

The Breakers Hotel  
South County Road  
Palm Beach  
Palm Beach County  
Florida

HABS No. FLA-228

HABS,  
FLA,  
50-PALM,  
9-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20243

## THE BREAKERS HOTEL

Location: South County Road, Palm Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida.

Present Owner: Flagler System, Inc., (formerly Florida East Coast Hotel Co.)  
c/o The Flagler Hotel System, Inc., 45 Coconut Row, Palm Beach,  
Florida.

Present Use: Resort Hotel.

Significance: The Breakers Hotel is important for being the last remaining structure of the Flagler System Hotel complex that once included the Royal Poinciana Hotel, as well as the Ponce de Leon in St. Augustine. Entered on the National Register 8/14/73.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Main section, December 1925 to December 1926. East addition and beach and golf additions completed by December 1, 1970.
2. Architect: The firm of Schultze & Weaver, New York City, were responsible for the entire building of the first period, with H. G. Balcom their consulting engineer for structural design.
3. Original and subsequent owners: Henry M. Flagler's Florida East Coast Hotel Company was the original owner. It was closely related to the Flagler East Coast Railroad line. It is now owned by the successor company, Flagler System, Incorporated.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Principal contractor was the Turner Construction Company of Atlanta, Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia. The work was under the general direction of R. C. Wilson, Gen. Mgr. Turner Construction Co., for the Southern District, with D. M. Bartlett, Gen. Supt. In the New York office the purchasing was handled by W. B. Ball, assisted by C. F. Fritch. Shop drawings were under the supervision of H. H. Alger, assisted by D. S. Bloom and L. C. Kuhl. Structural steel was the responsibility of H. G. Hauck. [Refer to Turner Constructor, in Appendix, for supplementary material on contractors and material suppliers.]
5. Original plan and construction: Refer to Turner Constructor above, in Appendix, for sketches of Typical and Main Floor Plan.
6. Known alterations and additions: In September 1928, a circular addition to the dining room was begun on the north. The hurricane of 1928 delayed the work, but it was completed for the 1928-1929 winter season. It was built by the Turner Construction Company also. The north elevator lobby has had a restroom addition for some time. The south porch was enclosed by a wall between the columns, and an extension to the central section added in 1928.

This work involved the removal of several columns and the replacement of some of the stone flooring with terrazzo. At about the same time, the original front desk was removed and also replaced with a "modern" desk area. It was being further remodeled at the time this report was in progress in 1971.

A most recent major alteration was the addition of wings on the northeast and southeast, completed in December 1970. The architect for this work was Richard Reilly & Associates, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. By December 7, 1970, the old Casino Beach Club had been demolished, and the new Beach and Golf Club buildings, designed by Kemp, Bunch, & Jackson, of Jacksonville, Florida, were completed. The Auchter Construction Company was the contractor for these additions.

Other changes occurring in the 1970 additions were the sealing of the east windows in the Gold Room (the South Lounge) and the Magnolia Room (the North Lounge). East windows in the Mediterranean Ballroom as well as the original doors were replaced by solid wood doors. The ceiling was altered to accommodate air-conditioning ducts. East doors in the corridors between the original lounges and the loggia which lead to the ocean front have been removed to provide passage to the new wings. Other changes in the past few years have seen the removal of eight large urns from the two towers.

General remodeling and refurbishing was under way in August 1971 as this report was in progress.

B. Historical Events and Persons Associated With the Building:

Henry Morrison Flagler—the owner and builder of The Breakers Hotel, one of several hotels designed to serve the railroad system owned by Flagler, the Florida East Coast Railroad Line—came to Palm Beach in May 1893. [See HABS No. 224, The Henry M. Flagler Mansion (Whitehall).] He remained only three days, but in that short time he had decided what land he wanted to purchase and to build upon. Before he departed he instructed Albert Robert to purchase certain lands on both sides of Lake Worth. Flagler paid \$75,000 for the land on which he built the Royal Poinciana Hotel on Lake Worth, and the Breakers Hotel on the ocean. The former was begun in 1893 by McGuire and McDonald. They also began work on the Palm Beach Inn on the site of the future Breakers Hotel in the summer of that same year.

A Casino and Beach Club were built on the site of the present Beach Club, together with cabanas to the south. A pier which was capable of servicing ocean liners was also built between the Casino and the hotel. The Palm Beach Inn was opened for the 1895-1896 winter season. According to Mrs. Stanley Banash, Librarian, Historical Society of Palm Beach County, the Henry M. Flagler Museum, "In 1903, the name of the Inn was changed to The Breakers. It was being enlarged when a disastrous fire



reduced it to ashes. Mr. Flagler was notified that the building was doomed, and he instructed that it be rebuilt immediately. Work was rushed, and as the new structure was nearing completion it again caught fire, and was again a total loss. Once more orders came to put up another one immediately. It was finished, reopening on February 1904."

On March 18, 1925, The Breakers Hotel again burned down in a spectacular fire. Although the season had not ended and persons were living in the hotel, no one was injured.

The existing Breakers Hotel was opened on December 29, 1926, and has remained in operation since that time. In the summer of 1971, for the first time, the hotel remained open to guests during the off-season.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Important old views: There are many photographs in the Henry M. Flagler Museum on Whitehall Way in Palm Beach.
2. Likely sources not yet investigated: Complete interior inventory, samples of materials, sources, floor plans, etc., as well as drawings by architects Schultze and Weaver are located in the Flagler Museum.
3. Aerial View, Typical Floor Plan, and First- and Second-Floor Plans appear in Turner Constructor, pp. 4-11. [See Appendix.]

4. Bibliography:

a. Primary and unpublished sources:

Letter copy books of Henry M. Flagler and general information in the files of the Flagler Museum, Whitehall Way, Palm Beach.

Historic Sites Inventory, Dept. of State, Div. of Archives, History & Records Management, 401 E. Gaines St., Tallahassee, Florida, 32304.

b. Secondary and published sources:

Amory, Cleveland. The Last Resorts. New York: Harper, 1952.

Martin, Sidney Walter. Florida's Flagler. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1949.

D. Supplemental Material:

"The New Breakers Hotel, Palm Beach, Florida," by R. C. Wilson, and "How the New Breakers Was Built," by L. S. Hosmer, from Turner Constructor, Vol. IV, No. 1, February 1927. [See Appendix.]

Prepared by: Bryan Paul Bowman  
Student Historian  
University of Florida

Prof. Woodrow W. Wilkins, AIA  
Dept. of Architecture  
University of Miami  
Project Supervisor  
Summer 1971

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Breakers Hotel, the second hotel on the same site to bear the same name, has been a local landmark in the social life of Florida and a hotel widely known around the United States as well, from the days of its predecessor. It is one of the few remaining grand hotels, with the original public rooms retaining and reflecting the social elegance of a past era. It is notable for the grand scale and decorative details of these rooms, including the large central patio or courtyard. According to the Turner Constructor [See Appendix] the Breakers Hotel stands as a monument to the architect and artist, Leonard Schultze, who stated that he was influenced by the memory of the Villa Medici in Rome.
2. Condition of fabric: Since it has been in constant seasonal use from the time it was opened in December 1926, it has been properly maintained and continues to be in good condition.

### B. Description of the Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions, layout, shape: The over-all north-south length is 450'-0", and the original east-west dimension was 375'-0" prior to the addition of 1970 on the east. There were 425 guest rooms and 300 servants' rooms as originally designed. There were seven floors above the public rooms in the central pavilion and five floors on the east-west pavilions which flank it. It was basically H-shaped, closed on the east by the one-story grand loggia, symmetrically disposed about the east-west axis.
2. Foundations: Reinforced concrete with spread footings.
3. Wall construction, finish, color: Exterior walls are 8" interlocking clay tiles painted light buff, trimmed with ornamental cast stone, and run cement (cast in place) moldings and cornices. The interior partitions in the basement and main floors are terra cotta partition tile. On the bedroom floors, gypsum block was used for all partitions, except at stairways and elevator shafts where tile was installed.

4. Structural system, framing: The frame of the building is reinforced concrete, consisting of floor slabs reinforced in two directions, supported by concrete beams and columns carrying down to the spread footings. The towers and wide spans in the main rooms on the ground floor are constructed with structural steel.

5. Porches, patios, courtyards, loggias:

a. Porte cochère: The axially located, two-story porte cochère on the west front projects from the entrance loggia. The porte cochère is framed by large corner piers to which are engaged double, cast, Corinthian pilasters. Within this rectangular frame, including the molded entablature and balustraded flat roof above, are three arched openings, springing from the entablatures of paired Ionic columns on a common plinth. The openings are balustraded at the ground with large urns incorporated into the balustrade in each bay. The double driveway, separated by a curbed walkway, passes through a pair of similar arched openings on the north and south ends.

The ceiling of the porte cochère is a stuccoed barrel vault with groined intersections at the arches. The intrados of the arches are decorated with full relief rosettes within sunken octagon medallions.

- b. West entrance loggia: This loggia extends along the west wall between the two projecting east-west pavilions. White Doric pilasters are engaged to the buff stucco wall opposite exterior Ionic columns. Concrete pavers are used for the floor. The ceiling is divided into bays by transverse plastered beams paneled on the bottom surface. This loggia is stopped on the north end by the wall of the service wing. On the south it crosses the end of the north porch to the wheel-chair patio.
- c. Wheel-chair patio: This open court, paved with concrete pavers, was used for storage of the wicker wheel chairs. It is surrounded by an arcaded cloister framed by rectangular piers and shallow pilasters. On the south and east walls, under the groined vaulted ceiling, are openings to shops. The wheel-chair patio is separated from the adjacent north porch and a covered passage on the west by larger scaled piers. (The increase in traffic has reduced or eliminated the use of the wheel chairs by patrons.)
- d. North porch: This porch is defined by the piers on the south and paired Doric columns on the north. Small square piers subdivide the porch into two wide bays flanking a narrow central bay. Pavers are of cast concrete. The bays defined in the flat ceiling are plastered and paneled with moldings around a central hexagon. Moldings are acanthus and Vitruvian scrolls. Above the Doric columns on the north is a molded belt course and the expression of a Renaissance attic rhythmically alternating modern bronze windows and arabesque panels. This attic

is repeated on the south wall of the service wing beyond the porte cochère. It continues around the west wall and returns on the east wall over the flat cloister roof. The attic terminates in a molded belt course, a plastered wall with dentils, and a crown molding at the eaves. West of the cloister and shops there is a covered passage, a single bay deep, with a flat balustraded roof.

- e. Central patio or courtyard: This open courtyard is surrounded by the major public rooms; the main lobby on the west; the dining room on the north; the grand loggia, presently named the Mediterranean Room, and the promenade on the south.

At the west side of the courtyard is a wide balustraded terrace leading to the main lobby. The cast-concrete balustrade is set between molded concrete pedestals. The axial steps are also balustraded. The high arched openings of the lobby wall are set in stuccoed reveals with engaged Ionic columns between the arches.

On the north and south walls, rectangular openings are framed by doubled engaged Ionic columns and a cast-concrete balustrade below the window sill. Concrete steps lead up to the doorways on the axis. Above the openings on the north, south, and west walls, is a large-scaled crown molding, surmounted by a concrete balustrade. On the west wall only, the balustrade is surmounted by large concrete globes.

At the east side of the patio is a balustraded stoop with steps on the sides. The balustrade is interrupted by a centrally placed dish-shaped fountain. The stoop leads through an arched opening to the former grand loggia. Other arched openings on this wall have concrete balustrades in the lower part. This east wall is framed at the ends with pilasters with denticulated capitals below the cornice molding under the eaves of the tiled roof.

In the center of the patio is a sunken reflecting pool enclosed by a cast balustrade except at the steps on the east and west. A concrete walk surrounds the pool.

6. Chimneys: A tall free-standing circular brick chimney stack for the heating system is located north of the service wing.
7. Openings—doorways and doors:
  - a. Typical doorways and doors: At the main entrance on the west front three adjacent arched openings frame the main entrance doors. A modern revolving door has been installed in the central opening. This is flanked by double doors, set deep in the stuccoed reveal. They are bronze, 3'-2" x 12'-6" each.

They contain five square panels, alternating between circular medallions in high relief and square plate glass panels behind a bronze grille decorated with tangent quatrefoil design. (On the interior there is a second set of double doors with eight lights, 13-1/2" x 18", below a bottom-pivoted transom with eight lights.) Exterior trim is large-scaled cast molding of several elements: flat bands, large and small acanthus, and bead-and-reel. The rectangular lintel has incised rustication surmounted by a projecting cornice combining egg-and-dart with crown molding carved with acanthus.

There is a pair of French doors, six lights each, with a fan above, leading from the wheel-chair patio to the shopping arcade. In the reveal on the exterior is a pair of bronze gates framed overhead with a filigreed bronze panel decorated with a fleur-de-lis enclosed by a wreath and flanked by finials.

The doorway to the shopping arcade on the south wall is recessed on a porch. The wall of the wing is framed at the corners with paired flat undecorated pilasters. The arched opening is framed up to the spring of the arch by paired Doric pilasters with broken entablature which support single short Ionic pilasters framing the arched head of the opening. The intrados is decorated with rosettes. Double bronze doors duplicate the main entrance doors on the west.

- b. Patio doors: On the east and west walls of the central patio are axially located wood French doors in an opening, 5'-8" x 7'-8". Each door has ten lights, 13" x 16", with an eight-light transom below a twelve-light fan. Sidelights consist of a single vertical row of twelve lights. On the north and south walls, the French doors, 4'-6" x 7'-6", have fifteen lights each. They are set in plastered reveals framed by engaged Ionic columns

8. Openings--windows:

- a. Patio windows: On the north and south walls, the windows are set in rectangular stuccoed reveals. The lower wood operating sash, 4'-6" x 4'-6", paired, contains nine lights, 11-1/2" x 16", under a similar fixed sash. There is a six-light transom over each window. On the east and west walls of the patio, windows are set in arched openings framed by engaged Ionic columns. The lower operating sash, 5'-2" x 7'-6", has ten lights, 13" x 16", on each side of a wide wood mullion which is part of the sash. The fixed sash above has twelve lights below a bottom-pivoted transom with eight lights. Above the transom is a twelve-light fan. Twelve vertical lights are in the sidelights of the opening.

- b. Windows, north wall: Dining-room windows duplicate the rectangular patio windows except the transoms are omitted. The circular addition on the north of the dining room contains windows in arched openings which were partially inaccessible because of shutters on the exterior and heavy drapes on the interior. The lower, single-hung sash is 3'-6" x 6'-4" with twelve lights, 11" x 17". Sidelights are 2'-6" x 6'-4" with two vertical rows of eight lights, 11" x 17".
- c. Windows, northeast lounge: This room is now called the Magnolia Room. The windows are modern bronze casements under a two-light fixed transom. Each casement is divided into two lights, 27' x 42" over a 27" x 21" light.
- d. Bedroom windows: The original bedroom windows on the upper floors are described as having wood sash and frames set in stucco reveals. These have successfully been replaced by bronze sash without detriment to the appearance of the imposing building.

9. Roof:

- a. Shape and covering: Imported antique tiles have been used on the hipped roofs. Except at the service department, flat roofs were covered by red shale tile surrounded by cast-stone balustrades.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Except as described on some walls, there are simple molded cornices throughout.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Twin towers on the north and south ends of the major bedroom block are located at the intersection with the lower five-story wings. Each is composed in three stages, the lowest being a square mass with rectangular windows. There is a simple molded cornice at the tile roof. The second stage is slightly set back, framed by rectangular corner piers, cornice, and cast balustrade. A Palladian niche encloses a rectangular window. The octagonal tile roofed mass encloses an open belfry on the four cardinal compass points. Flag poles are located on the top of each.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. First-floor plan: The porte cochère opens from the west and is set in a three-sided courtyard between the north porch and the service wing still further behind it on the north, and the wheel-chair patio on the south, and the shops in line with it on the extreme south boundary.

The main entrance doors of the porte cochère open on the east, and lead to a north-south lying symmetrical lobby, at right angles to the central patio beyond.

The north end of the lobby opens into the east-west dining promenade and east-west dining room. The promenade borders the central patio on the north, and the first, or east-west dining room, on the north opens still further to the north into the circular dining room, which was a later addition. East of the first dining room is the northeast lounge, now called the Magnolia Room, which faces on the gardens and the ocean.

At the south end of the main north-south lobby, behind the porte cochère, is another east-west promenade bordering the central patio on the south, the promenade lined with shops also to the south. At the east end of the shopping arcade there is a south-east lounge called the Gold Room, which balances the northeast lounge or Magnolia Room, both rooms looking out on the gardens and the ocean terrace to the east.

Between these lounges, and east of the central patio, lies the grand loggia, originally facing the ocean on the east, as well as the central patio on the west. The grand loggia is now called the Mediterranean Room, and the east side has been closed by the most recent hotel addition which provides meeting rooms and convention facilities under a bedroom block on the east.

- b. Second-floor plan: Originally this was a modified open H-plan, with central corridors flanked by guest rooms. Servants' rooms are ranged along the west wall with a separate corridor. The openness of the plan has been destroyed by the addition on the east.

2. First-floor public rooms:

- a. Main lobby: The floors are light gray marble with marble baseboards. The walls are cast imitation travertine in ashlar pattern. The barrel-vaulted ceiling is intersected with ribbed groins at the arched openings along both east and west walls. The ceiling is ornamented with moldings and medallions. Elevator lobbies at the north and south ends have paneled dados below the cast travertine walls, and their coffered ceilings are carved and have painted decoration.

Doorways to the shopping arcade on the south have double plate-glass doors faced with wrought-iron grilles. Above is a cast pedimented entablature.

On the central axis of the entrance is a cast-stone baptismal font. The front desk is in process of renovation in the summer, 1971, as this report is being first prepared. Also the varnished wainscoting and elevator doors are being repainted. (Note that the photographs were taken in 1972.)

- b. North and south promenades: The north promenade is actually an aisle in the dining room. Floors are pink and white terrazzo in geometric patterns. The plaster walls are scored to imitate rustication. The longitudinal walls consist of piers framing the glazed openings onto the patio. A cast balustrade separated the north promenade from the dining room. The shallow coffered ceiling contains painted panels. The doorway on the east is framed by two paneled pilasters supporting a bracketed curved pediment with cast cherubs in the tympanum.

In the south promenade, the wall along the shops is of rough plaster articulated by pilasters. High metal gridded windows are placed in each bay. The central bay contains a simple molded arched doorway with a wood reja in the fan above the door.

- c. Original dining room: The floor is carpeted, except for a small dance floor which is oak in a herringbone pattern. Walls are simulated rusticated ashlar. There is a series of arched openings separating this room from the circular or rotunda dining room on the north. The arches are supported by wood columns engaged to trabeated wood piers. The columns are fluted Corinthian, resting on a wood pedestal. At the center bay, which gives principal access between the two rooms, the column is missing.

A stairway, of 20 risers, with a landing at midpoint, was added at the time of the circular dining room. These stairs lead to an orchestra mezzanine, where the balustrade is filigreed and painted metal with a brass handrail.

The plastered ceiling is painted yellow and gold between the deep wood beams supported by wall brackets. Exposed joists are supported by smaller brackets at the sides of the beams.

The west wall has a painted wood paneled wainscot. The double wood doors to the main lobby on the west are set in an arched frame, enclosed by a classical rectangular composition of Corinthian pilasters, a broken entablature, and a frieze, decorated with festoons below a classical crown molding.

On the east wall, three arched openings enclose rectangular double doors. The tympanum is plastered and incised to simulate rustication.

- d. Circular dining room: The floor is carpeted. The arcaded opening separating the rotunda dining room from the first dining room is decorated in the rotunda room with a festooned frieze which also contains winged cherub heads. It is surmounted by a turned wood balustrade enclosing the orchestra mezzanine. The exterior circular wall on the north, consists of continuous arched openings between large piers plastered and rusticated.

The shallow domed ceiling contains a skylight from which a large multi-lamped leaded glass chandelier is suspended. This is surrounded by applied canvas paintings and frescoes depicting views of international resorts, framed by urns, festoons, and niched statues. Wall sconces, similar to the chandelier are located on the piers between the arches.

- e. Northeast lounge (Magnolia Room): The floors are of glazed hexagonal tiles. The walls are painted plaster, terminating in a frieze of decorative frescoes. The shallow beams of the coffered ceiling are supported at the cornice by modillion brackets. Each coffer is inset with a geometrical panel with painted decorations. Simple molded trim frames the tall deeply recessed double wood doors.

The cast-concrete fireplace on the north wall is elaborately decorated by engaged columns with scrolled brackets supporting the festooned mantel. The hearth is brick. A six-branched molded wood and gesso chandelier is painted with green and gilt.

- f. Southeast lounge (Gold Room): The floors and walls are similar to those in the northeast lounge (Magnolia Room) except that the cornice consists of a band of arabesques in low relief. The intersection of the diagonally low-relief coffered ceiling and the cornice consists of shallow groined vaulting framing portraits of Christopher Columbus, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, and New World explorers. The doorways on the north, east, and west walls are set in deep reveals framed by cast paneled pilasters with the upper part of the shafts. They support a broken pediment with an heraldic shield.

The fireplace on the south wall is cast concrete. Columns on each side, with bracketed capitals, support a lintel at the opening. There is no mantel. Above the lintel are three bays set off by four paneled pilasters with full entablature broken at the pilasters. The two smaller end bays contain arched niches, each containing a cherub—one with a cornucopia, the other with a flambeau. The central panel is decorated with low relief carvings of winged cherubs and clouds surrounding a circular, nearly smooth area of two tones, perhaps symbolizing the horizon at sea—the entirety described as symbolizing the Old World Acknowledging the New.

- g. Grand loggia (Mediterranean Room): This room originally faced the sea, and lay between the northeast lounge and the southeast lounge. The floors are red and white terrazzo squares. The plastered walls simulate rustication.

The ceiling is an inverted tray, penetrated at the arched openings on the east, toward the gardens and the sea, and the west, toward the central patio, by groined vaulting. On the north and south walls are three arched openings (to the Magnolia Room on the north and the Gold Room on the south), defined by cast concrete Doric columns, above which are similar groined vaults. The central ceiling panel is painted to represent a sunny sky. Spandrels are decorated with frescoes and painted canvas panels.

The original arched windows on the east wall duplicated those on the west wall. They have been replaced by wood doors leading to the new Venetian Room. Large commercial air registers in the ceiling are painted to blend with the painted sky. Two chandeliers are suspended from the ceiling, and inverted bell-shaped lamps are suspended in each bay at the north and south ends of the room. Wall sconces are located between windows.

- h. East foyers: Between the original grand loggia and the flanking lounges are two small foyers which originally led to a terrace on the ocean front. Floors are of cast stone. The simulated rusticated walls are articulated with fluted Ionic pilasters. The shallow coffered ceiling is painted green, pink, and gold, with medallions and egg-and-dart molding. East and west door trim is edged with cable moldings and brackets under a curved pediment.
- i. Shopping arcade: The south end of the south wing of the west front of the hotel is occupied by shops. The interior corridor connecting them to the wheel-chair patio is floored in dark brown hexagonal tiles. The walls are of rough plaster. Ceilings are quaripartite vaults defined by bracketed arches on the walls, enclosing either shop windows or plastered panels. Entry from the end of the lobby is through large, glazed metal grille doors. Exterior doors are wood with glazed panels. Leaded glass lanterns are suspended from the ceiling.

D. Site:

1. General setting: The spacious setting of The Breakers Hotel is not only appropriate for a luxury hotel, but is an asset in the cityscape of Palm Beach. The golf courses, traversed by the major vehicular artery on the Island, the beach club, and the cottages and the ocean combine to enhance the commanding majesty of the hotel with its twin towers, visible from across Lake Worth.

2. Historic landscape design: A wide avenue leads from South County Road through the golf course to a wide plaza from which the curved drives enter the porte cochere. A fountain is located in the center of this plaza. The main octagonal pool with its concrete cherub and swan, at each angle, is elevated on a broad base approached by travertine steps. Within this pool the principal dish of the fountain is elevated on the shoulders of four water nymphs. Rising from an upper, smaller dish, is a concrete finial.

Prepared by: Richard C. Crisson  
Architect  
University of Florida

Richard High  
Student Architect  
Georgia Institute of Technology

Prof. Woodrow W. Wilkins, AIA  
Dept. of Architecture  
University of Miami  
Project Supervisor  
Summer 1971

### PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Florida project to survey the historic architecture of Palm Beach and to emphasize written historical and architectural data was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) in cooperation with the Historical Society of Palm Beach County, and the Florida Board of Archives and History, in the summer of 1971. Under the direction of James C. Massey, then Chief of HABS, the project was carried out in the Historic American Buildings Survey field office in the Flagler Museum, Whitehall Way, Palm Beach, with Professor Woodrow W. Wilkins, AIA, (University of Miami) Project Supervisor; Richard C. Crisson, Architect (University of Florida); Richard High, Student Architect (Georgia Institute of Technology); and Bryan Bowman, Student Historian (University of Florida). Under John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS after March 1972, additional documentation was prepared, and in April 1972, archival photographs for the project were taken by Jack E. Boucher, HABS photographer. Editing and final preparation of the documentation was carried out in the Washington office by Lucy Pope Wheeler of the HABS professional staff.

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# Turner Constructor

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Volume IV

FEBRUARY, 1927

No. 1

## The Breakers; Palm Beach

**S**ELDOM in a business career does the opportunity come to build a masterpiece.

This opportunity was given to us through the good offices of Schultze & Weaver, Architects, and the Florida East Coast Hotel Company, owners of The Breakers at Palm Beach, Florida.

The Breakers is a masterpiece in conception, beauty of design and in the interior and exterior decorative treatment. It stands a monument to the architect and artist, Leonard Schultze.

Those who know, say it is the finest resort hotel in America, and it is not likely that the circumstances of ownership, time and place will produce its counterpart in years to come.

Most appropriately, this issue of the CONSTRUCTOR is devoted to articles and pictures describing and illustrating the New Breakers.

It is a pleasure to include a picture of Mr. Kenan, President; Mr. Bemis, Vice-President; Mr. Greene, Manager, and Mr. Schultze

## 1926—Our Most Progressive Year

The year 1926 opened favorably, with a large volume of construction work on the books. It was our twenty-fifth year, and we rightly sought to establish a record.

The total volume of work done was \$28,094,041. Forty-nine buildings were substantially completed within the year.

1926 was our most progressive year in the size and character of the work performed. The buildings included the fine home office building for the Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., at Springfield, Mass, the Breakers at Palm Beach, the Ingraham Office Building at Miami, the home office building for the Portland Cement Association in Chicago, and industrial buildings for many nationally known corporations—among others, the Western Electric Co., General Electric Co., Packard Motor Car Co., Bush Terminal Co., A. Schrader's Son, Inc., Robert Gair Co., Gillette Safety Razor Co., Pennsylvania R. R. Co., and New York Telephone Co.

Progress was made in a campaign to promote greater safety to our workmen, to improve methods and erection machinery, to promote better and more economical use of cement and concrete and to strengthen our organization to carry forward effectively our campaign to build the very finest type of public and commercial buildings as well as industrial buildings.

Mr. J. P. H. Perry, Vice-President, was transferred to direct our Chicago office, and has made substantial progress.

The study of the past is the best available guide for the future. Our progress has been due, in my judgment, to a consistent effort to maintain an organization of capable, high class men, devoted and loyal to their work. Each year we gain some-

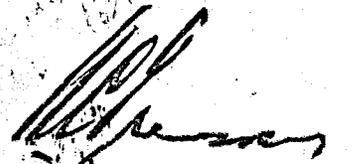
thing in knowledge and experience which aids us to do better the next year's business.

Our system of cost control combined with close supervision of the work makes it possible for us to accept fee contracts with or without a limiting total cost and to execute them to the entire satisfaction of big corporations.

There is very great merit in this form of contract. It saves time, permits the owner to select the builder considered by him and his architect best qualified to perform the work, secures the best workmanship and at the minimum cost consistent with good management.

Our Company performs both fee and lump sum contracts, and out of a long experience, I do not hesitate to recommend the fee contract for large and important work as preferable from the owners' own interest.

Will we have good business in 1927? The general opinion of leading business men seems to be that the volume of business in 1927 will be somewhat less than in 1926. This opinion was also generally expressed a year ago with reference to the year 1926. Prudent management made 1926 a record year. Business conditions are sound and if we are able to avoid speculation, we should have a good year. As a matter of fact, we will carry into 1927 business totaling \$12,235,000 which is only about one-half million less than the volume carried over a year ago. We have many excellent prospects.



President

# The New Breakers Hotel, Palm Beach, Florida

R. C. WILSON, General Manager, Turner Construction Company

**T**HE NEW BREAKERS HOTEL at Palm Beach, Florida, was completed and put in operation on the 29th of December, 1926. The old Breakers was destroyed by fire in March, 1925, and the Directors of the Florida East Coast Hotel Company decided to replace it with a new hotel that would be really worthy of carrying on and adding lustre to the name that had become everywhere a synonym for the most select of all the Florida resort hotels. The New Breakers was to be the acme of perfection in design and magnificence and nothing was to be omitted that could in any way add to the comfort of the prominent guests who each year were accustomed to spend a considerable part of the season at Palm Beach. The hotel was to be absolutely fireproof and of such sturdy construction that it would withstand without damage the violent storms that sometimes visit Florida between seasons.

Schultze & Weaver of New York were selected as Architects for the building and were retained to design and supervise the work of interior decoration and furnishing of the hotel, even to the details of the linen, china and silverware. They also planned the landscape gardening and architectural work surrounding the Breakers, so that its setting might be appropriate to and enhance the splendor of the building itself. The hotel as it stands completed and in operation is a compliment to the skill of the Architects.

The influence of the Italian Renaissance is noticeable in the treatment of the exterior, this style being used in such a way that there is always maintained an atmosphere of open spaces and sunshine,

for therein lies the true charm of the winter season in Florida. Mr. Schultze states that a memory of the Villa Medici, built in Rome during the sixteenth century, influenced him considerably in his determination of the general scheme, the small square towers of the original with their connecting balcony being the predominating features of composition which he has carried into the new building. The magnificent rooms on the main floor of the hotel offered splendid opportunity for the adaptation of architectural gems from the Old World. As one wanders from room to room and the motif of each is recognized, it is difficult to realize that this harmonious blending of the best from accepted masterpieces in Italy constitutes work just finished and that one is really in the public spaces of a most modern and luxurious hotel that has just opened its doors to the public.

The typical floor of the hotel consists principally of two pavilions running east and west, intersected near their westerly ends by the main pavilion running north and south. On the main floor the building is considerably spread out to give space for the public rooms such as the Grand Loggia enclosing the Central Patio on the east, the dining aisles on either side of the Main Dining Room and the Grand Promenade between the south pavilion and the Central Patio. An elaborate shelter for wheel chairs and many fashionable shops, catering to the wants of the guests and visitors, are found in the southwest corner of the building. The central portion of the west front is extended to form the very impressive Porte Cochere, giving entrance to the Main Lobby. In the northwest

corner of the building are the main service departments. In this section are located principally the main kitchen, power house, service court and store rooms. The extensive basement under the north pavilion contains the help's kitchens and dining rooms, refrigerators, bakery, laundry, machine rooms and innumerable storage spaces, all necessary to the operation of a great hotel. The building proper has an overall length from north to south of 450' and extends from east to west a distance of about 375'.

The exterior of the New Breakers is finished with a fairly rough textured stucco of Portland cement in combination with ornamental cast stone. The extent and elaborate detail of this stone work, the ornamental iron balconies hung here and there to relieve the plain areas, and the sloping roofs of old tile, all combine to give a most pleasing exterior. The stucco surfaces are high-lighted to a light buff while the stone work is left untouched in a considerably darker shade. The window casings and sash and the majority of the ornamental iron work are painted a soft green that harmonizes with the other colors on the exterior of the building.

On entering the Main Lobby from the Porte Cochere a scene of beauty greets the eye. The Lobby is a formal room of great dignity, with its high-arched ceiling stretching in long vistas to the right and left, reaching a total distance of over two hundred feet through the elevator lobbies at either end. The Great Hall of the Palazzo Carega in Genoa was the Architects' inspiration for this room and in contrast to its almost sombre magnificence is a view of the sunlit Patio through tall glass doors immediately oppo-

site the main entrance. Here is a picture of tropical beauty in the very heart of the hotel, the waving palm trees and tropical plants enhancing the beauty of the fountain and pool that form the central feature of the Patio. It is a temptation to continue directly on into the sunshine of the Patio but turning to the left we follow down the central aisle of the Lobby. The floor and base are of marble, the walls of travertine and the ceiling of ornamental plaster, the main arch of the ceiling being cut by deep penetrations that reach the tall window openings on either side. The frescoes and painted decorations are replicas of those in the Great Hall of the Palazzo Carega, as are the hangings and furniture.

At the north end of the Main Lobby is one of the groups of guest elevators in its separate lobby of exquisite design, with its ceiling in walnut and gold and its side walls of travertine stone and paneled walnut screens embellished with painted decorations as in a Florentine hall. Beyond to the right and reached by a broad flight of marble steps is the beautiful entrance door to the Main Dining Room. One lingers for a moment on the threshold of this impressive room. The center section is over a hundred and fifty feet long and about a third as wide between the rows of free standing limestone columns dividing the main room from the dining aisles on either side and making in reality a single room of vast area. The massive beamed ceiling of the center section is after the manner of the Palazzo Davanzati in Florence. The weight of the ceiling is relieved by elaborate decorations, while the side walls are finished in limestone, with marble base. The great height and span of the main room gives contrast to the side rooms with their lower ceilings of less heavy design. The floor

in the center section is of quartered oak, covered with a huge rug, while in the side rooms are floors of terrazzo in elaborate designs. The south room is depressed a few steps from the main level and has access through tall glass doors to the Central Patio.

At the east end of the Main Dining Room is the Dining Lounge, a splendid room nearly fifty feet square, with massive wall and ceiling design. The gallery in the Palazzo La Ferno in Rome was the motif for this room and with its red tiled floor, Venetian fireplace and harmonious decorations and furnishings, it is all that a lounge should be. To the right, through a stone flagged foyer, is the Grand Loggia, running across the east front of the hotel and separating the Central Patio from the Ocean Terrace. This room is one of the most beautiful parts of the hotel and was suggested in a general way by a similar room in the Palazzo Deg'Imperial at Genoa. It is well over a hundred feet in length, and with its clear width and great height is most impressive. The ceiling is arched with penetrations to the high windows, admitting a maximum of sunshine. The whole room bespeaks lightness and gayety and the furnishings are in keeping. The decorations on the central panel of the ceiling represent the sky on a sunny day and actually seem to admit much of the brightness that is the very atmosphere of the room.

Through another foyer at the south end of the Grand Loggia is the South Lounge, a beautiful room that is a replica of a room in the Doges' Palace in Venice. The diagonally paneled ceiling, which in the original is of hand-carved wood with extremely complicated cornice formed by the intersections of the ceiling panels, presented a serious problem for reproduction in plaster. No detail was omitted and the

whole area was richly embellished with decorations in green and gold. In the niches of the cornice are portraits of Columbus, Ponce de Leon and many others who ventured to the New World before or during the period of the Renaissance. In this room is a remarkable fireplace, with the front panel of the over-mantel portraying in symbol the Old World acknowledging the New. Turning west from the foyer of this room, we pass through the Grand Promenade, a replica of the sun porches or loggias of the Italian villas of the Renaissance period. We find ourselves back in the south end of the main lobby, near the entrance to the other group of elevators, which have their separate lobby, decorated in the manner of a Florentine hallway.

The size of the Central Patio causes a wide separation of the pavilions containing the living quarters of the hotel and results in the bedrooms receiving a maximum amount of sunshine and air, and gives each room a sense of privacy, due to the great distance separating the parallel pavilions. The majority of the guest bedrooms are located on each side of five floors of the pavilions running east and west, and on the east side of seven floors of the central pavilion. The rooms are very large, with high ceilings and closets of unusual size. The width and height of the main corridors give them really the atmosphere of a promenade and assure a maximum of ventilation to the bedrooms. Besides the regular corridor doors to the bedrooms or foyers, an auxiliary slit door is installed for use when more breeze is desired than passes through the transoms over the solid doors. All openings are fully screened. On the east front of the hotel are located ten elaborate suites with living room and sun porch overlooking the Ocean Terrace. These suites

occur on each of the five bedroom floors and occupy the full width of each pavilion, making truly luxurious apartments. All guest bedrooms and corridors are fully carpeted, the carpets being doweled directly to the cement floors. The plaster walls and ceilings have a sand finish and are oil painted in a restful color scheme, as is all woodwork in the living quarters. The servants' rooms are principally located on the mezzanine floor of the south pavilion, and on the west side of each floor of the central pavilion. The servants' rooms in the central pavilion are isolated from the guest section by a separate corridor. This is an unusual feature in hotel design and permits the housing of servants on the same floor of the hotel where their duties lie, resulting in a more prompt service without any direct contact between their living quarters and those of the guests.

The lavish use of space in the layout of the bedroom floors, as well as the public rooms, may be realized when it is considered that although there are only 425 guest rooms and 300 servants' rooms in the hotel, the building contains within its walls over five and a quarter million cubic feet of space. As resort hotels are usually designed, this amount of space would be forced to accommodate about a thousand bedrooms.

Much thought has been given to the surroundings of the New Breakers, so that the landscaping and architectural features of subordinate structures might be in harmony with the building itself and tend to enhance its magnificence. From the County Road, a new avenue, centered on the east and west axis of the hotel, has been cut through the Poinciana Golf Course. This avenue widens as it approaches the hotel, to permit parking of guests' cars, and finally enters a

broad plaza from which curved drives give access to the Porte Cochere. In the center of this Plaza is a great fountain of elaborate design. The main pool is octagonal and is elevated on a broad base structure of similar shape, which is approached by steps of travertine stone. From within this pool the bowl of the fountain is carried on the shoulders of four water nymphs, symbolic of the four seasons. A somewhat similar fountain in the Boboli Gardens at Florence furnished the inspiration for this one, which was sculptured by Lentelli. The avenue and Plaza are edged with palm trees and tropical plants, and ornamental stone benches are found in convenient locations. Separating the hotel from the Casino on the south is a Promenade guarded by an elaborate stone balustrade.

The New Breakers being on the beach, it was necessary to protect it from the inroads of the ocean by a sea-wall of massive design, extending from the old Breakers pier north a distance of about 500' and then west to the northeast corner of the building itself. This sea-wall, as well as its protective splash slab, has all been worked in as part of the ornamental setting for the building proper. The edge of the sea-wall is guarded by a heavy stone balustrade, while the splash slab, thirty feet in width, has become a fine promenade and roadway for wheel chairs. Between this promenade and the east front of the building is a tropical garden, and hidden therein is a small dance floor of terrazzo. Palm trees are everywhere.

The building itself is of reinforced concrete, although about a thousand tons of structural steel were necessary in framing around such rooms as the Main Lobby, Dining Room, Grand Loggia and certain other portions of the building, as well as framing for the towers.

The side walls are of interlocking terra cotta tile, eight inches thick, scored on the outside to hold the stucco and on the inside to carry the waterproofing and plaster. Extreme care was used in the design and construction of the enclosing walls and window details, to guard against leakage during the late summer and early fall, when tropical storms of great intensity are apt to occur. While the building was still in the process of construction, it was subjected to several such storms and proved itself capable of withstanding their fury without damage to the building or its contents. The windows are of wood, with sash carefully weather-stripped. Those on the typical floors are either of the double hung or casement type, while, of course, in the public rooms many elaborate varieties were designed to harmonize with the room wherein they may occur.

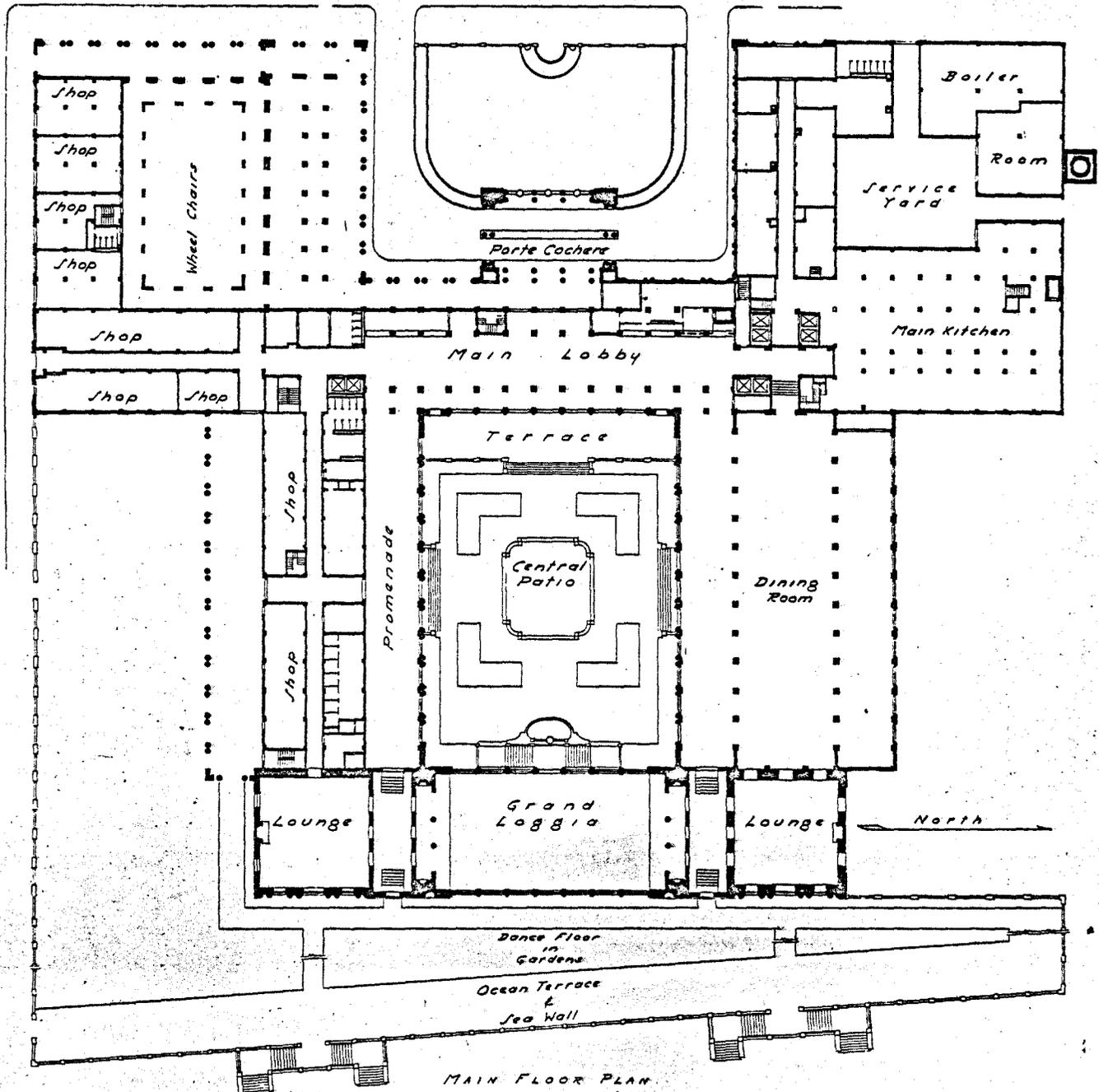
Contract for building the Breakers Hotel was awarded to the Turner Construction Company on December 4th, 1925, and the nucleus of the construction organization was immediately assembled at Palm Beach. At that time great congestion existed on all railroads in Florida, and it was necessary to procure permits for the transportation of materials. As soon as the contract was awarded, orders were placed for the principal items of materials entering into the building, but it was not until February that more than a few carloads began to arrive. It was possible, by special effort, to get the construction machinery to Palm Beach and to purchase locally sufficient lumber and other materials to erect this machinery and to build temporary offices, living quarters and mess hall for the staff and foremen. By the end of February the transportation situation cleared up rapidly and during March, for the first time, it

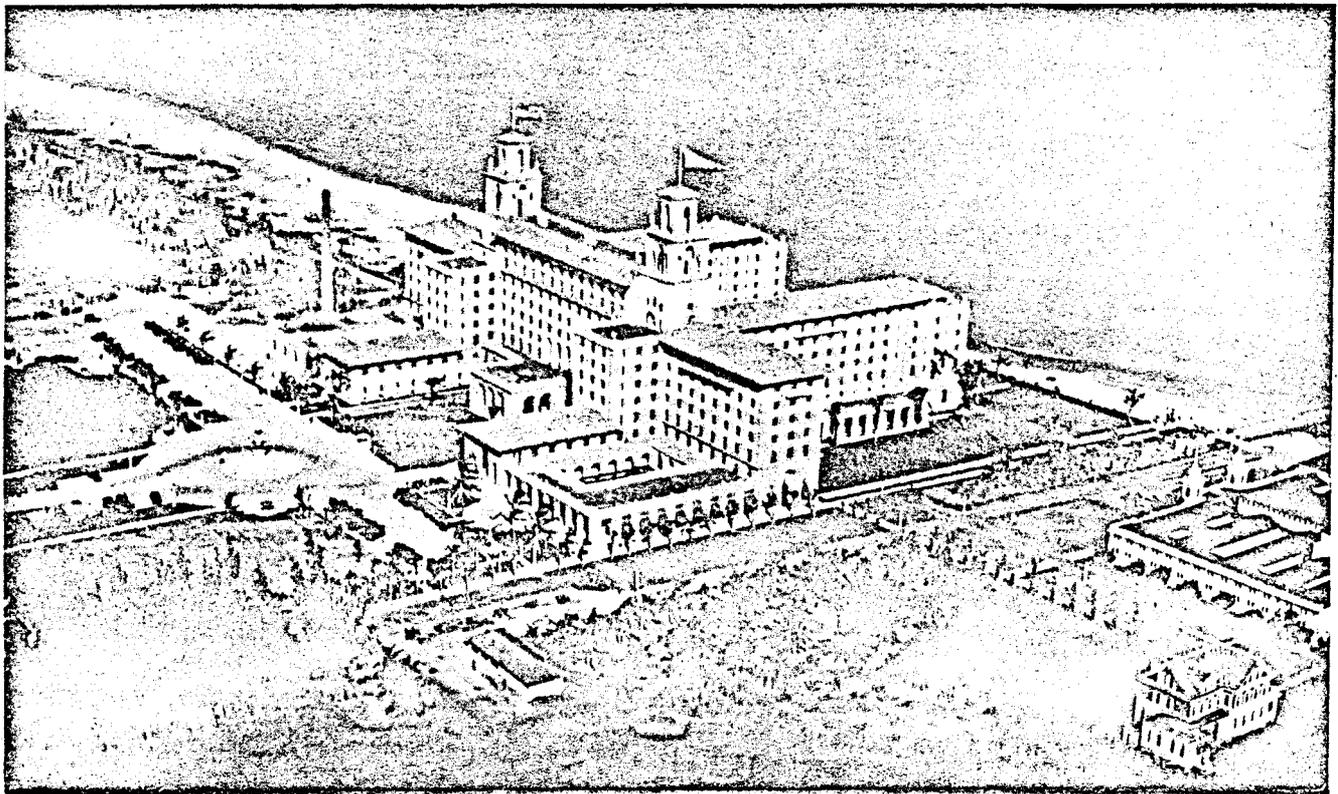
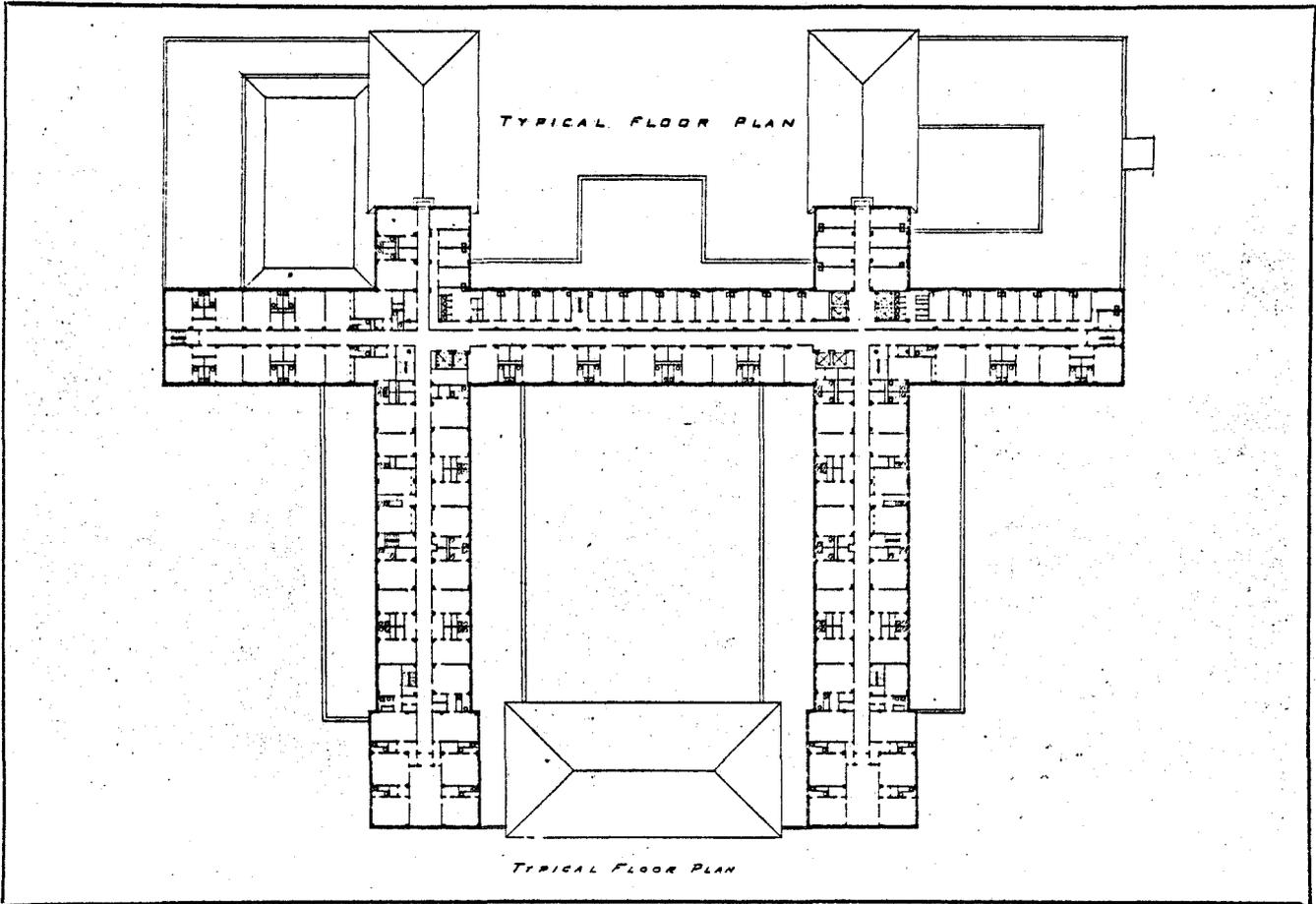
was possible to make real progress on the work.

The concrete frame of the building was pushed to completion by the first of July and all other work carried on as expeditiously as possible. The co-ordination of the work of the various sub-contractors, as well as that done by our own men, constituted the principal fea-

ture in the management of the whole, so that no single operation was ever permitted to delay the general progress. A considerable corps of expeditors was sent to different parts of the country to watch the progress of various items of work, both in the shops and on the road. In July and again in September, Palm Beach was visited by

storms of hurricane intensity and the scheduled progress was naturally delayed, but a most commendable spirit was maintained on the work and the whole-hearted co-operation of the various sub-contractors made possible the completion of the building in the short time allotted for such a remarkably complicated and elaborate structure.





AERIAL VIEW, BREAKERS HOTEL, PALM BEACH, FLA.

## How the New Breakers Was Built

L. S. HOMER, Superintendent, R. L. CULLUM, Supt. of Sub-Contracts  
Turner Construction Company

ON December 4th, 1925, we were formally notified that the contract for the New Breakers was ours! For several weeks prior to that time a great deal of study and planning had been done by those in the Company who were to be responsible for the management of this work, should we be fortunate enough to procure the much-sought-after job. No one of us questioned our ability to build this very large and elaborate building and do the work well, but the thought was always in our minds—"Are there a sufficient number of working days before the date set by the Owners for the opening of this great hotel, so that it might be built in an economical and orderly manner without resorting to overtime work?" The speed schedules and progress charts we had made told us that there was just enough time, if not a day was wasted, if every one of the thousands of different items of materials entering into the structure arrived on time, if there was no shortage of labor, if there was no delay in transportation of materials, if the weather held fairly good, and many other "ifs." When the word finally came to go ahead, we clearly realized that every minute had to be made to count, and that if severe storms or railroad congestion or other causes beyond our control did delay the work, the time just had to be regained by added effort and the work put back on schedule time as soon as was physically possible. It was with that fact realized by every one of them that the nucleus of the construction organization started for Palm Beach on December 4th to undertake a year of the most strenuous kind of work.

At the time the contract was let the construction conditions in Flor-

ida were at their worst. Everywhere large hotels and other projects were being rushed to completion to accommodate the winter influx of tourists for 1925-1926. All jobs were being run at night and on Sundays, which condition had an unhealthy effect on the ability of the workman to produce efficiently. The transportation facilities were being taxed far beyond their capacity, and the public service corporations had large building programs of their own under way in the mad race to keep up with the abnormal growth of the population of the state. In many instances money lost its power as a medium of exchange and materials were bartered for as of old. The great increase in population in Florida made it impossible for the staff and foremen to obtain satisfactory living quarters and board at any reasonable prices. Construction offices and mess hall were built, with a second story cut up into rooms accommodating, in all, about forty men.

Due to the complicated character of the work and the unusually difficult conditions under which it was to be done, the ordinary construction forces were supplemented by a Resident Engineer, Accountant, Cost Engineer, Purchasing Agent and Traffic Manager, all reporting to the Superintendent of Construction. No experiments could be made with untried organization, and it is interesting to note that every position of any responsibility, whether on the staff or among the foremen, was filled by men who had already been in the Company's employ from two to twenty years. The Resident Engineer handled all field problems of structural design with the local representative of the Architect and kept the construction forces advised of

all changes. After the skeleton frame of the building was well along, the Engineer who had followed the preliminary work of the sub-contractors in New York became resident on the job and, with a corps of assistants, handled the co-ordination of the various functions in the field. The Cost Engineer, besides making up detailed bi-monthly statements of actual cost of each item entering into the job, also kept daily records of such items as appeared to require special attention. Each month a statement was prepared, indicating what the financial outcome of the job would be, giving the over-run or saving on each item, as compared with the estimate.

The office of the Architect, as well as the main offices of the Florida East Coast Hotel Company, were in New York and, as many negotiations had to be carried on with these offices, it was necessary, in order to avoid delay, to establish a department in our New York Office that devoted itself exclusively to this part of the work. The duties of this department were to obtain necessary plans, interpretations, approvals and authorization for expenditures, purchase the principal material items and let sub-contracts. An Engineer was assigned to follow with the various sub-contractors scattered over the United States for detailed plans and to watch over the manufacture and shipments of their materials to meet the progress of the job. In some instances Assistant Engineers and Expeditors were sent to various mills, supervising the work from the time the detailed shop plans were started in the drafting rooms to the time when the finished material was actually on the job siding in Palm Beach.

The preliminary speed schedules

were amplified and revised so that they gave in detail the dates when the various classes of work on the job should be started and completed in order that the building should be opened at the date set. Further studies determined the time that each sub-contract should be let and when the various items of material entering into the building should be purchased in order that they should be on the job in time to go into the structure. Studies and charts were made, showing the man power required by the various sub-contractors and by the Turner Construction Company to complete each item in an orderly manner to maintain the speed schedule. Charts showing actual performance were plotted so that the executives could see at a glance which items needed special attention.

The frame of the building is of reinforced concrete, consisting of floor slabs, reinforced in two directions supported by concrete beams and columns which carry down to spread concrete footings. Over a thousand tons of structural steel were used in the two tower sections and main floor fine rooms to allow for large spans. The exterior walls were constructed of eight-inch interlocking tile, supported on the exterior beams at each floor level. These tile walls were covered with stucco, ornamental cast stone and run cement-mouldings and cornices. The exterior stucco was painted with a two-tone waterproof paint, giving the building its putty color appearance. The inside of the exterior walls was waterproofed with liquid mastic coatings, on top of which the interior plastering was applied.

Wood frames and sash were used for the exterior window openings with the exception of stairway shafts and portions of the basement where kalamein frames and sash glazed with wire glass are installed. Caulking was carefully applied be-

tween the frames and the tile walls and staff beads were caulked tight against the finished stucco. Imported antique tile was used for the sloping roofs laid over membrane waterproofing. All flat roof areas were covered with red shale tile surrounded by cast stone balustrades, with the exception of service department roofs, where slag roofing was installed. Interior partitions in the basement and main floor are constructed of terra cotta partition tile. On the bedroom floors gypsum block was used for all partitions except stairway and elevator shafts, where tile was installed.

The plaster on walls and ceilings of bedroom floors has a sand finish with an ornamental cornice in the guests' corridors. On the main floor almost every branch of the plastering art was called upon to produce the effects desired. Pre-cast plaster ornamental ceilings predominate, while portions of the side walls, columns and pilasters are finished as limestone and Caen stone, some of which was run in place and other portions pre-cast. Pre-cast travertine stone was used throughout on the main lobby walls and the adjoining elevator lobbies. Interior trim throughout the hotel is of wood except where kalamein and drawn metal are installed in the service sections, stairways, elevator shafts and exit doorways. The doorways from the guests' corridors to the bedrooms are fitted with two doors, one being a one-panel door with a solid transom above it and the other being a wood slat louvre door fully screened which, when closed, gives privacy in the room but allows for the circulation of air.

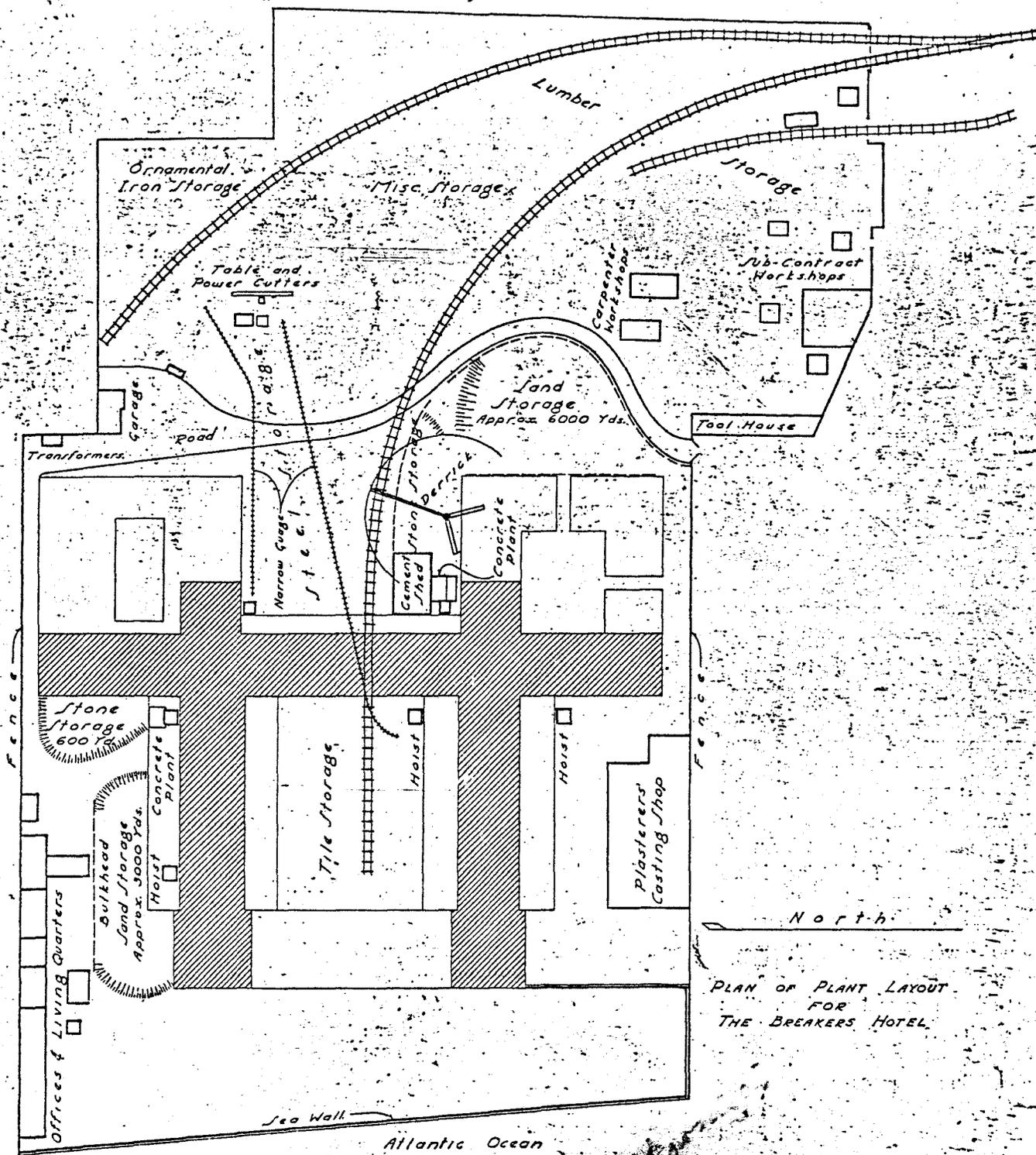
Each guest bedroom has its own bath with ceramic tile floors and glazed white tile wainscot. Built-in bathroom accessories, such as towel bars, soap holders, large medicine cabinets, make each bathroom complete. The guests' bedroom and cor-

ridor floors are fully carpeted. Linoleum and carpets are used in the service corridors. One feature of the bedroom floors should be noted in the typical floor layout which shows the servants' rooms separated from the guests' section by two corridors, one for guests and the other for servants. A metal paper chute has been installed, with inlets at each floor so that rubbish may be dropped to the service department at the basement. An aluminum-lined linen chute, with inlets at each floor, is also available so that soiled linen, when deposited in the chute, empties directly into the hotel's fully equipped laundry.

The mechanical equipment of the hotel is most complete. A steam heating plant furnishes steam for heat throughout the building and for running all auxiliary apparatus. A complete refrigeration system cools the various refrigerators throughout the kitchens. The kitchens and laundries are equipped with the latest labor-saving devices. The guests are served by four high-speed elevators which travel from the main floor to the seventh bedroom floor. Three freight elevators handle the service departments. Two one-story elevators are installed which carry goods from the storage spaces in the basement to the kitchens and shops. The electrical equipment provides the usual light and power throughout the hotel, together with flood lighting effects on the exterior. A complete fire alarm system and numerous annunciator and call systems are also installed. A series of clocks are available on all floors, which are all connected with a master clock, regulated to give accurate time.

The many fine rooms on the main floor called for different kinds of flooring materials. The floor of the main lobby and elevator lobbies is pink Tennessee marble with Botticino marble base. The central

(22)



PLAN OF PLANT LAYOUT  
FOR  
THE BREAKERS HOTEL

portion of the main dining room floor is oak laid in herringbone pattern, surrounded by a Verdolite terrazzo border and Alps Green marble base. The two side aisles of the dining room have terrazzo floors laid in colorful patterns. The North and South Lounges

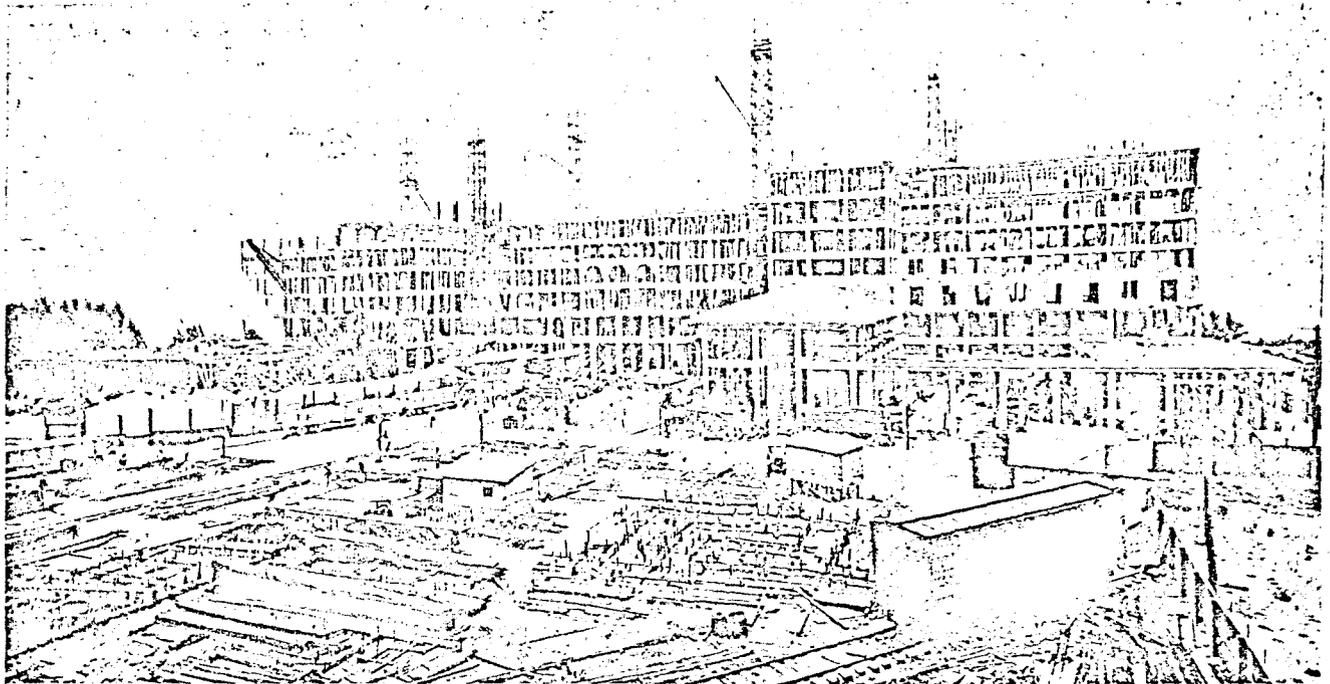
have floors of hexagonal red tile. Grand Loggia and Promenade have terrazzo floors, while the adjoining foyers, exterior porches and terraces have floors of pre-cast stone flagging:

The condition of the material market and the transportation situation:

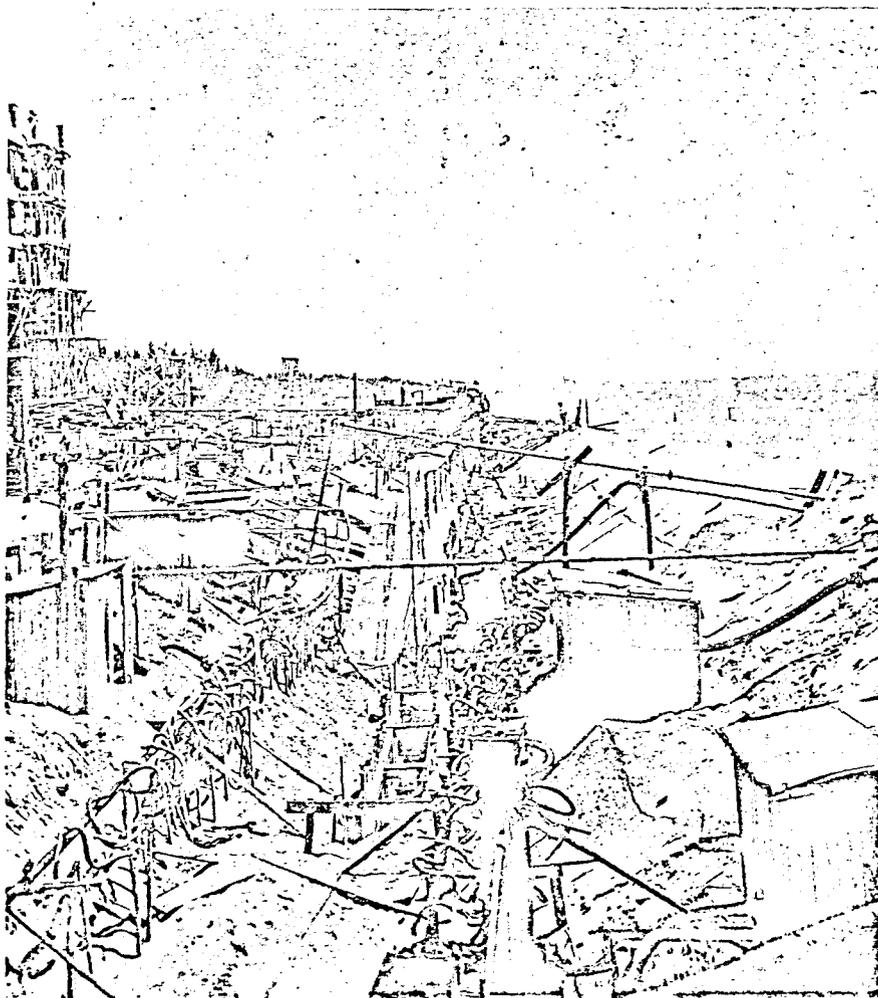
made it impossible to have a definite specification for the materials out of which the concrete was to be made, with the exception of cement, which was a standard brand of American Portland. Tests showed the sand from the site was suitable for use, but many sources had to

*Gold Room*

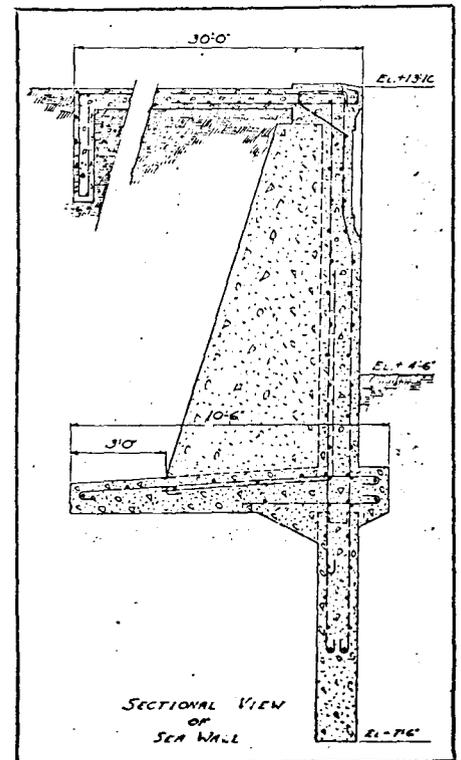
(23)



Construction view May 22nd, 1926, which shows all the construction machinery in place and the construction yard in good order.



The excavation in water bearing sand for the bottom toe of the sea-wall, which was about ten feet below sea level, was made possible by the use of the well point method of sub surface drainage.



(20)

be sought in order to get sufficient supplies of coarse aggregate for the concrete. Slag and gravel were brought in from Alabama; a considerable quantity of Florida limestone was used; and some was even imported from Cuba. This condition made necessary constant tests on sample concrete cylinders in order to determine the necessary cement content so that a uniform strength would be maintained in concrete no matter what kind of coarse aggregate might be used.

As already noted, the frame of the building is principally of reinforced concrete, although it also contains about a thousand tons of heavy structural steel. In order not to delay the whole structure while this steel was being fabricated, the concrete plants were laid out in such a way that they might have access to those portions of the frame in which no structural steel occurred. The majority of the concrete was mixed and hoisted by the two permanent set-ups shown on the plan of the plant layout, although these were augmented by two portable plants for miscellaneous work at a distance from the main plants. The railroad siding to the old Breakers Hotel was relocated and extended several hundred feet across the site of the new building, in such a manner as to allow standard freight cars to pass between the columns of the new structure. Materials were unloaded adjacent to the construction towers, where they were hoisted to the various floors on which they were used. At one time there were thirteen electrically operated set-ups for mechanically hoisting materials on the job, exclusive of the stiff-leg derrick and the derricks used for the erection of structural steel.

A railroad siding was constructed to bring the 1100 tons of reinforcing steel to a storage yard near the building, where it was sorted, cut to length in a mechanical shear, fabri-

cated and sorted ready to load on flat cars on narrow-gauge tracks which transported the steel to two main hoisting towers. Large storage spaces were cleared of the debris from the Breakers fire for the storage of the million and a quarter feet of lumber used in forms for concrete work. Several saw mills, a large store house for tools, various sheds for the housing of mechanics' clothing and their personal tools, timekeeper's quarters and buildings used by the sub-contractors for offices and shops were erected on the site. A shed covering about one-third of an acre was built as a cast shop for the preparation of moulds for the ornamental plaster and artificial stone work.

It is interesting to note that about thirteen hundred carloads of materials going into the building proper were unloaded from the temporary sidings shown on plan of Plant layout and, although it was found impossible to arrange to have these cars arrive at even a fairly uniform rate, the sidings had sufficient capacity so that the job was never penalized with charges for car demurrage. The principal classifications of carloads of materials were as follows:

Stone .....	492
Cement .....	190
Tile for partitions .....	101
Brick & Tile for exterior walls	90
Plaster & Artificial Stone...	89
Structural Lumber & Millwork	80
Lumber for Forms.....	64
Plumbing & Steam Equipment	38
Structural Steel .....	29
Reinforcing Steel .....	25
Roofing Material .....	22
Tile for Floors & Baths....	11
Contractors' Plant.....	10
Ornamental Iron .....	8
Electrical Supplies .....	7
Miscellaneous .....	36

The concrete seawall which protects the New Breakers from the inroads of the ocean is of interesting design, as shown on the sectional view. The main wall is of the gravity type set on a broad base of heavily reinforced concrete, and below is run a reinforced concrete cut-off wall to prevent any undermining by the action of the water. This precaution was necessary due to the great variations in the beach level in various seasons of the year and it was considered necessary to run this cut-off wall down to an elevation about twelve feet below the normal beach level. The wall itself was built in two operations so that its face for a thickness of sixteen inches might be made of an excessively rich mixture of concrete of especially selected aggregates to better withstand the action of salt water and the gravity backing be constructed of a less expensive concrete. During severe storms great waves break over the top of this wall and it was thus necessary to prevent damage they might cause by building a heavily reinforced concrete splash slab eight inches thick and thirty feet wide, sloped so as to throw the heavy wash back into the ocean. This splash slab is tied into the top of the wall and adds greatly to its stability. The construction of this wall was one of the most interesting items on the job.

The excavation in water bearing sand for the bottom toe, which was about ten feet below sea level, was made possible by the use of the well point method of sub surface drainage. Sand, and in some cases timber bulkheads, were constructed to hold back the force of the ocean. The planning of the work had to be very carefully thought out taking into account the periods of storms and extreme high tides usually occurring at the times of new and full moons.

## Personnel of the Turner Organization on the New Breakers Hotel

Operating under the direction of *Schultze & Weaver, Architects.* Mr. R. R. Gould, Field Representative, assisted by R. Loefler, Jr., and H. A. Yoc. All structural designs were made by Mr. H. G. Balcom, Consulting Engineer for the architects.

<b>Office</b>		G. G. SMALLMAN . . . . . Job Accountant	T. W. GREGORY . . . . . Trim
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IVAR ANDERSON . . . . . Draftsman			ROBERT EVERHART . . . . . Reinforcement
E. E. MORIN . . . . . Expeditor			DAVID CHRISTIE . . . . . Cement Mason
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CHAS. GETTIS . . . . . Forms
JULIUS KUSTNER (in charge) . . . . . Trim
T. A. CRUTTENDUN . . . . . Trim

The work was under the general direction of Mr. R. C. Wilson, General Manager, Turner Construction Co. for the Southern district, with Mr. D. M. Bartlett assisting as General Superintendent. In the New York office the purchasing was handled by Mr. W. B. Ball, assisted by Mr. C. F. Fritch. Shop drawings were prepared under the supervision of Mr. H. H. Alger, assisted by Mr. D. S. Bloom and Mr. L. C. Kuhl. Expediting of structural steel at the mill was handled by Mr. H. G. Hauck.

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