

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Royalton Hotel

other names/site number Hotel Royalton; The Royalton

Name of Multiple Property Listing Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

2. Location

street & number 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard not for publication

city or town Chicago vicinity

state Illinois county Cook zip code 60612

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance: ___ national ___ statewide ___ local

Applicable National Register Criteria: ___ A ___ B ___ C ___ D

Signature of certifying official/Title: Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Illinois Department of Natural Resources - SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- ___ entered in the National Register
- ___ determined eligible for the National Register
- ___ determined not eligible for the National Register
- ___ removed from the National Register
- ___ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	site
0	0	structure
0	0	object
1	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC / Multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19th AND 20th CENTURY REVIVALS /
Classical Revival + Renaissance Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete

walls: Brick, Terra Cotta

roof: ASPHALT

other: _____

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity).

Summary Paragraph

The Royalton Hotel, designed by Chicago architect Edmund Meles (1894-1968) and completed in 1926, is a four-story residential hotel of masonry construction located on the north side of W. Jackson Boulevard in Chicago's Near West Side community area. The building features a C-shaped plan, with two wings projecting east from the central north-south portion that runs along the west side of the building. The south side of the southernmost wing serves as the building's primary Jackson Boulevard façade. This elevation is clad in buff-colored face brick and decorated with a mixture of Classical and Renaissance Revival detailing rendered in architectural terra cotta. The central entrance features an elaborate terra-cotta surround with multiple bands of foliate detailing and niches in the inset door frame. The first-story of the south elevation is fenestrated with large original windows with multi-lite round arched transoms set in terra-cotta surrounds. The upper floors are regularly fenestrated with one-over-one replacement windows within the original openings. The secondary elevations are all common brick with no ornamentation, regularly fenestrated with single window openings with segmental arch lintels and stone or concrete sills. The roof of the building is flat with tile copings. The interior of the building is typical of an early twentieth century-rooming hotel in Chicago. The 1st floor houses a reception desk, a large resident lounge, and three stairwells (the Royalton Hotel has no extant passenger or loading elevators). Beyond these public spaces, the interior of the building holds 100 single-room hotel units arranged along central double-loaded corridors.

Narrative Description

National Register Listing Boundary

The proposed National Register listing boundary encompasses the building's entire footprint, bound on the south by Jackson Boulevard, on the east and west by property lines, and on the north by a public alley.

Site

The Royalton Hotel is located at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard in Chicago's Near West Side community area. The hotel is located on the north side of Jackson Boulevard between Wood Street to the east and Damen Avenue to the west and one block north of the Eisenhower Expressway (Interstate 290). The Royalton Hotel abuts an empty lot to its east, a parking lot to its west, and a public alley and parking lot to its north. The Royalton Hotel is the only twentieth century structure remaining along its stretch of Jackson Boulevard with the 2016 Malcolm X College Campus to its west at the corner of Jackson and Damen, and the 2017 Fifth-Third Bank / Chicago Blackhawks Community Ice Rink to its south across Jackson.

Exterior

The ground floor level of the primary south (Jackson Boulevard) facade features round arched windows framed by terra-cotta surrounds. The buff colored façade brick on the first story is corbeled with regularly spaced recessed courses. A granite base extends along the entire east elevation. The first story is separated from the upper stories by a molded terra-cotta cornice with inset scalloped light fixtures. The center portion of the east elevation projects slightly from the building. Four fluted pilasters divide this center portion into three sections. The pilasters extend from the second story to the fourth story and are surmounted by a simple molded cornice of terra cotta with corbeled brick detailing along the fascia. The bays flanking the projecting center portion feature a band of brick at the cornice laid in a basket weave pattern, but exhibit little other ornamentation above the first story. The window openings in these bays have brick headers and terra-cotta sills.

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

The center main entrance along the south facade is a non-historic metal and glass storefront door set into a terra cotta surround with Renaissance Revival style detailing.

Some original wood windows with wood and glass lunettes remain at the ground floor flanking the main entrance. The mostly symmetrical fenestration at the 2nd through 4th floors above display larger hotel room windows and smaller bathroom windows, all non-historic 1-over-1 replacement window products.

The remaining secondary facades are all clad in common brick with no ornamentation. These facades are regularly fenestrated with single window openings with segmental arch brick lintels and concrete sills. Original fireproof steel windows remain at alley-facing north façade and at the stairwell window openings at the north ends of the east and west facades. The hotel room windows along the east and west facades are non-historic 1-over-1 replacement windows within the original openings.

Interior

The main entrance along Jackson Boulevard opens into a small vestibule with multi-colored terrazzo flooring covered with non-historic vinyl flooring; the coved terrazzo base and portions of the terrazzo floor below are clearly visible in this and other public spaces at the south end of the 1st floor. The vestibule opens into the main 1st floor reception area, which features terrazzo flooring covered with non-historic vinyl and an original wood reception desk with non-historic metal and glass storefront enclosure above. Southwest of the reception area, terrazzo steps lead down to the main resident lounge, which features terrazzo flooring clad in vinyl and arched openings between rooms. An area that might have been an elevator enclosure is located just north of this lounge though today the building has no working elevator.

Just southeast of the reception area is a large multipurpose space also accessible from the Jackson Boulevard vestibule. This space, which likely functioned historically as a restaurant that primarily served the hotel residents, has been updated with non-historic flooring and has more recently been used as an office area.

Beyond these public spaces, the remainder of the 1st floor and the upper floors are given over to hotel rooms arranged along central double-loaded corridors in each wing. The corridors retain plaster ceilings, minimal painted wood trim, and unit door openings with transoms. Unit doors are almost all replacement flush doors. Floors (likely wood) are covered in non-historic vinyl and ceilings have been clad in popcorn plaster. The glass panes in the transoms have all been replaced with solid panels, but the wood frames remain.

The building has three enclosed stairwells. The stairwells retain their original wood stairs and railings.

The units throughout the building are single-room hotel rooms. Typical units feature with a closet and a shower flanking the doorway and a sink located on the interior wall, although there are units with showers and toilets elsewhere in the room. The trim in the units is simple and painted, and the flooring is wood. Each floor also has separate men's and women's restrooms at opposite ends of the main center corridor.

Integrity

Overall, the Royalton Hotel is a well-preserved example of a residential hotel and retains good integrity with its overall historic massing, roofline, and brick and terra cotta exteriors. The building retains its exterior massing and architectural detailing, with no major alterations or additions. On the interior, the building retains its reception area with desk, and a lounge space with terrazzo flooring, arched openings, and wood trim, and its restaurant space. The corridors are intact and retain historic trim and ceilings. With its intact exterior and interior, the Royalton Hotel continues to express its historic location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling and association that make it a significant example of a historic residential hotel in Chicago's Near West Side community.

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1926 (year of completion)

Significant Dates

1926 (year of completion)

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation (if applicable)

Architect/Builder

Edmund J. Meles, architect

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations).

The Royalton Hotel at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard in Chicago, Illinois, is eligible for National Register listing under Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent and well-preserved example of a residential “rooming” hotel, a type of residential hotel constructed in Chicago primarily between 1910 and 1930. The building meets the registration requirements developed as part of the Multiple Property Documentation Form for Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930, approved by the National Park Service in 2017. The Royalton Hotel exemplifies the rooming hotels that were purpose-built primarily to house the army of skilled but low paid white- and blue-collar workers flooding into Chicago in the early decades of the twentieth century. Rooming hotels like the Royalton Hotel offered residents daily, weekly, or monthly rates, and welcomed both transients and permanent residents. Hotel rooms were typically single rooms, some with private baths but most with shared toilets and sinks and showers in the rooms. “Hotel” service could include maid service, laundry service, elevator service, and meal services. Many lower-tier rooming hotels did not provide meal service but offered a restaurant in the building, as it appears the Royalton had.

The Royalton Hotel is a mid-rise rooming hotel with a C-shaped plan. Typical of residential hotels situated in the middle of a block, the building has one ornamented street-facing façade which features face brick and vaguely Classical and Renaissance Revival terra-cotta detailing. The ground floor reception area and lounge are also typical of the building type.

The Royalton Hotel’s proposed period of significance under Criterion C is 1926, the year of its completion.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

History of the Royalton Hotel

The Royalton Hotel’s original building permit does not appear to have survived but the building’s development by prominent Chicago attorney Benjamin E. Cohen (1886-1943) and his architect Edmund J. Meles (1894-1968) was documented in local newspapers as the building neared completion in early 1926.¹ The construction of the new Royalton Hotel at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard in Chicago was announced on March 19, 1926, in the *Daily National Hotel Reporter*:

“Hotel development in a new section of the near West Side is... planned. The Royalton Hotel, at 1808-12 W. Jackson blvd., to cost \$300,000, will pioneer in the newly developed section near the Wiedbodt store [at Ashland and Ogden Avenues, extant], the hospital district and the Marshfield station of the elevated [L tracks at Marshfield and Paulina Streets, since demolished].

This four-story building of semi-fireproof design, containing 110 hotel rooms, all with shower bath, is designed by Architect Edmund J. Meles. The lot is 75 by 125 feet in size.

The lobby will be arranged with ornamental plaster ceiling and fireplace. Rooms will be approximately 10 ½ by 13 feet in size. A push button elevator will serve all floors of the building.

The Royalton Hotel will be entirely furnished and operated by Julius Solomon, Harry Levin and Benjamin Cohen. Louis Cohen will be resident manager.”²

¹ Find a Grave, “Benjamin Edward Cohen,” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/236351820/benjamin-edward-cohen>, accessed December 10, 2023.

“Obituary: Edmund Meles,” *The Tampa Tribune* (Tampa, FL), July 26, 1968.

Find a Grave, “Edmund J Meles,” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/22730092/edmund-j-meles>, accessed December 10, 2023.

² “Apartment Hotels,” *Daily National Hotel Reporter* (Chicago, IL), March 19, 1926.

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

Two months later in May 1926, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that the Benjamin Cohen and Julius Solomon planned to lease the Royalton Hotel, designed with “plans by E.J. Meles,” to one Harry Bernstein for a twenty-year period.³

The Royalton Hotel was one of several Chicago residential hotels designed by architect Edmund J. Meles for Benjamin E. Cohen in the mid-1920s. Most notably, Meles’s design for Cohen’s 100-room Royalton Hotel, completed in 1926, was used again in an expanded form for Cohen’s 175-room Carling Hotel at 1512 N. LaSalle Street. The Royalton’s and Carling’s four-story massings and Classical Revival- and Renaissance Revival-inspired street facades were (and remain today) nearly identical.

When the Royalton Hotel first opened in 1926 – the first advertisements for the hotel date from April 23, 1926 – visitors were promised a “new, modern, reasonable hotel.”⁴ Arriving at the hotel’s Jackson Boulevard entrance, guests entered the Royalton through a vaulted vestibule and checked in at a reception area, or could pause in the large lounge steps down from reception. Though there is no mention of a restaurant onsite at the time of completion, the hotel’s ground floor southeast space facing Jackson Boulevard likely housed a small eatery for residents; a 1944 advertisement offered a “completely equip[ped]” “restaurant for rent” seating thirty at the Royalton Hotel, described as a “small commercial hotel.”⁵

The remainder of the building was given over to long internal corridors accessing perimeter guest rooms. Upper floors were accessed by three stairwells. Though there is no working elevator in the building today, the March 1926 *Daily National Hotel Reporter* article mentions an elevator and a 1950 Sanborn map notes an elevator enclosure at the southwest end of the building, just north of the 1st floor lounge.⁶

Guest rooms at the Royalton Hotel were small but fully furnished and could be combined into double rooms. All rooms were originally equipped with telephones, private baths or showers, and closets. Like today, many of the Royalton’s guest rooms may also have had en suite toilets though shared toilet facilities were located on each floor. Stays at the Royalton Hotel were originally advertised at “\$10 [a] week up,” allowing for extended stays for more permanent residents.⁷

Although the Royalton Hotel catered to both transient and permanent residents, United States Census records from 1940 suggest that the majority of those who stayed in the hotel in its first decades were not transient guests. In the 1940 census over three-quarters of the hotel’s approximately 115 guests reported having lived at the Royalton Hotel for at least five years, some together with their spouses. Most guests in 1930, 1940 and 1950 reported the American Midwest as their place of birth, and if foreign born they usually hailed from Eastern or Western Europe. Residents included married, single, and divorced people, both male and female, who worked a variety of blue- and white-collar jobs. Though most residents in the Royalton Hotel’s first decade were reportedly doctors, interns, and nurses (presumably working in the burgeoning nearby Medical District), in the 1940s and 1950s the hotel was more predominantly home to those in non-medical fields including clerks, bartenders, engineers, pharmacists, waiters and waitresses, typists, teachers, beauticians, auto mechanics, telephone operators, laborers, plumbers, and factory workers. Except for two males from Siam recorded in 1950, all occupants of the Royalton Hotel in the census years of 1930, 1940 and 1950 were reported as White.

By the late 1950s, however, the Royalton Hotel was open for business to Black customers. From 1957 to 1967, the hotel was included in several “Green Books,” travel guides for African Americans published annually that included listings of hotels, restaurants, gas stations, garages, and other businesses nationwide willing to serve Black travelers.⁸

³ “Leases Royalton Hotel for 20 Years; \$500,000,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), May 23, 1926.

Chicago “L”.org, “Marshfield (1700W/400S),” <https://www.chicago-l.org/stations/marshfield.html>, accessed December 9, 2023.

⁴ “Advertisement: Royalton Hotel,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), June 13, 1926.

“Advertisement: Hotel Royalton,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), April 23, 1924.

⁵ “Advertisement: Restaurant for rent,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), March 28, 1944.

⁶ “Apartment Hotels.”

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Chicago, Vol. 7, 1917 Revised to June 1950, 22.

⁷ “Advertisement: Hotel Royalton.”

⁸ *The Negro Travelers’ Green Book* (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1957), 17.

The Negro Travelers’ Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1959), 18.

The Travelers’ Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1960), 37.

The Travelers’ Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1961), 31.

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

Through the mid-twentieth century, the building at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard appears to have been interchangeably called the “Royalton Hotel” (as seen in early newspaper advertisements) and the “Hotel Royalton” (as seen in a 1950 Sanborn fire insurance map). Today the building at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard, now simply known as The Royalton, remains in use as a single resident occupancy hotel for short and long term stays.

Chicago’s Near West Side Community Area

The Royalton Hotel is located two miles west of Chicago’s Loop downtown central business district at the center of Chicago’s Near West Side neighborhood, a six square mile community area bounded by the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad (Kinzie Street) to the north; the Pennsylvania Railroad (Rockwell Street) to the west; the south branch of the Chicago River to the east; and 16th Street to the south. Beginning in the 1950s, two interstate highways cut wide open swaths through the Near West Side – the Kennedy Expressway (Interstate 90 / 94) which crosses north-south along the neighborhood’s east end between Jefferson and Halsted Streets, and the Eisenhower Expressway (Interstate 290) which crosses east-west through the center of the neighborhood between Van Buren and Harrison Streets just south of the Royalton Hotel.

Long before the construction of late twentieth century interstates, the Near West Side saw from the city’s founding continuous and significant changes in its settlement, population, and activities. Before White settlement, the Chicago area included the ancestral lands of Native American tribes, including the Ojibwe, Odawa, Potawatomi, Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, Fox, Kickapoo, and Illinois.⁹ After White settlement increased and the City of Chicago was founded in 1837, the Near West Side was for much of the nineteenth century the home to the city’s elite, many of whom built large homes around Union Park at Lake Street and Ashland Avenue, and to some of Chicago’s newest residents, families of African American, Irish, German, Czech, Bohemian, and French descent and later of Jewish, Italian, and Greek descent who settled in cramped conditions south of Harrison Street. The late nineteenth century saw the growth of wholesale trade businesses and manufacturers along the Near West Side’s railroads and main commercial corridors which ultimately drove the exit of wealthier residents and the influx of poor and working settlers. These newcomers were served most notably by the Hull House settlement house organization begun in 1889 at by reformers Jane Addams (1860-1935) and Ellen Gates Starr (1859-1940) at Halsted and Polk Streets approximately one-and-a-half miles southeast of the Royalton Hotel.¹⁰

The mid- to late-twentieth century brought significant population and infrastructure changes to the Near West Side. African Americans and Mexican immigrants moved in large numbers to the neighborhood beginning in the 1930s and in the mid-twentieth century many overcrowded communities were razed for large new public and private subsidized housing projects; for the University of Illinois at Chicago (for which most of the historic Hull House was demolished; for open parking around the Chicago Stadium at 1800 W. Madison Street; for major hospital construction projects south of Harrison Street; and later for the “Chicago Circle” interstate projects and for the construction of the United Center (1994, following the demolition of the Chicago Stadium) and its surrounding parking lots.¹¹

The Royalton Hotel was constructed in 1926 just west of Ashland and Ogden Avenues, two busy commercial corridors in the 1920s Chicago. The Near West Side neighborhood immediately surrounding the Royalton Hotel was significantly impacted in the second half of the twentieth century by urban renewal projects, notably by the construction of the “Chicago Circle” interstate system, new housing developments, the United Center, but most closely by the construction of Malcolm X College whose C.F. Murphy-designed campus catcorner from the Royalton southwest across Jackson Boulevard was completed in 1971; the 1960s campus was demolished in the early 2010s and was replaced in 2016 by a new Malcolm X

The Travelers’ Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1962), 37.

Travelers’ Green Book: International Edition 1963-1964 (New York: Victor H. Green Co., 1964), 22.

Travelers’ Green Book: International Edition 1966-1967 (New York: Victor H. Green Co., 1967), 22.

⁹ American Library Association, “Indigenous Tribes of Chicago.” <https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/chicago-indigenous>, Accessed December 8, 2023.

¹⁰ Emily Ramsey, Lara Ramsey, and John Cramer, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Mid-City Trust and Savings Bank; Cook County, Illinois* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2023), 9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

College facility on the north side of Jackson Boulevard abutting the west end of the Royalton Hotel. Another large public facility, the Fifth Third Arena / Chicago Blackhawks Community Ice Rink completed in 2017, is located south across Jackson Boulevard from the Royalton Hotel.¹²

Architect Edmund J. Meles (1894-1968)

The Royalton Hotel was designed by local architect Edmund J. Meles. Born in Chicago to British parents in 1894, Meles worked as a draftsman at a window sash company in the late 1910s. By 1922 he was practicing architecture under the architecture firm Knehans, Gieseler, and Meles. The firm designed the Austin Masonic Temple at Waller and Division Streets. By 1926, Meles had established his own architectural firm and secured several large Chicago hotel commissions, including the 13-story apartment hotel at 1117-1123 N. Dearborn Street (extant); 16-story Croydon Hotel (now the James Hotel) at 616 N. Rush Street (extant); the Vernon Hotel at 756 W. Jackson Boulevard (demolished); the Hotel Burton at 1429-1437 N. Clark Street (demolished); the Royalton Hotel at 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard. (extant); the Carling Hotel at 1512 N. LaSalle Street (extant); and the Hotel Marshall at 1232 N. LaSalle Street (extant). All were completed by late 1927. The Royalton, Carling, and Marshall Hotels were all built and operated by Benjamin E. Cohen, a well-known Chicago attorney. The Carling and Marshall Hotels were individually listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2017.¹³

In 1927, Meles designed the 13-story high-rise kitchenette apartment building at 732 Bittersweet Place. Construction on the 173 unit building started in October 1927. 732 Bittersweet Place is extant and is a contributing structure in the Buena Park Historic District, listed in the National Register in 1984.¹⁴

Criterion C – The Royalton Hotel and Rooming Hotels in Chicago

The Royalton Hotel is an excellent intact example of a rooming hotel as outlined in the Multiple Property Documentation Form of Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930. Rooming hotels were a subset of residential hotels constructed in Chicago between 1910 and 1930. Whereas apartment hotels featured a range of unit sizes, typically ranging from one to three rooms and included some kitchenettes, rooming hotels offered only single room units with no kitchenettes. Many required residents to share toilet facilities (accessed from the hall), but provided a sink and shower in the room for private bathing. Most mid-rise examples of rooming hotels, such as the Royalton Hotel, feature a modest lobby with check-in desk and small, homey lounge spaces. Although most rooming hotels did not include dining rooms specifically for residents, many incorporated a coffee shop, café or restaurant that, while not dedicated for residents, served as a convenient place to eat meals. Mid-rise rooming hotels typically housed single working class men and women who could not afford to live in a private house or apartment.¹⁵

Conclusion

Designed by architect Edmund J. Meles and completed in 1926, the Royalton Hotel in Chicago, Illinois, is eligible for listing under National Register Criterion C for Architecture as an excellent and well-preserved example of a residential rooming hotel and meets the registration requirements developed as part of the Multiple Property Documentation Form for

¹² Encyclopedia of Chicago, “Near West Side,” <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/878.html>, accessed December 11, 2023.

Alice Sinkevitch, ed., *AIA Guide to Chicago* (USA: Harcourt Books, 2004), 291.

Fifth Third Arena / Chicago Blackhawks Community Ice Rink, “About Us,” <https://www.fifththirdarena.com/about-us>, accessed December 8, 2023.

¹³ Emily Ramsey, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Carling Hotel; Cook County, Illinois* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2017), Section 16 page 12-13.

“Start Work on Austin Masonic Temple.”

“Vernon Hotel,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 21, 1927.

“15 Foot Tower Will Feature South Side Flat,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), October 21, 1928.

“Hotel Burton,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), December 5, 1926.

¹⁴ *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Carling Hotel; Cook County, Illinois*, Section 16 page 12-13.

“13 Story Flats in Bittersweet,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL), October 14, 1927.

¹⁵ Emily Ramsey and Lara Ramsey, *Multiple Property Documentation Form of Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2017), Section E page 1, 2, 14, 17, 19, 31, 32, 35, 36.

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930. For nearly a century, the Royalton Hotel, today called the Royalton, has provided inexpensive short and long term housing for low income Chicagoans.

Royalton Hotel

Name of Property

Cook, Illinois

County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

“15 Foot Tower Will Feature South Side Flat.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) October 21, 1928.

“Advertisement: Hotel Royalton.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. (Chicago, IL) April 23, 1924.

“Advertisement: Restaurant for rent.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. (Chicago, IL) March 28, 1944.

“Advertisement: Royalton Hotel.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. (Chicago, IL) June 13, 1926.

American Library Association. “Indigenous Tribes of Chicago.”

<https://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/diversity/chicago-indigenous>. Accessed December 8, 2023.

“Apartment Hotels.” *Daily National Hotel Reporter*. (Chicago, IL) March 19, 1926.

Chicago “L”.org. “Marshfield (1700W/400S).” <https://www.chicago-l.org/stations/marshfield.html>. Accessed December 9, 2023.

Encyclopedia of Chicago. “Near West Side.”

<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/878.html>. Accessed December 11, 2023.

Find a Grave. “Benjamin Edward Cohen” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/236351820/benjamin-edward-cohen>. Accessed December 10, 2023.

Find a Grave. “Edmund J Meles.” <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/22730092/edmund-j-meles>. Accessed December 10, 2023.

“Hotel Burton,” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) December 5, 1926.

“Leases Royalton Hotel for 20 Years; \$500,000.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) May 23, 1926.

“Obituary: Edmund Meles,” *The Tampa Tribune* (Tampa, FL) July 26, 1968.

Ramsey, Emily. *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Carling Hotel; Cook County, Illinois* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2017).

Ramsey, Emily and Lara Ramsey. *Multiple Property Documentation Form of Residential Hotels in Chicago, 1900-1930* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2017).

Ramsey, Emily, Lara Ramsey, and John Cramer, *National Register of Historic Places Nomination: Mid-City Trust and Savings Bank; Cook County, Illinois* (Chicago, IL: Illinois State Historic Preservation Office, 2023).

“Rites Monday for B. E. Cohen, Law Firm Head.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) December 18, 1943.

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Chicago, Vo1. 7, 1917 Revised to June 1950.

Sinkevitch, Alice, ed. *AIA Guide to Chicago* (USA: Harcourt Books, 2004).

“Start Work on 13 Story Flats in Bittersweet.” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) October 14, 1927.

“Start Work on Austin Masonic Temple” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (Chicago, IL) November 19, 1922.

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

The Negro Travelers' Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1957).

The Negro Travelers' Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1959).

The Travelers' Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1960).

The Travelers' Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1961).

The Travelers' Green Book (New York: Victor H. Green & Company, 1962).

Travelers' Green Book: International Edition 1963-1964 (New York: Victor H. Green Co., 1964).

Travelers' Green Book: International Edition 1966-1967 (New York: Victor H. Green Co., 1967).

United States Census Records. 1930, 1940 and 1950.

“Vernon Hotel.” *Chicago Daily Tribune*. (Chicago, IL) August 21, 1927.

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 # _____
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
 - Other State agency
 - Federal agency
 - Local government
 - University
 - Other
- Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage; enter "Less than one" if the acreage is .99 or less)

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

Datum if other than WGS84: _____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1	<u>41.877926</u>	<u>-87.672328</u>	3	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude
2	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	Latitude	Longitude		Latitude	Longitude

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The National Register boundary for the Royalton Hotel includes the entire parcel historically associated with the building, bound on the south by Jackson Boulevard; on the east and west by property lines; and on the north by a public alley.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The National Register boundary for the Royalton Hotel encompasses the building's full historic footprint.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Cramer + Emily Ramsey date January 8, 2024
organization Ramsey Historic Consultants, Inc. telephone 337.781.1180
street & number 1105 W. Chicago Avenue, Suite 201 email john@ramseyhcinc.com
city or town Chicago state IL zip code 60642

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **GIS Location Map (Google Earth or BING)**
- **Local Location Map**
- **Site Plan**
- **Floor Plans (As Applicable)**
- **Photo Location Map** (Include for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map and insert immediately after the photo log and before the list of figures).

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property

Cook, Illinois
County and State

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 pixels, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Log

Name of Property: Royalton Hotel
City or Vicinity: Chicago
County: Cook **State:** IL
Photographer: John Cramer, Ramsey Historic Consultants, Inc.
Date Photographed: December 7, 2023

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- Photo 1 of 15.** South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northeast.
- Photo 2 of 15.** South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northwest.
- Photo 3 of 15.** South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northeast.
- Photo 4 of 15.** South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northwest.
- Photo 5 of 15.** East facade, looking west.
- Photo 6 of 15.** North facade, looking south.
- Photo 7 of 15.** West facade, looking north from Jackson Boulevard.
- Photo 8 of 15.** 1st floor, Jackson Boulevard entry vestibule, looking south.
- Photo 9 of 15.** 1st floor, entry lobby, looking east.
- Photo 10 of 15.** 1st floor, lounge, looking east.
- Photo 11 of 15.** 1st floor, current office space, looking west.
- Photo 12 of 15.** 1st floor, center corridor, looking south.
- Photo 13 of 15.** Typical stairwell.
- Photo 14 of 15.** Typical upper floor corridor.
- Photo 15 of 15.** Typical residential unit.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Royalton Hotel
Name of Property
Cook, Illinois
County and State
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Documentation Page 16

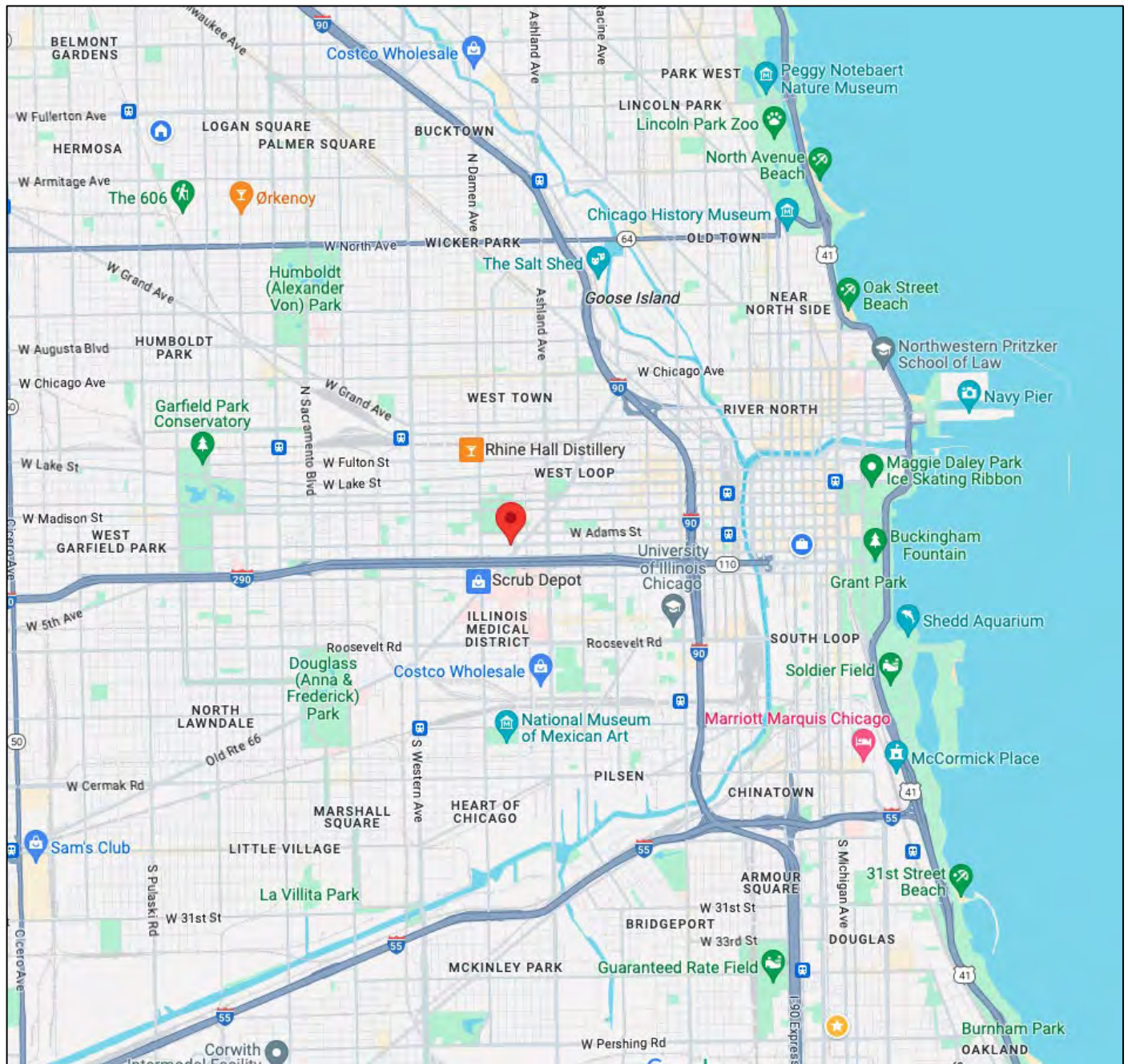
List of Figures

(Resize, compact, and paste images of maps and historic documents in this section. Place captions, with figure numbers above each image. Orient maps so that north is at the top of the page, all document should be inserted with the top toward the top of the page.)

- Figure 1.** Royalton Hotel – Location map
- Figure 2.** Royalton Hotel – Site map with National Register boundary
- Figure 3.** Royalton Hotel – Google Earth GIS Map
- Figure 4.** Royalton Hotel – Current 1st floor plan
- Figure 5.** Royalton Hotel – Typical current 2nd - 4th floor plan
- Figure 6.** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950. “Hotel Royalton” is circled in red.
- Figure 7.** Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950. Zoom in on “Hotel Royalton” at 1808-1812 W. Jackson Boulevard.
- Figure 8.** Royalton Hotel - 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard (completed 1926).
- Figure 9.** Carling Hotel - 1512 N. LaSalle Street (completed 1927), NR listed in 2017. The Royalton Hotel and Carling Hotel were nearly identical designs by architect Edmund J. Meles and both built for attorney and developer Benjamin E. Cohen.
- Figure 10.** Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 23, 1926.
- Figure 11.** Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 13, 1926.
- Figure 12.** Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 23, 1948.
- Figure 13.** Matchbook for the “Hotel Royalton,” c. 1930. Source: Ebay.
- Figure 14.** Cover of *The Negro Travelers’ Green Book* from 1957, the first year the Royalton Hotel appeared in this travel guide for African American travelers.
- Figure 15.** The Royalton Hotel listed among Chicago hotels in the 1957 edition of *The Negro Travelers’ Green Book*. The Royalton Hotel was listed in several “Green Book” guides from 1957 to 1967.

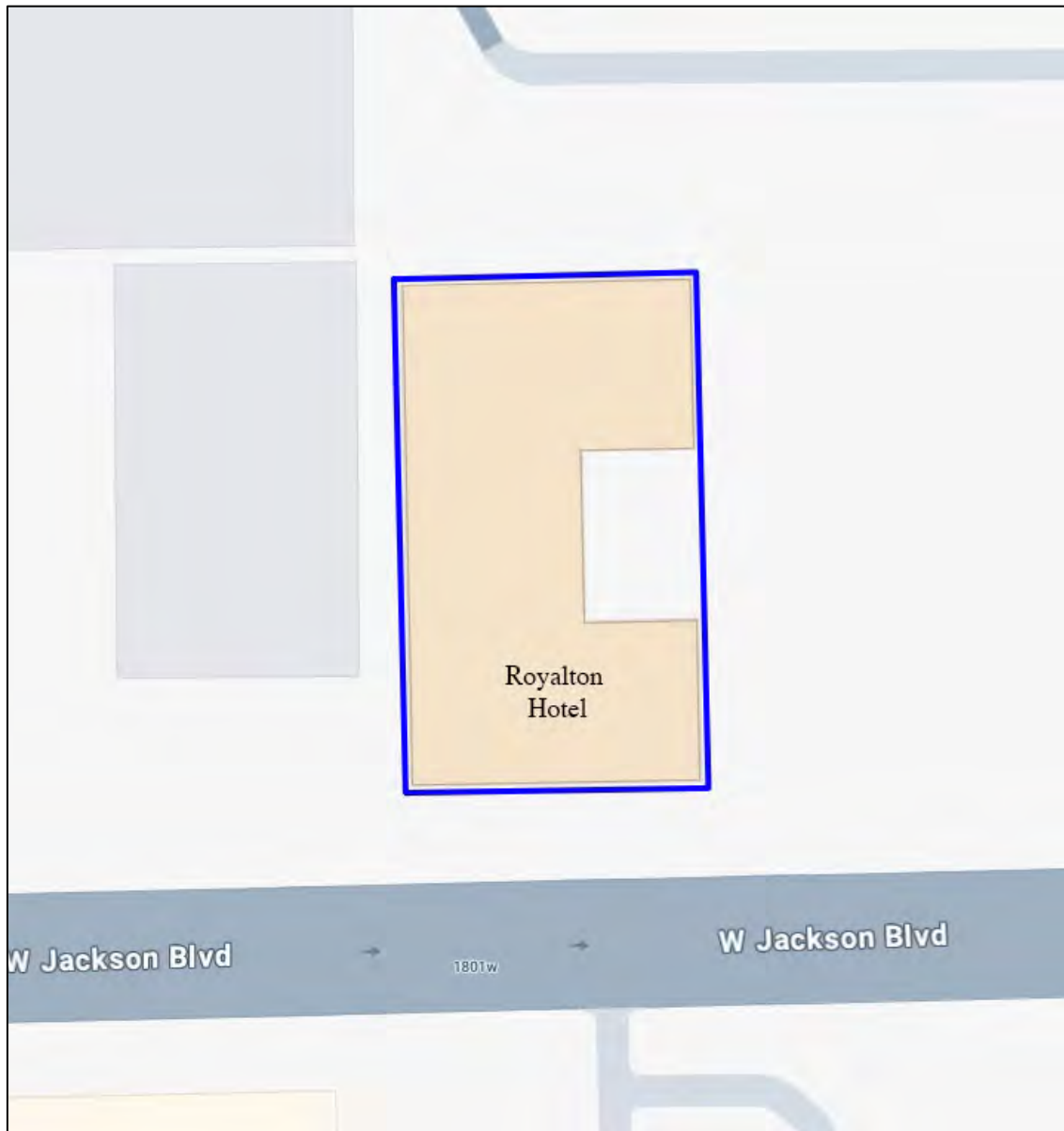
Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 1. Royalton Hotel – Location map



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 2. Royalton Hotel – Site map with National Register boundary



— National Register listing boundary



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 3. Royalton Hotel – Google Earth GIS Map

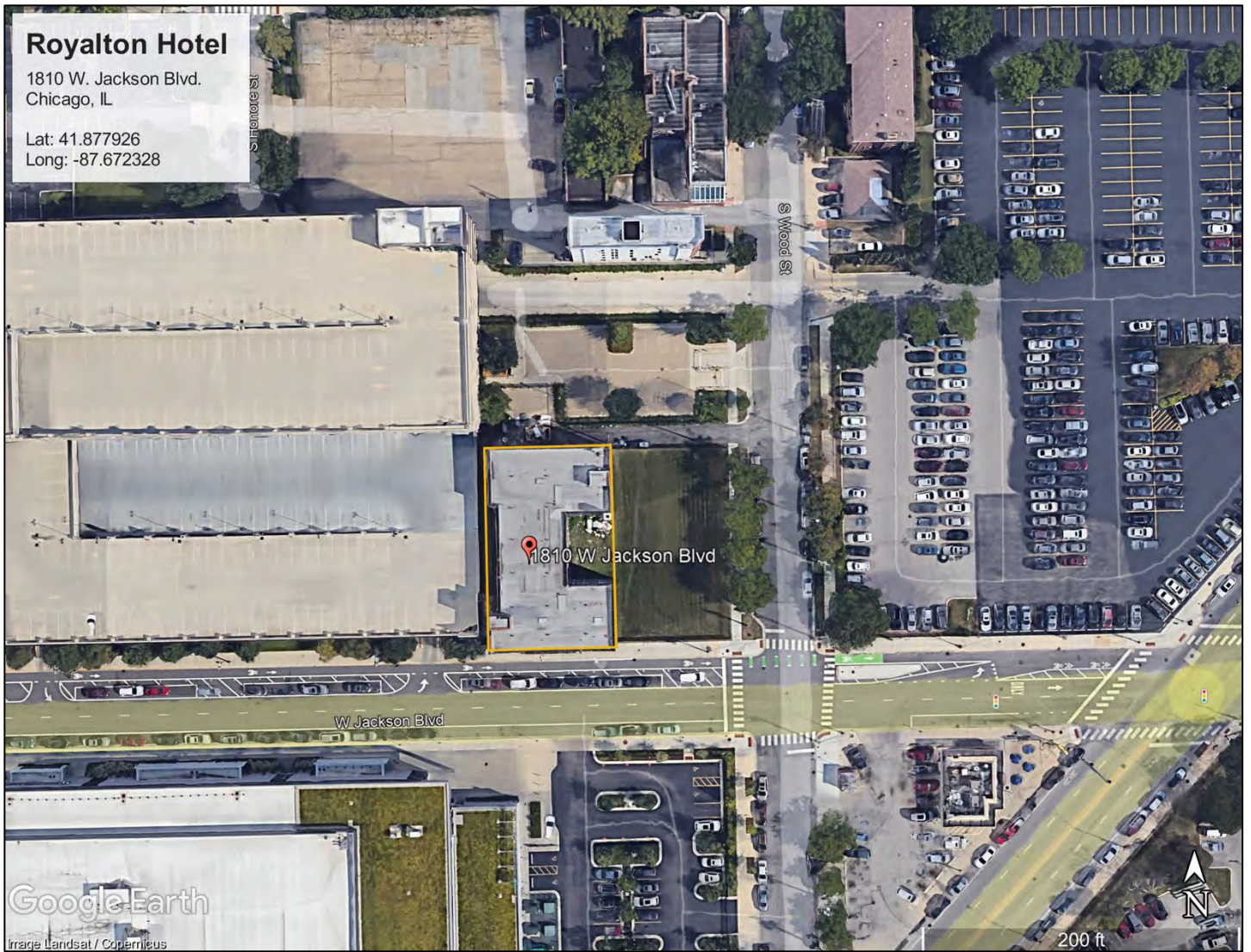


Figure 4. Royalton Hotel – Current 1st floor plan

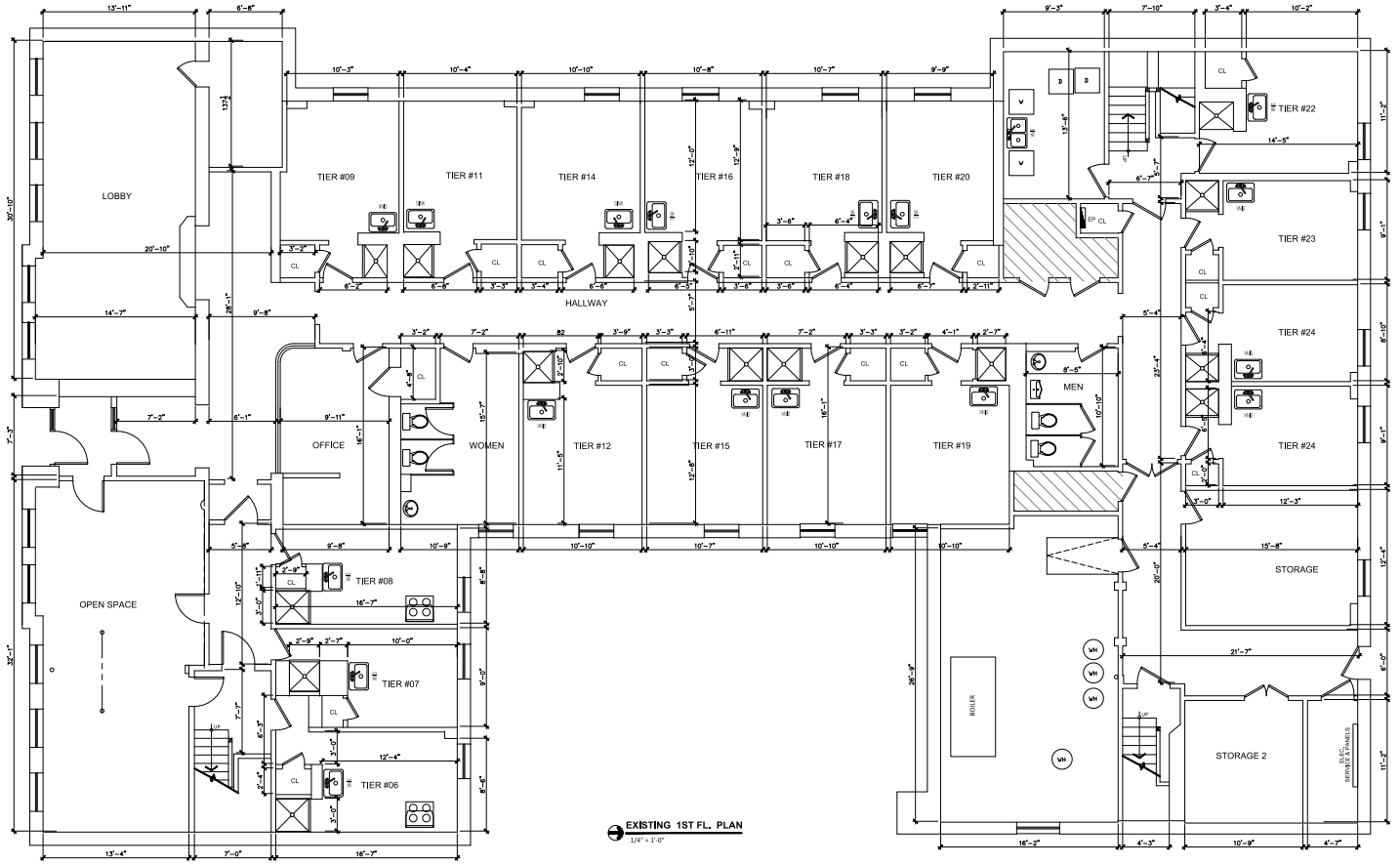
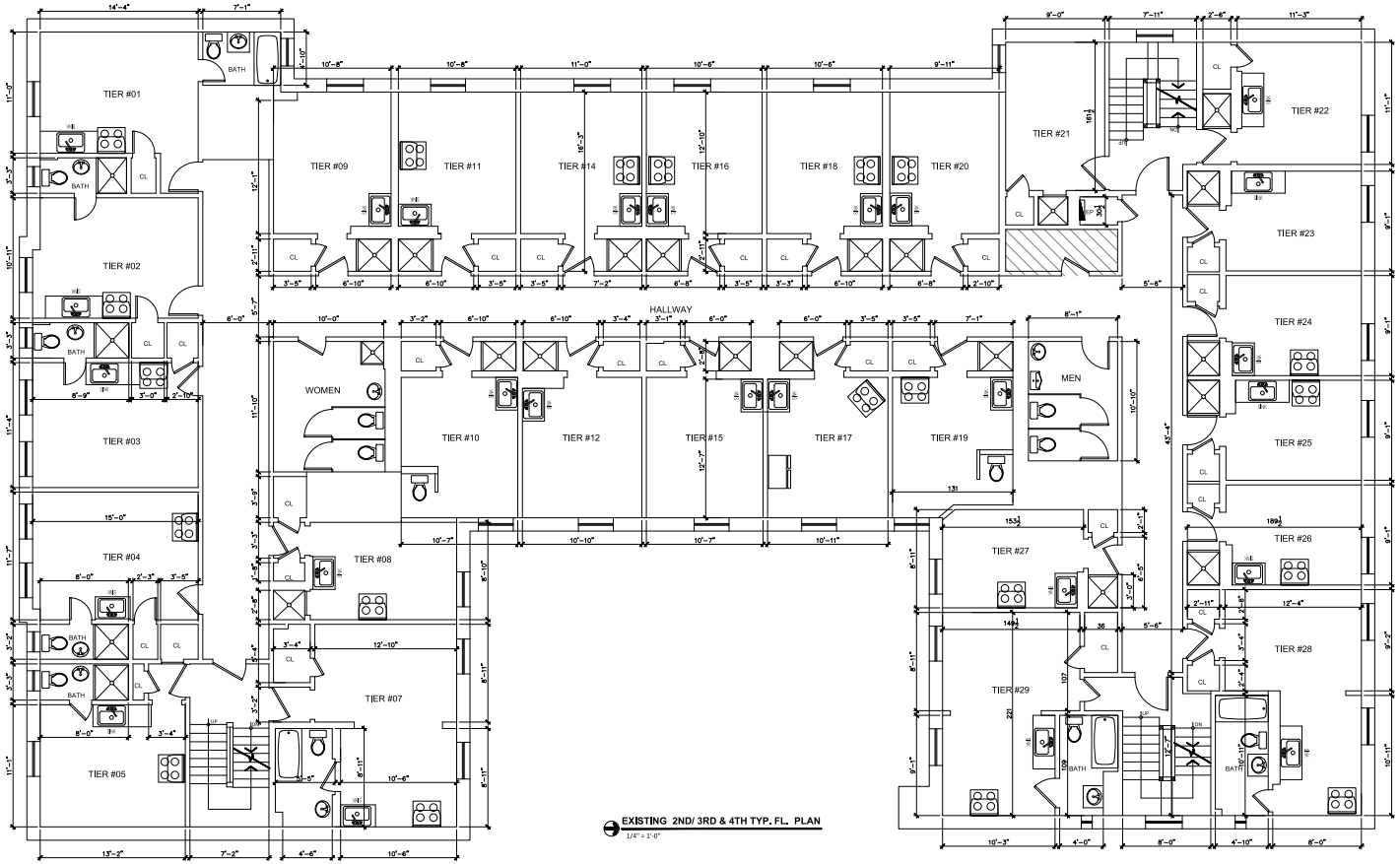


Figure 5. Royalton Hotel – Typical current 2nd - 4th floor plan



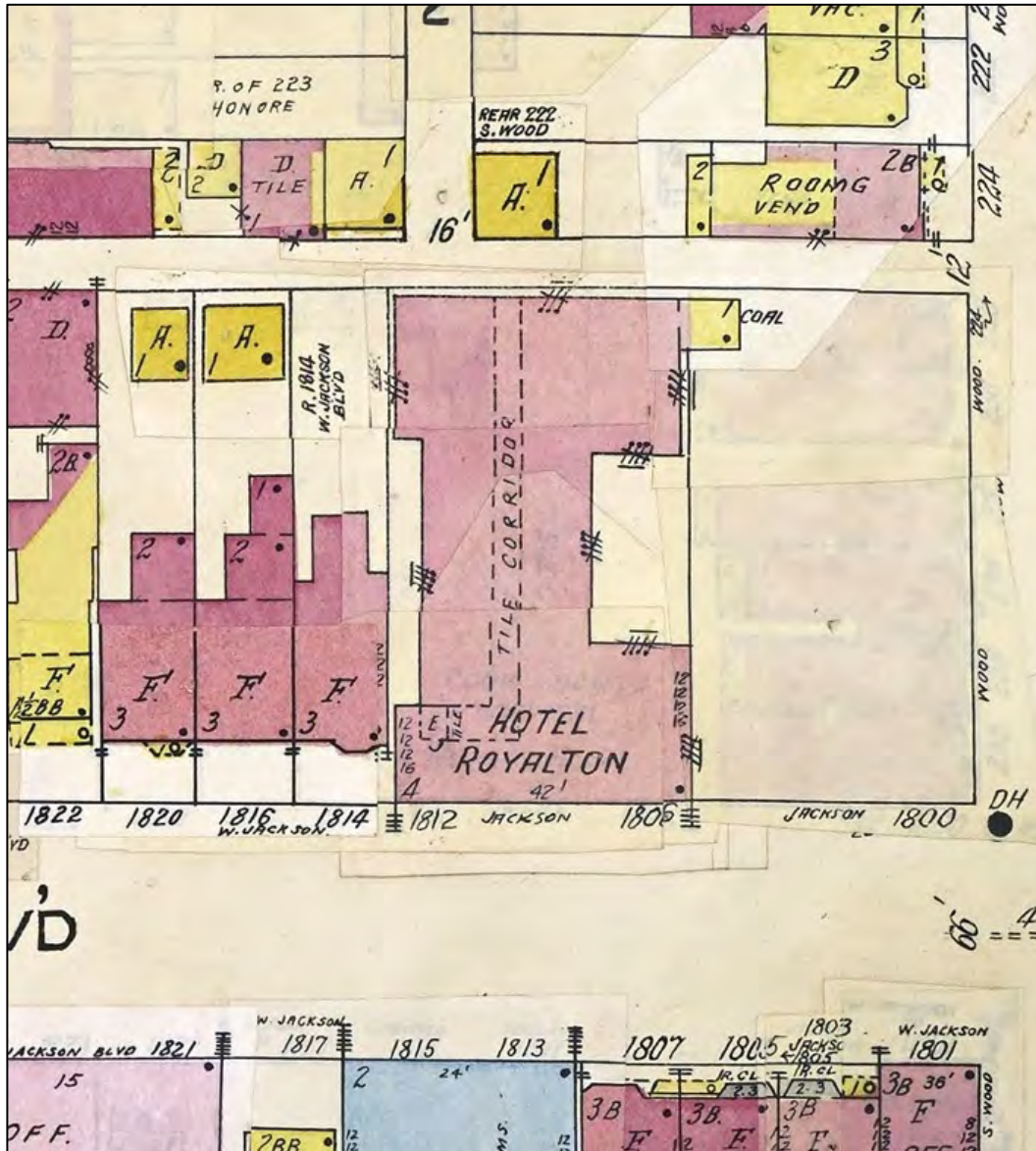
Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 6. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950. "Hotel Royalton" is circled in red.



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 7. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1950. Zoom in on "Hotel Royalton" at 1808-1812 W. Jackson Boulevard.



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 8. Royalton Hotel - 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard (completed 1926).



Figure 9. Carling Hotel - 1512 N. LaSalle Street (completed 1927), NR listed in 2017.

The Royalton Hotel and Carling Hotel were nearly identical designs by architect Edmund J. Meles and both built for attorney and developer Benjamin E. Cohen.



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 10. Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 23, 1926.



Figure 11. Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, June 13, 1926.

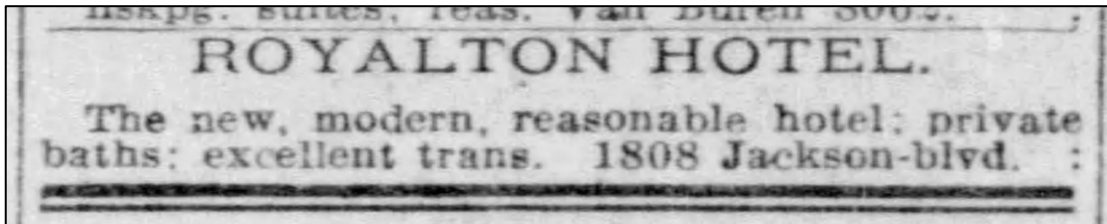


Figure 12. Advertisement, *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 23, 1948.



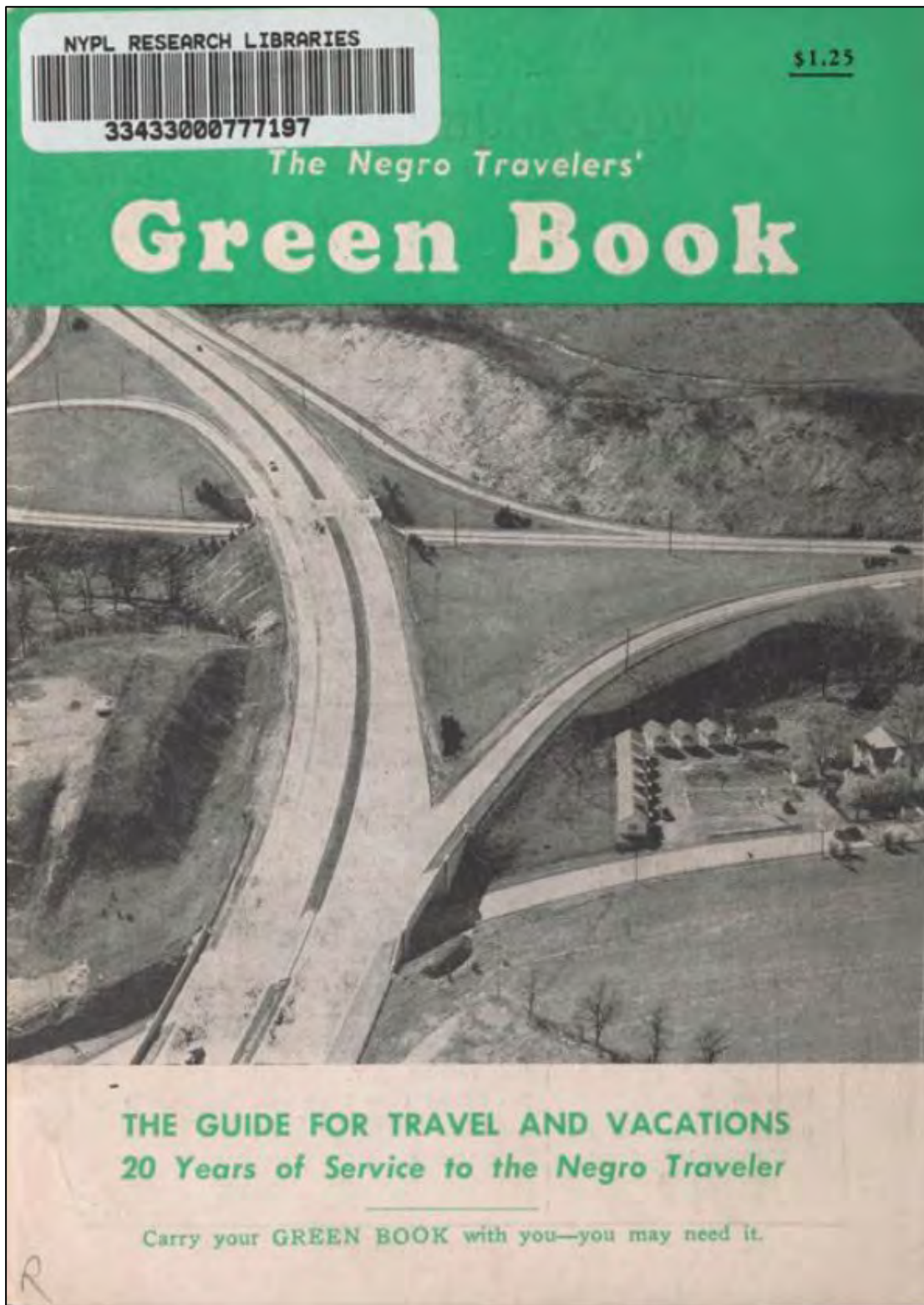
Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 13. Matchbook for the "Hotel Royalton," c. 1930. Source: Ebay.



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

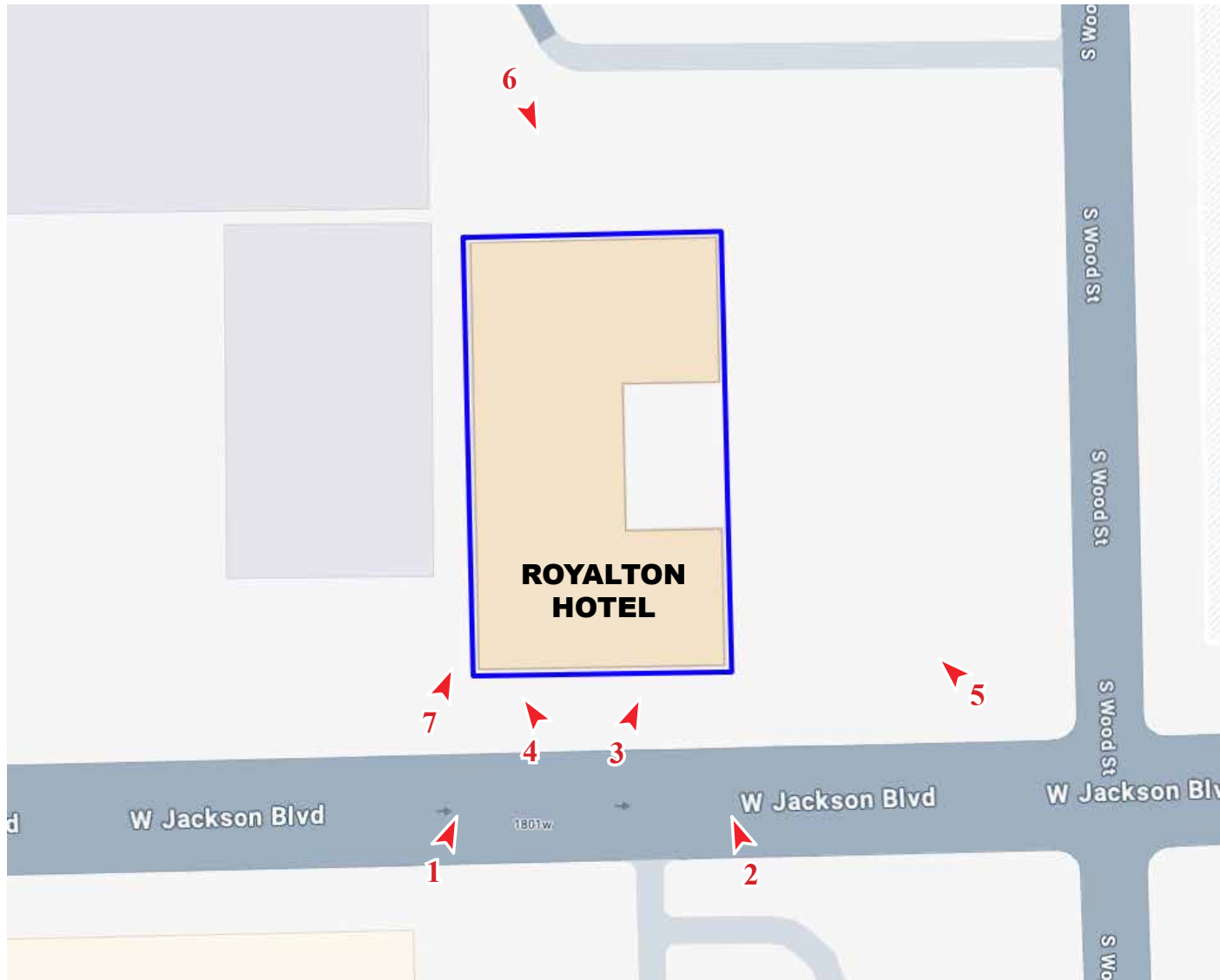
Figure 14. Cover of *The Negro Travelers' Green Book* from 1957, the first year the Royalton Hotel appeared in this travel guide for African American travelers.



Property name: Royalton Hotel
Illinois, County: Cook

Figure 15. The Royalton Hotel listed among Chicago hotels in the 1957 edition of *The Negro Travelers' Green Book*. The Royalton Hotel was listed in several "Green Book" guides from 1957 to 1967.



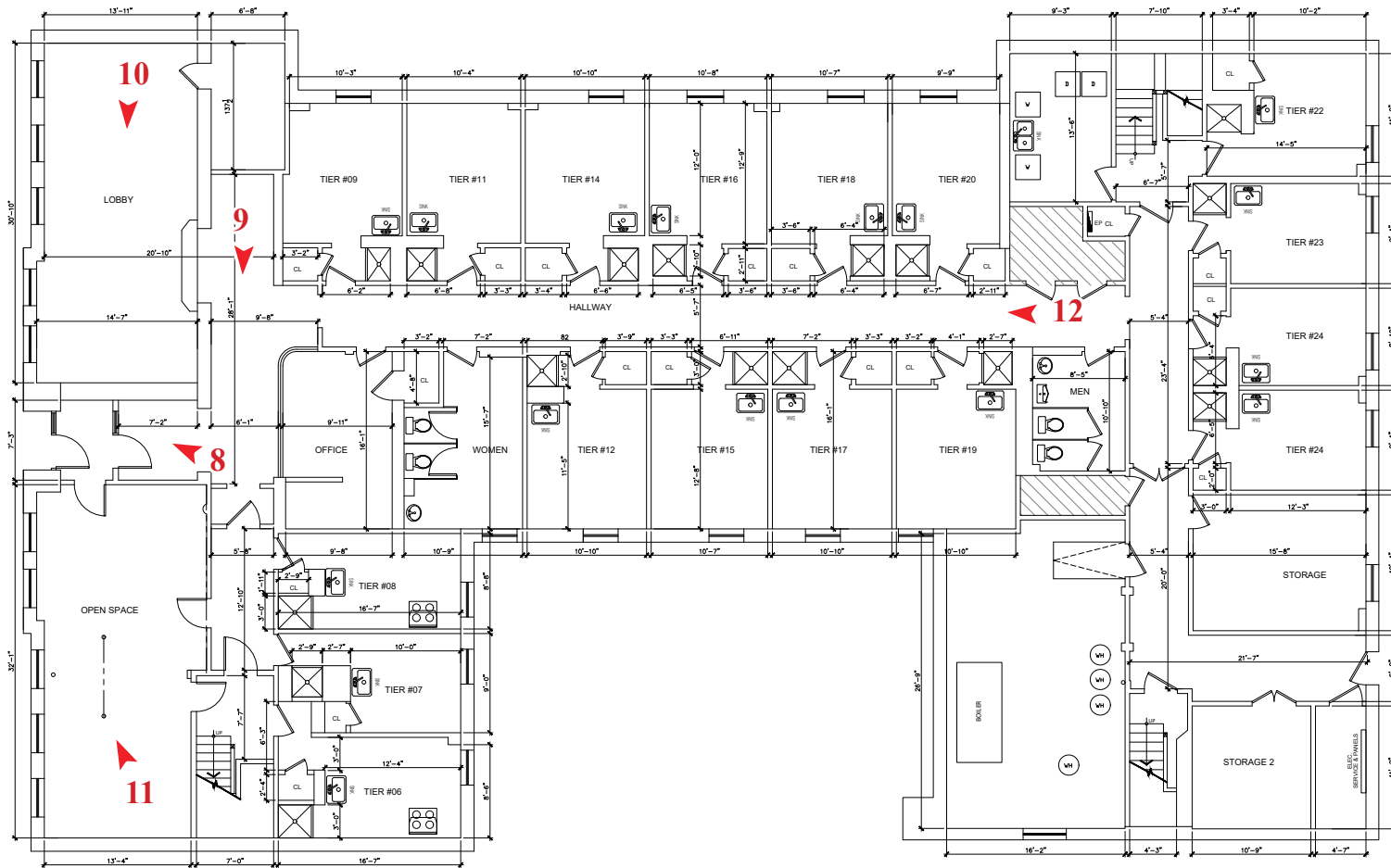


Proposed National Register Listing Boundary

Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois 60612

National Register Nomination
Photo Key
Site Plan

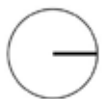


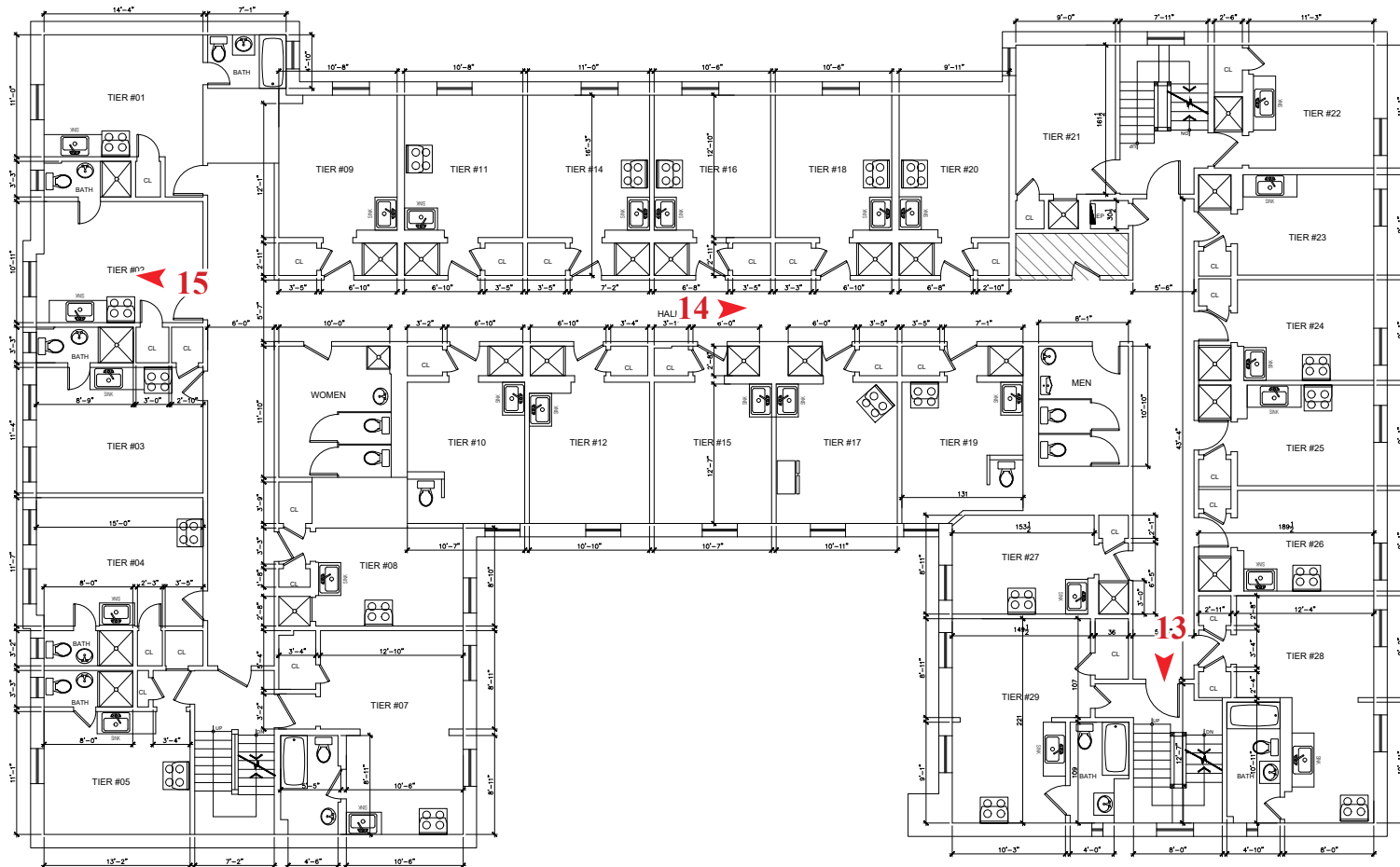


1st Floor

Royalton Hotel
 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard
 Chicago, Illinois 60612

National Register Nomination
 Photo Key

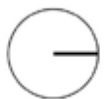




Typical Upper Floor - 2nd-4th Floor

Royalton Hotel
 1810 W. Jackson Boulevard
 Chicago, Illinois 60612

National Register Nomination
 Photo Key



National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612



Photo 1 of 15. South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northeast.



Photo 2 of 15. South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northwest.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612



Photo 3 of 15. South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northeast.



Photo 4 of 15. South (Jackson Boulevard) facade, looking northwest.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612



Photo 5 of 15. East facade, looking west.



Photo 6 of 15. North facade, looking south.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612

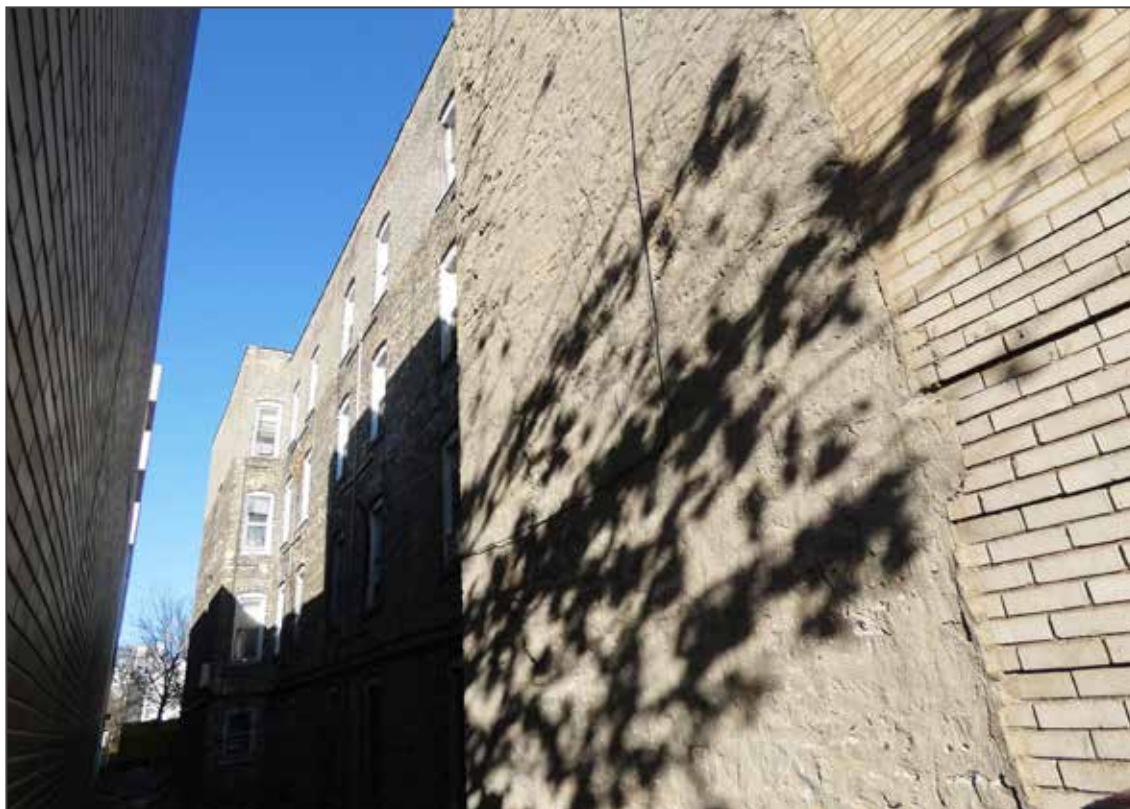


Photo 7 of 15. West facade, looking north from Jackson Boulevard.



Photo 8 of 15. 1st floor, Jackson Boulevard entry vestibule, looking south.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612



Photo 9 of 15. 1st floor, entry lobby, looking east.



Photo 10 of 15. 1st floor, lounge, looking east.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612



Photo 11 of 15. 1st floor, current office space, looking west.



Photo 12 of 15. 1st floor, center corridor, looking south.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612

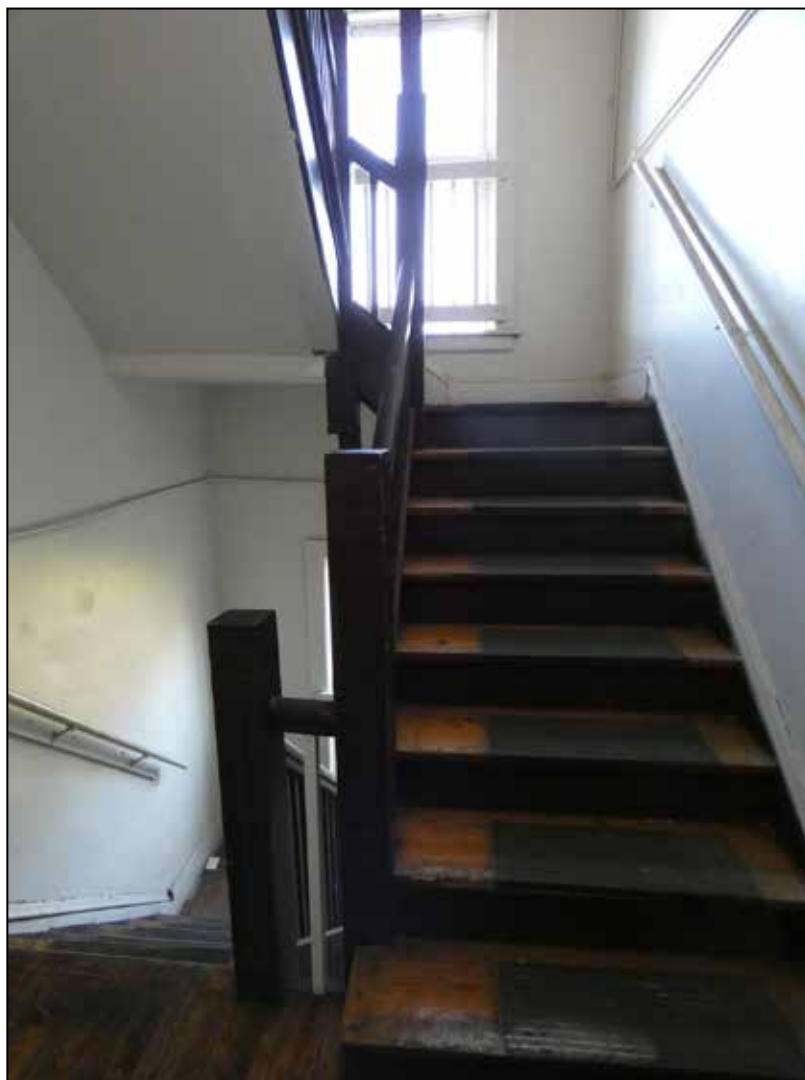


Photo 13 of 15. Typical stairwell.

National Register Nomination
Royalton Hotel
1810 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago (Cook County), IL 60612

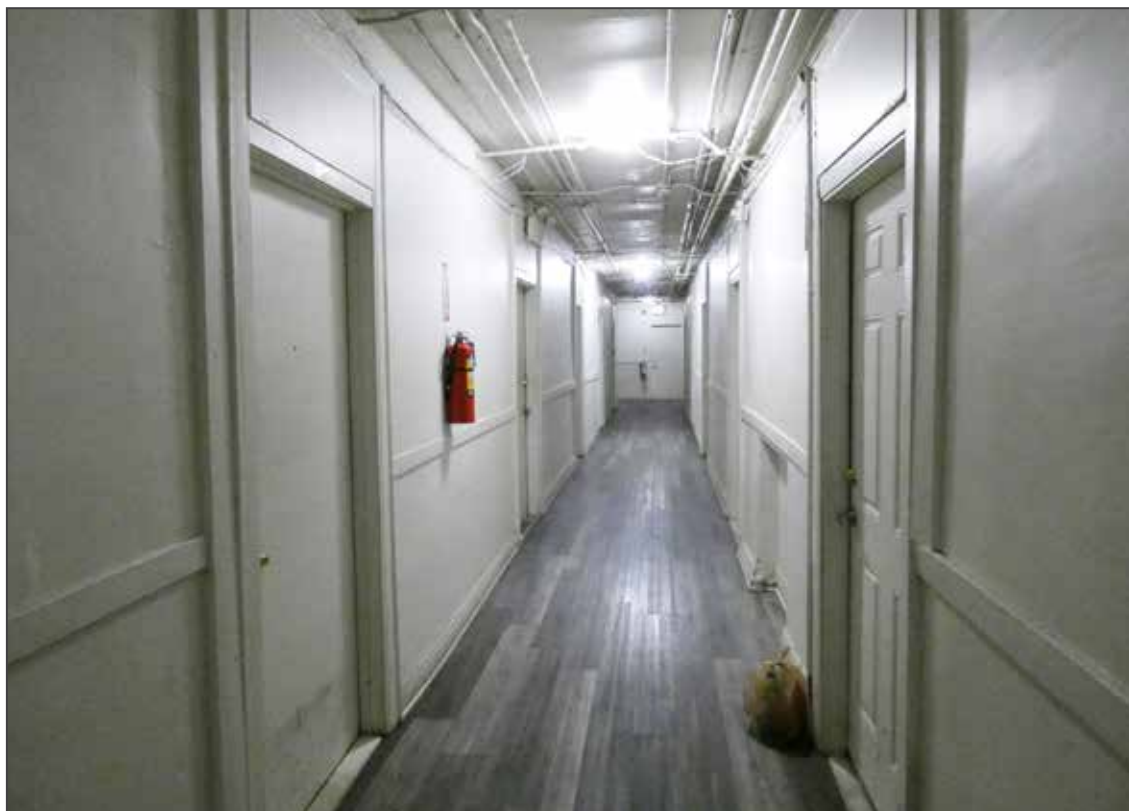


Photo 14 of 15. Typical upper floor corridor.



Photo 1 of 15. Typical residential unit.