

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**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 an 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 Masonic Temple

other name/site number N/A

**2. Location**

street & town 217 East Harrison Street N/A not for publication

city or town Kirkville N/A vicinity

state Missouri code MO county Adair code 001 zip code 63501

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles Nov. 19, 2009  
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
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 certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

- 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:)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(check as many boxes as apply)

**Category of Property**  
(check only one box)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

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

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Current Function**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

SOCIAL: Meeting Hall

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Egyptian Revival

foundation Concrete

walls Stone

Brick

roof Other: Neoprene

other \_\_\_\_\_

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

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
X 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 Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
B removed from its original location.
C a birthplace or grave.
D a cemetery.
E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
F a commemorative property.
G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1930

Significant Dates

1930

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N.A.

Cultural Affiliation

N.A.

Architect/Builder

Bonsack and Pearce, architects

Poehlman, Leonard F., contractor

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
Other State agency
Federal agency
Local government
X University
Other Name of repository:

Truman State University, Pickler Memorial Library Special Collections

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Masonic Temple  
Name of Property

Adair County, Missouri  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property less than one acre

**UTM References**

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 5/3/5/6/6/0 4/4/4/9/3/7/0  
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / /  
Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Cole Woodcox  
organization Truman State University date 21 September 2009  
street & number 616 East Harrison Street telephone 660.620.1626  
city or town Kirksville state MO zip code 63501

**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**

name/title Kirksville Masonic Temple Association  
street & number 217 East Harrison Street telephone 660.665.3409  
city or town Kirksville state MO zip code 63501

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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**Masonic Temple  
Adair County, Missouri**

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### SUMMARY

Designed by the St. Louis practice of Bonsack & Pearce and erected in 1930, the Masonic Temple in Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri is an excellent local example of Egyptian Revival architecture. This rectangular, four-story structure at 217 East Harrison Street was built to accommodate various Masonic lodges, chapters and allied organizations. The temple stands on the northwest corner of East Harrison and North High Streets immediately east of the Courthouse Square, the city's historic commercial district. Measuring approximately 55 feet by 77 feet, the building is divided vertically into five bays on its south and north elevations and four bays on its east and west fronts. The Temple's two primary façades (the south or Harrison Street façade and the east or High Street façade) are faced with limestone, emphasize a symmetrical, linear composition and display several decorative forms characteristic of the Egyptian Revival and Art Deco styles of the early-twentieth century. These two façades feature central entrances set in pylons with cavetto moldings. Masonic symbols are placed in the exterior door hardware, over the main entrance and funeral door and in the pediment at the attic level. Engaged Nilotic columns with papyrus capitals on the Harrison Street façade articulate the location of the third floor lodge room. The secondary façades (north and west) are brick and unadorned. In contrast to the stylized decoration on its primary façades, the building's interior is functional and conservatively decorated with classical detailing. Both the interior and exterior have integrity. Given its style and condition, the Kirksville Masonic Temple is locally significant and eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE.

### ELABORATION

**Site** The Temple covers most of a two lots, 105 feet by 117 feet total, at the intersection of East Harrison and North High Streets.<sup>1</sup> The house of a local attorney occupied the site for most of the late nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Around 1916 that house was razed and the double lot was vacant until the Masons bought it and had it cleared before construction of the Temple began in the spring of 1930.<sup>3</sup> The grade was raised approximately three feet to create a low earthen terrace around the building's Harrison Street façade. The site is level except for a portion on the west which slopes down slightly toward the northwest away from the building. Landscaping is minimal and the building is unobstructed by trees. The Masonic Temple constitutes a major architectural presence along East Harrison Street, which is primarily a residential street. The Temple, which serves as the last building in a transitional block between adjacent commercial and residential districts, shares its block with a one-story office building

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<sup>1</sup> See Figure A, *Insurance Maps of Kirksville, Missouri*, New York City: Sanborn Map Company, 1932, 7.

<sup>2</sup> It was the residence of H.F. Millan, a member and officer in Kirksville Masonic Lodge 105 and Adair Masonic Lodge 366.

<sup>3</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, Kirksville, Missouri: Simpson Printing Co., 1976, 155.

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and row of storage units. However, two churches,<sup>4</sup> a 1925 elementary school and historic one, one-and-a-half and two-story houses are in the immediate vicinity along East Harrison Street.

### Exterior of the Kirksville Masonic Temple

Because of its height, mass, position on a corner lot and the absence of trees in its landscaping, the Masonic Temple dominates the intersection of Harrison and High streets. The building is four floors total – first, second, mezzanine and third – and is primarily a rectangle in plan measuring 77 feet along its south and north façades and 55 feet along its east and west. Service entries and an exterior staircase are located along the west façade. On the ornamented south and east façades of the building, ashlar of dressed Carthage limestone, light grey in color, face all floors.<sup>5</sup> Cut limestone is also used for the embellishments at the roofline. The subsidiary façades (north and west) are buff brick laid in common bond.<sup>6</sup> Original wooden window and door surrounds are painted brown on the south and east elevations. The top of the building's concrete foundation is visible on the north and west as the grade drops toward the northwest of the site. The Temple rises to a height of approximately 52 feet and the footage for each floor is approximately 4,100 square feet. The Temple has a structural steel frame with subfloors of reinforced concrete.

**South Façade**<sup>7</sup> One of the Masonic Temple's two primary elevations, the south façade consists of five bays organized into three vertical units (1-3-1) and into three horizontal divisions indicated either by water tables or by dramatic shifts in scale. These three divisions correspond with the first floor, the second floor and mezzanine, and the third or top floor. The walls on the south and the east façade are covered with ashlar limestone and rise to a height of 52 feet. The cornerstone is found on the southeast corner. Clearly visible on the southern face is an inscription reading: Masonic Temple erected by the Masonic Bodies of Kirksville Missouri AD 1930 A.L. 5930.<sup>8</sup>

A short straight-run staircase with eight steps leads to the focal point of the first floor's composition: the main entrance centered in the south façade. The door surround is treated as a pylon – the walls are battered and surmounted by a gorge and roll molding. The pylon holds a double leaf door with plate glass panels set in wooden frames and original hardware. Historic lanterns flank the doors and a stone molding with stylized plants and grooves frames the door surround.<sup>9</sup> The cavetto molding above the entrance displays lilies and Masonic emblems – an

<sup>4</sup> These are the First Christian Church designed by Anselevicius & Rupe of St Louis in 1971 and Trinity Episcopal Church designed by local architect Irwin Dunbar in 1917 (NR listed – 01/02/08).

<sup>5</sup> See Photographs 1, 2 and 3.

<sup>6</sup> See Photographs 3 and 4.

<sup>7</sup> See Photographs 1 and 2.

<sup>8</sup> A frequently used Masonic calendar adds 4,000 years to the common era (1930 + 4,000 = 5930). This coincides with the start of the world in 4000 BCE, referred to as the Year of Light, Anno Lucis or A.L.

<sup>9</sup> See Figure B.

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### Masonic Temple Adair County, Missouri

interlocked compass and square around the letter G.<sup>10</sup> Atop the cavetto cornice is a thin metal balustrade of lotus flowers and fleur de lis, which creates a balcony for the second floor.<sup>11</sup>

The windows on the first floor have deep responds and feature the original, wooden, double casement windows set on stone sills. A water table marks the transition to the next floor. The fenestration treatment for the second story and mezzanine consists of vertically paired windows. The windows on the second floor are slightly larger than those on the mezzanine. The vertical pairing is emphasized by a subtly protruding stone surround that suggests a pedimented aedicule.<sup>12</sup> The vertical units in the first, second, fourth and fifth bays are made up of a double casement windows on the second floor, a spandrel decorated with a lotus and chevron pattern, a double casement window on the third floor and a triangular pediment. The vertical unit in the third bay contains original tripartite casement windows rather than the double casements found in the other bays. Otherwise this vertical unit has the same details as those located in the other bays. In contrast, the windows for the third or top floor (in the first and fifth bays) are the largest on the Temple's south elevation. They have pronounced sills and moldings, double casement windows and triangular pediments, whose tympana include lotus blossoms in high relief.

The projecting entrance pylon on the first floor establishes an implied vertical line that culminates in the Nilotic temple front on the third floor. This feature marks the location of the building's principal meeting room. Although Egyptian motifs decorate both the south and east façades, the primary elevations, their scale, number and placement make the third floor into the building's focal point.<sup>13</sup> The temple front is distinguished from the rest of the building by a recessed wall plane and also by a wide, plain string course which defines the mezzanine from the third floor and suggests a stylobate for the temple façade. Four engaged papyriform columns dominate this temple façade; the center two are half columns the outer two are quarter columns set at the edge of the temple. All four have bell-shaped capitals carved with alternating tall and short flowering papyrus and cartouches in low relief.<sup>14</sup> A blind arcade with recessed panels; a broken frieze with nine overlapping lozenges in high relief; a broad, plain lintel/architrave inscribed with "Masonic Temple"; and a striking triangular pediment with twin uraei on either side of a solar disc with Masonic emblems complete this temple front.<sup>15</sup>

The bays framing the temple front (the first and fifth bays) receive special decorative treatment above the third floor. A frieze of lotus blossoms cut in sub-relief is broken with large lozenges in

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<sup>10</sup> The compass and square signify reason and faith and are emblems of the Master Mason. The G stands for God and geometry.

<sup>11</sup> See Figure C.

<sup>12</sup> See Photograph 1 and Figure D.

<sup>13</sup> See Photographs 1 and 2 and Figures E and F.

<sup>14</sup> All four of these columns and the decoration of their capitals are based on the double row of Great Columns from the Hypostyle Hall of Karnak in Egypt built by Seti I (19<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) around 1279 BCE. See Figure G from David Roberts *Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt and Nubia* (1842-1849).

<sup>15</sup> See Figures E and F.

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high relief; these wrap around corners or are set in line with the fenestration of the four floors below.<sup>16</sup> The parapet is plain. A narrow coping and cresting of large palmettes finishes the building, which has a flat roof.

**East Façade<sup>17</sup>** This elevation mirrors most of the elements and arrangement patterns from the south façade with the notable exception that it is a three and not a four story structure. A side entrance is centered in the east façade. This door mirrors that in the south façade – double leaf with plate glass and wooden frame but is set at the level of the site’s original grade so there is no need for a staircase up to it as there is on the other primary elevation. The pylon for this door in the east façade is less elaborate than that on the south façade but has the same lotus relief in the cavetto molding and is topped with a triangular pediment.<sup>18</sup> Original metal lanterns flank the pylon. The second, exposed side of the Temple’s corner stone lies at the southern end of this elevation and is inscribed: “Laid by Samuel R. Freet, Grandmaster AF&M of Missouri. April 1, 1930. Bonsack & Pearce, Architects. L.F. Poehlman, Builder”. The fenestration for the ground floor echoes that of the southern façade: the first and fifth bays are double wooden casement windows set in deep responds and have stone sills. The second and fourth bays have single wooden casements on stone sills. The large vertical units for the second floor and mezzanine are repeated across the east façade with slight variations. On the second floor, the first bay contains stacked, double casement windows separated by a spandrel with lotus and chevron detailing like the windows on the Harrison Street façade. The second and third bays contain only one opening: double casement windows surmounted by a transom. The openings on the third floor are significantly larger than the corresponding windows on the Harrison Street elevation. On this side they feature double casements with a transom. The pediments above the third floor windows have the same lotus blossom in high relief as the southern façade. Similarly, the sub-relief lotus frieze, lozenges, parapet, coping and anthemion are replicated from that façade.

**North Façade<sup>19</sup>** This three-story façade is the rear of the building, faces an alley and is relatively austere. The walls are made of buff brick laid in common bond and are divided into five distinct bays. Each floor has five large rectangular windows, all of which were infilled with brick in the 1950s. Three brick pilasters serve as shallow buttresses and separate the first, second, third and fourth bays. The fourth and fifth bays are divided by a chimney. Two attic vents, above the second and fourth bays, are composed of an opening fronted by a grill of soldier bricks.

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<sup>16</sup> See Figure H.

<sup>17</sup> See Photographs 2 and 3.

<sup>18</sup> See Figure I. Despite the free mix of Egyptian motifs on the Masonic Temple, many individual elements are archaeologically correct. The source for the lotus motif in the cavetto molding is the Temple of Edfu (237 and 57 BCE).

<sup>19</sup> See Photograph 3.



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### **West Façade**<sup>20</sup>

This subsidiary façade is essentially divided into three bays. This is the second façade to utilize a buff brick veneer laid in a common bond. The cement foundation is in evidence on this side of the building because the raised grade drops steeply from south, where the ground is almost even with the first course of limestone, to the north where approximately three feet of the cement foundation is exposed. Originally a straight run, exterior staircase to the basement was part of the composition for this elevation. Sometime after the building's construction in 1930, the stairwell was given cinderblock walls above grade and a flat, cement roof.

A corbelled brick water table, which repeats the location and scale of the limestone water table on the south and east façades, separates the first floor from those above it. The first floor fenestration is asymmetrical in its placement and reflects a pragmatic arrangement. From left (north) to right (south), the first opening on the ground floor is rectangular with brick and glass block infill and a small rectangular infill window. Next, three stairs lead to a single leaf door with a transom. A rectangular vent is between this door and the next opening, a rectangle with brick infill surrounding a small rectangular infill window. Continuing to the right is the largest opening at this level: rectangular, paired, 1/1 replacement sash windows on a brick sill. The final opening is a small rectangular 1/1 replacement sash window with a brick sill.

The fenestration for the second floor and mezzanine is more regular. From left to right it consists of a rectangular opening (the second floor has brick and glass block infill and a small rectangular replacement window; the third floor has brick infill and a ventilation hood for HVAC; then paired rectangular 1/1 replacement sash windows set on a brick sill. The window surrounds and mullion are original. The final opening for both the second floor and again on the mezzanine is a rectangular 1/1 sash window set on a brick sill.

The third floor continues the three bay organization established on the second and third floors with two variations. The first is the size of the three main openings. These are large rectangular openings. Once again, the northernmost has brick and glass block infill surrounding a small infill window. The second large opening holds paired 1/1 replacement sash windows with an original mullion set on a brick sill. The third, large opening holds a 1/1 replacement sash window with a brick sill. The second variation is that a small rectangular 1/1 replacement sash window on a brick sill is set between the first the second of the aforementioned large openings. Above the third floor, at the parapet level, are two attic vents fronted with a grill of soldier bricks. Coping finishes the parapet.

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<sup>20</sup> See Photograph 4.

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**Masonic Temple  
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### **Interior of the Kirksville Masonic Temple**

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**Basement** The Masonic Temple stands on a foundation of cement walls approximately eighteen inches thick. A shallow basement occupies the western part of the building and houses the furnace and coal room. The rest of the basement consists of 1) a crawl space on the south side of the building where the first floor foyer is above grade, and 2) a pad foundation where the first floor Banquet Hall is at grade level. In short, the basement reflects the split level arrangement of the first floor above it. An exterior, straight run flight of stairs on the building's western elevation provides access to the basement.

In the structure above the basement, most of the Temple's interior finishes are original and in admirable condition. These include: 1) terrazzo floors for the main staircase, throughout the first floor and for the hallways on all floors. Other floors throughout the building are cement. 2) Plaster over metal lathe for most of the Temple's interior spaces. A number of non-load bearing interior walls are 4-inch gypsum block covered with plaster. 3) Oak door and window surrounds, single-panel doors, bathroom stall dividers and doors. 4) Door hardware, which displays a compass, square and G on each door knob. 5) Light fixtures throughout the Temple. The most notable being the chandeliers in the Banquet Hall on the first floor, the Blue Lodge on the second floor and the Commandry (a York Rite lodge hall) on the third floor.

**First Floor**<sup>21</sup> The lobby and banquet hall fill most of the first floor. The lobby stretches across the southern end of the building.<sup>22</sup> It retains most of its original features: light fixtures, plaster cornice composed of dentils and tongue and groove molding, oak single paneled doors and terrazzo floor. The lobby terminates in a men's lounge on one end and a staircase on the other end that leads directly to the Commandry. The closed string staircase has terrazzo treads, metal risers and a metal newel post, balusters and handrail.<sup>23</sup> Two cloak rooms, an office and the men's toilets divide the lobby from the Banquet Hall. A wide, straight run staircase with five stairs leads down from the lobby to the Banquet Hall. This room, approximately 60 by 34 feet, has a double leaf door and two paired casement windows set in the east wall.<sup>24</sup> When cleared of tables and chairs, this large room also functions as a ballroom and holds over 200 people. A plaster cornice encircles the ceiling, which, in turn, is divided latitudinally by two beams and illuminated by eight original chandeliers. Two original, single leaf, swinging oak doors with oval glass windows are set in the west wall. These lead into a sizeable kitchen. Pantries, a short corridor and women's toilets (complete with their original oak stall dividers, doors and hardware) fill the remainder of the western perimeter of this floor.

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<sup>21</sup> See Figure Q.

<sup>22</sup> See Figure K.

<sup>23</sup> See Figure L.

<sup>24</sup> See Photograph 5.

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### Masonic Temple Adair County, Missouri

**Second Floor**<sup>25</sup> Storage spaces, a preparation room, antechamber, a toilet and one committee room shared by the Kirksville Lodge 105, the Adair Lodge 366 and the Kirksville Chapter 184 Order of the Eastern Star (which includes men and women) line the western and southern sides of the second floor. The chief chamber on this floor is the Blue Lodge -- a vast, tall room oriented east-west.<sup>26</sup> It is used for Masonic rituals and displays the original nineteenth-century charters for the lodges, portraits and accoutrement used in lodge meetings. A dais stands on the east end and a smaller dais on the west end. As in most Masonic lodge halls, three chairs sit on each of these daises.<sup>27</sup> Several pieces of furniture in the room date from the late nineteenth-century and were apparently transferred from the 1890 lodge at 210-220 North Elson Street to this Temple. The western wall has a balcony supported by ornate brackets.<sup>28</sup> A segmental arched aperture opens onto the balcony, connecting it with the mezzanine floor above.<sup>29</sup> Panels with plaster moldings flank the balcony. Ten Roman Doric pilasters with rosettes in their necking line the pale blue walls around the Lodge.<sup>30</sup> A wide plaster cornice comprised of alternating husks and stylized slender leaves frames the ceiling. Three beams divide the Blue Lodge latitudinally thereby creating four rectangular panels, each of which has two original decorative chandeliers.

**Mezzanine** The upper part of the Blue Lodge extends into and fills most of this floor. The western and southern sides of this floor hold the balcony mentioned above as well as storage spaces, offices for the secretaries of the different lodges and a corridor that runs from the main staircase in the southwest corner of the building to a recreation room with pool tables in the southeast corner of the mezzanine.

**Third Floor**<sup>31</sup> The third floor of the Temple is where the York Rite bodies, a higher form of Freemasonry, hold their meetings and conduct their ceremonies. Their lodge hall, The Commandry, occupies almost this entire floor. It is a solemn, rectangular room oriented east-west.<sup>32</sup> The didactic quality of the room is conveyed by architectural suggestions of Solomon's Temple, the three degrees of Masonry reflected in the three tiered dais on the eastern wall, the ceiling with its original chandeliers<sup>33</sup> but also studded with light bulbs to suggest stars in the heavens. The ceiling also has two circular ventilation openings covered with original,

<sup>25</sup> See Figure R.

<sup>26</sup> See Photograph 6.

<sup>27</sup> These impressive, high backed oak chairs were donated by prominent local citizens who were Masons, viz., John L. Porter, a judge and Kirksville real estate developer; Charles C. Gardner who owned a loan and insurance business; Hiram Selby, a businessman and bank president; Joseph L. McClanahan who owned a buggy and vehicle store. Other shorter oak chairs on the western dais were donated by Harry Bamburg, a merchant.

<sup>28</sup> See Figure M.

<sup>29</sup> See the bottom center of Figure S for a spec drawing of this opening.

<sup>30</sup> See Figure N.

<sup>31</sup> See Figure S.

<sup>32</sup> See Photograph 7.

<sup>33</sup> See Figure O.

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**Masonic Temple  
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ornamental grills. As in the Blue Lodge, the Commandry exhibits many Masonic emblems and accessories – three altars, an open Bible, squares and compasses, the letter G, a Templar’s sword, etc. Additional rooms on this floor include storage closets, toilets, a locker room with a balcony for additional storage, and an L-shaped passage way with three niches or “huts”, each topped with a shed roof supported by knee braces that juts out into the corridor.<sup>34</sup> This hallway, used in Masonic rites, leads to the Red Cross Room, a sizeable chamber in the northeast corner of the Temple.

### Alterations

Only minor alterations have been made to the Temple since its construction, e.g, it was re-roofed in the late 1990s. The most visible alteration was to the north elevation (the alley façade) where all the windows were closed with brick infill in the 1950s.

### INTEGRITY AND CONCLUSION

The Kirksville Masonic Temple is a rare example of the Egyptian Revival style in northeast and north central Missouri. It is in good repair and manifests the structural condition expected of buildings eligible for listing on the National Register. The stone and brick veneers, original fixtures and plasterwork are all intact. Set in the context of the building’s total square footage, there is negligible water damage to the plaster on one wall in the Commandry and in the main stairwell. Through its site, solid construction and materials and constant use as a meeting hall since its construction, the Masonic Temple is a powerful symbol of Freemasonry’s stability and presence in this rural town. This is a dramatic building and embodies the distinctive characteristics of its genre -- a Masonic lodge -- as well as displays a synthesis of two early twentieth-century architectural styles – Art Deco and Egyptian Revival. Thus, the Masonic Temple in Kirksville ably demonstrates local architectural significance.

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<sup>34</sup> See Figure P.

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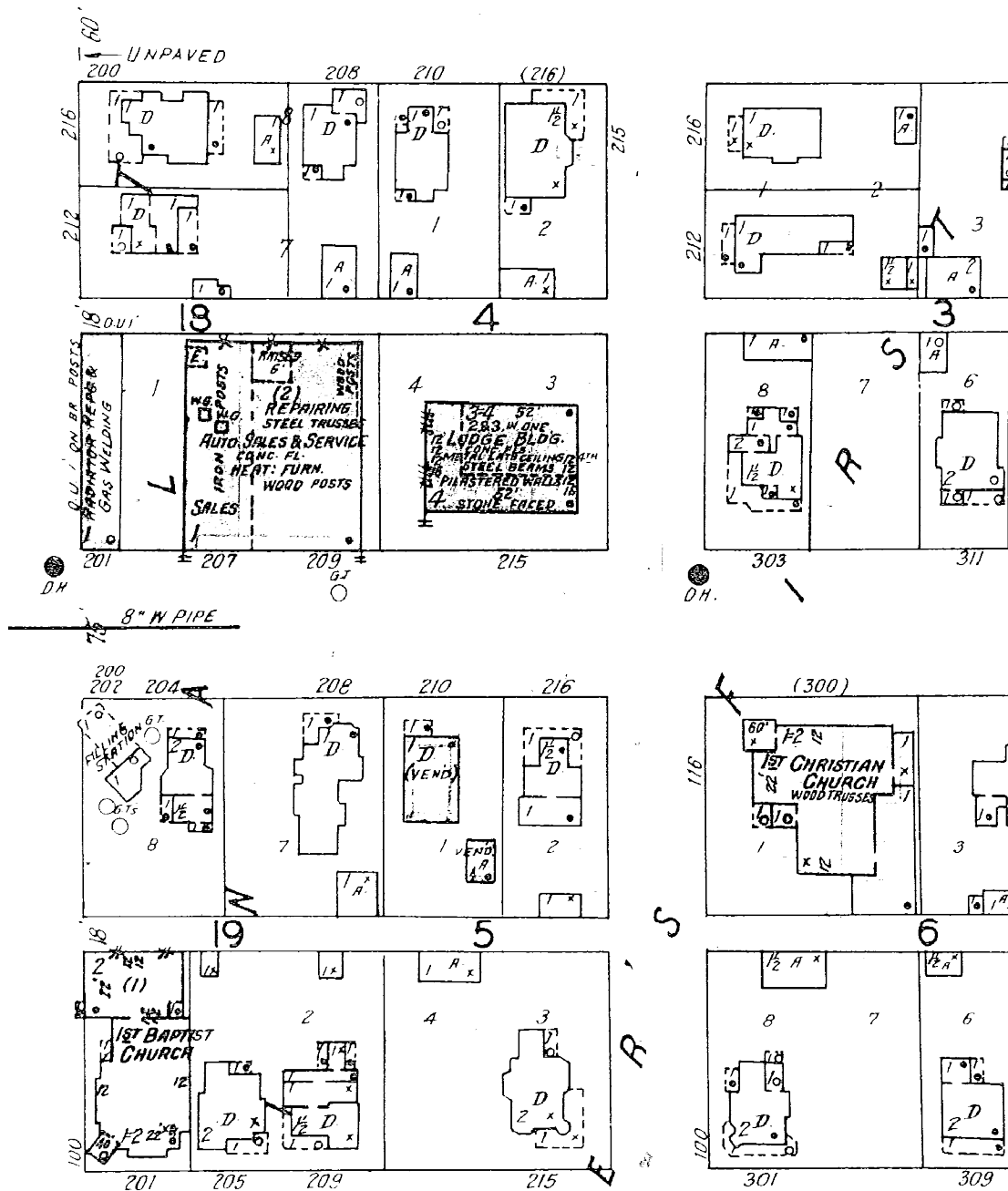


Figure A Insurance Maps of Kirksville, Missouri, New York City: Sanborn Map Company, 1932, 7.

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**Figure B**      Detail of main entrance



**Figure C**      Detail of main entrance balustrade

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**Figure D** Detail of fenestration and spandrel on south (Harrison Street) façade.



**Figure E** Detail of temple front on south (Harrison Street) façade.

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**Figure F** Detail of broken frieze and engaged columns on south (Harrison Street) façade.



**Figure G** Two views of the Hypostyle Hall in the Temple of Karnak (from David Roberts, *The Holy Land, Syria, Idumea, Arabia, Egypt & Nubia*. 1842-1849)



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**Figure H** Detail of frieze, parapet and anthemia on south (Harrison Street) façade.



**Figure I** Detail of cornice for funeral door on east (High Street) façade.

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**Figure J** Detail of window surround, frieze and parapet on east (High Street) façade.



**Figure K** Lobby looking east.



**Figure L** Main Staircase.

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**Figure M** Detail of Scrolled Bracket supporting the Balcony in the Blue Lodge.



**Figure N** Detail of Pilaster and Cornice in the Blue Lodge.

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**Figure O** Detail of Chandelier in the Commandry.



**Figure P** Hut in Third Floor Hallway.

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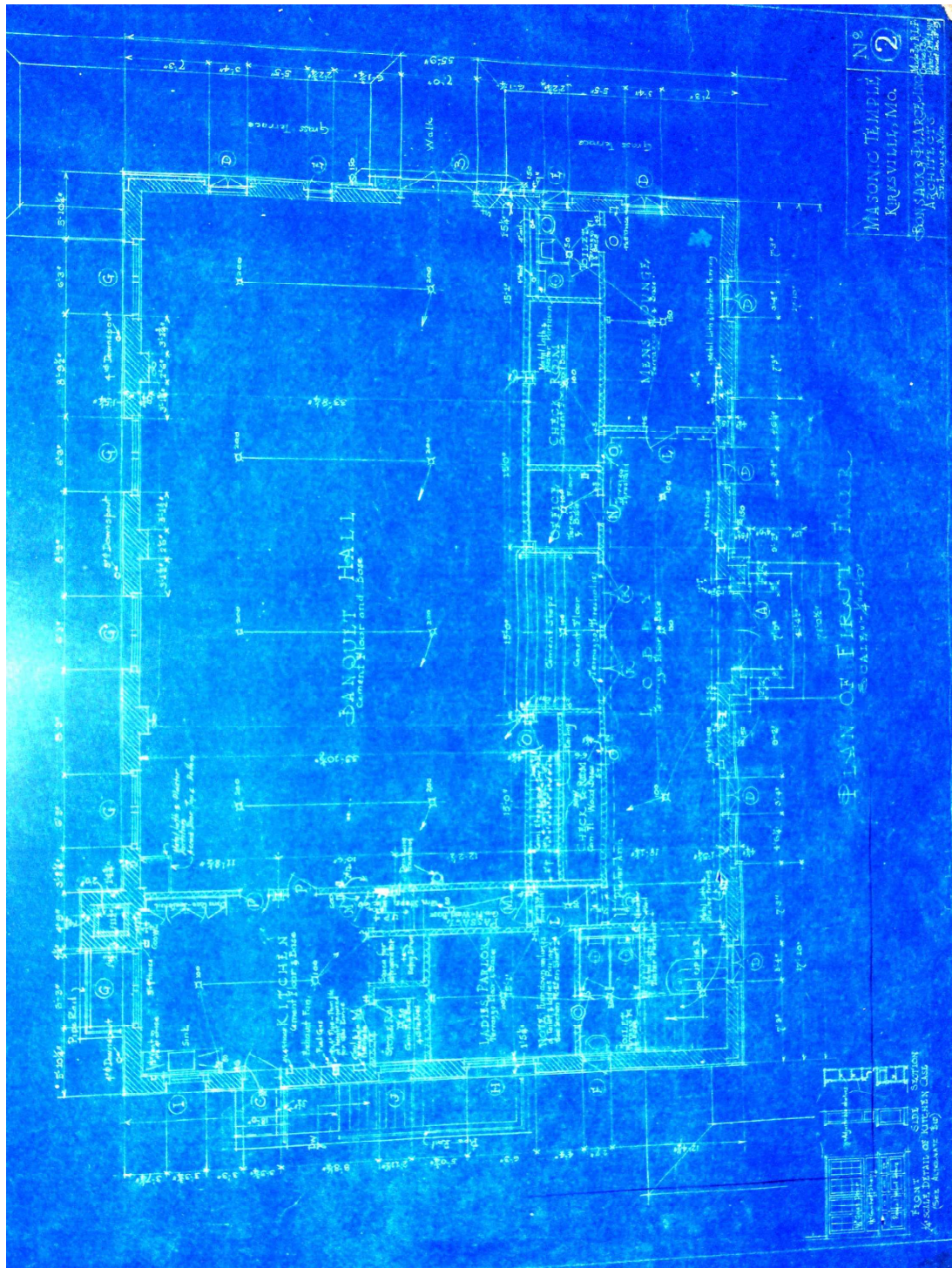


Figure Q Plan of the First Floor, 1929. (Kirksville Masonic Temple Association)

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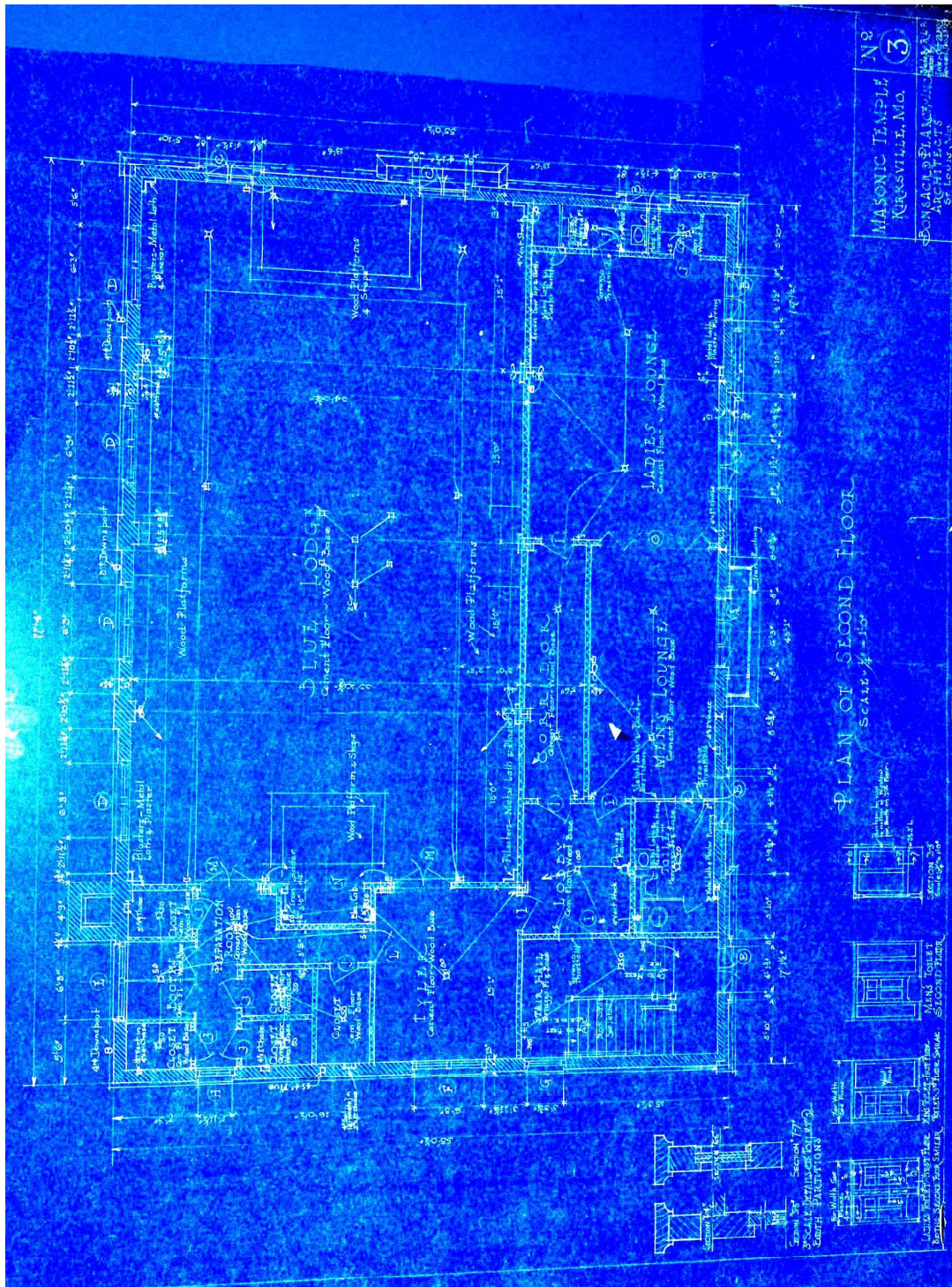


Figure R Plan of the Second Floor, 1929. (Kirksville Masonic Temple Association)

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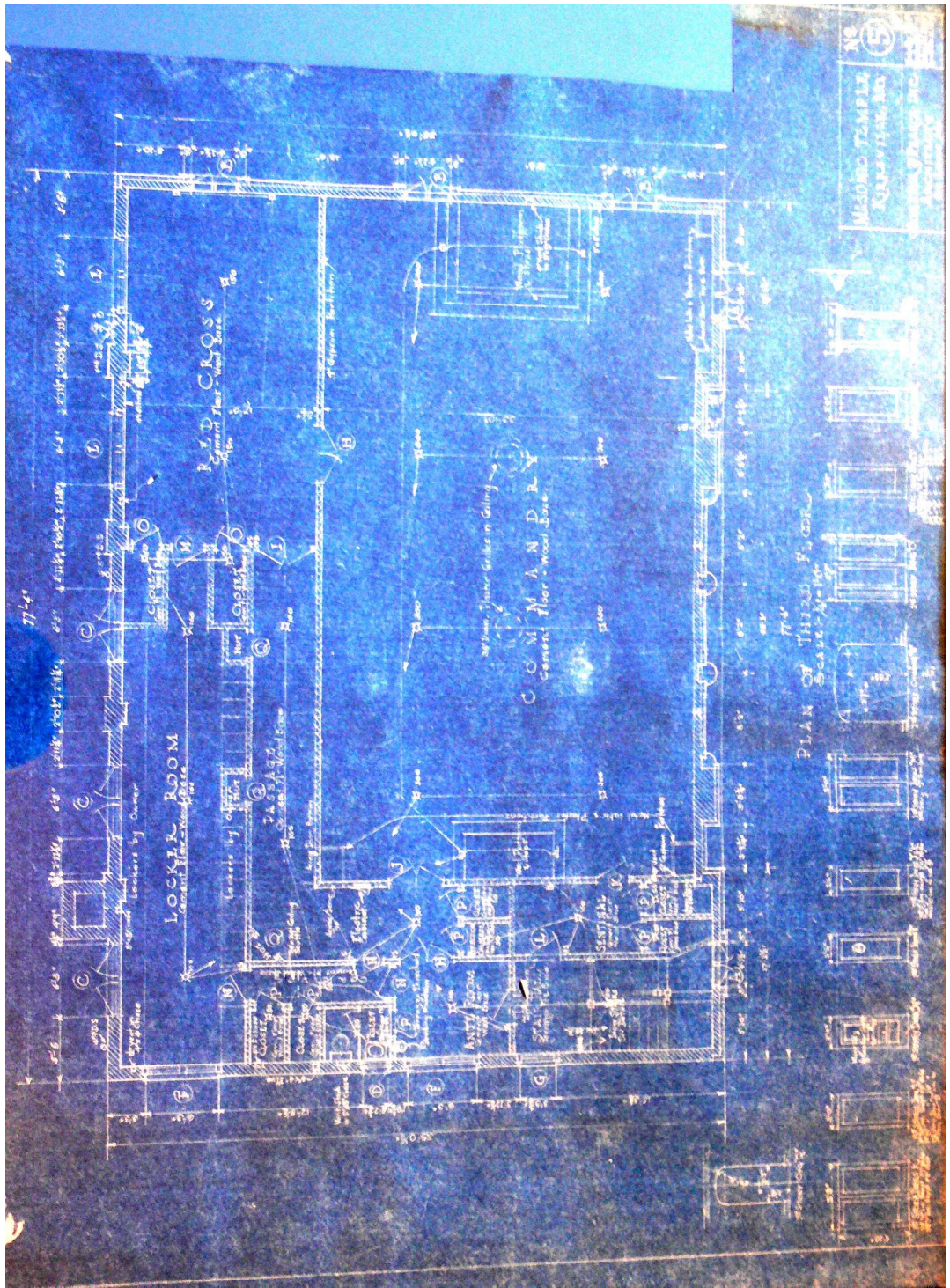


Figure S Plan of the Third Floor, 1929. (Kirksville Masonic Temple Association)

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### SUMMARY

Since its erection in 1930 at 217 East Harrison Street, the Masonic Temple in Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri has provided space for local groups to hold ceremonial meetings, gather for fellowship and festivities and organize their charitable activities. The building's design, in particular the massing and decorative details on the two primary façades facing Harrison and High Streets, make the Masonic Temple a noteworthy instance of its genre – a monumental Masonic lodge. This building is locally significant under Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE for four reasons. 1) It is an exceptional example of the Egyptian Revival style popular during the 1920s and 1930s. In fact, it is northeast and north central Missouri's best expression of the twentieth-century interest in classical Egyptian architecture. 2) In addition to Egyptianizing elements, the building has some Art Deco detailing. The architects, Bonsack & Pearce, synthesized two prominent styles in American architecture during the twenties and thirties for the design of this temple. 3) This stately building manifests the concern that Kirksville patrons had for their built environment. It demonstrates the translation of urban building styles to rural areas in Missouri and the conservative but still sophisticated design present in this small town at the onset of the Great Depression. And 4) the Masonic Temple preserves its prime historical features. The main elevations of the Masonic Temple are virtually unaltered in appearance since the building's construction by a local contractor and Mason almost eighty years ago. The period of significance is 1930, the date of construction.

### ELABORATION

**The Masonic Temple and Freemasonry in Kirksville** The Order of Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons or Freemasonry represents the oldest fraternity in existence.<sup>1</sup> The origins of this organization are vague but Freemasonry claims to descend from Medieval guilds. Masonic groups in the United States date to 1717. In Missouri, the organization started in 1807 in Ste. Genevieve and the first lodge in St. Louis dates from 1821. Freemasonry spread rapidly throughout the state as whites settled and organized new counties. This feverish pace saw the spin off of a number of allied autonomous organizations both locally and nationally which included: the York and Scottish Rites; Shrine; Order of the Eastern Star; Order of DeMolay; and Bethels of Job's Daughters.<sup>2</sup>

Located about 220 miles northwest of St. Louis, Kirksville was chartered as a town in 1858, but documented white settlement of the country began during the 1820s and Kirksville itself was founded in 1841.<sup>3</sup> The first Masonic lodge in Adair County was Kirksville Lodge No. 128 which was chartered in May 1850 and met in a log cabin. At its high point, the ante-bellum

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<sup>1</sup> "Freemasonry's First 150 Years in Missouri", *Kansas City Star*, 26 September 1971, Star Magazine Section, 25.

<sup>2</sup> "Freemasonry's First 150 Years in Missouri", 25.

<sup>3</sup> E.M. Violette, *History of Adair County*, Kirksville, Missouri: Denslow History Co., 1911, 6-17.



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membership in the county numbered 48 Masons.<sup>4</sup> The lodge's charter was pulled during the Civil War and in 1864 a charter was granted to Kirksville Lodge No. 105, which absorbed most of the members from the earlier lodge.

A second lodge, Adair Lodge No. 366, was chartered in 1881.<sup>5</sup> All but one of its original members came from Lodge 105.<sup>6</sup> These two lodges (numbers 105 and 366) used the same space for their meetings and rites. Together they erected a three-story brick building (no longer standing) in Kirksville at the west end of the north side of the Courthouse Square in 1872.<sup>7</sup> On alternate weeks, the two lodges met on the third floor of this building, however an admixture of Masons could be found at either meeting.

Two more Masonic organizations in Adair County feature in the history of Kirksville's Masonic Temple. Historically, both have been small groups. The Caldwell Chapter No. 53, part of Royal Arch Masonry, was chartered in 1869. Although it only had 100 members in 1900, by 1926 (when Adair County Masons were enthusiastically raising money to construct a new temple) its membership had soared to 428.<sup>8</sup> The second organization, Ely Commandry No. 22, Knights Templar, was chartered in 1873 with 10 members and grew very slowly, only reaching 100 members in 1911.<sup>9</sup> By the late nineteen twenties, approximately 500 people or about 5 percent of Kirksville's population were associated with these four lodges and their affiliated youth and women's groups.<sup>10</sup>

The store-temple built by Adair County Masons in 1872 was destroyed by a fire eighteen years later. Soon after, Lodge 105 constructed to a new Masonic facility at 210-220 North Elson Street directly north of the temple that had just burnt down.<sup>11</sup> Lodge 366, Caldwell Chapter and Ely Commandry chose to rent rooms on the Courthouse Square until 1910 when they moved to the third floor of the newly completed Foster Building at 116-120 East Washington Street.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 140.

<sup>5</sup> Violette, 152.

<sup>6</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 141.

<sup>7</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 153 and Violette, 151.

<sup>8</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 145.

<sup>9</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 148.

<sup>10</sup> A fifth lodge, for black Masons, also existed in Kirksville and was chartered as Northwestern Lodge No. 88 in 1878. Like the lodges for whites in Kirksville, this lodge too was peripatetic and met at 218½ North Franklin Street (historically 214½ North Franklin Street); 210 North Elson Street; 205½ West Washington Street during the 1920s; and finally in 101½ North Wabash Street during the 1930s. All of these locations are in Kirksville's Central Business District and most are within a block of the Courthouse Square.

<sup>11</sup> See Figure T. This building was located just off the Courthouse Square. Like the structure it replaced, this temple housed commercial ventures on the ground floor and lodge meeting rooms upstairs. During the day the lodge hall also doubled as a courtroom for Adair County. See Violette, 152 and *A Book of Adair County History*, 105.

<sup>12</sup> See Figure U. This arrangement continued the layout favored during the nineteenth century: a commercial space on lower floors and meeting space on the top floor. Both the Masonic Building (Lodge 105), the Foster Building (Lodge 366, Caldwell Chapter and Ely Commandry) and the meeting halls for the black Masonic lodge were all approximately two blocks away from the site of the nominated 1930 Temple.

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In 1919 a new Masonic Temple Association was formed in Kirksville to administer the buildings in which white Masons met.<sup>13</sup> This consortium of local Masonic lodges determined to finance and construct a building that would detach fraternal from mercantile spaces and instead be exclusively a Masonic lodge hall. At this same time, Adair Lodge No. 366, Caldwell Chapter and Ely Commandry moved to the Masonic Building on North Elson Street in order to economize and save funds for a new building. Each of the four lodges created a building fund to hold members' contributions and savings.<sup>14</sup> By 1920, George P. Behrensmeyer, an architect in Quincy, Illinois produced an elevation drawing of an impressive building for the Temple Association.<sup>15</sup> However, in 1927 the Association asked Bonsack & Pearce in St. Louis to draw up plans for a new building.<sup>16</sup> Planning and raising monies for the new Masonic Temple in Kirksville lasted a total of eleven years. The Temple Association's successful fund raising resulted in the construction of one of the largest, most prominent buildings in Kirksville. The various Masonic groups in Kirksville had raised \$45,000 by 1930 and decided to raise the rest of the monies needed through issuing \$35,000 in bonds.<sup>17</sup> Having successfully raised the requisite funds, the Temple Association selected a site for the new temple close to the downtown area. Construction began in early 1930 and was supervised by Leonard F. Poehlman, a local contractor and Mason. The building was finished rapidly and dedicated in December of that same year.

The completed building has a banquet hall on the ground floor, a meeting hall (the Blue Lodge) on the second floor and the Commandry on the third floor. The Blue Lodge and Commandry follow Masonic tradition and are oriented toward the east and entered from the west. Egypt inspires the building's exterior. The battered doorframe on the main elevation echoes a temple pylon. This same quadrangular shape appears in the funeral door on the east side of the building. The Temple's bulk is energized by a dramatic change of scale from the first to the third or top floor. The strong focal point established by the entrance pylons on the ground floor enlarges into the assertive temple façade on the top floor.<sup>18</sup> This eye-catching ensemble articulates the location of the Commandry Hall and recalls Solomon's Temple, a structure of great consequence in Masonic belief and imagery.

Since its completion, the Masonic Temple has been the venue for most lodge events and at the center of numerous activities and social functions in town. Its importance to Kirksville can be

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<sup>13</sup> This Association consisted of three members from Kirksville Lodge 105, three from Adair Lodge 366, three from Caldwell Chapter and three from Ely Commandry. These four groups had contributed to the building fund since 1919.

<sup>14</sup> *A Book of Adair County History*, 154.

<sup>15</sup> See Figure V.

<sup>16</sup> See Zelwin B. Eaton, "History of Adair Lodge No. 366", N.p. N.d., 4. The final plans by Bonsack & Pearce are dated 21 October 1929.

<sup>17</sup> See Eaton, 4-5. \$5000 of these bonds were purchased by two Kirksville Masons – Drs. Harry M. Still and George M. Laughlin.

<sup>18</sup> See Photograph 1.

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seen by the range of groups and functions that have used the space: religious services and funerals,<sup>19</sup> community dinners and parties, college fraternity meetings and a tour stop for visiting dignitaries.<sup>20</sup>

**The Masonic Temple and Bonsack & Pearce** Frederick C. Bonsack III, worked at the St. Louis architectural firm founded by his father (Frederick C. Bonsack, Jr., 1859 - 1917) before serving in the U.S. Navy during World War I. In 1921, he formed a partnership with Harvey J. Pearce (formerly a draftsman with Eames & Young and Harry Hohenschild). The practice of Bonsack & Pearce designed two county courthouses (Audrain and Dade Counties) and numerous houses, schools, churches, PWA projects and other institutional buildings across Missouri from 1921 to 1956, when Bonsack died and the firm became Pearce & Pearce.

Bonsack & Pearce was Kirksville's architectural firm of choice during the 1930s, the designated period of significance. They designed eight buildings in Kirksville, all of which manifest their sensitivity to balanced massing and exterior detailing as well as their skill in working with popular architectural styles of the time. Their first two designs in Kirksville date from 1930. The Egyptian Revival Masonic Temple being nominated was their first design built in Kirksville and probably helped them obtain continued commissions in town for the rest of the decade. They created an Art Deco design for the offices of a local newspaper, *The Kirksville Daily Express* (110 East McPherson Street) also in 1930. Subsequent buildings in Kirksville designed by the firm are: Greenwood Elementary School, 606 South Halliburton Street (1935);<sup>21</sup> Memorial Hall, 216 West Jefferson Street (1936);<sup>22</sup> the Dr George M. and Blanche Laughlin House, 706 South Halliburton Street (1937); and three buildings on Truman State University's campus: Baldwin Hall (1939), Ophelia Parrish Hall (north wing, 1939) and Kirk Memorial Building (1940).<sup>23</sup> These six structures employ a variety of Colonial Revival elements.

Bonsack & Pearce was essential in creating Kirksville's built environment. They offered graceful, efficient designs, had considerable ability in adapting historical styles to the needs of their clients and their buildings connected this small northeast Missouri town with three urbane styles popular during the 1930s – Egyptian Revival, Art Deco and Colonial Revival. In addition,

<sup>19</sup> Local Jewish and Christian groups have used the building for religious services.

<sup>20</sup> For example, Harry S. Truman visited the Temple while in Kirksville as a US Senator in 1940.

<sup>21</sup> Like their St. Louis colleague William B. Ittner, Bonsack & Pearce were well known for their school designs. Among those built during the 1930s in Missouri were Lee Elementary School (Columbia); Ste. Genevieve High School (Ste. Genevieve); School of the Osage (Lake Ozark); Washington School (Monroe City); Monroe City High School (Monroe City); Milton School (Kirkwood); Osage Hills School (Kirkwood).

<sup>22</sup> Memorial Hall was erected for the Kirksville College of Osteopathy and Surgery (now A.T. Still University), whose president was Dr George M. Laughlin. Seven years after Bonsack & Pearce designed the Kirksville Masonic Temple and one year after the commission for Memorial Hall, Dr Laughlin had the same firm design his new house at 706 South Halliburton Street in Kirksville.

<sup>23</sup> The University's president during the construction of these three buildings was Walter H. Ryle, a member of one of the Adair County lodges housed in the Masonic Temple being nominated.

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Bonsack & Pearce were part of a network that joined important local patrons. The Masonic Temple embodies the first in a sequence they created of notable social, domestic and educational structures in Kirksville.

**The Masonic Temple in the Context of Regional Architecture** The first purpose built Masonic temple in America was a crenellated Gothic Revival structure built in 1809 in Philadelphia.<sup>24</sup> As Freemasonry grew in the Mid-west during the nineteenth century, it changed meeting sites several times. Many early Masonic temples were located in rooms above a downtown store (an arrangement mentioned above). This combination of commerce and fraternal organization in the same building continued in Mid-western buildings well into the twentieth century. It was not co-incidental. Many Masons were middle-class, white and saw themselves as their communities' backbone. The store-temple arrangement was utilitarian, linked the fraternity with economic and civic development and was in accordance with the Masonic architectural principle that a Lodge should never meet on the ground floor in order to preserve privacy.<sup>25</sup>

Because Freemasonry combines civic and social activities with elaborate ceremonies it has generated an architectural form to serve its own specialized needs.<sup>26</sup> As a result, modern lodge halls or temples built exclusively for the Masons include spaces that can serve as an auditorium/theater, a banquet hall and lodge rooms. By the turn of the century, the generic requirements of the Masonic lodge as a building type had changed from the store-temple to an immense, grandiose building; an entrance through a portico; a large public area on the first floor for receptions; an isolated Grand Hall articulated on the exterior by columns or pilasters and an entablature; limited fenestration to shield secret rites conducted inside from the eyes of the uninitiated; and space for offices, libraries and auxiliaries.<sup>27</sup> Instead of any one architectural style, certain principles guided early-twentieth century Masonic construction: namely, the arrangement of interior space for ceremonies and the use of 18 inches, a Masonic cubit, as the module for building. These guidelines supposedly derive from the Solomonic Temple, the most important symbolic element of whose exterior were two columns, which represented the terrestrial and celestial realms, intelligence and power and the gate to eternity.<sup>28</sup>

In 1900 there were 563 lodges and 30,000 Masons in Missouri. By 1930, when the Kirksville Masonic Temple was dedicated, Masonic membership in the state had increased to 113,000

<sup>24</sup> *Architectural Record*, March 1908, 125.

<sup>25</sup> This was also accomplished by the Masonic tradition of placing windows five cubits above the floor. A cubit is 18 inches, so windows often stood 90 inches – over 7 feet – above the floor.

<sup>26</sup> Ray V. Denslow, *The Masonic Fraternity: Its Character, Customs, Ideals and Traditions*. N.p.: Masonic Service Association of the Grand Lodge, A.F. and A.M. of Missouri, 1932, 23.

<sup>27</sup> See Jan Cameron, NRHP nomination form for Lambskin Temple, St. Louis Missouri, September 1985, 2.

<sup>28</sup> See Malcom C. Duncan, *Duncan's Masonic Ritual and Monitor* (1866; 2009 reprint) and Albert G. Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry* (1869; 1960 reprint).

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people.<sup>29</sup> Such brisk membership growth required larger and newer lodges. As Masonic organizations were strong enough financially to build new meeting halls, they cast about for architectural styles that would be appropriate for their enhanced social status. While Freemasonry asserted its roots lay in Egyptian ceremonies, it never overwhelmingly selected Egypt as an architectural style. Indeed, both in urban and rural areas many new Masonic buildings during the first part of the twentieth century turned to Greco-Roman Classicism as the style of choice. Greco-Roman buildings had the advantage of conveying grandeur and seriousness to the public while simultaneously displaying arcane symbols – namely, Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian columns to which Masons attach certain moral attributes.<sup>30</sup>

Thanks in part to the praise architectural journals heaped on it, the most influential Masonic building at the start of the twentieth century was the Scottish Rite Temple in Washington, D.C., a massive Ionic temple set on a tall, fortress-like, unarticulated first story.<sup>31</sup> A 1926 article in an American architectural journal summarized the desiderata for early twentieth-century Masonic design: "The great antiquity of the [Masonic] body and its ancient affinity with the building trades have established a certain adherence to the use of the architectural styles of the ancient peoples, notably those of the Egyptians and the Greeks."<sup>32</sup>

Many architects who designed Masonic lodges during the early twentieth century in Missouri conceived of these buildings as Classical temples. That approach resulted in such faithful Greco-Roman peristyled descendents as the Tuscan Temple, St Louis (Albert B. Groves, 1908. NR listed 12/29/75) and the Masonic lodge in Louisiana, Pike County (Albert B. Groves, 1909. NR listed 05/06/87) or in Renaissance Revival pilastrated derivations like the Kansas City Masonic Temple (J.C. Sunderland, 1911, NR listed 11/14/80), and the Ivanhoe Masonic Temple also in Kansas City (Smith, Rea & Lovitt, 1922. NR listed 05/02/85).<sup>33</sup> A decade later, Masonic lodges in Missouri were still firmly Classical but more vertical and immense: for example, the Scottish Rite Cathedral in Joplin (C.W. Bane, 1923. NR listed 06/21/90); the Scottish Rite Cathedral in St. Louis (William B. Ittner, 1924); the Anchor Masonic Temple in University City (T.P. Barnett & J.W. Leigh, 1925. NR listed 09/23/80); the colossal pile of the New Masonic Temple in St. Louis (Thomas C. Eames & Albert B. Groves, 1926); and the vast Scottish Rite Temple in Kansas City (Keene & Simpson, 1929).<sup>34</sup>

In the more immediate region, many Masonic lodges in northern Missouri continued to meet throughout the late nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in buildings that combined spaces for

<sup>29</sup> "Large Crowds See Dedication of New Temple." *Kirksville Daily Express*, 4 December 1930, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Thus, the public would view a Masonic Temple with Doric capitals simply as being classical. Masons would know the Order's symbolic meaning, however -- Doric is associated by Masons with strength, Ionic with wisdom and judgment and Corinthian with beauty.

<sup>31</sup> See Figure W. It was designed by John Russell Pope and completed in 1915.

<sup>32</sup> R.R. Houston, "The Interior Architecture of Fraternal Buildings," *Architectural Forum*, September 1926, 130.

<sup>33</sup> See Figures X, Y, Z and AA for these buildings.

<sup>34</sup> See Figures BB, CC and DD for some of these buildings.

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commercial and fraternal events. Masons in Hannibal, Marion County began a long residency in an old converted theatre starting in 1915 and Lodges in Center, Ralls County; in Macon, Macon County; and in Brookfield, Linn County continued the store-temple arrangement well into the twentieth century.<sup>35</sup> The two story, brick Masonic Temple in Marceline, Linn County (thirty five miles southwest of Kirksville) is an exception. Built in 1923, this Renaissance Revival styled building is one of the few Masonic temples in north central and northeast Missouri that was not designed to house a business on the ground floor.

Together with the Masonic Temple in Kirksville, the temple in Moberly, Randolph County (sixty miles south of Kirksville) deserves notice as an early twentieth century alternative to the store-temple format in this region. The two buildings are contemporary; both were dedicated in 1930.<sup>36</sup> Both buildings rejected the earlier utilitarian store-temple format that dominated nineteenth and early-twentieth century Masonic architecture in northeast Missouri and both rebuffed the requisite use of classical orders in Masonic temple construction established by Albert B. Groves at the aforementioned Tuscan Temple in 1908. The temples in Moberly and Kirksville are on a smaller scale than the Masonic buildings in Missouri's large urban centers but still display the same strong sense of verticality and air of monumental classicism. Instead of a colonnade, the Masonic Temple in Moberly makes use of a pylon entrance, but the rest of the facade dwarfs it.<sup>37</sup> The brick pilasters create stark geometric patterns across its two primary facades and enliven what is otherwise a simple rectangular volume, just as more ornate versions handled this challenge in the 1911 and 1922 Masonic Temples constructed in Kansas City.<sup>38</sup> The design of the Moberly Masonic Temple, however, synthesizes a modicum of Egyptian Revival and Art Deco elements.

These same two styles receive a more developed treatment in Kirksville's Masonic Temple. Originally, the temple was designed to be constructed of buff bricks on the exterior and thus would have resembled the Moberly Masonic Temple. However, Leonard F. Poehlman, the contractor, used his connections with a stone company in Carthage, Missouri to obtain stone left over from the construction of another building at a reasonable price. For this reason the north

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<sup>35</sup> Perhaps Missouri's best and largest example of this type is also a twentieth-century one: the Masonic Temple in Springfield, Greene County is a large, prosaic four story store-temple erected in 1906 on East Walnut Street to the designs of Reed and Heckenlively.

<sup>36</sup> See Figure FF. Designed by the Kansas City architect Victor J. Defoe, the Moberly Masonic Temple was begun in July 1929 and dedicated in April 1930, the same month the cornerstone for the Kirksville Masonic Temple was laid. Defoe was best known for residential designs in Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas. The Moberly Masonic Temples was a rare institutional commission for him and he returned to its compositional elements when he designed the Camden County Courthouse in Camdentown, Missouri in 1931. See Figure GG. The similarities between the two buildings' exteriors are numerous.

<sup>37</sup> Such gradual reductions in the scale of a Temple's entrance from a colonnade or portico to a pylon lead to the eventual placement of front doors flush with the ground floor façade, for instance as seen in the Lambskin Temple in St. Louis (1927, J.A. Prahl and Ed Nolte. NR listed 08/12/87). See Figure HH.

<sup>38</sup> See Figures Z and AA.

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and west elevations were made of buff brick and the other two are dressed with Carthage limestone. Whereas smaller lodges like that at Moberly obtained distinction through mural mass and contrasting materials, the Kirksville Masonic Temple achieves monumentality through scale, materials and cohesive Egyptian and Art Deco detailing. But, unlike large urban temples, it could afford expensive materials for only two elevations. In contrast to the immense Masonic temples of the 1920s in St Louis and Kansas City which were intended to be seen from multiple sides, the Kirksville Masonic Temple demonstrates a practical solution to a financial reality – quality materials and ornamentation are kept for the two unobstructed elevations.

**The Masonic Temple and Egyptian Revival Style**           The Temple of Solomon, built in Jerusalem around 1000 BCE, is one of the earliest structures associated with Freemasonry and its architecture. To Masons, the Temple of Solomon symbolizes the most perfect building erected by the Supreme Architect of the Universe – its design and execution complemented each other.<sup>39</sup> Solomon's Temple provided Masonry with the basic plan for its lodges, symbolism, as well as the foundation for much of the fraternity's ritual.<sup>40</sup> Masonic legend traces its lineage to the builders of this temple. According to Masons, the Solomonic temple was constructed by craftsmen whose knowledge came from the priests of the old Egyptian Stellar Mythos Cult.<sup>41</sup> These Egyptian priests constructed the Cult's temples, trained its initiates, preserved its secrets, established organizations throughout the Ancient World and ultimately designed the Temple of King Solomon. At least notionally, Masons have looked to Solomon's Temple and its defining twin columns when designing their own buildings, and have believed that this building, in turn, looked to antique Egypt.<sup>42</sup>

Ancient Egyptian architecture was linear and additive. Surfaces are the controlling elements in Egyptian architecture; voids are subordinate.<sup>43</sup> The resulting mural mass facilitated the Egyptians' use of reliefs and ideographic decorations. These architectonic elements – linearity, frontality, two-dimensionality, mural mass, ideograms and surface decoration -- became well known in the West during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries due to various Italian and French publications and led to a significant Egyptian Revival in design at that time.<sup>44</sup> Marcus

<sup>39</sup> Moses W. Redding, *The Illustrated History of Freemasonry*, Bensenville, Illinois: Lushena Books, 1947; 2004 reprint, 21. For a fuller discussion see Albert G. Mackey, *The Symbolism of Freemasonry*, Chapter XII (1869; 1960 reprint).

<sup>40</sup> Redding, 21.

<sup>41</sup> Redding, 21.

<sup>42</sup> For a further consideration of this topic see Alex Horne, *King Solomon's Temple in the Masonic Tradition* (1988).

<sup>43</sup> For developed examinations of Egyptian architecture see Alexander Badawy, *A History of Egyptian Architecture* (1966) and James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival* (1982).

<sup>44</sup> The most influential of these were Bernard de Montfaucon, *L'Antiquité Expliquée* (1719); Comte de Caylus, *Recueil d'antiquités égyptiennes* (1752-1767); Giambattista Piranesi, *Diverse Maniere* (1769). The tremendous stimulus provided by the publication of scholarly surveys of Napoleon's teams in Egypt of architecture during the early nineteenth century -- namely Dominique-Vivant de Denon's *Voyage* (1802) which produced the first

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Whiffen notes the principal characteristics that appeared in architecture:

Every Egyptian revival building has one or more of the following features, and no two of them are combined in any other style: (1) battered walls; (2) the gorge and roll cornice; (3) window enframements that narrow upward; (4) columns with a more or less pronounced bulge; (5) columns that resemble bundles of stalks tied together with horizontal bands below the capitals; (6) the vulture-and-sun-disk symbol.<sup>45</sup>

Given its self-proclaimed associations with Egypt, one might expect the Masons to draw frequently on this ancient architectural tradition. However, Egyptian motifs like those noted by Whiffen do not appear in British Masonic temples until after 1860 and their application was interpretive instead of being archaeological.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, despite the fashionable Egyptian Revival in the United States during the 1830s and 1850s,<sup>47</sup> lotus-bud capitals do not occur in nineteenth-century Masonic architecture across America. And Egypt may have been the alleged architectural tradition that shaped Solomon's Temple but locally it did not inform nineteenth-century Masonic design in Missouri. Instead most late nineteenth-century lodges in Missouri held their meetings on the upper floor of a commercial building, which they often owned. For example the Masonic Lodges in Warrensburg, Johnson County (1894. NR listed 12/24/98), Liberty, Clay County (1868. NR listed 12/28/92)<sup>48</sup> and the 1890 Kirksville Masonic Hall demonstrate this common trend. Instead of the style of the pharaohs, the free-standing Masonic temples built in Missouri in response to considerable membership growth during the early twentieth century favored Greco-Roman, Gothic or Renaissance styles as discussed in the previous part of this section.

The application of Egyptian architectural forms to the exteriors of Masonic temples in the Midwest waited until the twentieth century. One of its first appearances occurred fifty miles west of

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archaeologically correct views of Egyptian architecture – also renewed interest in Egyptian designs.

<sup>45</sup> Marcus Whiffen, *American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1996, 48.

<sup>46</sup> For example, on the exterior at the Freemasons Hall, Boston, Lincolnshire (1860), which imitates an Egyptian temple. Cf. the Chapter Room of the Supreme Grand Royal Arch Chapter of Scotland (1900) in Edinburgh. The room is Egyptian with a frieze representing the story of Isis and Osiris. Like the Temple at Karnak, the hall is illuminated through high grills.

<sup>47</sup> *The American Quarterly Review* devoted forty pages of one issue to Egyptian architecture in 1829. The first major Egyptian Revival buildings in the United States were constructed between 1831 and 1848 – e.g., Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge; Moyamensing Prison, Philadelphia; the New York Halls of Justice (also known as “The Tombs”); County Courthouse at Newark, New Jersey; the Medical College of Virginia; Pennsylvania Fire Insurance Company building, Philadelphia; entrance to the Grove Street Cemetery, New Haven; Croton Reservoir, New York City; Whaler's Church at Sag Harbor; First Presbyterian Church at Nashville. For a developed list see Appendix II in Richard G. Carrott, *The Egyptian Revival*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978, 142-145.

<sup>48</sup> See National Register nomination for the Miller Building, Liberty, Clay County Missouri, Deon K. Wolfenbarger, 1992. The Liberty lodge met in this commercial building from 1870 to 1886.



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Kansas City, in Lawrence, Kansas in 1910.<sup>49</sup> These Masons constructed a simple, rectangular building with a pressed tin cavetto cornice that hides a gable roof. Stone dressings and stock brick are used on the two street facades. The main façade, orientated towards the east, the cardinal point associated with light and knowledge for the Masons, has a distyle portico *in antis*. Some detailing was added to the abacus, but otherwise the columns are archaeologically correct.<sup>50</sup> Stone screens surmounted by concave moldings fill the intercolumniations of the facade. Not only do the cornice, columns and screens constitute the building's dominant Egyptianizing elements, without them the building's simple volume would have few architecturally distinguishing features at all.<sup>51</sup>

The Egyptian Revival had a dramatic resurgence during the 1920s with the opening of the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 and the display of its superlative contents to widespread modern publicity starting in 1923.<sup>52</sup> While the Tutankhamun discoveries account for some Egyptian Revival cinemas and factories across the United States during the 1920s, few Masonic buildings built in Missouri in that period made use of the style. The most important of those that did, however, is in University City. The Anchor Masonic Temple (NR listed 09/23/80)<sup>53</sup> was built in 1925, three years after Howard Carter announced his pharaonic discovery to the world and a year after he had visited the United States to give a series of illustrated lectures in New York City and Chicago. Unlike comparable large Masonic temples in St. Louis, T.P. Barnett and J.W. Leigh's design for the Anchor Masonic Temple turned to the Egyptian Revival style for extensive decorative inspiration and went so far as to incorporate common twentieth-century Egyptian Revival colors (red, blue, yellow, green) on its exterior.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> See Figure II. The Masonic Temple in Lawrence was built to the designs of W.A. Griffith, a professor who had just moved to Lawrence from Paris and who founded the Art Department at the University of Kansas. Lawrence had five Masonic lodges in 1910 with a total membership between them of about 300 men or about 3 percent of Lawrence's population. Two years before, in 1908, an earlier application of the Egyptian Revival to a Masonic Temple can be found in Louis Curtiss's project proposal for the Ararat Temple in Kansas City, Missouri (1908). See Figure JJ. This theatrical design with pyramid, obelisks and a sphinx also shows a distyle portico *in antis* that anticipates the main facade of the 1910 Lawrence Masonic Temple.

<sup>50</sup> The building's two papyrus-bundle columns are modeled on those in the great court of Amenhotep III in the Temple of Luxor (Eighteenth Dynasty, c.1370 BCE).

<sup>51</sup> In the hands of a more inventive architect these same elements appear in the Stine & McClure Undertaking Company in Kansas City (NR listed 07/19/90). See Figure KK. This 1912 building by the prominent Kansas City architect John W. McKecknie is one of Missouri's best examples of Egyptian Revival architecture. McKecknie took the same elements found in Lawrence – distyle portico *in antis*, screens filling the intercolumniation, gorge and roll molding, etc. – rendered them in granite and set them into a sober, controlled facade for a two-story commercial building that evokes the Temple of Horus at Edfu.

<sup>52</sup> Clearance, documentation and conservation of the tomb's valuable objects (and the accompanying media coverage) were not completed until 1932, two years after the construction of the Masonic Temple in Kirksville.

<sup>53</sup> See Figure DD.

<sup>54</sup> For a discussion of Egyptian Revival polychrome facades see James Stevens Curl, *The Egyptian Revival*, London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982, 201.

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The Anchor Masonic Temple and the Kirksville Masonic Temple were built within five years of each other and both were designed by St. Louis architectural firms. The similarities between the two Masonic Temples are clear: similar massing, five bay by three bay facades, entrance pylons and the placement of a Nilotic temple façade on the upper story.<sup>55</sup> While no known evidence exists, it is possible that either the architects or the patrons had the Anchor Masonic Temple in mind when it came time to design the Kirksville Masonic Temple. Egyptian Revival was not a style Bonsack & Pearce employed often and no precedent for this style exists in northeast and north central Missouri, places far from Egypt and far from metropolitan American contexts. This temple in Adair County signifies the conscious use of a novel and very old building style by rural Mid-western men and women for their own organization.

One reason for selecting Egyptian motifs for a lodge hall is articulated by Carl W. Scott in a paper he presented on symbolism and the Masonic Temple at Salt Lake City, Utah, a building he designed in 1927.<sup>56</sup> Like the other Masonic Temples mentioned in this section, the Salt Lake City Temple was built to accommodate a growing number of lodges and social demands. The patrons set out deliberately to examine Masonic structures across America to identify what they wanted in their own temple. They concluded that: "Some had excellent individual features; some had scarcely anything Masonic about them. Other than...the rather liberal use of Masonic degree symbols in the cornice there was nothing of particular Masonic interest on their exteriors. Where the symbols were used, the effect was disappointing because there was no consistency of design...and the effect was more that of a billboard than a monument."<sup>57</sup> Clark explained that the Egyptian style was used on the exterior of the temple he designed because it was:

deemed most important and was not used merely to be different. Most of the more modern Masonic Temples follow one of the Classic Orders. This gives a monumental dignified appearance; but does not give much opportunity to display Masonic symbols in a concealed and inoffensive manner. However, with the Egyptian style, where inscriptions and figures appear on almost every surface, it was possible to include one of Masonic significance without disclosing their presence and still be in perfect keeping with the general style adopted. Further, the Egyptian Art was highly developed in Solomon's time and seemed 'a natural' for our purpose.<sup>58</sup>

The exterior of the Salt Lake Masonic Temple makes full play of Masonic symbolism: the three degrees of Masonry are symbolized by the three flights of stairs. The funeral exit on the West side has the scarab, the symbol of immortality and resurrection carved on its lintel. The ramp also has seven urns, each containing an acacia plant, which recall the acacias placed at the head of the grave of Hiram Abif, the murdered architect of Solomon's Temple. The sphinxes are used as symbols of strength and intelligence. The spheres recall the terrestrial and celestial spheres.

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<sup>55</sup> See Figures DD and EE and Photograph 2.

<sup>56</sup> See Figure LL.

<sup>57</sup> Carl W. Scott, "Symbolism in the Masonic Temple at Salt Lake City, Utah", N.p.: n.p., 1944, 3.

<sup>58</sup> Scott, 6.

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The double-headed serpent and solar disc, the symbol of the Egyptian God Horus, the God of the Sun, appears under the cornice, “signifying that this is a Temple dedicated to Masonic light”.<sup>59</sup> And then the Masonic emblems of the square, the compass and the letter G appear, which are associated with the three degrees in Masonry. At all points on the exterior, Scott commented, Egyptian ornamentation was used “to show that it is possible thereby to symbolize much of Masonry for the benefit of Masons and to expose these symbols to public gaze and yet completely conceal the meaning from those not informed of their significance.”<sup>60</sup>

Back in Missouri, the Masonic Temple in Kirksville uses several attributes of Egyptian Revival architecture mentioned earlier. Moreover it also applies elements of classical Egyptian architecture to a modern, twentieth-century building: planarity, mural mass, simplicity, horizontality, independent, articulated units and decoration in low relief. As with the Salt Lake City Masonic Temple’s application of the Egyptian Revival, the temple in Kirksville displays Masonic symbols and Nilotic motifs across its principal elevations: the solar disc that crowns the Temple, a symbol of the all-seeing eye; the pyramid of light in the form of the triangular pediment atop the building; the two half engaged columns that recall the Temple of Solomon and symbolize the twin columns of intelligence and power that form the gate to eternity; the repeated lotus flowers – Masonic symbols of spiritual enlightenment.<sup>61</sup> Numerical symbolism sustains many aspects of the Temple’s composition. For instance, the five bay by three bay organization of the exterior; the manner in which the windows on the second and third story are joined in a common frame to imply a three-story façade; the lozenges in the frieze occur in threes on the Harrison Street elevation; seven anthemia adorn the parapet.<sup>62</sup> These comprise Masonry’s numerical symbols: three for the three ages of man and the three degrees in the fraternity; five for the five sense and five orders of architecture; and seven for the Liberal Arts.<sup>63</sup> Inside, the structure follows a tripartite plan: one meeting room for each of the three degrees. The staircase inside the Temple is also divided into three sections: a flight with three steps, followed by one with five, and finally a part with seven.

The Masonic Temple in Adair County also draws inspiration from a second approach to design fashionable during the 1920s and 1930s. The Temple’s two primary facades are a splendid amalgam of Egyptianizing and Art Deco components. The influential Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in 1925 encouraged a new style that became known as Art Deco whose admired geometrical, stepped pyramidal compositions and stylized, low relief ornament were compatible with basic lines of Egyptian architecture.<sup>64</sup> In

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<sup>59</sup> Scott, 7.

<sup>60</sup> Scott, 9.

<sup>61</sup> See Figures B, C, D and E.

<sup>62</sup> See Figures D and H and Photograph 2.

<sup>63</sup> The fraternity’s ancient priests were educated through a series of initiation rituals into the “Mysteries”, or seven Arts and Sciences: Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy.

<sup>64</sup> Curl, 200. For a sustained examination of Art Deco and the Egyptian Revival see Jean-Marcel Humbert, *Egyptomania: Egypt in Western Art, 1730-1930*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, 508-514.

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Kirksville, the Masonic Temple stands at the confluence of Art Deco systems of decoration and Egyptian architectural forms. The Art Deco overtones appear in the lotus patterns in the Temple's door surrounds and on the iron balustrade with its budding plant motifs atop the entrance pylon.<sup>65</sup> The accumulation of Art Deco aspects continues at the top of the Temple in the stylized lotus blossoms set in the window heads, the lozenges in the frieze and the crisp lines of the anthemion.<sup>66</sup>

This particular Masonic temple shows that a climate ready to absorb anything interesting from Egypt existed even in rural Missouri. It is indicative of the broad spread of this style during the 1920s. In the absence of documentation, it is not known precisely why, with relatively unrestricted design determinants, the Kirksville Masonic Temple drew on the distinctive visual formulae of Egypt. That to Masons' minds, the Temple of Solomon allegedly looked Egyptian lent justification to borrowing Egyptian architectural elements. To the uninitiated viewer, the Kirksville Masonic Temple offers a tall, rectangular volume with Egyptian detailing. In short, the architects evoked just enough of the Nile to suggest something epic and colorful in a small town neighborhood of houses and churches. To an Adair County Mason, however, the building's details tied him to a panoply of Masonic symbols. Set in the context of widespread construction of new Masonic temples across the United States, the temple in Adair County exemplifies a structure whose scale was consistent with contemporary Masonic taste for massive buildings. Moreover, the two architectural styles it uses (Egyptian Revival and Art Deco) were fashionable and one style, the Egyptian Revival, was at once relevant to the display of Masonic symbols and rare in this region of Missouri.

### CONCLUSION

The Masonic Temple in Kirksville, Adair County is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places as locally significant under Criterion C: ARCHITECTURE. The construction of new Masonic lodges throughout the early-twentieth century created urban landmarks and tangible signs of civic progress. Masonic rites and their attendant architectural forms connected lodge designs found in urban locations to those put up in suburban as well as rural areas. The building nominated embodies the distinctive type of architecture that developed around the Ancient, Free and Accepted Order of Freemasonry, its ceremonies and attendant symbolism. The Kirksville Masonic Temple is a valuable local example of an early-twentieth century lodge hall in a small rural town. It demonstrates a poised, well-organized composition. It evinces power, dignity, ambition and a vision of its own seriousness. Bonsack & Pearce's design for the Temple deftly integrates Masonic symbols with Egyptian Revival and Art Deco idioms as well as suggesting exoticism and the earliest origins of the fraternity. The building's scale, materials, organization and detailing project quality workmanship and indicate a solid architectural ensemble. This

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<sup>65</sup> See Figures B and C.

<sup>66</sup> See Figures H and J.

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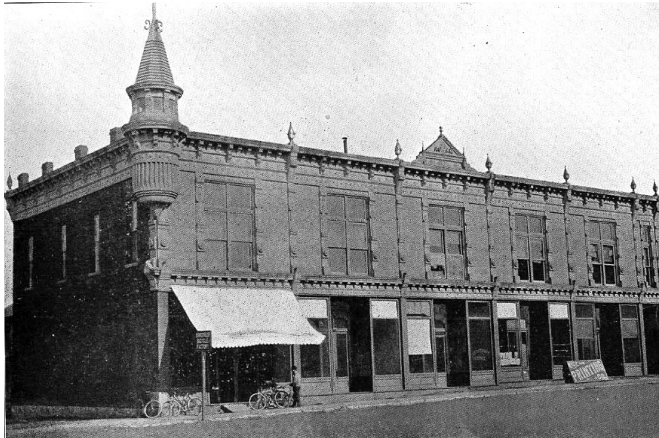
particular temple provides a tangible local link to a period when several fraternal lodges were constructed across Missouri and it evokes the period of significance, 1930, with ease. For seventy-nine years it has been the meeting hall for various local lodges and other Masonic bodies and throughout that time it has remained a focus of Kirksville's social and philanthropic community. Furthermore, this building is noteworthy as the best example of Egyptian Revival architecture in northern Missouri and it is the largest and most ornate early-twentieth century lodge hall in the region. The location, design, size, workmanship and integrity of the Masonic Temple clearly demonstrate its unique, local architectural significance.

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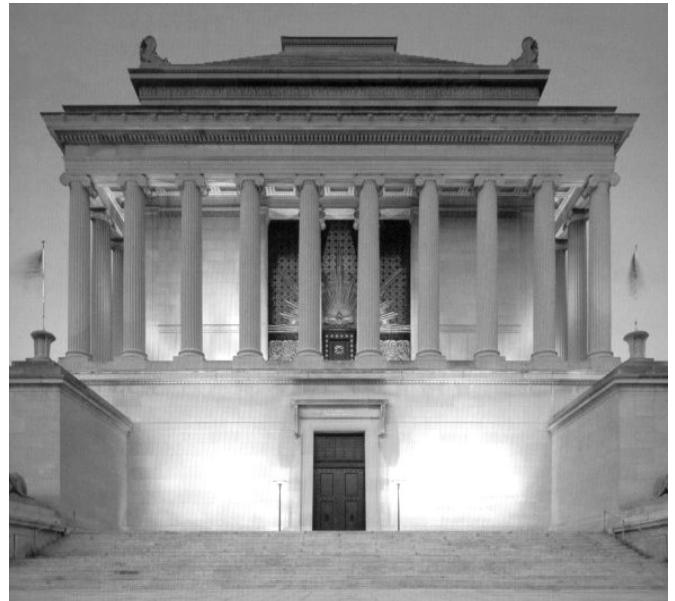
**Figure T**  
Masonic Building (1890). Kirksville, Missouri.  
(*History of Adair County*)



**Figure U**  
Foster Building (1914). Kirksville, Missouri.  
(*Adair County Revisited*)



**Figure V** Proposed Masonic Temple, 1920.  
(Kirksville Masonic Temple Association)



**Figure W** Scottish Rite Temple (1915), Washington D.C.  
(<http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/main/>)

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**Figure X**  
Tuscan Temple (1908). St. Louis, Missouri.  
(<http://www.builtstlouis.net>)



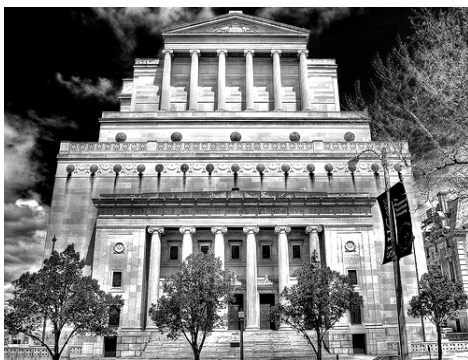
**Figure Y**  
Masonic Temple (1909). Louisiana, Missouri.  
(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/26098262@N07/2498824515>)



**Figure Z**  
Masonic Temple (1911). Kansas City, Missouri.  
(<http://www.kansascitylodge220.org/>)



**Figure AA**  
Ivanhoe Masonic Temple (1922). Kansas City, Missouri.  
(<http://www.scottishrite-kcmo.org>)



**Figure BB**  
Masonic Temple (1926). St. Louis, Missouri.  
(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/vesuviano/473990606>)



**Figure CC**  
Scottish Rite Temple (1928). Kansas City, Missouri.  
(<http://www.scottishrite-kcmo.org>)

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**Figure DD**  
Anchor Masonic Temple (1925). University City, Missouri.  
(Preparer's Photograph)



**Figure EE**  
Masonic Temple (1930). Kirksville, Missouri.  
(Preparer's Photograph)



**Figure FF**  
Views of the Masonic Temple (1930). Moberly, Missouri.  
(Preparer's Photographs)



**Figure GG**  
Camden County Courthouse (1930). Camden, Missouri.  
(<http://members.virtualtourist.com/m/4b7c5/c7123>)



**Figure HH**  
Lambskin Temple (1927). St. Louis, Missouri.  
(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/jerkinhead/2800019275>)



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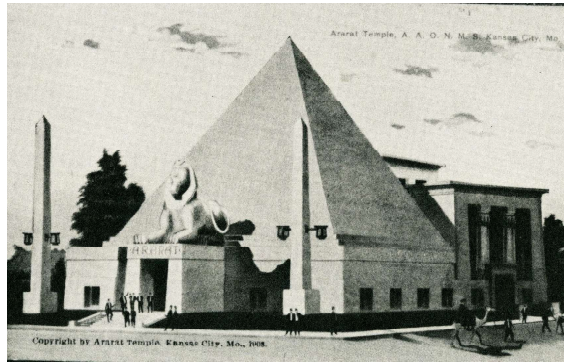
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**Figure II**  
Masonic Temple (1910). Lawrence, Kansas.  
(<http://www.kancoll.org/graphics/abbott/masonic.htm>)



**Figure JJ**  
Proposed Ararat Temple (1908). Kansas City, Missouri.  
(from Sandy & Hancks, *Stalking Louis Curtiss*)



**Figure KK** Stine & McClure Undertaking Company (1912). Kansas City, Missouri.  
(<http://www.kchistory.org>)



**Figure LL** Masonic Temple (1927). Salt Lake City, Utah.  
(<http://www.flickr.com/photos/bobindrums/2742908372/>)

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Adair County, Missouri**

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 42

**Masonic Temple  
Adair County, Missouri**

## VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

All of lots 3 and 4, Block 4, Linder's First Addition, a subdivision laid out in the eastern part of Kirksville, Adair County, Missouri.

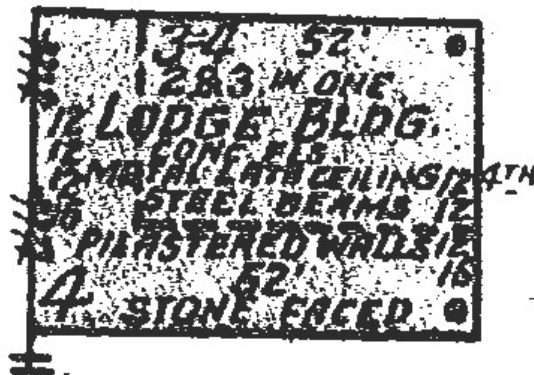
## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This nomination includes the two lots historically associated with Kirksville Masonic Temple since their purchase by the Temple Association in 1920.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

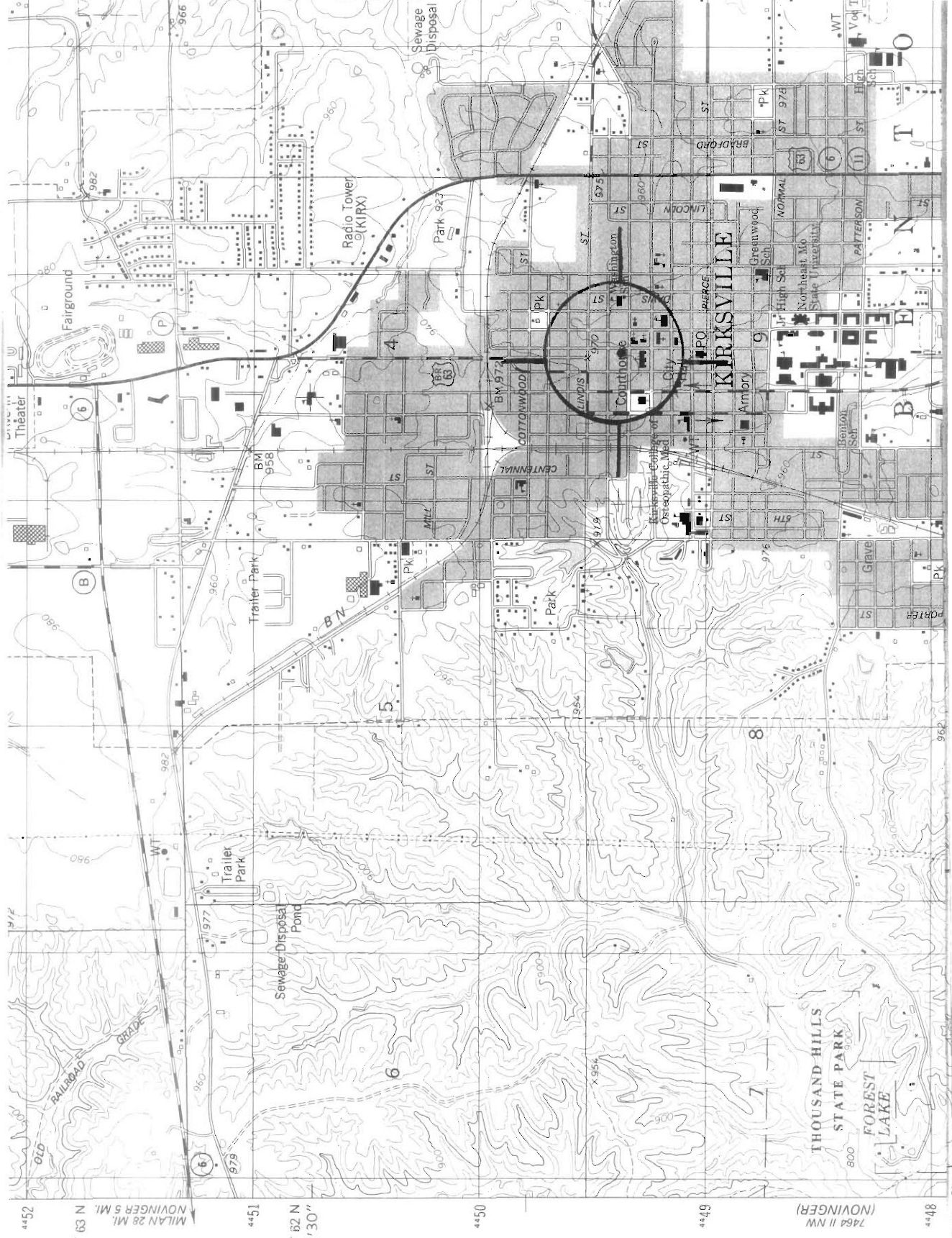
Photographer: Cole Woodcox, Kirksville, Missouri  
Date of Photographs: June 2009  
Location of Original Images: Cole Woodcox  
616 East Harrison Street  
Kirksville, Missouri 63501

Number	Description	Camera direction
1.	South Elevation, Harrison Street façade	North
2.	South and East Elevation, High Street façade	Northwest
3.	East and North Elevations	Southwest
4.	West Elevation	Southeast
5.	Banquet Hall, First Floor	East
6.	Blue Lodge, Second Floor	East
7.	Commandry, Third Floor	East



High Street

Harrison Street



Masonic Temple  
 Adair County, MO  
 15133566014449370

4452 T 63 N NOVINGER 5 MI. 4451 T 62 N 12'30" 4450 4449 7464 11 NW (NOVINGER) 8141







MASONIC TEMPLE



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