

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Nebraska	
COUNTY: Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 2 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:
The Aquila Court Building

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1615 Howard Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Omaha

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31 COUNTY: Douglas CODE: 055

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Union Casualty Company

STREET AND NUMBER:
1615 Howard Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Omaha

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Register of Deeds, Douglas County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
18th and Farnam Streets

CITY OR TOWN:
Omaha

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic Preservation in Nebraska

DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Nebraska State Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER:
1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Lincoln

STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Nebraska

COUNTY: Douglas

ENTRY NUMBER: 31

DATE: OCT 2 1973

FOR NPS USE ONLY

This nomination is located in the second Nebraska Congressional District

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Aquila Court Building occupies the entire half block on the south side of Howard Street between 16th and 17th Streets. This site is on the southern fringes of Omaha's business district.

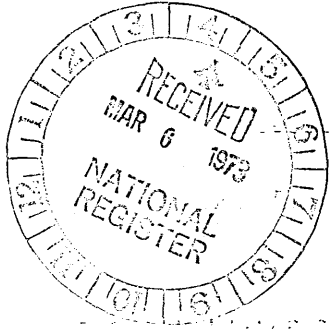
The building's Howard and 16th Street facades are four stories, and are faced in Bedford lime stone. The architectural character is distinctly Renaissance, although adapted to a commercial setting.

U-shaped in plan, the building is focused around a central courtyard. The transition to this inner court is made by a change in material. All interior facing walls are red brick, which creates a warmer atmosphere. An arcade encompasses the court serving as a screen and protected walkway for the surrounding businesses. It is entered from 17th Street through an arch and colonade. The building's east entrance is directly off the elevator lobby. Originally patterned after an Italian formal garden, the gold fish pool, murmuring waters, stone paths, and numerous plants created a uniquely serene atmosphere in contrast to its urban environment. The court not only provides a prestigious shop setting but also gives the inner offices an exposure to light and natural ventilation. It also serves as a buffer between the north retail-office wing and the south apartment wing.

The south wing is comprised of court-level retail spaces and second-story studio apartments. The apartments are two-story units with a bedroom balcony and clerestory living room space which overlooks the court. The apartments are entered through the court and provide a transition from city-scape to residential atmosphere.

In 1927 the court was extensively altered. It was completely surfaced with split-marble slabs. The verdant pools and canals were replaced with modern fountains and a large ornamental waterwheel. This renovation was stimulated by future plans to convert the court to an outdoor dining area. The court, however, still possesses much of its original quiet charm.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate) <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century			
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)			
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric <input type="checkbox"/> Historic <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Art <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Industry <input type="checkbox"/> Invention <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape <input type="checkbox"/> Literature <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Political <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy <input type="checkbox"/> Science <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian <input type="checkbox"/> Theater <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The Aquila Court Building, conceived and designed in Chicago, was a real estate venture of Charles and Raymond Cook, Chicago capitalists. Being the first building which they had commissioned, it was to be an ideal prototype containing offices, small ground level shops, and several town houses. Raymond Cook, the main promoter, insisted on an interior court similar in design to the Italian gardens he had seen in his home town, Chicago. Landscape gardening was his hobby and Mr. Cook personally supervised the courts layout and planting.</p> <p>Aquila Court is the result of an enlightened client working with architects possessing mature skills. This commission was one of the last received by Holabird and Roche, the prominent Chicago architecture firm. It was under construction the same year that William Holabird died, 1923.</p> <p>Holabird and Roche are considered as lesser members of the Chicago School. However, they did play an important role in developing a modern architectural approach to America's rising industrialism and commercialism. Along with their teacher, William LeBaron Jenney, they are tied strongly with the development of the skyscraper. They introduced riveted steel construction, which greatly improved the speed and efficiency of skyscraper erection. Their firm was one of the first to set up along the lines of a modern architectural office, with personnel including not only architects, but also engineers, specification writers, superintendents, and accountants. They were equipped to handle confidently any project of that day.</p> <p>Holabird and Roche's buildings have not been compiled in a complete monography, and their work is most likely more extensive than realized. Their architectural oeuvre is comprised of intricate engineering and spacial development. Detail and forceful architectonic is most generally subdued in favor of logic, the handling of structure, systems integration, and economics.</p> <p>The works of Holabird and Roche were described in one of the leading 1920 architectural publications as "that which makes up the daily grist." However, in the case of Aquila Court, an ordered and uneventful facade gives way to a unique set of inner spacial relationships.</p> <p>In the present day of urban emphasis this building represents a well developed integration of the urban components; retail, office, and town</p>			

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hitchcock, Henry-Russell. Architecture Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1967).

Andrews, Wayne. Architecture, Ambition and Americans (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955).

Files; Nebraska State Historical Society

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

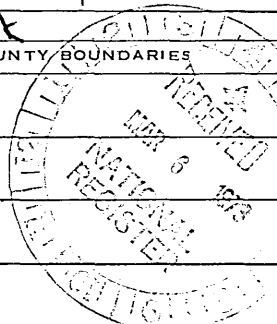
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		95° 56' 16"	41° 15' 19"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

UTM
15/253850
4511060
CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approx. 1/2 city block

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Persijs Kolberg, Curator of Historic Sites

ORGANIZATION: Nebraska State Historical Society DATE: March 1, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER: 1500 "R" Street

CITY OR TOWN: Lincoln STATE: Nebraska CODE: 31

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Merrin D Knott

Title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

Date March 1, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Robert W. Tuttle
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 10/2/73

ATTEST:
Constance [Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date 9. 28. 73

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Nebraska	
COUNTY	
Douglas	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 2 1973

(Number all entries)

Significance

Page 2 of 2 pages

house arranged around a peaceful courtyard.

