

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC Battery Park Hotel

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Battle Square

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN
Asheville

VICINITY OF

11th

STATE
North Carolina

CODE

37

COUNTY

Buncombe

CODE

21

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME D. M. Blackwell

STREET & NUMBER
Osborne Plumbing & Heating Co., 221 W. French Broad St.

CITY, TOWN
Brevard

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 28712

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Buncombe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Asheville

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Rising fourteen stories from the summit of a high hill in the midst of Asheville, the Battery Park Hotel is one of Asheville's most striking landmarks. Standing on the remains of the higher hill truncated by developer E. W. Grove, it faces down the slope, Grove's equally ambitious, sprawling Arcade (NR). Designed by hotel architect W. L. Stoddart, the Battery Park is a representative and little-changed example of eclectic 1920s hotel architecture, its functional brick mass accented with notes of Neo-Classical elegance and Spanish romanticism.

The main block of the building is a massive T form, with the crosspiece of the T forming the main (south) facade. The main elevation is seven bays wide, with the third and fifth bays being double ones. To either side of this block is a two-story wing, and at the top is a three-bay penthouse. At the rear of the stem of the T rises a chimney. The corners of the brick building are defined by brick quoins, and horizontal decorative bands break up the height of the building into a strong three-part division: the three-story base, the eight-story main expanse, and the one-story cornice topped by the penthouse.

Across the entry level of the facade stretches a terrace, bounded by a classical urn balustrade. The balustrade is repeated on the flanking terraces that serve the wings. The east side terrace is shaded by a pergola whose open roof is supported by Ionic columns. (The pergola on the west is gone.) Large French doors with fanlights connect the terraces with the large rooms filling the wings.

The focus of the ground level front is a trio of large, arched openings, each two stories in height—the main entrance and flanking windows. In the remaining pairs of flanking bays are first-level French doors and second-level paired windows with double-hung sash. At the third level are simple double-hung sash windows occurring singly and in pairs. This three-story base area is further emphasized by the use of brick in striated courses that continue the lines of the quoins, and by a heavy, richly decorated carved cornice that carries around the front and sides of the building. This cornice serves as continuous sill for the elaborately treated windows of the fourth level. Ornate open pediments, cartouches, and other classical motifs are used to enrich these windows. Similar motifs recur at the three central bays of the fifth level. The windows at the sixth through tenth levels are simply treated with double-hung six-over-one sash.

The upper levels are elaborately treated. At the eleventh level, which is set off by a narrow molded cornice, alternating bays have ornate iron balconies. Above, creating a dominant roofline, is a broad, strongly molded stone cornice accented with a series of shields in high relief, beneath a dentil molding. The thirteenth-story windows occur between this molding and the wide bracketed eaves of the overhanging green tile roof. This area is further enriched by the use of the diaperwork in colorful tile filling the wall surfaces between the windows. The roofline is interrupted by the penthouse, whose three bays rise a full story above the thirteenth story. Its three large arched windows are served by iron balconies, and cartouches flank the windows. The bracketed cornice and deeply overhanging tile roof are repeated.

Within, the hotel retains vestiges of its earlier splendor despite the ravages of thieves, vandals, and neglect in recent years. The lobby is a splendid, light open space overlooked on three sides by the paneled balcony of the mezzanine, which is carried

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on elaborate ceiling-high pillars and ornate consoles. Tile floors, marble stairs (minus their railings), marble baseboards, and paneled wainscots survive. Of special importance is the fountain in the elevator lobby. Resembling a fireplace in appearance, this ceramic fountain, located against the wall, has a semi-circular opening with a molded fan back. Above this a rectangular composition of tile rises to near-ceiling height, framing a colorful, realistic, and skillfully executed ceramic mosaic of the original Battery Park Hotel. The ceramic inscription reads, "Erected 1884 BATTERY PARK HOTEL Razed 1923".

The wing rooms, the gold room and the dining room are spacious and handsomely finished. The gold room or ball room has paneled wainscot, triple windows beneath fanlights, applied moldings on the walls, and ornate rococo molded plaster ceiling decoration. The dining room is somewhat simpler but has a dramatic series of supporting arches and a handsome coffered ceiling.

The rooms of the several floors are functional and typical hotel rooms, arranged around a T hall plan. Walls are plastered, wainscoted, and papered. Many original bathroom fixtures, marble accoutrements, and tile floors remain.

The penthouse is as handsomely appointed as the main floor. The front room is especially fine. On all four sides of the rectangular room are large openings, those on the inner wall being mirrored, those on the other three sides windows and French doors, creating a light interior and permitting a grand view of the city and mountains beyond. On either side, French doors open to roof terraces not visible from below. All the openings, with a central glazed leaf framed by sidelights and transom, are surmounted by a fanlight which is in turn framed by a pointed vault that fits into a cove ceiling. The walls and vaults are articulated with applied moldings forming panels. Under the peeling paint can be seen ornate stenciling on the plaster with urns, scrolls, wreaths and foliage in green, gold, brown, and ivory. The cove ceiling is underlined with a rich plaster cornice of corn, oak leaves, pineapples, and grapes. The rear penthouse room is less elaborately treated, has a tile floor, and windows overlooking balconies.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) Resort
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1924 BUILDER/ARCHITECT W. L. Stoddart

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Battery Park Hotel is one of Asheville's most prominent landmarks topographically and historically, a vivid expression of the city's rapid development in the 1920s. In the early 1920s E. G. Grove, entrepreneur and ambitious developer of Asheville, bought the old Battery Park Hotel, razed it and its hill, and created a major complex including an arcade, office buildings, and a new Battery Park Hotel. The fourteen-story brick hotel, designed by hotel architect W. L. Stoddart, stands high on the summit of the slope, commanding a dramatic view of the city.

In the late nineteenth century, the mountain town of Asheville began to attract attention as a health and pleasure resort, where tourists and tubercular patients enjoyed the mountain air and cool summer temperatures. The Eagle and the Swannanoa were two of the relatively simple hotels providing accommodations. Among the visitors was Colonel Franklin Coxe (grandson of cotton industrialist Tench Coxe of Philadelphia) a successful banker and entrepreneur associated with A. B. Andrews in the building of the Western North Carolina Railroad. During his regular Asheville visits, Coxe, according to one source, was "attracted to the necessity of higher class accommodations for the visitors from other States, both North and South." He purchased the chief hill in the small town of Asheville--known as Battery Porter and the location of a Confederate battery--and thereupon constructed "what was at that time the largest and best hotel in the entire South." Finished in 1886, the sprawling, turreted frame hotel was called the Battery Park.

The completion of the Battery Park Hotel in 1886, the same year the Western North Carolina Railroad reached Asheville, was the beginning of Asheville's first boom period. "That year . . . began the dawn of a new era, and new life and energy crept into the town. Capitalists and homeseekers began pouring in. . . ." The population, 2,610 in 1880, had climbed to 11,500 by 1890. Local tradition states that it was from the porches of the Battery Park that George Vanderbilt "first gazed out upon the misty stretch of towering mountain peaks and resolved to make his home in the Land of the Sky."

After Coxe's death in 1903, the property was purchased in 1920 by Edwin W. Grove. Grove, according to a grandson, was a man of little (third-grade) education but great financial genius. The inventor of a process of suspending powdered quinine in fluid, he had made a fortune in pharmaceuticals. He came to Asheville early in the twentieth century, fell in love with the place, and with his son-in-law Fred Seely in charge, constructed the splendid mountainside hotel, the Grove Park Inn, which opened in 1913. According to his grandson Fred Seely, Jr., Grove and his son-in-law were convinced that tourism must replace the tubercular institutions as the major industry if Asheville was to realize its potential as a city. The two, Seely recalled, had a grand plan for Asheville's development.

