

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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received **OCT 31 1985**
date entered

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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

DEC 2 1985

1. Name

historic Imperial Hotel Number of contributing resources: 1
and/or common Plaza Hotel Number of non-contributing resources: 0

2. Location

street & number 422-426 SW Broadway not for publication
city, town Portland N/A vicinity of
state Oregon code 41 county Multnomah code 051

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<u>N/A</u> 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:

4. Owner of Property

name Princeton Portland Investors, The Princeton Group
street & number 1332 Park Street
city, town Alameda N/A vicinity of state California 94501

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Multnomah County Courthouse
street & number 319 SW Fourth
city, town Portland state Oregon 97204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title City of Portland Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date 1981-83 federal state county local
depository for survey records Bureau of Planning, City of Portland
city, town Portland state Oregon 97204

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 type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Imperial (Plaza) Hotel is one of the major commercial and institutional buildings constructed in Portland between 1889 and 1895 in the Richardsonian Romanesque/Sullivanian style. The design of the 1894 hotel is customarily credited to F. Manson White, although an early newspaper article credits George F. Wells, one of the original owners, as the designer of the building. The Imperial Hotel is a six-story structure with mezzanine and vaulted basement. The basic structural system of the building consists of a concrete foundation, exterior bearing walls, interior cast iron columns on an asymmetrical grid system with heavy timber beams and steel girders. Exterior elevations above the altered base are intact. Only portions of the third floor interior are intact. All other interior finishes and configurations have been removed.

Setting

Located at the NE corner of SW Broadway Avenue and Washington Street, the Imperial Hotel occupies a 100 x 100 foot parcel on Lots 5 and 6 of Block 176, in the Portland Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon.

When originally constructed, the area surrounding the building was undergoing a transition from residential to commercial and retail uses. A gradual movement of the business district west had been occurring since the great fires of 1872 and 1873. This movement west was stepped up due to the annual spring flooding of the city, which occurred until construction of the sea wall in 1929. Thus, the buildings we find surrounding the current structure date from 1910 to just before the Depression and include the 1910 addition to the Imperial designed by Whidden and Lewis, noted Portland architects.

Exterior Description (Original)

Originally the south and west street-level elevations of the building consisted of a heavy rock-faced ashlar "blue sandstone" base at the first floor level. This story was topped by a heavy dentilated course which terminated at the bottom of the second floor windows. The main hotel entrance, composed of a carved stone Romanesque arched entry flanked by massive colonnettes, was located to the east of center on the Washington Street (south) elevation. A second entrance was located in the northernmost bay on the Broadway (west) elevation. The entries to the building remain in the original locations, but the storefront level has been substantially altered by numerous remodelings and additional entries. Major alterations to the storefront level occurred in 1910, when the Owl Drug Store moved in, and in 1939. Changes in the years since have destroyed most of the building's original storefronts. However, major portions of the original and secondary entrances are intact, as well as stonework located at the top of the original base. Much of this stonework has been damaged during subsequent remodelings but can potentially be rehabilitated.

Above the storefront elevation the corner bays of both west and south elevations project slightly from the main facade, providing a pavilion-like termination. At the second floor level the rock-faced ashlar is carried upward to the bottom of the third floor windows, which emphasizes the pavilion-like corners. The

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building is divided horizontally into three sections consisting of an ashlar base extending at the corners to the bottom of the third floor windows, followed by a mid-section of three stories, and topped with an attic story which is capped by a frieze and cornice.

Each corner pavilion-like bay has three recessed arches flanked by full or partial pilasters, which begin at the third floor stone window ledge on a molded brick base, and terminate at the spring of the semi-circular tops of the fifth floor windows. The pilasters and all upper-floor wall surfaces of the hotel are composed of red pressed brick with a struck beaded mortar joint. The pilasters are capped with red, slip-glazed, terra cotta capitals decorated with a "Romanesque" foliage pattern. Proportionately larger pilasters mark the outer corners of the pavilion-like projections and support a small frieze which terminates the mid-section.

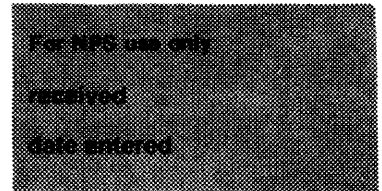
According to an Oregonian article dated June 8, 1893, the terra cotta was manufactured in Portland by a firm owned by Mr. Theodore Jensen:

Mr. Theodore Jensen, the well-known brick manufacturer, has this year secured the services of an experienced terra cotta manufacturer, and he is now engaged in the production of terra cotta. The contents of the first kiln was this week delivered at the Steinbach-Wells Building. A representative of the builder called upon Mr. Phillip Plattenberg, the superintendent of this building, this week to inquire into the merits of the Portland article. Mr. Plattenberg was superintendent of the Dekum Building, of this city, and of the Columbia National Bank Building at Seattle, and is an exceptionally competent builder. In speaking of the Portland terra cotta, he said that it exceeded his expectations in every particular and would rank with the very best terra cotta ever used in this city. Mr. Plattenberg said that one peculiar merit which he founding the Portland terra cotta was its uniform hardness, it having been burned everywhere alike. In the terra cotta delivered at the building all the edges and corners are smooth and even, and the surface perfectly finished. It is safe to predict that first-class terra cotta will hereafter be produced in Portland. Mr. Fred Lehman is the gentleman who took charge of the work with Mr. Jensen. He has had many years experience and is known widely as an expert clay-worker. There are now several buildings being constructed in this city in which considerable terra cotta is to be used, and the contractors on these now regard the Portland terra cotta with favor. As has heretofore been affirmed by the Builder, Portland could become a great center for clay-working industries of a higher order. That she will ultimately become such is indicated by the marked success that has attended this first attempt to manufacture terra cotta.

The windows in the pavilion mid-section are one-over-one, double-hung sash. The windows are framed by a dentil-like brick work which consists of a bullnose brick laid alternately with a header. The semicircular arches over the fifth floor windows have a pellet molding hood of specially molded bricks.

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The attic story of the pavilion sections consist of four one-over-one, double-hung sash windows, each framed by dentil-like brickwork. The group of four windows is surrounded by the pellet molding. A plain brick frieze located above the windows is topped by a modillioned sheet metal cornice painted to match the brick. A solid brick parapet wall rises behind the cornice and has chimney-like projections which terminate above the top of the parapet wall at the pavilion corners. Each of these projections has foliated sheet metal decorations on the exposed sides.

The central bays of both elevations read A-B-B-B-A. The A bays consist of single double-hung windows without dentil-like brickwork but with a casing edged by pellet molding surrounding the openings. These brick bays rise from the second floor window sills to the attic story. The fifth floor windows have semicircular tops.

The B bays consist of paired one-over-one, double-hung windows on the second through fourth floors. The fifth floor windows consist of a large semicircular transom over three mullioned one light sash. The windows in the three B bays are slightly recessed, and all of the windows are surrounded by dentil-like brickwork. Each pair of windows and the top semicircular arched window are all set off by the pellet molding which defines these windows as bays from the second through the fifth floors, and adds to the verticality of the building. In the spandrel panel between each of the semicircular windows of the fifth floor is a roundel which is believed to be terra cotta but has been painted to match the brick.

The attic story above the A-B bays consists of a single one-over-one, double-hung window with a semicircular arched top over the A bays. Pairs of similar windows are over the B bays and are separated with a single brick colonnette. A triple colonnette between the pairs of windows and the end single windows correspond to the rhythm of the bays below. The molded bricks which compose the smooth circular shaft of the colonnettes, rest on a red, slip-glazed, terra cotta base, and support a foliated "Romanesque" capital constructed of the same material.

Above the attic story is a decorated frieze of "Romanesque" foliage. The sheet metal frieze, painted to match the brick, is capped by a modillioned sheet metal cornice painted the same color. A brick parapet wall with small arched openings rises behind the cornice. An exterior metal fire escape is located to the left of center on the west elevation, and another is located on the south elevation in the bay nearest the southeast pavilion-like projection. The upper elevation of the building appear to be in good condition, despite the poor condition of the cornice and poor condition of the parapet wall evidenced by the missing chimneys and deteriorating decorative metal work.

Interior

The interior partitions and floors of the Imperial are supported on an asymmetrical interior structural framework of cast-iron posts and steel girders.

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Wood floor joists rest on the structural frame and are covered by tongue-and-groove decking. The remaining partition walls are stud frame, and like the ceilings are finished with plaster over wood lath.

As described in an early newspaper article, the Imperial contained a total of 145 rooms. The main entrance, located on Washington Street, had a carved arch and massive pillars which led to the elevator. The stairs ascended to the sixth floor around the elevator shaft. Directly to the left of the main entrance was the office, which measured 27 x 80 feet. This room contained easy chairs and writing tables. The main desk and cloakroom were located at the center of the west wall. The bar was located at the rear, or north end.

The second floor contained several suites of rooms, the parlor, the dining room and kitchen. The dining room measured 65 x 48 feet and was located facing Washington Street. To the rear or north of the room was a nursery, or children's dining room. To the rear of this room was the kitchen and pantry. The ladies parlor was a large room located at the southwest corner of the second floor. The parlor was accessed by a private stair off the main Washington Street entrance. Both the dining room and parlor were frescoed.

The remaining floors contained quest rooms, most of which had stationary washstands with hot and cold water. On each floor were located men's and women's bathrooms. Few rooms in the hotel were equipped with private bathrooms. The building was heated by a central steam system and was supplied with electricity from its own generating plant located in the basement.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 1892-1894 **Builder/Architect** F. Manson White

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Imperial (Plaza) Hotel, located at 422-426 SW Broadway, Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, is a six-story structure with mezzanine and vaulted basement. One of sixteen Richardsonian Romanesque/Sullivan-esque buildings constructed in Portland between 1889 and 1895, the design of the structure is credited to F. Manson White. Constructed for A. B. Steinbach and George F. Wells, the building has been designated a Portland Historic Landmark and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion "c" as a work of the prominent Portland architect F. Manson White, and as a premiere example of that style of architecture in Portland. The building is also eligible under criterion "b" for its association with Portland personages George F. Wells and Phil Metschan. Finally, the former hotel is eligible under criterion "a" for its association with the political and commercial history of Oregon.

History

When construction of the Imperial Hotel began in 1892, the city directory for that year announced:

In many respects Portland is a wonderful city. . . Not alone in the increase of buildings and population. . . but in the high character of the improvements -- such as the magnificent edifices, the extensive rapid transit system, and the general uplifting everywhere. . . (Portland's) advance from the village to the great metropolitan city has been taken in a single bound.

George F. Wells must have been caught up in the desire, so to speak, to put Portland on the map. As Joseph Gaston reported, Wells, a contractor by trade, had always had a great ambition to own a brick building, and the Imperial was the fulfillment of his hopes.

The growth of Portland's business district after the fires of 1872 and 1873 was generally towards the west hills. As the business district moved west, single-family houses were making way for new businesses, hotels, and theaters. In the immediate vicinity of the hotel, just one block to the north, a new public library had been completed. Standing next to the site of the new hotel on the east side of the block was the four-story Raleigh Building, which contained a saloon, drugstore and offices. Other businesses on the remainder of Block 176 included: the Rambler Bicycle Riding School, a bicycle repair shop, a small three-story hotel; carpenters' and painters' shops, and a residential building occupied by Chinese immigrants.

At the time of construction the Imperial was built on what was then the edge of town. Unlike the buildings along the river, which had their major entrances on

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Portland, Or. - Wash.

Quadrangle scale 1:62500

UTM References

A

1	0	5	2	5	2	2	0	5	0	4	0	6	5	0
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 The Imperial Hotel is located on Lots 5 and 6 of Block 176, Portland Addition to the City of Portland, Multnomah County, Oregon, a 100 x 100-foot parcel.

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

state N/A code county code

state N/A code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title N/A

organization Heritage Investment Corporation date March, 1985

street & number 123 NW Second, Suite 200 telephone (503) 228-0272

city or town Portland state Oregon 97209

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

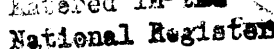
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National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

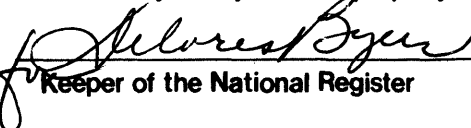
State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer date October 25, 1985

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

 National Register

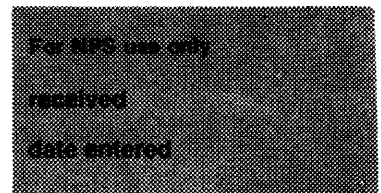
 Keeper of the National Register date 12/2/85

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration

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either their east or west elevations, the main entrance to the Imperial Hotel faced south on Washington Street, which at that time carried two streetcar lines, and was one of the primary sources of transportation to and from the hotel.

Excavation for the new building began in early October, 1892, on the previous site of the Brunswick Building, which had burned down. By January, 1893 the foundation had been laid; by May 5, the second story was almost complete; and in June, 1893, the first load of Portland terra cotta from Theodore Jensen, a well known brick manufacturer, was delivered to the site. On August 6, 1893, the Oregonian described the building:

The handsome six-story block of Steinbach and Wells, at Washington and 6th Streets, is rapidly approaching completion. The stone work of the first and second stories is very handsome and the building has a fine appearance.

On March 10, 1894, fifteen months after construction commenced, the Imperial Hotel was, as announced in the Sunday Oregonian of March 11, 1894, "informally opened." While the economy throughout the country was on a down swing since the early part of the decade, much emphasis was still placed on how the city was growing, and how the Imperial demonstrated that growth:

The informal opening of the Imperial hotel, which occurred last evening, was an event of considerable importance in the history of the city of Portland. There is perhaps no better criterion for gauging a city's growth and progress than the size and character of its hotels. The expansion of a city necessitates an increase, from time to time, in these very essential establishments. It is the style and character of the various hotels of a city, rather than their number, that marks the degree of progress attained by the community where such hotels are located.

Due to the economic climate at the time, there must have been some skepticism as to whether or not the Imperial would actually open. The newspaper continued:

Great surprise and pleasure were manifested on all sides last evening among those who assembled to honor with their presences the housewarming of the Imperial. Very little talk had been indulged in, in regard to the hotel and its furnishings and apportionments, prior to the opening. Few, if any, therefore, of the guests of the evening were prepared to find such an elegant and comfortable house as the Imperial certainly is.

Credit for design of the hotel has been given to F. Manson White while he was a member of the firm of McCaw, Martin and White. However, an advertisement in the Oregonian for the week of June 19-25, 1892 announced that Mr. White had left the firm and had established an independent practice. It was four months later, in October, that excavation for the hotel began. White and his former partners, William McCaw and Richard Martin, were familiar with and experienced in designing buildings in the Richardsonian Romanesque/Sullivanian style. Their list of projects in this idiom includes the First Presbyterian Church, the Dekum Building, and West Hall at the University of Portland. To add to the confusion

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of attributions, the Oregonian of March, 1894 reported that George Wells, one of the construction partners, "designed and planned (the building) entirely and supervised construction." While not an architect, Wells was an experienced and well-known contractor in the city, with projects going back into the early 1870s. He is credited with having built the Love and Harker buildings in the Portland Yamhill Historic District.

Manager of the hotel was Thomas Guinean, Guinean had held similar positions at both the St. Charles and Esmond Hotels in Portland, as well as the Grand Hotel in Seattle. The Imperial Hotel remained under the management of Guinean until 1899 when the lease and furniture were purchased by Phil Metschan, Sr. It was under Metschan's guidance and that of his son, Phil, Jr., that the Imperial was to achieve its greatest fame.

Phil Metschan, Sr. was born in Germany in 1840, immigrating to the United States in 1854 at the age of fourteen. He remained with an uncle in Cincinnati for six years, then traveled to California searching for gold. Arriving in Portland in 1862 he established the second bakery in the city. He remained for only a year, however, moving east to Canyon City in 1863. In June, 1862 gold was discovered just west of Canyon City. By July 300 miners had arrived in town, many from California. A year later there were at least 1200 people residing in the town. Most supplies arrived in town via trains of pack mules traveling from The Dalles. In 1863-1864 the road was improved enough to allow regular mail and stagecoaches to reach Canyon City. The nearest railroad station, however, remained 45 miles away.

After a period of mining for gold, Metschan opened a butcher shop, then a general merchandise store. In August, 1870 his meat market, along with most of the rest of Canyon City's business district, was destroyed by fire. However, Metschan had settled into business and family life in Canyon City, fathering nine children. He became active in Grant County and later statewide politics. In 1870 he was elected to the position of County Treasurer, a title which he retained for two years. This was followed by two years as County clerk, from 1876-1878, and four years as County Judge, 1882-1886.

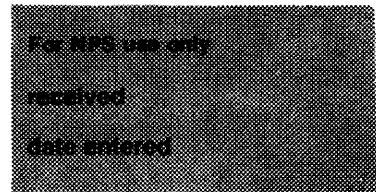
In 1890 Phil Metschan, Sr. was elected State Treasurer. That year most of the gold mines in Canyon City were depleted and the town population had shrunk to 382. Leaving his home of 27 years, Metschan and his wife traveled to Salem, where he remained for eight years, serving two terms as State Treasurer. At the end of his second term in office Metschan purchased the lease and furnishings of the Imperial Hotel, and, at the age of 59, moved to Portland and began a new career as a hotel operator.

Quotes from a February 2, 1910 Oregonian article titled, "Imperial Hotel as Political Battlefield" best describes the political historic era of the Imperial which began with Phil Metschan:

When the inquisitive little boy seeking governmental information finds his papa hiding behind the evening paper and questions about politics, if he

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knows his political catechism, he asks Papa, "What is the hub of Oregon politics?" Then, if Papa knows the answer, he says quickly, "Portland, son," and reads on about the ballgame and the son, continuing the lesson, asks; "What is the axle about which Oregon politics revolve?" And Papa, being wise, says; "Why, the Imperial Hotel, of course. Run away now and play." And there you have it. And for ten years it has been so. In the old days, before the direct primary law in the initiative and referendum and all the modern machinery of government made every man his own political boss in Oregon and every family fireside a political headquarters, every man who had hopes politically looked at the corner of Seventh and Washington Streets as the mecca of his hopes. The inner sanctuary of things political, the granite mausoleum in which reposed the hidden spring unlocking convention doors and ballot boxes and official success, it was the home of the Poo-bah the of the council of War.

Prior to the Metschan's takeover of the Imperial, aspiring politicians gathered at the Perkins farther down the street.

While the Imperial served as a gathering place for many Republican functions, it did not keep Democrats away. William Jennings Bryan frequently stayed at the Imperial on his trips through Oregon. The political career of the Imperial lasted from 1899 to the close of the 1908 legislative session.

In 1910 the political arena of the Imperial moved into the New Imperial, adjacent to the north.

The new building offered the modern conveniences demanded by the new breed of traveler which was developing as America moved into the automobile era.

After the opening of the New Imperial Hotel, the Old Imperial was remodeled, and the Owl Drug Store moved into the ground-floor level. The Imperial, after 1910, continued to operate and acted as an annex to the New Imperial.

Phil Metschan died in March, 1920, just weeks after his 80th birthday. His obituary listed his sons Otto as assistant manager, H. A. as treasurer, and his namesake Phil, Jr., as manager of the hotel. It was the third son, Phil, Jr., who shared much of his father's enthusiasm for politics and followed in his footsteps in state and local affairs.

Born in Canyon City in 1875, Phil, Jr. purchased and operated a hotel in Heppner for several years. He later moved to Portland and assisted his father with the management of the Imperial. From 1924 to 1930 he was Chairman of the Republican State Central committee. In 1930 he became the party's candidate for governor, but lost to Julius Meier. In Portland he served on the Commission of the Port of Portland for sixteen years, the last ten as treasurer. He was also a member of the State Board of Higher Education. Because of their connections with residents in eastern Oregon, as well as their experience with Republican politics in the state, many of the guests at the Imperial were old acquaintances of Phil, Sr. and Jr.

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Under Phil, Jr.'s direction the Imperial Hotel came under the complete ownership of the Metschan Family, while they maintained a lease on the 1894 building. Phil, Jr. also later purchased the Roosevelt Hotel, on SW Park and Salmon Streets.

Between 1909 and 1949 the Imperial Hotel was remodeled three times to try to keep the hotel up-to-date. Several of the changes included the remodeling of rooms to include private baths and showers, air conditioning, banquet rooms, coffee shop and a restaurant.

Phil, Jr. continued to run the hotel until 1949. In that year he sold the new Imperial to the operators of the Mallory Hotel in Portland. Phil, Jr. died in 1952. In his obituary the Oregonian stated that Phil, Jr., "was the magnet that drew thousands of eastern Oregon residents to the Imperial Hotel for many years."

Since 1949 the New Imperial has continued in operation under the management of the operators of the Mallory Hotel. The older building then changed names to the Plaza Hotel and continued to operate under lease arrangements until the early 1980s, when the hotel was determined no longer to be economically viable.

After 91 years of family ownership the Imperial currently sold to a group which plans to rehabilitate the building into retail and office space.

George F. Wells

George F. Wells was born in New Brunswick on November 13, 1845. As a youth he learned to be a carriage maker from his father. At the age of 21 he came to America and after working at a variety of jobs, he opened a carriage factory with his brother in San Francisco.

He came to Portland in 1871 and turned his attentions to the contracting business. Between 1871 and 1894, when he built the Imperial Hotel, Wells acted as the contractor on many buildings in the city of Portland and the lighthouse at Cape Disappointment. Wells' great ambition during his lifetime was to own a brick building. In 1894 he saw the fulfillment of his hopes, when the Imperial was completed. Five months after completion of the hotel George F. Wells died. He was survived by three sisters and a brother. The most recent owners of the building are descendants of Wells.

A. B. Steinbach

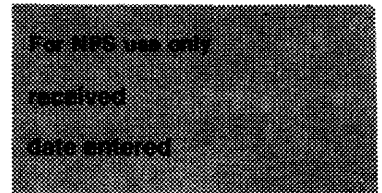
A. B. Steinbach was born in Czechoslovakia in 1850. He came to Portland in 1880 and was involved in the clothing business. He married Miss Cecelia Kohn and had three children. He owned a small amount of real estate in Portland and retired from the clothing business in 1910. A. B. Steinbach died in March, 1924.

F. Manson White

F. Manson White was born in England in 1869 and moved to the United States as a young man. He studied architecture with his uncle Stanford White of McKim, Mead

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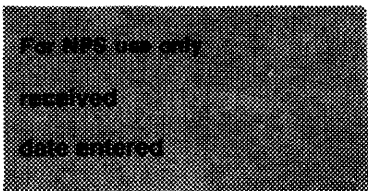
& White and attended Cornell University and M.I.T. He is credited with having done design work for some of the World's Fair buildings in Chicago in 1893. He also designed the interior of the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. He first came to Portland to design the interior of the First Presbyterian Church, a McCaw and Martin commission finished in 1889.

White became a partner in the firm of McCaw and Martin in 1889 after having worked as a draftsman in the firm. In 1892 White left the firm to begin his own practice. Four months after leaving McCaw and Martin, construction began on the Imperial Hotel. It is likely that the 1892 Dekum Building had some influence on the design of the Imperial. One might even question whether the building begun while White was still with McCaw and Martin.

Other Richardsonian/Sullivan-esque structures attributed to White include the Sherlock Building and the Auditorium Building, both of which are listed in the National Register. White retired in 1947 and died five years later, in April, 1952, at the age of 83.

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Oregonian

- 3/14/1891
- 6/29/2892
- 16/21/1892
- 10/10/1892
- 1/2/1893
- 5/8/2893
- 6/9/1893
- 8/6/1893
- 1/11/1894
- 2/27/1894
- 3/11/1894
- 8/29/1894
- 1/1/1899
- 3/20/1920
- 2/28/1920
- 11/4/1929

Telegram

- 3/24/1914

Journal

- 1/2/1910
- 4/7/1915
- 5/23/1920
- 3/19/1949
- 12/31/1949
- 1/1/1950
- 8/1/1951
- 8/2/1951
- 4/24/1952
- 9/1/1971

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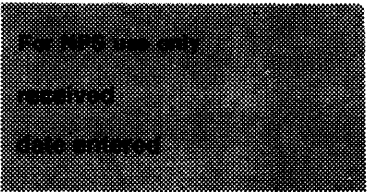
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Oregon Historical Society Scrapbooks Nos. 48, 50, 58, 67, 69 and 272.

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Sanborn Maps, 1879, 1886, 1908, 1926, 1932 and 1955.