

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JAN 5 1977
DATE ENTERED MAR 17 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Hamilton Building

AND/OR COMMON Hamilton Building

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER 529 S. W. Third Avenue

CITY, TOWN Portland VICINITY OF Oregon First District

STATE Oregon 97204 CODE 41 COUNTY Multnomah CODE 051

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Melvin Mark, Jr. and John W. Russell

STREET & NUMBER 520 S. W. Sixth Avenue

CITY, TOWN Portland VICINITY OF STATE Oregon 97204

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Multnomah County Court House

STREET & NUMBER 1021 S. W. Fourth Avenue

CITY, TOWN Portland STATE Oregon 97204

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Statewide Inventory of Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE 1976

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS State Parks and Recreation Branch, 525 Trade Street, S. E.

CITY, TOWN Salem STATE Oregon 97310

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The six-story Hamilton Building, designed by architects Whidden and Lewis was built in 1892-93. The classically detailed structure built by H. W. Corbett occupies a 50' x 100' site on Portland's S. W. 3rd Avenue, a center of commercial development during the period 1890-1910.

"The Hamilton" as it was commonly known in its early years was flanked by two of the city's most prominent structures: the grand mansarded Masonic Temple by Warren H. Williams on the south, and the exuberant Dekum Building on the north built a year earlier in the Richardsonian Romanesque manner.

While change has occurred through the intervening years, the setting retains much of its turn-of-the century flavor. The Masonic Temple was replaced in the 1920s by the present Loyalty Building, but the Dekum continues as a well maintained office structure. Across 3rd Avenue to the east is Whidden and Lewis' finely detailed Failing Building (now the Postal Building) of 1900, and north of the Dekum across Washington Street is the Spaulding Building (now the Oregon Bank Building) designed by New York architect Cass Gilbert.

The original plan of the Hamilton Building had a service core along the south wall which contained the entrance lobby, stairs, passenger elevator, restrooms, and a freight elevator running from the basement to the first floor. The remainder of the first floor was designed for retail use and has been so used to the present day.

Upper floors were planned for office space. Early tenants included lawyers, dentists, investment companies, a language teacher, an architect, and other professionals. A rooftop skylight, approximately 16' x 30' in the center of the building provided illumination to a lightwell which extended to the second floor. This pattern of use continued until 1913 when the J. K. Gill Co., located in the Masonic Building to the south, expanded into the upper five floors of the Hamilton.

According to the lease agreement, the Hamilton Building owners (H. W. Corbett heirs) were to perform certain alterations on the upper floors to accommodate the Gill Co., a stationery, book and office equipment business. The alterations included: removal of office partitions; installation of seven openings in the party wall with the Masonic Building; and filling in the light well floors. This alteration work was done under the supervision of architects Doyle and Patterson. Due to subsequent floor coverings, evidence of the floor infill can only be seen at the 5th floor. Two of the wall openings which were later bricked in can be seen on the 3rd and 4th floor.

(see continuation sheets)

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The J. K. Gill Co. occupied the upper floors until 1922 when they moved into their own building at 5th and Stark. During the same year the Corbett heirs conveyed title to the Hamilton to the Masonic Building Association who in turn sold the building to Sealy-Dresser Co., a wholesale and retail grocery business. Sealy-Dresser Co. remained in the Hamilton until the late 1940s when they sold it to the Paul Gross Furniture Co.

Paul Gross Furniture occupied the entire structure until Mr. Gross' death in 1967. The building was vacant until about 1970 when the Paul Gross estate leased the ground floor space to a pornographic book and film store. Since acquisition by the present owners in 1976 the entire building has been vacant. Partitions (none original) have been removed as a preparatory step to restoration and remodeling.

STRUCTURE

The basic structure of the Hamilton consists of exterior masonry bearing walls and columns, and interior cast iron posts supporting a wood floor and roof structure. The sidewalls belong to the two pre-existing structures - the brick walls of the Masonic Temple on the south and the stone and brick walls of the Dekum on the north. The basement, which extends under the sidewalk to the curb line, has plastered brick walls on the east, south and west. On the north, the massive stones of the Dekum's wall are exposed. Brick piers, 38" x 46", support the granite columns and brick piers of the east wall above and the iron columns at the store front.

Cast iron columns are arranged in two rows in the long east-west direction and in three rows in the north-south direction. Starting from the south wall, the first row of columns is out 10 feet and defines the entrance lobby, stairs, elevator, and restrooms. The second row is equidistant between the first row and the north wall, a spacing of 19'6" \pm .

From the front wall (east), column rows are spaced in 22'-0", 20'-4", 20'-4" and 20'-4" to a brick wall which defines the 15' light court at the rear. (The light court presently extends the full width of the building from the 2nd floor up. Originally a 20' x 15' section of the court extended to the basement but was later filled in.)

Basement and first floor columns are 10" diameter. Column size diminishes on successive floors to 9" dia. on the 2nd floor, 8" dia. on the 3rd, and 7" dia. on the 4th (cols on 5th, and 6th floors are covered with wood or plasterboard and could not be measured.)

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Columns support composite wood (fir), and steel floor beams spanning north-south, and wood joists running east-west. Joists are notched into beams. First floor beams are made up of 6 wood members, each 1-5/8" x 18", and a central 3/4" thick by 18" steel plate. Beam members are connected by bolts along two rows. Ground floor joists are rough sawn fir, 2-1/2" x 2-3/4" by 18" on 16" centers. The layout and design of upper floor beams and joists is the same as the ground floor, only members are smaller: composite beams consist of 6 - 1-5/8" x 15" wood members and a 5/8" x 15" steel plate; joists are milled fir, 1-5/8" x 15" on 16" centers. The roof structure is framed in wood in a similar manner.

INTERIOR FINISH

The basement floor is concrete. Upper floors are covered with 3/4" fir diagonal sheathing, and 3/4" tongue and groove fir flooring. Original flooring is intact, but most is covered by later composition flooring.

The stairway and elevator lobby is substantially in original condition. Flooring is 8" x 8" black and white marble set in a diagonal checkerboard pattern with a 6" wide black marble border. Lobby walls, and stair walls to the 6th floor have a gray marble wainscot with a wood cap molding. Walls above the wainscot, and ceilings are undecorated plaster which appear to be original.

The original open iron elevator cage has been enclosed with painted wire glass at the first floor. The present elevator cab, which has corner doors (entrance from the east on the first floor and exit from the north on upper floors) dates from the 1930s.

The stairway, located along the south wall, retains some original elements. The oak newel post and oak handrail are original, while the simple rectangular balustrade is a subsequent alteration. Original wood stair treads are covered with a composition material. A fire wall and door have been added at a landing along the line of the elevator wall. A door, opening to the store area, has also been added to the north wall of the lobby.

The original oak framed directory board is intact as is the cast iron mail box.

Above the first floor the stairway wraps around the original metal elevator cage. The cage has cast iron corner posts, 2-1/2" dia., with simple base and top flanges. Cast iron ornaments at mid height on the posts receive horizontal rails

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of cast iron with Greek fret decoration. The cage is enclosed with open steel stripping in a basketweave pattern.

Each floor had men's and women's restrooms and a small janitor's closet along the south wall west of the stairway. Original restrooms were handsomely finished: marble wainscot, toilet partitions, and lavatory counter; china toilets with ornate elevated wood tanks lined with copper; and matte glaze tile floors. Field tiles on the floor are brick red, 2" x 4-1/4", and are laid in a common brick pattern.

The border consists of 1" wide black tiles and darker red tiles of the same size as the field tile. Only one restroom (2nd floor) retains all original elements. Ground floor restrooms have been removed, and fixtures and finish materials in the 6th floor restrooms have been stripped. Most other restrooms have original floors, wainscots, toilet partitions, and lav counters.

Walls throughout the building are undecorated plaster on wood lath. Interior partitions are wood stud. Lath and plaster is fastened to wood furring strips on exterior brick walls.

Ceilings consist of two layers of wood lath and plaster, undecorated, and fastened directly to floor joists.

The only remaining original interior doors are those to restrooms and janitor's closets. Doors are 4 panel, painted fir with transoms. Casings are 3-1/2" wide painted fir with classical detail. A cornice is located above the transom head casing. Window casings, all intact, are the same as door casings except there are no cornices. A 9-1/4" painted fir baseboard also classically detailed, is situated on all walls except in the restrooms. Most of the original baseboard is intact above the first floor.

The hipped skylight at the roof, which sets on a clerestory, is framed in metal and glazed with obscure wire glass. Along the ridge is an ornamental cast iron ventilation grille.

The original heating system consisted of a steam boiler and cast iron radiators with cast decoration in anthemion and other leaf patterns. Most original radiators are in place. The original boiler, still intact in the basement, was abandoned in the early 1900s when the building connected to the city steam system.

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There is no remaining evidence of original electric lighting fixtures, though there is some original, or very early, electrical switchgear still in the basement.

EXTERIOR

The elegant classically detailed facade is organized into four equal bays, unrelated to the interior structural system. The three northerly bays comprise the store front while the south bay contains a recessed entrance to the elevator lobby. The original wood door frame, transom and paneled ceiling of the entranceway are intact. Wood and glass doors are not original. The entrance side wall features grey marble panels bordered in black marble, and a white marble inset of the original number, "131". The center bay of the storefront also has a recessed entrance way in the same design as the south entrance. The north bay of the store front retains the original plain wood framing, while the south bay has been remodeled with metal framing. A base course of black marble is located under the large storefront windows.

Free standing ground floor columns (21" dia. at base) are of a variegated pink, gray, and black granite, and have bases and plinths of gray granite. The northerly 2 columns are monolithic, while the south column is in two pieces. The granite columns appear to support the brick piers of the upper floors. However, immediately behind the storefront windows and on line with the granite columns are 6" dia. cast iron columns (1st floor only) which undoubtedly contribute to the support of upper stories.

Brick facing is a rust-brown pressed brick made in Japan. Bricks measure 2-3/8" x 8-3/8" x 3-3/4", and are laid in common bond with 1/8" + beaded joints. Except for wood window and door frames, all other trim and detail is unglazed terra cotta, originally in an off white color. (The rust-brown brick and off-white terra cotta trim was characteristic of other Whidden and Lewis buildings of the period: the original Failing Building (1900) now Postal Building; the Meier & Frank store at 5th & Morrison (1897-98) razed for the present store in 1915, and the second Failing Building (1907 and 1913)) In ca. 1955 most of the brick and terra cotta was painted a rust color, similar to the original brick color. The exceptions were the first floor column capitals, architrave and cornice which were painted white, somewhat lighter than the original terra cotta color. About 10 years later the first floor brick was sand-blasted, exposing the original color, but badly pitting the original smooth surface.

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The Greek Ionic detailing of the first floor column capitals and entablature is apparently based on the Erechtheum, probably the east porch. Terra cotta capitals begin with a plain fillet, and a band at the column neck decorated in an anthemion and palmette pattern. The echinus consists of a bead and reel astragal, egg and dart molding, and a torus molding in chain pattern. Completing the capital is an egg and dart abacus. Volute sides are fluted and have bead and reel decoration on the fillets. The capitals of the "anta pillars" at the north and south are detailed in a similar manner.

The architrave consists of a plain double fascia and cyma reversa molding with leaf and tongue enrichment. The plain brick frieze is surmounted by a richly decorated cornice: leaf and tongue cyma reversa molding similar to the architrave, a dentil course, beaded astragal, egg and dart molding, a fluted corna with bead and reel astragal, and a cavetto cymatium with anthemion and acanthus decoration.

The first floor cornice also serves as the second floor sill course. Fenestration on the upper floors consists of pairs of double -hung wood sash, the same size on each floor. Second floor windows, the only windows with a transom, have a uniform terra cotta surround on the jambs, mullions, transom rails and heads, in a guilloche pattern with an intersecting foliage element. Brick piers have recessed horizontal courses similar to the "anta pillars" at the ground floor. A minor cornice with wave scroll decoration in the fascia completes the 2nd story, and like the first floor cornice, it also forms the 3rd floor sill course.

Third story sash are framed with a subtle label molding having an outer row of dentils and an inner astragal in a bead and reel pattern. Centered on the facade at the 4th floor line is a terra cotta panel containing the building name - "HAMILTON". The border molding features a leaf and tongue ovolo and plain astragal.

Fourth and fifth floor window trim is identical and relatively simple. Each window pair has a projecting sill and surrounding trim with a cable molding and plain rectangular elements.

The continuous sixth story sill course and all surfaces above, including the frieze and cornice are of terra cotta. Piers are paneled in a guilloche pattern with egg and dart border. Mullions are decorated with a recessed bead molding. A continuous head course with beaded astragal and egg and dart molding forms

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a base for the frieze which features festoons and wreaths arranged in pairs as the windows below.

Above the frieze is a grand cornice, the crowning feature of the entire structure. All elements are enriched with classical detail, beginning with a bead and reel astragal, leaf and tongue ovolo, and dentil course, another bead and reel astragal, and an egg and dart molding. Modillions support the projecting ovolo cymatium with anthemion decoration. Rosettes are featured in coffered panels in the soffits between modillions.

Exterior surfaces are generally in good condition. Brick is of high quality and in excellent condition except on the ground floor where sandblasting has pitted the surface. Erosion is evident in a few brick joints and in many terra cotta joints. Some terra cotta trim has been broken.

PROPOSED RESTORATION AND REMODELING

The present owners are planning to undertake exterior restoration, and interior remodeling and restoration during 1977. Preliminary plans call for the following work:

EXTERIOR

- tuck point exterior brick
- caulk terra cotta joints and restore broken terra cotta
- repair, strip and repaint wood sash and window trim
- retain existing store front

INTERIOR

- ground floor store space to be used for book store and restaurant -
- upper stories to be used for offices
- retain elevator shaft and stairway - enclose as required by building code on upper floors
- restore marble floors, wainscot, and other detail in south lobby
- provide ground floor opening in the back wall (west) to the adjacent parking garage
- install skylight over rear light well at the roof line

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- retain restroom locations and reuse marble fixtures and tile floors where possible
- install suspended acoustical ceilings and carpet floors
- install new elevator

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/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1892-93

~~BUILDER~~/ARCHITECT

Whidden and Lewis

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Hamilton Building, once described as Portland's most elegant new office building, was Oregon's earliest and very likely the best example of the Commercial Style in classical form and detail. Built by pioneer industrialist and banker, Henry Winslow Corbett, the Hamilton is an early and fine example of the work of Whidden and Lewis, Portland's leading architectural firm of the period.

The prevailing style for business structures during the early 1890s was the Richardsonian Romanesque, as can be seen in the Dekum Building, to the north completed in 1892, a few months earlier than the Hamilton. The contrast in styles is dramatic. The classical treatment of the Hamilton set a new fashion for commercial structures in Portland.

Though small (50' wide by 90' + high) in comparison with other office buildings of the period, the Hamilton is beautifully proportioned, appropriate in scale, and correct in detail, demonstrating Whidden and Lewis' skill with the classical vocabulary, as well as their skill in adapting classical forms to a modern office building. The quality of design and the execution of classical Greek detail was unsurpassed for the period.

William M. Whidden and Ion Lewis were both trained at M.I.T. After graduation, Lewis worked in the Boston office of Peabody & Stearns, and later formed a partnership with Henry Paston Clark.

Whidden, after four years at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris joined McKim, Mead and White in New York. Accompanied by McKim, Whidden came to Portland in 1882 to supervise work on Henry Villard's Portland Hotel. Villard's financial collapse in 1883 ended work on the hotel and Whidden returned to the east coast. In 1888 the hotel was acquired by a local syndicate headed by H. W. Corbett and W. L. Ladd who invited Whidden to return to Portland to oversee construction. A year later Whidden was visited by his friend and classmate Ion Lewis who stayed on and joined Whidden in partnership. The arrival of Whidden and Lewis also marked the arrival of current eastern styles, and architecturally speaking, Portland had "come of age". Whidden and Lewis dominated the Portland architectural scene during the years 1890-1910. They introduced the Georgian Revival in residential structures, the Second Renaissance Revival in public buildings (Public Library, 1890-91 - Portland City Hall,

(see continuation sheet)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

see attached sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .117 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

1,0	5,2,5,4,6,0	5,0,4,0,4,8,0
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

C

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

D

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George A. McMath

ORGANIZATION

Allen, McMath, Hawkins, Architects

STREET & NUMBER

840 N. W. Summit Avenue

CITY OR TOWN

Portland

DATE

September 8, 1976

TELEPHONE

(503) 228-5154

STATE

Oregon 97204

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

TITLE State Parks Superintendent

DATE Dec. 28, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

CHIEF

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

8/17/99

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

2/16/77

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1892-95), and the classical treatment of office buildings. The Hamilton was the first of several office structures designed by the firm in the classical manner.

Henry W. Corbett was among the first of Portland's prominent citizens to employ the talents of Whidden and Lewis. Their association, which began with the Portland Hotel project, was continued by the Corbett Estate after Corbett's death in 1903.

Corbett was one of a small group of pioneer businessmen who came to dominate the commercial and social life of the City during the last half of the 19th century. In March 1851 Corbett, age 24, arrived in Portland from New York with a consignment of dry goods which sold out in 14 months. He went back to New York for a year then returned to Portland with his new bride and established his own business.

Corbett's business prospered and he soon developed other interests, especially Republican politics. In 1866 he was elected to the U. S. Senate where he served one term.

With Josiah Failing and his brother-in-law Henry Failing, Corbett purchased controlling interest in the First National Bank in 1869. The same year Corbett acquired the California stage line, the first of several endeavors in the field of transportation. In later years he was a director of the Oregon Steam Navigation Co. and its successor, the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Co., and was involved in Portland's street railways. Corbett was also president of the Willamette Iron & Steel Co. as well as the Portland Hotel Co. Henry W. Corbett's first construction project was the 1870 Corbett Building which housed his own business. He later built the First National Bank Building, the Worcester Block, Cambridge Block, and Neustader Building. The Hamilton, completed when Corbett was 65 years old, was his last building project, and was named either for his son Hamilton F. who had died many years earlier, or for his grandson also named Hamilton F. Corbett.

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