# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines* for *Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

(Form 10-900a). Type all entries.			
1. Name of Property			······································
	Trust Company of Flo	rida Building	
other names/site number 8 Du 24			
			······································
2. Location			· · · · · ·
street & number 200 East For:	syth Street	n/a 🗌	not for publication
city, town Jacksonville	- <u></u>	n/a	vicinity
state Florida code	FL county Duy		
3. Classification	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resource	ces within Property
x private	x building(s)		Noncontributing
public-local		1	0 buildings
public-State	☐ site		sites
public-Federal			structures
			objects
			0 <b>Total</b>
Name of related multiple property listing	<b>a</b> .	Number of contribu	ting resources previously
n/a	y.		-
1/ ą		listed in the Nationa	
4. State/Federal Agency Certifica	tion	<u> </u>	
Signature of certifying official Florida State Historic Pr State or Federal agency and bureau In my opinion, the property meet		al Register criteria.	tinuation sheet.
Signature of commenting or other official			Date
State or Federal agency and bureau			
5. National Park Service Certifica	tion	<u> </u>	······
I, hereby, certify that this property is:		Entered in the	
entered in the National Register.	Helous	National Regist	2/23/FU
determined not eligible for the National Register.			
removed from the National Registerother, (explain:)			
	- Signat	ure of the Keeper	Date of Action

6. Function or Use			
Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)	Current Fund	ctions (enter categories from instructions	
Commerce/Trade: Business	Commerce/Trade: Professional		
	<u> </u>		
7. Description			
Architectural Classification (enter categories from instructions)	Materials (er	nter categories from instructions)	
	·	nter categories from instructions) Concrete	
	Materials (er foundation _ walls	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	
(enter categories from instructions)	foundation _	Concrete	
(enter categories from instructions)	foundation _	Concrete Brick	

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

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**See continuation sheet** 

8. Statement of Significance		
Certifying official has considered the significance of this pro	operty in relation to other properties:	
Applicable National Register Criteria XA B XC	; 🔲 D	
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)	; ]]D ]]E ]]F ]]G	
Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions) Commerce Architecture	Period of Significance 1929–1940	Significant Dates
	Cultural Affiliation n/a	
Significant Person n/a	Architect/Builder Marsh, William M. & Saxel Bentley, A. & Son	bye, Harold/

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION SHEETS

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See continuation sheet

PLEASE SEE CONTINUATION	SHEETS
	the <b>D</b> and <b>D D D</b>
	See continuation sheet
Previous documentation on file (NPS):	
preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)	Primary location of additional data:
has been requested	x State historic preservation office
previously listed in the National Register	Other State agency
previously determined eligible by the National Register	Eederal agency
designated a National Historic Landmark	Local government
recorded by Historic American Buildings	
Survey #	Other
recorded by Historic American Engineering	Specify repository:
Record #	
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of property Less than 1 acre	
UTM References	
	3
Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
	See continuation sheet
Verbal Boundary Description	
The boundary includes the original, three s	story, 1929 Title & Trust Company of
Florida Building, as shown on the accompanying m	ap entitled, "Map to Show the Boundary
Survey of a Portion of Lots 3 & 6, Block 2, Hart	s Map of Jacksonville, Duval County,
Florida". The area included within the boundary	v is indicated by diagonal lines.
	See continuation sheet
Devenden v. f. satisfication	
Boundary Justification	
The boundary encompasses the original 1929	portion of the Title & Trust Company of
Florida Building.	-
-	
	See continuation sheet
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Paul Weaver/ Barbara E. Mattick, Histori	
organization Bureau of Historic Preservation	date January 1990
street & number R.A. Gray Building, 500 S. Bronough	<u>Street</u> telephone (904) 487-2333

state Florida zip code 32399-0250

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### SUMMARY

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building is a 1929, Neoclassical, two story with a mezzanine and basement building, located at 200 East Forsyth Street, in the commercial and governmental core of Jacksonville, Florida. It has a rectangular ground plan, and rests on a poured concrete foundation. Its structural system is steel frame (H-beam), encased in concrete. The flat, parapeted roof is covered with tar and gravel. The exterior is covered with brick and limestone detailing. One story additions, constructed in 1948 and 1956, abut the east elevation. Because the original 1929 building remains intact and is completely distinguishable, these non-historic additions are not part of the nominated property.

### SETTING

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building occupies a prominent corner lot in downtown Jacksonville at the intersection of East Forsyth and North Newnan Streets. Sanborn maps show that the site of the Title & Trust building was vacant in 1884. The T. McMurray Livery occupied the corner from 1887 to at least 1903. When the Title & Trust Company of Florida Building was constructed in 1929, it occupied the address of 200-202 East Forsyth Street. The building immediately next door, at 208-210 East Forsyth Street, was a two story building which housed Clinton E. Garrick Auto Repair. The Garrick building was torn down in 1956 to make way for a one story annex to the Title & Trust building.

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building is still a distinctive feature of downtown Jacksonville, and in close proximity to governmental buildings (Photo 1). It is presently approximately one block from City Hall and the current County Courthouse Complex on Bay Street. In the 1920s, the county courthouse was located one block to the west, between Forsyth and Adams Streets, on the site of the present downtown public library. The newly renovated courthouse annex is located directly across the street on the north side of Forsyth Street. Opposite the Title & Trust Company of Florida Building, at the southwest corner

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of Newnan and Forsyth Streets, is the Florida Theater Building (NR 1982), which now houses, among other functions, the offices of the City Planning Department and the Downtown Development Authority.

PRESENT APPEARANCE

### <u>Exterior</u>

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building was designed to fit its setting at a prominent corner. All of the detail and decorative features, therefore, are on the north and west elevations, which face East Forsyth Street and North Newnan Street, respectively. These elevations are covered with buff brick and limestone. The elevations on the south and east, which face other buildings on the block, have red brick, and are relatively unadorned. The first two stories of the building are visually separated from the third story on the north and west elevations by a heavy cornice with dentils and a frieze (Photo 2).

The main facade (north elevation) faces Forsyth Street. It is three bays wide, and is distinguished by a central main entrance set in a slightly projecting pavilion (Photo 2). A stainless steel and glass, paired door entry has a limestone surround, and is crowned with an enclosed pediment. Anthemions mark the corners of the pediment (Photo 3). Above the pediment is a casement window with a limestone surround accented with decorative side scrolls. The entrance is flanked by paired, Ionic-like, engaged columns and Doric pilasters. They are monumental, extending through the second level. "TITLE & TRUST COMPANY OF FLORIDA" is inscribed in the frieze over the entry. Single, 2/2 fixed windows are located in the bays on each side of the central entrance. Each pair has a spandrel and surrounds and hood molds of limestone (Photo 4).

The top of the projecting pavilion is at the third floor level, above the cornice. Quoins on axis with the first floor pilasters define the pavilion at this level. The pavilion is crowned with a closed pediment. A cartouche and garlands are in the center of the tympanum. Paired 1/1,

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double hung sash windows are centered above the entrance in the central bay (Photos 2 & 5).

The flanking bays at the third level have 1/1, double hung sash with flat arches defined by three voussoirs. Quoins accent the east and west corners of the building. The roof line is defined by a plain cornice which runs on axis with the bottom of the pediment. Limestone coping tops the parapet. Single limestone anthemions are located at the two edges of the pavilion at the top of the coping. Other rooftop features include a twenty foot flag pole which rises above the entrance from the top of the parapet, and a penthouse in the northeast corner of the building. The penthouse houses the mechanical system for an elevator (Photo 2).

The <u>west elevation</u> repeats many of the same decorative elements as the north elevation, but is more subdued. It, too, has three bays. The central bay of the first two levels has five casement windows with quoined surrounds and spandrels. "TITLE & TRUST COMPANY OF FLORIDA" is inscribed in the frieze. The flanking bays each have fixed, 2/2 windows with spandrels and hood molds, as on the main facade. On the third level, the central bay has paired, 1/1, double hung sash windows, with five voussoirs forming a flat arch. The flanking bays each have single 1/1, double hung sash windows with a flat arch of three voussoirs (Photo 6).

The south and east elevations are very plain. The <u>south elevation</u> is red brick with only a small entrance at the west end of the first floor, and four 2/2, double hung sash windows at the third level (Photos 6 & 7). The <u>east</u> <u>elevation</u> also has red brick, but has a variety of unadorned windows: casement windows across the second level, and 2/2 double hung sash across the third level. The 1956 annex covers the original fenestration at the first floor level. An exterior chimney is located in the southeast corner (Photo 8).

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### Interior

On the <u>first floor</u>, the major room is a large public space which rises two levels. Steel, fireproof vaults are located at the rear of the space. Marble floors, high coffered ceilings, and clerestory windows are other significant features of the public space (Photos 9, 10, & 11). Other first floor rooms include a vestibule at the main entrance, the president's office on the west side of the vestibule at the northwest corner of the building, and a closing room on the east side of the vestibule. An elevator is located between the vestibule and the bathroom, and a stairway up to the mezzanine level runs perpendicular to the vestibule. The president's office is noteworthy for its walnut wainscotting (Photo 12).

The <u>mezzanine level</u> consists of a space at the northwest corner which was originally designed as the director's closing room. To the east of the closing room was the original men's bathroom. At the rear is an additional vault and a work room. The work room features pilasters, modillions, and other classical detailing associated with the Neoclassical style (Photo 13).

The <u>second floor (third level)</u> is a large open space designed for record storage and work space. It lacks the detailing of the lower levels (Photo 14). The only enclosed space is the original women's bathroom, located in the northeast corner.

### <u>Alterations</u>

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building has undergone several alterations, most of which have been minor or in keeping with the original design. All alterations were designed by the original architectural firm of Marsh & Saxelbye or by one of its derivatives. The original wood with beveled glass doors surmounted with a brass grille were replaced with stainless steel and glass doors at an unknown date. The mezzanine level of the original building as completed in 1929 was not finished, although a "future mezzanine line" had been indicated on the 1929 blueprints.

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The mezzanine was finally completed in 1945, with the addition of a work room at the south end of the public space.

In 1948, a narrow, one story filing room (approximately  $65' \ge 7 1/2'$ ) was added in the alley on the east side of the building, between the Title & Trust building and Clinton E. Garrick Auto Repair. Windows on the first floor of the east elevation were enclosed, and a door was made through the south window at the east end of the original closing room. The location of the original window spaces can still be identified on the east interior wall of the original 1929 building (Photo 10).

In 1956, Clinton E. Garrick Auto Repair was torn down and a extensive, one story annex (approximately 106' x 56 1/2') was added to the east elevation of the building. The east end of the original closing room, which extended approximately nine feet east of the main block of the 1929 building, was converted into a lobby/entrance for the annex. Access from the annex to the original building was made through the new lobby and the 1948 filing room addition. As a result, nearly all of the original 1929 east wall remains intact, and the annex is virtually a separate, selfcontained building (Photo 15).

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### SUMMARY

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building is significant under Criterion A because of its association with Jacksonville's most prominent title and abstract company. The Title & Trust Company of Florida played a critical role in the development of commercial real estate in Jacksonville after the Great Fire of 1901, one of the city's most important historical periods of development; during the Florida Land Boom of the 1920s; and through the Depression of the 1930s. The building is significant under Criterion C as a fine example of the Neoclassical style and the work of the prominent Jacksonville architectural firm of Marsh & Saxelbye.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The origins of the Title & Trust Company of Florida date from 1887, when several local residents formed a corporation called the Florida Abstract and Title Security Company. In 1898, James W. Spratt resigned as Treasurer of the City of Jacksonville to become actuary of the company. At that time Spratt purchased one third interest from C.W. Stansell and Edward Vail. Two years later, he bought all the outstanding stock in the company and assumed complete control.

Spratt's company had duplicate copies of most of the land ownership records for Duval County. On May 3, 1901, much of Jacksonville, including the county courthouse, was destroyed by what is known as the Great Fire. As the fire spread toward his building on Market Street, Spratt and his employees loaded the company's records on a sailboat moored on the St. Johns River and transported them to safety on the south side of the river. With the loss of the records in the courthouse, Spratt's collection of documents became the principal means of establishing title to Duval County real estate, and the Florida State legislature passed an act making the company's records admissible in court as evidence to support title claims. The years of rebuilding that followed the fire are known as the Jacksonville Renaissance. During that time, Spratt's company, with its valuable

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collection of title and abstract information, prospered in the real estate boom.

In 1922, Charles H. Mann and Richard P. Marks obtained a charter for the Title & Trust Company of Florida. With operating capital of \$250,000, the new company absorbed the Florida Abstract and Title Security Company and its chief competitor, the Realty Title and Trust Company. The new Title & Trust Company of Florida also began to insure land titles. This was an innovative practice in Duval County at that time.

## HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The commercial importance of the Title & Trust Company of Florida during the Jacksonville Renaissance and the Florida Boom of the 1920s is reflected in its handsome building, constructed in 1929. It was located in downtown Jacksonville, in the heart of the county's governmental center. The new building was prominently featured on the inside cover of the 1929 Jacksonville City Directory. The company's only major competitor at that time was the Florida Title and Guaranty Company, a representative of an out-ofstate company, the New York Title and Mortgage Company.

Despite the collapse of the Florida Land Boom in 1926, and the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, the Title & Trust Company of Florida remained prosperous during the 1930s. Much of its business was based on mortgage foreclosures and legal proceedings which were needed to remove clouds on titles resulting from failed real estate activities. In 1960, the company's trust department was separated and transferred to a different banking institution, the First Bank and Trust Company of Jacksonville. The Title & Trust Company of Florida preserved its valuable archives in fireproof steel vaults at its building at the corner of Forsyth and Newnan Streets until it relocated its offices in 1984.

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ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

### Neoclassical Style (1894-c1940)

The Neoclassical style was popularized by the World's Columbian Exposition, held in Chicago in 1893. Buildings erected by each state at the Exposition were to have a classical theme. Wide publicity for the event and attendence by people from all over the country assured a popularity of the style which lasted for nearly fifty years.

Neoclassicism recalled the simple architectural features and techniques of the Greeks and Romans. Its most distinguishing characteristics include: use of the Ionic or Corinthian order for colossal pilasters and engaged columns, flat or low pitched roofs behind parapets, horizontality, symmetry, and balance. Doorways often have elaborate, decorative surrounds based on Greek Revival, Adam, or Georgian precedents. Cornices often have dentils or modillions, and sometimes have a wide frieze band. Windows are usually double hung sash with various light configurations.

### Marsh & Saxelbye

William Mulford Marsh was born in DeLand, Florida in 1889, and moved to Jacksonville during his youth. He had no formal training in architecture, but acquired his knowledge through first hand experience, principally with the firm of Talley and Sumer. Harold Saxelbye was born in England and educated at the Royal Institute of Architects in the Beaux Arts tradition which drew on many Classical motifs. He arrived in New York in 1904 and practiced there with the firm of Jacobs and Davies, and later as a partner in the firm of Thompson and Frohling.

In 1914, Saxelbye went to Jacksonville to supervise the construction of the Mason Hotel. He met Marsh at that time, and formed a partnership with him in 1919. They became Jacksonville's most successful architects during the 1920s. They represented a new generation of local architects who supplanted such pioneers as Henry J. Klutho and Wilbur

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Talley. By 1920, Klutho was suffering from unwise investments in Jacksonville's motion picture industry and thereafter never received the quantity or quality of commissions that he had previously. Talley left Jacksonville in favor of Lakeland, Florida during the 1920s Land Boom.

Most of Marsh and Saxelbye's commissions were for private residences, but they also designed major commercial, educational, and institutional buildings in Jacksonville. In addition to the Title & Trust Company of Florida Building, their works included the Levy-Wolf Building, the Jacksonville Police Headquarters, the Cummer Gallery, the Women's Club, the Mayflower and George Washington Hotels, the Hildebrant Building, the Western Union Building, Landon High School, Hope Haven Hospital, and several apartment buildings in the Riverside Historic District. They were responsible for the designs of numerous buildings in Jacksonville which are listed in the National Register of Historic Places: Epping Forest (NR 1973), the Lane-Towers House (NR 1982), San Jose subdivision (NR 1985), and numerous houses in the Avondale subdivision (NR 1989). Harold Saxelbye alone designed the Village Store which was listed in the National Register in 1988.

### ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Title & Trust Company of Florida Building is a fine example of the Neoclassical Style in Jacksonville. It incorporates most of the features used to define the Neoclassical Style, such as: monumental, engaged columns and pilasters in the Ionic and Doric orders; enclosed pediments; a cartouche, and a garland; anthemions, scrolls, quoins, and voussoirs; and a dentil cornice with an inscribed frieze. The building is an excellent example of the detailed designs executed by William Marsh and Harold Saxelbye, two of Jacksonville's most outstanding twentieth century architects.

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### Public Records

- City of Jacksonville, Florida. Building Permits, Permit #122.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Historic Landmarks Commission Files.
- State of Florida. Bureau of Archaeological Research. Florida Master Site File.

#### <u>Newspapers</u>

- Jacksonville Journal, May 11 and 14, 1929.
- Florida Times-Union, May 3, 1981.

### **Pamphlets**

Title & Trust Company of Florida, "Saving Title Records, An Historic Document," Jacksonville: Title & Trust Company of Florida, n.d.

\_\_\_\_\_, "Title & Trust Company of Florida," Jacksonville: Title & Trust Company of Florida, c1960.

#### <u>Books</u>

- Brown, Paul S. <u>The Book of Jacksonville, A History</u>. Poughkeepsie, N.Y.: A.V. Haight, Printer and Bookbinder, 1895.
- Davis, T. Frederick. <u>History of Jacksonville and Vicinity,</u> <u>1513 to 1924</u>. St. Augustine, Fla.: The Record Company, 1925.
- Gold, Pleasant Daniel. <u>History of Duval County</u>. St. Augustine, Fla.: The Record Company, 1928.
- Polk, R.L. & Co. <u>Polk's Jacksonville (Florida) City</u> <u>Directory, 1929</u>. Jacksonville: R.L. Polk and Company, 1929.

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- Ward, James Robertson. <u>Old Hickory's Town: An Illustrated</u> <u>History of Jacksonville</u>. Jacksonville: Florida Publishing Company, 1982.
- Wood, Wayne. <u>Jacksonville's Architectural Heritage:</u> <u>Landmarks for the Future</u>. Jacksonville: University of North Florida Press, 1989.

### **Blueprints**

- Marsh & Saxelbye, Architects. Building for Title & Trust Co. of Florida, Jacksonville, Florida. July 24, 1928.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Mezzanine Floor Addition to Title & Trust Co. Building, Jacksonville, Florida. October 10, 1945.
- \_\_\_\_. File Room Addition to the Title & Trust Co. Bldg., Jacksonville, Florida. August 13, 1948.
- Saxelbye and Powell, Architects. Addition to Title & Trust Bld'g., East Forsyth Street, Jacksonville, Florida. December 10, 1956.

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	1	1. Title & Trust Company of Florida Building,
		200 Forsyth Street 2. Jacksonville, Duval County, Florida
		3. Paul Weaver
		4. May 1989
		5. Historic Property Associates, St. Augustine, FL
		6. Setting at corner of Forsyth & Newnan Streets,
		camera facing SE
		7. 1 of 15
	Items	5 1-5 are the same for the remaining photographs.
	2	6. Main elevations (N & W) along Forsyth and Newnan
		Streets, camera facing SE
		7. 2 of 15
	2	6 Nain antwy on Rengyth Street comerce facing C
	3	<ol> <li>Main entry on Forsyth Street, camera facing S</li> <li>3 of 15</li> </ol>
		7. 5 OI 15
	4	6. N elevation, first and mezzanine levels, camera
		facing S
		7. 4 of 15
	_	
	5	6. Cartouche and garland in tympanum, top of the pavilion, camera facing S
		7. 5 of 15
		/. 5 OF 15
	6	6. W elevation, camera facing NE
		7. 6 of 15
	_	
	7	<pre>6. S elevation, camera facing N 7. 7 of 15</pre>
		/. / OI 15
	8	6. E elevation, showing 1956 annex, camera facing SW
	-	7. 8 of 15
	9	6. Public space on first floor, showing clerestory
		windows and pilaster, camera facing W
		7. 9 of 15

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Photographs	s 2	Title & Trust Company of Florida Building,
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- 10 6. E wall of first floor, showing clerestory windows and enclosed windows at floor level, camera facing SE
   7. 10 of 15
- 11 6. Public space on first floor, showing marble floor, camera facing SE 7. 11 of 15
- 12 6. President's office, showing wainscotting, camera facing NW 7. 12 of 15
- 13 6. Work Room, mezzanine level, camera facing W 7. 13 of 15
- 14 6. W wall of second floor, camera facing SW
  7. 14 of 15
- 15 6. Front elevation of 1956 annex, camera facing SE 7. 15 of 15







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FLORIDA TITLE & TRUST COMPANY OF FLORIDA BUILDING



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