UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

The National Survey of Historic Sites and Buildings

Union Station, 1820 Market Street, St. Louis, Missouri

Union Station, constructed in 1892-1894, is a rare example of monumental nineteenth century railroad terminal architecture in the United States. The late Carroll L. V. Meeks, the authority on American railroad architecture, has characterized Union Station as belonging both to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The picturesque qualities of its clock tower and complex roofline silhouette establish its nineteenth century flavor, while its monumental proportions are more typical of stations built in the early 1900's. Designed by the St. Louis firm of Theodore C. Link, the 600-foot long granite structure stylistically reflects the Romanesque influence of H. H. Richardson. Behind the vaulted waiting room, the railroad offices, and the hotel block comprising the terminal building itself extends the great steel trainshed, which originally sheltered 32 parallel tracks. After reaching a peak of 100,000 people daily during World War II, passenger traffic in Union Station has dwindled to thirteen passenger trains a day in 1970. The station is still owned by the Terminal Railroad Association, which built it, and remains in sound condition. Interior alterations at various times have not changed the basic character of the structure.

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NSHSB: 1/8/71
R S G

Form 10-300
(Dec. 1968)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: Missouri	
COUNTY: St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Union Station

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: 1820 Market Street (South side of Market between 18th and 20th Streets)

CITY OR TOWN: St. Louis

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Missouri		St. Louis City	

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
District ☐ Building ☒	Public ☐	Public Acquisition:	Occupied ☒	Yes:
Site ☐ Structure ☐	Private ☒	In Process ☐	Unoccupied ☐	Restricted ☐
Object ☐	Both ☐	Being Considered ☐	Preservation work in progress ☐	Unrestricted ☒
				No: ☐

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Agricultural	☐	Government	☐	Park	☐	Transportation	☒
Commercial	☒	Industrial	☐	Private Residence	☐	Other *(Specify)*	☐
Educational	☐	Military	☐	Religious	☐		
Entertainment	☐	Museum	☐	Scientific	☐		

Comments ☐

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNERS NAME: Mr. J. H. Sharp, President
Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis

STREET AND NUMBER: Union Station

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
St. Louis	Missouri 63103	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Office of Recorder of Deeds, St. Louis City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER: 12th and Market Streets

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
St. Louis	Missouri	

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 20 acres

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 (in progress) Federal ☒ State ☐ County ☐ Local ☐

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Historic American Buildings Survey, Prints and Photographs Division

STREET AND NUMBER: Library of Congress

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Washington	D. C.	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: | COUNTY: | FOR NPS USE ONLY: ENTRY NUMBER | DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One) Excellent ☒	Good ☐	Fair ☐	Deteriorated ☐	Ruins ☐	Unexposed ☐
INTEGRITY	(Check One) Altered ☒	Unaltered ☐	(Check One) Moved ☐	Original Site ☒		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Designed by Theodore C. Link and erected in 1892-94, Union Station and its Terminal Hotel is a massive building of varying heights with steeply pitched Spanish-tiled roofs and gables. Designed in the "Romanesque"manner with romantic-eclectic medieval revival elements, the building is about 600 feet long, 100 feet deep, and is constructed of Bedford limestone. Turrets flank the corners of the station itself, and near the east end a slender square clock tower boldly rises to a height of 232 feet above ground level. Great round arches frame the numerous entrances. The station is a head station technically on one level, since it is possible to enter and leave at track level, entirely bypassing the elaborate Grand Hall and waiting rooms on the second floor.

A double flight of marble stairs leads from the main entrance in the north, or Market Street facade up to the second floor Grand Hall. Measuring 76 by 120 feet this elaborately decorated waiting room is the finest room in the station. An enlarged version of the dining room in Adler and Sullivan's Auditorium Hotel in Chicago (1887-89), the Grand Hall is roofed by a magnificently designed semicircular barrel vault. Two tiers of balconies extend around the north, east, and west sides of the room within the plane of the walls. The two marble north stairways are enclosed within a 40-foot arch in which is set a great stained-glass window with an allegorical scene: three maidens dressed in classical Greek attire, representing New York City, St. Louis, and San Francisco. The windows in the upper two tier of the north and the three tiers of windows in the opposite wall also contain stained glass. The room is lighted by great chandeliers and the walls are richly decorated in greens, yellows, and shades of golds. To the east of the Grand Hall is a huge ladies lounge or waiting room and to the west a Gothic corridor with gracefully vaulted ceiling leads to the Renaissance private Dining Room, the oak paneled Main (public) Dining Room, and the 86-room Terminal Hotel. Interior walls and floors are decorated with variegated tile and marble from North Africa, Europe, and the United States. A 70-foot wide and 708-foot long cross-platform or "Midway" extends along the exterior south (rear) side of the station, set between the station and the head (north end) of the great trainshed.

Designed by the engineer George H. Pegram and constructed in 1892-94, the steel trainshed is 600 feet wide, 630 feet long, and 74 feet high, and originally contained 32 tracks. Set at right angles to the station, the structure is concealed from view from Market Street by the station and four-story hotel. The great breadth of the shed made it impossible to construct a single span shed on arches and Pegram chose instead to build a low, much flattened vault of five intermediate spans, with the widest span measuring 142 feet. The tin-covered wooden roof of the shed rests on a steel framework of transverse Pegram trusses carried on six longitudinal rows of columns.[1] Pegram's design was based on aesthetics as well as utilitarian ends. He rejected the alternatives of separate vaults or gables because he felt that the single shed offered more monumental possibilities. In execution, however, his rigid trusses in six exact parallel rows serve only to break up into a multiplicity of angles the otherwise unified space under

1. The upper cord is here continued in an unbroken curve from one side of

(continued)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Pre-Columbian ☐	16th Century ☐	18th Century ☐	20th Century ☐
15th Century ☐	17th Century ☐	19th Century ☒	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)*

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	Education ☐	Political ☐	Urban Planning ☐
Prehistoric ☐	Engineering ☐	Religion/Philosophy ☐	Other *(Specify)* ☒
Historic ☐	Industry ☐		Architecture X
Agriculture ☐	Invention ☐	Science ☐	
Art ☐	Landscape	Sculpture ☐	
Commerce ☐	Architecture ☐	Social/Humanitarian ☐	
Communications ☐	Literature ☐		
Conservation ☐	Military ☐	Theater ☐	
	Music ☐	Transportation ☒	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Include Personages, Dates, Events, Etc.)*

Erected in 1892-94 and designed by the architect Theodore C. Link in the Romanesque style, Union Station is the finest surviving example of and illustrates the culmination of the High Victorian picturesque eclectic style as applied to railroad stations in the United States during the 19th century. Union Station is also an important transitional structure, summarizing and incorporating the development of station architecture in the period 1860 to 1890 and including new features that were to be utilized in the even more monumental stations of imperial splendor that were to be erected after 1890. Union Station's adjoining steel trainshed, built in 1892-94 and designed by the engineer George H. Pegram, was the largest of enormous single-vault trainsheds erected in the United States during the 19th century, exceeding all others in area and linear dimensions and spaning the largest number of tracks. Both Union Station and its trainshed have undergone only minor architectural modification and are in excellent condition.

Early History of American Railroad Stations

Although the United States was quick to adopt and develop the railroad, its rail systems from 1830 to 1850 consisted of miles of poorly built track that connected its widely separated coastal cities and reached back into the Middle West. The available capital, most of it foreign, was limited and had to go into the construction of track, bridges, and tunnels. Huge terminals and large stations were not needed. Railroad company engineers generally designed the small stations that were built and these early stations were designed in the Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, and Italianate architectural styles then in vogue. Not until the construction of old Grand Central Station in New York City, designed by Isaac C. Buckhout and John B. Snook in the French Second Empire mode, in 1869 did the United States have a single station capable of standing comparison with the finest European ones, and 10 years later the situation had not greatly improved. In the 1880's, however, lavish large stations, designed by professional architects and embodying picturesque eclectic aesthics in their complex massing, bolder asymmetry, pointed vaults, and rising towers, which reminded their contemporaries of medieval cathedrals, began to appear in increasing numbers in the larger cities of the United States: at Boston, Worcester, Massachusetts, Washington, D. C., Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, St. Louis, New London, Connecticut, and other cities and towns.[1]

1. Major illustrative examples of the best stations of this period, now

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

50 Years of Transportation, 1894-1944: St. Louis Union Station and St. Louis (Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis, St. Louis, 1944).

Freeman H. Hubbard, "Union Station," Railroad Magazine (February, 1947), 10-38.

Carroll L. V. Meeks, The Railroad Station, An Architectural History (New Haven, 1956), 107, 120-21, 124, Plates 138-39, 158.

Carl W. Condit, American Building Art - The Nineteenth Century (New York, 1960), 219-221 (continued)

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN ONE ACRE					
CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE				LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	38 °	37'	47 "	90 °	12 '	33 "		°	'	"	°	'	"
NE	38 °	37'	45 "	90 °	12 '	23 "							
SE	38 °	37'	35 "	90 °	12 '	26 "							
SW	38 °	37'	37 "	90 °	12 '	36 "							

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

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

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Charles W. Snell, Survey Historian

ORGANIZATION: Division of History, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation, National Park Service

DATE: 2/19/70

STREET AND NUMBER:
801 - 19th Street, N. W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D. C.

CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

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

National ☐ State ☐ Local ☐

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

_____
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. Description - continued

this vast dark cavern of a trainshed.

In spite of its 32 tracks - the largest number of any American railroad station at the time - the St. Louis Terminal Association decided to build additional features. In 1929-30, ten more tracks with separate platform canopies were added parallel with the west side of the original shed. The midway was also lengthened at this time, from 600 to 708 feet. In 1942-44 the station and its facilities were extensively renovated and modernized. In the station the large first floor waiting room was enlarged and redecorated. The wooden benches dating from 1894 were removed and a modern ticket office constructed. On the Midway the present terrazo floor was laid over the original concrete floor and the existing oak benches installed. The original iron picket fence and gates which separated the Midway from the trainshed were removed and replaced by the existing partitions of hollow gypsum tile, with large plate glass windows and sliding oak doors with circular glass panels.

Other changes included new offices for the stationmaster and general baggage agent, a more efficient train bulletin board, modernized toilet rooms, an improved taxicab concourse, and modern heating and lighting systems.

On the second floor of the station the Grand Hall and Dining Room had their original English interlocking tile floors covered over by new tile floors. Original (1894) wooden benches in the Grand Hall were removed and replaced by leather-and-chromium-trimmed settees and writing desks (now also removed). Few changes, however, were made in the rooms on the second, third, and fourth floors which were and still are occupied as offices by the Terminal Railroad Association, the Pullman Company, and the Association of American Railroads. No major structural changes were made in the station or trainshed in this renovation work. Both structures are in excellent condition. Of the 42 tracks, however, only 23 remain in use and the other 19 have been removed or concreted over.

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the shed to the other, but the lower chord is broken into five parts, each convex to the platform.

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

2. Description of the Boundaries of Union Station, St. Louis

Beginning at the northwest corner, at 20th and Market Streets, proceed southeast along Market Street about 800 feet to its junction with 18th Street, the northeast corner; thence turning southwest and going around 1,000 feet along 18th Street to the southeast corner; thence turning at right angles and going about 800 feet northwest and parallel to Market Street to the southwest corner at 20th Street; thence turning northeast and proceeding about 1000 feet along 20th Street to its junction with Market Street, the point of beginning.

Enclosed in these boundaries are the Union Station and Trainshed and about 20 acres of land.

8. Significance - continued, page 1.

The more utilitarian trainsheds were not designed for architectural effect but went through a similar process of evolution: first constructed of wood, then of iron, and finally of steel, and growing ever larger in size until they ceased to be built because of the high costs of construction and maintenance, and because new technological developments no longer made these structures essential.

History of Union Station and Its Trainshed

The Terminal Railroad Association of St. Louis was founded in July, 1889 by six railroad companies to build and operate a large passenger terminal in St. Louis that would be used by all member railroads. The site of the present Union Station was selected on April 1, 1890. It was decided to erect a "head" or "end" rather than a "through" type of station because no passenger trains passed through St. Louis. All railroads, whether east-west or north-south, terminated their runs in the city and transferred their passengers to other lines traveling beyond St. Louis. Another reason for the use of the "pocket station" was the city's topography, which confined its rail operations to a narrow valley. Detailed specifications were drawn up for the erection of the new station and sent to 10 competing architects from all over the United States.

By July, 1891 eight sets of drawings had been received and the judges decided in the favor of the plan prepared by Theodore C. Link, a St. Louis architect, who was awarded the first prize of $10,000 and also appointed superintendent of construction for the station. His design utilized Romanesque architecture - as interpreted by H. H. Richardson. Excavations for the foundations began on April 1, 1892, the cornerstone was laid on July 8, 1893, and 14 months later, on September 1, 1894, the huge building (about 100 feet deep

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either demolished or greatly altered architecturally, include the following: Park Square Station, Boston (Peabody and Sterns, 1870-demolished); Union Passenger Station, Worcester, Massachusetts (by Ware and Van Brunt, 1875-77-demolished except for tower); the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Depot, Washington, D. C. (by Joseph M. Wilson, 1873-77-demolished); Broad Street Station, Philadelphia (1881-93 by Joseph Wilson, Arthur Truscott, Frank Furness, Allan Evans-demolished); Reading Station, Philadelphia (F. H. Kimball, 1890); Dearborn (Polk Street) Station, Chicago (by C. L. W. Eidlitz, 1883-85); Michigan Central Station, Detroit (by C. L. W. Eidlitz, 1882-83); Chicago and North Western Station, Chicago (by W. W. Boyington, 1880's); Union Railroad Station, New London, Connecticut (by H. H. Richardson, 1885-87); North Easton Station, Massachusetts (by H. H. Richardson, 1886); Chicago and North Western Station, Milwaukee (by Charles S. Frost, 1889); Union Depot, Detroit (by Isaac S. Taylor, 1889); Union Station, Indianapolis (by Thomas Rodd, 1886-89); Grand Central Station, Chicago (by Solon Spencer Beman, 1880-90), and the Illinois Central Station, Chicago (by Bradford Gilbert, 1892-93).

and 600 feet long, including the Terminal Hotel) was opened to the public, and train service began. Also added to the west end of the station in 1894, though not included in the specifications for the competition, was the 86-room Terminal Hotel. The hotel, also designed by Link, conformed with the architecture of the station.

Also built in 1892-94 and adjoining the new four-story station at right angles on the south or rear elevation, was a huge steel trainshed, the largest such structure to be built in the United States during the 19th century. Designed by the engineer George H. Pegram, who had just invented the Pegram truss, the trainshed was 600 feet wide, 630 feet long, 74 feet high, and spanned 32 tracks. Total cost of the project, including acquisition of site, construction of station, trainshed, hotel, trackage, and other improvements, was $6,500,000.[2]

In spite of its size - the largest American railroad terminal at the time- the St. Louis terminal was so conjested by the mid-1920's that the company decided to build additional facilities. In 1928 a two-story baggage building was added on the west side of the Terminal Hotel, thus completing the extension of the station and hotel from 18th to 20th Street. In 1929-30 ten more tracks with separate platform canopies were added along the west side of the 1894 trainshed and the 70-foot wide cross-platform or "Midway" at the head of the trainshed was extended from its original 600 foot length to 708 feet.

In 1942-44, under the supervision of H. Austill, chief engineer, Union Station and its trainshed were renovated and modernized at a cost of nearly $12,000,000. Architectural changes to both structures in this work, however, were not extensive. In 1943 about 100,000 people a day passed through Union Station and more than 200 passenger trains daily moved in and out of the great trainshed. In 1970 Union Station handles about 13 passenger trains a day.

Architectural Work of Theodore C. Link (1850-1923)

Born in Germany in 1850 and educated at Heidelberg University, Theodore C. Link was trained in architecture in London and completed his studies at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Coming to the United States in 1870, he settled in St. Louis in 1873 and began working on engineering projects. In 1883 he

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2. The track layout of the approaches to Union Station also apparently illustrates a unique but less successful engineering feat. The original 1894 wye of two double track branches was expanded in 1904-05 to one with two pairs of branches, the inner two lines crossing at the station throat. The resulting system of double wyes has been called by one authority "without parallel for the resulting complexity and inefficiency of train movements." Carl W. Condit, American Building Art - The Nineteenth Century (New York, 1960), 221.

(continued)

8. Significance - continued, page 3.

entered architectural practice under the firm name of Link, Rosenheim, and Ittner. From 1886 to 1889 he worked in partnership with Wilbur T. Trueblood. Link then withdrew and opened an independent office.

His first important work in St. Louis (won in a competition held in 1891) was for the new Union Station, which he supervised until its completion in 1894. In the years that followed his practice was extensive, both in character and range, and included such buildings in St. Louis as the Barnes Hospital buildings, medical buildings at Washington University, the Carleton Office Building, the Lindall Avenue Church (in association with A. F. Rosenheim), and the Metallurgy Building at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904. Elsewhere he designed the Wabash Terminal at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1904 and in 1919 the State Capitol of Mississippi at Jackson. He then moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he designed the buildings of the Louisiana State University and State Agricultural College. Link died November 11, 1923.

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

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INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Missouri	
COUNTY	
St. Louis City	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

9. Major Bibliographical References- continued.

John A. Bryan, Missouri's Contribution to American Architecture (St. Louis, 1928).

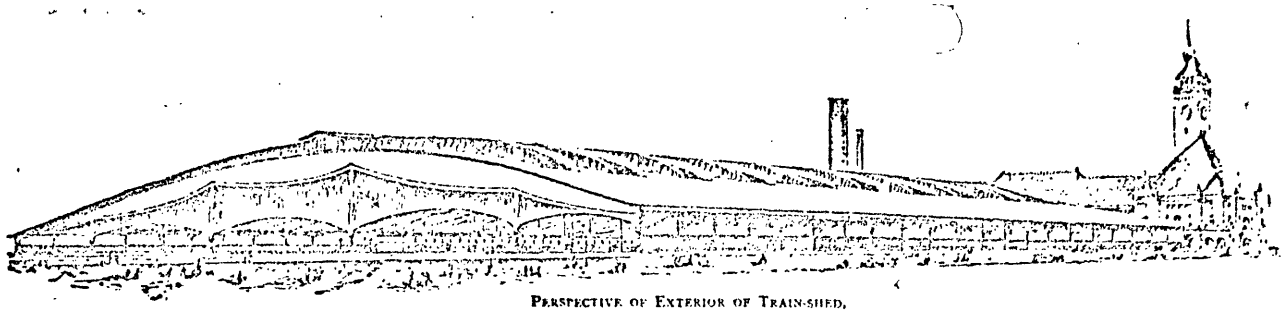
Henry F. Withey and Elsie R. Withey, Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Los Angeles, 1956), 373-374.

John Burchard and Albert Bush-Brown, The Architecture of America, A Social and Cultural History (Boston and Toronto, 1961), 277, 279.

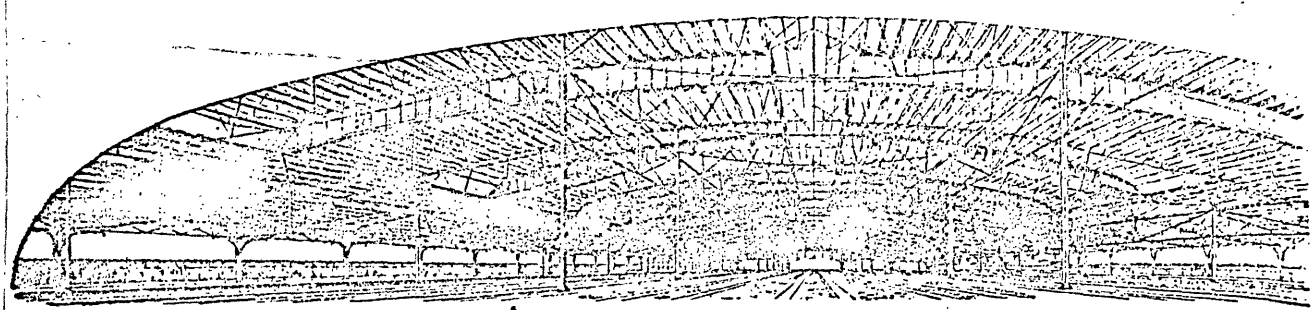
Dorothy J. Caldwell, Editor, Missouri Historic Sites Catalogue (Columbia, Missouri, 1963), 173.

Missouri, A Guide to the "Show Me" State (American Guide Series) (New York, 1941), 194,316.

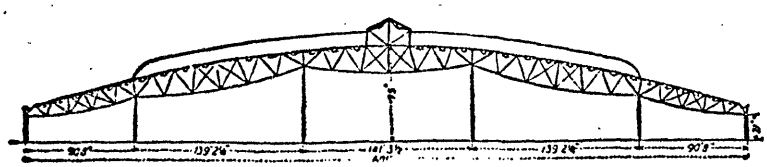

STATION
and
TRACKS



PERSPECTIVE OF EXTERIOR OF TRAIN-SHED.



PERSPECTIVE OF INTERIOR OF TRAIN-SHED.

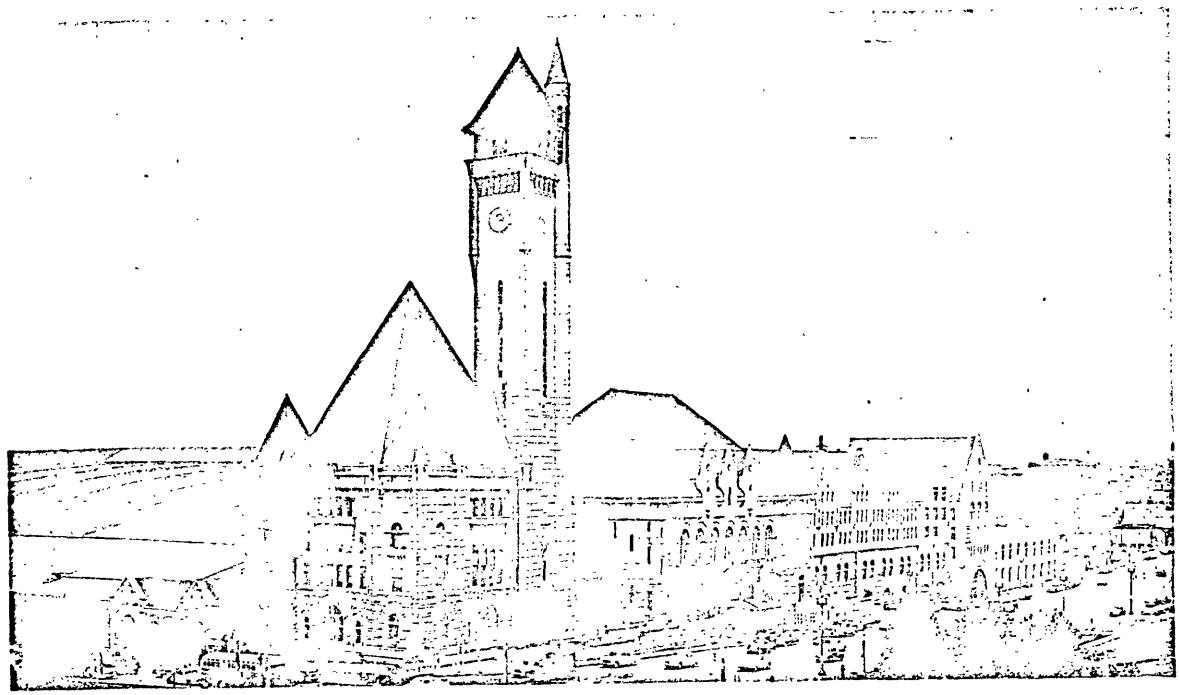


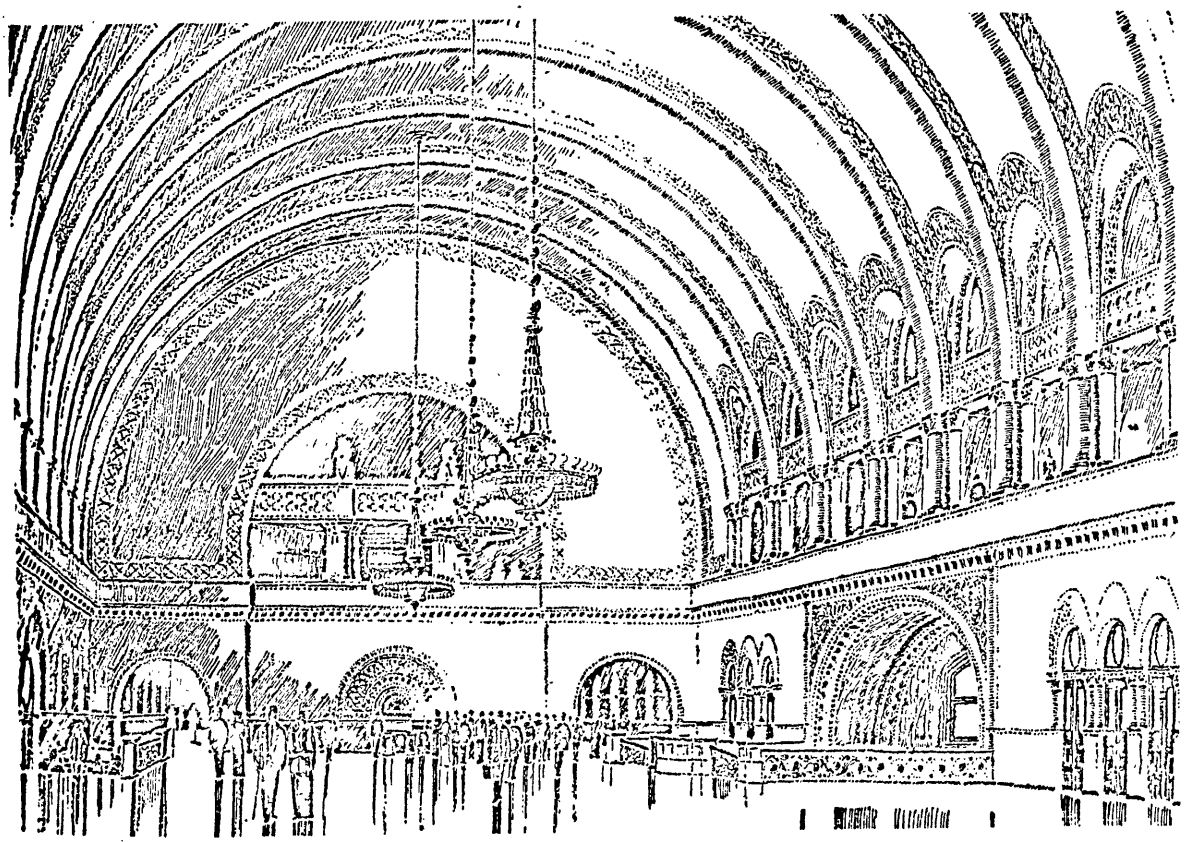
CROSS-SECTION OF TRAIN-SHED.

119 Union Station, St. Louis. Top to bottom: Exterior, interior, and cross section of the train-shed.

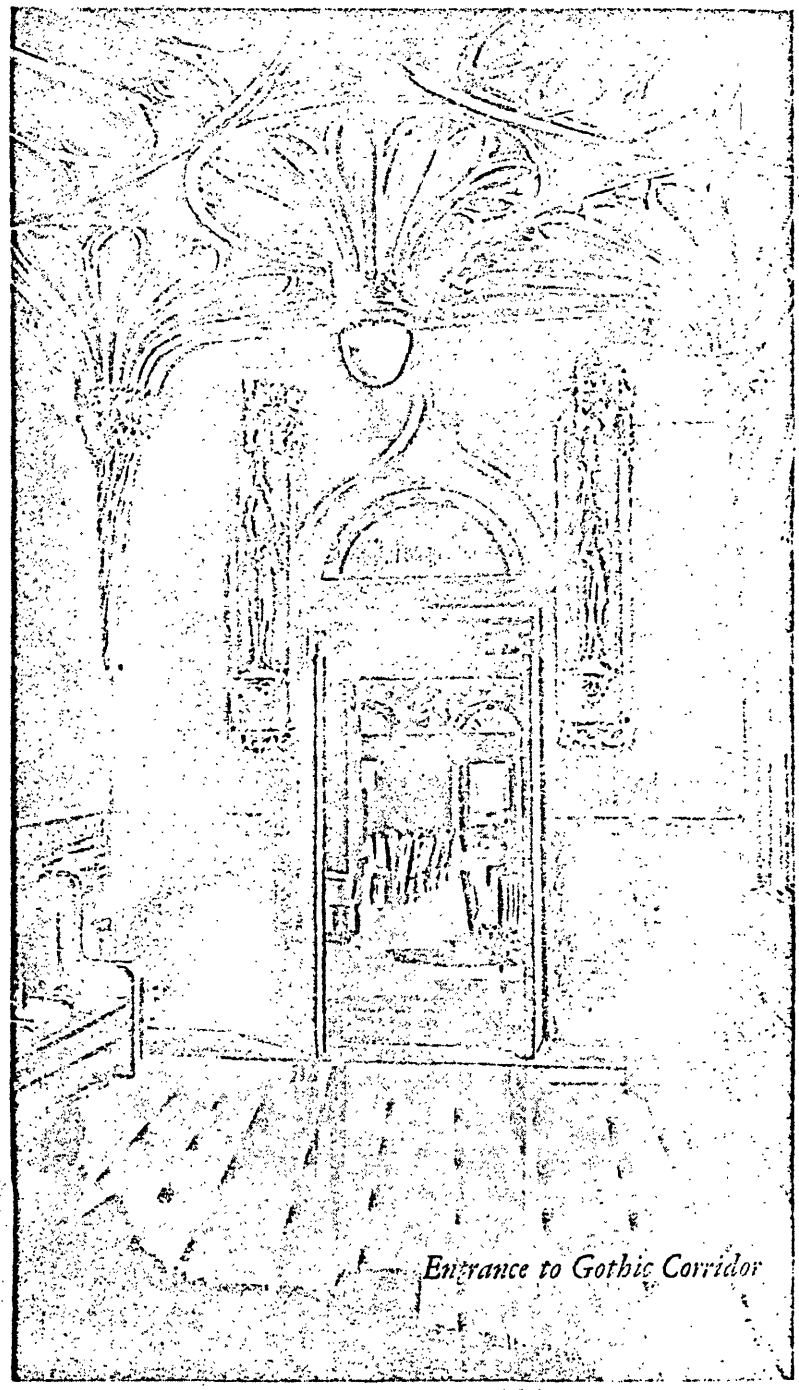
From Carl W. Condit, American Building Art - The Nineteenth Century (New York, 1960), 220.

138, 139. St. Louis, Union Station. Theodore C. Link and Edward D. Cameron, architects, and George H. Pegram, engineer, 1891-94. 138. (top) Exterior. 139. (bottom) Grand Hall. (See also Fig. 158.)





From Carroll L. V. Meeks, The Railroad Station, An Architectural History (New Haven, 1956).



Entrance to Gothic Corridor

Union Station, St. Louis, Missouri