

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0675041

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	APR 9 1979
DATE ENTERED	MAY 18 1979

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Burr Block

(LC13-C9-2)

AND/OR COMMON

Security Mutual Building/Veterans Administration Building/Anderson Building

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1206 "O" Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Nebraska

VICINITY OF

CODE

031

COUNTY

Lancaster

CODE

109

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

J. Philip Mahoney

Roger L. Anderson

STREET & NUMBER

Suite 1702, First

3430 Touzalin

National Bank Building

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln, Nebraska

STATE

Lincoln, Nebraska

VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds, County-City Building

STREET & NUMBER

555 South 10th Street

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Historic and Architectural Site Survey of Lincoln, Nebraska

DATE

1978

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Nebraska State Historical Society

CITY, TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The building known historically as the Burr Block occupies the northeast corner of Twelfth and "O" Streets in Lincoln, Nebraska (1970 pop., 149,518). "O" Street is the main thoroughfare of Lincoln and the Burr Block's location is a prominent downtown corner site that receives much traffic--both pedestrian and vehicular. Visual distinction is attained through the building's height and through its stone construction: structures east and west are mostly of brick construction and were either built at much later dates or have been severely mutated. Abutting the Burr Block's north wall is a recent multi-level parking facility.

When initially erected in 1887, the building contained six stories above a raised basement, fronting "O" Street for 50 feet and Twelfth for approximately 140 feet. Construction of those walls facing streets was of rough-cut grey limestone, their surfaces being enlivened by differing textures and treatments. The basement level was approached from several points on the sidewalk level and the building's principal entrance was located past a large Romanesque arch in the center of the south facade. Windows were in a variety of shapes and arrangements, the most conspicuous being three-tiered oriels of shallow projection. A richly embellished metal parapet wrapping around the south and west was interrupted on each side by an arabesque-treated panel flanked by dome-topped turrets. The rounded southwest corner was crowned by an onion dome surmounted by a pinnacle.

In 1916 the Burr Block was enlarged and most of the original portion was rebuilt; the first floor was altered to street level and four stories were added. Stone walls were reconstructed using the same material, but the fenestral pattern was made regular and all openings were made rectangular. Pilaster strips that had divided the 1887 building into major bays were retained and extended to accommodate the added floors. The original property dimensions, 50' x 140', were retained and a stone cornice treated with modillions and cartouches became the crowning element.

The mutations that the Burr Block underwent in 1916 transformed it into a somewhat Sullivanesque edifice: after the reconstruction and addition were completed, the building essentially consisted of a base, shaft, and cornice.

The early 20th-century construction shifted the principal entrance to the west, as elevators were situated in that portion. The present elevators are replacements, although staircases are those installed in 1916. Office rooms have been subdivided and expanded according to the needs of occupants through the years, but the corridors retain some of their 1916 flavor: walls and ceilings are sheathed with white marble veneer, and a good number of oak doors with brass hardware are extant.

Based on plans by Davis and Wilson of Lincoln, the Burr Block's first floor was remodeled in 1931. Large display windows were installed and a sidewalk shelter was appended.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1887; 1916 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Tyler; Berlinghof & Davis

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Burr Block, known also as the Security Mutual Building, the Veterans Administration Building, or the Anderson Building, is historically significant to Lincoln and Nebraska as being a highly visible chronicle of two prosperous eras in the city and state. In this capacity the Burr Block is also an exemplary instance of changing modes in American architecture: initially constructed in 1887 as a romantic Victorian edifice, it was transformed twenty-nine years later into a modern, ten-story "skyscraper"--up-to-date construction methods being employed, but stone remaining the principal medium. These factors accord the Burr Block as a unique remnant of late-19th and early-20th-century business activities on "O" Street, Lincoln's main thoroughfare. Since its initial construction the building has been associated with persons significant on the local, state, and national levels, and for over four decades the building was home office to an important insurance company that experienced tremendous growth during its period of occupancy.

The 1880s was a substantial decade of economic prosperity and population growth in Nebraska, mostly due to the spread of railroads and to favorable weather for crops. This golden age in the state's development was, by nature, reflected most strongly in its cities and towns which expanded at a rapid rate. Lincoln particularly profitted in the '80s and its ascent inspired a contemporary writer to ebulliently boast: "Day by day it (Lincoln) has grown and thriven, adding some new industry or social element, until the winter of 1886-87, when like a mountain stream, bounding free from its frozen embrace, and leaping with mad delight to meet the warm sunshine, has this capital city sprung into national fame and great prosperity" (Western Resources, Feb., 1887, p. 36). In 1885 Lincoln's population stood at 20,000; within two years the number doubled. Various urban facilities were serving Lincoln by 1887, and the community assumed a metropolitan air (James Olson, History of Nebraska, p. 202).

Carlos Burr, an early eastern loan agent and attorney in Lincoln and a one-term mayor of the city, and his brother, Lionel, also an attorney and an authority on federal court procedure, had an ample, six-story building with an elevated basement erected on the northeast corner of Twelfth and "O" Streets in 1887 to accommodate the increasing demand for office spaces. The Burr Block, as the brothers named it, was at once a popular addition to Lincoln's main thoroughfare, and among its early tenants were Charles G. Dawes and William Jennings Bryan. Dawes, whose noted capacities would include Comptroller of the Currency, Director of the Federal Budget, Ambassador to Great Britain, and Vice President (1925-29) under Calvin Coolidge, maintained a successful law practice from his office in the Burr Block during years that his biographer pronounced "decisive in molding the kind of man Charles Gates Dawes was to be" (Bascom Timmons, Portrait of American, p. 21). For a short period Bryan resided in his office at the Burr Block as an economizing means (Olson, Op. Cit.)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

QUADRANGLE NAME Lincoln, Nebr.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	4	6	9	3	6	9	0	4	5	2	0	4	3	0
ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

B

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

C

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

D

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

E

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

F

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

G

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

H

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

A rectangular lot on the northeast corner of Twelfth and "0" Streets in Lincoln, Nebraska: The foundation of the building serves as the nominated area; 50 feet frontage on "0" Street and 140 feet frontage on Twelfth Street.

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

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

STATE CODE COUNTY CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Daniel Kidd, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

January, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

1500 "R" Street

TELEPHONE

402/471-3270

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

STATE

Nebraska

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Morris E. Kenneth

4/2/79

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

W. Metzger

DATE

5/18/79

ATTEST: William H. Bratham 5/16/79

DATE

5/17/79

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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The building's designer and construction supervisor, James Tyler, was born in Gloucestershire, England, and he (and apparently his brother) received training in stone cutting and carving in that country before emigrating to America (Andreas, History of Nebraska, p. 1080). In Lincoln he was associated with the design of several notable edifices. James' brother, William, emerged in Lincoln during the construction of the Old U.S. Post Office and Courthouse (NRHP listing, Oct. 15, 1969), and following its completion William established a stone-cutting enterprise (see William Tyler House, NRHP listing, April 6, 1978). Undoubtedly, William's business furnished material employed in his brother's design.

Upon its completion the Burr Block drew favorable comments from many sources: an 1889 publication proclaimed it as being "perhaps the handsomest building in Nebraska..., beautifully designed in every detail" (Hays and Cox A History of the City of Lincoln, n.p.).

In 1906 the building was sold to the Security Mutual Life Insurance Company for use as a home office. This business institution grew steadily and, due to the need for additional space, expanded the structure in 1916. Changes were considerably major; four floors were added, the first floor was altered to street level, exterior walls were replaced, and fenestration was changed. Also, the Saracenic embellishments that had crowned the apex were removed and not reused. The alterations and the addition appear to have been planned by Berlinghof and Davis of Lincoln, this assumption linked to an extant document and circumstances revolving around this partnership's dissolution. As a result of its expansion and alterations, the Burr Block/Security Mutual Building assumed a progressive and modern appearance--somewhat Sullivanesque in effect.

As when it was initially constructed in the 1880s, the building was metamorphosed during an important financial era in Lincoln and Nebraska: during the years of World War I "Nebraska's primary contribution...was the production of food for the armed forces and the Allies--and in filling that function the state prospered greatly" (Olson, p. 268). Land values throughout Nebraska increased, and lending institutions such as Security Mutual benefitted from the conditions.

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Insurance companies play a highly significant role in Lincoln's economic composition, and Security Mutual has been a prominent contributor to this legacy. Between 1906-1947, the period of Security Mutual's occupancy of the former Burr Block, the company's assets increased from \$277,096 to \$12,876,000; business enforcements increased from \$5,317,415 to \$72,251,900; and the number of policies grew from 4,431 to 40,637 (Interview with Barbara Kowitzky, Information Department Head, Security Mutual Ins. Co., Lincoln, Jan. 15, 1979).

When Security Mutual vacated the building in 1947, it was purchased by the Veterans Building Corporation and leased at no profit to the federal government as offices for the Veterans Administration. Given an option to purchase the structure in 1959, the federal government rejected it as being "unmodern" (Neale Copple, Tower on the Plains, p. 69). In 1959 controlling interest was acquired by Victor Anderson, Governor of Nebraska 1955-59. Since then the building has been known among Lincolniters as the Anderson Building: the first floor houses several small shops and all other floors are rental office spaces.

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CONTINUATION SHEET Bibliography ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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