

City Beat

There are eight million stories in my albums. This is one of them...

The Eppley Hotel Company was located in Omaha, Nebraska. Owned by hotel magnate Eugene C. Eppley, the company was established in 1917. Eppley is credited with single-handedly building one of the most successful hotel empires. There were 22 hotels spread across six states. At the time of its acquisition by the Sheraton Corporation in 1956, it was the largest privately held hotel business in the United States. Eppley, a renowned philanthropist, was later a director of Sheraton Hotels, Mid-Continent Airlines, and the Mount Rushmore Foundation.

The 22 hotels in the Eppley Hotel Company's portfolio included Pittsburgh's William Penn Hotel, the Seelbach Hotel in Louisville, Kentucky and Hotel Fontenelle in Omaha, Nebraska.

Other properties included the West Hotel in Sioux City, Iowa, which was built in 1903 and became part of the Eppley chain of hotels in the mid-1930s. The West Hotel was razed in 1953.

Sioux City's Warrior Hotel was built in 1930. Eppley built the Warrior in 1929 with the Grand Opening being December 20th 1930. Eppley Hotels sold the Warrior to the Sheraton Corporation of America in 1956.

Omaha's Hotel Fontenelle was built in 1914. An exquisite venue, the Fontenelle hosted dignitaries and luminaries of all sorts, including Presidents Harry S. Truman and John F. Kennedy. After Eppley sold it to the Sheraton corporation, the hotel eventually went to ruins, closing in the 1970s. It was demolished in 1983.

In 1927, Eppley commissioned four murals by Grant Wood for his hotels in Council Bluffs, Cedar Rapids, Waterloo and Sioux City. The original piece painted for Eppley's Martin Hotel dining room in Sioux City, one of the Corn Room series, is now located in the Sioux City Art Center.

The Hotel Fontenelle, located from 1915 to 1983 in downtown Omaha, Nebraska.

