

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Marshall Field Garden Apartments
other names/site number Town and Garden Apartments

2. Location 1336-1452 Sedgwick; 1337-1453 Hudson; 400-424 Evergreen

street & number 401-425 Blackhawk not for publication
city, town Chicago vicinity
state Illinois code IL county Cook code 031 zip code 60610

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>10</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>10</u>	_____ objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. 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:) _____

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Multiple Dwelling**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and Early 20th CenturyAmerican Movements

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Concretewalls BrickLimestone, Concreteroof Tar

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Marshall Field Garden Apartments, occupying two city blocks between Sedgwick Street and Hudson Avenue and Evergreen and Blackhawk Streets (1300 North and 400 West) were designed by New York architect Andrew J. Thomas and built 1928-29 by the Marshall Field Estate. Graham, Anderson, Probst and White were the Consulting Architects. Typical of the garden apartment type, the complex is made up of ten buildings surrounding a spacious interior garden court. All of the buildings are red brick with ornamentation of limestone and precast concrete. The eight buildings facing Sedgwick and Hudson are "H" shaped and are four and five story walk-ups. The two end buildings facing Blackhawk and Evergreen are five story walk-ups and are roughly in the form of two "H" shaped buildings that are connected.

The buildings all retain their original massing and, although in deteriorated condition, sufficient physical characteristics to present a fine example of the garden apartment. The exterior perimeters are unchanged, and ornamental wrought ironwork, limestone detailing, molded concrete ornamental panels and geometric brickwork remain intact. Most alterations were made in the late 1960's when the buildings underwent a major Federally-funded renovation. During this period, a fence surrounding the complex was added; storefront openings were slightly reduced in window area; some windows were changed from 8/8 and 6/6 to 1/1, and kitchens, bathrooms and systems were updated. On the interior, the public spaces--entrance and stair halls--generally retain their original configuration and historic finishes. Garbage chutes were added. Within the units, ceilings and walls were drywalled, closets were added, moldings were removed and living-dining rooms were created by the removal of the wall separating those rooms. The original location of the apartment units, however, remains intact. The interior courtyard, though not lavishly planted with shrubs and flowers, contains several mature elms, ginkos and other trees. Axial paths still link the buildings. As originally designed, a playground is located in the center of the courtyard. The entire two block property exists today essentially as it did during its early years--a clear reflection of Thomas' conception of the garden apartment.

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The Marshall Field Garden Apartments, as originally conceived and as it exists today, is circumscribed by Sedgwick and Hudson, running approximately 938' north and south and by Blackhawk and Evergreen, running approximately 263' east and west. The two-block stretch along Hudson faces a school and empty lots; it is a quiet street. Sedgwick, however, is a busy thoroughfare. The buildings, despite a basic symmetry, are oriented toward Sedgwick, then and now the more fashionable eastern boundary. Twenty storefronts or offices open onto this street. Today most are vacant; those occupied include a day-care center, food store, Alderman's office and the office of the building. Where window area was reduced in the 1960's, brick lintels were added that duplicated the band of bricks surrounding the buildings beneath the first story, and the brickwork set in horizontal bands was imitated.

Each of the buildings in the ten-building complex is fireproof, with concrete foundations, concrete slab flooring and red tapestry brick masonry walls. Although very simple in conception, with applied ornament only located around the doorways and at the roof line, ornamental brickwork breaks up the wall planes. Rows of projecting headers form bands below the first floor sill line, establishing a "base" for the buildings. A molded band of headers and stretchers also forms a band at the fourth story lintel--visually tying all the buildings together and giving them a lower, more horizontal profile where they extend to five stories. Windows are double hung with sills formed by a single row of headers; those opening from the stair halls are multi-paned. All of the roofs are flat with roof ornament projecting from terra-cotta-capped brick parapets. The ornament takes two forms. On the exterior perimeter of the building, the figure of a horse surrounded by a circular band is set in the center of sand-colored molded concrete panels projecting above the roof line. The design is very abstract and Art Deco in style. In the center of each entrance courtyard, the design of an eagle, more realistically portrayed and also set in concrete panel, projects above the roof line. Though still comparatively simple, the most elaborate ornamentation on the buildings surrounds the doorways. All are arched, leading to an open vestibule. The central courtyard entrance to each building is surrounded by limestone moldings with a capital in the shape of an abstracted bird topping a 3/4 rounded pilaster on each side of the door. Stone in a twisted cord pattern forms the arch. The side courtyard entrances are formed by an arch of stretchers capped by a semi-circular hoodmold. Stairs leading to the sheltered vestibules have brick risers and slate treads. The handrails are of twisted wrought iron. Some of the exterior entrance courts have low brick walls with brickwork in a pierced geometric pattern.

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Many of the building entrances from the large interior courtyard have elegant brickwork, stepped to the point where bricks radiate out from the arched opening to a rectangular hoodmold reminiscent of a Tudor arch.

The eight buildings that are roughly "H" shape, are identical in size and shape. Each measures 180' by 102' with six bays flanking the courtyard facing the street at the lot line and eight bays facing the street from the inside of the exterior courtyards. All have five stories of apartment units with the four-story section of each building topped by a roof garden, creating four such gardens per building. The two end buildings measure 64'x 262' and extend along Blackhawk and Evergreen Streets, the entire length of the block. They stand five stories and have three courtyards facing the street. The central courtyard is identical in shape and number of bays to the exterior entrance courtyards of the other buildings. The flanking courtyards are only four bays wide, narrower and more shallow. The street elevations are two bays wide on the ends and four bays wide in the center.

The interior of each building has relatively little space devoted to public area. Each entry is accessed from a sheltered outside vestibule leading to an entrance foyer. The center entrance foyer opens directly into a small stair hall. The side entrance foyers open, on one side to a stair hall and on the other, to a long corridor leading to a second stair hall. Entries to the stair halls are arched. Walls are brick, and floors are slate. Two or three apartment units, many with paneled wood entrance doors, open off each landing. The balustrade of the staircase connecting the floors is very simple with narrow vertical balusters and two small square newel posts at the landings. The apartment units vary in size from one to three bedrooms; rooms are of moderate dimension. No unit is more than two rooms deep and many, because of the configuration of the buildings, have corner rooms. There are no interior corridors.

The Garden Apartments have always had communal spaces. In the basement there are areas marked "laundry room;" in the south building there is a ground floor "auditorium" (which is really more of an activity room) opening off the courtyard and schoolrooms opening off the playground. Today a schoolroom serves as a day care center by day and a shelter for the homeless by night.

The large central interior courtyard that runs the entire length of the complex is approximately 800' long. The small inside courtyards of the "H" shape buildings open onto it, and it is

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linked to the street by passageways cutting east and west between the buildings. Paths transverse the courtyards, with one long pathway extending north and south. This central path links all the buildings to the sunken central playground, which is accessed by brick and wrought iron arched gates. On the west side of the playground is a brick arcade.

In the garden apartment type, where several five or six story buildings are oriented around a large interior garden, open space between the buildings and the relationship of the buildings to each other defines the type. In the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, despite broken windows, graffiti and deferred maintenance, the 1960's alterations, and the removal of low shrubbery and plant material, the overall site plan as well as a considerable amount of detailing is intact; there have been no significant additions, and no buildings have been removed. The entire complex continues to reflect the concept of the garden apartment as it was originally intended.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Architecture
Social History
Community Planning
and Development

1929

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Thomas, Andrew J.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Marshall Field Garden Apartments, known after 1942 as the Town and Garden Apartments, meet Criteria A and C for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. They meet Criterion A as a very early example of large-scale multiple unit housing for low to moderate-income families, thereby playing a significant role in the city's social history. At the time of construction, 1928-29, the ten building, 628-unit complex was the largest moderate income housing development in the city and one of the largest in the country. Developed by the estate of merchant entrepreneur Marshall Field under the direction of Marshall Field III, it was among only four privately-developed large housing projects constructed in Chicago before the advent of publicly-subsidized housing in the thirties.¹ Although Field intended for the project to produce an adequate return on the money invested, his goal was also philanthropic. He built the apartments to provide decent moderate income housing. The apartments, in addition meet Criterion A as an intended demonstration project, thereby making them significant in Community Planning and Development. Field hoped to show the business community that it was possible to design pleasant places to live yet turn a modest profit. He planned to build two or three similar projects. Because of the Depression, apartment construction ground to a halt; existing slum conditions persisted and worsened and Field never saw his hopes come to fruition. Large scale housing needs were to be met by the public sector. Nevertheless, the construction of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, because of their attempt to meet basic housing needs without the expectation of making a large profit, was a critical step in the overall historical development of subsidized housing in Chicago.²

The Field Garden Apartments also meet Criterion C, as a representative example of the garden apartment type as defined by Richard Plunz in A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis, 1990. Writing about New York, where the type originated and proliferated, Plunz characterizes it as "a grouping of five or six-story buildings whose perimeter massing

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incorporates ample recreation and other shared communal spaces."³ This is a general definition commonly used in earlier years by historians and architects, one that aptly describes the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, which were laid out on two city blocks, and made up of four and five-story buildings surrounding a central garden court. The design, with courtyard, playground and spaces designated for an auditorium, nursery school and workshops, was clearly meant to foster a feeling of community among the tenants. Style was almost irrelevant, a form of dress. Some New York garden apartments were clothed in French, Tudor or Italian-inspired ornament; some, like the Field Apartments, had handsome brickwork and decorative treatment around the doorways and roof line but fit into no neat stylistic category. The architect, Andrew J. Thomas, was adept at various stylistic interpretations of the form and received considerable attention in the early journals for his work. He is, in fact, generally acknowledged as the creator of the Garden Apartment type.⁴ Though he designed numerous garden apartments in New York, Thomas' only Chicago commission was the Marshall Field Garden Apartments. Graham, Anderson, Probst and White, one of Chicago's largest and most distinguished firms, served as Consulting Architect.

Even though the Field Garden Apartments have suffered several years of neglect and deterioration, and they underwent a major renovation in the 1960's, the overall massing of each building is unchanged, the handsomely-designed ornamental treatment surrounding the doorways and crowning the exterior roof line perimeter is intact and the basic configuration of the public spaces remains unaltered. In 1990, the Marshall Field Garden Apartments are again in deteriorated physical condition, but unmistakably continue to express Thomas' design intent.

HISTORY

The history of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments dates back to 1925, when Marshall Field III commissioned Edith Abbott, Dean of the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration, to study sites for a north side housing project as part of a general survey of Chicago's tenement districts she and Sophonisba Breckenridge had been conducting for eighteen years. The site selected by Field from 24 areas he received statistical information on was a five-acre parcel occupying two full city blocks between Sedgwick, Hudson, Blackhawk and Evergreen (Sigel) Streets in the middle of a rundown working class Italian neighborhood on Chicago's Near North Side--within walking distance of industrial development just east of the Chicago River. Miss

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Abbott's pleasure in Field's choice was clear. She was quoted in the Chicago Daily News of November 23, 1927, as saying

Mr. Field's project for building a 'garden city' group of inexpensive apartments for an industrial district is one of the most practical solutions for the wretched tenement situations existing in many places in Chicago and is a credit to him.⁵

Other early press reports of plans for the project quoted officials of the Marshall Field estate as saying it was to be the first two, three or four such projects.⁶ It comes as no surprise, however, that with the onset of the Depression, the Marshall Field Garden Apartments was the only such development ever completed by the Marshall Field Estate.

The area Field selected was one of the oldest sections of Chicago; all of the Near North Side community was included in the City of Chicago when it was incorporated in 1837. Thousands of small wood frame working men's cottages were built, many by German immigrants, before and after the great fire of 1871--especially west of Wells Street (which is located two blocks east of Sedgwick). Although the area less than a mile to the east housed Chicago's elite, in the 1880's and 90's the western section was declining rapidly and by the turn of the century was regarded as a slum. The section just to the south of the proposed apartments was variously known as "Little Sicily" or "Little Hell." By 1927, the Sedgwick area was regarded as blighted. The blocks Field chose were described in the Daily News article as "congested dilapidated and lacking decent sanitary conveniences." The paper envisioned that the area's sub-standard housing would be replaced by "model tenements at the lowest possible rent."⁷

Construction of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments marked the first attempt at rehabilitation of the area, but it did not provide better housing for families living in the blighted buildings. Few people in the neighborhood could afford the rents, which were set, not at a low, but at a moderate level.⁸ The Field estate, which originally envisioned the complex as a cooperative, intended to establish a \$4000 limit on family income. But this was at a time when a family with an income significantly lower than \$4000 would have been hard pressed to pay for an apartment.⁹ In fact, 2/3 of all Chicago families lived on less than \$2500/year.¹⁰

The project cost more than the planners originally intended

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with cost overruns exceeding 40%. Assembling the land ran three times the original estimate. Although consolidating two blocks of land was complicated, negotiations with the City of Chicago presented no problem. The City vacated the street connecting Sedgwick and Hudson and sold it to the Estate for \$.50 per square foot and two alleys which it sold for \$.25 per square foot. The problem came from individual property owners; when some owners got wind of the magnitude of the project and the identity of the owner, they held out for higher prices forcing the estate to pay several times the value of the parcels.¹¹ In addition to land costs of \$1,212,000, the estate had to pay for the cost of demolition of numerous old tenements. Construction costs for the buildings ran to \$6,250,000. Also, local real estate taxes were high with no basis or precedent for rebate.

The Marshall Field Garden Apartments never lived up to the financial expectations of the estate. Field's biographer, Stephen Becker, states that it was built not as "an experiment in avant garde social philosophy or a concession to malcontents, but to demonstrate that economic building technique and slow amortization could make low rent housing profitable." Unfortunately the experiment failed, and the return hovered between 1% and 2%, not enough to attract capital. What is interesting is that Field (who had a reputation as a great liberal and was founder of the Chicago Sun Times) came to recognize that the expected profit on low rent housing would likely be impossible and told a friend that municipal participation might be the answer. This was not an opinion at all common in the business community in the twenties.¹²

The Field Apartments, when completed, rented as moderate income housing. Becker points out that rents were set at \$16 a room, which in 1927, was not low rent housing.¹³ They were marketed to attract young professionals. The rental brochure states they were designed to meet the needs of everyone--teachers, businessmen, young marrieds, couples and family groups, and they were promoted for their "convenience of location, comfort in living and beauty in environment."¹⁴

Although slums continued to exist and bordered the property on the west, the opulent Gold Coast, Lincoln Park and Lake Michigan were less than a mile to the east. The downtown business district was a mile to the south and easily reached by the elevated train. The apartments were within easy reach of two el stations at Schiller and Sedgwick, and it was an eight minute trip to the Loop. Surface car lines ran in front of the east entrances on Sedgwick and on North Avenue, two blocks north.

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Every effort was made by the building management to make life comfortable for building tenants. The Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College established a demonstration school for nursery school, kindergarten and grade school up to and including the third grade, "all under the most approved system of progressive education."¹⁵ Many pages of the rental brochure illustrate children's activities. A large playground, completely equipped, was established in the center of the complex. There was a "well-equipped" workroom fitted up for tenants with handicraft hobbies, an auditorium for card parties and club meetings, carriage rooms, modern laundries, space for twenty stores along Sedgwick and a large garage building across the street. The apartment units ranged from 3-1/2 to 6 rooms and were touted for their light and air; every apartment was described as having cross ventilation. Floor plans showed fairly generous size rooms and fully-equipped kitchens. The brochure described fireproof construction and 24-hour heat supplied by an immense heating plant located a block away "eliminating noise and smoke." The buildings' permanent staff included three engineers, three gardeners, eleven janitors and an electrician, plumber, carpenter and plasterer.

Beauty was not ignored in advertising the Garden Apartments. Brochure illustrations show landscaped paths flanked by flowers in the center courtyard. A caption under one photograph of an apartment interior states that "the smartly modern note is struck in this spacious adaptable living room." A second caption describes a "sun-flooded living room well adapted to simple, eighteenth century treatment."¹⁶ The appeal was to a broad range of needs and tastes.

All the wonderful amenities the Apartments provided could not prevent them from being less than a success economically, an experience matched elsewhere. James Ford, who wrote about slums and housing in 1936 commented that many model tenements failed to yield a return, acknowledging that "in so doing they merely paralleled the experience of a large percentage of commercial enterprises during that same period, having been faced by unforeseen economic conditions beyond their control."¹⁷ He cites as examples the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments and the City Housing Corporation in New York City. The Depression hit everyone hard.

Prior to the advent of public housing, there were, besides the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, three privately-financed housing developments in Chicago that provided high quality housing on a large scale. Devereux Bowly, who wrote The Poorhouse: Subsidized

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Housing in Chicago: 1895-1976, calls them "philanthropic housing projects" or "subsidized" housing, not because they were government subsidized, but because the return on investment for all of them was so low.¹³ All provided excellent housing, but the only one really similar that could be called "Garden Apartments" was the Michigan Avenue Garden Apartments developed by Julius Rosenwald. Completed at approximately the same time, it contained 418 units located in a continuous perimeter building around a central garden court. The other two differed considerably. Frank Lloyd Wright's Francisco Terrace of 1895 (dem.) located at 255 North Francisco Avenue, surrounded a central interior court, but only stood two stories and occupied half a block. The size rather than the amenities contributed to a feeling of community. Charles Frost's Garden Homes of 1919 provided housing on a large scale and a beautiful landscaped setting, but the buildings that occupied a 40 acre site at 87th and State Streets were 154 detached or duplex houses in a setting modeled after the garden cities of England. They were not apartment buildings. Both of these projects really were precursors to the garden apartment type as developed by Field and Rosenwald.

The Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments and Marshall Field Garden Apartments, conceptually were very similar. Both incorporated the garden apartment idea which Field's architect, Andrew J. Thomas, had employed in model projects in the East where he took a whole block and arranged the buildings, many of which were "U" shaped courtyard buildings two rooms deep, around a large spacious interior courtyard. Both were planned as moderate income housing, attracting teachers, service workers, some doctors and lawyers--no one in the poverty category. Both contained shops and a progressive nursery school. Both were considered business enterprises not just charitable gestures. The two had much in common because the collaboration between Alfred Stern, Rosenwald's son-in-law and real estate man and George Richardson, the Field Estate's real estate head, was said to have been so close that the projects were almost a joint enterprise.¹⁹ The major sociological difference in the two projects was that the Rosenwald enterprise was intended for black tenancy and the Marshall Field project was intended for whites.

Architecturally there were also similarities. Both apartment complexes were 5-story walk ups, (a height typical for New York but uncommon in Chicago) with deep stairwells. Both focused on the landscaped interior courtyard and both were sparsely ornamented. But there are two major differences. The first lies in the buildings overall design configuration. The Michigan Boulevard

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Garden Apartments are composed on one continuous perimeter building with eight entrances onto the interior court. The Field Garden Apartments are made up of ten distinct structures providing greater opportunity for multiple vistas. The second difference pertains to the significance of the architects. Rosenwald's architect, Ernest Grunsfeld, was a competent designer whose eclectic repertoire includes many handsome North Shore estates as well as later public housing. But he was not a trend setting architect. Andrew J. Thomas, who designed the Marshall Field Garden Apartments, was the father of the "Garden Apartment."

Individual courtyard buildings were constructed throughout Chicago and its inner ring of suburbs in the teens and twenties. But they were not grouped together into Garden Apartments. The type never became prevalent or influential in Chicago. Nevertheless, the garden apartment type--five and six story apartment buildings surrounding a landscaped interior court and occupying one if not more city blocks--can be found all over the boroughs of New York. The importance of the type is clearly stated by Richard Plunz in his 1990 book on the history of housing in New York. He begins his chapter on the garden apartment by saying:

The decade of the 1920's produced an advance in housing form and production of a significance to middle class New Yorkers equal to the upper class apartment revolution in the 1880's.²⁰

As early as 1920, the garden apartment type was recognized by New York architect John Taylor Bond writing for the Architectural Record as the latest and finest development in the progress that began in the early 1900's when the Tenement Act of 1901, which required that the maximum amount of area built on could only be 70%, effectively put a stop to the construction of dumbbell or railroad type tenements. Both Boyd and Frank Chouteau Brown (who authored an eleven-part series on "Tendencies in Apartment House Design") wrote in the 1920's on the garden apartment for both the Architectural Record and the Architectural Forum. In "Opportunity in the Garden Apartment," an article Boyd wrote in 1930 for the Forum, he discussed the superiority of the garden apartment and illustrated his article with a site plan, photos and floor plans of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments as well as several New York designs of Andrew J. Thomas.²¹

The chief advocate of the garden apartment type was Andrew J. Thomas, who was, according to architect Robert A. M. Stern,

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probably the author of the term.²² Thomas was described by Plunz as one of a new generation of architects who entered the profession in the twenties and were very different from earlier generations of upper middle class, Beaux Arts trained architects that were tied to the WASP establishment, a critical source of their patronage.²³ These men, of whom Emery Roth is probably the best known, came from humble, sometimes immigrant backgrounds and received no formal architectural training. Thomas was born on lower Broadway, and by age 13, was orphaned. He was a self-taught architect. Louis Pink, author of the book, The New Day in Housing (1928), is quoted by Stern. Pink characterizes Thomas as follows:

a genius, an enthusiast, excitable, talkative, always making speeches in favor of better housing and often commanding newspaper space on the first page. Housing is his religion. "What better religion could there be than this?" he often exclaims, pointing to the interior garden with its shrubs and pools, its chaste but tasteful doorways and pleasant brick walls. He is a "good mixer" and is as much at home with plasterers and carpenters and walking delegates as with millionaires....

Thomas's work is much criticized by other architects, but he alone has built model tenements in times of high costs....

Thomas has always been an adventurer. He followed the lure of gold to the Klondike in 1896. He hired out as a carpenter at Skagway. He worked in a jeweler's shop in New York and was a bellboy in a hotel in Los Angeles. He collected rents for real-estate speculators, became a speculative builder himself, and got his training in architecture from his daily work. He was the first to build apartments with a little court or setback in front with some trees in it. This proved popular and the idea of the garden apartment was born. He learned that beauty pays. He also learned that it does not pay to crowd the land. He became a crusader for beauty, light and air.²⁴

During the First World War Thomas served as supervising architect for housing for the U. S. Shipping Board. Upon his return Thomas' career took off, and he developed and refined the concept of the garden apartment. His first project was in Brooklyn

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for the City and Metropolitan Homes Company. It was one of two organizations that, up to 1920, were most instrumental in developing this new type of multifamily housing. His second and more important job was with the Queensborough Corporation in Jackson Heights, formed in 1909 when the Queensborough Bridge opened. After the turn of the century the private development of housing in New York shifted to a larger and larger scale; the modern development corporation emerged, and small lot by lot development of the 19th century was replaced by the development of whole blocks. Marketing their efforts to the middle class, the Queensborough Corporation was one of the earliest, largest and most innovative of these developers; their architect was Andrew J. Thomas. While working for them he developed and had published numerous proposals about the economic advantages of the reduced land coverage of the garden apartment type. His arguments must have proved convincing for he executed multiple projects for them during the early twenties, taking several basic "U" shaped courtyard buildings and orienting them, courtyard facing inward, around a long open space for outdoor gathering and recreation. This was quite a remarkable concept when it is remembered that traditionally the only playground for New York children was the streets. He clothed the several complexes he built for them in various styles--including Moorish and Chateausque. His designs reflect the eclecticism of the period, though they were basically quite simple with ornamentation concentrated around the roof line and doorways, as is the case in the Marshall Field Garden Apartments. In 1924, Thomas designed the Metropolitan Model Homes for the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, his largest project, in three locations in Queens--54 buildings housing 2,215 families. This was the largest single housing project built in New York up to that time.

Actually, though all of these projects designed by Thomas were published in the journals and his reputation was established, the complex that might have drawn Field to select Thomas was its closest prototype, the Paul Lawrence Dunbar Apartments on Fifth Avenue, between 142nd and 143rd Streets in Harlem, Thomas' only garden apartment complex in Manhattan. The developer was John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Built specifically for "negroes," the complex was made up of six 6-story walk-ups containing 511 three to seven-room apartment units surrounding an interior park "designed and planned with exceptional skill." Unlike Thomas' earlier buildings, the perimeter of each building had several corners on the court side, permitting many double-exposure apartments and corner rooms. The perimeter of each of the individual buildings of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments is even more complex, almost an "H" shape.

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Although there were other New York architects designing garden apartments during the twenties, it makes perfect sense that Marshall Field would choose Thomas, the acknowledged originator and expert on the type for his Chicago project. No doubt other investments would certainly have produced higher return for either man; nevertheless, Rockefeller, who built the Dunbar Apartments as co-ops hoped to make a 5-1/2% return on his money; Field initially had similar expectations.²⁵ And Thomas' distinguished New York client could certainly be described as Field's social equal.

The garden apartment continued to be built throughout the entire city of New York for moderate income private housing and publicly subsidized housing until the end of the 1930's. During the late twenties and thirties it was also a popular building type in Northern Europe. An article from the April 1933 Architectural Forum illustrates many examples from Holland, Germany, Austria, England and Switzerland, including some by modernists like Gropius. The Paul Lawrence Dunbar Apartments were illustrated.²⁶

In Chicago, the garden apartment housing type was a transplant from New York. For the Marshall Field Garden Apartments the pre-eminent New York garden apartment architect was used. For Rosenwald's Michigan Boulevard Apartment, Henry Wright, another New York designer of garden apartments served as consultant.

During the twenties Chicago enjoyed an enormous apartment boom. Between 1920 and 1930, 227,786 apartment units were built. With the Depression the boom came to a stop. During 1933 only 21 units were built.²⁷ In the late thirties large public housing efforts took over, with the construction of low-scale architecturally minimal buildings surrounded by open spaces in four large developments located in various parts of the city.²⁸

During this period of time no changes were made to the Marshall Field Garden Apartments. In 1942, however, the Apartments changed ownership. Bought for \$1.75 million by businessman Luis Barkhouse and attorney Ralph Bohrer, they were renamed the Town and Garden Apartments. A Daily News article of 1941 indicates that the apartments were still very "much in demand" particularly by young marrieds and the formerly wealthy who moved from the Gold Coast when their economic status changed. The occupancy rate was described as averaging 84.94% since the building opened in 1929.²⁹ In 1955 the property was sold again, to real estate developer Arthur Rubloff and several other investors.

Vast changes occurred to the property in the 1960's. In 1961

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it was acquired by Hanover Equities Corporation of New York, who allowed the apartments to deteriorate to the point where, in 1966-67, tenants mounted a rent strike--with sit-ins and demonstrations, followed by evictions. Journalist Lois Wille later described what happened as the inner city syndrome: absentee ownership, transient tenants, families too big for the apartments, rising crime in the neighborhood and complaints about poor police protection.³⁰ Although originally white occupied, at this time it was integrated. During the 60's there were also many changes in the neighborhood. Cabrini Green was built, so that to the west the apartments were dominated by large high rises housing poor black people. In 1966, Carl Sandburg Village was constructed, and to the east were 2000 units in 28 story buildings filled with young professional whites. Also in 1966, an abortive attempt was made by the community Renewal Foundation, a church-sponsored, not-for-profit organization, with the goal of promoting the Old Town Gardens as a stable, diverse and interracial community of high standards. This never occurred, and the property was finally sold to McHugh Levin Associates who immediately initiated a multi-million dollar rehabilitation under Section 221(d)3 of the National Housing Act using the architectural firm of Dubin, Dubin, Black and Moutoussamy.

Presently the Marshall Field Garden Apartments look pretty much as they did in the late 1960's, when the apartment interiors were modernized and all systems were replaced. Despite these attempts at modernizing, the interior public spaces retain most of their original features and their original finishes; the apartment interiors closely resemble their intended floor plan and the ornamental embellishment of the exterior is intact. Most important, no changes have been made to the configuration of any of the original buildings, and there have been no intrusions added to the interior courtyard setting. The Marshall Field Garden Apartments remain, despite their deteriorated condition, a fine example of the garden apartment type.

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ENDNOTES

1. The other three were: Francisco Terrace, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright for Edward Waller in 1895 and demolished in 1974; The Garden Homes, designed by Charles Fost for Benjamin J. Rosenthal in 1919 and the Michigan Boulevard Garden Apartments, designed by Ernest Grunsfeld, for Julius Rosenwald in 1929 (and listed on the National Register in 1981).

2. Devereux, Bowly, Jr. The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago: 1895-1976. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978.
For a full discussion of the Marshall Field Garden Apartments in the development of privately and publicly subsidized housing in Chicago, see Chapter I.

3. Richard Plunz. A History of Housing in New York City: Dwelling Type and Social Change in the American Metropolis. New York: Columbia University Press, 1990. p.138.

4. Ibid., p.134 and "Andrew Thomas" obituary in Progressive Architecture. September, 1965, p.52.

5. "Field's 'City' to Replace Squalor," Chicago Daily News, November 23, 1927.

6. Interview with Devereux Bowly, May 15, 1991.

7. Chicago Daily News, November 23, 1927.

8. Evelyn M. Kitagawa and Karl E. Tauber. Local Community Fact Book Chicago Metropolitan Area, 1960. Chicago: Community Inventory, Philip M. Hauser, Director, 1963. p.30.

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9. Thomas Lee Philpot. The Slum and the Ghetto: Neighborhood Deterioration and Middle Class Reform, Chicago, 1880-1930. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978, p.261.
10. Ibid., p.250.
11. Ibid., p.263.
12. Stephen Becker. Marshall Field III, A Biography. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1964. p.113-4.
13. Ibid., p.114.
14. "Marshall Field Garden Apartments" Rental Brochure prepared by Hayes, Loeb and Company, Chicago.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. James Ford. Slums and Housing with Special Reference to New York City, History-Conditions-Policy. Westport, Conn.: Negro University Press, 1936, p.690.
18. Bowly, Chapter I.
19. Philpot, p.260.
20. Plunz, p.122.
21. John Taylor Boyd. "An Opportunity in the Garden Apartment," Architectural Forum, September, 1930, p.353.
22. Robert A. M. Stern. "With Rhetoric: The New York Apartment House," VIA, Culture and the Social Vision, Volume IV, Cambridge: The Graduate School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania and the MIT Press, 1980, p.91.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., p.91-92.
25. Ibid. p.103.
26. "The Planned Community." The Architectural Forum, April 1933, pp.253-274.

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27. Bowly, p.18.

28. The 1930's example cited by Bowly in Chapter II of his book include: the Jane Adams House (1,027 units on a 24-acre site), the Julia Lathrop Homes (925 units on a 35-acre site), the Trumbull Park Homes (426 units on 21 acres) and the Ida B. Wells Homes (1662 units on 47 acres).

29. "Field Garden Apartments Reveal Peoples Desire to Live Near Downtown," Chicago Daily News, March 27, 1964.

30. Lois Wille. "Town and Garden Apartments," Chicago Tribune, August 15, 1970.

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- Bowly, Devereux, Jr. The Poorhouse: Subsidized Housing in Chicago: 1895-1976. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1978.

See continuation sheet ~~114~~

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

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Five acres

UTM References

A

Zone Easting Northing

C

B

Zone Easting Northing

D

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The area bounded by Sedgwick, Evergreen, Hudson and Blackhawk Streets, starting at the northwest corner of Blackhawk and Sedgwick, extending south 938'9" to Evergreen Street, extending west 263'9" to Hudson Street, extending north 938' to Blackhawk Street and back east 263' to the northwest corner of Blackhawk and Sedgwick. These dimensions are measured from the masonry edges of the buildings.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This acreage has historically been associated with the Marshall Field Garden Apartments.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan Benjamin

organization _____ date _____

street & number 711 Marion Street telephone 708/432-1822

city or town Highland Park state IL zip code 60035



Marshall Field Garden Apts.

1336-1442 SEDGWICK

1337-1443 HUDSON

400-424 Evergreen

401-423 Blackhawk

Chicago, IL

PHOTO: Susan Benjamin, May, 1991

NEG: "

711 Madison Av

Highland Park, IL

60035

SEDGWICK AV. Storefronts facade

PHOTO LOOKING SW

Marshall Field Garden Apts

1336-1442 SEDGWICK

1337-1443 HUDSON

400-424 Evergreen

401-423 Blackhawk

Chicago, IL

PHOTO - Susan Benjamin, May, 1991

NEG - "

711 Madison Av

Highland Park, IL

60035

VIEW S. on HUDSON ST. showing
three courtyard BUILDINGS

+ 5 END BUILDING -

PHOTO FACING SE



Marshall Field Garden Apt's

1336-1452 SEDGWICK

1337-1453 HUDSON

400-424 EVERGREEN

401-423 BLACKHAWK

CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOS: Susan Benjamin, May 1991

NEG

711 MARCON AV
Highland Park,
IL

60035

Central Playground
PHOTOGRAPHING

Marshall Field Garden Apartments

1336-1452 SEDGWICK

1337-1453 HUDSON

400-424 Evergreen

401-425 BLACKHAWK

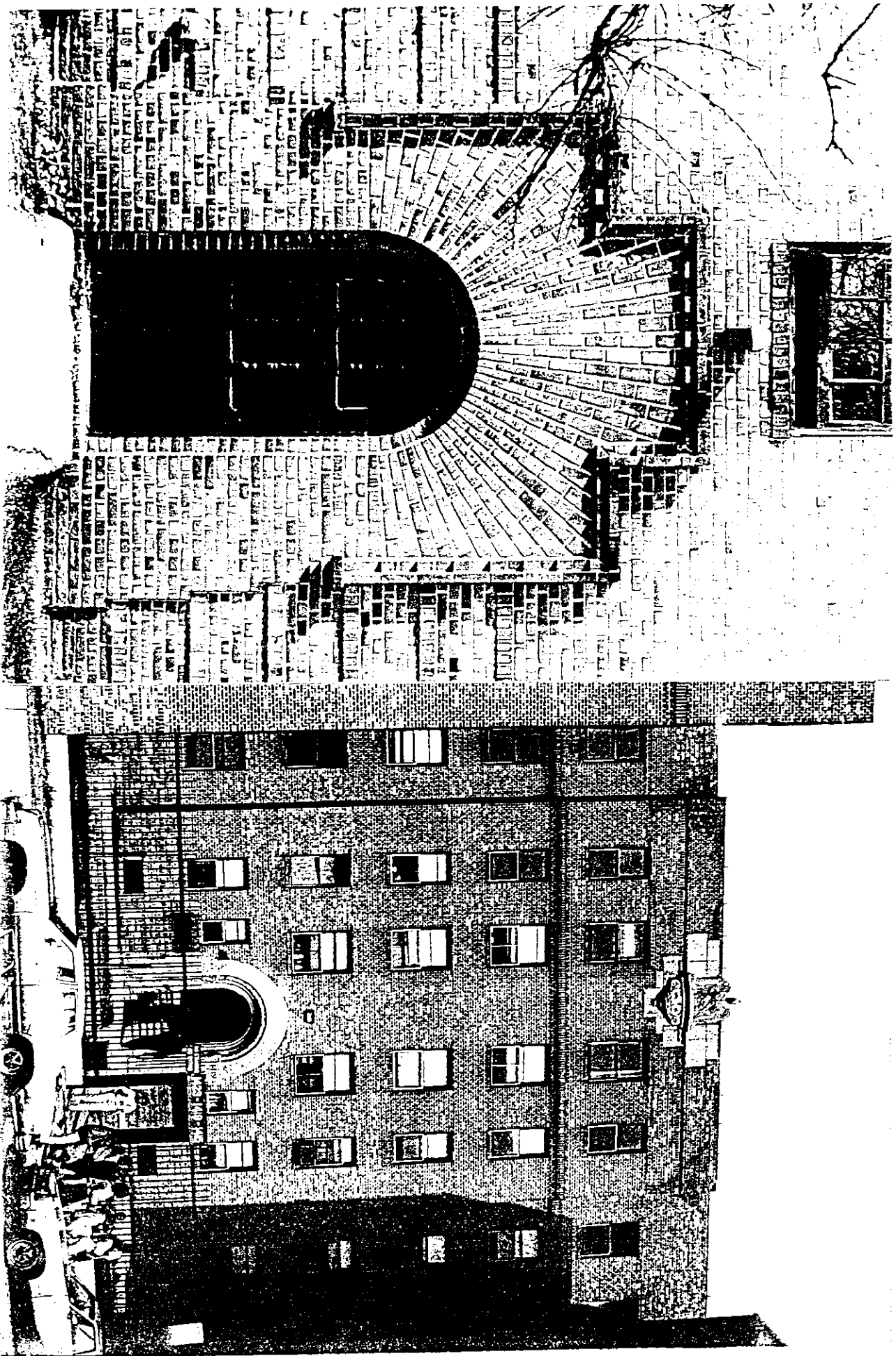
CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOS: Susan Benjamin, MAY 1991

NEG

711 MARCON AV
Highland Park, IL
60035

typ. ornamental eaves on exterior
courtyard parapet
PHOTOGRAPHING



Marshall Field Garden APTS

1336 - 1402 HUDSON

1337 - 1443 HUDSON

400 - 424 EVERGREE

401 - 423 BLACKHAWK

CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOG: Susan Benjamin, 1991

NEG: " 711 MARION
Highland Park,
IL

Doorway N Building 60035

PHOTOG FACING N.

Marshall Field Garden Apts

1415 - 23 N. HUDSON - Section

CHICAGO, IL

EXT. COURTYARD FACING HUDSON

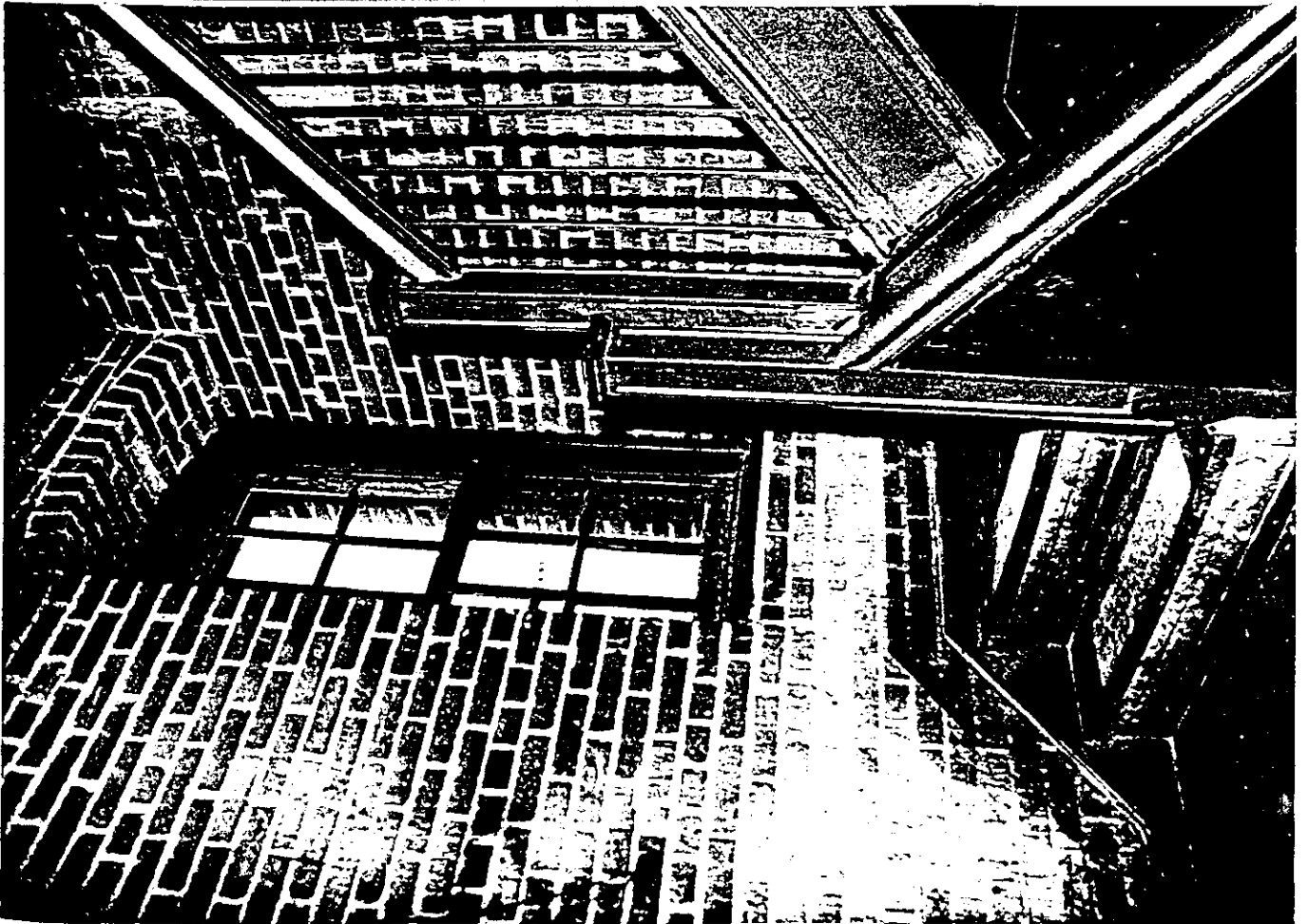
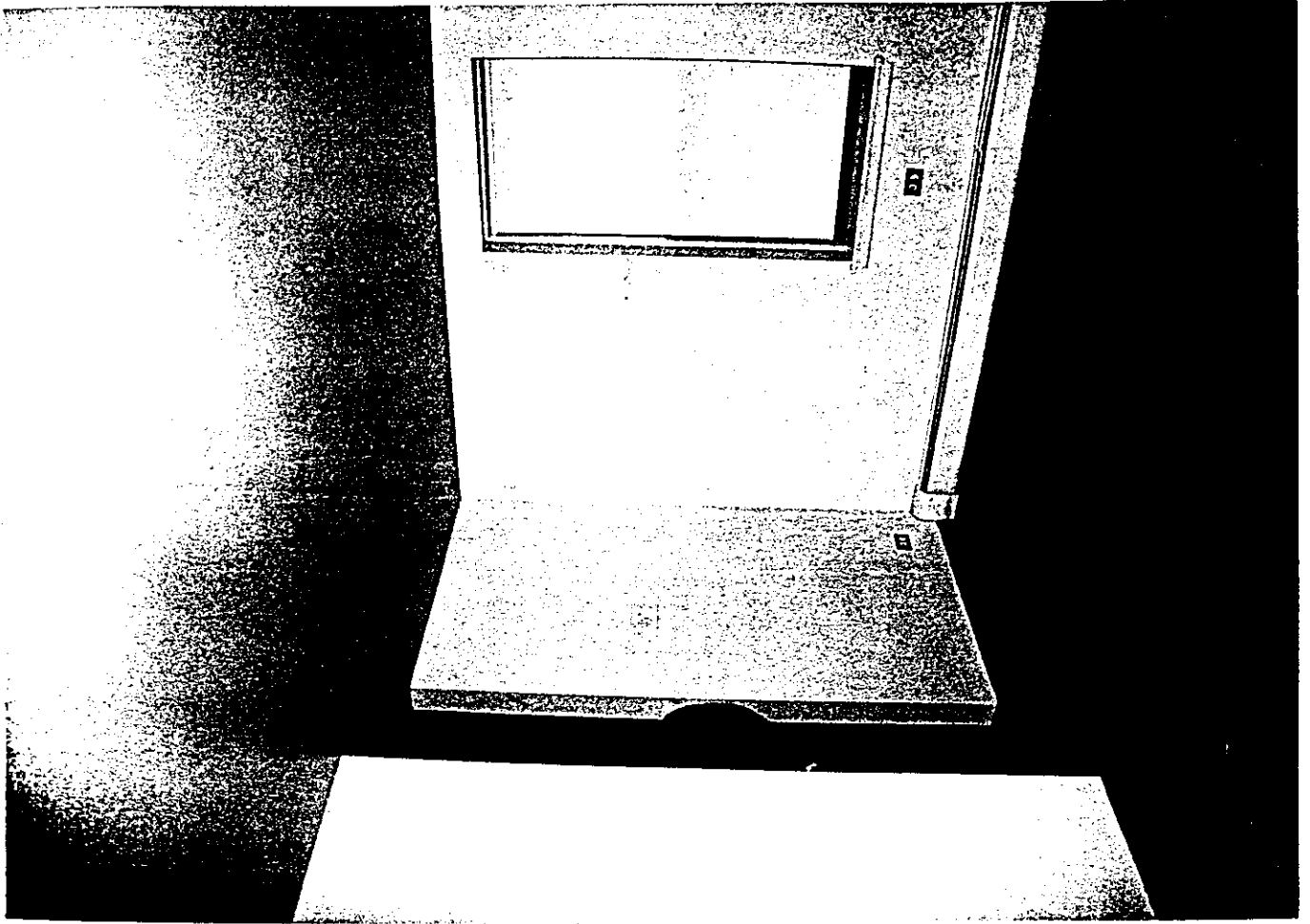
PHOTOG FACING E

PHOTOS: Susan Benjamin, MAY, 1991

NEG:

" 711 MARION

HIGHLAND PARK, IL 60035



Marshall Field GARDEN APTS

1336-1442 SEDGWICK

1337-1442 HUDSON

400-424 EXISTING

401-425 BLACKHAWK

CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOS: Susan Benjamin, May 1991

NEG

711 Marion Av

Highland Park, IL
6-1995

Typical Apt. Unit INTERIOR

MARSHALL FIELD GARDEN APARTMENTS

1336-1452 SEDGWICK

1337-1452 HUDSON

400-424 EXISTING

401-425 BLACKHAWK

CHICAGO, IL

PHOTOS: Susan Benjamin, May, 1991

NEG

711 Marion Av

Highland Park, IL

60055

Typical Stairhall