

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For NPS use only received date entered

1. Name

historic LaFayette Hotel

and/or common N/A

2. Location

street & number 525 South Louisiana N/A not for publication

city, town Little Rock N/A vicinity of congressional district Second

state Arkansas code 05 county Pulaski code 119

3. Classification

Table with 4 columns: Category, Ownership, Status, Present Use. Includes checkboxes for building(s), structure, site, object, public/private/both, occupied/unoccupied/work in progress, accessible (yes/restricted/unrestricted/no), agriculture/commercial/educational/entertainment/government/industrial/military, museum/park/private residence/religious/scientific/transportation/other: Vacant.

4. Owner of Property

name LaFayette Hotel Company, an Arkansas General Partnership

street & number 11323 Arcade, Attn: Mr. Jan Nicholson

city, town Little Rock N/A vicinity of state Arkansas 72212

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Pulaski County Courthouse

street & number Markham and Spring Streets

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas 72202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Ark. Historic Preservation Program has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1977 federal X state county local

depository for survey records Arkansas Historic Preservation Program

city, town Little Rock state Arkansas 72202

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

SUMMARY:

The LaFayette Hotel is located at Sixth and Louisiana Streets within one block of the heart of the financial district; across the alley to the east are the backs of major downtown retail establishments. The LaFayette was designed by St. Louis architect George Barnett and shows the influence of both the Chicago School tall buildings and historicism. Here, the applied terra-cotta embellishment borrows motifs from the Italian Renaissance. The principal facades of this twelve-story concrete-frame building are subdivided into base, shaft and crown, with base and crown composed of glazed terra-cotta units and the top of the crown composed of a large stamped copper cornice. The shaft and secondary elevations are unpainted brick with repeating double-hung wood windows. The principal interior spaces, in terms of size and ornament, are the lobby and mezzanine areas, a first floor dining room and the ballroom on the eleventh floor. The dining room has been substantially altered with most of its ornamental plaster removed. The ballroom is generally intact, although deteriorated. The lobby and mezzanine areas are in better condition except for surface deterioration. The lobby is comprised of a decorative marble floor and base, red gum paneled walls and columns and an ornamental plaster ceiling which was originally grain painted and stenciled.

LABORATION:

The base of the LaFayette is a rectangle, 100 feet by 140 feet, below which is a full basement. Beginning with the second level, a mezzanine, the building reduces to an "ell" with its long sides parallel to Sixth and Louisiana Streets, the principal sides.

On both of these principal facades, there are entrance doorways with what were once ornamented cast iron marquees that are now covered with aluminum and plastic covers. Original wood and glass door transoms and sidelights have been replaced with aluminum storefront units.

While the other elevations are brick without embellishment and have wood sash windows, the main facades begin with a low band of limestone above which are three stories of glazed terra-cotta units with inset wood sash windows of various configurations. From the fourth level to the tenth, the exterior is unpainted brick with double-hung wood windows of eight-over-two-light design. The eleventh and twelfth levels are again ornamented terra-cotta capped with a large bracketed copper cornice. At the east end of this floor the windows are multi-light wood sashes with arched tops.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates Constructed 1925 **Bullder/Architect** George D. Barnett, Architect (St. Louis)
Paul Heerwagen, Decorator (Little Rock)

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

SUMMARY:

The exterior of this twelve-story hotel is remarkably intact. Few buildings of its size and design were built in Little Rock and it precedes by three years the only other major hotel of its decade, the Albert Pike. (Architect George D. Barnett's building is a clear expression of the period, embellishment applied in terra-cotta, so popular earlier in this century.) In the lobby and mezzanine areas, through peeling added paint layers, the work of Arkansas' best known decorator, Paul Heerwagen, is again becoming visible. The business history of the building is 1925 until the Depression, finally closing in 1933. It reopened because of increased travel during World War II, closing again in 1973, put out of business by the sustained trend toward motels in lieu of downtown hotels.

ELABORATION:

The hotel was designed by St. Louis architect George D. Barnett. Mr. Paul Heerwagen, the foremost decorator of his era in Arkansas, was responsible for the interior. His foreman during the original construction, Mr. John Oehrlie, redecorated at least some parts of the building in 1941 while on the staff of Southwest Hotels.

From its opening on September 2, 1925, until the Depression of 1929, the hotel was one of the state's finest. It was erected by the Little Rock Hotel Company with A. D. Gates of St. Louis as president and John F. Boyle of Little Rock as vice president.

After a few successful years, the hotel was closed in 1933 because of reduced business brought on by the Depression. By 1941, increased travel stimulated by World War II finally increased the demand for hotel rooms. The hotel reopened August 23, 1941, under the ownership of Southwest Hotels, Mrs. H. Grady Manning, president. An Arkansas Gazette article on the day of reopening stated that the building "had been modernized throughout" and that it had 260 guest rooms.

In 1953, there was a general remodeling of the upper floors of the building including major mechanical, electrical and plumbing revisions. The management and owners were attempting to keep pace with the growing number of motels and travel courts springing up on the edges of the city. The effort was only partially successful, and by 1973 it was no longer profitable to operate and in late October or early November, the hotel was closed, reflecting a period of out-migration from Little Rock's central business district and the closing of the hotel reflected the low ebb of commercial activity.

9. Major Bibliographical References

1. Arkansas Gazette, articles on the following dates: 9/2/1925, p. 8; 9/3/1925, p. 1; 8/23/1941, p. 9; 8/24/1941, pps. 3 and 7, 10/31/1973.
Little Rock City Directory, 1926, p. 343.
Interview with T. J. Oehrle, son of John Oehrle, September 16, 1981.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Little Rock, AR

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	5	5	6	6	6	3	10	3	18	4	14	6	13	10
Zone			Easting						Northing					

B

Zone			Easting						Northing					

C

Zone			Easting						Northing					

D

Zone			Easting						Northing					

E

Zone			Easting						Northing					

F

Zone			Easting						Northing					

G

Zone			Easting						Northing					

H

Zone			Easting						Northing					

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 5 and 6, Block #74, Original City of Little Rock, Pulaski County

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Charles Witsell, Jr., AIA (Edited by Staff of Ark. Historic Preservation Program)^{js}

organization Witsell and Evans, P. A. date February 24, 1982

street & number 1008 Cumberland telephone (501) 374-5300

city or town Little Rock state Arkansas 72202

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature William Stokes

title SHPO date 8-26-82

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

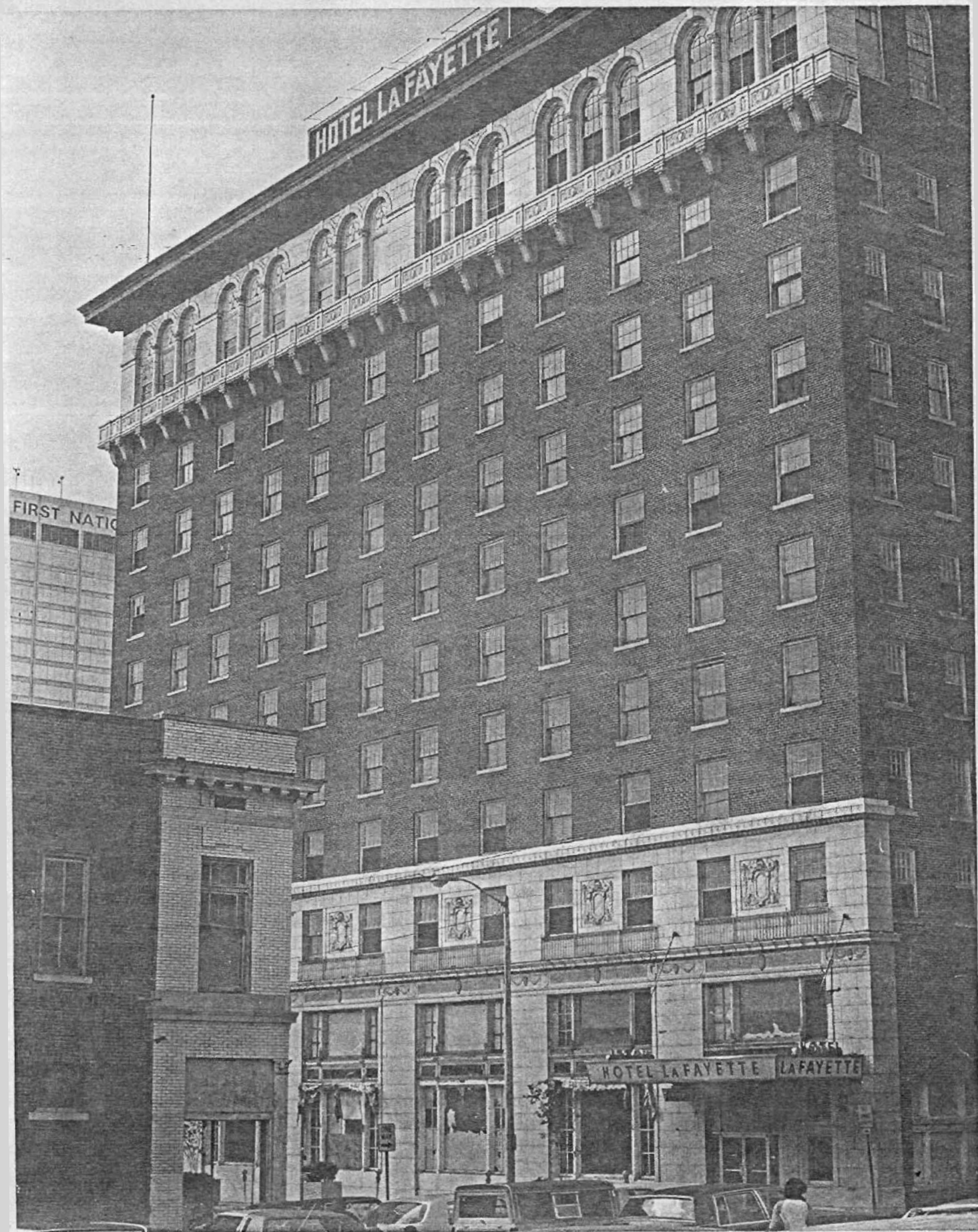
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration





HOTEL LAFAYETTE

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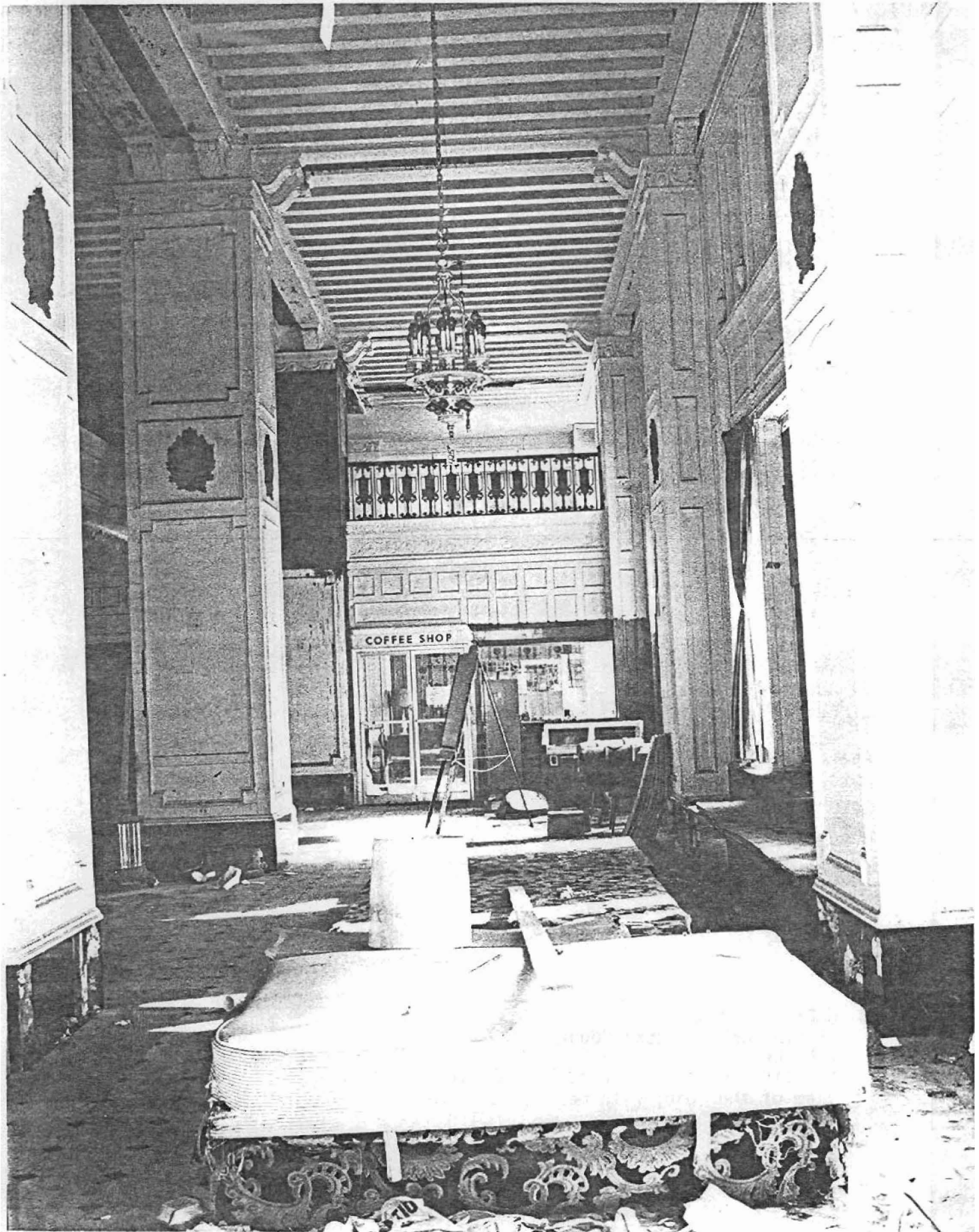
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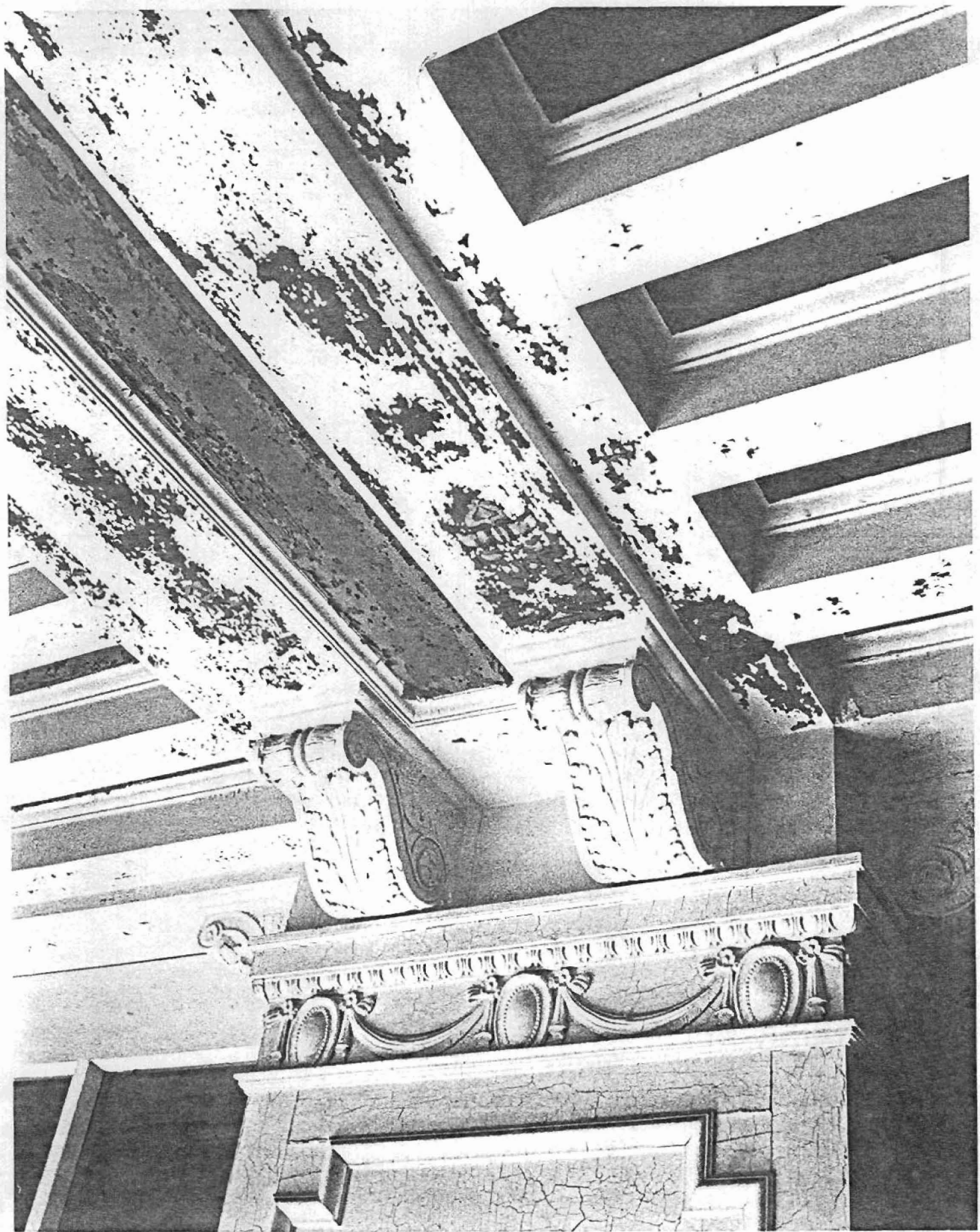
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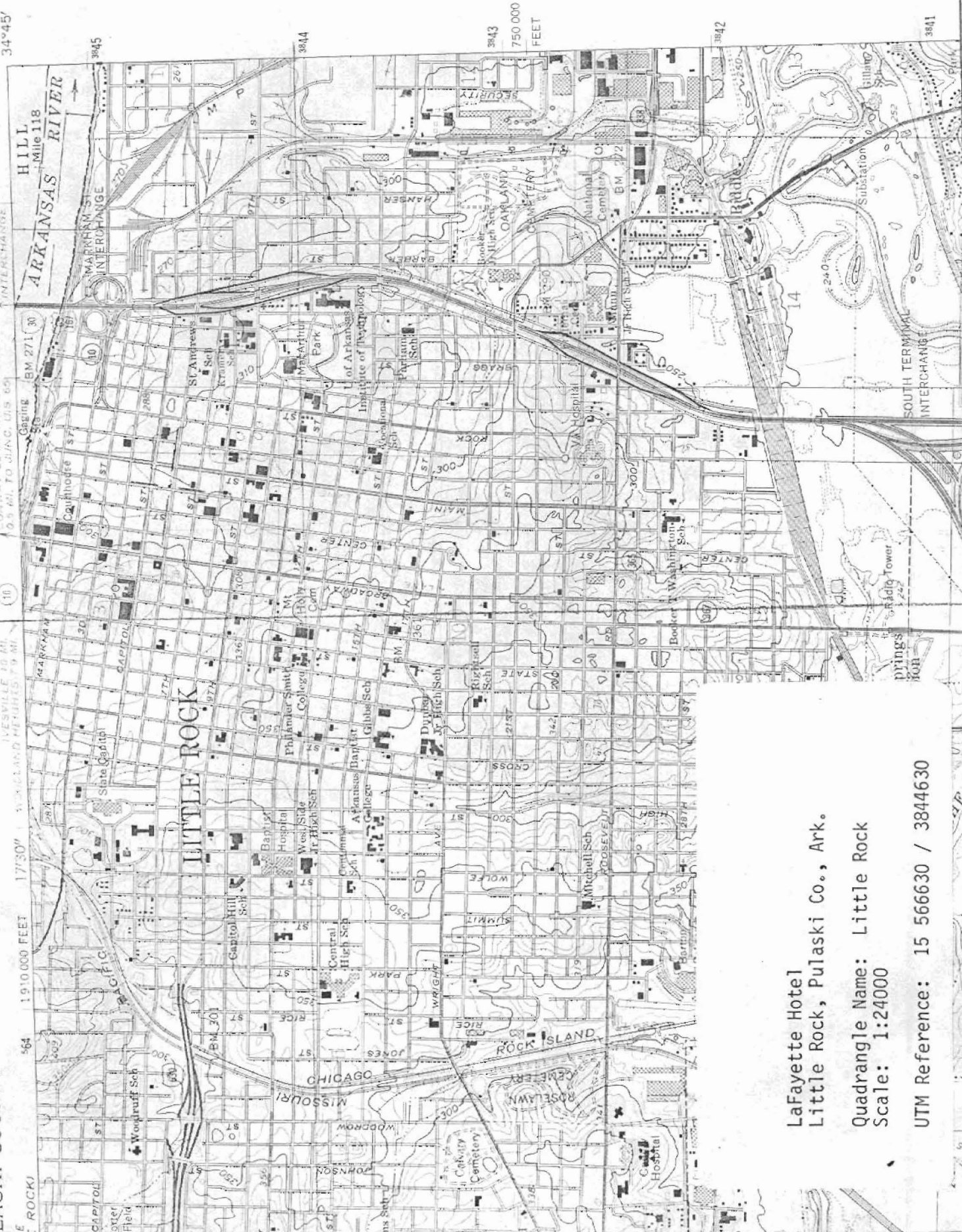






LITTLE ROCK QUADRANGLE
ARKANSAS
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

AREA PLANNING
LASKI COUNTY



CONWAY 32 MI (VIA U.S. 65)
1.7 MI. TO NORTH TERMINAL INTERCHANGE
0.5 MI. TO J.W.C. U.S. 65

IVESVILLE 10 MI.
3.3 MI. TO CLAYTON HEIGHTS 7.9 MI.

171°30' 1910,000 FEET

34°45'

Lafayette Hotel
Little Rock, Pulaski Co., Ark.
Quadrangle Name: Little Rock
Scale: 1:24000
UTM Reference: 15 566630 / 3844630