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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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- COATES HOUSE HOTEL
- 2. The Need for the Preservation of Kansas City's Architectural Heritage (Local)

1969

Kansas City Chapter, The American Institute of Architects

917 West 43rd Street

Kansas City, Missouri 64111

Code: 29

3. Missouri State Historical Survey (state)

1971

Missouri State Park Board

P.O. Box 176

1204 Jefferson Building

Jefferson City, Missouri 65101 Code: 29

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (II known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

The Coates House Hotel is an example of a late nineteenth century, urban hotel exhibiting the use of contemporary design systems and luxury features. The original hotel on the site was completed in the late 1860's. It was enlarged, 1886-1887, by the addition of a south wing. The original building was then replaced, 1889-1891. This description is of the final building consisting of the 1886-1887 and 1889-1891 portions.

EXTERIOR

Present Appearance

- 1. Over-all dimensions: The building is 220 feet long on the Broadway (Primary facade--west) side and 142 feet on the 10th Street (north)side. It is six stories high, and has a light well on the east side giving the building a "U" plan.
- 2. Foundations: The foundations are brick at the south end and possibly stone at the north end. (If future research reveals that the foundations are stone, they are reused foundations from the earlier Coates House Hotel, demolished).
- 3. Wall construction, finish and color: Red, pressed brick with stuccofaced limestone belt courses was employed in the upper walls. Stone (painted white) alternating with seven courses of brick was used in the walls at the first story level. Ornamental stone insets appear between the windows of the fifth and sixth story windows, and another continuous course of stone forming the sills of the sixth story windows. Moulded brick in a checkered, square and ball, pattern differentiates the uppermost portion of the wall above the sixth story windows, from the lower wall. A cornice of molded sheet metal divides the lower four floors from the two uppermost floors.
- 4. Structural system, framing: The hotel has brick bearing walls, and a metal column and beam structure for the interior support. This construction method was a contemporary fire-resistant system.
- 5. Porches: There is a balcony across the primary (Broadway) and secondary (10th Street) facades at the second floor level. The balcony is supported by ornate iron brackets and is rimmed by a sheet metal moulding. In front of the main entrance the balcony widens into an entrance porch and is supported by four cast iron pillars.
- 6. Chimney: Chimneys presently appear only at the rear of the building. One is a free-standing stack at the center of the rear "U."

7. Openings:

a. Doorways: The main entrance is on the west side. A secondary entrance is on the north. Tertiary entrances from the streets

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7. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

and from the east and south alleys open into shop spaces, and service areas.

b. Windows: Fenestration provides the salient exterior feature. Double-hung windows, regularly spaced in bays running through the second to sixth stories occur in groups 2, 3, and 4 bays wide between projecting polygonal and rectangular bay windows. The projecting bays occur at the corners of the two street facades and are ranged along these two facades—paired at the midpoint of the north facade and dividing the west facade into equal fourths. Polygonal bays on the south facade occupy the second and fifth range of windows from the east end. The projecting bays are of wood construction, clad in heavy—gauge, ornamental, sheet metal.² All windows have wood frames, and one pane of glass in each sash.

Windows at street level are the store front type.

8. Roof: The roof is apparently featureless and flat. This area was not examined.

Original Appearance

The walls originally terminated in a crenellated parapet. Copper-clad, mansardic-domed belvederes were located at each corner of the building along the street facades on 10th Street and Broadway. The belvedere at 10th and Broadway served as a look-out area. A large double chimney was located immediately east of this belvedere on the 10th Street side.

The name of the hotel, "Coates House," was inscribed in stone forming part of the crenellated parapet on both the Broadway and 10th Street sides. An iron balustrade rimmed the second floor balcony. The parapet, belvederes, signs, chimneys and balustrade have all been removed.

A four-story rear (east) wing originally joined the two east-west arms of the building to form a four-square plan around an open court. This wing has been removed, but its profile is visible on the inner walls of the "U."

INTERIOR

Floor Plans

Entire interior is presently in a state of neglect and disrepair.

1. Basement: The building has a finished basement with service areas (boiler room, storage room, wine room, coal room, etc.) and comfort

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7. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

accommodations for hotel patrons (turkish bath, barber shop, etc.), presently unused.

- 2. Main floor: The hotel lobby is the dominent feature with marble stairway, shops, former bar and billiard room. A portion of the original registration desk is in use, but not in the original position.
- 3. Second floor: This floor was originally called the Parlor Floor. The former main dining room is located at the southeast corner of this floor. A barrel vault, with a semi-circular window (originally art glass) at its east end, at the second floor level was the former ceiling of the hotel office. This feature has been sealed off from the first floor, but is visible on the second floor.

Wood trim in the former main dining room has been partially removed.

- 4. Third Floor: This floor was originally called the "Second Floor."
 This floor is the lowest level occupied entirely by hotel rooms and bathrooms. The building up to and including this level originally had a rear (east) corridor, with rooms opening off it, closing the "U" to form a four-square plan.
- 5. Fourth floor: This floor was originally called the "Third Floor."
 From this level upwards the arrangement of hotel rooms and bathrooms remains essentially the same.

Stairways

The main stair is an open-well, "U" plan stair with white Italian marble treads and risers. An art glass window originally ornamented the rising steps at the first turn of the stairway between the first and second floors.

Subsidiary stairs in the building are both straight run and "U" plan type.

Flooring

Flooring surface is primarily terra cotta tiles arranged in geometric patterns. Many tiles are loose. More recently, asphalt tile has been used in some areas.

Wall and ceiling finish

Paneled, wood wainscoting is a prevalent feature in the lobby, the corridors, and the primary rooms such as the main dining room on the second floor. Upper walls and ceilings are painted plaster.

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7. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

Wainscoting in the most luxurious bedrooms is birds-eye maple. Beveled mirrors were also employed in lieu of wall paneling in the more elaborately outfitted suites, and in the billiard room.³

OUTBUILDINGS

An auxiliary building to the east originally provided quarters for services (storage, laundry) to the hotel and from for the hired help. This building was four stories high (plus basement) and connected to the main hotel through two corridors bridging the rear (east) alley at the third and fourth floor levels. The building has been demolished, except for the first floor, front room facing on 10th Street which appears to survive in a much modified Dentist's office.

FOOTNOTES

- 1. Edward J. Wimmer, A.I.A., Information on the Coates House Hotel prepared for the State Historical Survey and Planning Office, 1971.
- 2. Ibid.
- 3. Ibid.

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STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Coates House Hotel is significant as an example of a late, nine-teenth century, luxurious, urban hotel built on a site of a mid-nineteenth century, urban hotel which precipated development of its neighborhood Kansas City. Van Brunt and Howe, architects, designed the building.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Physical History

The Old Coates House occupied the site of the present Coates House Hotel. This land was part of an approximately 120 acre tract, Coates' Addition, purchased by Kersey Coates in 1855 and, within the subsequent 20 years, developed by him from a cow pasture into a prosperous residential and commercial district of Kansas City. The commercial hub of the young Kansas City was then about 10 blocks north of the hotel.

The original hotel was financed by a company formed for the purpose.⁶ It was uncompleted at the time of the Civil War, but the foundations were incorporated into a federal fort.

Kersey Coates was one of the promotors of the old hotel, but it was originally completed in the late 1860's under the proprietorship of W.A. Eldridge of Lawrence, Kansas. Eldridge's brother, Thomas A. Eldridge, managed the hotel.8

The old hotel was five stories high, 100 feet long on the 10th Street side and 142 feet on the Broadway side. It was a brick structure with shops at the street level and a mansard roof at the fifth story level. Chimneys emerged between each pair of dormer windows in the mansard. Windows were uniformly placed on the primary facade except in the central bay where two windows were paired on each floor. This feature was carried over into the New Coates House design in the rectangular pulled-out windows on the Broadway facade where the windows are also paired.

John Johnson was the architect and contractor for the Old Coates House. 10 Johnson, an Englishman, was also the third elected mayor of Kansas City. 11

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8. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

Coates acquired the then failing hotel in 1870. 12 The structure became the "Coates House" at that time. It was located diagonally across 10th Street from the Coates Opera House. The Opera House, the first major entertainment facility in Kansas City, was constructed by Kersey Coates in the mid-1860's. 13 It burned in 1901. Under Coates' management the hotel prospered and in 1886 4 he began adding a new wing at the south end of the building extending the long axis approximately 80 feet. This portion was unfinished at the time of Coates' death in April 1887. 15 By the following autumn, however, the new south addition was sufficiently complete to quarter the United States President, Grover Cleveland, with has bride and entourage. 16 The presidential party occupied the southwest corner on the third floor of the new addition. 17

About one year after Coates' death his widow and family resumed the project he had begun. "The old [hotel] was demolished" and the south addition to the old hotel was enlarged to form the New Coates House Hotel. The new hotel opened on January 10, 1891 with a gala celebration. The local press described the event, and the luxurious features of the hotel, in detail. 19

Architect

Van Brunt and Howe, ²⁰ designers of the building, ²¹ had opened an office in Kansas City in 1886, moving their architectural practice there from Boston, Massachusetts.

Henry Van Brunt (1832-1903) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. He was graduated from Harvard College in 1854, and trained in architecture in the Boston office of architect George Snell, 1855-ca. 1857. In 1857 he began apprenticeship in New York under Richard M. Hunt. 22 In 1863 he entered a partnership with William Robert Ware. 23 He later entered partnership with Frank M. Howe. The work of this firm in Kansas City included residential projects, and numerous railroad (terminals at Portland, Oregon; Denver, Colorado; Sioux City, Iowa; and Omaha, Nebraska) and commercial structures. Their work in Kansas City included the Kansas City Club, 1888 (razed); the Gibraltar Building, 1888 (razed 1971); the Bullene, Moore and Emery Store, 1889-1890 (later Emery, Bird and Thayer); and numerous residences (K.B. Aman, c. 1895-1896; August R. Meyer, 1895-1896; Mrs. A.W. Armour, 1903; and E.W. Smith, c. 1903).24 The firm designed the Electricity Building for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago. Van Brunt was known for his writing on architecture as well as for his work as an architect.

Frank M. Howe (1849-1909) also from Massachusetts, was educated at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology where he was a member of the initial

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8. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

class in the Architectural Department. After coming to Kansas City in 1885, he settled there permanently. He later became senior partner of Howe, Hoit & Cutler, continuing practice in Kansas City.

Contractor

C.E. Clark of Boston, Massachusetts was contractor for the construction of the New Coates House Hotel. His contract called for completion of the work by January 1, 1891.²⁵

Some Historical Events and Persons Associated with the Building

1. Kersey Coates: Kersey Coates, (1823-1887) was born at Sadsbury, Pennsylvania. He was a quaker, and he was strongly opposed to slavery. A scholarly student, he was educated at Whitestown Seminary, New York, and Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. He taught school and later became a lawyer. He ventured west in 1854, first going to Kansas, then settling in Kansas City. He became deeply involved in the development of Kansas City promoting especially the area of the city on which the Coates House Hotel and the Coates Opera House stood. He was instrumental in encouraging eastern interests to invest in Kansas City and he promoted the construction of the Hannibal and St. Joseph Railroad bridge at Kansas City.

The Kansas City Daily Journal published a comprehensive obituary at the time of his death, 26 and his wife's memoirs were published, edited by their daughter, Laura Coates Reed. 27

- 2. References to the Coates House Hotel in the contemporary newspapers refer to various conventions, such as the Cattle Grower's Convention²⁸ meeting at the Coates House.
- 3. President Benjamin Harrison: United States President Benjamin Harrison stayed at the Coates House during his visit to Kansas City, October 11, 1890. He dined in the suite of rooms exactly one floor below the quarters occupied by President Cleveland three years previously.²⁹

These two presidential visits, both housed in the southern section, prior to the completion of the northern section of the New Coates House, lent prestige to the hotel and suggest its superiority, even during a rebuilding stage, to other local hotels.

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8. COATES HOUSE HOTEL

PRESENT STATUS

The Coates House is presently threatened by neglect, vandalism and a plan for the development of the Kansas City, Missouri downtown published in January 1971. This document, the "Kansas City Missouri Downtown Plan," was prepared for the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City Missouri, in a project partially financed with funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The plan outlines a 3-phase development program, 1970-1985, with acquisition of the Coates House Hotel site for development into a high rise parking structure during the Phase 2, 1975-1980.³⁰

This plan is presently being reconsidered with a view to previously unrecognized historical and architectural merits of the Kansas City Downtown area. A survey is being conducted to establish these values.

Prior to publication of the Downtown Plan, the real estate agent for the owner of the property had made preliminary consultation with several architects. To date no adaptive use plan, or renovations plans, have been brought forth as a result of these preliminary efforts directed toward preservation of the building.

FOOTNOTES

- 4. William A. Coles, ed., <u>Architecture and Society, Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt</u> (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1969), p. 424.
- 5. Annals of the City of Kansas (Kansas City, Missouri: Van Horn and Abeel's Printing House, 1858 [reprinted, 1950]), pp. 47-48.
- 6. "Formal Opening," The Kansas City Journal, January 11, 1891, p. 3, col. 2, "The Old and the New."
- 7. Ibid.
- 8. <u>Ibid</u>.
- 9. Annals of the City of Kansas, 1858 [1950], pp. 47-48.
- 10. Ibid.

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- 8. COATES HOUSE HOTEL
- 11. Early History of Greater Kansas City Missouri and Kansas. Vol I
 Early History. (Kansas City, Missouri: Charles P. Deatherage, 1927),
 p. 510.
- 12. The Kansas City Journal, January 11, 1891, p. 3.
- 13. Laura Coates Reed, ed., <u>In Memoriam</u> (Kansas City: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Company, n.d.), op. p. 110.
- 14. The Kansas City Journal, January 11, 1891, p. 3.
- 15. Ibid.
- 16. "The Presidential Apartments at the Coates," The Kansas City Journal, October 13, 1887, p. 2.
- 17. Ibid.
- 18. The Kansas City Journal, January 11, 1891, p. 3.
- 19. <u>Ibid</u>.
- 20. This section is based on material from Henry F. Withey, A.I.A., and Elsie Rathburn Withey, <u>Biographical Dictionary of American Architects</u>
 (Deceased) (Los Angeles: New Age Publishing Company, 1956), pp. 303, 614-615.
- 21. Coles, 1969, p. 424; and "The Development of Architecture in Kansas City, Missouri," The Architectural Record XV: 135-157, February 1904.
- 22. Coles, 1969, p. 10.
- 23. <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 10-16. William Robert Ware set up the first school of architecture in the United States at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in 1868.
- 24. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 422-433.
- 25. "Gleaned From the Hotels," The Kansas City Journal, July 17, 1890, p. 3.
- 26. "Released from Pain." The Kansas City Daily Journal, April 25, 1887, p. 1.

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- 8. COATES HOUSE HOTEL
- 27. Reed, n.d.
- 28. The Kansas City Journal, October 27, 1887, p. 3.
- 29. The Kansas City Journal, October 11, 1890, p. 1.
- 30. "Kansas City Missouri Downtown Plan," pp. 71 and 90.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- 1. Annals of the City of Kansas. Kansas City, Missouri: Van Horn and Abeel's Printing House, 1858, [reprinted 1950].
- 2. Coles, William A., ed. <u>Architecture and Society, Selected Essays of Henry Van Brunt</u>. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1969.
- 3. "The Development of Architecture in Kansas City, Missouri," The Architectural Record, Vol. XV: pp. 135-157, February 1904.

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- 9 COATES HOUSE HOTEL
- 4. Early History of Greater Kansas City Missouri and Kansas. Vol. I, Early History. Kansas City, Missouri: Charles P. Deatherage, 1927.
- 5. The Kansas City Daily Journal, April 25, 1887, p. 1.
- 6. The Kansas City Journal, October 13, 1887, p. 2.
- 7. The Kansas City Journal, October 27, 1887, p. 3.
- 8. The Kansas City Journal, July 17, 1890, p. 3.
- 9. The Kansas City Journal, October 11, 1890, p. 1.
- 10. The Kansas City Journal, January 11, 1891, p. 3.
- 11. "Kansas City Missouri Downtown Plan." Prepared for the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority of Kansas City, Missouri, January 1971.
- 12. Reed, Laura Coates, ed. <u>In Memoriam</u>. Kansas City, Missouri: Hudson-Kimberly Publishing Company, n.d.
- 13. Wimmer, Edward J., A.I.A. Information on the Coates House Hotel, prepared for the State Historical Survey and Planning Office, 1971. Filed at the central office of the Missouri State Park Board, P.O. Box 176, 1204 Jefferson Building, Jefferson City, Missouri 65101.
- 14. Withey, Henry F., A.I.A., and Elsie Rathburn Withey. <u>Biographical</u>
 <u>Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)</u>. Los Angeles: New Age
 Publishing Company, 1956.

OTHER PERTINENT WORKS

- 1. Brown, Andrew Theodore. <u>Frontier Community Kansas City to 1870</u>. Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1963.
- 2. Ellis, Roy. A Civic History of Kansas City, Missouri. (Ph.D. Dissertation) Springfield, Missouri: Roy Ellis, 1930.
- 3. Loring, Janet, Ph.D. "Coates' Tales," <u>Missouri Historical Review</u>, Vol. LVI. No. 4, July 1962, pp. 319-327.
- 4. Pen and Sunlight Sketches of Kansas City and Environs. Chicago: Phoenix Publishing Company, 1892.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

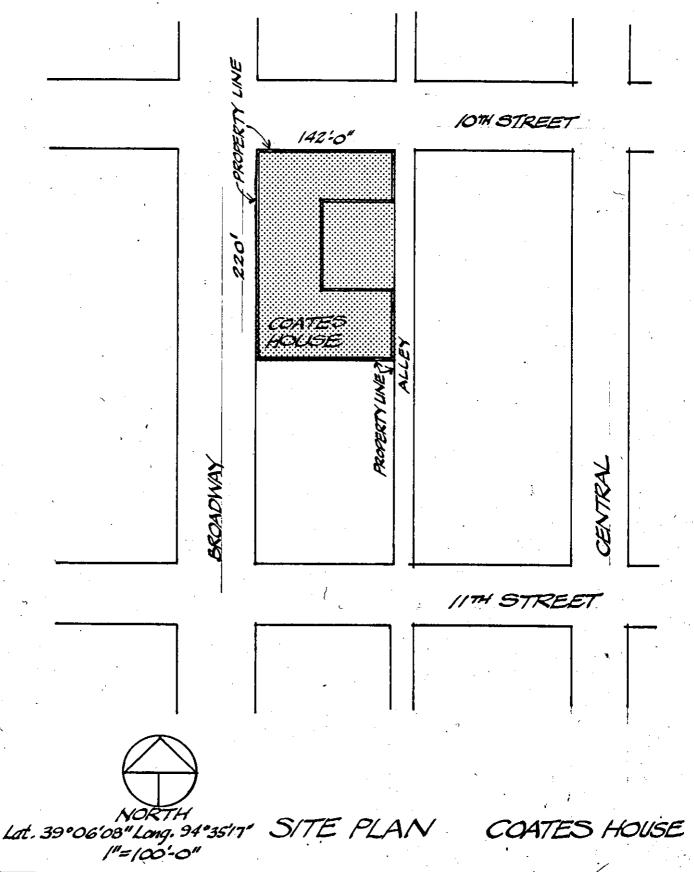
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

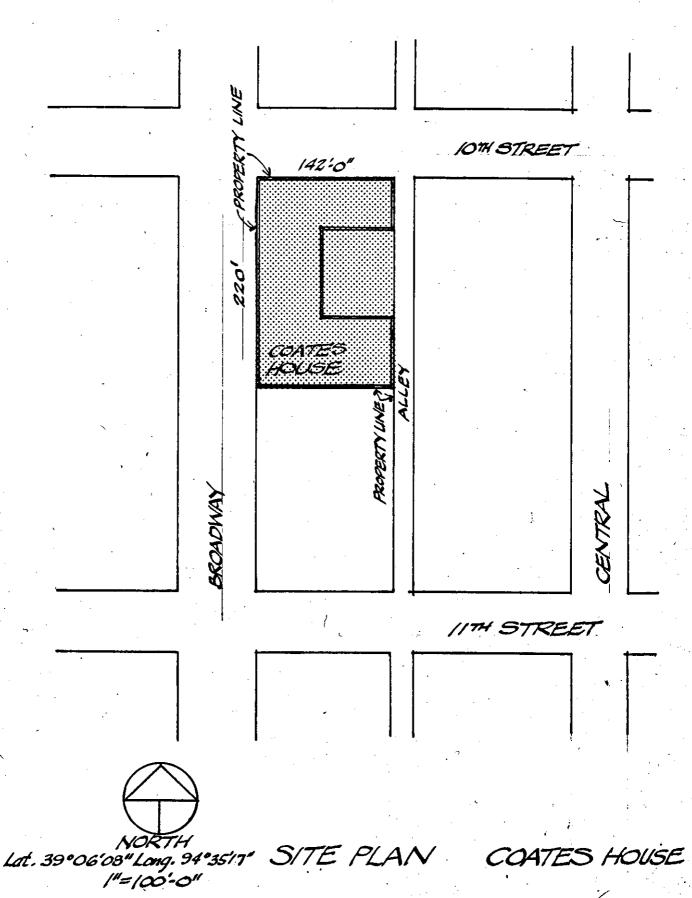
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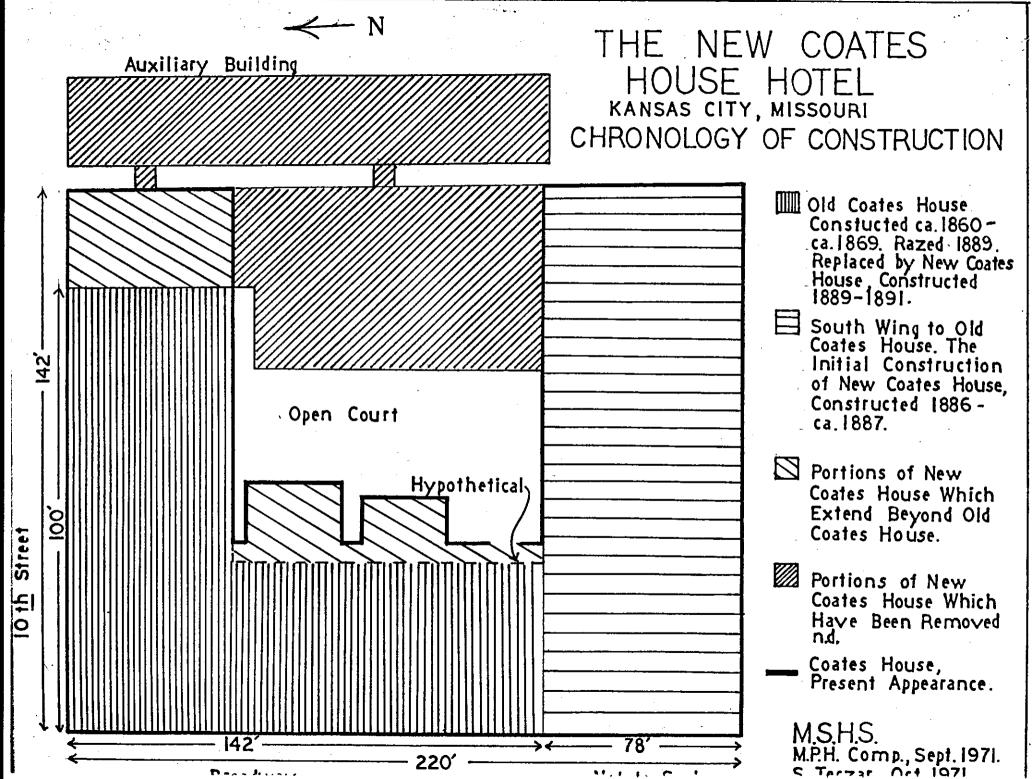
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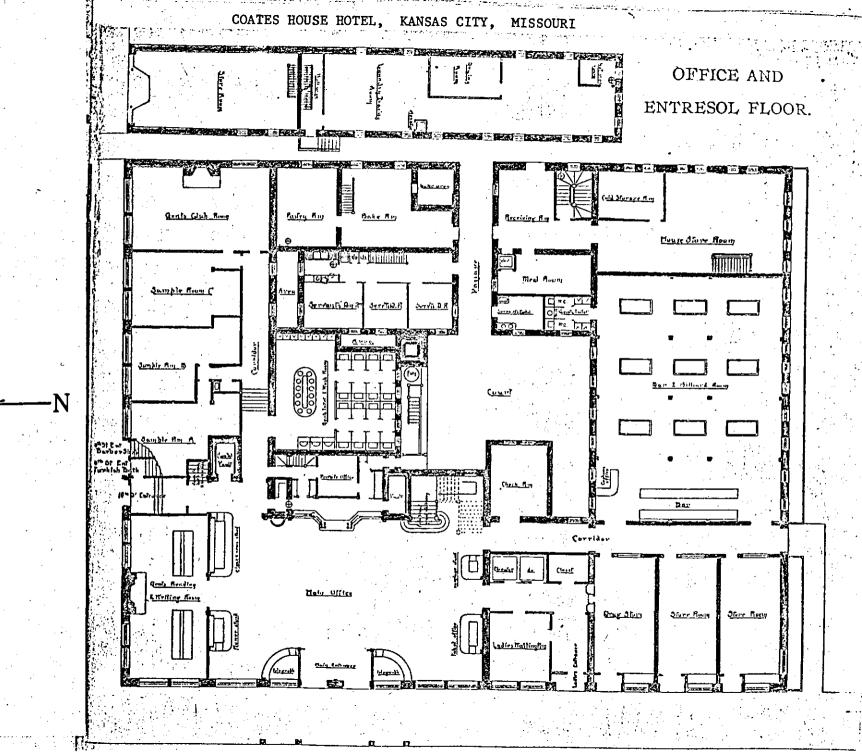
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- 9. COATES HOUSE HOTEL
- 5. The Kansas City Evening Times, January 12, 1891.
- 6. The Kansas City Times, January 11,11891, p. 5.









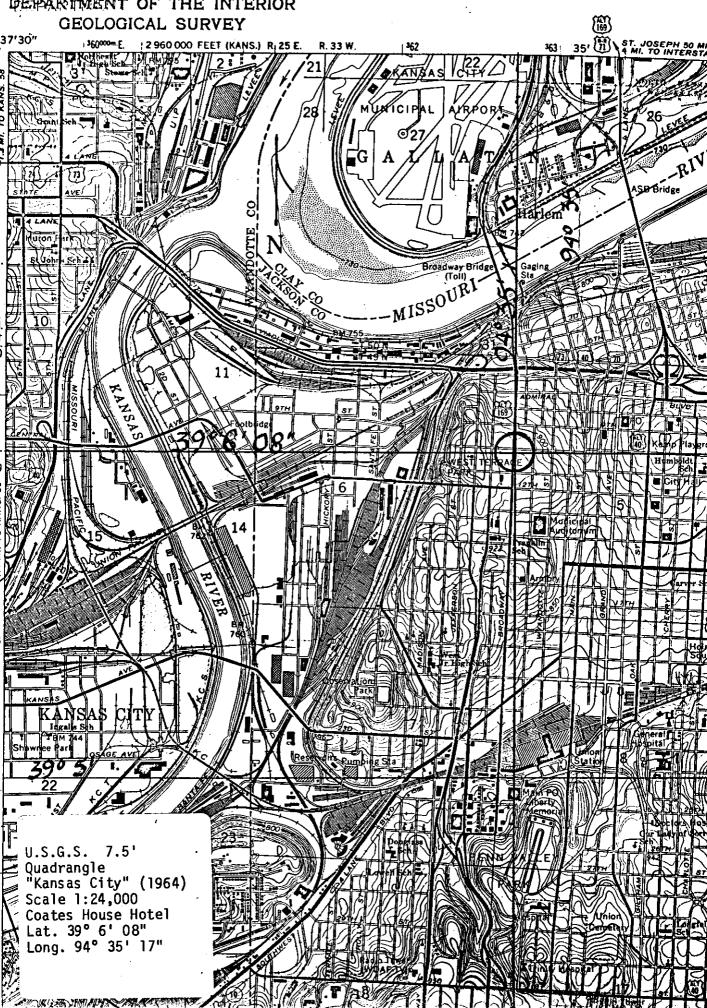


Photo Log:

Name of Property:	Coates House Hotel
City or Vicinity:	Kansas City
County: <u>Jackson</u>	County State: MO
Photographer:	MO Valley Room, KC Public Library and Ron Walker
Date Photographed:	Apr. 1970

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

- 1 of 7. From NW looking SE at the 1oth Street façade (at left) and the Broadway façade (at right) of the New Coates House Hotel as it appeared soon after opening in 1891. Photo circa 1891. 2 of 7. From NW looking SE toward the W (Broadway) façade of the Coates House Hotel. The building existed in this state only between the years 1886-1889. Old Coates House of 1860's at left, S wing of the Old Coates House (or the initial construction stage of the New Coates House) constructed 1886 circa 1887, at right. Photo circa 1886-1889.
- 3 of 7. From SE, looking NW, view of the rear "U" of the Coates House Hotel. Fragment of original auxiliary building (located E of Coates House) exists as one-story commercial building at right. 4 of 7. From NW looking SE, view to N (10th Street) façade of the Coates House Hotel. View illustrates the present appearance of the building with original ornamental features the crenelated parapet, mansardic-domed belvederes, stone placards, chimneys and balustrade stripped off. 5 of 7. From NW looking SE, view of the W (Broadway) façade of the Coates House Hotel. View illustrates the present appearance of the hotel exterior with crenelated parapet, mansardic-domed belvederes, stone placards, chimneys and balustrade stripped off.
- 6 of 7. From SW looking NE. Foundations of the old Coates House Hotel visible at extreme right. These stone foundations may still exist, incorporated into the foundations of the 1889-1891 New Coates House Hotel.
- 7 of 7. Drawing illustrates the character of the interior finish of the Coates House Hotel when it opened in 1891. View of the main lobby on first floor from the mezzanine.

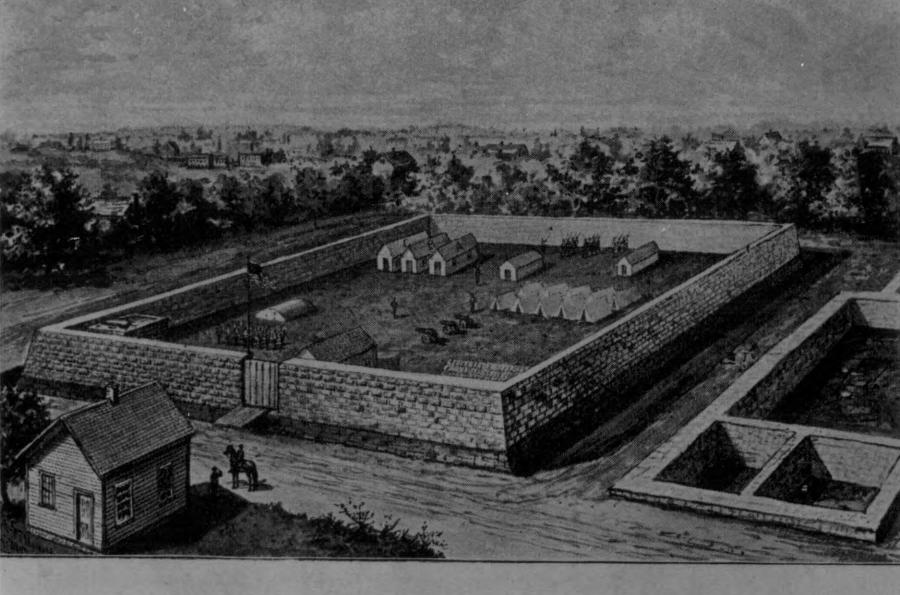








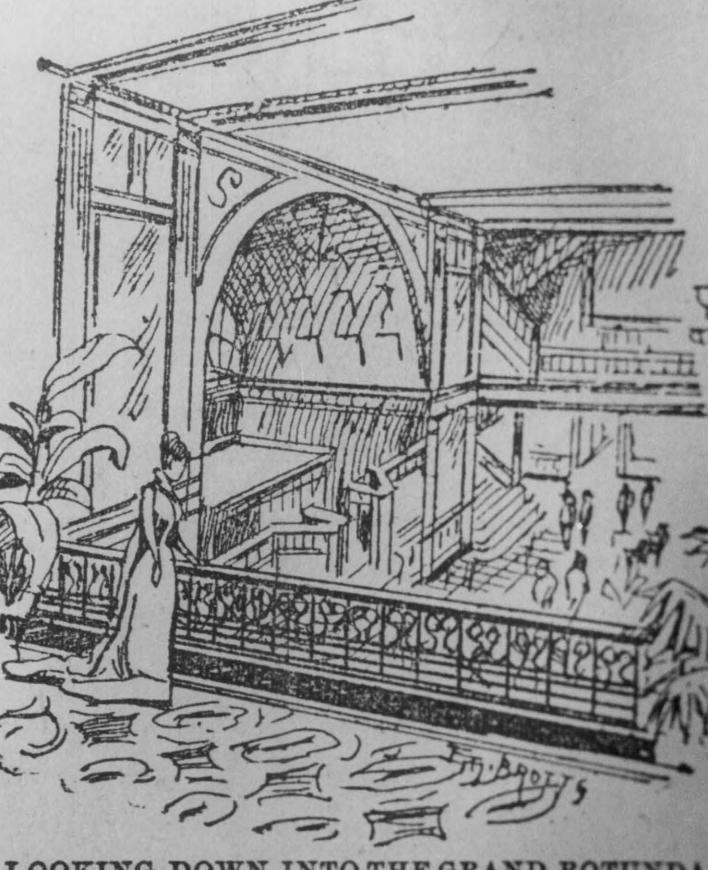




Quartermaster's Department.

Coates House foundation; lai in 1860. Boarded over an used for cavalry barns.

The Old Fort. 1861. From a drawing made at the close of the war.



LOOKING DOWN INTO THE GRAND