

PH0364801

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED OCT 1 1976
DATE ENTERED APR 18 1977

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
Louisville Trust Building
AND/OR COMMON
Old Louisville Trust Building (Jefferson County Police Headquarters and Offices)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
208 South Fifth Street
CITY, TOWN
Louisville
STATE
Kentucky
VICINITY OF
03 & 04
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
03 & 04
COUNTY
Jefferson
CODE
111

3 CLASSIFICATION

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

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Jefferson County Public Governmental Center Corporation
STREET & NUMBER
Jefferson County Courthouse
CITY, TOWN
Louisville
STATE
Kentucky
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Jefferson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
Jefferson Street
CITY, TOWN
Louisville
STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Brown-Doherty Survey
DATE
1960
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS
Bridwell Art Library (University of Louisville)
CITY, TOWN
Louisville
STATE
Kentucky
 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

(continued)

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 former Louisville Trust Bank Building is located on the southwest corner of Fifth and Market Streets in downtown Louisville. Market Street-- which received its name legitimately from its 19th-century use-- is the second major east-west thoroughfare south of the Ohio River; Main Street is to the north (see the National Register nomination form for the West Main Street Historic District, listed on March 22, 1974; its boundaries are currently being extended eastward). The south side of the block on which the old Louisville Trust Building is located is the site of the important Greek Revival Jefferson County Courthouse (1835-58, designed by Gideon Shryock, completed by Albert Fink; listed on the Register on April 10, 1972). Connected to the Courthouse by a second-story bridge over Courthouse Place, which runs east-west across the center of the block is the old Courthouse Annex (probably designed by McDonald and Dodd and erected in the mid-1890s) with the 20th-century Fiscal Court Building west of it. The north central portion of the block facing Market Street is occupied by the former Ben Snyder's Department Store building; this is a handsome turn-of-the century brick structure probably designed by Clarke & Loomis. The Louisville Trust Building is surrounded on the south and west by the former First National Bank Building with its Adamesque brick facades on Court Place, 5th and Main Streets.

Diagonally across the intersection from the old Louisville Trust Building is the new high-rise First National Bank Building with a plaza on the corner. The remainder of the intersection and much of nearby 5th and Market Streets has turn-of-the century commercial structures (eventually to be nominated to the Register as a district). Thus, the Louisville Trust Building does not stand in isolation, but retains its intended urban context of civic, legal, financial, and commercial structures, whether 19th- or 20th-century in date. In fact, the tower of the 1890s building is usually seen against either that of the 25-story Citizens' Fidelity Bank building a block to the south with its concrete-aggregate-panelled and finned surface, designed by Weldon Beckett, or the 35-story dark metal and glass surface of the First National Bank Building designed by Harrison and Abramowitz to the northwest. The 1891 building more than holds its own in mass, texture, and color against either of them, and provides a most welcome contrast in detail, particularly the picturesque composition of the corner tower and turret.

The old Louisville Trust Building consists of a seven-story main block with a square tower rising one story above the main cornice and an octagonal turret above that.

(continued)

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input 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 **1889-1891**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT **Mason Maury and William J. Dodd**

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Louisville Trust Bank Building is the largest and finest of Louisville's (i. e. Kentucky's) surviving Chicago-style high-rise office buildings. It represents the major collaboration of two of Louisville's most talented turn-of-the-century architects, Mason Maury and W. J. Dodd. Although Dodd had earlier worked in Chicago with two of the founders of the famous "Chicago School," Major William LeBaron Jenney and Solon S. Beman, the exterior appearance of the building seems to have been directly inspired by both the late works of H. H. Richardson and the early masterworks of Louis Sullivan, two of the giants of American--and indeed modern--architecture. Yet, whatever its immediate sources, the design of the Louisville Trust Building has a character and coherence of its own.

In spite of the subtle and varied elaboration of what Newcomb called the "robust lithic facades," to reflect (or possibly compensate for) the structure's then-unprecedented height and amount of usable office space, the overall form is bold, supple, and clear. The building was from the outset a powerful proclamation of the stability yet modernity, lavish yet controlled resources, community pride yet corporate competitiveness of the private financial institution it long represented. Now part of the magnificent Jefferson County-Louisville civic complex dominated by the nearby **Courthouse** and City Hall, the building has been effectively adapted for public use.

Construction of the original Louisville Trust Building began as the city ended its eleventh decade of continuous settlement. During that span, the city had grown from a crude trading village to a virtual metropolis. Its hegemony in the Falls of the Ohio region was long established and a prominent position in the commerce and industry of the Midwest and South secure. As the place itself evolved, so too did the size and demeanor of its architecture. Commercial building needs, once dictated by the simple mercantile arrangement of goods, now demanded provision for a plethora of new and complex uses. Such a need--one which required the performance of a great many participants within a limited amount of urban acreage--was shared by the legal and financial community in the last quarter of the 19th century. Its business was conducted, in a great measure, in

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Art Work of Louisville, 1903.

Brown, Theodore M. "Introduction to Louisville Architecture," Louisville, Free Public Library, 1960.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1

UTM REFERENCES

A	16	608600	4234650	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Property Valuation Administrator's City District 3, Block 14-E, Lot 12 as recorded December 1, 1969, in the Jefferson County Clerk's Deed Book 4319, page 147.

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

Douglas L. Stern, Research Assistant/Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Louisville Landmarks Commission/Kentucky Heritage Commission April 1975

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

530 West Jefferson Street/104 Bridge Street

(502)589-4230/(502) 564-4452

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Louisville/Frankfort

Kentucky

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

Eldred W. Melton

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

9/24/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

CHIEF

DATE

4/18/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

3-18-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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The number of bays on both sides seems almost deliberately blurred, but the north facade on Market Street is approximately half as wide as that on 5th. There is a small three-story addition west of the main block on Market, with continuous lintel and treatment of the first story, but slightly diminutive proportions on the two upper stories. This addition is not shown on views as late as 1903 but seems to have been added shortly thereafter. On the south side of the main block is a narrow seven-story addition designed by D. X. Murphy & Bros. about 1920, when the first two stories of the main building were extensively remodelled by them. The south unit is faced with lighter-color stone and has a wide entrance framed in a bronze molding with Sullivanesque detail. Although it is now used as the main entrance to the office tower and contains the elevators for the whole building, this south unit is visually distinct from the 1891 structure. (Both additions are included in this nomination.)

The original building is L-shaped in plan, with a shallow light-and air-shaft in the southwest corner; the original staircase, with its superb marble steps and iron railing, ascends within a broad semi-octagonal bay overlooking the light-shaft.

Originally the first-story banking rooms were partially lit by means of colored-glass skylights at the base of the shaft, but this feature was removed sometime ago, perhaps during the 1920 remodelling, which also included installation of a skylit arcade along the west side of the property, connecting the west and south additions and 5th and Market Streets.

The overall composition of the original building is clearly meant to be seen from the northeast corner intersection. The main (east) elevation consists of an extremely forceful, but in fact quite open, first story of polished and pen-hammered granite, with two low round-arched openings asymmetrically placed & flanked by square piers. Between these are stubby columns and above is a plain but deep continuous lintel. The "main" wall surface above-- although in fact it probably accounts for less than half of the total surface of the building--is of artfully rough-cut stone. This treatment accounts for the whole second-story, treated as a mezzanine with linked round arches framed by long and heavy radiating voussoirs. The rough surface continues up the end bays (whether they are single or double is hard to distinguish), up the tower, and across the facade under the main cornice. The apparently random surface texture is actually carefully

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calibrated, with alternating courses of thick and thin blocks, a wider band continuous with the lintels of the third story (but across only the lintels of the fourth story), and various other subtleties such as the implied quoins at the corners. The top three stories of the tower share this rough surface, but the surfaces are slightly recessed except at the corners; at this level even the spandrels between and above the windows are also rough-surfaced.

Framed within the main rough surface is the central panel of smooth, ashlar stone, although it too is given texture by bands of encrusted ornament, colonnettes, and superimposed layers. These panels are organized into two main vertical sections, four horizontal bays wide on the east facade, and two on the north. The central arcade is three stories high, enclosing pairs of window divided by short colonnettes on the third and fourth stories, with semicircular lunettes under the arches on the fifth story. (The end windows of the fifth story are also round-arched to sustain the rhythm at this level. Note too that the fifth-floor windows at the south end of the facade are linked by a stubby colonnette, but not on the tower.) The upper section of two stories of the central section has rectangular units separated by slender triple two-story colonnettes, with triple division of the windows between. The corner tower has slightly larger paired colonnettes linking the rectangular sixth- and seventh-story windows with round arches above; these lead the eye upward beyond the cornices of the main block to the loggia above the roofline. The parapet atop the tower contains another series of round-arched openings.

Except within the rough-surfaced areas, the horizontals throughout the facades are extremely emphatic and increase in plasticity upward. Huge raked stones underlie the wide window openings of the first story, although the bases of the piers and columns between them seem to rest directly on the sidewalk. Except for the heavy foliate cushion capitals of the columns and decorated capital-bands of the piers, this ground floor relies for affect on its massiveness, relative plainness, and clearcut geometry. The lintels, sills, arches, spandrels, and cornices on the upper stories are elaborately (yet precisely and regularly) carved in foliate or geometric patterns presumably of Romanesque or Byzantine inspiration. Each of these lavish bands, however, is offset by an adjacent plain smooth band, including the pilasters of the main arcade, which are edged by the slenderest of colonnettes. All the edges are clearcut, although some of the horizontals

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are richly shadowed by the ornamental bands. There is also a balance between the projecting horizontal members and the subtle surface recessions: true to masonry construction, the thickness of the wall is emphasized at the base by the deepset openings; there are fairly deeply setback windows within the rough-surfaced areas (except on the upper stories of the tower, where the surface is correspondingly recessed); within the central panels the setback layers bring the windows increasingly toward the surface as the eye moves upward, simultaneously seeming to diminish the actual thickness of the wall. This latter affect is all the more dramatic because of the generous projection and sculptural quality of the cornices.

The final turret, which seems somewhat like a garden pavilion misplaced on the roof, continues the interplay of rough and smooth surfaces, simple geometry and sculptured detail. Its improbable location nevertheless is highly effective as seen in silhouette from most angles, and successfully enlivens the bold flat top of the massive structure.

The interiors of the Louisville Trust Building have been altered numerous times, particularly affecting the spaces of the main floor. Although the wroughtiron grills and other ornamental features mentioned in the 1891 article are gone, massive Byzantinoid columns remain in the former banking room, there is still much marble and tilework lining the corridors, and the staircase mentioned above is also intact. Although the single huge plateglass windows of the ground story apertures have been replaced by conventional double sash, the bayed bronze entrances remain. The south addition dating from 1920 also has some interesting "Art Deco" features such as the elevator doors and other doorframes.

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an area determined by the location of the Courthouse and limited by the river three blocks to the north. Being somewhat labor intensive, this group vied, often unsuccessfully, for what little choice space was availed by the business district's many older three-and four-story buildings.

The Trust Building was conceived and erected in this context. Located within one block of the Courthouse among buildings sheltering the most prominent practitioners of the legal and banking trades, the edifice contained office space for nearly ninety firms within its eight-story mass. Actually, it was the city's second structure to satisfy such an unprecedented need by means of multi-story fireproof construction; the somewhat smaller Kenyon Building (demolished 1973), also designed by Maury and perhaps Dodd, preceded its erection by only a year or two.

The completion of this work marked a milestone not only for its city but also for the company that sponsored it. "The Louisville Trust Company is certainly to be congratulated," the Courier affirmed, "upon the success of their building from an artistic standpoint, and to be commended for their liberality in thus adorning the city. The company which had the enterprise and foresight to plan and erect such a building," was established in 1884 with a capital of \$200,000. Its first president was Hector V. Loving. In charge during the building's construction, Loving (b. 1839) was a native of Bowling Green, Kentucky, and was graduated from Hamilton College (New York) and the Louisville Law School in 1861. He entered the wholesale grocery business with his brother-in-law upon graduation and enjoyed great mercantile success in the city for many years. After his retirement from strictly commercial pursuits, Loving involved himself solely with the operation of the Trust Company, doing so, as the Courier put it, "with eminent ability and great good judgement and caution": characteristics particularly desirable during the late-nineteenth century's uneasy economic cycle. Along with Loving and "selected from among our most prominent and successful men" were directors such as John H. Leathers, W. N. Haldeman, J. Ross Todd, and J. M. Robinson.

Loving's good judgment was exercised especially in the selection of architectural services for the original Trust Building. Mason Maury (1846-1919) and William J. Dodd (1862-1930), designers and superintendents of the project, were among the leaders of Louisville's late nineteenth-century architectural scene. Upon the building's completion, the Courier wrote that it had "been pronounced by a prominent Chicago architect as the

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best example of commercial architecture in the West, the architect explaining that there are so many more restrictions put upon the designer in his city that they can not obtain such artistic results;" an ironic remark from the seat of the revolutionary Chicago Style. Together from about 1889 to 1896, Maury and Dodd displayed a remarkable adaptive capacity during a period of enormous change in the style and technique of American building. They ended separately with Dodd an able Beaux-Arts eclectic and Maury a disciple of the progressive Prairie School. (A more detailed discussion of the careers of Maury and Dodd may be found in the National Register nomination form for Dodd's Louisville Free Public Library Western Colored Branch, listed on December 6, 1975.)

It is believed that Maury began his career working in the High Victorian Gothic mode with English-born Louisville architect W. H. Redin, switching to a gutsy individual variant of the Richardsonian Romanesque manner when he began to practice on his own about 1880. The younger Dodd seems to have started in the Chicago version of Richardson's Romanesque, but soon adapted himself to the more refined classicism of the eastern architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White, particularly under the spell of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. It was Maury (apparently before Dodd arrived from Chicago) who was responsible for the design of the first "fireproof" steel-structure high-rise office building in Louisville, the Kenyon Building. Demolished in 1973, it was located half a block north of the site of the Louisville Trust Building. (The tallest and most prominent Chicago-style office building in Louisville, the ten-story Commerce (later Columbia) Building by another local firm, Curtin and Campbell, was erected on Main Street for the Commercial Club in the early 1890s. It was replaced by the present Louisville Trust building in the early 1970s.) Dodd is also thought to have had a hand in designing the other surviving Richardsonian office tower in the city, the American National Bank Building (later Vaughan or "300" Building) attributed to H. P. McDonald and also erected in the 1890s (it is to be included in the enlarged Main Street Commercial District presently being nominated to the National Register).

How to satisfy the requirements imposed by both safety and land economics became a thorny issue confronted in a variety of ways in the 1880s by a number of able architects.

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Cast iron, once touted as the ideal tall-building material, was in fact incapable of realizing many of its users' expectations. Aside from its intrinsic beauty and the flexibility of its construction potential, the material would rust terribly if not properly treated and melt when exposed to the heat of a fire. This latter quality was especially ruinous. After Chicago's 1871 conflagration and numerous other blazes in other cities (Louisville suffered three during this period in its Main Street wholesale district alone), it was clear that fire-proofing would be a primary requirement in any tall edifice. Combinations of metal and non-bearing masonry were used most often in tall commercial buildings. The best-known pioneer of this type was William LeBaron Jenney's 1883-85 Home Life Building in Chicago. In its ten stories, Dodd's mentor Jenney (1832-1907) introduced skyscraper construction to the Midwest and helped establish a theme expanded again and again.

In a technical sense, the Louisville Trust Building represents a similar compromise. Its exterior walls are indeed load-bearing, but not without assistance. The foundations of the edifice are concrete and support a ground floor of excellent Barre, Vermont, granite. The upper stories consist largely of cyclopean blocks of fire-resistant Ohio sandstone. This exterior masonry was supplemented throughout, nonetheless, by vertical supports of cast iron. In further pursuit of a building, as the Courier-Journal explained, which would be "as nearly absolutely fire-proof as it is possible to construct," the architects laid the floors on "arches of hollow fire-clay tile, resting on steel beams." The result was a rather innovative structural system which employed some features of both skyscraper and traditional masonry construction. States Architectural Historian William Morgan, "on the basis of architectural quality and in its temporal context, the Louisville Trust Building ~~must~~ certainly rate highly!" "It is the finest office building yet erected south of the Ohio river, and compares favorably with any building of this character in the United States," averred the Louisville Courier-Journal upon the completion of the structure in 1891. "This building," the author continued, "is a very fine example of the Romanesque order of architecture, applied to the requirements of a modern office building, where the effect of the design depends upon the beauty and correctness of the proportions, depths of reveals and fineness of detail. The architects have shown an unusual amount of skill in the coloring of the building; i. e.; they have taken advantage of the sooty atmosphere of Louisville to darken rock-face wall surface, and so defining very clearly the smooth stone work between the third and seventh stories, and the corner towers. This part of it will always remain several shades lighter than rock-face stone.

Five years after its completion, the editor of an 1896 Louisville history, J. Stoddard Johnston,

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announced that the edifice "is a notably handsome structure, massive in appearance and classic in its style of architecture, one of the few business blocks of Louisville which compares favorably with the best business blocks of larger cities of the country."

Although the composition of the exposed walls owes much to Richardson's Marshall Field Wholesale Store in Chicago of 1885-86 and perhaps also his 1876 Cheney Building in Hartford, Connecticut, the design of the Louisville Trust Building bears considerable resemblance to the Studebaker Building by Solon S. Beman, located prominently adjacent to Louis Sullivan's Auditorium Building on Michigan Avenue in Chicago. It is possible that Dodd may actually have participated in the design (or at least draughting) of the Studebaker Building, as it may well have been on the drawing boards while Dodd was associated with Beman's office in the early 1880s. It may be, too, that the Sullivan and Adler design for the Auditorium itself had something to do with Maury and Dodd's blocky corner tower with its "loggia" above the flat roof, the low-sprung round arches of the street-level entrances, the smooth-surfaced arcade of the central upper stories, the stubby columns and foliate cushion capitals throughout. The slender colonnettes linking the top two stories still bear the attenuated proportions of castiron supports, however, and evoke a lingering High Victorian Gothic sensibility. Since there is a carefully revealed gradation in wall-thickness from the ground upward to the cornice, with the entrance arches of exaggerated depth and boldness and the upper stories artfully layered to suggest their relatively shallow masonry, it may be that the architects were attempting to represent visually, within the Richardson-Beman-Sullivan vocabulary, the combined masonry and steel construction.

The distribution of design responsibility between the two Louisville architects cannot yet be ascertained in this project. As no doubt befitted the character (or desired image) of the banking institution with which the building was identified (although among the original tenants must also have been the Equitable Life Assurance Company, whose sign is prominently displayed on the Market Street side in the rendering that accompanied the 1891 Courier-Journal article on the grand opening), the design as well as the construction techniques had both conservative and progressive elements. The reliance on a mainly Chicago influence has been seen as progressive by most architects and architectural historians. Yet the degree and subtlety of surface enrichment--both

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attributable to Dodd--seem to look backward. In any case, the role of the structure in the evolution of the high-rise office building in the United States deserves further study; although this design may have received little attention in either Chicago or New York, it is far from a provincial imitation of features fashionable elsewhere.

The original interior finishings, superior in function and appearance and complete in every detail, also received a share of praise by contemporary observers. The basement was "thoroughly lighted and ventilated" and used largely for the Trust Company's storage. The vault here and above on the principal story, made "practically burglar proof" by the massiveness of its walls, was exposed on all four sides so that every portion could be inspected on nightly rounds. "Richly furnished in mahogany cabinet work and oil frescoing," the company's rooms on the first floor drew greatest comment. "The bank counter is made of mahogany," admired the Courier, "and the finest Numidian marble. The counter screens are made of wrought iron, and show the perfection to which smithery has been brought. The wrought iron is hammered into ornamental leaves and intricate designs interwoven together, and is in great contrast, and relief from, the usual copper and brass grille work heretofore so much in vogue. Everything about this work is designed with an idea of its lasting qualities, and will look as well after years of use as when first put up. This screen work is interesting inasmuch as it is the first of its kind ever put up in this country, and is executed by German artisans brought here recently."

In addition, abundant attention was given to the need for natural light. "The coupon rooms, for the use of the Trust Company, are back of the great deposit vault, and are lighted from an art glass ceiling of a soft, mellow tone and are furnished in mahogany." A magnificent marble stairway served pedestrians "with easy gradation" from the basement to top story while two hydraulic elevators ("speeded to run 350 feet per minute") supplied quicker passage. In the upper stories--devoted to firms with insurance, clerical, or legal interests--all the halls, the Courier explained, "are wainscoted with the best Georgian marble and all are tiled with the same material, the idea being to keep the material and decoration as light as possible, in order that light may be reflected from the sky-lights and office doors. In this way

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Louisville Trust Building

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ample light and ventilation is obtained for all the halls. There is no spot in the building, neither in the halls or offices, that is not perfectly light and well ventilated in every way, every available inch of space being used to advantage."

No possible amenity went unheeded: "One feature of this building is the splendid accommodations arranged in the toilet rooms. The toilet room for gentlemen is on the seventh floor. It is of marble floors and partitions, and is wainscoted with the same material seven feet high. It is lighted and ventilated with windows and art-glass ceiling similar to the coupon rooms. The ladies' toilet room is immediately under the gentlemen's in the fourth floor, and is furnished in the same manner, being very elegant in all its appointments." The designers were also careful to equip the edifice with utilities in the most efficient way. The heating and lighting plant was situated in the basement in the southwest corner and presented "the very best that modern science can construct." Furthermore, in the event of an emergency, provision was made for an alternate power source.

Unfortunately, many of these interior features no longer exist, particularly on the once-spectacular ground floor. A small addition in keeping with the original exterior was made on Market Street just west of the original block, probably shortly after the turn-of-the century. In 1920 the prominent local firm of D. X. Murphy & Brothers (successors to the firm of Henry Whitestone; see the National Register form for the Jefferson County Jail listed July 16, 1973), designed a narrow seven-story addition at the south end of the 5th Street facade. Although somewhat different in material and stylistic character from the main block, it provides an efficient entrance to the office stories above. At the same time numerous changes in the interior were made. Further simplifications of the interior occurred when the structure was adapted for Jefferson County offices, including the Police Headquarters, in the early 1970s. Nevertheless, impressive Byzantinoid columns remain in what was once the main banking room, the superb stairs are intact above the lower stories, and some of the much-touted marble wainscoting survives in the corridors.

Fortunately, renovation and perhaps some restoration of the building is to be included in a master plan for the entire county-city complex currently being worked out by enlightened local officials. Thus, there is every likelihood that the old Louisville Trust Building will retain its role as one of the largest and finest historic structures within the evolving fabric of downtown Louisville.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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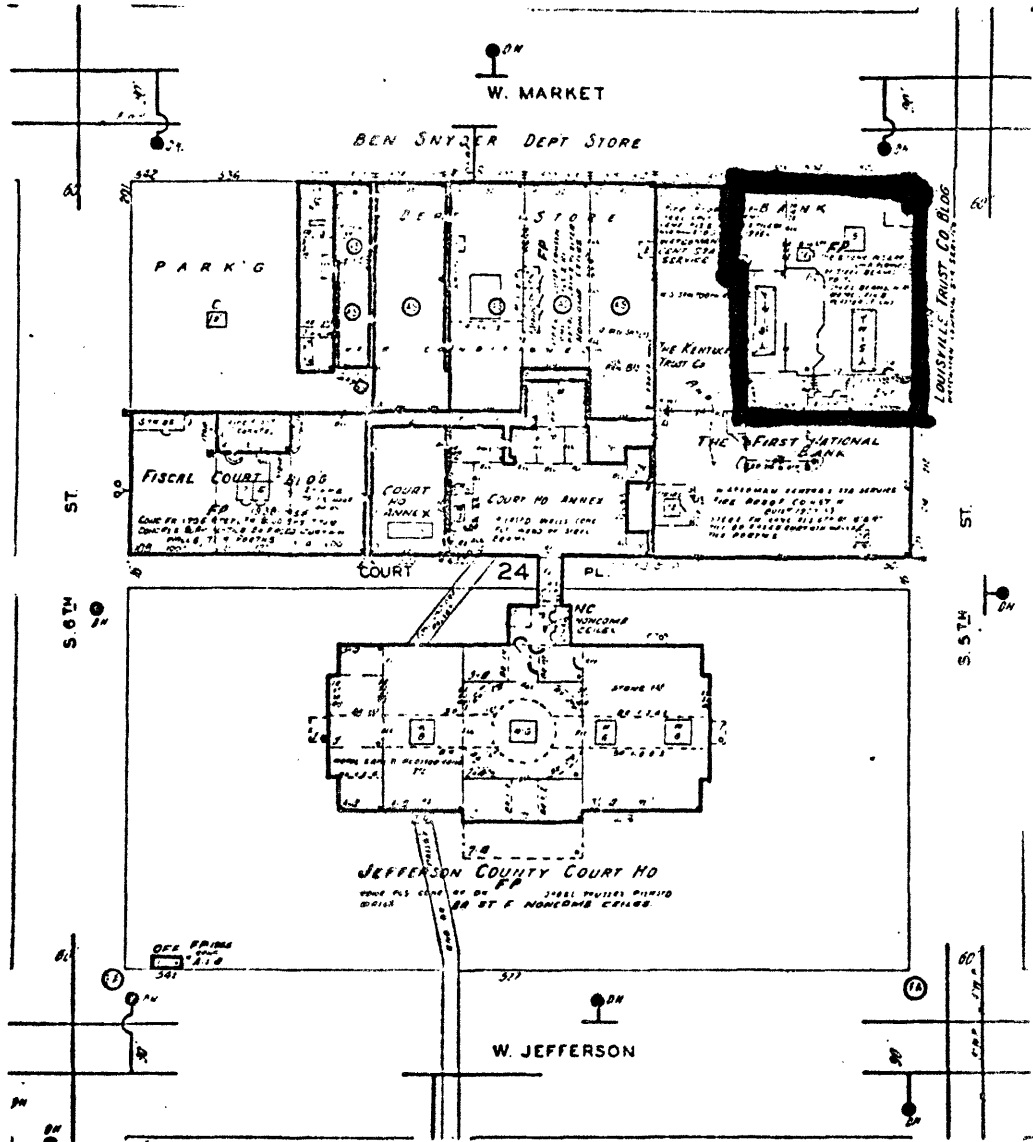
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LANDMARK: Old Louisville Trust Building

ADDRESS: 208 South Fifth Street
Louisville, Kentucky

DATE: 1891

ARCHITECTS: Maury and Dodd

Louisville Trust Building
Louisville
Jefferson County
Kentucky

Map 2. Current property map,
showing plan of Louisville Trust
Building in relation to Courthouse
Complex.

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