servants, back staircases and gracious living. Both parts of the duplex included formal libraries, maids' rooms and open sleeping porches for hot weather. Interior finishes in the public areas were quarter-cut oak with mahogany panelling. A plate-rail in the dining room was supported by carved brackets and the libraries had built-in book cases with leaded glass in the doors. One suite seems to have occupied the main floor while the other consisted of the second floor and a large attic. The basement contained the mechanical system, storage and blank space. Clearly, the duplex was fairly luxurious and well-suited to the class of its original occupants.

The far eastern end of Roslyn Road is something of a backwater. A few early homes and small apartment blocks have remained, giving the area an interesting blend of housing and an ambience in combining the old with the new. The connections of the Lilly Apartments with such figures as E.H. Macklin and the Allan family give it a particular significance in the city's history.

## FOOTNOTES--

1. "Wm. Rae Allan Succumbs to Brief Illness" Free Press 19 March 1926.
2. Henderson's Directory for Winnipeg 1914.
3. "Mrs. W.R. Allan Dies After Week's Illness" Free Press 13 January 1925 and "George K. Killam Dies in Hospital" Tribune 3 August 1942.
4. Mrs. Pennock, Mrs. Allan's daughter, died in 1906 but H.P. Pennock seems to have re-married yet another family member later.
5. From Rural Parkland to Urban Centre U. of M. Centennial Project Hyperion Press Winnipeg 1977 p. 5.
6. "D. Finkelstein Dies at Age 71" Tribune 15 February 1952.
7. M.E. Nichols (CP) The Story of the Canadian Press The Ryerson Press Toronto 1948 p. 18.
8. "The Long, tortuous struggle to build a news-gathering agency" Free Press 20 September 1977.
9. Nichols, op. cit., p. 292.
10. "Canadian Press is 60 years old" Tribune 21 September 1977.
11. Nichols, op. cit., frontpiece.
12. City of Winnipeg Building Permits No. 1191 20 March 1951. Owner Mike Sywak spent \$2,000 to put in new bathrooms and board over the screened verandas.
13. Ibid., No. 9665 10 November 1953 and No. 238 24 February 1955. Although this second permit is marked 'cancelled', it is obvious that its owner undertook the stated renovations at approximately that time.
14. Frank Schofield The Story of Manitoba Volume II The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company Winnipeg p. 334.
15. Western Municipal News March to October 1908 passim. These designs included a fire hall, two schools, a townhall, library, market and a municipal hospital that strikingly resembles the duplex at 6 Roslyn.
16. Permits, op. cit., No. 8049 31 October 1952.

**6 ROSLYN ROAD – LILLY APARTMENTS**

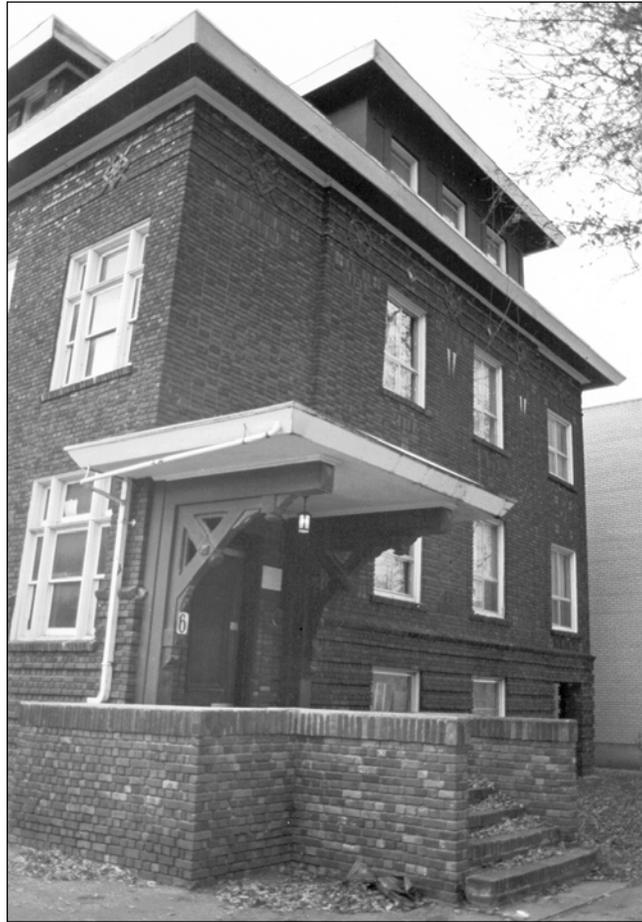


Plate 1 – Lilly Apartments, 6 Roslyn Road, main entrance, no date. (City of Winnipeg Planning Department.)



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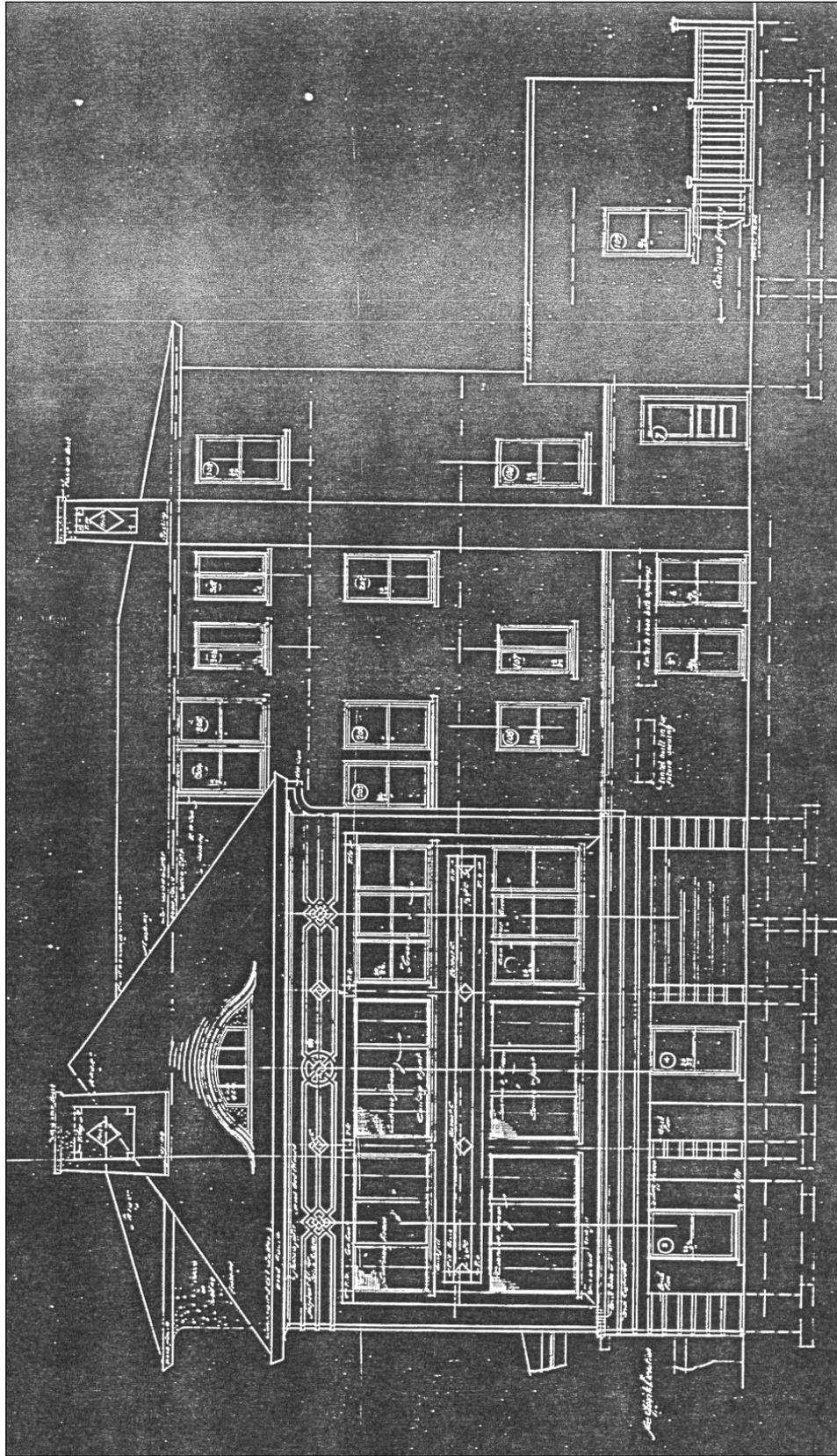


Plate 3 – Architect’s plans for Lilly Apartments, “Side Elevation,” west. (City of Winnipeg Planning Department.)

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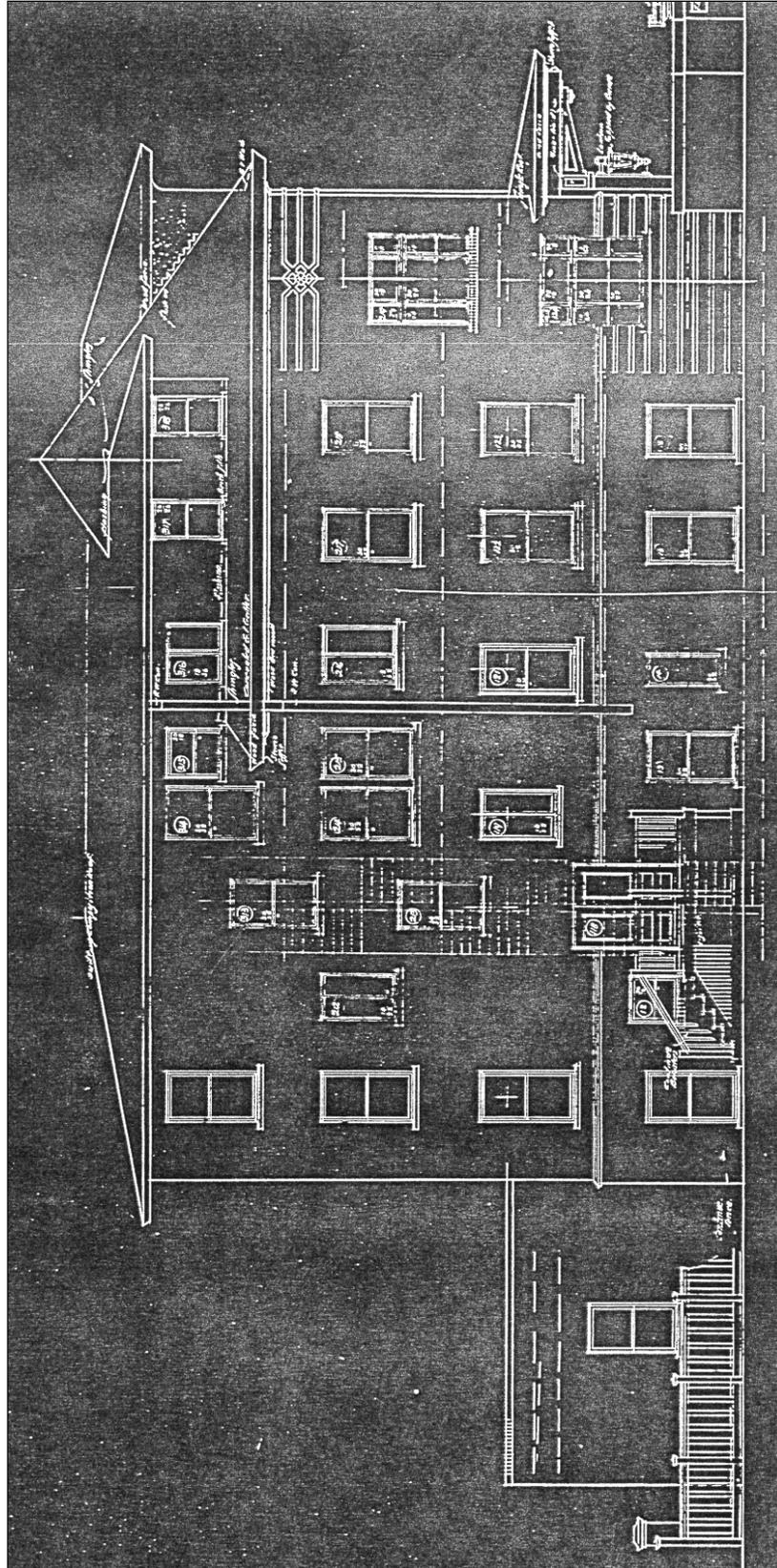
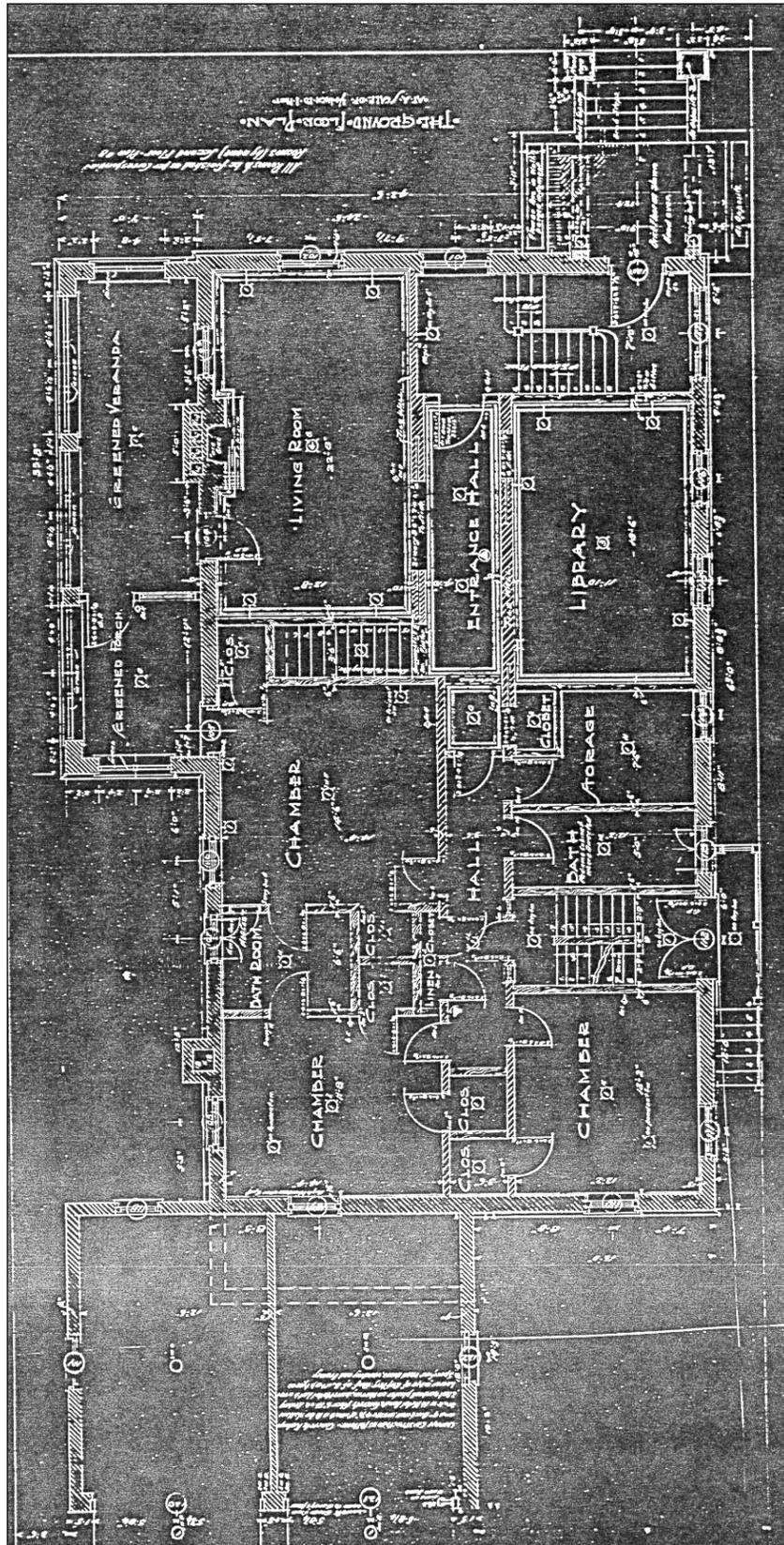


Plate 4 – Architect’s plans for Lilly Apartments, “Side Elevation,” east. (City of Winnipeg Planning Department.)

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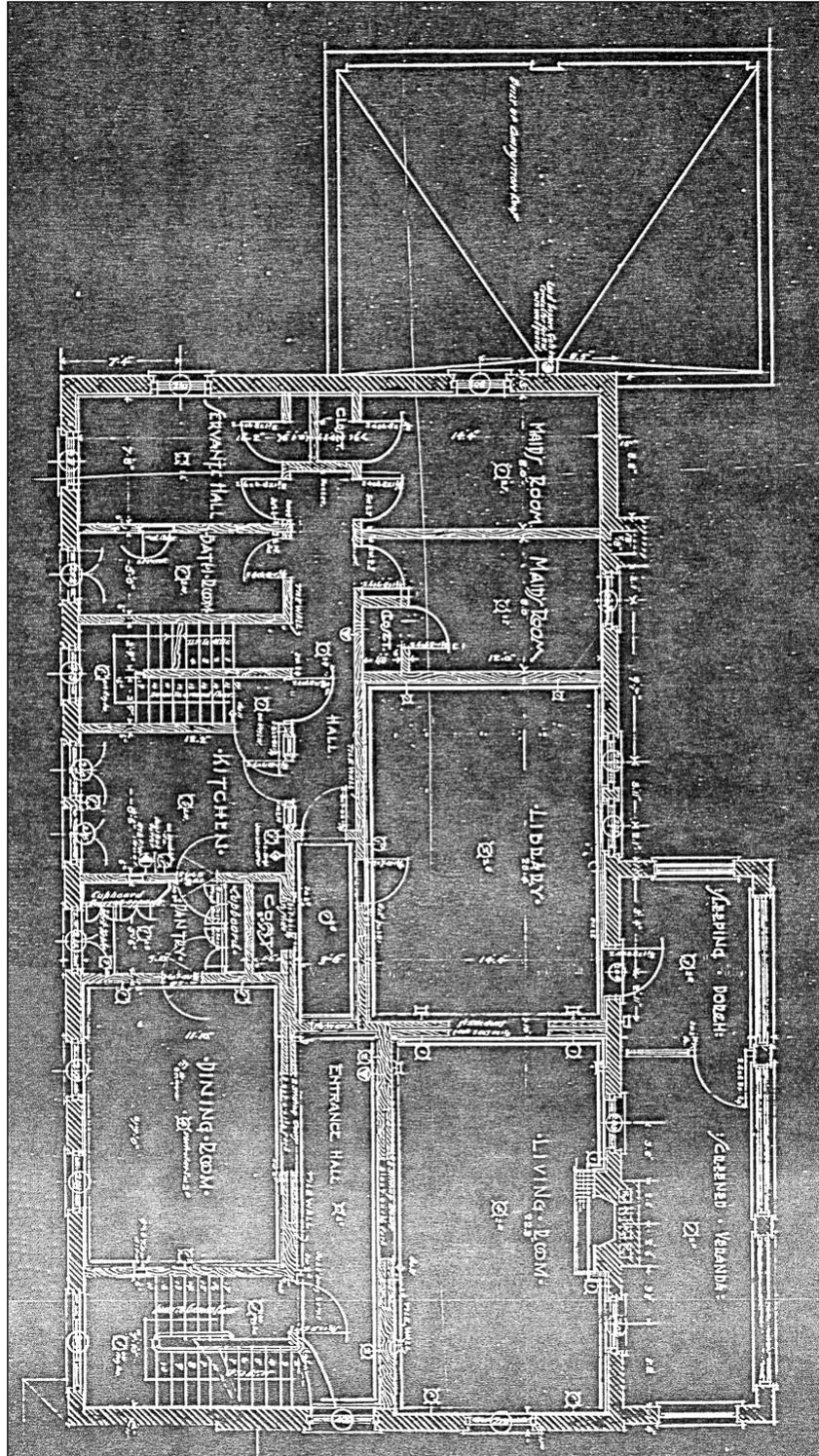


Plate 6 – Architect’s plans for Lilly Apartments, “Second Floor Plan.” (City of Winnipeg Planning Department.)

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Plate 7 – Lilly Apartments, part of rear and west façades, 1990. (City of Winnipeg Planning Department.)