

The Ames Building

Boston Landmarks Commission Study Report



THE AMES BUILDING



Boston Landmarks Commission
Environment Department
City of Boston

Report on the Potential Designation of

The F. L. Ames Building

as a Landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended

Approved by: Ellen J. Levey 10/5/93
Executive Director Date

Approved by: Alan Schwartz 10/5/93
Chairman Date

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1.0 LOCATION OF THE PROPERTY

1.1 Address: 1 Court Street, Boston
Assessor's parcel number: parcel 2885, ward 3.

1.2 Area in Which Property is Located:

The Ames Building is located at the intersection of Court, State, and Washington Streets between the northern edge of the downtown financial district and south of Government Center. The continuation of Washington Street north of the intersection (passing the east facade of the Ames Building) is a pedestrian mall and connects the intersection with Boston City Hall several hundred yards away. The buildings in this area are varied; a mix of 2-14 story, late 19th century, and 30-plus story modern buildings surround the Ames Building. Of note are the adjacent Veterans Administration Building (five stories) and the Old State House (three stories) which is diagonally across the intersection.

1.3 Map Showing Location:
Attached.

see pages 9 and 10

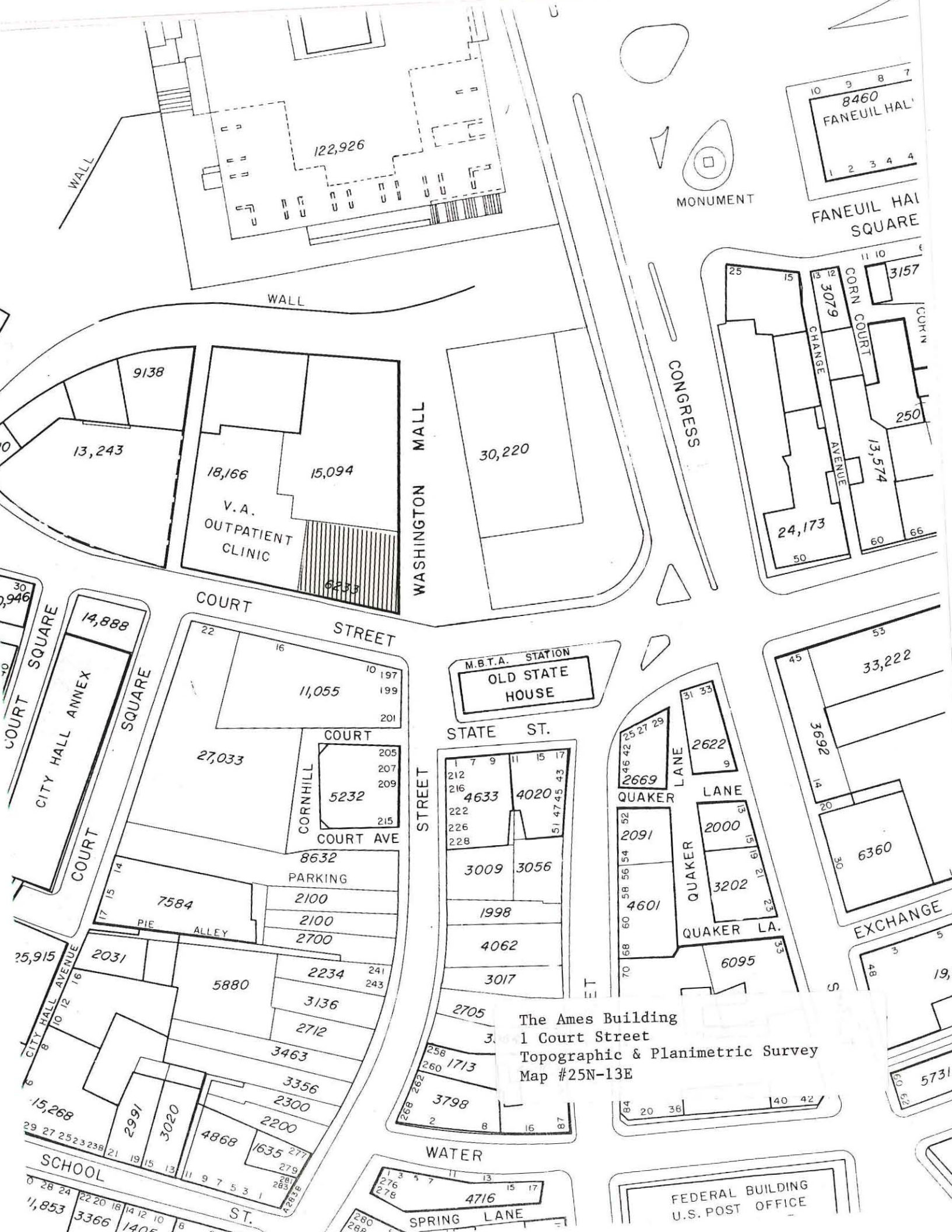


BOSTON

B O S T O N

H A R B O R

The Ames Building
1 Court Street
Boston



The Ames Building
 1 Court Street
 Topographic & Planimetric Survey
 Map #25N-13E

2.0 DESCRIPTION

2.1 Type and Use

The Ames Building is a fourteen-story commercial office building, with retail space on the first and second floors.

2.2 Physical Description

Exterior

The Ames Building has two principle elevations which are visible from the street. The main elevation faces south onto Court Street and the secondary elevation faces eastward onto Washington Mall. The building is 196 feet tall from sidewalk to cornice line and is visually massed into three distinct sections that represent the base, shaft and capital portions of a classical column. The four-story base, which has Romanesque characteristics, is made of Milford granite and slopes slightly at grade from west to east. Rising from the base is the eight-story superstructure clad in Ohio sandstone. The Court Street elevation has a six bay facade while the Washington Mall side is composed of five bays.

The midsection is divided horizontally into two sections by the ninth floor which breaks the pattern of rectangular windows with its round arched composition. The twenty-eight foot tall capital segment of the building comprises two floors. The thirteenth floor is a single band of arcaded windows surmounted by a projecting cornice of ornate corbels and small attic windows.

The massive load bearing blocks of the first floor have a battered texture and are pierced on each facade by three large openings. The middle opening of the Court Street facade serves as the main entrance to the building. The remaining openings were windows for the stores and one bank that occupied the street during the building's early years. The second and third floors are composed of monumental Romanesque arches placed directly over the openings of the first level. Initially they provided light for the main banking floor, which is now divided into two floors of office space. The lower half of the entrance arch is composed of a smaller one story arch and an elaborately carved spandrel which bears the name of the building. The large arches each have smooth granite block voussoir, a label molding and carved intrados. Just above the plain spandrels is a continuous, slightly projected sill that stops short of the corners. On this sill rests an arcade of one-story windows that mark the fourth floor. Ornately carved archivolt outline these deep set windows. Lastly, a projecting cornice of carved granite wraps around the building where the base meets the superstructure above.

The strong vertical thrust of the central section is created by the massive, smooth and unadorned corner piers that extend a full eight stories to the capital portion of the building. These piers are penetrated by rectangular windows that form the

outer bays at each level. The building's verticality is further enhanced by the remaining recessed wall surface, which consists of lesser piers and windows (together forming bays), beyond the level of the corner piers. The Court Street facade has four such inner bays, the Washington Mall side has three. The windows in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth floors are massed in pairs separated by small sandstone colonettes. These are matched by columns in each window corner that support a plain lintel upon which rests the decorated sill of the window above.

The round-headed windows on the ninth floor form an arcade and are similar in form and decoration to the colossal arches in the base portion below. These upper arches spring from the lesser piers that extend up from the cornice of that lower section. The spandrels of the ninth floor windows are decorated with a Byzantine inspired mosaic of red Longmeadow sandstone and blue slate from North River. A thin but sharp string course is delineated by carved granite figureheads set at close intervals.

Above this string course the rhythms established in the lower half of the central (shaft) section quicken. Rendered below as single columns, the lesser piers that extend through the tenth, eleventh and twelfth floors are now depicted as triple columns. Similarly, the windows are massed in sets of three and divided by two small columns. Bands of more mosaic work appear between each window level. Immediately above the twelfth floor windows is decorative corbelling depicting floral patterns and human heads. A projecting ornamental granite cornice separates two distinct sections of the overall composition, in this case the shaft from the capital.

In the capital portion of the building the thirteenth floor windows are housed under a continuous row of arches that spring from short double-columned pillars. The last windows at either end are directly above the single windows of the massive corner piers. The ornamental treatment of the arches is the same as that of the colossal arches far below: label molding, smooth voussoirs and carved intrados. Above the label molding is a short section of smooth ashlar surface that ends with the projection of a narrow round sill upon which rests a continuous ribbon of small square attic windows. Between each window is a great modillion carved in the form of an acanthus leaf that extends out and up to support the projecting cornice. The cornice itself features three courses of molding, the middle of which features small carved animal head panels spaced to correspond with each supporting bracket. The roof of the Ames Building is flat. Two thirteenth floor windows at the southeast corner of the building, one on the south and one on the east elevation have been infilled; at the fourteenth floor, two windows have been infilled above each of the thirteenth floor infilled windows at the southeast corner; also, at the fourteenth floor, the western most window on the south elevation and the northern most window on the east elevation are infilled. These windows have been infilled since the early twentieth century.

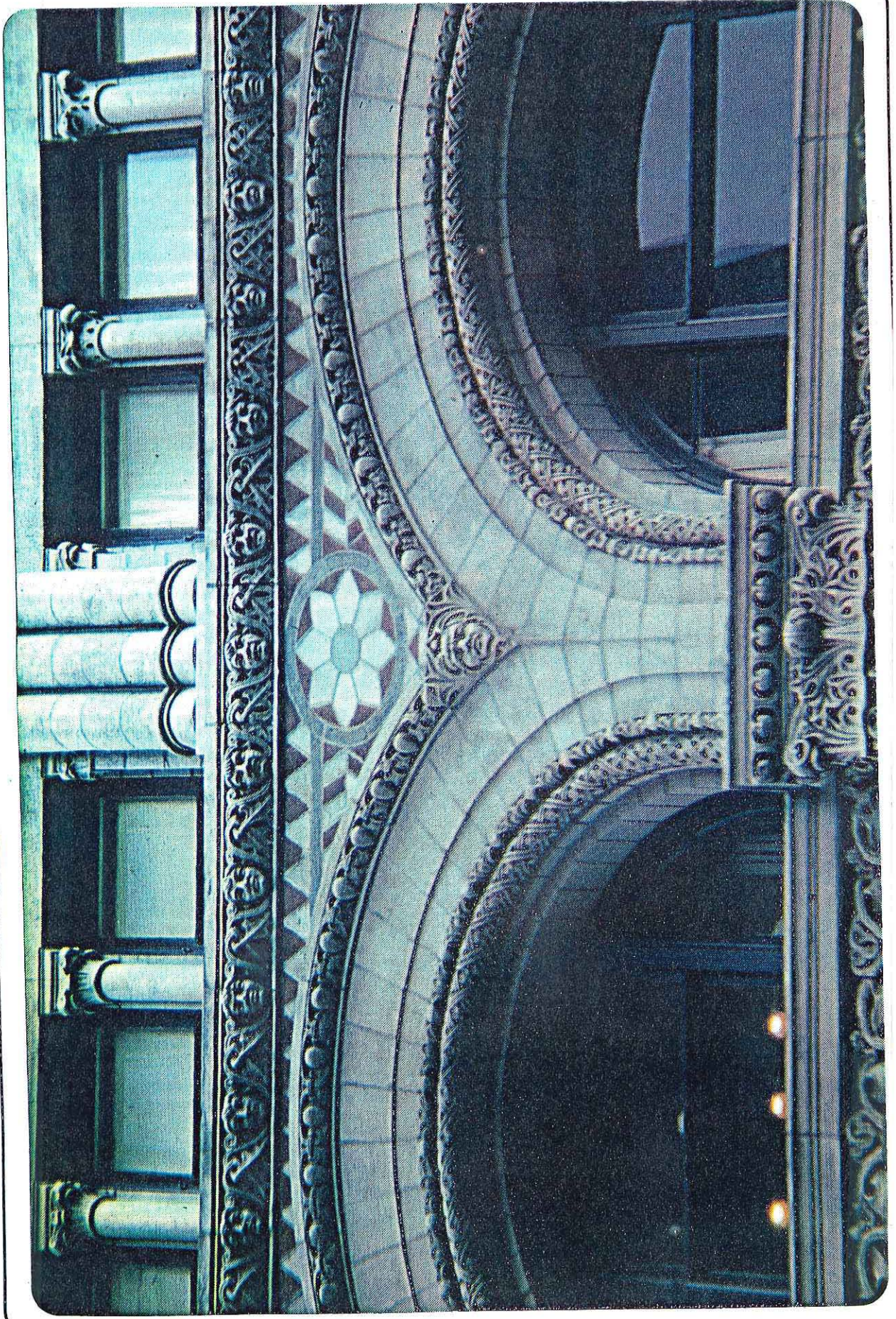
**2.3 Photographs
Attached.**



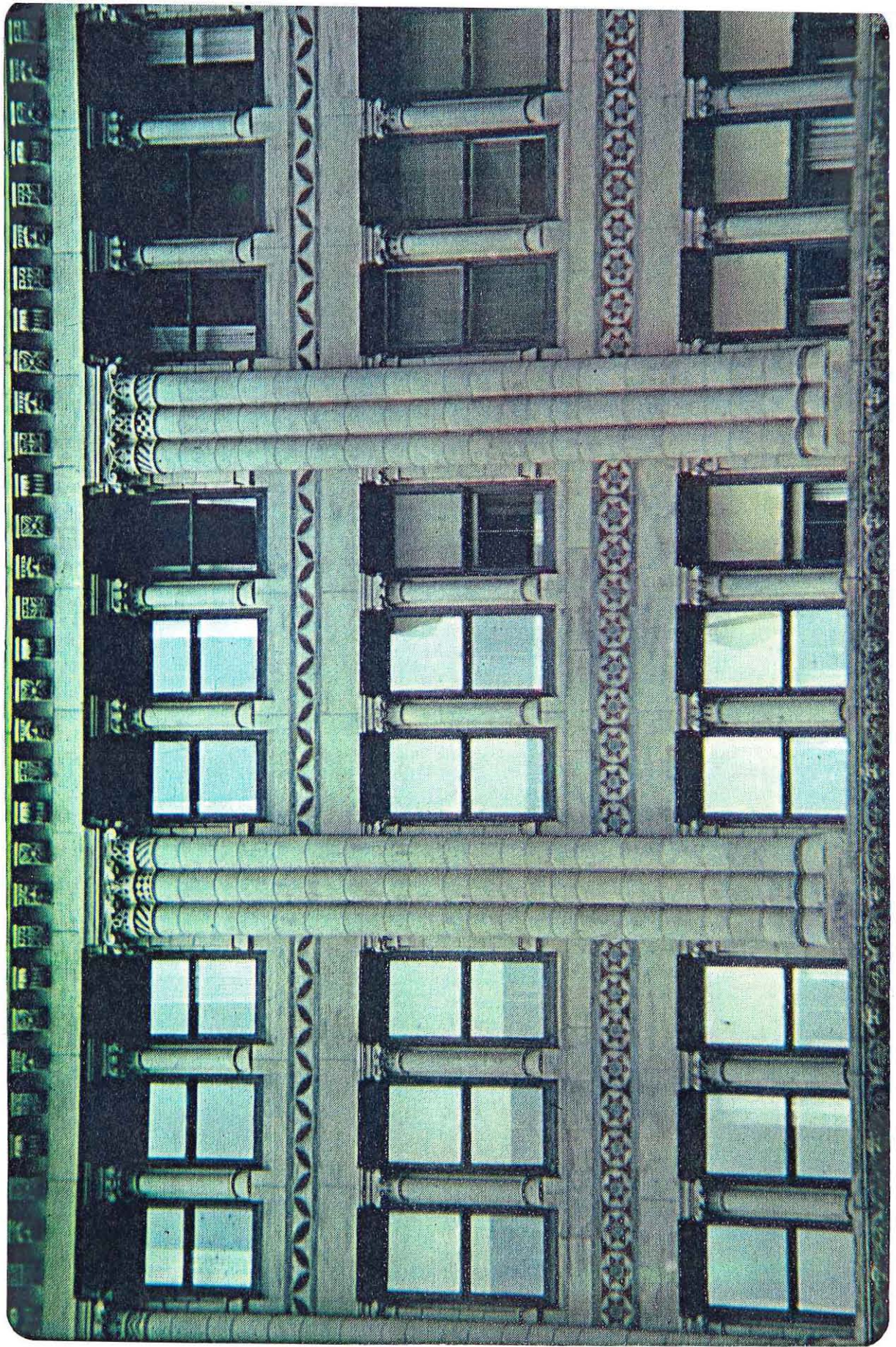
The Ames Building, Washington Mall elevation, c. 1986.



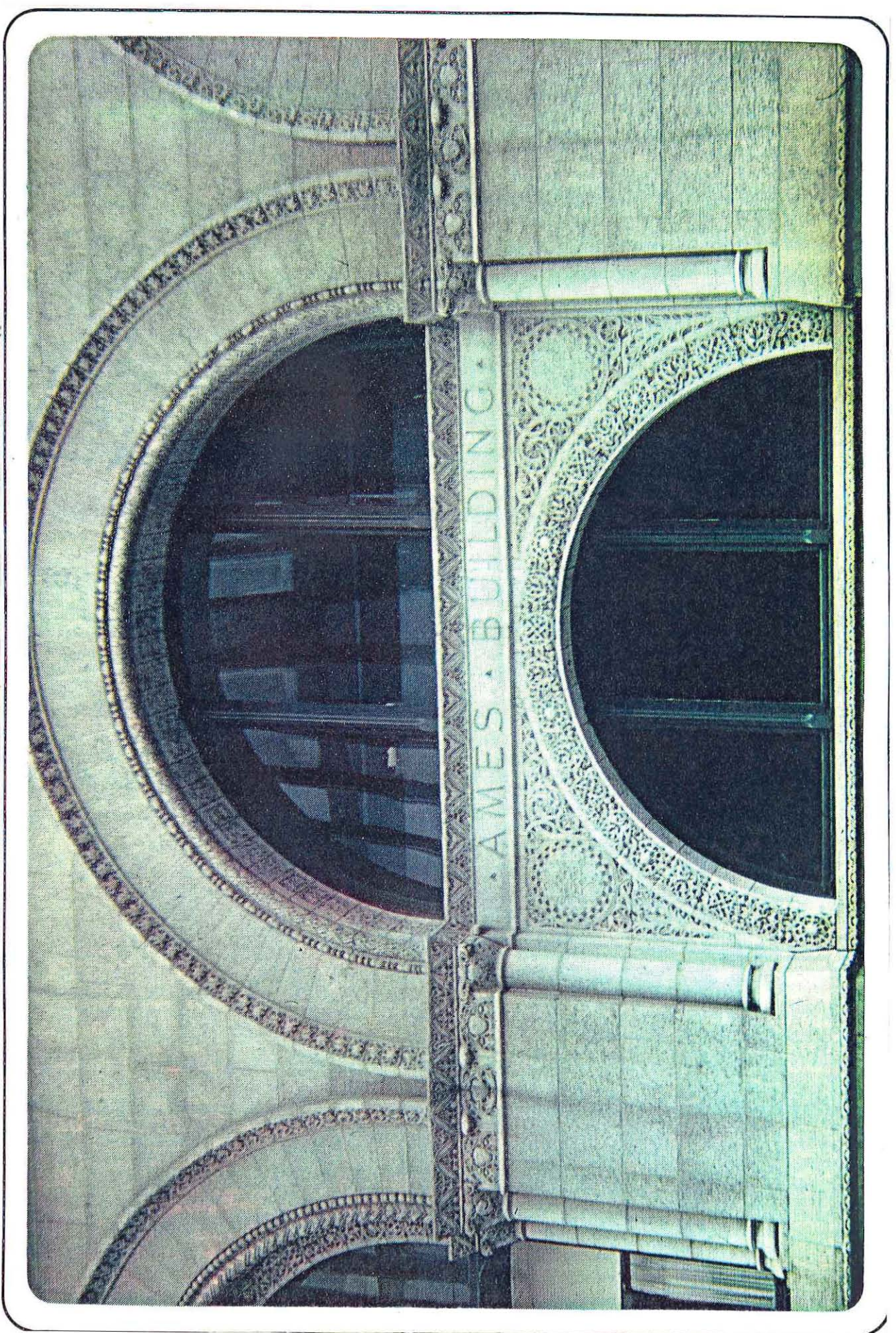
Ames Building, Southeast corner, at Washinston Mall and Court Street, c. 1986.



Ames Building, string course and mosaic detail between ninth and tenth floors, Court Street elevation, c. 1986.



Ames Building, floors ten through twelve, Court Street elevation, c. 1986.



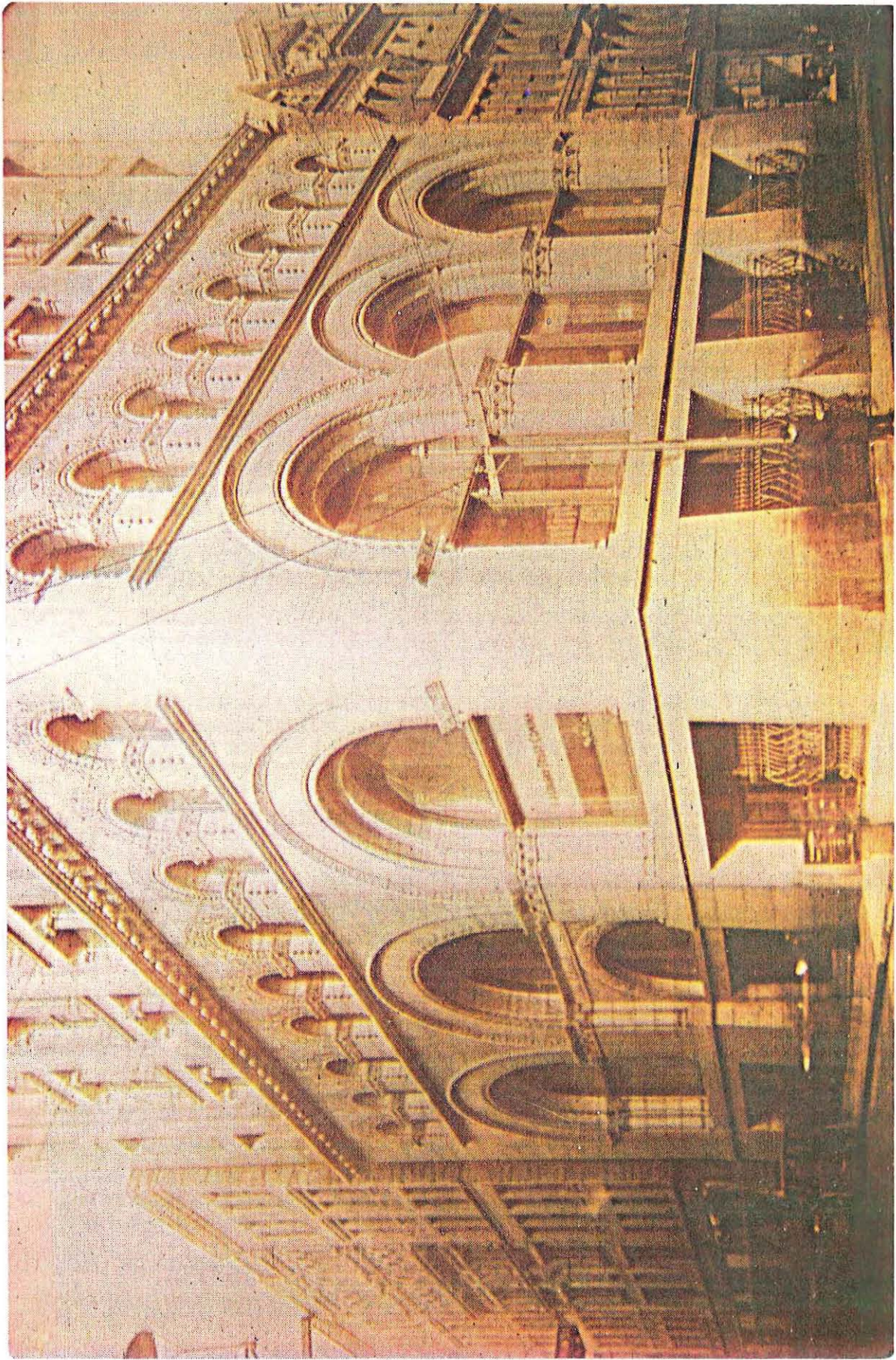
Ames Building, second floor arches over the entrance, c. 1986.

The previous photographs were taken by
William S. Steelman.

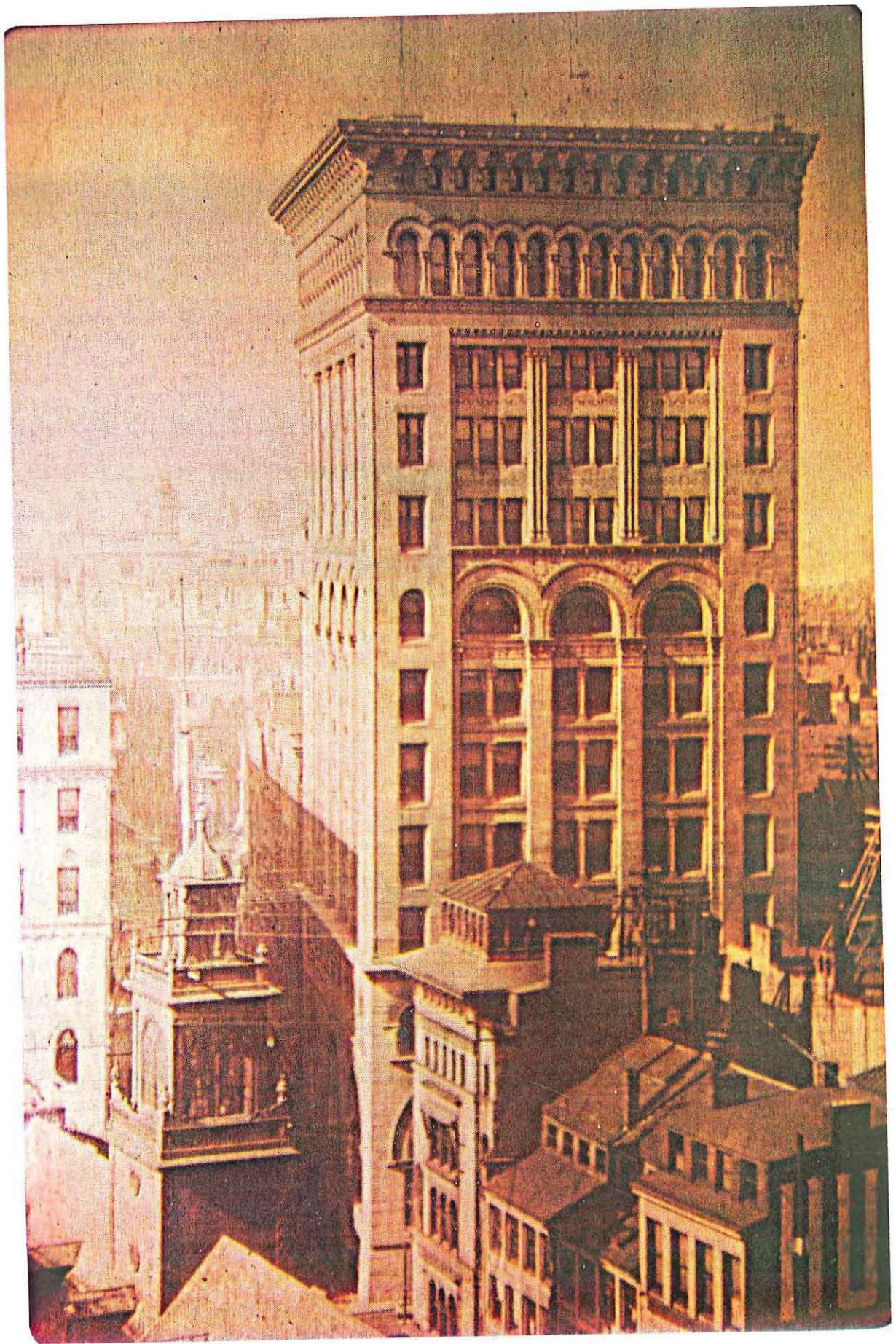
The following photographs are courtesy of
Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbott, Architects.
Boston, MA



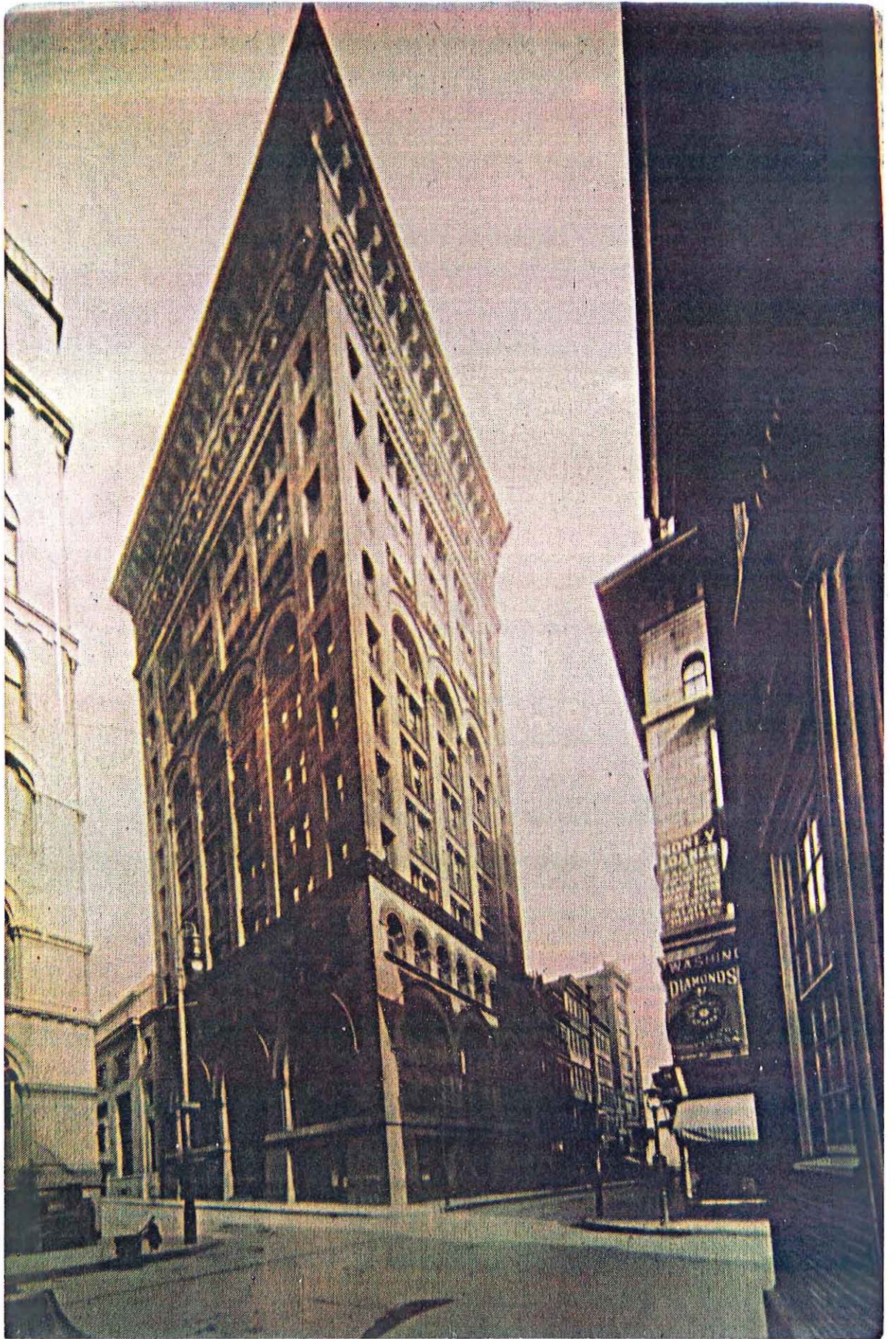
Ames Building, Court Street elevation, c. 1960.



Ames Building, southeast corner, before 1908.



Ames Building, commercial floors, corner Washington and Court Streets, before 1908.



Ames Building, Washington Mall elevation, Ames Building, c. 1910.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE

The Ames Building is a significant work of the architectural firm of Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge, and is an excellent example of the Romanesque style. With a height of 196 feet, it was the tallest masonry building constructed in the United States. Designed by a nationally prominent architectural firm, and built by the well known construction company, the Norcross Brothers, the design applies an integration of the Romanesque legacy of H. H. Richardson to the problematic tall building so successfully that it can justifiably be called Boston's first skyscraper.

3.1 Historical Significance

Begun in 1887, the Ames Building was constructed in a period of rapid evolution in American architecture. While notable architects in Chicago and New York were establishing an ideological base from which to address the peculiar problems of urban office tower construction, the firm of Shepley, Ruten and Coolidge was overseeing the completion of Boston's tallest building. At that time the Ames Building was the second tallest office structure on the east coast. Today it remains the second tallest masonry building in the country, having been surpassed six months after its completion by the Monadnock Building in Chicago, the Ames Building may have influenced the imposition in Boston of a one hundred and twenty-five foot building height limit; a barrier which was not broken until the construction of the Custom House tower in 1915.

The Ames Building was commissioned by the most important patron of H.H. Richardson, Frederick Lothrop Ames (1835-1893), who was a member of the wealthy and influential Ames family of North Easton, Massachusetts. The Ames family fortune was created by Frederick Lothrop's grandfather, Oliver Ames (1779-1863), who started a manufacturing company that supplied the newly emerging railroads with shovels and trenching equipment. His sons, Oakes and Oliver II, took over the business in 1844 supplying the Union Army during the Civil War and later helping to finance and construct the Union Pacific Railroad. Oakes managed the business from his position as a congressman where he helped organize the ill-fated Credit Mobilier. His son, Oliver Ames III (F.L. Ames' cousin) also became involved in politics, first as a state senator, then lieutenant governor, and finally as governor of Massachusetts where he served three consecutive one year terms ending in 1889, the year the Ames Building was complete.

While not involved in politics himself, F.L. Ames was the most financially successful member of the family. Besides his interests in the family business and the Union Pacific Railroad, F.L. Ames started his own railroad (Old Colony), his own bank (Old Colony Trust) and speculated heavily in real estate. It was the construction of a building that first brought him to contact with Henry Hobson Richardson. The commission for the Oliver Ames Free Library in 1877 at North

Easton was the first of twelve commissions the Ames family would give to Richardson. The projects included libraries, monuments, houses, and commercial structures. Of these twelve, F.L. Ames would be directly responsible for at least ten. Only James Rummill, who was a board member of the Boston and Albany Railroad is believed to have been the source for more commissions; however, most of those were for smaller, similarly designed railroad depots.

Had Richardson not died in 1886 he probably would have been asked to design the Ames Building. He was at the time working on another design for F.L. Ames, this one a six-story commercial building that in many ways foreshadows portions of the Ames Building. Instead, the Ames Building commission was delivered to the firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. The record books of the Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge list no fewer than thirty-four separate jobs for members of the Ames Family between 1886 and 1909 and all but seven attributed to F.L. Ames or his estate. Still other records indicate work being completed for the family as late as 1960. Much of this later work consists of additions and alterations.

The construction of the Ames Building was undertaken by the Norcross Brothers of Worcester. This distinguished team of two brothers who pioneered the development of general contracting. James F. O'Gorman, architectural historian familiar with H.H. Richardson and his practice, says of the Norcross Brothers' firm: "Without question it was among the most important construction companies in the country in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century." Providing building materials from their own marble, slate and granite quarries, kilns, mills and ironworks, the Norcross Brothers were able to effectively harness all the building trades for their clients.

In all Norcross built more than fifty percent of Richardson's designs, including Trinity Church, the Allegheny County buildings and Marshall Field Warehouse. With offices in Boston, Providence, New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago, and St. Louis, the company built not only for Richardson and Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge but also McKim Mead and White, Van Brunt and Howe, and Peabody and Stearns. Individual buildings included the New York Public Library, the Rhode Island State House, South Station and the Custom House Tower in Boston, and the Corcoran Gallery and the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington.

The Ames Building occupies a site on one of Boston's most historically significant corners. The intersection of today's State and Washington Streets has witnessed some of the most important events and changes in the growth of the Commonwealth. At one time Washington Street was the only road that crossed the thin neck of land that connected the Shawmut Peninsula with the mainland. Its prominence as a major thoroughfare increased with the construction of Long Wharf at the foot of State Street. Foodstuffs and other goods were bought uphill to the intersection of Washington Street where many continued to travel down the

neck. Eventually a market was established on the site and the intersection rapidly became the meeting spot of the new town.

3.2 Architectural Significance

The Ames Building is an excellent example of the Romanesque style, designed by the nationally prominent architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge. The building is often referred to as Boston's first skyscraper, and is considered a major architectural and engineering achievement of its day.

The degree to which the Ames Building may rightly be called Boston's first skyscraper is dependent on how one defines the building type. In the narrow sense of having to be constructed with a structural iron or steel skeletal frame, the Ames Building does not qualify. Although there are a great number of cast iron elements, not all are continuous and much of the building's weight is borne by the masonry base and vertical piers. Critics have never been completely in agreement about what constitutes a skyscraper from a stylistic viewpoint. However, a review of contemporary and latter day criticisms produces several points on which the authorities agree; the elements of height, form, expression and use of ornament. Viewed in this broader definition the Ames Building qualifies as a skyscraper, regardless of its masonry construction.

Beyond the obvious need for dependency on elevator technology, the first and foremost criterion is that the design of the building be generated from consideration of its use requirements or to use Louis Sullivan's idiomatic expression "form follows function." The utilitarian nature of the Ames Building, like the better examples of the Chicago School, is clearly expressed by the exterior form of the structure. The principle banking floor area is easily distinguished from the repetitious levels of office space above by a change in fenestration patterns. The distinction in purposes may further be enhanced by a change in materials. In the case of the Ames Building, the switch is made from Milford granite in the base to Ohio sandstone in the upper stories. This material and textural change is present in the finest work of Jenny, Burnham and Root and Adler and Sullivan.

The choice of the column motif to visually express the different functions of the building corresponds perfectly with chronological development described by skyscraper authority Winston Weisman. In the book The Rise of an American Architecture, Weisman divides the development of the tall building into seven phases. His phase four "starting in the late 1880s and characterized by a tripartite system of composition corresponding to the parts of a classical column with its base, shaft, and capital" accurately describes the Ames Building. It is obvious to the observer that the base supports the shaft and the shaft supports the roof. The clear expression of this relationship is central to the notion of the Ames Building being regarded a skyscraper.

The manner in which the vertical thrust is emphasized is also central to the question. Earlier building design witnessed a relative uncertainty about how to emphasize the vertical feel of the structures. Beginning in the late 1880s a concerted effort to use ornamentation for this purpose appears. Its careful application around openings and its conspicuous absence on the vertical elements of the Ames Building greatly enhances the upward thrust. Left smooth and unadorned the massive corner piers and interface lesser piers and colonettes are more distinctive than the horizontal members. The use of dark red and blue ornamental tile only on the recessed horizontal members provides the final contrasting accent to the vertical supporting piers.

The successful use of ornament on the Ames Building is significant because it is one way to demonstrate the influence of H.H. Richardson on his immediate successors, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. The use of large masculine forms like the granite arches in the base and the manner in which the windows are placed in the massive corner piers are all classical Richardson. His influence is further demonstrated by the use of colonnades to horizontally divide the levels and equally by the colossal double arch marking the entrance to the building. Richardson's pioneering development of Romanesque architecture into a contemporary expression of strength, power, and beauty leads architectural writer Carl Condit to suggest that it was ultimately the only style suitable to convey the themes of the day. Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge's recognition of this fact and their adept handling of it in the Ames Building prompted the well regarded nineteenth century architectural critic Montgomery Schuyler to write that the building was "perhaps the most successful example in the country of the adaptation of Romanesque architecture to the extreme requirement of the elevator building."

The Ames Building is architecturally significant as a major work of the nationally prominent Boston architectural firm, Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. George Foster Shepley (1860-1903), was born in St. Louis. He graduated from MIT in 1882, and joined Richardson's office as a draftsman. Charles Hercules Rutan (1851-1914) was born in Newark, New Jersey and began his architectural training with the firm of Gambrell & Richardson in 1869. He was promoted to draftsman and eventually became one of Richardson's chief designers. Charles Coolidge (1858-1936), a native Bostonian attended Harvard College and M.I.T. Coolidge received his early training in the Richardson's office. Each had increasing responsibilities in the latter years of the firm when Richardson's health failed. After Richardson's death, the three architects formed a partnership to complete the 25 projects left in Richardson's office. Unfinished projects turned over to the firm include the Allegheny County Courthouse in Pittsburgh and the Marshall Field Warehouse in Chicago, two designs which are noted as among Richardson's best.

The list of the firm's commissions is long and distinguished; their most significant works include: the original buildings of Stanford University (1890); the

University of Chicago; the Chicago Art Institute and Public Library (1893-97); and the New York Hospital. Their work in the Boston area include the Flour and Grain Exchange (1892), the tallest building in the city at the time of its completion, the First Parish Church in Brookline (1892), South Station Terminal (1899) and, numerous buildings at Harvard University and the Harvard Medical School (1903-07). Other Boston works include 17-23 Beach Street (1906) and the Boston Safe Deposit and Trust Company Building at 86-102 Franklin Street (1908-11)

Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge designed numerous lesser known buildings in Boston's neighborhoods such as the Rotch Memorial Hospital at 55 Shattuck Street and the Harvard Dental School at 188 Longwood Avenue, both completed in 1910, in the Longwood Medical Area. The firm also designed the Robert Breck Brigham/New England Baptist Hospital at 125 Parker Hill Avenue (1912-14) and the Jefferson School at 240 Heath Street (1903-04) on Mission Hill, and the Boston YMCA at 312-320 Huntington Avenue (1911-12) in the Fenway. Coolidge completed the Peter Brent Brigham Hospital, units at Massachusetts General Hospital and Children's Hospital.

Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge (1896-1915) was known subsequently as Coolidge and Shattuck (1915-1924) and then Coolidge, Shepley, Bulfinch and Abbot (1924-52). The firm is currently known as Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbot. The 100 year lineage makes the firm the second oldest continuing architectural practice in the country.

The Ames Building also represents the work of a notable construction firm, the Norcross Brothers. This firm is associated with many of Boston's most significant late-19th century buildings, and with almost all of H.H. Richardson's best known designs. Well known in the industry for their innovative construction techniques, the firm was among the earliest builders to become general contractors, and was without question, among the most important construction companies in America in the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries. The Norcross Brothers provided building materials from their own granite, slate and marble quarries, kilns, mills and ironworks. They provided services as engineers, consultants, estimators, suppliers of materials and skilled craftsmen. The Norcross Brothers built more than fifty percent of Richardson's designs and most of the major commissions. The builders had offices in Providence, New York, Pittsburgh, Chicago and St. Louis, and their clients included McKim Mead and White, Van Brunt and Howe, and Peabody and Stearns. Their most significant work includes the New York Public Library, the Rhode Island State House, The Corcoran Gallery and Scottish Rite Temple in Washington, and the remodeling of the White House.

3.3 Relationship to Criteria for Landmark Designation

The Ames Building meets the criteria for Landmark designation found in section 4 of Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975, as amended. The Ames Building is:

- ◆ Listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places;
- ◆ Structure representative of elements of architectural design and craftsmanship which embodies distinctive characteristics of a type inherently valuable for study of a period, style, and method of construction, and is the work of a notable architectural firm, whose work influenced the development of the city, the commonwealth, the New England region and the nation.
- ◆ Associated significantly with the lives of outstanding historic personages.

4.0 ECONOMIC STATUS

4.1 Current Assessed Value

According to City of Boston assessor's records, the Ames Building has an assessed value of \$5,689,500.00 The land is assessed at \$2,980,500 and the building is assessed at \$2,709,000.

4.2 Current Ownership

The Ames Building is owned by William J. Zoppo General Partnership.

5.0 PLANNING CONTEXT

5.1 Background

Central to the development of the area surrounding the Ames Building was the construction of the First Town House. Residences occupied this area after the founding of Boston, and the house occupying the future Ames Building site belonged to the Reverend Henry Dunster who in 1640 became the first president of Harvard College. Located adjacent to his house, in the middle of Washington Street, was where the town dug the first well in the colony.

The scale of the area changed rapidly as two- and three-story structures containing shops and proprietors' quarters began to fill the area. In 1712 the building we know as the Old State House was constructed at the intersection of State and Washington Streets and the town marketplace became host to many of the speeches, riots, and public events that led to the Revolutionary War. After the War, a triumphal arch was erected in honor of George Washington on Washington Street just north of the Court Street intersection.

The area continued to change in the mid 1880s as the buildings grew to heights of three and four stories with the gradual location of the city's financial interests along State Street. This was the fabric into which F. L. Ames introduced his fourteen-story building.

Boston's first land use policies were just being defined when the Ames Building was constructed in 1887-89. At that time the public concerns were the issues of fire safety, health conditions and overcrowding. A combination of public and private initiatives in the Back Bay led to the use of deed restrictions to solve the health, size and use problems. Yet it was not until 1898 that the state finally authorized the city to control use, density and building dimension. Prior to this the main form of regulation was provided by the building codes which were aimed primarily at safety.

Height restrictions first appeared in Boston with "an Act relating to the Construction, Maintenance and Inspection of Buildings in the City of Boston." Enacted in 1892, three years after the Ames Building was completed, the law established a maximum height restriction of 125 feet. It is altogether possible that the 196 foot tall Ames Building was partially responsible for the law. Although numerous variances were granted, the 125 foot law for commercial districts remained on the books until new zoning regulations appeared in 1964.

At that time Boston enacted its current zoning code which replaced the traditional height restriction with floor area ratios (FAR) formulas that today, along with usage laws dictate a commercial building's height and shape. It was after 1964 that the streetscape surrounding the Ames Building became radically altered. The

FAR formulas allowed for the construction of very tall steel and glass office towers that appear on Boston's skyline.

5.2 Current Planning Issues

The Ames Building was surveyed by the Boston Landmarks Commission in 1980 as part of the Central Business District Preservation Study. The Ames building was evaluated as a building of "Major Significance" and recommended for listing as an individual landmark.

The Ames Building is located in the Government Center/Markets Zoning District. This zoning, Article 45, was approved by the mayor on April 1, 1991

The Government Center/Markets District Plan states as its development strategy:

The process of managing growth focuses primarily on measures to humanize less successful components of the original Government Center Urban renewal plan by improving underutilized or ill-defined areas with forms related more to the pedestrian rather than the auto.

The district plan goes on to state:

The Government Center District contains monuments of great importance to the historic of the city, the Commonwealth and nation, as well as more modest structures which lend scale, interest, and dignity to the area. With areas developed during the 18th and 19th centuries, as well as the Urban Renewal era, Government Center provides a common setting for history and tradition on the one hand and progress and change on the other.

These concerns stated in the District plan area mirrored in the Statement of Goals of the Zoning Article which state a desire to "preserve Boston's historic resources and public spaces which are a vital component of Boston's heritage." The Zoning Article creates "Protection Areas" in an attempt to protect existing scale, quality of pedestrian environment, and concentrations of historic buildings within and abutting the protection areas. The design review procedures for protection areas within this zoning district call for the Boston Landmarks Commission to review certain work, in an advisory capacity to the Boston Redevelopment Authority

5.3 Current Zoning

The Ames Building is zoned for commercial/office use. It is located within a 125'-155' Medium Growth Area, with an FAR of 8-10.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

6.1 Alternatives

Both the significance of the structure and the language of the Commission's enabling statute, which precludes all but Landmark Designation in the central city, indicate designation as a Landmark.

The Commission also retains the option of not designating the building as a Landmark.

6.2 Impact of Alternatives

Landmark designation under Chapter 772 would require the review of physical changes to the building exterior in accordance with the standards and criteria adopted as part of the designation. It would not, however, affect the use or treatment of the building interior.

The building is listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places. This listing provided protection from federal, federally-licensed or federally assisted actions. National Register listing also provides various federal income tax incentives for rehabilitation. A property listed on the National Register is eligible to take advantage of these provisions once it is determined that a) the rehabilitation can be certified according to the Tax Act and (b) that the building contributes to the historic character of the district.

Similar protection from state-sponsored activities is achieved by the concurrent listings of all National Register properties in the State Register of Historic Places under Chapter 152 of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

Failure to designate the building as a Landmark would mean the City of Boston could offer no direct protection to the structure or guidance to present or future owners.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the exterior of the Ames Building, 1 Court Street, be designated as a landmark under Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 as amended. The boundaries of the designation should correspond to the boundaries of parcel 2885, ward 3.

The standards for administering the regulatory functions provided for in Chapter 772 are attached.

8.0 GENERAL STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

8.1 Introductory Statement on Standards and Criteria

to be used in evaluating Applications for Certificates

Per sections, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the enabling statute (Chapter 772 of the Acts of 1975 of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, as amended) Standards and Criteria must be adopted for each Landmark Designation which shall be applied by the Commission in evaluating proposed changes to the property. Before a Certificate of Design Approval or Certificate of Exemption can be issued for such changes, the changes must be reviewed by the Commission with regard to their conformance to the purpose of the statute.

The Standards and Criteria established thus note those features which must be conserved and/or enhanced to maintain the viability of the Landmark Designation.

The intent of these guidelines is to help local officials, designers and individual property owners to identify the characteristics that have led to designation, and thus to identify the limitation to the changes that can be made to them. It should be emphasized that conformance to the Standards and Criteria alone does not necessarily insure approval, nor are they absolute, but a request for variance from them must demonstrate the reason for, and advantages gained by, such variance. The Commission's Certificate of Design Approval is only granted after careful review of each application and public hearing, in accordance with the statute.

As intended by the statute a wide variety of buildings and features are included within the area open to Landmark Designation, and an equally wide range exists in the latitude allowed for change. Some properties of truly exceptional architectural and/or historical value will permit only the most minor modifications, while for some others the Commission encourages changes and additions with a contemporary approach, consistent with the properties' existing features and changed uses.

In general, the intent of the Standards and Criteria is to preserve existing qualities that cause designation of a property; however, in some cases they have been structured as to encourage the removal of additions that have lessened the integrity of the property.

It is recognized that changes will be required in designated properties for a wide variety of reasons, not all of which are under the complete control of the Commission or the owners. Primary examples are:

- ◆ Building code conformance and safety requirements;

- ◆ Changes necessitated by the introduction of modern mechanical and electrical systems;
- ◆ Changes due to proposed new uses of a property.

The response to these requirements may, in some cases, present conflicts with the Standards and Criteria for a particular property. The Commission's evaluation of an application will be based upon the degree to which such changes are in harmony with the character of the property.

In some cases, priorities have been assigned within the Standards and Criteria as an aid to property owners in identifying the most critical design features.

The Standards and Criteria have been divided into two levels:

- ◆ Those general ones that are common to almost all landmark designations (subdivided into categories for buildings and landscape features); and,
- ◆ Those specific ones that apply to each particular property that is designated. In every case the Specific Standards and Criteria for a particular property shall take precedence over the General ones of there is a conflict.

8.2 General Standards and Criteria

A. Approach

1. The design approach to the property should begin with the premise that the features of historical and architectural significance described within the Study Report must be preserved. In general, this will minimize the exterior alterations that will be allowed.
2. Changes and additions to the property and its environment which have taken place in the course of time are evidence of the history of the property and the neighborhood. These changes to the property may have developed significance in their own right, and this significance should be recognized and respected. ("later integral features" shall be the term used to convey this concept.)
3. Deteriorated material or architectural features, whenever possible, should be repaired rather than replaced or removed.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary is should be based on physical or documentary evidence of original or later integral features.

5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
6. New additions or alterations should not disrupt the essential form and integrity of the property and should be compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property and its environment.
7. Contemporary design is encouraged for new additions; thus, they must not necessarily be imitative of an earlier style of period.
8. New additions or alterations should be done in such a way that if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property would be unimpaired.
9. Priority shall be given to those portions of the property which are visible from public ways or which it can be reasonably inferred may be in the future.
10. Color will be considered part of specific standards and criteria that apply to a particular property.

B. Exterior Walls

Masonry

1. Retain whenever possible, original masonry and mortar.
2. Duplicate original mortar in composition, color, texture, joint size, joint profile and method of application.
3. Repair and replace deteriorated masonry with material which matches as closely as possible.
4. When necessary to clean masonry, use gentlest method possible. Do not sandblast. Doing so changes the visual quality of the material and accelerates deterioration. Test patches should always be carried out well in advance of cleaning (including exposure to all seasons if possible).
5. Avoid applying waterproofing or water repellent coating to masonry unless required to solve a specific problem. Such coatings can accelerate deterioration.

6. In general, do not paint masonry surfaces. Painting masonry surfaces will be considered only when there is documentary evidence that this treatment was used at some point in the history of the property.

Non-Masonry

1. Retain and repair original or later integral material whenever possible.
2. Retain and repair, when necessary, deteriorated material with material that matches.

C. Roofs

1. Retain original roof covering whenever possible.
2. Preserve the integrity of the original or later integral roof shape.
3. Whenever possible, replace deteriorated roof covering with material which matches the old in composition, size, shape, color, texture and installation detail.
4. Preserve architectural features which give the roof its character, such as cornices, gutters, iron filigree, cupolas, dormers and brackets.

D. Windows and Doors

1. Retain original and later integral door and window openings where they exist. Do not enlarge or reduce door and window openings for the purpose of fitting stock window sash or doors, or air conditions.
2. Whenever possible, repair and retain original or later integral window elements such as sash, lintels, sills, architraves, glass shutters and other decorations and hardware. When replacement of materials or elements is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
3. On some properties, consideration will be given to changing from the original window details to other expressions such as to a minimal anonymous treatment by the use of a single light, when consideration of cost, energy conservation or appropriateness override the desire for historical accuracy. In such cases, consideration must be given to the resulting effect on the interior as well as the exterior of the building.

E. Porches, Steps and Exterior Architectural Features

1. Retain and repair porches and steps that are original or later integral features including such items as railings, balusters, columns, posts, brackets, roofs, ironwork, benches, fountains, statues and decorative items.

F. Signs, Marquees and Awnings

1. Signs, marquees and awnings integral to the building ornamentation or architectural detailing shall be retained and repaired where necessary.
2. New signs, marquees and awnings shall not detract from the essential form of the building nor obscure its architectural features.
3. New signs, marquees and awning shall be of a size and material compatible with the building and its current use.
4. Signs, marquees and awnings applied to the building shall be applied in such a way that they could be removed without damaging the building.
5. All signs added to the building shall be part of one system of design, or reflect a design concept appropriate to the communication intent.
6. Lettering forms or typeface will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally shall be either contemporary or relate to the period of the building or its later integral features.
7. Lighting of signs will be evaluated for the specific use intended, but generally illumination of a sign shall not dominate illumination of the building.
8. The foregoing notwithstanding, signs are viewed as the most appropriate vehicle for imaginative and creative expression, especially in structure being reused for purpose different from the original, and it is not the Commission's intent to stifle a creative approach to signage.

G. Penthouses

1. The objective of preserving integrity of the original or later integral roof shape shall provide the basic criteria in judging whether a penthouse can be added to a roof. Height of a building, prominence of roof form, and visibility shall govern whether a penthouse will be approved.

2. Minimizing or eliminating the visual impact of the penthouse is the general objective and the following guidelines shall be followed:
 - a. Location shall be selected where the penthouse is not visible from the street or adjacent buildings; setbacks shall be utilized.
 - b. Overall height or other dimensions shall be kept to a point where the penthouse is not seen from the street or adjacent buildings.
 - c. Exterior treatment shall relate to the materials, color and texture of the building or to other materials integral to the period and character of the building, typically used for appendages.
 - d. Openings in a penthouse shall relate to the building in proportion, type and size of opening, wherever visually apparent.

H. Landscape Features

1. The general intent is to preserve the existing or later integral landscape features that enhance the landmark property.
2. It is recognized that often the environment surrounding the property has character scale and street pattern quite different from that existing when the building was constructed. Thus, changes must frequently be made to accommodate the new condition, and the landscape treatment can be seen as a transition feature between the landmark and its newer surroundings.
3. The existing land forms of the site shall not be altered unless shown to be necessary for maintenance of the landmark or site. Additional land forms will only be considered if they will not obscure the exterior of the landmark.
4. Original layout and materials of the walks, steps, and paved areas should be maintained. Consideration will be given to alterations if it can be shown that better site circulation is necessary and that the alterations will improve this without altering the integrity of the landmark.
5. Existing healthy plant materials should be maintained as long as possible. New plant materials should be added on a schedule that will assure a continuity in the original landscape design and its later adaptations.
6. Maintenance of, removal of and additions to plant materials should consider maintaining existing vistas of the landmark.

I. Exterior Lighting

1. There are three aspects of lighting related to the exterior of the building
 - a. Lighting fixtures as appurtenances to the building or elements of architectural ornamentation.
 - b. Quality of illumination on building exterior
 - c. Interior lighting as seen from the exterior.
2. Wherever integral to the building, original lighting fixtures shall be retained. Supplementary illumination may be added where appropriate to the current use of the building.
3. New lighting shall conform to any of the following approaches as appropriate to the building and to the current or projected use:
 - a. Accurate representation of the original period, based on physical or documentary evidence.
 - b. Retention or restoration of fixtures which date from an interim installation and which are considered to be appropriate to the building and use.
 - c. New lighting fixtures which are contemporary in design and which illuminate the exterior of the building in a way which renders it visible at night and compatible with its environment.
4. If a fixture is to be replaced, the new exterior lighting shall be located where intended in the original design. If supplementary lighting is added, the new location shall fulfill the functional intent of the current use without obscuring the building form or architectural detailing.
5. Interior lighting shall only be reviewed when its character has a significant effect on the exterior of the building; that is, when the view of the illuminated fixtures themselves, or the quality and color of the light they produce, is clearly visible through the exterior fenestration.

J. Removal of Later Additions and Alterations

1. Each property will be separately studied to determine if later additions and alterations can, or should, be removed. It is not possible to provide one general outline.
2. Factors that will be considered include:
 - a. Compatibility with the original property's integrity in scale, materials and character
 - b. Historic association with the property
 - c. Quality in the design and execution of the addition
 - d. Functional usefulness

9.0 SPECIFIC STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

The Ames Building

1 Court Street

A. General

1. The intent is to preserve the overall character and appearance of the building, including its exterior form, its mass, and its richness of detail.
2. All elevations visible from a public way and the roof are subject to the terms of the exterior guidelines herein stated.
3. Original fabric shall be repaired rather than replaced.
4. Should any major restoration or construction activity be considered for the property, the Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the proponents prepare an historic building conservation study early in the planning process.
5. Items under Commission review include but are not limited to the following.

B. Exterior Walls

1. No new openings shall be allowed on the Washington Mall and Court Street elevations. No original existing openings shall be filled or changed in size.
2. All historic facade detail, ornamentation, and materials shall be preserved.
3. No exposed conduit will be allowed on the Washington Mall and Court Street elevations.
4. The Boston Landmarks Commission recommends that the masonry work outlined in the following sections (B.5-B.8), be executed with the guidance of a professional building materials conservator. All masonry work shall be subject to review and approval by the Commission.
5. All existing granite and sandstone elements and other detailing shall be retained and repaired. Replacement of deteriorated granite and sandstone, if required, shall match the original in material, color, texture, size, shape, profile and detail of installation.
6. Painting of the stone is not acceptable.

7. The color, composition and profile of the mortar used for repointing shall duplicate the original color, composition and profile of the mortar used when the building was constructed.
8. Cleaning of masonry is discouraged and should be performed only when necessary to halt deterioration. If the building is to be cleaned, the most gentle method possible shall be used and a test patch shall be reviewed and approved on site by staff of the Boston Landmarks Commission. Wire brushing, sandblasting (wet or dry) or other similar abrasive cleaning methods shall not be permitted.
9. Waterproofing and material consolidants are strongly discouraged. Samples of any proposed treatment shall be reviewed by the Commission before application.
10. No external gutters and downspouts will be allowed.

C. Windows

1. The original window design and arrangement of window openings shall be retained. Changing window openings to accommodate larger or smaller sash and frame is not allowed.
2. Should window replacement be proposed, new windows should match originals in size, shape, profile, recess and detail of installation of the original two-over-two, double-hung windows.
3. Tinted or reflective-coated glass shall not be allowed.
4. Retention and repair of existing window frames is encouraged. Existing window frames may be replaced where required, provided that the replacement frames match originals in size, shape, profile, recess and detail of installation.
5. Window frames, sashes and grilles shall be of a color based on paint seriation studies.
6. Removal of window sash and the installation of permanent fixed panels to accommodate air conditioners is not allowed.

D. Entrances

1. The Commission encourages the reconstruction of the original entrance and storefronts. Alterations to the existing storefronts should demonstrate an attempt to return to the original design.

2. The original granite steps shall be retained. If replacement is required, the new steps must match the original in material, size, shape, color, texture and detail of installation.
3. Intercom/buzzer devices and security systems may be allowed and will be reviewed by the Commission. The units should be minimal in depth and be located within the recessed panels in the entryway.

E. Roof

1. The original cornice line shall be retained.
2. The decorative cornice elements shall be retained or repaired. Replacement of the cornice elements, if required, shall match the original in material, size, shape, profile, configuration, color and detail of installation.
3. All replacement flashing and gutters shall be of copper.
4. Satellite dishes, antennas and other communication devices shall be located on the flat portion of the roof, so that they are not visible from public ways. Antennas should be located so that they are unobtrusive and minimally visible from public ways.
5. Additional roof projections (such as penthouses, roof decks, mechanical or electrical equipment) should be located out of view from public ways.

F. Additions

1. No additions to the height of the building will be permitted.
2. No additions that will be visible from a public way will be allowed.

G. Lighting and Signage

1. Lighting fixtures shall be reviewed. As a Landmark, architectural night lighting is recommended.
2. Signage, directory and other locating devices including installation details must be reviewed by the Commission.
3. The design and material of new signs should reinforce the architectural character of the building.

4. No back-lit or plastic are to be allowed on the exterior of the building.
5. The Commission encourages the removal of existing interior illuminated box signs.

H. Balcony and Fire Escapes

1. No balcony shall be permitted on the facade unless absolutely required for safety and an alternative interim egress route is clearly not possible
2. The existing fire escapes on the west elevation shall be retained.

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