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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Tennessee State Office Building
other names/site number Sevier, John, State Office Building

2. Location

street & number 6th Avenue North and Charlotte Ave N/A not for publication
city or town Nashville N/A vicinity
state Tennessee code TN county Davidson code 037 zip code 37202

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 for in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)
E. Patrick Wright May 24, 2011
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
State Historic Preservation Officer, Tennessee Historical Commission
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 certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 Date of Action
7/13/2011

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in count)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
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1	0	buildings
_____	_____	sites
_____	_____	structures
_____	_____	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
N/A

Number of Contributing resources previously listed in the National Register
0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

GOVERNMENT/government office

GOVERNMENT/government office

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Streamlined Classical

foundation Granite
walls Limestone

roof Flat membrane
other Bronze; Brick; Iron; Steel

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

Narrative Description

Located in downtown Nashville, The Tennessee State Office Building occupies a prominent location directly across from the Tennessee State Capitol (NHL 11/11/1971). It was built 1939-40 to house state offices that were heretofore scattered in various buildings. Nashville architect Emmons Woolwine designed the building in the Streamlined Classical style that was popular for public buildings during the New Deal era. The building is set on a forty-five degree angle and features walls clad in Indiana limestone, steel windows, and ornamental bronze relief panels. Monumental fluted pilasters rise the height of the facade which faces toward the southwest corner of the site. The central main block is capped by an ornamental limestone cornice featuring anthemion and dentil carvings. The interior features two large murals completed by well-respected artist Dean Cornwell while the exterior has bronze screens and relief sculptures by Rene Chambellan.

The main block of the building rises up six floors and is oriented toward the southwest corner of the site. Wings that stand at four stories extend from the main block at forty-five degree angles. Along Fifth Avenue, at the rear of the building is a triangular one story section that currently serves as the main entrance. This section originally served as a loading dock and as an entrance to the State Highway Patrol garage, but was converted to its current use in the 1980s.

The southwest facade faces a broad terrace that provides access to the building from Charlotte Avenue and Sixth Street. A set of granite stairs leads from the sidewalks up to the terrace which is paved with Crab Orchard sandstone. Limestone retaining walls form planting beds around the terrace. At either end of the terrace is a granite bench and flagpole base.

The facade has three recessed entries containing bronze and glass double doors. Three pane sidelights and transoms are surmounted by decorative bronze screens. The screens covering the transoms depict representative scenes of Tennessee, including wild ducks, fish, a forest, a mine, an opossum, a marble crane, wheat and corn, a cock with a churn and milk can, and a beehive. The transoms and sidelights are all operable and open as casements from the interior. Set directly in front of the entry doors are sets of heavy cast bronze double doors. Each set of doors has eight ornamental relief panels representing different departments of state government – agriculture, health, welfare, law, labor, protection, finance, and conservation. Above each entryway is a limestone relief figure representing justice, agriculture, and industry/commerce.

The base of the facade is clad in granite while the rest of the facade is limestone. Six fluted limestone pilasters extend almost the full height of the building. The pilasters adjacent to the entries each contain decorative bronze and glass light fixtures. Between the pilasters are vertical columns of steel window units separated by iron panels. Each window unit is typically composed of two sets of paired three-pane casements above two-pane hoppers. Above the pilasters the words 'Tennessee State Office Building' are carved across the width of the facade. Above this is

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the decorative limestone cornice with dentils and anthemion. The flat membrane roof is hidden by a parapet wall. A central block rises from the roof and likewise has a flat membrane roof. This central block appears from the ground to be devoid of fenestration, however it does have irregularly placed steel windows along its base that are hidden by the lower parapet wall.

The wings that extend from the main block each have two columns of windows separated by plain pilasters. Each column contains four sets of windows in the same configuration as those on the main block. Along the top of the wings is a molded limestone cornice. The flat roof is hidden by a parapet wall.

The site slopes down towards the east revealing the ground and basement levels on the south elevation of the east wing. The elevation has three bays separated by unadorned pilasters. A central entrance with bronze and glass double doors leads into the basement. A small terrace paved with Crab Orchard sandstone and trimmed with granite leads from the sidewalk on Charlotte Avenue to the entry. Above the entry is an iron panel with a decorative emblem in relief and a set of steel casement and hopper windows. Flanking the entry bay are two columns of containing two sets of window units similar to those found on the facade. Above the basement and ground levels are two fluted pilasters that separate the three banks of steel windows. The top of the elevation has a molded cornice and a parapet wall.

The east elevation of the east wing has five bays facing Fifth Avenue. The lower two levels have four bays consisting of two sets of original steel casement windows separated vertically by iron panels. The fifth bay has a single leaf entry with a transom below an iron panel and a set of steel casement windows. A simple water table visually separates the lower two levels from the upper stories. The top four stories have five vertical columns of multi-pane casements with hopper windows separated vertically by blank iron panels. Along the top of the elevation is a molded cornice and parapet wall.

A one story section extends north from the main block along Fifth Avenue. The two central bays have large openings that originally served as loading docks. In 1986-87 aluminum and glass double doors with sidelights and transoms were installed and these bays became the main pedestrian entrance. Flanking the central bays are single multi-pane casement window units. Between each bay is a bronze and glass light fixture.

The north elevation of the one story extension is obscured by alterations that took place in the 1970s and 80s. During the 1970s the Central Services Building was constructed immediately north of the Sevier Building, then in the 1980s alterations were made to improve access to the new building. This required regrading the site and the construction of new retaining walls and terraces.

The north elevation of the main block has seven bays. The five central bays each contain a column of five sets of paired six-pane casements with two-pane hopper windows separated

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vertically by blank iron panels. The outer two bays each have a column of five window units containing two six-pane hopper windows. The top of the elevation is adorned with a row of dentils and a carved cornice featuring anthemias.

The lower two levels of the north elevation of the west wing are hidden by the terraces created by the construction of the adjacent Central Services Building in the 1970s. Light wells with open metal grating provide a measure of light for the windows below grade. The unadorned water table is visible along the top of the light wells. The upper four stories have similar fenestration found on other elevations. There are five columns of window units containing six-pane casements and two-pane hopper windows.

The west elevation of the west wing has three bays delineated by two fluted pilasters. A recessed central entrance has bronze and glass double doors topped by a multi-light transom. Covering the transom is an ornamental bronze grill with three scenes representing the three grand divisions of the state – “an eagle alighting upon a mountain top for East Tennessee, a plow against the background of the rising sun for Middle Tennessee, and a stevedore wheeling a bale of cotton with a riverboat in the background for West Tennessee.”¹ Flanking the entry are two stone knee walls with bronze and glass light fixtures. The fenestration on the rest of the elevation consists of paired six-pane casements with two-pane hopper windows separated vertically by iron panels. The panels between the first and second stories each contain decorative emblems with three stars representing the three grand divisions of the state.

Interior

The interior of each floor is laid out along a central double loaded corridor. Octagonal vestibules are located in the corridor at the points where the main block meets the wings. The corridors generally have marble wainscoting, terrazzo floors, and coffered ceilings.

Primary entry to the building is via the double doors on the east elevation of the one story section facing Fifth Avenue. This basement level lobby space was transformed from its original use as loading dock space to its current function ca 1988. It has terrazzo floors, marble wainscoting, plaster walls, and a coffered plaster ceiling. A security desk is on the east wall and two sets of stairs, located on either side of an irregularly shaped pedestal, lead to the elevator lobby. The same materials from the entry lobby extend to the elevator lobby. A letter collection box manufactured by the Culter Mail Chute Company of Rochester, New York is located between the elevators on the west wall.

The elevator lobby on the first floor has terrazzo floor, marble walls, decorative etched bronze elevator doors, and stenciled designs on the coffered ceiling. The elevator doors are etched with

¹ “John Sevier State Office Building”, pamphlet produced by the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General November 2009.

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a design that represents falling water bordered by a band of rectangles with fluted designs. The rectangular border is also found along the top of the walls in the lobbies and hallways of the first floor. The ceiling is stenciled with stars and groups of bundled arrows. Additionally, spiral and flower designs are found around the perimeter of the ceiling and an abstracted design is around the original light fixture. These stencils along others found on the first floor were repainted in 1987. An original octagonal bronze clock hangs from the ceiling between the elevator lobby and the hallway.

The hallway contains many of the same elements as the elevator lobby, such as terrazzo floors, marble walls, and stenciled designs on a coffered ceiling. Entries to individual offices typically have glass and paneled doors, and single-pane windows allow light to pass between the offices and hallway. At either end of the main hallway is an octagonal vestibule that provides access to restrooms, stairwells, and office spaces. The central portion of the ceiling is painted with symbols of the zodiac and figures representing agriculture, industry, commerce, and prosperity. Surrounding this is a zigzag border punctuated with signs of the zodiac at each corner of the ceiling.

A large office suite extends from the east vestibule. It features a central open area with a coffered ceiling, plaster walls with a chair rail, and a carpeted floor. A continuous band of lights runs down the center of the ceiling and a metal window unit is in the southeast wall. Individual offices open from the central space with single panel and glass doors. Paired single-pane windows allow for light to pass between the offices and central area.

The main lobby area is directly across the main hallway from the elevator lobby. A set of stairs that are divided into three sections by marble clad piers leads down into the lobby from the hallway. Original bronze light fixtures hang from the coffered ceiling. Each fixture contains floral designs set in a rectangular grid. The ceiling is stenciled with a zigzag design along with a band of spiral designs alternating with flowers. The terrazzo floor has decorative borders that divide the floor into rectangular spaces. The original exterior entries are in the south wall and have original bronze and glass doors with operable transoms and sidelights. Between the door units are decorative bronze grills with geometric designs composed of circles and squares.

The walls are clad in marble, and the east and west walls feature large scale murals painted on canvas by noted artist Dean Cornwell. The mural on the west wall is titled The Development of Tennessee. Andrew Jackson is the central figure surrounded by other notable figures including: settlers arriving in Tennessee, War of 1812 soldiers, Sam Houston, James Polk, Andrew Johnson, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Admiral David Farragut, Cordell Hull, and Sergeant Alvin York. On the opposite wall is the mural titled The Discovery of Tennessee. John Sevier, the first Governor of Tennessee is the central figure. Other figures include De Soto, Father Marquette, La Salle, Daniel Boone, James Robertson, William Blount, and Revolutionary War soldiers. Marble benches are located below each mural.

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The remainder of the floors differ slightly from the first floor, as they tend to be simpler in design. They contain marble wainscoting and plaster walls, terrazzo floors and coffered ceilings. Stenciled designs are not found above the first floor. Single-panel and glass pane doors with hollow metal frames lead into office spaces. Original drawings indicate that the corridor doors originally had louvered vents in the bottom panel. The louvers were replaced with wood panels sometime before the 1987 renovations. Transoms are found on many office entries, but were not universally used. Fixed single-pane windows are typically found between the hallways and offices.

The walls of the elevator lobbies and octagonal vestibules are clad entirely in marble. The metal elevator doors are grain painted to look like wood. Each lobby has a mail chute that leads to the collection box in the basement. Modern drinking fountains were added in the lobbies in 1987 while original porcelain drinking fountains are found in the octagonal vestibules. The ground floor lobby has a set of double doors that originally led out to a tiled roof deck. These doors were sealed in 1987 when the deck was covered with insulation and bitumen roofing.

Typical office spaces have plaster walls, pine baseboards, chair rails, and picture rails. The picture rails, however, are hidden by suspended ceilings that were added in the 1980s. In many places the interior arrangement of the offices has been altered through time. Original interior partitions were constructed of structural clay tiles that were faced with plaster.² Early alterations also used structural clay tiles, however, a renovation done in 1987 used walls of wood or light gage steel studs. During the 1987 renovation original elements such as doors, baseboards, and chair rails were reused. While this renovation changed the layout of some office spaces it did not alter the overall relationship of the main hallways and offices.

Open staircases located in irregular rhomboidal spaces are accessed from the octagonal vestibules. The treads are concrete while the risers are steel. The wood handrail is supported by rectangular steel balusters and newel posts. Above the fifth floor the stairs rise in the main block of the building and have handrails mounted directly on the walls.

Original bathrooms are accessed from the stair halls. They typically have ceramic tile floors. Ceramic tiles rise approximately three-quarters up the walls. Original toilet stalls are pink marble with wood doors, while later alterations for handicap access were done with stainless steel.

Despite changes to the layout of the office spaces, the Tennessee State Office Building retains high level of integrity. The original layout of the public lobbies and hallways remain intact as do the majority of the materials on the interior and exterior. Decorative elements such as the murals and bronze grilles and reliefs remain in place.

² Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects, "Tennessee State Capitol Historic Structures Report" (April 2009), 51.

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 N/A

(Mark "x" in all boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or 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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Government
- Architecture
- Art

Period of Significance

1939-1941

Significant Dates

1939-1941

Significant Person

(complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Woolwine, Emmons, architect

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A

- 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:
Tennessee Attorney General's Office

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Statement of Significance

The Tennessee State Office building in Nashville (Davidson County), Tennessee is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and C, both for its architectural and art significance as well as its historical significance as a representation of the work of the Public Works Administration and associated programs of the New Deal programs in the 1930s. Additionally, the building is significant for the works of artist Dean Cornwell and sculptor Rene Chambellan, which are integral to the building. Originally called the Tennessee State Office Building, the building was constructed in 1939-1940, and was one of the last projects funded by the Public Works Administration (PWA). The Works Progress Administration (WPA – after 1939, the Works Projects Administration) provided the labor. The period of significance begins in 1939 with the beginning of construction to 1941 when the murals by Dean Cornwell were installed.

Prior to the 1930s, state government in Nashville had no real centralized location. The Tennessee State Capitol (NHL, 11/11/1971) had served as the main state government office since its construction in the 1860s, but growth of the state's public agencies had led to overcrowding in the offices in the Capitol, with many calling for expansion of government offices. By 1905, the State was investigating "the advisability of constructing an annex to the Capitol building, or what additions and improvements should be made."³ Ten years later, several State agencies had moved from the Capitol and were renting office space in downtown buildings. At the same time, a group of concerned women formed the Tennessee State Capitol Association (TSCA), an early historic preservation association dedicated to the maintenance and preservation of the Tennessee State Capitol and its grounds. One of their principle causes was alleviating the overcrowded nature of the offices in the Capitol, and the TSCA and others advocated the purchase of property surrounding the Capitol for the use of Tennessee State Government, some going so far as purchasing some surrounding property as it went up for sale both as an investment and to prevent undesirable development.⁴

In 1921, the State of Tennessee passed a bill providing for the State to acquire, through purchase or condemnation, property adjoining or facing the State Capitol on the north, east, or west sides, for the purpose of the extension of the Capitol grounds. The first two properties purchased were on the east (the current location of the John Sevier State Office Building), and on the west (the current location of the Supreme Court Building).⁵

The first building constructed to house State offices outside of the State Capitol was the War Memorial Building, constructed south of Capitol Hill in 1925. Nashville architect Edward Dougherty

³ Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects, "Tennessee State Capitol Historic Structures Report" (April 2009), 67.

⁴ "The Story of the Tennessee State Capitol," Tennessee State Library and Archives. Cited in Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects, "John Sevier State Office Building, Historic Structures Report" (April 2009), 4.

⁵ State of Tennessee Department of State, Public Acts 1921, Chapter 48, House Bill 673. Cited in Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, 4.

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worked with the nationally-acclaimed firm of McKim, Mead, and White of New York to design this building, which honored Tennessee's WWI soldiers while providing additional space for state government offices and activities.

In the mid-1930s, Tennessee Chief Justice Grafton Greene (who had gained fame in his own right for authoring the Court's opinion in the "Scopes Monkey Trial"), viewed the New Deal's Public Works Administration as a way to ease the Supreme Court's growing caseload and overcrowded space in the Tennessee State Capitol, and pressed the State to take advantage of the program. The four-story granite and marble structure to the west of Capitol Hill still serves today as Tennessee's State Supreme Court building. The Nashville firm of Marr & Holman designed State Supreme Court building, which served as a model for the several county courthouse buildings they designed later in the decade.⁶ Shortly thereafter, local architect Emmons Woolwine was selected to redesign rooms within the Tennessee State Capitol, including the Governor's Offices; at the same time, the General Assembly requested additional space for both their own offices and the new and growing state agencies. While the General Assembly moved their offices into the ten-year-old War Memorial Building, there remained a need for a new state office building.

The new state office building was one of the last major Tennessee projects of the Public Works Agency, one of the many New Deal agencies designed to provide both employment relief and improving infrastructure. Tennessee Governor Hill McAllister submitted a preliminary application for the PWA funding needed for the construction of the State Office Building on 20 May 1936, just a few months before national agency director Harold Ickes closed the application process. The federal government, through the PWA, provided up to 45% of the project cost, with the remainder of the cost to be met by the state. Bill No. 1589 in the 1937 Public Acts of Tennessee, allocated \$500,000 for the construction of the office building, and established the State Building Commission.⁷

The application for funding of the Tennessee State Office Building was finally accepted in the final round of projects approved for administration by the PWA in June 1938. However, the federal funding approved was only in the amount of \$409,090, less than originally anticipated; meanwhile, the project itself had gone up in projected expenses, necessitating a massive reduction in budget for the actual furnishings and equipment planned for the building, from \$75,000 to \$2,000. Following the receipt of approval from the federal government, the architect, Emmons Woolwine, prepared construction documents over the next month, allowing the bid to open on 10 August 1938. Ten local contractors submitted bids, and the project was awarded to Nile E. Yearwood. The State Building Commission also purchased three city lots between 5th and 6th Avenue on Cedar Street (now Charlotte Avenue), for a total of \$35,000, on 20 October 1938.⁸

⁶ Carroll Van West, *Tennessee's New Deal Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001), 34-35.

⁷ Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, pg. 6-7.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

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Building commenced the next spring, with the cornerstone laid on 10 April 1939. J. M. Gardenhire represented the federal government at the laying of the cornerstone, and Governor Prentice Cooper also participated, with a speech that included the estimated cost of the project, the building cost (\$813,057), and the cost of the land at \$44,000. Governor Cooper stated: "It has been necessary for the State to rent office space for many years. This rental amounts to approximately \$25,000 per year at the present time. It was felt that this building should be built to save this rental, as well as to bring about a more efficient operation of State government through the consolidation of the various offices into one building."⁹

Governor Cooper also alluded to the design of the building, stating that it was designed to "conform to the classic architecture of the surrounding State buildings, and at the same time planned with the idea of efficient office arrangement and lighting. In putting to use this building, it will be the attitude of my administration to see that the efficiency in the prosecution of the work of the various departments is in keeping with the efficiency that we have attempted to build in its design."¹⁰

The cornerstone itself contained a copper box which contained a representative photo of the site pre-construction, a photo of the building under construction, Nashville newspapers of the day, a message from the governor, the names of the state officials at that time, and a program of the ceremony. The Tennessee Industrial School band played "The Star Spangled Banner" and other musical selections; the invocation was given by Rev. King Vivian of McKendree Methodist Church, and the benediction was given by Rev. Tom Carruthers of Christ Church.¹¹

During the course of construction over the next several months, amendatory applications were submitted to increase the grant, as well as the State's responsibility, to ensure that the building was appropriately furnished, lighted, and air conditioned. Work continued quickly on the building over the summer of 1939, but came to an abrupt stop in early September 1939, when the Bricklayers Union went on strike, protesting the employment of non-union workers. Other construction unions picketed in solidarity, until the contractor, Nile Yearwood, agreed to employ union workers; many former non-union workers joined unions as a result.¹²

The building was completed in just about a year, with the dedication ceremonies held on 14 March 1940. Governor Cooper was again the principal speaker at the dedication ceremonies, along with Chief Justice Grafton Green and Speaker of the House John Ed O'Dell. The invocation was given by the Rev. Fred Woodward and the benediction by Rev. I.W. Gernert of First Lutheran Church. The Tennessee Industrial School band again furnished the music. O'Dell stated that "the building

⁹ Ibid., 8. Speech, Governor Prentice Cooper Papers, Box 231, Folder 13, Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Nashville Tennessean*, 9 April 1939.

¹² Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, 9.

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is indicative of a new day in Tennessee. It stands as a symbol of modern efficiency in state government."¹³ Governor Cooper spoke of how the building would help consolidate the different State agencies, including conservation, agriculture, insurance and banking, accounting, and the State Planning Commission, but more importantly would save the state up to \$100 a day in rents, and would improve the State Capitol area.¹⁴

Today, the building houses the offices of the State Attorney General and the seventeen divisions of the Attorney General's office.

The Tennessee State Office Building is a pivotal building in the history of the State's use of New Deal funding, specifically that of the Public Works Administration in the New Deal decade of the 1930s. The building is built on a rather unique "butterfly plan," in part due to the corner lot the building addresses, as well as the change in grade at the site. The exterior ornament is representative of the "Streamlined Classicism" of the New Deal era, while the interior public spaces are demonstrative of the Art Deco spirit of the era, as well. The public entrances and lobby are representative of the works of nationally-known artists Dean Cornwell and Rene Chambellan.

Emmons Woolwine, architect

Architect Emmons Woolwine (1899-1951), the architect for the Tennessee State Office Building, was a Nashville native, who had studied at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, and the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied Fine Arts. Woolwine practiced architecture in Nashville for his entire career, working first for the firm of Marr & Holman and opening his own firm in 1931. Woolwine accepted both commercial and residential commissions, and designed his own home in Belle Meade in 1928. His other designs included commercial, institutional, and residential projects.¹⁵

In 1935, Woolwine submitted a design for a competition for the new Davidson County Courthouse (NR 03/23/1987), teaming with the New York firm of Frederic C. Hiron. The Woolwine and Hiron design was selected, with the judges calling the design "the most ingeniously designed public building...that will undoubtedly serve as a model for others buildings of its type for years to come."

¹⁶ The Davidson County Courthouse was constructed at the Public Square, just a few blocks from where the Tennessee State Office Building would be built. The Davidson County Courthouse is another excellent example of the PWA "Streamlined Classicism" style. Additionally, the Davidson County Courthouse and the Tennessee State Office Building share the artistic endeavors of Dean Cornwell, muralist, and Rene Chambellan, artist.

¹³ *Nashville Tennessean*, 15 March 1940.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* *Nashville Banner*, 14 March 1940. See also Office of the Tennessee Attorney General, "John Sevier State Office Building" (Nashville, 2009).

¹⁵ Joseph L. Herndon, "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930," Masters Thesis, Columbia University, 1975, page 199.

¹⁶ "A Noteworthy Competition," in *Pencil Points* (November 1935), 573.

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Woolwine worked primarily with the architect John C. Clark from the firm of Frederic Hiron for the design competition and in construction of the Davidson County courthouse. Clark relocated to Nashville and joined forces with Woolwine and his associate John C. Harwood. Emmons Woolwine died in 1951; the firm of Woolwine, Harwood, and Clark operated in Nashville until the 1960s.¹⁷

Dean Cornwell, muralist

Artist Dean Cornwell (1892-1960) was chosen to create the murals installed in the lobby at the Tennessee State Office Building, depicting "The Discovery of Tennessee" and "The Development of Tennessee," and featuring many historically significant Tennesseans, including John Sevier, James Robertson, William Blount, Daniel Boone, Andrew Jackson, Nathan Bedford Forrest, Sam Houston, James K. Polk, Andrew Johnson, and Cordell Hull, among others.

A Kentuckian by birth, Cornwell was first an illustrator, with his work appearing in newspapers, magazines, and in books by Pearl S. Buck and Ernest Hemingway. Cornwell studied illustration in Chicago and New York in the 1910s, and established his reputation as the "Dean of Illustrators" by the 1920s. He moved to London in 1927 to study mural painting with famed muralist Frank Brangwyn, and won his first mural commission for the Los Angeles County Public Library. During the New Deal era of the 1930s, Cornwell was a celebrated muralist, receiving several commissions both commercially and under the various art programs of the New Deal. Cornwell created the murals in the lobby at the Davidson County Courthouse in 1937-1938, and completed the murals for the Sevier State Office Building in 1941. He also became known for his graphic artwork in advertisements and posters, especially in the 1940s for his patriotic themes.

Cornwell was elected president of the National Mural Painters Society in 1954, and named to the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame in 1959. He died in New York on December 4, 1960.¹⁸

Rene Chambellan, sculptor

Sculptor Rene Chambellan (1893-1955) was born in New Jersey, and studied art and architecture at New York University (NYU), and studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris following his service in World War I. He returned to the United States, teaching at NYU. He began receiving commissions for architectural sculptures and design elements, as well as for commemorative medals and art pieces, sometimes based on the sketches of other artists. Chambellan is perhaps best known for his work with Lee Lawrie for the "Atlas" and other work at Rockefeller Center (1932-1939), and was a prominent medallist. His medal designs include both the Caldecott and the Newberry medals for children's literature.

¹⁷ Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, 14-16.

¹⁸ Susan W. Knowles, "Dean Cornwell" in *Tennessee Historical Quarterly* (Spring 2002), 25-26; Anne-Leslie Owens, "Dean Cornwell" in *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, ed. Carroll Van West (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Society, 1998), 209-210.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

Chambellan was a prolific and adaptable architectural sculptor, who could and would adjust his artistic style to the desires of the architect and commissioning owner. His work varies from the highly stylized forms found at the Chanin Building (1929-1930, NR 4/23/1980) in New York City to the more classical designs at the Sevier State Office Building. He is known for his playful gargoyles resembling his associates at the Chicago Tribune Building (1925) and the Firestone Library at Princeton University (1948). His architectural sculptural designs also appear on the Panhellenic Building/Beekman Tower (1928) in New York, Sterling Memorial Library at Yale University (1931), and the Shrine of the Little Flower Church (1931-1936) in Michigan.¹⁹

In Nashville, Rene Chambellan completed the sculptures for the monumental brass doors at the Davidson County Courthouse as well as decorative grille doors depicting Signs of the Zodiac for the First National Bank, now Courtyard by Marriott Hotel (listed as contributing in the Printers Alley Historic District 08/26/1982). Unfortunately, those doors were removed during a c. 2000 remodeling and their fate is currently unknown. His work at the Tennessee State Office Building includes the bronze doors with classical depictions of the departments originally housed in the building, including Agriculture, Health, Welfare, Law, Labor, Protection, Finance, and Conservation. Additionally, it is unclear but believed that Chambellan may also be the artist for the ornamental grilles at both the main entrance as well as the smaller grille at the Sixth Avenue entrance of the building.

Chambellan died in November 1955.

¹⁹ Jim Patterson and Bob Perrone, "Rene Paul Chambellan – One of Art Deco's Greatest Sculptors," available on-line at www.louisvilleartdeco.com.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 12

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

Bibliography

Herndon, James. "Architects in Tennessee Until 1930," Masters Thesis, Columbia University, 1975.

Knowles, Susan. "Dean Cornwell," *Tennessee Historical Quarterly*. (Spring 2002).

Mesick, Cohen, Wilson, Baker, Architects. "John Sevier State Office Building Historic Structure Report." April 2009.

Nashville Banner, 14 March 1940

Nashville Tennessean, 9 April 1939

Nashville Tennessean, 15 March 1940

Office of the Tennessee Attorney General, "John Sevier State Office Building" (Nashville, 2009)

Owens, Anne-Leslie. "Dean Cornwell," *Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*, ed. Carroll Van West (Nashville: Tennessee Historical Society, 1998)

Patterson, Jim and Bob Perrone. "Rene Paul Chambellan – One of Art Deco's Greatest Sculptors," online article found at www.louisvilleartdeco.com

Van West, Carroll. *Tennessee's New Deal Landscape* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2001)

Tennessee State Office Building
Name of Property

Davidson County, Tennessee
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.78 acres Nashville West 308 NE

UTM References

(place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>519558</u>	<u>4002384</u>	3	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	4	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
					<input type="checkbox"/>	See continuation sheet	

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Brian Beadles/Historic Preservation Specialist; Tara Mielnik/Historic Preservation Specialist
organization Tennessee Historical Commission; Metro Historical Commission date
street & number 2941 Lebanon Road; 3000 Granny White Pike telephone 615-532-1550; 615-862-7970
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37214; 37204

Additional Documentation

submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO) or FPO for any additional items

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Department of Finance and Administration, Real Property Administration; c/o Robert Oglesby, State Architect
street & number 312 Rosa Parks Blvd., William Snodgrass Tennessee Tower telephone
city or town Nashville state TN zip code 37243

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listing. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*)

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P. O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20303.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 13

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

Boundary Description and Justification

The nominated boundary is the southeast corner of parcel 09301007900. The south and east boundary follows the parcel boundary. The west boundary of the nominated property follows Sixth Avenue North. The north boundary line follows along the north edge of the building. This boundary excludes the General Services Building that is immediately adjacent to the nominated building, as well as other buildings on the same parcel. The majority of the neighboring General Services Building is underground and there is no direct access between the buildings.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 14

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 15

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

Photographs

Photographs taken by:
Brian Beadles and Claudette Stager
Tennessee Historical Commission

Photos taken October 20, 2010

Southwest facade, photographer facing northeast.
1 of 29

Southwest facade, photographer facing northeast.
2 of 29

Southwest facade of main block, photographer facing northeast.
3 of 29

Main entries on southwest facade of main block, photographer facing northeast.
4 of 29

Main entry on southwest facade of main block, photographer facing northeast.
5 of 29

Main entry on southwest facade of main block, photographer facing northeast.
6 of 29

Ornamental grill above main entry, photographer facing northeast.
7 of 29

Close-up of panel on security door on main entry, photographer facing northeast.
8 of 29

South elevation of east wing, photographer facing north.
9 of 29

Southeast corner of east wing, photographer facing northwest.
10 of 29

Northeast elevation of main block, photographer facing southwest.
11 of 29

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 16

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

North elevation of west wing, photographer facing south.
12 of 29

Northwest corner of west wing, photographer facing southeast.
13 of 29

West elevation of west wing, photographer facing east.
14 of 29

Elevator lobby on basement level, photographer facing northwest.
15 of 29

Main lobby on first floor, photographer facing northwest.
16 of 29

Main lobby on first floor, photographer facing northwest.
17 of 29

Close-up of mural on north wall of main lobby, photographer facing northwest.
18 of 29

Close-up of mural on south wall, photographer facing southeast.
19 of 29

Main entry into lobby, photographer facing southwest.
20 of 29

First floor hallway, photographer facing northwest.
21 of 29

Octagonal portion of hallway, photographer facing northwest.
22 of 29

Ceiling of octagonal portion of hallway.
23 of 29

Hallway in west wing, photographer facing west.
24 of 29

Large office space, photographer facing southwest.
25 of 29

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number PHOTOS Page 17

Tennessee State Office Building
Davidson County, Tennessee

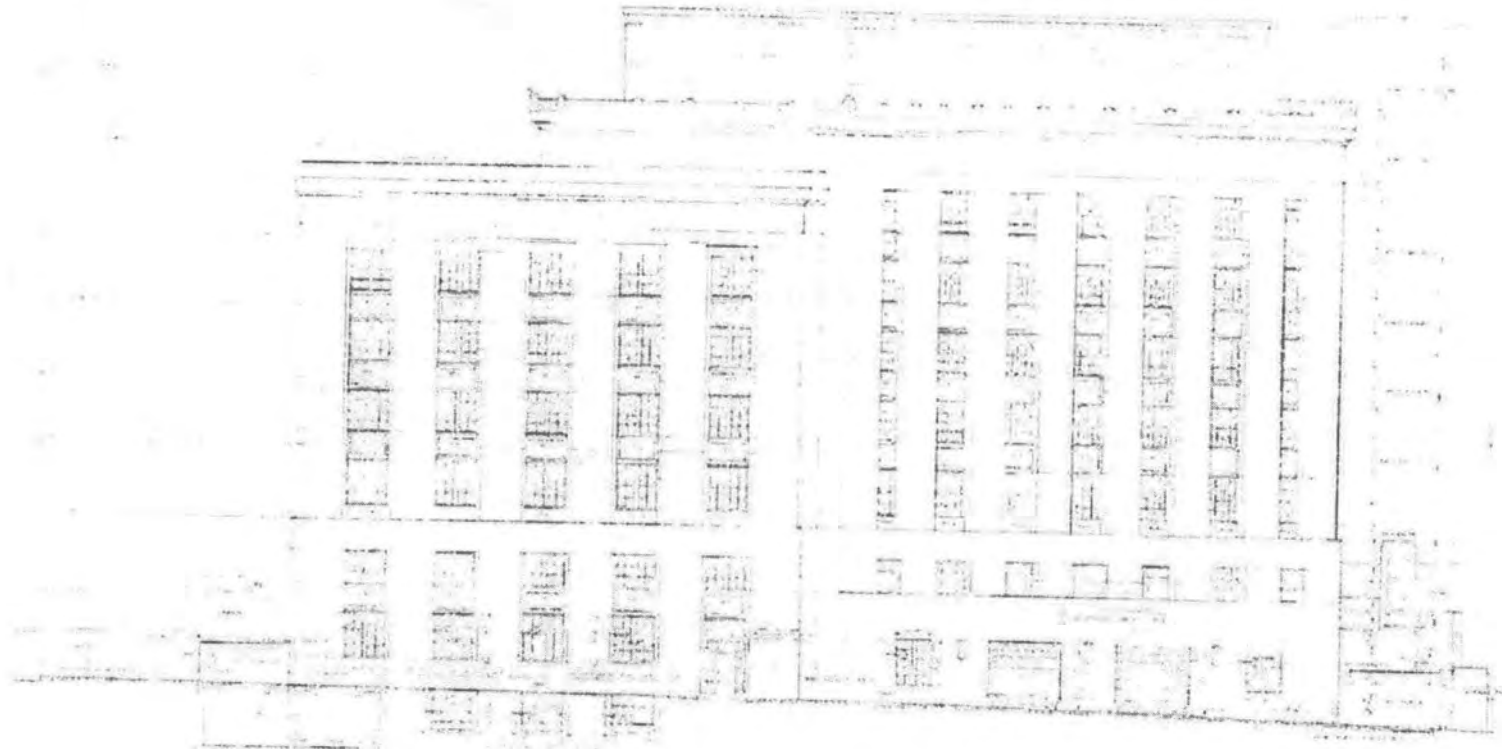
Hallway, photographer facing west.
26 of 29

Hallway, photographer facing southeast.
27 of 29

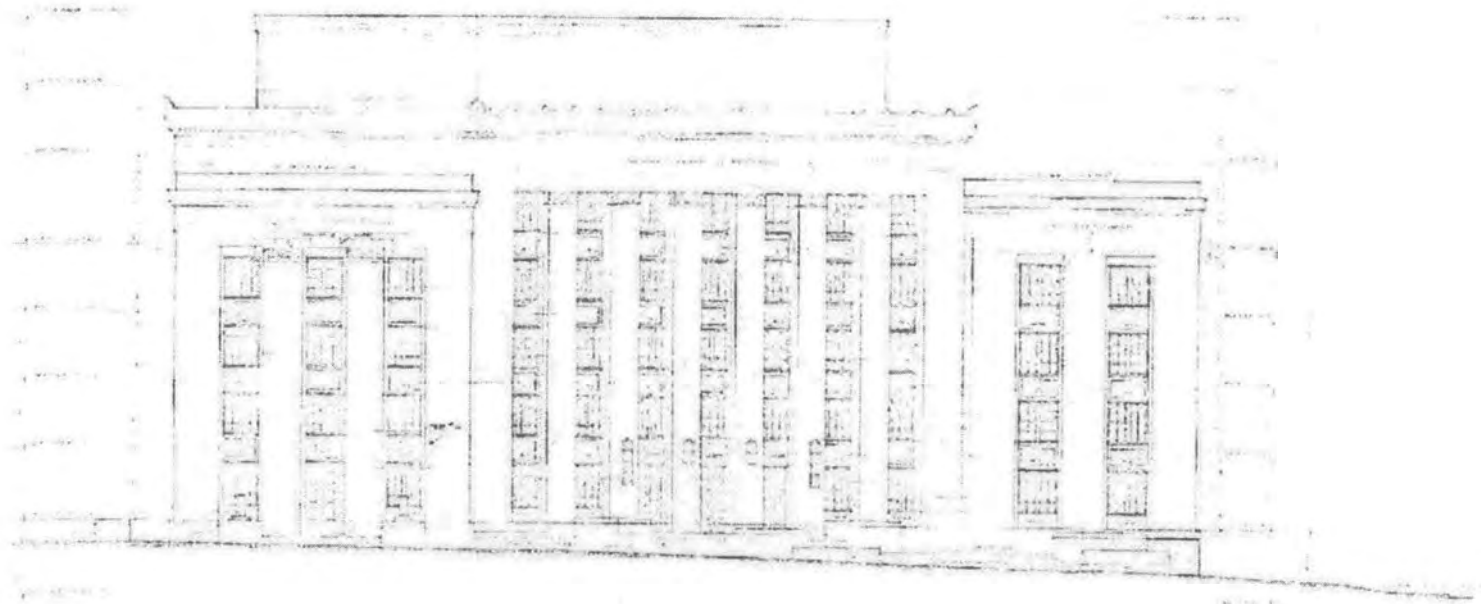
Office space, photographer facing southwest.
28 of 29

Office space, photographer facing southwest.
29 of 29

5th Avenue Elevation



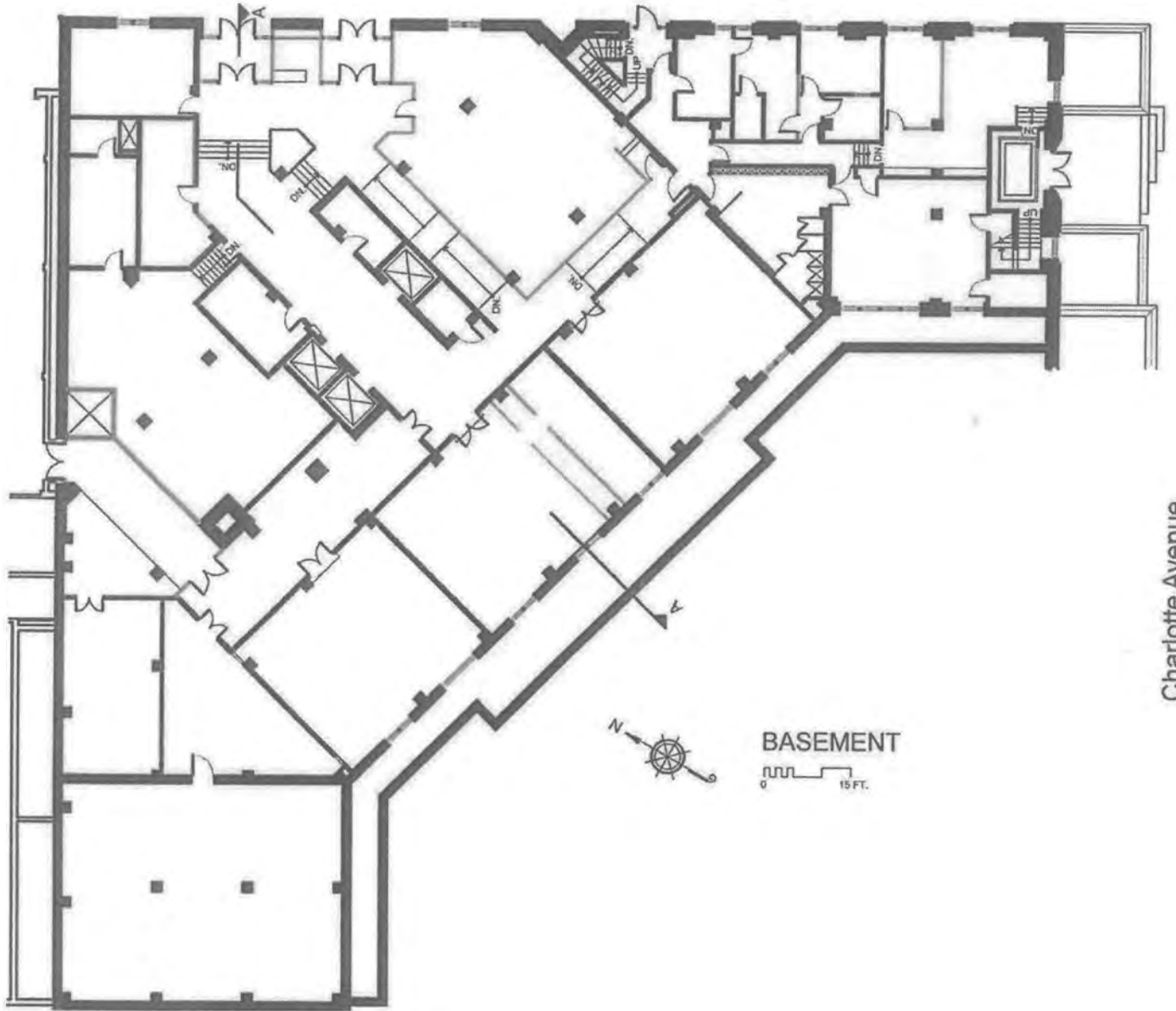
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SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
DATE 10-1-1911
BY [illegible]
CHECKED BY [illegible]
APPROVED BY [illegible]



6th Avenue Elevation



5th Avenue



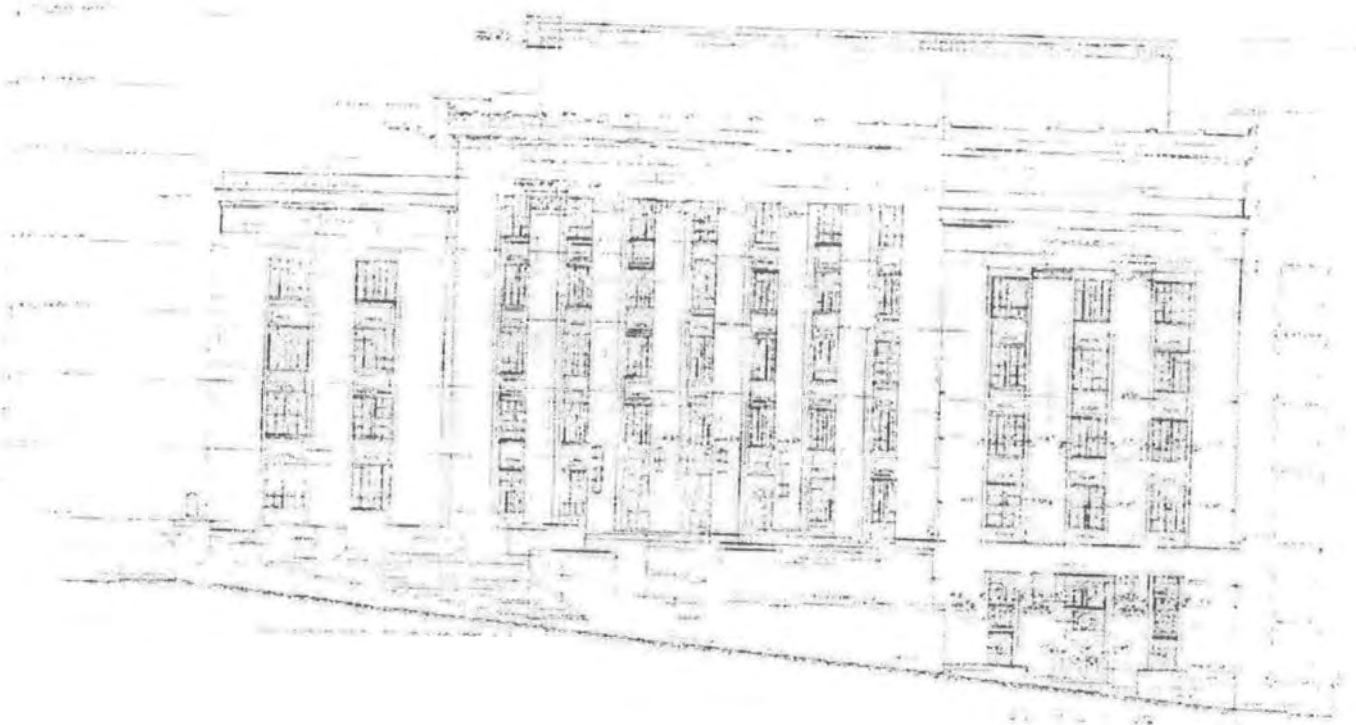
Charlotte Avenue

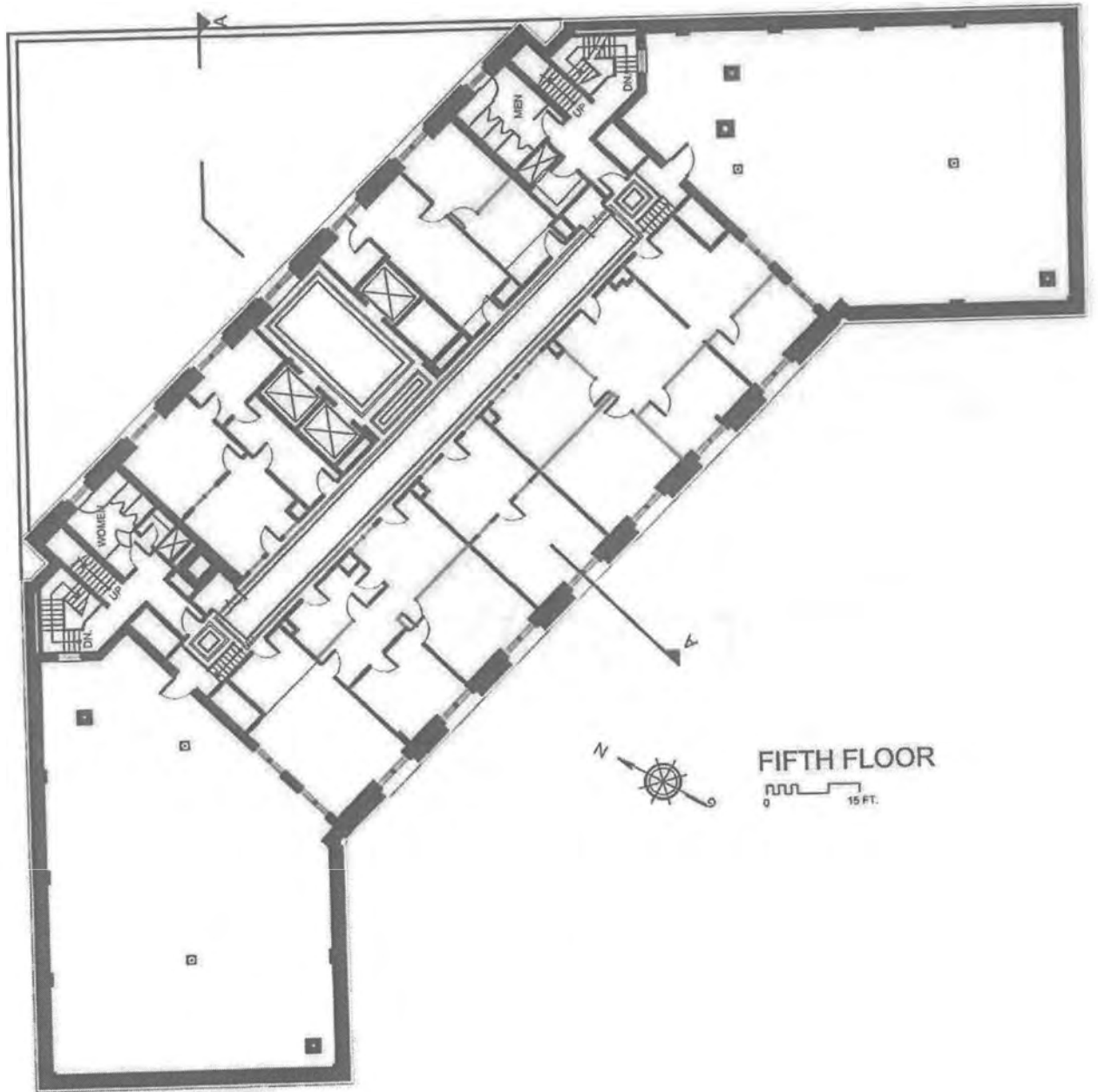
BASEMENT

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6th Avenue

Cedar Street Elevation
(now Charlotte Avenue)

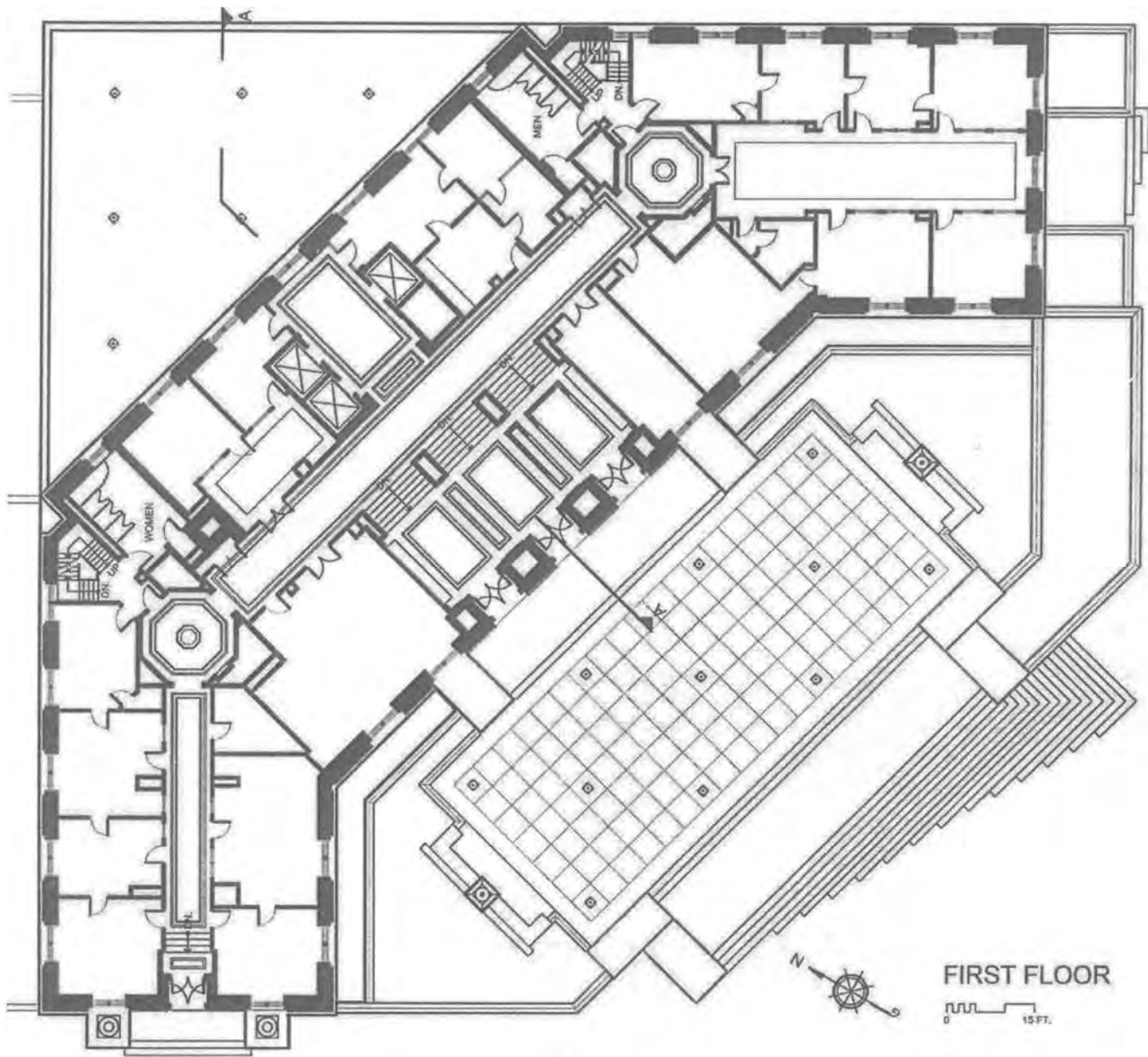




FIFTH FLOOR

0 15 FT.

5th Avenue

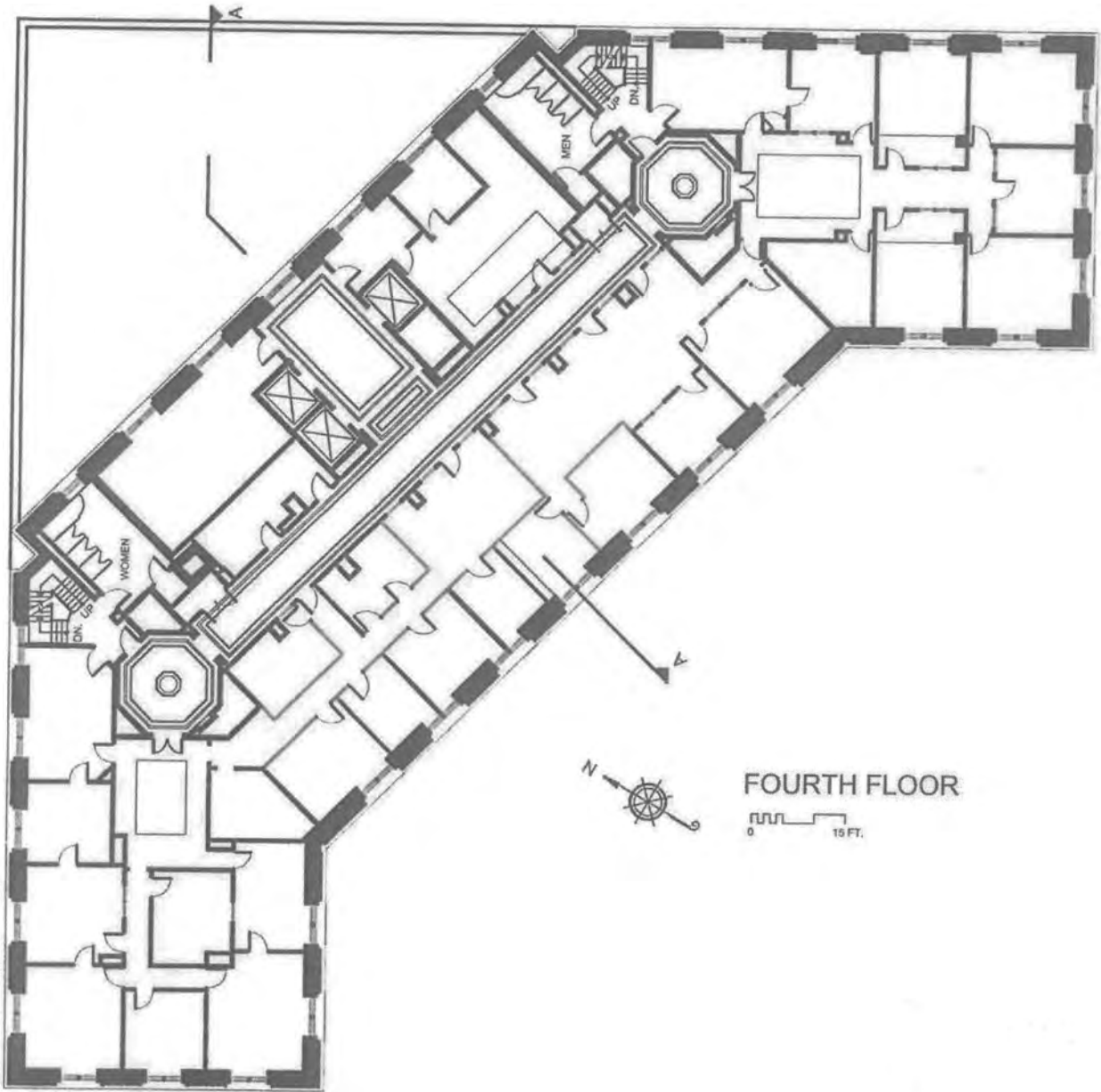


Charlotte Avenue

6th Avenue

FIRST FLOOR

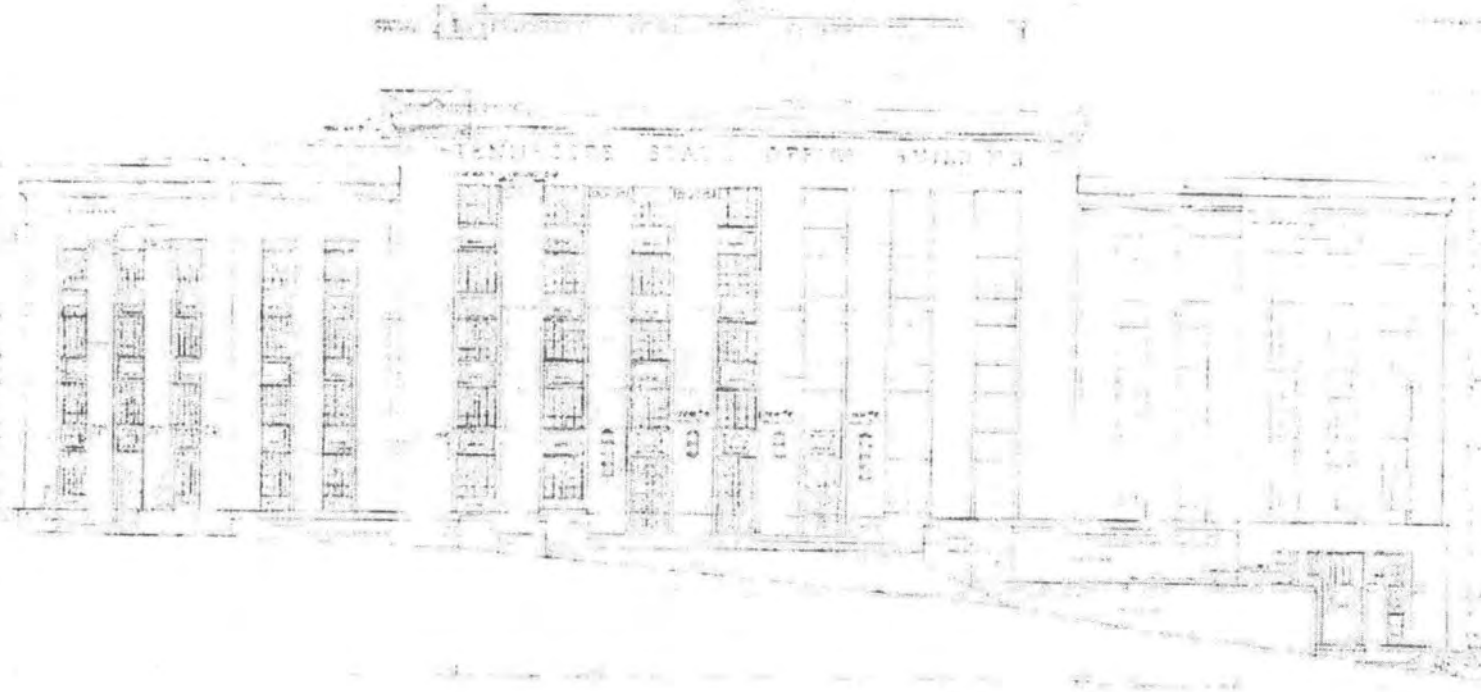
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FOURTH FLOOR

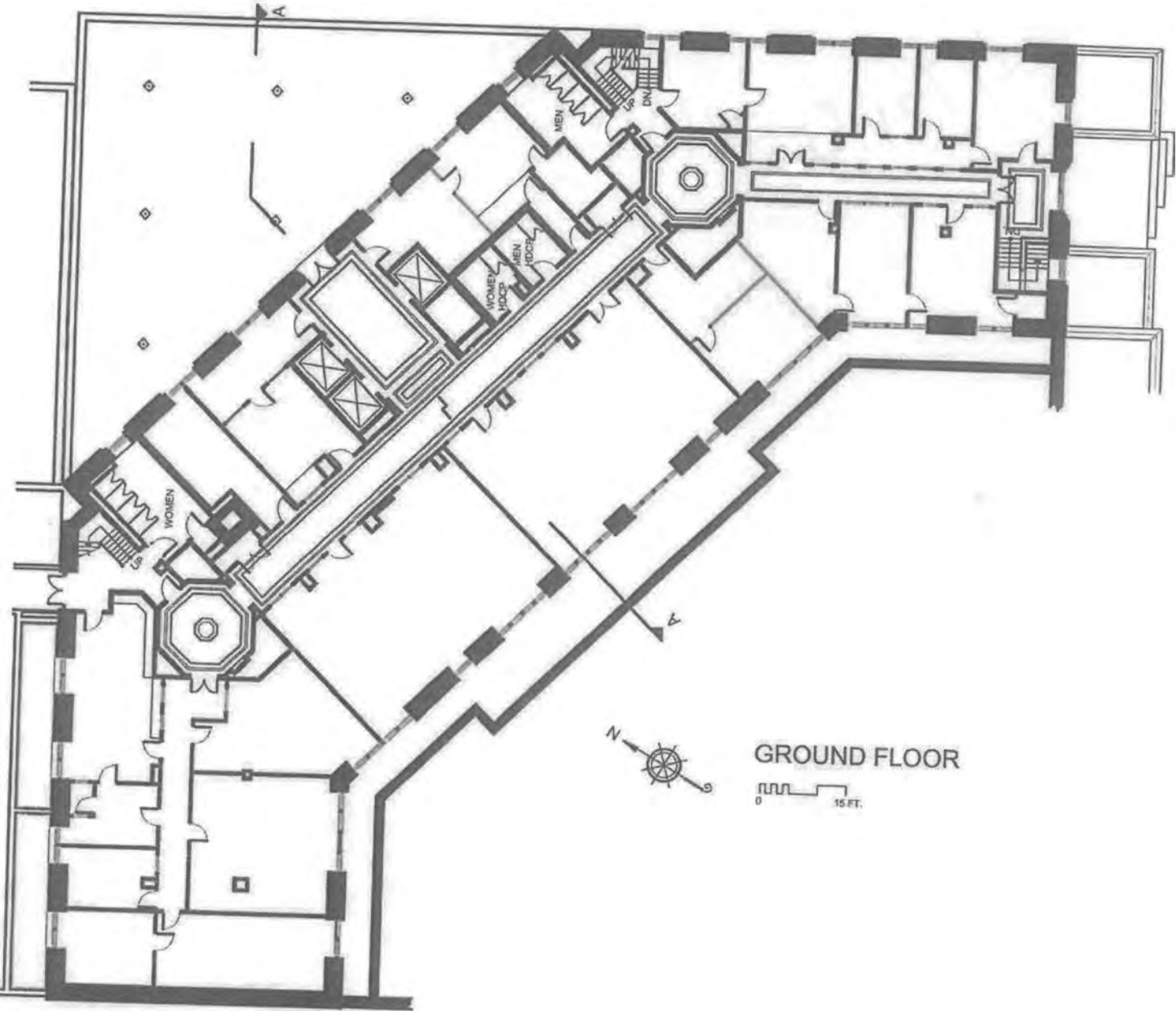
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Front Elevation

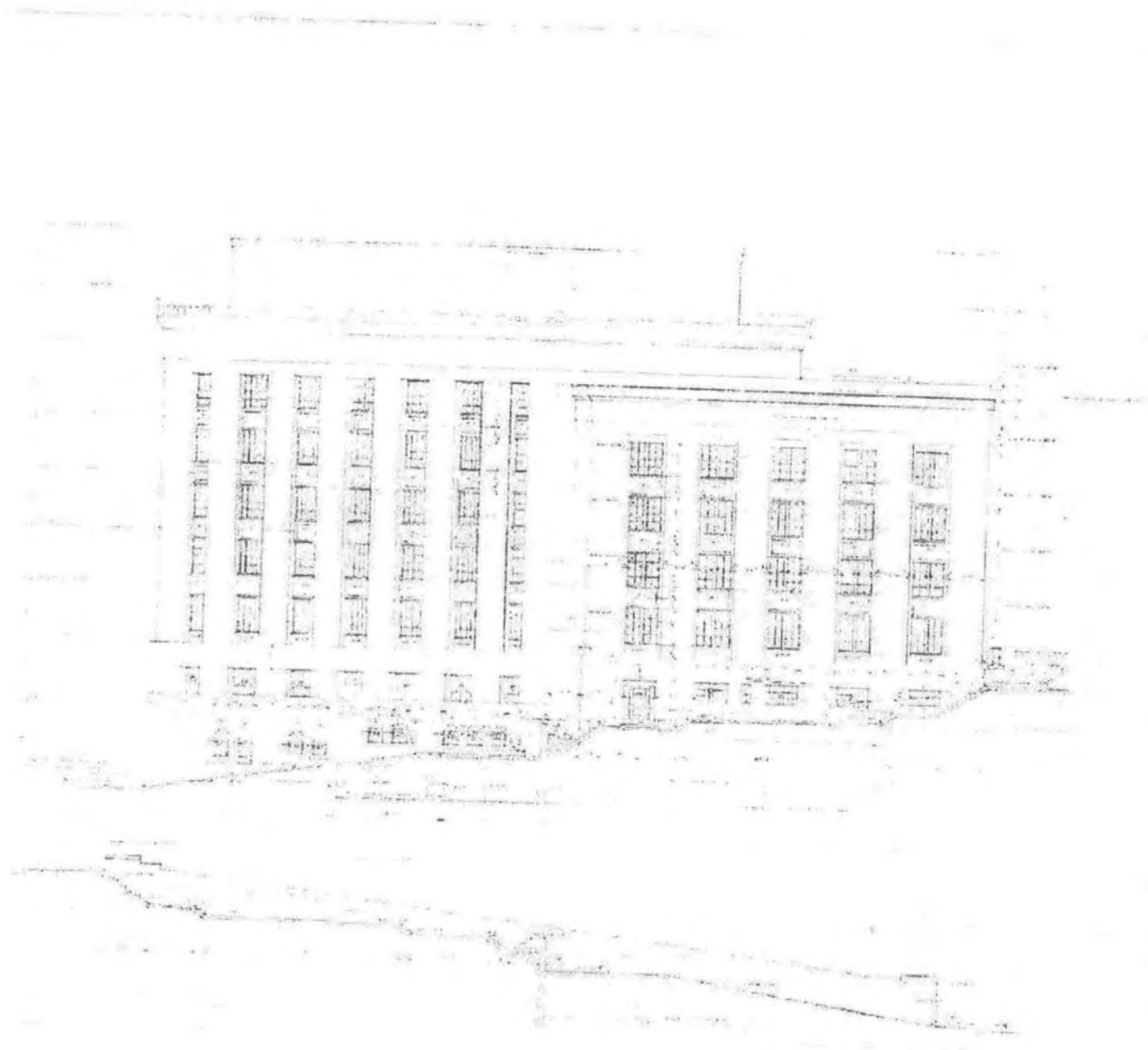


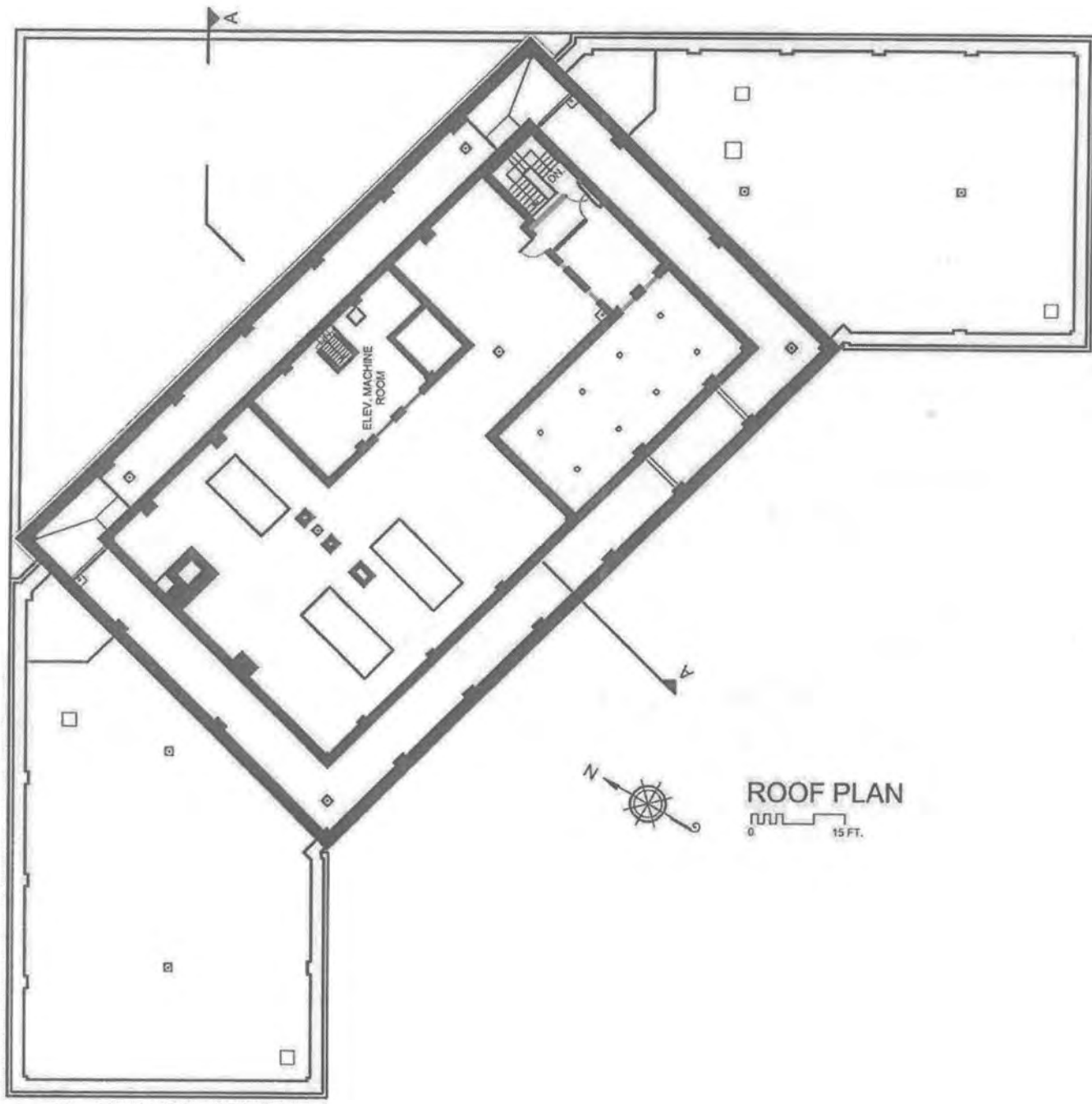
Architectural drawing showing a floor plan or section of a building, oriented vertically on the page. The drawing includes a central corridor and several rooms, with some areas shaded to indicate depth or structure.

The John Sevier Building



North Elevation

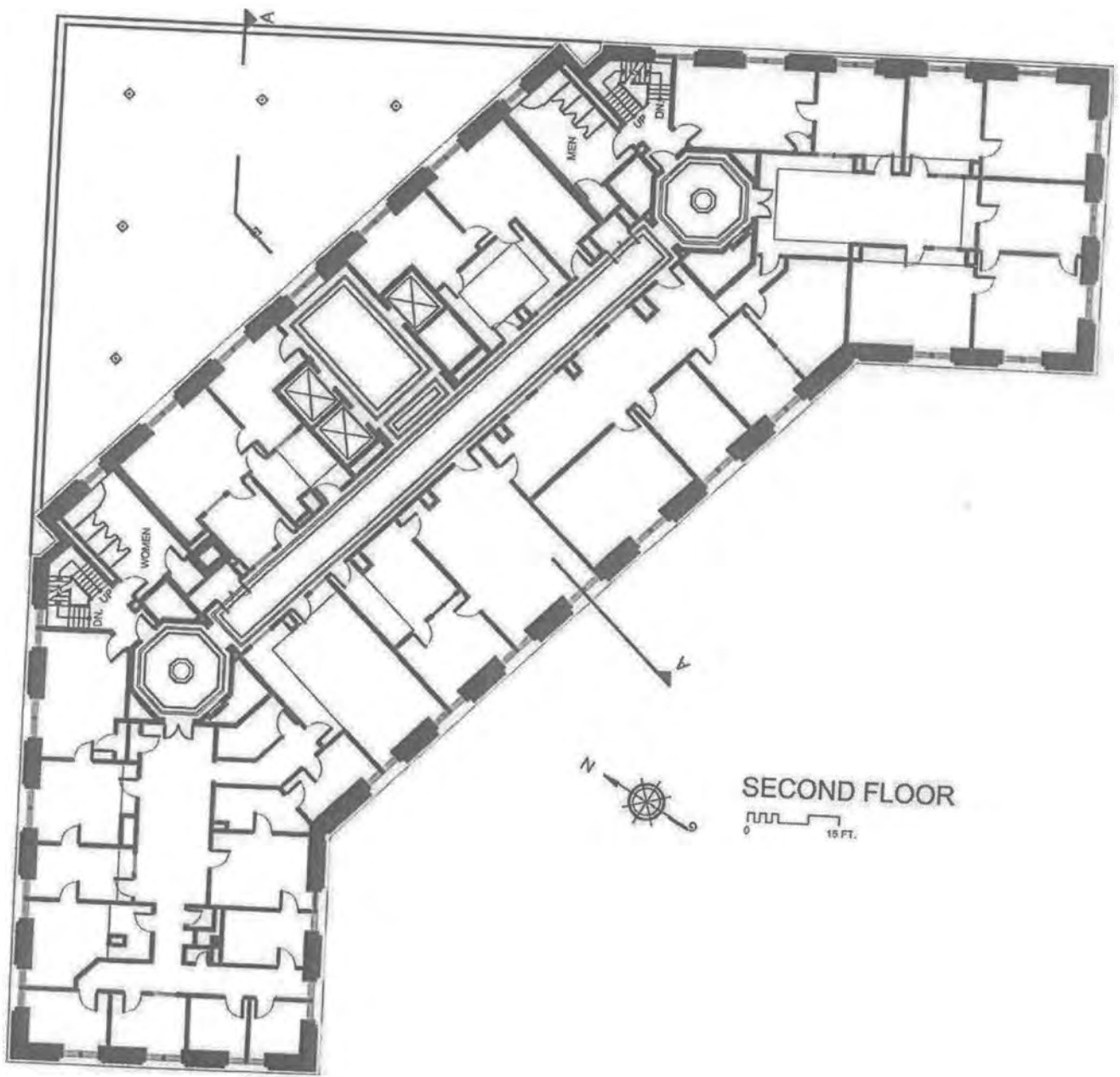




ELEV. MACHINE ROOM

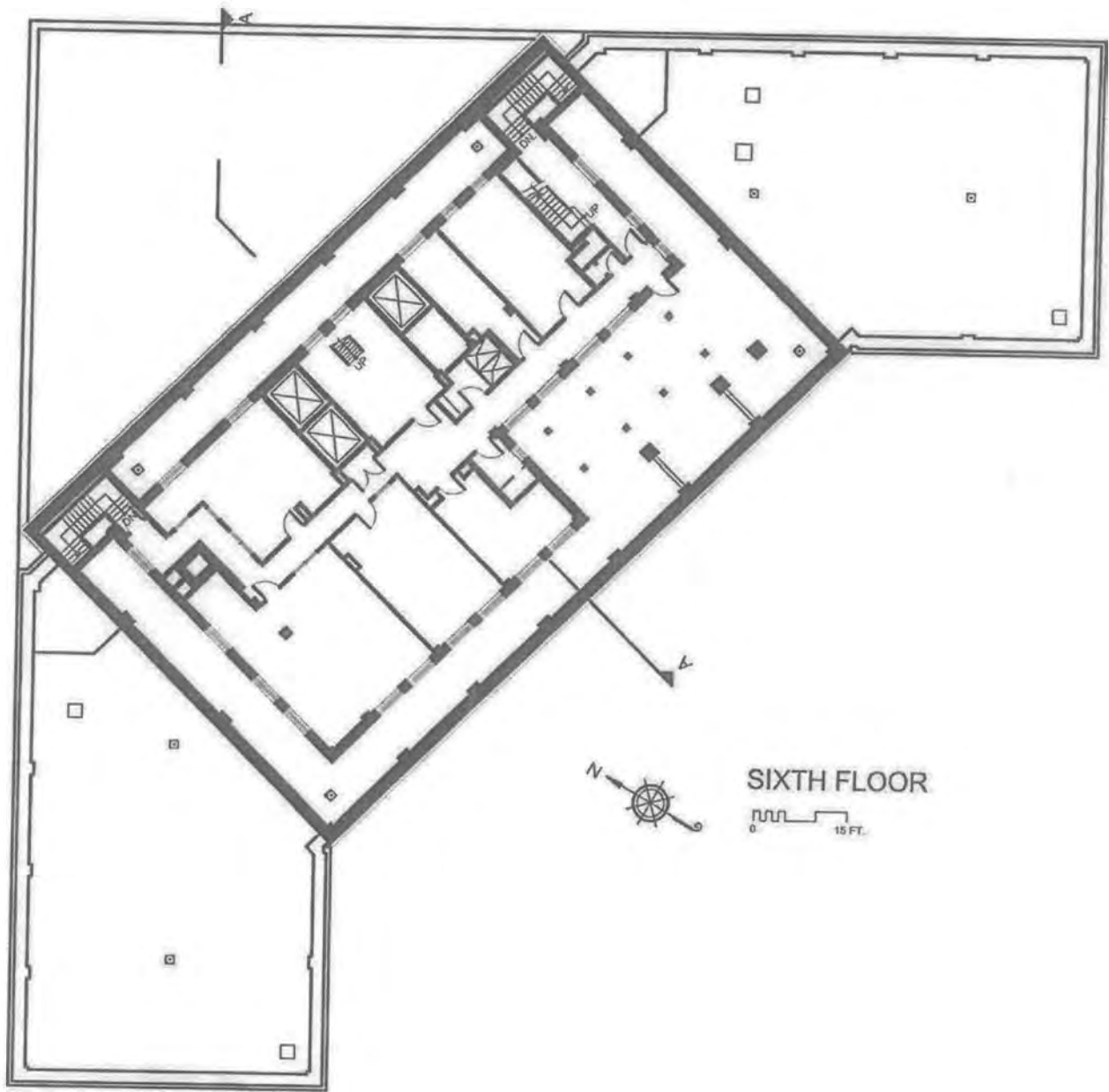
ROOF PLAN

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SECOND FLOOR

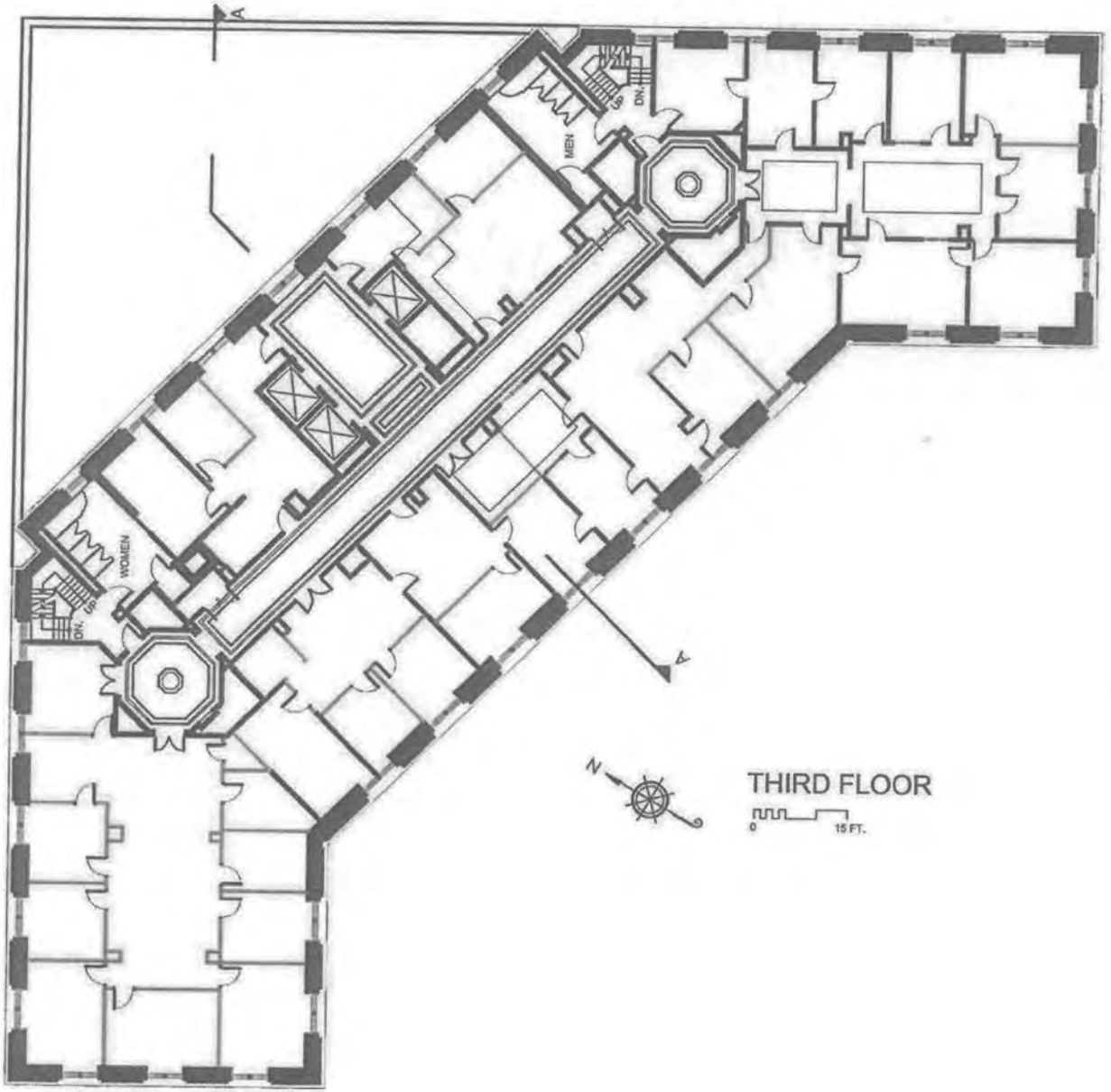
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SIXTH FLOOR



0 15 FT.



THIRD FLOOR
0 15 FT.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Tennessee State Office Building
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: TENNESSEE, Davidson

DATE RECEIVED: 6/03/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 6/24/11
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 7/11/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 7/19/11
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000455

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT RETURN REJECT 7/13/2011 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Excellent example of the "Streamlined Classical" often used by architects for
Government bldgs, especially when financed by PWA. This building serves to
complete the Capital Grounds as badly needs space. Contains murals and bas relief
Sculpture of very high quality. Significant locally for its design and for its
Representation of New Deal public works.

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A & C

REVIEWER J. Gabbert DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the
nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

1 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

2 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

3 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

4 of 29

SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

5 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVISON COUNTY, TN

6 of 29





SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

7 of 29

SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

8 of 29





SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

9 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

10 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

11 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

12 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

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SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

14 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

15 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

16 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

17 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

18 OF 29



SENIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN.

19 of 29

SENIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

20 1/2 29





SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

22 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

23 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

24 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

25 OF 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

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DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

27 of 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

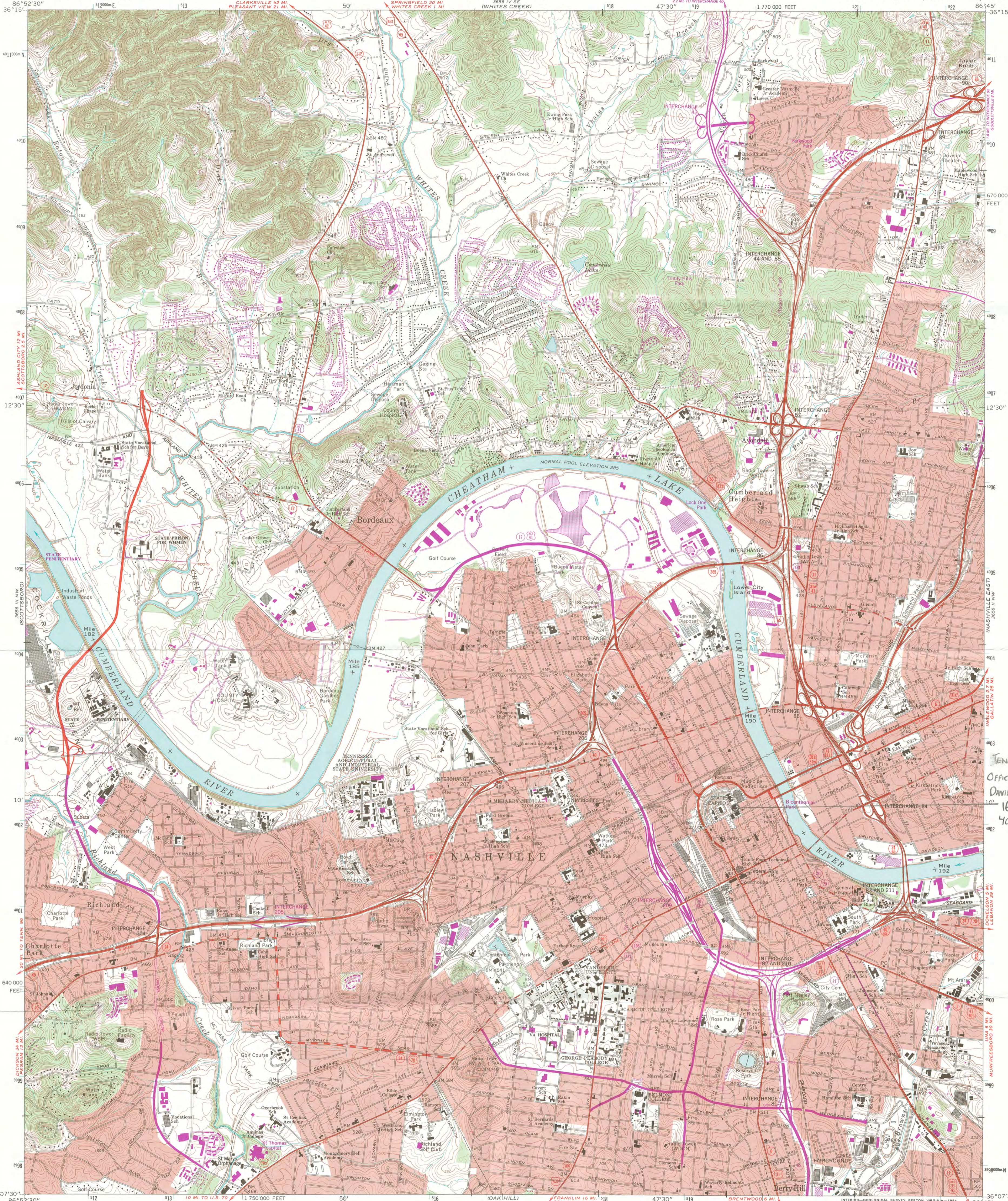
28 & 29



SEVIER, JOHN, STATE OFFICE BUILDING

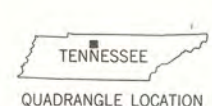
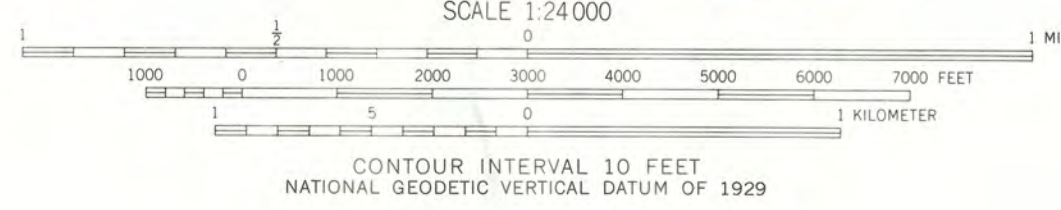
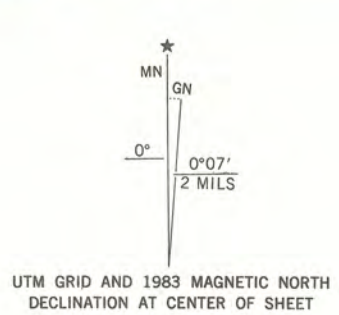
DAVIDSON COUNTY, TN

29 of 29



TENNESSEE STATE
Office Building
DAVIDSON County, TN
16 519558
4002384

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, USCE, and Tennessee Geologic Survey
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1951 and by the Defense Mapping Agency. Field
checked 1952. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1967
Field checked 1968
Polyconic projection, 10,000-foot grid ticks based on
Tennessee coordinate system
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south as shown by
dashed corner ticks
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown
Entire area lies within the Nashville-Davidson County
Metropolitan Government
There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map



ROAD CLASSIFICATION
Primary highway, all weather, hard surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface
Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Unimproved road, fair or dry weather
Interstate Route U.S. Route State Route
NASHVILLE WEST, TENN.
36086-B7-TF-024
1968
PHOTOREVISED 1983
DMA 3685 III NE - SERIES V841

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION, DIVISION OF GEOLOGY, NASHVILLE, TENN. 37219
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled from
aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources
This information not field checked. Map edited 1983





TENNESSEE HISTORICAL COMMISSION
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
2941 LEBANON ROAD
NASHVILLE, TN 37243-0442
(615) 532-1550



May 20, 2011

Carol Shull
Keeper of the National Register
National Park Service
National Register Branch
1201 Eye Street NW
8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Ms. Shull:

Please find the enclosed documentation to nominate the *Tennessee State Office Building* to the National Register of Historic Places.

If you have any questions or if more information is needed, contact Brian Beadles at 615/532-1550, extension 125 or Brian.Beadles@tn.gov.

Sincerely,

E. Patrick McIntyre, Jr.
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures