

PH 364886

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED  
MAY 23 1977  
DATE ENTERED  
DEC 16 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

Y. M. C. A. Building

AND/OR COMMON

Same

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

227-229 West Broadway

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 and 4

STATE

Kentucky

VICINITY OF

CODE  
021

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE  
III

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

### CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

### OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

### STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

### PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER: athletic club

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

William J. Receveur, Jr.

William H. Millard, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

5228 Moccasin Trail

7913 Rose Island Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Louisville, Ky.

VICINITY OF

Prospect, Ky.

STATE

## 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 Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1976

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 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		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The old Y.M.C.A. Building, completed in 1913, is located on the northeast corner of Broadway and Third Street with the main entrance on Broadway. It is directly across Broadway from the Weissinger-Gaulbert Apartments (1912) and across Third Street from the Fincastle Building (formerly the Breslin Building, ca. 1920). (See Map # 1.)

From its opening in September, 1913 until 1976 it housed the varied activities of the Louisville Y.M.C.A. When the Y.M.C.A. moved to a new structure on Second Street in 1976, the old building was sold. At present it is being renovated for the accomodation of a private school, an athletic club and possibly some apartments.

Constructed of brick in a soft red color, with stone trim, the building contains seven stories and a basement partially raised above street level. A stone water table divides the basement and the first story. The Broadway facade features a recessed section above a projecting central pavilion on the first story. (See Photo 1.)

The first story contains an elaborate window treatment on both the Broadway and Third Street facades. The windows are very large and are composed of vertical mullions with a semielliptical fanlight at the top. A massive stone surround, embellished with carved garlands of leaves, forms a round arch above each window. A scroll-like keystone is at the top of the arch. The windows facing Broadway are symmetrically arranged with the main entrance in one of the arched openings in the central pavilion. The entry has a flat-topped hood supported by large, foliated brackets and topped with a carved cartouche-like stone figure. The pavilion is surmounted by several large, carved and foliated stone volutes. The first story is separated from the upper stories by a cornice of stone underscored with dentils, egg-and-dart molding, and a wide band of stone panels, bricks, and white-glazed terra cotta tiles. (See Photos 2 and 3.)

Fenestration on the upper stories consists of simple, double-hung windows symmetrically arranged in vertical lines.

The recessed portion of the Broadway facade, comprising the second through the sixth stories, exhibits various decorative details. Inset, vertical panels of brick separate the pairs of windows and contain, above the second story, a circular motif in stone and brick. The spandrels have panels with a design in brick and white-glazed terra cotta tiles. (See Photo 4.)

A rounded stone cornice with dentils and egg-and-dart molding separates the seventh story from the lower stories. This story is faced with stone and its windows are interspersed with varied panels of brick, or a combination of brick and white-glazed terra cotta.

At the top of the building there is a massive, projecting cornice of galvanized iron with brackets and diamond-shaped figures which rise above the flat roof.

The original plans by McDonald and Dodd, which still exist in the possession of the owners, called for an elaborate use of varied types of marble around the entrance. This was never executed, probably because of the greater cost involved. However, the vestibule within the entry does use marble of a pinkish-cream shade with black veining.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1911-1913

BUILDER/ARCHITECT McDonald & Dodd

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The YMCA is an excellent example of a modified Beaux-Arts style building with Baroque overtones. In addition it is the work of a major late 19th century architectural firm in Louisville, McDonald & Dodd. Situated at a prominent corner in Louisville, it is undergoing extensive renovation for an adaptive reuse.

The Louisville Young Men's Christian Association was organized in 1853, the tenth chapter in this country. The YMCA had been founded in London, England, in 1844 by a draper's clerk for the "improvement of the spiritual condition of young men engaged in the drapery and other trades by the introduction of religious services in the houses of business", according to newspaper articles by Melville O. Briney which traced the history of the YMCA.

The Louisville organizers were L. L. Warren, Richard A. Robinson and Frederick Wedekemper. James H. Huber was the first president. Committees representing the different church societies in Louisville were formed and meetings were held in the Walnut Street Baptist Church. In following years, lectures were held featuring speakers such as Oliver Wendell Holmes. Regular prayer meetings were scheduled and committees visited the City Hospital, Marine Hospital, the Jail and similar institutions.

In 1866 the YMCA was reorganized and chartered by the Kentucky Legislature in 1867. Its object, as recorded in old minute books, was to "improve the religious, moral, intellectual and social condition of every young man in the city and of every stranger who may make it his abode." The charter required that "active members...shall consist exclusively of male members in good standing of the Evangelical Churches in the state."

The newly reorganized chapter was able to raise \$20,000 and rent quarters in Weisiger Hall, part of the Central Market Building which then stood on the site of the present Kaufman-Straus Building. The rooms were renovated and furnished and a substantial library was purchased. However, financial problems soon affected the chapter, community support decreased and by 1870 the board of managers had to sell the library and furnishings to pay accumulated debts. The YMCA then ceased to function as an active group.

In 1875, a series of gospel meetings was held in Louisville and, at the suggestion of one of the evangelists a group of young men determined to reactivate a YMCA chapter. This was done and in 1877 the International Convention of YMCAs met in Louisville, providing an opportunity for renewed interest in the work of the YMCA. In 1878, the amended articles of incorporation stated that "the purpose of the corporation is to help develop Christian personality and build a Christian society, and to promote those ends through religious training, education, charitable enterprises...!"

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Architectural plans for YMCA, owned by William J. Receveur, Jr., Louisville, Kentucky.

Briney, Melville O. "From A Sidewalk Conference Grew The YMCA." The Louisville Times, 20 September, 1962.

(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .5 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 

1	6	6	0	8	8	3	0	4	2	3	3	6	8	0
ZONE			EASTING				NORTHING							

B 

ZONE				EASTING				NORTHING							

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Old YMCA is located on the northeast corner of Broadway and Third Street, in the Fourth City District, Block 16-F, Lot 1.

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

Mary Jean Kinsman, Research Assistant

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Commission

DATE

4/5/77

STREET & NUMBER

617 West Jefferson Street

TELEPHONE

587-3501

CITY OR TOWN

Louisville

STATE

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

*Cedric W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE May 18, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS SERVICE  
 ATTEST: *[Signature]*  
 SUPERVISOR OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/16/77  
 KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER  
 DATE 12-18-77

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The ensuing years were busy and productive ones for the Louisville YMCA. A house on Walnut Street near Fifth was purchased for a headquarters. A branch for railroad men was organized, as well as a German Branch and a Boy's Branch. In 1893, a Branch for Colored Men was added. Classes were held in such subjects as mechanical drawing, music, penmanship, mathematics and German. A gymnasium provided space for athletic activities.

During these years some of Louisville's most prominent men served as president and directors of the YMCA. Among them were J. B. McFerran, W. H. Dillingham, Samuel Avery, W. C. Kendrick, F. D. Carley, and Owen Gathright.

In 1894, Mrs. Mary R. Belknap, whose husband owned the Belknap Hardware Company, donated \$10,000 to the YMCA to start a fund for a new building. A fund raising campaign was held and in 1897, the B. F. Avery house, at the southeast corner of Fourth and Broadway, was purchased and renovated for a new and larger headquarters. The YMCA remained at that location until the new building was erected in 1913 at Third and Broadway. By the time the "Y" moved one block east in 1913, Broadway, an elegant residential street from the 1850's to the early twentieth century, was rapidly becoming a street of commercially-oriented structures.

Because of expanding programs and increased membership, it became evident that the facilities at Fourth and Broadway would soon be too small. By 1906, according to the minute books, plans to raise money and erect a new building were discussed. A committee was appointed to choose an architect to draw preliminary plans and local architect Brinton B. Davis was selected.

Since the extant minute books end in 1907, there is no information about Davis's plans or why McDonald & Dodd were later asked to design the new building. Pictures of two proposed designs exist. One appeared in a brochure of Davis' work and was labeled "Proposed Athletic Club". The other was printed in 1908 in a book entitled Greater Louisville-Illustrated. It was unsigned and captioned "Proposed New YMCA Building". Possibly the building committee invited several architects to submit preliminary plans. (See Views #1 and #2.)

Several unsuccessful attempts were made to raise funds for a new building and it was not until late in 1910 that enough money was raised to proceed with building plans. The president of the "Y" at that time was William Heyburn, prominent businessman, president and later Chairman of the Board of the Belknap Hardware Company, and president of the Heyburn Building Company, which later built and operated the Heyburn Building at Fourth and Broadway. Heyburn is generally credited for the success of "The Great Building Fund," which raised enough money for the new central building plus a building for the Railroad Branch and an addition to the Colored Branch. An important part of this campaign was a

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\$25,000 gift from William R. Belknap, whose mother had given a generous sum in 1894 for the purpose of acquiring a new headquarters.

It was first planned that the new building would be constructed on the Fourth and Broadway site and preliminary plans for a structure there were drawn. However, in March, 1911, it was announced that the YMCA had purchased three lots at the north-east corner of Third and Broadway. A newspaper article quoted Mr. Heyburn's statement that this site was chosen because of its central location, the relative quiet, since no car line ran on Third Street, and its southern and western exposure. The lots contained substantial houses which were built in the mid-nineteenth century. The house at the corner had been the home of Judge Bland Ballard's family from 1862 until 1905.

By early 1911, the YMCA building committee had selected the local firm of McDonald & Dodd to design the new building. Associated with them was the firm of Shattuck and Hussey of Chicago, which had supervised the construction of numerous YMCA buildings in the United States and other countries.

The first plans submitted were considered too costly and revisions had to be made. In August, 1911 the final plans for a seven-story building, costing about \$340,000 were approved. Razing of the houses on the site began in late 1911. On August 28, 1912, the cornerstone was laid by James E. Hardy, a past president of the YMCA and the only surviving charter member of the original chapter.

In September 1913, the building was completed and a four-day opening celebration was held. Various tours and receptions were given for members of the "Y", subscribers to the building fund, congregations of local churches and young people's organizations. The Mayor and city officials, and members of civic, fraternal, and commercial organizations were also given special tours. A dinner honored the YMCA board of directors, other officers and committee members, and prominent YMCA officials from other states. The building was opened for tours by the general public and a concert and mass meeting for men was held on the final day.

The Louisville Times of September 13, 1913 described the interior of the new building and stated, "Not a single item in the way of facilities for educational and physical training and Christian teaching has been overlooked in the scheme of things incident to the construction of the new building, and here many of the diversions that take a boy away from home nights may be enjoyed in a free, frank and wholesome atmosphere without the attendant dangers of demoralizing, evil associations."

The first floor contained a spacious lobby, separate club rooms for boys and men, an auditorium seating 200 people, and the association business offices. On the second

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floor were educational rooms, a ladies parlor, the main gymnasium, and a smaller gymnasium containing three handball courts. The larger gym had a "concave running track covered with cork carpet." The third floor housed classrooms, dormitories and offices for the State YMCA. The remaining four floors contained dormitories, "each furnished with chiffonier, single bed, reading table, brussels rug, two chairs and a large closet", and bath and toilet rooms. In the basement were located bowling alleys, locker and shower rooms, a barber shop, cafeteria, wrestling room, bicycle room and a swimming pool measuring 75 by 30 feet.

The architects, Kenneth McDonald and William J. Dodd during their partnership designed a number of outstanding Louisville buildings. These included the 1905-06 Temple Adath Israel (placed on the National Register in December, 1974), the Lincoln Bank Building (later known as the Washington Building and razed in 1973), the 1908 Western Colored Branch, Louisville Free Public Library (placed on the National Register in December 1975) and the Weissinger-Gaulbert Apartments (1903-1912).

McDonald (1852-1940) was the junior partner in the firm of McDonald Brothers. Dodd (1862-1930) was a native of Chicago and trained there in the office of William LeBaron Jenney. He came to Louisville about 1884 and joined the McDonald firm about 1900. (For a more complete discussion of the McDonald and Dodd careers see the National Register Form for the Western Colored Branch Library.)

McDonald and Dodd designed for the YMCA a handsome structure in a "Beaux-Arts Baroque" style. The commission was one of their last as partners, since Dodd moved to California about 1914, and it continued their tradition of excellence in adapting the Beaux-Arts mode to buildings of a public or commercial nature. The handsome edifice with its ornate ornamentation presented to the community an image consistent with the high-minded ideals and purposes of the association it housed.

In the years after 1913, the functions of the YMCA were gradually changed to meet the new demands of a changing society. Needs for educational programs for young men, or the type of lodging provided by the "Y" were met elsewhere. Emphasis slowly shifted to athletics. Today the YMCA provides athletic facilities and programs for men, women and children, with perhaps more emphasis on adult physical fitness. Proof is visible in the new structure at Second and Chestnut, described as a "brick-and-glass exercise palace," which rendered obsolete the old building on Broadway.

The YMCA building is an important example of twentieth century design by distinguished architects. Its adaptive reuse as an athletic club and private school facility seems a fitting reminder of its place in the sociocultural history of the city.

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"Dedicatory Exercises At YMCA Begin Thursday!" The (Louisville) Courier Journal, 7 September 1913, Sect. 3, p. 10.

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"Three Historic Houses Make Way For YMCA!" The (Louisville) Courier Journal, 12 October 1911, p. 4.

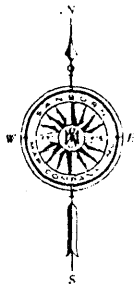
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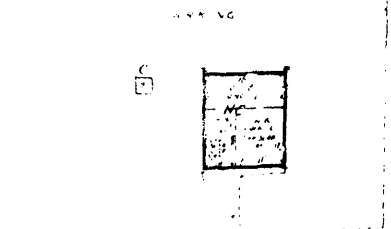
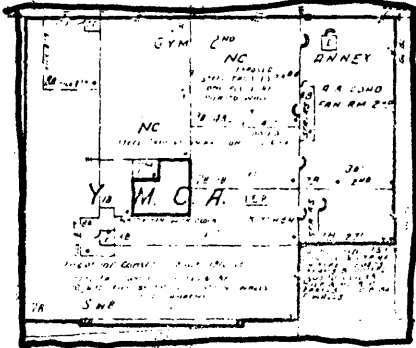
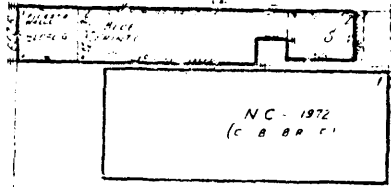
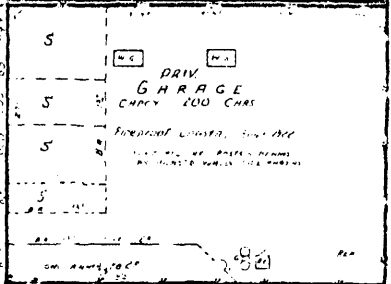
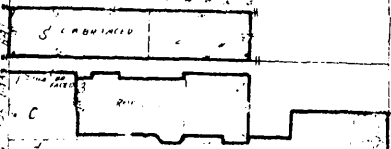
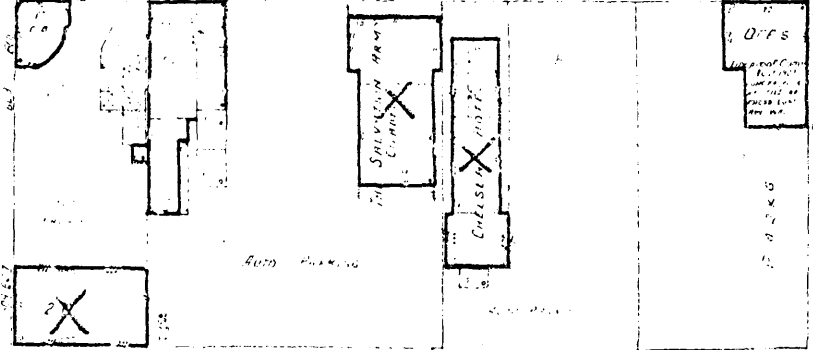


79

S. 3RD ST

40

S. 2ND ST



BROADWAY

SEE VOLUME 2E

The Old YMCA  
Louisville, Jefferson Co., Ky.

The Sanborn Map Co.

c. 1973

MAY 23 1977

Map # 2.  
Sanborn map showing site of Old  
YMCA.

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