

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1410

1. Name of Property

historic name Masonic Temple

other names/site number (MC-NP-105)

2. Location

street & number 501-505 South 7th Street not for publication N/A

city or town Paducah vicinity N/A

state Kentucky code KY county McCracken:code 145 zip code 42003

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, SHPO

Date 10-21-02

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official _____ Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

Signature of the Keeper DMcnet J. Vivian Date of Action _____

12/4/02

Masonic Temple
McCracken County, Kentucky

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
<u> </u>	<u> </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing
N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Social Sub: meeting hall
Commerce professional, specialty store, restaurant

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Vacant Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK
roof Wood with built-up asphalt
walls Brick
other _____

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

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.
- 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.)

- a owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- b removed from its original location.
- c a birthplace or a 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.

Significant Dates N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above) N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Areas of Significance

BLACK ETHNIC HERITAGE

COMMERCE

Architect/Builder

unknown Narra

ative Statement of Significance (See continuation sheets.)

Period of Significance 1914-1952

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 #

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:
Kentucky Heritage Council

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

Zone Easting Northing
1 16 357 840 4104 805 Paducah East Quad

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (See continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sharon Poat, Secretary
organization Upper Town Heritage Foundation date August 1, 2002
street & number 446 Kinkead Street telephone (270) 443-9229
city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42003

Property Owner

name Mrs. Shirley Massie
street & number 2527 Laclede Street telephone (270) 443-3806
city or town Paducah state KY zip code 42001

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Description

The Masonic Temple (MC-NP-105) is located in Paducah, seat of McCracken County, Kentucky, at 501-505 South Seventh Street. It is a three-story, three-bay brick building, almost square in shape. It is located in what was once the middle of a two-block row of African-American businesses with a mix of two-story brick commercial buildings and frame houses. Most of the original businesses and small houses located along South 7th Street between Clark and Jackson Streets have been torn down. The Hammock Funeral Home still sits in the 400 block of South 7th, almost next door to the Masonic Temple. The funeral home has been in business since the 1890s and has been operating from this building, which was once the original owner's home, since 1937. The rest of the buildings in the 400 block of South 7th have been replaced by the county jail and related government buildings. Except for the Masonic Temple, the west side of the 500 block of South 7th is vacant. Across the street are three small businesses, two in cinderblock buildings, whose construction dates to the 1950s.

The Masonic Temple is an east-facing building measuring 68' wide x 60' long. The first floor was constructed in 1904; the top two floors were added in the teens. A header row of bricks projects from the building at the top of the first story of the front and side facades and visually divides the original first floor from the upper floors, a division now highlighted because the ground level is now painted while the upper floors and rear of the building are still unpainted. The front of the ground level has three entries, one for each of the building's addresses. The center opening is a Roman arch composed of five concentric rings of brick over a double door. The bottom of the arch is composed of a series of projecting bricks at the lintel-level of the door. The outer edges of these projecting bricks mark the edges of a raised brick panel that extends vertically to the ground level header and that heads the arch. At the center of the panel above the arch is a two-piece sandstone block inscribed "MASONIC TEMPLE." On either side of this central arched opening are the wide openings for the store fronts. The sixteen-foot openings are each capped with substantial granite lintels. The locally-made Jackson Foundry post-and-lintel systems that once filled these wide openings were removed in 1978, leaving recessed paneled entries with modern doors and windows.

Along the north Adams Street side of the building, the short, high arch-topped windows that once let additional light into the businesses located at 501 South 7th have been boarded over.

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The original door openings at the front and rear of the Adams Street side of the building remain but have also been enclosed or replaced. In addition, three holes have been cut in the Adams Street side below the back three windows to accommodate three long, slender modern windows. On the ground level of the southern side, the original alternating high and longer windows have also been boarded. On this side, a sturdy open lean-to has been added along the building's length.

The front and sides of the added upper two floors show a Classical Revival influence. At the front of the building, brick pilasters separate paired windows in each of the three bays. Projecting brick forms both a column base and an entablature with six architrave grilles centered over the windows and dentils at the top of the frieze. The pilasters and entablature continue, simplified, along the sides of the building, with the parapet stepping down at each pilaster. As on the front, the double-hung windows are paired. Each has a flat sandstone lintel.

The second-story windows are longer than the third floor's. They have three vertically aligned, single-light sashes which make them one-third taller than the third floor windows, which appear to be one-over-ones on the sides and original-sized, wooden four-over-fours on the front. On the front and north side of the building most windows have been boarded to protect them from breakage. Those without covering have been broken. On the southern side of the building the upper floor windows have all been bricked in. On both sides of the building, the back windows in the middle pair are elongated. An early twentieth century photo shows that the elongated windows on the north side were, indeed, windows. On the south side, the second floor window is boarded and the third contains a replacement door. A Property Valuation Administration photo taken in the early 1950s shows a steep set of metal stairs running along the building from the front up to this third floor door--an important second means of egress from the large meeting hall on the third floor.

The rear wall is a plain flat surface with six window openings in each the second and third floors. A small frame building once stood immediately behind the Masonic Temple, making rear windows on the first floor useless. The window openings at the rear of the building are simple arch-topped openings with stone sills. One of these still houses the original window with glass. Several windows have been partially boarded and replaced, and half have been roughly bricked in. The walls here and throughout are solid with no signs of cracking.

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The three main front entrances represent three distinct and separate parts of the building. On the first floor, solid brick walls separate the storefronts at 501 and 505 South 7th from the central bay which provides access to the second and third floors. The first floor storefronts each have concrete floors and secondary exits at the rear of the side walls. The center entrance opens into a shallow foyer with a wide arched opening into the main part of the bay. After the construction of the upper floors, the 24' wide space functioned as a wide entry hall leading to the enclosed wooden steps at the rear of the building.

Wooden pilasters, rather than solid walls, separate the three bays on the second and third floors. The centrally located stairwell, opens to the northern side of the second floor. Parts of this floor were partitioned for office or organizational meeting space over the years. However, a large area on the north end functioned as dance floor and basketball court mid-century. The stairwell opens onto the southern part of the third floor. This floor had some storage rooms partitioned off on the southern end; however, most of third floor was simply a large meeting space for the various Masonic and Eastern Star organizations that met there. On the north end was a raised wooden platform used in their rites.

Interior Damage and Rehabilitation Plans

The flat wood roof with built-up asphalt has failed. Although this is impossible to see from the exterior, the interior has suffered a great deal of damage. The second and third floors have collapsed into the first floor. The foyer that the central doorway opens onto is still intact. The two pieces of glass that make up the semi-circular arch above the main doorway are still in place and can be seen from inside the foyer. Most of the plaster remains on the walls. The wide opening into the main hallway--with its plain millwork and deep transom with two lights--is also still in place.

Beyond the foyer, though, the hallway is choked with the remains of floor joists and lathe and plaster ceilings and walls. The enclosed stairwell at the rear of the hall is still standing. If the building were a creature, its interior skin and flesh would be missing. However, the structural bones that hold up the roof structure are still in place: the brick walls that separate the three bays of the original structure are still in place. They support long wooden pilasters that reach to the roof and carry the wooden girders that support the roof structure. Daylight can be seen in several

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places through the lathe that remains on most of the third floor ceiling.

In the Spring 2002, the Paducah City Inspections Department issued a correction notice on the building. The owner, Shirley Massie, has spoken with the chief inspector and agreed to repair the roof, install gutters, and replace or cover broken windows as initial steps in stabilizing the building. She is investigating the steps that will need to be taken and the costs of completing a total rehabilitation of the building. She is committed to preserving the building.

Integrity Evaluation

This property's basis for eligibility is that it meets the terms of Criterion A, where it is significant for its association with Paducah's African American community. The most important integrity factors which allow the building to convey these historic associations are integrity of location, setting, design, and association.

The property is evaluated to have integrity of location simply because it has not been moved.

The property is evaluated to have integrity of setting. The setting of the property was evaluated on two levels: the setting of the property itself and the way that the property fits within the setting from which it derives its meaning, Paducah's African-American community. Within the property itself, there is very little setting. Most of the land proposed for listing was covered by the building itself. The building, as it always has, fronts directly onto the city sidewalk with a narrow strip of grass along the Adams Street side. The building's prominent corner setting has not changed, but the streetscape around it has. The small two-story frame structures that enclosed the Masonic Temple at the rear and on the south side have been torn down, as have most of the other buildings, commercial and residential, which comprised the neighborhood's two-block commercial district. Because the greatest intactness of setting is confined to the Masonic Temple's immediate property, this nomination is for that area alone.

The property is also evaluated to have integrity of design. The building attains part of its significance through its sheer size. Older members of the African-American community, Robert Coleman and Gladman Humbles, respectively call the construction of this building by

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members of the African-American community in the early twentieth century "a miracle" and "an amazing feat." The building was and is much more massive than any other building Black- or White-built building in the African-American commercial district, marking a high point in community cooperation and vitality. Thus, the integrity of the building's massing and contours is of great importance.

In addition, the brick facades and the architectural detailing that defines them remain intact. The exceptionally long second floor and shorter third floor original windows, mostly boarded over for protection, are still in place on the most public sides of the building--both the South 7th Street and Adams Street sides. Only the front entryways have suffered design changes. Openings replicating those seen in early twentieth century photographs, however, would be easy to include in the rehabilitation plan and would restore complete integrity of exterior design.

It is the integrity of the exterior design that is most critical in showing the significance of the building; however, the impact on design of substantial interior materials losses should be addressed. The brick walls that separate and define the building's original three commercial bays are still intact along with some of the plaster on these and the exterior brick walls and the millwork around the original windows. Several factors somewhat mitigate the loss of lathe and plaster ceilings and partitioning wall throughout the building: many of the interior spaces were either (1) large spaces defined by their openness, as on the third floor, or (2) spaces that had been altered several times as different businesses and organizations used them for varying purposes during the first half of the twentieth century, as on the second and ground floors.

The building's integrity of association is also evaluated to be intact. The building is associated with the development of Paducah's Southside African-American neighborhood, particularly the business district that once flourished there. This neighborhood still exists and is still predominantly African-American. Even the remnants of the business district remain in the form of a restaurant/billiard hall/bar, a liquor store, and another bar that stand across the street from the vacant Masonic Temple. The immediate neighborhood, still seen as African-American by its inhabitants and the community as a whole, is sadly typical in what it shows of post-segregation abandonment, decay, urban renewal, and poverty. The Masonic Temple is a marker of a darker, more limited and limiting period in history. But one in which communal unity and community needs made a building such as the Masonic Temple possible and successful.

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Statement of Significance

The Masonic Temple (MC-NP-105) meets National Register Criterion A and is historically significant within the context of "Building an African American Neighborhood on the Southside of Paducah, KY, 1865-1950." This building was constructed in the heart of an African-American neighborhood that began developing immediately after the Civil War. The purchase of the lot on which this building stands by a Masonic organization in 1881 marked the first move toward creating a commercial/fraternal public space in this neighborhood. The building of the Masonic Temple almost twenty-five years later in 1904 marked the last major addition to a business district that served not only this African-American neighborhood but also Black people from other parts of the city and surrounding areas.

This building reflects the importance of African-American fraternal organizations in building communities in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries: a building as massive as the Masonic Temple could not have been built by the individuals of modest means who lived in the Southside neighborhood or other parts of the town. However, the combined wealth and commitment of the men who belonged to Paducah's African-American Masonic groups made the building possible.

The building also reflects the response of the African-American community to racial segregation. When possible, members of the community would purchase goods and services from African-American businesses and professionals located in their own neighborhoods. They could enter the front doors of their hotels and saloons, eat in their diners, and be served in a timely fashion by their doctors, attorneys, and even grocers. In the era of racial segregation, the Masonic Temple was built to serve the needs of the African-American community. In its seventy years of public life, the building housed a wide array of business ventures and organizations to serve those varied and changing needs.

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Historic Context: Building an African American Neighborhood on the Southside of Paducah, KY, 1865-1950:

The construction of the Masonic Temple was the climax of the development of Paducah's primary African-American commercial area--an area located in the neighborhood that had been developing on the south side of Paducah for more than thirty-five years. In the years after the Civil War, two African-American neighborhoods began to develop in Paducah--one on what was then the north west outskirts of town the other on the southern edge. By the beginning years of the twentieth century, these neighborhoods had clearly assumed different roles in serving the African-American community in Paducah.

City directories of the period and Sanborn maps from 1901, 1906, and 1951 (updated from 1906) show that the original Northside neighborhood remained more residential in character with churches, restaurants, and saloon/billiard halls in modest frame or small brick commercial buildings. Further north, at what was the northern edge of town in 1900, Dr. Dennis Anderson and his wife Artelia built the first building and opened the school for African-Americans that would come to be known as West Kentucky Technical School. Another African-American residential neighborhood sprang up around the college. By the beginning of the twentieth century, trolleys ran out to this neighborhood, connecting it to Paducah's commercial areas ("Quiet Eighth" 1901, 1). Trolleys, and later buses, not only brought African-Americans to Paducah's main commercial district downtown, they also brought them to the Southside African-American neighborhood that had become the commercial and service center for Paducah's African-Americans for the duration of racial segregation. The Masonic Temple still stands as a massive reminder of the role this Southside neighborhood once played for Paducah's African-American community.

That Southside neighborhood began developing on what was once the southern edge of Paducah even before the Civil War. In the 1850's two churches were built to serve slaves and freedpeople (*Williams Paducah Directory* 1859, 15). The Colored Baptist Church, now known as Washington Street Baptist Church, and the Colored Methodist Church, now known as Burk's Chapel AME (MC-NP-106), were and are only four blocks apart along South 7th Street. In

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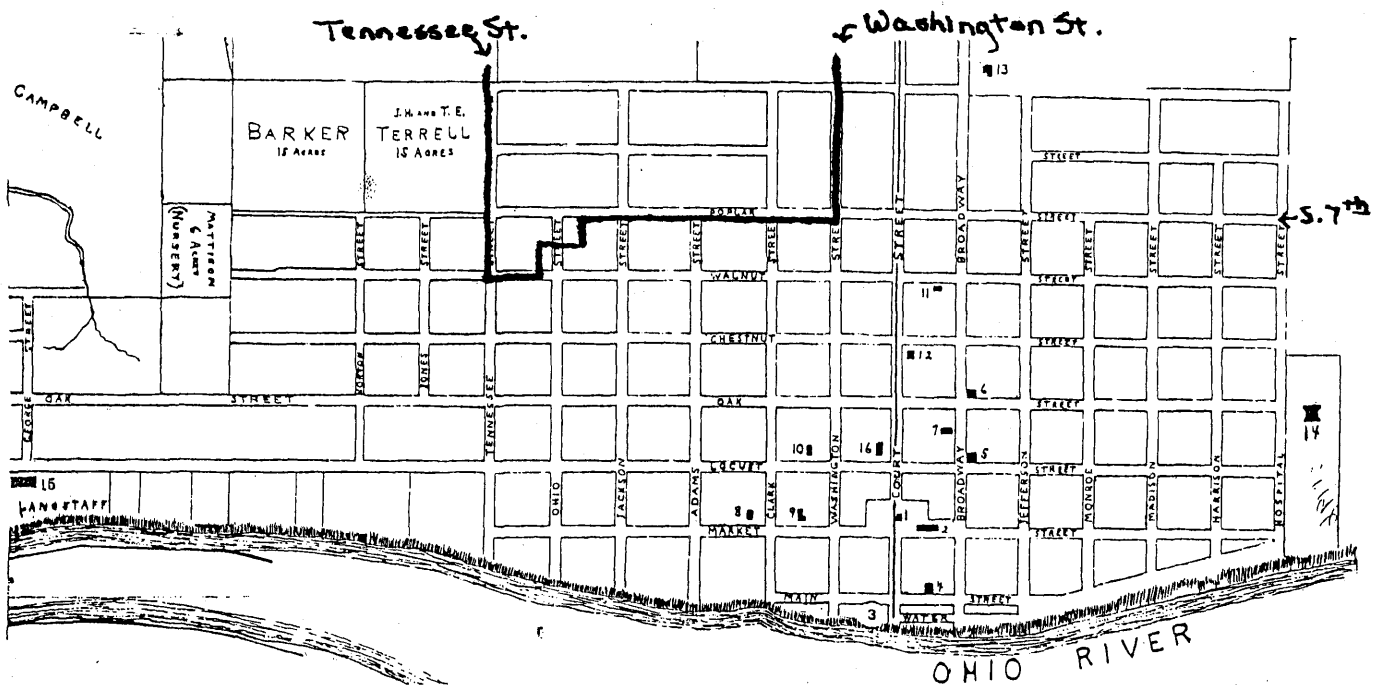
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following years, these churches would anchor the Black residential neighborhood that grew between them and just to the south of Burk's Chapel.

The Population Returns from the 1870 Census shows that after the Civil War there were households of freedpeople living in an L-shaped area where Union forces had been encamped only a few years before (Hall 1965, 8). This area ran from the 700 block of Washington Street west to the edge of town and from the 700 block of Washington Street south past Tennessee Street. The largest clusters of families lived at the very southern end, from the 600 to the 800 block of Tennessee Street. (See following map.)

Map reprinted from Fred Neuman's *The Story of Paducah*.



MAP OF PADUCAH IN 1856.

1. Courthouse. 2. Market House. 3. Marine ways. 4. Branch Bank of Louisville. 5. Commercial Bank of Kentucky. 6. Broadway Methodist Church. 7. First Baptist Church. 8. First Christian Church. 9. Grace Episcopal Church. 10. Cumberland Presbyterian Church. 11. St. Francis de Sales Catholic Church. 12. Female Seminary. 13. Paducah Male University. 14. Marine Hospital. 15. Site of old Langstaff mill. 16. First Presbyterian Church. Note on railroad track on Kentucky Avenue to river.

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The people who lived in this neighborhood worked in river-related businesses, on the construction of roads, on the railroad, in the tobacco warehouses and foundries. They worked as domestics, washerwomen, seamstresses, and nurses (1870 Census, Population returns). The Census also reports that 158 of the residents attended school; *A History of Blacks in Kentucky* notes that the Freedmen's Bureau and the Chicago-based Northwestern Freedmen's Aid Commission both opened schools in Paducah. In addition, Paducah Baptists had a tuition school (Lucas 1992, 244). Households were often made up of at least one traditional husband-wife-children family. Often additional people lived in the household: a young couple, several unrelated young adults, a woman with several children, or simply several children apparently from different families.

City directories of the time show that by the early 1880s, a few of the residents of this area had become entrepreneurs, opening barbershops and bathhouses in Paducah's main downtown business district. "Colored" lodges of Masonic and Odd Fellow organizations had also formed and were meeting in rented rooms downtown. As a matter of fact, Paducah was home to two groups of Prince Hall (the African-American branch of Masonry) Masons by 1881 (*Jno. B Gaines* 1881-'82, 106). These groups of men--or "lodges" as the groups are called--included the Stone Square Lodge No. 5 (so called because in 1876 it was the fifth Prince Hall Lodge to be formed in the Kentucky) and Mt. Zion Lodge No. 6 (Harber 1990, 34).

The men of these lodges were the river and railroad men, the entrepreneurs, and the factory workers who lived in the African-American neighborhoods on the north and south sides of town. For them, as for the members of other mid- to late-nineteenth century fraternal organizations, their organizations provided an opportunity to connect with others across neighborhood, work, and church-affiliation boundaries. Fraternal connections gave members support for their own endeavors and a sense of unity and common purpose in identifying and carrying out service projects and other philanthropic activities in their communities. Fraternal connection gave the members of some Paducah groups the necessary support, financial and emotional, to undertake major building projects.

In their earliest years, Paducah's African-American Masonic and Odd Fellow lodges

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rented space on the upper floors of downtown buildings (*Jno. B Gaines* 1881-'82, 106). In 1881, though, Mt. Zion Lodge No. 6 was the first to move toward acquiring its own meeting space by purchasing a 40' x 50' 8" lot on the southwest corner of South 7th Street and Adams Street (*Deed Book 27*, 462). The junction of Seventh and Adams-- halfway between Washington Street Baptist Church and Burk's Chapel AME along South 7th Street--was at the center of the original Southside neighborhood and would become the heart of the African-American community's primary service and commercial district.

The members of the Mt. Zion Lodge did not build immediately, but their purchase marked the beginning of a transition for this neighborhood. Within twenty years, "downtown" would become much less important to residents of the African-American community. Within a few years of the turn of the twentieth century, the Southside neighborhood would be home to two substantial brick commercial buildings built and operated by African-American fraternal organizations--the only two such buildings in Paducah.

The first of these buildings--and the first commercial building in the Southside neighborhood--was the Odd Fellow's Lodge Hall constructed in 1886. In 1884, The Paducah Lodge #1545 of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows bought the lot directly across 7th Street from the Masonic lot at the southeast corner of Seventh and Adams. There, they built a three story brick building which housed a rented store space downstairs with a small saloon in the rear, general meeting rooms on the second floor, and lodge meeting space on the top (*Deed Book 63*, 407-08). During the closing years of the nineteenth century, the upstairs meeting rooms hosted the meetings of several Odd Fellows-affiliated groups as well as the meetings of the Colored Juvenile Society and the Grand Army of the Republic, the colored branch of a Civil War veterans group. In the early 1890s some rooms were even used as classrooms while construction was completed on Lincoln High School (*Bennett and Co.* 1886-'87; 1890-'91). By 1900, the Odd Fellows had a successful venture in their building--they sold 1/10 interest to a fellow lodge. This deed mentions "all rents and profits accruing from said property" without any mention of debt (*Deed Book 63*, 407-08). Demolished in the 1970s, this building offered a successful pattern for development which a Masonic group would later adopt and expand in constructing their own Masonic Temple--the building under consideration here.

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This large commercial building served as an anchor for the small storefronts and home-based offices and businesses that city directories show growing up along 7th Street between Clark Street and Adams Street. By 1900, German immigrants who lived nearby and other White businessmen had built three more brick commercial buildings close by (*Sanborn Map* 1897). On the northeast corner of Seventh and Adams was Jake Biederman, a White grocer, who rented a hall above his store to the "colored" United Knights of Tabor. A drug store and a grocery operated from buildings that had recently been built a block from the Odd Fellow Hall at the northeast and northwest corners of Seventh and Jackson. Meanwhile, the Mt. Zion Lodge A&FM was holding its meetings in a small house they had built on the lot they had purchased back in 1881 at the southwest corner of Seventh and Adams (*Sanborn Map* 1901).

In this Southside neighborhood, the African-American residential section itself had expanded far beyond its original southern boundary, reaching its current limit by the turn of the century: it stretched an additional four blocks along 7th and 8th streets and then continued an additional five blocks along 8th, 9th, and 10th streets to the edge of Cross Creek (*Sanborn Map* 1901; *Caron's City Directory* 1908-'09). This thickly populated neighborhood, as well as Paducah's other African-American neighborhoods, supported the thriving business district in the heart of the original neighborhood.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the development of this Southside African-American neighborhood had followed very closely the typical development of African-American communities described by Victor Howard in the introduction of Black Liberation in Kentucky:

As slavery collapsed, the blacks moved to the cities or created communities on the outskirts of county seats. Wages earned by labor or from army service during the Civil War were translated in time into institutionalized wealth in the form of schools, churches, fraternities, and small businesses such as boardinghouses and barber shops. The developing middle class supplied leadership in the struggle for equal rights and suffrage. (2)

In 1904, the members of the three Prince Hall Masonic lodges then active in Paducah took the first steps construct a final, massive commercial building in the neighborhood--one

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which would serve their lodge and the community as a whole. The Mt. Zion Lodge No. 6 sold their lot on the southwest corner of Seventh and Adams, the small house that sat on it, and an adjoining 20'4" strip on 7th Street to the Colored Masonic Stock Company (*Deed Book 74, 166*). This group was comprised of all the Prince Hall lodges in Paducah. The names of six trustees representing these groups are inscribed on the building's 1904 cornerstone: Silas Kevil, C A Isabell, W M Miller, Ed Price, Lee Boyd, and J W Moore. The occupations of these representatives suggest the wide cross section of men brought together by Masonry: carpenter, physician, teamster, teamster, grocer, and drayman. Together, the fraternity members bore the responsibility for constructing the Masonic Temple, the subject of this nomination.

A 1906 Sanborn map of the area shows that they began modestly, constructing a 68' x 60', one-story three bay brick building which almost completely covered their 75' x 61'1 1/2" lot. The public library's holdings of city directories from the earliest twentieth century are patchy, but those that do exist show the building being well used: the 1980-09 *Caron's City Directory* lists building as being occupied by the Buford and Hayes Saloon, the Masonic Hall (where only one lodge is listed as meeting), and C B Boyd's Restaurant (568). By 1914, all six African-American Masonic and Eastern Star organizations in Paducah were meeting at the temple, and 505 was occupied by Hughes and Gause Billiards (*Caron's 1914-'15, 641*). Two years later, a billiard hall was still in operation under the ownership of Hayes and Umble (*Caron's 1916-'17, 602*). In addition, Biederman Hall on the northeast corner of the Seventh and Adams intersection had become vacant, and six groups affiliated with the Knights of Pythias as well as one from the International Order of 12 and one from Jonathan and David were renting meeting space at the Masonic Temple (*Caron's 1916-'17, 24-25*). In 1918, the H L Gause Saloon was operating from 501, and the Masonic and Knights of Pythias groups were still meeting (*Caron's 1918-'19, 557, 25-26*).

It is most probably in late 1918 or early 1919 that the Colored Masonic Stock Co. undertook to complete an addition to their building that would create the massive three-story structure that stands today. It is a building with the two original storefronts on the ground level; a private Masonic meeting hall on the third floor; and a large rental space on the second floor, divided over the years to meet the needs of a number of different business offices and

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organizations.

The building they constructed outsized all of the others in the neighborhood. The 1906 *Sanborn Map* shows that the Masonic Temple towered above the one- and two- story frame houses and businesses that surrounded it. It also rose above the other one- and two-story White-built commercial buildings. Its mass was almost double that of the older Odd Fellows building which was only 32' wide and 80' long (*Deed Book 63*, 407-08). For the next thirty years and well beyond, the Masonic Temple would have plenty of space to house the businesses and services needed by Paducah's African-American community.

Although their new building was impressive, the members of the Masonic lodges had overextended themselves. They would lose control of the building for a few years: in early 1920 the building sold on the courthouse steps in the case of Mechanics Trust and Savings Bank vs. The Colored Masonic Stock Company (*Commissioners' Deed Book 6*, 426). When Brack and Laura Owen bought the building, their renters in 1920 included several Black professionals: JW Egester, Attorney; HS Brannon, MD; National Benefit Life Insurance; and Mammoth Life and Accident Insurance Co. With the institution of prohibition, HL Gause was listed at selling soft drinks from the Masonic Temple. The building was also home to the short-lived Tuskegee Business College as well as the Home Drug Co. in 505 (*Caron's 1920-'21*, 621). The six Masonic and Eastern Star groups of the day met in their new, large third floor hall (33-34). They and other newer groups would continue to use this space for another fifty-five years.

Office space in the upper suites continued to be rented to insurance agents, attorneys, doctors, and dentists after the Masonic and Eastern Star Association repurchased the building in 1925. Into the 1940's, a number of businesses rented the large groundfloor spaces at 501 and 505 South 7th, including drug companies, cleaners, restaurants, a photo studio, a taxi cab company, and even the Paducah Funeral Home (*Caron's 1922-'23*, 638; *1926-'27*, 791; *1933-'34*, 684). By 1937 the Kentucky Sportsman's Club, a benevolent association, had begun meeting here too (*Baldwin and Young 1937*, 197). In 1941 the building was again sold on the courthouse steps in the action of the City of Paducah against the Masonic and Eastern Star Association (*Commissioner's Deed Book 11*, 95). Gladman Humbles and City Commissioner Coleman recall that

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during World War II, the USO was housed on the second floor, offering dance, drinks, cigarettes, and, in general, a place for soldiers on leave to relax. When the Masonic and Eastern Star Association again acquired the building in 1945, the medical professionals and attorneys that had long occupied the building's second floor had moved to other buildings along South 7th never to return, perhaps a result of the USO's tenure there.

In 1947, the space vacated by the USO was in use as the Masonic Recreation Center (*Caron's* 1947, 412). Gladman Humbles recalls the basketball court that occupied part of their space. The Kentucky Sportsman's Club was still meeting there, and the Story Novelty Company was headquartered there. The storefront at 505 South 7th was being rented by the local chapter of the NAACP (*Caron's* 1947, 412). The Masonic Temple was still home to the NAACP when the chapter helped bring a landmark suit against Paducah Junior College in 1949. This suit led to a decision that the Kentucky Day Law of 1904 (which prohibited race mixing in classrooms) could not be enforced at institutions of higher learning when similar classes were not available at Black institutions. As a result of this case, four Black students enrolled at PJC in the fall of 1953 (Murrell 1965).

On a lighter side, the Kentucky Sportmen's Club not only met at the Masonic Temple, older residents remember that they also hosted an annual Christmas dance and other dances throughout the year in the large recreation area on the second floor. Entertainment promoter Richard Bell also had office space in the Masonic Temple and worked with the the Kentucky Sportmen's Club and other organizations to bring groups who have come to be legend to Paducah in the 1940s and 1950s. However, the dances at the smaller venue in the Masonic Temple were usually played by well-known regional bands. Robert Coleman recalls the Nat Story Band and Karl Barber's group playing there.

It was also during this time period that Oscar Cross began to meet here with the second chapter of the Junior Legion Boy's Club formed in Kentucky. The group was still using the building's second floor in the late 1950s when they became the first integrated boy's club in the state.

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Stone Square Lodge No. 5 and the Queen Esther Chapter No. 4 of the Order of the Eastern Star and other groups continued to meet at the 503 South 7th Street until early 1975. They then purchased a "more modern facility for the transaction of Masonic business" (Harber 1990, 34), selling the historic building to a private owner. In the following years, Tom and Shirley Massie used part of the building as storage for their vending machine and arcade game business.

In the first half of the twentieth century, and beyond, the Masonic Temple at 510-505 South 7th Street housed the meeting place for various Masonic organizations which worked to improve their lives and their community. It also housed much more, reflecting, in its tenants and their activities, the varied and changing needs of the Southside neighborhood and Paducah's African-American community as a whole during the era of social segregation.

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Verbal Boundary Description

Map 112-1-4, Block 9, Parcel 3, McCracken County Property Valuation Administration.

This is the same property described in the Deed recorded in Deed Book 74, page 166,
McCracken County Clerk's office:

Being a part of Block No. 25 1/2 of Addition 'C' or Upper Town of Paducah, Kentucky,
and beginning at the South West corner of the intersection of 7th and Adams Streets;
thence with the South side or line of Adams Street and Towards 8th Street 61' 1" 1/2 feet
to a stake; thence at right angles and toward Jackson Street 75 feet; thence at right angles
61' 1" 1/2 feet to the West side or line of 7th Street; thence with the West side or line of
7th Street 75 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes the 75' x 61" 1/2 parcel historically associated with the Masonic
Temple.

Masonic Temple. Paducah, Kentucky. 501-505 south 7th.

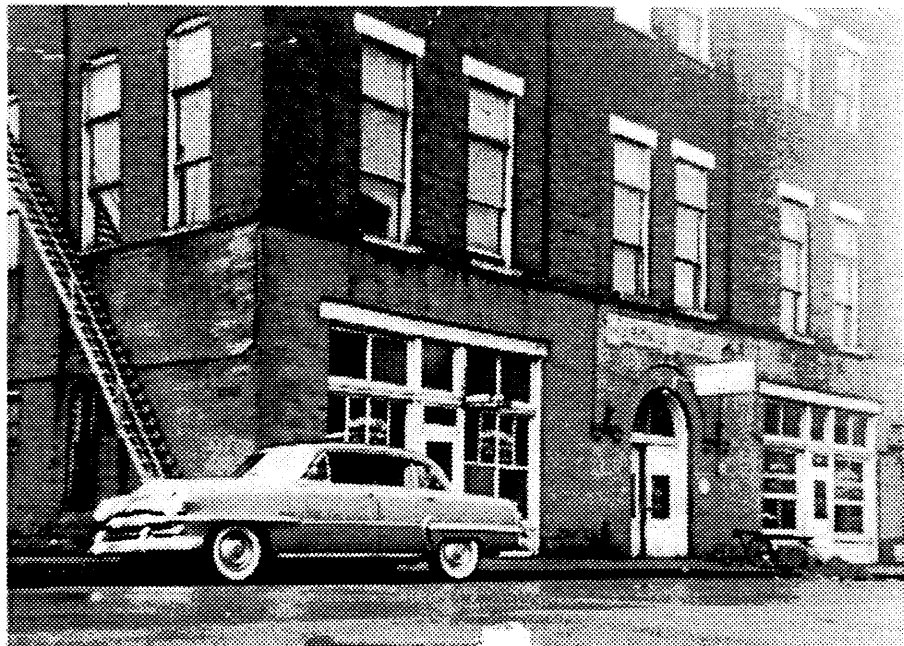


Photo from City Property Card--early 1950s

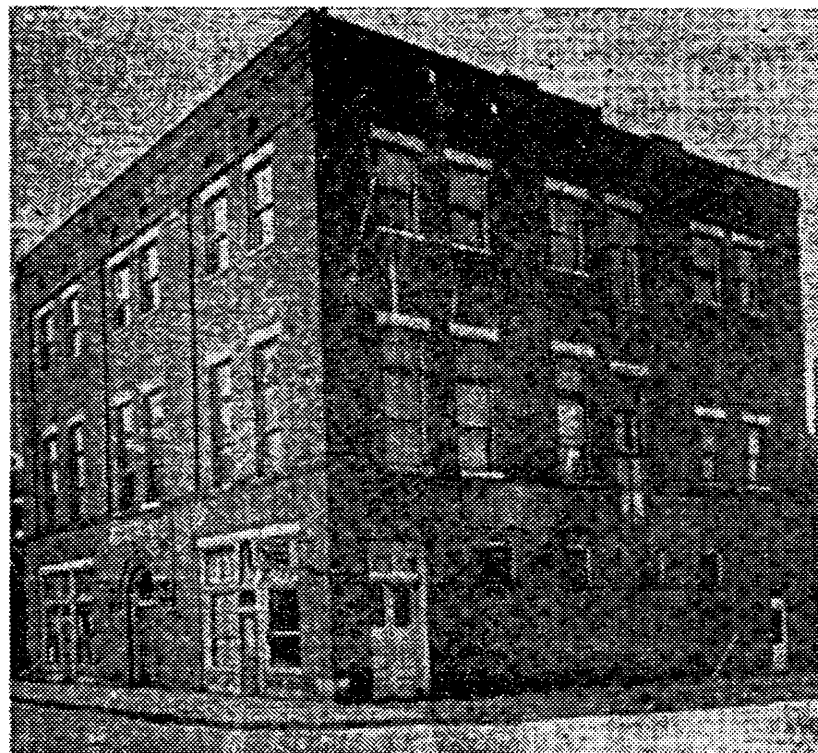


Photo belonging to Corine Harber.
Source and date unknown

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SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 02001470

Date of Listing: December 4, 2002

Property Name: Masonic Temple

County: McCracken

State: Kentucky

none
Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

for Daniel J. Vivian

Signature of the Keeper

December 4, 2002
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8. Statement of Significance

The period of significance is hereby changed to 1904-1952 to accurately reflect the period in which the property achieved significance under Criterion A in the areas of commerce and black ethnic heritage.

The Kentucky State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file**
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

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This nomination includes five (5) photographs of the Masonic Temple. All photographs were taken on July 24, 2002 by Sharon Poat. Negatives of all photographs are held by Sharon Poat at her home address: 446 Kinkead Street, Paducah, KY 42003. When the Hotel Metropolitan Museum at 724 Jackson Steet, Paducah, KY 42003, is opened, the negatives will be stored there.

- No. 1: Front of Masonic Temple from across South 7th Street. Camera facing west.
- No. 2: Northeast corner of Masonic Temple, showing the intersection of South 7th Street and Adams street. Camera facing southwest.
- No. 3: Southeast corner of Masonic Temple from across South 7th Street. Camera facing northwest.
- No. 4 North and rear sides of Masonic Temple from across Adams Street. Camera facing southeast.
- No. 5 Closeup of central front entry. Camera facing west.