

Washington Lodge #15  
(B.P.O. Elks Lodge #15)(Convention  
Center Site, District of Columbia)  
919 H Street, NW  
Washington, D.C.

HABS No. DC-386

HABS,  
DC,  
WASH,  
253-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

WASHINGTON LODGE # 15, THE BENEVOLENT AND PROTECTIVE ORDER OF ELKS  
(Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge)HABS,  
DC,  
WASH,  
253-

Location: 919 H Street, NW Washington, D.C.

Present Owner: District of Columbia

Present Occupant and Use: Demolished 1979 for D.C. Convention Center Site

Significance: An attractive Beaux-Arts design by B. Stanley Simmons, this building is ornamented with stone swags, urn baluster balconies, portrait busts, and oversized elks heads. This lodge included many of Washington's prominent men as members. As a benevolent order, this lodge carried out many acts of charity beneficial to the community.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1908
2. Architect: B. Stanley Simmons
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Elks Lodge was the original owner, and it was last owned by the D.C. Government just prior to demolition.

## B. Sources of Information:

1. Original architectural drawings: See supplemental material for xeroxed copies
2. Bibliography
  - a. Primary and unpublished sources:

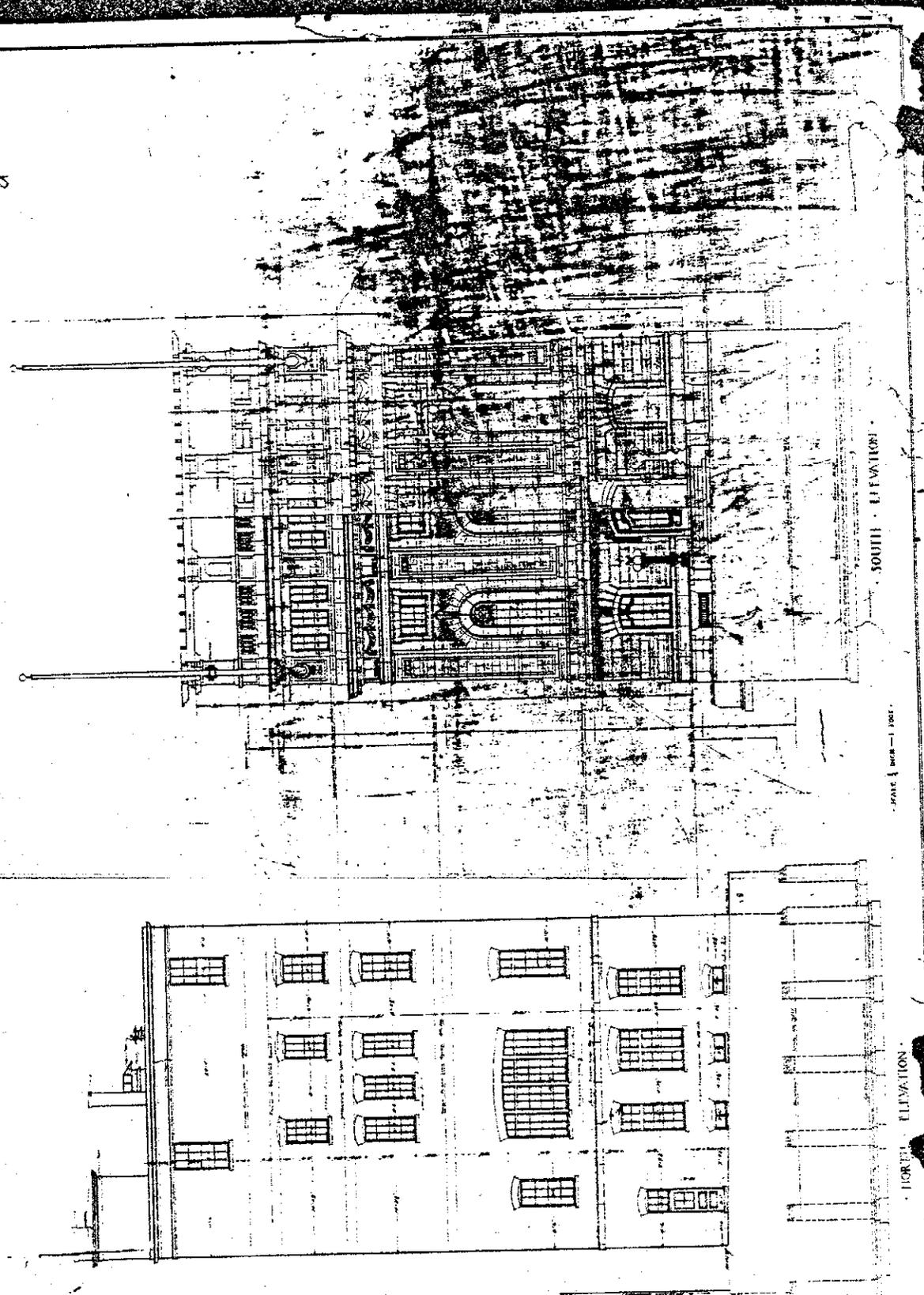
National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form

## C. Supplemental Material:

1. NORTH AND SOUTH ELEVATIONS
2. EAST ELEVATION
3. WEST ELEVATION

4. FIRST FLOOR PLAN
5. MEZZANINE PLAN
6. SECOND FLOOR PLAN
7. THIRD FLOOR PLAN
8. ROOF PLAN
9. INTERIOR ELEVATIONS
10. STRUCTURAL DETAILS
11. LONGITUDINAL SECTION

9



SOUTH ELEVATION

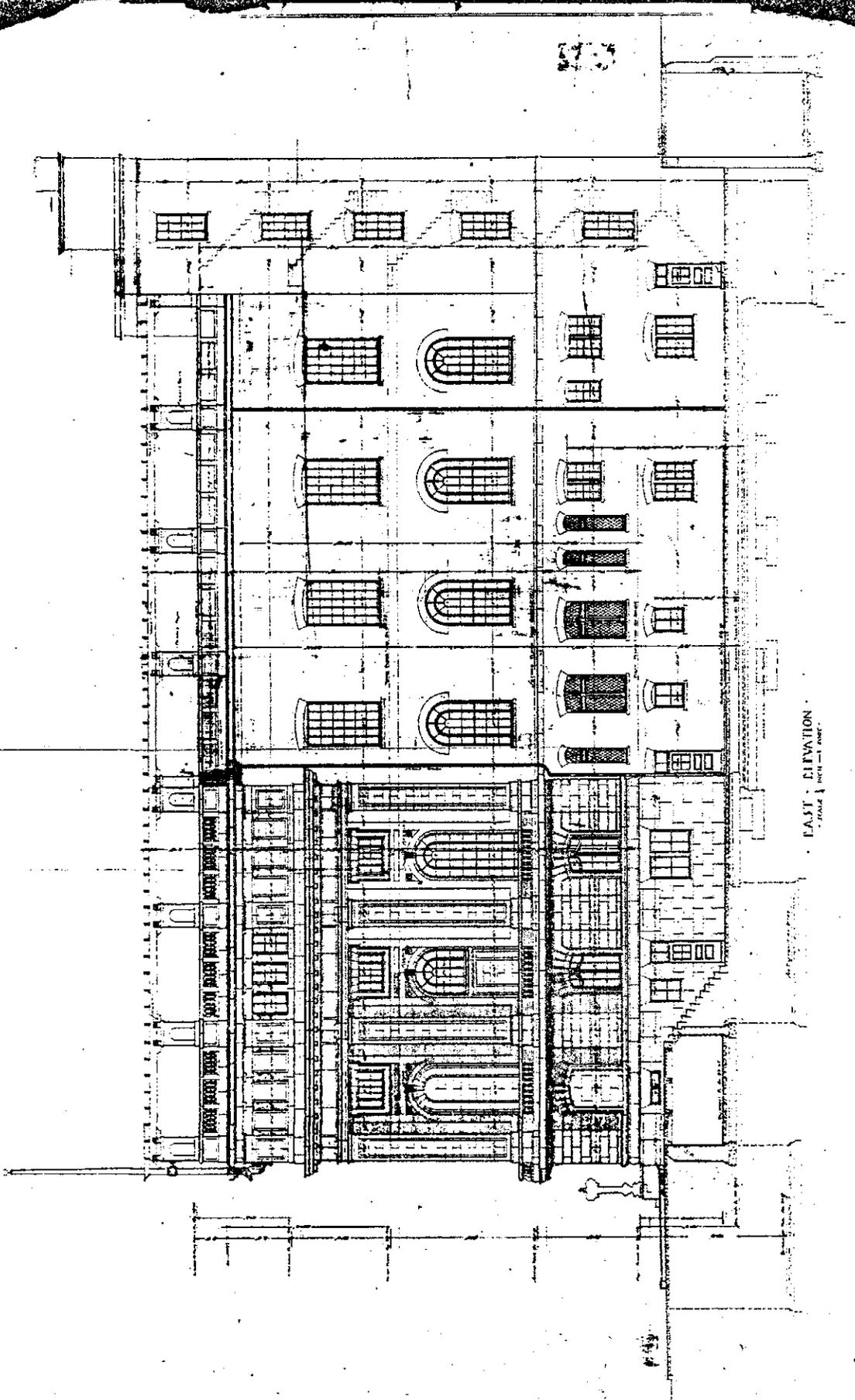
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

NORTH ELEVATION

CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO 13 B.P.O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON D.C.

*Handwritten signature and date*

DATE COMPLETED  
DRAWN BY  
TRACED BY  
CHECKED BY



EAST ELEVATION  
 SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

LOT 4  
 SQUARE 374

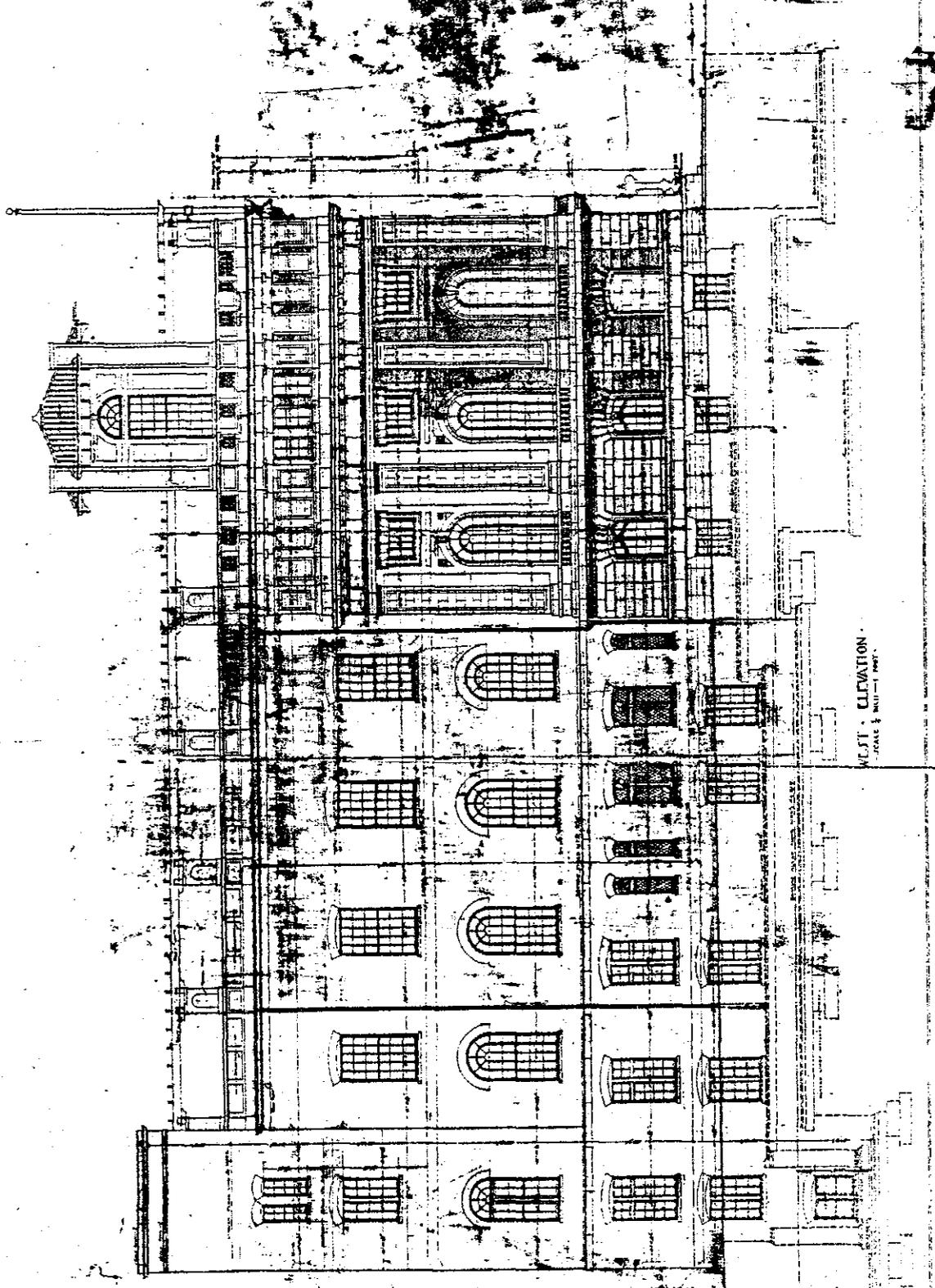
CLUB HOUSE FOR  
 WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 15 B.P.O. ELKS  
 WASHINGTON D.C.

*Handwritten signature and date*

DATE OF PLAN  
 MADE BY  
 TRACED BY  
 CHECKED BY

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
 HABS No. DC-386 (Page 4) Supp. Mat. 2

(c)



WEST ELEVATION  
SCALE 1/4" = 1'-0"

PLANS BY 10  
NO. 808  
1914

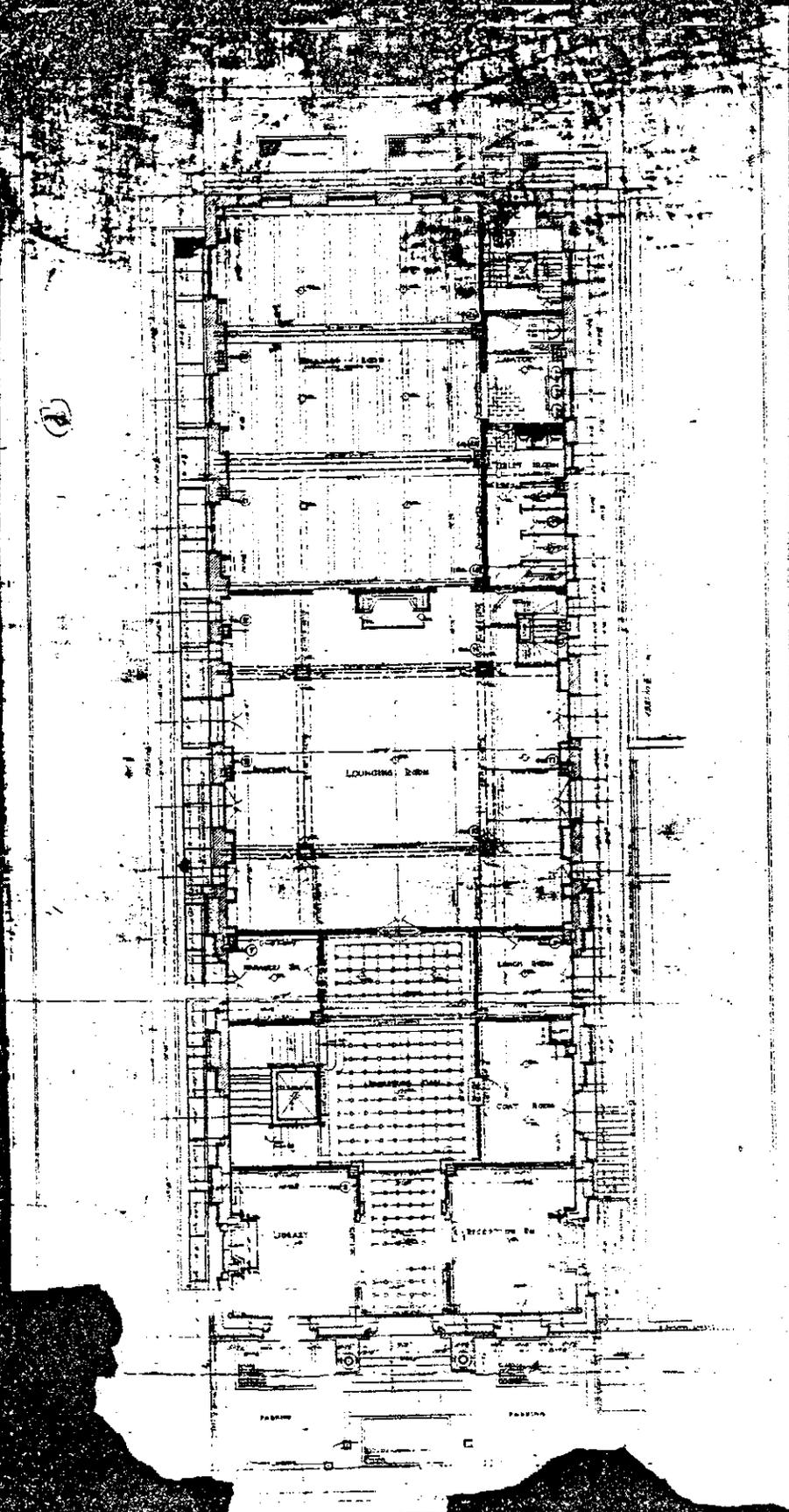
CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 15 - P. O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON - D. C.

1914

DATE: OCT 22 1914  
MADE BY: M. J. H.  
TRACED BY: S. J. H.  
CHECKED BY: S. J. H.

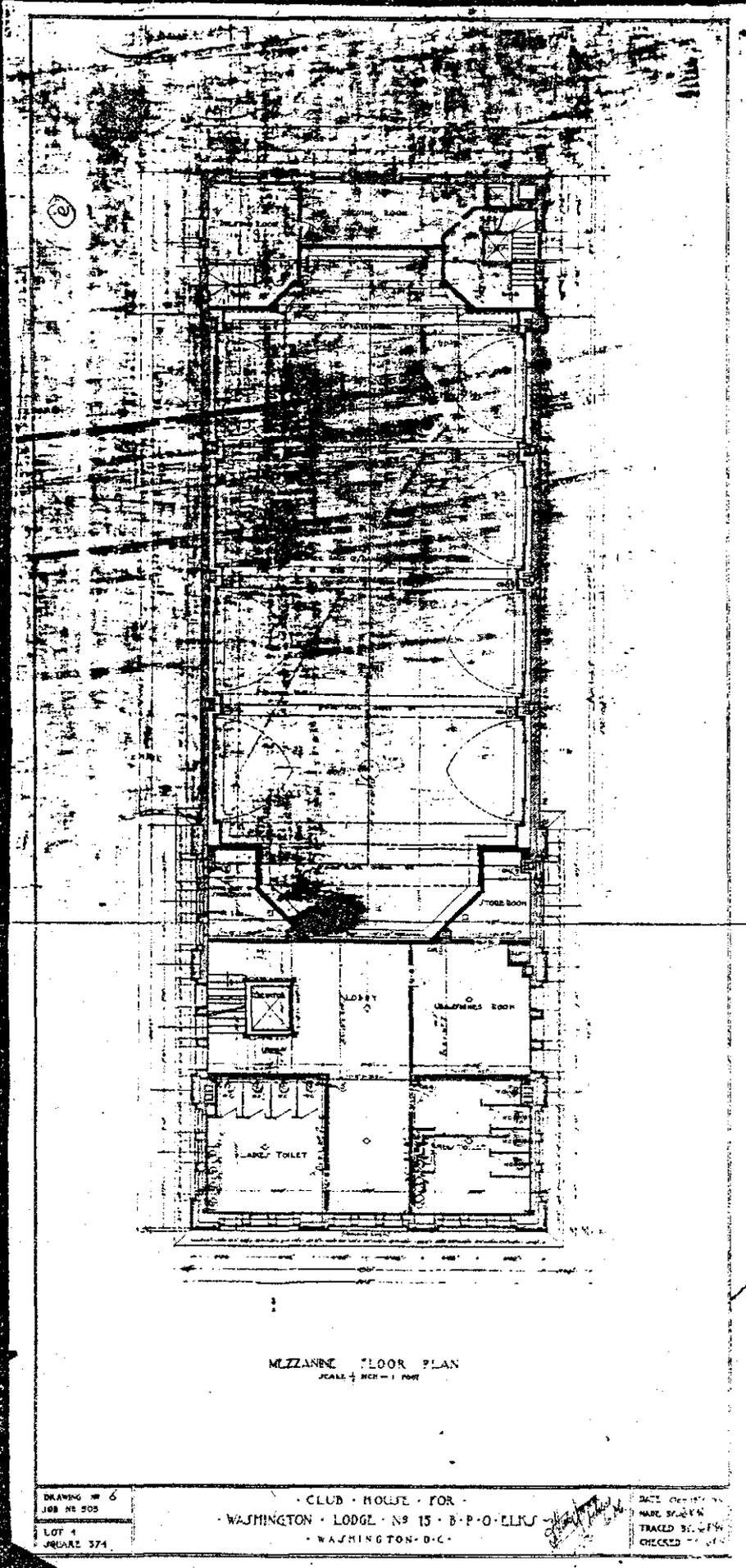
Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
HABS No. DC-386 (Page 5) Supp. Mat. 3

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
HABS No. DC-386 (Page 6) Supp. Mat. 4



FIRST FLOOR  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

DATE	1954
DRAWN BY	...
CHECKED BY	...
DESIGNED BY	...
PROJECT NO.	...



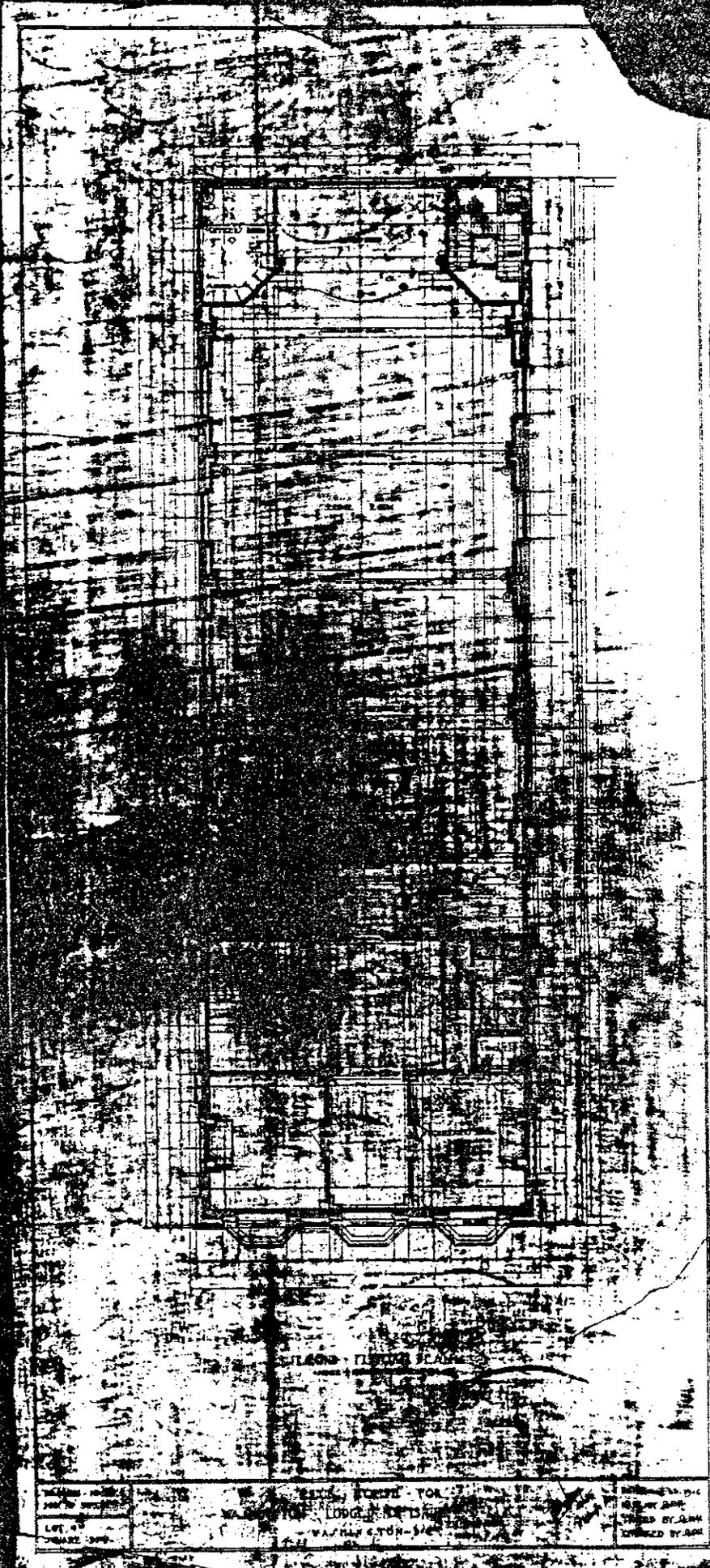
MUZZANINE FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

DRAWING NO. 6  
JOB NO. 205  
LOT 4  
SHEET 374

CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 15 B.P.O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON D.C.

DATE CHECKED  
MADE BY  
TRACED BY  
CHECKED BY

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
HABS No. DC-386 (Page 7) Supp. Mat. 5



Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
HABS No. DC-386 (Page 8) Supp. Mat. 6

Architectural drawing details including:  
DRAWN BY: [illegible]  
CHECKED BY: [illegible]  
DATE: [illegible]



20



ROOF DECK  
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

DRAWING NO. 2  
JOB NO. 503  
LOT 4  
DATE 11-1-54

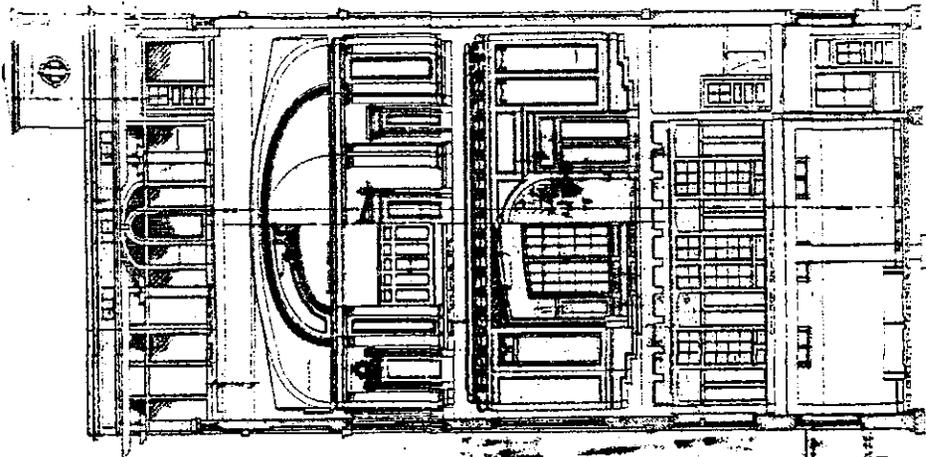
CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 15 B.P.O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON D.C.

*Handwritten signature and initials*

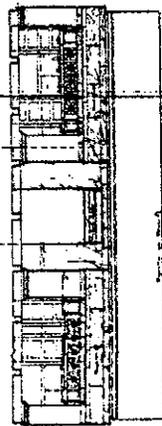
DATE 10-1-54  
MADE BY R.A.M.  
TRACED BY R.A.M.  
CHECKED BY J.M.

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
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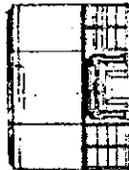
CROSS SECTION



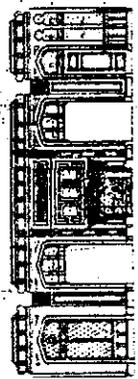
ELEVATION OF IND. ROOM LOOKING NORTH



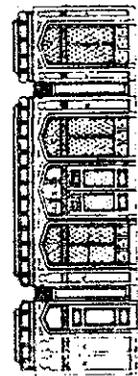
RECEPTION DESK



LOBBY



ELEVATION OF LOUNGE ROOM



ELEVATION OF LIVING ROOM

INTERIOR ELEVATIONS

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

DRAWING NO. 12  
JOB NO. 201

CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO. 15 B.P.O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON D.C.

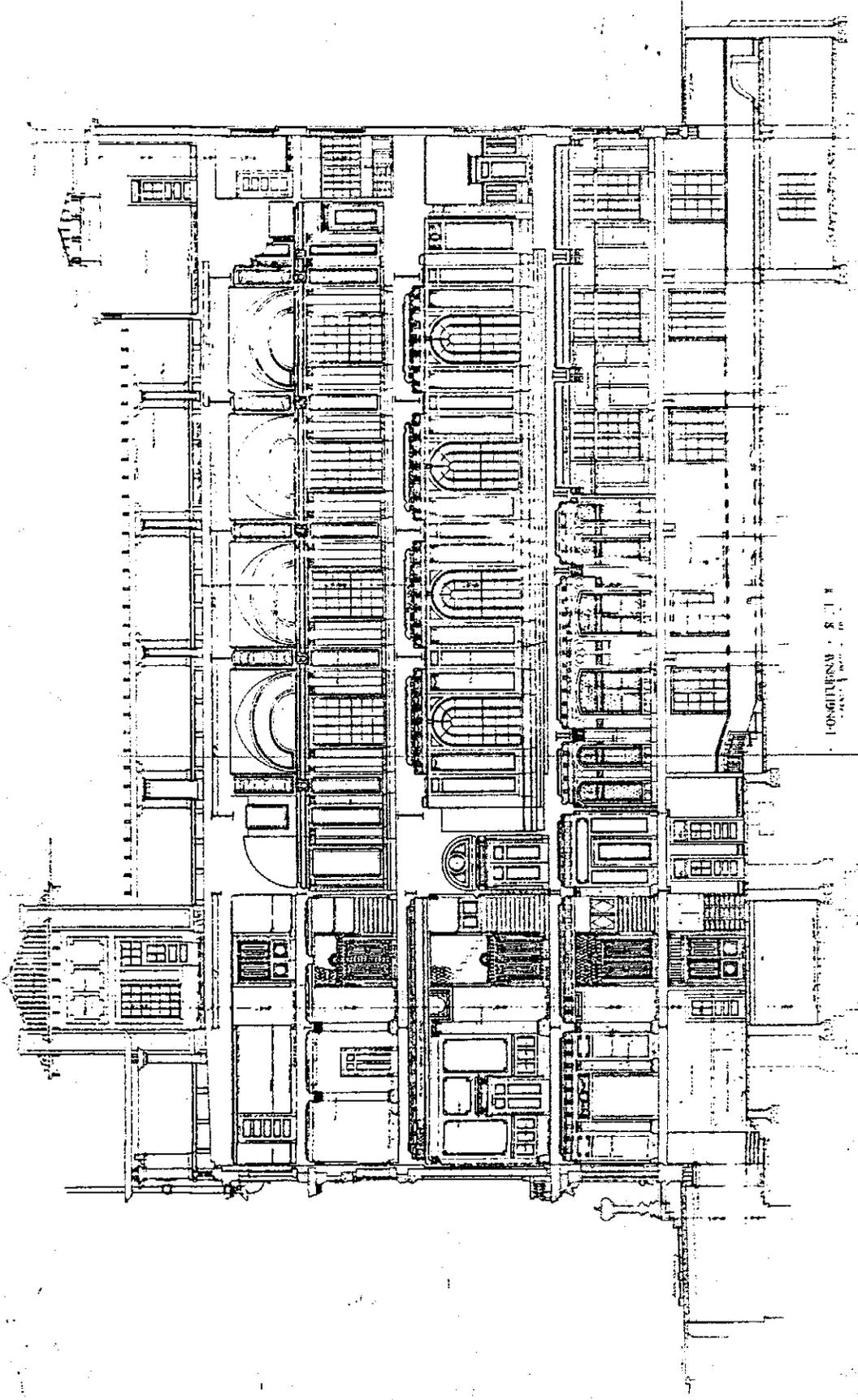
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DATE 10-1-20  
MADE BY G.A.

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge

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LONGFURNAY - 8-11-18

CLUB HOUSE FOR  
WASHINGTON LODGE NO 15 B.F.O. ELKS  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Convention Center Site, Elks Lodge  
HABS No. DC-386 (Page 13) Supp. Mat. 11

Prepared by: Robert S. Lange  
Historian  
Historic American Buildings Survey  
July 1980

from material  
compiled by: Margaret Orelup  
National Register Of Historic Places  
for a Determination of Eligibility  
October 1979

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This three-bay, Beaux-Arts facade is ornamented with bronze light standards surmounted by elks antlers, stone swags, urn-baluster balconies, portrait busts, and oversized antlered elks heads.
2. Condition of fabric: Demolished, 1979

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: 44'5" wide, 132'10 $\frac{1}{2}$ " deep; 3 bays wide, 3 stories, plus mezzanine.
2. Wall construction, finish and color: This building is faced with beige brick with stone ornaments. The first floor has rusticated brick bands. The tall second floor is broken into three bays. Each bay has a stone balcony which is flanked by brick pilasters with a stone base and capital. Stone portrait busts rest on the keystones which top the round arched windows. Garlands flank the busts, and also adorn the frieze of the modillioned cornice above the second floor. The third floor maintains the same bay arrangement, only with shorter pilasters and tripartite window arrangements in place of the large single one to each bay. The two pilasters at either extreme of the third floor carry large antlered elk head ornaments. The roof line is marked by a plain stone cornice which supports a balustrade. Pedestals rise above the roof line directly above the pilasters.
3. Balconies: Below each second floor window is a projecting stone, urn-balastered balcony.

4. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The building is approached via a central double-doored, glass entrance which is at the top of six steps. This door is set in a segmental arches doorway with garlands.
- b. Windows: Rectangular basement windows flank the steps at the base of the building. Segmental arched windows flank the central doorway and contain ornamental mullions. Each bay of the second floor contains a long, round arched window and rectangular transoms. These long windows have brick jambs and ornamental keystones. The third floor contains three long, thin windows to each bay.

5. Roof

- a. Shape: flat
- b. Cornice: a modillioned stone cornice with a garlanded frieze is above the second floor, and a plain stone cornice is at the roof line.
- c. Tower: A rooftop structure is at the western bay.

C. Description of Interior

1. Floor plan: Of particular interest is the ordered vertical arrangement of major spaces for gatherings. A dining room and lounge is at the first floor, lodge room at the second, and ballroom at third. These large rooms are the width of the building allowing through ventilation and natural light from east and west. At the rear of the building (north) is a vertical service core of stairs, dumbwaiter, and pantries. Kitchens and storage areas are in the basement. At approximately one-quarter of the depth of the building from the entrance is the public vertical core of lobbies, toilets, and an open steel cage elevator that rises through the stairwell. Attention should be drawn to the translucent material of the elevator wall that allows the pattern of the moving elevator cage to be seen by the public. On axis with the entrance doors is a vestibule flanked at left (west) by a library, and right (east) by ladies' sitting room and toilet facilities; next is the lobby (with elevator and stair at left); and then through glazed wooden doors and sidelights, through the "Edwardian" dining room to a "Tudor" fireplace flanked by doors to the lounge beyond. Behind the new ceiling of acoustical tile is the original plaster ceiling and run-plaster cornice. The walls are panelled in wood with carved-applied swags and BPOE emblazoned escutcheons. Hardware in this area is custom made using emblems of the Elks. The lounge beyond the dining room

is a darker, more intimate chamber of clustered tables, stained glass, and a great panelled wood bar and backbar along one wall. In the space above the dining room and lounge is the Elks Lodge room which, notwithstanding its window to the east and west, is an inward-looking room, this character being accentuated by banks of theatre seats stepped up at the walls, and running the depth of the lodge, the ends terminating at large throne-like chairs for the officers. Paraphernalia of the Order, the tables (altars), lecterns, and large antlered elks heads all contribute to the fraternal air. At the second floor front are two offices and central reception hall, each opening to a balcony overlooking the street. At the third floor front, at floor level and on a mezzanine, are meeting and sitting rooms and toilets. The two-story high vaulted ballroom is above the second floor lodge room, and the ballroom's proscenium and state is at the north end, surrounded by two floors of service stairs and pantries for supplying the needs of patrons.

D. Site

1. General setting and orientation: This building stands at the North side of H Street, facing South. The entire neighboring 3 square block area has since been demolished in preparation for the construction of the D.C. Convention Center.

Prepared by: Robert S. Lange  
Historian  
Historic American Buildings  
Survey  
July 1980

from information  
compiled by: Margaret Orelup  
Nation Register of  
Historic Places  
for a Determination of  
Eligibility  
August 1971

PART III PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the District of Columbia Government in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative effort in the completion of the Convention Center Project. John A. Burns, AIA and Emily J. Harris were the HABS

project coordinators. Photographs were taken by R.S. Scurlock in October 1979. The written data was prepared by Robert S. Lange of the HABS staff in July 1980, from material compiled by the National Register of Historic Places in October 1978 for a unilateral determination of eligibility.

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