

COMMENCED 1870 **COMPLETED 1873**

GRAND HALL AND ROTUNDA. TROPICAL GARDEN ON THE ROOF. GRAND STAIR CASE.

COST TO BUILD \$2,250,000. COST TO FURNISH \$575,000.

MIDDAL CHAMBER. THE PALACE HOTEL OF THE WORLD. GRAND PARLOR.

ONLY THOROUGHLY FIRE-PROOF HOTEL in the UNITED STATES. CONDUCTED ON THE European & American Plans.

MAIN DINING HALL. CHARGES (NO HIGHER THAN OTHER FIRST CLASS HOTELS) READING ROOM. ROOMS RENTED WITH OR WITHOUT BOARD. RESTAURANT.

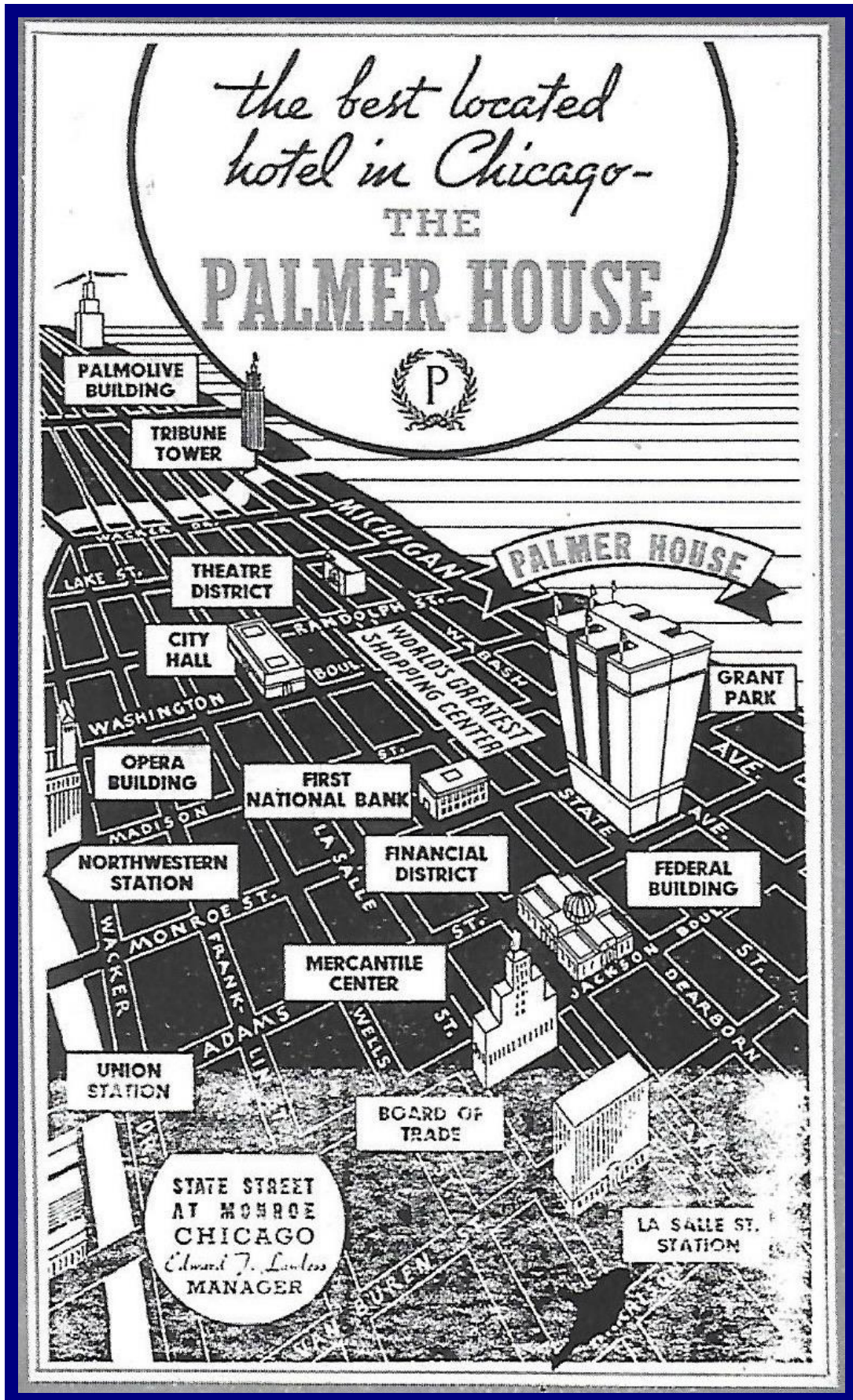
POTTER PALMER, **PALMER HOUSE, CHICAGO.** OWNER & PROPRIETOR.

HISTORIC CHICAGO HOTELS

1871-1951

BRIAN ROBERTS

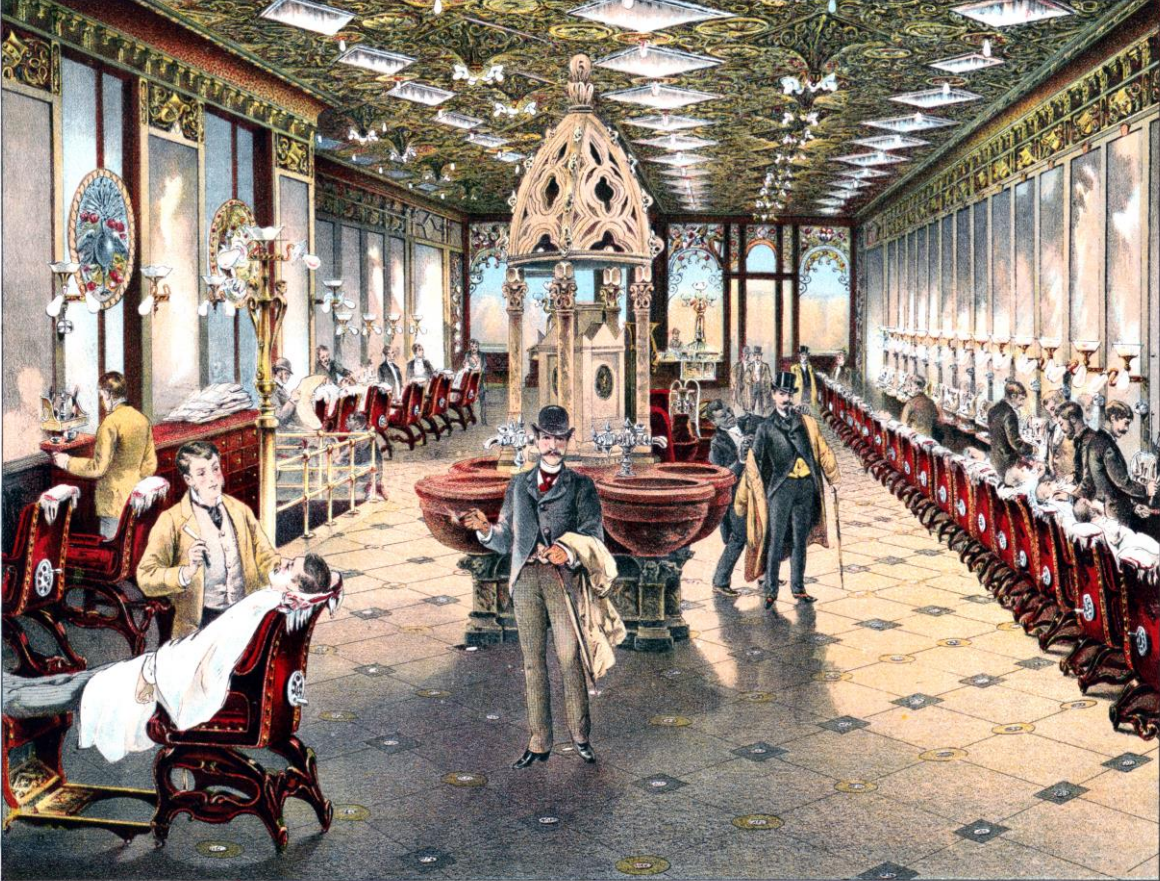
PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The 1940s.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL

COMPLIMENTS OF
THE J. B. WILLIAM'S CO.
MAKERS OF
WILLIAM'S CELEBRATED SHAVING SOAPS.



EVERY CUP IN THIS SHOP CONTAINS A CAKE OF WILLIAM'S CELEBRATED BARBER'S BAR SOAP.

**THE CELEBRATED
PALMER HOUSE BARBER SHOP**
AT CHICAGO.

Mr. W. S. EDEN, Proprietor.
800 Solid Silver Dollars in the Floor of this Shop.

EMPLOYS 32 BARBERS
SHOP OPEN DAY AND NIGHT
USE WILLIAM'S BARBERS' BAR SOAP.
BARBERS LIKE IT. - CUSTOMERS ENJOY IT
IF PAYS TO BUY THE BEST.

MR. EDEN SAYS -
IT IS A MISTAKE TO BUY CHEAP IMPURE
SOAP. I HAVE TRIED ALL KINDS AND FIND
WILLIAM'S SOAP
THE BEST.

SIGNED W. S. Eden

CONTENTS

COVER PICTURES

Front: Drake, Inside Front: Drake, Inside Back: Palmer House, Back: Stevens

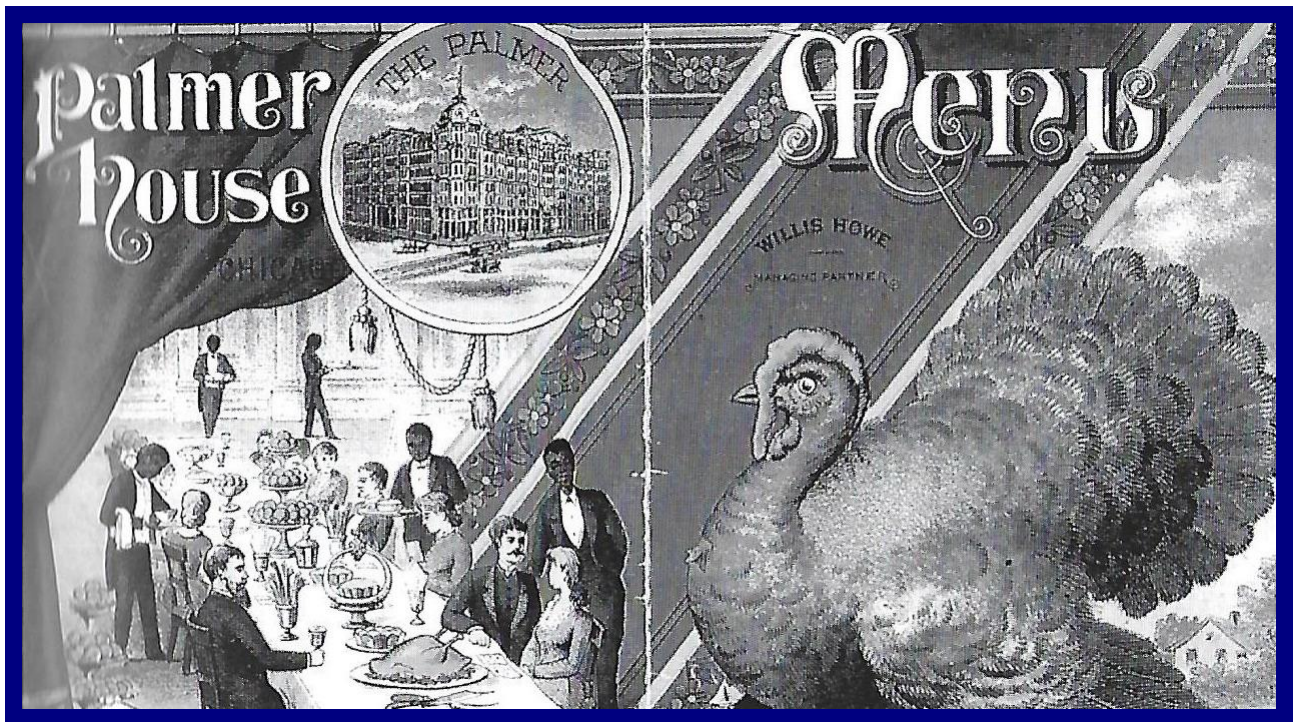
FEATURED HOTELS

Conrad Hilton 41-44: Drake 20-32: Palmer House 1-19: Stevens 33-40

Introduction: 4

References and Further Reading: 44

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Palmer House menu cover from 27 November, 1884.

INTRODUCTION

In 1870, the major cities (in order) were New York, Chicago, Brooklyn and St. Louis, but in 1871 Chicago was devastated by the Great Fire. The first major hotel to reopen was the second Palmer House in 1873. Chicago went on to build the first "skyscraper" and to develop the steel-framed structure. The main USA is 40 times the area of the UK and 2900 miles wide. Before air travel the train journey took 4 days, and in the beginning had neither restaurant nor sleeping coaches. These factors affected the types of American hotels: luxury, commercial, middle-class, resort and "railroad". Many were the skyscrapers of their day having over a 1000 guest rooms. Hotels were, and still are, the buildings with the greatest range of engineering services. From about 1917, the cost of these engineering services was recognised: passenger and service elevators were grouped together requiring only a single bank of machinery. Bathrooms were built back-to-back sharing a common plumbing shaft. Air conditioning came later. But information is not easy to find. Many hotels have been demolished, others rebuilt, enlarged or renamed. Today the USA has some 54,200 hotels with 5 million guest rooms. Three of the most famous classic hotels in the United States are in Chicago: The Palmer House, the Drake and the Stevens. (The Palmer House and the Stevens were destined to be part of the Hilton Hotels Group). A fourth hotel, the Peninsula opened in 2001, widely viewed as the country's best hotel, being part of the Group, which opened the famous namesake in Hong Kong in 1928.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



THE OLD PALMER HOUSE BEFORE THE FIRE.

The first Palmer House of 1871.

ONLY FIRE-PROOF HOUSE IN THE UNITED STATES.

CONDUCTED ON THE AMERICAN & EUROPEAN PLAN.
Rooms with Board, from \$3 to \$5 per day,
ACCORDING TO LOCATION.

ROOMS WITHOUT BOARD, FROM \$1 TO \$2 PER DAY.
The Finest Restaurant in the City
CONNECTED WITH THE HOUSE.

THE PALACE HOTEL } **PALMER HOUSE, CHICAGO.** } POTTER PALMER,
OF THE WORLD. } Owner and Proprietor.

Cost to build and furnish more than any two Hotels in America, except one—the Palace, San Francisco. Head-quarters of the Army and Navy.

The second Palmer House of 1873.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL

Only Fire-Proof House in the United States.

The Palace Hotel of the World.

Palmer House, Chicago.

The Largest and Best Furnished Hotel in the World.

Conducted on the American and European Plans.



COST OF BUILDING, \$2,250,000.

COST OF FURNITURE, \$550,000.

700 ROOMS.

The Finest Restaurant in the City

CONNECTED WITH THE HOUSE.

Also, a Business Men's Lunch Room and Cafe.

Rooms, with Board, \$3.00 to \$3.50 per Day.

Rooms, without Board, \$1.00 to \$2.00 per Day.

An Extra Charge for Parlors and Rooms with Baths.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The Charges at this Palatial Hotel are no higher than at other houses that claim to be first-class, that furnish much inferior accommodations.

POTTER PALMER, } Proprietors.
WILLIS HOWE, }

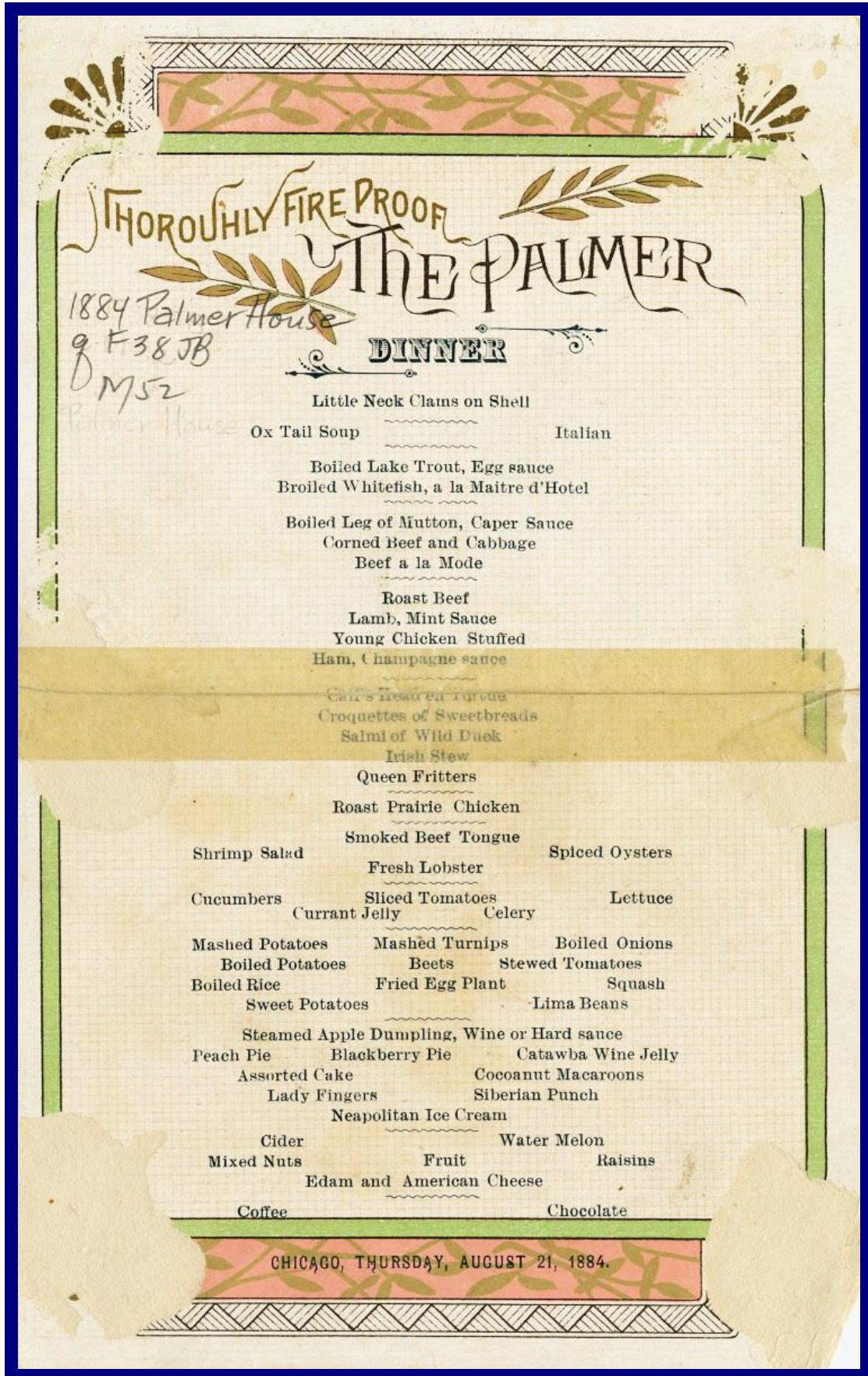
<7>

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Ladies' Entrance for unescorted female guests in 1903.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



A Palmer House Dinner Menu from 1884.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



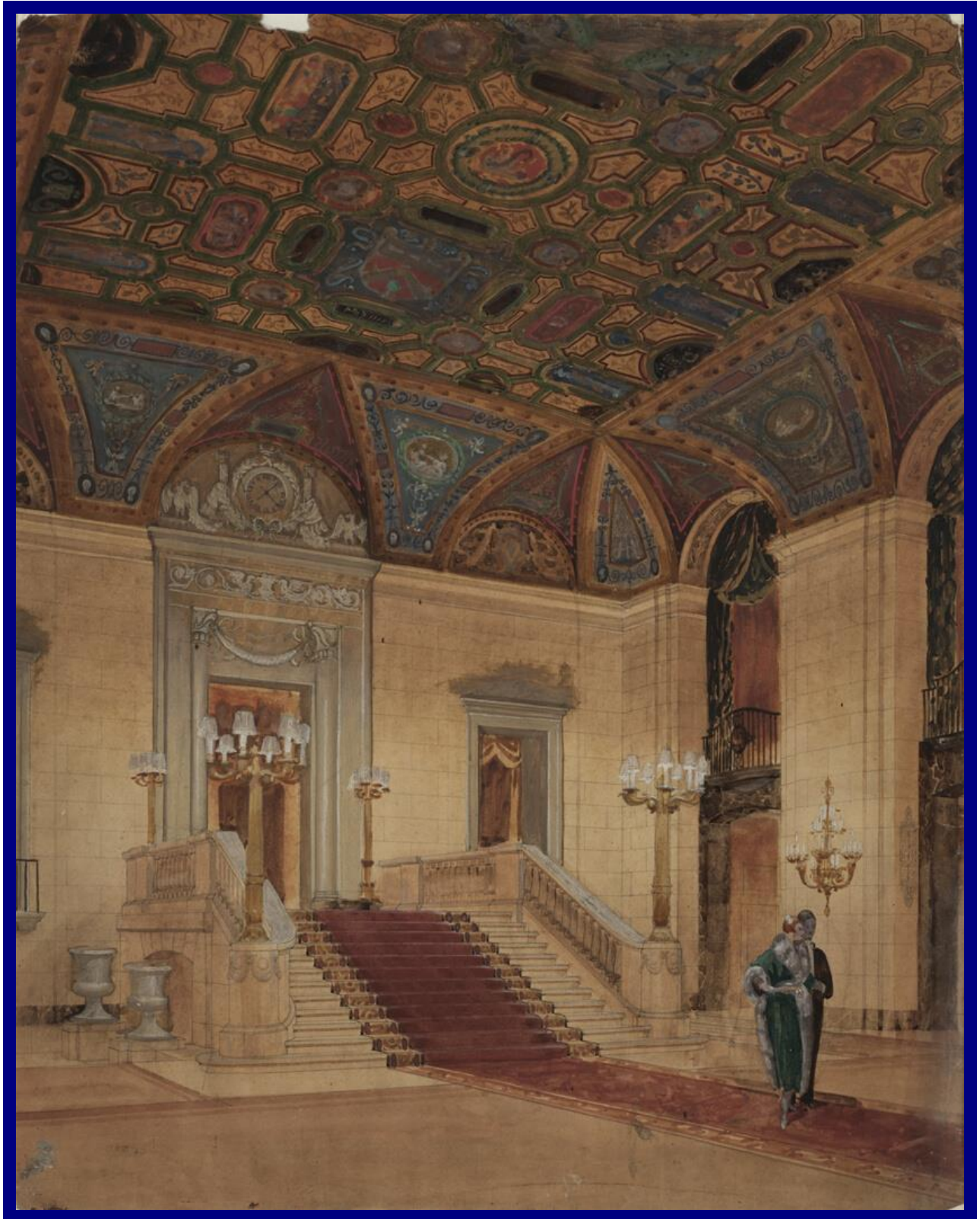
The Empire Room of the third Palmer House which opened in 1925.



The Empire Room, with a capacity for 250 guests, in 1954.

<10>

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The main Lobby.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Palmer House Lobby.

<12>

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



Two views of the formal Dining Room called The Victorian.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The famous Lobby ceiling, with 21 individual paintings, dates from 1926.

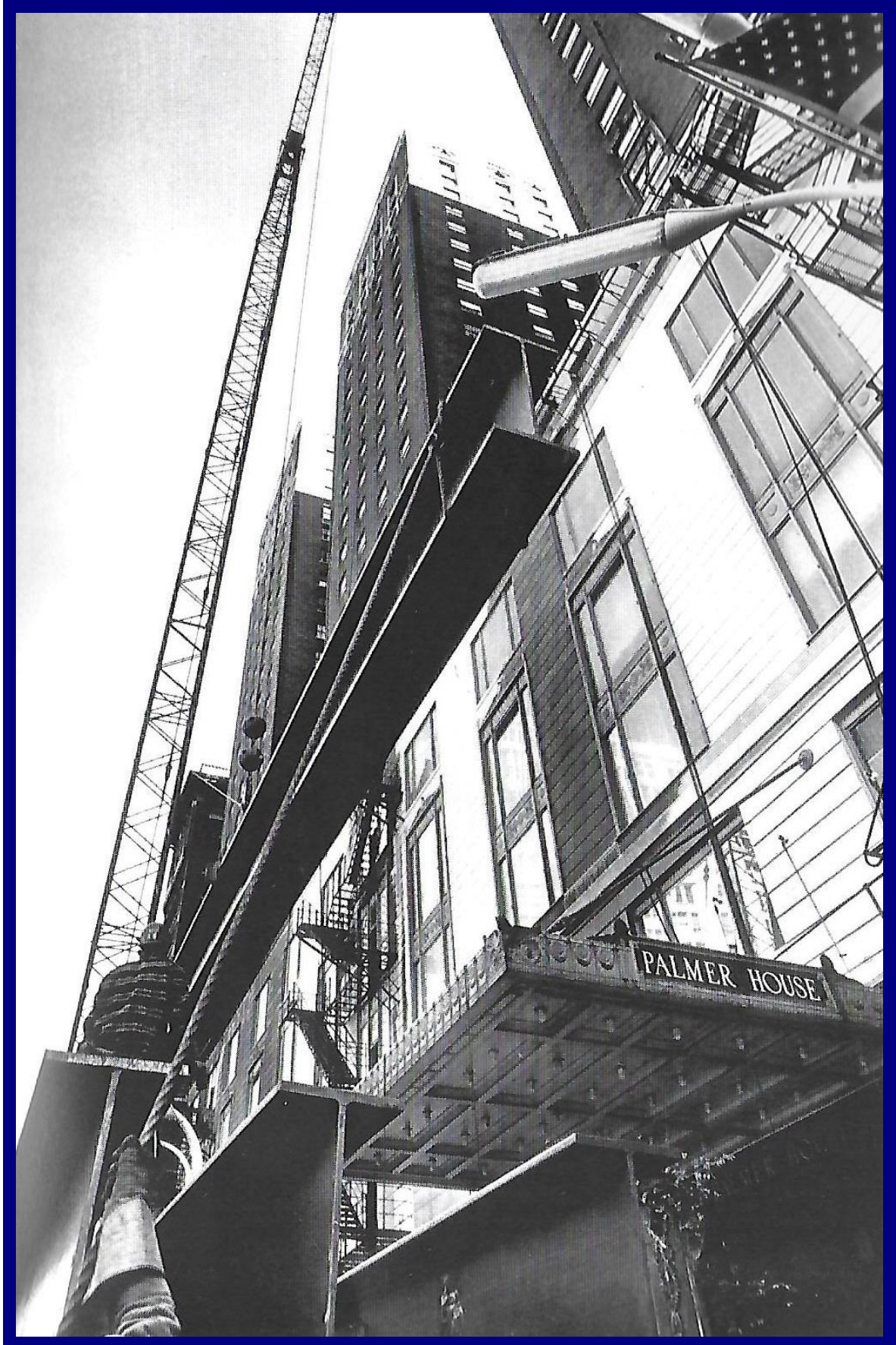
PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The third and current Palmer House of 1927, with 24 floors.
It had 2268 guest bedrooms all with their own baths.

<15>

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



At work on the third Palmer House.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



Some of the 1200 "Back of the House" employees at the front desk with the status of each guest room on cards in a rack system (long before computers).



The hotel telephone switchboards in late 1950s with 17 operators handling 6 million calls a year.

PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Grand Hall of the second Palmer House.



The 85 ft bar of the second Palmer House, a legendary drinking establishment before prohibition.

<18>

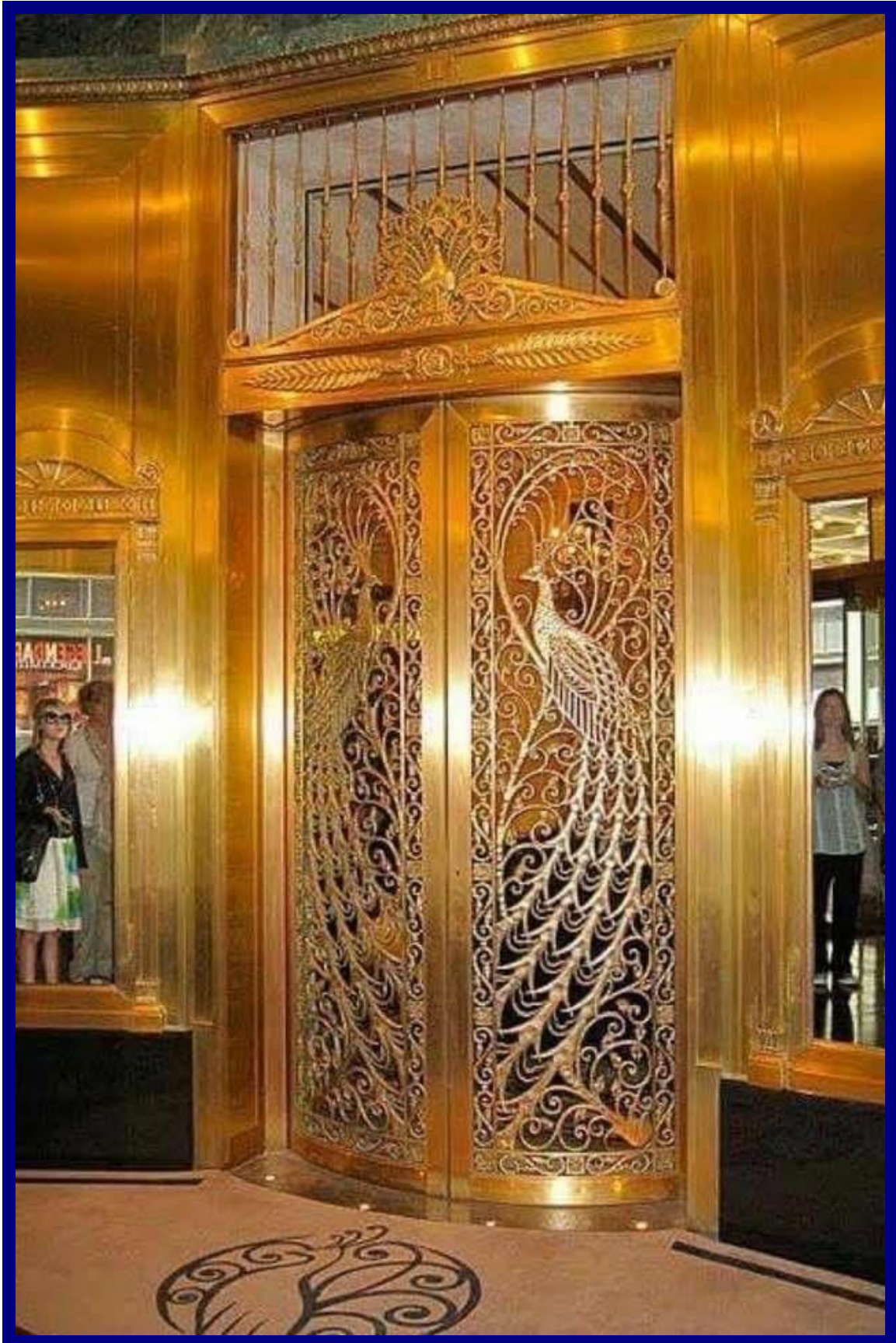
PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Red Lacquer Ballroom referred to as "one of Chicago's architectural jewels."

<19>

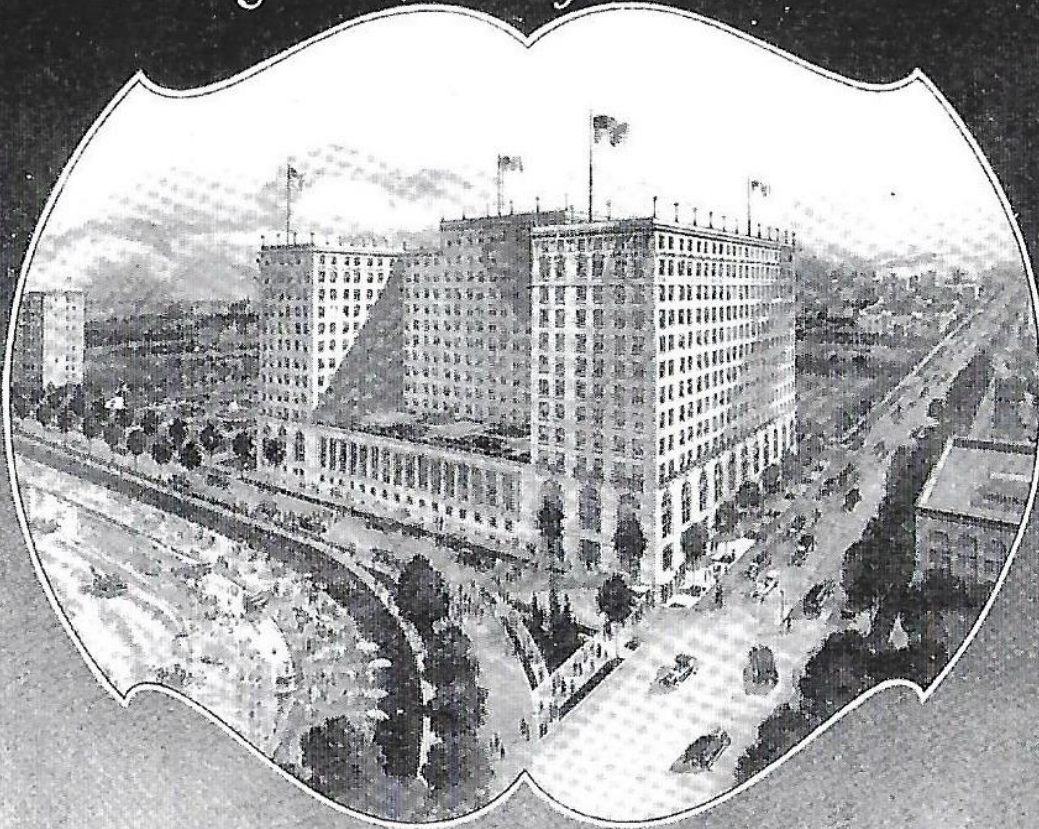
PALMER HOUSE HOTEL



The Tiffany golden Peacock doors.

THE DRAKE HOTEL

Chicago's Wonderful New Hotel



AS a guest of this ideally-located, beautiful new hotel you will be in a position to appreciate the real charm of America's second city.

THE DRAKE is on the quiet shore of Lake Michigan, five minutes from the heart of the city. As a guest you are near the center of things, yet you *live* in the quiet of a favored residential section overlooking the Lake and Lincoln Park.

The memory of a sojourn at THE DRAKE will surely intensify the pleasure of a visit to Chicago, hailed more and more as one of the queen summer-pleasure cities of the world.

*Single Rooms, each with bath, \$5 per day and upward
Rooms for two, as low as \$3 for each person*

Booklet sent, on request

The **DRAKE**

Lake Shore Drive and Upper Michigan Avenue
CHICAGO

THE DRAKE is under the direction of the Drake Hotel Company, owners of THE BLACKSTONE
(Six minutes distant by taxicab)

<21>

THE DRAKE HOTEL

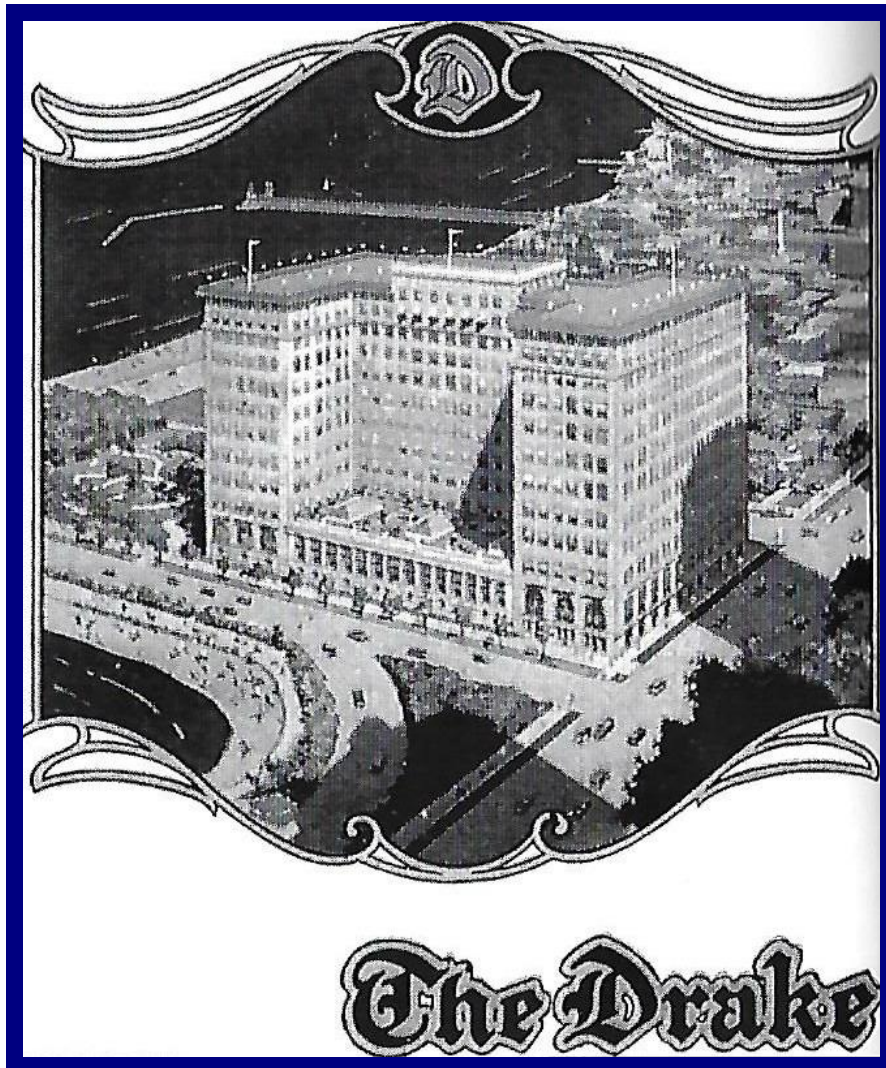


The 14 floor, H-shaped Drake, opened with 800 bedrooms.



Lake Michigan's Oak Street Beach in the 1920s in front of The Drake (right).

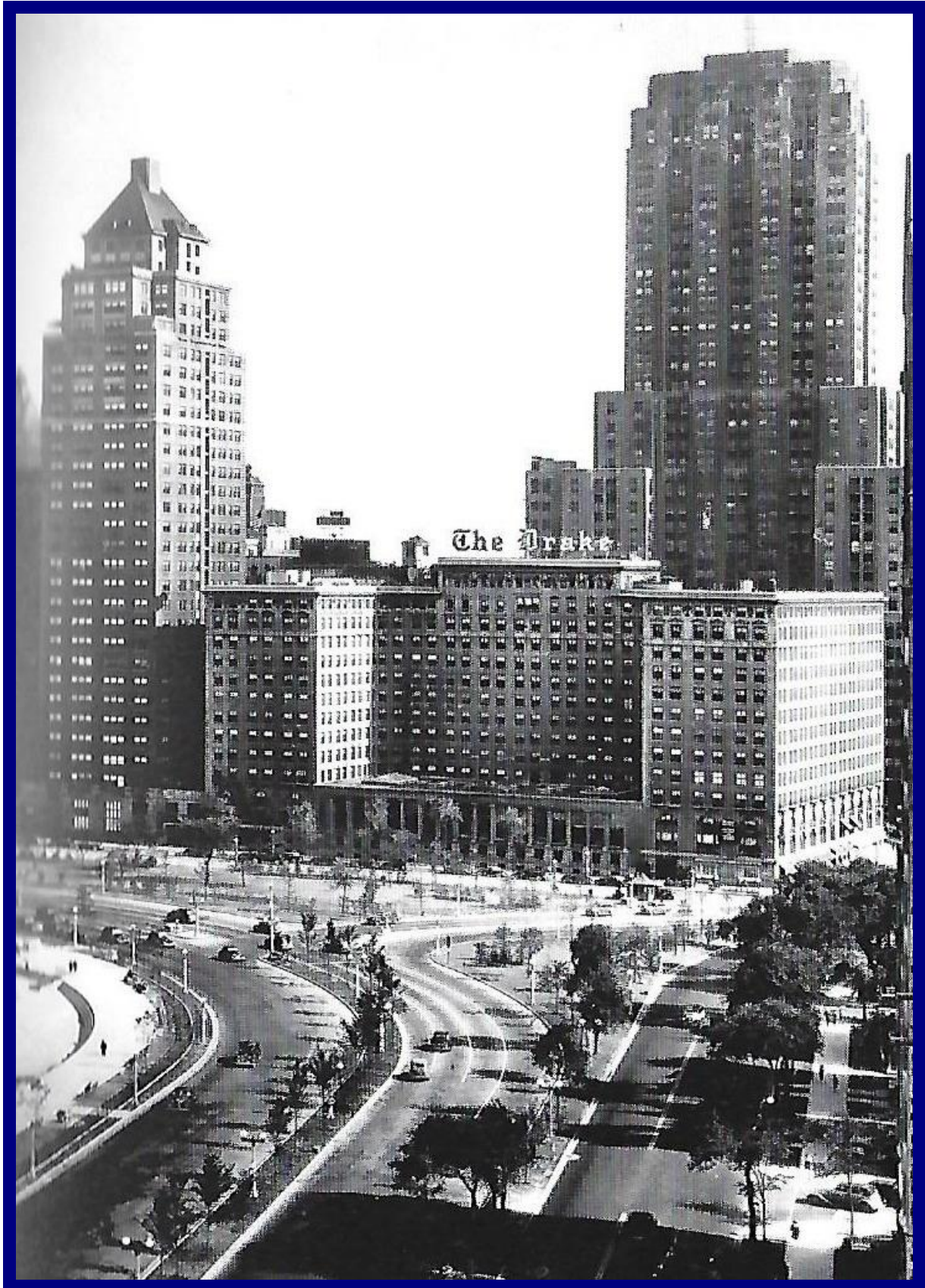
THE DRAKE HOTEL



A hotel luggage label (top) and an early postcard.

<23>

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The hotel in the 1940s with The Drake Towers apartment building (left) and the Palmolive skyscraper behind.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The Gold Coast Room of 1941 with its "turquoise and coral and gold leaf tracery" restored, with new air conditioning, in 1982.

THE DRAKE HOTEL

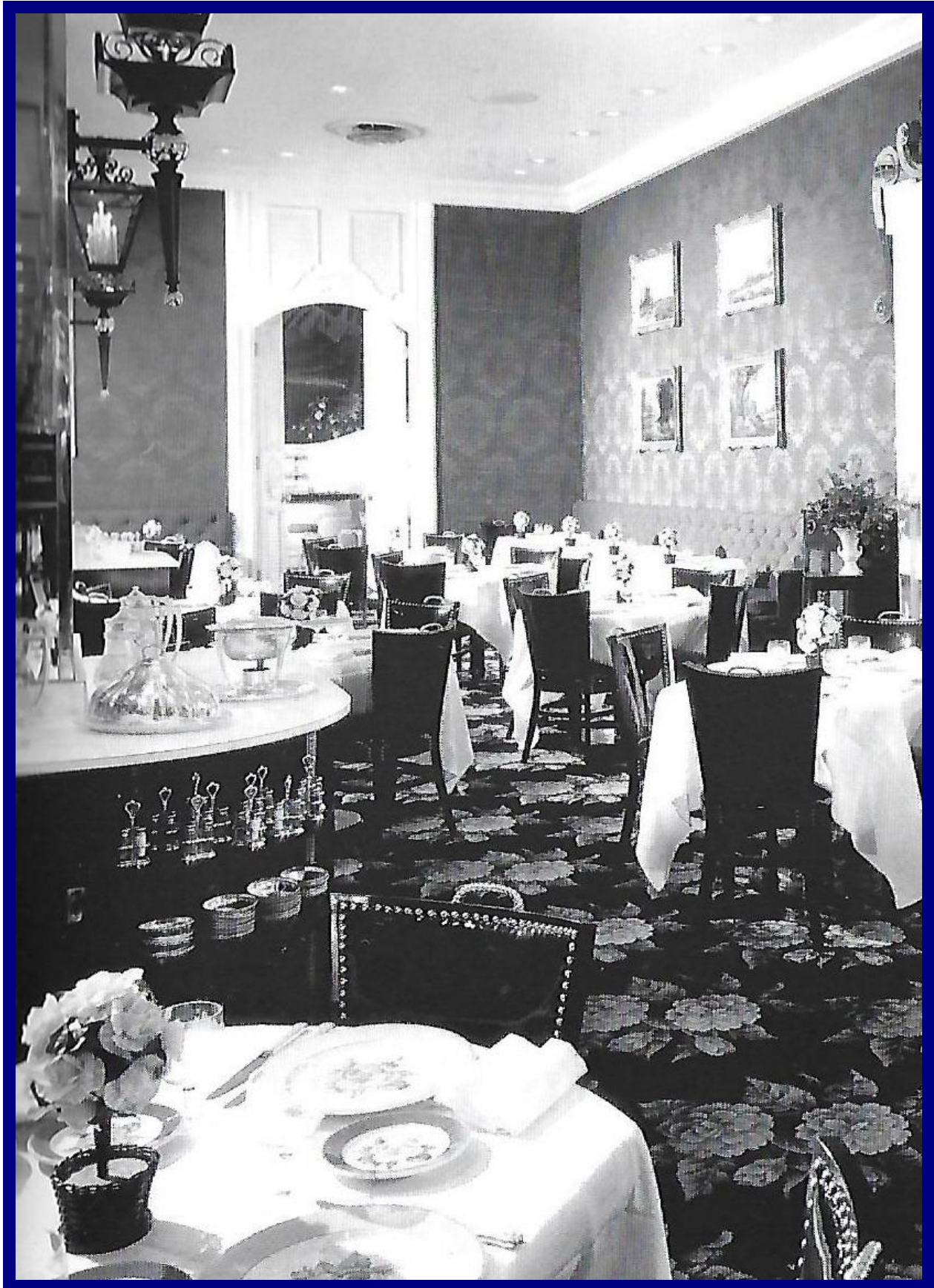


The Gold Coast Room once the main dining room, becoming the Silver Forest Room in summer.



The Annual Banquet of the American Society For Steel Treating in 1926

THE DRAKE HOTEL



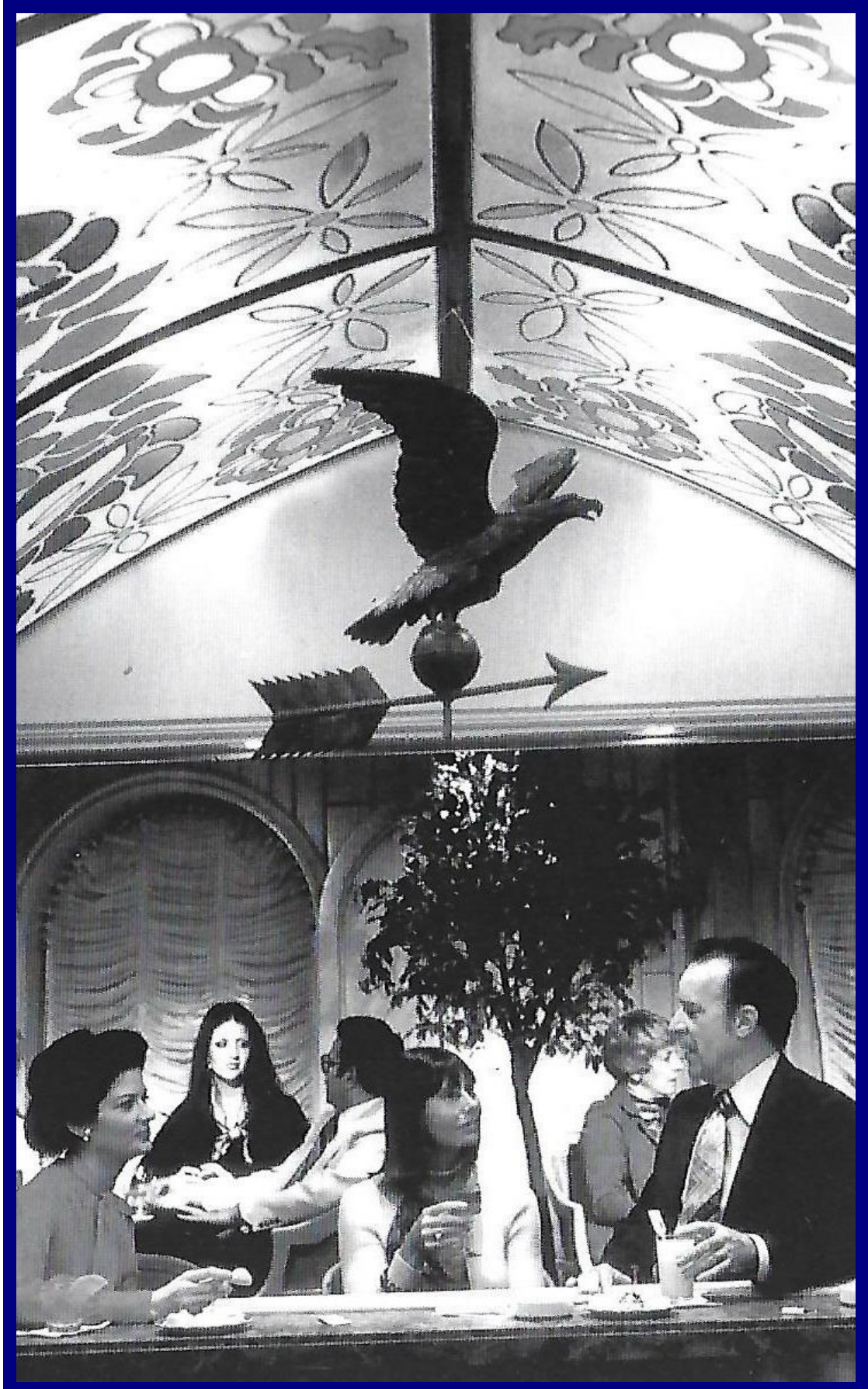
The Drake's Camellia House opened in 1941.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The Dining Room at Avenue One, successor to the Camellia House.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The Avenue One cocktail lounge, closed in 1982 becoming The Drake Room.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The Lobby of The Drake in 1998.

<30>

THE DRAKE HOTEL



One of The Drake's luxury suites looking out on Lake Michigan and the North Shore.



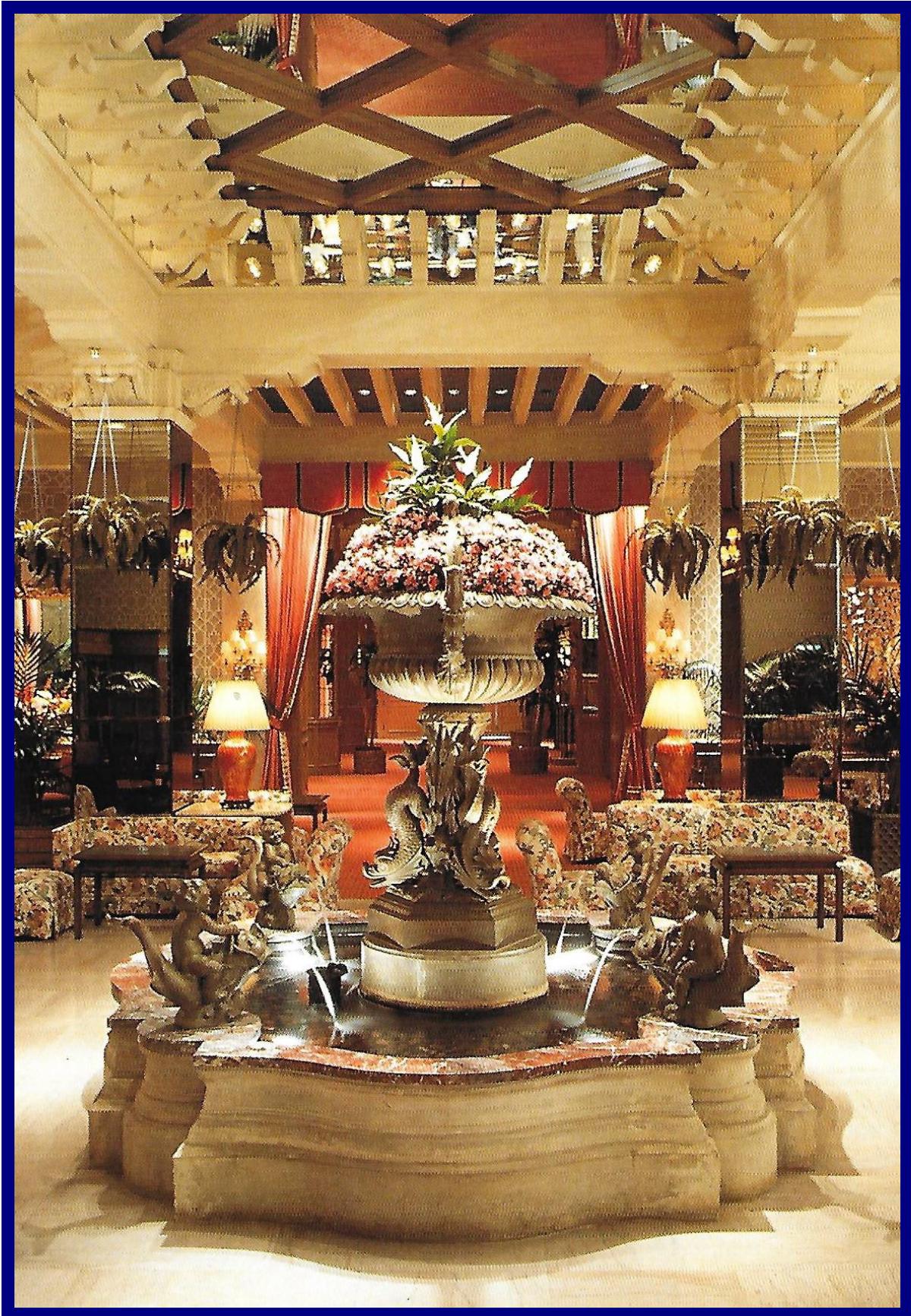
Princess Diana arriving at The Drake in June 1996.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



The Gold Coast Room of 1933, restored 1981-87.

THE DRAKE HOTEL



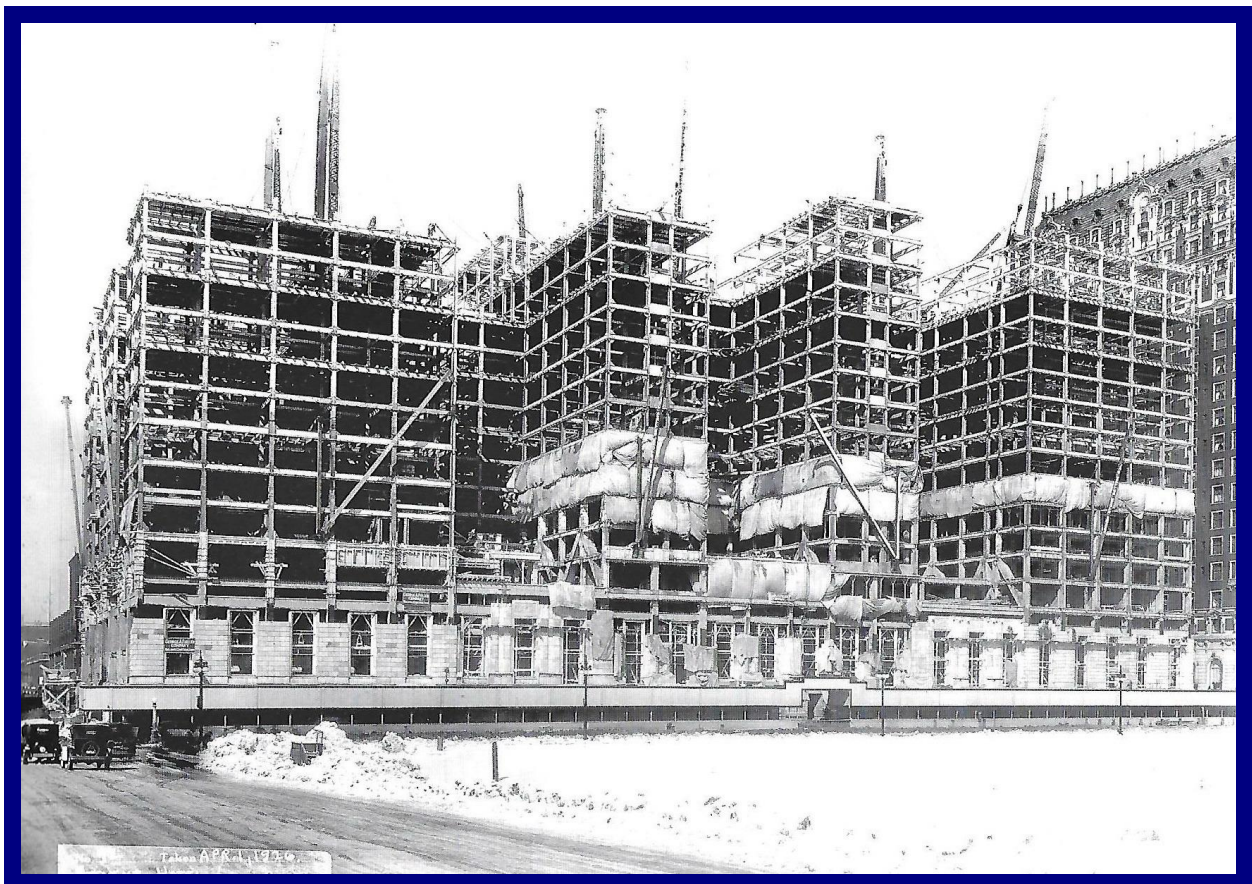
The renovated Palm Court.

THE STEVENS HOTEL



Under construction in 1925. The column being transported 77 ft long, weighing about 80 tons.

THE STEVENS HOTEL



Construction continued through 1926. Hotel (top picture) is the Drake Brothers Blackstone

THE STEVENS HOTEL

April, 1926

THE HOTEL BULLETIN

7



Architect's drawing of THE STEVENS, showing the Michigan boulevard east front, the Eighth street south front, and Seventh street, separating the Stevens from The Blackstone. The frontage on Michigan avenue is 402 feet, on Seventh and Eighth Streets, each 174 feet. The building is to contain three thousand rooms. An order has been placed for four thousand beds.

THE STEVENS

3,000 ROOMS *The World's Greatest Hotel* 3,000 BATHS

Michigan Boulevard, 7th Street to 8th Street, Chicago

THE Stevens Hotel will occupy the entire block on Michigan Avenue between 7th and 8th Streets—402 feet on Michigan Avenue, 173 feet on 7th Street and 8th Street.

Site covers 80,000 square feet. Building 25 stories above ground, 4 below, enclosing 20,000,000 cubic feet. 3000 outside rooms, each with private bath. Largest and finest banquet hall in the world with seating capacity for 4000 guests. Many other banquet and meeting rooms of various sizes.

Exhibition room for conventions containing over 35,000 square feet.

Across the alley, and connected with the main structure by bridges, will be a 12 story service Building fronting on Wabash Avenue.

The Stevens Hotel is being built, is owned and will be operated by the owners of Hotel LaSalle.

1927, 25 floors, 3000 outside rooms each with private bath, banquet hall for 4000 guests.

THE LARGEST HOTEL IN THE WORLD.

THE STEVENS HOTEL



The main Dining Room, later (under Hilton) the Boulevard Room.

THE STEVENS HOTEL



The Normandie Lounge, with furniture from the French luxury liner, damaged by fire in 1942.

THE STEVENS HOTEL

To Our Guests

THE STEVENS WILL BY ORDER OF THE FEDERAL COURT BE TAKEN OVER COMPLETELY BY THE ARMY ON AUGUST 1. THIS MEANS THAT ALL OCCUPANTS OF THE HOTEL WILL BE REQUIRED TO SEEK HOUSING ELSEWHERE AS OF MIDNIGHT OF JULY 31 OR BEFORE.

WE ARE INFINITELY GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR THE COMPLIMENT YOU HAVE PAID US IN OCCUPYING OUR FACILITIES, AND IT IS WITH REGRET THAT WE CONTEMPLATE THE INCONVENIENCE TO YOU.

HOWEVER, THE WAR EFFORT MUST BE SUPPORTED AND WE ARE TAKING OUR PLACE ALONGSIDE OF THOSE WHO HAVE DEFINITELY APPROPRIATED THEIR PROPERTIES TO THE GOVERNMENT.

WE EXPECT THAT WE WILL BE SEEKING YOUR PATRONAGE WHEN THE ARMY USAGE OF THE HOTEL HAS CEASED AT WHICH TIME WITH THE ASSOCIATIONS AND EXPERIENCES WE HAVE ENJOYED WITH YOU, WE WILL BE ABLE TO DO A BIGGER AND BETTER JOB.

YOURS VERY TRULY,

THE STEVENS HOTEL

J. A. JONES, GENERAL MANAGER

JULY 13, 1942.

CHICAGO REGRETFULLY SAYS... "So Long Soldier... Good Luck!"

There's a bit of a lump in our throats as we bid Godspeed to the officers, men and women of Chicago Schools, Army Air Forces Training Command. Thirty classes have graduated in the short period of a year. Many of the earlier graduates who went forth to battle, have already made the supreme sacrifice—or returned as heroes. All graduates, to a man, have had the stuff it takes to win. You've done a creditable job and we're frankly proud of you. We hope that you have enjoyed your stay with us as much as we've enjoyed having you as our guests.

The Stevens and the Congress hotels are honorably discharged from military service and return to civilian use. It would be only fitting and proper, we think, that as a reminder to future guests, these institutions be permitted a service bar on their stationery in recognition of the part they played in the nation's great emergency.

For all of you who have received ROM, mechanic, instrument, or meteorological training in Chicago Schools, AAFTC, it is our prayer that wherever you go or whatever your task, your part in ultimate victory be guided by Divine Providence. After victory, may you safely return to your loved ones, firm in the knowledge that you have fulfilled your obligation to God and country, and that you have played a vital part in making this a better world in which to live.

We, the undersigned, and all citizens of this great city, without exception, know full well that when the last curtain falls on the grim stage set by war, Americans unanimously will say, "Well done, soldier, well done!"

AMERICAN ROILER & TANK CO.
BRIGGS & TURVAS
CHICAGO BAKING CO.
DUP-O-LITE PENCIL CO.
THE HALLCRAFTERS, INC.
DUTCH MILL CANDIES
MAGILL WEINSHLEMER CO.
PHOENIX TRIMMING CO.
DICHTERS FOOD PRODUCTS, INC.
J. P. STEEL CO. CORPORATION
THE PUTZ NATIONAL CO.
WESSON-LOCK TYPEWRITER CO.

CHICAGO I WILL
BACK THE ATTACK
Buy War Bonds

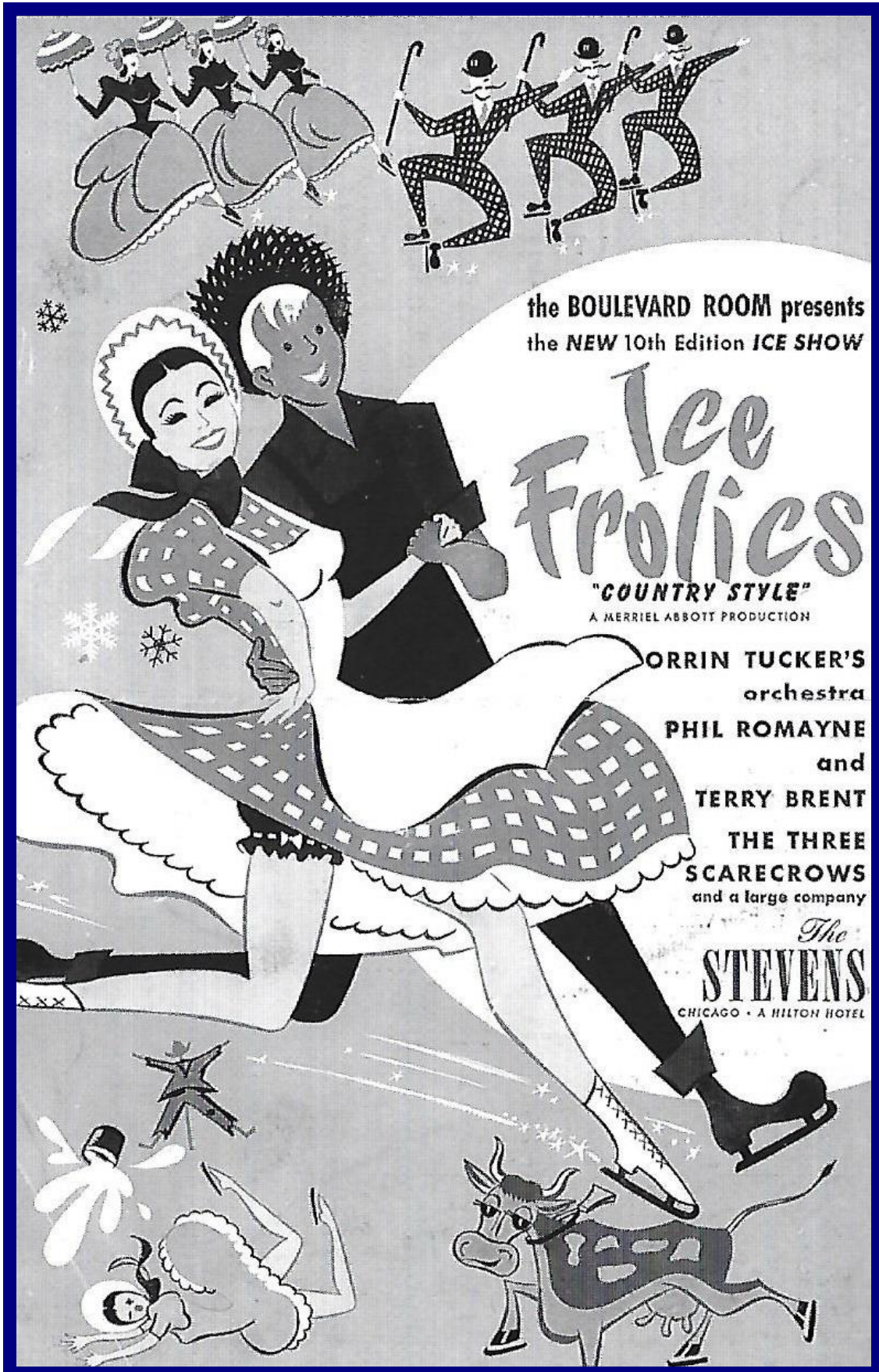
THE STEVENS HOTEL



A "mini-musical" on ice in the Boulevard supper club, after installation of rink and refrigeration.

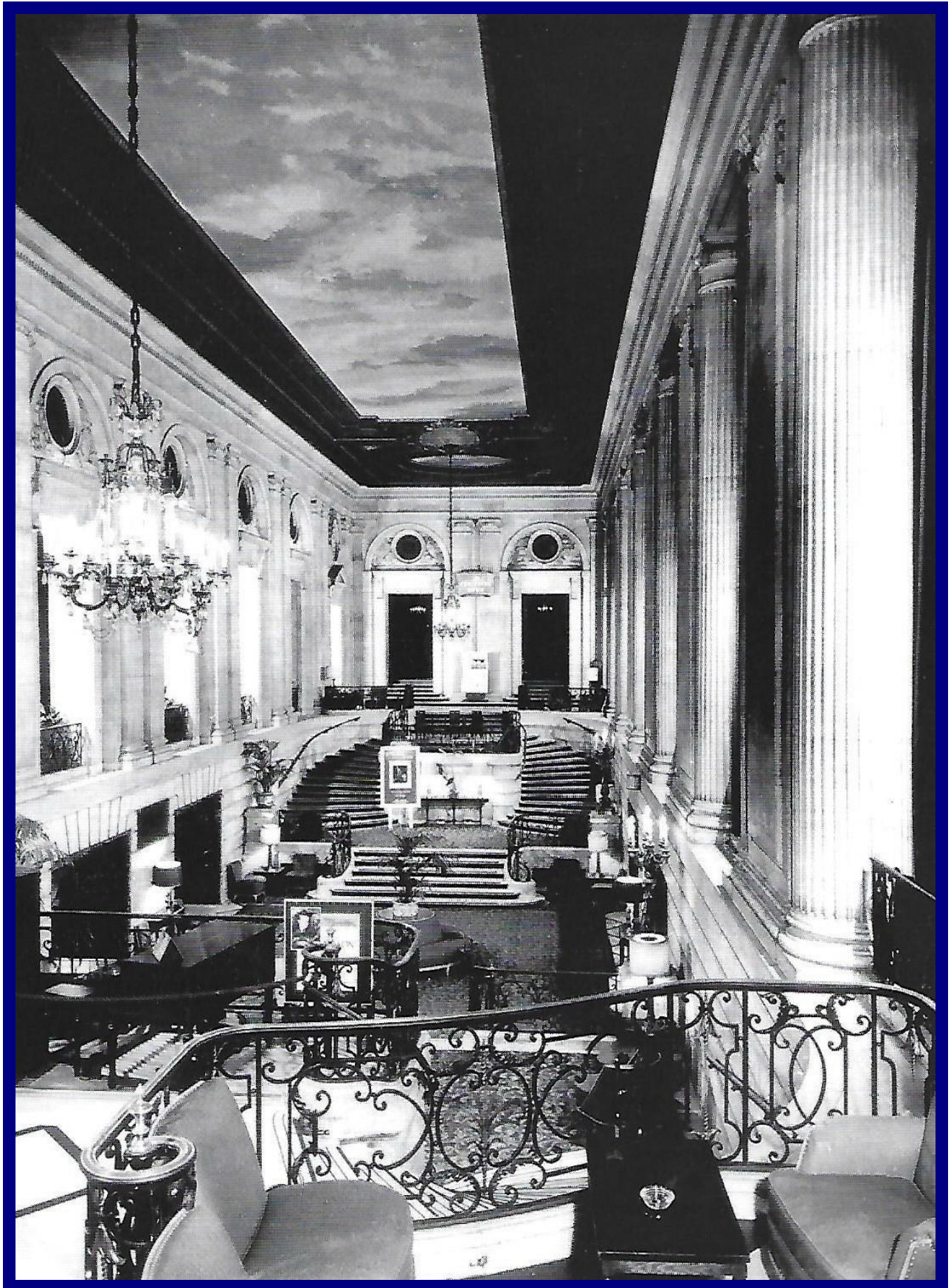
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THE STEVENS HOTEL



Program for the "Ice Follies", which began in 1948 and ran for 21 years.

STEVENS RENAMED CONRAD HILTON 1951



The Great Hall dates to the 1950s.

THE CONRAD HILTON HOTEL

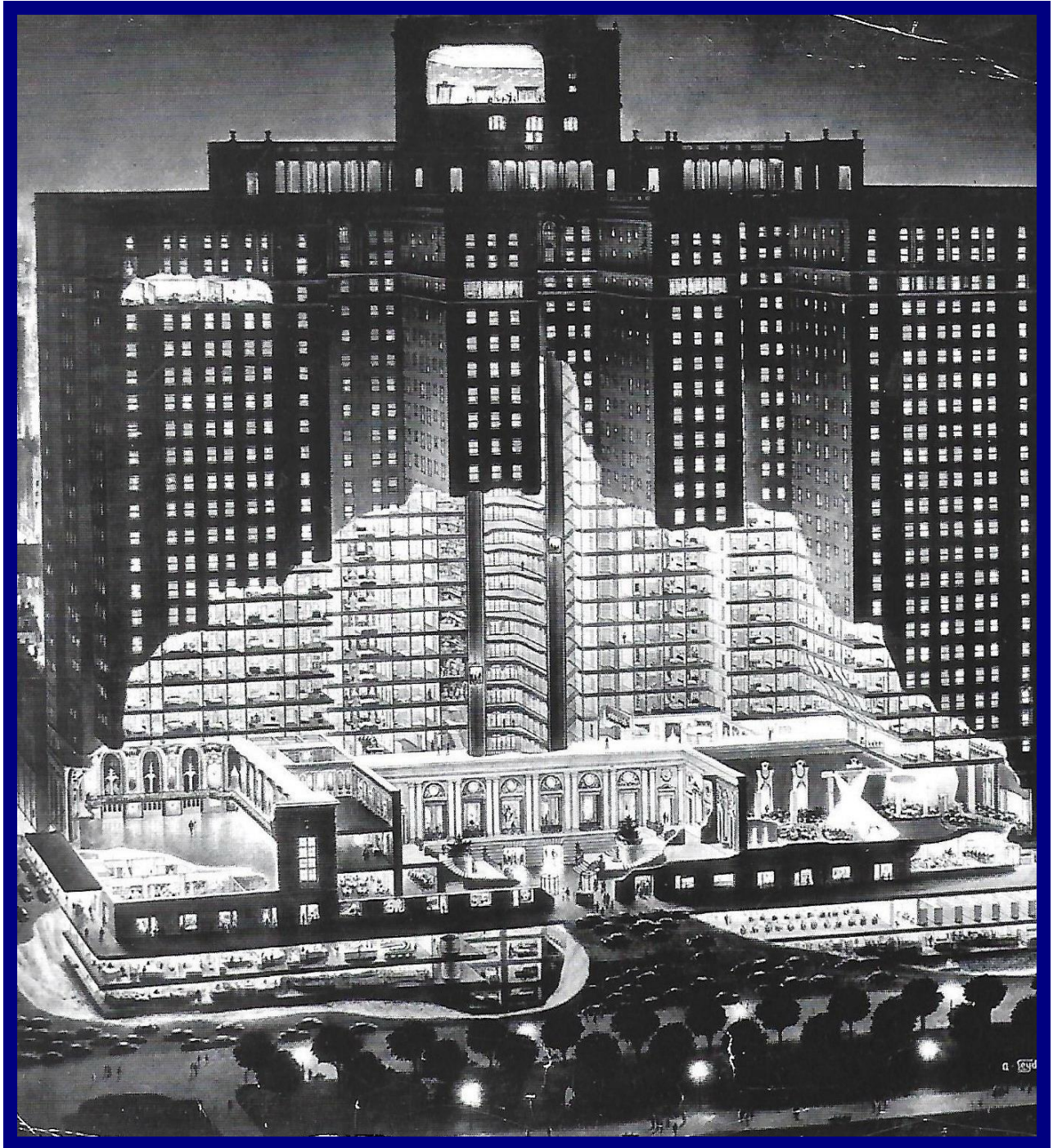


Diagram from the 1950s illustrating "A Hotel is a Machine for living in" with the main engineering services located in the 4 basements.

THE CONRAD HILTON HOTEL



A Dinner in Honour of Queen Elizabeth II in July 1959.
Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh attend a dinner in his honour in the hotel in 1966.

THE CONRAD HILTON HOTEL



The Conrad Hilton and Michigan Avenue in the late 1960s.

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**university of illinois/chicago architecture imagebase
encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/603 (Hotels)**