

Hotel Lenox (New Lenox Hotel)
1100-1116 S.W.
Portland
Multnomah County
Oregon

HABS No. OR-130

HABS
ORE,
26-PORT,
5-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
HOTEL LENOX

(HABS No. OR-130)

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ORE,
26-PORT,
5-

NAME AND LOCATION: The Hotel Lenox, also known as the New Lenox Hotel, is located on lot 8, Block 25, of the City addition. Its original address was 240-244½, 246 S.W. Third and Main. Presently the site is known as 1100-1116 S.W. Third. The Hotel sits across the street from Chapman Square, one of Portland's oldest parks.

PRESENT USE: The Hotel Lenox building is vacant as of February 1, 1980.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE: The Hotel Lenox is representative of the work of one of Portland's pioneer architects, Emil Schacht. In the early twentieth century, Schacht was very active in the design of many of Portland's residential, commercial, and civic buildings. In his design for the Hotel Lenox, Schacht combined Renaissance, Neo-Classical and Modern detail into a style known as "Period" architecture. The Hotel is one of a few of Schacht's buildings that still stands. Built in 1906, the building remains in essentially its original condition on its original site. Although the interior has been stripped, the exterior appears much the same as it did upon its completion in 1907.

The Hotel was built for E.C. Jorgensen, a prosperous businessman who was active in Portland's early civic affairs. The Jorgensen family owned the building continuously until it was sold to the city in 1979.

The neighborhood which surrounds the three block park from Madison Street to Salmon Street between Third and Fourth has undergone a great deal of change in recent years. The area includes some of Portland's oldest buildings, such as the Portland Landmark, City Hall, and one of the first city auditorium buildings in addition to some of the City's newest buildings such as the Federal Building and a new parking structure. As one of the original buildings facing the park, the Hotel Lenox is in keeping with the turn of the century architecture which once dominated the area.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical history:

1. **OWNERSHIP:** The property and Hotel were under continuous ownership by the Jorgensen family until the site was bought by the Portland Development Commission in 1979. Emil C. Jorgensen, the original owner, deeded the ownership over to his two sons, Edwin D. and Victor Hugo, after his death in 1923. The property and building were transferred to Edwin's nephew, Victor's son, Victor H. Jorgensen Jr. after V.H. Jorgensen Sr.'s death in 1977.¹

2. **ERECTION:** Plans were drawn for the Hotel in July, 1906. The cost of the project was estimated at \$4,400 at that time.² The building was basically finished by June 1907 and opened as a hotel by September of that year.³

3. **ARCHITECT:** The Hotel Lenox was designed by Emil Schacht. During his 40 years of practice in Portland, Schacht was responsible for many notable buildings. The building for which he is perhaps best known is the Oriental Building which was built for Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition in 1905. Done in an ornate Spanish Renaissance style, the building was torn down when the fair grounds were demolished a few years later.⁴

Other buildings designed by Schacht include the Central Police Headquarters at 2nd and Oak Streets, erected in 1912, the Meagley Tichnor Building at 6th and Alder, the early Elks Temple at 329 Stark Street, the Lowenson Building, and the Perkins Hotel at 422 SW 5th. Of these buildings, only the Police Headquarters and the Perkins Hotel still stand.⁵

Schacht was also very active in the design of residential structures. A newspaper review of his plans for a four-story apartment house called them "pretentious" and "especially ornate". The building, owned by Saul Silverfied, was erected on Lucretia Street in 1909 at a cost of \$7,500.⁶ It is uncertain how many residential buildings designed by Schacht are still standing.

Schacht won several awards for his commercial, residential and civic buildings, including an award for the design of the Hotel Lenox. Pictures of the Hotel were included as one of six pieces of work chosen to be shown in the first annual exhibition of the Portland Architectural Club in 1908. Schacht was also selected to show examples of his work in the 1910 and 1913 exhibits.⁷

Emil Schacht was born in 1854 in Southern Denmark. He studied at Polytechnical School of Hanover, Germany, and at Copenhagen, Denmark. He moved to New York City in 1874 and worked as a draftsman for six years before returning to Denmark. He remained in Denmark for one year, married Miss Augusta Trier, returned to America, and opened an office in Omaha, Nebraska. In 1884 he moved to Portland where he practiced architecture for forty years, first alone, then later with his son under the name "Schacht and Son". He died suddenly in 1926.⁸

4. ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS; The building was originally designed as an office building and received a building permit in 1906 for that purpose. During construction a decision was made to use the building as a hotel. A few minor changes were made such as changing the number of water closets from 8 to 43 and the number of bath tubs from 6 to 24 before the building opened as a hotel.

A few slight changes have been made on the first floor to accommodate office and store spaces over the years. In 1925 girders were added and in 1957 the basement was divided with a stud wall and the stairway was enclosed to conform to code. At some time the N.W. corner was replaced with a door. On the north wall the windows were lowered and a door was added.⁹

The hotel suffered from a fire on November 23, 1950. Flames spread from a rubbish bin in the basement to each floor and onto the roof. No one was injured, but the flames did melt some of the metal in the building. Among the repairs necessary was the replacement of nine toilets and three sinks. The damage was estimated at \$35,000.¹⁰

The first floor was extensively remodeled in 1978 by a new tenant who leased the space for a store. He added sheet rock to the walls and took out several partitions. He and several other men stripped the upstairs of the hotel in 1978 as part of a proposed renovation project. They had hoped to develop the hotel into a home for low income renters. The renovation work was stopped when funds and other support for the project did not materialize.¹¹

The building was not used as a hotel after 1975 and the upstairs remained empty.

The original name "Hotel Lenox" was changed in 1937 to "New Lenox Hotel". The old sign "Hotel Lenox", which was painted onto the corner of the building was replaced by a new, projecting sign which read "New Lenox Hotel". Neither sign is present now.¹²

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Building

OWNERS, TENANTS: The Hotel was commissioned by Emil C. Jorgensen, who owned the property on the corner of S.W. Third and Main. Jorgensen was born in Denmark in 1851 and immigrated to the United States in 1870. He moved to Portland soon thereafter and worked as a salesman in the liquor business. He later owned a liquor business with his partner, Daniel Marx, which, according to one account, was "one of the leading wholesale liquor houses in the Northwest".¹³ Jorgensen's life is a story of a business success. He came to America with very little capital, yet with a careful business sense he did well for himself and his family. He was active in civic affairs and was responsible for one of the first auditorium buildings to be built in Portland.¹⁴

When the Hotel opened in 1907 the proprietors were listed as the Dagget Hotel Co., with F.E. Dagget as president. Management was taken over by O.H. Spencer shortly after it opened in 1907 and stayed until the fall of 1908. Advertisements in the Oregonian began to appear for the Hotel by September, 1907. It was advertised as "Portland's newest and most modern Hotel, Up-to-date-grill, free bus meets all trains, Rates \$1 day and up - European Plan - long distance phones in all rooms - Private Baths."¹⁵

Jorgensen's two sons, Edwin D. and Victor H. Began to manage the Hotel in 1909. Although the Hotel had opened two years earlier they advertised it as "Select Family Hotel, Newly opened September, 1909". This ad ran from September 6 to March 1912. At that time they added the sales pitch, "A truly modern, truly Home-like and quiet hotel, centrally located. Our electric bus will meet you". This ad ran until 1916.¹⁶

The Hotel prospered under the management of the brothers, who catered to visiting families. The Hotel was considered a nice hotel among Portlanders. It received front page coverage in the weekly Hotel News in 1914 for its beautiful entrance. Printed below a photo of the entrance, the print read, "This picture shows what is conceded by many as the handsomest hotel entrance in the City of Portland, entrance to the Hotel Lenox. This hotel is located opposite the plaza at Third and Main Streets and affords accommodations to the traveler or permanent guest and service of the best, while their rates are extremely reasonable."¹⁷

The brothers, who owned the hotel after their father died in 1923, continued to run the hotel and keep an office in the NE corner of the first floor until 1937. In 1937 the name was changed to "New Lenox Hotel" and although the Jorgensens continued to own the building, the management of the hotel was taken over by Peter Kosturos.¹⁸ The Lenox did not try to alter its image as a family hotel. An ad in the 1941 City Directory advertised the Lenox as "Quiet, orderly, homelike and modern".

After the Jorgensen brothers quit managing the hotel, it began to slide downhill in quality and reputation. At least nine different managers ran the hotel from 1937 to 1975.

The first floor of the Hotel Lenox has a history separate from that of the Hotel. In the original design the first floor was divided into a dining room, kitchen, barber shop, bar room, office, lobby, store and office spaces. The building opened with a restaurant which was noted for its quality.¹⁸ The first floor saw a variety of tenants during the time it was used for store spaces. Among them were Weibel Brothers Taxidermists, Nilsson Wall Paper Co., Park View Confectionary Co., Cleve Marsden Watch Repair, Philo Gilbert Massage, and M.L. Morgan Sporting Goods. From 1950 to 1975 the northeast corner was occupied by Frank's Parkview Inn, beer parlor, the sign of which still hangs on the corner.

The most recent tenant was the Oregon Mountain Community, a sporting goods store, which occupied most of the first floor from 1978 to 1980.

Ownership of the building passed into the hands of Victor Hugo Jorgensen Jr. in 1977. Jorgensen sold the property and the hotel to the Portland Development Commission in 1979, ending 73 years of family ownership.

End Notes

- 1 Victor Jorgensen, personal communication
- 2 Sunday Oregonian, August 5, 1906
- 3 Plumbing Records, City Hall, Portland, Oregon
- 4 Vaughn, Thomas, and Ferriday, Virginia Space, Style and Structure Vol. I, (Portland, Oregon Historical Society, 1974), P. 324.
- 5 Withey, Henry F., and Elsie Rathburn Withey, Bibliographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased) (Los Angeles, Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc., 1970) p. 538
- 6 Sunday Oregonian, September 19, 1909
- 7 Portland Architectural Club, Catalogue 1908
- 8 Carey, H.C., History of Oregon, Illustrated, Vol. III, (Portland, The Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1922) p. 384
- 9 Bureau of Building Records, City Hall, Portland
- 10 Oregon Journal, November 13, 1950
- 11 Richard Humphries, personal communication
- 12 City Directory, 1937
- 13 Oregonian Souvenir 1850-1892 (Portland, Lewis and Dryden Printing Co., 1892) p. 98
- 14 Bureau of Buildings, City Hall, Portland
- 15 Oregonian, September 4, 1907
- 16 Hotel News, May 16, 1910
- 17 Northwest Hotel News, January 23, 1914

¹⁸ Sunday Oregonian, January 27, 1980

¹⁹ City Directory, 1937-1978

C. Sources of Information:

1. Bibliography:

Carey, H.C. History of Oregon, Illustrated, Vol. III. Portland: The Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1922.

Oregon Souvenir, 1850-1892. Portland: Lewis and Dryden Printing Co., 1892.

Portland Block Book. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1907.

Portland Architectural Club, Catalogue, 1908. Portland: Rhodes Advertising Company, 1908.

Vaughn, Thomas, and Ferriday, Virginia. Space, Style and Structure Vol. I, Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1974.

Withey, Henry F., and Withey, Elsie Rathburn. Bibliographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey and Ingalls, Inc. 1970

Newspapers;

Oregonian, June 6, 1953, September 4, 1907.

Sunday Oregonian, September 19, 1909, August 5, 1906, January 27, 1980.

Hotel News, May 16, 1910

Northwest Hotel News, January 23, 1914

Records:

Plumbing Inspection Records, City Hall, Portland

Bureau of Buildings, Building Permits, City Hall, Portland.

Maps:

Sandborn Maps 1901 updated to 1908
 1909 updated to 1955
 1921 updated to 1933

Personal Communication:

Victor Jorgensen, January 3, 1980

Thomas McKenzie, McKenzie Structural Engineers, January 10, 1980

Richard Humphries, Oregon Mountain Community, January 10, 1980

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: The Hotel Lenox is an example of "Period" architecture. The structure, built during a transition period of architectural style, combines characteristics of "Renaissance", "Neo-Classical", and "Modern".

PRESENT CONDITION: The structural condition of the hotel is good. Although the interior has been stripped, most of the doors, moldings, and hardware still remain. The exterior is basically in its original condition with the exception of the removal of an awning, some ornamental lion heads, and the fading of painting on some windows.

A. Exterior

OVERALL DIMENSIONS: The hotel is a square 100' x 100' 4 story building with a 16' x 54' 10" skylight on the first floor. The second, third and fourth stories are built in a U-shape around the skylight well.

FOUNDATION: The hotel has a concrete foundation.

STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: The perimeter walls are load-bearing brick masonry. The interior structure consists of cast iron columns connected by cast iron girders and by steel girders near the corridor. The joists and floor boards are wooden.

WALL CONSTRUCTION: The exterior walls of the hotel are red brick with a stretcher bond. The west (front) and north walls are divided into 8 bays 10' wide with terra cotta pilasters between each bay on the second through fourth floors.

The first floor is divided from the second floor, by a gally iron belt course on the north and west sides.

The exterior wall of the west side, first floor, is divided by four pilasters with granite bases. The NW corner pilaster is marble paneled; the others are terra cotta. The wall is a curtain wall with four large plate glass show windows with iron frames. From the sill to the ground are three wired glass sash hinged, iron framed windows below each show window. On either side of the main entrance above the show windows is a panel of prism glass 51" high. Above the prism glass is a course of bricks 22" high.

The wall on the first floor of the north side is brick, with marble paneled pilasters at the corners. The east and south walls are red brick with a stretcher bond.

CHIMNEYS: The hotel has two inside end chimneys. One is located at the east wall, the other at the corner of the south and east wall. They are both plain, red brick and extend only slightly above the edge of the roof.

DOORWAYS AND DOORS: Originally there were four entrances to the hotel: three on the west side and one on the north. The center entrance on the west side leads directly into the lobby. The doorway is framed by pilasters which support a full copper entablature and balustrade. The entablature is supported by scroll-shaped corbels. Two wrought iron lanterns with octagonal glass plates are mounted on the pilasters which flank the doorway.

On the inside of the vestibule, next to the terra cotta pilasters are solid marble pilasters 8' tall and 12" in diameter at the base, tapering to 10" at the capital. A decorated copper lintel upon which "Hotel Lenox" has been written, is supported by the marble pilasters. Above the lintel is an ornate iron grill fanlight. Centered above the fanlight is a copper cartouche mounted on the brick wall.

Recessed 5' and on a rise 6" from the sidewalk is the main door. It has a glass panel, plain architrave with embrasure, and is flush with glass paneled side lights. Flush with the door is a large transom. The vestibule has a tile floor, marble wainscoting, and a marble ceiling. "Hotel Lenox" is set in black tile on the floor.

The two other doorways on the front of the building are also recessed 5' and raised on a 6" cement step. At the sidewalk edge, the vestibule is flanked by two iron framed, terra cotta pilasters. Both doorways have two double action doors with brass kick plates and plate glass panels. Above them are plate glass hinged transoms.

The hotel originally had two double action doors on the northeast corner with brass kick plates and double panels. At some later time a door was added to the northwest corner and to the north wall.

WINDOWS: The second, third and fourth floors each have seven windows on the north and west sides. These windows are large with Kamm lintels and terra cotta slip sills. Each opening is comprised of three sash and three transoms. The center sash is stationary but the left and right sashes are pivoting casements. The center transom is stationary, while the outer transoms are hinged. The transoms were once decorated with painted tracery which resembled small leaded diagonal lights. A few traces of the painting remains. The fourth floor windows have a terra cotta rectangular surround in a bound leaf pattern and a pronounced keystone.

On the first floor of the north wall where originally four openings comprised of three sash hinged windows with ribbed glass and terra cotta lug sills. These windows were high and small. They were later extended lower.

On the east wall there are four pairs of double hung sash windows on each of the second, third and fourth floors. They have a metal frame, brick sills, and rowlock arches. Eight mullioned double hung sash and three double hung sash windows face the skylight well. Two double hung sash windows are located on the south wall. These windows are all identical to the windows on the east side of the building.

ROOF: The roof is low-hipped with a composition roof. The roof of the skylight is wired glass.

The hotel has a three part entablature which includes an architrave, a frieze, and a cornice on the west and north walls. The architrave consists of a decorated gally iron belt course. Over alternating windows the belt course is replaced by small entablature. The frieze is decorated with iron cartouches and rectangular pieces of iron grill work. The cornice is boxed and decorated with a paneled soffit and a course of iron dentil. On the top of the building were once approximately 40 stamped metal lions heads.

B. Interior

FLOOR PLANS: The hotel has a full basement. The first floor was originally divided into a dining room, kitchen, barber shop, bar room, office, lobby, store and office spaces. Later walls were changed to provide store space for tenants. The second, third and fourth floors each contain 28 rooms. Each were equipped with a wash basin and for every two rooms, a toilet and bath tub. Each floor had two closets and a bathroo

STAIRWAYS: Between the first and second floor is an enclosed, two flight stair with one landing. Half way down the lower flight the stair is open. The stairs have marble treads and decorated iron risers. Along the open stair is a cast iron baluster, a wooden rail, a cast iron stringer panel, and a cast iron newel. The landing is wooden.

The stairs between the second, third and fourth floors are enclosed with two flights and a landing. They are wooden with a tongue and groove backing. A short, dog-leg stair with winders leads from the fourth floor to the roof. From the first floor to the basement was an open, single flight stairway. This was later enclosed.

FLOORING: Most, if not all, of the first floor was covered with small tiles. This has been replaced in many areas but is still visible in the entrance hall and the lobby. The floors in the upper stories are covered with linoleum, although they may have been originally wood. The basement floors are concrete.

WALL AND CEILING FINISH: The walls have been finished with painted plaster and wallpaper. The lobby is exceptional because it was finished with wood panels 7' high on all four walls. Another room with an exceptionally ornate finish is the hallway, which is paneled with 7' high marble. Along the stairs 36" marble paneling continues to the second floor. A pilaster and arch in the hallway add to the ornamentation.

DOORWAYS AND DOORS: The interior doors are wooden with a single panel. The doors leading to the corridor have a wired glass hinged transom. Some of the doors have wired glass panels.

TRIM: The entrance hallway is trimmed with plaster moldings in a rectangular shape and a plaster cove and frieze. Wooden wainscoting run 36" high along the stairway and in the hotel rooms. Plaster molding one foot below the ceiling line runs throughout the building. The interior windows and doors are trimmed with a wooden cornice.

HARDWARE: Although all of the doors have been removed, many of the metal butt hinges and doorknobs remain. Most of the windows still have hinges for their pivoted and hinged openings.

LIGHTING: The hotel has always been wired for electricity. The upstairs rooms each had an overhead light fixture. The lobby originally had a hanging chandelier from the middle of the room with nine light bulbs. This was later replaced with a brass spoke-shaped chandelier with twelve bulbs which is still hanging.

HEATING: The hotel is heated by steam from a boiler in the basement. Steam radiators were placed in every room. They still remain and are in working condition.

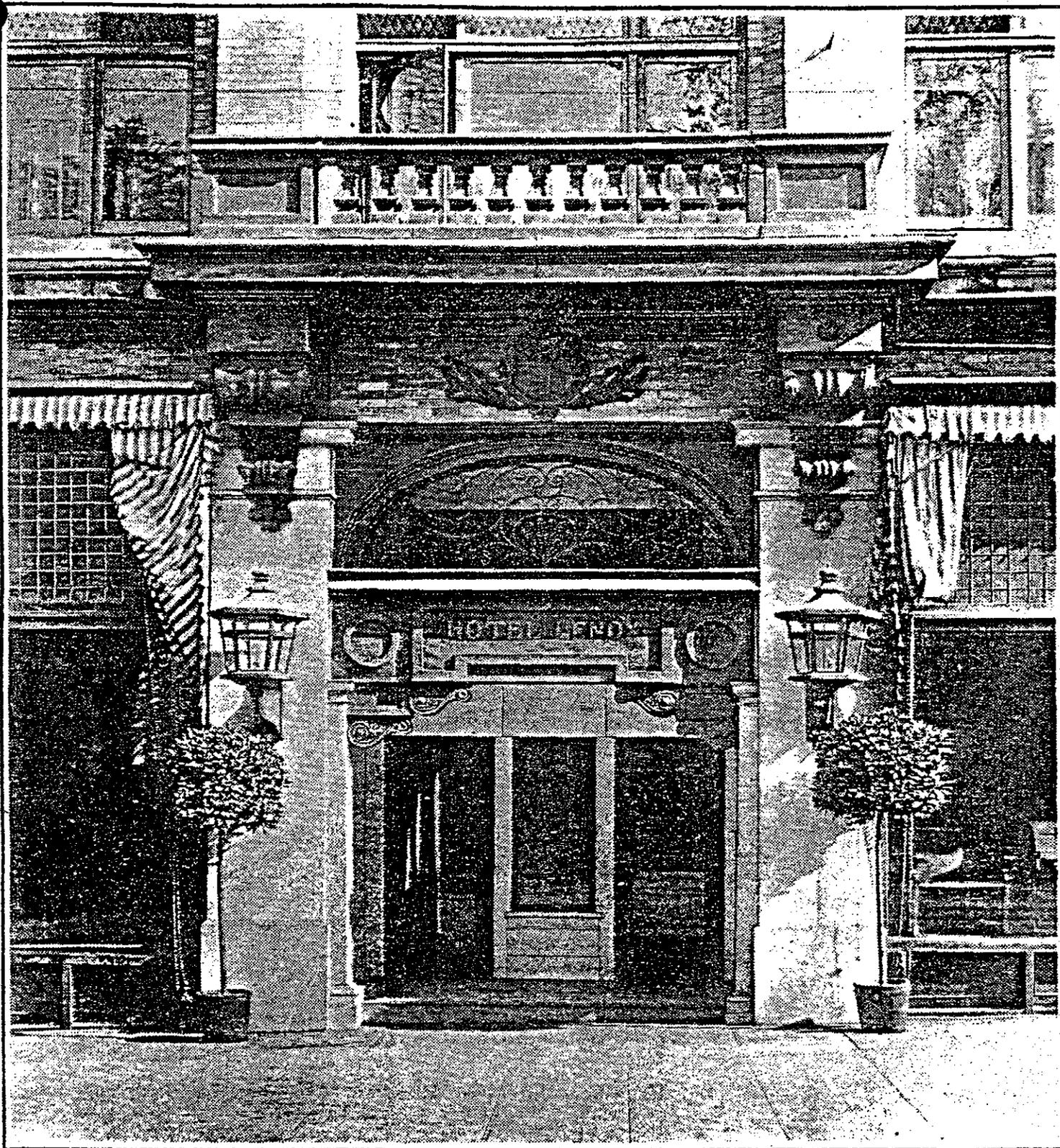
MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT: An elevator was built to run from the basement to the fourth floor. The hatch measures 5'9" x 7'4". The elevator was built by Otis Elevator Company of San Francisco. A metal door covers the shaft at each floor.

C. GENERAL SETTING AND ORIENTATION: The building faces Chapman Square, a three block area which has been designated a Portland Historical Landmark. The Lenox is part of a three block group of early turn of the century buildings on the east side of the park. Included in this group is a Portland Landmark, the Auditorium Building (1894), also built by E.C. Jorgensen, on 920 SW Third and recently nominated to the National Register. Attempts have been made to maintain the City Hall, located

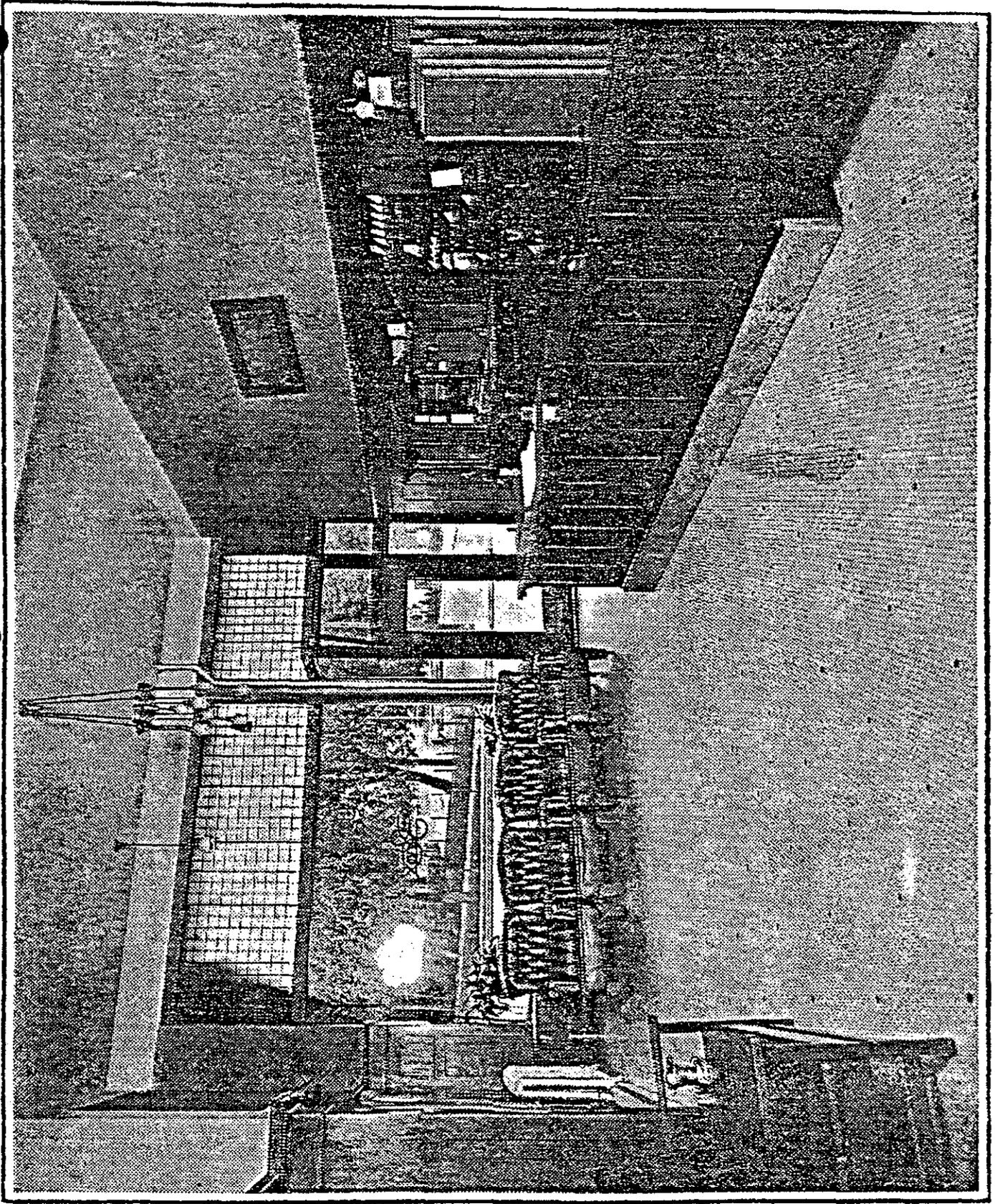
near the Lenox, as a focal point of the city. The Hotel Lenox, with its brick-face, low height, and "period" architecture is in keeping with the theme of this area.

Part III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Federal Highway Administration in compliance with Executive Order 11593 and a Memorandum of Agreement with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to mitigate the adverse effect of the construction of the Justice Center, Portland Oregon. John A. Burns, AIA, and Emily Harris were the HABS project coordinators. Historic data was compiled by Chris Johnson in February 1980. Photographs were taken by Jerry Robinson in March 1980. The data was prepared for transmittal to the Library of Congress by Patricia Rowse, an architectural historian in the HABS office, in July 1980.



ENTRANCE TO HOTEL LENOX.



LOOKING TOWARD THE PARK, HOTEL LENOX LOBBY.

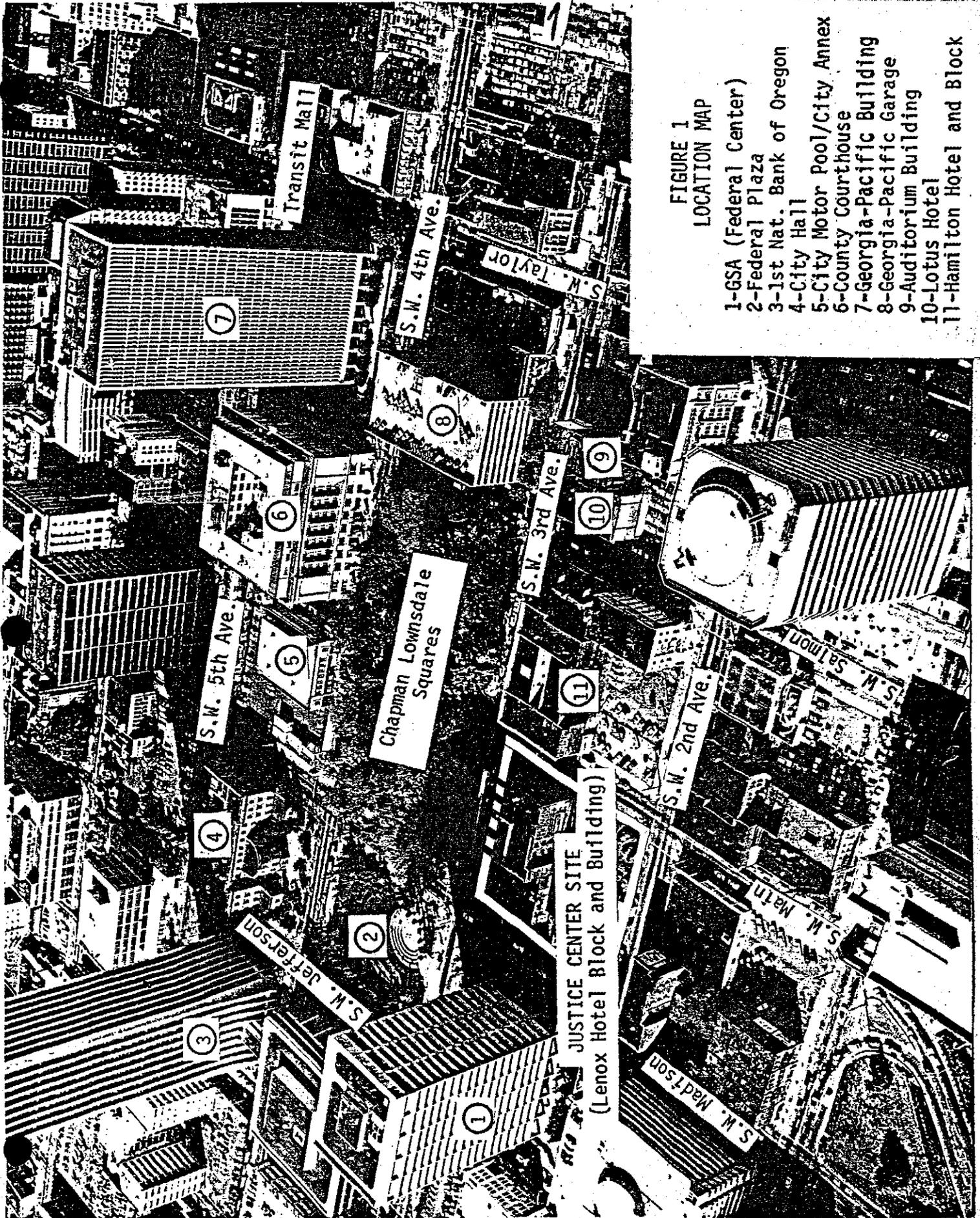
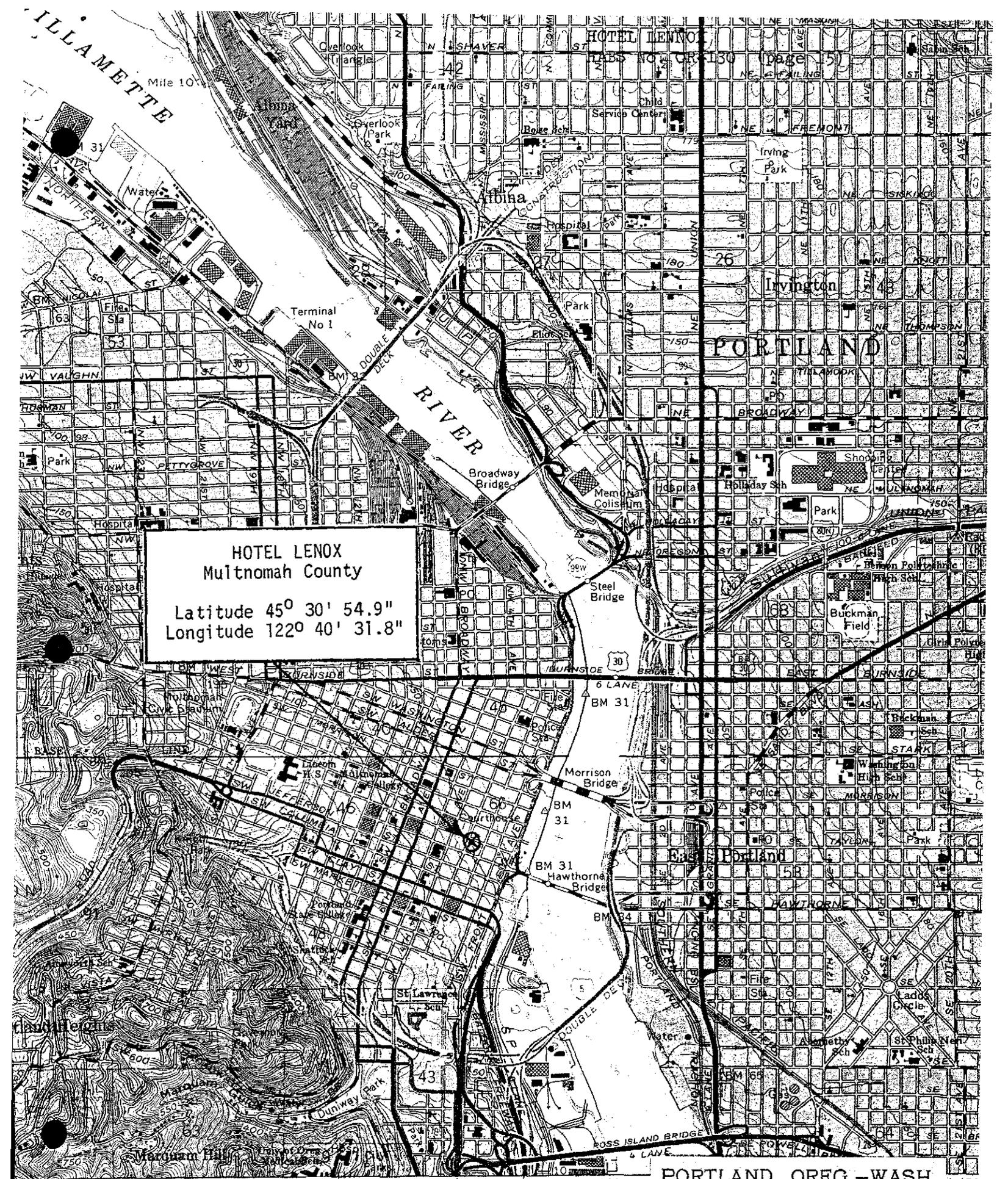


FIGURE 1
LOCATION MAP

- 1-GSA (Federal Center)
- 2-Federal Plaza
- 3-1st Nat. Bank of Oregon
- 4-City Hall
- 5-City Motor Pool/City Annex
- 6-County Courthouse
- 7-Georgia-Pacific Building
- 8-Georgia-Pacific Garage
- 9-Auditorium Building
- 10-Lotus Hotel
- 11-Hamilton Hotel and Block



HOTEL LENOX
 Multnomah County
 Latitude 45° 30' 54.9"
 Longitude 122° 40' 31.8"