

MINNESOTA ARCHITECTURE-HISTORY INVENTORY FORM

Property Location			
Property Name:	G.A.R. Hall/Memorial Hall	Inventory No.	ME-LTC-0153
Address:	308 North Marshall	County:	Meeker
City/Twp:	Litchfield	PIN	
T-R-S Quarter:	T119N R31W Sec. 11 SW ¼	Block:	54
USGS Quad	Litchfield North, Minnesota	Lot:	5

Property Information			
Architect:	Unknown	Style:	Period Revival
Date Const:	1885	Historic Context:	Railroad and Agricultural Development 1870-1940
Historic Use:	Social Hall	Present Use:	Museum
Property Type:	Building	Survey Name:	Downtown Historic Resources Resurvey
NR Status:	Listed	NR Recommendation:	Listed
Prepared by:	William E. Stark, based on Hackett	Survey Date:	February 2010

Description:

The G.A.R. Hall is faces west onto the city park within central Litchfield. Constructed of cream-colored brick, its style is reminiscent of a small, medieval fortress. The symmetrical front elevation of the building includes two window openings framing an engaged, projecting central tower. The tower contains with an arched door opening with a single, wood-paneled door with a rounded transom. The entrance contains a wood paneled door and a small round window. Positioned above the door is an inscribed stone with the raised letters "G.A.R." and the date of 1885. Above the stone tablet is a roundel containing the photograph portrait of Abraham Lincoln. The tower is mounted by a heavy, corbelled cornice. Square, corbelled turrets stand out from the front corner pilasters, and project above the parapet wall. Front fenestration includes two-over-two, double-hung windows placed within a semi-elliptical opening, brick window hood and a stone sill. Similar windows, with segmental arched openings, are found on the other windows of the hall: four windows are located on the south wall, while the north wall contains only one.

A brick, rear addition was constructed in 1961 by the Meeker County Historical Society as a museum, and abuts the east wall of the hall.

History:

The hall was built in 1885 as a tribute to those who fought to preserve the union during the Civil War. It was designed to resemble a fort and to contain rooms for a public library, reading and museum. The cost of the structure and the land was \$5,000. Funding for the site and the hall was obtained by subscription from citizens and Civil War veterans. The veterans of Litchfield and Meeker County had founded their own chapter of the G.A.R., Frank Daggett Post No. 35, on July 8, 1883. The hall was deeded to the City of Litchfield with the stipulation that it should remain unaltered, standing as a permanent monument.

This structure is representative of the Grand Army of the Republic movement which wielded powerful political and social influence in the years after the Civil War until the turn of the century. "Memorial Hall" is one of the finest examples of the architecture inspired by the G.A.R. activity.

Evaluation:

This property is listed in the National Register and continues to possess the significance and integrity that make it eligible for listing.

Integrity:

The hall has been well preserved and maintained over the years, and few alterations have been made to the property. In 1961, the rear addition was added to expand the museum.

Condition:

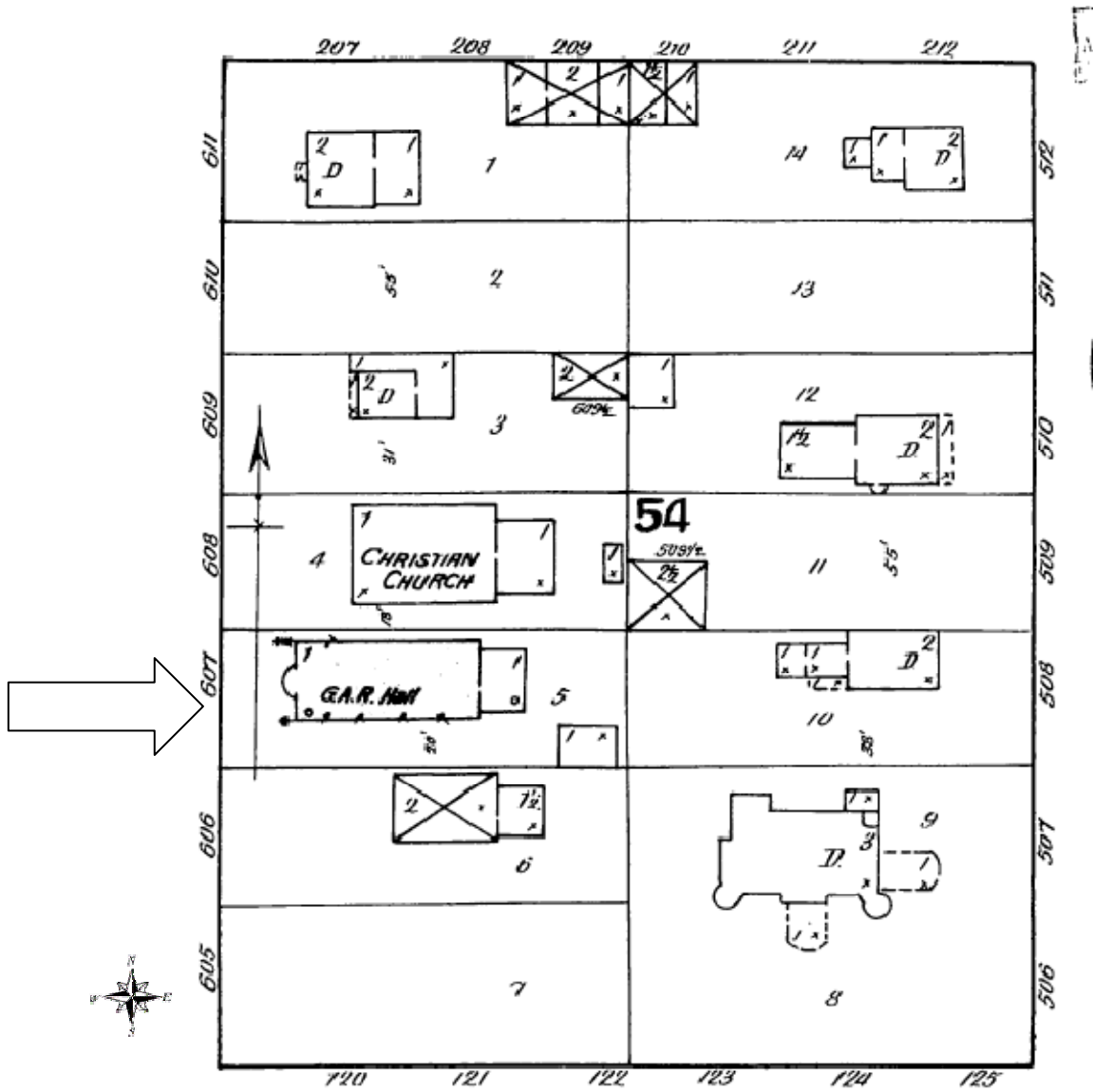
In general, the G.A.R. Hall is in very good condition and appears to be well maintained. Some spalling and deterioration due to water penetration near the down spout on the north wall was evident. Attempts to repair this condition were also seen. The 1961 building also appears to be experiencing erosion of the concrete wall due to improper water drainage.



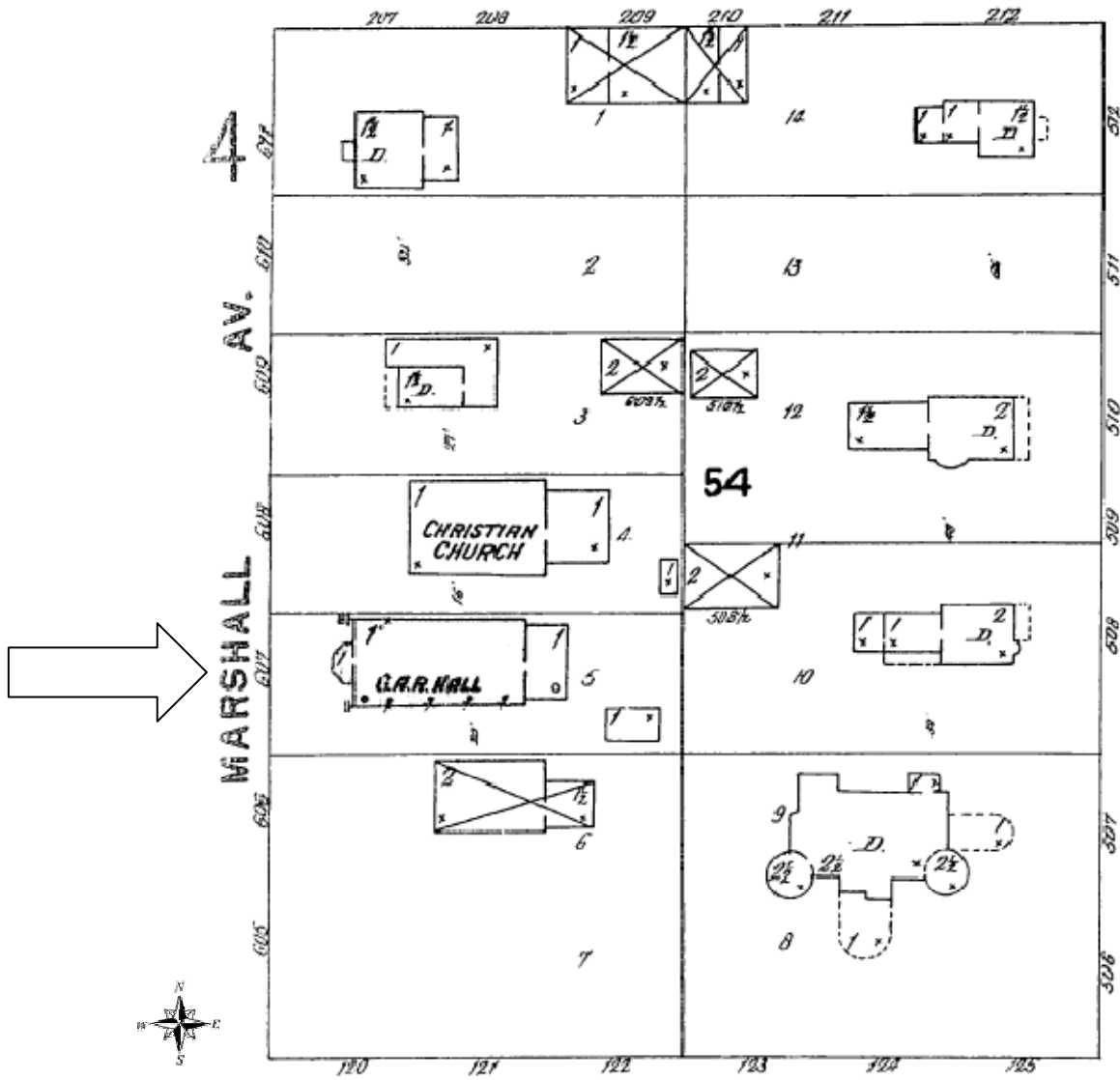
Facing NE



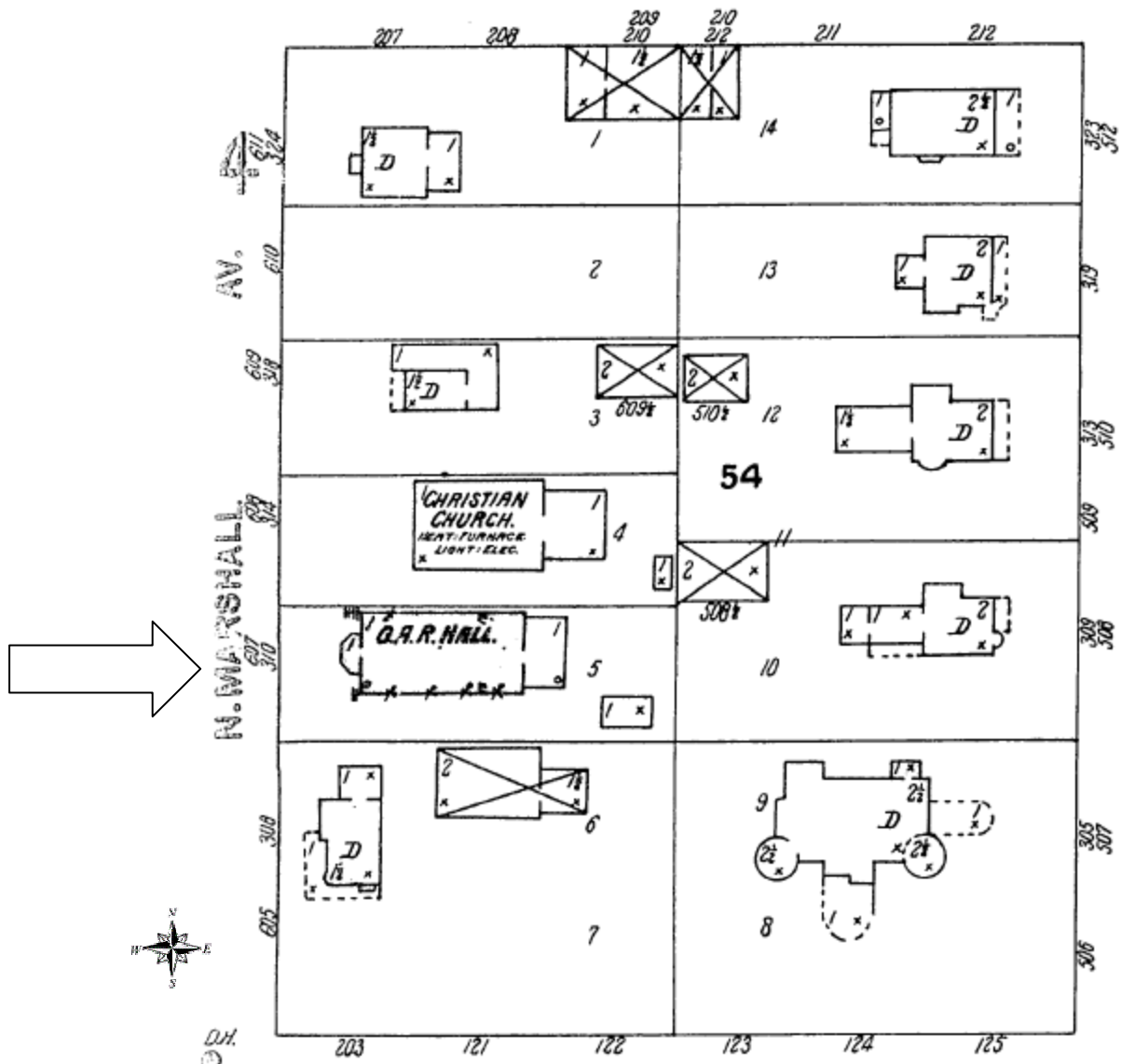
Facing SE: evidence of water damage



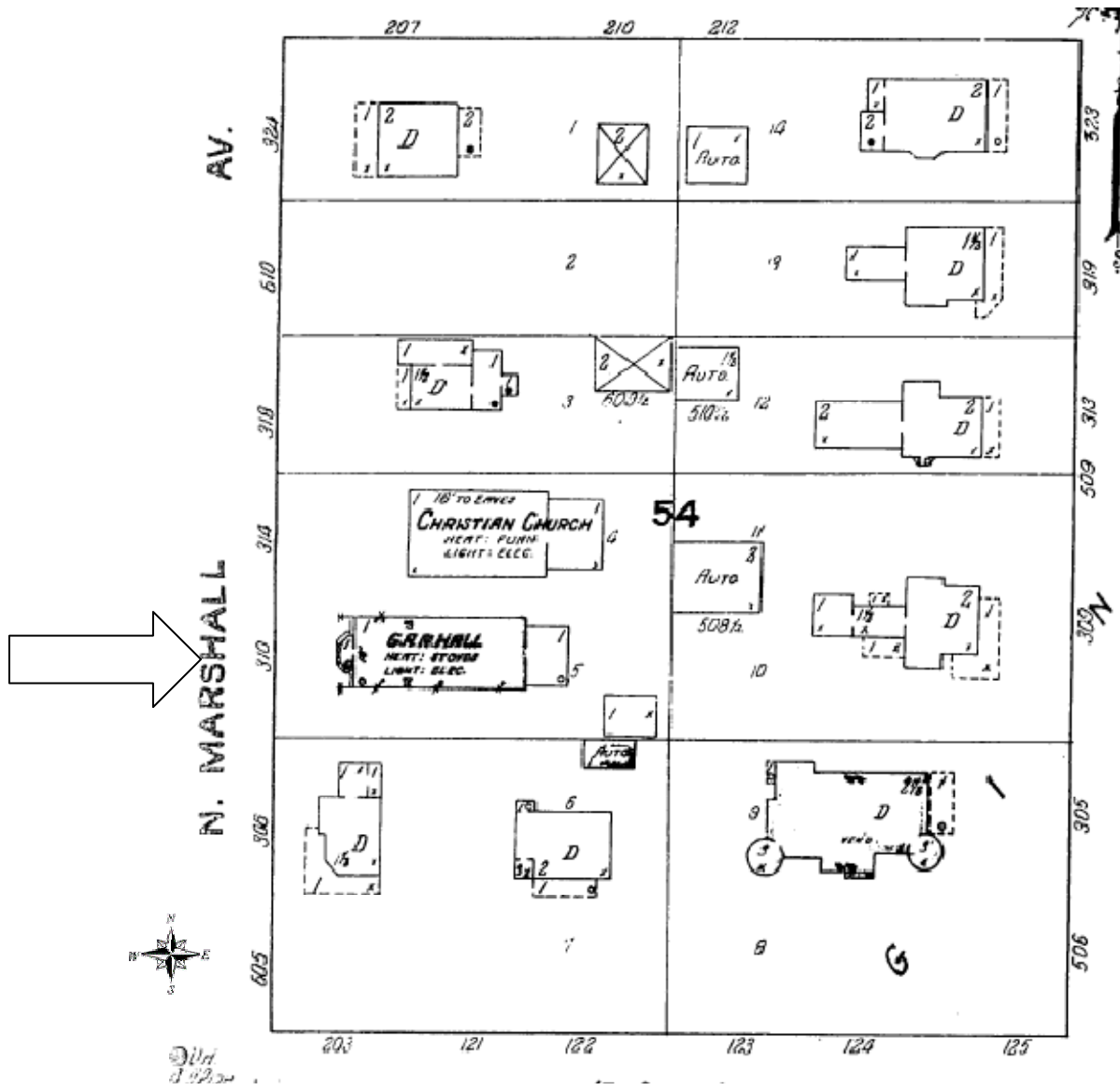
1892 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



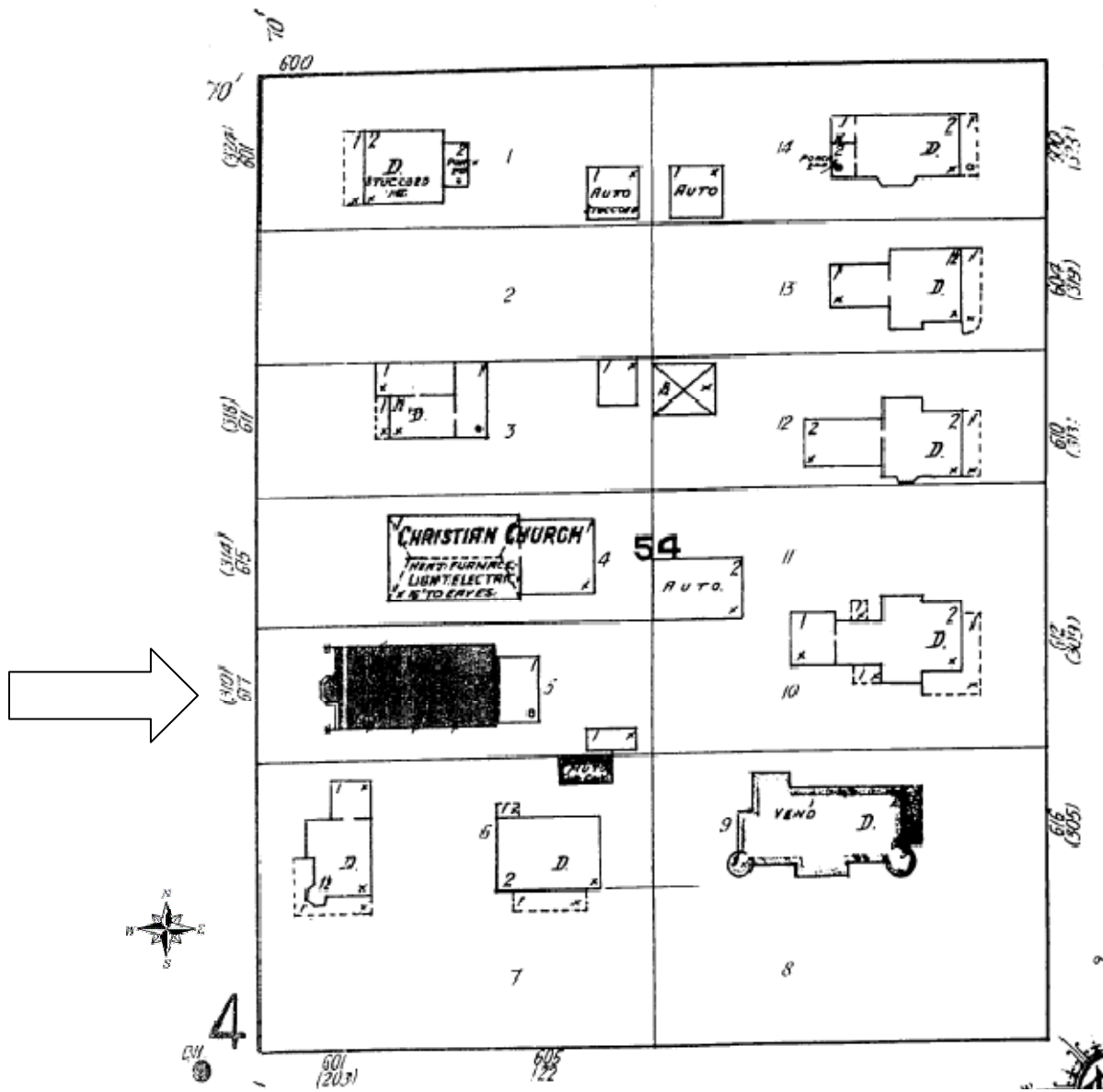
1896 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



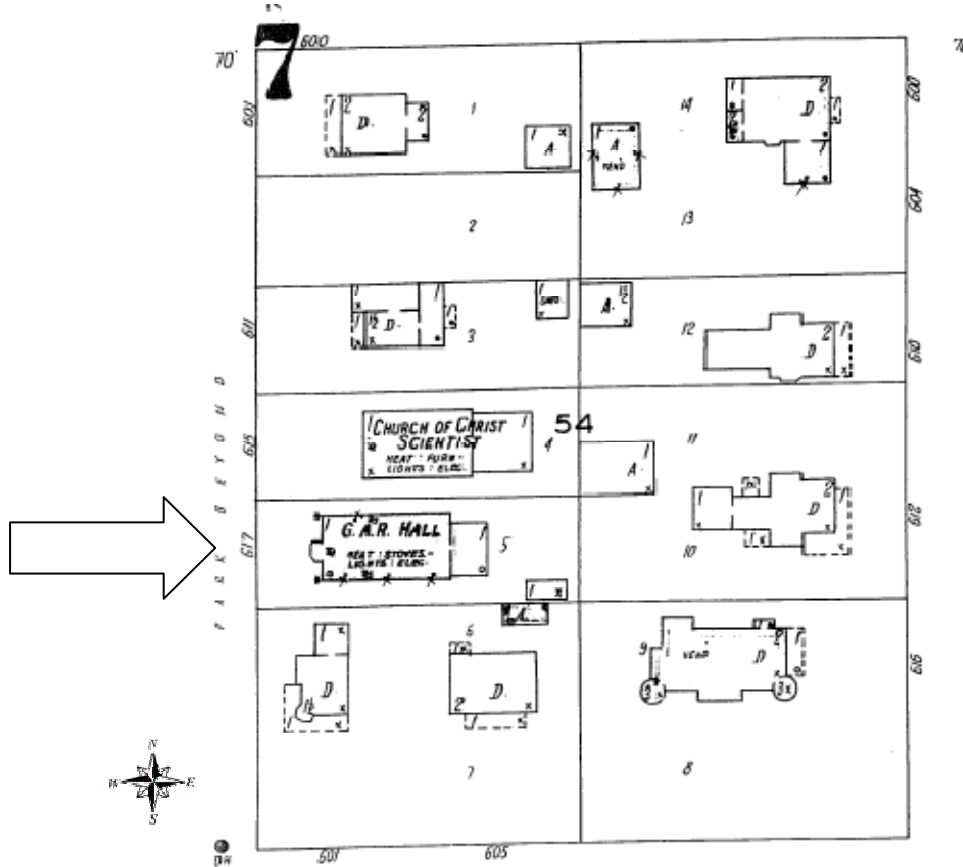
1903 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



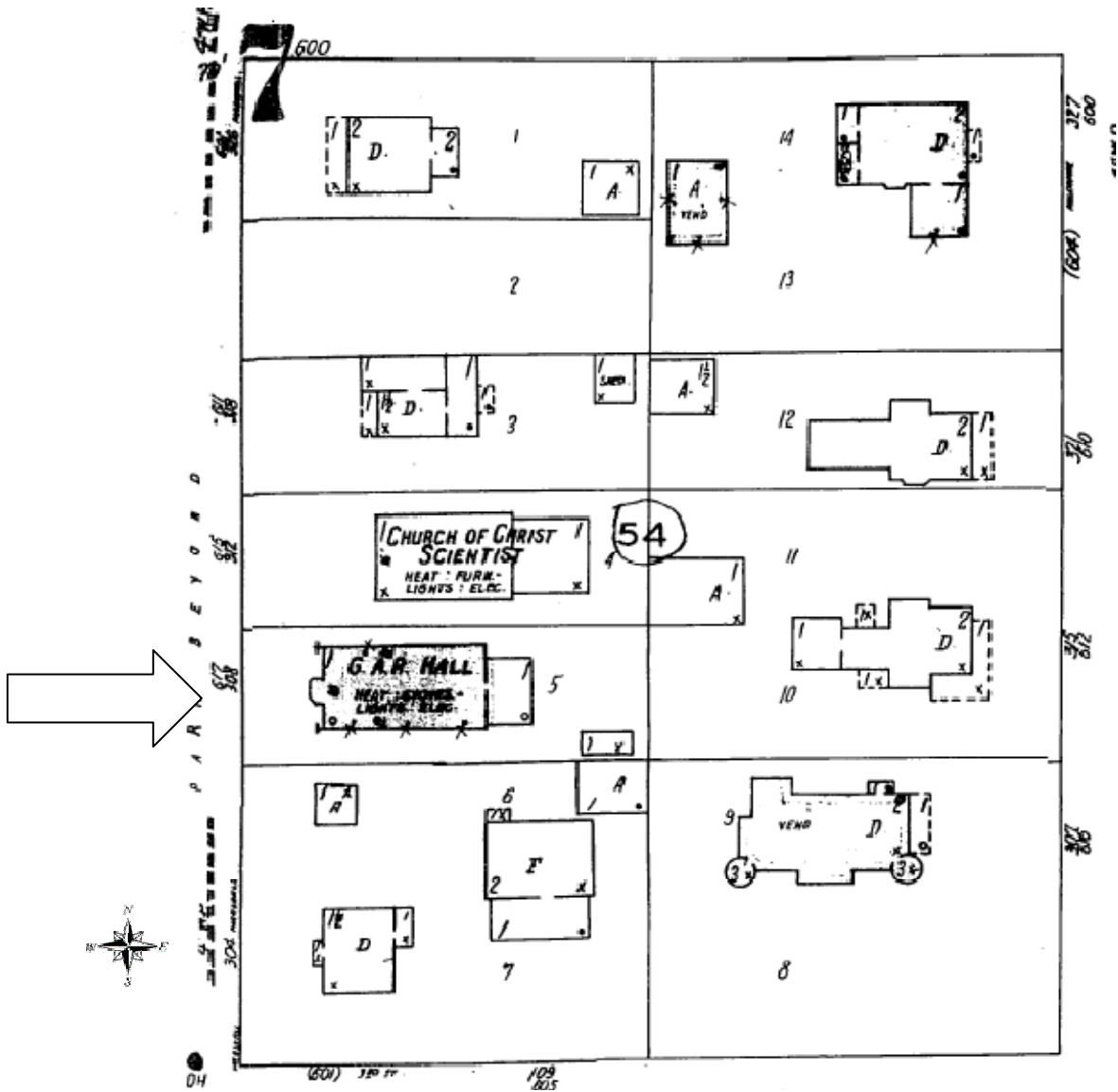
1913 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



1917 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



1930 Sanborn Fires Insurance Map



1941 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map