

JOHANNESBURG METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITY

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT SURVEYING FORM

Compiled by: Dr JJ Bruwer, 2002-07-29

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NAME OF PLACE: [Second] CASTLE MANSIONS



Main photo: the building as seen from a position in Eloff Street, southeast of the building. Top right: view of the building and its neighbour in Jeppe Street, i.e. *second Manners Mansions*. Remaining photos: detail of main (Eloff Street) façade.

Previous/alternative name/s :

LOCATION: Street : corners Kerk, Eloff and Jeppe
 Street number :
 : [61 Kerk; 87, 89, 91, 93 Eloff; 170 Jeppe]
 Stand Number : 4729
 Previous Stand Number: 1357, 1358, 1253, 1254
 Block number : AE
 GIS reference :

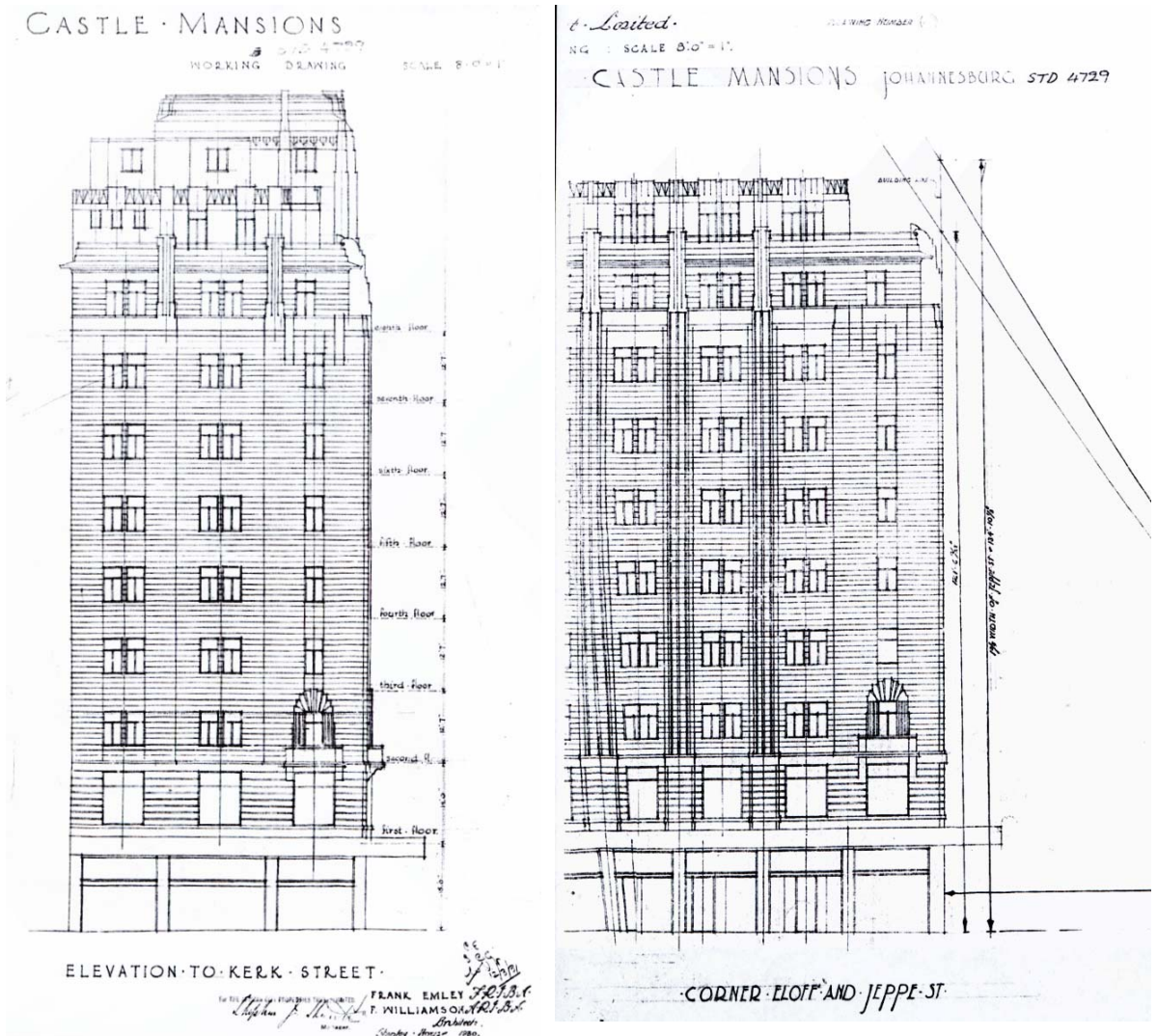
ZONING: Current use/s :
 Previous use/s :

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:

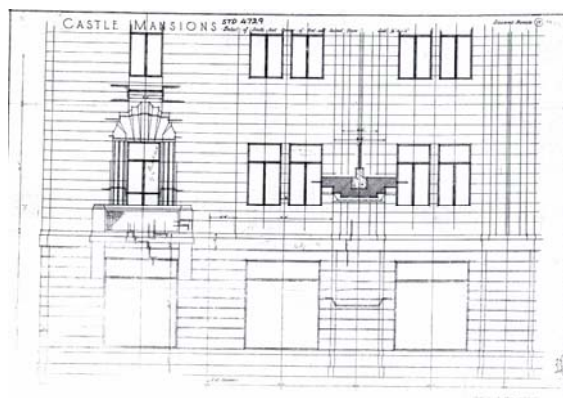
Height : 180 feet 7¼ inches (55 048 millimetres)

Levels above street level : 10 (plus roof)
 Levels below street level : one
 On-site parking :

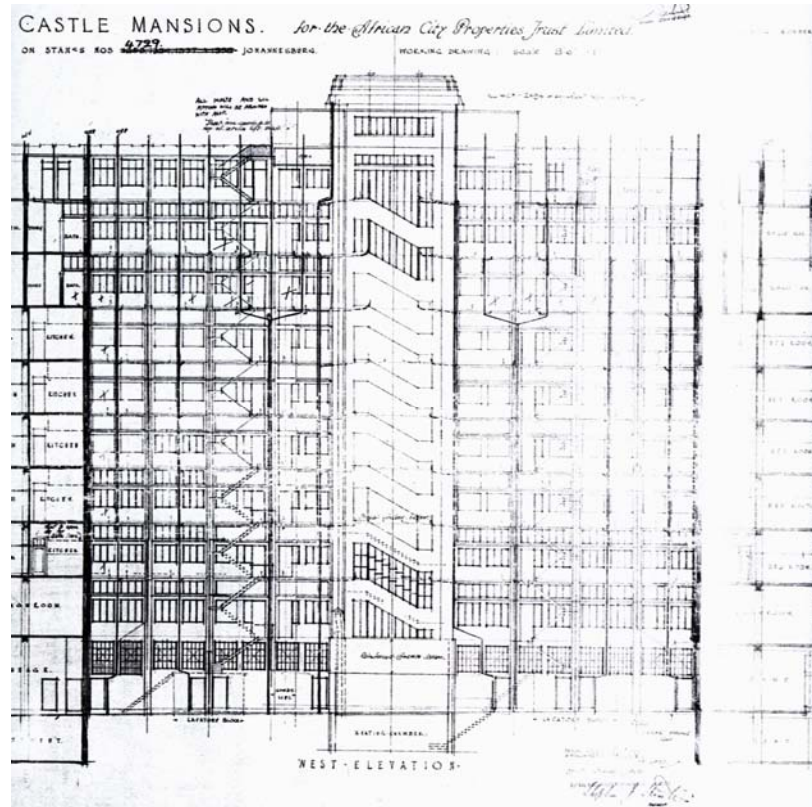
Below: the reduced copies of drawings appearing on this and the next four pages of this form, are extracts from the original submission drawings of the building by the architects Emley & Williamson.
 Left – copy of elevation to Kerk Street. Right – copy of incomplete main (Eloff Street) elevation.



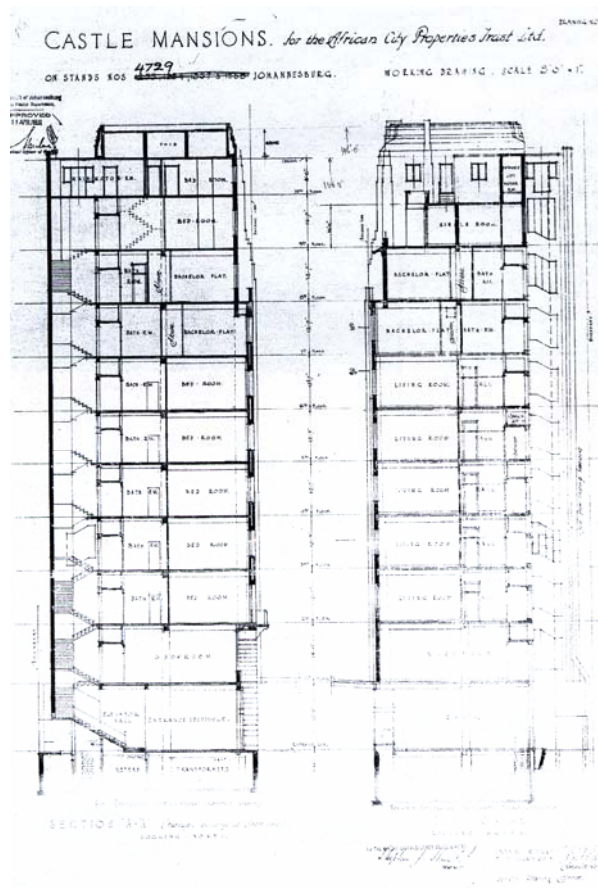
Below: copy of 'detail of South East corner for first and second floor'.



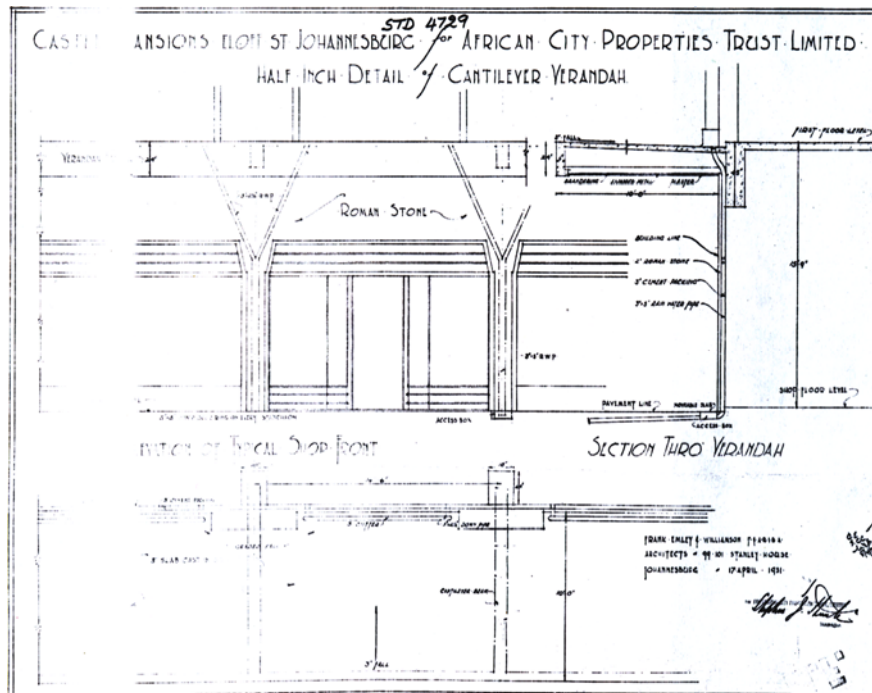
Below: copy of west elevation.



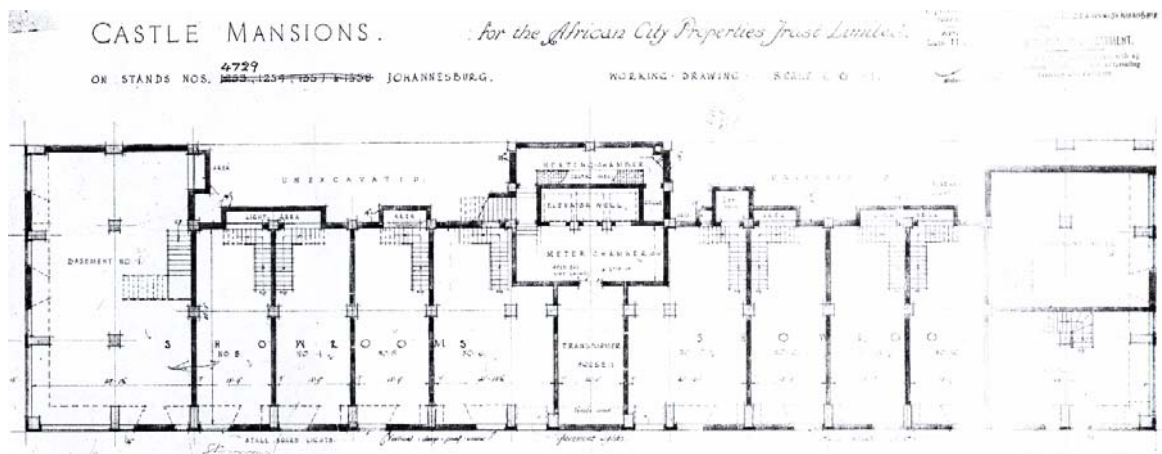
Below: copy of sections.



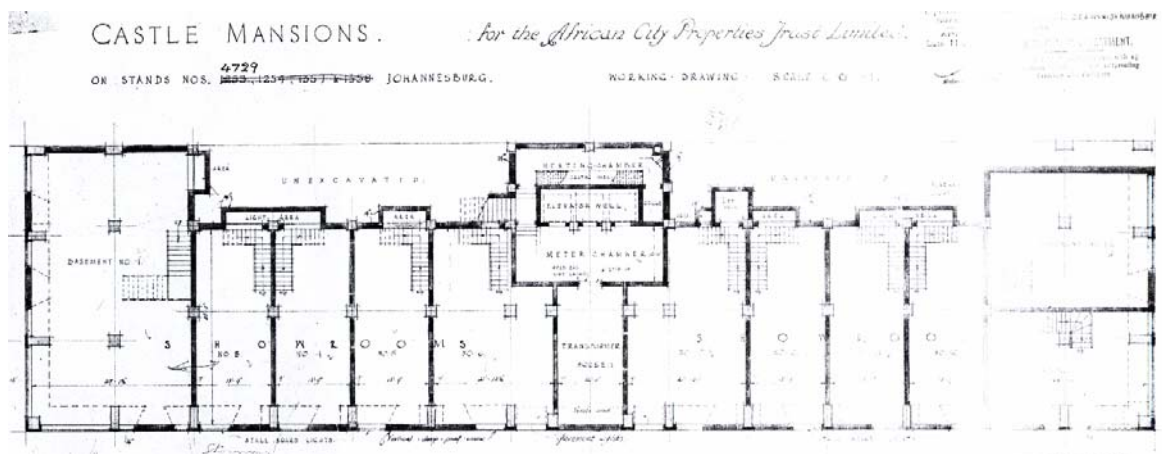
Below: copy of plan showing exterior detail.



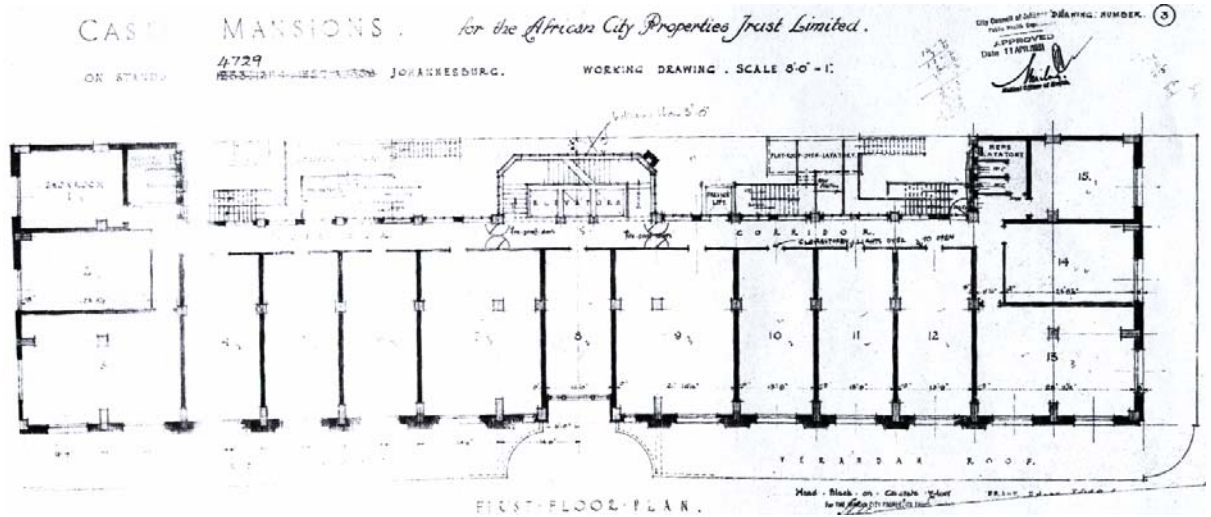
Below: copy of Basement plan.



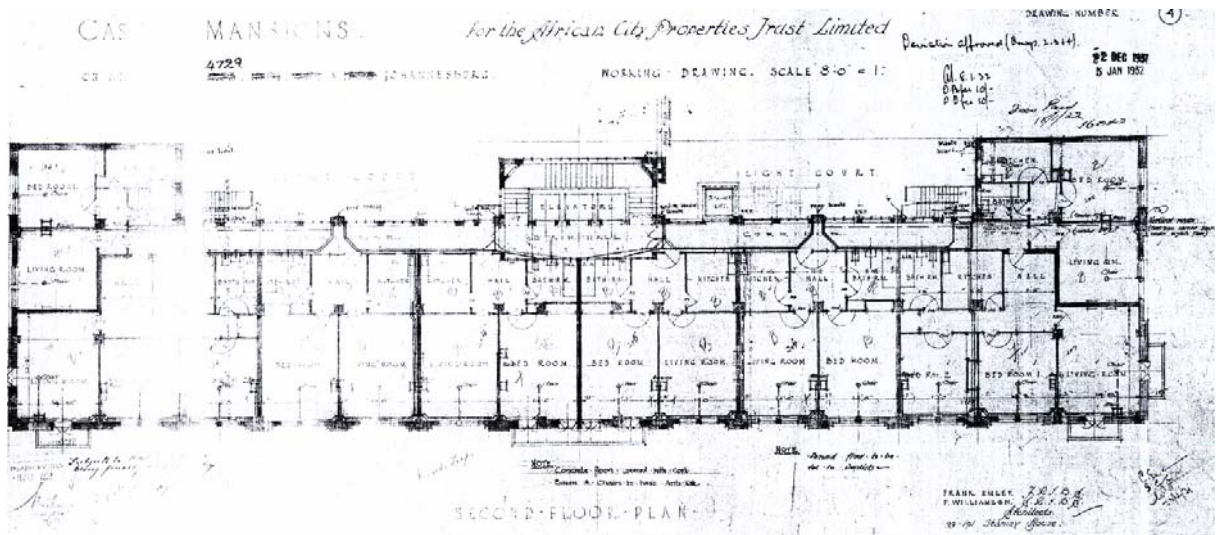
Below: copy of Ground Floor.



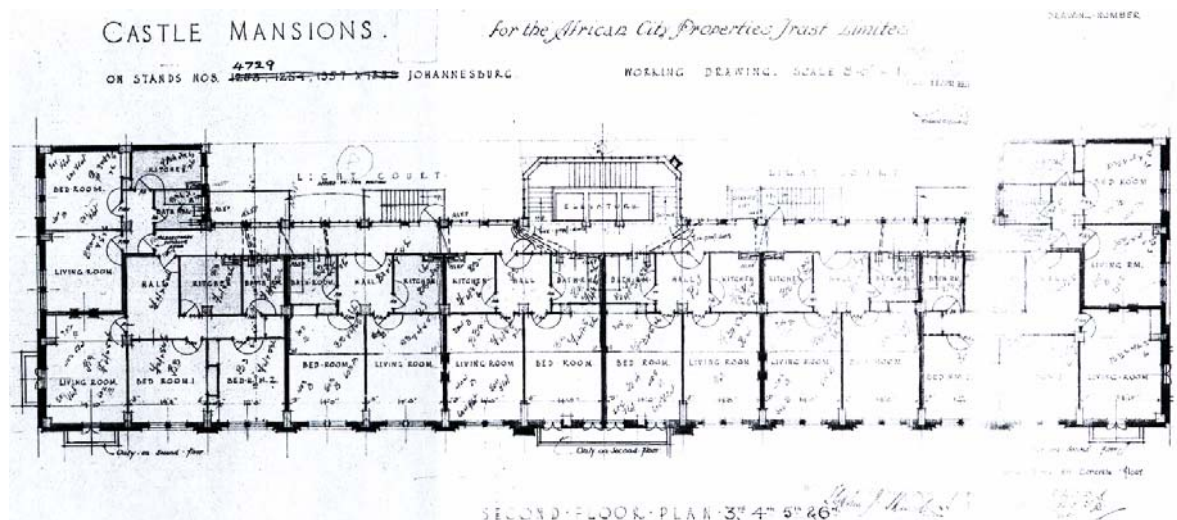
Below: copy of First Floor plan.



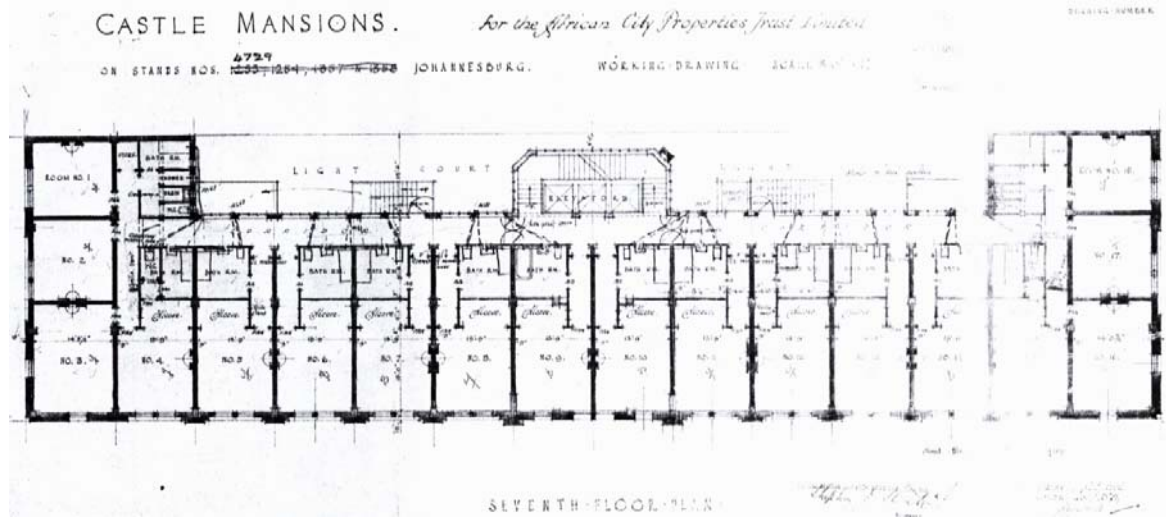
Below: copy of Second Floor plan.



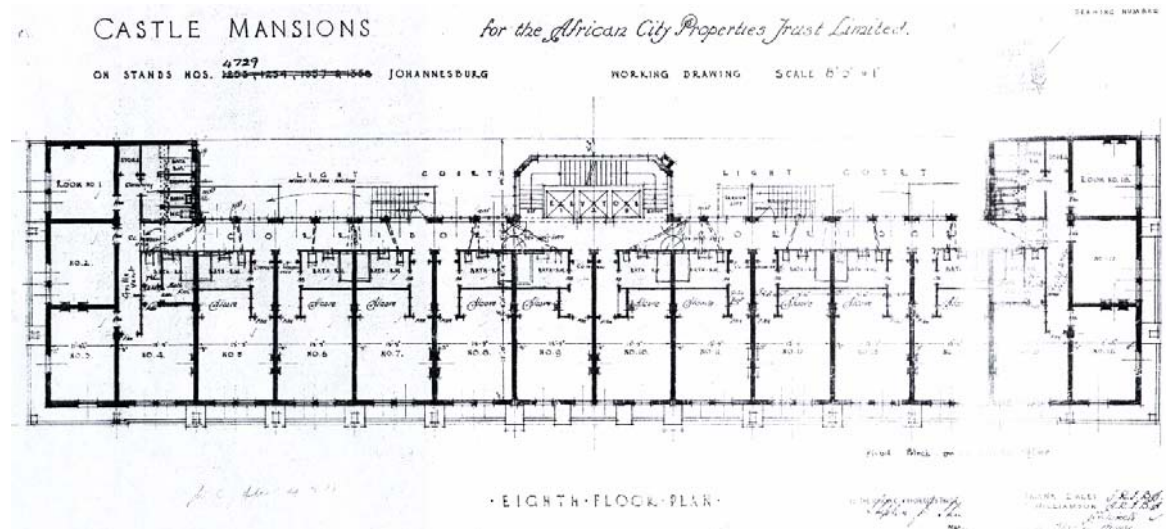
Below: copy of Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Floor plan.



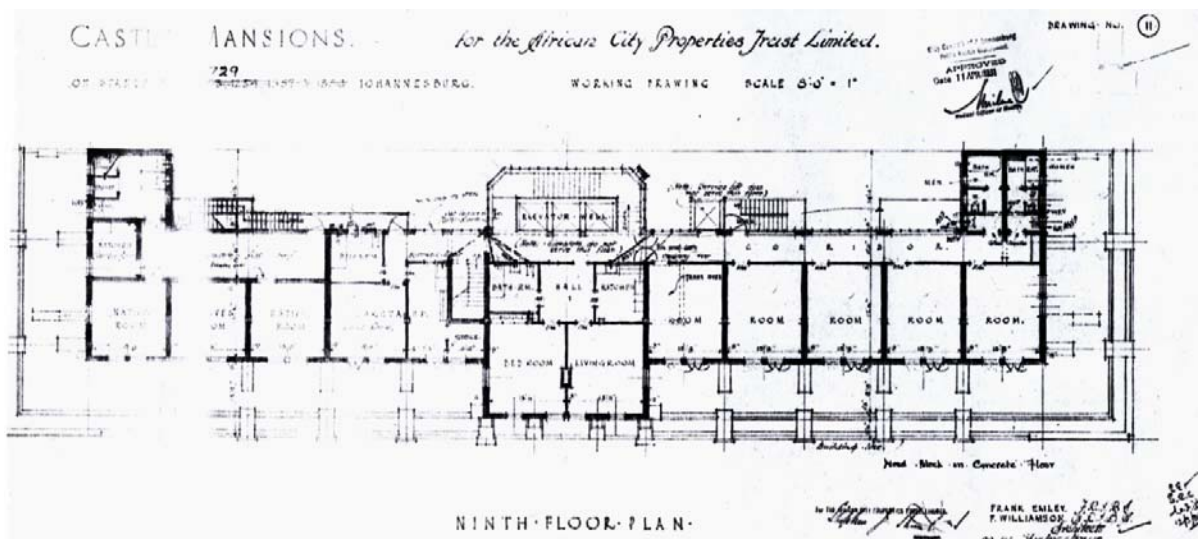
Below: copy of Seventh Floor:



Below: copy of Eighth Floor plan.



Below: Copy of Ninth Floor plan.



According to Van Der Waal: "By 1930 the Traditional Style had become the basis for stylistic renewal, as was manifested by the imitation rustic work, pillars, pilasters and mouldings used together with, for example, Art Deco Form and ornamentation elements in *Astor Mansions* (1931-2), 178 Jeppe Street. The Ahistorical Style appeared on the scene shortly afterwards, but embellishments were still based on the Art Deco style medium. A good example of this was *Dunvegan Chambers* (1933-4), 66 Pritchard Street [see AC-4], with its relief panels on the lower storeys of the middle section and the ornamentation running over the top of the corner sections. The building also boasted one of the purest applications of the 'crested arch', an almost detached concrete strip centred on the gable plane, which directed the eye in a sweeping movement over the eaves. This type of upper façade accentuation was reminiscent of the Late Victorian practice of accentuating the upper portion of the façade. However, during the 1930s this was not done to draw attention to the picturesque roofline but rather to strengthen the illusion of verticality and give a streamlined finish to the mass of the building. An early example of the use of crested arches was to be found in the second *Castle Mansions* (1930-2), 87/9.91/3 Eloff Street, whose façade, shorn of all ornamentation, represented one of the first applications of the Ahistorical Style in Johannesburg. Compared with *Astor Mansions* and *Dunvegan Chambers*, whose bay windows still echoed the traditional (domestic) architecture, *Castle Mansions* with its singly textured façade made a particularly modern impression." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

"While the commercial buildings were vertically orientated, especially in the upper portions of their facades, they did not entirely escape the force of the strong horizontal lines and planes of the display windows and pavement hoods. Verandahs with their pillars began to be replaced by cantilever pavement covers in the early 1930s, but such hoods were first used in the *Paramount Building* [see AE-1] as early as 1911. In Johannesburg this change-over was more gradual than in Sydney, Australia, where new building regulations introduced in 1912 banned verandahs altogether...Initially, Johannesburg's hoods were fitted with bearer beams on the underside. Later however, beams were placed on the upper side of the hood to leave an uncluttered ceiling over the pavement. The effect of this practice was that the hoods, together with the long bands of display windows, reinforced the suggestion of horizontal movement in the smooth street and pavement surfaces." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: From Mining Camp to Metropolis...).

At its completion at the end of 1932, the *second Castle Mansions* was considered by many as a building of special qualities. According to Chipkin, it was "the first modern building of the 1930s built in Eloff Street. Commenced in 1931, it took the contractors John Barrow sixteen months to complete what was advertised as the 'greatest building in South Africa': greatest in size (a whole city block in length), greatest in bulk (massive, symmetrical, fortress-like) and greatest in height. Its pre-eminence in the Johannesburg skyline was not based on its mandatory ten-storey elevation but on the height of its central Art Deco flagmast. It was regarded as the most modern building of its day, noted for its modern plateglass shop-fronts, with Art Deco brass trim and modernistic illuminated shop signage, its first-floor plateglass showroom windows and its dramatically modern entrance with sans-serif name letters. The previous competition for height had been won in the beginning of 1932 by *Astor Mansions*, eleven storeys high and 150 feet to the apex of its spire. This had surpassed *Barbican Building* [see S-1] 140 feet to top of its attic sculpture) and *Shell House*, which was the *South African Builder* of 1931, in an attempt at fair adjudication, recorded as 148 feet 9 inches to the top of its lift tower. Thus *Astor Mansions* held its pre-eminence by a mere 1 foot 3 inches 9375 millimetres). Now came *Castle Mansions* – massive ocean liner of a building, ten storeys high with a central attic tower and flagmast which the owners declared was 180 feet 7¼ inches (55 048 millimetres) above the pavement – a new height record for Johannesburg, superseding the short-lived claims of *Astor Mansions*, which had been completed only a few months earlier. But that seven and a quarter inches to the top ferrule of the flagmast on *Castle Mansions* did not in the end help much. Within five years a stepped infill building such as *Annan House* in Commissioner Street [see BC-2] was five floors higher than *Castle Mansions*, and by the end of the decade there were at least five real skyscrapers visible at the new record height-levels of the pre-war period: these held pre-eminence until they in turn were swamped by the building scale of the 1960s and 1970s." (Chipkin, C.M.: *Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society*...).

CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS:

Walls: reinforced concrete frame, precast concrete blocks.
Roof: concrete, flat.
Windows: steel casements with fanlights over.

The definition of a skyscraper according to Fleming is as follows: "A multi-storey building constructed on a steel skeleton, provided with high-speed electric elevators and combining extraordinary height with ordinary room-spacers such as would be used in low buildings. The term originated in the United States in the late 1880s, about ten or twelve years after office buildings in New York had reached the height of ten or twelve storeys or c. 250 ft. To go much beyond this was impossible with traditional building materials, with traditional building materials, and further development was based on the introduction of metal framing. This took place at Chicago in 1883...Steel skeleton construction for skyscrapers was first established by Holabird & Roche's Tacoma Building in Chicago (1890-94) which had twenty-two storeys and a complete steel skeleton. The highest skyscraper before the First World War was C. Gilbert's Woolworth building in New York (792 ft.); the highest to date [i.e. 1976] is the Empire State Building of 1930-32 (1,250 ft)." (Fleming, J. *et al*: The Penguin Dictionary Of Architecture, Penguin Books, Middlesex, reprint 1976.)

SITE FEATURES:

ALTERATIONS:

INTEGRITY:

INSCRIPTION:

"In March 2003 South Africa hosts the Seventh Annual World Congress on Art Deco. This will be held in Cape Town and to link into this, Jo'burg is erecting plaques on buildings evidencing the Art Deco theme. We start with the TOP TWENTY – great buildings in the Inner City will be identified by means of distinctive blue and white heritage plaques. A further forty buildings of similar merit will follow in the hall of fame. These include more in the centre of town but also those spread across Johannesburg, noticeably blocks of flats.

Art Deco was not just the preserve of the wealthy corporates [sic.]- it belonged to everyone, and the purpose of this project is to highlight a period in the history of Jo'burg which created a valuable architectural and social treasure. Some of these buildings are, sadly, deteriorating but dilapidation and decay cannot conceal the glorious and exuberant architecture." (Information sourced from Art Deco Plaques\main.htm).

"In replacing a small building of the same name, the architects Emley & Williamson used modern materials and Art Deco motifs in creating this impressive castle in 1931 in Eloff Street, the city's most fashionable shopping street. Large scale pre-cast concrete blocks provide a sense of strength and endurance; the central attic tower hints at the stronghold of the fortress, the keep. The flagpole right at the top echoes the pride of the nobleman flying his standard." (Information sourced from Art Deco Plaques\list2.htm).

ARCHITECT:

Emley & Williamson (address: 99 – 101 Stanley House, Commissioner Street).

BUILDER:

Builder: John Barrow (Pty) Limited.

Reinforcing engineers: The Reinforcing Steel Co. Ltd.

CONSTRUCTION DATE:

Date on plans : 1930
Approval of plans : 29 May 1931
Completion date : 5 December 1932

BUILDING STYLE:

Art Deco Monumentality: "...the tumbprint of a modernising classicism being transformed into Art Deco Monumentality." (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...).

Art Deco Exhibition Style.

"Architectural Merit and Workmanship of Merit: An absolutely beautiful early art deco building, with a well articulated stone facing." (Johannesburg Building, Space & Urban Feature Classification, 1998: Inner City).

BUILDING TYPE:

Shops to street, office and residential building.

ENVIRONMENT:

The following is mentioned in an undated survey form of the former NMC: "A very elegant building in superior material, with most attractive & restrained exterior decoration. It perfectly complements its famous landmark neighbours, in height and scale and development of style. The vertical emphasis & balance of elements is extremely pleasing." (SAHRA Archive File 3/1/3/Joh/A Johannesburg – General). *Manners Mansions* (AE-3) and *Anstey's Building* (AF-2) are both situated in Jeppe Street. The owner of the building at the time of the undated survey was African City Props Ltd.

CONDITION:

Fair. City grime and neglect has taken its toll and a good clean up (preferably by specialists) and cosmetic maintenance work will restore this important building to its former glory.

Refer recent fire damage to Jinos (First Floor).

URGENT ACTION:

Under no circumstances should this building be painted and the owners should be informed accordingly.

SAHRA RECORD REGARDING ALTERATIONS, RENOVATIONS, RESTORATION:

PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Heritage Resources Act, 1999)

General protection:	Section 34(1) structure/s	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Formal protection:	provincial heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	national heritage site	<input type="checkbox"/>
	provisional protection	<input type="checkbox"/>
	heritage area	<input type="checkbox"/>
	listed in provincial heritage resources register	<input type="checkbox"/>

Relevant Gazette Notice:

Gazette description:

FORMER PROTECTION STATUS: (under National Monuments Act, 1969)

NOTES:

It was previously recommended (i.e. by the former NMC) that the building be declared as a national monument. This recommendation was never implemented.

DEEDS INFORMATION:

Original ownership: African City Properties Trust Ltd.
By 1956: African City Properties Trust.

PRE-HISTORY OF SITE:

CARNARVON HOUSE:

By 1888 - according to Leyds - *Carnarvon House* stood at 61 Kerk Street and 87 Eloff Street.

Leyds: "Before leaving the year 1888 a few random items of interest must be recorded. During October three doctors established surgeries or consulting rooms, and advertised accordingly...Dr Exton advertises that he has had seventeen years' experience in Bloemfontein. He also is one of the Accoucheurs. The word gynaecologist does not appear to have been in general use. His consulting room is 'in Carnarvon House, opposite St. Mary's Hall', which means at the south-west corner of Eloff and Kerk Streets, where John Orr's shop is." (Leyds, G.A.: *A History of Johannesburg*). Accoucheur is a French word meaning a male-midwife or a surgeon who attends to a woman in childbirth.

FIRST CASTLE MANSIONS:

The first *Castle Mansions* designed by McIntosh & Moffat in 1899, and completed after the Second Anglo Boer War in 1902, originally occupied the site of the current building.

"Residential buildings erected in Johannesburg during this period [1890 – 1900] shared one major feature – verandahs which, in the case of higher buildings, were stacked across the full height of the façades... To a great extent, these verandahs expressed the homeliness and habitability of this type of building. High french doors gave access from the rooms to the verandahs on which residents relaxed or entertained their friends. Early buildings such as the *Salisbury Chambers* (1891), 65/7 Von Brandis Street, and the *North Western Hotel* 19, 21 Pritchard Street [see X-2] had timber verandahs. The growing wealth of the mining town in the mid 1890s was reflected in more richly embellished cast-iron verandahs, of which the best examples were those of the *Heath Hotel* (1894-5), 78 Pritchard Street; *Escourt Building* (c. 1896), 84/6 Pritchard Street; and *Pollock Mansions* (c. 1897), 94/6/8, 100 Eloff Street. The first *Castle Mansions* (1899-1902), 87/9, 91/2 Eloff Street had balconies and bay windows instead of verandahs. As in the case of *Pollock Mansions*, the roofline was interrupted by a row of attractive gables. The façade with its decorative banding was one of the very few examples of the revival of Jacobean architecture in Johannesburg...Both *Castle Mansions* and *Pollock Mansions* extended over the full width of a block and were worthy predecessors of the flat or apartment complexes that were to rise in Johannesburg later." (Van Der Waal, G-M.: *From Mining Camp to Metropolis...*).

Right: "Castle Block, Offices of the High Commissioner. Eloff Street looking south with a closer view of Castle Block. The administrative office of the high commissioner of the UK, Lord Milner, were housed in this Block. Markhams Corner is just visible in the distance." (Norwich, O.I.: *A Johannesburg Album; Historical Postcards*, postcard 92).



A photo of the first *Castle Mansions* appearing in Stark, F. [Ed.]: *Seventy Golden Years*, carries the following caption: "Castle Mansions which derived its name from Edward J. Castle, K.C...the building housed Lord Milner's offices and for almost a year the Transvaal was governed from these premises which were superseded in the 'thirties by a modern block."

"On the 9th August, 1902, Lord Milner arrived in Johannesburg to assume the government of the Transvaal. He had already transferred the seat of the High Commissionership from Cape Town to Johannesburg, thereby snubbing Pretoria which he disliked and described as 'a place unfitted to be a capital of anywhere'...he established his offices in Castle Mansions in Eloff Street and took over as his official residence Sunnyside, the house built by Hennen Jennings in Parktown..." (Shorten, J.R.: *The Johannesburg Saga*).

"Milner, Lord. Born as Alfred Milner on March 23, 1852 in Bonn on the Rhine, he was partly of German origin. An exceptionally able administrator, he was appointed Governor of Cape Colony in 1897, and took charge of the negotiations with President Kruger, meant to avoid the outbreak of the South African War...Unfortunately his uncompromising views led to the breakdown of last-minute discussions in Bloemfontein, 1899. After the annexation of the two Boer Republics, Lord Milner was made Governor of both the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony in 1901. His admitted aim of overcoming the power of the Afrikaner by the importation of English settlers aroused the antagonism of the Boers, but it was acknowledged that the Civil Service and other departments which he established were extremely efficient, and he undoubtedly did a great deal for the development of the country. He returned to Britain in 1905 after much of the war damage had been repaired. During World War I Lord Milner was one of the principal members of the British Cabinet. He died on May 13, 1925." (Rosenthal E.: Encyclopaedia of Southern Africa...).

HISTORY:

"African City Properties Trust (1952) Ltd. One of the modern romances of big business that will one day take up an important chapter in the history and development of Johannesburg lies behind the story of the emergence of the African City Properties Trust 1952 Ltd. as the largest property-owning concern in Southern Africa today. Originally established in London in 1894 with the object of acquiring properties in the Union, A.C.P.T. Limited, amongst other valuable holdings, owned six of the highest-valued properties in Johannesburg, facing on Eloff Street. On these sites there existed buildings which in their day were looked upon as the last word in modern architecture but which had long been outmoded by the fast pace of the city. In 1940 there came into being a company called Controlled Investments Limited, owned and operated by two brothers, Mr. Samuel L. Glazer, J.P., who came to the Union in 1926, and Mr. Bernard Glazer, who came to Johannesburg in 1930, and who were mainly responsible for the development of Hillbrow. The company built the Skyline Hotel and a new block of shops, Hillcrest Buildings, on an adjoining corner, which will eventually rise to eleven storeys. In 1947 the Glazer brothers realised that Eloff Street - South Africa's most valuable strip of land - was lagging far behind in the meteoric progress and growth of the country. The story of how the Glazer brothers made successive trips to England, wooed the shareholders of African City Properties Trust, and finally managed to purchase a controlling interest in the company, is one that will be discussed in financial circles in South Africa for years to come. At that stage the company owned the following properties: Castle Mansions, of 10 storeys, on the corner of Eloff Street and Jeppe Street [AE-2]; [second] Manners Mansions, of 13 storeys, on the corner of Jeppe Street and Joubert Street [AE-3]; Davidson Mansions (now the famous Waldorf), of five storeys on the corner of Eloff Street and Bree Street; Walter Mansions, of four storeys, on the corner of Eloff Street, Bree Street and Jeppe Street, which had since been demolished, a modern skyscraper being erected in its place; Pollock Mansions, of four storeys in the heart of Eloff Street, now demolished to make way for African City - one of the landmarks of Johannesburg's commercial centre; [first] Marlborough House, of four storeys, bounded by the corner of Eloff Street, Commissioner Street and Fox Street, now demolished to make way for a modern skyscraper standing there today; St. James Mansions, of five storeys, on the corner of Eloff Street and Bree Street, and Norfolk House, of four storeys, on the corner of Joubert Street and Bree Street, which has since been demolished for the erection of the new Bosman Building [AS-4]; Lauriston Court, of five storeys in Louis Botha Avenue, Houghton; Stanley House, corner of Commissioner Street and Bree Street [sic. should be 89, 91 Commissioner and 37 Loveday Streets; see Pre-History: F-5], which was subsequently sold, and a subsidiary, Green's Buildings Limited, which owns 17-storey Annan House, Commissioner Street [BC-2], which today [i.e. 1956] houses the headquarters of African City Properties Trust. With complete control in their hands, the Glazer brothers and associates now turned to their second part of their long-term programme. This was the organization and flotation of a public company known as A.C.P. Investment Limited, which acquired the total controlling interest in African City Properties Trust Ltd. This new company perfected the plans for the rebirth of Eloff Street, demolishing existing buildings and erecting gigantic modern edifices which today form new and progressive landmarks of the city's main shopping thoroughfare. At the same time the company gained further suburban interest by taking over Carnarvon Hotels Limited, owners of the Orange Grove Hotel, in Orange Grove, and a block of 14 shops next to the hotel. The company also bought out Stedelike Grondbeleggers Beperk, owners of bank premises in De Villiers Street, Johannesburg. The Organisation has since bought Mackay Mansions, of 11 storeys, on the corner of Rissik and Jeppe Streets [AQ-7], Ridgeway Court, corner of Bok Street and Nugget Street and Parkleigh Court, in Wolmarans Street. The Glazer brothers have always worked together. For more than two decades they have planned real estate and building operations with an implicit faith in the future of Johannesburg and the still greater future of the country where-in their interest now extends to Bechuanaland [now known as Botswana] and the Central African Federation. But the story does not end there. As South Africa moves forward in the face of inevitable progress, so African City Property Investment Limited and its associated companies will move forward with it, secure in the knowledge that its prosperity is intimately bound up in that of a progressive country." (Stark, F.

[Ed.]: Seventy Golden Years...).

"THE ABORTION SCANDAL DR GERHARDUS BUCHNER: 1949 Just before midnight on Wednesday, 9 November, 1948, the police raided the private medical practice of Dr Gerhardus Bernieres Buchner at Castle Mansions, Eloff Street, Johannesburg. They discovered five women in different rooms, each of whom had undergone an abortion. Buchner was in another room, counting money on the bed. When Detective Head Constable F.C. van Niekerk, the officer in charge of the raid, accused Buchner of carrying out abortions on the premises, Buchner claimed that the women were being treated for varicose veins. One of the patients was immediately transferred to the Johannesburg General Hospital where it was established that she had received an abortion. Thus began one of South Africa's greatest scandals in recent times. Buchner (44) was an outstanding physician. He studied medicine at the University of Cape Town Medical School, in Germany and at the Sorbonne in Paris. He had been operating an extremely lucrative abortion clinic in Johannesburg for over eight years and his private practice at Castle Mansions provided the perfect front for these clandestine operations. The system at Castle Mansions was simple, efficient and well-organized. On arrival, patients would be examined either by Dr Buchner or his junior partner, Dr Edward Blumberg (34). Once pregnancy had been confirmed, Nurse Susanna Pieterse (34), would present the bill. (The average cost was £70 to £75, payable in advance.) When the financial details were concluded, arrangements for the abortion would be made. Normally, patients would arrive sometime during the afternoon, go into the Theatre late in the evening, and be discharged the following morning. They would not know the names of the doctors or the nurses that treated them. The abortion team comprised four people. Buchner or Blumberg carried out the operation with Nurse Pieterse acting as anesthetist. A second nurse, Anna Sophia Kelly, sometimes performed the duties of general assistant. In addition, a relief nurse who filled in for Kelly in 1941, when she went on holiday, provided a referral system. From 1943 to 1945, this nurse had worked for another doctor, but would send pregnant women to Buchner. For this service, she received a commission of £5 to £7 per patient. In 1946, she worked in the Castle Mansions rooms once more and was paid £30 per month - an excellent salary of the time. At the inquiry that followed Buchner's exposure, the same nurse claimed that at least five abortions were carried out each day - although the clinic had on occasion handled up to nine patients in a twenty-four hour period. In some cases, operations were conducted by torch-light in order to avoid attracting unnecessary attention to the premises! Despite the elaborate precautions which Buchner and his associates took to maintain their anonymity, word slowly got around. In the end, exposure was inevitable. Buchner had a close shave in 1946, when the Johannesburg newspaper, *Weekblad*, published an article entitled *Aborsie in Johannesburg*, in which it was alleged that one of Johannesburg's foremost abortionists had three flats in the city, all under different names and was said to be making £2 500 a month from the practice. The newspaper's source was subsequently proved to be more than accurate. Indeed, exactly how lucrative Buchner's practice had become was revealed during the trial. Financial records presented to the court showed that from July 1 946 to June 1947, over £51 000 had been paid into Buchner's banking account. From August 1947, to July 1948, the figure was £36 000, and in the three months that preceded the police raid, Buchner's income had been £9 500. Buchner also owned a farm and plots of ground on which houses were built and sold. The abortion clinic at the Castle Mansions was making him very wealthy. The end came for Buchner shortly after the police were informed about the illegal operations being performed at Castle Mansions by a small stock farmer from the Northern Transvaal. The farmer had been asked by his recently-widowed cousin to take her to Johannesburg where she was to have a medical examination for 'varicose veins'. After the first visit to Castle Mansions, she had asked him to lend her £75, for the cost of the operation. She had no money of her own because her husband's estate had not been wound-up. Her uncle gave her £70, and a few days later they returned to the city. When he picked her up after her operation, she looked 'very weak and pale' and on the return journey, she confessed to having had an abortion. The farmer later returned to Castle Mansions, spoke first to Nurse Pieterse and then to Buchner and tried unsuccessfully to get some of their money back. It was not long afterwards that he approached Brigadier Mickdal, Acting Commissioner for the police in Pretoria, and alleged that Buchner was procuring illegal abortions on a 'wholesale scale'. Following the raid on Castle Mansions, the police began an intensive investigation to trace other patients of Buchner and Blumberg. Needless to say, the investigation was of an extremely sensitive nature, all the more so since the police had no wish to cause hardship or distress to any of the women who had been treated by either of the two doctors. Meanwhile, Buchner, Blumberg and Pieterse were remanded in custody pending an inquiry. The inquiry which began on 9 December, 1948, quickly established that there was a case to answer. The four accused were granted bail, Buchner and Blumberg for the amounts of £500 each. On 17 January, 1949, the official hearing began at the Johannesburg Magistrates' Court under Mr M.A.S. Mathews. In order to protect the identities (sic.) of those involved, the hearing was held in-camera and none of the names and addresses of the over sixty witnesses who were called to give evidence were released to the press. At the end of each day an official bulletin was issued. Buchner, Blumberg, Pieterse and Kelly were subsequently committed for trial on 1 March, 1949. The seven-week trial which began two months later was to attract immense public interest, produce over 1100 pages of written evidence, and reveal

some astounding facts. The prosecution was led by Mr F.E. Lutge K.C., Attorney General for the Transvaal. Witness after witness came to the stand and testified that they had had abortion performed by Buchner and Blumberg under conditions of great secrecy. In virtually every case the patient had no knowledge of the names of the doctors or nurses who treated them. One woman told the court how, on the morning after the operation, she was brought a cup of tea in her room and noticed that there were a number of other cups on the tray. She had assumed that this meant that other patients were also being treated. She also said that on the day after her operation she was sent home in a taxi, even though she was still very weak, because her room had to be vacated by noon. Another woman from Natal went to Johannesburg to procure an abortion after doctors 'in Natal refused to help her. She approached a number of doctors and all but one refused to help her in any way - he gave her Buchner's name. At Castle Mansions, she was first interviewed by a blond nurse (Pieterse) and was later examined by a doctor who told her that she was five months pregnant. The blond woman then asked her if she couldn't get married. Pieterse then informed her that, because of the advanced state of her pregnancy, the fee for the abortion would be £200. This figure was later reduced to £150. The women paid £90 in cash - all the money she had with her - and Pieterse also took down her parents' names and address. 'Why did Nurse Pieterse do that?' 'Mr N. Masters, Mr Lutge's assistant asked. 'As a guarantee,' the woman replied. 'Guarantee? Guarantee of what?' 'That they would tell my parents if I didn't pay the money I owed.' She later sent the balance by post. Dr Blumberg was also charged with attempting to defeat the ends of justice. He was alleged to have approached a policeman friend (who happened by coincidence to have been part of the raid on Castle Mansions) and asked him to get the names and addresses of some of the key witnesses. The police initially maintained that this was an attempt by Blumberg to get some of the witnesses to either change their evidence or claim that their evidence was given under duress. These charges were later dropped. After hearing evidence for seven weeks the judges retired on 27 June to consider their verdict. At 10 a.m. on the morning of Tuesday, 9 August, 1949, judgment was finally given. Facing a packed courtroom, the judge began his two-hour summing-up. He began by cam (sic.) mending the defective team of Detective Head Constable F. C. van Niekerk, Detective Head Constable H.P. Mare and Detective-Sergeants J.A. Le Roux and S. Smidt. They had carried out extremely delicate investigative work with great tact and consideration. Consequently, neither the lives nor the reputations of any of the women involved had been harmed in any way. The judge turned to the defendants. The court had accepted, he conceded, the defense counsel's argument that the women who had appeared for the prosecution were in no way complainants. All those called had appeared merely at the request of the police. However, as he pointed out, the morality of abortion was not the issue. It was the task of the court simply to establish if the law had been broken and this was clearly the case. Furthermore, the accused were fully aware of the illegality of what they were doing: they had operated under conditions of great secrecy, and the names and addresses of the women who had undergone abortions did not appear on any file cards. It was clear, therefore, that Buchner's private practice was being used to procure abortions on a regular basis. Of the 60 counts on which Buchner was charged, he was found guilty of 49. He was given six weeks 'hard labour' for each count - a total of five years and 34 weeks. Blumberg was given six weeks 'hard labour' for 34 counts - three years and 48 weeks. Nurse Pieterse, who had actively participated in the abortions and acted as anesthetist, was given four weeks on each of 48 counts - a total of four years. Nurse Kelly received four weeks for ten counts but her four months sentence was suspended. Buchner, Blumberg and Kelly received their sentences stoically and made no protest as they were led away to the cells. Pieterse, however, broke down completely and had to be assisted from the court. And so it seemed that along and drawn out cause celebre had finally ended. But the closing chapter of the story was still to be written. Buchner was to use his medical knowledge to save a life while in prison. For this exemplary conduct he was granted two years remission of sentence. Dr Gerhardus Buchner died several years after his release." (Information sourced from <http://www.africacrime-mystery.co.za/gerhardu.htm>).

GENERAL NOTES:

Estimated cost of building	: £112 000
Estimated cost of drainage	: £3 000
Accommodation approved	: 188 'European' and 10 'Natives'
Phase One valuation	: £80 000 (2 March 1932)
Valuation at completion	: £26 000 (5 December 1932)
Occupied	: yes (partially)

"Eloff Street in its heyday never attempted architectural unity. On the contrary, with its hodge-podge of late-Victorian, Edwardian, neo-classical and Art Deco Buildings and shop-fronts, it lacked the essential urban quality of a great metropolitan thoroughfare. Nevertheless it was the main shopping street of South Africa...Eloff Street does not have the same ring as the rue Saint-Honoré. Nevertheless in its own way it was quite dazzling." (Chipkin, C.M.: Johannesburg Style; Architecture & Society...)

"Castle Mansion shines again *February 19, 2004* By Thomas Thale CASTLE Mansion in downtown Johannesburg, hailed as the greatest South African building when construction was completed in the 1930s, looks set to recover some of its sparkle when it rises again as a residential complex. Property investors AFHCO Group Holdings recently bought the building with the gray stone façade, which has stood empty for 10 years, for conversion into a residential complex. The property was formerly owned by ApexHi. Wayne Plit, managing director AFHCO, says the company will spend R8-million on the alterations. 'We will convert the building into 135 apartments comprising 99 two-bedroom flats, 14 bachelor flats, 14 one-bedroom and five three-bedroom penthouse units.'" The 10-storey Castle Mansion, on the corner of Eloff and Jeppe streets, was the tallest and most modern building in the country when it was built in 1931. In his book, *Johannesburg Style, Architecture and Society, 1880 to 1960*, Clive Chipkin writes of the building: 'Its pre-eminence in the Johannesburg skyline was not based on its mandatory 10-storey elevation but on the height of its central Art Deco flag mast. It was regarded as the most modern building of its day, noted for its modern plate glass shop-fronts, with Art Deco brass trim and modernistic illuminated shop signage, its first-floor plate glass showroom windows and its dramatically modern entrance with sans-serif name letters.' Today, retail outlets remain on the ground floor, but the rest of the building is deserted, except for the workmen on site busy removing rubble from the building, as construction work gets underway. According to Plit, construction will entail clearing the floors, removing existing partitions, stripping flooring materials and then rebuilding the units. 'Significant costs though, will go towards plumbing and electrification. We need separate plumbing stacks for each unit,' explains Plit. 'Each unit will have its own bathroom, kitchenette, floor finishes and curtain rails. We had detailed plans drawn-up by architects and engineers. This is not makeshift stuff.' The building will have access control in the form of fingerprint technology, 24-hour security, including CCTV surveillance, intercoms and TV points to each unit. Apartments from the second to the fifth floor will be ready for occupation by mid-year, according to Plit. Work on the rest of the building will be completed by December. AFCHO is targeting people who earn between R2 000 and R8 000 per month to move into the newly renovated apartments, says Plit, adding that demand for residential property in the inner city is on the rise. Gerald Leissner, CEO of ApexHi, a listed company that owns numerous buildings in the inner city, said in a statement that the company intends selling some 40 000m² of office space in the Johannesburg city centre for conversion into residential apartments. According to Leissner, retail space in the city centre is fully let." (Information sourced from CASTLE MANSION SHINES AGAIN.htm)

PREVIOUS TENANTS:

By 1954:

Eloff Street: 87 "Romanze"; 87a – Sport & Country; 87c – L Bethlehem & Co; 89a – Treasures (Pty) Ltd; 91 - Bojars Ladies Outfitters; 91a – La Couture (Pty) Ltd; 91b "Rejane" Ladies Outfitters; 93 – Manhattan Ltd; 93a Mannie Brothers (Pty) Ltd.

61 Kerk Street: Crysanne (Pty) Ltd.; Levinson's; Edgars Store.

170 Jeppe Street: Vendome (Pty) Ltd.

CURRENT TENANT/S:

Lady World U.S.A. Wholesalers.

Grillos.

World Fashion – Men's and Women's Clothing.

Sterns.

Little Stars Day Care Centre.

Albertini Jewellers.

Kinky Boutique.

SOURCES:

For additional illustrative information, see relevant supplementary photo album in electronic format.

See SOURCES DOCUMENT for information on sources consulted with reference to this document.

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Historic Value:

Associated with historic person, group or organisation

Associated with historic event or activity

Architectural/Aesthetic value:

- Important example of building type
- Important example of a style or period
- Fine details, workmanship or aesthetics
- Work of a major architect or builder

Social/Spiritual/Linguistic value:

- Associated with social, spiritual, linguistic, economic or political activity
- Illustrates an historical period

Scientific/Technological value:

- Example of industrial, technical or engineering development/achievement
- New, rare or experimental building techniques

RECORDED BY:

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Unless otherwise indicated photographs by Catharina JM Bruwer.

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