# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property	
historic name <u>Security Buil</u>	Jing
other names/site number	
2. Location	
city or town <u>St. Louis</u>	treet not for publication <u>N/A</u> vicinity <u>N/A</u> vicinity <u>N/A</u> county <u>St. Louis [Independent City]</u> code <u>510</u>
3. State/Federal Agency Certification	
nomination request for determina National Register of Historic Places an opinion, the property _ X meets	National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X tion of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the d meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be statewide X_locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.) Date Claire Blackwell, Deputy SHPO

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. ( \_\_\_ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:	
entered in the National Register	
See continuation sheet.	
determined eligible for the National Register	
See continuation sheet.	
determined not eligible for the National Register	
removed from the National Register	
other (explain):	

Signature of Keeper

**Date of Action** 

5. Classification	

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- X private
- \_\_\_\_ public-local
- \_\_\_\_ public-State
- \_\_\_\_ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- X building(s)
- \_\_\_\_ site
- \_\_\_\_ structure
- \_\_\_\_ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing		
_1	0 buildings		
	sites		
	structures		
	objects 0 Total		
1	0 Total		

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0\_

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A\_\_\_

#### 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: COMMERCE	Sub: business
COMMERCE	financial institution
SOCIAL	clubhouse
Current Functions (Enter categories from instruc Cat: <u>COMMERCE</u> S	tions) ub: <u>business</u>

#### 7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions) \_\_\_\_\_Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	STONE	 	
roof	ASPHALT_		
walls			
other fron		 	

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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

#### 8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Nation	onal Register Criteria
A	Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
В	Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
<u>_x</u> _ c	Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.
Criteria Conside	erations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)
A B C D E F G	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes. removed from its original location. a birthplace or a grave. a cemetery. a reconstructed building, object, or structure. a commemorative property. less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.
	cance (Enter categories from instructions) <u>ARCHITECTURE</u>
Period of Signil	ficance <u>1890-1892</u>
Significant Date	es <u>1890-1892</u>
Significant Pers	son (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) <u>N/A</u>
Cultural Affiliati	on <u>N/A</u>
Architect/Builde	er <u>Peabody, Stearns, &amp; Furber</u>
	ment of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
9. Major Biblio	graphical References
preliminary previously previously designated recorded b	nentation on file (NPS) determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested. listed in the National Register determined eligible by the National Register a National Historic Landmark y Historic American Buildings Survey # y Historic American Engineering Record #
	ency

Name of repository: Landmarks Association of St. Louis, Inc.

÷0.	Geog	raphica	ıl Data		
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Acreage of Property less than one acre

JTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By
name/titleMary M. Stiritz
organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date September 21, 1999
street & number_917 Locust_7th_Floor telephone_(314) 421-6474
city or town <u>St. Louis</u> state <u>MO</u> zip code <u>63101-1413</u>
Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form: Continuation Sheets Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property. Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)
Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)
name
street & number telephone
city or town state zip code

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

#### **Description of Building**

The eleven story Security Building was constructed in 1890-92 as an office building with a ground floor bank. It is located on the southwest corner of Locust and North Fourth Streets in downtown St. Louis. Architects Peabody, Stearns & Furber designed the load-bearing building in a Classical Revival style articulated in Missouri pink granite and red brick. The exterior of the building has been well-maintained and little modified.

The U-plan building fronts approximately 114 feet on the Fourth Street (east) elevation and 127 feet on the Locust Street (north) elevation. The light court faces south. The building rests on a brick and stone foundation. The first three stories of the trabeated base are of pink granite; two-story piers with Classically-detailed capitals define bays on Locust and Fourth Streets. Balustraded balconies supported by brackets mark the principal entrance on North Fourth Street and the western-most bays on Locust. The angled corner bay (originally a doorway) features polished pink granite columns supporting an entablature. Above the base, the building's primary facades are articulated with granite arcades rising four stories; carved stone detailing embellishes the round arches at the seventh story. Red brick is employed for bays flanking the granite arcaded mid-sections and in the three-story capital comprising two arcaded stories crowned with an eleventh floor attic story. Irregularly-spaced oculus windows pierce the eleventh floor. Unarticulated red brick walls form the rear (south) elevation which incorporates the light court and the domed skylight of the lobby (Photo # 4). The alley (west) elevation is also of brick divided into eight bays by simple brick piers. Here, regular fenestration is framed in cast iron.

The Fourth Street entry to the richly articulated ground floor lobby is gained from a vestibule corridor with original coffered ceiling and floor-to-ceiling massive oak doors on ornamental brass hinges. The lobby rotunda is crowned with a domed glass skylight (now painted), detailed with caryatid figures around the drum and supported by salmon colored marble walls (Photos # 5, 6). Further enrichment is found in the principal stairway constructed of ornamental cast iron with marble treads (Photo # 7), and in the ornamental metal grillwork above the elevators. The former banking space on the north side of the lobby has been remodeled but retains enormous original vaults and a directors' board room fitted with wood paneling and a classically-detailed fireplace in ochre marble. Office space on the south side of the lobby features a small original vestibule with coffered vaulted ceiling and art glass transoms. The only other area of architectural interest and integrity is the tenth floor whose high vaulted ceilings and classical columns once graced the quarters of the Noonday Club.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

#### **Statement of Significance**

The Security Building is significant under Criterion C and in the area of ARCHITECTURE. Constructed 1890-92 by an elite syndicate of St. Louis businessmen, the Security Building became St. Louis' most costly tall office building in the 19th century and one of the most prestigious. Its distinguished Classical Revival design by nationally prominent architects Peabody, Stearns & Furber (Boston) features a massive granite three-story base and four-story arcade with carved detailing, and a noteworthy interior lobby with domed and coffered ceilings. The Security Building remains Peabody, Stearns & Furber's only commercial building standing in St. Louis of at least five erected. The eleven story building is further significant as one of only eight historic tall office buildings which survive in downtown St. Louis out of approximately 30 built in the latter 19th century.

The construction of the Laclede Building (National Register, 1998) in 1886-1888 at Fourth and Olive Streets, one block south of the Security Building site, marked a new direction in St. Louis commercial design. The fireproof Laclede's towering eight stories and vertically-oriented red brick facades broke the conventional height barrier and horizontally-tiered Palazzo style typical of earlier St. Louis office buildings. The 1891 publication, <u>Commercial and Architectural St. Louis</u>, noted this remarkable progress:

Architecture in St. Louis has undergone a great change in the last few years....The stereotyped five-story front office buildings of the city....have now passed into our city's youthful history as relics of rickety fire traps, and their places are supplied by palatial office buildings of strictly fireproof construction....and served with magnificent, smoothly working, rapid elevators, rendering the top floor as desirable as the first story.

The location of the Laclede and Security buildings on Fourth Street was also in step with the new order of progress. The first two tall buildings on Fourth, the Laclede and Security (both with ground floor banks) greatly enhanced the street's prestige. Gradually other financial institutions gravitated to Fourth street so that by the turn of the century, "the Street" (as it was called in financial vernacular) had become St. Louis' Wall Street (Fig. 1).

In May, 1889 Daniel Catlin (1837-1916), a wealthy St. Louis tobacco magnate purchased the Security Building's 115 x 127.5 foot parcel for \$148,550. Four months later Catlin, reportedly the largest individual holder of downtown business realty, also acquired the 114 x 127 foot future

### NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

site of the Wainwright Building at Seventh and Chestnut Streets at a cost of \$90,000. Catlin announced intentions to build on both sites. (However, in May 1890, he realized nearly \$40,000 profit with the sale of the Chestnut Street parcel to Catherine Wainwright.) The local press announced in November, 1889, that Catlin had invited three non-resident architectural firms to prepare plans for the Security Building, projected as a 10-story building of Missouri granite and red brick "on a scale of elegance which will make it equal to the finest structure of its character west of New York." The press further noted that "special attention will be given to the interior design and finish, the intention being to make each apartment more elegant than the offices of any building in the West." Already half of the office space had been applied for, including the ground floor which was reserved for the State Bank of St. Louis.

In mid-February 1890, title to the property passed from Catlin to a newly formed syndicate composed of important figures in the downtown business community. The 6000 shares of the Security Building Company, capitalized at \$600,000, were divided equally among Catlin and five other prominent millionaires representing both old and new money. Stockholder John T. Davis (1844-1894), heir to Samuel C. Davis' wholesale dry goods firm, was commonly known as the richest man in St. Louis. His large real estate holdings extended to Chicago and Boston. Shareholders Charles D. McClure, Moses and L. M. Rumsey, all leading Granite Mountain bonanza kings, had reaped sudden wealth from the flood of Montana silver profits into St. Louis hands. The patrician of the syndicate, iron industrialist Charles Chouteau Maffitt, boasted a lineal descent into wealth from Auguste Chouteau, an 18th century founder of St. Louis; Maffitt continued the family tradition as a man of numerous civic and commercial affairs. Catlin, aside from his fortune in tobacco and real estate, also promoted the advancement of art in St. Louis as a director of the St. Louis Art School and as an avid collector of "masterpieces".

Local histories indicate that the incorporators of the Security Building Co. viewed their undertaking as more than mere speculative investment but as a personal monument expressive of their wealth, status, taste and even civic spirit. All except one maintained offices in the building including pump manufacturers Moses and L. M. Rumsey whose showrooms were located in the basement. The Montana silver mining companies, Granite Mountain and Bi-Metallic, were also headquartered in the building. Four of the stockholders (Davis, Catlin, Maffitt, and L. M. Rumsey), served as directors of the State Bank of St. Louis. The removal of the bank from its modest riverfront address to the ground floor of the prestigious new Security Building clearly enhanced its institutional image. The custom-designed 10th and 11th floors of the building became the showplace for the Noonday Club, organized in 1893 for St. Louis' business elite. Pierce P. Furber (of Peabody, Stearns & Furber) was among the group of eight original

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

incorporators of the club.

Boston architects Robert Swain Peabody (1845-1917) and John Stoddard Stearns (1843-1917) were awarded the Security Building commission in February 1890. The Harvard-educated men formed a practice in 1870 with Peabody as the design partner and Stearns the project superintendent. Peabody's Unitarian background brought them their first St. Louis work: an 1878 commission for the Church of the Messiah (demolished). Within a short time the firm attracted sufficient business in St. Louis to justify opening a branch office in 1883 managed by M.I.T.-trained Pierce P. Furber (1854-1893) who became a partner in 1890. Prominent St. Louis clients commissioned some of the firm's major works such as the Museum of Fine Arts (1879-81); the Turner Building (1882-83); and the St. Louis Club (1884-85) - all demolished. Nearly two-thirds of the architects' 15 or 16 houses in St. Louis also have been razed including 21 Vandeventer Place, the home of Security Building developer Daniel Catlin.

In addition to Peabody & Stearns' prolific residential work, (especially at Newport, RI where they out-built McKim, Meade & White and Richard Morris Hunt), the firm had completed 15 major office buildings by 1886 and some 40 by 1914, the majority of which stood in Boston. Modern scholarship credits Peabody & Stearns' widely published 1882 design for Boston's R. H. White Building (demolished) as the most influential of the firm's 19th century commercial buildings. The White Building's simply stated tri-partite facade composition featuring an arcaded shaft of three stories most likely inspired important later works by Burnham & Root, Louis Sullivan, and H. H. Richardson. The arcaded three-part facade design became a theme Peabody & Stearns returned to in office designs such as Manhattan's 1890-91 Central Railroad of New Jersey Building (demolished), and the Security Building in St. Louis (Fig.#2).

In contrast to Adler & Sullivan's Wainwright Building (National Historic Landmark, 1968), under construction at the same time as the Security and comparable in size, Peabody & Stearns' building revealed the Boston architects' more conservative attitude towards structure and design. The Security's granite Beaux Arts Classicism also satisfied St. Louis clients' preferred architectural image of 'solid, stable, conservative'. The Wainwright Building's steel skeleton frame with brick and terra cotta curtain walls placed it in the vanguard structurally although the building's total cost of \$549,402 was substantially less than the \$825,000 expended on the Security.

Peabody & Stearns' reputation for construction of outstanding quality derived from meticulous supervision of projects and a careful selection of builders and craftsmen. They entrusted Boston

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

builder C. Everett Clark for construction of the Security Building as well as other St. Louis and New England projects. The character of Clark's work on the Security Building was highlighted in the <u>Architectural Record</u> ("Great American Architects", Series No.3, July 1896) with the comment that "it is safe to say that you may try [the Security Building] by the test of any moral plumbline, and that you will find it both upright and square." The carved stone on the Security Building (Photo # 3) was the work of John Evans & Co. (Boston), craftsmen who earned a national reputation as masters in the field through prestigious commissions from firms such as H. H. Richardson, Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, McKim, Meade & White, and George B. Post in addition to Peabody & Stearns. As the name of the building suggests, 'security' was of first importance to winning office tenants as well as attracting bank patrons. The building's heavy load-bearing brick and granite walls together with its steel frame, fireproofed with clay tile, guaranteed maximum strength and safety. The specification of brick instead of the traditional stone for a superior fireproof foundation was cited as a novel feature at the time. Brick, it was claimed, possessed a greater ability to resist cracking and crumbling when subjected to fire and cold water.

The elaborate interior treatment of the ground floor lobby and former banking rooms, together with the vaulted 10th floor Noonday Club space set the Security Building apart from other office buildings of the period. The dramatic space created by the lobby rotunda, crowned with a domed glass skylight (now painted), detailed with caryatid figures around the drum (Photos # 5, 6) and supported by fine Numidian marble walls remains the city's finest example of a 19th century office building interior. Entering from Fourth Street, a vestibule with coffered ceiling and massive floor to ceiling oak doors opens to the lobby. The public spaces are further embellished by original metal grillwork and an ornamental cast iron stairway (Photo # 7). Although most of the original banking rooms have been remodeled, the enormous vaults as well as a board room finished with wood wainscoting and a marble fireplace survive intact on the north side of the ground floor. Also noteworthy, a small vestibule with coffered barrel vault ceiling and art glass panels remains on the south side of the building.

Ownership of the building remained with the Security Building Co. until 1962. Over the years, the property enjoyed a high occupancy rate and continued to attract prestigious business and professional tenants. The Noonday Club occupied the 10th and 11th floor club space until 1964. Unlike many downtown office buildings, the Security Building was spared radical post-World War II 'modernization' which defaced exteriors and obliterated elegant interior lobbies. The building also survived the massive urban renewal programs which removed almost all of the historic Fourth Street financial district. Today the renovated office building boasts close to 100

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

per cent occupancy including one tenant, Bellefontaine Cemetery Association, which moved in when the building first opened in 1892. The Security Building anchors the east end of a strategic block in the Central Business District and remains one of the city's best-preserved and most significant 19th century office buildings in the small group of eight which still stand.

## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section <u>9</u> Page 7 Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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Holden, Wheaton A. "The Peabody Touch: Peabody and Stearns of Boston, 1870-1917." Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, (May, 1973): 114-131.

Landau, Sarah Bradford. "The Tall Office Building Artistically Reconsidered: Arcaded Buildings of the New York School, c.1879-1890". In <u>In Search of Modern Architecture</u>, pp. 136-164. Edited by Helen Searling. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982.

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Section 10

#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The boundary of the property is defined by the heavy broken line on the accompanying map entitled, "Boundary Map, Security Building".

#### **BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION**

The boundaries encompass the entire original parcel that is historically associated with the building.

NPS Form 10-900-a (8-86)

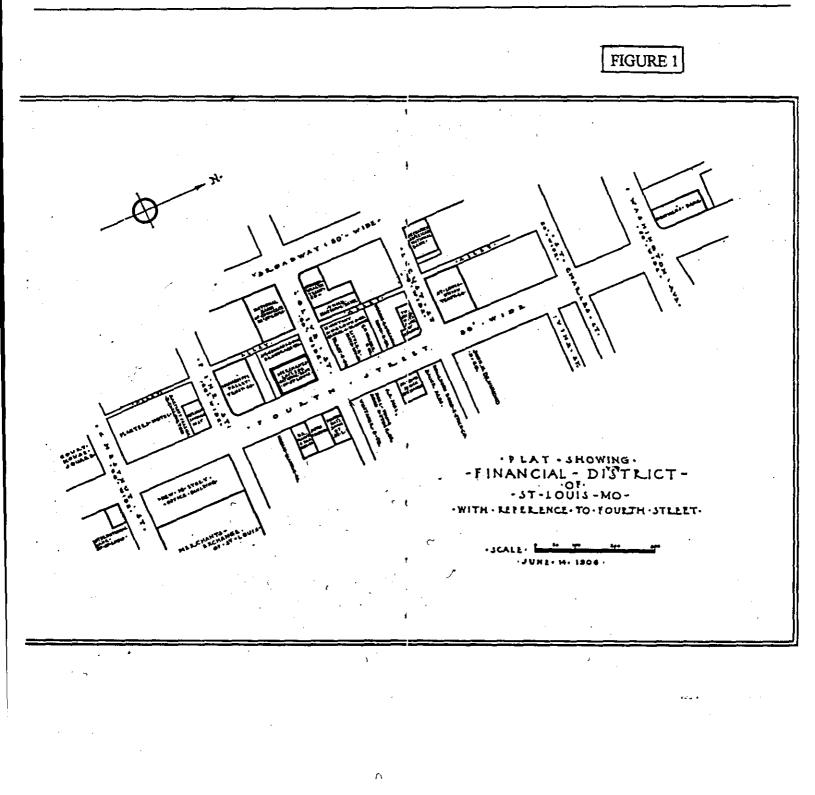
United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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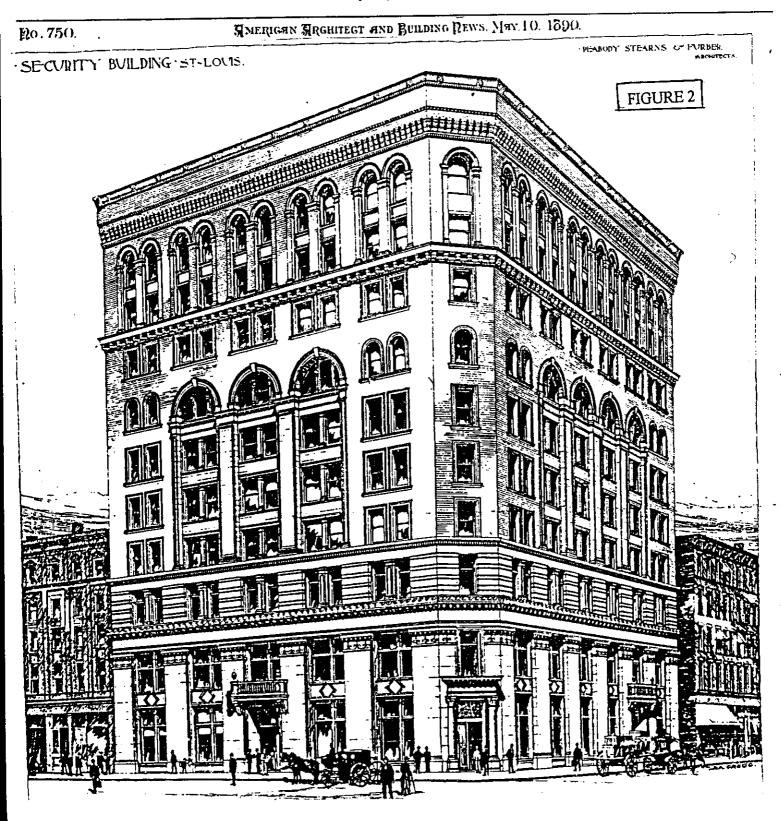


# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

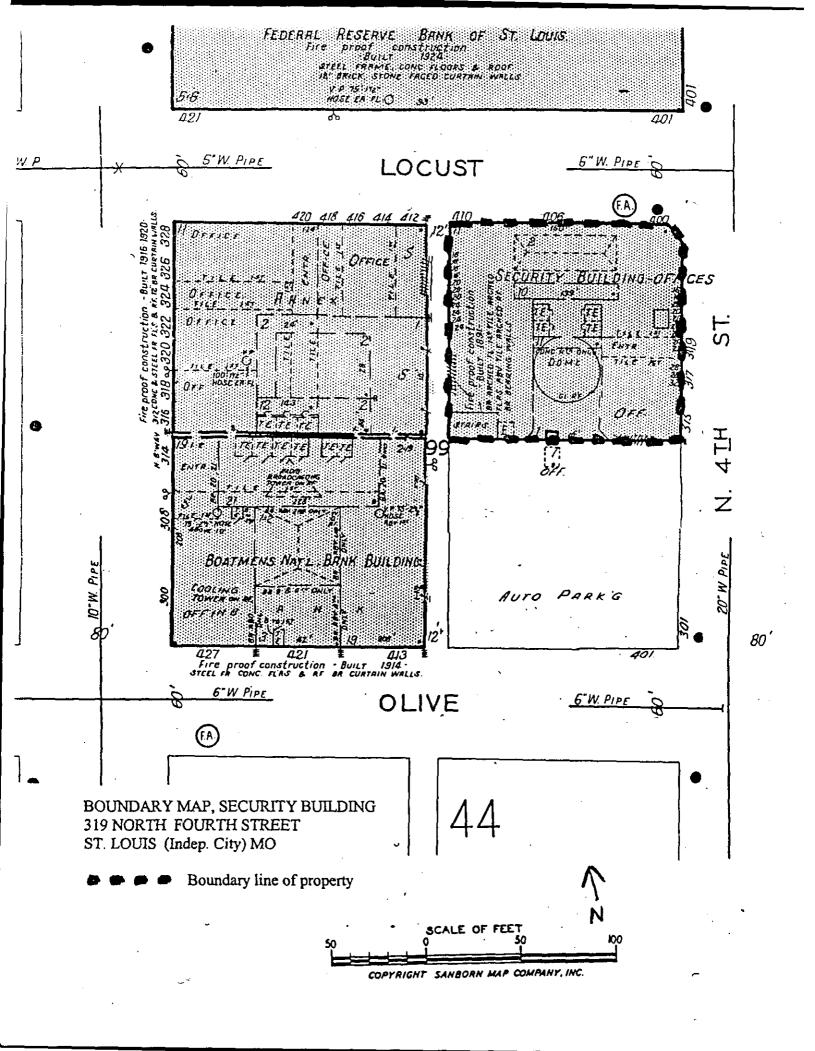


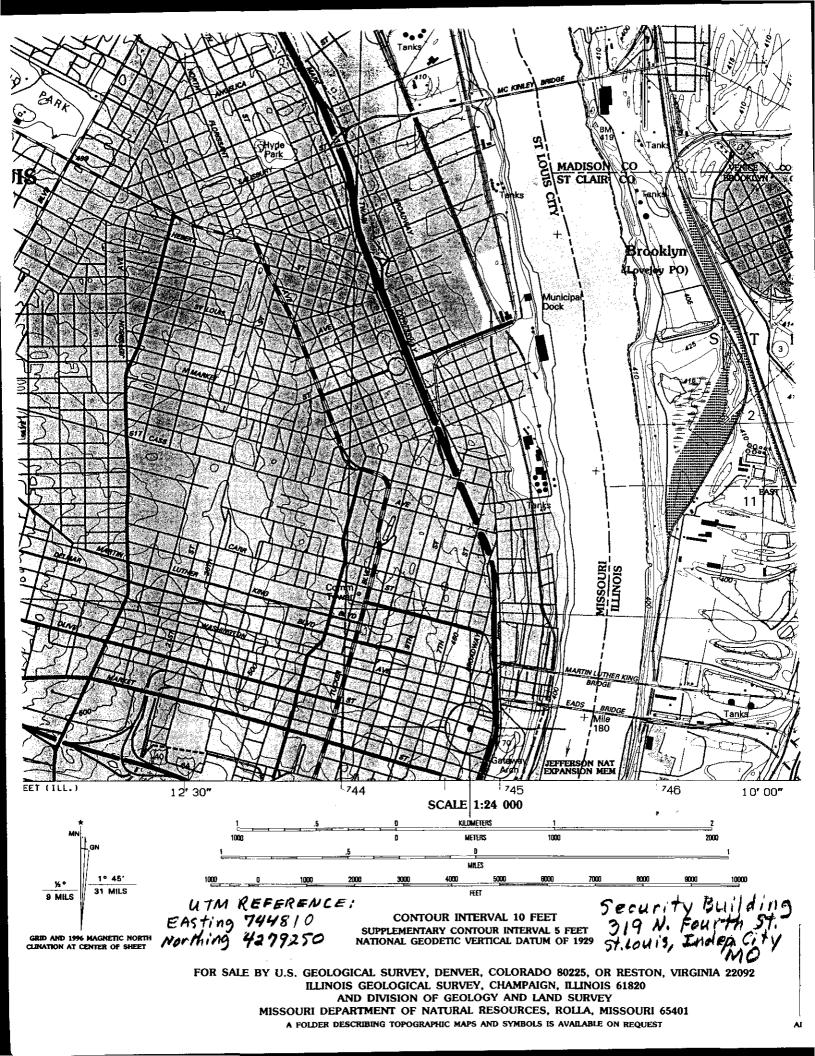
# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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Security Building St. Louis [Independent City], Missouri

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D SECURITY BUILDING 2 ST LOUIS (Indep. City) MO 3 LYNN JOSSE (4) August 1999 (5) LANDMARKS ASSOC. OF St.LOUIS 6 North & part of EAST ELEVATIONS CAMERA FACING South west #1



() SECURITY BUILDING 3 ST. LOUIS (Indep. City) NO 3 LYNN JOSSE (4) August 1999 5 LANDMARKS ASSOC. of St. Louis 6 EAST ELEVATION CAMERA FACING WEST )#2



1) SECURITY BUILDING 2) ST. LOUIS (Indep-City) MO 3 Lynn Joss E (4) August 1999 (5) LANDMARKS ASSOC. 07 St. LOU'S 6 DETAIL, EAST ELEVATION CAMERA facing WEST 7) #3

1

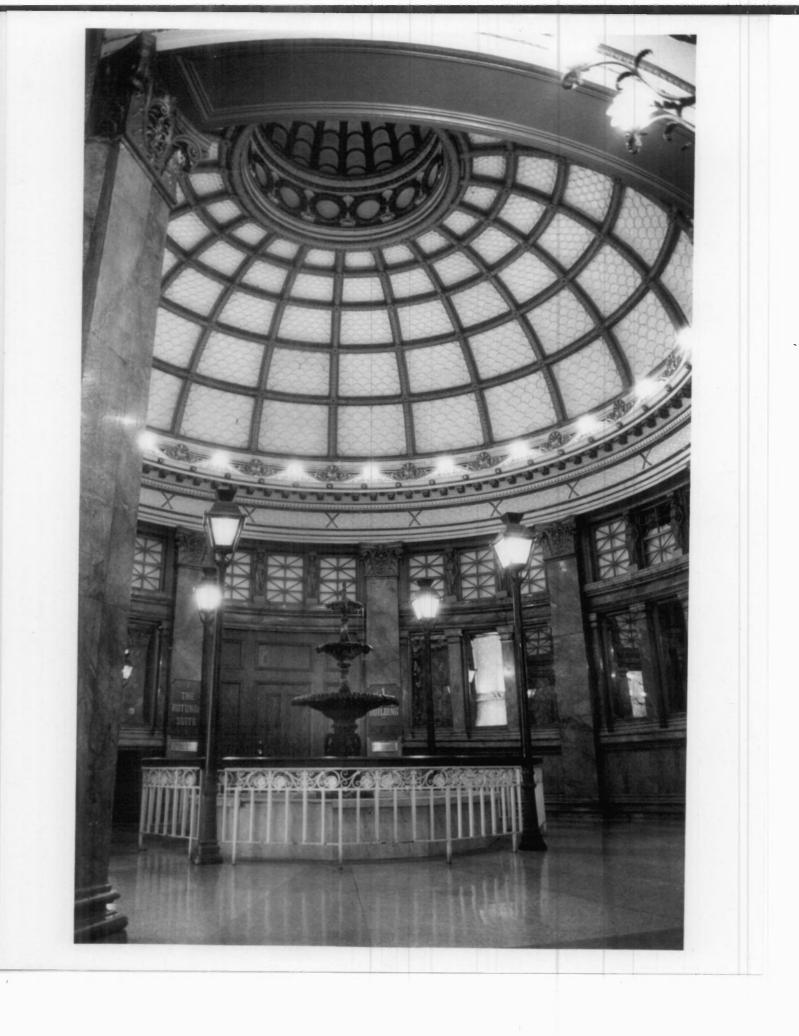


D SECURITY BUILDING 2) ST. LOUIS (Indep. City) MO 3 Lynn JossE 4) August 1999 5) CANOMARKS ASSOC. of StEOUIS ) South ELEVATION CAMERA FACING NORTH 7)#4



O'SECUPITY BUIDING D STIDUIS (Judeo City) NO 3 MARY ST RITZ (A) August 1932 (3) LANDMARK ASSOC. of St. Louis @INTERIOR, Ground FLOOS LODRY 7 #5

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(?) SECURITY BUILDINS-(2) St. Louis (Indep. CHU) NO 3 NARY STIRITZ (A) August 1922 5) LANDMARKS ASSOC. of ST. OUL (6) INTER 10R, detail ground for Lobry D#6



D SECURITY BUILDING-D ST. LOUIS (Indep. City) MO 3 MARY STIRITZ (F) August 1999 (5) LANDMARKS ASSOC. of St. LOUIS @ Interior, Staircase (7) #1

